Land Use Policy 60 (2017) 233–241

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Land Use Policy

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/landusepol

Hope for new communities as an alternative to sprawl?: Insights from developer perceptions of amenities in future new communities in the U.S. and U.K

Stephen Buckman[a,*], Ian Trivers[b], Carla Maria Kayanan[b], Tristan Black[c]

[a] University of South Florida, United States
[b] University of Michigan, United States
[c] Arizona State University, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 22 December 2015
Received in revised form 25 October 2016
Accepted 26 October 2016
Available online 3 November 2016

Keywords:
Amenities
New communities
Suburbia
Real estate development

ABSTRACT

New Communities are again being promoted as an alternative to sprawling urban growth. This paper uses the results of a unique survey of the real estate development communities in the U.S. and U.K. to examine the likelihood that future New Communities will provide the array of amenities necessary to create developments that provide a true alternative to sprawl. Based on an analysis of this data we conclude that while developers do envision New Communities as more amenity rich than much of the suburban master-planned communities of the last few decades, they are nonetheless still likely to produce developments that have an insufficient array of amenities to make future New Communities a strong alternative to sprawl.

1. Introduction

The production of suburban built form resulting in sprawl is not a new phenomenon; rather it has been a dominant development pattern since the early 20th century. As unrestrained sprawl has produced negative environmental, financial, and social outcomes, various techniques have been proposed to combat these impacts (Williamson, 2013; Dunham-Jones and Williamson, 2009; Schmitz et al., 2003). The planned community movement has been a prominent source of alternative urban development patterns, ranging from Garden Cities, like Welwyn (founded in 1920) and Letchworth (founded in 1903)[1] in England, to New Urbanism sites such as Seaside (founded in 1981) and Stapleton (founded in 2001)[2] in the United States. This paper focuses on one particular example of planned communities: New Communities which we define as large-scale, master planned, and managed urban units that are conceived as alternatives to traditional, sprawling suburban development.

In this paper we seek to understand contemporary claims made by the real estate development community in the U.S. and the U.K. that New Communities are an alternative to sprawl in the face of contemporary rapid urban growth (Apgar, 2014). To understand these claims we analyze the results of a unique survey of the real estate development community on the topic of amenities in future New Communities. While research on sprawl does not typically use amenities as a metric for evaluation, we argue that, in the light of the history of the planned community movement, the concept plays a key role in the conceptualization and likely success of New Communities as alternatives to sprawling suburban development. Amenities, broadly conceived, are used to create desirable places that lure residents. Once residents have been attracted to the community, the range and robustness of amenities help to organize their daily activities in ways that could fulfill the promise of a less sprawling, auto dependent and more compact lifestyle. Amenities are a significant concept that separates New Communities from standard master planned suburban communities, having a direct influence on their success as an alternative to sprawl.

Based on the responses to the survey, we conclude that the development community envisions New Communities as more akin to traditional family focused suburbs with less robust amenities than are likely necessary to provide the promised alternative

* Corresponding author at: University of South Florida, School of Public Affairs, 4202 E Fowler Ave., S°C 107 Tampa, FL 33620, United States.
E-mail address: sbuckman@usf.edu (S. Buckman).

[1] Welwyn which was founded in 1920 as a Garden City became one of the first New Towns, designated as such in 1948, while Letchworth was one of the world's first Garden Cities founded in 1903.

[2] Seaside which was founded in 1981, is considered to be prototype and one of the first major New Urbanist communities. Stapleton founded in 2001 built on the former Stapleton Airport is still in construction.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2016.10.036
0264-8377/

to sprawl. Private developers are the key drivers of the production of New Communities therefore it is reasonable to expect that these communities will not live up to their early ideals. As New Communities come with a touted contemporary promise to provide a full alternative to sprawling urban expansion, but without a specific Return on Investment (R.O.I) this is a lofty goal.

This paper begins with a brief review of literature discussing the impact and costs of suburbia, historical ways to combat urban sprawl, the planned community, and the role of amenities in attracting residents and organizing daily activities. We then follow the literature review with a methods section that explains the administration and analysis of the survey that was originally analyzed but not designed by the authors. Thirdly, we present the results of the survey focusing on specific demographic variables and responses related to amenities and attributes. Fourthly, we discuss the findings of the survey and what can be garnered from them. Lastly, we conclude with recommendations for further research.

2. Literature

The following is a brief overview of the literature that highlights the physical, environmental, and social impacts of suburban induced sprawl and urban plans designed to combat it; a leading concern of urban planning and development in the U.S. and U.K for well over a century.

2.1. The persistence of sprawl and its negative effects

Despite being the dominant form of urban development over much of the 20th century, a general consensus among urban planners, environmentalists and others is that sprawl has wide ranging negative effects. A basic definition of contemporary sprawl states that it is "low density development that disperses the population over the widest possible area, with rigidly separated functions – homes, shops, and workplaces – connected by limited access roadways" (Flint, 2006: 47). The seemingly insatiable appetite for sprawl across much of the world has financial, environmental, equity, health and safety, and quality of life ramifications.

Among the most prominent features of sprawl is dependency on the automobile. Suburban sprawl typically exhibits few usable sidewalks, bike lanes, and modes of public transit (Flint, 2006). Transportation costs can become especially burdensome (Belzer and Autler, 2002), particularly for low-income people living in sprawling communities. Due to the lack of sufficient public transportation, low income people will spend as much as 20% of their yearly income on transportation needs (Newman, 2001). Furthermore fatalities alone from traffic accidents account for roughly 40,000 deaths and many more injuries per year (Belzer and Autler, 2002; Newman, 2001). The effects of driving have adverse impacts on our personal health habits. According to Frank et al. (2002), in study of 10,898 people in Atlanta "each additional hour spent in the car per day was associated with a 6% increase in the odds of being obese, while each additional kilometer walked per day associated with a 4.8% reduction in the odds of being obese" (2002: 75). The average American spends 443 h driving per year (Belzer and Autler, 2002), thus reducing the amount of time that can be devoted to other activities and therefore negatively impacting quality of life. With all the negative effects of sprawl, promoting alternative forms of urban growth that alleviate these problems has become a key object of concern of urban planning and development.

