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American Planning in the 1990s: Part II, The Dilemma of the Cities

Michael B. Teitz

Introduction

The previous paper in this review of American planning in the 1990s focused on planning as a social activity that is largely driven by development and is therefore oriented to suburban and metropolitan growth (Teitz, 1996). However, while growth and the demands of continuing suburbanisation and exurbanisation may be the most powerful elements of urban development in the US, few people would deny that among the greatest social problems of the country are those found in the inner cities of its metropolitan areas.¹ No review of the current state of planning thought and practice can ignore the extraordinary issues that now face these historic cores and their inner suburbs. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the social stability of the country in the next two decades could turn on how effectively those issues are addressed.

Nonetheless, it will be argued that, for planning in America at the end of the 20th century, the central cities present a paradox. Although the cities are the field's historic source, and important parts of the field continue to pay attention to them, planning's dominant concerns are elsewhere. Thus, many of the most interesting research ideas and a good part of the emergent policy direction for the cities are coming from other sources. Given the national role of urban

problems, this is probably inevitable. Yet, with the declining level of national attention to the cities over the past two decades, one may ask who else will be concerned. For planners who are concerned about the larger missions of the field in social policy and professional practice, this may be a disturbing question.

The purpose of these reviews is not to argue for a specific view of where American planning should be going as it heads into the 21st century and its second century as an organised profession. Even so, examination of the state of the field may be a useful basis for thinking about such questions. How planning addresses the key concerns of its time is likely to be critical for its future. This paper reviews research and writing in the field of urban planning as it relates to economic and community development in the central cities, which this author takes to be a critical set of issues. It will not attempt to cover all issues in which planners are engaged. Notably, lack of space precludes discussion of housing policy. Given the impact of homelessness, this is a serious gap, but such a review would take an entire paper to itself.

The rest of this paper is organised in four parts. Although space will not permit a complete description, the next section will briefly describe the current state of US cities, the

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major economic and social problems that they face and their likely options. It attempts to provide a strategic context for the discussion. Section 3 then takes up the issues of race and poverty, which are critical to understanding current urban problems. It looks at the debates over what those problems really are and how they should be addressed. The following section examines the responses of the cities, together with state and federal governments, to inner-city problems—notably the shifting patterns of local economic development theory and policy and the role of community development. In its final section, the paper draws some conclusions about planning and the central cities, looking towards the future.

The Condition of the Cities

As the tumultuous 20th century comes to a close, it is instructive to consider where planning stands in relation to the historic core cities of US metropolitan areas. In the first decade of the century, when American planning was coming into existence as a formalised and recognised professional activity, the country was far less urbanised, but within the urban areas the cities were dominant. Although suburbanisation was beginning, planning, for the most part, took the city as its field of endeavour. The strand of planning that is rooted in the reformist and progressive responses to the problems of the 19th-century capitalist city, clearly saw its mission to respond to inadequate housing and the problems of poverty, congestion and transport that were so evident, and planners sought to address those problems directly within the urban context.² The very rapidly growing, poor, non-English speaking, immigrant populations were faced with overcrowding, lack of facilities, inadequate incomes, crime and social disorder. A striking feature of American central cities in the 1990s is how many of those issues are still with us.³ They are now compounded by the outcome of a long and complex process of urban economic change and migration from rural to urban areas that has left some inner-city, racial

minority populations, especially African-Americans, in a state of serious deprivation.

The condition of the central cities in the 1990s is decidedly mixed. Some have been prospering; for others, their long-term population decline appears to have slowed, and new sectors have emerged; for still others, conditions are worse than ever. The 1980s saw continuing population decline of as much as 10–15 per cent in many older cities in the north-east, midwest and south, even as their metropolitan areas grew, while newer central cities in the west and south-west were still gaining population (Glickman *et al.*, 1996). A look at the ten largest central cities in 1990 reveals that six of the ten are now in the south or west—Los Angeles, Houston, San Diego, Dallas, Phoenix and San Antonio. These all grew in population by more than 10 per cent over the decade 1980–90, except for Houston, which grew by 2.2 per cent. Of the remaining four—New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia and Detroit—all declined, except for New York City, which grew by 3.5 per cent. Other traditionally notable central cities, such as Boston, St Louis, Pittsburgh and Cleveland, are no longer even among the 20 largest cities in the US, having been replaced by such fast-growing places as San Jose, Jacksonville and Memphis. The most precipitous population declines in the decade occurred mostly among the older, smaller central cities, such as Newark, Pittsburgh and St Louis; Detroit was the only city in the 20 largest to decline by more than 10 per cent. Clearly, when we speak of the central or inner cities in the US, we must now distinguish carefully between those newer cities that are still able to annex land or are able to attract population, and those that are either declining or in a condition of stability or slow growth.

What has accounted for this startling change in fortune over a period of no more than 40 years? Technological change and competition, both regional and international, are clearly part of the story (Glickman *et al.*, 1996; Stegman and Turner, 1996). The manufacturing sectors of the declining cities have been decimated, but even among the fast-

growers there have been only modest increases in manufacturing employment, with some exceptions among the newer urban areas in the south and west of the country, the so-called Sunbelt.⁴ In virtually every central city, the share of total employment accounted for by manufacturing continued to fall in the 1980s. With that loss of manufacturing jobs has come a transformation of both the population and the economic structure. Reflecting the structural shifts that have occurred, the proportion of employment in producer services grew substantially during the decade, even among the most depressed cities. Other service sectors showed modestly rising shares, except for the public sector, where the share generally declined. Business services generally pay well, but the other sectors are quite mixed, with the result that incomes have continued to polarise. Given their high proportions of low-income employment opportunities and workers, central cities are now much poorer and more heavily minority than urban areas in general.

Two major shifts were especially important for central cities in the 1980s. The reverse side of manufacturing decline was the growth of employment in the service sectors. Even in the north-east and midwest, central-city total employment grew in most places during the 1980s, with producer or business services featuring prominently in that growth. In almost all central cities, these sectors increased their share of total employment by 3–5 per cent. New York City, for example, saw its population grow by 3.5 per cent and its total employment grow by 11.6 per cent over the decade, while its manufacturing employment continued to decline. Many observers link this phenomenon with the changing international economy and consequent industrial restructuring that took place (Castells, 1989; Sassen, 1991). In fact, the 1980s were indeed boom years for those 'global' central cities, such as New York, Los Angeles or San Francisco, that were capable of competing for the growing international market in producer services. Office development proceeded apace and their sky-

lines were transformed. When a major recession hit in 1989–90, this would all come to a crashing halt, leaving a difficult legacy of overbuilding for the ensuing years.

