

# A Regional Perspective on Canadian Suburbanization: Reflections on Richard Harris's Creeping Conformity

Larry McCann

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[See table of contents](#)

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Article abstract

Richard Harris's recently published *Creeping Conformity* offers a carefully reasoned interpretation of the country's evolving suburban landscape from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. In particular, Harris argues that Canadian suburbs have passed from a state of diversity to one of conformity. No longer are suburbs a jumble of land uses and social classes. Instead, through the initiative of large, vertically integrated corporations, supported by federal mortgage and other fiscal policies, suburbs have become more middle class, yielding to a “conformity” in the shaping of their physical design and social make-up. This paper suggests that factors of a distinctive regional character—for example, corporate land development in western Canadian cities before World War I and provincial town planning and zoning legislation in the 1920s—require elaboration within the “diversity to conformity” model. Once done, we can then speak more assuredly about how, when, and to what extent “conformity” has emerged to distinguish Canada's suburban landscape.

# ***A Regional Perspective on Canadian Suburbanization: Reflections on Richard Harris's Creeping Conformity<sup>1</sup>***

Larry McCann

## **Abstract**

***Richard Harris's recently published Creeping Conformity offers a carefully reasoned interpretation of the country's evolving suburban landscape from the late-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. In particular, Harris argues that Canadian suburbs have passed from a state of diversity to one of conformity. No longer are suburbs a jumble of land uses and social classes. Instead, through the initiative of large, vertically integrated corporations, supported by federal mortgage and other fiscal policies, suburbs have become more middle class, yielding to a "conformity" in the shaping of their physical design and social make-up. This paper suggests that factors of a distinctive regional character—for example, corporate land development in western Canadian cities before World War I and provincial town planning and zoning legislation in the 1920s—require elaboration within the "diversity to conformity" model. Once done, we can then speak more assuredly about how, when, and to what extent "conformity" has emerged to distinguish Canada's suburban landscape.***

## **Résumé**

***L'ouvrage récent de Richard Harris, Creeping Conformity, présente une interprétation bien argumentée de l'histoire de la suburbanisation au Canada, de la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> au milieu du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Plus particulièrement, Harris allègue que les banlieues canadiennes sont passées de la diversité à la conformité. Elles ne sont plus désormais un enchevêtrement d'affectations du sol et de classes sociales variées. À l'initiative de grandes sociétés verticalement intégrées, bénéficiant d'hypothèques fédérales et d'autres politiques fiscales, les banlieues sont plutôt devenues représentatives de la classe moyenne et se sont engagées dans un processus de « conformité » en aménageant leur environnement physique et social. L'article suggère que les facteurs spécifiquement régionaux—par exemple, l'aménagement de terrains relatifs à une société dans les villes de l'Ouest canadien avant la Première Guerre mondiale, de même que la planification urbaine et la législation provinciale sur le zonage au cours des années 1920—ont dû s'élaborer dans le cadre d'un modèle évoluant de la « diversité à la conformité ». Cette démonstration nous amène à mieux déterminer comment, quand et jusqu'à quel point la notion de conformité est apparue pour caractériser le paysage suburbain au Canada.***

*Creeping Conformity* is an important book, a tightly argued interpretation of Canadian suburban development to the mid-twentieth century. Written clearly and with aplomb, Harris's most recent undertaking provides researchers, teachers, students, and others with a valuable introduction to Canada's evol-

ing, ever-changing suburban landscape. Its well-respected author, historical geographer Richard Harris, is brave indeed for embracing the challenge to write a history of Canadian suburbs—and in 204 pages, no less! But more than anybody else, he is certainly prepared for the task. Harris is well known for previous and award-winning studies of self-builders, home ownership, political activism, and Toronto's evolving landscape—all of which have established important benchmarks for those researching Canada's suburbs. So, too, will *Creeping Conformity*. The book is a major work of synthesis that offers, as its centrepiece, an interpretation of how Canadian suburbs evolved from a state of diversity to one of conformity.

Harris argues that by the 1960s, conformity in the physical design and social make-up of suburbs, to cite just two traits, replaced the diversity that distinguished the suburban landscape of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. To explain suburban change, Harris argues that conformity—sameness, uniformity, call it what you will, whether of form, function, or processes shaping suburbia—was spurred on initially by the federal government's fiscal policies during the Depression era; and after World War II, by the rise to prominence of large-scale, vertically integrated land-development and house-building corporations. For these firms and town planners alike, the favoured form of development became the comprehensively planned neighbourhood, oriented to the automobile, built in carefully managed phases, and catering overwhelmingly through mortgage practices and house design to middle-class consumers. How very different this postwar, corporate suburb compared to the many earlier subdivisions that often took shape haphazardly, in the process attracting a mix of social classes and houses of varying size and style.

An admirable quality of *Creeping Conformity* is Harris's advice to readers that certain features of his "diversity to conformity" thesis remain little understood. This admonition applies most notably to unravelling the changing social geography of suburbs, a task hindered by limited historical data on the shifting family, socio-economic, and ethnic features of suburban society. Not cited as restricting his argument, but certainly worth reflecting upon, is whether the "regional factor" warrants consideration when explaining suburban development in Canada. In the case of *Creeping Conformity*, can a perspective based largely on evidence from Toronto and Hamilton, the two places researched thoroughly by Harris, account for suburbanization elsewhere across Canada?<sup>2</sup> My ongoing study of western and eastern Canadian cities suggests that a suburb's regional setting can influence suburban development.<sup>3</sup> This assertion seems reasonable, given that urban places in the country's core and periphery spatial system function in distinct historical, political, and economic contexts, leading to landscapes of varying form and patterns.<sup>4</sup> Thus, while I was interpreting suburban development before 1960, my research findings

suggest that more attention should be given, for example, to the provincial laws that regulated the ways subdivisions are surveyed and planned; to the suburban strategies practised in the pre-World War I era by regionally based land syndicates such as the Hudson's Bay Company; and to municipal government policies that articulated the many demands of local society. In fact, it seems essential to consider the interplay between provinces, municipalities, and business corporations—in substance, a dialectic between public and private interests played out in a regional setting—before a full understanding of the pre-1960s suburban landscape can be achieved. To this end, my approach in writing this critique of *Creeping Conformity* is to reflect upon how some recent “regional” research findings by myself and others on this period can broaden the “diversity to conformity” thesis proffered by Harris.

