

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE OF PLANNING PRACTICE:  
CITIZEN ACTIVISTS, PROFESSIONALS,  
AND  
THE CHALLENGE OF MODELING

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## INTRODUCTION

### The Crisis in Transportation Modeling and Planning

Traditional transportation planning has involved a four-step process of using forecasts of socioeconomic variables to estimate trip generation, trip distribution, modal split, and trip assignment. Not only has this process assumed that socioeconomic inputs will remain fixed, it has also ignored the impact of transport patterns on land use and the subsequent impact of land use on transport. While planners have been becoming increasingly aware of the inability of their models to capture the interactive relationship between transport and land use, very little has been done in theory -- and even less in practice -- to address this inadequacy. As a result, transport planning and modeling has remained in a relatively stagnant position for decades.

What does it take to effect a major shift in modeling and planning practice and theory? This study suggests that there may be certain precipitating events that serve to force the planning and modeling community to “push the envelope” of modeling theory and practice, to overcome traditional limitations, and to herald the ushering in of a whole new generation of models. The precipitating event revealed by this study was a transport project -- a freeway bypass -- proposed by a growing suburban county in the Portland metropolitan region. What made this project different was that a significant portion of the proposed bypass was to extend outside of Portland's urban growth boundary. This threat signaled a crisis in regional planning, and it was this crisis that served as the precipitating event causing the region's modeling and planning practices to be seriously questioned.

But this study revealed that other forces of change were present in this area as well. A single planning crisis serving as a precipitating event -- no matter how serious a threat -- might not be enough to turn planning on its head. In this case, other factors emerged as important, as well. Among these, the most significant are the region's existing commitment to a progressive planning ethos, a solid tradition of technical expertise, and a regional government that facilitates centralized planning and decision making.

As important, if not more so, in precipitating change is the existence of opposition to conventional planning practice from sources external to the planning profession. In the Portland metropolitan case, this opposition came from citizen activists. The citizen activists interviewed agreed that the task of questioning conventional wisdom falls to citizens because they are uniquely placed and blessed with ingenuousness: in being external to the planning profession, citizens are in a position to "ask all the right dumb questions," forcing the profession to articulate a response and, in doing so, to examine its own position. As one regional modeler puts it, the inquisition from citizens "forces us to do our job"; another regional planner notes that "citizens are always ahead of government".

It is not that those working within the planning profession are unaware of the inadequacies and limitations of their models. They are just as aware as, if not more than the citizens who critique them. Both citizen activists and planning professionals in the Portland metropolitan area believe that the tradition of progressive planning in this region might well have resulted in significant shifts in planning practice and theory even without the intervention of the activists. It may be true that both citizens and planning professionals were poised to attack the status quo in planning. But, as one prominent member of an activist group in this area put it, "Somebody had to go first." And in this case, it was the citizen groups who made the first move.

## THE CONTEXT OF THE PORTLAND CASE

### The Western Bypass

The Ascendancy of Washington County. As noted, in the Portland metropolitan area, the precipitating event that resulted in a challenge to conventional planning was the proposal of a new freeway bypass in a suburban county. Washington County, to the west of the Portland city center, has been emerging as a strong contender for regional leadership over the past several decades. Between 1967 and 1987, retail sales in Portland increased by just under 2 percent; in Washington County, they increased by nearly 12 percent, so that total sales now rival those of Portland (U.S. Census of Business).

Regional Transport Projects. In the struggle to regain a position of economic ascendancy, Portland has convinced outlying communities to invest in regional transport projects that have favored the Portland city center. The most notable of these has been the 1986 completion of a light rail transit line, along a radial corridor extending from the Portland central business district to eastside suburbs. The transport project of the 1990s, again spearheaded by central city interests, is a westside light rail line, extending along a radial corridor from downtown Portland to Washington County.

These regional transport projects are overseen by several state and regional entities, such as the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT); the regional transit agency, Tri-Met; the area's regional governing body and Metropolitan Planning Organization, METRO; and METRO's transportation-policy arm, the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT).

Washington County interests have argued for decades that the support of regional transport investments serving primarily to enhance downtown Portland is not to their advantage. What is really needed, many Washington County leaders have argued, is a

means of addressing increasing congestion within the county. Washington County had been promoting the Bypass for a number of years. In the 1980s, county leaders committed to the Western Bypass project. In 1987, in a conciliatory move serving as a quid pro quo for Washington County's earlier support of the other regional projects, METRO recommended that the state's Regional Transportation Plan be formally amended so as to include the Bypass (Adler and Edner 1992; Adler 1994).