Meanwhile, the 1980s saw another critical transformation in the cities, one much less evident, but just as important as the office boom. A new wave of immigration, both legal and illegal, has reshaped the populations of many cities to a degree not seen since the early part of the century. By 1990, in the north-east and west, especially, the proportions of foreign-born residents of central cities grew to over 20 per cent, and in some cases—for example, Los Angeles—the figure exceeded 35 per cent, a 10-point increase over 1980. This is a scale of immigration unseen in the US since the early 20th century. Like those earlier immigrants, many newcomers were from rural areas and were poor and relatively low-skilled. But also like their predecessors, they were willing to work hard for low pay in order to advance, even against great odds (Mueller, 1994). What is missing in this round is the prospect of employment in manufacturing, except in minimum-wage, sweat shops, largely producing garments, which have sprung up in the core areas of cities such as Los Angeles. This has not deterred the immigrants who, like their predecessors, have sought out employment in whatever sectors offered it, notably consumer services, such as tourism and health, and in highly localised trade. Although the issue is debated, there can be little doubt that this influx of cheap labour has affected the prospects of earlier migrants to the cities, particularly, the African-Americans, who came in great numbers from the rural south to the cities in World War II and the succeeding decades. By the 1980s, those and their descendants who had not been able to move out of the cycle of poverty, were in desperate straits.

With the long-term fall in the rate of productivity growth after 1973 and growing inequality of incomes, low-skilled populations have done poorly in the US labour market. Insofar as these populations are also more than proportionately minority and

located in the cities, the result has been catastrophic. Unemployment rates for the cities generally are close to twice those of the suburbs, no matter at what point on the business cycle. Poverty reflects this state of affairs. From its low point of just over 8 per cent in 1973, the total US poverty rate increased to over 12 per cent in 1993.⁵ After some business-cycle-based fluctuations in the 1980s, the poverty rate increased continuously during the first half of the 1990s—reflecting a severe national recession—and showed its first decline only in late 1996. The cities had more than their share of the burden. Central-city poverty rates in 1990 were generally more than double those of the suburbs; for black and Hispanic populations, poverty rates were over 25 per cent and typically four to five times the average suburban rate. This situation has led directly to a continuing debate about the 'underclass', which is discussed at more length below.

In summary, the condition of the inner cities reflects their position within the larger economic environment. For those that have been able to participate effectively in the sectors of growth during the past two decades, the picture is relatively positive. In this, they resemble the suburbs of almost all areas in the US. For those cities that have not been able to participate, the result has been much more problematic. Many of them have found themselves attempting to cope simultaneously with loss of manufacturing employment, rapid immigration and the increasing isolation of the poorest groups within the population. That dilemma has attracted a great deal of attention in the past decade, and it presents major issues for planning.

Poverty, Race and the Inner Cities

Despite, or perhaps because of, the near desperate condition of many inner cities in the 1980s, there has been a resurgence of research and policy interest about questions of poverty. Some important new theoretical positions have been advanced, while older conceptions have been refined and reformu-

lated. These debates have influenced decision-makers and have provided the context of much that planners have thought and done in relation to inner-city problems. However, the direct contribution of planning as a field to the research and debate has been surprisingly small. Nonetheless, because these questions are so important to the field, especially in relation to proposals for practice, their content and significance will be reviewed in this section.

Inner cities, poverty policy and planning in the US have been intertwined throughout the 20th century. From the reform and progressive movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to the War on Poverty, of the Johnson administration in the 1960s, the issue of concentrations of poor and, later, minority populations in the inner cities has been a focus both of analysis and of policy proposals. For our purposes here, the War on Poverty is a critical antecedent. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, there was a remarkable return of awareness of poverty, perhaps in part made possible by the mainstream prosperity that had been experienced since 1945. The story of that period is beyond the scope of this paper, but some important elements need to be noted. First, the debate about the incidence and causes of poverty focused increasingly on the state of populations within the inner cities, where concentrations of poor, largely African-American, minorities were accompanied by rising crime, drug use, welfare dependency, family dissolution, out-of-wedlock births, school drop-out and other behavioural characteristics perceived as social pathologies. Secondly, arguments about causation polarised around the importance of culture and social reinforcement of behaviour that impeded upward mobility within the poverty population, versus structural forces that were preventing the poor from realising their aspirations to gain access to the economic benefits enjoyed by the rest of the population. Foremost among these structural impediments were racism, discrimination, segregation and lack of access to employment opportunities. By and large, the struc-

tural view prevailed as cultural models were discredited. Thirdly, policy proposals also polarised between those aimed at increasing individuals' ability to improve their economic situation ('people' policies), as opposed to those that asserted the need to deal with poverty within the context of the communities within which the poor were living ('place policies').

In the event, the period from the mid 1960s to the early 1970s saw passage and implementation of a wide range of measures, including anti-discrimination laws, employment training measures, expansionary fiscal policy, expansions in entitlement programmes for the elderly and the poor and, importantly for the inner cities, area-focused programmes for community development through the formation of neighbourhood-based institutions. The role of planning as a source of ideas and debate was especially important in this aspect of the War on Poverty, through such writers as Marris and Rein (1967). Planners were involved in the creation of the Community Action Program and the Office of Economic Opportunity, which were the key agency innovations. More generally, planning saw a reawakening of awareness of issues of equity through scholar-advocates, notably Paul Davidoff (1965). The issues of poverty and inner-city neighbourhoods were at the forefront of attention. Even in the face of formidable criticism (Moynihan, 1970), the ideas of community development continued to develop.