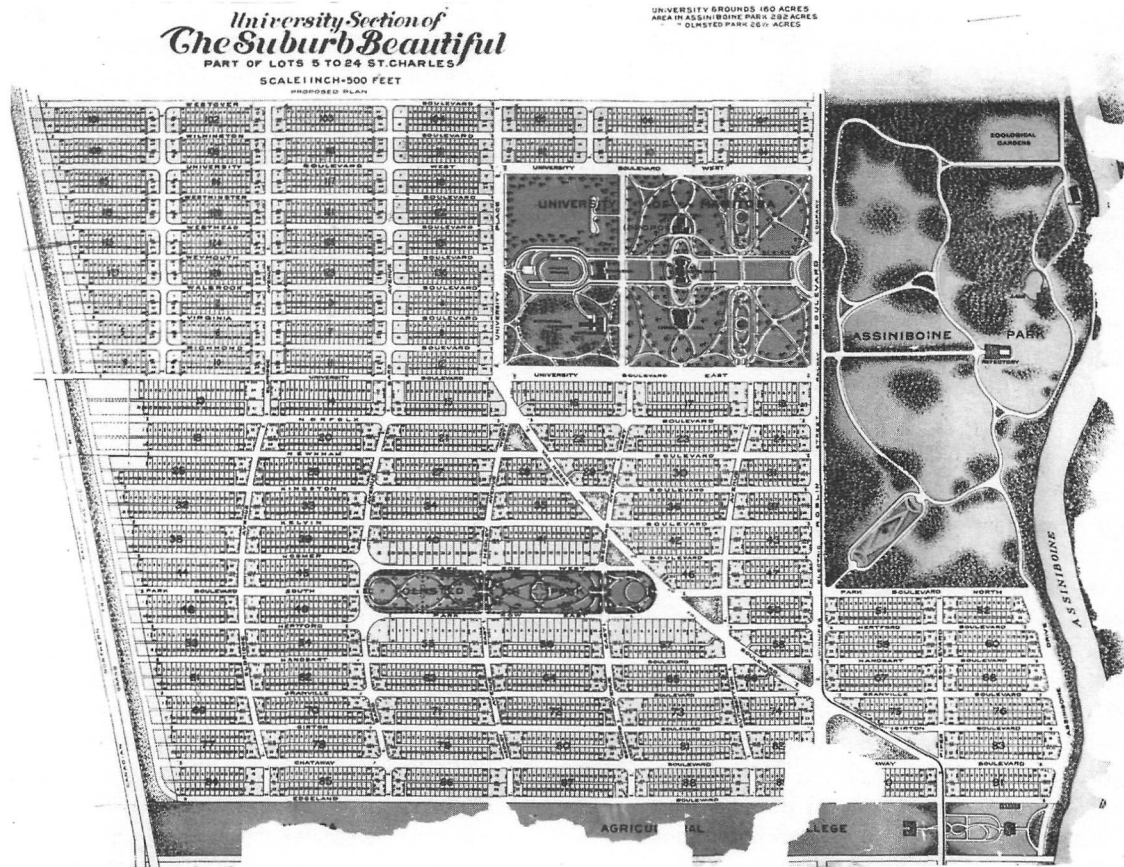
To establish context for his “diversity to conformity” model of suburban change, Harris fashions *Creeping Conformity* around three meaningful themes. First, and most importantly, the book challenges the long-asserted perception, held particularly since the 1960s, that early-twentieth-century suburbs were largely middle-class. Now and in the past, the middle class have never dominated the social make-up of suburbia in Canada. To the extent that “conformity” exists across the contemporary suburban landscape, Harris argues that it awaited the emergence of the “corporate suburb” boom of the 1950s. This point needs further study, as raised in this critique. Second, Harris suggests that to fully understand the rise of suburbs, two attributes—house and home, or place and people—must be viewed as an interrelated whole. Harris cautions that this relationship is complex and “still in many respects obscure.”<sup>5</sup> Third, Harris believes that a certain conflict of attitude exists, one that pits critics against advocates of the suburbs. To bridge this divide, he proposes to present a balanced view of suburban development by summarizing both academic and non-academic studies, and also by incorporating the personal stories of suburbanites themselves, whatever their social background. He succeeds admirably on both counts, adding the “sweat equity” of representative Canadians to the “body” of their house-building, family-living, and mortgage-borrowing experiences.

These three themes are addressed through an eminently sensible organizational scheme that supports the “diversity to conformity” thesis. The introduction and next two chapters consider the characteristics of suburbs, emphasizing the defining elements of a suburb and the differences that separate suburb from city. The central argument of the book, the “diversity to conformity” thesis, then follows in three chapters that examine distinctive phases in the development of the suburban landscape: the making of suburban diversity (ca. 1900–1929); the growing influence of the federal government (1930–1945); and the rise of the corporate suburb (1945–1960). For each period, Harris stresses what he believes are the essential features and shaping forces of the changing suburban landscape. A concluding chapter reviews the unfolding of suburbanization from the early twentieth century and points

to events beyond the 1950s. Here, Harris reconsiders the extent of “creeping conformity,” deciding that “the conformity . . . pioneered in the corporate suburbs is carrying the day.”<sup>6</sup>

To establish a common ground of understanding, Harris introduces criteria for defining suburbs, particularly ones distinguishing suburbs from inner-city neighbourhoods, all the while recognizing that older residential districts were once part of suburbia. Not unexpectedly, his summary of the Canadian and American literature yields a traditional definition of suburbs greatly in need of revision. He does this well. After citing six standard defining criteria—low density development; location at, or close by, the rural-urban fringe; high owner-occupancy of dwellings; politically distinct spaces; middle or upper-middle social class predominance; and residential orientation, implying that residents must commute beyond the suburb to work—Harris amends the residential and middle-class features of suburbia to become, respectively, multi-functional and “home to all classes.” He does so by referring to his own revisionist-driven research. Indeed, Harris’s study of self-built, working-class neighbourhoods has informed research both within and beyond Canada.<sup>7</sup> So, too, have his findings related to the adjustment of British immigrants on Toronto’s suburban rim.<sup>8</sup> Harris is also correct in telling us, on the basis of an analysis of industrial decentralization around Toronto in particular,<sup>9</sup> as well as on evidence in Robert Lewis’s *Manufacturing Montreal*<sup>10</sup> and Lewis’s recently edited collection of essays on various North American cities,<sup>11</sup> that suburbia comprises much more than the residential function. Harris argues that, by 1900, industrial suburbs of factories and working-class housing were a common presence not only in central Canadian cities, but elsewhere across Canada. For the greater Winnipeg area, the “Chicago of the North,” he cites the rail complex and stockyards of suburban Transcona and St. Boniface, respectively, as epitomizing this reformulation.<sup>12</sup>

But for Winnipeg, as well as for other hinterland cities across Canada, a more prudent interpretation is called for. The suburbanization of factories in the greater Winnipeg area was actually held in check because the City of Winnipeg controlled the regional water system. Archival records show that by 1910, with many industrial lots lying vacant throughout the inner city, city council was aggressively protecting its tax base by denying water for manufacturing establishments to enterprising capitalists like Frederick Huebach, the founder of Tuxedo.<sup>13</sup> This policy effectively halted the buildup of industrial suburbs east of the Red River and south of the Assiniboine.<sup>14</sup> An astute and enthusiastic promoter, by 1904 the savvy Huebach had purchased some 4,000 acres on the southwest outskirts of Winnipeg with the full intention of promoting suburban activities within this expansive territory. Besides the eventually successful and prestigious “Suburb Beautiful” district of Tuxedo, these included sites for the University of Manitoba, auto and horse racing tracks, an industrial village, an exhibition grounds, a cemetery, a golf course, and a private park.<sup>15</sup> After dismissing several Canadian designers, notably Rickson Outhet and Frederick Todd, Huebach commissioned Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts, North



Map Collection, Public Archives of Manitoba

**Figure 1: “University Section of the Suburb Beautiful” (ca. 1910). John Olmsted prepared the plans for the University of Manitoba and Olmsted Park. He also designed the suburb’s curving streets. Assiniboine Park is the work of Frederick Todd, who apprenticed with Olmsted Brothers.**

America’s leading landscape architects, to redesign the residential layout of Tuxedo. Over several years, from 1909 to 1913, John Charles Olmsted did just this, crafting in addition many designs for most of Huebach’s far-fetched “dreams”—including the unrealized plans for the Tuxedo campus site of the University of Manitoba and the industrial village of South Winnipeg (figs. 1 and 2).

