PARKING PUBLIC

PARKING IN CHICAGO'S WRIGLEYVILLE 2010

temporary travel office

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This mini-booklet is a brief and incomplete guide to consider the space of parking in and around Chicago's Wrigleyville neighborhoods. It is not a manual on how to find parking. Nor is it a technical or historical account of parking.

So what exactly is it?

The Temporary Travel Office has been producing guided tours of public parking around the United States since 2005 in an effort to understand its role in how our cities and towns are shaped - and hence, how relationships between citizens are shaped. While this plays out somewhat differently in different cities and regions, certain trends are visibly woven throughout these disparate narratives.

For our 2010 tour of the Wrigleyville area of Chicago, we focus on the *front* and *back* spaces of parking – those spaces where parking takes place and those spaces where the places of parking are conceived. As tourists, we will be looking at the material results of debates and struggles that, more-often-than-not, take place somewhere else. But we will also see how the spaces of parking, where people come into direct contact with commercial and state power, often become the stage for battles over aesthetics, land and economic ideology.

A Brief History of Surface Parking in the U.S.

While parking is probably most thought of as a late 20th Century phenomenon, the struggle to deal with stationary automobiles had been felt before mid century. As early as 1920, the city of Los Angeles struggled with gridlock in its downtown business district, and banned parking in its urban core. The ban, however, was quickly repealed after the city was overtaken by outraged motorists and their vehicles. But the story of parking is not to be told as one solely about "America's love for its cars" or our national pride in individual speed, mobility, and horizontality.

Even before the circulatory highway system and suburbanization that followed WW II, parking was seen as an issue that could make or break cities. During the Great Depression the country's urban cores struggled. In that era of New Deals and government solutions, business leaders called on local governments to intervene in the form of parking solutions. As early as 1930, the city of Kalamazoo, Michigan would pioneer the development of municipal parking lots. Cities, and their politicians, needed to keep their downtowns economically vital, as they were a prime source of the tax revenue, then helping to fund modernization projects and civil services. The zoning regulations of the 1920s would help organize the expanding mobility

and mass of capital. By 1942, one of five cities with populations over 10,000 would operate municipal downtown parking lots, most of them being free. Municipal lots were not limited to the pre-war economic crisis. With the development of the Highway Act, federal housing subsidies, and suburban malls, the threats to the welfare of urban business districts continued. Cities found municipal lots one way to retain the tax dollars that were relocating to outlying shopping centers offering cheap real estate, fewer zoning and labor regulations and large expansive parking lots.

But parking's history is obviously not over... as urban desires and needs are being reshaped, so are the spaces we have known as parking lots.

Chicago has played a special role in the historic development of the parking industry. In 1951, the largest parking industry association, the National Parking Association, was launched on September 13 at Chicago's Bismark Hotel. During the early development of large-scale urban surface parking lots, Chicago led the way, being a frontrunner in the development of the kind of public parking systems that are the norm today. In the 1960s when "fringe" lots (surface parking lots that surrounded central business districts, then undergoing massive redevelop-

