

CANADIAN CITIES IN TRANSITION

SIXTH EDITION

CANADIAN CITIES IN TRANSITION

Understanding Contemporary Urbanism

Edited by Markus Moos | Tara Vinodrai | Ryan Walker

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Publisher's Preface

Introducing *Canadian Cities in Transition*

Oxford University Press is proud to introduce the sixth edition of *Canadian Cities in Transition: Understanding Contemporary Urbanism*, edited by Markus Moos, Tara Vinodrai, and Ryan Walker.

The new edition retains its unique Canadian focus on urban geography and urban planning while providing a relevant and comprehensive survey of urbanization from both modern and traditional perspectives. From founding principles to the current trends shaping the discipline today, *Canadian Cities in Transition* explores the recent and ongoing transformational change to our urban environment while building on the strength of previous editions and their authoritative contributions.

Highlights of the New Edition

- **New voices.** A blend of new and seasoned scholars brings a lively mix of perspectives in the field of urban geography and planning to the text, and ensures balance in the interpretation of trends, both past and present, that are shaping Canadian cities in the twenty-first century.
- **New and expanded topical coverage.** Coverage of issues including gentrification, climate resilient design, and digital innovation draw students into the current and relevant social and physical factors that have an impact on the nation's urban environments.
- **Canadian perspective.** *Canadian Cities in Transition* remains the only book in urban geography and urban planning to focus on Canadian urban areas and the uniquely Canadian forces that shape our cities.
- **Updated data and visuals.** The most recent statistics and new additions to the art program help to contextualize key issues and locales.

Preface: A Guide to the Text

This sixth edition of *Canadian Cities in Transition: Understanding Contemporary Urbanism* is designed to serve a number of purposes. It is an introduction for university students to the Canadian urban phenomenon, presenting different facets of the city: its historical evolution, economic dynamics, environmental impacts, dependence on natural systems, urban lifestyles, cultural makeup, social structure, infrastructures, governance, planning, and design. The volume also aims to assist the next generation of citizens, consumers, experts, business people, and politicians in their efforts to solve the urban problems—traffic congestion, different forms of environmental damage, crime, social segregation, inequality, housing affordability, governance—that they are inheriting. Canadian cities are not simply a collection of problems to be solved, however, and this book helps to articulate the promise of Canada’s urban age, where people and public space are re-centred for economic, environmental, and social reasons, and where “quality” instead of simply “growth” becomes a unifying hallmark of urbanism. The book offers the most current knowledge and perspectives on the Canadian city. The contributors review the recent literature and research on different aspects of the city, and provide their expert opinion on how to focus our examination of contemporary urban issues. Finally, the volume provides an update on urban Canada by identifying the main characteristics of the contemporary Canadian urban phenomenon, its problems, achievements, and opportunities. In this regard, the text will help students and other citizens make sense of the vast flow of information on cities circulated by the media. Because quality information is a condition for judicious decisions, knowledge of the city is vital to effective planning, private and public development, consumer choice, and functioning of democratic processes.

The text is informed by different disciplines with an urban dimension: mainly geography and urban planning, but also economics, political science, sociology, ecology, and history. It focuses

on different urban themes and draws on all the disciplines relevant to their exploration. It also considers cities belonging to all size categories, as well as to different Canadian regions. Contributors who represent all parts of the country are able to highlight cross-country differences, as well as similarities by drawing on examples from their own regions.

The 24 chapters of this edition are organized into five parts. The five chapters in Part I “City Building Blocks” serve an introductory role by setting the context for the inquiries that occupy the following chapters, and also a formative role, building for readers a foundation upon which to shape their interpretation of the content in subsequent parts of the book. In Chapter 1, Pierre Filion lays out seven universal properties common to all cities. These properties explain the existence of the urban phenomenon as well as its different manifestations over time. In Chapter 2, Filion provides historical background by exploring the themes of transition and transformation that are at the centre of the book. It describes three different epochs of urban development in Canada: the pre-World War II city, the rise of suburbanization in the postwar period, and the urban development patterns—both new and inherited—that have prevailed since the post-industrial structural shifts of the 1970s. The chapter closes with an exploration of possible future trajectories of urban development. Chapter 3, by Zack Taylor and Neil Bradford, begins by discussing the role of local governments across Canada in shaping urban policy. They identify examples of how Canadian governments and civic leaders at all levels have engaged in collaborative multi-level urban governance to address today’s pressing urban challenges. In Chapter 4, Ben Fawcett and Ryan Walker discuss cities as Indigenous places, the concept of Indigenous urbanism, and key foundations to understanding the future of Canadian cities where shared sovereignty, governance, cultural resurgence, and guiding principles for truth-seeking and reconciliation need to be

understood by all who would make the Canadian city a subject of analysis, and not just the few who in the past have taken a special interest in the topic. The final building block, Chapter 5 by Shauna Brail and Betsy Donald, addresses how cities are being shaped by new—and potentially disruptive—technologies. They argue that we have entered a period where rapid digitization and the fast-paced adoption of new technologies are disrupting almost every aspect of urban life.