Opposition to the Western Bypass and Agitation for a Land Use Alternative.

Although conceived as a means of handling traffic and congestion that would develop on the west side by the year 2010, the Western Bypass had one major flaw: nearly half its route lay outside the area's urban growth boundaries, thus opening up large new tracts of land to unplanned development. This positioned the Bypass for challenge from the very beginning.

On more of a grassroots level, some Washington County residents opposed the Bypass because they were afraid of how it would affect the area's livability. These opponents formed a citizens group against the Bypass, taking the name Sensible Transportation Options for People -- or STOP -- as a reincarnation of an earlier group that had begun a successful opposition campaign against the Mt. Hood Freeway in the early 1970s (it was in fact moneys from that freeway project that had been diverted toward the region's first light rail transit line). STOP's first course of action was to bring a suit against METRO, charging that the Bypass violated the state's land use and urban growth boundary rules. STOP received pro bono legal representation from 1000 Friends, a watchdog organization that had been challenging exceptions to the state's land use laws since 1975. In short order, 1000 Friends instituted its own suit against Washington County for its role in the Bypass proposal.

Oregon's Land Use Board of Appeals found in favor of the citizen organizations and ruled that Washington County would need to recast its transportation plan and

consider alternatives to the Bypass (the ruling against METRO would later be reversed by the State Court of Appeals). ODOT asked 1000 Friends for suggestions regarding alternatives, maintaining that, while the agency did not oppose the concept of land use planning, it did not have the resources to do it; if 1000 Friends wanted a land use alternative, they were going to have to come up with one themselves. The result of this undertaking was the Land Use/Transportation/Air Quality (LUTRAQ) project.

The citizen activists had already been clamoring for a land use alternative even prior to the lawsuits. They had a voice in the decision-making process to begin with because of their presence on the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) during the study stages for the Western Bypass. 1000 Friends and STOP were members of the CAC, as was the local chapter of the Sierra Club. These members of the CAC repeatedly expressed their opposition to the fundamental assumption behind planning for the Bypass: that it was a fait accompli that the region would continue to grow in the manner it had heretofore, thus leading to the congestion problems that would require the Bypass. There must be something that could be done, the citizens challenged, that would *change land use patterns* so that in the future the area would develop *differently*, making a bypass unnecessary.

### Critique of the METRO Model

In the late 1980s, when the citizens first began voicing opposition to the Bypass, they knew very little about the modeling process. According to STOP's executive director, Meeky Blizzard, the citizens knew little more than that the name of METRO's model was EMME2. Although they knew little about the model, they were instinctively suspicious of it and the forecasts it produced. Again, their mistrust was grounded in their feeling that the assumptions underlying the model were not necessarily correct. In fact, the EMME2 model was one of the most advanced in the country. According to METRO

modeler Keith Lawton, the EMME2 model already contained elements that most models didn't. It did involve a land use forecasting model, which provides projections of future population, household makeup, and employment -- all at the aggregate level. Even so, it still did not address the interactive relationship between transport and land use.

Although STOP was composed of citizen activists who were effective through agitating at the grassroots level, 1000 Friends was a small, elite organization composed primarily of attorneys who were effective through litigation. They were equipped with a reputation of respectability; several prominent members who were well-known and respected locally and nationally; and significant fund-raising capability. However, once they were given the task of creating a land use alternative to the Western Bypass, the group quickly realized how little they knew about transportation planning. Thus, their first step was to appoint a National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) that could serve in an advisory capacity to the group.

The National Technical Advisory Committee. NTAC's members were all recommended through behind-the-scenes consultation with local planners and modelers. The committee that was finally put together consisted of chair Jeffrey M. Zupan, a transportation consultant from New York; George M. Crandall, a Portland-based consultant; Elizabeth Deakin, from the University of California at Berkeley; Frederick Ducca, with the Federal Highway Administration; Michael Replogle, transportation coordinator with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission; and William Schroeer, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The work of this committee resulted in a project plan, as well as requests for proposals from consultants who could take on the LUTRAQ project. Again, the consultants were recommended by NTAC, with the implicit approval of local and regional planners. The final consultant team included Peter Calthorpe and Associates;

Cambridge Systematics, Inc.; Stephen Putman and Associates; and Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc.