2.2. Planned communities and combatting sprawl

The modern planned community movement has its roots in the desire to solve the social and physical ills of the industrial city's rapid expansion. To combat the undesirable effects of the rapidly growing, disorganized industrial city, city planners, theorists, and designers, such as Ebenezer Howard, Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford, looked beyond the city, envisioning innovative designs and regional plans for new, self-contained urban units. Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, the product of the concepts published in his 1902 book *Garden Cities of To-Morrow*, was not the first planned community concept in response to the industrial city, but arguably the most influential modern model for reorganizing urban expansion. Howard envisioned small self-sufficient cities with limited population bounded by greenbelts (Hall, 1996; Fishman, 1987, 2002). The core physical concept of the Garden City was the holistic provision of amenities, services, and employment and other economic opportunities of the city coupled with easy access to fresh air and open spaces. While a utopian life outside the squalor and congestion of the industrial city was the focus, combatting early forms of urban sprawl (what Lewis Mumford called "conurbation") was also an important goal for Howard's Garden City (Kolson, 2001: 99).

The Garden City was put to the test in England with the building of two model communities: Letchworth (founded in 1903) and Welwyn Garden City (founded in 1920). Despite the early hopes to organize rapid urban expansion and to decant the populations of dense industrial city in orderly ways, the core notions of this self-contained planned community succumbed to market pressures and the realities of capitalist housing production almost immediately. The Garden City gave way to the "garden suburb" – a typology that adopted a largely pastoral landscape but lacked the full array of amenities, resources, employment and activities that comprise a self-sufficient urban place. The garden suburb seldom had amenities beyond parks, schools, and basic services. Eventually this model transitioned into the suburban post-war master planned community replete with housing, but lacking in amenities that supported a compact, semi-self-sufficient urban unit.

After the initial failed attempts of the Garden City movement a regionalist variant of the planned community, still undergirded by the work of Howard, gained strength. The aim of the Regionalists, highly influenced by the ecologically focused work of Scottish polymath Patrick Geddes, was to create dispersed communities that furthered social progress while achieving a better ecological balance with their natural environments (Hall, 1996). Starting in the 1920s and gaining favor in the postwar period, Regionalists, such as Lewis Mumford, Benton MacKaye and Clarence Stein, advocated for eschewing investment in central cities and instead promoted networks of semi-self-sufficient "new towns" that would become the primary feature of regions as old central cities shrank to smaller proportions (Fishman, 2000). These cities were aimed at a high level of internal organization for self-sufficiency. Mumford (1968) believed these semi-self-contained cities should be built for all the phases of life: infancy, the school child, adolescence, maturity (work phase, domestic phase, phase of social interaction, personal phase), and senescence – all of which echoed the holistic ambitions underpinning the Garden City model.

The Regionalist movement inspired numerous urban development initiatives worldwide. In Britain the New Towns Act of 1946 lead to the construction of 20 new towns over a nearly 35 year period. In the United States it inspired the depression era "Greenbelt Towns"[3]; (1930s) and, later, "New Communities" (1960–1970s). Despite similar inspiration and goals, the Regionalist movement played out differently in each context. In the United States the smaller and short-lived Greenbelt Towns program was focused on low-income families while the larger New Communities program became focused on upwardly mobile families of the post-

[3] In the US the Greenbelt Towns were part of the New Deal Pubic Works program that attempted to get the US economy out of the Great Depression.

war American economic boom. The British New Towns, on the other hand, were far more focused on a lower income and less mobile working classes as well as being more numerous and larger than their American counterparts. But while executed differently in each context and period, these are among the most direct and important precursors to the New Communities movement of today and share key core concepts and aims. A 1968 report from a commission of the United States Federal Government's Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations developed a definition of New Communities out of the many strains of planned communities that influenced the concept:

> "[L]arge scale developments constructed under a single or unified management, following a fairly precise, inclusive plan and including different types of housing, commercial and cultural facilities, and amenities sufficient to serve the residents of the community. They may provide land for industry or are accessible to industry, offer other types of employment opportunities, and may eventually achieve a considerable measure of self-sufficiency" (United States, 1968,: 64).

The notions of development to manage urban growth, with a mix of uses, housing types, and amenities with the aim of a level of self-sufficiency carries forward the early intentions of the planned community. Between enthusiastic post-war government backing in the U.K. and the eventual development of government supports in the U.S., the New Communities movement became a key concept for the post-war management of urban growth and reform. Peiser and Chang (1999, 1679) called New Towns "one of the most important movements in planning in the 20th century" that spread to every continent.

Despite much more success by the Regionalist, postwar planned community movement and a legacy of still extant and well-functioning planned communities, most did not live up to their ideals. Suburban sprawl still became the defining feature of urban growth in the United States, the U.K and much of the world. Like the Garden Cities before them Regionalist approaches succumbed to the realities of capitalist housing and production. In the United States, New Communities, highly driven by private development interests, morphed into or were far outpaced by more auto dominated garden suburbs over time. In the U.K., the New Towns were more government driven and closer to the social and environmental ideals, but as Peter Hall put it, "not quite as rich and worthy and high-minded as they hoped; a good life, but not a new civilization" (Hall, 1996, pp. 187).

2.3. Contemporary new communities as inheritors of the planned community tradition

In the United States and the U.K. the major Regionalist planned communities programs, at least at the national level, were mostly wound down by the 1980s. But an interest in planned communities as a planning and development solution has persisted. The planned community tradition, at least in theory, continues in its opposition to the unrestrained development patterns of suburbia. The contemporary planned community movement attempts to create equilibrium between social groups, economic activities, humankind, and nature, as well as provide modern conveniences (Forsyth, 2005). The New Urbanism is one of the leading contemporary movements that, while not exclusively about planned communities, has been a driving force in shaping new development towards these goals. Started by private actors in architecture and journalism, the movement was predicated on combating the social and environmental ills of sprawl (Katz and Scully, 1994). Well known examples include the Stapleton neighborhood in Denver, Colorado (founded 2001) with a population of around 14,000 and Kentland, Maryland (founded 1989) with a population of around 8000. Another variant, the Eco-Town movement in the UK, takes much of the mantle of the New Towns program with a strong focus on sustainability (Warwick, 2015). A central government initiated effort beginning in 2007, Eco-Towns attempt to balance sustainable living and affordable housing (at least 30–40% of housing affordable) and is a clear example of the contemporary turn in how planned communities are being promoted and designed. Current examples in the UK of this turn include Northstowe (founded 2003), which is a proposed 10,000 home community with the mission or reducing carbon emissions and Cambourne (founded in 2008) a completely new community that would house roughly 10,000 people and be eco-friendly.

