



THE PLANNING
AWARENESS CLUB
OF EASTERN

Special points of interest:

- Showcasing student, alumni, faculty and other compositions
- 100% student produced
- Dedicated to diffusing information, innovation and inspiration

[http://
planning.emich.edu](http://planning.emich.edu)

Inside of this issue:

Student Commentary: Ideal Cities: The Sustainable City	2
Faculty Commentary: Cities of the Future: Metropolitan Detroit in 2053	4
A Farewell from the President of PLACE	7
Upcoming Excursions	7
Our Three Mediums of Information	8
Inside Next Month's Issue	8
A Note About PLACE/ The Officers of PLACE/"Links to the Future"	9

The Journal of PLACE

Volume One Issue Two

May 2004

Thoughts From the Editor

The Potential Infinity of Finite Space

"One Nature, perfect and pervading, circulates in all natures. The one Moon reflects itself wherever there is a sheet of water, And all the moons in the waters are embraced within the one Moon." -Yung-chia Ta-shih

The allegory is ancient, yet it is without time.

An interesting concept in the realm of theoretical urban design is that of producing an enormously complex visual perception from within the confines of a limited space. This attempts to create a 'more-than-finite' perceptual feedback that never allows the observer to understand 'all at once'; as with the sequence of a storybook, there are pages still unturned.

To grasp the idea, simply gaze at the seemingly infinite grains of an ancient oak wood. Within that space time has been transcended, and one sees not only what is but what has been, and therefore can contemplate what

is yet to come.

Urban gardens could derive particular benefit from such a design. While physical space may be at premiums in such gardens, designs could be implemented to augment the visual feedback that one receives as they peer into a given space. Like contemplating a work of impressionist art, one can discover new dimensions with the changing seasons or the natural alteration of light quality. Such ideas have been explored for centuries in the Oriental world, epitomized by the "contemplation garden", in which a carefully framed space acts as much as a tool of meditation as a work of art.

It is amazing how often one can find means to bypass the traditional dichotomy between linear nature and the conceptual world of meta-linear thought.

In these gardens, never can the whole be comprehended at once, and therein lies their dynamic potential to enrich an urban space.

Could such an idea succeed in the urban gardens of our own cities?



The Celtic symbol for infinity

In This Issue

This issue features both a student and a faculty commentary. André Stone inaugurates our monthly 'Ideal Cities' section where he explores the components of his city ideal: 'The Sustainable City'. Faculty member Thomas Wagner embarks on the first of what will be many excursions into the future of our urban loci in what we call

'Cities of the Future'. Most appropriately, Metropolitan Detroit first accompanies us through time's gate.

We also feature a special message from our departing President. Devany Donigan bids farewell with a bright vision of the future of PLACE.

We also give you a summary of

our upcoming summer excursions. Anyone and everyone planning to be in the Metropolitan Detroit area is welcome to attend.

Your voyage into our transcendent world awaits.

Ticket in hand, you board the light-rail of acumen, and the adventure begins...

Student Commentary: "City Ideal for a Less Consumptive Future: The Sustainable City"

By Andre Stone
Contact him at:
andrestone@lycos.com

Planners dedicate their entire lives to the betterment of our urban and rural spaces, yet very rarely are their ideal improvements fully realized. Planners sometimes burst with ideas, but usually these design concepts are swallowed by a sea of regulations that all but stifle any innovation. Thus, planners' dream cities almost always exist only in the back of their minds. Though our wildest planning ideals rarely come to fruition in our own lifetimes, by no means does this indicate that our dreams will not become relevant in the future. The ideas of several notable design professionals have come to life long after the deaths of their inventors. For example, we see Le Corbusier in American public housing and Ebenezer Howard in our suburban areas. These individuals eagerly publicized their alternatives to the city planning doctrine of their times, only to have their concepts implemented decades later. With this in mind, it is necessary to predict the changes our world will undergo in coming years and determine a city ideal for the future.

