

Developing a Living Metropolis to Mitigate the Climate Crisis through Prosocial Spatial
Urbanism

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Contents

Table of Contents	
Acknowledgements	4
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	5
Social Significance	7
Personal Significance	9
Conclusion	12
CHAPTER 2: Literature Review	13
Introduction	13
Synthesis of Theory	13
Synthesis of Practice	15
Conclusion	17
CHAPTER 3: Research Plan	19
Project Goal	19
Project Methods	19
Project Measurements	20
Final project	23
CHAPTER 5: Reflections and Recommendations	24
Project Summary	24
Reflections	24
Recommendations/Conclusions	27
References	30

Abstract

Living Metropolis is a multi-media project exploring the mechanism of creating land and climate crisis policy. It will look at the United States' past relationship with land, slavery, and colonization at its founding and how those relationships reverberate in the modern era. The key finding of the 2020 Vacancy Report (Ferrer et al., 2020) is that currently 67% of residential property in Los Angeles is under control by investment entities. Los Angeles is taking the lead in a sprawling trend across the country. Historical racism and exclusion are being exacerbated by unjust land policies disproportionately impacting African American Chicano, working class, immigrant, and increasingly the white middle-class populations. The goal of the project was to use media and prosocial methods to explore ways to overcome the climate crisis through equitable land policies, economics, and discussing methods that create a more collaborative, cooperative, and sustainable society.

Keywords: media, creative project, land policy, land value tax, spatial planning, African American, Chicano, white middle class, white working class, climate change, climate crisis

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Prosocial Spatial Urbanism

Spatial planning is a critical tool to guide proactive development and preventive adaptation of human settlements to the threats caused or aggravated by changes in climate patterns (UN-Habitat, 2014). Regions, cities, and neighborhoods can improve access to housing, transportation, and healthcare and make cities and neighborhoods more racially inclusive through thoughtful spatial planning. Spatial planning looks at a geographic area through the lens of the region and the climate crisis. It also observes and develops tools to dismantle the weapons that prevent us from planning with the climate crisis in mind, such weapons as racism and polarization.

Living Metropolis is a multimedia project that explores the use of Prosocial Spatial Urbanism in developing more sustainable communities. Prosocial is a methodology developed using Elinor Ostrom's Core Design Principles (CDP). The goal of the Living Metropolis media project is to determine if centering climate mitigations solutions using prosocial methods can create a more equitable land policies and a more collaborative, cooperative, and sustainable society. This project strives to be a resource and conversation for urban planners, public administrators, economics, and members of the public.

Hardin (1968) argues that human overpopulation would stress ecosystems beyond their limits and cause a resource catastrophe. Ostrom's (2009) Nobel prize-winning work was groundbreaking research that demonstrated that Hardin was pessimistic, and that ordinary people can create rules and institutions that allow for the sustainable and equitable management of

shared resources. Ostrom documented this phenomenon in the creation of the eight core design principles: 1) Clearly defined boundaries, 2) Proportional equivalence between benefits and costs, 3) Collective choice arrangements, 4) Monitoring, 5) Graduated sanctions, 6) Fast and fair conflict resolution, 7) Local autonomy, 8) Appropriate relations. Prosocial urbanism incorporates the CPDs.

Prosocial is a practical method of change based on evolutionary theory and complex system science. These two paradigms are the theoretical foundations for virtually any subject, including the subject of positive change (Wilson, 2020). Positive change is not an original idea.

Aristotle said, "The whole is more than the sum of its parts." A complex system is a collection of parts that, when interacting, appear to move in unison in such a manner that you often forget the parts are all themselves systems (Gel-Mann, 1988). Examples of complex systems are Earth's global climate, the human brain, transportation systems, an ecosystem, social and economic systems like cities, metropolises, and regions — and finally, the entire universe.

In the 20th century, cultural change and personal change separated themselves from evolutionary theory and the material world. They became a priori rather than a posteriori, transformed into personal narratives and thought exercises drowning in confirmation bias. Economics, urban planning, climate science, history, ethnic studies, and political science all need to be communicating to facilitate positive change and they all should entertain the idea of a posteriori thinking. Evolution is not just for science. Evolution is any issue that includes—variation, selection, and replication. These are all ideas embedded in urban planning.

