

# Memorandum



DATE January 16, 2009  
TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the Dallas City Council  
SUBJECT January 21, 2009 City Council Briefing

Dallas and the north central Texas region have been fortunate to not experience the full effects of the economic crisis troubling many parts of the country today. Nevertheless, we are experiencing somewhat of a softening or slow down in construction-related activities. One of the few advantages of this economic climate is that it presents us with an opportunity to step back and reflect on the type of city we are creating and contemplate our future direction.

In line with that idea, we have planned Wednesday's Council briefing to be a symposium that focuses on sustainable development and the value of urban design in enhancing Dallas' quality of life and attractiveness as a place to live, work and play in the increasingly competitive global economy.

We are fortunate to have four nationally prominent speakers to address different aspects of these ideas and concepts.

- **Larry Beasley** – led the City of Vancouver's development processes during a period of robust growth and inner city revitalization. Mr. Beasley is currently the principal of Beasley Associates and a Professor at the University of British Columbia.
- **Christopher B. Leinberger** – Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution and Director of the Graduate Real Estate Development Program at University of Michigan.
- **Maurice Cox** – Director of Design, National Endowment for the Arts and former Mayor of Charlottesville, VA.
- **James Rojas** - Transportation Manager for Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority and co-founder of the Latino Urban Forum. The LUF is a group of architects, planners and community activists interested in improving the built environment.

The agenda Wednesday will provide an opportunity to hear each of these speakers discuss their ideas and experiences around the concepts of urban design and best practices in a morning and early afternoon session. Following each session will be a breakout discussion for Council to engage the speakers with questions and in-depth discussions on these topics.

We hope this symposium will be an informative and helpful discussion.

Mary K. Suhm  
City Manager

cc: Deborah Watkins, City Secretary  
Thomas P. Perkins, Jr., City Attorney  
Craig Kinton, City Auditor  
Judge C. Victor Lander, Administrative Judge  
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager  
Forest Turner, Interim Assistant City Manager  
A.C. Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager  
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
Ramon F. Miguez, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
Dave Cook, Chief Financial Officer

## Speaker Biographies



### **Larry Beasley**

C.M., B.A., M.A., Hon. L.L.D., F.C.I.P.

#### **Biographical Sketch**

LARRY BEASLEY is the retired Director of Planning for the City of Vancouver. He is now the "Distinguished Practice Professor of Planning" at the University of British Columbia and the founding principal of Beasley and Associates, an international planning consultancy.

Over thirty years of civic service, Mr. Beasley achieved land use and transportation plans along with careful development management that have dramatically reshaped Vancouver's inner city. He also led the revitalization of neighbourhoods, a strong heritage preservation program, the City's urban design studio and a successful civic fundraising initiative. For the last thirteen years of his civic service, he was a principal decision maker for Vancouver's development approvals. He now teaches and advises the private sector and governments around the world. He chairs the 'National Advisory Committee on Planning, Design and Realty' of Ottawa's National Capital Commission and is the Special Advisor on City Planning to the government of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. He is the vice president for planning of a major Canadian development company, Aquilini Development.

Mr. Beasley has studied architecture and has degrees in geography and political science (B.A.) and planning (M.A.). He was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree (Hon. L.L.D.) from Simon Fraser University, one of his alma maters. He is a Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners, an Honorary Member of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and has been recognized as an "Advocate for Architecture" by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. Last year, he received the Kevin Lynch Prize from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the most prestigious award in American planning.

Mr. Beasley is a Member of the Order of Canada, our country's highest honour for lifetime achievement.

#### **Professional Awards Received by Larry Beasley**

1987	<b>Achievement Award</b>	Downtown Vancouver Association (Legacies Program)
1987	<b>Special Achievement Award</b>	International Downtown Association, Washington D.C. (Legacies Program)
1988	<b>National Honour Award</b>	Canadian Institute of Planners (Legacies Program)
1990	<b>Award for Planning Excellence</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (False Creek North Plan)
1991	<b>Award of Merit</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (Coal Harbour Policy Plan)
1992	<b>Award of Merit</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (Central Area Plan)
1992	<b>"Golden Nugget" Award</b>	Pacific Coast Builders Conference, San Francisco, Calif. (False Creek North Plan)
1992	<b>Excellence on the Waterfront</b>	Waterfront Centre Society, Washington, D.C. (Coal Harbour Plan) Honour Award

