THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITIES AND COMICS STUDIES AT PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY PRESENTS....

MOVING FROM CARS TO PEOPLE

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WE DEDICATE THIS COMIC TO $BILL.
I've been stranded at this intersection for what feels like forever with no safe or easy way to cross. These cars are moving so fast, drivers don't seem to notice that I'm here... did anyone think about pedestrians? When did it become...

**All About the Car?**

Cars, invented in 1886, were initially playthings for the rich. In 1900, there were only 8,000 operating in the entire U.S.

Launched in 1908, the Model T made cars more affordable for the average American.

Cars quickly skyrocketed in popularity and by 1920 there were 8 million cars on the roads. The streets became chaotic.

To create a more orderly flow, engineers developed design standards and "rules of the road". Hello, traffic lights!
After WWII, automobiles and new suburban housing became hallmarks of the American dream. Planners, architects, and engineers started to think about other ways that cars could reshape cities.

We can connect the suburbs to the downtown by cutting through this blighted neighborhood.

Many cities eagerly embraced this new technology, building highways to move vehicles in and around the cities as quickly as possible. But many poor neighborhoods, mostly communities of color, were intentionally destroyed. We still live with the consequences of this racist legacy.

Personal vehicles evolved into symbols of American culture. City planners and engineers continued to prioritize them at all scales—from the region to individual plots of land.

Here’s how we made sure everyone could easily drive to this new shopping center.
To integrate cars into planning for new development, engineers developed an approach called "transportation impact studies." These studies estimate the number of vehicle trips generated from new development and the effects on traffic flow.

After the impact of new development on traffic is determined, planners make suggestions for easing congestion, such as adding more lanes or traffic signals.

Key in this process is the Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Handbook and Manual. First published in 1976, it became the most widely used resource for transportation and land use planning.

It is a compilation of data about the number of vehicle trips expected for supermarkets, strip malls, and other kinds of developments.

Those little tubes on the street - they’re counting cars!

These data are gathered by counting cars coming and going from sites across the U.S., with a focus on the busiest times of day.
This information helps planners figure out how much traffic is caused by a new development. For example, let’s say a developer wants to build a bank.

Based on results gathered from the 1980’s through 2010’s, ITE Trip Gen has data for two types of banks—walk in and drive in.

It estimates that a 4,000 square foot walk in bank generates about 100 vehicle trips per hour during the busiest time.

These estimated trips are compared with the current traffic levels. If it looks like this will cause unacceptable delays, changes are made—like adding lanes, driveways, or traffic signals.

Mission accomplished!
But today, we still have congestion. Wasn’t all this planning supposed to help?

I’m still waiting...

Because trip generation data include studies since the 1980s, they don’t consider changes in how we live, new technologies, or people not in cars.

When was the last time I actually walked into a bank?

Adding more room for cars can make it difficult to get around by other modes, creating a cycle of auto dependence.

Gaaaah! Why is there no crosswalk?!

Yikes! Hurry, Kelly! Don’t get hit!

Whew! That was a close one!

This intersection is a disaster!
IT'S SO WRONG! IT REALLY GETS ME THINKING...

ME TOO! WHAT IF WE PLANNED FOR PEOPLE FIRST, INSTEAD OF CARS? SO MANY PEOPLE DON'T OR CAN'T DRIVE. WHEN WE FOCUS ON CARS, WE IGNORE A LARGE PORTION OF SOCIETY.

WALKABLE, BIKEABLE NEIGHBORHOODS WITH GOOD TRANSIT AND YES, EVEN CARS! WHERE DO WE START?

FIRST, WE CAN FOCUS ON COUNTING ALL THE PEOPLE MAKING TRIPS—“PERSON TRIPS”, NOT JUST CARS.

YES! AND TO DO THAT, WE NEED MORE DATA ON HOW PEOPLE USE ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.

AND LET'S THINK ABOUT OUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AT ALL HOURS OF THE DAY, NOT JUST THE PEAK HOURS.

