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**Rethinking Our Cities…with People and Climate in Mind**

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My heart skips a beat. Atop an extinct volcano, Mt. Tabor is a lovely city park with breathtaking views of Portland below. And the hike up, a popular exercise routine among locals, was a welcome workout. But neither is on my mind now. What has me a flutter is my missing wallet. I’m here at this Oregonian oasis studying new urbanism, namely how a walkable downtown with mixed housing options, abundant sidewalks, and narrow streets really operates. All this emphasis on buildingdensity deemphasizes automobiles and, as I will soon experience, nurtures civic life. It fosters a culture where a stranger from my last bus returns my wallet to the driver, ensuring it reunites with me little more than an hour later. Green architecture, as highlighted two chapters ago, brings much needed attention to buildings in our fight against climate change. But precisely how these buildings are organized matters, too. This chapter takes this more holistic approach, rethinking design of our cities, including the infrastructure that binds them together. City design is more important than we often realize. Consider the time it takes to get from home to work. Longer commutes, borrowing from Harvard political scientist Robert Putnam, limit civic engagement and development of social capital.[[1]](#footnote-1) People spread too thinly interact less. Moving them closer together strengthens civil society – and decreases political polarization. And it gives us a better chance to address complex societal issues like climate change.

Alas, many Americans never consider the social implications of city design. To be fair, most cities, across the globe, were never planned. They evolved in ad-hoc patterns. But the older ones, at least their city centers, enjoy the benefit of human scale design. Returning to this approach will allow cities to reach their potential – and lower our carbon footprint. That means rethinking how our cities look. It means planning for people, not cars. Legendary urbanist, activist, and author Jane Jacobs offers us a recipe. Neighborhoods, and the cities they comprise, work best with a mixture of commerce and residences. Buildings of six stories and less should occupy small blocks with narrow streets but wide sidewalks and plenty of pocket parks. All this facilitates foot traffic – and fosters neighborhood interactions that build civil society. It’s also good for business. “Sidewalk contacts are the small change from which a city’s wealth of public life may grow,” as Jacobs poetically wrote over a half century ago.[[2]](#footnote-2) Walkability, a reflection of density and viable public transit, is not a new idea. Another iconic urbanist, Lewis Mumford, stressed the role of a well-constructed city back in 1938, championing pedestrian-scaled, sustainable cities.[[3]](#footnote-3) Since the mid-twentieth century, though, most American cities have prioritized cars over people.

The results have not been good. “Worshipping the twin gods of Smooth Traffic and Ample Parking – [has] turned our downtowns into places that are easy to get to but not worth arriving at,” notes city planner and bestselling author Jeff Speck. “Get walkability right and so much of the rest will follow.”[[4]](#footnote-4) Four criteria influence whether people choose to walk, according to Speck.[[5]](#footnote-5) For one, walking must serve a purpose. It must be useful. Secondly, walking must be safe. This means wide sidewalks protect pedestrians from car traffic. It also means good lighting at night. Third, walking must be comfortable. Tree-lined and shaded communities like older portions of Winter Park, FL, do just that – and feature buildings pushed forward to wide sidewalks with narrow streets and parking in the rear, explains former chief planner for Orange County government and current community and economic development director for the city of Groveland, FL, Tim Maslow.[[6]](#footnote-6) And finally, walking must be interesting. Describing her Hudson Street home in New York’s Greenwich Village, Jacobs labelled this an “intricate sidewalk ballet,” one “in which the individual dancers and ensembles all have distinctive parts which miraculously reinforce each other.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

More interesting and walkable streets, by the way, are also better for business’ bottom line. Think about it. Cars don’t shop. People do. A study by Transport for London, for example, interviewed shoppers from fifteen London commercial districts. People who drove spent more per individual shopping visit, but those who arrived by foot, bus, or train shopped more often. And collectively during a month, the last group spent nearly five times those who drove.[[8]](#footnote-8) A Portland survey of its commercial districts found similar results. Those who drove to their shopping destinations spent the most per visit, but cyclists spent more overall when counting total visits.[[9]](#footnote-9) And yet, our default in facilitating shopping continues to be enhancing access by car. A car-first attitude is more than a drag on profits, though. It hurts our overall health as well. Every minute spent walking extends life expectancy by three minutes, according to one British study.[[10]](#footnote-10) That’s a statistic worth repeating. One minute invested in walking returns three more in lifespan.

