THINKING AS A REGION

A remarkable convergence of thought is occurring in Northeast Ohio—a growing understanding that our future depends on acting regionally.

It’s an understanding that many of our most serious environmental, social and economic problems are regional in scope. It’s a recognition that our region’s sprawling development patterns destroy communities and are not sustainable. And it includes a concern that, with our fragmented hodge-podge of local governments, we have little ability to act regionally at present. This convergence involves not only the “usual suspects,” such as environmental groups, urban planners and transit advocates, but also a growing number of elected officials, religious leaders and the business community. This EcoCity Cleveland assembles the thoughts of a number of people who have been thinking regionally.

See pages 4-13

Illustration by Jon Luoma/Natural Resources Council of Maine
We have discovered that I cannot bring myself to write about the threat of oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. A couple of weeks ago I had an opportunity to do such a story. A Sierra Club expert was passing through town, and I had a chance to interview him.

But I declined. The story didn’t feel right. I have never lived in Alaska, and no amount of interviewing or research from Cleveland will ever allow me to write authoritatively about events there. I would have been reduced to parroting the Sierra Club line.

Not that I don’t trust information from environmental groups like the Sierra Club. I’m a member, and I’m sure they are right about the evils of drilling on the North Slope. It’s just that I would rather write about things I can see in my own backyard—things about which I can make an original contribution and add real value to the discussion.

This is about as much as just "writing what you know." It’s about writing what you can do something constructive about.

And, in most respects, you can only know enough about what is right to do within your own backyard. When you start thinking outside of your familiar ground—especially when you try to think globally—it’s easy to get into trouble.

"Writing what you know" means taking those photographs of half the earth taken from outer space, and seeing if you can recognize your neighborhood. If you want to have a shot at space travel, you have to get out of your space vehicle, out of your car, off your horse, and walk over the ground. On foot you will find that the earth is still large, and full of beguiling nooks and crannies.

"If we could think locally, we would do far better than we are doing now," Berry concludes. "The right local questions and answers will be the right global ones. The Amish question ‘What will this do to our community?’ tends toward the right answer for the world."

So I write about creating walkable neighborhoods in Northeast Ohio, so we don’t drive cars so much, so we don’t have to drill for oil in Alaska.

Thank you

Thanks to The Katherine and Lee Chilcote Foundation for a grant to support our efforts to develop a vision for a sustainable food system in our region. In our last issue, we listed some of the questions one might ask about sustainability, our land, and our food. During the next eight months we will be researching this topic. Then we will publish our findings in a special issue of EcoCity Cleveland next fall. As we go along, we will appreciate ideas from readers. How would you figure out what a local, sustainable food system could be like?

Happy New Year!

David Beach
Editor

EcoCity Cleveland, 0 December 1995

Mision

EcoCity Cleveland is a nonprofit, tax-exempt, educational organization. Through the publication of the EcoCity Cleveland Journal and other programs, it will stimulate ecological thinking about the Northeast Ohio region (Cuyahoga Bioregion), nurture an EcoCity Network among local groups working on urban and environmental issues, and promote sustainable ways of living through all human activities.

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Root Causes

The larger environmental priorities

What are Northeast Ohio’s most serious environmental problems? The Regional Environmental Priorities Project (REPP) at Case Western Reserve University recently ranked 16 issues, based on potential impacts on human health, ecosystems and quality of life. High priority issues included urban sprawl and concentration, energy and resource use, and the quality of air and surface water.

While these priorities may seem reasonable, they have raised concerns among representatives of grassroots environmental and public interest groups who participated in the ranking process. These activists repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, tried to get the REPP to broaden its focus to include what they saw as most fundamental problems—the underlying causes of environmental degradation.

Below is a recent statement by the grassroots Environmental Caucus, which outlines these broader issues. Caucus members include representatives from EcoCity Cleveland, Lee-Seville-Miles Citizen Council, Cleveland Women’s Cancer Project, Environmental Health Watch, Sierra Club, Western Reserve Alliance, Ohio Citizen Action, Lake Erie Alliance, Earth Day Coalition, and the Commission on Community Action.

The Northeast Ohio Regional Environmental Priorities Project (REPP) ranked a number of specific environmental problems. The REPP raised some important issues, such as urban sprawl. We support and encourage its efforts in facing these problems. However, the problems ranked, like those raised by the Ohio EPA’s Comparative Risk Project, are not the fundamental environmental issues we face as a society. Rather they are symptoms of larger systemic problems in our economic practices, political systems and regulatory programs.