Through the 1970s and into the 1980s, debates over poverty policy continued, though during the Reagan-Bush administrations, new initiatives were highly constrained. A key factor was the continuing evidence of deep poverty within the society, as the poverty rate that had fallen from 22 per cent in 1960 to 11 per cent in 1978, reversed itself and began to increase. Even during the time of the declining poverty rate, welfare rolls were still increasing and it was evident that for specific groups, such as single parents and children, poverty was increasing. This was the period of the worst

recession since the 1930s, which produced low points in 1979 and 1981. At the same time, the increasing impact of competition on domestic production contributed to the loss of manufacturing employment discussed above. Deindustrialisation was reducing well-paid employment as whole sectors succumbed to foreign competition. Indirectly, the increasing skill levels that were required in new sectors precluded workers with lower educational levels from competing for jobs. In addition, deindustrialisation had particular force for the inner cities, which not only lost employment to the rest of the world, but also saw the restructured jobs in both old and new sectors locate in the suburbs and the Sun Belt cities. The result was the simultaneous deepening of unemployment and poverty of inner-city, low-income populations, and their increasing isolation from viable employment. William Julius Wilson (1987) was especially influential in his argument for this 'spatial mismatch' hypothesis, which, in his view, was reinforced by the weakening of the social fabric that occurred as those residents who were able to move out of declining neighbourhoods did so. (Wilson was, in fact, resurrecting an idea originally developed by Kain (1968, 1992).) Ironically, that they could leave was due in large part to the success of those aspects of the War on Poverty that had reduced racial discriminatory barriers to employment, particularly in the public sector, while opening better residential opportunities, both within the cities and to a modest extent in the suburbs. Wilson, in what amounted to a partial return to a cultural theory of poverty, argued that economic forces had reduced the employability of inner-city minorities, both through reduction of opportunities and reinforcement of behaviours antithetical to effective competition in the labour market.

This idea fell on fertile ground. In the early 1980s, there had been a resurgence, in new form, of cultural arguments about poverty, especially in conservative critiques of welfare dependency, as creating incentives that were counter to individual economic advancement (Gilder, 1981; Murray, 1984;

Mead, 1986). Despite powerful and well grounded counter-arguments, these ideas deeply affected both federal policy and public opinion, laying the groundwork for the attack on welfare programmes in the 1990s. But, more immediately, they were connected to the emergence of a debate over what was called the 'underclass'. (Most writers on the topic attribute the original usage to Myrdal (1944), whose work remains central to discussions of race in America.)

Whether explained as due to rural origins, family structure and self-reinforcing behaviours (Auletta, 1982; Lemann, 1991), or to isolation and entrapment for structural reasons, especially racism (Glasgow, 1980), the underclass notion of poverty in the 1980s and 1990s focuses on the existence of a part of the population that is out of the economic mainstream. Living in areas that are isolated, segregated and crime-ridden, this population is characterised by low labour market attachment, low educational achievement and a wide range of socially reproved behaviours, such as welfare dependency, drug use, single-parent households and engagement in the underground economy. This is an idea that is very familiar to anyone who has read the writings of late-19th-century reformers, whose mixture of concern and disapproval is so reminiscent of current views. However, there are differences. One is the existence of welfare support as an option, albeit under heavy pressure with the welfare reform legislation passed in 1996. The second difference is the existence of strong critical voices, against the underclass idea, which are discussed below. Nonetheless, the influence of the underclass discussion on politics and policy in the 1980s and 1990s is undeniable, and the debate continues (Jencks and Peterson, 1991).

In this critical debate, not just about national poverty policy, but also centrally about the inner cities, it might have been expected that researchers and practitioners in planning would have played a considerable role. Since its emergence, the underclass concept has attracted enormous attention, both in support and in opposition. The his-

tory of planning, both early on and during the period of the War on Poverty would suggest that many planners would find the idea ideologically unacceptable, and indeed they did. However, the work of the field largely ignored the debate altogether. Virtually no major planning journal gave the underclass much attention and there has been remarkably little published research on the issues that it raises, despite their relevance to the future of the older inner cities. The work has been carried out primarily by sociologists, economists, political scientists and others.

It is interesting to explore this phenomenon from two directions, namely, critiques of the underclass idea, and the search for adequate alternatives. There has been an avalanche of criticisms of the underclass idea. Gans (1990) was one of the earlier people to discuss it critically in the planning literature, arguing that it was, once again, a way of stigmatising and blaming the poor. That theme that was taken up at more length by Goldsmith and Blakely (1992) in their book, which argued a structuralist position, and in a set of invited editorials in the *Journal of the American Planning Association* (Hartman, 1994; Grigsby, 1994; Mier, 1994; Cordova, 1994). Nonetheless, substantial research on the issue in planning is thin.⁶ Criticism of the underclass idea was made most effectively by a sociologist, Katz (1989 and 1993), drawing on a line of thought that manifested itself very strongly in the 1970s. Apart from Goldsmith and Blakely (1992), Galster and Hill's (1992) collection of pieces on the issue provides the broadest look at the idea from a planning perspective, arguing that segregation into poorer schools reduces employment opportunities and contributes to a vicious circle of inadequate performance and reinforcement of underclass behaviours that, in turn, reinforce the discriminatory attitudes of the majority. In that collection, the essays by Rickets (1992a, 1992b) provide an especially clear and brief overview of the nature and causes of the underclass. Nevertheless, like him, most of the contributors are from other fields. In general, the planning literature is not extensive. There have been a

number of case studies of specific cities, such as Squires *et al.* (1987) on Chicago, and Darden *et al.* (1987) on Detroit, but their influence was modest.

Alternatives to the underclass idea tend to focus on two main themes. The first is the cluster of ideas around the structural economic explanation for inner-city concentrations of deep poverty, exemplified by Wilson's (1987) spatial mismatch hypothesis. Wilson, building on earlier work by Kain (1968), argued that underclass African-American youth, especially, were cut off from employment opportunities by continuing housing market discrimination and the suburbanisation of new employment. Kasarda (1985, 1989, 1993) was also a major contributor to this argument through his extensive empirical research. Spatial mismatch has not been a universally accepted view. However, Kain (1992), in a masterly review of the issue, generally finds empirical support for the idea, despite the passage of 30 years. Depending on one's point of view, Wilson may be seen either as a supporter or an opponent of the underclass idea. His explanation emphasises the structural causes of inner-city unemployment, but he does not condone the behaviours that reinforce its persistence. Since the original work, he has continued to plough this ground, with his most recent work emphasising the need for public intervention to support employment training and access to suburban employment opportunities for the inner-city poor (Wilson, 1996). The structural economic explanation of inner-city poverty, which sees the underclass phenomenon as the result of profound changes in access to employment, seems now to be dominant, with a concomitant view of the associated behavioural traits as expressed in HUD's *Shaping the Cities* report:

With the outmigration of jobs, employed residents, community leaders and institutions, many inner-city neighborhoods were left with only the permanently unemployed and unemployable, a permanent underclass trapped by structural changes in the Americans economy. Seeing little hope

of gaining entry to mainstream opportunities, many of these people turned to the underground economy to survive; thus, seemingly deviant behavior became the community norm. (Glickman *et al.*, 1996, p. 50)

Wilson's response to this is to call for a massive programme to retrack ghetto youth towards education and the labour market (Wilson, 1996). Despite the fact that he is seen as a conservative by those on the left, this approach does not appeal to conservatives, who would reject 'seemingly' in the notion of deviant behaviour in the quotation above. So the spatial mismatch argument is rejected by both ends of the spectrum.