The design of the Sustainable City is based on several predictions on what the human situation for planet Earth will look like in about 100 years. By 2100, the number of inhabitants will number greater than 11 billion, creating an ever increasing demand on the Earth's natural resources. Continuing consumption of arable land for non-agricultural uses will lead to a worldwide food shortage, forcing humans to consume less. The world will have run out of oil, and internal combustion engines as we know them will have become obsolete. The primary energy sources will be renewable resources such as wind, sun and water. Finding enough potable water will be a primary concern for all. Humans will have created a more egalitarian society worldwide.

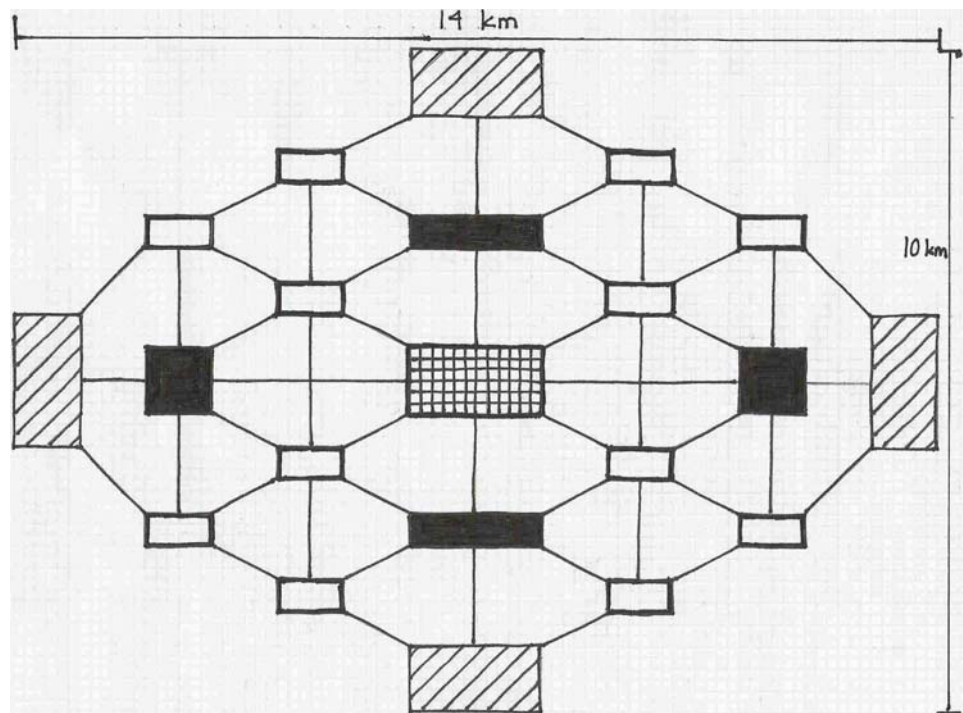
Having established these changes, the world will need cities that cluster people together for commercial and social reasons but minimize their impact on the earth. Sustainable City is the answer to this need. What is now known as a "community" will evolve into a "rural urbanism," consisting of clusters of dense urban neighborhoods, which are represented on the diagram as rectangular areas with bold perimeters. Crops will be nurtured in the negative spaces between neighborhood clusters. The agriculture component of the city will take up the majority of the land area and will ensure that the city's dietary needs are met. By utilizing climate control techniques

in some agricultural areas, those individuals responsible for share-cropping will be able to produce a wide variety of foods. Additionally, the interior open areas will function as recreational space for the city's residents.

The residential urbanized sections of the city will be of high density, compacting over 10,000 residents within a one-by-two kilometer area. These clusters shall consist of row houses and apartment buildings. All parts of the urban residential sections will be oriented toward a central focal point, which will function as a neighborhood center featuring small shops and basic services. The main feature of each pod will be a transit station, which will enable movement throughout the city. The clusters will be small enough that they can be traversed end-to-end on foot in less than ten minutes; the neighborhood center will be no more than a five minute stroll from any point in the district.

Each city will have two major employment and distribution centers and two manufacturing areas (diagonally hatched areas). These sectors will operate only to serve their zoned purposes and will be home to no permanent residents. They are to be located on the periphery of the city. The employment centers will serve as the Sustainable City's "downtowns."