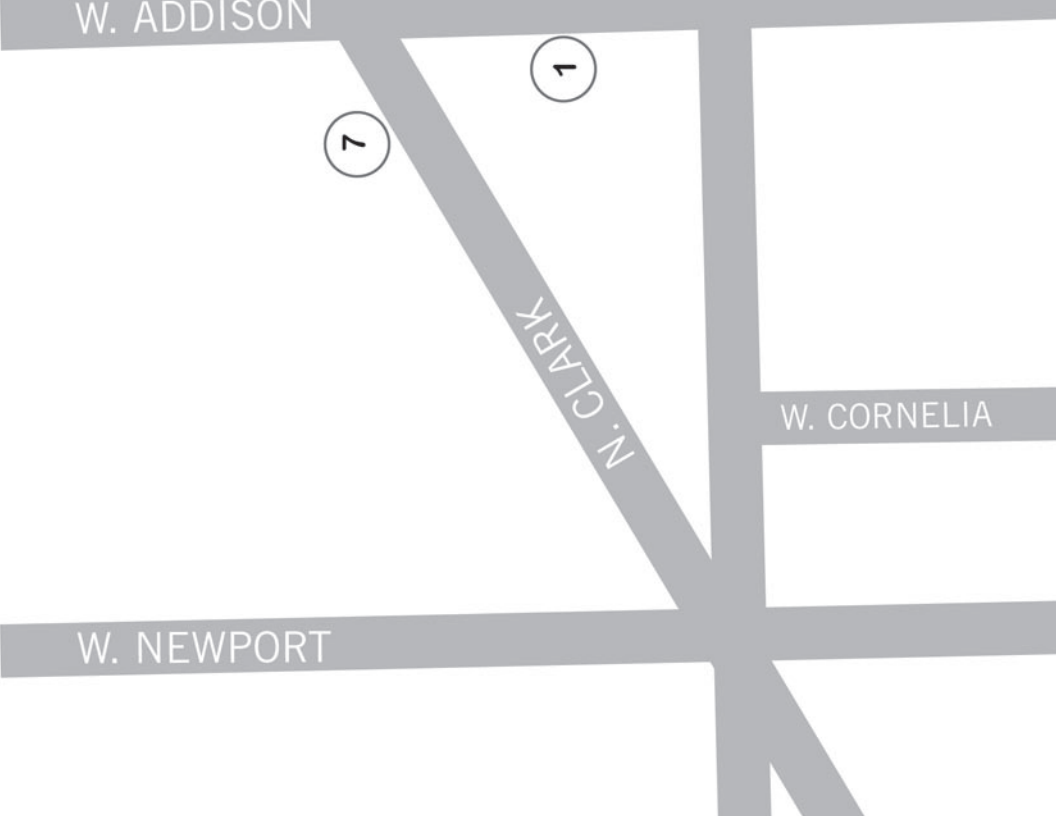
ment) dominated urban parking programs, Chicago's Monroe Street facility (the current site of Grant Park) was deemed one of the "most successful" in the country, with 3,000 spaces and a good view of the city's skyline.

Chicago is also home base to the second largest parking corporation in North America Standard Parking, Inc. Standard Parking operates over 2,200 facilities in 330 cities across the continent, adding up to over one million spaces and roughly 20% of all pay parking in the United States. Standard easily dominates pay parking in the Wrigleyville area, with over 15 facilities within a two square mile area.

Changes in transport change everything else.

Hermann Knoflacher, Austrian Civil Engineer and inventor of the Gehzeug (walkmobile)

Standard Parking, Inc's graphic identity. All roads lead to a parking space.

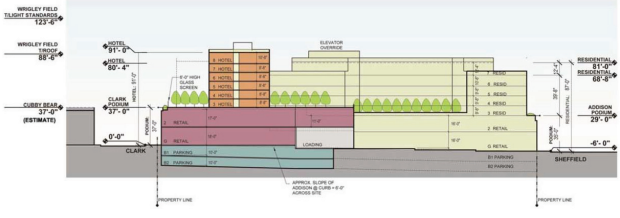

W. ADDISON
7
1
N. CLARK
W. CORNELIA
W. NEWPORT

5
N. CLIFTON
6
N. SEMINARY
4
3
W. WAVELAND
2
N. KENMORE
N. SHEFFIELD
N

1. 1015-25 W. Addison St.

The lot you are currently standing in is owned by Preferred Properties, LLC. Preferred Properties is owned by Steve Schultz, as are many of the adjacent properties on Addison and Clark, such as the those housing Starbucks and 7-11. Since 1994, Schultz has been acquiring land across from Wrigley Field, and more recently has put forward a plann for a mixed-use development project here. The proposed development, managed by M & R Development, has been called "Addison Park on Clark" and would introduce a 137 room boutique hotel, 135 apartment units, 147,000 square feet of retail and 403 underground parking spaces. Since the proposal was made public a few years ago, it has been the source of a few conflicts. Zoning regulations and the aesthetic tastes of residents have challenged the original planned height of the complex, which was significantly taller than the historic ballpark. The development has also had some financial difficulties, with Bank of America filing a foreclosure suit against Schultz for lack of payment on a $9.04 million loan in 2009.