Beyond Winnipeg, where urban-based manufacturing enterprise across the rest of the Prairies, British Columbia, and the Maritimes was in fact underdeveloped, there was little call for industrial suburbs, even ones oriented to transportation or the staples trades.<sup>16</sup> Yes, there were, for example, a rail and a coal-mining suburb on the fringe of Edmonton; and several saw-milling, fish-canning, and shipping suburbs near Vancouver.<sup>17</sup> For hinterland cities in general, though, industrial suburbs were few, and when extant, were of a different economic base (and likely of a dissimilar social structure) compared to the central Canadian examples studied by Harris.<sup>18</sup>

Besides the limited amount of suburban manufacturing industry that marked Canada’s hinterland cities, another significant example of the ways in which regional circumstances affected suburbanization concerns the incredible numbers of tax-

defaulted lots and developed property that fell the way of western Canadian municipalities during the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s.<sup>19</sup> Municipalities set up elaborate schemes to reduce the burden of these non-income-generating properties, including advertising in newspapers, posting “for sale” lists in municipal halls, sponsoring auction sales, and even incorporating self-serving real estate companies. Still, many vacant lots remained under municipal control until after World War II. This situation offered Prairie province cities, even the region’s smaller towns, the eventual opportunity to initiate various forms of neighbourhood planning—read “corporate suburbs”—across their suburban landscapes after World War II (fig. 3).<sup>20</sup> The comprehensive planning of neighbourhoods, particularly in Edmonton and Calgary, and to a lesser extent elsewhere in western Canada, in turn yielded another differentiating factor: apartments became an intrinsic feature of planned suburbs in western Canadian cities from the early 1950s onwards. This situation warrants further study elsewhere in Canada, but perhaps no more so than in Manitoba and British Columbia, where anti-apartment disputes in suburban municipalities like Tuxedo, Burnaby, West Vancouver, and Oak Bay were a frequent subject of heated debate at ratepayers’ meetings and in newspaper editorials.<sup>21</sup>



Olmsted Plans and Drawings Collection, Plan No. 40296-15, National Park Service, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

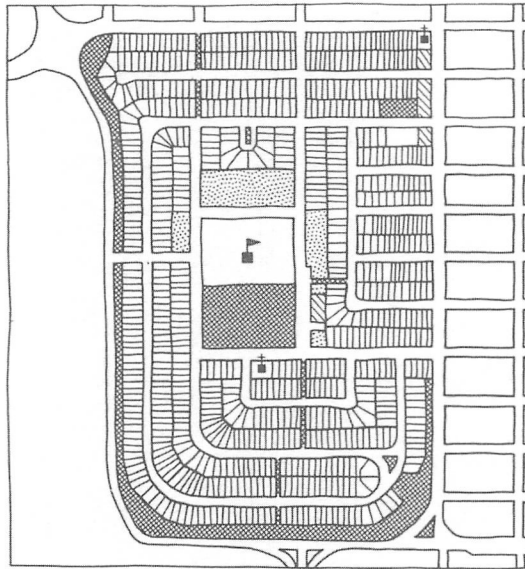
**Figure 2: “South Winnipeg: Proposed Plan” (ca. 1910), designed by John Olmsted and located one mile south of the “Suburb Beautiful.”**

The social character of Canadian suburbs before mid-century is discussed by Harris in chapter 4, “The Making of Suburban Diversity, 1900–1930.” Here, there are wonderfully rich descriptions, for instance, about self-built houses; of families, ethnic groups, and neighbourliness; of the impact of the automobile on suburban form; and of mortgages and consumer choices. About architecture, though, Harris has surprisingly little to say, and that is disappointing because several very fine, recent architectural studies for major western Canadian cities tell us a great deal about regional design and the building of the modern suburban house.<sup>22</sup> But more than this oversight, it was Harris’s opening chapter statement that caused heightened reflection: “In the first half of the twentieth century, *Canadian suburbs were collectively diverse but individually homogeneous*” (italics mine).<sup>23</sup> This is a sweeping generalization, to be sure, based as it is on very few studies of the changing social geography of Canadian suburbs before mid-century. Much to his credit, Harris faces this difficulty squarely, admitting the paucity of research to draw upon, but presses on, no doubt in the spirit of encouraging further research, discussion, and debate.

Regional setting aside, whether or not one agrees with Harris’s “diversity to conformity” thesis depends upon reaching a consensus—or at least an understanding—about the geographical scale of enquiry used to interpret the evolving social landscape of suburbia. Harris first mentions the always present and obvious types of city-wide segregation, which include the separation

of industry from homes; of the rich from the poor. True enough. This captures the essence of cities like Halifax and Victoria on the edge of Canada, as much as it does of Toronto and Hamilton at the centre. Harris next focuses attention on the social segregation of much smaller spaces—subdivisions (legally registered plans of streets and lots)—by pointing up the fact, among others, that many immigrant groups chose to live apart from native-born Canadians, residing in separate suburban subdivisions, segregated from the mainstream of Canadian society. They often did so as a means of adjusting to the strangeness of a new place. But Harris also argues, and rightly so, that separation was sometimes forced upon certain ethnic and racial groups by the process of restricting subdivisions. Through this procedure, deeds of sale might specify, for example, that Chinese, Negroes, Jews, Abyssinians, or some other social group were discouraged from purchasing property in a particular subdivision. More frequently, however, deeds of sale focused on the minimum value or size of a single-detached house. As Robert Fogelson has shown recently in *Bourgeois Nightmares*, deed restrictions were used extensively for these purposes in the United States after 1870, a practice soon followed in Canadian suburbs, broached by firms like Olmsted Brothers.<sup>24</sup> Restricting, of course, was the principal method used by developers to protect their investment before comprehensive zoning became legally feasible in most provinces during the 1920s. Harris suggests that restrictions were a commonly used, as well as a successful, tool of segregation in Hamilton and Toronto. My research on






Parkallen (ca. 1952)



Lendrum (ca. 1961)



**Figure 3: Two examples of neighbourhood units in postwar Edmonton: Parkallen (ca. 1952), a modified-grid neighbourhood; and Lendrum (ca. 1961), an independent neighbourhood unit.**

-  Apartments, row houses, senior's residences, etc.
-  Shopping centres and other commercial uses
-  Public parks, playgrounds, buffer zones and walkways
-  Schools and school grounds
-  Churches

Adapted from P. J. Smith, "Planning for Residential Growth since the 1940s," in *Edmonton: The Life of a City*, ed. B. Hesketh and F. Swyryda (Edmonton: NewWest, 1995), 253.

suburban development in Halifax, Montreal, and all the major cities in western Canada suggests otherwise. True, deed restrictions worked very well in better-quality or affluent subdivisions like Rosebank Park (Halifax), Mount Royal and Hampstead (Montreal), Tuxedo (Winnipeg), Shaughnessy Heights (Vancouver), or the Uplands (Victoria). They proved unsustainable, though, in the vast majority of subdivisions laid out in the Maritimes and western Canada before the First World War, particularly where "curbsiders," as Marc Weiss calls them,<sup>25</sup> quickly sold lots and then fled their obligation to uphold restrictions. Even when subdividers "stayed the course," they often lacked the will or the funds to prosecute those who violated a restriction.

