

The Congress for the New Urbanism  
Project for Transportation Reform  
Preamble to a Vision Statement  
by Wes Marshall

New Urbanists understand the need for streets to be both public spaces and safe, comfortable multi-modal corridors. They also understand that street networks are integral to neighborhoods that are compact, pedestrian friendly, and mixed-use. Conventional transportation engineering standards and methods, unfortunately, have long been one of the biggest hurdles to realizing these principles.

CNU's Project for Transportation Reform is a collective effort that seeks to change the built environment by changing industry standards and professional transportation practice. Our aim is to provide the global community with the knowledge and skills needed to help shape the future of transportation and land use, and in turn, our communities. Whether it is via collaborations with established engineering organizations, emergency responders, or the general public, we promote an active and inclusive approach that communicates our principles in simple, straight-forward language.

Transportation has long been the key to unlocking the potential of New Urbanism, but a great transportation plan is also a land use plan. We view the nexus of transportation and land use as the foundation for what *The Charter of the New Urbanism* stands for in terms of restoring existing urban centers and towns, reconfiguring sprawling suburbs into real communities, and conserving the natural environment. Comprehensive change rarely happens overnight and often requires slow but strategic process with a clear understanding of conventional practice and policy. It has long meant fighting for flexible standards, but we have now moved into an era where codifying good practice is also possible. Doing so can help ensure iterative and lasting change.

From the creation of the FHWA-approved *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities* with ITE and the LEED for Neighborhood Development certification standards with the U.S. Green Building Council to the Freeways Without Futures reports and the *Sustainable Street Network Principles* guidebook, making the best possible use of our collective abilities – to positively influence transportation and land use at local, regional, and national levels – will continue to embrace such cooperative efforts.

The next reincarnation of CNU's Project for Transportation Reform is always on the horizon because this is an ever-evolving movement. Fulfilling the promise of New Urbanism requires implementation, and implementation tends to raise transportation and land use questions. We will strive to answer those questions and will continue to raise many of our own. The underling goal is to build great places for diverse communities, but doing so means recognizing that great places must be supported by great transportation and land use. Recognizing this connection is only part of the solution; realizing these goals in the real-world remains a work in progress. CNU's Project for Transportation Reform dedicates itself to helping achieve these ends.