Russell Pildes

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Professional Background

Education
Master of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, 2017
B.A. University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign, 2014
Social Geography and Environmental Management, University of Otago (New Zealand), 2013

Years of Experience
6

I am a transportation planner and policy analyst specializing in translating technical analysis into policy decision-making. I bring both programmatic management and technical planning experience, with a broad skillset including emissions modeling, economic impact and cost-effectiveness analysis, and land use regulatory analysis. I also have experience managing strategic communications for politically sensitive projects; these softer skills are actually the foundation of my experience. I am a member of the American Planning Association and Young Professionals in Transportation.

Though I have maintained sharp skills across my range, I have spent much of my career in technical research-oriented pursuits. I am seeking opportunities to apply what I have learned to strategic policy activities. Most of my experience has been in public service, and I prefer working in that mission-driven environment.

Skills

- Extensive experience with geographic research: plans, regulations, social and physical datasets. Proficient in performing technical analyses, policy syntheses, and translating between the two.
- Experienced speaker skilled at managing stakeholder relationships and responding to their needs.
- Strong written, verbal, and visual communication skills in a variety of contexts.
- Excellent geospatial problem-solving and cartography, including using ArcGIS and Illustrator.

Selected Experience

National Transit Inventory and Performance Report (US National Park Service). For two years, Pildes led an annual inventory of all NPS transit vehicle assets and analyzing year-over-year transit ridership trends for program performance metrics ultimately presented to Congress as part of NPS' environmental stewardship programs. Data collection effort involved outreach to 95 transit systems in 65 parks. Analyses included service-wide and regional utilization trends, fleet recapitalization estimates, and environmental impact analyses. Pildes introduced new emissions modeling methods and other technical improvements. Contributions also included policy recommendations to NPS.

Industry Baseline Assessment for Safety Rule Implementation (US Federal Transit Administration). Pildes served as a member of a team assessing the US transit industry's readiness to implement FTA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Final Rule. Work consisted of in-person interviews at multiple public transit providers around the US of various characteristics, analyzing the results, and providing policy advice to the FTA. This work resulted in collateral contributions to FTA safety program guidance and training materials.

Financial Equity Assessment of Mileage-Based User Fees (Eastern Transportation Coalition). The member states of the Eastern Transportation Coalition (formerly the I-95 Corridor Coalition) are carefully examining the implications of switching from fuel taxes to mileage-based user fees. Pildes conducts the spatial equity analyses examining urban vs. rural and socio-economic impacts of such policy changes. He and his team engage with state governments to gather data, decode vehicle registration information to understand the fleet, analyze Census data to understand travel behavior, and then use novel methods to estimate financial effects across multiple socio-geographic dimensions.

Yosemite National Park Transit Optimization (US National Park Service). Pildes served as lead technical planner conducting a network optimization of the Yosemite Valley Shuttle, the fourth largest transit system operated in the National Park System. Work included ridership data collection and analysis, as well as developing alternative optimization scenarios for study with the engineering consultant. Scenarios included roadway redesign/retirement proposals, transit network modifications, and associated network modeling analysis. Data collection and scenario development included conducting field visits and charrettes with park staff as well as gateway communities.

CMAQ Cost-Effectiveness Report (US Federal Highway Administration). Every four years, FHWA's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program must analyze and the cost-effectiveness of eligible projects. Pildes led a team through methodology development, modeling, project-level CE analysis, and extensive consultation with the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Ypsilanti Township Demand Responsive Transit Pilot (Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority). Pildes worked with a team consulting for the AAATA to offer transit service in a very low-density area of their service shed. Key contributions included feasibility survey development and analysis, scenario specification, and novel GIS methods for scenario effectiveness evaluations. AAATA implemented the pilot as proposed and has now cloned it in other similar service areas.

White Paper: Supporting Rural Communities Through the Transportation and Climate Initiative. Critics have questioned whether "cap-and-invest" strategies of the nascent Transportation and Climate Initiative will benefit rural communities in New England and Mid-Atlantic states. Pildes worked with a team to author a white paper on economic development potential of rural-focused policies. Significant contributions include emissions analysis of personal, transit, and freight fleet hybridization/electrification scenarios, and assessing economic impacts from mode shift.

High Speed Rail Noise Joint Rulemaking (Environmental Protection Agency/Federal Railroad Administration). Pildes and a team of engineers and economists assisted sponsor agencies conduct a rulemaking for high-speed rail noise. Work consisted of preparing original research and analysis for internal and stakeholder use, providing topic-area expertise, and representing planning perspectives. Key contributions included development of the regulatory impact analysis baseline scenarios.

Work Experience

EBP-US, Boston MA
Associate, January 2019 – present
- Conducts technical transportation planning analysis and prepares policy advice for a variety of public and private sector clients, including Federal and state transportation departments.

Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, US Department of Transportation, Cambridge MA
Community Planner, May 2016 – January 2019
- Served as transportation planner and policy analyst at USDOT's technical research facility.
- Co-led programmatic support for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, including developing simplified project-level emissions calculators for under-resourced agencies and advising the program on regulatory matters.
- Major contributor to the Center's transportation planning practice, including transit planning.

University of Michigan, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Ann Arbor MI
Research Assistant to Dr. Rob Goodspeed, September 2016 – June 2017
- Conducted geospatial analysis for neighborhood-scale public health study.

Research Assistant to Dr. Richard Norton, JD, PhD; February – June 2016
- GIS and planning consultant on a team of lawyers and planners from the University of Michigan advising Flint, Michigan as they updated their master plan and zoning code.

Legal Research Assistant to Dr. Norton, Oct 2015 – February 2016
- Examined instructive precedents of public trust, public nuisance, and takings in ocean coastal management to create a resiliency-oriented planning toolkit for Great Lakes municipalities.

District of Columbia Department of Transportation, Washington DC
Extern, March 2016
- Provided technical assistance to senior planners and regional governmental partners.

Oceana USA, Washington DC
GIS Consultant, July-December 2015

US Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Washington DC
GIS Specialist, 2014-2015
- Provided programmatic support to resource management planning across the US.
- Successfully developed and implemented an agency-wide transportation GIS data framework.
- Coordinated with other Federal Land Management Agencies and partners to unify GIS efforts.

International Model United Nations Association, New York NY
National High School Model United Nations Conference (NHSMUN) at United Nations headquarters
Chief of Administrative Affairs 2010-13
- Senior administrative executive of international high school conference with 4000 student participants, 25+ committee simulations, and delegate resource center. Hired, trained, and supervised eleven-member team.

Professional Affiliations

- Young Professionals in Transportation, Boston Chapter, Member 2017 – present.
- Boston Cyclists Union, Volunteer, member, and GIS consultant 2017 – present.
- American Planning Association, Member 2015-present.

Publications, Presentations, Lectures

- Pildes, Russell et al. "Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) Cost-Effectiveness Tables Report," (US Federal Highway Administration, 2020). FHWA-HEP-20-039. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/reference/cost_effectiveness_tables/#Toc445205105
- Pildes, Russell and Jesse Boudart. "Carrots vs. Sticks in Transport Policy," in State of Transportation 2020, ed. Mark Bennett (Chicago IL: American Planning Association, 2020), 280-288.
- National Park Service Garden of the Gods Shuttle Study: Visitation Trends and Scenario Planning (January 2019). https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/38464
- National Park Service Transit Inventory and Performance Report
  - 2017: https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/37306
  - 2018: https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/42915
- FHWA Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Toolkit (major contributor) https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/toolkit/
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program: CMAQ Toolkit Overview and Demo: International Emissions Inventory Conference, August 2019. View presentation