We used to walk more, at least our children did. Some 50 percent of American children walked to school when I was born back in 1969. Less than 15 percent do now. And as we age, with poor walking habits firmly in place, Americans increasingly struggle with obesity, which contributes to coronary disease, hypertension, several cancers, gallstones, and osteoarthritis. Excessive weight kills more Americans today than smoking. As recently as when I graduated from college in 1991 no state had adult obesity rates over 20 percent. In 2007, only one state, Colorado, was under that number. And in 2020, no states registered adult obesity rates under 23 percent. Compare these statistics to the fact that drivers who switch to public transit drop an average of five pounds. Of course, as Speck cautions, correlation does not prove causation. Suburbs might not make people fat. Heavier people are more likely to prefer driving over walking, so they may be a causal agent shaping higher demand for suburbs.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Cars can strike down our health even more quickly. From 2008 to 2017, drivers killed nearly 50,000 pedestrians, according to analysis of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data by Smart Growth America, a national nonprofit that advocates improving livability of communities by improving transportation options. The most vulnerable are older adults, people of color, and those in low-income communities where wide streets designed for heavy, multilane traffic are more common.[[12]](#footnote-12) It doesn’t have to be this way. Cars don’t have to be deadly to those who walk. But “we spent decades building an unsafe system,” says Emiko Atherton, director of the National Complete Streets Coalition, a program of Smart Growth America.[[13]](#footnote-13)

An emphasis on driving over walking also contributes to the Balkanization of our society. Suburbanization increases the physical distance between middle and upper middle class versus our poor, making it “much easier and less risky for wealthier taxpayers to ignore problems of those less well off.”[[14]](#footnote-14) Those attitudes, with their often-racist undertones, are easily passed on to younger generations. “A child growing up in a homogenous environment is less likely to develop a sense of empathy for people from other walks of life,” as architects and city planners Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck contend.[[15]](#footnote-15) And putting aside the third rail of race in America, children of all ethnicities lose their autonomy in suburbia. Dependent upon adults to drive them to school, work, or play, they simply cannot practice becoming adults.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Cities like Portland offer an example of what we can do differently. A typical midsize American city, with a population around 660,000, it’s the central city in a metro region of twenty-seven municipalities that totals over two million residents spread across three counties. Postwar sprawl brought Portland’s metro area the same strip malls and parking lots seen across this land. But beginning in the early 1970s, this city started evolving into a model for walking, biking, and public transit. Thanks to resulting reduction in auto use, Portland is the only US city where carbon emissions today are less than they were in 1990. Central Portland’s physical design facilitated this shift with its short, two-hundred-foot blocks. Its economy also weathered transition from shipbuilding, flour milling, and pulp-and-paper processing to producing Intel chips, Nike running shoes, and Columbia activewear, so, crucially, people still live downtown.

Why, you ask? Powell’s Bookstore, covering an entire city block, is reason enough for bibliophiles like you and me. Inviting open spaces are another. Jamison Square Park’s kid friendly fountain and The Fields Park and its off-leash dog area are just two examples of 275 parks strung across this city. “We need nature where people live, work and play – in the city,” explains Mike Houck, emeritus director at the Urban Greenspaces Institute, as we hike through Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge, 163-acres of meadows, riparian forest, and wetlands on the east bank of Portland’s Willamette River. “The goal is there’ll be equitable access to parks, trails, and natural areas throughout Portland and the entire metro region. Greenway and wildlife corridors make that possible.”[[17]](#footnote-17) Even less-green parks can have a positive impact, enhancing social capital, the currency that makes all our lives richer. In the heart of downtown, for example, there’s brick-lined Pioneer Courthouse Square, the single most-visited site statewide. Nicknamed Portland’s living room, the park replaced a two-story parking garage in the mid-1980s and now serves as a hub for buses and light rail – while hosting about three hundred concerts and cultural events annually.