We believe these issues to be the fundamental problems which deny our children a healthy, sustainable future.

• Disastrously short-sighted economic practices which undervalue our vital natural resources and ignore the cost of environmental degradation. The very basis of any economy, global or local, is the natural environment in which it functions. Our failure to place tangible value on our fundamental assets has resulted in a growing "environmental deficit" which our children will inherit.

• A political system which is unduly influenced by the power of run-away campaign financing. Currently, this influence is grievously eroding what legislative progress has been made in environmental protection by using a virtual war on governmental regulation. This unbalanced favoritism prevents democratic access to environmental policies and unfairly places all citizens—especially children, inner-city populations, the elderly and the chronically ill—at the mercy of powerful polluting interests.

• Outmoded, reactive regulatory programs which do not focus on preventing pollution at its source. There is a sufficient weight of evidence that certain types of pollution cause potential harm to both human health and the ecosystem. We believe these situations require that polluters be held accountable to principles of environmental safety and pollution prevention. The magnitude of the potential harm from situations like global warming, persistent toxins, pesticides in food and nuclear issues demand a higher degree of prevention than current approaches dictate.

Society needs a clear strategy to confront these challenges. After extensive scientific, sociological, economic and ethical study, U.S. members of the International Joint Commission appointed by the Canadian government and President George Bush advocated a unique pollution prevention strategy [for the Great Lakes]. We believe the principles of this process would be a valuable tool in healing Northeast Ohio’s environmental problems.

While the REPP report alludes to the points made above, we believe that, as the fundamental challenges, they need stronger emphasis. The Grassroots Environmental Caucus believes these issues need to be included in any ranking of environmental priorities.

Happy New Year!

David Beach
Editor

EcoCity Cleveland, 0 December 1995
Thinking as a region

Livable Communities: views from the conference

Ohio Sierra Club

If we want to get a place where our communities are more livable, mass transit is relevant, jobs accessible, our air breathable, water drinkable and land fit for life, we need to plan and cooperate regionally. When we talk about transportation and land-use planning we must take our focus off of today and look at tomorrow. The solutions, ideas and examples exist to improve our economy, our social systems, and environment. However, we must cooperate regionally to plan transportation systems and land use.

Ohio Sierra Club

I'd like to talk about some thoughts I have about the urban sprawl crisis and the things that challenge us... This conference today deals in a major way not just with transportation, but with how we are going to deal with the next generation.

[Making an analogy, he talks about an article he read recently on the deteriorating state of ocean fisheries.] What is going on with the fish of the world, the rape of the oceans, is similar to what is going on in what I hope will be a growing debate over transportation. Every day, we use the evidence of what we are doing in the fish, what we are doing to the world, and what we are doing to ourselves. And because of our own myopic view of our responsibilities and the entanglements of power and money, and because of myopia, we continue to rape the fish, the fish, as if we were only concerned with this aspect of things.

And so it is probable that when my daughter Brianna, who is now five, is 21, and my son Josh, who is two, becomes 21, there will be very few fish in the oceans. It is also probable that when Brianna and Josh turn 21, trees, and the concrete, engineering political nexus of transportation to have so destroyed and demoralized the cities of America, that either they will not be habitable or it will take billions of dollars to repair them.

Now you may think that I'm talking about the strong words or a political speech that I'm giving just to impress the Sierra Club. It is neither. It is the reality. [White tells about seeing the construction of new high-speed lanes on I-71.] Two years ago, there was this huge median with grass and trees. Over the years trees had grown up on both sides of the highway. But if you were to go there today, you will find that all the trees are gone, most of the grass is gone, and, in a matter of weeks, we have put more roadway in.

Now I am a transportation planner. ... I will tell you as someone who has lived in this community for 44 years, I can find no logical, none, purposeful reason for what is being done... and not only should we be asking why, but we should be doing more and more to articulate and raise the consequences of what is being done.

This insanity will kill our cities

Michael White
Mayor of Cleveland

“If we do not bring some sense to urban sprawl, if we do not fight sprawl, we face a choice about to the table? It's a choice that needs to be made.”

“...to halt these lunatics who keep building all these roads, keep expanding all these highways, who keep making it so easy to get out, if we don't find a way to combat one of the competing interests in historic things out that have been putting pressure on our city...”

Cleveland Heights.

