How CMHC Revived Canadian Community Planning

1944-1970

Canadian Institute of Planners conference 2019

David L.A. Gordon

Queen's University







REVIVED Canadian Community Planning?

Thomas Adams



- Joined Canada's Commission of Conservation 1914 as Town Planning Advisor
- Founded Civic Improvement League 1915
- Town Planning Institute of Canada founded 1919



Source: Planning Canadian Communities 6th Ed.

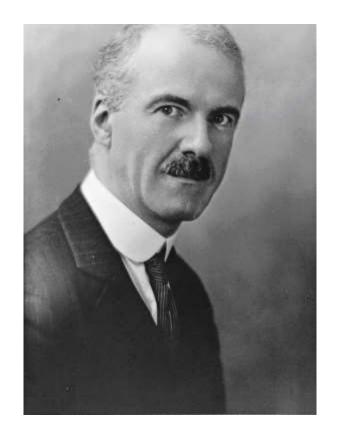
Author: Gerald Hodge, David L.A. Gordon

REVIVED Canadian Community Planning?



- 300 TPIC members in late 1920s
- Basic planning legislation in 8 provinces
- Advisory Town Planning Commissions in many cities
- Advisory plans prepared Vancouver and Kitchener
- Zoning bylaws in some communities

Noulan Cauchon, TPIC President 1924-5



Source: *Planning Canadian Communities* 6th Ed. Authors: Gerald Hodge, David L.A. Gordon

THE COLLAPSE OF THE CANADIAN PLANNING MOVEMENT

1930-45 → Great Depression & World War 2

- Great Depression 1930- 39:
- Cities going bankrupt
- Annual housing starts dropped from 20,000 ?? to almost none
- Planning commissions folded across the country

1930 JTPIC article on bankrupt cities

February, 1930

Page II

CITIES THAT HAVE GONE BROKE

By A. G. DALEVILL.

In an article under this heads It would be indeed fortunate if the existing problems of unwise expenditure as were cited in that article. The trouble, however, lies much deeper, and because the cause if really known is neglected the danger is great and may lead to other towns and cities falling in the same way, however economically they may be

While at the present time the trouble is most propounced in the western cities there are fowns and cities in Ontario that are perilously situated. The problem throughout the entire Dominion demands not only the attention of those who lend money to the municipalities to enable them to carry on their development, but also the careful consideration of all provincial governments to whom both bond-holder and citizen appeal for aid when the day of reckoning

When the transcontinental railways opened up for settlement, large sections of land previously innecessible, villages, towns and cities, sprang into existence as fast an and in some cases ahead of the agricultural development of the country. New actilers, both those who were Canadians by birth, and these of foreign origin whose knowledge of the English language was very limited, were enabled by the homestead regulations to acquire at least 160 acres of land for little more than the promise of some egricultural development. In many instances, as soon as a title to this land was acquired, farming was abandoned, the quarter section sub-divided into some 1,250 building lots and a townsite formed. The owners of the land had no interest in planning the land to serve the future community. Their only purpose was to divide up the land in such a manner as to secure the quickest sale at the greatest profit. In this way, section after section of land was divided up until to-day we find cities whose existing population is not above 60,000 that have within their city limits over 40 square miles every square mile of which is sub-divided into building lots that would accumumdate 20,000 people. But because land within city limits is assessed and taxed at high figures. square mile after square mile all around the city was partially sub-divided in the same manner to accummodate thousands more.

Whilst this was taking place in the prairie provinces, where, generally speaking, land is level highly assessed land and their very presence hinderand easy to prepare for building sites, similar sub---ing the development of the land for purposes for division of land under different conditions was taking which it is better suited

of Saturday Night reasons were given why some much of the land laid out for townsites requires an Canadian towns had got into financial difficulties, expenditure of some five hundred dollars ar nere to fit it for building purposes. The same disregard of some of the western Canadian cities could be at- was shown in planning the land to serve the comtributed to nothing more serious than such examples munity. The topography of the country was ignored and streets set out for main thoroughfares in locations that would tax a mountain goat to climb.

Vancouver, considering its population, occupies one of the smallest areas of land of any of the larger western cities. It is, bawever, surrounded with other municipalities and other all really tributary to it. The consequence is that within a radius of 20 miles in this area, sub-divisions have been planned and streets dedicated sufficient to serve a population equal to sne-half of the present population of the entire dominion or ten times the population of the

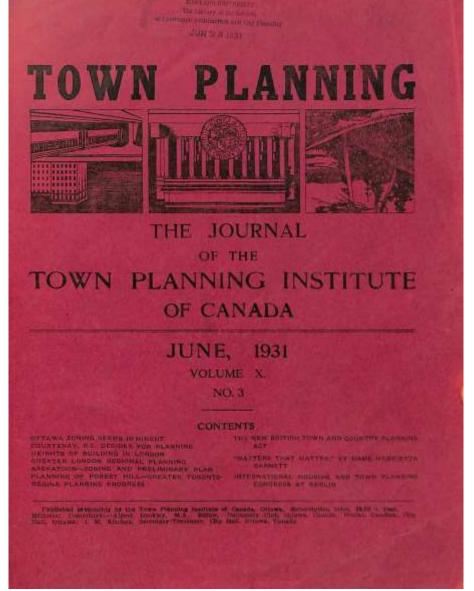
The city of Toronto has begun to stagger at the cost of developing the most recent annexations, and has called a halt to the extension of the city limits. But if the present haphamed development continues, the community as a whole will pay just as dearly wherever the artificial boundaries of the city may be The so-called "clean up" of the street and radial railway franchises in the Terante area was been hailed by some as a means of salvation by allowing the people access to cheap land. But it all depends upon the manner of development whether it is a blessing or a carse. It is not the cost of the land but the cost of developing the land that is the problem the manicipalities have to face. When development of land is more wisely regulated, the price of land will be more equitably controlled It is the uncertain use to which land may be pur that gives it most of its fetitions and speculative value.