Bruce Stepheson, a professor of environmental studies who has been studying Portland over two decades, is not only an academic proponent of parks like this. He lives it every summer and sabbatical from his Pearl District condo. The Pearl District, located just northwest of downtown and sandwiched between Chinatown and Interstate 405, was redeveloped with pedestrians in mind.[[18]](#footnote-18) Three and a half decades ago it was littered with abandoned warehouses along aging factories and known simply as the Northwest Industrial Triangle. Gallery owner Thomas Augustine is credited with renaming it in 1985 after telling a freelance magazine writer the “old, crusty exteriors on the buildings are like the exterior of the oyster shell. But inside it's amazing: There are literally thousands of people inhabiting them, some illegally . . . not only painters and sculptors, but software-makers, wine distributors, poets and musicians.”[[19]](#footnote-19)

Today the Pearl District is home to an enticing array of art galleries and restaurants as well as 7,000 residents and 10,000 jobs. Good bones of short blocks and diverse building structures made this possible. That’s what caught Stephenson’s eye over two decades ago when he first saw early plans for redevelopment. But the final piece was public transit. “When the streetcar went in, that was the gamechanger,” he says.[[20]](#footnote-20) Streetcars solve the first mile/last mile problem common to much public transit. They attract more customers than buses, including the occasional user such as visitors like me who often balk at buses because their routes can be confusing. Portland’s streetcar service began sharing roads with cars and people in 2001 with a 2.4 mile stretch strategically routed through the heart of the burgeoning Pearl District. Notably, it connected major employment centers like Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital and Portland State University.

Stephenson applauds that decision but is quick to note continued success is grounded in a grassroots governing system where citizens remain devoted to the public good.[[21]](#footnote-21) Established in 1991, the Pearl Neighborhood Association, for example, is one of ninety-five in the city. I learn more about its volunteer Planning and Transportation Committee over lunch with its co-chair Reza Farhoodi.[[22]](#footnote-22) Comprised of fifteen to twenty members who live, work, or own property in the district, it meets the first and third Tuesday each month and is integral to preservation of walkability within the district. That’s crucial because neighborhoods like the Pearl District are fundamentally shaped by their walking radius. A five-minute walk, roughly one-quarter mile, is a good rule of thumb. “One quarter mile is usually the distance from which you can actually spot your destination…and short enough most Americans simply feel dumb driving,” elaborate urban planners Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Speck.[[23]](#footnote-23)

While the Pearl District is a little larger than this, at just under half a square mile, its streetcar service helps stragglers over the hump. Local planning for the streetcar system was integral here, but the state of Oregon gave a big assist decades ago under leadership from Republican Governor Tom McCall. In 1973, the state legislature dictated its metro areas establish urban growth boundaries (UGB) beyond which commercial and residential development were prohibited. This preserved productive farmland and limited suburban sprawl.It’s the opposite of drawing lines around a park, as Houck, the former Urban Greenspaces Institute director, notes. The law also created Metro, the only regionally elected governing board in our country, and it allows cities, every five years, to reassess their land use needs for twenty years down the road.

Another key measure at the state level occurred a year later in 1974 when Governor McCall told the federal government he would apply funds granted for the Mount Hood Freeway to build a regional public transport system instead. When the Oregon legislature subsequently created the publicly managed TriMet, Oregonians hopped on the transit-oriented development (TOD) train. That was a turning point as TOD promotes density by emphasizing walking distance from residences and business to public transport. “The value in transit is the development you get, not the ridership. The development pattern is what is valuable,” asserts central Florida real estate developer and new urbanism advocate Craig Ustler.“Roads do that, too, by way. They dictate a certain type of development.” What makes Portland and its neighborhoods like the Pearl District attractive, Ustler argues, is the “value created not just by assets themselves, but how they are arranged and connected.”[[24]](#footnote-24)