Prosocial is the first practical change method solidly grounded in the best of our current knowledge about complex systems and evolution. It is philosophical, meaning it allows us room to contemplate deeper questions, but it is still practical as it provides us with a toolkit to support

planners, economists, and activists in building better communities, better neighborhoods, and better cities (Atkins et al., 2019; Wilson, 2020).

The framework of Prosocial is based on Ostrom's 1990 work *Governing the Commons*. In 2009 Ostrom was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics proving that people can successfully self-govern. The primary evidence of the absence of sharing has been documented in the cases where wealthy landowners deliberately over farmed, to weaken the positions of smaller farmers. Most research has shown that overuse of a resource comes about when it is privatized and not allowed to remain public and self-governed (Neeson, 1993, p. 156).

The power of the larger community has not been fully employed on a larger scale in the planning, environmental, or racial justice movements. Communities have been purposely divided into a hierarchical categorization by attributes such as race, immigration status, and other not always visual characteristics, such as worldview. Prosocial Spatial Urbanism embraces the group and provides people the tools to work together as a human community better. It also provides communities strategies to open their groups up to members who may not share physical boundaries, racial designation, or historical purview.

This project intends to expose the relationship between community, race, capitalism, land, and the climate crisis and explore how society can work together more effectively for the good of the planet, the creatures we share the planet with, and ourselves.

Social Significance

The climate crisis will significantly impact economic systems, weather patterns, and humankind. The planet is heating up, and the consequences include, increased heat, drought and insect outbreaks, increased wildfires, and health impacts in cities due to heat and flooding. Global warming is also reducing agricultural yields, increasing flooding, speeding up erosion in

coastal areas and risking infrastructure owing to such effects, such as increased ocean acidity (Mbow et al., 2017, p. 25).

If we do not make changes now, we will be forced to make very hard choices later. The idea that new technology will save us, is not realistic. Also, the other option of simply moving is also not a realistic option. We assume that global warming will only impact the Global South. This is not true. Our entire planet is connected.

This is not fiction or exaggeration. It is what science tells us will result from our current energy policies. We are on a pathway to global warming of more than double the 1.5-degree (Celsius, or 2.7-degrees Fahrenheit) limit that was agreed in Paris in 2015. (UN-IPCC, 2022)

The United States is a significant driver of global warming. The US has emitted more green house gas emissions than any other country to date: 400 billion tons since 1751. It is responsible for 25% of historical emissions. (Ritchie et al., 2020)

US vehicle emissions lead the way (Milman, 2018) in our greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. past framework of building cities put little forethought into the ideas of social equality or environmental sustainability. U.S. cities were designed with control and economic growth in mind. Dense cities were viewed as un-American, dangerous, and possibly socialist (O'Toole, 2000). The suburb allowed regular middle-class white men to have land and property. The American lifestyle and dream post-WW2 included a car and a home with a white picket fence in the suburbs. Moreover, for quite a while, Los Angeles was the epitome of the American Dream.

Despite Los Angeles' current reputation as an environmentally conscious city, the facts present other perspectives. In 2018, Norwegian University of Science and Technology compiled

a list of the carbon footprints of 13,000 cities worldwide. Los Angeles made number five among the countries with the largest carbon dioxide footprints (Moran et al., 2018).

Los Angeles is literally and figuratively the leading driver in the United States' position in global warming. The United States impact on the climate crisis does not stop with Los Angeles or pollution from cars. The way the U.S. plans across the nation impacts the country's emission rankings. In the Southern California region - which includes Las Vegas, L.A., San Diego, and Tijuana - a large portion of the area's emissions comes from imported water. The areas water sprawls for miles from the Colorado River and the Sacramento Delta. Electric consumption to move water around the region is a major emissions generator (Fang et al., 2015).