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Cleveland Heights.
Howard Maier
Director of the Northeast Ohio Arcwide Coordinating Agency

In Northeast Ohio we have hundreds of units of local government. I like to say that we have more local governments than there are sovereign nations in the world. No one is elected to represent the region.

Bit by bit, year by year, we are going off the cliff.

Tom Bier
Director of the Housing Policy Research Program, CSU College of Urban Affairs

I am so encouraged by this event. In the 13 years I have been at Cleveland State there has never been an event such as this. There are commissioners from three or four counties here. That says to me that we are heading in the right direction.

Are we heading fast enough? Of course, we're not. Here are some conclusions about sprawl from the years I have been chipping away at this:

- We have to press the seriousness of the situation.
- We have to focus on two numbers.
- And we have to demand seven-county cooperation, demand a balance of investment, and we have to talk equivalently.

First, the seriousness of the situation has not generally been grasped. Gradually, slowly, bit by bit, one year by another, we are going off the cliff. The problem is, we are going so slowly that the crisis is not apparent. Fifty years ago it would have been ludicrous for anyone to say that the city of Cleveland's population would be halved by the year 2005. It would have been impossible to make that statement because there wasn't enough knowledge about the dynamics of development in this region. It's just as possible today to make this statement: In another 50 years the city of Cleveland will be virtually emptied. And that's because we are slowly, year by year, emptying it out in spite of the enormous effort of Mayor White, Chris Warren and others.

We are emptying it out because we are building our housing primarily at the edges of the metropolitan region. One number we have to focus on is 7,000.

By building 7,000 new homes a year in this region, and allowing them to run out on the edges. Times 50 years, the other number, equals 350,000. We are going to build at least 350,000 new homes in this region over the next 50 years. Roughly 300,000 of those will be in the counties adjacent to Cuyahoga. And then rehousing in place or on the horizon to stop this. Nothing on the horizon that is powerful enough to moderate this slightly. And the better the economy, the faster it will happen.

Two-thirds of the occupants of those new homes outside of Cuyahoga County will come from Cuyahoga County. That's 200,000 households... The city of Cleveland then will have emptied into the more moderately priced suburbs, which will then be largely lowered. And if you take a somewhat objective look today, you will see they are on the path to that future. In fact, all of the tremendous efforts of officials in those communities to combat the decline, those efforts will not win. The forces that they're up against are simply too powerful.

Secondly, the potential was unheralded every year by placing hundreds of thousands of people of this county and drawing people farther out, is simply too powerful for a Cleveland, a Cleveland Heights, a Maple Heights, a Parma, a Lakewood to survive.

Gradually, that will become apparent... I would not want to be a commissioner of Cuyahoga County in 25 years; because the economic position and tax base of the county will erode substantially. Higher taxes will have to be levied for the county to stay even, which will encourage more people to move out.

That's where we're heading. And there's absolutely nothing in place in this region to alter that future. And comes from a few officials, the seriousness of the situation is not grasped by public officials. We're all fragmented by cities and towns and townships within those counties. We're preoccupied with our own little worlds, not the larger metropolitan forces. We need to focus on those two numbers and convince the state over the next 50 years... The way that change is to happen is to change the location of where those 7,000 homes are built. I'm not suggesting that all housing must be stopped on the outer fringes. At all. But we have a vision of a region aimed toward half out there, half in here.

I don't know how that future can come about unless there is some kind of plan to get into this room together at the same time and convince each other that they don't want the future we've been headed toward. We want to change the location of those 7,000 homes. We have to come to agreement about how we're going to do it. The 7,000 and then determine what it's going to take to accomplish that change.

They can do it. All they have to do is get into this room and say that's what we're going to do. And when they do that, they will go off and change the public investments that affect where housing gets built.

Yes, it is true that when I was moderately young, many in Lorain County will think it's wonderful. I also will accelerate the decline of Cuyahoga County because there will be a counter-balancing investment to offset the impact and we'll end up with a counter-balancing investment? That road might cost $550 million. How many millions of dollars would have to be available to the mayors of Cleveland, Lakewood, Rocky River, Fairview Park? How many millions would have to come from the county to offset the impact of a $550 million road widening? My intuitive feel is it's probably closer to 10 times that...$550 million of investment in those communities might offset the power of widening that road. It might be a billion dollars to offset that impact.

If we were achieving that kind of balance of investment, we'll be moving toward a completely different future.

