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New Book Chronicles Baltimore's Epic 40-Year Battle Over Interstate Highways

Stop the Road spotlights unsung heroes who saved city's waterfront communities from "death by expressway" and reveals racial discrimination impacting unspared neighborhoods

BALTIMORE — A ragtag band of community activists, environmentalists and preservationists won three major expressway battles, eliminated two highways and rerouted a third – thereby saving the waterfront that became the bedrock of Baltimore's later revival. However, other highways were built – reflecting racial inequities and discriminatory practices deeply embedded in the City's history.

Veteran city planner and national urban development expert, [E. Evans Paull](#) chronicles all this and more in [Stop the Road: Stories from the Trenches of Baltimore's Road Wars](#) (October 1, 2022, Boyle & Dalton, 353 pages, paperback: \$19.99; e-book: \$9.99, ISBN 978-1-6337-644-1).

"The Road Wars were a determinant of what Baltimore looks like today," explains Paull, who initially heard about the highway controversies while working in the mid-1970s and felt compelled to write the "untold story" after retiring in 2017. "You would have to go back to the building of the B&O Railroad to find another issue that has had a more profound impact on Baltimore City and its neighborhoods."

Geared to the human side of Baltimore's history, *Stop the Road* gains depth from 55 interviews of the "road warriors" who fought the highway battle. The book showcases their stories, as Paull unravels this improbable victory of the powerless and the outsiders over the insiders and the powerful, thereby saving **Federal Hill, Harbor East, Fells Point** and **Canton** from the wrecking ball and economic catastrophe.

Probing and exposing Baltimore in unflinching detail, the book cites the infamous **Harlem Park "Highway to Nowhere," I-395 through Sharp-Leadenhall** and **East-West Expressway through Rosemont** as examples of using highways for "Negro removal" and the low regard for fully functioning Black communities. These are issues that "need to be explored and take their place in this country's much needed reckoning over race," according to Paull.

While depicting the grassroots movements surrounding the highway battle, *Stop the Road* features extensive coverage and insight into two towering political figures: **William Donald Schaefer** and **Barbara Ann Mikulski**.

- “*Stop the Road* is an engrossing saga of Baltimore, not just because the events depicted are so significant for our city, but also because the history is enlivened by in person storytelling.”

**M. J. (“Jay”) Brodie, former Baltimore Housing Commissioner
and Baltimore Development Corporation president**

- “Ev Paull masterfully documents the untold story of plans for a series of superhighways that changed the face of Baltimore over the last 80 years, taking readers through the many twists and turns, and buttressing his research with interviews from both prominent and all-but-forgotten participants, the opponents and advocates.”

**William F. Zorzi, former journalist, *The Baltimore Sun*
and writer, *The Wire* and *We Own This City***

- “Paull’s surgical dissection of the 40-year battle produces a book that is essential for understanding today’s Baltimore—and the many other American cities which experienced similar highway wars.”

**Antero Pietila, author of *Not in My Neighborhood:
How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City***

Stop the Road will be available on [Amazon](#) and [Barnes & Noble](#), and in area bookstores. To learn more, visit the [Stop the Road website](#) or follow on [Facebook](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Northwest Baltimore resident E. Evans Paull spent 45 years as a city planner working in Baltimore and nationally on urban redevelopment issues. He began his career in the **Baltimore City Department of Planning** as a generalist planner before specializing in the redevelopment of brownfields.

After starting and managing Baltimore’s **Brownfields Initiative**, he tackled these same issues at a national level, working first for **Northeast-Midwest Institute** before becoming director of the **National Brownfields Coalition** and finally running his consulting business, [Redevelopment Economics](#). Many of his published articles and papers still appear on the Redevelopment Economics website.

Paull has won several awards, including: *Brownfields Leadership Award*, *Phoenix Award* (for brownfields redevelopment), *Governor’s Smart Growth Award* and *Professional Achievement in Economic Development Award* from the Maryland Chapter American Planning Association.

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**-For interviews with Evans Paul or copies of the book, contact Caryn Sagal
at caryn@sagalpr.com or 410.363.9583.**

Stop the Road: Reviews

"It was people, not politicians, who stood up and saved Baltimore from the ravages of the East-West Expressway. With few material resources, diverse citizens united to protect their neighborhoods - to resist, regroup, persist and finally prevail. Ev Paull has found many of those courageous people and made their 'highway stories' a compelling human history of the challenges that faced post-war urban America."

Mark Reutter, senior editor, *Baltimore Brew* and author, *Making Steel: Sparrows Point and the Rise and Ruin of American Industrial Might*

"Ev Paull masterfully documents the untold story of plans for a series of superhighways that changed the face of Baltimore over the last 80 years, taking readers through the many twists and turns, and buttressing his research with interviews from both prominent and all-but-forgotten participants, the opponents and advocates. *Stop the Road* is an examination of policy and politics, equity and race, and heroes and villains in this tale of how the city was shaped and reshaped in the latter half of the 20th Century as a result of the proposed highway system. Paull's book is at once scholarly journal, urban history and personal observation, while highlighting "ordinary people doing extraordinary things" in fighting various highway proposals, neighborhood by neighborhood. Drawing on Baltimore's experience, he provides a cautionary tale for future highway and city planning, as well as an instructive guide for the federal government as it now turns its focus to correcting mistakes of the past."

William F. Zorzi, former journalist, *The Baltimore Sun* and writer, *The Wire* and *We Own This City*

"Evans Paull has written a scary book about how close Baltimore came to losing its chance at future renewal. His villains are 1960s politicians, planners and civic leaders who backed misguided schemes that would have rammed expressways through the downtown business district, Inner Harbor, Federal Hill, Fells Point, Canton and Leakin Park, destroying thousands of homes in the process. His heroes are activists of all races and backgrounds who stopped the worst excesses. Paull's surgical dissection of the 40-year battle produces a book that is essential for understanding today's Baltimore--and the many other American cities which experienced similar highway wars."

Antero Pietila, author of *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City*

"*Stop the Road* is an engrossing saga of Baltimore, not just because the events depicted are so significant for our city, but also because the history is enlivened by in person storytelling. You will marvel how this combination of community protectors, civil rights activists, preservationists, 1960's idealists, and environmental advocates gained the upper hand over the road building establishment. "

M. J. ("Jay") Brodie, former Baltimore Housing Commissioner and Baltimore Development Corporation president

"The story is a marvelous example of how different groups, race, ethnicity, and education came together for a common goal—to stop something that was destroying the fabric and essence of a community. This is sorely lacking in many ways today."

Philip J. Merrill, Nanny Jack and Company, LLC co-founder and EOA and author, *Old West Baltimore (Images of America)*

“If you think about the things that have really changed the face of Baltimore as we know it today, to me there is nothing more important than the road wars.”

C. William Struever, Baltimore developer and urban strategist