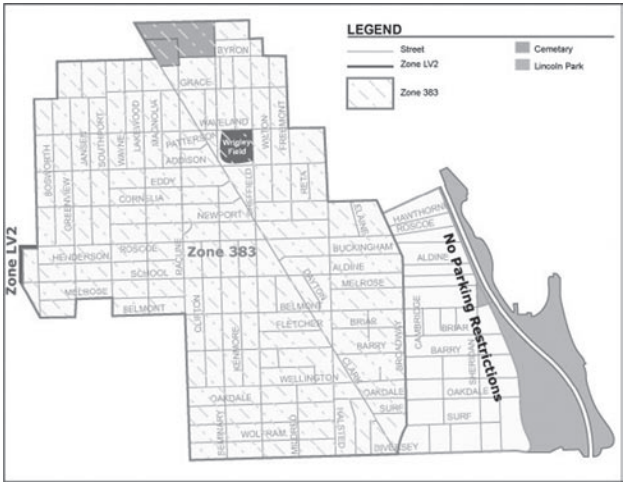
Proposal visualizations of the Addison Park on Clark development.
From the Addisonparkonclark.com website.



2. Wrigley Field

Not surprisingly, a large sports facility like Wrigley Field generates lots of problems related to traffic and parking. Residents have long struggled with the impact on residential parking generated by the periodic flocking of sports fans to the area. In the late 1980s, a particularly heated battle arose when the park was granted permission to host night baseball games. A residents' group – cleverly named Citizens United for Baseball in Sunshine (CUBS) – quickly formed to oppose the two new intrusions into their neighborhood that would (and eventually did) accompany night games: the bright lights required for night play and the increased burden on night parking infrastructure. In response to community concerns, the city and baseball franchise agreed that the Tribune Co. (owners of the Cubs) would subsidize remote parking with shuttles to and from the park. The city also created a permit parking zone that would forbid street parking in nearby neighborhoods without a permit during games. The special Cubs Night Parking program that required a special permit (LV-2) was eliminated on July 1, 2008. Currently, night game parking enforcement

relies on permits issued for the larger parking zone in the 44th Ward, Zone 383. Beginning at 5:00 PM on game nights, cars must display the Zone 383 residential parking permit while parked on residential streets.



Not all of the battles over parking have to do with regulating whose cars can occupy what space. Another battle involving Cubs parking plans in the 1980s involved a 1/2 mile stretch of “unused” city land lying under the CTA’s Howard El tracks, from Irving Park to

Montrose, adjacent to Graceland Cemetery. While this site is not physically part of our tour, we are occupying the symbolic spaces of power that largely shaped it. The conflict arose over disagreements about plans for this strip of land, with neighborhood organizations desiring a landscaped park and the Cubs's management desiring a 400-500 space parking lot. After much debate between the two sides, Alderwoman Helen Shiller is said to have brokered a compromise that would result in a park and 200 space parking lot for use during games (leased to the Cubs for 25 years). In 1992, Challenger Park was opened, promising amenities such as an ice rink, native flowers and grasses and a soccer field. Until the Summer of 2009, a sign welcomed visitors to this impressive list of amenities, despite the fact that they did not exist. Following a Chicago Tribune investigation, the sign was quickly removed. Even the name of the park is contested: the official story holds that the inspiration is the 1986 ill-fated space shuttle Challenger launch while many residents claim "Challenger" as a name honoring their challenge to the city and Cubs's plans.

Site of Challenger Park in 1989, three years before the park's creation. Photo by flickr.com user Genial23

Montage critical of Ald. Shiller and the Challenger Park "compromise". From the uptownupdate.com

3. 1048 Waveland Ave.

On November 18, 1956, David Kotler, a Chicago resident and Bears fan, was surprised when his car was towed from the private garage at this address. Driving in to watch the Bears beat the Los Angeles Rams at Wrigley Field, Kotler paid an unknown man $2 to park in his garage. Unfortunately for Kotler, this turned out to be an all-too-common scam. And even more unfortunate for him, the actual resident of 1048 Waveland was Chicago Policeman Robert Murphy. Kotler's car was, of course, promptly ticketed and towed.