A major difference between the contemporary planned community and other contemporary urban forms is its focus on a complete, well-designed, and self-contained development (Talen, 2005). Successful planned communities have tried to create diversity through design (Talen, 2005), incorporating a variety of housing types, sizes, and prices; mix of land uses; ample common space, and a vibrant public realm (Heid, 2004).

Today, New Communities, as an inheritor of the planned community tradition, have again come to forefront as an alternative tool to organize rapid contemporary urban growth. In 2014 leading real estate development industry organizations in the U.S. and U.K., the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) respectively, jointly commissioned a report on innovations in New Communities promoting them as important tools for the real estate community to support and adopt in the face of rapid urbanization (Klem, 2014). The report calls New Communities "novel forms of human settlement [that can] achieve a range of social and economic objectives, from improved housing and job choices to healthier, resilient living environments to strong, diversified local economies and, more recently, integrated transportation networks that reduce care dependence and every usage" (Apgar, 2014: 4). Or put more simply, rather than a response to the industrial city, "NCs [New Communities] are a 'smart growth' antidote to suburban sprawl" (Apgar, 2014: 15).

While the basic concept of New Communities has changed little over time, their definition has shifted to meet the current real estate development environment. The size of a contemporary New Communities can range from 1000–100,000 in population (Apgar, 2014) to 200–2500 acres in the U.S., though high-density developments will be much smaller (Forsyth, 2005). Apgar (2014: 6) further separates New Communities from other single-use developments in six different ways: New Communities "(1) are *large-scale,* to enable economies, efficiencies, and tradeoffs that elude smaller projects; (2) are of a *comprehensive scope*, to ensure coverage of all objectives while cross-fertilizing individual uses; (3) are *unitary organizations,* with the management depth and technical expertise to develop and operate complex projects; (4) contain a *land use mix* and mutually reinforcing activities to capitalize on the project's scale and scope; (5) utilize *portfolio financing and management* to ensure that sufficient funds are available at each stage and that asset performance is monitored throughout the NC's life; and (6) have a '*partnership*' *structure and style* to solve ongoing problems in a collaborative, constructive manner without the adversarial tone of conventional contracting." In this paper we adopt Apgar's definition of New Communities.

We agree that New Communities, as a form of planned community, *can* provide successful alternatives to sprawling urban expansion. However, as the history of early planned communities would suggest, New Communities have in practice tended toward becoming only a "more well-provisioned suburban life" (Clapson, 2002: 160) than a true antidote to sprawl. One concept we see as key to understanding the potential success of future New Communities to be more than a well-provisioned suburban life and instead a robust alternative to sprawl is that of "amenities" (See Table 1 for

Table 1
Contemporary New Communities in the U.S. and U.K.

United States	Developer	Development Start	Acres
Fort Belvoir, VA	Public-Private	2003	576
Playa Vista, CA	Private	2002	1087
Celebration, FL	Private	1994	4900
United Kingdom			
Ebbsfleet, Kent	Public-Private	2014	1035
Kings Cross Central, London	Private	2006	65
King's Hill, Kent	Public-Private	1989	800

Source: Adapted from (Apgar, 2014)

an examples of contemporary New Communities in the U.S. and U.K.).

2.4. Amenities in new communities

A key argument here is that amenities, broadly defined, play an integral role in the ability of New Communities to function as an alternative to sprawl by attracting residents into planned communities and organizing their daily activities in ways that are counter to sprawl. As such, amenities have played a key role in the planned community tradition. Ebenezer Howard "summed up" what drew people to "overcrowded" cities centers as "attractions", arguing that to draw people Garden Cities must "present to the people, or to at least considerable proportions of them, greater 'attractions' than our cities now possess so that the force of the old 'attractions' shall be overcome by the force of the 'attractions' which are to be created" (Howard, 1902: 14). Howard used the metaphor of cities as "magnets" and a person as a "needle" attracted to the magnet to emphasize the importance of a full cadre of economic opportunities and amenities needed to attract and keep residents. Lewis Mumford, building on Howard's concept, argued modern planned communities should have all the facilities needed for daily life within walking distance of the home, breaking the modern dependence of sprawl on the car (Mumford, 1961).

The clarity of these core arguments withstanding, in practice amenities are easier to recognize than to define (Smith, 1974). Amenities are features of a place that make it a desirable location for commercial, residential, and/or recreational development, embodying the concepts of beauty, pleasantness, seemliness, and opportunity for increasing one's quality of life (Myers, 2007; Smith, 1974). However, amenities are often subjective in nature and have a varied ability to influence change, making them difficult to systematically codify. Even with the lack of codification, amenities and the concept of amenities are principle themes in physical planning (Smith, 1974) and should be considered a location-specific good (Diamond and Tolley, 1982).

A robust array of amenities, are key to a New Community's ability to achieve its promise as an alternative to typical sprawling suburban development in two key respects. First, there is a link between the housing market and amenity consumption. Housing developers have a vested interest in what types of amenities attract consumer households in order to package dwelling characteristics and land as a bundle of housing goods (Diamond and Tolley, 1982). As a location specific-good, amenities affect the level of household satisfaction as well as profits for the developer. In regards to the New Community model as a location-specific entity, amenities are a key facet in determining its success. In turn, it is important for developers to understand what drives residents to locate and remain in a planned New Community. Knowledge of amenities can be what makes or breaks a New Community, particularly in a highly competitive housing market.