That success can come with a price, though, as increased property values often bring gentrification, pushing out lower income families. Homelessness is a related byproduct and a visible problem in Portland, officially reaching 4,015 in 2019 with 8,532 accessing emergency shelters in fiscal year 2017.[[25]](#footnote-25) The city recognizes affordable housing, namely a current deficit of 22,000 housing units for low and moderate-income households, as its Achilles heel. It started to address this deficiency with its Inclusionary Housing Program. That mandates residential buildings proposing twenty or more units provide a percentage of new units at rents affordable to households at 80 percent of median family income.[[26]](#footnote-26) Other cities should take note. “Affordable housing is a national crisis,” Alberto Vargas, manager of the Orange County Planning Division in Orlando, FL, warns from his second-floor downtown office.[[27]](#footnote-27) Housing is considered affordable when mortgage or rent, along with utilities, total no more than 30 percent of a monthly budget. Yet, in 2019, 37.1 million households (30.2 percent of households nationwide) were “housing cost burdened,” spending 30 percent or more of their income on housing, according to Harvard University’s State of the Nation’s Housing2020report. And 17.6 million in total (one in seven nationwide) were “severely cost burdened,” spending half or more of their income on housing.[[28]](#footnote-28)

This brings us back to density. Smart growth is about growing up, not out. But density alone is not enough. To reduce driving and its high carbon footprint, we also need good neighborhood design and viable public transit.[[29]](#footnote-29) Like all politics, this last piece regarding transportation can be intensely personal. “Debates about streets are typically rooted in emotional assumptions about how a change will affect a person’s commute, ability to park, belief about what is safe and what isn’t, or the bottom-line of a local business,” as former commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation Janette Sadik-Kahn asserts.[[30]](#footnote-30) Cars take center stage here. They are the number one enemy of density, the spreaders of sprawl. And we are the world’s most intensive car culture. American households spend 25 percent of our income on transportation. We purchase six million new cars each year. Only 5 percent of Americans use public transportation daily. And three-quarters of those who drive, drive alone.[[31]](#footnote-31)

Cars were supposed to enhance our independence, to bring mobility and foster freedom of choice. It did for many Americans, for many years, and still does in rural areas. But that’s no longer true within most of our cities as traffic increasingly restricts mobility. And yet, paradoxically, for many Americans, it’s logistically impossible to not have a car.[[32]](#footnote-32) You could say our servant has become our master. It certainly has in terms of time. Our average commute is nearly an hour, 27.6 minutes one-way in 2019 according to the US Census Bureau. Some may enjoy solitude behind their wheel, but time spent commuting means less time for other pursuits and remains a powerful predictor of unhappiness. One German study even found if one partner commutes longer than forty-five minutes, the couple is 40 percent more likely to divorce.[[33]](#footnote-33)

Then there is the impact on our land. Our nation has 2.6 million miles of paved roads. Add parking to that and you claim more space than the state of Georgia. Every five cars added to the US fleet requires still another acre of land to be paved over, equivalent to a football field, as Earth Policy President Lester Brown details.[[34]](#footnote-34) Parking requirements and their pricing have become the primary shaper of our urban landscape.[[35]](#footnote-35) And this isn’t cheap. The least expensive urban parking space, an eight and a half by eighteen-foot rectangle of asphalt on relatively worthless land, costs about $4,000 to create. Those in underground parking garages can be almost ten times that, reaching $38,000 per parking space in San Francisco, says Donald Shoup professor emeritus of UCLA’s Department of Urban Planning and former director of its Institute of Transportation Studies.[[36]](#footnote-36) He calculates the total cost of US parking spaces surpasses the value of our cars themselves.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Driver taxes and tolls pay only about half the costs needed to build and maintain this physical infrastructure, from roads to bridges to parking.[[38]](#footnote-38) Regardless of how often one drives, taxpayers like you and me subsidize the rest. The environmental think tank World Resources Institute estimates US government subsidies of cars, including construction and maintenance of highways, as well as the costs associated with patrolling them, is $111 billion a year more than the taxes paid on motor fuel, vehicle purchases, and license plates.[[39]](#footnote-39) This die was cast decades ago with the 1956 Federal Aid Highway and Revenue Act. Officially known as the Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways, and 90 percent funded by the federal government, it launched the largest public works project in world history.[[40]](#footnote-40) Today, that system is a grid of sixty-two limited access roadways that total 47,000 miles. Benefits cannot be denied. But costs are often ignored. Interstate construction, complete with on-ramps and overpasses, destroyed or divided many inner city neighborhoods. The system also accelerated our urban demographic migration to the suburbs.[[41]](#footnote-41)

