

## Oral Histories of the New Urbanism

### Research Project Overview

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**Purpose:** This research aims to explore how the ideas and practices of new urbanism developed and spread and to document the early years and development of new urbanism through oral history interviews whose records will be available for future researchers.

**Research questions:** How did the ideas and practices of new urbanism develop, spread, and change over time? What social processes facilitated or impeded this development?

**Design/methodology/approach:** Oral history interviews with experts knowledgeable about new urbanism will explore the development of key new urbanist ideas, products, and practices. Recordings and transcripts will be deposited in the Archive of the New Urbanism at the University of Miami Library for public use. Transcripts will be analyzed using thematic template analysis.

**Population, sampling, and recruitment:** The primary population of interest is people who have been heavily involved with new urbanism, especially those involved in the early years. A secondary population of interest is those who had contact with new urbanism and are knowledgeable about it but have not been heavily involved. Since there is no list of this population, purposive sampling will access the population through the researcher's professional network and through listservs that discuss new urbanist topics. Sample size for the initial phase will be 8-20, with the goal of identifying the range of issues and clarifying the network of the identified populations. Future phases could expand the research to include more participants, with the goal of saturation in content. The population of interest is estimated to be about 150 people.

**Expected findings:** Thematic and narrative analysis of oral history interviews will result in a "thick" description of the development and spread of new urbanist ideas and practices. Transcripts and recordings will be publicly available for use of future researchers at the New Urbanism Archive at the University of Miami Libraries.

**Research limitations:** As a qualitative study, the research will contribute to understanding the phenomenology of perspectives about the development and spread of new urbanist ideas and practices but will not be able to quantify the extent of influence of different factors. The results will also have limited generalizability: since there is no comprehensive frame for the universe of people who have influenced new urbanism, a nonprobability purposive/availability sample will be used for the interviews.

**Originality/value:** Professions and fields of related professions comprise a related set of ideas and practices that shape and limit possible action. Changing circumstances require changes in professional practices, but change is often resisted. This research will explicate how change happened among a set of related professions, adding to broader understandings of change.

**Practical implications:** This research could identify which factors are the most likely potential targets for improving the ability of professions to adapt and adjust to changing circumstances, potentially improving the effectiveness of professions.