The second aspect is how amenities play a role in the reduction of the negative impacts of sprawl. Having amenities sufficient to serve the residents of the community, as described earlier, means the residents of new communities should reduce travel, energy use, land use, and produce related environmental benefits stemming from living a more compact lifestyle. Instead of driving through a sprawling landscape, parks, stores, schools, and even jobs, should be in close proximity (i.e. in the community), thus organizing travel, energy use and land consumption.

Amenities are not a traditional metric or descriptor in research on sprawl. A recent article in the *Journal of Planning Literature* reviewing a large amount of literature on the measurement of sprawl by Ewing and Hamidi (2015) identified numerous ways to measure sprawl as well as descriptors of dimensions of sprawl. Amenities was not among those metrics identified, the closest analogues being the measurement of a mix of uses and the general concepts of compactness and self-sufficiency that are associated with non-sprawling places. We do not argue here for amenities as a quantitative metric for measuring sprawl. Instead we argue here that, in light of the history of planned communities and New Communities specifically, looking at the planned provision of amenities in future New Communities is a helpful lens for evaluating their sprawl reducing *potential* in broad strokes. The concept of amenities, while not precise, communicates a broader understanding of the level of self-sufficiency envisioned for a New Community. It is a concept that, if robustly embraced by the developers of New Communities, should lead to projects with high levels of mixed use, compactness, and self-sufficiency relative to typical sprawling development.

3. Methods

The data on the real estate development community's perspectives on amenities in future New Communities was collected via two surveys administered by a survey research firm in the spring and early summer of 2014. One survey was specific to the U.S. centric Urban Land Institute (ULI) and one specific to the U.K. centric Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Both were developed by a group that included high ranking members of the ULI and RICS as well as a private consultant that lead the study, and was further advised by prominent real estate academics. The surveys were directly emailed to each group's full membership list and a link was made available on both the RICS and ULI websites as well as the websites of the Counselors of Real Estate (CRE), the National Town Builders Association (NTBA), the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA). A U.S. specific survey was distributed by ULI and a U.K. specific survey distributed by RICS and its partners, though the content of the two surveys mostly overlapped. There were no restrictions on accessing the survey and participation in the survey was open to anyone with the link. Once the surveys were completed, we were engaged to help analyze the results along with the private consultant. After completing analysis for ULI and RICS the results were released for the basis of this paper.

The surveys consisted of 58 questions each, and all questions were offered to all respondents. The surveys were a combination of multiple choice and ranking questions. The survey consisted of seven key sections that included questions gathering options about Greenfield and Urban Renaissance communities, which divided the concept of New Communities into distinctly greenfield and urban subcategories. The sections included: screening questions (demographics), individual definitions and metrics for New Communities (included questions on size, density, and travel time to the city center), attributes of successful New Communities (income levels of residents, housing type, safety and security, retail components, transportation facilities, social amenities, open space, and business climate), key factors for the success and failure of New Commu-

nities (external and internal factors and leadership structures), statements about New Communities (ranking questions ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with statements ranging from market forces to housing mix to the achievement of social and economically diverse housing mix), organizational and individual information (type of firm, area of firm, number of developments worked on, size of the developments) and additional thoughts (open ended to allow for any unincorporated insights). Here we will only focus on those questions related to demographics of the sample and their opinions on amenities in New Communities. As well, it is important to note that the survey design did have some asymmetries and inconsistencies between the U.K. and U.S. versions due in part to societal and geographical differences of the two countries. While the authors acknowledge limitations in the data we obtained, overall it provides a unique window on the preferences of the real estate development community regarding the production of future New Community developments and provides useful insights as such.

4. Survey results

A total of 727 surveys were completed in the U.S. and U.K. Of this total, 614 were completed in the U.S. and 113 completed in the U.K. It was expected that there would be substantially less respondents from the U.K. as RICS has a smaller overall membership and the U.K. has a population approximately 5 times smaller than the U.S. While the survey was composed of various sections, this paper is concerned with the results of questions centered on community amenities of New Communities.

4.1. Demographic characteristics

The first section of the survey collected data on key characteristics of respondent's positions, affiliations, levels of experience, and organization types. Age and experience, as well as the role played in one's organization are important aspects to consider when analyzing the respondents' views on attributes and amenities.

While the survey was openly available and not designed to terminate for respondents with no real estate or related experience (unfortunately the lowest experience answer category was designed as zero to 4 years), 95% of respondents overall answered that they had 5 or more years' experience, meaning the likely inclusion of non-real estate or related professional respondents is very low. As Table 1 shows there was a considerable amount of respondents that reported at least twenty (20) years of experience in their current position within their company, with forty two percent (42%) of the respondents stating that they were either the owner, principal, or senior official. The industries most represented were planning and design followed by land development. While there was a wealth of experience in regards to the position in one's company and years in one's industry, actual experience working with or on a New Community project varied. Yet, given the scale, complexity, and time horizons of planning and developing New Communities the respondents' overall level of participation in at least one New Community project was remarkably high at seventy two percent (72%). While there was a large amount of respondents that worked on least one project, it should be noted those who have worked on New Communities would be considered more likely to have taken the survey in the first place.

The experience with size and scope of projects also varied among participants. As Table 1 further shows most of the respondents had been involved in mixed-use projects of 1000 or more residents. The higher amount of U.K. participants involved in larger projects reveals that they had considerably more experience with such projects than U.S. respondents, reflecting what would be expected due to different historical development patterns – as noted above, the U.K. has a larger and longer standing tradition of New Communities. Further analyzing the size of developments, fifty seven percent (57%) of U.S. respondents were involved in New Communities developments 26 to 2500 acres (11–1012 ha),[4] while in the U.K., 26% of respondents were involved with smaller developments of 100–499 ha (247–1233 acres) and thirty nine percent (39%) in developments of 11–99 ha (27–245 acres). This demonstrates that U.K. developers were dealing with higher populations as well as higher densities than their U.S. counterparts (Fig. 1).

