

Columnist chronicles Denver's New Urbanism conference on the Huffington Post

By Michael Roberts in [Not-So-New Urbanism](#)

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Photo by Jonathan Shikes

The new-urbanist enclave of Highlands' Garden Village.

Last week, the Congress for the New Urbanism held its annual conference in Denver -- an event we commemorated with examinations of [Bradburn Village](#), [Highlands' Garden Village](#) and several other New Urbanist developments in the city; find them in our [Not-So-New Urbanism](#) archive. As for the conference itself, the issues debated there are currently being chronicled on the [Huffington Post](#) by [Frank Gruber](#), a columnist for the [Santa Monica Lookout News](#). He's posted three dispatches thus far, with the first, "New Urbanism: Very Misunderstood," setting the stage for the discussions to follow by, among other things, sharing some of the criticism levied against the movement. He writes:

New Urbanists are attacked from both sides of America's cultural divide. Chances are, if you mention New Urbanism to group of forward thinking, contemporary design professionals, whether architects or planners, they will roll their eyes. To them New Urbanism, because so many of its practitioners make their livings designing new towns and developments outside of existing cities, is a facilitator of sprawl, not a solution. Then, because many of these towns and developments feature traditional architecture, New Urbanism is hopelessly nostalgic.

But if you find yourself among a group of conservatives or libertarians, such as Randal O'Toole of the Independence Institute's Center for the American Dream, and who writes for the Cato Institute and the Reason Foundation, and you mention New Urbanism, you'll just as likely unleash a denunciation on the grounds that New Urbanism aims to thwart the natural desire of Americans to live in a single-family house on a cul-de-sac.

So how do New Urbanists react to these attacks from the left and the right? I'd like to be able to say that they smile, realizing that to be attacked from both sides is a compliment, and reflects the success of the ideas in their Charter. But that's not always the case.

Read [part two](#) of Gruber's account here, and [part three](#) here.

Tags: [Bradburn Village](#), [Congress for the New Urbanism](#), [Frank Gruber](#), [Highlands' Garden Village](#), [Huffington Post](#), [Michael Roberts](#), [new urbanism](#)

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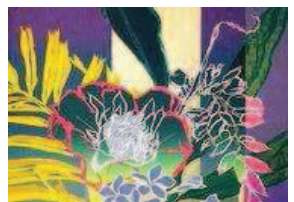
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