Lastly, we have to link statewide. This discussion could just as well be held in Dayton, Cincinnati, Toledo, Columbus. The same phenomena, the same consequences. They're heading in the same direction. The federal government is going to continue to dip their resources. By linking statewide, our state officials will begin to appreciate the seriousness of this.

"It's time to change the location of those 7,000 homes undeveloped sites..."

Lee Weingart
Cuyahoga County Commissioner

You've got to show people the benefits of regionalism. In order to take a regional approach to solving problems, you have to show Lorain County why it's important to have a healthy Cleveland, why for Cleveland it's important to have a healthy Hudson.

And all these things have to be put together in people's minds in a concrete fashion. If you don't do that, you're wasting the wind and working on a theory that can't be implemented. You've got to find a way to explain to the people of Northeast Ohio why it benefits them...
Creating a partnership with power

Dave Goss
Director of the Build Up Greater Cleveland program of the Greater Cleveland Growth Association

One of our problems is that we don’t have a consensus on even what is the region. Some people think it’s the county, some say the five counties covered by NOACA, some say seven counties, and others say it’s Northeast Ohio. We have to deal with this issue and start to think about what is our region. I would suggest that it cannot be less than seven counties because we cannot deal with what’s going on in this area without taking into account Akron... Without creating some kind of a partnership entity that has power to create a strategy and implement it, everything we’re saying here today is an academic exercise." We will not get regional government in my time. We will not have a state that will dictate what we will do. So we have to figure out a way in this community a partnership... an entity that has these powers. Far if you don’t have the power to implement, if you don’t have the power to get out there, we will have 10 to 20 groups creating regional strategies. And they will go nowhere.

Keep coming back to vision and values

Len Calabrese
Commission on Catholic Community Action

"We must be willing to talk about community and look at policies that are going to foster communities where inclusion and diversity are valued and cherished."

ODOT is not solely to blame

Bryan Groden
Director of the Ohio Department of Transportation Districl 12

A lot of the projects that are in our program called "Major-New," are in areas off the interstate system where local communities have invited a large amount of residential construction and commercial construction, and they come to ODOT and ask for some form of relief...We have heard of this here in the state of Ohio. The Ohio Department of Transportation cannot implement the improvements without the invitation of these local communities...I think the Ohio Department of Transportation should be a player in these kinds of issues, but I do not believe that we are the sole player or the only party to blame. Even if we were to restrict the addition of lanes on interstate highways or on local state highways, we would still have problems with access management. Ohio has no access management law. States that have far more severe congestion problems, such as New Jersey, have regulated access management...the New Jersey language says that any proposed development must undergo a two-part traffic feasibility process. They have to ask, in light of the code provisions for lot size, highway frontage, traffic generation and existing level of service, is the amount of traffic generated permitted? And also, ifit is permitted, will the project itself pay for its fair share of the costs for improvements to intersections or roadways? The state of Ohio has nothing like this, and it may be an option we want to consider.

No growth, more transportation

The population of Northeast Ohio reached a peak of 2.3 million people in 1970. Population loss due to outmigration over the past 20 years has reduced the total to 2.1 million. Despite the loss, more land is used today for residential purposes as the regional population seeks lower density living patterns...The region’s businesses have also sought lower densities, some to profit from new plants in new locations and others simply by following population movements.

As people and businesses make these moves other changes occur. Potential tax revenues erode and flow from community to community as jobs and people enter or exit. Demands on the region's highway system increase as new living patterns emphasize private rather than public transportation. Forecasts of regional employment and population show no growth over the next 20 years. Forecasts of land use, absent policy changes that would encourage alternative development, show continuation of the sprawl patterns, thus suggesting increasing demands on the transportation system.

One aspect of the overall reduction in density is the localized nature of growth. As population spreads across the region, the central areas become less densely populated and existing jurisdictions become denser. This fact means that, from the point of view of officials in the outlying area, their part of the region is growing. This localized growth creates demand for transportation infrastructure, particularly wider arteries and additional freeway interchanges.

The conference was made possible with grants from The George Gund Foundation.
We are all in this together

In our December 1993 issue we published a speech by Bishop Anthony Pilla of the Cleveland Catholic Diocese in which he announced a new Church in the City initiative to address the historic trends of outmigration and suburban sprawl that are polarizing Northeast Ohio along racial and economic lines. Since then, we have watched how the Bishop and the eight-county diocese has begun to continuously implement the program—promoting dialogue and reflection on the issue, building bridges between urban and suburban parishes, and increasingly speaking out on urban issues, such as the Cleveland Public Schools. Whatever our own religious beliefs, we can thank Bishop Pilla for speaking out and for making sprawl a moral issue.