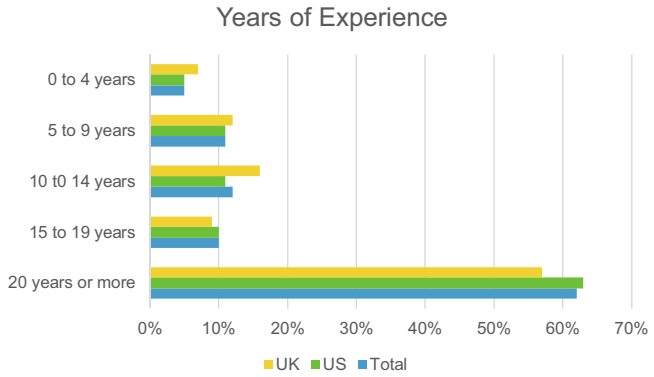

Fig. 1. Years of Experience.

4.2. Amenities

Respondents were asked to rank the five most important facilities and/or services (broadly acknowledged as amenities) that should be in a New Community, assuming they could be provided by a public, nonprofit, or private organization. Overall, the two groups responded quite similarly. In the U.S., top ranked items included neighborhood shops, open spaces/parks, access to public transportation, leisure activities (like movie theaters), schools (Pre-K through High School), and walking/bike paths. In the U.K respondents chose access to public transit, neighborhood shops, schools (Pre-K through High School), open spaces, and leisure activities. While transport was more important in the U.K., both countries clearly agreed on the most important services and facilities offered as selections. The most notable differences were that the U.K. ranked schools higher than those in the U.S., while U.S. respondents viewed walking and bike paths as more important than those in the U.K.

Drilling down, survey participants were asked to rank the importance of specific sub-types of amenities for a set of categories related to the above question. These categories were "safe and secure environments", "retail development", "transportation facilities and services", "recreational, social and cultural amenities", "educational opportunities", and "real estate products/property types". Respondents were asked to rank each as "not at all important," somewhat important," "important," "very important" and "extremely important".

Overall, there tended to be considerable agreement across most categories between the U.S. and U.K. with a few major differences existing between the U.S. and the U.K. on what is needed for a safe and secure environment. The most important features overall include on-street lighting, visible police presence, and tight control of building access. For the U.S. visible police presence, and bright street lighting were most prominent. While U.K. respondents considered bright street lighting, and low crime rates as being most

[4] Measurement conversions are approximate.

Table 2
Key Demographics of US and UK Respondents.

		US	UK	Combined
Experience	20 or more years	62%	57%	63%
	Owner			42%
Industry	Planning/Design	69%	66%	
	Land Development	56%		61%
New Communities Experience	12 or more	15%	14%	15%
	1–11			57%
	At least 1			72%
	Zero	29%	25%	28%
Size of Project	1000 or Homes	66%	81%	69%
	26–2500 acres	57%		
	100–499 ha		26%	
	11–99 ha		39%	

Table 3
Key Aspects of a New Community Expressed by US Developers (in order of importance per sections).

	Amenities	Percentage
Facilities/Service	Open space/parks	79%
	Neighborhood shops	77%
	Access to public transport	74%
	Recreation/leisure	69%
	Walking/bike paths	64%
	Schools (PreK – High School)	63%
Safety	Lighting	61%
	Police presence	43%
	Building access	
Retail	Local markets/convenience stores	83%
	Moderate restaurants	69%
	Local boutiques	50%
	Upscale restaurants	
Transportation	Mass transit	58%
	Highway access	47%
	Rapid bus	45%
Structural Amenities	Distinctive architecture	66%
	Community centers	57%
	Bars/Art Venues	54%
	Libraries	
Open/Green Space	Parks	91%
	Walking paths	88%
	Bike paths	83%
	Play fields	61%
Business Types	Standard Office Space	47%
	Manufacturing	16%

Table 4
Key Aspects of a New Community Expressed by UK Developers (in order of importance per sections).

	Amenities	Percentage
Facilities/Service	Access to public transport	89%
	Neighborhood shops	83%
	Schools (Pre K- High School)	81%
	Open space/parks	65%
	Recreation/leisure	65%
Safety	Low crime	81%
	Lighting	49%
Retail	Markets/Convenience Stores	66%
	Moderately Priced Restaurants	48%
	Local Boutiques	27%
Transportation	Rapid bus	68%
	Mass transit	64%
	Highway access	43%
Structural Amenities	Leisure center/pool/gym	72%
	Community centers	59%
	Bars	50%
	Libraries	49%
Open/Green Space	Parks	89%
	Walking paths	82%
	Play fields	75%
	Bike paths	74%
Business Types	Standard Office	50%
	Shared Office Space	44%
	Business Incubation	43%

significant. It should be noted that the option of low crime rate was not offered to U.S. respondents. While these were the top ranked responses in the category, overall no security features were not marked as important or very important by most respondents (Tables 2–4).

While there was general agreement in terms of security, there were more differences in regards to the types of retail amenities that should be prominent (See Fig. 2). Ample neighborhood supermarkets ranked high for both the U.S. and U.K. Differences occurred in that the U.S. placed more emphasis of moderately priced restaurants and local boutiques than the U.K. As well, the U.K. did rank distinctive commercial design/"sense of place" highest in this subcategory, though it was not asked of U.S. respondents. Importantly, other than supermarkets and convenience stores, moderately priced restaurants, and sense of place, no other amenity in this subcategory received a ranking of very important or extremely important from more than 50% of respondents.

In terms of transportation facilities and services, the two sets of respondents answered similarly except on rapid bus service, which was ranked much higher in the U.K. than in the U.S., where respondents selected mass transit and light rail as the top two most important factors for providing effective transportation facilities and services in New Communities (See Fig. 3). Still, other than high-capacity mass transit as well as rapid bus in the U.K. no other transportation amenity was seen by a majority of respondents as "very" or "extremely important". Respondents seem to agree that regional transportation access for a New Community is very valuable giving the picture of New Communities being understood as deeply embedded and dependent on their region, not as standalone places.