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1993	<b>Award for Planning Excellence</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (Downtown South Plan/Implementation)
1994	<b>Award for Contribution to</b>	Social Planning & Research Council of B.C. & Forum for Planning Action Local Government (Victory Square Planning Program)
1994	<b>"Georgie" - Silver Award</b>	Canadian Home Builders' Association of B.C. (Government Cooperation for Concord Pacific Place)
1995	<b>National Honour Award for</b>	Canadian Institute of Planners (Central Waterfront Port Lands Policy Statement) Intergovernmental Cooperation
1996	<b>Award of Merit</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (Downtown Public Realm Improvements)
1996	<b>Award of Planning Excellence</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (False Creek North Policy Broadsheets and Official Development Plan)
1996	<b>"World's 100 Best Planning Practices"</b>	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, Nairobi, Kenya – for Habitat II Summit, Istanbul, Turkey (Waterfront Planning Process and Plans)
1998	<b>Award for Planning Excellence</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (Vancouver Skyline Study)
1999	<b>National Honour Award</b>	Canadian Institute of Planners (Historic Preservation Planning in Xi'an, China)
2000	<b>National Honour Award</b>	Canadian Institute of Planners (Southeast False Creek Environmentally Sustainable Community - Policy Statement)
2003	<b>Excellence on the Waterfront</b>	Waterfront Centre Society, Washington, DC (Waterfront Promenade) Honour Award
2003	<b>Awards for Planning Excellence</b>	Canadian Institute of Planners and Planning Institute of British Columbia (Downtown Transportation Plan)
2003	<b>"Advocate for Architecture" Medal</b>	Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
2004	<b>Award of Excellence</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (Urban Design Booklet -Vol.2: "Vancouver's New Neighbourhoods")
2004	<b>Excellence on the Waterfront Honour Award</b>	Waterfront Centre Society, Washington, D.C. (False Creek North Neighbourhoods)
2004	<b>Special Achievement Award for Planning</b>	International Downtown Association, Washington, D.C. ("Living First" Strategy Downtown)
2005	<b>Plan Canada Feature Canadian Communities: Article of the Year</b>	Canadian Institute of Planners (for "Moving Forward in Soliloquy of an Urbanist")
2005	<b>Appreciation Award</b>	Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association
2006	<b>Leadership in Healthy Public Policy Award</b>	Heart and Stoke Foundation of Canada
2006	<b>Award of Excellence</b>	Congress for the New Urbanism, Chicago, Ill. ("Living First" Strategy Downtown)
2006	<b>Honorary Landscape Architect</b>	Canadian Society of Landscape Architects
2007	<b>Distinguished Alumni award</b>	Simon Fraser University Alumni Association
2007	<b>Honorary Doctorate Degree</b>	Simon Fraser University
2007	<b>Kevin Lynch Prize</b>	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2008	<b>Award of Excellence</b>	Planning Institute of British Columbia (for "Plan Abu Dhabi 2030")

VISITING FELLOW



## Christopher B. Leinberger

Visiting Fellow, [Metropolitan Policy Program](#)

Christopher Leinberger's expertise includes downtown redevelopment, real estate, financing, and strategic planning for downtowns and suburban centers. He directs the University of Michigan's real estate graduate studies.

Quote: "There's demographic evidence; there's consumer research evidence; but probably the most compelling evidence is the price premium people are willing to pay to live in a walkable urban place, that the survey's show anywhere from a 40% to 200% price premium on a price per square foot basis for a walkable urban place as oppose to a competitive near by drivable suburban place."

### EXPERTISE

Downtown and suburban downtown redevelopment, financing progressive real estate, real estate development, metropolitan development trends, strategic planning for downtowns and suburban downtowns

### CURRENT POSITIONS

Professor of Practice and Director of the graduate Real Estate Program at University of Michigan; Founding Partner of the Arcadia Land Company, real estate development with "new urbanism" in Southeast Pennsylvania and Independence, MO.

### PAST POSITIONS

Managing Partner and Co-owner of Robert Charles Lesser and Co., an international real estate consulting firm.

Christopher B. Leinberger, a land use strategist and developer, combines an understanding of business realities with a concern for our nation's social and

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environmental issues. Currently, Mr. Leinberger is a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC. He focuses on research and practice that help transform traditional and suburban downtowns and other places that provide “walkable urbanism”, as well as research and practice that implements the Brookings’ Blueprint for American Prosperity initiative in metropolitan areas throughout the country. Please refer to [www.brookings.edu/walkableurbanism](http://www.brookings.edu/walkableurbanism).

Chris is also a Professor of Practice and Director of the Graduate Real Estate Development Program at the University of Michigan. This program trains the next generation of real estate developers in the building of sustainable walkable urban places. The Program is a joint venture of the Ross Business School, law school and the Taubman College of Architecture & Urban Planning, where it is housed. Please refer to [www.tcaup.umich.edu/realestate](http://www.tcaup.umich.edu/realestate).

Mr. Leinberger is a founding partner of Arcadia Land Company, a New Urbanism/transit-oriented development and consulting firm dedicated to land stewardship and building a sense of community. His partners are Robert Davis, the developer of Seaside, Florida, and Joe Duckworth, who has run two Builder 100 home building companies and was the National Home Builder of the Year in 1992. The firm has developments in the Philadelphia metropolitan area, a 1,400-acre development in Independence, Mo., a joint venture with Forest City Enterprises, and was the catalytic developer for the revitalization of downtown Albuquerque, N.M. Please refer to [www.arcadialand.com](http://www.arcadialand.com). Finally, Mr. Leinberger is president of Locus; Responsible Real Estate Developers and Investors. Locus is advocating for the upcoming transportation, climate change and energy bills before Congress. Locus is a partner and member of the executive committee of Transportation for America, a broad coalition of environmental, business, real estate, unions and government bodies. Please refer to [www.t4america.org](http://www.t4america.org).

For 21 years, Mr. Leinberger was Managing Director and co-owner of RCLCo, the largest independent real estate advisory firm in the country that today works on over 600 projects a year for developers, corporations and municipalities.

Mr. Leinberger has served on the boards of AMRESO Capital Trust (NASDAQ real estate mortgage trust) and AvalonBay Communities, one of the country's most respected equity REITs (NYSE). He is a member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), serving on the jury of JC Nichols Award for Excellence in Urbanism and in the leadership of the Transit-Oriented Development Council. He is also a member of the Congress of the New Urbanism.

Mr. Leinberger has also been active on several committees of the National Academy of Sciences, including the creation of the National Biological Survey, sponsored by Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, and a panel to improve metropolitan governance. He is also on the National Advisory Board of The Conservation Fund and the National Real Estate Leadership Council of Enterprise Community Partners.