Evaluation of METRO's Model. The consultants' first task was to evaluate METRO's EMME2 model, and, as might have been expected, they concluded that it was already very good -- one of the best in the country. Their next task was to work to make the model more responsive to land use issues and to come up with an alternative to present to ODOT.

### The EIS Alternatives

ODOT's Alternatives. By the end of 1992, ODOT already had four alternatives ready to be included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Western Bypass. In addition to a no-build alternative, which would include light rail transit, expanded feeder bus service, and already funded roadway improvements, there were three other alternatives.

- The transportation system management (TSM)/planned projects alternative consists of the no-build alternative's projects plus roadway improvements that are not already funded; it also includes transportation demand management (TDM), such as parking charges, and demand-responsive transit (DRT), or "dial-a-ride."
- The arterial expansion/high occupancy vehicle (HOV) express alternative would add to the TSM alternative roadway improvements, conversion of existing lanes into express lanes, construction of new express arterials, and preferred access for HOVs.
- Finally, the bypass alternative consists of building a new four-lane highway between I-5 and Hwy. 26, extending from the Tualatin area to the Cornelius Pass or the 185th Ave. interchange with Hwy. 26; these would be in addition to the projects in the TSM alternative.

The LUTRAQ Alternative. By the end of 1993, the LUTRAQ alternative was added, and all five alternatives were approved by ODOT for inclusion into the Western Bypass project's EIS. The LUTRAQ alternative, as fashioned by 1000 Friends and the consultant team, has two main components: a land use component and a transportation component. The land use element proposes Calthorpean “transit-oriented developments” (TODs) that combine commercial, retail, and residential land uses located within walking distance to transit lines and light rail stations. While this proposed alternative assumes the same increase in growth that the other alternatives do, it emphasizes reallocation of that growth into higher density pockets, located closer to transit.

The transportation element consists of three light rail corridors: the westside light rail line presently under construction, proposed to be extended to Hillsboro; a Hwy. 217 light rail line from Beaverton to Tualatin, with an extension from Tualatin to Lake Oswego; and a Barbur Boulevard line from Tigard to Portland. The transportation element also includes some roadway improvement in the form of adding lanes to the most congested arterials. Like ODOT's alternatives, LUTRAQ's transportation component also includes TDM and DRT, as well as all of the projects in the no-build and TSM alternatives.

## THE ROLE OF CITIZENS IN THE MODELING PROCESS

As citizen organizations, STOP and 1000 Friends are very different. As noted, STOP is a grassroots organization in the classic sense of the term. It considers its primary purpose to be one of raising awareness, of making transportation problems visible, and of agitating for attention: “raising a ruckus,” as executive director Blizzard characterizes it. 1000 Friends, on the other hand, is a professional public-interest group whose members are primarily attorneys. The organization was formed in 1975, two years after the passage of the state's ground-breaking land use law, requiring urban growth boundaries. Since its

creation, 1000 Friends has been actively involved in the acknowledgment process, whereby local plans -- which are mandatory -- are reviewed for conformance with state land use guidelines.

Despite the differences between the two citizen groups, they have in common the fact that they are composed of people who are not planning professionals, yet who have participated to a very significant extent in a modeling and planning process in this region. The effect of their participation was (a) to provide a catalyst for change; (b) to provide "free" resources to local planners; (c) to create institutional and procedural modifications; (d) to foster relationships that might not have previously existed; and (e) to introduce land use and pedestrian elements into METRO's model.

### Catalysts for Change

The citizens' visions of a transportation model that integrates land use are to a large extent shared by the region's planners and modelers. The citizens did not need to hard sell their vision, for they were essentially "preaching to the converted." This seems to have been the case regardless of the agency, whether it be ODOT or local bodies within Washington County itself. Bill Ciz, who heads the Western Bypass Study for ODOT, reports that a shift in thinking away from focusing on roadway improvements had already been occurring within ODOT for some time, although he does note that the agency was not particularly interested in going so far as to expand transportation planning in order to take land use into account. METRO's Keith Lawton says that it's easy to work with groups such as STOP and 1000 Friends "because underneath we have the same basic objectives: to have a livable community and to have an environment we can live with." Tri-Met's G.B. Arrington and Washington County's Brent Curtis both note that many of the ideas embodied in the LUTRAQ alternative were already present in the station area planning that was underway in Washington County in preparation for the extension of

light rail to the area. Indeed, Keith Bartholomew notes that there might be more widespread support for the citizens' plan if "LUTRAQ" were removed from the title and "Light Rail Station Area Planning" substituted instead.