For the entire country, the zoning laws that separate people's homes from their jobs and the effects of redlining, which continues to separate people by race, takes huge tolls on people's health the effects according to Everything Connects (2013), "are higher rates of high blood pressure, hypertension, and chronic diseases." This purposeful separation also decreases our shared networks of relationships among people who live, work, and play in our city. There is also a loss of natural habitats, wildlife, and open space. It adds and encourages crime as it removes, as Jane Jacobs said in 1961 (p. 56), "the eyes on the street." It abandons homes and destroys businesses, leaving in its wake pollution-causing industrial sites and all the features that create the slums of America. The human and environmental tolls are immeasurable (Everything Connects, 2013).

Personal Significance

Altruism does not build coalitions, foster collaboration, or create equitable policies. Pluralism is the engine of politics. When I published a newspaper in Los Angeles, billionaire Stanley Kroenke wanted to build a football stadium in my community's backyard. Kroenke

wanted to skip the California law that required an environmental impact report for any development project that would impact nearby residents' traffic and quality of life. An environmental group I was a member of was trying to get bicycle infrastructure. The future stadium would create a physical divide between the community and owing to the lack of public transportation would make being carFREE dangerous. When I informed others in the Los Angeles environmental movements of this travesty, I could not create any traction outside the African American, middle-class, west South Central Los Angeles community. Even environmental and bicycle advocacy groups did not care as it appeared to mainly impact Black homeowners. This minimal connection to other communities meant there was a minimal chance to build coalitions or cooperation. Striving towards anti-racism does not inspire people to come out against billionaires and football. Kroenke's project, Sofi Stadium, is now sitting in the middle of a quickly vanishing middle-class African American residential neighborhood, which was formerly my home. Three generations of my middle-class African American family have now been moved for infrastructure initiatives in Los Angeles, including me.

Segregation makes African American communities highly susceptible to targeted actions (Bullard, 2021) that endanger everyone's air quality and add to global warming. Our communities are effectively isolated from other ethnic communities. Suppose a business must choose a location to dump trash. In that case, they are going to dump it in the community with the smallest amount of people, which is the least polarizing and has actual physical barriers that lessen the immediate impacts on the greater community. Government Accountability Office (2007) found that Black people made up most communities near landfills.

Residential segregation also makes the Black community highly susceptible to disinformation. There is no need to have Black human-interest stories in media or public health

campaigns. Why write about Black people? Why is not one media vehicle enough? Who cares if the one media vehicle is mostly hyperlocal and in an entirely different section of the country. Other ethnic communities are more integrated into society. So, if you engage in non-Black people of color outreach, you get a two-for-one, that community and the white community. That does not happen with the Black community. If funding for historically excluded communities is limited, often the outreach is cut in the Black community, as it is the most physically and socially isolated. You can see the dire consequences of this during the COVID-19 pandemic. The high vaccine hesitancy rate in the Black community (Laurencin, 2021) was owing to the vacuum of regular public health information. Highly funded and skilled disinformationists filled that lack of information.

Anything that happens favorable in Black communities is viewed through a “us vs them” racial lens by the white and greater society. It is often perceived as African Americans taking from them or “Why do the Blacks get everything?!” Even though in urban areas, our communities have been the most defunded, ignored, overpoliced, and polluted. None of these facts matter. The isolated excluded group should get nothing. Even empathy is too much (Ispa-Landa, 2013) is the average person’s purview.

The climate crisis is not racist, but the West’s responses to it appears to be. Nordhaus’ DICE model states that a 4°C degrees warming is acceptable, because it will only impact the Global South is a danger to the globe. The United States’ planning and economic development perspective that it can isolate pollution to the hypersegregated communities is slowly harming the entire country and adding to the global heating.

Conclusion

The material goals of this media project are to educate and inform the public on how spatial planning, urban policy, and historical racism impact our ability to mitigate the climate crisis. It also plans to amplify practitioners and scholars engaged in equitable practice in the fields of land policy, transportation, antiracism, evolutionary theory, and commoning.

The public needs to understand what is at risk if we are unable to enact active antiracist, residential desegregation, and climate mitigation measures being taken by the federal, state, and local governments regarding transportation, labor, and planning policies.