Additionally, there will be four entertainment and activities districts in each city (shaded). These centers are intended to serve as retail centers, amusement centers, theater districts, or other areas



A diagrammatic layout of the Sustainable City

Student Commentary: “City Ideal for a Less Consumptive Future: The Sustainable City” ...continued

that can be utilized for free-time activities.

Finally, a central area of the city will be a major transportation hub and infrastructure base. This will be the central service point for all connections beyond the Sustainable City. High-speed trains will carry people and goods between the Sustainable City and other urban centers.

The central area may also be home to an airport of sorts, and will function as the home for infrastructure. For example, water treatment and power generation will occur here.

All the districts will be connected by an underground train system. The city is designed so that the commercial, distribution, and recreational areas are connected to all residential pods by two or fewer transit stops.

The Sustainable City will live up to its name as an efficient place in which people can be supplied with basic materials

Andre Stone is an undergraduate student in Eastern Michigan University’s Urban and Regional Planning Program. He is especially interested in physical planning and urban design, and hopes to plan for a non-automotive culture in the future.

Mr. Stone is one of the recipients of this year’s Robert M. “Rocky” Ward Endowed Scholarship.

necessary to preserve life, but with added enhancements that will elevate the sense of well-being and consciousness. It is a model of a city designed for the needs of the future.

Faculty Commentary: “Metropolitan Detroit in 2053”

By Thomas W. Wagner
Contact him at:
twagner127363MI@comcast.net

Looking to the Future

What good is planning if it can't tell us something about the future? After all, if we plan for today, our plans will surely be out-of-date by the time they are acted upon. But if we anticipate and plan for a future that does not happen, we may do more harm than good. How far into the future can we see? That depends at how good we are at interpreting the signs in the landscape today.

Tom Wagner is a Senior Research Scientist with Eastern Michigan University's Institute for Geospatial Research and Education and an analyst at the University of Michigan's China Data Center. He's lived and worked in such diverse Asian cities as Katmandu, Dhaka, and Kuala Lumpur. His current interest is in "systems of cities" and he is the principle author of the Eastern Michigan University-Mark Jefferson website: <http://ceita.emich.edu/gsc>.

continue. Metropolitan Detroit will continue to evolve toward a dispersed, polycentric urban network -- only more so. One guess is that local communities will become more socially integrated but economically differentiated and separated from each other by wide green areas and thinly settled land. An aging population will continue to grow in numbers, but with decreasing personal mobility, may become concentrated in Detroit's specialized "edge" towns and cities.

A Bit of History

Detroit was founded by the French in 1701 on the northwestern bank of the narrow strait connecting Lake St. Clair with Lake Erie. For its first 59 years Detroit was a French fort-town serving fur trappers, traders, and later, the settlers of ribbon farms with narrow frontage on the Detroit or Rouge rivers. Its location was strategic in monitoring commercial traffic between the lower and the upper Great Lakes and in pacifying periodically hostile Indian

For example, what will Metropolitan Detroit look like in 50 years? Of course, there is no way to know for sure; a lot of unexpected things can happen in 50 years. But consider some of the economic and social processes we already see at work and guess what happens if they will

tribes that occupied nearby lands. Because of its location and the westward movement of America's rapidly growing population, by 1900 this pioneer community had become a major commercial and industrial center, exploiting its ready access to coal, iron ore, timber, and abundant fresh water -- key resources of the industrial age.

By 1930 Detroit was the 4th largest city in the United States and during World War II, was described as the "Arsenal of Democracy" for the strength of its armaments production. Since that time, metropolitan Detroit has continued to grow in area, but less so in population and manufacturing prowess-- dropping to 10th in population by 2000. Between 1969 and 1994, the metropolitan area lost 170 thousand people and almost a third of its well-paying manufacturing jobs (Maki & Lichty, 2000).

Current Geography

Today, Metropolitan Detroit sprawls over a 10-county, semi-circular area around the river-fronted Central Business District (CBD). But with the decline of centralized automotive manufacturing, many of the newer service-oriented jobs are located in suburbs at some distance from the CBD. Some of these changes could be discerned back in the late 1950s: the decline of inner city factories and the rapid growth of suburban communities, what would be called "edge cities". However, three unforeseen forces also contributed to this sprawl: (1) rapid road and highway construction that kept up with and, in some cases, preceded new suburban development, (2) the entry of significant numbers of women into the suburban workforce, and (3) the population flight from the central city that accelerated after the 1967 Detroit riots. These processes, along with growing inner city insecurity and a prosperity that spawned mobility, resulted in sprawling communities surrounding the decaying and segregated urban core.