On a more personal level, there seems to be widespread support among the planning professionals for the ideas embodied in LUTRAQ; most seem to agree that land use planning is the "right thing to do." There is, however, a lack of consensus regarding when and even whether a LUTRAQ-type plan would have made it to the table had it not been for the citizen activists. Some planning professionals -- those most closely involved with the light rail station area planning that was already underway in Washington County -- seem almost to resent the implication that the LUTRAQ concepts could not have been integrated into regional plans without the active participation of the citizen groups. The citizens may have helped push the body of planning knowledge another step further, notes one planner, "but some people had already taken that step."

On the other hand, there is a sense that some of the specific revisions made in the models could never have occurred had it not been for the participation of the citizens. There is general agreement that the citizen groups enjoy a certain freedom that planners within government bureaucracies do not have. In the first place, the citizen groups do not have a political constituency whose demands need to be taken into consideration. Friends, in particular, is considered a fairly top-down, nondemocratic organization, whose board doesn't even need to consult with the general members in decision-making. As the regional government, METRO especially felt the strain of competing constituency demands; the agency did not want to be in the position of questioning the Bypass. In this regard, METRO planners welcomed the citizens and the role they played in drawing attention to the problems the Bypass raised. Tri-Met, also a regional agency, expressed similar concerns, citing its role as a "government partner" with Washington County as a factor limiting its desire to become directly involved with controversy.

Another element characterizing the special freedom enjoyed by the citizens was their ability to raise money quickly and efficiently, without having to go through bureaucratic channels. This fund-raising capacity, which became quite considerable, allowed the citizens to hire top-rate consultants, giving their project a high degree of credibility.

One planner also charged that the citizens were even exempt from following the standard rules of a governmental planning process; unlike government agencies, the citizens did not have to submit their project plans to any sort of citizen review procedure, nor were they forced to examine alternatives.

Others believe that the citizen groups, particularly 1000 Friends, played a very specific role of forcing the agencies to make critical changes in their models by threatening legal action if this were not done. Nobody wanted a repeat of the situation in the Bay Area, where in the late 1980s the Sierra Club sued the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for using inadequate models. For METRO, the regional planning agency that is keeper of the EMME2 model, incorporating pedestrian and land use elements into the model was not considered a high priority, certainly when compared to its primary agenda of installing light rail. Had it not been for the threat of a lawsuit looming in the background, the agency would not have undertaken the task of modifying its model -- at least at this time.

### Free Help

There was little evidence of resentment or animosity toward the citizens entering the planning process and bringing with them outside consultants. Instead, the consensus was that, through the consultants, the citizen groups were providing additional technical expertise, at little or no extra cost to the existing planning agencies. ODOT had made it clear early on that it had no land use planning capability. Even though METRO planners

report ODOT as being generous in its support of planning, the state agency clearly does not have a surplus of resources to devote to the issue. In an atmosphere of strained and dwindling resources, the government agencies welcomed the information and expertise the citizen groups' consultants were able to offer. On the other hand, of course, the modeling efforts involved with the LUTRAQ project involved repeated simulations and calibrations, which ended up being expensive to the agencies in terms of money and time.

### Institutional and Procedural Innovation

The citizen activists themselves see their involvement in the planning process as having a substantial effect on planning institutions and procedures, particularly in the formation of Oregon's Transportation Planning Rule (TPR). One of the most important issues in the lawsuits initiated by the citizens was the concern that a determination of whether or not the Bypass met state land use rules had been deferred to the project-evaluation stage. As a result of the procedural ambiguities that were made apparent by the lawsuit, the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) embarked upon a rule-making process that would set out issues of timing and relationships among agencies in the transportation planning process. The result was the TPR, which was formally adopted by the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission in 1991 (Adler 1994).

When DLCD began the rule-making process, its primary goal was to come up with a highway-planning rule that would address the issue of siting highway projects outside of urban growth boundaries. The final rule is much broader. The state (ODOT) is given a centralized role in transportation planning, and all transportation planning is required to fit into larger transportation system plans (TSP). Multimodal planning is strongly emphasized, and a reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) of 20 percent over a thirty-year period is mandated. Local governments within METRO's boundaries are

required to consider land use alternatives in their transportation plans (the TOD language is integrated into the Rule).

