

# Can Urbanity Come to the Uncontrolled Periphery? The Case of Houston's FM1960

The relentless horizontal growth of the contemporary American city is driven by the logics of capitalist land development. Public space, and sense of place are commodified and imbued with the same built-in obsolescence as any other consumer product. Older peripheral areas that have been surpassed by the newer expanding edge are left in decline, used up, and discarded.

Yet they remain occupied, no longer by the homogenous demographic for which they were originally designed, and to whom they were marketed, but now by more diverse generations of inhabitants. These areas do not depend on the nuclear downtown so they cannot be properly described suburbs. They make up the entire periphery of the Houston, yet they are not urban. New techniques must be identified to make these zones relevant to their current residents, thus restoring their utility and value. A new complex, layered urbanity must be overlaid upon the simplistic extant forms of subdivision, commercial strip, and arterial road.

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Greater Houston<sup>1</sup> is the extreme iteration of the contemporary American city. It has no zoning and very minimal ordinances. Two loop freeways (a third is under construction) enable Harris County, the sprawling peripheral ring around the city where there are even fewer development controls. Harris County exhibits capital-driven city growth in an even purer form than the city of Houston itself. It is the quintessential open city — the Wild West.

This paper recounts the history and diagnoses the current malaise of a formerly successful, nascent edge city in Northwest Harris County, the FM1960<sup>2</sup> Corridor. Developed in the late 1960's and 1970's, several newer layers of edge growth have now surpassed this zone, and it now finds itself within the vast horizontal in-between city. I focus on FM1960's commercial strip, which no longer serves the needs of the current local residents, nor those of the public at large, whom have both abandoned it. Rising crime, falling property prices, and vacant commercial property characterize the current malaise of this zone, which stands in for many similar areas in our quickly growing low-density horizontal cities. It is a political reality that no solutions to FM1960's problems can be dictated from above. Consensus must be reached among local interests and the resulting change will have to flow from the private sector.

Houston's super grid of declining strip mall-lined arterial roads is a systematic and pervasive problem. The romantic pop-analyses of Las Vegas' Strip in Robert Venturi

and Denise Scott Brown's *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972) and of Los Angeles in Rayner Banham's *Los Angeles: The Architecture of four Ecologies* (1973) no longer provide the critical models for understanding these conditions. They come from an era when the post-war commercial strip was still new enough (just 25 years old) and the role and effect of the private automobile in society could still be romanticized. Nevertheless, I share their intentions to turn a critical architectural eye onto the contemporary conditions of these ubiquitous urban landscapes.



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FM1960 is much more rudimentary than the spectacular Las Vegas Strip of 1972, and it cannot match even the light historical layering of Los Angeles. Houstonians primarily use arterial roads like FM1960 to access the freeway network from their residential enclaves. FM1960 is congested, chaotic, commercial, car-centric, not well planned, and not dense. It is urban, but it is not urbane. Houston's down and dirty arterial road network functions as the means of getting to somewhere else, and not as urban space. They are experienced in-transit, from the moving private automobile. FM1960 has towering highway billboards but no sidewalks. Following Jane Jacobs, Lars Lerup has characterized these zones as "gray" and "fast" as opposed to "slow" and "green."<sup>3</sup> A low-functioning rudimentary and ubiquitous typology, the arterial road strip malls are considered by today's public to be eyesores.

Greater Houston (population 6.3 million) is the fifth largest metropolitan area in the United States, and is perennially one of the fastest growing. The only major American metropolis to retain no zoning into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Houston is a truly open city, with a diverse population. Particularly, it serves as a gateway between the US and Latin America, but also houses an extensive tapestry of world cultures. It is a wild-west town thriving in the present, with people arriving from all over the US and the world to settle. From its inception in 1836, the urban form of Houston has always been the direct product of unfettered speculation. In this respect, Houston is similar to Los Angeles and other Sunbelt cities, but Houston's lack of comprehensive zoning intensifies the universal tendency toward sprawl.