Mr. Leinberger has written chapters for eight books. His most recent book is “The Option of Urbanism, Investing in a New American Dream”, published in 2008 by Island Press. It demonstrates how the pendulum of how the country invests in the built environment,

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which comprises 35% of the asset base of the country, is swinging back toward “walkable urbanism”. This follows two generations of building the alternative, “drivable sub-urban” development, which has been the de facto domestic policy of the country. The book makes the connection between how the American Dream lays out on the ground and the economic base of the country from the agricultural era, through the industrial to the current knowledge-based economy. He is also the author of *Strategic Planning for Real Estate Companies*, originally published by ULI in 1993, regarding corporate strategy for real estate companies, which was revised and re-published by ULI in 2008.

He has written articles for many periodicals, including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *the Nation*, *Urban Land*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Canada’s National Post* and *Los Angeles Times*, among others. Mr. Leinberger has given speeches to nearly every major real estate and land use organization in the country, as well as many chambers of commerce, councils of governments and environmental organizations. His articles can be found at [www.cleinberger.com](http://www.cleinberger.com).

He has been profiled by CNN, *The Today Show*, Canadian National Radio, USA Radio, CBS Radio and numerous times by National Public Radio, including *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered* and *Marketplace*, regarding metropolitan development trends. He has been a visiting lecturer at the Santa Fe Institute, Harvard University, Swarthmore College, University of Wisconsin, UCLA, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Virginia Tech, University of New Mexico (as an adjunct professor) and other institutions of higher education.

Mr. Leinberger received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Swarthmore College, where he double majored in Political Science and Urban Sociology, and subsequently acquired a MBA from the Harvard Business School. He also attended the Martin Luther King School of Social Change, the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan, and was a Coro Foundation Fellow in Public Policy in Los Angeles. Mr. Leinberger lives in the Dupont Circle area of Washington, DC, with his wife, Lisa.

## Speaker Biographies

### National Endowment for the Arts Announces Maurice Cox as Director of Design

*NEA design initiative receives \$250,000 gift from Edward W. Rose III Family Fund*

October 2, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- The National Endowment for the Arts announced today that Maurice Cox, an architecture professor at the University of Virginia, has been appointed the NEA's Director of Design. In that position, Cox will supervise the panel selection and grant making process in design, oversee the Mayors' Institute on City Design, Governors' Institute on Community Design, and Your Town programs, and provide professional leadership to the field. He will assume his new responsibilities on October 2.

Mr. Cox arrives at the NEA at an exciting time. The Arts Endowment announces that the Edward W. Rose III Family Fund of The Dallas Foundation has given a generous gift of \$250,000 for the NEA's Mayors' Institute on City Design.

#### **Maurice Cox as director of design**

Of Maurice Cox's appointment, National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Dana Gioia said, "We are excited that Maurice Cox will join us to direct the Arts Endowment's design initiatives. His wide-ranging experience, from professional practice to academic instruction to civic leadership, fits well with the NEA's mission of promoting broad public access to artistic excellence. We know he will provide invaluable guidance for our programs."



Maurice Cox. Photo by  
Tom Cogill

Mr. Cox noted, "With the NEA's commitment to the arts as a way to enrich the lives of ordinary citizens and my own experience of design as a fundamentally democratic and public art, I am confident that together we can make design socially and culturally relevant to the everyday lives of Americans, in whichever community they live. Well-designed environments are not a luxury -- they are a public necessity."

Mr. Cox is an Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Virginia, School of Architecture and is a 2004-05 recipient of the Loeb Fellowship at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. He recently completed eight years on the Charlottesville (VA) City Council with the last two years as the city's mayor. As mayor, professor, and urbanist he was widely recognized as the principal urban designer of his city. During his mayoral term, Frommer's Cities Ranked and Rated selected Charlottesville as "Best Place to Live" out of 400 cities in the United States and Canada.

A native of New York City, he received his education at the Cooper Union School of Architecture under the guidance of Dean John Hejduk. In 2004, he was awarded the Cooper Union's highest alumni honor, the President's Citation for distinguished civic leadership to the architecture profession and, in 2006, the John Hejduk Award for Architecture. He began his teaching career as an Assistant Professor of Architecture at Syracuse University's Italian Program in Florence, Italy, where his teaching career was accompanied by 10 years in architectural partnership with Giovanna Galfione, collaborating on buildings with architect Aldo Rossi.

He was founding partner of RBGC Architecture, Research and Urbanism from 1996-2006 in Charlottesville. The firm became nationally renowned for its work with communities traditionally underserved by the design field. His reputation as a design leader and innovator led to his being featured in *Fast Company*, as one of

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America's "20 Masters of Design;" on CBS news magazine "60 Minutes;" in the documentary film *This Black Soil*; and in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Architecture Magazine* -- all for his ground-breaking use of design as a catalyst for social change in the rural town of Bayview, Virginia.

Cox was a founding principal, with Ken Schwartz, of Community Planning and Design Workshop (CP+D Workshop) which is working on urban design strategies for the cities of Richmond, Virginia, and Moss Point, Mississippi. Cox has lectured widely on the topics of democratic design, civic engagement, and the designer's role as leader.

For more information, contact the NEA's Communication Office at 202-682-5570 or go to [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov).



## Speaker Biographies

### James Rojas: Los Angeles, California



#### Co-founder, Latino Urban Forum

In Latino communities, streets play an important role for purposes other than driving. They function as plazas and gathering places, and immigrants retrofit their houses, front yards and sidewalks to foster a sense of community.

But most Latino immigrants live in impoverished communities that lack open spaces, safe pedestrian crossings and well-maintained streets and sidewalks, notes James Rojas, who is working to reduce these disparities. Through his research on Latino urbanism, Rojas aims to change the way public space is allocated and used.

To help promote safer and healthier Latino communities, Rojas co-founded the Latino Urban Forum (LUF), a group of architects, urban planners and community activists interested in improving the built environment.