The six chapters in Part II, “Demography, Identity, and Home,” look at how the social and cultural space of cities is shaped by demographic trends, and is responsive to changing societal and global contexts, and how the range of urban experiences is brought into sharp contrast by the extent to which people are able to meet the need for housing and home. In Chapter 6, Markus Moos considers the age and generational dimensions of urban restructuring. He tracks the changing age compositions of our cities and the changing location patterns of young adults and seniors. Moos points to growing segregation of young adults in central areas of our cities and discusses the deteriorating economic prospects of those just entering labour markets. He describes current policies aimed at planning for an aging population and explores exclusion and inequalities arising from ageism. Chapter 7, by Ivan Townshend and Ryan Walker, is about social changes affecting cities: demography, life course, and lifestyles. Among other things, the chapter highlights the effects of aging, the extension of youth, and the co-existence of numerous lifestyles, as well as the impact of these trends on the built environment and on community dynamics within our cities. In Chapter 8, Audrey Kobayashi and Valerie Preston focus on immigration and the resulting social diversity. They chart the geography of immigration in Canada—the urban areas that especially attract immigrants and where immigrants concentrate in these cities. They also describe new urban phenomena associated with immigration, such as the emergence of “ethnoburbs,” and the broader policy frameworks through which immigration is managed. Damaris Rose explores the nature of

gender and sexuality in the city in Chapter 9. She adopts a perspective that underscores the freedoms and constraints confronting gender differences and the expression of sexual orientations in cities. The chapter discusses the impact of values and of the spatial organization of cities on the lives of women. It also looks at how LGBTQ+ people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and others) negotiate the city. The subject of Chapter 10 is social polarization. Alan Walks identifies a range of factors accounting for growing income polarization among households over the last decades. He also paints a picture of the urban consequences of polarization—an urban social geography that is increasingly characterized by unevenness—and the policy responses that could address social inequality. Chapter 11, by Richard Harris, is devoted to housing, one of the largest uses of space in Canadian cities. The chapter reviews the socio-economic and geographic landscape of housing in Canada and the policy environment in which housing is managed, and ends with a discussion of some of the pressing issues facing the Canadian housing system as a whole.

Part III, “Urban Form, Structure, and Design,” is about responses to contemporary patterns and challenges that structure our cities, as well as specific design and policy approaches seeking to enhance Canadian urbanism. In Chapter 12, Jill L. Grant and Pierre Filion pursue the planning transition theme introduced in Chapter 2 through an exploration of the newer urban forms emerging in the Canadian city. Chapter 12 is about the loud call within the planning profession for a change in urban development trends. It describes and evaluates attempts at intensifying the urban environment while acknowledging the counter-effect of many new automobile-dependent urban forms, such as power malls. Ryan Walker and Jill Blakley examine the movement, market, and meeting functions of public space in Chapter 13, focusing on streets and squares in our city centres. Topics range from the conceptual to measurement and metrics, and to lessons learned over multiple generations of scholarship and observation to enhance the design and programming of

public spaces. The connections between activity and urban form are discussed. The authors give examples of how public life is being re-ignited in the shared spaces of our cities by place-specific public art and performance, by recalibrating transportation infrastructure to induce more of the movement we want in our urban age, and by decades- or centuries-old lessons for good physical design of streets and squares. In Chapter 14, Ahmed El-Geneidy and Emily Gris  use the lens of accessibility to examine the relationship between transportation and land use. Following a history of urban transport, congestion levels, and the distribution of transport mode share between private automobiles, active transport, and public transit in Canadian cities are compared with urban areas internationally. The authors discuss how the modelling of travel demand is changing in pursuit of a multimodal sustainable approach that blends transport options with land-use decisions. Chapter 15, by Alison Bain and Bryan Mark, deals with emerging places in Canada’s inner or central cities: gentrified neighbourhoods, high-rise condominiums, and the like. It relates the conditions that have led to their development and the impact of these places on the social structure and the functioning of cities. Given the increasingly suburban nature of urban life in Canada, it is fitting for this section of the book to close with Chapter 16, by Jean-Paul D. Addie, Robert S. Fiedler, and Roger Keil, an exploration of how understandings of the Canadian urban form are broadening to include the conceptual study of suburbanisms, the “cities on the edge.”

The four chapters in Part IV, “Economies of Cities,” undertake an examination of urban economics and the dynamics of growth and decline in our Canadian urban system. Chapter 17, by Tara Vinodrai, focuses on how cities are affected by present and recent economic trends and how they have responded. She traces the shift from the industrial to the post-industrial city and the growing emphasis placed on innovation, creativity, and knowledge-based work. She sees this trend as having both positive and negative impacts on cities. In Chapter 18, Richard Shearmur explores the different viewpoints on the relationship

between cities and innovation, and examines how the debate applies to Canadian cities. He presses us to understand what is specific about innovation in an urban context and why innovation is more likely to occur in cities. Chapter 19, by Andrejs Skaburskis and Markus Moos, examines the economics of urban land use. The chapter introduces the structuring parameters of urban land use and describes the origin and operation of urban land markets as well as their outcomes. Skaburskis and Moos end by introducing the dimensions of timing and strategy to help explain development decisions that challenge our conventional views of when, where, and how intensively land is capitalized. Chapter 20, by Heather M. Hall and Betsy Donald, zeroes in on polarization *among* urban areas. This last contribution of the book’s fourth part describes the multiple challenges that declining urban areas face and policy responses that could mitigate the consequences of decline. This issue is increasingly relevant given the present concentration of demographic and economic growth in a few large metropolitan regions and their surroundings. Hall and Donald convey the opportunities missed by urban decision-makers too narrowly focused on growth rather than on qualitative development.