Pressing his case further that Canadian suburbs "were collectively diverse but individually homogeneous," Harris again shifts geographical scale by recognizing four specific types of suburbs or subdivisions (he uses both terms interchangeably from this point on in his argument). The four identified are the affluent enclave, the unplanned suburb, the industrial suburb (whether planned or unplanned), and the speculative, middle-class subdivision. The traits of each are briefly fleshed out, with the conclusion reached that these principal types of suburbs, "subdivided and built in a variety of styles, were occupied by different classes of people and were strikingly different in appearance. *Individually homogeneous, they were collectively diverse*" (ital-

ics mine).<sup>26</sup> Harris questions what makes this mix of suburban types distinctly Canadian, that is, different from the same mix in the United States. His answer focuses on the particular mixture found in each country: Canada was characterized by fewer industrial, middle-income, and elite suburbs than the United States, but was distinguished by many more unplanned—that is, unregulated—subdivisions or suburbs. In making comparisons to the suburban experience in the United States, Harris was able to draw upon a large body of published research, a literature, incidentally, that continues to expand both in traditional ways and path-breaking directions—notably the "new suburban history."<sup>27</sup>

Harris has warned us earlier in *Creeping Conformity* that the social geography of Canadian suburbs is still largely obscure. What remains uncertain, of course, is the actual amount of diversity or homogeneity that we can expect to find in the suburbs. From my research, I have found that internal diversity was much more common than internal homogeneity, regardless of the spatial scale of enquiry or subdivision type—even in affluent and planned subdivisions. Ignoring the thorny question about what comprises the middle class, one of my research investigations was into the way municipal decision making affected the eventual social make-up of these subdivisions, and sometimes long after their initial platting. All subdivisions are regulated to a certain degree. Indeed, lots cannot be sold

unless the plan for a subdivision has been legally registered according to a province's *Land Registry Act*. In western Canada, this act and a province's *Municipal Act* were revised frequently and increasingly policed, especially during and after the 1920s, when thousands of tax-defaulted lots reverted to municipal or provincial control, a legacy—as mentioned earlier—of the wild, laissez-faire speculation in land that occurred from about 1906 to 1913. When municipalities sold these “tax lots,” usually quite cheaply because of the pressing need to regain lost tax revenues, elected councils and civic administrators were generally not too concerned about the social class of the person who bought a lot—whatever the subdivision type. Compared to the original intentions of a land developer, “tax lots” usually “filtered down,” sometimes even “up.” In the former case, the infilling of an initially advertised “middle-class” or unplanned subdivision was frequently rounded out by a “lower class” of homeowners, some of whom were “self-builders,” to use Harris's term. In the latter case, custom houses for the middle class were sometimes built in older working-class subdivisions when building lots throughout a municipality or district of a city were in short supply. In these and other ways, local government decisions affected the mixing of social classes in a subdivision, neighbourhood, suburb, or even across an entire municipality.<sup>28</sup>

The initial marketing of newly laid out subdivisions also affects the unfolding social structure of suburbia. Examination of the surveyed or legal landscape of early-twentieth-century western Canadian cities reveals that the front-footage of lots in subdivisions could vary widely: lots measuring thirty-three, forty, forty-five, or fifty feet were typical. Reflecting market conditions, subdivisions were surveyed differently to attract buyers of varied financial strength. Many subdivisions even contained a mix of lot sizes, primarily the result of a business strategy to ensure the continuous sale of at least some lots in an always fluctuating and uncertain land market. The result was a more socially diverse subdivision, the outcome verified by using directories to tally the occupations of people living in the dwellings eventually built on these lots. In short, blue- and white-collar workers often lived close by one another, as illustrated by the subdivision layout and houses shown in figure 4. Intermingling could also prevail in affluent enclaves, but was of a different sort. The exclusive Uplands subdivision, located in the Oak Bay district of Victoria and comprising nearly 600 lots spread thinly over 465 acres, illustrates the case where various levels of white-collar workers lived in close proximity. Designed by John Olmsted in 1907–1908, the Uplands marketed all variety of lot sizes for the specific purpose of not placing, so-to-speak, all of the developers' eggs in one basket. In this way, more than one young lawyer's or small business owner's “smallish” bungalow basked in the shadow of a retired millionaire's or corporation president's more imposing residence (fig. 5). Examples like these suggest that at least through the early decades of the twentieth century, the social-class diversity of subdivisions in western Canadian cities could be greater, that is, less segregated, when compared to similar subdivision types in central Canadian cities like Toronto and Hamilton. The

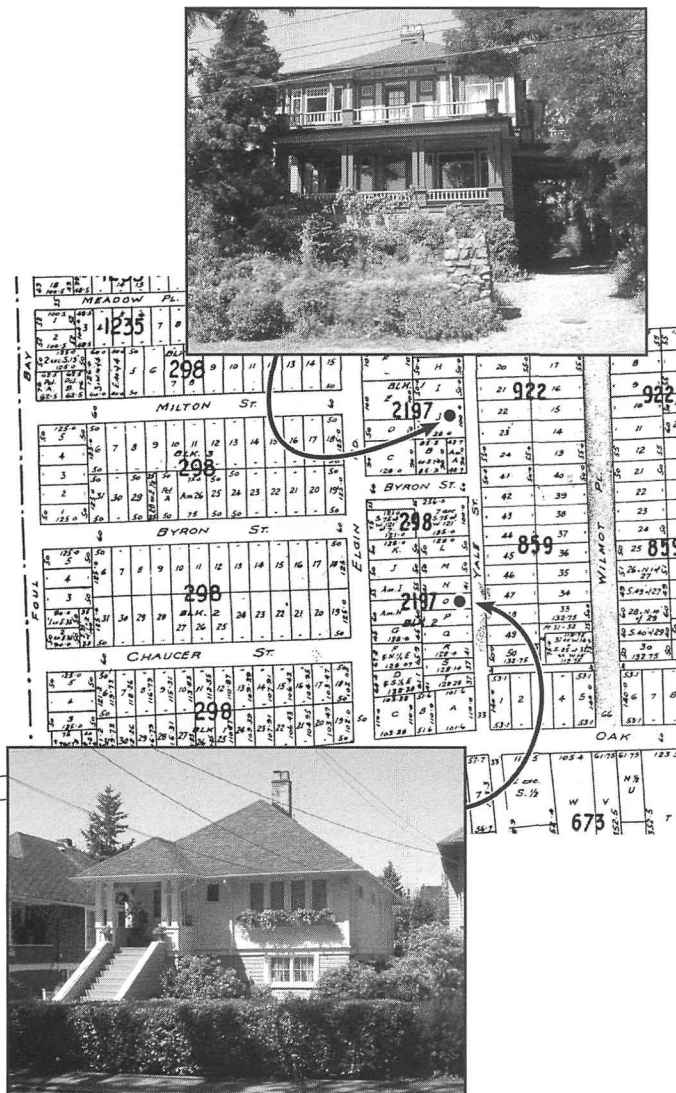
evidence also suggests that more discussion is required about issues such as what actually comprises a homogenous subdivision, and what is the “best” way to measure social class.