Beyond the economic explanations are those that seem to turn back toward the radical, structural arguments of the 1960s and 1970s that insisted on the primacy of race as a factor in the perpetuation of inequality in the US. In planning, this is the theme of Goldsmith and Blakely (1992), but it is more powerfully argued by Massey and Denton (1993) who argue from a substantial empirical analysis that discrimination and resultant racial segregation remain the single most powerful factor generating inner-city urban poverty. Their analysis countered Wilson's assertion of the importance of the loss of role models for black youth because of a major out-migration of middle-class, African-American households from the ghettos. Furthermore, they found that the manufacturing job losses led to increased poverty only in the context of racial segregation. Efforts to sort out the effect of race, let alone discrimination, on the conditions of urban poverty have not been as frequent in planning as one might expect from the importance of the problem. One of the few studies in planning that actually try to do this (Gibson, 1996), explicitly attempts to compare the life-chances of black and white poor in two metropolitan areas. The problem is a very difficult one, but her results suggest that racial discrimination may still be a significant factor, though within a larger economic set of forces.

At this point, it seems that the issue of inner-city poverty reflects larger ideological tensions in American life. For the left, the suggestion that social pathology exists and that it may contribute to the manifest problems of inner-city neighbourhoods is still fiercely resisted as labelling and 'blaming the victims' of systemic forces of capitalism and racial discrimination (Cordova, 1994). For the right, the same problems are blamed on long-term welfare dependency and a self-reinforcing culture that can only be changed by draconian measures. Added to this is the recent return of what looks like early 20th-century racial eugenics in writers such as Herrnstein and Murray (1994). The centre has undoubtedly shifted rightward over the past decade, as evidenced by a Democratic president's endorsement of welfare reform, despite the vehement opposition of liberals within his own party. Nonetheless, it is probably fair to say that policy analysts in this area are generally closer to Wilson's view of the world than to most others, with perhaps some convergence. Kasarda and Ting's (1996) careful empirical analysis indicates that both structural and cultural-political factors are operating together. However, as Galster (1995, pp. 59ff) notes, while the 1990s wind down, ideologues are faced with some difficult demographic facts. Urban poverty is increasingly spatially concentrated, and it is growing among children in single-parent, female-headed households. 'Tough' welfare policies may have long-term beneficial effects, but their outcome is uncertain and the negative impact on children very real. Recent national policy decisions curbing welfare suggest that the mainstream is willing to take that risk, but it is not likely to bear the cost. In any event, planning has contributed little to the debate.

Planning and Inner-city Policy

The apparent absence in planning literature of research contributing to the debates about the nature and causes of inner-city poverty problems does not mean that the field has ignored the cities in practice. Although

almost always working in conjunction with other fields, planners have clearly been involved in most of the major programme and policy initiatives toward the inner cities that have been undertaken in the past decade. Two policy areas will be discussed in this section, namely, local economic development and community development. These ideas are clearly related to one another, but they are carried into practice with very different intellectual bases and institutional structures. Economic development has emerged in the past two decades as a major function of states and cities in the US in response to broad changes in the economy. It is an important phenomenon in its own right and, for the cities, is especially critical for central business district development. Community development focuses much more on populations in poverty and is more closely connected with the inner cities. Each of these activities is more or less uneasily related to planning.

The Cities and Economic Development

One of the most striking characteristics of urban policy in the past decade has been the emergence of local economic development as a major sphere of interest and activity. Although states and cities in the US have engaged in efforts to promote and expand their economies since the beginning of the Republic, this activity was generally not undertaken explicitly by government. Rather, dominant local economic business interests were generally able to secure their objectives through coalitions that could shape political outcomes. Of course, during periods of crisis, such as the Great Depression, public intervention did occur, but it was not until after World War II that systematic local intervention through the mechanism of urban renewal became institutionalised. Even then, it was done in the name of slum clearance rather than economic development *per se*. Eisinger (1988) makes a good case that there was a significant change after the mid 1970s, largely as a result of the new competitive pressures upon local economies that

accompanied the opening of American markets to imports and the long-term slackening in growth of productivity. The localised collapse of manufacturing employment stimulated a search for alternatives, sometimes at any cost. At the same time, the federal government, which had intervened extensively through the War on Poverty in the 1960s, was withdrawing from major budgetary commitments to the cities and states in favour of expanding individual entitlement programmes.⁷

Three features of the emergent state and local economic development activity should concern us here. First, it was ushered in under the banner of a new conceptual basis that was appealing to planning. Secondly, it explicitly sought to engage local governments as active participants in development through partnership arrangements. Thirdly, it was accompanied, for the first time, by the creation of institutional structures that sought to professionalise economic development activity. All three of these features were visible in the central cities.

The traditional approach to local economic development in the US relied on the idea that growth required inward capital investment to develop local resources, utilise local labour and create sales to non-local markets. Local economic base analysis was, in fact, a simple pre-Keyensian export multiplier developed in planning practice. The stimulation of and support for inward investment was primarily seen as a function of local business organisations, such as chambers of commerce, and of real estate interests. The role of government was to provide the infrastructure for development, especially residential, and to maintain a favourable local 'business climate' by keeping taxes low. When necessary, incentives for the attraction of a new firm could be offered by providing property tax abatements in various forms. Notwithstanding a long series of efforts by regional economists to discredit the use of tax incentives, this view of local development continued to dominate local political perceptions of appropriate policy. In the 1980s, the business attraction strategy did not disappear; if anything, com-

petition among localities for new branch plants rose to higher levels, stimulating new interest (Loveridge, 1996). Incentives have even seen some intellectual support (Bartik, 1991). However, the traditional view was challenged by a set of ideas that might be called the 'new local economic development' (Eisinger, 1988; Blakely, 1989; Teitz, 1994).