LUF organizes residents around projects that celebrate public space, including Cornfields State Park, South Central Community Farm and the Nacimiento Bike Tour of nativity scenes in East Los Angeles.

Rojas and LUF also played a critical role in the creation of the Evergreen Cemetery jogging path in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of East L.A. Without any parks in the neighborhood, health-focused residents navigated the cracked sidewalk bordering the local cemetery.

Rojas and LUF organized the Evergreen Jogging Path Coalition to design a resurfaced jogging path and lobby city officials for funding and support. Six months after the effort began, the new jogging path was in place. It is now enjoyed by roughly 1000 residents of Boyle Heights and neighboring communities each day—five times the daily use of the old path.

He also studies transportation issues in Los Angeles County and oversees millions of dollars in urban design, bike and pedestrian projects. Rojas envisions communities in which people walk, bike and use electric streetcars to reach their destination.

"We need to look at transportation as a quality of life experience," Rojas says. "Active living is a way to get people out of their house and into their environment."

# Larry Beasley presentation to Squamish Council

## Larry Beasley Talks on Oceanfront Development Plans

**Background:** This meeting is the first step in moving forward on the Oceanfront Lands since the Qualex deal fell through in October. Larry Beasley is an esteemed former Vancouver City planner who has won many awards for his work and now consults internationally. He was very keen to come to Squamish and speak on this.

**Cam Chalmers:** Jim Lauden is director of the Stanley District/Parks in Vancouver, and Larry Beasley is long time and esteemed City of Vancouver planner, currently running his own consulting business.

**Mayor Sutherland:** Many SODCO board members are in the audience.

**Larry Beasley:** I'm glad to be here - there is so much good happening here, and you feel the anticipation because you have this site. Up front - my bias is public sector. The best thing I can do is to facilitate your conversation with my experience from Vancouver where we had a similar situation with new, great waterfront sites and no plan. I am not working for anyone. I know Vancouver and Squamish are not the same. I respect your planning and your director of planning.

I believe you have to approach this with new principles: Keep your public interest really clear. Don't get them confused with entrepreneurial interests, whether they are your interests, or the interests of another developer.

It is good to go in stages. Don't do specific and general at the same time. In Vancouver, we start with a "dreaming stage" – just ideas and thoughts. Then move to a master plan, then zoning. Sometimes zoning is little pieces. For everything there is a season. If you don't do that, you give up urban design. The public experiences the city as urban design.

You have to involve the public every step of the way. You can't stop and start, even through elections, and at every stage. You have to co-ordinate your civic departments so you speak with one voice. You have to find a way to collaborate with the community and the developers. We used to fight with developers, but in these projects, you have to collaborate.

You have to define the rolls for politicians and bureaucrats.

In setting up a plan, the variables are: How much money do you want to spend on the process? You can spend a lot or none. How much money do you want to make? You could just get your Public Goods, or you can make money to spend on other things. You can hold land for the future. They are all part of how much money you make.

How much control do you need? You have fundamental control with zoning, but how do you secure the public goods? You want to be sure of the urban design.

How much political consensus do you have, or how much can you achieve? That varies.

You have 2 kinds of power in play - your legislated power, and your (land) ownership (entrepreneurial) power. You have to know which is in play.

You want to make a great place - not an average place. You want to build in all the bells and whistles.

**Scheme 1:** 'You Plan It': The city controls everything, and then you have something to sell. The developer knows what they are getting. This costs you the most, especially if you want to go state of the art. You also have the most control. It COULD give you the biggest profits. But you can allow that to be spent on Public Goods. The public and your own departments will want the money too. It is also the most risky. You can end up with a scheme that is too constrained and developers will not want to buy in or bid.

If you have strong political consensus and a strong site, then you have the power to control a lot. i.e.: Olympic Village.

**Scheme 2:** 'You sell the land NOW'. This is the other extreme: The developer goes through the process, at his risk. This costs the least. It can cost almost nothing. You only have regulatory control, but that is limited by the province. You get much smaller profits as there are too many unknowns and the developers discount what they are willing to pay. Financially it's the least risk, and it can hurt the image of your city. This works if you are broke, and you lack political consensus. A good example is the North False Creek lands.

There are many possibilities in the middle. One is the collaborative one. You work early, conceptually, and then you work with the community and the developer. You try and reconcile everyone's interest. Council remains actively involved. It can cost very little. You get good control, and you have some ownership powers. The profits are shared, but not as good as #1. It is also less risky for you and the developer.

NOTE: When I said collaboration, I did not say Joint venture. This is a good thing to do when you have political consensus, and some money. You can also get most of the public goods. There is a lot of this in Vancouver, such as East Fraser lands. The Developer there eventually brought in some of the best urban designers in the world.

When I look at his site - I think you need to refresh the vision. Go and talk to people, try to get some consensus. It has been a while since you went to the public. You have to talk the developers out there - there is a lot of gossip out there in the development community about what happened with Qualex.

This is a fabulous site - and it is a great site for your community. This site will set the future image of Squamish.

**Jim Lauden:** It is a question of setting the image of how much of Squamish wants to do. How willing are you to move beyond the boundaries of the project. What identity is seen on the site? How much can I draw from this? How can the town core benefit? Squamish has insular residential subdivisions, but what is downtown Squamish? What is the role it plays in where people work and play? How do you create a vibrant community? You have a gem next to your current core. You have to incorporate that.

**Mayor Sutherland:** We had a false start. That is not unusual with a site like this. All councillors are looking for the best thing, in their opinion, for the community. We should learn from the past and treat this as day one of a new process.