The recent terms "drosscape"<sup>4</sup> and "terrain vague"<sup>5</sup> used to describe the undefined, ruined, and vacant areas that are the by-product of growth in the contemporary city apply more intensively to fast-growing Houston. These zones of degradation, decay, and vacancy, including my own subject area, are interspersed throughout the city between successful, designed, and controlled places. This

Figure 1: FM1960, Harris County Texas.

wasteful patchwork vacancy among intensity exists at all possible scales throughout the urban footprint, enabled by the limitless supply of new land at the ever-expanding periphery, and fueled by consumer demand for new product in the real estate marketplace.

There is a perennial middle and upper middle class migration outward toward the edges of Houston, pushing areas within the former periphery, like my FM1960 Corridor site, into obsolescence within as little as one generation. Because there is a constant supply of new product, these older zones are almost never retasked or renewed, so they have no chance to accrue the layers of meaning and use that have traditionally yielded urbanity and lasting value in cities. This debasement of real estate toward the status of consumer product, where, like the automobiles that it so depends on, property is so easily discarded after its limited useful life expires, has left Houston's commercial arteries in dire condition. In June 2014, the Greater Houston Partnership, rebranded the city as "Houston: The City With No Limits," embracing the reality that this chaotic sprawl has caused "many outsiders [to] see Houston as a good place to find a job but not a great place to live."<sup>6</sup> In this unlimited expansion scenario, where new product has been the principal driver in Houston's development, there has not been a market for renewing the blighted parts of its former periphery.

Architectural culture has it tough in the Houston environment, at least on the ideal terms that we typically set for it in the academy. Although, in theory, the city's multiplicity of urban form, and the lack of consistent context should allow an architect to freely project pretty much anything onto any site, the developers who drive the design process with their own expedient, market-derived imperatives, control most of the actual building, thus foreclosing inventive, novel, and most times, responsible design solutions. While Houston boasts a series of projects by A-list architects, notably Phillip Johnson, this is a prestige collection of iconic trophy buildings, realized by key developers and other elite interests.<sup>7</sup> The ensemble of these projects does not make Houston an urbane city; it is more of a symptom of the diminished condition of Houston's architectural culture.

Some of Houston's development schemes, like the Woodlands,<sup>8</sup> have been based on good intentions, and they have stood the test of time, acquiring the kind of layered complexity that we value in successful urban places, but many others, like Sharpstown,<sup>9</sup> are malfunctioning on a grand scale, and within as little as a generation or two because, as no more than 40-year investments,<sup>10</sup> they did not require much depth and complexity to sustain them. Houston's speculative growth reached a crescendo during the 1980's, during the Savings & Loan (S&L) bubble. The city was the epicenter of the national "casino economy," a term coined by economist Maurice Allais, where "...the largest profits are made from placing a good bet" and land speculation got tied to the circulation of money itself. "Profits in this casino economy are made from speculative ventures designed to bring windfall profits from clever bets."<sup>11</sup>

By the onset of S&L crisis in the mid 1980's, and the ensuing property bust in Texas, Houston's original nuclear downtown lay mostly imploded, covered with surface parking, except for some trophy office towers. Houston led the nation in foreclosures in 1985 and the scale of the problem in Texas threatened the national economy.<sup>12</sup> Immediately after the S&L crisis, Houston was described as a donut: a ring with an empty hole at the center.<sup>13</sup> In the boom and bust cycle, some zones of Houston become speculatively over-developed during the boom and



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Figure 2: Blank signage at the "Concrete Jungle."

Figure 3: Empty big box store, "Concrete Jungle." *National brands have left.*

Figure 4: Saturday Afternoon, FM1960 at the Concrete Jungle."

others are left empty and fallow in the bust.<sup>14</sup> By the 1980's, Houston's periphery had expanded tremendously, at the expense of its own downtown as well as a whole series of rust belt cities in the country's Northeast, Detroit being the worst example. Today, many of the expediently built zones of Houston's 1970's and 80's expansion donut, my subject site included, are transitioning into drosscape.