On an existential level, the goal of this project to support people on their self-reflective journey on the many harms that racism has been the root cause of in the United States. We must win over the hearts and minds of the public and give them the power to create thriving, dense, culturally diverse urban communities. An arcadian future is possible, but sometimes for people to see what is possible, they need support in the visionary stage.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

Introduction

How we can live better has been a topic of debate since the documentation of community. One of the first English books on the subject was Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). *Utopia* is a fictional political satire of a planned community. It was a mocking of the Catholic Church and its "planned communities" of the New World—known in modern day history books as the colonies. How people live and the consequences of it, have often been studied in a political fashion rather than a scientific fashion, meaning that those with power have used community, how they are formed and configured, as a tool and a weapon.

The United States' geographic configuration has come about owing to the idea of Manifest Destiny, the belief that the United States should own the land from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. European immigrants had access to land taken from Native Americans via the Homestead Act. The Desert Act is the basis of the wonderland of California. And the GI Bill and Redlining shaped all the major metropolises of the country where 80% of Americans still reside.

Sound bites state you can determine who will graduate from high school and college and when and how you will die, by a zip code (Graham, 2016; Gross, 2022; Misra, 2007). Who we are and how people see us is determined as much by the community we live in as our race and the car we drive.

Synthesis of Theory

While More's characterization of *Utopia* was fiction, others used theory to describe their observation and to interpret their research. George's *Progress and Poverty* (1884) described his modern day dystopian in his characterization of San Francisco at the turn of the century. He

discussed how the wealthy exacerbated the poverty of their fellow citizens owing to their monopoly on land. George proposed the economic tool of the Land Value Tax, which was essentially viewing the land as a common that no single person or entity could own, but could only be shared as a common and rented via a tax. His theory is that this economic tool would discourage exploitative forces from having a monopoly on land.

Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealthy (2010) discussed the climate crisis and explained how society should change how we measure success. Schor stated that we should place sustainability in the center of our planning, labor, and economic policies. She states that this would not be a sacrifice but a gift. In Schor's lecture series on the climate crisis, she highlights how racism is also a major driver in the climate crisis. She made proposal such as reduced working hours and a GDP-like measurement that would measure the health of citizens. Schor painted a vision of a pragmatic utopia that is well within our grasp.

Massey and Denton's *American Apartheid* discussed how de facto housing segregation has created a very bleak situation for the most economically oppressed Black and Latino citizens of the United States. The book discussed at length the many problems that stem from segregation. From the targeted defunding of schools to the lack of opportunities for the residents in the inner-city ghettos. While, American Apartheid has not aged well in parts owing to its tendency to pathologize the entire African American experience, its facts and overall message still holds up. Massey's solution to enforce the Fair Housing Act, almost 30 years later, is still ignored.

Metzl in his 2020 book *Dying of Whiteness* discusses how segregation has impacted white people. How its reduced white people's life expectancy. There is also a mental health cost to racially exclusive suburbia. Metzl a MD and a researcher stated that the suicide

rate by gun is 92 %, white men. The lack of any enforcement of gun policy and the lack of funding for the study of gun violence is based in part on the supposed “Fear of a Black Planet.” The unspoken but deadly mythology of white people’s need to defend their homes and neighborhoods from the invading Black menace is the excuse for allowing the continuation of clearly stochastic terrorism activities that end up mainly killing white women and white children with legal guns.

Nobel Prize-winning Yale Economist, Nordhaus in his paper “Climate change: The ultimate challenge for economics,” he picked 4°C degrees heating of the earth as being acceptable and optimal as it gives the biggest gap between the cost and benefits of reducing emissions. This is a theory I do not agree with. At a heating of 4°C the Southern Hemisphere will be a hell house. It will be uninhabitable, but Nordhaus and his DICE model is the model that many in corporate America are betting on. Nordhaus research has the developed world overfocused on adaptation for the inevitable global heating rather than trying to mitigate the climate crisis. We have the tools to mitigate the crisis and economics is not sciences. Nordhaus theory is not supported by science.