Public transit offers a different path. Spending on transit creates twice as many new jobs as spending on highways. Every billion dollars reallocated from roadbuilding to transit creates 7,000 jobs.[[42]](#footnote-42) Public transit is also considerably less carbon intensive. Greenhouse gas emissions per passenger mile on highspeed trains are roughly one third those of cars.[[43]](#footnote-43) And like in 1956, a case can even be made that public transit addresses critical national security concerns. But two big problems hold US public transit back. Too often, it’s slower and poorer. That explains why, as household income increases, people are less likely to use it. For public transit to take better root we must reverse this relationship. “An advanced city is not one where poor people drive cars, but where rich people take public transportation,” as Bogota Mayor Enrique Penalosa states.[[44]](#footnote-44) Speed of travel will help facilitate that. For now, car travel takes about two minutes per mile for commutes under five miles. In contrast, bus commuting takes more than three minutes per mile – and the average bus commuter waits nineteen minutes just for the bus to arrive.[[45]](#footnote-45)

That’s not the case in Portland where TriMet guarantees minimum frequencies of ten minutes on key bus routes. Older American cities in the northeast such as Boston and New York also enjoy frequent routes thanks to a different strategy of going underground. Subways, by virtue of not competing with on ground traffic, are another way to solve the slow problem. Theyare, hands down, the most reliable and efficient mode of transit a city can build. But they are not cheap. Something called bus rapid transit (BRT), with its dedicated lanes and express stations, is a worthy and less expensive alternative. Light rail is as well. It’s more expensive to build than buses but costs the same to maintain. Exploring the nearly 60-mile network of MAX light-rail that serves as the backbone for Portland’s transit system, one is easily converted to this mode of transit. Low-floored, two-car MAX trains with boxy, angular slanted profiles, they run on rails with power from overhead electric wires. These streetcars average 20 mph, including stops, but can reach 55 mph for brief stretches such as the one within a couple hundred feet of the checked baggage carousel at Portland’s international airport. Transit ridership in Portland rivals per capita numbers in Chicago, Philadelphia, and many older, denser cities. Portlanders are twice as likely to use public transport as an average American.[[46]](#footnote-46) They also travel 20 percent fewer miles per day, spending far less of their household income on transportation.

Part of why Portlanders spend less is they bike more. Portland holds the highest bike mode share among sizable American cities with 5.9 percent commuting trips. This biking, often dismissed as an elite fad in the US given our 1 percent national commuting rate, is the final piece to our walkability and public transit puzzle. If every American biked an hour per day instead of driving, the US would cut its gasoline consumption 38 percent and greenhouse gas emissions 12 percent.[[47]](#footnote-47) Hills and heat as well as cold, snow, and rain present challenges. But more than topography shapes usage as hilly San Francisco boasts three times the ridership of relatively flat Denver.[[48]](#footnote-48) Climate does not play the role we might expect, either. Rainy Portland regularly ranks as the second most bikeable city in the US, with chilly Minneapolis holding the title as “America’s #1 Bike City” according to *Bicycling* magazine.[[49]](#footnote-49)

One key to realizing this potential is creating a bike-friendly transport system. Parking-protected bike lanes enhance safety. Beefing up bike share programs like the 12,000 bikes across over 750 stations within New York’s Citi Bike NY enhances access. And giving cyclists an advantage over motorists at traffic lights, by allowing them to move out before cars and synchronizing traffic lights to bike cruising speeds, creates incentives. To really move the US needle, though, consider examples such as Denmark where 18 percent of local trips are on two wheels and the Netherlands where it’s 27 percent. The world leader in terms of percentage of its people cycling, the Netherlands has more bikes than people, 22.5 million compared to 18 million. In central Amsterdam, nearly half traffic, at 48 percent, is by bike, while Denmark’s capital of Copenhagen is no slouch either, recording rates of 36 percent. Amsterdam and Copenhagen weren’t always bike friendly. Both cities made their streets car centric after WWII. But public protests surrounding traffic deaths instigated shifts in the late 1960s. Amsterdam responded by segregating bike lanes from cars. They disincentivized car ownership to make biking more attractive and made infrastructure for cars less accommodating, gradually removing parking spaces. There’s also a cultural piece here. Europeans typically shop for food daily instead of weekly like us. Bike trips naturally lend themselves to errands like that.