In Houston, the creation of urbanity has been haphazard. The city's builders have mostly only managed to produce an episodic series of self-focused, targeted, and packaged commodities - units of exchange to be converted into money - rather than properties imbued with potential for legitimate long-term place value. There is no Houstonian equivalent to Central Park or Rittenhouse Square. This creation of meaningful public space has been meager, with many significant gathering places lying in private hands. Cities like Chicago, built in a different age, benefited from the integration of private capital, public interest, and urban design by employing city the building strategies characterized by Daniel Burnham's "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work." Urbanity in Houston, left to mostly in private hands, free of public intervention, has been continuously compromised: a series of small plans. In their 1978 book *Collage City*, Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter place Houston on the historic continuum of "bricolage" cities like Rome and London, describing Houston as a "pop Rome" consisting of "fields of internal coherence" and "areas of interstitial debris."<sup>15</sup> The FM1960 commercial strip is just such an interstitial zone, located between the arterial road and a series of privately developed and individually administered subdivision enclaves.<sup>16</sup> Expediently developed along FM1960, who's primary role was to service to the flanking subdivisions, the commercial strip initially generated some extra profit for its developers, and it does not exhibit the cohesive planning of the surrounding enclaves that were the true focus of their endeavors.

If Houston can boast of any "big plans," it would be the planning and construction of the spoke and loop freeway framework that has underpinned its vast expansion from 1970 to the present. There were two initial loops, the Inner, Interstate 610, and the Outer, Sam Houston Tollway/Beltway 8. The 61 km (38 mi) Inner Loop was begun in the 1950's and completed in the 1970's. The 142 km (88 mile) Outer Beltway 8 Loop, planned in the 1950's, was begun in the early 1970's, but faced delays, and was not completed until the 1990's. Today a third loop, the 290 km (180 mile) Grand Parkway, projected in the 1960's, but not started until the 1990's, is under construction, yet to be completed, and inching its way through greenfield landscape.<sup>17</sup> As of 2014, the Grand Parkway is 19% complete, and an additional 29% is in construction.<sup>18</sup> The cohesive parts of this expansion are the series of "edge cities" dispersed along the 610 loop identified by Joel Garreau in his 1991 book, *Edge City, Life on the New Frontier*.<sup>19</sup> Although the urban fabric of Houston might not have been comprehensively planned, its growth has followed a systematic and deliberately preconceived general arrangement around its ever expanding, framework of freeways.

The build out of the FM1960 Corridor took place in the expansion period between 1970 and S&L bust in the mid 1980's. It was isolated in greenfield when it was conceived at the end of the 1960's, located even beyond the yet-to-be completed Outer Beltway 8 second loop, at northwest edge of Houston's periphery. Until now, prior to the immanent completion of the Grand Parkway third loop, FM1960 has formed part of a de facto third loop of arterial roads, and is subject to extreme congestion, paradoxically hurting the commercial strip. It is



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Figure 5: Grand Parkway, June 2014. *Marching across greenfields.*

Figure 6: Houston's freeway network. *Note the new Grand Parkway third loop.*

hoped that the Grand Parkway will relieve some of this pressure and that FM1960 can regain some sense of order.

The term “suburb” is not correct to describe peripheral Houston: this abstract low-density constellation of edge cities, and the less defined interstitial zones are the most of the urban fabric of Houston. In 1991, Garreau identified FM1960, and the Woodlands, still further north, as two additional “emerging edge cities.”<sup>20</sup> As of 2014, the FM 1960 Corridor is in decline, frozen in its 1991 state, whereas the newer and more comprehensively planned Woodlands has become the completely realized and successful peripheral anti-downtown, anti-urban, enclave that the FM1960 Corridor had originally aspired to be. The FM1960 Corridor has never fulfilled its destiny as “edge city,” and parts of it, particularly the commercial strip, have experienced precipitous decline. It is rather a part of the diffuse urbanism of the “in-between city.”<sup>21</sup>

During the 1970’s and 80’s, FM1960’s strip malls were a popular shopping destination, even on the citywide scale, and reportedly, their vast parking lots were always filled with cars. Their retail originally consisted of the kinds of wallpaper stores, salons, clothes shops, restaurants, and hardware stores that would have been targeted to the homogeneous demographic of the original residents. Today, there is a lot of empty retail space, and that which is leased is increasingly occupied by “dollar store economy,”<sup>22</sup> sub-Walmart level retail, and other low rent, underclass offerings like tattoo parlors, five dollar haircuts, massage spas, and cell phones shops. On a more positive note, ethnic businesses, mostly restaurants and food shops, are interspersed within these debased properties, but the parking lots are mostly empty.