Synthesis of Practice

One of the most cited and best-selling books on the practice of planning is not by a planner it is by urbanist, Jane Jacobs. Jacobs’ 1961 book the *Death and Life of a Great American City* is a seminal text. One referenced by planning students and professionals. It is an accessible text. Death and Life gives great observations, such as the importance of ‘eyes on the street.’ She also was against urban renewal as it is like using a hammer to take down a wall when all that is needed is paint. Jacobs worked critiqued the neo-rationalist perspective of Robert Moses. Her book was personal narrative, observations, and very simple studies of what worked and what did

not. Jacobs focused as much on what did work as what did not. A pragmatic idealist who was unarguable one of the best writers on community and planning in United States history.

Donald Shoup has done the impossible, make discussing about parking interesting. *The High Cost of Free Parking* (2017) is a masterpiece of the banal. He explains how free parking adds to sprawl, destroys communities, creates unpleasant walking environments, because policy requires so much of it. The argument seems dicey until you read about it and realize that he is correct. And the free ride in parking can also be applied to developers who park their projects in de facto segregated communities. The solution to both are charging those who park and using the funds to improve the infrastructure. There are some issues with Shoup's theory, such as what about poor people who can't afford to live by transit, which is very reasonable question in a place like Los Angeles, where Shoup resides, but the theory is sound. In this project will be exploring some actions that will make Shoup's ideas more socially equitable.

David Sloan Wilson has made evolutionary theory accessible to the masses. He has also challenged the humanities to take up the mantle of evolutionary theory. In this project we rise to his challenge. Wilson's book *Prosocial: Using Evolutionary Theory to Build Productive, Collaborative, and Equitable Groups* take a scientific approach on how groups work effectively. Prosocial is based on the ideas of Elinor Ostrom's eight CDPs. The book also explains the commons and its history. The commons, are the things that we inherit and create jointly, and that will last for generations to come, such as the ocean, the land, the air, and cyberspace. The book provides research, exercises, and workshops based on evolutionary theory and complex systems so you can build a framework within your group that fosters communication.

Wilkie's (2018) article, "Across the economy, workplaces are more segregated than 40 years ago," looks at how not only is residential housing still segregated, specifically in regards to

African Americans, but also the US workplace. Wilkie's article looks at the reasons of why the workplaces continue to be segregated and typically the reason is segregated residential housing. People get jobs from their networks, segregated residential housing, segregated K-12 schools, create segregated workplaces and segregated job duties.

Mast and Din (2021) measure outcomes by neighborhood. The study measures longitudinally based on children's outcomes in adulthood for the years 1989 to 2015. It develops results based on 29 child welfare indicators categorized into three domains: (1) education, (2) health and environment, and (3) social and economic. Their findings demonstrated that residential segregation was a primary driver in preventing positive outcomes for children, with African American children faring the worst.

Martin Adams' book *Land* (2018) discusses in simple language the value of the viewing land as a common to increase social equality. Adams explains how wealth is produced with labor and that wealth does not exist without the labor of people and our planet's natural resources. He further explains how people should benefit from their work and currently, that is not happening. He also discusses the free market and social justice and how the United States cannot have a free market with a society that is not rooted in justice. He backs up his ideas with research and opinion pieces by world-renowned economists from both sides of the political aisle, such as Milton Friedman, Mason Gaffney, David Ricardo, and Karl Marx.

Conclusion

Another way of planning is possible. The tools of urbanism alone are not enough to change practice and increase social equity. Prosocial is a methodology based on the proven theories of evolutionary and systems theories. Racism has been an effective weapon in preventing positive change in the areas of education, labor, urban planning, and land policy. To

combat this weaponry, it is imperative that we center a unifying cause and use methods rooted in research to create equitable, cooperative, and collaborative processes and results. Our lives and the planet need us to figure this out quickly.

CHAPTER 3: Research Plan

Project Goal

The key function of this project is twofold, to generate stakeholder engagement and qualitative research. The project will provide the public with an accessible way to learn about history, public policy, and current initiatives related to the climate crisis, land policy, and commoning. It will have discussions with professionals and activists across cultures, nations, and disciplines. It will also present the stories of successful antiracist and culturally integrated communities and explain how they work and overcome challenges and how their practices support climate crisis mitigation.