Investigation will show that in most cities the poorest people are living on the highly assessed and taxed land. The foreign immigrants who live in the rity of 20,000 people in Northern Ontaria, en what a without doubt the worst housing site in the whole dominion, paid more per square yard for their build. at the same time for the freshold of Hamratend Garden Suburis, London, within 30 minutes' car ride of the very heart of the British metropolis. The remain was mainly because of an alleged value of the land for industrial purposes, but in all probability the artifement of the people in that area has postpened indefinitely, if not for ever, the use of the land for industrial purposes. The "Ward" in Toronto is another example of poor people living on

THE COLLAPSE OF THE CANADIAN PLANNING MOVEMENTS

1930-31 → CIP Collapses

- Membership evaporates
- No fees coming in
- Last conference 1929
- Journal keeps going until 1931
- Leadership lost
 - DeVille 1924
 - Ewing 1926
 - Cauchon 1935
 - Horace Seymour 1940
 - Thomas Adams 1940

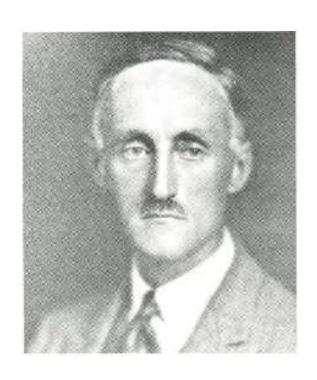


Last JTPIC Issue, June 1931

ONLY FIVE PLANNERS IN CANADA IN 1944 – all part-time



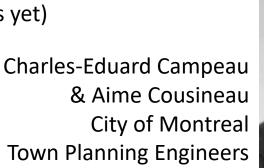
Eric Thrift, MRAIC Manitoba Reconstruction Committee



Tracy leMay, OLS Toronto City Surveyor City Planner



Eugenio Faludi, architect **Town Planning Consultants** (no commissions yet)





Ing. CHS.-E. CAMPEAU Town Planning — Urbanisme



GREAT DEPRESSION

Three events with lasting consequences...

- 1. Unemployment relief projects
 - ➤ Infrastructure construction (roads, bridges, waterworks and parks)
 - ➤ Planning consultants became engineers and surveyors again

Relief project, the Citadel, Quebec City, 1936



Source: Library and Archives Canada/Department of National Defence fonds/a034657

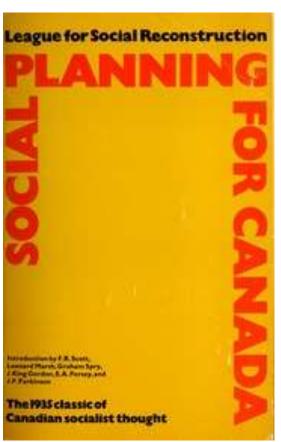
GREAT DEPRESSION

Three events with lasting consequences...

- 2. Regional natural resources planning
 - ➤ Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (1935) — prairie dust storm 1930s — Oktoks AB
 - ➤ Maritime Dykeland Rehabilitation Committee (1943) - Failing Acadian dykes - Grand Pre

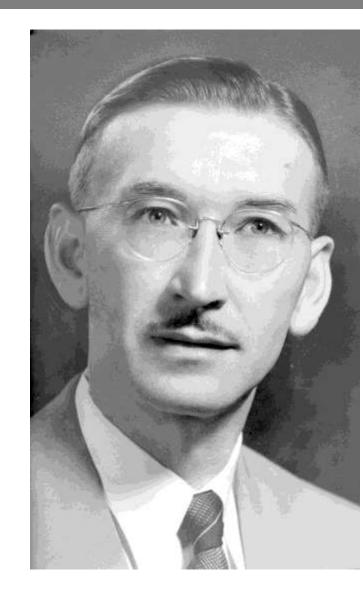






Three events with lasting consequences...

- 3. Campaign for the introduction of social welfare by League for Social Reconstruction
 - Lawyer F.R. Scott
 - > Political Reformer King Gordon
 - > Sociologist Leonard Marsh



Leonard Marsh

Humphrey Carver

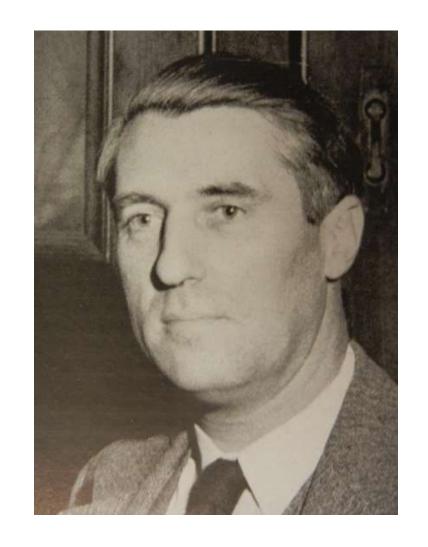
Architect (AA London)

Arrived 1930

Joined League for Social Reconstruction

Articles on housing reform for *Canadian Forum*, *JRAIC*

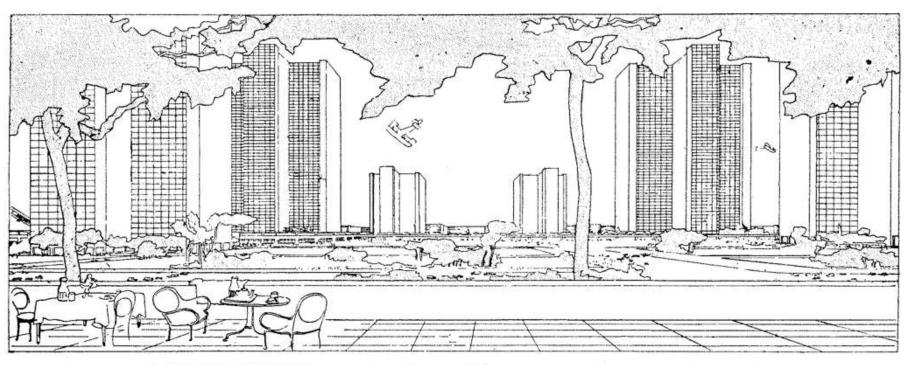
Wants public housing and town planning



THE STRATEGY OF TOWN-PLANNING

By HUMPHREY CARVER, A.R.I.B.A.

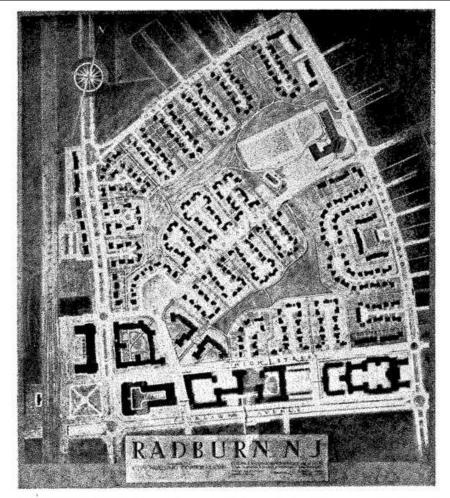
An address at the thirty-fourth annual meeting of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.



