

Glossary

Democracy of consumption

The idea that the widespread production and consumption of goods is an expression of American democracy.

Democracy of land ownership

The idea that widespread land ownership is an important part of a democracy; it was espoused by Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, among others, and still impacts society today.

De-urbanization

The phenomenon of people and businesses moving out of urban centers.

Franchise

A right granted by the government to a company, group or person to operate in the community in a certain manner.

Free-rider problem

The problem that people receive public goods and services even if they do not contribute to paying for them. See “Public goods.”

Freight

Transported goods.

Good Roads Movement

Efforts at the turn of the 20th century, led first by bicyclists and then motorists, to make roads smoother by paving and other means.

Inexhaustible natural resources

The view that America’s natural resources are so abundant that they will not run out.

Intermodal containers

Containers, used for shipping freight, that can be moved from one mode of transport to another; for instance, from ship to rail.

Interstate Highway System

The network of express highways across the United States allowing safe, high-speed travel. The Interstate Highway System was initiated by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1956, partially due to military concerns.

Mass transportation

Transportation moving large numbers of individuals by buses, airplanes, subways, etc. Mass transportation requires passengers to travel (sometimes by foot) to a centralized pickup point, share personal space and follow established timetables.

Monopoly

Control by one company of the entire market for a good or service.

Cumberland Road

The road built between 1811 and 1838 from Cumberland, Maryland, to “the West” – Vandalia, Illinois. The Cumberland Road is also known as the National Road.

Personal transportation

Transportation appropriate for one person or a family that allows more individual freedom and flexibility than mass transportation.

Public goods

Goods or services that benefit all, payers and nonpayers, alike; for example, bridges.

Public transportation

Mass transportation that is owned and operated by the government.

Suburbanization

The phenomenon of people moving from city centers to the adjacent land outside the city, which began with the use of streetcars at the turn of the 20th century and accelerated with highways and interstates built after World War II.

Toll

A fee charged to travel on a road or bridge.

Transcontinental Railroad

The first railroad to cross the continental United States was completed in 1869.