To balance these comments, there is much supporting evidence for Harris's “corporate” model of social-class conformity in western Canadian suburbs when our attention shifts to newly developed and largescale post-World War II development. Take the example of another subdivision found in Oak Bay—the 220-acre Lansdowne Park subdivision, developed by the Land Department of the Hudson's Bay Company, from about 1952 to 1961, and based upon neighbourhood unit planning principles. The Bay Company had been active in the suburban land market of the greater Victoria area since the mid-nineteenth century. Always responsive to contemporary planning trends, the company had a scheme for Lansdowne Park that envisaged a restricted subdivision of large lots with seventy-foot frontages and single-family houses valued from \$10,000 to \$14,000. A core area comprising a local shopping centre surrounded by low-rise apartments was initially considered, but was cast aside on the recommendation of municipal officials. Instead, a school and recreation centre became the focal point of the residential plan. The scheme was to be built-out in units of forty to sixty lots, added yearly (fig. 6). As it gradually evolved, Lansdowne Park attracted a variety of white-collar professionals (managers, teachers, university professors) and small-business owners who can safely be labelled as middle class, in sum over 90 per cent of first-time homeowners. To this example can be added the many other postwar and socially homogenous subdivisions found across western Canada, especially in Calgary and Edmonton, where neighbourhood unit planning became the standard planning system.<sup>29</sup> Here, then, are examples that support Harris's contention of postwar, social-class conformity,<sup>30</sup> at least in areas of suburbia where corporate-led development actually took place. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that great swaths of older subdivisions continued to evolve higgledy-piggledy.

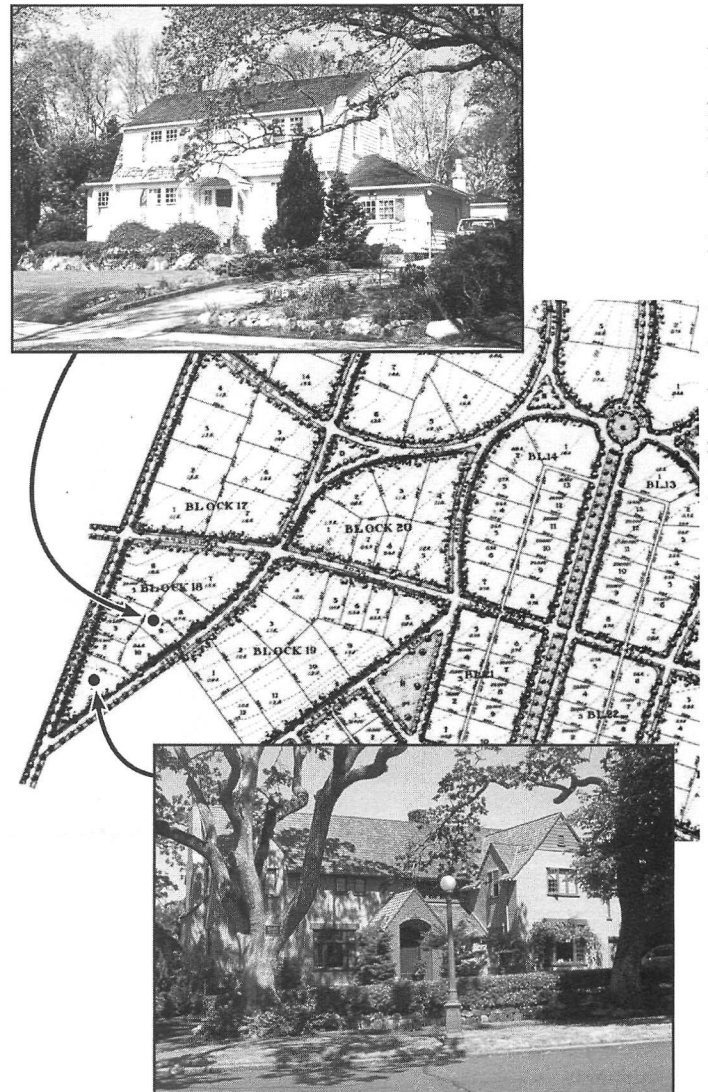
Mention of corporate suburbs poses the question “Why corporate suburbs?” An answer is offered by Harris in chapter 5, “The Growing Influence of the State,” which emphasizes the strong role of the federal government in shaping the suburban landscape through depression and war (1930–1945). Harris claims, and his contention is worth quoting, that

in the early twentieth century, suburbs were diverse because governments allowed them to be. It was only when the federal government entered the housing field in 1935, when local governments began to adopt national building standards in the 1940s, and when provincial governments brought in more rigorous planning legislation after 1945, that Canadian suburbs started to earn their modern reputation for being homogeneous and bland. Diversity was slowly ironed out by the growing influence of the state.<sup>31</sup>

In other words, “creeping conformity” was strongly associated after 1935 with the federal government's attempts to



House photos by Ole Heggen, July 2006.



House photos by (top) Larry McCann, April 2003, and (bottom) Ole Heggen, July 2006.

**Figure 4.** Social intermingling in a blue- and white-collar subdivision, Yale Street, Oak Bay, BC. The two houses were built at the height of the 1906–1913 land boom.

**Figure 5.** Social intermingling in the Uplands, Uplands Road, Oak Bay, BC. The larger house was built in 1929; the smaller one in 1932.

affect—nationwide—the provision of single-detached, single-family, and privately owned housing. Ottawa did so, for example, by establishing standards of house construction, by passing legislation that expanded the mortgage lending market, and by creating, in 1946, the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Importantly, CMHC was given the mandate to assist with many facets of suburban development, including mortgage lending, land assembly, town planning, and house design. On balance, this chapter offers a thoughtful summary and interpretation of the growing involvement of the federal state in the nation's suburban affairs.

What we are not offered, however, is an assessment of the role played by provincial governments in this process before World War II. This oversight is surprising, considering the fact

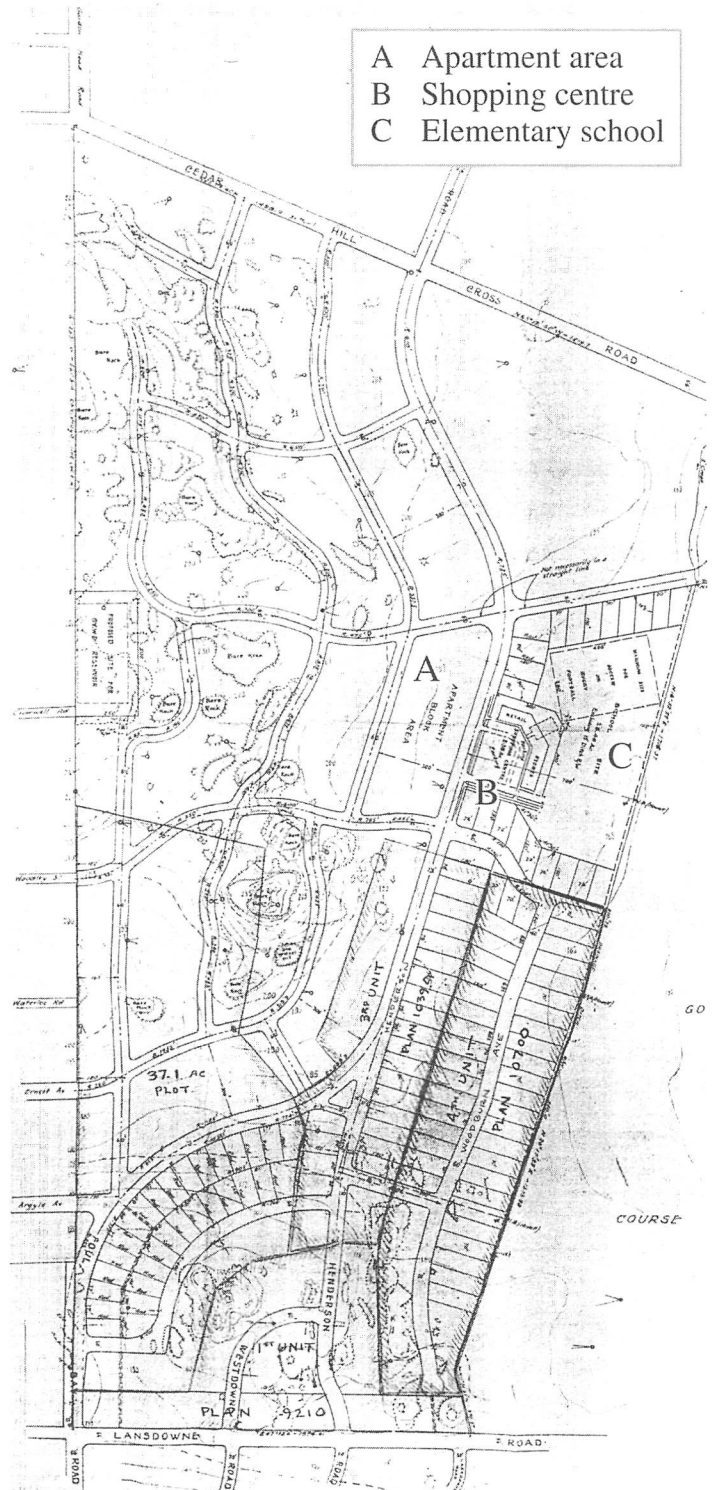
that Canadian cities and suburbs are the direct responsibility (established through the *British North America Act*, 1867) of provincial governments. By my count, not once does Harris mention this fact. To the extent that he does consider the role of provincial governments, it is usually focused on Ontario, sometimes on Nova Scotia—and always informatively. The legislative acts of provincial governments are important, because provinces were taking meaningful steps well before World War II—in fact, in western Canada and the Maritimes even before the First World War—that affected the emerging form of suburbia. This early involvement was discharged, for example, through specific provincial acts that granted developers and people living in suburban areas the explicit right to incorporate as separate municipalities, or through broader enabling



