

The Primacy of Neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOODS MATTER.

The first responsibility of every city is to protect the homes and neighborhoods of its citizens. Neighborhood preservation, protection and enhancement are critical activities for every city to be a prosperous and pleasant place to live.

The first step in city planning is to embrace the primacy of neighborhood; to fully commit to creating great neighborhoods, residences, and secure places for people to live.

Neighborhoods and homes must be valued and protected from:

- Crime and personal injury,
- Declining property values,
- Aggressive driving on neighborhood streets,
- Structural deterioration through lax code enforcement in the neighborhood, and
- Other obnoxious and threatening intrusions.

Primacy of neighborhoods is important because neighborhoods are where most people live and raise their families, invest their savings and spend their time. A basic function of the city is to protect the homes and neighborhoods of its citizens.

The second reason is personal economics. Residences should be appreciating assets. Historically, home investment has been the primary means for creating family wealth.

Thirdly is city economics. Neighborhoods are an important part of the city's tax base.

Finally, strong neighborhoods matter from the perspective of community rejuvenation.

Cities are constantly, growing, contracting, improving and deteriorating. Maintaining the existing housing stock and neighborhood values protects the city from deterioration. New investment in vacant or marginal lands renews neighborhoods and their host cities.

COMMUNITY TRUST.

Trust is an important reason for putting the interests of neighborhoods and residents first. Residents must trust that the city leaders will protect their neighborhoods and homes. Fear of change by residents diminishes a city's ability to re-invent itself with new investment. Fear comes from distrust which comes from bad experiences.

Once residents trust that their interests are being protected, they are more likely to support city initiatives like downtown redevelopment, new business investments in development corridors adjacent to residential areas and other efforts to fund schools, parks or streets.

Steps to a city policy of neighborhood primacy:

1. **The City's security assurances** to protect residents from crime, intrusive traffic and declining property values with an articulated policy to preserve and enhance all city neighborhoods with communication links to prevent and remedy problems.
2. **Neighborhood commitments** to partner with the city to create great neighborhoods.
3. **A Mutual Recognition** that neighborhoods are more than a collection of houses; they require safe and convenient connections to adjacent neighborhoods, schools, parks and shops on walkable and beautiful neighborhood streets, sidewalks and trails.