As noted, the citizen activists were the most likely to emphasize their role in bringing about the TPR. The professional planners were somewhat less likely to point to the TPR, but rather emphasized the overall role of federal legislation such as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act on requiring public participation in the planning process and on emphasizing multimodal planning and VMT reduction. Indeed, STOP's Meeky Blizzard agreed that federal legislation has played an important role in transforming the direction of transportation planning.

### New Relationships

As might be expected, the participation by citizens in the planning process has fostered several new types of relationship. Most obvious, of course, is the cooperative relationship that developed among the various actors in the planning process, brought together by virtue of the LUTRAQ plan. These include the relationships between the planning professionals and the citizens themselves; this will be discussed in more detail in the next section. One noteworthy point in this regard is the participation by another citizen actor in the planning process, as the result of LUTRAQ's deemphasis on roads: truckers and other highway interests have emerged as an additional source of lobbying pressure in the citizen participation part of the transportation planning process.

Another important relationship that has developed out of the LUTRAQ project is the role of ODOT as a mediator between the citizens and the local jurisdictions in Washington County. Also in an intermediary position is 1000 Friends' National Technical Advisory Committee, which helped bridge the gaps between the citizens, the planners, and the consultants.

The most surprising relationship to have been affected by the citizen participation process is that *among* the region's government planners. One planner explained that before the citizen involvement that emerged as a result of the Western Bypass controversy, the modeling and planning process did not *have* to be open. This planner emphasized the evolution and tradition of carefully structured relationships and tenuous lines of communication among the region's transportation planners. The delicate nature of these relationships has been threatened by the involvement of the citizens in the planning process. The result has been much more reliance on "back room deals" as a means of decision-making. Much of the region's transportation decision making has in the past been carried out by METRO's Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC), the technical branch of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation. Now, because of citizen involvement and the resulting uneasiness among government planners to express themselves candidly, much of the decision-making is occurring outside of TPAC, in places where the citizens don't have to be included.

This is confirmed by 1000 Friends' Keith Bartholomew, who reported that at a recent TPAC meeting regarding an upcoming project, it became apparent that METRO had already consulted with engineers and planners in Washington and Clackamas Counties *before* bringing the ideas to TPAC. Bartholomew explains that the coordinating committees on which these county professionals sit are exempt from public meeting laws. Nevertheless, he says, he was "shocked" that METRO and the county professionals had met "basically in secret," adding, "The fact that all of these assumptions [about the proposed project] have been made in the back room kind of smells like a rat."

#### The Introduction of Land Use and Pedestrian Elements in the METRO Model

Significantly, the citizens' involvement with planning and modeling in this region has in fact resulted in some important modifications to the METRO model. As a result of

the LUTRAQ project, land use variables have been introduced into the model, as has a pedestrian element.

DRAM and EMPAL. The LUTRAQ consultants examined fourteen modeling systems that simulate the interaction of land use and transportation. Of the fourteen, only eight were available for the LUTRAQ project. The system chosen was that pioneered by Stephen Putman in the early 1980s, the Integrated Transportation and Land Use Planning system (ITLUP). The only one of the fourteen models to have originated in the U.S., Putman's ITLUP augments the Urban Transportation Planning System (UTPS), which is the standard four-step modeling process mentioned earlier. ITLUP consists of two submodels, DRAM™ and EMPAL™. DRAM forecasts residential location, while EMPAL forecasts employment location. These two models were used to add variables to the METRO model that would make it more sensitive to land use density and mix.

Although METRO has not yet refined an integrated set of feedback loops linking transportation and land use, the land use component itself has been considerably strengthened. This revision to the model is widely seen as significant and as a direct result of the LUTRAQ project, spearheaded by the citizens.

The Pedestrian Environment Factor. Another element that is generally agreed to be an important addition to the modeling process is the Pedestrian Environment Factor (PEF). The PEF is a composite, ordinal-level measure of the “pedestrian friendliness” of each of 400 analysis zones in METRO's regional travel-demand forecasting model network. Each zone was scored on a three-point scale for ease of street crossings, sidewalk continuity, local street characteristics (grid versus cul-de-sac), and topography. A composite score ranging from 4 to 12 was assigned to each zone, with 4 representing the lowest pedestrian-friendly and 12 representing the highest. The PEF variable was used to improve the model's ability to estimate the effects of the pedestrian environment on influencing premode choice (walk or bike versus vehicle) for home-based trips.