In the following selection, Bishop Pilla further discusses why we need to build a "solidarity" in our region. This selection is excerpted from remarks the bishop made November 21 at the annual community luncheon of the Cleveland Restoration Society. The diocese is a partner in the Restoration Society's Sacred Landmarks of Cleveland program, which seeks to preserve historic religious buildings that are anchors of city neighborhoods.

Roots in the city

The work of historic preservation responds to a deeper challenge that is important for all of us—leaders and followers—we have to remember, for ourselves and with our people, to remember "who we are"—our roots and our heritage, our values and our beliefs. The life today is very hard, it can be hectic for some people. It can be difficult to distinguish between what is trivial and what is important. One of the great struggles for some of our people, and especially for some of our youth, is found in the experience of "rootslessness"—in being confused or forgetting "who they are" and "where they came from"—in being without a deeper sense of heritage and spiritual values without hope. Even without bad will or ignorance, people lose sight of their authentic identity, as if everything is changing and unstable. Life becomes a lot more difficult when this sense of identity, of "who I am," is lost.

In such demanding times, we must keep our focus on the essentials—on enduring values and the symbols of those values; on who, in the end, is most important in living a life that is rich in meaning and that provides genuine service to others—a life that leaves our world with a legacy to be cherished. I believe that one significant thing that we can help our people to remember "who they are" is through the proper care and use of our historic places—our buildings and neighborhoods, our churches and synagogues. These places provide us with a sense of rootlessness—with a link to the past that helps us to better understand our direction for the future. Across our country, historic places and districts have been the centers of urban rejuvenation. Preservation efforts have proven to be a breath of life in dying and struggling communities. Historic places help us to recall the people, events and values that we really do want to remember—values that bring depth and meaning and hope to people's lives.

One metropolitan society

In November of 1993, I issued a statement, The Church in the City, which expressed the challenge to build new cities—the kind of cities our society desperately needs, cities where people of different incomes, races and cultures can live together and be enriched by the experience of one another, cities where the poor and disadvantaged can achieve their rightful dignity and potential, cities that reflect the image of a new broodless city of God re-created here below. I believe that the image of the city is based on flight and fear rather than solidarity and compassion.

But in our diocesan consultation, we have also heard a multitude of voices that give me great hope. We have received substantive, in-depth reflections and proposed actions from suburban and rural parishes and diocesan groups to date. A number of these responses are from suburban and rural parishes who may otherwise have not even begun to ponder The Church in the City of which they too are a part. The overall responses indicate basic acceptance and support for our implementation plan as a guiding framework for what we can do at Church over the next few years. We acknowledge the importance of the call and challenge of the transition and the change we are making because it is our desire to be a Church in our times. People are asking the right questions and beginning to explore new possibilities for relationships and partnerships that reflect a new sense of mutuality, of being together. We want our children to understand that the gifts—the kind of relationships that in the end can be truly transforming. People have recognized the reality of "we are in this together." "Together" refers to a new notion that we have touched a deeper chord—a chord that many people to re-think and re-image a response to the way our society is developing and to some of the current trends in our nation. These trends should be disturbing for all of us:

- The materialism and selfishness as the gap between rich and poor only widens.
- The unbending images of violence and the exploitation of our youth.
- And the growing insensitivity towards people of all ages who are struggling to make ends meet.

"All for us, whether we live in city, suburb or rural area, we are one metropolitan society. We share one economy, one environment, one transportation system, and common recreational, artistic and athletic events. Our civic boundaries are in some ways an illusion that distracts us from the real needs and the real capabilities of our one society."

Accepting the challenge

Based upon The Church in the City, the vision of our diocese were asked to submit recommendations for an implementation plan by June 1994. A task force was then formed to study the issue and develop a diocesan-wide consultation plan on this was initiated in March of this year and is now being completed.

The task force strongly emphasized that at the heart of the implementation plan is a deeper call to conversion and a change of heart—to a renewed understanding of what it means to live the teachings of Jesus in our times. As you might expect, we are hearing a range of responses. Some people are not comfortable with this vision and challenge. They feel overwhelmed by the size of the task. For some of our people, the image of the city is based on flight and fear rather than solidarity and compassion.