legislation, including municipal, land registry, and rudimentary town planning acts, which provided the legal apparatus to regulate basic features of house building, subdivision platting, and yes, even rudimentary forms of land use zoning.<sup>32</sup>

Later, following the collapse of the land boom prior to the First World War, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba all sought reform during the 1920s by implementing fully functional town-planning legislation.<sup>33</sup> The newly introduced acts offered incorporated cities, towns, suburbs, and even rural municipalities the means to carry out comprehensive planning schemes. In particular, this legislation gave municipalities the opportunity to establish specific zoning criteria to regulate, for example, the minimum size of lots and houses in both existing and proposed residential zones. Because property values and socially exclusive practices were affected by these minimum standards, zoning had the ability to influence where people of various incomes and wealth bought or built houses in the suburbs, as illustrated for Oak Bay at mid-century (fig. 7). The long-term and commonly stated municipal strategy associated with zoning was to engender a stable tax base for managing municipal affairs. More pointedly, zoning was also intended to placate the growing clamour of middle-class homeowners wishing to reside in protected (even segregated) suburban neighbourhoods—a modernist ideal, to be sure. Bear in mind, though, that because social intermingling was already quite entrenched in most early-twentieth-century suburban areas, an increase in community-wide segregation took time to be realized.

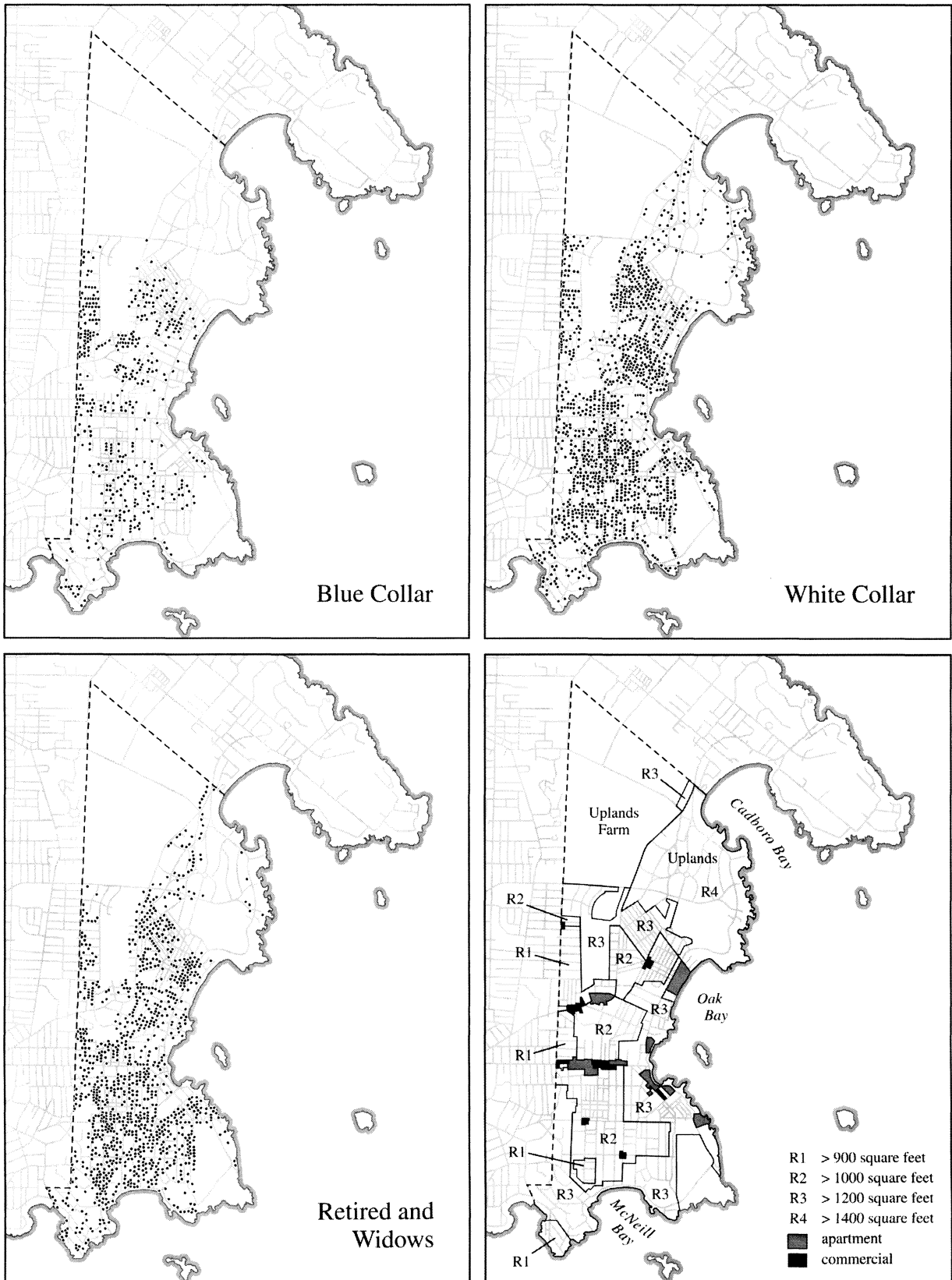
Provincial governments in western Canada also affected the social make-up of suburbs in other, sometimes very subtle, ways that could, paradoxically, either promote or delay “creeping conformity.” In responding to calls by homeowners who wanted assurance that equity in their suburban property would be protected, beginning in the late 1920s both local and provincial governments sought ways to engage in residential planning. In British Columbia, one way of accomplishing this planning goal was to introduce legislation that monitored the irresponsible municipal use of local improvement bylaws to finance roads, sidewalks, and sewer and water systems. Provincial governments did this to force municipalities to complete services in older, partly built-up residential areas. This upgrading had a multiple effect, introducing efficiency, improving property values, and limiting sprawl—the last of concern to all levels of government from early in the century.<sup>34</sup> This action sometimes attracted a higher class of people to these improved areas, stirring the pot of social intermingling even further and restricting the “creeping conformity” of social sameness. The same legislation also put a halt to the platting of many new subdivisions, thus holding back the construction of potentially homogeneous subdivisions, including ones planned solely for the middle class. For these reasons, and also because the federal government banned the construction of houses valued at more than \$5,000 during World War II to conserve building materials for the war effort, the Hudson’s Bay Company’s was obliged to delay completing a Radburn-style planning scheme started in Victoria in 1937 until