Cultural and social amenities within the community are also an important component of any master planned development. U.S. respondents placed importance on community centers, bars, art venues, and distinctive architecture. U.K. responses varied somewhat from those of the U.S. survey. The U.K. looked to leisure centers, community centers, pubs or bars, and libraries as important cultural and social amenities. Excluding the differences in the response choices, the only major difference between the two countries was on arts and venues, which were not highly ranked in the

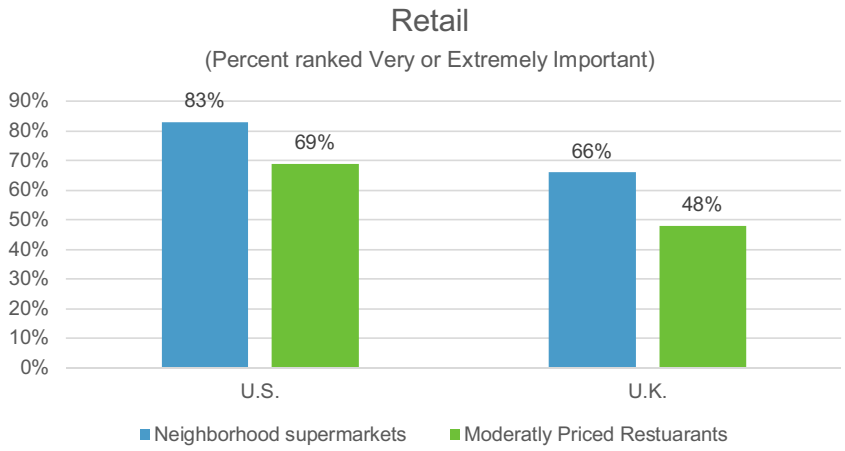

Fig. 2. Retail.

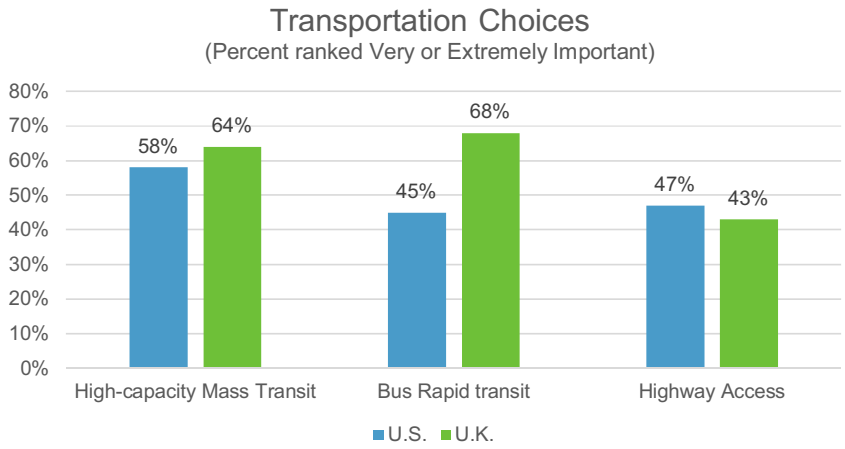

Fig. 3. Transportation Choices.

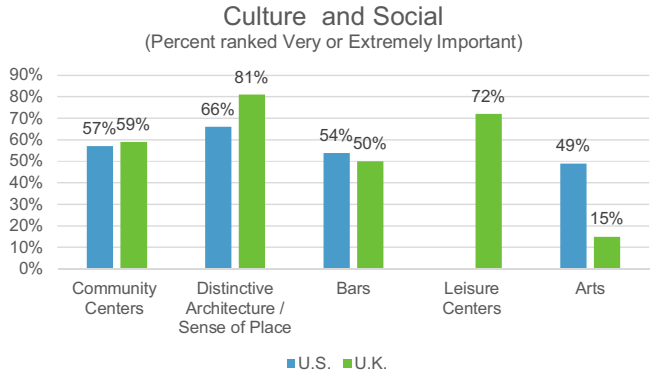

Fig. 4. Culture and Social.
Note: The fact there was no Leisure Centers chosen in the US is due to the fact that Leisure Centers was not an option on the US survey as the US does not use this term. This represents one of the wording/cultural differences of the two surveys.

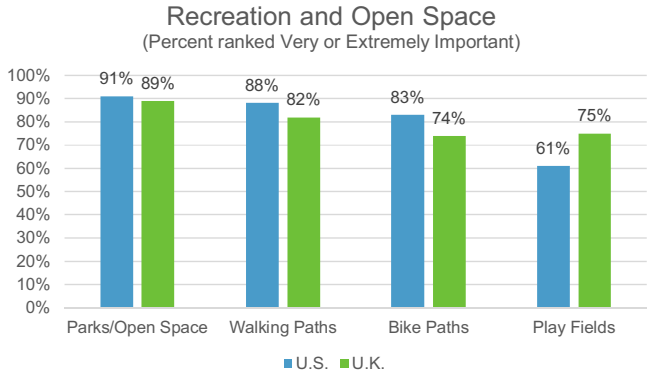

Fig. 5. Recreation and Open Space.

U.K. but were ranked as important in the U.S. Overall, there were no particularly high ranking standouts in this category either (Fig. 4).

Closely aligned with recreational amenities is the notion of open space, which would encourage on site recreational activities (See Fig. 5). Survey participants were asked which types of open areas, green space, and parkland within the community or near would be preferred. The U.S. respondents overwhelmingly envisioned parks and open space as one of their top choices, with walking paths, bike paths, and playing fields as also being important amenities. In contrast the U.K., chose parks and open space as one of their tops, followed by walking paths, playfields, and cycle paths. While parks and open space, walking paths, and playing fields were key in both countries, woodlands and urban farms were of less interest in the U.K. Overall, it is clear that in both cases parks and open space, walking paths, bike paths, and playing fields are seen as key to New Communities by a substantial majority of respondents and we can expect these to be standard amenities in future New Communities.

The next category, educational opportunities within the community for both K-12 and post high school, is important to

understand. The responses were very similar for the U.S. and U.K. group. High quality nursery schools, primary schools, and secondary/high schools ranked very highly. However, in both cases universities and adult education – really anything after secondary school – was not highly ranked. This gives a strong sense that the development community may still view New Communities as primarily residential, bedroom communities in nature.