"For all of us, whether we live in city, suburb or rural area, we are one metropolitan society. We share one economy, one transportation system, and common recreational, artistic and athletic events. Our civic boundaries are in some ways an illusion that distracts us from the real needs and the real capabilities of our one society."

Voices of hope and unity

I believe that we must voice the need for unity and reconciliation. We must work to overcome the fragmentation and alienation which center on racial issues and continue to afflict our common day. We cannot of this journey, it is clear that The Church in the City initiative continues to be both challenging and inspiring. In the public sphere, both locally and nationally, it has received remarkable attention. This attention says to me that we have touched a deeper chord—a chord that many people to re-think and re-image a response to the way our society is developing and to some of the current trends in our nation. These trends should be disturbing for all of us:

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A new metro strategy

By Peter Calthorpe, Calthorpe and Associates

Many of the nation’s compelling issues now addressed at the federal, state, and local levels are truly regional in scope. More and more we live in an aggregation of cities and suburbs; a regional metropolis which forms one basic economic, multicultural, environmental and civic entity. Given this reality, our policies for economic development, pollution, open space, housing, and transportation have many dimensions that would benefit from regional strategies and regional coordination. Yet we lack the basic tools to respond to these challenges at the scale they can most effectively be resolved.

Perhaps because of this, we are at a political crossroads. At the same time that frustration with centralized public programs has reached a crescendo, local solutions seem unable to deal with the concentrated and self-reinforcing social, physical, and economic problems of our cities and suburbs. We are left between national solutions too generic, bureaucratic and large, and local solutions too isolated, atomistic and reactionary. The answer lies between, in strategies which link regional resources with local programs.

But lacking regional tools of governance, policy makers have persisted in treating only the symptoms of our problems. We address inner-city disinvestment with CRA legislation, small community banks, and regulation rather than providing more fundamental tools to enhance and target regional economic growth. We control air pollution with tailpipe emissions inspections, fuel consumption with more efficient engines, and congestion with more highways, rather than making cities and towns which are less auto-dependent. We limit open space with piecemeal acquisitions, habitat destruction with disconnected reserves, and fragment conversion with convertible tax credits, rather than defining regional forms which are compact and environmentally sound. Too often we address affordable housing by building isolated blocks of subsidized housing rather than zoning for mixed-use neighborhoods and implementing regional fair housing practices. Most now agree that these current policies, though well intentioned and partially successful, are insufficient to divert further deterioration in each area of concern.

Many have demonstrated how past federal programs helped to create sprawl and inner-city disintegration which underlie these fragmented problems. Examples include environmental regulations that unintentionally inhibit urban redevelopment, a federal tax structure that favors low-density, single-family dwellings, and an infrastructure investment bias that allows motorists to evade the full costs of their driving. Given this context, our efforts should not only support locally initiated regional solutions, they should begin to rectify the imbalances created by past programs and policies.

Goals for regional effectiveness

Urban decay, middle class disaffection, and environmental degradation are paramount national issues that a regionalist agenda can help address. At the root of urban decay is a massive decentralization of jobs and opportunity, a loss of coherence and identity in neighborhoods (new and old), and a dysfunctional regional distribution of tax base. At the root of environmental degradation is the fact that one cannot truly escape urban ills, that even with two jobs the quality of life is declining.

It is time to address inner-city problems, middle class disaffection, and environmental degradation in isolation. Effective regional governance can coordinate our patterns of development and renewal in a fashion that addresses the cause as well as the symptoms of these interconnecting issues. Regional government should focus on forging alliances around common interests rather than creating bureaucratic structures. These alliances tend to be organized around three broad areas of interest: economic development (including problems of uneven development and resulting fiscal disparity), growth management (infrastructure provision and environmental protection), and issues related to social inequalities. Effective regional governance does not displace local programs or government, it augments them with coherent coordination and adequate resources. While the federal or state governments should not mandate regional policies, they could establish goals in this area, support their local implementation, and help level the playing field with respect to regional patterns of growth.

The economy of regionalism

In part, the justification for a new metropolitan strategy is simply to respond to the public's demand for more efficient public investments and more efficient government. Optimizing public investments requires a regional approach. Investments in inner-cities and urban businesses ought to be linked to regional opportunities, not isolated by gridlock, prevented by exclusionary zoning, and drained by suburban growth. Investments in transit should be supported by land use patterns which put riders and jobs within an easy walk of stations and by a coherent regional plan which strategically clusters development.