In essence, the new conceptual structure argued that localities faced with economic difficulties had to turn to their own resources; that viable economic activity needed to be based in the creation of new local enterprises; and that the key to such development lay in the active participation of local governments in partnership with the private sector. This endogenous growth—or, in Eisinger's (1988) terminology, 'demand-side'—message was attractive to planners, reinforcing their tradition of local action. It also appealed to those states and localities, particularly the inner cities, where there seemed to be little prospect of attracting major investments such as Japanese auto assembly plants that were being located on greenfield sites in non-traditional manufacturing locations such as Tennessee. Whether, the new framework would actually lead to economic development was undemonstrated, but the arguments of Eisinger (1988), Blakely (1989) and others were widely read and discussed. Relatively few studies have actually attempted to measure the extent to which cities have adopted these ideas, but there are clear indications that they have penetrated practice (Reese and Fasenfest, 1996).

Especially appealing was the notion of partnership between local governments and business in the process of local economic development. This idea had been given currency in the federal Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) programme, put into place during the Carter presidency in the late 1970s. Under the UDAG programme, the federal government provided funds for local economic development projects that were to be leveraged by private investment in partnership with local governments.⁸ Rich (1992, pp. 168–169) argues that, despite its termin-

ation, the UDAG programme was very important in moving urban economic development into a partnership mode and away from simple tax incentives. However, as Mollenkopf (1983) has shown, the idea that local governments should become active participants in the process of development, in what he called the "pro-growth coalition", had already emerged from the changing economic circumstances and evolving politics of the cities in the 1970s. As we shall see, this posed interesting issues for planning. Certainly, not all planners were sanguine about the idea (Fulton, 1989; Peiser, 1990).

The third element of the evolution of local economic development is its institutionalisation and professionalisation within government and in non-governmental organisations (Visser and Wright, 1996; Blakely, 1996). As economic development became more generally recognised as a part of local government activity, so the question of its placement within the governmental structure arose, and its participants began to form quasi-professional organisations. For planning, this has raised a number of issues, particularly, over what the functional and organisational relationship of planning and economic development should be within government. The outcome is by no means clear. Functionally, the two are often in conflict, as citizens use the planning process to slow down or block development, or as developers seek to override planning constraints. Organisationally, in some cities, economic development and planning are separate departments; in others, economic development resides in the mayor's office, reflecting the importance of high-level interaction in the pro-growth coalition politics; in still others, planning and economic development have been subsumed into larger departments, often also including urban redevelopment agencies. What is evident, is that planning and economic development in the 1990s are intimately related in tension as well as in mutual support.

This is also apparent in the professionalisation of economic development. Although

there is, as yet, no formal profession, its practitioners are being formally trained in planning, business administration and public policy schools, among others (Visser and Wright, 1996). Planning schools, in particular, have developed curricular and teaching positions in the area, often supplementing and extending what was traditionally seen as regional development. Texts and handbooks have been written (Blakely, 1989; Blair, 1995; Lyons and Hamlin, 1991). Professionally, economic development practice is supported by what has become a significant journal, *Economic Development Quarterly*, which offers both theoretical and practice oriented papers from a range of disciplines.⁹ Organisations of state and local economic development practitioners have been expanding in a fashion that is a familiar feature of emergent professions in the US. In short, this is now an important professional element both within and outside planning, comparable in its development to the emergence of environmental planning.

For the older central cities, local economic development is especially important. Faced with serious economic problems, they have grasped at nostrums of all kinds, often with disappointing results.¹⁰ However, the challenge of economic development is complex. On the one hand, elected officials are striving to overcome the dominant images of poverty and its associated ills, which leads them to seek development that will 'turn the city around'—a euphemism for bringing back middle-class population. To do this, they have emphasised the development of advanced sectors and central business district renewal. On the other hand, they must respond to the needs and political demands of impoverished groups, who clamour for equitable outcomes, especially through community development. Trying to square this circle is not easy. Both thrusts have generated very interesting responses in planning, epitomised by central business district development and community development. In the remainder of this section, we will examine recent literature on each of these.

Planning and Central Business District Development

In the 1980s, the pattern of inner-city public involvement with economic development described by Mollenkopf (1983) continued and intensified to a remarkable degree. The boom of the 1980s produced a huge amount of new office construction. Although the largest amount of office development actually took place in suburban metropolitan locations, a substantial quantity went into older central city cores. It is estimated that between 1980 and 1984, more space was built in the central cities of the 33 largest metropolitan areas than in any of the three preceding decades (Rich, 1992, p. 168). Along with offices, there were new hotels, retail complexes, convention centres, and cultural facilities. It has been argued that these capital flows mainly resulted from a combination of international investment and the growth of information services (Castells, 1989; Sassen, 1991). In some instances, such as New York City, the downtown skyline was transformed by a burst of building that increased total office space by upwards of 30 per cent in the decade (Fainstein, 1994, p. 34). Even in the most depressed cities, such as Newark, new downtown buildings were constructed, often for the first time in many years.

This intense growth was accompanied by several types of planning analysis and some debate about the role of planning (Peiser, 1990; Robertson, 1995). At the large theoretical scale, planning researchers such as Castells (1989) and Sassen (1991) sought to understand the sources of growth in the informational mode of development and growing spatial integration and specialisation of production. Their work was accompanied by an eruption of research cutting across planning and geography, by those—such as Scott (1993a; 1993b) and Storper and Walker (1989)—who attempted to make sense of the complex changes in urban functioning that were underway, linking change to larger forces at work.

