

The city and the future.

Urban Design's effectiveness in addressing contemporary issues in city building may seem beyond its traditional mandate. Present, pressing concerns include: global warming; sea level rise; carbon emissions; globalization; and distribution, justice and equity issues in the employment, health, education and housing sectors.

Only by understanding the fundamental and elemental forces impacting urbanization on an item-by-item basis can we begin to deal with the city as a whole. Private vehicle use and parking, by necessity, is central to many of these concerns, and parking demand remains one of the elemental forces shaping urban, suburban and exurban places.

City planning and parking.

Parking acts as a determinant in the urban process, and at the same time it is a disrupter to many of the ambitions of city-building and place-making. Any discussion of the city and the evolution of city planning cannot ignore parking—while it may not be the point of beginning in the urban dialog, parking quickly becomes a point of focus and contention. Parking represents a challenge that needs to be addressed head on. To advance the discussion of city-building, parking demand and preferences must be understood, and positioning parking and structured parking in the larger discussion of city building and the redevelopment process is vital.

Parking is all of these things.

Central and fundamental; basic and instrumental; mundane and common; overlooked and ill-regarded; pervasive and ubiquitous. Parking acts as a limiter and a governor, and yet is also an enabler of redevelopment—structured parking is many times the first intervention and public investment that shapes the scale and intensity of a development program.

In culture.

Private vehicle ownership directly translates to parking demand and involves both practical and lifestyle dimensions. Private vehicle ownership is embedded in personal concepts of freedom, independence, and, many times, acts as a display of wealth and status. Nonetheless, vehicle ownership is being redefined and is being reshaped by generational transitions and new mobility options. However, the ultimate outcomes are yet to be known, and whether these transitions are sustaining and transformative remains to be seen. The present urban condition must still address parking as a fundamental element of human settlement.

This dissertation and research focus on parking as a fundamental challenge in city building and urban design. Conducting a basic research effort in this area of interest is important and impactful.

See the link below for the full document published last week at the Graduate School, Rutgers University, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/c5knn5pa6s25sew/Submission%20Jan%202013.pdf?dl=0>