1. LE CORBUSIER'S romantic and scientific imagination dominated architectural philosophy during the nineteen-thirties. His design for a city of 3 million population showed what the Skyscraper Age might have been, had the resources of modern science been properly harnessed.

Source: Carver, RAICJ, March 1941, Figure 1, including his original caption.

- In the same article:
- The Garden City
- Radburn NJ garden suburb and
- The Neighbourhood Unit



7. RADBURN, New Jersey, designed by Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, with cul-de-sac streets leading to the Park belt, provides a complete pedestrian circulation without using traffic streets. The main street is underpassed near the School.

Source: Carver, RAICI, March 1941, Figure 7, including original caption?

"Homes Fit for Heroes"



Canada:

- 11 million population
- 1 million in the armed forces

What happens when the veterans come home?

Source: Montreal Gazette





Clifford Curtis



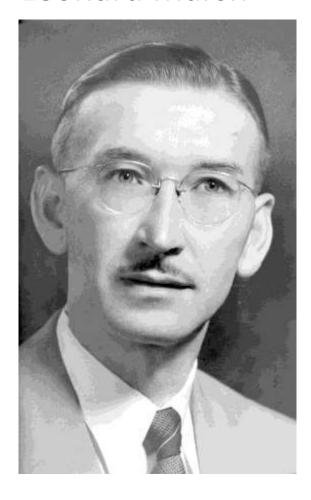
 1944 Advisory Committee on Reconstruction in Canada after WWII – Housing and Community Planning Report

 Came to be known as the "Curtis Report"

Leonard Marsh



Leonard Marsh

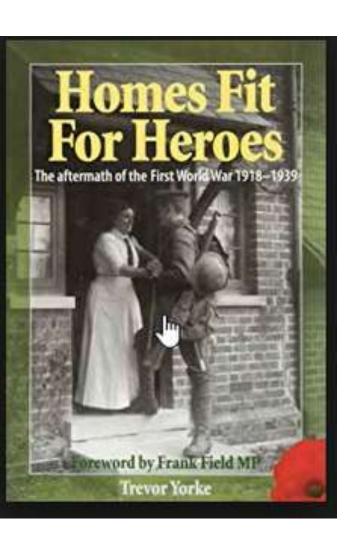


Recommendations:

- Financing and expanding housing production
- Recommended big housing programs and urban renewal
- Community planning mandatory and regulatory

Clifford Curtis





"Homes Fit for Heroes"

A million homes in *planned communities*

A lovely sentiment, except Canada didn't have any...

- **≻** Developers
- ➤ Housing finance
- **≻**Community Plans
- **≻**Planners
- ➤ Planning schools

WARTIME HOUSING



Urban
housing
shortage
Small houses
War workers
50,000 units



Toronto

North Vancouver



January 1, 1946
Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Administered the *National Housing Act*

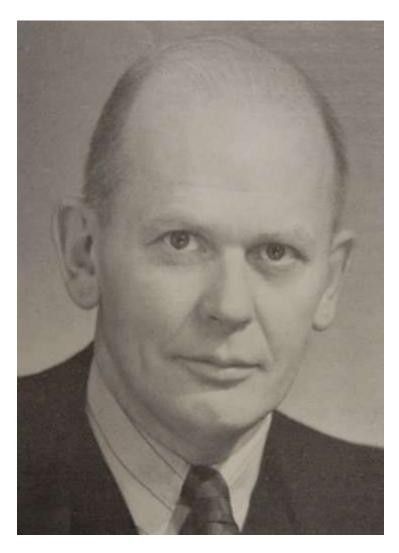
Responsible for...

- **≻**Housing
- ➤ Community Planning
- **≻** Research



David Mansur, CMHC President, 1946-54

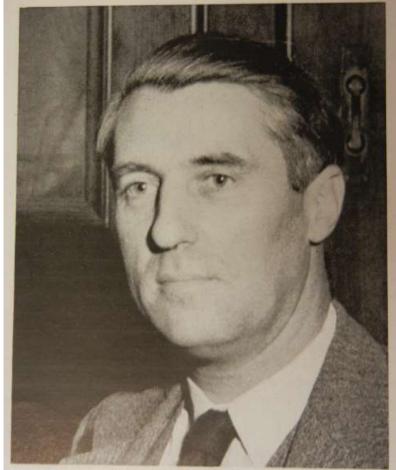
COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCITION of CANADA - 1946



Dick Davis First CPAC President Canadian Welfare Council

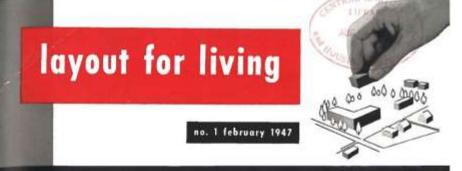
- Created by CMHC in 1946
- Drew from:
 - Canadian Welfare Council
 - Housing advocates
 - RAIC, EIC
- Promoted community development and community involvement in planning

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCITION of CANADA



H. S. M. CARVER elected Vice President at the First Annual Meeting. Photo: Editorial Associates

- CPAC divisions in every province within one year
- Newsletters
- Films
- Slideshows
- Lobby for new provincial legislation



what is community planning to you?

Our general satisfaction with our community gets a rude jolt every so often. Traffic this morning seemed hopelessly slow, and we wished there were a Society for the Improvement of Traffic Flow. Last week, when one of the kids up the street was skating on the roadway and got builty hart by a milk-truck, we thought there would be some point in forming a Citizen's League for More Playgrounds. We actually did get to a few meetings last Fall of the Committee for Veterans' Housing. But many of these outfits (whether organized or just thought about) seem to stand very little chance of getting a clear enough goal or a large enough membership to go very far. And they don't,

Improvement of traffic takes a lot of study of where traffic comes from and wants to go. Any sensible traffic program has to take into account next year's bousing, and next year's commercial construction. Our big chance to locate schools and playgrounds sensibly also calls for tving them in with next year's house-building. Separation of veteram' housing from over-all bousing and industrial programs is becoming more and more meaningless. In other words, while we may see these needs separately, it is clear we cannot meet them by isolated efforts. When we study all the needs of the community at once, we are studying community planning. And all those who began by wishing vaguely that something be done about this or that feature will end up after discussing the various needs by supporting every part of a sound community development program. All the small groups with partial information can become one large group of citizens, informed and active in community planning. The Community Planning Association of Canada exists for just that. It can do only what its members want done, to inform and to set on community planning.