A thumbnail sketch of the geography of metropolitan Detroit today is that of a polycentric commercial system embedded within contiguous residential neighborhoods and connected by an efficient network of high-speed highways and finely gridded local streets and roads. Much of the social and economic activity

Faculty Commentary: “Metropolitan Detroit in 2053” ...continued

occurs within this semicircular band. The inner portion of the band (Ecorse, Melvindale, Dearborn, Birmingham, Eastpoint, and Grosse Pointe) comprises older communities that prospered in the 1950s and 60s but since has stagnated as newer communities (such as Southfield, Canton, Westland, Warren, Livonia) grew rapidly in the 70s and 80s. More recently, the ring is expanding into the metropolitan fringes in Washtenaw, Livingston, Oakland, and Macomb counties at ever lower densities. The picture is one of high population and job mobility and a flattening population density curve as one progresses outward from the once congested metropolitan center. Large areas of crop- and open-land continue to be appropriated by developers and speculators for future housing developments, low-rise warehouses, municipal centers, malls and service centers.

By contrast, the aging minority communities within the City have seen their neighborhoods dissected by expressways and bypassing by new employment, economic growth, and viable civic services. Today, many areas of the City of Detroit have aging populations living in substandard houses adjacent to abandoned brownfields.

Urbanizing Forces

Ideally Detroit's residents will grow to see their metropolitan region as a single system encompassing both the older City neighborhoods as well as the newer suburbs. While the overall population will continue to grow, this growth cannot be even -- some areas will prosper while some may lose, resulting in changing urban patterns. Communities are advised to coordinate their growth plans with each other and manage their environments as components of a unified system.

Local advantages and historical “lock-ins” will continue to concentrate certain activities in particular locations (and attract specialized workforces). For example, spectator sports and entertainments that draw from the entire region will continue to be located in or near downtown, as will the services associated with the growing cross-river international trade. Professional services

and communications associated with the internationalization of Detroit's industry and trade will expand beyond Southfield into the northern suburbs. Higher education, IT, and medical research will grow on the western fringes of Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. While Detroit will continue to be a significant international force in transportation technologies, its overall role will be in managing supply-chains and dispersed facilities from a distance. However, new vehicle and energy technology research may continue to involve aggressive and innovative small firms.

The centripetal forces of urban agglomeration will include increasing energy costs, greater inner-city security, and growing numbers of single and two person households. With scarce petroleum prices going to perhaps 10 dollars per gallon or more, personal vehicle travel will be curtailed in favor of rapid transit between networked communities and business centers. Workforces will find it desirable to locate near rapid transit stations, however continuing improvements in communications may reduce the need for continuous person-to-person contacts. It's possible that centrally located business centers will host meetings and activities for different companies or agencies at different times on a 24 hour cycle, thereby reducing the need for costly dedicated facilities. Reductions in solid, air, and water waste will make downtown environments more environmentally desirable.

By 2020 many retiring Baby Boomers will seek diverse amenities, including social and health care services, within walking distance of where they live. One can expect decreasing demands for remote suburban houses on large lots and a growing demand for community-centered apartments, condominiums, and town-houses near shopping, recreation, and cultural centers. Of course, high-income households will out-compete lower income households for downtown locations and poor families will be forced to locate further out along rapid transit corridors.

The centripetal forces that allow Metro Detroit's communities to remain separate from each other include the plentiful availability of fresh water, electrical energy, and communications

Faculty Commentary:
“Metropolitan Detroit in 2053” ...continued

technologies. In particular, fresh water and the proximity of the Great Lakes will assure that Detroit remains a dispersed center for manufacturing, trade, and recreation long after more arid areas have depleted their supplies. Increasing winter temperatures from global warming may result in fewer people migrating south for the winter months and lower heating costs. Located in the center of the Great Lakes Megalopolis that Dioxides once talked about, Detroit's geography will continue to play a central role in the America's economy and culture.