Some area planners are skeptical about how the PEF variable will be applied at the fine level and how much it will cost to implement pedestrian improvements (e.g., add sidewalks, improve street crossings) in order to effect a 10-percent reduction in VMT; but everyone agrees that the inclusion of the PEF -- which, again, came as a direct result of the citizens' involvement -- was an important breakthrough in the modeling process. While some area planners feel that METRO might have made the land use improvements independently of LUTRAQ, all concede that the PEF element probably would not have been integrated without citizen involvement.

#### THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIZENS AND PROFESSIONALS

##### A Prevailing Sense of Cooperation

There seems to be consensus among both the professional planners and the citizen activists that the relationship between the two groups was that of cooperation, rather than antagonism. In large part, this appears due to the fact that, as noted above, the citizens' vision was one that was already held at least to some extent by a majority of the professionals. There is little evidence that the planning community looked upon the citizens' suggestions as radical or impractical.

While the dominant relationship is that of cooperation, both the planners and the citizens agree that there are limits to the cooperation. As noted, the LUTRAQ project was costly to the government agencies in terms of money and labor resources. While no one seemed to resent the extra work generated by the LUTRAQ project, it is evident that the additional burden strained relationships on occasion.

The relationship that is marked by contentiousness continues to be between the citizens and the local planners in Washington County. The adversarial relationship was cast in the beginning, when the citizens sued Washington County. The very fact of this

lawsuit seemed to indicate to Washington County planners that their way of doing things was not only being questioned, but was being found to be somehow wrong.

Compounding the adversarial relationship has been the feeling among county planners that the citizens are “outsiders,” that they do not fully understand the land use needs and economic-development commitments within Washington County. Indeed, several segments of the LUTRAQ proposal have been rewritten as local demands have been made clear; for the most part, the revisions have amounted to relatively inconsequential reallocations of density. Local county planners, as well as those regional planners who are especially sensitive to local county needs, stress the difficulty of *implementing* a project such as LUTRAQ at the local level, compared with abstract discussion at a theoretical, academic level.

Both citizen groups have had some detractors. There were those members who were opposed to the inclusion of *any* roadway improvements or mechanisms such as congestion pricing that were not specifically directed toward elimination of the automobile. In addition, there were some members of STOP who, as land-rights advocates, opposed 1000 Friends' position with respect to growth issues. On the whole, however, the dissension within and between the groups has been minimal.

#### Citizens as Insiders in the Planning Process

During their work on the LUTRAQ project, STOP shed its role as an activist, awareness-raising entity; and 1000 Friends deemphasized its role as a litigious public watchdog. Members of both groups became co-opted into the planning and modeling processes conducted by the professional planning community. The co-optation occurred when ODOT challenged 1000 Friends to come up with a land use alternative. In order for their alternative to be taken seriously, 1000 Friends knew that their plan would have to be capable of being subjected to the same modeling process as the ODOT alternatives. They

also knew that their alternative would have to address the congestion issue directly. However, both the citizens and the professionals describe this co-optation as entirely ad hoc -- temporary in nature. Once the LUTRAQ project comes to a close, they all agree, STOP will again focus on being an activist organization, concerned with transportation issues in general, and 1000 Friends will again focus on defending the urban growth boundary through litigation.

But both citizen groups agree that they will never quite be the same. Their experience with the LUTRAQ project has shown them the power of information and the power of modeling. In both cases, this has meant a crash course in modeling assumptions and practices. It has meant that the citizens have taken on the responsibility -- and it has become *expected* of them -- for learning about even the most technical elements of modeling. The process has been time consuming and frequently overwhelming. The citizens have shown themselves to be up to the task, however, and as a result have maintained -- and in the case of STOP, *gained* -- the professionals' respect. Once armed with the professionals' information and tools, the groups probably won't go back to working in quite the same way as they have in the past. They will probably be quicker to seek out information and the power that accompanies it, to foster cooperative relationships with professionals, and to try to gain credibility through equal-level participation. Both groups emphasize, however, that they do not see an end to their role as agitators for what they perceive to be right and just causes.