EXACTLY. THIS ROAD IS HUGE AND DURING THE MIDDAY, THERE’S NOBODY ON IT. BUT DURING THE EVENING, IT’S FULL OF CARS WITH ONLY ONE PERSON IN EACH!
WE CAN ALSO BE MORE SENSITIVE TO THE CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT. WHO ARE THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE IN AND VISIT THE AREA?

ALSO, WHAT DO WE WANT THE AREA TO LOOK LIKE? WHAT TRANSPORTATION MODES WILL WORK BEST FOR EVERYONE?

THE TRIP GEN MANUAL HAS IMPROVED ITS DATA AND IS NO LONGER USING THE OLDEST INFORMATION.

THE LATEST EDITION INCLUDES NEW LAND USE CATEGORIES LIKE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND EVEN MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES. INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTEXT IS ALSO INCLUDED.

THEY’RE EVEN BEGINNING TO COLLECT “PERSON TRIPS”!

FOR FAR TOO LONG, OUR PROFESSION HAS PLANNED FOR VEHICLES ONLY, USING DATA FROM THE PAST TO PLAN FOR OUR FUTURE. WE NEED TO START TO PLAN FOR PEOPLE AND THE FUTURE WE WANT.

EXACTLY... NOW, HOW DO WE GET BACK ACROSS THE STREET? I WANT A SLUSHY!
HOW DID WE END UP WITH THIS CRAPPY BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

AT LAST! I’VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS SLUSHY BREAK ALL DAY!

ME TOO! BUT OOF, THIS MINIMART IS DIFFICULT TO ACCESS! AND SO MANY PARKING SPACES.

YET THIS GUY’S GOT NOWHERE TO PARK HIS BIKE.

AND THE STORE IS SET BACK SO FAR FROM THE STREET, IT’S LIKE A LITTLE ISLAND IN A RIVER OF CARS AND PARKING. IT’S A HASSLE TO WALK HERE.

...AND GOOD LUCK GETTING HERE BY TRANSIT.

HOW DID IT END UP LIKE THIS?

WELL KELLY, I’M GLAD YOU ASKED....
IT ALL STARTED WHEN A PERSON DECIDED TO BUILD THIS CONVENIENCE STORE ON THIS PARCEL OF LAND. SHE WORKED WITH ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS TO CREATE A SITE PLAN FOR HER VISION.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS DETERMINED WHAT COULD BE BUILT HERE, HOW FAR THE BUILDING NEEDS TO BE FROM THE STREET, THE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS, THE NUMBER AND LOCATIONS OF DRIVEWAYS, AND EVEN THE AMOUNT OF CAR PARKING REQUIRED.

MOST CITIES EVEN REQUIRED A MINIMUM NUMBER OF CAR PARKING SPACES BASED ON THE TYPE AND SIZE OF DEVELOPMENT. THE DEVELOPER COULD ALWAYS ADD MORE THAN REQUIRED, EVEN IF IT WAS LIKELY TO GO UNUSED MOST OF THE TIME.

THESE REQUIREMENTS WERE OFTEN BASED UPON BUSIEST TIMES FOR TRAFFIC AND THE ASSUMPTION THAT EVERYONE WILL ARRIVE AT THE SITE BY DRIVING.

THIS PARKING ASSESSMENT WAS DONE INDEPENDENTLY OF HOW MUCH PARKING WAS AVAILABLE IN THE SURROUNDING AREA. IT DIDN'T CONSIDER WHAT OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORTATION PEOPLE MIGHT WANT TO USE TO GET TO THE CONVENIENCE STORE.

DURING THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS, THE CITY REQUIRED A TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY TO ASSESS HOW MUCH NEW TRAFFIC THE CONVENIENCE STORE WOULD CREATE, PARTICULARLY DURING THE BUSIEST TIMES.
To do this, a data resource called the Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Handbook and Manual was used.

It is a compilation of data on the number of vehicle trips generated by different developments. They are organized by different land uses – there is even a category for convenience stores!

The data in the ITE Trip Generation Manual come from many sites in North America, most of them suburban automobile-oriented locations.

Using estimates based on these data, experts evaluated how much the future convenience store would impact congestion. In their evaluation, they used a performance measure called level of service (LOS), which is a measure of congestion or delay.