**Councillor Jenson:** My question is about the areas of Downtown - we used to have sawmill site - we are going through an OCP. In the town, the development that is moving ahead first is the Interfor site - how do we draw the other developers into this equation?

**Larry Beasley:** If you stay within the borders of this site, you miss the big pictures. The other developers want to know what each other are doing. Try and bring those owners together, and engage them in looking at things holistically. You talk about the larger issues and the community. A lot of things have to be thought out here: Waterfront and water usage, traffic, access, etc. Because you have a development corporation, you bring equity to the table. You can work with them on that.

**Councillor Jenson:** On getting the consensus of Council - how did you manage that in Vancouver?

**Larry Beasley:** "We went through hell."

In big developments like this, where you are holding the public interest, and there are a lot of stakeholders, it is prudent for you to find what the public interest is. You need to go through a process together, but base it on public consultation. You have done good things. It is a start. As councillors, you each have to commit to finding a common ground. Usually, the imperative from the public to solve the problems motivates council to find the common ground. Once it is done with the public, they all buy in and the consensus lasts for a long time.

**Councillor Heintzman:** We are economically challenged this year, and we are consensus challenged. We should all be on couches talking about our bad dreams. With consensus you need good will and an open mind. This whole idea of collaboration with landowners - it seems different for this process - is it unusual?

**Larry Beasley:** No it is not unusual. We engage with many developers in Vancouver. You have to look beyond the site. Smart landowners get motivated by this. Keep everything very fair - your corporation cannot have advantages over other developers. Don't negotiate behind the scene. The public has to see the bad stuff get decided, as well as the good stuff. If a group of landowners believe in the leadership of the community, they come to the table.

**Councillor Mackenzie:** How do we connect the downtown to that site? What are your thoughts?

**Larry Beasley:** This gets to your design philosophy and plan. In general, you want as many linkages as possible - it makes it more vibrant. You want many connections. Also, it helps transportation. I'd look at the pattern of the existing streets. For example, when we did North False Creek, the developer brought forward a beautiful plan with a number of canals. We liked it, but eventually we said it did not fit the area as it cut off the connectivity.

**Councillor Gardner:** How do the players fit into the planning process? Where would something like SODCO fit in, and how do we engage a planner?

**Larry Beasley:** I think your SODCO is an effective arrangement for consummation the business deals, but it may not be the place to begin the planning. The planners should plan the city: You department and planners you bring in. The public must see the planning department as leading the process in the public's interest. The real estate department in Vancouver is my best friend. They kept my feet on the ground. But the planning department leads the planning. I suspect your planner, knowing what I do, is overworked. You are going to need expertise and a team to augment and work through the process. Then the average citizen knows there is a custodian beyond the interests of the present council.

How much planning do you do before the developer comes in? You need to go through until you get a consensus on what will happen on the lands. You need to do that as a council. You need to have a direct relationship with the community. Once you know, then you can bring in a developer. You can then bring in the development perspective and the public perspective. You should also include the other developers in the area.

**Councillor Lonsdale** wondered whether it was time to develop this land. You can do this in the first round - look at factors and decide whether it is the best time right now, but not just looking at the question: "Can we sell residential real estate?"

**Councillor Lonsdale:** We have 4 major developments going on – Waterfront Landing, Westmana, Red Point, and BC Rail. Do we look at the whole area in that economic assessment, or just our land?

**Larry Beasley:** You have to look at all of them. You are transitioning from a resource-based economy, but what are you transforming to? What are the allocations on the lands developed over the next 15 years? When it is unclear where things are

going, you cannot plan long term very well. You have to balance jobs, and residential and industry. You don't go linear - in complicated sites, there is too much to do. You have to cluster things.

**Mayor Sutherland:** Assuming a process for several owners, What do you think is the proper time line? And how do you allocate those costs to the landowners?

**Larry Beasley:** I don't know what Westmana is doing. You need to set up a program that meets your needs and their needs. If you want to move faster, it is going to cost you more, particularly to do it right. A lot of things have to go onto the table. I've worked with up to 30 experts and brought them together. I can't give you an answer now.

**Councillor Heintzman:** You talk about this 'entrepreneurial power' we have. We don't have a real estate dept. What is that power?

**Larry Beasley:** Probably Mike Chin can give you a better answer. You can contract with anyone to do anything, beyond your regulatory powers. For example, with public goods, the law constrains what you can extract from a landowner, but as an owner, you don't have those restrictions. Mike probably has a better answer.

**Jim Lauden:** You can trade pieces of land, you can get things from other people's land, You are a player.

**Larry Beasley:** There is a negative side as well. You can end up forgoing the public goods sometimes. The City of Vancouver has a huge land bank. The combination of powers allows you to achieve what you want to achieve?

**Councillor Mackenzie:** How do you avoid the conflict of interest between your different interests?

**Larry Beasley:** It is always hard to do. If you have laid out the public agenda first, and explain when you deviate, you are on solid ground.

**Councillor Gardner:** What are the milestones we should look for on a project like this and for the city as a whole?

**Larry Beasley:** There are basic urban principles. Diversity is most important thing. Intensity is also important. You can find alternative to the car but walking is the best way to solve this. Vibrancy is important, as is humanism.

When I look at your community, you have a lot of that, but your centre is not as healthy as it could be. The density you are adding is great. It will add cultural energy. You don't have that in many respects. Your downtown survives against the odds. In 'Intensity' I'm not talking about towers. Many associate those with me. It is about the 'appropriate' intensity. You have to think of the city as a body - everything has to work well together.

**Councillor Lonsdale:** You talked about moving gradually, developing from the least valuable to the most valuable. We have challenges down there. Do you think the "Develop the Worst, First, Best Last" principle will work there?