Project Methods

This project is using storytelling, podcasting, and media to engage and inform the public. It is needed as the current state of media, and especially media that provides ethical editorial journalism, is mired in biased information that supports corporations over communities and suburbia over urban density. Most people process information through traditional editorial media which provides a framework and weltanschauung for information. Traditional newspapers have lost their traditional funding and much of their traditional readership (Hunter & Di Bartolomeo, 2019). This is frightening because journalism is necessary for democracy to continue (Harvey, 2019). Our First Amendment rights are dependent on the public having information. An ill-informed public will destroy democracy. As US Supreme Court Justice William Brennan explained in 1965:

The protection of the Bill of Rights goes beyond the specific guarantees to protect from Congressional abridgment those equally fundamental personal rights necessary to make

the express guarantees fully meaningful. I think the right to receive publications is such a fundamental right. The dissemination of ideas can accomplish nothing if otherwise willing addressees are not free to receive and consider them. It would be a barren marketplace of ideas that had only sellers and no buyers. (*Lamont v. Postmaster General*, 381 U.S. 301 (1965))

This project will discuss the many factors that lead to inequitable urban planning and the many side effects rather than focus on one issue, such as the environment, traffic safety, police, or health. This project would be talking to a broad cross-spectrum people and presenting solutions of how we can live together. It will discuss policy that includes pragmatic economic and social solutions.

Project Measurements

What I will be measuring with Living Metropolis is engagement. My measurement will be based on the number of people who listen to the podcasts, read a blog post, interact on social media or actively participate in a synchronous activity. I will be measuring from January 1, 2022 to August 20, 2022.

I will interview 10 people and write 10 essays. I will host two live engagement actions.

Another aspect of engagement the project will be observing is if practitioners reach out to me to be interviewed. The goal is to build a community. One of the goals of the project is for people from the fields of economics and urban planning to view Living Metropolis as a valuable resource to share their message. One way the project will know it is successful is by climate scientists, activists, and scholars reaching out to participate in the project.

The project will also measure active audience. As this is a new project, the project will measure success by the number of email sign-ups and FB group memberships.

We will use anonymous pop-up surveys and internet tools, such as the tool that WIX and Substack have embedded in their systems. With those tools, we will be measuring the following:

Reach

Reach indicates the number of people the media connect with new audience members.

Impressions

Impressions indicate the number of *times* people saw the content. I will be observing if

Living Metropolis gets return views.

Audience growth rate

Measuring how much my audience grows from the project launch to the conclusion.

These measurements will guide the project's directions and support in receiving funding later.

CHAPTER 4: Measurements, Results, and Interpretations

Living Metropolis is a multi-media project that was executed using the framework of strategic communications and editorial journalism. The objective for the aesthetic of the vehicle was to have the gravitas of editorial media, but with a dynamic theme that encompassed the tools that can be used to combat the climate crisis. Strategic communication is an organization's purposeful use of communication to fulfill its mission. (Hallahan et al., 2007). The mission of Living Metropolis was to appeal to a culturally diverse population of college educated, middle class, baby boomers and millennials, located in college towns and large Metropolitan areas. The project had a broad cross spectrum of themes, as it was necessary in meeting its objective and targets.

From the projects conversations with various experts in economics, science, urban planning, and activism, and the research to book guest and write essays, it was very clear that a goal of this project had to be expanding the idea and the manner in which journalism covers the environment, urban planning, and race.

The project also wanted to motivate people to action, even if talking about the climate crisis and how it intersects with urban planning and racism, was the action. The act of discussing the climate crisis was turned into a polarizing act (Schor, 2022). This project wanted to support people in all actions, from discussing space to creating better spaces.

Results

Accomplishes of the project:

Twenty-one people interviewed and 18 podcasts published.

Fourteen essays.

The project was able to obtain 817 subscribers.

Two virtual events: One was a session to introduce Prosocial Spatial Urbanism for the Newark area that had five people in attendance.