Like grades in school, LOS is scaled A–F. Unlike grades in school, sometimes an F can count as passing.

Because of the additional traffic anticipated from the convenience store, the intersection didn’t “make the grade.”

So the developer had to add another driveway on the site. She also had to contribute money for a new traffic light and a turn lane.

She considered building a smaller store to avoid some of these costs, but a smaller store wouldn’t be profitable in the long run.
So all of this bureaucracy, planning and regulation resulted in a place like this?...

Which is oriented toward motorized traffic and does not seem to consider the people actually visiting the site.

Right, so this unnecessarily huge parking lot is based on data from other convenience stores, many of them in suburbs where it’s really hard to walk?

Many people walk, bike, or take the bus to this mini-mart but the data used to plan this didn’t consider them. And with all of those driveways, vehicles are coming at us from all directions.

Wow, I wonder how many more people would use those modes if we did a better job planning for them?!

This isn’t unique to convenience stores either. So many cities use data like these for all sorts of developments. They are used everywhere.
This strip mall has so much parking—enough for two more grocery stores—because it was designed for the busiest times, like for holiday shopping.

This neighborhood eatery supports cyclists, but it was built on a busy street with no easy connections to the neighborhood.

This popular coffee shop has a “convenient” drive thru that’s inaccessible to people that walk and bike; traffic backs up onto the street in the morning.

And new developments are often scaled back due to neighborhood concerns about increased traffic. In reality, multifamily housing increases density, which is key to supporting walking, biking, and public transit use.
All of those locations were designed for vehicles first. In order to create more livable spaces, we need to start with people.

Let's create the urban environment we want. Where do we start?

We should be thinking about how to plan for the everyday things people do and the best modes of transportation to get them there.

Minimizing traffic congestion and delay seems like a good goal, but it doesn't consider the whole picture... and it doesn't work.

Planning should consider how easy it is for people to access destinations, not just cars.

Right on! We need to think not just about traffic delay but also our safety and health, economic vitality, sense of community, the environment...

And enjoyment! Planning for people creates better spaces for everyone... Let's not forget about the fun!
I’VE WANTED TO LIVE IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD FOR YEARS, AND IT’S GREAT TO FINALLY SEE SOME AFFORDABLE HOUSING!

I’VE OWNED THIS SHOP FOREVER, BUT WHERE WILL MY CUSTOMERS PARK NOW?

I LOVE THIS PLACE—IT’S ONLY 3 BLOCKS FROM PILATES.

I USED TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL SKYLINE VIEW. NOW ALL I CAN SEE ARE THOSE NEW DEVELOPMENT MONSTROSITIES! THINGS ARE CHANGING SO FAST.

PEOPLE, PLACES, & PERSPECTIVES
Hey, Kristi, how’s the research project coming along?

Pretty well, Kelly. I’ve collected all the data on this new building.

It’s got 55 units and 10 are designated as “affordable”. Residents get a free annual transit pass and membership to a car sharing program, so they don’t need to own a car.

Like many new buildings in the neighborhood, it is taller and has a mix of apartments and retail on the ground floor.

There’s bike parking inside and outside, a concierge to hold onto delivered packages, a fridge for grocery deliveries, an espresso machine in the lobby, and even a rooftop lounge!

There is no car parking on site, but a bikeshare station, freight delivery zone, and transit stop nearby.
Whoa, cool! A coffee shop! Package concierge! But why is there no car parking? How did this all happen?

Well, for the past 40 years housing supply hasn’t kept up. This lack of supply has increased what people have to pay for housing.

We’re also facing a climate crisis... transportation accounts for nearly 30% of greenhouse gas emissions.

To address both of these issues, cities are trying to encourage more compact and affordable development that can be served by a lot of transportation options. By making these options easy, cheaper, and more accessible, people are more likely to think about other ways to move around town.
But these changes take time. In the meantime, there is a disconnect between our planned vision... and the present state of things.

This building offers no on-site parking in order to encourage residents to carpool or use other forms of transportation. But many still use cars because the city, and most of the neighborhood, are still designed primarily for automobiles.

Residents get free transit passes! But transit doesn’t come often enough and may not take people where they need to go.