**Larry Beasley:** To clarify - a developer will do worst first, and build value. But that is the developer. Done publicly, it can be different. When I looked at the maps of this, I liked the water, but when I looked at it, I liked the mountains. Access to the water might not be as important here. If you use open spaces well, you can bring everything out.

**Jim Lauden:** You will have to front-end some of the public amenities to get the first residential phase to buy in. Don't go too hard on residential. In False Creek, the parks are on the most contaminated areas.

**Councillor Lonsdale:** What about infrastructure costs and leases vs. sale?

**Larry Beasley:** You will pay a lot for doing leases. People want to own land. It gets tougher to strata things, etc. You may decide that there are parts you want to keep public for various reasons - social housing, parks, etc.

**Mayor Sutherland:** What about one developer vs. multiple developers?

**Larry Beasley:** One developer helps the public. Better decisions can be made. Sometimes it is hard to negotiate things with more than one developer. You can trade public goods and other things around the site easier.

**Jim Lauden:** Don't be shy about trading or sharing lands , especially to consolidate sites.

**Councillor Heintzman:** A broader question - our community is not comfortable with density. How do we reconcile that with a community that sees it as overcrowding? There is a concern out there that density is bad.

**Larry Beasley:** The reason people hate density is that most density is terrible. If it is designed badly, that happens, but if it is designed well, it works well for everyone. We have to design cities well. You are not just developing density; you are developing something beautiful and full. Also, not all density is tall. Paris is dense, but not tall. There are good ways to build density. It does not mean towers. Row house towns are good and fun. They have good density. Squamish does not need to be a small version of Vancouver.

**Jim Lauden:** Don't get into the numbers game too early.

**Councillor MacKenzie:** With all of these developments in Vancouver, they were all industrial before. This site was too.

**Larry Beasley:** In Vancouver, we did a study, and decided which industrial to keep, and which to re-develop. Often, industrial does not work any more on many sites. Industrial is valuable in completing urbanism. We are still protecting some parts of Vancouver. You look at industrial land as jobs that are part of your community.

**Councillor Lonsdale:** Is the first step to determining, with the public, what we want from our lands?

**Larry Beasley:** That's part of it, but what you want for your town is important too. You have to look at the town, and how the lands fit into that. Your planning department knows how to do that.

**Mayor Sutherland:** Any thoughts on [the proposed Capilano ] college for downtown Squamish?

**Jim Lauden:** You are welcoming the intelligence industry into your city. That will enliven downtown. It is an excellent anchor, and an excellent replacement for industry. So many spin offs come off of this.

**Rene David (Westmana):** The tools you have are the most important things you mentioned. I feel we are working in a void sometimes. We are fearful of making the wrong decision.

**Larry Murray:** There is nothing said here that does not fit into moving forward with this project. Thank you for the insights. Over the last 3 years, Larry Beasley has in a way been there in the background. I would suggest at this time that a key component is the enabling foundations of the Oceanfront corporation. We need a clear understanding of the beginning points.

**Mayor Sutherland:** Today went better than I thought it would. Mr. Beasley and Mr. Lauden are here because they want to be here.

Notes by Gord Addison

# Shop Talk

**Former NEA design director Jeff Speck talks with Maurice Cox, the architect recently selected to succeed him.**

By Jeff Speck

Posted January 16, 2008

I can't say that I didn't see it coming. When my phone rang and the caller ID said "Metropolis," there was little doubt what was next. The day before, Maurice Cox—architect, educator, and former mayor of Charlottesville, Virginia—had been appointed director of design at the National Endowment for the Arts. Now a contributing editor of this fine magazine, I had recently stepped down after four years in that selfsame NEA job. Guess who they wanted to do the interview?

I accepted the assignment with pleasure. A firm believer in guilt by association, I had watched my empty desk with some anxiety over the selection of a replacement. And I had encouraged many talented and socially conscious designers to apply, Cox prominent among them. Now my reputation was secure! But were my programs? Time to ask some questions.

The NEA's director of design oversees all of the grants that the agency gives in design, from graphic design to regional planning. He also steers three "leadership initiatives" that the NEA funds, all of which teach design skills to community leaders including mayors and, more recently, governors. As a federal appointment, the job carries its share of paperwork—and frustrations—but also provides the special satisfaction that comes from identifying those who are doing the most good and giving them cash to do more of it. Here is what Cox had to say about his new job and his path to Washington.

**At last year's Aspen Design Summit you presented a project that completely captivated the audience.**

That was Bayview village, an initiative started in 1996, in which my office worked closely with a community of rural poor on the eastern shore of Virginia to create a counterproposal to a maximum-security prison that was planned for their neighborhood as economic development.

**Were they being displaced?**

Worse, they were on the verge of being stigmatized for the rest of their existence. They fought this prison very effectively over a three-year period, and once the governor backed away from this plan, they were left with the question, What now?

**And you volunteered to be the town planner and architect for these people?**

We worked pro bono as the community planners, and we assembled a team to address the larger issues of environmental and spatial justice. We brought in the Nature Conservancy to propose a grant, and won funding from the Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA grant enabled this community to become the planner, developer, and affordable-housing provider for its own rural village.

**So now, a few years later, they're living in nice homes. I remember the conclusion we reached in our working group. The theme of the conference was "Taking It to Scale"—repeating local successes globally. Our first thought was that we need more projects like this. But then we realized that what we really need are more Maurice Coxes. Because what you accomplished there required a tremendous amount of effort and was not scalable without the presence of people like you who are really going to take on huge challenges like this one.**



Well, what's needed in the design disciplines is a sense of urgency that these types of effort are the work of our profession. We need more designers that frame their work as socially relevant and, if necessary, politically charged. That is the larger challenge to designers: How do we make it a central part of our practice to serve communities that are not traditionally served by design?