Parking scams around Wrigley Field go back several decades, with press reports suggesting their ubiquity as early as the 1930s. The parking scam artists of the 1930s operated as "car watchers" - mostly young men who would solicit 15-25 cents for "protecting" cars from vandals and thieves. They were frequently accused of being "racketeers" that intimidated parkers. By the 1970s, many police officers seemed to have gotten in on the action. A 1974 investigation by the Chicago Tribune and the State's Attorney concluded that officers had been accepting and even encouraging illegal parking by

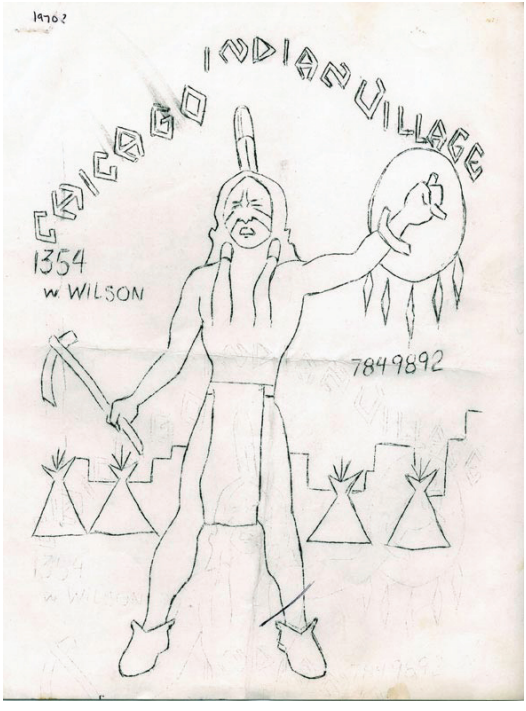
Wrigley Field visitors in exchange for $3. After asking an officer if he was “the man in charge”, drivers would illegally park, leaving money on the seat and the car unlocked.

4. 3716 N. Seminary Ave.

This lot just North of Waveland on Seminary was the site of a protest camp known as the Chicago Indian Village (CIV) during the Summer of 1970. Following the forced eviction of a Menominee woman named Carol Warrington and her six children, the CIV was established on May 5. The village consisted of a temporary office and shelters and by July was occupied by up to 60 people. While the encampment was initiated in response to Ms. Warrington's eviction, the CIV demands were much larger, focusing on the lack of adequate housing and educational opportunities for the 15,000 Native residents of Chicago.

The lot's owner, Val Christmann, originally supported the CIV's efforts, allowing the occupation of part of the parking lot. This agreement began to break down, however, as the CIV expanded to an area used for Wrigley Field parking and Christmann began parking cars in CIV territory. By late August, the village was dismantled and many of its families relocated to Chicago Housing Authority Units. Throughout the early 1970s, the CIV continued to occupy land in Northern Illinois, demand-

ing more adequate resources for Chicago's Native American Community.



Chicago Indian Village flyer, artist unknown, c. 1970
Collection of the Newberry Library: Virgil J. Vogel Research and Personal Papers

5. W. Waveland Ave & N. Clifton Ave.

This surface parking lot is operated by **Red Top Parking, Inc.**, easily identified by its large sign. Red Top is a rather unremarkable parking operator based in Chicago, reporting average revenues between $500,000 and $1 million, and employes a staff of 5 to 9. It's owned by the Secor family of Park Ridge, IL, who started the business in 1968. Charles H. Secor started a separate valet service company, Red Top Valet Service, in 1991.

On October 6, 2009, Mayor Daley appointed John Rice, a former Red Top Parking manager and one time owner of Red Top Valet Service, to the position of Alderman of the 36th Ward. Rice was appointed to replace retiring Ald. William J.P. Banks, whom Rice served as a top aide and driver. Rice also served as a zoning inspector for the city from 1997-2005.

W.J.P. Banks was a central figure in a Chicago Tribune investigative series ("Neighborhoods for Sale") in 2008 that uncovered connections between city zoning commissions and real estate interests. The former Alderman's nephew, James Banks is considered one of the most successful zoning lawyers in the city, often acting

on behalf of real estate developers looking to modify zoning policies in their favor.

Taking a look at the lower-right corner of the large “Red Top” billboard, you will see that a company named Lincoln Towing is responsible for towing cars in violation of the lot’s regulations. Perhaps best known as the subject of folk signer-songwriter Steve Goodman’s 1973 song “Lincoln Park Pirates”, Lincoln Towing Service, Inc. developed quite a reputation within Chicago’s Northside communities during the 1960s and 70s. The subject of several individual and class action lawsuits (one for $5 million in 1976), the company, and it’s one-time owner Ross Cascio, were also the focus of much public scorn. Charges against the company and its owner included “endangering and menacing residents”, illegally towing cars and collusion with police officers. In 1976, a Lincoln Towing employee was convicted of assaulting an “uncooperative” driver with a hammer.