All this adds up to more biking, public transit, and walkability options at the local level, which requires fundamentally rethinking how our cities operate. John Muir famously eschewed city living as toxic, pushing for national parks as restorative retreats free from urban blight. And until the last century, large American cities regularly struggled with pollution and disease, their inhabitants passing away ten years sooner than rural residents in 1880, for example.[[50]](#footnote-50) But modern medicine, sanitation advances, and environmental regulations reversed that pattern as life expectancies throughout the US have been higher in urban areas than rural since 1940.[[51]](#footnote-51) Even as technology continues to facilitate telecommuting, cities remain a center of creativity and cultural amenities. And with climate change, cities are key to saving our planet, as former NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg asserts. He lists four reasons. For one, cities are on the front lines of climate change, accounting for about 70 percent of carbon emissions. For another, city mayors are less ideological than national legislators. They deliver essential resources and solve local problems, as Bloomberg points out, so they must be pragmatic to politically survive. Thirdly, mayors recognize addressing climate change is a medium to speeding up economic growth. And finally, as we have seen throughout this chapter, cities offer scale thanks to their density.[[52]](#footnote-52)

Rethinking our cities requires a two-pronged approach. On the transportation end we need a Copernican-like revolution as Sadik-Kahn argues. The struggle here is not with the science of climate change. It’s not even with 20th century traffic engineers married to roads whose sole purpose is moving cars through (and often out of) a city as quickly as possible. “Its’ within the culture and idea of whom streets serve,” as she states.[[53]](#footnote-53) American cities and their streets were made for cars. But that was a different time, and this century requires a different approach, one where people are the focus and walkability with public transit emphasized. That only works in areas of sufficient density, our second prong. Targeting density means we must better emphasize diversity. So many challenges across this land come from misinformation, from lack of exposure to different people and different ideas. “Does anyone suppose that, in real life, answers to any of the great questions that worry us today are going to come out of homogenous settlements?” as urban activist Jane Jacobs once asked.[[54]](#footnote-54) Jacobs was emphasizing infrastructure, but her target was people themselves. She identified four generators of diversity for a neighborhood district, contending all four were necessary and stressing them as central to her seminal book.[[55]](#footnote-55) First, neighborhoods need more than one primary function, and preferably more than two. Second, blocks must be short. Third, buildings should range in age and condition. And fourth, there must be density.

Portland neighborhoods like the Pearl District get this. They understand that’s what attracts and retains talent. As American urban studies theorist Richard Florida argued two decades ago, 21st century cities will only flourish if they entice such creative people.[[56]](#footnote-56) That will also give us a fighting chance when it comes to climate change. Cities like Portland give us a playbook on how to better evolve with this in mind. But ultimately, progress depends on you – and whether you push for similar changes in your hometown.