I have focused my attention on a particularly vacant zone around the four corners of the FM1960 / Kuykendahl Road intersection, locally know as “the Concrete Jungle.” The local retail market does not mesh with the retail leasing system that places national brands in commercial properties. It is reported that leasing agents, in a kind of commercial redlining, cannot or will not place national brands into FM1960 properties, due the lack of market definition in the extremely heterogeneous demographic.

The current state of the public realm along arterial roads like FM1960 is a disgrace throughout Houston. Extensive and ubiquitous, are they now poised to renew themselves? In order to end its decline, the FM1960 Corridor now faces the need to fulfill its potential as edge city, to present a new, relevant, identity to Houston. Just as architects like Burnham did in at the turn of the 20th Century in Chicago, I am investigating the potential for architectural thinking and formal urban design, coupled with private capital, to fill this early 21st Century identity void on my subject site. This thinking would apply to similar peripheral zones in other sprawled out cities that have outlived their useful lives.

There is a vacuum of local government in Houston’s periphery, so it is difficult to use regulatory authority to foster change. There is no zoning, no parking ordinance, no city government, and no building department. There is only a signage ordinance, but it is weakly enforced, leaving a chaotic mix of highway billboards interspersed with signs at every imaginable scale, many of them temporary. A series of municipal utility districts (MUDs) each control their own subdivision enclave through homeowners’ associations (HOA’s), enforcing deed covenants,<sup>23</sup> and raising taxes for basic services and maintenance. These MUDs sometimes coalesce to work together, for example in the recent successful implementation of a linear nature park along Cypress Creek. They view these kinds of initiatives

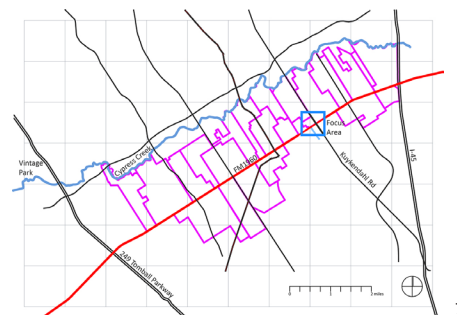


Figure 7: FM1960 Corridor Municipal Utility Districts (MUDs).





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Figure 8: FM1960 Commercial Strip. *The entrance to Ponderosa Forest Subdivision is behind the tall billboard.*

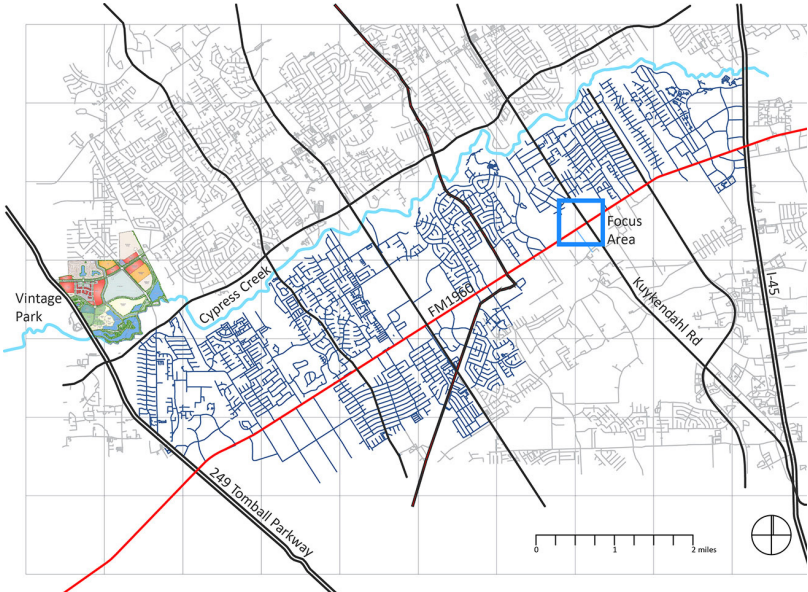
Figure 9: Limit of Ponderosa Forest MUD.

Figure 10: Typical Ponderosa Forest residential street.