**So is that a particular challenge you hope to take on in your time at the NEA?**

Absolutely. The reality is that if design is going to become a relevant issue to the majority of Americans, we're going to have to speak directly to them. Design is not a conversation that can be exclusive to the design community.

When it becomes powerful is when that conversation spills out into the general public. And when the general public begins to equate design with a quality of life, then they're going to demand it, just as they demand good schools and good health care—as a part of what they perceive to be their rights as citizens. I think of this as democratizing design so that more people begin to understand the relevance of the buildings around them.

**Sometimes architects don't even understand the relevance of buildings around them!**

You know, I was reminded of my time living in Italy, when I would see schoolteachers taking children around to the great churches and cathedrals, and they would talk to these students about the buildings' designs, the role that they played in the community, and the architects who designed them. Fourth-graders could name the architect of their city's cathedral. It was a powerful experience to understand that they start so young. In my own experience as a parent—whose children were born in Italy, and their nursery school in Florence was the foundling hospital by Brunelleschi—I have such vivid memories of walking, holding my son's hand, every day through that courtyard. And to think they received this kind of visual stimulus from their very early years, it's no wonder my kids are now urbanites and on the edges of architectural and urban careers.

**I'm sure you had no influence.**

None whatsoever.

**The sort of bottom-up advocacy you describe is a great balance to the NEA programs that you are inheriting, such as the Mayors' Institute on City Design, which are more top-down. As a former mayor, how do you feel about these programs?**

They're the main reason I took the job. I know what it's like as a mayor to withstand the controversy over, for example, a piece of public art like the 54-foot-long slate chalkboard, designed by Peter O'Shea and Robert Winstead, placed in front of city hall. Listen, in my experience, mayors and other policy makers are starved for tools, for a vocabulary, to talk about design in a way that reaches their constituents; and designers are in a unique position to be advisers to them. And the Mayors' Institute gives many mayors their first opportunity to be grounded by a group of design professionals. I mean, they are constantly advised by all kinds of professions, but...

**Rarely designers.**

Exactly—who can show them what design thinking and design problem-solving actually look like. So not only are they empowered by that, they want to know how do they replicate it, how can they go home and have the same resources available to their professional staff and their communities?

**Let's discuss your tenure. You will find that it's hard to accomplish very much in a single two-year NEA term because of the time it takes simply to process things in government. I ended up staying for two terms. I told you not to apply for this job unless you were committed to at least three years. Are you going to keep that promise?**

Oh, you want that on record? Let's just say that it's becoming increasingly clear to me that the work of the design director cannot be

easily achieved in a two-year term, so I find myself already looking beyond two years in order to bring my own thoughts about new national initiatives to bear on the NEA.

**I'll take that as a yes. As you know, the main initiative that we began during my tenure—also covered in *Metropolis*—was the Governors' Institute, which teaches smart-growth techniques to state leadership. How do you feel about that program? Are you going to kill my baby?**

Your baby is safe. I am elated that someone identified a missing component to effective urban design and regional planning. Particularly when you're dealing with issues of transportation, housing, and instruments that shape the way development happens locally, the most powerful and antiurban policies exist at the state level. That program is an important recognition of the role governors play in shaping the built environment, and I'm looking forward to participating in the sessions.

**I'll end with a question that I was asked when I took the job. I can tell you for a fact that there were some other very strong candidates for the position. Why do you think the chairman selected you?**

I think chairman Dana Gioia understood that I shared his mandate to spread the wealth of the arts into every corner of America, which for me means placing design within reach of communities that traditionally have been outside what we think of as the cultural capitals. He could have been reading a page from my own professional experience in that regard. It probably also helped that I have a serious focus on implementation. I know what it's like to have an exciting transformative idea as a mayor and then to have to convince thousands of people to follow. And so I think he understood how important it is to make design ideas actually happen, and probably welcomed the opportunity to hire someone who has struggled through that before and had a reasonable track record of success.

# Dallas Should Walk This Way

Christopher B. Leinberger, Visiting Fellow, Metropolitan Policy Program

Dallas Business Journal

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Walk Score, a new Web site popular with urbanists and environmental advocates ([www.walkscore.com](http://www.walkscore.com)), rates neighborhoods by their walkability--basically the ease of meeting daily needs on foot. The higher the Walk Score, the more walkable a place is.

Beyond its utility, however, the rise of Walk Score is another indicator that how the American Dream lays out on the ground has been fundamentally changing over the past 10 to 15 years. Dallas in general and downtown Dallas in particular is well on its way to accommodating this new version of the American Dream, but more needs to be done.

The Ozzie and Harriet drivable suburban vision of the American Dream is being supplemented by the Seinfeld vision of "walkable urbanism." Led by late-marrying young adults and empty-nester baby boomers, many households are looking for the excitement and options that living and working in a walkable urban place can bring. Current demographic trends promise continued demand.

A recent Brookings Institution survey of the largest 30 metro areas in the country identifies the 157 walkable urban places that play a regionally significant role, such as concentrations of employment, education, professional sports, entertainment and housing. It ranked these metros on their per capita number of walkable urban places. Washington, D.C., was first, followed by Boston, San Francisco, Denver and Portland.

The top 15 metro areas had the vast majority, 85%, of these walkable urban places, though only two-thirds of the surveyed population. This showed that the top 30 metros are dividing between haves and have nots: metropolitan areas that have many walkable urban options and those that are lagging. Additionally, two-thirds of these 157 places had rail transit, demonstrating the importance of rail transit to the emergence of walkable urbanism.