1. Robert D. Putnam. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Jane Jacobs. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (New York: Random House, 1961), 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Lewis Mumford. *The Culture of Cities*. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Jeff Speck. *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time*. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2012), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Speck, *Walkable City*, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Tim Maslow. Personal Interview with Board Member, SunRail Citizen Advisory Board & Economic Development and Research, Orange County Planning Division, Winter Park, FL, July 31, 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 65-66. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Transport for London. *Town Centre Study*, September 2011, ii. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Kelly J. Clifton, Sara Morrisey, and Chloe Ritter. “Business Cycles: Catering to the Bicycling Market,” *TR News*, May-June 2012, 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Dashka Slater. “Walk the Walk,” *The New York Times Magazine*, April 20, 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Speck, *Walkable City*, 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Seven of the top ten most dangerous metro areas for walking are in Florida, with Orlando’s metro area regularly ranking an unwelcome first in pedestrian deaths. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Kevin Spear. “Orlando No.1 Again for Pedestrian Deaths,” *Orlando Sentinel*, January 23, 2019, <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/transportation/os-ne-orlando-deadliest-pedestrians-worsening-20190122-story.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Matthew E. Kahn. *Green Cities: Urban Growth and the Environment*. (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2006), 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck. *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*. (New York: North Point Press, 2000), 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Duany, et al, *Suburban Nation*, 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Mike Houck. Personal Interview with former Executive Director, Urban Greenspaces Institute, Portland, OR, May 23, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Philip Langdon. “Redeveloping with Pedestrians in Mind,” *Within Walking Distance: Creating Livable Communities for All*. (Washington, DC, Island Press, 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Margie Boule. “Pearl District’s Namesake Was a Jewel of a Woman,” *The Oregonian*, April 14, 2002 <https://www.oregonlive.com/portland/2002/04/pearl_districts_namesake_was_a.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Bruce Stephenson. Personal Interview with professor of environmental studies and urban planning, Rollins College, Winter Park, FL, June 30, 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. R. Bruce Stephenson. *Portland's Good Life: Sustainability and Hope in an American City*. (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Reza Farhoodi. Personal Interview with Pearl District Planning Committee Chair, May 25, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Dauny et al, *Suburban Nation*, 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Craig Ustler. Personal Interview with President/Owner, Ustler Development, Inc., Orlando, FL, March 8, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. “The Numbers,” *Portland Business Journal*, May 18, 2018, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. City of Portland. Ordinance 188163. Inclusionary Housing Program Administrative Rule Adopted by City Council. December 21, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Alberto Vargas. Personal Interview with Manager, Orange County Planning Division, Orlando, FL, March 29, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
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    [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Janette Sadik-Khan and Seth Solomonow. *Street Fight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution*. (New York: Viking, 2016), 252. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Interestingly, one group of Americans is driving less, our younger ones. According to analysis of Federal Highway Administration data by the Green Car Congress, approximately 61 percent of 18-year-olds in the US had a driver’s license in 2018, compared to 80.4 percent in 1983. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
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33. Taras Gresco. *Strap Hanger: Saving Our Cities and Ourselves from the Automobile*. (New York: Times Books/Henry Holt and Company, 2012), 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Brown *World on the Edge*, 61-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. In the words of famed American architect and founder of the Congress for the New Urbanism Andres Duany, “Parking is destiny.” [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Adam Brinklow. “It costs $38,000 to create one parking space in San Francisco,” *Curbed SF*, June 8, 2016, <https://sf.curbed.com/2016/6/8/11890176/it-costs-38000-to-create-one-parking-space-in-sf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Donald Shoup. *The High Cost of Free Parking*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Sadik-Khan and Solomonow, *Street Fight*, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Brown. *Eco-Economy*, 243. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Our interstate highway’s origins are military. A young Dwight D. Eisenhower was part of a military convoy that required two months to travel from DC to San Francisco in 1919. Years later, as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, he saw much different infrastructure in Germany, writing in his memoirs, “Germany had made me see the wisdom of broader ribbons across the land.” [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. That’s something cities like Portland as well as Milwaukee, San Francisco, Baltimore, and New Haven recognized, and are trying to partially correct, reviving old neighborhoods by removing portions of their inner-city expressways. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Jane Holtz Kay. *Asphalt Nation: How the Automobile Took Over America and How We Can Take It Back*. (Berkley: University of California Press, 1998), 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Brown, *World on the Edge*, 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Sadik-Khan and Solomonow, *Street Fight*, 235. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Matthew E. Kahn. *Green Cities: Urban Growth and the Environment*. (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2006), 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Grescoe, *Strap Hanger*, 233. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Jeff Mapes. *Pedaling Revolution: How Cyclists Are Changing American Cities*. (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2009), 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Speck, *Walkable City*, 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Rachel Kaufman. “These Are the Most Bikeable Cities in America,” May 16, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Kahn, *Green Cities*, 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Admittedly, the COVID-19 pandemic raised important public health questions about cities and density, spurring those with means to retreat to smaller towns and the countryside in 2020 and 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Bloomberg and Pope. *Climate of Hope*, 21-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Sadik-Khan and Solomonow, *Street Fight*, 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 448. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 196-197. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Richard Florida. *The Rise of the Creative Class, Revisited*. (New York: Basic Books, 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-56)