Steve Goodman's "Lincoln Park Pirates" (1973)

The streetlamps are on in Chicago tonight,
And lovers a'gazin' at stars;
The stores are all closin', and Daley is dozin',
And the fat man is counting the cars…
And there's more cars than places to put 'em, he says,
But I've got room for them all;
So 'round 'em up boys, 'cause I want some more toys,
In the lot by the grocery store…

To me, way, hey, tow them away,
The Lincoln Park Pirates are we,
From Wilmette to Gary, there's nothin' so hairy
And we always collect our fee!
So it's way, hey, tow 'em away,
We plunder the streets of your town,
Be it Edsel or Chevy, there's no car too heavy,
And no one can make us shut down.

We break into cars when we gotta,
With hammer and pickaxe and saw;
And they said this garage had no license;
But little care I for the law!
Our drivers are friendly and courteous;
Their good manners you always will get;
'Cause they all are recent graduates
Of the charm school in Joliet.

(first two versus and the chorus)

$170.00 TOWING FEE
$40.00 PER DAY STORAGE
WARNING
UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES WILL BE RELOCATED AT OWNERS EXPENSE
CASH
VISA
MASTERCARD
DEBIT
VEHICLES REQUIRING SPECIAL EQUIPMENT INCLUDING VEHICLES OVER 10,000 LBS. TRUCKS, MOTORCYCLES, RV'S, BOATS, TRACTORS, TRAILERS $200 & UP
LINCOLN TOWING
24 HOURS A DAY
773-561-4433
4882 N. CLARK, CHICAGO, IL.
7 DAYS A WEEK
RED TOP PARKING
WRIGLEY FIELD
312-421-4136
PAY UNIFORMED RED TOP ATTENDANTS ONLY

6. 3641 N. Clark St.

During the first half of the 20th Century, this triangular parcel of land on the West side of Wrigley Field was a coal yard operated by Collins & Wiese Coal Company. In 1961, the drive-in restaurant chain, Henry's bought the land as a location for a restaurant and 200 parking spaces. The acquisition and development of the land cost approximately $700,000, which was the largest real estate deal involving a drive-in restaurant at that time. This Winter, the lot was used as an outdoor ice skating rink as well as parking.

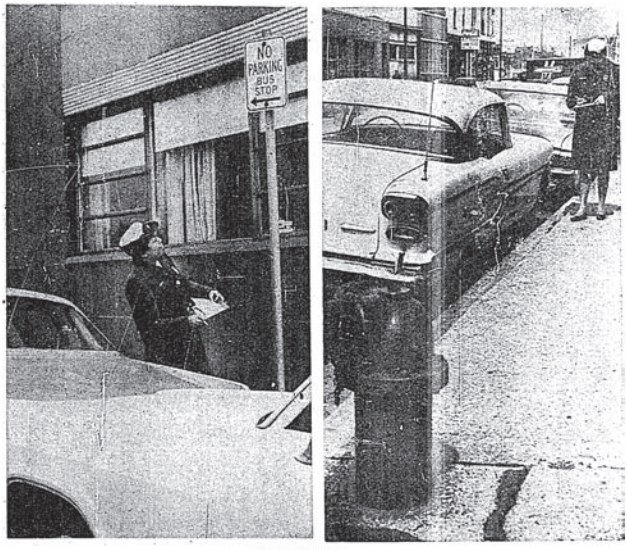
Image of former Henry's building, looking South on Clark, 2008. Photo by Picasa user Jwestern.

7. 3554 N. Clark St.

Our final destination is perhaps the most important stop on our tour. Here, the historical trajectory of automobile parking most visibly intersects with the broader forces shaping local civic space and global economics. In the Spring of 1966, one of the City of Chicago's new meter maids, Mrs. Ida Turnipseed (Meter Maid No.120), wrote her first parking ticket at this address, to a car illegally parked in front of a bus stop. Mrs. Turnipseed and her colleagues were set out on their first day of work with the advice that the *success or failure of the program depends on the smile on your face.*

The parking meter system in Chicago would eventually grow to over 34,000 on-street meters and 18 metered parking lots. 2007 revenues from meter collection totaled $22.9 million.