Conclusion

Clearly Detroit owes its existence to the competitive advantages of its location on the Detroit River and its proximity to various regional resources. Scale economies were at work in the creation of giant, vertically integrated manufacturing industries such as those of automotive manufacturing in the past. Much of Detroit's growth was a function of both the local and urban economies that resulted in prosperous businesses and high-skill jobs.

However, newer forces allow production to diversify and facilities to spread out. Increasing energy and social costs however may cause existing population to concentrate in higher-density communities connected by rapid transit. The picture is that of a polycentric metropolitan area of great local diversity as well as continuing economic strength and vitality.

A Farewell *From the President of PLACE*

By Devany K. Donigan
Contact her at:
ddonigan@wdc-econdev.com

It is with both pride and a sense of loss that I write this farewell. There are so many people to recognize and thank for their many hours of volunteerism that have continued to build this organization upon the strong and stable cornerstones that were laid by my predecessors. Thanks to all of you who made this year so memorable for me, and such a success for PLACE!

Below is a summary of our activities in 2003-2004:

- In the fall, PLACE and the Advisory Council sponsored World Town Planning Day at Norm and Ilene Tyler's home in Ann Arbor. We also recognized our beloved retiring professor and one of the founders of Eastern's Planning Program, Dr. Robert M. "Rocky" Ward by renaming the PLACE endowment after him. Each attendee spoke about what they were currently doing, what planning meant to them, and how Rocky had touched their life.
- A fieldtrip and tour of Detroit was also held in the fall. Many students who had never explored Detroit attended and experienced Detroit's great history and structures firsthand.
- The Journal of PLACE was created to publish interesting and extraordinary ideas and thoughts of students and alumni about planning.
- To raise funds this year, we created PLACE bins for can collection, and made hundreds of dollars!
- PLACE began building alliances with the other two student organizations in the department; Preservation Eastern and Club GIS.
- PLACE developed a new look for PLACE by adopting a logo that would be used throughout the year on all correspondence, and the PLACE bulletin board in Strong Hall was redesigned to reflect our new look. We created PLACE business cards for student members to provide professionalism to the organization and assist with networking opportunities.
- In the winter, PLACE held International Planning Awareness Presentations. Four students presented their experiences and ideas about planning in France, Germany, China and Japan.
- PLACE developed a marketing strategy to promote the planning program at Eastern.
- In the spring, the scholarship committee distributed 4 scholarship awards for \$400.00 each, to four students in the Planning Program.
- PLACE began planning for the Fall, 2004 golf outing.
- To wrap up the end of the year, there was an evening gathering for all students in the program on the last day of school in downtown Ypsilanti.

The greatness of PLACE, this living, breathing organism with a heart, is credited to the student members, the advising professors, the Planning Program Advisory Council, and the alumni who have contributed to the success of the many activities and programs that we accomplished this year. I am confident that PLACE will continue to thrive under the capable leadership of the incoming executive board and its members, and will watch with great anticipation for the exciting and innovative pro-

Upcoming Excursions

Ford Rouge Center

We will be led on a guided tour of the environmental projects at the Ford Rouge Center in Dearborn. The Rouge manufacturing site is one of the largest Brownfield sites in the U.S., but has changed to accommodate major storm water management initiatives, including wetland swales and ponds, pervious pavement, and the largest vegetated roof in the world. Other features include phytoremediation, green screens and wildlife corridors. The Ford Rouge Center mirrors the long journey of Detroit, from its glorious rise to its great fall, and its hope for a phoenix-like future. This is a chance not to be missed.

Cherry Hill

Come with us to visit one of the more unique new urban developments in Michigan. A Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), Cherry Hill attempts to create a walkable, sustainable urban environment by utilizing (by our area's standards) unique and time-proven design techniques. Here is an opportunity to observe how a 'human-scale' development can be interfaced with an 'automotive-scale' metropolitan area.

Our Three Mediums of Information

PLACE and the Urban and Regional Planning Program at Eastern Michigan University are further integrating and connecting their three primary mediums of information. The website, this Journal and the bulletin board in Strong Hall are serving more and more as a powerful interface between PLACE, the Urban and Regional Planning program, and those interested in wanting to be a part of its ever-developing structure. Each channel compliments the others; they do not try to replace or reproduce each other.



