



The Opportunity &
Responsibility for
New Urbanism to
Create Cities that
Work for Everyone

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Florida Summit
October 7, 2021

Segregation by race and class in America

- Immigrants to America clustered in ethnic enclaves, while Black Americans were segregated “by color of law.”
- Widespread racial covenants forbid occupation of desirable neighborhoods by anyone “not entirely of the Caucasian race.”
- Single-family zoning was formulated to keep immigrants, the poor, the working class and people of color out of a new form of desirable neighborhoods



Futurama: Marketing Suburban Sprawl

- 12.5 million Americans stood on line for up to four hours to get a glimpse of a world built around General Motors automobiles
- The future was relentlessly marketed to sell houses, cars, appliances, furniture and a new version of the American Dream
- More often than not, those suburban developments were closed to People of Color by law, by design, by practice or by violence



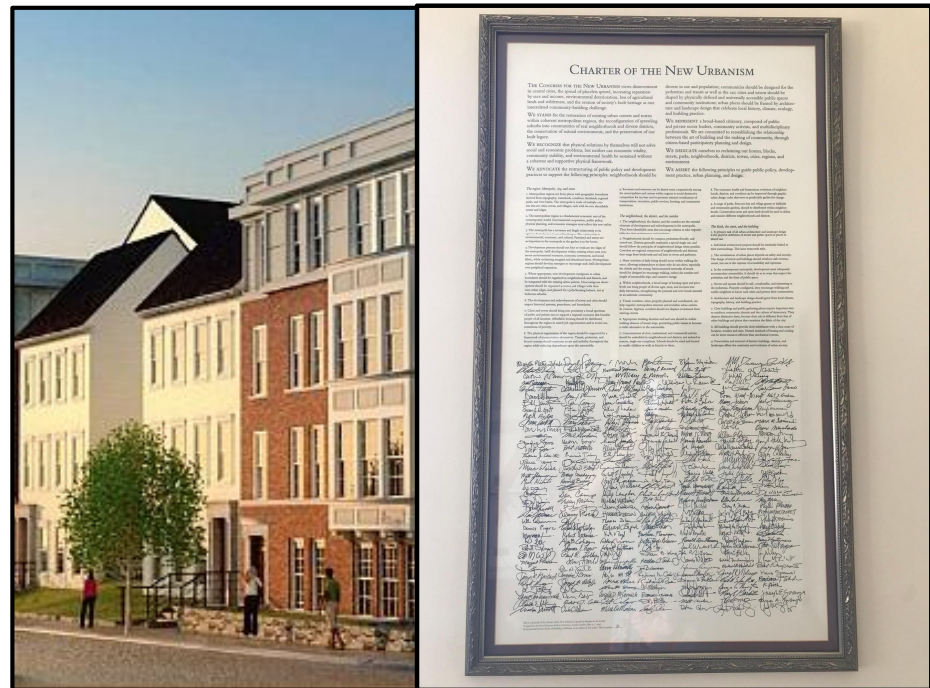
“The Sacking of Cities”

- Interstate Highways and Urban Renewal “eviscerated great cities.”
- An estimated 3.6 million people were uprooted by Urban Renewal, informally called “Negro Removal”
- Jane Jacobs: “This is not the rebuilding of cities. This is the sacking of cities.”
- Kerner Commission: “What white Americans have never fully understood is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain, and white society condones it.”



The New Urbanism

- The Charter: “New Urbanism views disinvestment in central cities, the spread of placeless sprawl, increasing separation by race and income, environmental deterioration, loss of agricultural lands and wilderness, and the erosion of society’s built heritage as one interrelated community-building challenge”
- A commitment to equity was built into the founding principles of our movement



The Birthright of Every American

- The iconic greenfield developments fostered a shallow stereotype of New Urbanism
- Our work in urban infill, inner cities and Rust Belt towns was marginalized
- We challenged the status quo, but failed to understand and challenge how much existing institutions and practices create and maintain inequity and inequality



The Prime Directive

- Reaffirms “the Charter’s commitment to building great places for all people, regardless of background, race, income, or ability, and to create a more inclusive, engaged movement”
- Commits to “develop, evolve, and implement strategies and solutions for providing attainable housing, designing and financing diverse neighborhoods, and ultimately building a just place”



Rededication -- and a New Reckoning

- Prime Directive requires us all to be accountable – to identify and confront “exclusionary policies, practices, and behaviors; empowering those who have been most affected” and “to accelerating actions and strategies that foster more inclusive communities”
- Some of these are built into our movement: challenging single family zoning; highway widening; and suburban sprawl
- Some require a new reckoning with affordable housing; displacement; and patterns of investment; disinvestment; and racism



Building an Inclusive Movement

- We need to identify and confronting exclusionary policies, practices, and behaviors within our own movement, communities and professions
- We must center new voices empower and those who have been most affected by existing inequities
- We can partner with those who share our values; align with our strategies; and broaden and enrich our ability to create great places for all people, regardless of background, race, income, or ability



The Architecture of Community

- New Urbanism needs to be back at the center of the National Conversation
- Our principles are more relevant than ever
- Like the cities we celebrate, we must be diverse, inclusive and welcoming
- We have vital work to do:
 - Legalize Walkable Urbanism
 - Design for Climate Change
 - Promote complete neighborhoods and the 15 Minute City
- Our job is carry this work into every community in America



Places People Love

- Harvey Milk: “Cities will be saved by the people who like it here. The people who prefer the neighborhood stores to the shopping mall, who go to the plays and eat in the restaurants and go to the clubs and worry about the education kids are getting even if they have no kids of their own. I’m asking you to ride with me against the windmills, to make the quality of life what it should be, to help our city set the example, to show the rest of the country what a city can be like.”