A second was a Climate Action Book Club, which was successful owing to our social media vehicle. We had eight people in attendance and started a new podcast series, “Climate Almanac.”

The podcasts had an average download of 212 per episode

The project needed a more active social media presence. Owing to baby boomers being an important part of our demographic and it being an easy lift for the project’s limited staff, Facebook was decided to be the focus rather than Instagram or TikTok. Facebook has a high action turnover rate. We began our Facebook group on June 22, 2022. We now have 108 very active group members with a total of 583 comments and 1,785 reactions.

Final project

Living Metropolis: Space is a means of production website:

<http://www.livingmetropolis.com/>

Living Metropolis: Space is a means of production Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1115464465705796>

CHAPTER 5: Reflections and Recommendations

Project Summary

The objective of Living Metropolis was to create an instrument that was appealing to professionals in urban planning, science, and economics and the general public. This project accomplished that objective. We were able to get high profile interviews such as Dr. Donald Shoup author of *High Cost of Free Parking* (2005), Johnathan Rothwell the principal economist at Gallup and author of *A Republic of Equals* (2021), Dr. Sam Bowles founder of CORE, Dr. Juliet Schor, Guggenheim Fellow, author of *Plentitude* (2010), and Peter Barnes the founder of Credo. We were able to build a small following and get people to participate in synchronous events.

The prosocial aspect of the process aspect takes time to develop in its initial stages, as it's a framework, not an item you can point to. The framework was cooperation, evolutionary theory, and complex system science. We are using the Core Designs as documented by Ostrom.

The project is gaining more momentum and will continue after the Capstone is complete. Bill Reed the founder of the LEED certification will be the next person interviewed. He is a leader in sustainability and development.

Reflections

What I learned from this project is that theory is important. It is important to plan your project with a framework that is based on published research, such as the Climate change in the American mind (Leiserowitz et al., 2019). I participated in several Yale Program on Climate Communications (YPCCC) workshops. The YPCCC is a leader in climate communications. From the YPCCC I learned concepts in messaging and who to effectively target. I did not waste resources on those who do not believe that the climate crisis is real, owing to the numbers in that

demographic being small and the chance of converting those people being low (Leiserowitz et al., 2019).

I also participated in weekly meeting with the Prosocial Commons, a group started by David Sloan Wilson, so that I could receive guidance on creating a community that was based on Prosocial principles.

It was necessary for me to attend these workshops as it supported my research in making this project successful. It is important while implementing a project you continue to stay openminded and willing to learn and adjust your process once you receive better information.

A revelation that I had with this project is that the relationships you build with people are crucial. I am an active participant in several communities. My involvement in those communities was a sizeable part of this project's success. I learned that you can be successful and independent critiques large investments and property, however your voice is amplified if you have institutional support. I was able to obtain more high-profile interviews, because of my relationships with members of the New School and Cornell. I gained confidence in my projects. I am most proud of the caliber of people I interviewed, such as Sam Bowles and Juliet Schor. The New School provided me a fully funded fellowship to their economics program. I believe that this project was crucial to my being selected.

The small moments were also crucial. As a curator of the programming, much of my effort was encouraging participation in the Living Metropolis: Space is a means of production Facebook group. The daily participation brightened my spirits. When performing media projects, you are rejected often. Being able to receive positive interaction daily, as well as being successful at getting people to engage asynchronous and in synchronous virtual events truly

made me see I am doing forward moving work in my community. I was also able to get immediate feedback on the direction of the project.

My disappointments in this project, were at the beginning. I wanted to be assured that I confronted this problem from the correct angle. As this was a creative project there were many parameters, outside my control. I was concerned I would not be able to entice people to be interviewed. I was concerned that I would not be able to obtain subscribers. Owing to biases in media and social media itself, I wondered if my gender or race might be a hinderance in getting participation. In creative projects your socially constructed identity becomes part of the project (Youngkin & Kuppaswamy, 2018). I felt my race and gender might be a barrier in getting funding for the project (Fairlie et al., 2022), as studies show it is often much harder to get media vehicles developed by members of historically excluded groups funded. People with power may see the value of the project, but instead of funding the project would fund me to be the person of color part of their vision. I did not contemplate these ideas long. You cannot change other people's behavior, so I simply moved forward.

