Frontiers of Context
Sensitive Design: Understanding Context

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Goal of Context Sensitive Design

A transportation project that reflects:

- Community consensus regarding purpose and need with the features of the project and
- Balances safety, mobility, preservation of service, aesthetics, historic, and environmental resources.

Context Sensitive Design transforms the entire transportation planning process.
Context Sensitive Design

Are we educating and training our transportation-related professionals to develop Context Sensitive Solutions?
Sometimes It’s a Simple Context
Sometimes It’s Not
What Skills and Characteristics Are Critical?
Interdisciplinary

Shared commitment to solve a problem requiring collaboration among participants with different backgrounds and expectations.
Human-Centered Attitude

- Greater consideration of human use of system and the value, culture, community and aesthetic preferences
Put people in the equation
Documentation

Improve documentation process and skills of public and professionals. Documentation is a dominant activity under Context Sensitive Solutions.
Consensus Seeking

Involve diverse stakeholders to develop consensus on the scope of the project. Analyze multiple alternatives to arrive at a consensus.
Value Laden

Stakeholders, professionals and the community all have different values which they bring to a Context Sensitive Solution.
Inclusion

Invite all stakeholders to participate early in the project and consider selecting some as members of the team.
Visualization

Use a variety of analysis and tools to communicate information about the project.
Documentation

- Documentation of a context-sensitive design solution provides the information to support the decision and provides defense against potential lawsuits.

- Designers need skills in context-sensitive decision making and documentation.
Consensus-Seeking

Must integrate mobility needs of many interests and people to arrive at more context sensitive solutions. The challenge is to develop a concept and solution that reflects a consensus.
Inclusion

Context Sensitive Design involves a collaborative, interdependent approach that includes citizens and other stakeholders as part of the design team. Seek out participants with different views.
Including Quality Growth

Context Sensitive Design must include tools the local government can use to enhance the quality of the environment.

- Regional transportation policies and plans
- Standards and requirements for subdivision streets
- Streetscape improvements plans
Including Quality Growth

- Zoning and infrastructure funding to promote transit-oriented development
- Zoning to promote walkable and transit-friendly neighborhoods
- Shared-parking requirements
- TDM and congestion management programs
Visualization

- Developing ways of helping stakeholders see outcomes before they become reality.

Drawings • Photos • Simulations • Modeling • Animation
BUFORD HIGHWAY: INCREMENTAL URBANISM
THE PERIMETER
285
DORAVILLE
PEACHTREE DEKALB
AIRPORT
BASE CASE
STUDY AREA
BUFORD
HIGHWAY
A GRAYFIELD
ENVIRONMENT
INTERSTATE 85
NORTHEAST PLAZA
SHOPPING CENTER
Highway to Boulevard

URBAN DESIGN PROTOTYPE: the thin wall arcade
Pedestrian Wilderness to Pedestrian System

URBAN DESIGN PROTOTYPE: the thin wall arcade
Pedestrian Wilderness to Pedestrian System
URBAN DESIGN PROTOTYPE: the thin wall arcade
Highway to Boulevard
URBAN DESIGN PROTOTYPE: the Oreo Deck
BEFORE

AFTER

Highway to Boulevard

URBAN DESIGN PROTOTYPE: the wrapped garage
Highway to Boulevard
URBAN DESIGN PROTOTYPE: gas stations & warehouses
Training for Context Sensitive Solutions

Training programs agencies typically include:

- Project development and management
- Public involvement and facilitated communication
- Environmental management
- Geometric design and design guidelines
- Tort liability
- Aesthetics and visualization techniques