

# BETTER NOT BIGGER

## How to Take Control of Urban Growth and Improve Your Community

By Eben Fodor

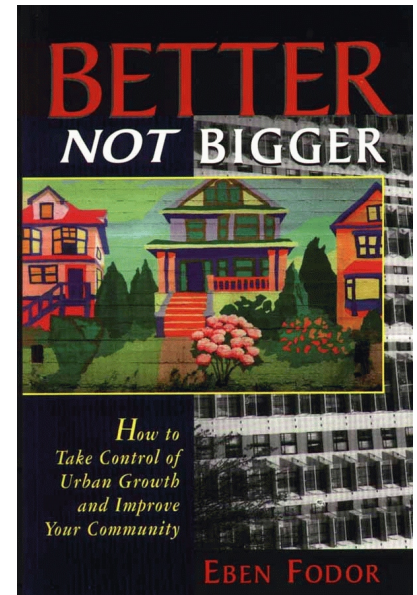
**M**ost cities are busily doing everything they can to grow as fast as possible. More people, more jobs, and more real estate, we are told, will make our cities better and enhance our quality of life. So isn't urban growth good for us?

Eben Fodor, a central voice in the urban growth debate, asserts that bigger is not necessarily better. Growth - especially rapid growth - can leave communities permanently scarred, deeply in debt, drowning in traffic, with unaffordable housing, a lost sense of community, and sacrificed environmental quality.

*Better, Not Bigger* is a 'mantra' for communities facing rapid development. Fodor explodes the fundamental myth that growth is always good for us and that more development will bring in more tax money, provide needed jobs, lower housing costs, and reduce property taxes. The real winners, contends Fodor, are real estate developers, mortgage bankers, realtors, and construction companies who utilize local government to divert public resources into growth-inducing investments. The benefits from exploiting the community commons accrue to a few, while the costs are distributed across the entire community. Fodor marshals evidence from almost every state in the US to prove his point.

This much-needed resource provides insights, ideas, and tools to empower citizens to switch off their local "growth machine" by: debunking the pro-growth rhetoric; recognizing the true cost of growth; implementing the right growth controls for their community; and presenting a sustainable vision for their community that is an attractive alternative to endless growth. Written in a lively style with liberal use of illustrations, cartoons, tables and graphs, *Better, Not Bigger* is highly accessible to ordinary citizens as well as professional planners.

**Eben Fodor** is a professional community planning consultant, and an environmentalist, civic activist, and grassroots organizer from Eugene, Oregon. He has been in the middle of the urban growth debate for the past 12 years.



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#### Includes...

- ▶ 8 critical questions to ask about any economic development project;
- ▶ 12 big myths about growth;
- ▶ 12 steps towards a sustainable community;
- ▶ 13 ways to control growth in your community right now.