Part V, “The Environmental Imperative,” is about the most pressing structuring parameters of Canadian urbanism in the twenty-first century, environment and sustainability. Chapter 21, by William E. Rees, is about the environmental impact of cities. It pictures cities as an important contributor to global environmental damage. The chapter also explores the vulnerability of cities to environmental deterioration and the need for them to deploy long-term sustainability strategies. In Chapter 22, by Meg Holden and Robin Chang, climate change, sustainability, and resilience are examined in relation to the ups and downs of Canada’s battle with urban sprawl, its costs, and the challenges of enhancing the density of our built environment in relation to its ecology. Model sustainable neighbourhoods are discussed, and the chapter ends with critical reflections on where the powerful concepts of sustainability and resilience join to direct a pathway for Canadian urban

development. Chapter 23, by Alison Blay-Palmer and Karen Landman, looks at the new-found interest in the geography of food, as evidenced in movements such as the 100-mile diet. This chapter is about how food is procured and distributed within Canadian cities. Issues include accessibility to different forms of food outlets and the problem of food deserts, efforts to increase reliance on food grown nearby, and food production

within cities themselves. The book closes with Chapter 24, an urgent discussion of how climate change threats must prompt responses to how we design our cities. In this chapter, Maged Senbel, Simon Liem, and Alexandra Lesnikowski explore the challenges and opportunities inherent in various approaches to sustainable urban design intended to create low-carbon, resilient, and healthy neighbourhoods.

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Tribute to Trudi Bunting (1944–2017)

Co-editor of the First Four Editions of *Canadian Cities in Transition*

Six editions of *Canadian Cities in Transition* ago, in the late 1980s, we were experiencing a surge of interest for Canadian cities as a distinct area of study—different enough from their US counterparts to be an object of investigation in their own right. *The Myth of the North American City* by Michael Goldberg and John Mercer, published in 1986, highlighted differences between Canadian and US cities. These researchers demonstrated that Canadian cities registered higher density and public transit use, were much less racially segmented, and benefited from a greater involvement of the public sector. It is in this context that Trudi Bunting and I decided to proceed with the first edition of *Canadian Cities in Transition* (we did not know at the time that there would be a second, let alone a sixth, edition). From the start, we adopted principles that have defined the book through all its editions: chapters had to communicate original research, they were to be written by the leading experts on the aspects of the city they addressed, their material was to be accessible to undergraduate students without being dumbed down, and the book had to advance knowledge of the Canadian urban phenomenon.

Trudi Bunting both made the book possible and was responsible for the orientation and quality of its first four editions. We came up with the idea of such a book together, but I hardly knew anyone within the Canadian urban research community. I had just finished my doctorate in England a few years earlier, so my Canadian contacts were limited. Trudi Bunting, on the other hand, knew nearly all Canadian urban researchers. After we identified the themes to be covered by the different chapters, she quickly matched them with potential contributors. And then came the Trudi

Bunting personal touch. It was important to her that we meet face-to-face with as many of the contributors as possible in order to discuss together a detailed plan for their chapter. She had a vision of each edition of the book she co-edited and wanted to make sure that all chapters fit this vision. Then she would carefully edit the chapters, not hesitating to restructure them to clarify their message and ease their reading. Trudi Bunting had an exceptional ability to perceive problems with a text and correct them. The four editions of the book benefited greatly from this talent.

The work of Trudi Bunting on *Canadian Cities in Transition* was an extension of her dedication to the education of undergraduate and graduate students. She was exceptionally supportive of her students, but at the same time highly rigorous about the quality of their work. Their papers and theses would be given the same detailed editing treatment as the book chapters. The book also reflected the breadth of her interest in urban geography. She began her career focusing on children in the city from a behavioural psychology perspective. Then her research work shifted to other aspects of cities, particularly mid-size cities, the revitalization of the inner city, and the dynamics of suburban areas. Later in life, she left urban research to investigate the characteristics of rural places that attract artists.

At the beginning, I disagreed with Trudi Bunting about the title “Canadian Cities in Transition.” My point was that we did not know if this system of cities was actually undergoing a transition. She, on the other hand, was adamant that Canadian cities were indeed in a transitional phase. Thirty years later, with the revival of core areas, widespread densification, ethnic and racial diversification, and renewed interest in public transit, walking, and cycling, it is obvious that she was right.

—Pierre Filion, co-editor of the first five editions of *Canadian Cities in Transition*.