Figure 11: 17502 Ponderosa Pines Drive, Ponderosa Forest. *Worth less than \$259,000 in June 2014.*

Figure 12: The FM1960 Corridor. *The focus area is known at the "Concrete Jungle."*

as grass routes steps toward the bringing their edge city to fruition. The FM1960 MUDs and their residents have always felt proudly separate from the city of Houston and they don't want government to dictate their future. They are currently working with the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce and the Houston Galveston Area Council (HGAC) to study strategies to fix the FM1960 commercial strip. Any change will have to come from private development, aided by the establishment of a tax increment reinvestment zone (TIRZ), a means used in Texas to allow public funds to flow into blighted areas.



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The residential enclaves that flank FM1960, with evocative names like Westador, Ponderosa Forest, Greenwood Forest, Olde Oaks, Oak Creek Village, Fountainhead, and Huntwick, remain well administered by their MUDs, and their storybook, reproduction style homes are mostly well maintained. Many of the original 1970's residents, families that were likely to be new arrivals to Texas with employment in the oil and gas industry, have retired, grown up, or moved on. The well-treed streets have a 1970's time capsule quality, but today they are increasingly occupied by a new and diverse demographic with no clear racial majority. Residential property prices have been adversely impacted by the decrepit state of the FM1960 strip, the no mans land that the residents must cross daily to enter their subdivisions, where plantation style mansions now sell for less than \$645/m2 or \$60/sq. ft .

The American strip mall is a rudimentary and ubiquitous typology that once addressed the mid-century primacy of the automobile, but has now been rendered obsolete, after only 60 years, by contemporary shopping patterns dominated by big box retail and Amazon etc. The development industry has not provided what people want along the arterial roads of Houston, which are considered to be blighted eyesores. This poor urban environment contributes to the migration of residents of means to the newest periphery, serially jumping further out every ten years or so to new homes and neighborhoods populated by PLU (people like us). Although the strip mall is no longer deployed in the newest peripheral areas of Houston, but it exists throughout the pre-2000's parts of the city. Recognizing that this not normally seen as a place that architecture can operate, I am proposing that, in certain key areas like the Concrete Jungle at the

FM1960 / Kuykendahl Road intersection, the strip mall be replaced with a genuine formal urbanity.

An interesting 1970's precedent for rethinking the Houstonian commercial strip exists in the initial parts of the Woodlands, designed by landscape architect and planner Ian McHarg. Along the Woodlands' main arterial roads, McHarg implemented the anti-strip, where green completely masks the gray. Given the general ugliness of Houston's public realm, McHarg's reactionary privileging of trees over commercial signage and parking lots is understandable. But the presence of the very same retail mix that is found along every American suburban commercial strip behind a densely forested wall is weird, and it is just as willfully artificial as any more architectural design would have been.<sup>26</sup>

The solution for FM1960 must be to employ an open and variable grid-based linear city form that is able to adapt to changing cultural and economic trends, rather than to propose over-determined and static solutions.<sup>27</sup> Although disconnected residential enclaves, car dependency, and low density are givens in Houston's periphery, the evolution of the FM1960 Corridor into a full-fledged edge city demands higher density, mixed use, and pedestrian oriented public space within its linear interstitial zone.

An urbane solution must first be commercially viable. It must also have quality of architectural design, provide public space, and privilege the street. The diverse local demographic should be embraced, taking the current bright spot of ethnic retail offerings, as a clue. These additional steps do work across purposes to profitability but rather point to a longer outlook, where more value is ultimately added. In Houston, under this no-zoning regime, private capital, (as the sole city builder) has been benefiting from greater regulatory freedom and should be willing to take more responsibility for the public realm. This very traditional strategy is a proven model of urbanity evident in the most valued parts of our cities. Today, with the New Urbanist movement pervading planning practice, this thinking seems commonplace. But new urbanist designs often become just as problematic as modernist schemes when they succumb to the age-old American land use typology of a disconnected, centrifugally focused plot of land, with a use developed in its center, (farm, house, office tower, campus, mall, etc.) and an address on a street primarily tasked with servicing the properties along it.