When asked how important certain business property amenities were, either within or near a New Community, there were no standout responses with standard office space getting the highest ranking in both surveys but still not more than 50% indicating it as very or extremely important. Overall responses from both countries were almost identical. The U.S. did not have any stand out selections (none of the choices received fifty percent (50%) or more of respondents' rankings as "important" or "very important"), which indicates that respondents may not find business property to be significant to the success of New Communities. The U.K. did not have a dominant response either, although half of the respondents selected standard office as a top two, and chose shared office space and business incubation space also being of importance. Neither country found major significance in business property types, indicating future New Communities are not likely to mix in the facilities and amenities for any substantial non-retail employment opportunities.

5. Discussion

The respondents of the survey skew towards more senior professionals within their organizations and within the development community demographic with relatively impressive New Communities development experience. These demographics may explain why the responses demonstrate a traditional way of understanding a planned community as more of a bedroom suburb. An older demographic sample with development experience likely starting in the 1980s may indicate respondents with preconceived notions of "New Communities" as less like their post-war, self-sufficient ideal, and more like the master planned suburban communities developed in their professional careers. On the other hand, the respondents represent a segment of the real estate community with years of experience and expertise on what has traditionally worked and what does not, at least financially. Furthermore, their seniority would indicate a strong role in decision-making and shaping projects at their respective organizations.

Of interest is how the academic literature and policy debates around designing communities for the growing population of young professionals in the age range of 25–40 years old (Florida, 2002, 2008) does not appear to influence the respondents' views. In general, responses demonstrate a focus on neighborhood shops, open space, public transportation, and elementary schools with mild emphasis placed on bars and restaurants and almost none on business and employment, post-secondary education, or wide range of retail and consumer services. This is a vision of New Communities that is slanted towards a long-standing suburban planning and development paradigm of designing communities for the traditional family.

These traditional viewpoints are further highlighted by the amenities that the respondents emphasized as important, such as bright street lighting and police presence as important factors for safety and security within the community. This holds true with much of the academic literature around the control and securitization of perceived public space to maintain order (Davis, 1990; Mitchell, 2003). While the policing and control of public space is seen as an amenity by the developers, it further attests to the fact that these developments, while appearing at times to be public in nature with mixed uses, are privately controlled and designed spaces that look to maintain and control for a certain demographic base, which include property owners and non-owners alike.

While not explicitly being family oriented, the choices in retail amenities further highlight the traditional nature of neighborhood markets and moderately priced restaurants, implying family dining establishments as key amenities. Amenities of this nature are not understood to be geared towards a younger demographic such as: specialty markets, bars, and trendy avant-garde restaurants.

Additionally, amenities around recreation, business property types, and education are further centered on traditional ideas of the planned community with parks, walking paths, and community centers as important factors. In relation to the type of education considered as a priority, elementary education (K-12) was emphasized as opposed to higher education or continuing education centers. In addition, little importance was placed on businesses. All these variables further highlight the push for family oriented development that aligns with traditional sprawl producing suburban planned communities. The lack of a high ranking for even basic amenities around post-secondary or continuing education indicate a vision of New Communities as satellite to a larger city or region and not more self-sufficient or comprehensive. The same can be said for the low rankings of office and other commercial space. The general disinterest in New Communities as mixed residential and employment centers points clearly toward a more bedroom community vision.

One factor that was surprising in light of the overall implicit emphasis placed on the family was transportation choices. While there was no one overwhelming transportation choice as being key, there was importance placed on mass transit such as light rail and BRT. Likewise, direct access to a freeway was not as highly ranked as expected, rather significantly more emphasis placed on the individual automobile over mass transit was expected. This anomaly in relation to the rest of the survey responses may be a result of the increases in development and media coverage of light rail and BRT in both countries, especially the U.S. However, it most likely indicates a vision of New Communities as dependent on the major employment centers of the region instead of one that induced the development of employment opportunities within new communities to make them more self-sufficient economic units.

6. Conclusions

The results of the survey as discussed above indicate a development community in the U.S. and, to a lesser degree, the U.K. that view New Communities as somewhat more amenity rich than the traditional master planned communities that make up the bulk of suburbia today. However, while the level of amenities they envision in New Communities is far more robust than many classic master planned communities, it does not reach a level that would satisfy any expectation of self-sufficiency needed to meet the promise of a strong alternative to sprawl. The New Community movement to appears suffer from the same flaw leveled at the New Urbanism – on paper developments appear or are claimed to be utopian in nature, but in practice they both become softer, more pedestrian friendly versions of suburbia that lacks much of the promised levels of sustainable livability.

Considering the development community is more attuned to attracting and retaining residents, we can reasonably infer that the level of amenities they envision in New Communities is effective to meet private developers' financial objectives. Likely, those developing more New Communities have a good sense of the minimum amenities needed to attract residents at the lowest cost and complexity, an important balance for successful development in a capitalist framework. However, in terms of providing the amenities that will allow for New Communities to be more self-contained

units where the activities of everyday life are undertaken without reliance on motor vehicles over extended spaces, there is little evidence that the development community envisions this milieu. In particular, there was limited support for post-secondary or continuing education and surprisingly little interest for office space and a full array of retail stores and services in New Communities. Based on this, we can expect future New Communities to be marginal improvements over many of the sprawling suburban forms of our recent past and do not achieve anything near their promise as an alternative to sprawl.

From these results we can project that future New Communities within the current developer led environment will not overcome the historic tensions between the idealism of organized development to combat the ills of sprawl with the constraints of capitalist development. Just as the Garden Suburb adopted the most marketable aspects of the Garden City and today many master planned suburbs have turned the New Urbanism into a simplified marketable aesthetic of traditional Americana, future developer led New Communities are mostly likely to skew closer to what is marketable and financially most productive than their social and environmental ideals. It is no surprise that developers' main concerns are attracting people to their developments and meeting financial, not social and environmental goals. However, the current promotion and rhetoric of New Communities essentially claims the social and environmental goals as compatible with how the development community operates.

