No Little Plans: Envisioning the Bay Area Rapid Transit System and the Renewal of Rapid Transit in the United States.

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Abstract
Cities across the United States and Canada in the years following the Second World War witnessed reinvigorated efforts to construct rapid transit systems despite a decades-long decline in transit patronage, and central to these efforts was the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) District. The proponents of these new systems used their initial plans and feasibility studies to articulate a new vision for rapid transit, one that imagined rapid transit not merely as a practical solution, but as a technologically advanced tool for reshaping urban regions. This thesis emerges in an examination of the cartography, visual design, and textual arguments of the original BART plan of 1956 and nine additional rapid transit plans produced from 1925 to 1968. Placing the BART plan in the broader context of rapid transit planning illuminates both the innovations of its authors and the concepts those authors inherited from earlier designs. These plans exhibit increasingly sophisticated presentations and nuanced arguments for rapid transit intended to win approval as a tool for positively shaping urban areas, this thesis reveals future development of North American cities.

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