At the level of urban development pro-

cesses, writers such as Fainstein (1994), Frieden and Sagalyn (1990) and Pagano and Bowman (1995) have been trying to unravel the complexities of the public-private relationships in development. Their work, too, has generally aimed to analyse the character of the new processes that were appearing in cities all over the world. The similarities and contrasts between major cities were a source of great attention, notably by Fainstein (1994). At the level of economic development policy, the growth spurt also induced new debate about the equity issues involved in central business district growth (Krumholz and Forester, 1990; Keating and Krumholz, 1991), which will be discussed further in the next section. Downtown development's effectiveness as a strategy for public investment also saw considerable debate, both at the broad policy level (Frieden, 1990; Frieden and Sagalyn, 1990; Sagalyn, 1990) and for specific types of investment (Fenich, 1994). Finally, at the level of practice, there were planning issues of urban design and infrastructure investment, among others (Robertson, 1993). Within planning, this activity created new employment opportunities calling for real estate and project development skills and training (Dowall, 1990).

In the late 1980s, most of this large-scale, central-city development simply stopped. Faced with serious fiscal problems, cities did their best to cope, but in fact were able to do little. Nonetheless, initiatives have continued to be put forward. Many of them appear to take on symbolic importance, notably public support for the expansion or construction of sports stadiums, as cities try to prevent professional sports teams from moving.¹¹ Despite the widespread scepticism among analysts as to the economic efficacy of such public investments, local politicians and administrators in cities and suburbs, both old and new, seem to be transfixed by the alleged value of major professional sports franchises (Shropshire, 1995). In some places, this has been supplemented by efforts to create gambling enterprises, in what seems to be a kind of fatalism about the prospect of attracting or developing any other basis for employment.

However, not all are turning to these desperation measures. Reporting on a survey of local officials (Clarke and Gaile, 1990), Clarke (1991) found that entering the 1990s, most of them were broadening their strategies and looking for more indigenous growth and smaller, lower cost projects. It suggests that the new economic development conceptions are beginning to take hold.

Even though the cities are, in many respects, on their own, the sense that the central city is a critical component of metropolitan development has not disappeared. There has been a growth of interest in the relations between central cities and their metropolitan areas, spurred partly by David Rusk's (1993) analysis of 'elastic' cities, those that are able to expand their boundaries, which appear to coincide with better metropolitan performance in general. Research by Savitch *et al.* (1993) and Schwartz (1993) supports this idea in the broad sense, as does the work of Lewis (1996) which analyses the effect of political fragmentation on the economic performance of central cities and metropolitan areas. However, the issue is still open, as is evident by the finding of Blair and Zhang (1994) that apparent correlation between central-city viability and metropolitan performance may be affected by other factors and therefore less important than suggested by other researchers.

In retrospect, central business district economic development planning in the inner cities seems to have been more a function of the building boom than anything else. As a result, planners are now wiser about development, with the scars to show how they have learned. Cities are still looking for investment, but are finding little. Much of the literature, however, seems rather detached. Even such powerful studies as Fainstein's (1994) do not seem to lead to convincing policy conclusions. On the other hand, studies by scholars with a more explicitly professional outlook, such as Robertson's (1995), seem rather remote from the economic realities of development. We know a lot more about how the process worked in

this boom, but will it be the same the next time? Cities are likely to continue to attempt to reinforce their downtowns for all the reasons that they have traditionally done so, but in future they will face increasing opposition from other claimants on local resources.

Planning and Community Development

If planners appeared to be less engaged than other groups in the debate about the underclass, it may be because those among them who are actively involved with the inner cities were already deeply committed. As described above, part of that commitment was to central business district development and large projects. However, there has also been a long stream of work in planning devoted to the issues of the poor and community development. Much of that engagement since the time of the War on Poverty in the 1960s has focused on neighbourhood or community development, largely through the medium of local organisations and community development corporations (CDCs) (Vidal, 1995; Boothroyd and Davis, 1993). That work continues. However, the past two decades have seen the growth of a community development perspective, generally known as 'equity planning', which incorporates a larger view, extending to the city and the region. This section will review equity planning and community development in the context of inner-city problems.

Equity planning has its roots in the 1960s with the rediscovery among planners of advocacy for the disadvantaged, most closely associated with Paul Davidoff (1965) and Chester Hartman. (See Metzger (1996) for an excellent and comprehensive review of equity planning.) That advocacy, however, with its strong redistributive intent and talk of 'guerrillas in the bureaucracy', was generally seen as being in opposition to the organised and institutionalised forces of government and planning, and therefore requiring separate community-based institutions for its legitimacy. Often it was substantially Marxist in tenor. However, in 1969, the appointment of Norman Krumholz as plan-

ning director for Cleveland by its first African-American mayor Carl Stokes, led to the definition of an institutionalised form of planning practice that focused on the poor and worked explicitly with community organisations. This effort culminated in the *Cleveland Policy Planning Report* (Cleveland City Planning Commission, 1975) which was widely discussed. Subsequently, Krumholz, who became an academic, has worked with a group of other planning scholars and advocates to pursue actively the idea of engaging government in a planning mission that recognises the necessity of serving the poor and disadvantaged. While redistributionist in aim, this effort was politically and ideologically pragmatic, reflecting much more the American Progressive tradition, though many of its participants are further leftward on the ideological spectrum (Krumholz and Forester, 1990; Krumholz and Clavel, 1994; Krumholz, 1994; Clavel, 1994; Mier, 1993). From their work, most of the ideas associated with equity planning or, in a slightly different variation, progressive planning, have emerged.

From the perspective of economic development and the aggressive pursuit of employment opportunities for minorities and the poor, the equity planning experience of Chicago during the brief administration of Mayor Harold Washington from 1983 to his untimely death in 1987 is critical. Washington appointed Robert Mier as economic development commissioner (Giloith and Wiewel, 1996). Mier, whose recent death has cost planning one of its most influential and productive scholar-practitioners, led a group that sought to reorientate the city's economic development strategy away from downtown and large projects and towards the needs of the poor and neighbourhood residents (Mier, 1993). The Chicago Development Plan (City of Chicago, 1984) embodied this conception, placing job opportunities as its one of its four central goals. Under Mier's guidance, the city created industry task forces to focus on local business development and retention, and worked closely with community development corporations to develop local busi-

ness opportunities (Clavel and Wiewel, 1991). Given that this occurred during the period of huge downtown office expansion, the redirection of policy was quite remarkable, though perhaps made fiscally possible by that growth. With the death of Mayor Washington, Chicago politics reverted largely to its previous style, but a considerable legacy has been left, both for theory and practice of equity planning, as other cities, such as Berkeley, California, Boston, and Burlington, Vermont, moved in that direction.