Community planning does not mean a scheme believed in only by a few experts. Neither does it mean a collection of drawings that can be set uside (or vetoed) by a few people under temporary pressure. Good community planning is orderly development which the citizens of the community have shared in preparing. It is a guide-chart, and a schedule of works, voted into law and put into operation under continuing, competent local direction, with the participation and approval of provincial plunning authorities.

community planning association of canada, ottawa

CPAC Vice-President, Humphrey Carver, University of Toronto Housing Centre

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCITION of CANADA



Alan Armstrong,
First CPAC Executive Director

- CPAC chapters in every major city within *two* years
- Fees \$2.00/year
- National conferences
- Provincial conferences



Our New CPAC Branch

by Agatha LeBlanc

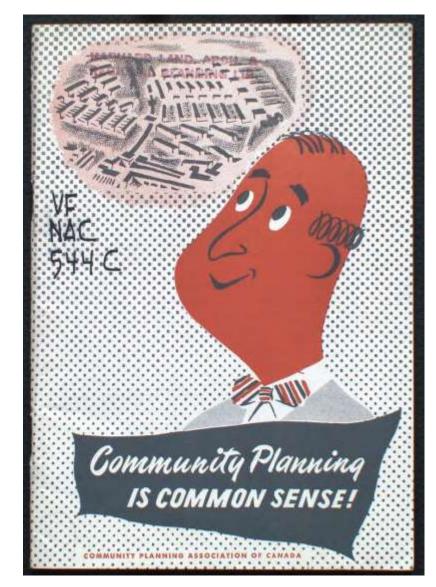
Secretary-Treasurer of the Greater Sydney Branch

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCITION of CANADA

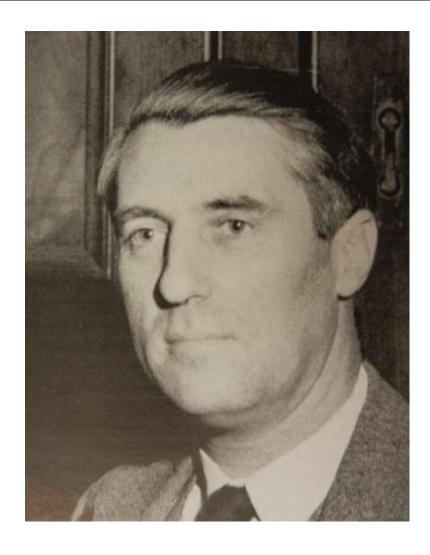


CPAC National Executive members Bessie Luffman, Barbara Lambert and Lin Good

- CPAC over 7000 members
- More diverse membership than TPIC
- Advocacy campaign for municipal planning commissions



CMHC RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

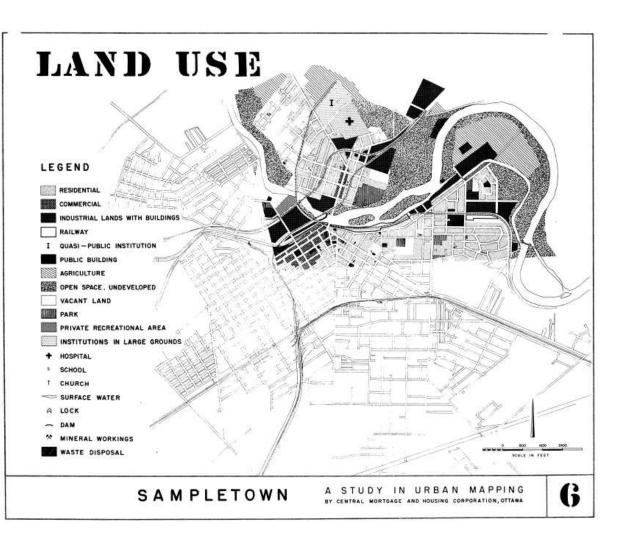


Humphrey Carver



Peter Oberlander

CMHC RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY PLANNING







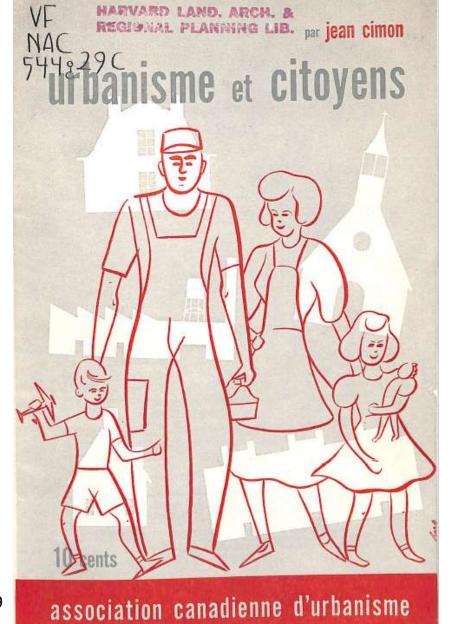
Blanche Lemco Van Ginkel

Urban Mapping, CMHC 1949

COMMUNITY PLANNING ADVOCACY IN QUEBEC

Jean Cimon ACU Co-Director, 1949



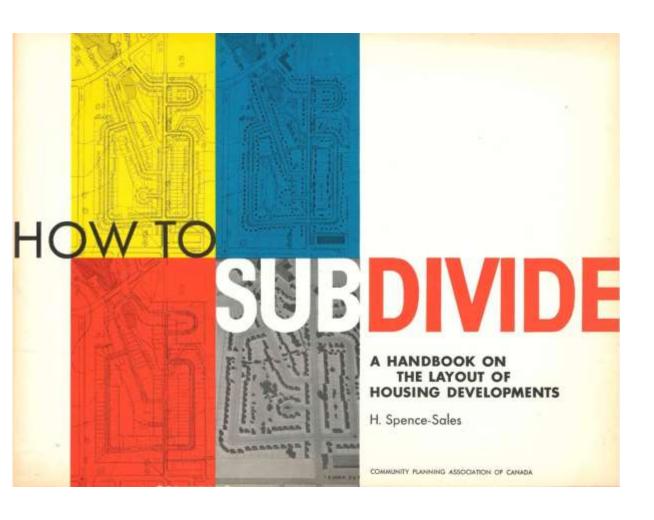


CPAC SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PLANNING PRACTICE, 1948



- Sponsored by CPAC
- Funded by CMHC
- Taught at McGill's Macdonald College
- Professor Harold Spence-Sales
- Attendees:
 - Builders
 - Architects
 - Engineers
 - Landscape Architects
 - Surveyors