It is important to keep in mind that the respondents of the survey overwhelmingly held senior positions within companies and had years of experience. As senior members of their firms, the respondents might be entrenched into certain ways of thinking that are not necessarily in line with changing demographic patterns. The makeup of the survey respondents and emphasis on family oriented development patterns opens up avenues for future research around amenities and New Communities. A survey of only those in the development community with less than ten years of experience, presumably the next wave of senior management, might result in very different views of amenities and attributes of the New Community. A comparison of these two studies might provide a clearer view of what attributes and amenities are important to the success of a New Community.

Understanding what amenities are important in the design of New Communities in order to achieve social and environmental goals should be a significant avenue of study. As the residential makeup of both the U.S. and U.K. continues to be suburban in nature with growing economies following suit, it is essential to continue to evaluate and design better master planned communities. Our findings do not suggest that all future New Communities built in the U.S. and U.K. will lack the robust array of amenities that help make them more self-sufficient urban units and successful alternatives to urban sprawl. However, the results of the survey should lead planners and policy makers that seek to curb sprawl to be wary that the private development community will likely deliver on that promise in most cases. Instead, the results of this survey indicate the need for more engagement with the development community on how their products can genuinely meet anti-sprawl goals and more scrutiny of their project plans rather than trusting in an alignment of goals.

Further implications of this study for the New Community movement and, relatedly, the New Urbanism, is a call for those developers engaged in the movement to re-evaluate what they are looking to accomplish. The tension between social/environmental goals of the movement and the financial goals of development have existed since the Garden City movement and have not been resolved. If the development community truly wishes to adhere those goals of the New Community movement, then drastic changes to the balance between achieving them and an ROI must be considered. This of course centers on the belief that developers see the title of "New Community" as more than just a marketing scheme – and that would be the real innovation.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Sandy (Mahlon) Apgar for his assistance with constructing and analyzing the survey and his insights into the workings of New Communities.

References

Apgar, M.I.V., 2014. Placemaking: Innovations in New Communities. Urban Land Institute, Washington DC.
Belzer, D., Autler, G., 2002. Countering sprawl with transit-oriented development. In: Issues in Science and Technology. Fall.
Clapson, M., 2002. Suburban paradox? Planners' intentions and residents' preferences in two new towns of the 1960: Reston, Virginia and Milton Keynes, England. Plann. Perspect. 17 (2), 145–162.
Davis, M., 1990. City of Quartz. Vintage Books, New York.
Diamond, D., Tolley, G., 1982. The economic role of urban amenities. In: Diamond, Douglas, Tolley, George (Eds.), The Economics of Urban Amenities. Academic Press, New York.
Dunham-Jones, E., Williamson, J., 2009. Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs. John Wiley and Sons, Hoboken, New Jeresy.
Ewing, R., Hamidi, S., 2015. Compactness versus sprawl: a review of recent evidence from the United States. J. Plann. Lit. 30 (4), 413–432.
Fishman, R., 1987. Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia. Basic Books, New York.
Fishman, R., 2000. The death and life of regional planning. In: Katz, B. (Ed.), Reflections on Regionalism. The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C, pp. 107–123.
Fishman, R., 2002. The bounded city. In: Parsons, Kermit, Shuyler, David (Eds.), From Garden City to Green City. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, pp. 58–66.
Flint, A., 2006. This Land: The Battle over Sprawl and the Future of America. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
Florida, R., 2002. The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It Is Transforming Work, Leisure, Community, and Everyday Life. Basic Books, New York.
2008. Who's Your City: How the Creative Economy Is Making Where We Live the Most Important Decision of Your Life. Basic Books, New York.
Forsyth, A., 2005. Reforming Suburbia: The Planned Communities of Irvine, Columbia and The Woodlands. University of California Press, Berkeley.
Frank, L., Sallis, J., Conway, T., Chapman, J., Saelens, B., Friedman, W., Avi, 2002. Planning the New Suburbia: Flexibility by Design Vancouver. UBC Press.
Hall, P., 1996. Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century. Oxford, Basil Blackwell.
Heid, J., 2004. Greenfield Development Without Sprawl: The Role of Planned Communities. The Urban Land Institute, Washington DC.
Howard, E., 1902. Garden Cities of To-morrow. S. Sonnenschein & Co., London.
Katz, P., Scully, V., 1994. The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community. McGraw-Hill, New York.
Klem, J., 2014. What's New in New Communities, Retrieved October 11, 2015, from http://uli.org/general-posts/report-proposes-new-initiatives/.
Kolson, K.L., 2001. Big Plans: The Allure and Folly of Urban Design. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.
Mitchell, D., 2003. The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space. The Guilford Press, New York.
Mumford, L., 1961. The City in History. Harcourt, New York.
1968. The Urban Prospect. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York.
Myers, D., 2007. Building knowledge about quality of life for urban planning. J. Am. Plann. Assoc. 54 (3), 347–358.
Newman, P., 2001. Transport: reducing automobile dependency. In: Satterthwhaite, David (Ed.), The Earthscan Reader in Sustainable Cities. Earthscan, London.
Peiser, R., Chang, A., 1999. Is it possible to build financially successful new towns?: the milton keynes experience. Urban Stud. 36, 1679–1703.
Schmitz, A., Engerbretson, P., Merrill, F., Peck, S., Santos, R., Shewfelt, K., Stein, D., Torti, J., Utter, M., 2003. The New Shape of Suburbia: Trends in Residential Development. Urban Land Institute, Washington D.C.
Smith, D., 1974. Amenity and Urban Planning. Crosby Lockwood Staples, London.
Talen, E., 2005. New Urbanism and American Planning: The Conflict of Cultures. Routledge, New York.
United States, 1968. Urban and Rural America: policies for future growth, Washington, D.C.
Warwick, E., 2015. Policy to reality: evaluating the evidence trajectory for english eco-towns. Build. Res. Inf. 3218 (June), 1–13.
Williamson, J., 2013. Designing Suburban Futures: New Models from Build a Better Burb. Island Press, New York.