Inside or Out? There is differing opinion as to the degree to which the citizens came to be seen as "insiders" in the planning process. Some professionals refute the notion that the citizens did in fact become insiders. These planners -- those at the local or regional level who are the most involved with Washington County planning -- tend to see the citizens as not having moved much from their position as outside adversaries. Nor are these planners eager for the citizens to become closer to the internal process. They point

to the special relationships that exist among the members of the area's planning community and the inability of the citizens to participate at that level. They also note that the *function* of the citizens is to act from the outside, that they do not belong on the inside.

Other professionals -- and the citizens themselves -- see the activists as joining ranks with the government planners, at least to a certain extent. The citizens "became more like us," says one regional planner. 1000 Friends acknowledges that it was important for the group to "buy into" METRO's modeling process, to "play by the rules" -- rules that had been formulated by the professionals.

Playing by the Rules. By submitting the LUTRAQ alternative to the modeling process, the citizens had taken quite a risk. Initially, the citizens had viewed this model with some skepticism; certainly, they questioned its underlying assumptions. By submitting their own project to the modeling process, however, they not only lent credibility to their project, but to the model itself. Some area planners report that in the process, the model became deified, taking on a life of its own. They indicated that the model's worth transcended its utility as a tool and became instead rooted in its role of validating the citizens' vision. One local Washington County planner notes that the modeling process worked like a self-fulfilling prophecy: what the citizens had wanted, the model delivered. On the other hand, 1000 Friends' Keith Bartholomew says that in fact the results of the model were not as favorable as some citizens might have wanted.

As the citizen groups worked with the modeling process, their approach and, to some extent, their goals changed. They did become less strident, less critical of the model and its assumptions. They also adopted some of the goals and solutions of the area's regional planners, particularly with respect to congestion relief. This appears to be a function of their becoming more informed *and* of needing their alternative to be received as credible and competitive.

## ACCOUNTING FOR LUTRAQ'S SUCCESS

As noted, the LUTRAQ alternative -- conceived and fashioned by citizen activists and their consultants -- has been included in the EIS for the Western Bypass project. ODOT expects to recommend one of the alternatives sometime during 1995, and 1000 Friends is hopeful that the LUTRAQ alternative will be selected. Whether or not the LUTRAQ alternative will be chosen has become almost a moot point; the Western Bypass is becoming a defunct project, in large part due to the citizen opposition. The project may be abandoned altogether, and at this point, it is difficult to ascertain whether any alternative will be chosen.

The fact that the Western Bypass is in the process of dying attests to effectiveness of citizens in affecting the planning process. This certainly would not be the first time that citizens have stymied a freeway project. But it is one of the first times -- if not *the* first time that citizens have participated so intensely in the planning and modeling process. Furthermore, the LUTRAQ project is a ground-breaking proposal for integrating land use and transportation and including both elements into a model. However, there is much uncertainty about whether or not the LUTRAQ alternative could work in practice, whether people would in fact have a significant demand for high-density, mixed-use transit-oriented development. In this regard, its success cannot yet be judged.

But LUTRAQ's success as a product of citizen involvement in the planning and modeling process *can* be judged. Clearly, the project has been highly successful from that standpoint. There are two general reasons for this success. One has to do with the fact that the citizen groups and the consultants involved in the LUTRAQ project have enjoyed a high degree of credibility and respect. The other explanation for LUTRAQ's success involves the nature of the planning community in this region. There are three features of this community that are relevant to the project's success: (a) the community

has a high degree of technical competence and experience; (b) there is only one model -- METRO's model -- and that is a function of METRO's role as a regional planning entity; and (c) the planning and modeling vision in this region was already moving in the direction of LUTRAQ to begin with.

### The Importance of Reputation

It has been 1000 Friends, rather than STOP, that has been responsible for managing the LUTRAQ project. As an organization, 1000 Friends appears to enjoy a more respectable reputation than does STOP. It is important to note the reasons for 1000 Friends' domination of the project. As noted, of the two groups, STOP has much more of a grassroots membership, appeal, and mission, while 1000 Friends is institutionalized -- many of its members are attorneys, who move in the same circles as the area's powerful decision-makers. 1000 Friends' directors have been well-known, respected community members, who are powerful in their own right; they are seen as aggressive visionaries, with a special talent for being able to attract funding. In other words, 1000 Friends is *not* a fringe group. Its character as an established, institutional organization already imbues it with a reputation of respectability.