CPAC SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PLANNING PRACTICE, 1950





Source: Harold Spence-Sales, *How to Subdivide* (Ottawa: CPAC, 1950) Front and back covers.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PLANNING PRACTICE - TPIC

- TPIC re-established in 1952
- 45 members
- Small, volunteer-run professional association
- Supported by member fees
- Combined its conferences & news with CPAC
- Cousineau, Faludi & Thrift early Presidents









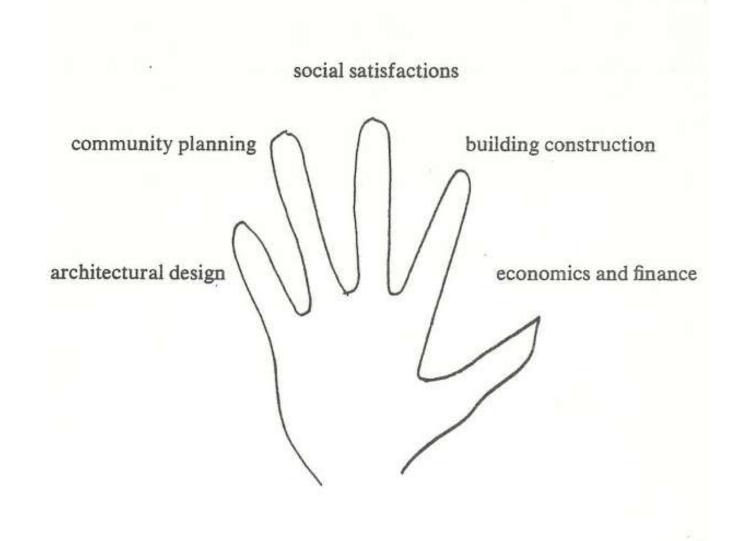
CMHC ADVISORY GROUP: Multi-Disciplinary Thinking for National Policy



Alan Armstrong



Ian MacLennan, Chief Architect



Source: Carver, Compassionate Landscape, (UTP, 1975), p.137.



Sam Gitterman



Robert Legget, NRC

CMHC PLANNING

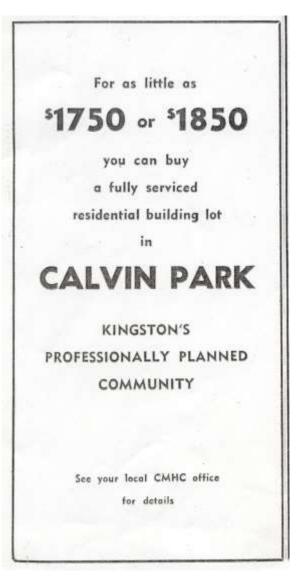
- CMHC recruited planners and architects from Britain, the USA and Belgium
- CMHC planned and subdivided federal lands
- Reviewed subdivisions with CMHC mortgage insurance



Polson Park in Kingston

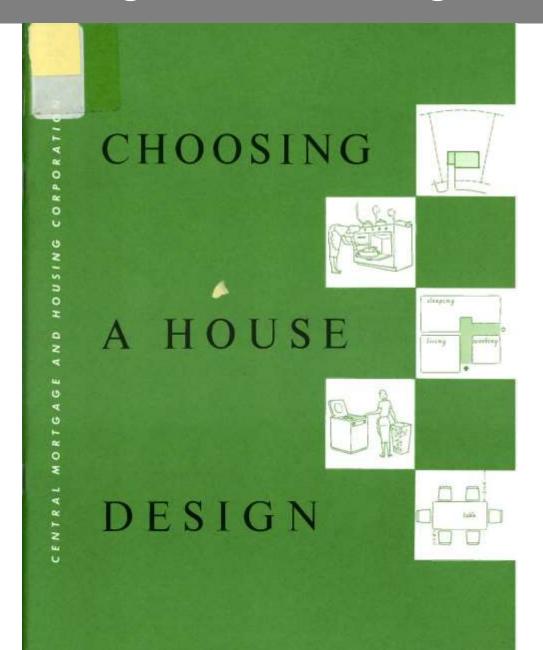
CMHC PLANNING in KINGSTON 1956





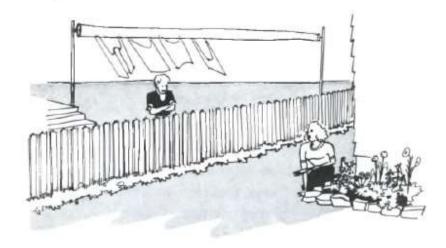


Choosing a House Design (1952+)