Research on equity planning has been extensive, but it mostly takes the form of case studies and it is difficult to draw aggregate conclusions (Clavel, 1986; Krumholz and Clavel, 1994; Simmons, 1996). By the early 1990s, many of the equity planners had moved on from their cities and the idea's future is hard to gauge. Although it is firmly established in planning education and is influencing practice (Metzger, 1996, p. 115), there are considerable problems for equity planners in practice (Simmons, 1996; Krumholz, 1994). However, two events in this decade have refocused the attention of planning on community development in the central cities. The first was the Los Angeles riots and the second was the return of the federal government to community development.

The riots in Los Angeles in April 1992 gave new prominence to the black underclass, as well as reminding people that racial black-white tensions in US cities continued to be critical, and awaking them to inter-ethnic hostility as an important element in the inner city (Baldassare, 1994, pp. 3-5; Pastor, 1995). In their suddenness, and in the extent of property destruction far beyond ghetto boundaries, the riots generated renewed attention to their underlying causes as well as ideological debate about their meaning and appropriate nomenclature (Johnson *et al.*, 1992; Johnson *et al.*, 1994).¹² A flurry of measures followed the riots, notably the formation of Rebuild LA, an organisation intended to bring the private sector deeply into the process. It was largely

unsuccessful, but a considerable amount of new capital investment, both public and private, found its way into the troubled area. Whether the city's government has shown an effective response is debatable (Regalado, 1990), but the riots certainly influenced the federal government.

The return of the federal government to inner-city community development was undoubtedly accelerated by the riots, but it was more directly associated with the election of President Clinton, the first Democrat in the White House since Jimmy Carter's departure in 1980. Even before the election, Henry Cisneros, who was to become the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), had issued a call to the National Conference of the American Planning Association for urban policies addressing the inner cities (Cisneros, 1989). Donna Shalala, who would become Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, had also addressed the urban issue (Shalala and Vitullo-Martin, 1989). Even so, it was clear from the beginning of the administration, that concern with the budget deficit and fiscal austerity would not permit any new large-scale urban initiatives. What emerged in 1993, was a new programme calling for 'empowerment zones' (Snow, 1995). This place-based programme combined some aspects of the idea of the enterprise zone concept (Green, 1990), favoured by conservatives, with a community development approach favouring non-profit organisations and local decision-making. As will be discussed below, it reflects a return to concern for community and community development organisations that goes far beyond the federal government. The programme's nominal funding was \$3.5bn, most of which is in the form of tax credits for employment generation, together with existing programme resources that were to be retargeted and coordinated (Snow, 1995, pp. 187–188). The aim of the programme was to return to place-targeting of the poorest cities and neighbourhoods, but—in accord with the tougher rhetoric of the Clinton administration—localities would have to compete for a small

number of awards by demonstrating not only how bad were their problems, but also how effective were their networks of local organisations. In the event, politics played its normal role of diluting programmes intended to concentrate resources geographically.¹³ In 1994, six urban Empowerment Zones were selected, together with two Supplementary Zones, three rural Empowerment Zones and 95 urban and rural Enterprise Communities, the latter being eligible for smaller levels of new funding. Interestingly, Los Angeles, which by that time had elected a nominally non-partisan, but actually Republican, Mayor, and allegedly had made little effort in its application, received only Supplementary Zone status (Boyle, 1995). Competing for Empowerment Zone status mobilised planners in many cities, including some, such as Detroit, an eventual winner, that had had deep problems, both before and during the process (Thomas, 1995). Those difficulties appear to have persisted for many cities during implementation, but there is little hard evidence of the effectiveness of the programme at this time.

Important as the Empowerment Zone programme is as an indicator of federal re-engagement with the cities, its underlying conceptual framework, in what is usually called community development, is perhaps even more important (Dreier, 1996; Vidal, 1995; Bendick and Egan, 1993). Over the decades since World War II, inner-city policy has had a curious on-again, off-again relationship with the idea of community. During the War on Poverty, it was a key concept for urban policy, resulting in the formation of large numbers of local community development corporations, many of which continue to exist. Under subsequent Republican administrations, a combination of belief in individual initiative and blaming the poor, reduced federal involvement and place-based programmes. Neighbourhood planning organisations and CDCs survived through hard times, albeit with an ambiguous message about development, since they had been service delivery organisations and local control frequently means opposition to any

change (Wenocur, 1991; Marquez, 1993).¹⁴ Since the 1980s, the idea of community—both in a larger sense and as a part of urban policy—has seen a rejuvenation with key works by Castells (1983), Bellah *et al.* (1985 and 1992) and Etzioni (1993), while the related concept of social capital has been widely discussed through the work of Putnam (1993).¹⁵ Morris (1996) provides a very useful review of urban community, showing its relationship to the idea of community organisation and development, which are central in the present context. It appears that this idea is generating new interest among many influential groups in American society.

The question of whether community development can make a significant, long-term difference to populations in deep poverty is complex and difficult. Vidal (1992) gives a guardedly optimistic assessment; others, for example Marquez (1993), are less sanguine. He points out that although individual CDCs may be very effective, in the absence of continued subsidy, they are forced to adapt into a survival mode and their impact on community problems is diminished. It appears that a new round of research on community development is now occurring. CDCs have previously been studied (Vidal, 1992) and, like that earlier wave, the newer work tends to emphasise case studies, seeking out organisations that innovate and provide potential models for replication. Among such exemplary cases are the Center for Employment Training (CET) in San Jose, California, Cooperative Home Care Associates (CHCA) in Chicago, which is a worker-owned business, and the South Shore Bank in Chicago, with its numerous spin-offs.

It is unlikely that community development could survive on public-sector support alone in this era. Thus, support from foundations is critical. Among the major foundations, such as Ford and Annie E. Casey, there is a resurgence of interest in promoting a new round of support for what Giloth (1995) calls “targetted economic development”. Although incorporating community development as a key element, its proponents see

this as focusing on employment and income for the disadvantaged. Thus it combines

employment training, human services, and enterprise development to enhance access to and creation of jobs, careers, and self-sufficiency for the disadvantaged. (Giloth, 1995, p. 280)

This approach clearly has much in common with the new economic development, while also representing an expansion of community economic development as it has been done by CDCs. At the same time, there is increasing attention being paid to the potential power of networking among CDCs, developing out of research on such networks in regional development (Saxenian, 1994 and 1996; Putnam, 1993; Indergaard, 1996). Whether networking is simply another hoped-for nostrum to produce effective community-based involvement remains to be seen.

