Strong Towns Notes

April 22, 2026

Traditional Growth Paradigm

Post WWII development philosophy is one-size-fits-all. It is an illusion.

Investment in a community must be adaptable.

Citizens' demand to widen the road is not always the right answer. The “Deal with” perceptions allow us to build alternatives for not needing to drive, rather than to separate us more.

The City is Not the Growth-maker:

If the city tries to be the growth-maker, it impairs the citizens.

Cities should not get into the development game.

Dynamic solutions are in the private sector. Only roads and infrastructure are public solutions. But the private sector dumps long-term costs on the city.

The city asks, “Does this work on behalf of the public?”

The government's role is stable long-term stewardship.

Growth:

It is easier to work on the edge than in core neighborhoods. The city edges will cause more risk because they may be what is expendable in the future.

Stasis is the paradigm of keeping what exists; we’ve always done it this way; we were promised . . . . Stasis is the point of imminent death.

Cities have more in the ground than they can support and will have to face that fact someday.

High-growth chapter creates delusional service levels that cannot be sustained when the high-growth income is gone.

Need radical change to support city mature-in-place or run out the clock on viable existence.

A city’s demographics are its destiny. Must plan for worst-case scenarios.

Neighborhoods:

Need to be walkable, complete

Success planning – must have the humility to know that we don’t know and push beyond what we do know.

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