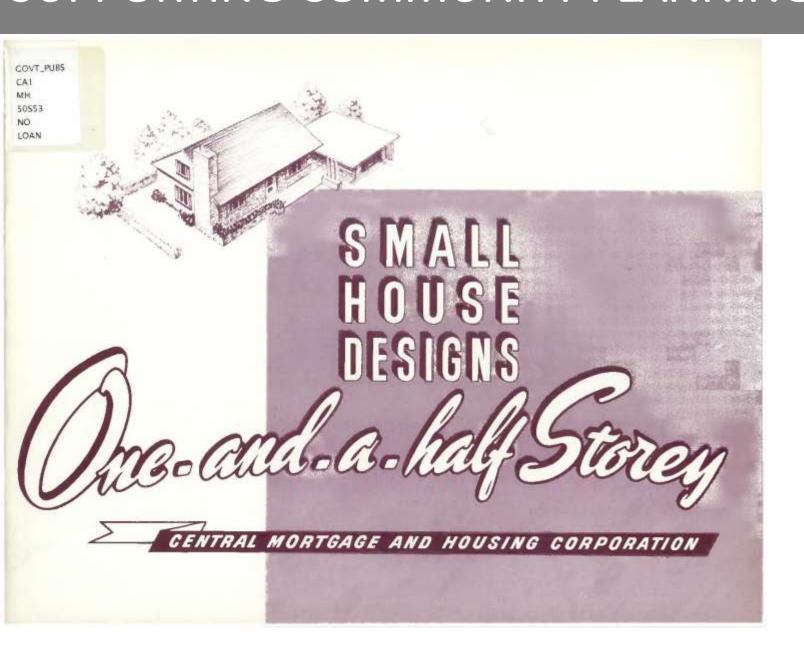
Choosing a neighbourhood

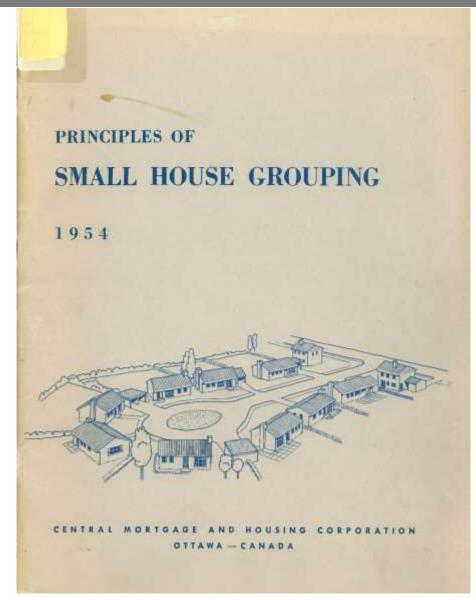
CHARACTER Look for a place which has a large proportion of owner-occupied homes, well designed and constructed and of consistent character. Look for a place in which you are likely to find congenial neighbours.



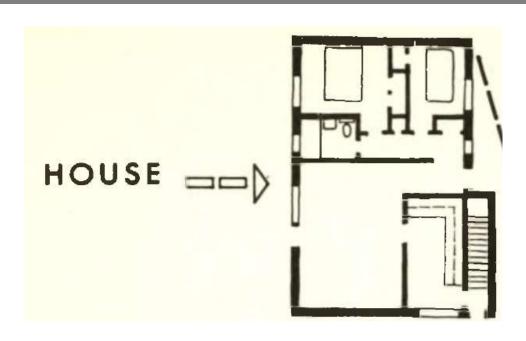
Normal community requirements are a good school, shopping centre, churches, a park or playground and a community centre close by. Easy access to where you work and to the town centre (good connecting roads and dependable transportation service) should be considered. Factories and commercial buildings should not be too close to the site.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PLANNING PRACTICE

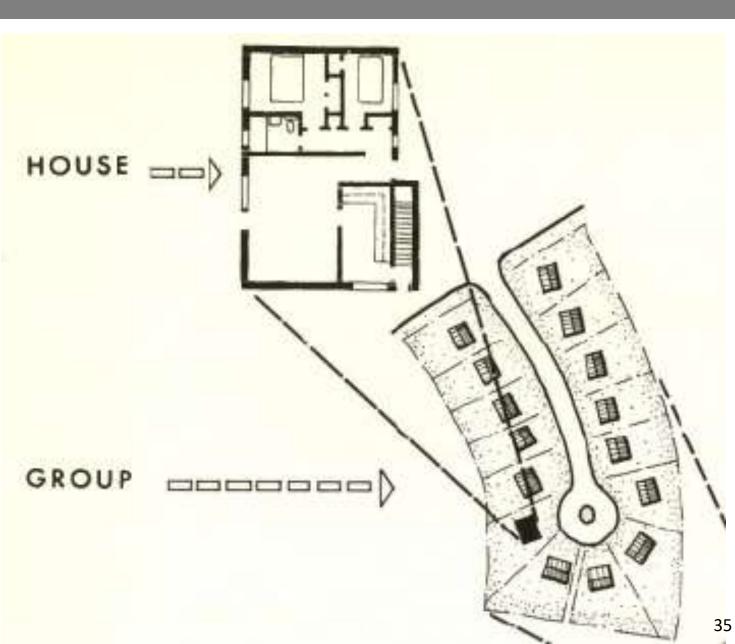




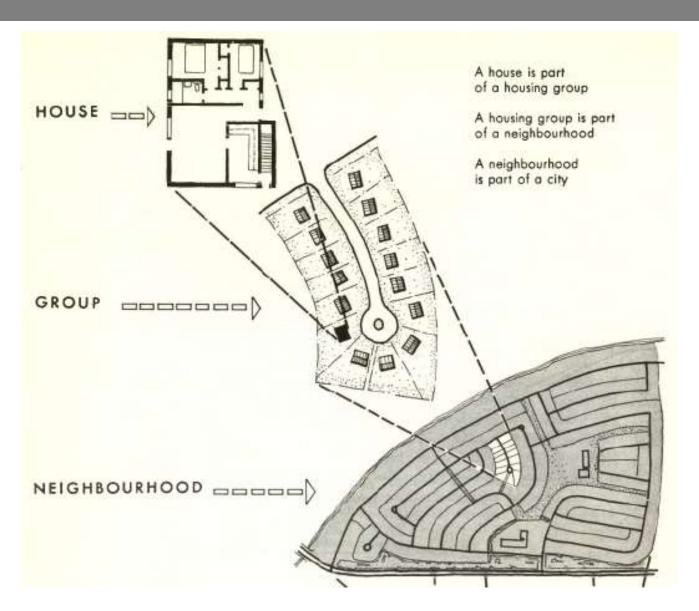
SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PLANNING PRACTICE

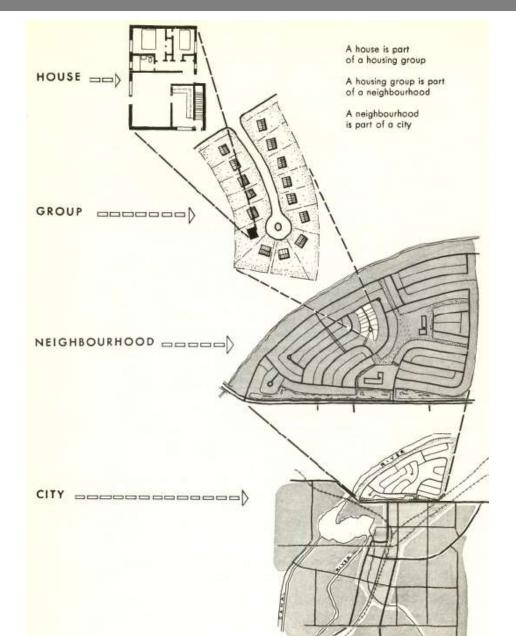


Source: CMHC, Principles of Small House Grouping, 1954, p.3.



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PLANNING PRACTICE





Source: CMHC, Principles of Small House Grouping, (Ottawa: CMHC, 1954), p.3.

