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11.337J Urban Design Policy and Action

Exercise #5: “Information: An Example”

Objectives: This exercise is intended to have you focus on the generation and distribution of *information* as a tool of government action. It asks you to provide a concise account of examples of its use by government to achieve an urban design policy (or another policy of your choice).

Assignment: From the literature or your experience, select an example of government use of *information* as a tool to implement a policy. Describe this example in as much detail as possible. Try to avoid an example that provides only a trivial use of information—information has to be used to explain the use of *any* policy tool, e.g. a brochure that explains a tax incentive—and focus instead on an example where information is the *content* of the intervention.

Be careful also about the difference between government requiring other parties to provide information (a coupling of information and regulation) with the government developing and disseminating information on its own. You might want to try to find an example of each.

As you do this exercise, please keep in mind the ideas presented in the readings about information strategies.

Be very brief in your description; our emphasis is to build a wide a dossier of good examples with appropriate commentary rather than to dig deeply. Two pages would be sufficient; less would probably be insufficient.