Regional growth opportunities are enormous. Our cities are in need of the new regional development, pollution, open space, housing, and transportation policies that will bring together the economic, cultural, and environmental needs of our region as a whole. The time has come for more progressive regional policies and programs that will help to resolve these regional problems.

Regional fundamentals

The following are fundamental programs for healthy and sustainable communities which only regional coordination and integration can achieve:

Regional transportation/land use integration

To counter the negative effects of sprawl we must focus new development, redevelopment, and services in walkable, transit-served neighborhoods. These patterns serve not only youth, elderly, and low-income groups but also working-class households in search of more convenient and affordable lifestyles.

Fair housing policies

Each jurisdiction must provide its fair share of affordable housing. Investments in open space should reinforce regional habitat reserves, greenbelts, and urban limit lines. Investments in highways should not unwittingly support sprawl, inner-city disinvestment, or random job decentralization. As the fundamental vessel of these investments our regional form and local design codes should be restructured to enhance communities, not encloses.

In optimizing public investment the needs of the urban poor are congruent with the working middle-class; both are in need of a more frugal, sustainable, and community-oriented model of the American Dream. And both are in need of the new regional order which results from such a transformation.

Peter Calthorpe, AIA, Calthorpe and Associates, is a renowned architect and planner. He has been named by Newsweek as one of 25 "innovators on the cutting edge" for his work redefining the models of urban and suburban growth in America. This article is from a larger report prepared for the President's Council on Sustainable Development, and it is reprinted from the November 1993 newsletter of the Surface Transportation Policy Project.
Winter solstice

I wrote this essay a number of years ago, and it's always been one of my favorites—a piece worth reprinting for the winter holidays.

—David Beach

In the dying light of a record-cold day, we hiked to a rocky ledge in the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area. A dozen of us stood at the edge of the precipice—a gift of the glaciers that had scooped the area thousands of years ago—and looked out over the snow-covered river valley. The winter wind, after racing across miles of open space, struck us head on and frontal our faces. Cold seeped into our boots from the rocks. Yet we stayed and kept looking to the southwest. We were about to see the winter solstice, the day the sun rises farther south, with the shortest day of the year, as it approaches the longest night that was upon us. We would not be afraid of the dark winters without central heating and electric lights. What if you didn't know for sure that the sun would return? What if the events would be

We know that the process is the result of the earth being tipped on its axis, the northern hemisphere leaning away from the sun during a portion of the year. As I shivered on the ledge, however, I tried to forget such abstract astronomical knowledge. I tried to imagine the fears of ancient peoples who depended on the earth's natural cycles and endured long weeks of darkness without central heating and electric lights. What if you didn't know for sure that the sun would return? What if the events would be

Each year, as the winter solstice approaches December 21, the sun rises farther south, with the shortest day of the year, as it approaches the longest night that was upon us. We would not be afraid of the dark winters without central heating and electric lights. What if you didn't know for sure that the sun would return? What if the

CHRISTMAS

The people around me might have all been strangers, yet I felt we had just shared something mystical. We had witnessed the dying of the sun, the true end of the year. At the shelter, we would soon be sharing a meal. TheYule logs, candles, evergreens in the home—symbols of the birth of new life, of warmth over cold, of goodness over evil, of life over death. As I stood out on the exposed ledge and watched the setting sun, I felt close to the root of such traditions. I was far from a church and the city. I could forget about the tensions of the Christmas season, the frenzied shopping and the crowded malls. For a moment I could reconnect with the natural cycles of the earth, recount myself in place and time as ancient peoples must have done ages ago.

After the last drop of light fell below the horizon, our group walked back to a park shelter about a quarter of a mile away. We emerged from the deepening gloom of the woods and crossed an open field, our boots punching clean footprints in the snow. Away from the ledge, there was little wind. It seemed perfectly peaceful, this cusp of winter. The people around me might have all been strangers, yet I felt we had just shared something mystical. We had witnessed the dying of the sun, the true end of the year. At the shelter, we would soon be sharing a meal. The Yule logs, candles, evergreens in the home—symbols of the birth of new life, of warmth over cold, of goodness over evil, of life over death. As I stood out on the exposed ledge and watched the setting sun, I felt close to the root of such traditions. I was far from a church and the city. I could forget about the tensions of the Christmas season, the frenzied shopping and the crowded malls. For a moment I could reconnect with the natural cycles of the earth, recount myself in place and time as ancient peoples must have done ages ago.

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