Just such a new urbanist scheme, Vintage Park,<sup>28</sup> is located at the northwest corner of the FM1960 Corridor. Vintage Park is a well-intentioned but ultimately unsatisfactory master-planned, mixed-use development that includes a retail lifestyle center. The "streets" of Vintage Park are not authentic; their model is Main Street USA. Despite the variation of facades, it is clearly all one building with fake second story windows. The surrounding surface parking lots form a barrier to the actual public streets. It is not fully leased, and the same types of nail salons and massage spas that are found along FM1960 have already moved in. A more integrated, connected, inclusive arrangement is needed. Disregarding the post war period, right through New Urbanism, I would like to posit better, more urbane models drawn from the first half of the 20th Century as well as very recently.

In Kansas City, J. C. Nichols' Country Club Plaza is the main retail element of a 5,000-acre garden city new town built. Begun in 1908, and continuously developed until the present, it has featured mixed-use and higher density from inception and has been able, through constant upgrading, to absorb the growing pre-eminence of the automobile.<sup>29</sup> In Houston, there is the more modest, but



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Figure 13: Intersection at FM1960 and Kuykendahl Rd. *The center of the Concrete Jungle.*

Figure 14: Woodlands Parkway intersection.

Figure 15: Woodlands Parkway commercial strip. *The gray is masked by green.*

Figure 16: Vintage Park lifestyle center, FM 1960 Corridor.

also highly successful Rice Village. Laid out in the 1930's (and under threat today) it accommodates cars with a nonchalant diversity of means, including roof top parking, head-in street parking, and small parking lots. Small walkable blocks and vibrant public streets are key to the characters of Country Club Plaza and Rice Village. In Rice Village the buildings are Individually owned<sup>30</sup>, allowing ethnically and culturally diverse business owners to become property investors. The resulting mix of retail and restaurants is precisely calibrated to the local market in a way that national brands cannot.

In Toronto, Shops at Don Mills,<sup>31</sup> a failing modernist mall built in 1955, originally open air but covered in the 1970's, was uncovered and transformed into a thriving lifestyle center in 2009. Like in the 100-year-old Country Club Plaza, there is a public square, retail streets, small pedestrian friendly blocks, mixed use, density, and minimized surface parking. It is active throughout the day and families gather in the early summer evenings for *la passeggiata* (their evening stroll). The

Also in Toronto, the very popular Pacific Mall<sup>32</sup> bills itself as North America's largest indoor Chinese mall. Dispensing with conventional retail mall planning, it houses a myriad of small family-owned retail businesses, arranged on a vast indoor undifferentiated city-like grid, with streets and no anchor stores. It has a regional draw, even extending into neighboring US states. The Pacific Mall is covered due to Toronto's inclement winter climate. There is no reason that this kind of agglomerated of small retail could not find a home at FM1960 as a partially sheltered outdoor experience, where the existing ethnically diverse businesses could be consolidated into a critical mass, each housed in a commercial condominium unit.

These four models each accept the reality that the automobile still dominates our cities, however they dispense with conventional Post-War retail typologies, where the automobile is given so much importance at the expense urbanity. They all manage to incorporate the most important traditional urbane elements, such as small blocks, streets, diversity, and public space, into new typologies in order to work with the automobile. Rice Village and Pacific Mall (and to some extent Shops at Don Mills) realize success in targeting local markets that are not catered to by the national retail chain leasing system.