The PLACE Bulletin Board in Strong Hall was recently redesigned in order to enhance the image of the club through the use of attractive and visually powerful media.

Our Three Mediums of Information

For years EMU's Urban and Regional Planning Program website has been the primary diffuser of Planning Program information, including event news, alumni updates, student information and much more. It always contains up-to-date information and it includes a page for PLACE. For the most up-to-date information about PLACE, the Planning program, and all events, please visit the site often at <http://planning.emich.edu>

The PLACE Bulletin Board

Our recently renovated bulletin board is an exemplified combination of organization and minimalism. We feel that such a combination allows for a powerful attention-getter, allowing us in effect to 'direct' the eye to certain areas of the board in order of their importance. But don't take our word for it; please visit the southern corridor of Strong Hall to see for yourself!

The Journal of PLACE

With the introduction of The Journal of PLACE, a key component is added to this existing network of information conduits. With every month our subscriber base will build, and *The Journal of PLACE* will be a legacy for all future members of this student club. It all begins with us, right here, right now.

"These three mediums of information are a powerful interface between PLACE, the Urban and Regional Planning Program, and those wanting to be a part of its ever-developing structure"

Inside Next Month's Issue

There are many exciting articles that will be featured in the next issue. We will begin our "Great Transit Nodes of the World" piece. We will continue with our "Ideal City" commentary, and our commentary on "Cities of the Future". The Journal will also introduce a new and very special mini-series. Each year undergraduate students in the Urban and Regional Planning Program's Site Planning Studio design a site plan to present to a potential developer. For the next four months we will feature these presentations, the culmination of 16 weeks of research and design. We are pleased to showcase the finished works for all to see.

PLACE

Urban and Regional Planning
209 Strong Hall
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Email:
placejournal@sbcglobal.net
an_an@sbcglobal.net

[http://
planning.emich.edu](http://planning.emich.edu)

The Planning
Awareness Club of
Eastern



The Planning Awareness
Club of Eastern

A Note About PLACE

PLACE is a 100 % student-led organization. Leadership and membership change from year to year with students graduating and new students arriving. Therefore, the goals and objectives of the organization change annually. This provides members with a unique opportunity to become involved in an organization that regularly encourages and welcomes new ideas and change. The mission of **PLACE** 2003-2004 is to provide its members with opportunities for personal and professional growth through special events, conference and workshop attendance, fieldtrips, networking, scholarships, and a medium (this Journal) through which their opinions and passions can be stated and respected.

The Officers of PLACE



From top-left to bottom-right: **Andrew Armbruster**, *President*; **Bonnie Wessler**, *Vice President*; **Ingrid Ault**, *Secretary*; **Stephanie Diebold**, *Treasurer*; **Andre Stone**, *Director of Excursions*

Contributions Welcome

Long-time faculty member Rocky Ward was honored at his retirement party with notice of the renaming of the Planning Program Scholarship Fund as the Robert M. Ward Endowed Scholarship. In response, he gave a significant personal contribution to the fund. Would you like to honor Rocky by also giving a contribution? Because we didn't hold the golf outing this year, the fund's new contributions are down and the number of scholarships for the coming year may need to be cut back. Help restore the fund by making a tax-deductible contribution of any amount.

Send your contribution to the EMU Foundation, 1349 S. Huron Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Indicate it is for the Urban and Regional Planning Program (Robert M. Ward) Endowed Scholarship and put the Account No. R28750 on the check. Or contact Norm Tyler at ntyler@emich.edu for further details.



Robert M. Ward founded the Planning program at Eastern Michigan University.

The Annual PLACE Golf Outing

PLACE is pleased to announce the date for this fall's "Links To the Future" Golf Outing. It will take place on Friday, September 24th, at the beautiful Eagle Crest Golf Course. This event is eagerly awaited each year by alumni, students and other friends and golfers.

PLACE will follow with more details as the golf outing committee puts the plans together. For further information please contact chairperson Bonnie Wessler at b.wessler@sbcglobal.net