In many ways, the recent resurgence of federal interest in community development is encouraging. Although tempered by hard experience and limited by fiscal stringency, it shows that some attention is being paid to the dire situation of the populations of the older inner cities. Whether the effort will succeed is uncertain, but the condition of the poor in the central cities surely merits the attempt. This effort also may reinvigorate both the community development movement and the contribution of planning to the crisis of the inner city.

Conclusion

This review of planning and the central city is necessarily incomplete. It does not deal with some important aspects of inner-city development. Housing continues to be a salient feature of urban policy, though fading at the federal level, and the issues of housing segregation, quality and cost remain central for the poor in many cities (DeParle, 1996). Public transport is in a continuing state of fiscal stress as revenues cannot keep up with costs. Infrastructure is deteriorating and not replaced. Nonetheless, I would argue that

each of these familiar and historical problems of the cities depends ultimately on the issues that are central to the review—namely, the failing economies of the older cities, the disastrous condition of large portions of their populations, and the responses to those issues.

Looking forward to the next century, it is difficult to be optimistic. Despite the renewed attention of policy-makers and researchers, the problems are not new and they have proved to be stubbornly resistant to change. It is true that the politics of the past decade have produced a real shift in public willingness to challenge what had been untouchable policies and programmes. But, insofar as that willingness consists mainly of cutting welfare payments without concomitant improvements in education and employment opportunity for disadvantaged people, it is not evident how it can change behaviour or raise productivity and incomes. Effective urban policy, either federal, state or local, remains elusive. Overall, the record of planning has been little better than that of any other profession in addressing inner-city issues. In some respects, notably the disasters of public housing and urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s, it is worse, clearly contributing to the process of deterioration. However, it may be fair to say that planners did learn from those errors. Planners also learned much from rethinking local economic development and from the community development efforts of the 1960s through the 1980s. Though they did not discover how to make community economic development effective, there can be no doubt that local communities, even of the poor, now have a stronger voice in the planning and development process. In the 1980s, planning began to understand better the mechanisms of public participation in large-scale development, but that knowledge cannot be utilised unless there is development, which is hardly the case now, and is unlikely to be the case in the near future.

In the 1990s, American cities seem to be groping for approaches that will work in what seems to be a new economic environ-

ment. This is leading them often to grasp at quick or temporary solutions to fiscal problems, for which they will pay in due course. However, some are also looking seriously at the basic requirements for a productive local economy and population. Even though unproven in practice, the new ideas in economic development do avoid the worst mistakes of the old—they suggest caution in investment, looking hard at the outcomes for local people, and thinking about ways to improve skills or to take advantage of local assets. These are not trivial in economic development, a realm in which wishful fantasy often seems to overcome common sense. But the new ideas also have their shibboleths. If community development means ignoring economic reality, then its advocates, too, will fail. Can anything else save the cities? In the absence of a major shift in social and political attitudes, the federal government is unlikely to provide major new resources. For a few cities, the global theoreticians' predicted return of the value of centrality might make an enormous difference, if it comes to pass. For some cities, immigration may give a boost driven by the energy of new populations, though tensions and problems will come too. As for the rest—the smaller, formerly industrial subcentres—they will either continue to decay or they will have to rely mostly on themselves for salvation. For that purpose, a doctrine of endogenous development may not be the worst basis for planning.

Notes

1. The terms inner city and central city will be used interchangeably in this paper, referring to that part of the metropolitan area, as defined by the US Census, that includes the historic core cities and older, inner suburbs.
2. It should be noted that this early reform impulse in planning did not dominate the field's development and agenda in the succeeding decades. Nonetheless, it has remained an important part of planning's ethos and self-image, rising and receding at different periods (Hall, 1988).
3. The *New York Times* (9 October 1996, pp. A1, A14–A15), has recently devoted a major

- series of articles to housing in the City, particularly noting the similarities to late-19th-century conditions.
4. Most of the data in this section are drawn from the US Census as reported in HUD's *State of the Cities* report (Glickman *et al.*, 1996). Data for the cities here refer only to the central city of each metropolitan area.
 5. The poverty rate is the proportion of the population falling below a minimum real standard of living defined by the federal government.
 6. Planners have long been opposed to racism, and some have written about it very effectively—for example Mier (1994), Goldsmith and Blakely (1992) and Blakely's (1992, 1994) superb but pessimistic review articles. In many respects, Blakely, Mier and Krumholz have been the conscience of the field. However, in recent years, some planners' research has focused more narrowly on the profession—for example, Hoch (1993).
 7. Through changes such as linkage of social security to inflation and support of health care for the elderly through Medicare, federal expenditures shifted decisively towards individual entitlements. When budgetary pressures grew, these could not be politically restrained.
 8. It is interesting to note that a version of this programme was essentially adopted by Britain shortly thereafter and remained in place long after its abandonment in the US.
 9. Planners appear to be turning increasingly to specialised publications such as *Economic Development Quarterly* or *Housing Policy Debate* when writing about inner-city issues.
 10. Over the past three decades, for example, the city of Oakland has failed in attempts to subsidise a downtown shopping centre, an historic district, a major hotel and, most recently, an ice rink.
 11. The attraction of professional sports teams is an enduring topic that continues to mesmerise city officials despite negative analyses (Baade and Dye, 1988). Recent discussions have noted that relatively even regional franchises are attracting attention with, perhaps, even less economic basis than national franchises (Rosentraub and Swindell, 1991; Johnson, 1991); but the issue remains in some dispute (Blair, 1992).
 12. Among different groups, terms used to describe the Los Angeles events include 'riots', 'uprising', 'rebellion' and 'civil unrest'. Given the complex nature of the occurrence, the diverse participants and their varied motives, all might be invoked.
 13. This has been an historical feature of federal place-based programmes for economic development since at least the efforts of the Area Redevelopment Administration to create growth poles in the 1960s.
 14. Their public nadir may have been the publication in the *New York Times* of a widely cited critique of the whole concept (Lemann, 1994), but the tide was already turning.
 15. Putnam's work dealt with Italy, but subsequently he has written extensively about what he perceives as the decline in social capital in the US (Putnam, 1995 and 1996).

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