- CMHC had a direct role in founding the first five Canadian planning schools
- Funded half of the first professors' salaries
- CMHC Scholarships for half the Master's students
- CMHC Doctoral Fellowships to become a professor
- \$5 million research fund



(Diploma 1947)

Harold Spence-Sales



Source: CIP/ICU



University of Manitoba

(MCP, 1949)

Professor Joe Kostka & Eric Thrift



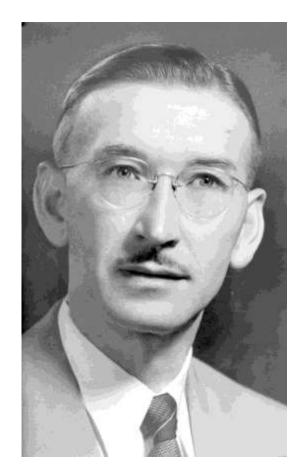
Peter Oberlander





(School of Community and Regional Planning, 1950)

Leonard Marsh



Source: CIP/ICU

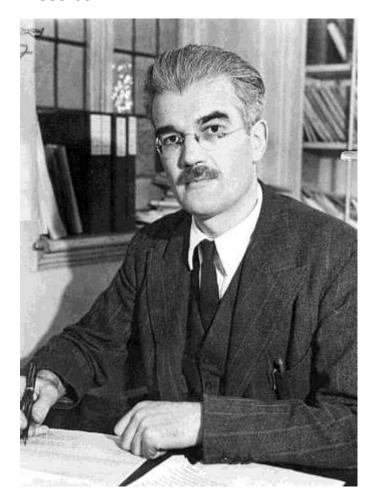
Jacqueline Tyrwhitt



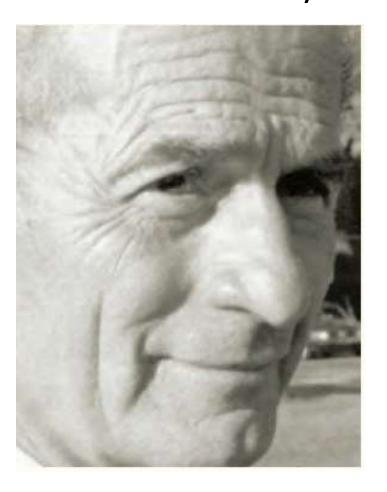


(Diploma, 1951)

Gordon Stephenson



Jean-Claude La Haye



Université m de Montréal

(MU 1961)

Early student winners of CMHC scholarships / awards











Harry Lash FCIP Montreal Vancouver 1949, McGill

Peter Oberlander OC Head UBC Dep. Min. MSUA 1949, Harvard

Thomas Shoyama OC Dep. Min. Finance 1949. McGill

Brahm
Wiesman FCIP
Vancouver,
Head UBC
1949. McGill

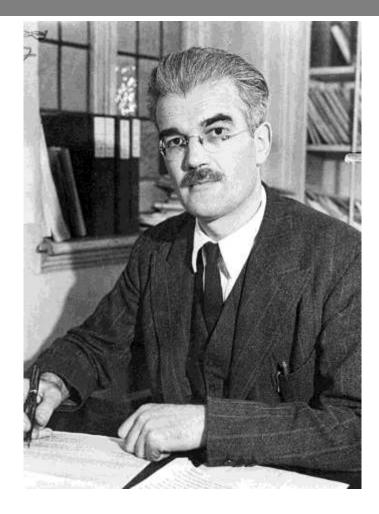
Raymond Moriyama, CC Architect 1955, McGill

CPAC PROGRESS 1950s

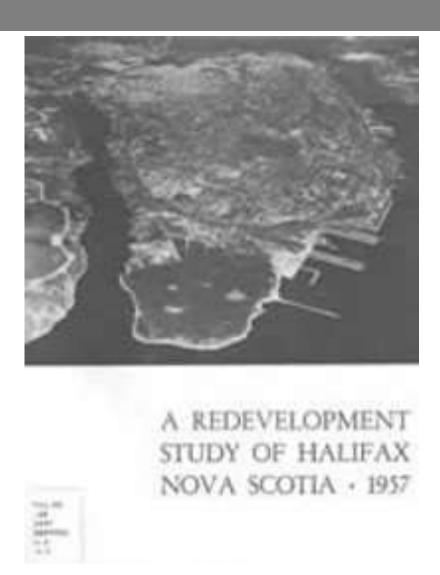
- 9 of 10 provinces had new planning legislation
- Planning a mandatory activity, with regulatory plans
- Most provinces had planning bureaus
- Most cities had planning commissions or boards
- Many cities had consultants preparing comprehensive plans and zoning bylaws
- Some cities were hiring municipal planners



FUNDING PLANNING & URBAN RENEWAL STUDIES



Gordon Stephenson



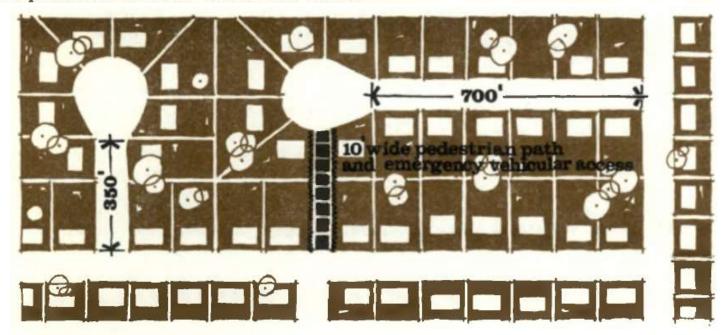


A PLANNING STUDY KINGSTON, ONTARIO

CMHC SITE PLANNING HANDBOOK, 1956+

The traditional street layout which developed before the introduction of the automobile was the grid plan. Although this form of layout is still appropriate in some of the older urban parts of our cities, care must be taken to determine if it is suitable for new communities where the scale and type of housing is

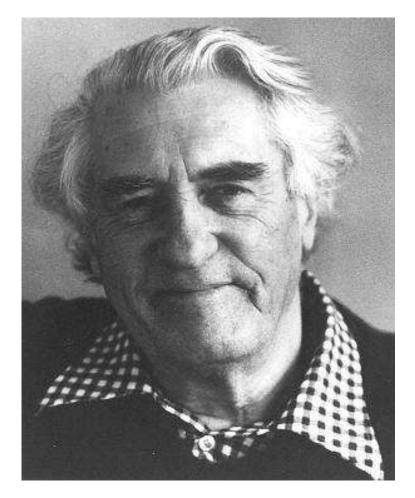
different, where the topography of the site does not often permit economic development in this manner and where the traffic pattern must be designed to reduce potential hazards to the minimum.