There’s bike parking and a bike share system! But with the current state of bike infrastructure, many don’t feel safe riding on streets in traffic.

Deliveries are on the rise and the package concierge and loading area can make the process easier. But the delivery trucks create congestion too!
WHAT ABOUT THE RESIDENTS? HOW’S IT WORKING FOR THEM?

MY APARTMENT IS AFFORDABLE AND NEAR THE CITY CENTER...

BUT WHAT GOOD IS A TRANSIT PASS OR BIKESHARE FOR ME? I NEED MY CAR FOR WORK, ERRANDS, AND GETTING MY KIDS AROUND. NOW I SPEND A GOOD 30 MINUTES EVERY DAY LOOKING FOR PARKING.

THE NEW BUILDING BROUGHT SOME NEW CUSTOMERS TO MY SHOP...

BUT I NEED TO ATTRACT MORE PEOPLE, AND I’M WORRIED I CAN’T COMPETE.

I’M LIVING MY BEST LIFE! I LIKE TO WORK, WALK TO SHOPS, SHOP ONLINE, AND HARDLY EVER TAKE TRANSIT.

BUT MY APARTMENT’S KINDA SMALL. I MIGHT HAVE TO UPGRADE TO A BIGGER PLACE SOON. MAYBE BUY A HOUSE.

IT’S NICE TO HAVE GOOD RESTAURANTS AND SHOPS OPENING UP...

BUT ALL THESE NEW RENTERS USE MY STREET LIKE THEIR OWN PERSONAL PARKING LOT! THE NERVE! I WORKED HARD! I PAY MY TAXES! AND FOR WHAT?
SO WHAT DO WE DO? WELL, I THINK WE NEED TO HEAR FROM EVERYONE.

YOU BIKE TO WORK IN THIS TRAFFIC?! I’D BE SCARED TO DEATH...ALSO I CAN’T DEAL WITH RIDING IN THE RAIN.

YES, THERE IS A BIKE PATH ALL THE WAY TO WORK. AND I TAKE THE BUS WHEN IT RAINS. BUT THE CITY NEEDS MORE BIKE PROTECTED LANES...AND BETTER TRANSIT.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD HAS CHANGED WITH ALL OF THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT.

YOU ARE RIGHT! BUT WHAT DO I DO IN THE MEANTIME? MY JOB IS TOO FAR TO BIKE AND THE BUS DOESN’T RUN WHEN I COME HOME AT NIGHT FROM WORK.

YES, IT WAS QUIETER...BUT I HAD FEWER CUSTOMERS. NOW THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE WALKING BY MY STORE, AND I HAVE A FEW REGULARS.

MY HUSBAND AND I MOVED HERE BECAUSE OF THE GREAT LOCAL STORES, LIKE YOURS!

EVERYONE keeps RAVING ABOUT THESE EXPENSIVE LOCAL SHOPS. BUT I CAN ONLY AFFORD TO SHOP AT WALMART.

I’VE SEEN YOU PARK IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE LATE AT NIGHT.

YOUR DELIVERY TRUCKS BLOCK THE BIKE LANE EVERY DAY.

I HAVE TO WORK TWO JOBS TO MAKE ENDS MEET.

WITH ALL OF THOSE AMAZON DELIVERIES, MY PRODUCE GUY HAS NOWHERE TO PARK.

OH, I GUESS I DO HAVE A LOT OF DELIVERIES.
CITIES ARE CONSTANTLY TRANSFORMING. NEW MOBILITY OPTIONS ARE BEING INTRODUCED, LAND IS DEVELOPED AND REDEVELOPED, PEOPLE MOVE IN AND OUT. WE WANT MORE FROM OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAN MOBILITY. WE ALSO EMphasize ACCESS, SAFETY, SUSTAINABILITY, VITALITY, AND FUN!

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING METHODS HAVE TO ADAPT TO MEET OUR CURRENT AND FUTURE VISIONS. WE'VE MADE A LOT OF PROGRESS, BUT WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT PLANNING IS...

ALL ABOUT PEOPLE!!
REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL READING

ALL ABOUT THE CAR
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