#### ENDNOTES:

1. Greater Houston is also known as Houston-The Woodlands–Sugar Land, but referred to simply as Houston here. It includes the city of Houston itself as well as the surrounding metropolitan periphery.
2. "FM" denotes "Farm to Market Road" and it is part of the secondary highway system of Texas. Many FM roads are now found within cities.
3. Lars Lerup, *One Million Acres & No Zoning*, (London: Architectural Association) 2011.
4. Alan Berger, *Drosscape, Wasting Land in Urban America*, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press) 2006
5. Ignasi de Sola-Morales Rubio, "Terrain Vague," *Anyplace*, Cynthia C. Davidson Ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press) 1995.
6. David Kaplan, "No Limits: New image campaign highlights Houston's high points," *Houston Chronicle*, June 3, 2014. The city has tried a number of other image campaigns over the years, including "Houston Proud," "Expect the Unexpected" (1997) and "Houston is Hot"(1990).
7. Joel Warren Barna, *The See-Through Years: Creation and Destruction in Texas Architecture and Real Estate, 1981-1991*, (Houston: Rice University Press), 1992.
8. The Woodlands is a master-planned new town community of about 110,000 situated 45km (28 miles) north of the City of Houston, built by developer George P. Mitchell (1919-2013), and designed by landscape architect and planner Ian McHarg (1920-2001), along environmental principles, from the mid 1970's to the present. Median income: \$121,000 (Houston Average: \$58,000).
9. Sharpstown is a master-planned community in Southwest Houston of about 75,000, begun in the mid 1950's. It was the first automobile centered in Houston and featured the nation's first air-conditioned indoor mall. Median income: \$41,000 (Houston average: \$58,000).
10. Barna, xvii. Developer George Mitchell (Woodlands) is quoted: "Energy is a fast-moving business on pay-out. I have to drill a well every seven years because the well's gone by then, produced out. But if I build a building, it has a forty year life. The long term economics are what make it look interesting."
11. Kitty Calavita, Henry N. Pontell, Robert Tillman, *Big Money Crime: Fraud and Politics in the Savings and Loan Crisis*, (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press) 1997, 2. Nobel Prize winning economist Maurice Allais, who coined the term "casino economy" is quoted.
12. Barna, 31.
13. More recently, there has been a lot of intensification within Houston's inner loop, and property values have risen exponentially.





Figure 17: Rice Village, Houston. *Note the parking on the roof.*



Figure 18: Main square, Shops at Don Mills, Toronto. *The public art is by Douglas Coupland.*



Figure 19: Pacific Mall, Toronto.

14. Houston lead the nation in foreclosures in 1985.
15. Colin Rowe and Fred Keotter, *Collage City*, (Cambridge: MIT Press) 1978, 107.
16. Albert Pope, *Ladders, Architecture at Rice 34* (Houston: Rice School of Architecture, and New York: Princeton Architectural Press), 1996. Rowe and Keotter's interpretation of the urban condition of Houston was greatly expanded by Albert Pope in this 1996 book.
17. Erik Slotboom, *Houston Freeways, a Historical and Visual Journey*, (Cincinnati: Slotboom) 2003.
18. Zachary Oderbrecht Parkway Builders, "Grand Parkway 99, Connecting Communities," [www.grandparkway.com](http://www.grandparkway.com), 2013.
19. Joel Garreau, *Edge City, Life on the New Frontier* (New York: Doubleday) 1991, 211.
20. *ibid*, 211.
21. Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums*, (London; New York: Verso) 2006.
22. Jack Hitt, "The Dollar Store Economy," *New York Times*, August 18, 2011.
23. David Kaplan, "Suburbia Deserta" *The Ephemeral City, Cite Looks at Houston*, Barrie Scardino, William Stern & Bruce Webb, editors (Austin: University of Texas Press) 2003. Deed covenants have a lifespan and must be renewed. They can also stop being enforced or lose their charter, requiring 50% of residents to support reinstatement. These are the sole means for the MUDs to raise funds to maintain common areas of subdivisions.
24. For example, 17502 Ponderosa Pines Dr, in Ponderosa Forest near the Concrete Jungle, is a 421m<sup>2</sup> (4,534 sq ft) 5 bedroom, 4.5 baths mansion, built in 1984, and listed but not sold in 2014 at \$259,000 (\$615/m<sup>2</sup> or \$57/sq. ft.).
25. Some of the key people still involved in the FM1960 Corridor revitalization have since moved out to the newer periphery.
26. Dispensing with McHarg's systems-based environmental architecture, the newest parts of the Woodlands are full-blown New Urbanist, keeping it in line with the latest thinking in planning.
27. Rem Koolhaas, "The Generic City," *Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large: Office for Metropolitan Architecture, Rem Koolhaas, and Bruce Mau*, (New York: Monacelli Press) 1995.
28. [www.thevintagelifestyle.com](http://www.thevintagelifestyle.com). Vintage Park is a 630-acre new urbanist master planned mixed-use development in Northwest Houston, begun in 2004.
29. Geoffrey Baker and Bruno Funaro, *Shopping Centers, Design and Operation*, (New York: Reinhold) 1951, 81-85.
30. At Rice Village, I am talking about the original ten-block core, created in the 1930's. Developers have recently built six new blocks and they are less successful.
31. <http://www.shopsatdonmills.ca>.
32. <http://www.pacificmalltoronto.com>.