A surprising finding of the survey is that while downtowns are a major location of walkable urbanism, downtown adjacent places are exploding in number and size. Places like Lincoln

Park in Chicago, Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C., and the Pearl District in Portland, Ore., are booming alongside their resurgent downtowns.

A major benefit of walkable urban development is that it keeps and attracts young adults to the metro area, many of whom willingly trade crushing car commutes for walkable places to live and work. Walkable urban places seem to attract the well educated, the so called "creative class." Even the nascent revival in downtown Detroit has seen 83% of new residents arriving with a college education, compared to 26% of the national population.

While the Dallas metro ranked only 25th of 30 in the Brookings' survey, there are reasons to believe your destiny is to become a major concentration of walkable urban places. That reasoning starts with your investment in Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail and the Trinity Railway Express commuter rail. This is being followed by aggressively encouraging high-density zoning around rail stations and in downtown adjacent locations. The combination of rail transit and high density zoning is essential to allow the private real estate community to respond to the pent-up market and economic demand of walkable urban development.

Finally, it is crucial to manage the various walkable urban places that either exist or are evolving. The role model in the Dallas area is the DowntownDallas organization, which provides security, signage and strategic direction for downtown.

The future of the Dallas metro area is linked to your ability to provide both more walkability options and expanded offerings of existing walkable urban places. There should be 15-20 more places like downtown Dallas, downtown Fort Worth, Uptown, Plano Town Center and Addison Circle for the region to meet the pent-up demand for walkable urbanism.

Building those additional walkable urban places will continue the economic development miracle that has been Dallas metro for so many years and it will increase your Walk Scores as well.

# *Planner James Rojas Takes an Interactive Look at Downtown*

by Ryan Vaillancourt

In transportation planner James Rojas' Downtown, if you look south down Broadway from Temple Street, you can see all the way to an Arc de Triomphe-esque structure hovering above a roundabout at Olympic Boulevard.

The monument beckons pedestrians to walk south through the Historic Core. But then again, in Rojas' world, it might be nicer to hop aboard the streetcar that traverses Broadway through Downtown. Just don't be surprised when you look over your shoulder toward Bunker Hill and notice a sprawling green park. Disney Hall? Not in Rojas' world.

Though this imagined landscape of a more transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly Downtown Los Angeles exists and evolves primarily in the veteran planner's head, it is also on display as a scaled-down model at the 7+Fig Art Space gallery. The candy-colored design is up through July 3. Fashioned out of thousands of recycled knickknacks collected from yard sales, thrift shops and friends, the model depicts the portion of Downtown bounded by Figueroa, Los Angeles, Temple and 11th streets.

In the eight-foot-long, four-foot-wide model, skyscrapers and other buildings are composed of Legos, salvaged wooden blocks, bottle tops and faux jewels. They straddle wide streets and short city blocks, qualities of an urban Los Angeles that Rojas, who grew up in Boyle Heights and now lives Downtown, says would make the city more "livable." Curious shoppers and office workers taking their lunch break at 7+Fig wander in and out of the gallery. When they enter, Rojas wants them to be more than onlookers. Visitors are encouraged to pick up pieces of the model and move them around - even entire buildings - and at least for a few moments, channel their inner urban planner. "It's a back-to-the-sandbox approach," he said.

## Fighting Flat Planning

Rojas started building faux cities as a child when his grandmother gave him a box of random blocks and objects. Decades later, after earning a masters degree in city planning from MIT, Rojas continues to assemble imaginary city models. Now he is paid to do so as a transportation planner for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

But for Rojas, who is also co-founder of the Latino Urban Forum, an advocacy group of architects, planners and activists, building the models is more than just an indulgence: He considers the practice a tool to engage the public in urban planning. "The planning profession has become very dry and boring. We show people maps and pictures. We ask, do you want a park or do you want housing? Do you want bus or do you want rail? It's a very flat and one-sided argument," Rojas said. "But how do we get people to think about spaces in more creative ways? The whole idea of this is to get people to engage and think about the physical, three-dimensional form of the city."

Rojas' model at 7+Fig is a fantasy metropolis that only partly resembles Los Angeles. The color scheme brings to mind Las Vegas and the jam-packed density of skyscrapers is closer to Manhattan. Only a few structures are clear signatures of Downtown. A minimalist gray Lego edifice at Second and Main streets is a recognizable



**Transportation planner James Rojas sits by his scaled-down model of Downtown, which is part art project and part public urban planning exercise. Visitors to the gallery at 7+Fig can move buildings and other parts of the model. Photo by Gary Leonard.**

CalTrans building and that group of cylindrical towers at Figueroa and Fourth streets couldn't be anything but the Westin Bonaventure.

But even those pieces are subject to the imagination of anyone who walks into the gallery and feels compelled to play planner. In Rojas' world, where the goal is to engage imaginations rather than navigate strict planning guidelines, there are no building or zoning officials to prohibit bold moves. That means someone can switch one building with another, replace a structure with green space or put a pair of pink elephant toys in Pershing Square, as one viewer has already done. "There's no right or wrong answers," Rojas said. "Do whatever you want."

Rojas' display is part of *Habeas Index*, a show at 7+Fig Art Space geared toward engaging Angelenos with their surroundings. Organized by artist Linda Pollack, the show functions largely as an open forum that invites guests to participate in discussions every Thursday with featured artists about the urban environment. As for Rojas' model, Pollack said including it in the show was a natural decision. "That's a model of Downtown," Pollack told a curious onlooker who wandered into the gallery with a shopping bag in tow last week. "You're welcome to change it as you see fit."

