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Deep Thoughts: Real Estate

Did these Shopping Centers Create the Great Recession?

<http://atlanta.curbed.com/archives/2011/10/28/did-these-shopping-centers-help-bring-on-the-recession.php>

Friday, October 28, 2011, by [Josh Lindenbaum](#)

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Those in the real estate development world may be familiar with [Christopher Leinberger](#), the real estate developer, [Brookings Institution fellow](#) and University of Michigan professor widely considered one of the country's top thinkers on **land use and urbanism**. Back in 2005, Leinberger penned a rather prescient [piece](#) in the journal *Places* identifying the 19 building types that need to be replaced in the American real estate development lexicon that achieve the **magical combination** of both getting financing and contributing to more sustainable, vibrant communities. (If Leinberger's piece is too much for you, *The Atlantic* Cities blog has a nice [summary](#).) One prime example that will be particularly familiar to the Atlanta area is

the **grocery-anchored shopping center**. On the one hand, these centers represent the pinnacle of convenience in a automobile-centric world. On the other, they are an environmental and land use disaster. Leinberger posits that the commoditization (and easy financing that followed) of the grocery-anchored shopping center and other product types that go with it (**suburban tract housing, other big box retail**) caused the over-building that leaves us mired in the real estate doldrums and current economic malaise. Look around Atlanta and it's difficult to argue his point.

· [The Need for Alternatives to the Nineteen Standard Real Estate Product Types](#)[Places via eScholarship]

· [The 19 Building Types That Caused the Recession](#) [*The Atlantic Cities* blog]