I am still concerned about people not understanding the value of diversity. It should not be check-mark exercise, where historically excluded people are relegated to speaking about bias in a very specific and stereotyped manner. To me the strengths of this project is that it includes a diversity of cultures, genders, sexual orientations, socioeconomic classes, and ages. We need to begin moving as one group, because we are one group.

Part of the challenge with climate crisis is this idea that some parts of world, people, cultures do not matter, because they are not from the global north, are not white, or are not middle class. Sprawl is amazingly harmful for the environment and is in many ways driven by racism. To reference Plessy vs Ferguson, it is not even Separate, but Equal, rather it is

deliberately Separate but UNEQUAL. Segregation in any form adds to the climate crisis because it places the costs on those deemed of lower status and that includes journalism. African American journalists and activists are often relegated to a designated topic such as health and only discuss the climate as it relates to race and health. Their participation is often limited to a particular day rather than being integrated into the core discussion. This strategy of marginalizing the discussion of the BIPOC population has done absolutely nothing to mitigate environmental racism. BIPOC people are the most informed on the issues of urban planning and the connection to the climate crisis (Leiserowitz et al, 2019). There should not be a separate table. There should not be a separate community. There should not be a separate conversation based only on the social construct of racism and the categories of race within it. The cooperative, prosocial, and economic justice part of Living Metropolis is just as important as talking about the climate crisis itself. The climate crisis is anthropogenic. We're not going to solve it by not dealing with the issues that stop us from getting along with each other.

The strengths of this project were the planning, time management, and the caliber of people interviewed.

Recommendations/Conclusions

The next step of this project is a 501(4)(c) political action group that is driven by editorial journalism, strategic communication, and call to actions. Dr. Shoup of UCLA truly helped in grounding this project and helping other scholars, economists, and activists understand the direction and weight. It is important to get a person or organization respected in the field early in a project, as that helps in getting other respected and publish people in the field interested in your project.

This project would have been stronger with a more direct relationship to a university or thinktank. I feel with projects such as this, you need institutional support for distribution. I was able through herculean effort to get engagement and a small (and still growing) audience, but producing content and getting engagement are two very different and labor intensive tasks. It is possible, but it is not recommended.

I will continue to attempt to pitch the vehicle to institutions to get funding or support in distribution. I have created an improved pitch and am actively reaching out to various support sources.

A scaled-up version of this project would include a staff, an active relationship with urban planning, housing, & climate crisis communities, and funding. It would also be directly connected to a thinktank, university, or even a larger media outlet. Next City is connected to Bloomberg, the Living Metropolis project deserves a similar relationship.

This project is sustainable independently, but in fairness to the project and audience, it would be best for it to actively build relationships that would support in its growth. For now, I have created an additional site for where the 501(4)(c) will be housed, the media portion would be rolled into this project. The 501(4)(c) is called Where Do We Go From Here? Based on the ideas of Martin Luther King's 1967 book by the same title, we talk a lot about what happened, but what about what is happening now?

I will give two final suggestions anyone doing a project on urban planning and the climate crisis. First be hopeful, provide tools, focus on what is happening presently, and what could happen in the future. There is a lot more talk about redlining from the mid 20th century than there is about the de facto segregation that continues to take place today and is a driver of sprawl. The consequence of sprawl is decreased services, longer drives, heat islands, increased

energy use, and social isolation. These are consequences that are harmful to the earth and the people who inhabit it.

Finally, the United States has a fascination with harmful things happening to African Americans (Feagin, 2013), feeding into that while it may get you engagement, speaking engagements, and even funding, it will not get you change. It normalizes harm. There is a saying in journalism, “if it bleeds, it leads,” think very closely what that means in the history of the United States (Schneider, 2009). The most public bleeding in the United States has taken place with African Americans being harmed in the form of lynching. That still happens. Be mindful when you are discussing issues that are regarding racism that you are discussing policies and not feeding the American “unimagination.”

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