

D5 - Back to the Biped: The Pedestrian Reorientation of Our Environments.

Presentation # 1 title: Pedestrian Green Wave

Presenter:

Jody Rosenblatt Naderi - Texas A&M University

Abstract

The Pedestrian Green Wave Project is a research collaboration between landscape architects and traffic engineers exploring a temporal design approach to creating kilometer long walks in the city designed for contemplation and renewal. The walking pace and timing of lights can be orchestrated to create opportunities for pedestrians to take a long uninterrupted walk through city streets by adjusting the timing so that they are 'hitting the green lights' all the way. Historically, this mechanism in traffic engineering has been used to support non-stop vehicular movement across several blocks. Recent research has indicated that walking pace and preferred environments differ according to walking purpose. This presentation discusses the benefits of making slow-movement routes in the city a place where contemplation and renewal are encouraged. We postulate that the creation of these slow movement environments upgrades the health and sustainability of a city enormously. In this pilot, a major city street in downtown Toronto is being designed for a slower contemplative walking pace. Physical Health, Sustainability and Aesthetics are all factors which play a role in determining which links in the city can be efficiently and cost-effectively adjusted to make the city walk a time of uninterrupted contemplation and renewal.

Speaker Biography

Jody Rosenblatt Naderi has worked as streetscape manager in Toronto for over a decade before taking a research and teaching post at Texas A&M University. Her work focuses on the impact of urban design and greening on sustainable and health city outcomes. Recently, Jody has been able to integrate her focus on the design of walking places for spiritual renewal into the vernacular street building infrastructure of the city by measuring the impacts on climate, health and accessibility. She splits her year and her work between Canada and the USA. Bruce Zvaniga is a professional engineer working as a Manager in the Traffic Management area of the Transportation Division for the City of Toronto. Bruce has been instrumental in coordinating the technical data for the study. He is a member of the Signalization Committee of the National Academy of Sciences Transportation Research Board in Washington, D.C.

Presentation # 2 title: New Main Street Complete Community Design in Suburbia

Presenter:

Michael Von Hausen - MVH Urban Planning & Design Inc.

Abstract

Many of our main streets and shopping centres are declining or old. They have lost their energy and attraction. The vigour and excitement is gone or waning. It is time for a radical makeover. There is a trend across North America to develop new pedestrian-oriented main streets that feature mixed use, dynamic architecture, pedestrian programming, 4 season design, innovative parking structures and transit, and "green" features that are showcased to educate the public. In the summer of 2007, Michael von Hausen explored 7 projects across the United States that were cutting edge new Main Street design. These included projects in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Colorado. Each project included winter programming and design which informs our Canadian context. His firm, MVH Urban Planning & Design Inc., along with other consultants, is developing a new Main Street as part of a 40 hectare complete community in Strathcona County, Alberta. MVH is using the lessons from these projects to inform numerous other downtown projects they are undertaking in Alberta and British Columbia. Michael will explore seven case studies of new suburban main streets. These main streets are incorporated into existing and new shopping centre projects or complete new communities. This research was undertaken to develop design

criteria for a significant new sustainable community Main Street in Strathcona County, Alberta. In the presentation Michael will : 1. First, explore the challenges of creating a new main street by discussing the sustainable urban design elements of the proposed community; 2. Presenting 7 common elements in the case studies 3. Presenting 8 contrasting elements in the case studies; and 4. Finish with 10 principles that should guide the development and implementation of new main streets. Participants in this session will learn: 1. Key Principles to reexamine their own main streets; 2. Innovative design elements and programming that can extend main street activity into the evening and into the winter months; 3. Design process elements that recognize local values and build on the special “site signature” elements that will make their main street unique, enduring, successful, and attractive.

Speaker Biography

Michael von Hausen brings 30 years working across North America in the areas of land development planning, finance, and urban design. He is President of MVH Urban Planning & Design Inc., an international consulting practice in sensitive land development planning, sustainable urban design, and community partnerships in Canada, United States, Russia, China, and Mexico. Mr. von Hausen’s professional work has received national and international recognition. His firm work has been recognized with ten local, provincial and national planning and design awards over the past three years. Michael is Adjunct Professor in the graduate Urban Studies Program at Simon Fraser University. He is also the chief instructor and curriculum coordinator of the award-winning Urban Design Certificate Program at Simon Fraser University. His graduate work at Harvard University specialized in real estate development economics and urban design.

Presentation # 3 title: The Value of Sustainable Trails in Connecting Communities

Presenter:

Paul Radchenko - Government of Alberta - Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation

Abstract

Issue Trails are integral to the landscape we treasure and enable meaningful connections between one another and with nature. They provide opportunities for outdoor activities that contribute to physical and mental health. They allow people to connect with one another and with nature in a sustainable manner. They offer significant tourism benefits and opportunities for economic diversification for communities of all sizes. Trails are integral to encourage healthy, active lifestyles, whether as recreation amenities or as components of comprehensive transportation and commuting corridors and, provide an opportunity to learn about our rich heritage including First Nations history and culture. Trends Demand is growing for recreation trails close to urban and residential areas and this, in turn, is helping to invigorate individual and community health. The key trends all suggest increasing demand for community based, highly connected and locally developed trail networks that provide linkages among communities and regions, as well as nearby parks and natural areas. There is growing recognition of the increasing diversity of users and the need to reflect diverse values in trail planning and land-use management. Recreation trails are also becoming recognized as drivers of economic development and tourism as well as playing a greater transportation role as greener alternatives become increasingly popular. Discussion

This presentation will explore unique approaches to effective co-ordination between agencies that address recreation trail legislation, policy, planning, construction, activity regulation, development and management. Case studies will reveal how building trail systems within and amongst communities not only embraces the broad range of trails that may be used primarily for recreation, but also function as transportation / commuting corridors and as tourism and economic assets. They will show how mobilizing citizens and communities in becoming stewards and users of recreation trails have inspired entrepreneurs to develop responsible tourism and trails-related products and businesses. Outcome One of the best ways to encourage and secure access to trails for all users is the development of local trail system plans through a collaborative approach, where such land use plans do not exist. Participants will take away knowledge that will help inform and guide future investment in recreation trail planning, development and land-use management. They will be able to facilitate the development of a network of community and

regional trails for all trail-dependant recreational uses - built, managed and promoted as a high quality regional network providing an outstanding and appropriate diversity of economic and recreational opportunities for communities.

Speaker Biography

Mr. Paul Radchenko has more than fifteen years of professional experience in tourism academia having taught at the University of the Fraser Valley, University of British Columbia and most recently at Medicine Hat College where he coordinated the Ecotourism and Outdoor Leadership degree program for the past 6 years. He has special research interests in ecotourism, sustainable tourism, natural resource management, outdoor recreation, and community tourism development. He has incorporated these interests on a wide range of tourism projects in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors in the US, Canada, Mexico and Australia. Paul is currently employed by the Alberta Ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation where he works with federal and municipal jurisdictions, Alberta provincial departments, and various tourism stakeholders to promote tourism as an appropriate use of public and private land. His biggest challenge as the industry develops has been working with provincial land managers and industry stakeholders to develop and represent sustainable tourism positions during land-use and integrated resource management policy, planning and implementation processes.