This reputation was important when 1000 Friends began putting together its National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) and asking for proposals from national consultants. Local planners and modelers already respected 1000 Friends, which is one reason why they responded so readily to the citizens' initial demands for a land use alternative. The citizens were taken *seriously* by the local professionals. As a result, the local planners worked with the citizens to recommend a strong group of nationally recognized advisers to serve on the NTAC.

The NTAC members, in turn, recommended nationally known consultants to work on the project itself. Those consultants signed on because they trusted the reputation of

the people who were already involved. Samuel Seskin is the consulting project director; he initially was with Cambridge Systematics, Inc., later moving to Portland to join Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. Seskin reports that when Cambridge was considering 1000 Friends' request for proposal, the firm first had to determine if its own reputation would be at risk by taking on such a project. He says that various government officials confirmed that LUTRAQ was something of a fringe project, but that it was "for real," that the best consultants and planners were going to be involved, and that it "would be done right." Cambridge concluded that "it was okay to get involved."

While the consultants were concerned about 1000 Friends' reputation and about putting their own reputation at risk, they were also aware that the project had the potential to be a ground breaker and that it could only add to their national visibility. Seskin says that he was excited about the opportunity to become involved in what he saw as a "leading public policy issue" and "to challenge conventional beliefs about transportation."

The project eventually came to be regarded as having great potential for enhancing a firm's reputation. This reputation-making ability was augmented by the involvement of nationally known architect/designer Peter Calthorpe and by the subsequent recognition from the federal government. Keith Bartholomew says that it was important for the group to involve Calthorpe because of his national reputation as the emerging expert in TOD design. Bartholomew feels that it was due to the reputation of consultants such as Calthorpe that the project was able to attract significant funding from the Federal Highway Administration.

Indeed, the LUTRAQ project was able to attract a number of sources of major funding. In the course of about four or five years, LUTRAQ has grown from a \$125,000 project to a \$1.3 million project. In addition to the Federal Highway Administration, funding sources include the Energy Foundation, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, the

United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, the National Endowment for the Arts, Tri-Met, METRO, Portland General Electric Company, and the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Oregon.

### The Importance of Centralized Planning

Both parties to the process -- citizens and professionals -- cite the central role that METRO plays in the planning process as a significant factor in LUTRAQ's success. In the case of METRO, centralized planning has had two important results. One is that it eliminates controversy over models. Because METRO's EMME2 model is *the* regional model, there is no cause for dissension over competing models. All of the area's planners and modelers have become familiar with the EMME2 model and hence share a common knowledge base.

Another important result of centralized planning is that all of the area's planning professionals have to work cooperatively with one another. They all know one another, meeting regularly to discuss shared issues. As noted above, this unity is in fact one reason why the citizens are thought of as necessarily remaining on the outside, no matter how involved they become with the planning process. But it has also been an important factor in garnering professional consensus with respect to the LUTRAQ project.

### The Strength of the Region's Planning Community

As noted previously, the region's modelers and planners themselves have a strong reputation for having a high degree of technical competence. This competence is reflected in the fact that the regional model, EMME2, is considered to be one of the best in the country. The professionals in this area respect one another and work well together; these cooperative relationships have been forged over a period of two decades. The expertise of the area's modelers enhanced the reputation of LUTRAQ when it was in the early stages of requesting proposals from consultants; it was understood that it would be

these professionals who would be doing much of the hands-on work with the model. As the project has developed, local planners and modelers -- particularly at METRO -- have been given much of the credit for making LUTRAQ a strong proposal. Even if LUTRAQ is never implemented, its contribution to modeling in the form of the PEF and the introduction of land-use elements has been successful due to the technical abilities of METRO staff.

Another reason that the LUTRAQ project is proving successful is because it was a seed planted in very fertile ground. As discussed above, this region already has a reputation for being forward looking in matters related to land use and transportation. Oregon's land use law, passed in 1973, is a testament to that, as is the success of the regional transit agency, Tri-Met, in implementing an enviable transit system, including -- with the cooperation of other government agencies such as ODOT -- pioneering developments in light rail transit.

The commitment to progressive planning has been important in fostering faith in the LUTRAQ project. Although among the consultants and planning professionals, there is a consensus that the LUTRAQ vision may be more idealistic than practical, that implementation may be difficult, and that overall the findings may be more politically correct than statistically correct, there is also widespread agreement that the undertaking has been the "right thing to do." It is seen as "good planning," and that, at a very fundamental level, is what is desired by all participants in the process.

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