Map Collection, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba

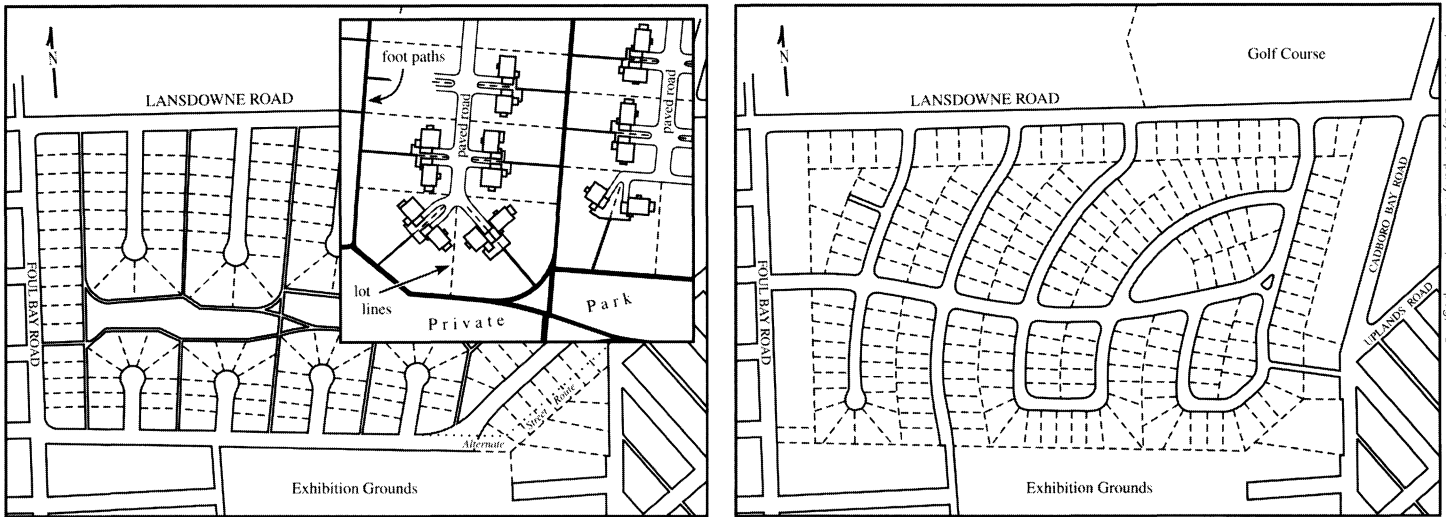
**Figure 6: Plan of Lansdowne Park Subdivision (1952), Oak Bay, BC, showing key elements of neighbourhood unit planning.**

Richard Harris's *Creeping Conformity*



Social data compiled from Henderson's Street Directory for Victoria, 1949. Street plan and zoning information redrawn from "Oak Bay Zoning Map, 1949," Corporation of the District of Oak Bay Record Service.

Figure 7. Zoning and the social geography of Oak Bay, 1949.



**Figure 8: Lansdowne Heights, Oak Bay, BC, a planned neighbourhood developed by the Hudson's Bay Company, showing (left) the original 1937 plan and (right) the final scheme, 1951.**

after the war, thus forcing the rethinking and redesign of the original subdivision plan (fig. 8). A similar sequence of events happened in Edmonton. Here, the immediate postwar residential boom spurred a spate of planned neighbourhood units, including several on the namesake "Reserve" of the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>35</sup> These trendsetting ventures were implemented several years in advance of Don Mills and before CMHC became involved in large-scale land assembly and planning schemes.<sup>36</sup>

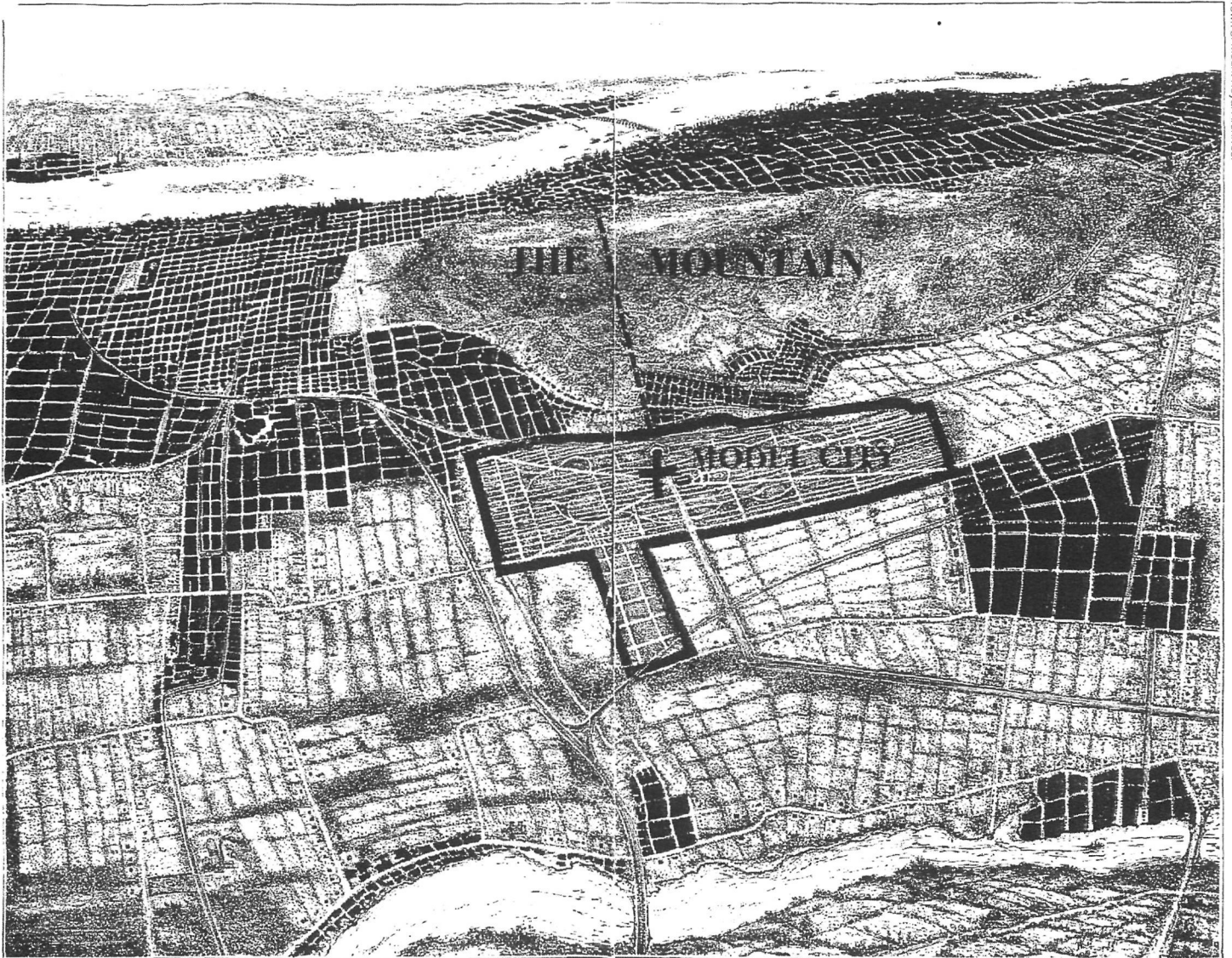
The suburban development practices of large land-holding corporations like the Hudson's Bay Company, many of which controlled thousands of acres on the fringes of western Canadian cities, raises the question of what actually comprises a corporate suburb. This is a topic considered by Harris in chapter 6, "The Rise of the Corporate Suburb, 1945–1960." For Harris, a corporate suburb is one that is "packaged . . . designed, financed, and built in an increasingly standard way."<sup>37</sup> To this can be added the understanding that these attributes were supported by advances in urban design and town planning practices, by the growing importance of media promotion of a suburban lifestyle,<sup>38</sup> and by the increased offering of mortgages to the middle class by the state and financial institutions. According to Harris, corporate suburbs emerged in the early 1950s, led by the building of Don Mills on the edge of Toronto. This type of suburb soon spread quickly across Canada, particularly to large metropolitan centres where corporate suburbs were developed by vertically integrated land and housing companies that owned vast acreages of one-time productive farmland. It is the ascendancy of the corporate suburb after World War II that leads Harris to reach his conclusions about "creeping conformity."