Today, the coin-fed meters are gone, replaced by high-tech "pay boxes" that accept credit cards. These high tech meters, such as those used in Chicago and manufactured by Cale Parking Systems USA, operate wirelessly, efficiently transmitting money through telecommunications networks. 33,000 single-space meters have already been replaced by 4,200 Cale pay boxes.



(TRIBUNE Staff Photos)

Mrs. Ida Turnipseed, one of city's new meter m aids, found car parked illegally in bus stop zone at 3554 N. Clark street and wrote one of her first ticke ts. Then in same block she found car parked only six feet (legal distance is 15 feet) from fire plug and wr ote another ticket.

(Story on page 19)

Tribune Staff Photo, "Meter Maids Get Down to Cases," *Chicago Tribune*, April 12, 1966. pp. 19-20.

Cale Parking Systems was founded in 2003, although it is a subsidiary of the Cale Group, which has been in the parking meter business since 1955. Headquartered near Tampa, FL (The Cale Group is based in Sweden), it has a help-desk operation in Richmond Hill, Georgia and warehouses in Baltimore, Portland, Oakland and Buffalo. It has over 50,000 machines in use in over 35 countries.

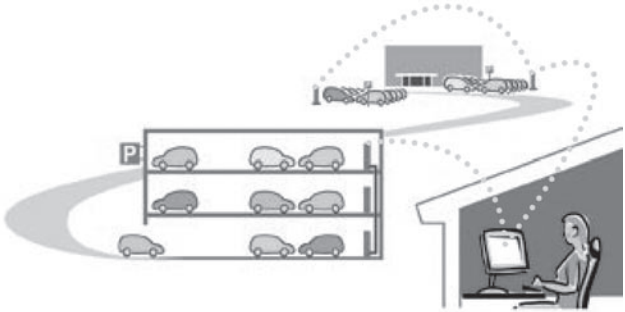


Diagram illustrating how Cale's pay boxes communicate with remote office workers over a wireless communications network. From Cale's brochure for its MP 104 Compact pay box, the type of machine used in Chicago.

Picture of Carl-Axel Andersson, Cale founder with the first parking meter produced by the company, the ORUB model. Photo from www.Cale.se.

Of course, along with the old parking meters went the economic and political infrastructure that regulated street parking in the city. In the Spring of 2009, the *Chicago Reader* produced a three part story on what quickly became known as "the Chicago Parking Meter Deal" outlining the 75 year lease of the city's parking meter system to a private corporation. The deal is only

one in a series of privatization moves by the city that include the 99-year lease of the Chicago Skyway to a Spanish/Australian consortium and the lease of parking garages under Millennium and Grant Parks to Morgan Stanley.

The switch to high-tech pay boxes was the work of a corporate collaboration between LAZ Parking and Chicago Parking Meters, LLC, who are the current operators of Chicago's street parking system. The deal has drawn much fire from the press and a number of Aldermen who portray it as a major financial and political loss for the city. Politically, one of the primary complaints is the lack of transparency with which the Daley Administration has conducted the deal. The City Council was asked to vote on approving the deal on December 4, 2008, a mere three days after final bids on the deal were due, none of which were made available to the public. The Council approved the deal 40-5, despite many admitting that they didn't understand the deal's details. Other complaints point out a loss of civic autonomy in regulating a primary component of the city's transportation infrastructure. As 32nd Ward Ald Scot Waguespack has found, while the city retains the legal ability to modify

parking spaces, times and rates under the deal, the city is responsible for any “lost” revenues such modifications may cause. When Ald. Waguespack decided that the proposed increase in rates for metered parking would not be in the best interest of the Ward’s businesses and residents, he sought to keep the current regulations. He was promptly informed, however, that the city would have to pay Chicago Parking Meters more than $600,000 in estimated lost revenues for the next three years.

Chicago Parking Meters, LLC is a consortium of companies assembled by the winning bidder for the deal ($1.16 billion), Morgan Stanley. Stakes in the new company are held by Morgan Stanley partnerships (50.1%), Allianz (a German financial firm) and Tannadice Investments, LLC (a subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, which is owned by the Government of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi).

The private interior spaces of automobiles seem to be merging and expanding outward, beyond their metallic containers, swallowing up ever greater masses of land and cannibalizing even the infrastructures that enabled their proliferation.

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