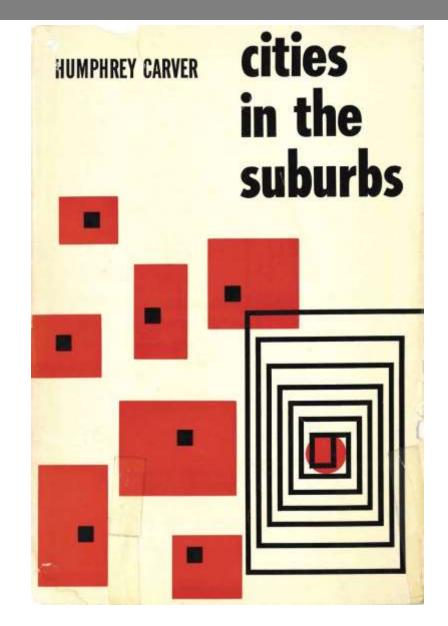
The maximum length of a cul-de-sac should be 350' to the turning circle.

Source: CMHC, Site Planning Handbook, (Ottawa: CMHC, 1966), p.10.

Cities in the Suburbs, 1962



Carver argues for suburban town centres that would provide jobs, services and facilities to make more complete communities



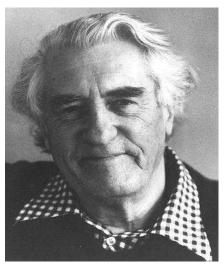
Source: Carver, Cities in the Suburbs, 1962. Cover design by Zoltan Kiss.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PLANNING PRACTICE — TPIC 1960s

- TPIC grew slowly in 1960s
- 200+ members
- Still a volunteer-run professional association
- Plan Canada 1960
- Blanche van Ginkel first female TPIC Councilor, 1962
- Carver TPIC President, 1963 64; made TPIC bilingual

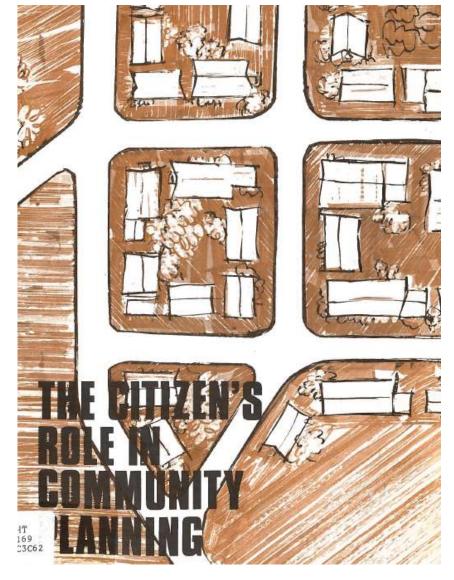






CPAC PROGRESS 1960s

- All major cities had planning commissions or boards
- Some cities were making planning a regular staff department
- Most cities and towns had comprehensive plans and zoning bylaws
- Most cities and some towns had municipal planners on staff
- CPAC activists began to question slum clearance and urban renewal in the late 1960s



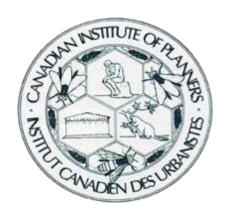
Source: CPAC, 1967.

CONCLUSIONS

- Much of progress attributed to many background forces at work in immediate post-war era
- Remarkable achievement in establishing financial system and nurturing large-scale homebuilding industry
- Role in re-establishing community planning often overlooked
- Implemented federal policy from 1944 Curtis Report in an area where the federal government had little or no jurisdiction
- From advocacy to education, practice and research

CONCLUSIONS - Postscript

- CPAC collapsed in 1974 after CMHC wound down funding
- TPIC continued to grow slowly;
- Became CIP/ICU in 1970s; 7000+ members today
- CMHC reduced its role in community planning in the 1990s, but its critical role in re-establishing the profession should be acknowledged.







Thank you!



Research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Disclaimer

Archival materials from: CMHC, Canadian Centre for Architecture, CIP, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Library and Archives Canada, MIT, McGill University, Queen's University.

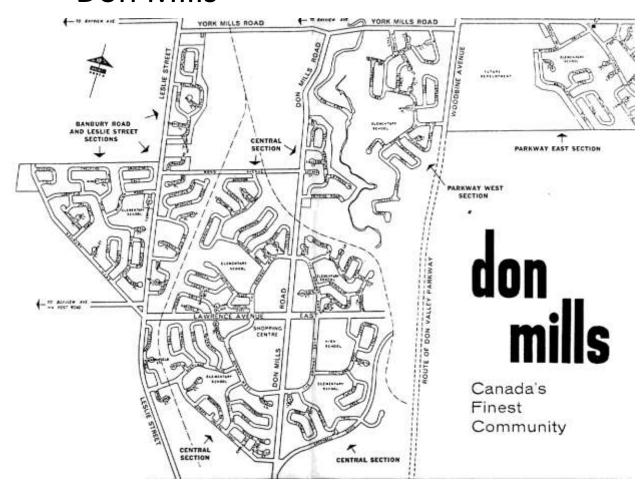
For more information see

David L. A. Gordon, "Humphrey Carver and the federal government's post-war revival of Canadian community planning" *Urban History Review*, forthcoming Summer 2019.

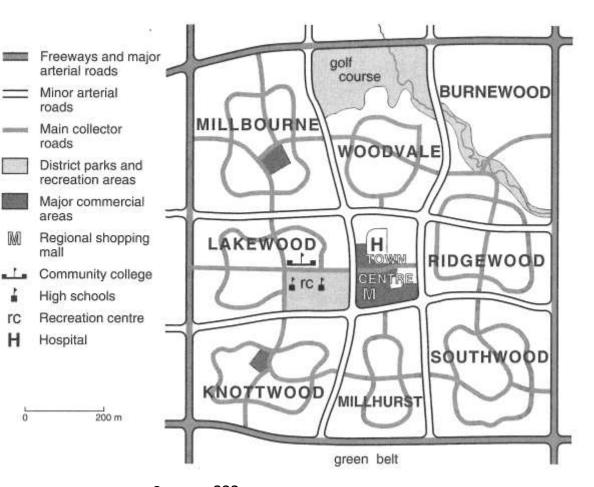
Presentation research and design by Chris Willms

Suburbs

Don Mills



Mill Woods



Source: ???

Source: ???

Urban Renewal

Regent Park BEFORE



Regent Park AFTER



Source: Pickett, The Citizen's Role in Community Planning, (Ottawa: CPAC, 1967), p.26.