In discussing corporate suburbs, Harris argues that this form of suburban development emerged during the post-World War II housing boom. I disagree, dating their appearance to the pre-World War I era, for several reasons. Given that corporate

capitalism was active across Canada and in all sectors of the country's economy, and given that corporate suburbs existed in the United States prior to World War I,<sup>39</sup> it is reasonable to assume that corporate suburbs also existed in Canada. Indeed, some of the more important ones—citing date started, location, and developer—include a group of spatially linked subdivisions on peninsular Halifax (ca. 1922, in Halifax, by Carrick and Co. of Montreal); a town planning scheme that later became the Town of Mount Royal (1910, northeast of Montreal, by a subsidiary of the Canadian Northern Railway); the subdivision (and later Town) of Hampstead (1913, northwest of Montreal, by a land syndicate comprising mostly Canadian Pacific Railway and Bank of Montreal officials); the scheme that resulted in the Town of Leaside (1912, east of Toronto, by a subsidiary of the Canadian Northern Railway); the 4,000-acre project that eventually became the Town of Tuxedo (1904, southwest of Winnipeg, by Frederick Huebach); South Mount Royal subdivision (1910, in Calgary, by the Canadian Pacific Railway); the "Reserve" (late nineteenth century, in Edmonton, by the Hudson's Bay Company); Shaughnessy Heights (1907, in Vancouver, by the Canadian Pacific Railway), and the Uplands (1907, in the Oak Bay district of Victoria, first by William Hicks Gardner and later jointly, after 1911, with the Franco-Canadian Company, a French multinational). A panorama of suburban Mount Royal, the "Model City," illustrates the scale, location, and layout of these development projects (fig. 9).<sup>40</sup>

The companies promoting these early suburbs, some icons of Canadian business history, were usually incorporated with letters patent under both provincial and national law. They raised millions of dollars of capital by selling shares (often abroad) and by borrowing money from financial intermediaries. Schemes typically embraced thousands of acres and were designed by trend-setting planners and landscape architects, such as Frederick Todd, Warren Manning, or John Charles Olmsted—

Compiled from maps accompanying files in RG 1, Series 84, "Uplands Farm," Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Winnipeg, MB.



Town of Mount Royal Archives

**Figure 9.** A panorama of Mount Royal, the “Model City” (ca. 1912), looking south toward the “Mountain” and the City of Montreal.

who did not plan a suburb in Edmonton and whose stepfather (Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.) never designed a suburb in Canada, only Mount Royal Park.<sup>41</sup> Company officials sometimes secured provincial legislation to create a town or municipality coinciding with the suburb’s boundaries—a particularly easy accomplishment before World War I.<sup>42</sup> By this process, company presidents, general managers, directors, and even land-owning shareholders became Reeves or mayors, councillors or aldermen, all engaged in the business of public service and community building to protect the syndicate’s heavy investment in land.

Other planning and business strategies put in practice by these early-twentieth-century corporate prototypes influenced the post-World War II corporate suburban landscape. The careful phasing in of development units to ensure the orderly expansion

of a subdivision has now become standard practice. Model houses have long been built as marketing ploys to entice consumers, especially aspiring middle-class home-buyers. For well over a century, the careful use of deed restrictions for various reasons—to protect one’s capital investment, to differentiate units by size and value of house and thus by social class, and of course to ensure the fulfilment of a long-term vision of development—has been deemed all-important. Restrictions had a particular influence on town planning legislation and local government zoning bylaws, especially during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>43</sup>

Today, conformity and corporate suburbs of various kinds are all-pervasive. Anybody travelling across Canada who takes time to drive through the expanding suburbs of St. John’s, Halifax, Quebec City, Ottawa, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary,

Kelowna, Victoria—to cite just a few Canadian cities—will certainly notice common features marking the suburban landscape, repeated from place to place across the country. These include the older rectangular lots and grid subdivisions that give way to the post-1945 curving streets and cul-de-sacs of planned neighbourhood units; a hierarchy of streets catering to cars; the familiar logos and repetitive architecture of branch businesses located in regional shopping malls; the supremacy and similar designs of the detached, single-family house; ubiquitous golf courses and university campuses; and large and multi-purpose industrial parks abutting the railroads and freeways that radiate everywhere, spoke-like, from these sprawling urban places.

Richard Harris has done a masterful job of opening the enquiry into explaining this landscape of conformity. And he would be the first to agree that the “diversity to conformity” thesis of *Creeping Conformity* can be broadened in scope. The challenge now is for suburban scholars to research a host of factors that have shaped Canada’s suburban experience since the late nineteenth century. These include provincial legislation, municipal taxation policy, early corporate business strategies, architecture and consumerism, family values, women and property—is there an end to the list of shaping forces? Clearly, besides examining the regional dimension of suburbanization, there is much that requires consideration, interpretation, and inclusion within the country’s overall suburban narrative. Once that is done, we can then speak more assuredly about how, when, and to what extent “conformity” has emerged to distinguish Canada’s suburban landscape. As a seminal study, *Creeping Conformity* is very much the benchmark in providing stimulation and guidance for future research.

### Notes

1. This is a revised version of paper presented in “Author Meets Critic,” 2006 Congress of the Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Canada, York University, Toronto. The purpose was to assess Richard Harris’s *Creeping Conformity: How Canada Became Suburban, 1900–1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004). My thanks to Peter Baskerville and Gordon Darroch for inviting me to take part in the session, and to Richard Harris for his gracious response to my comments. Illustrations were prepared by Ole Heggen, Department of Geography, University of Victoria.
2. *Creeping Conformity* does draw upon most of the available published evidence about the suburbanization in other Canadian cities, but as Richard Harris acknowledged during the “Author Meets Critic” session, unless a researcher knows a place well through doing field work or gathering evidence from local archives, it is difficult to achieve a full understanding of the suburban development of that place.
3. Some of this research was first reported in Larry McCann, “Suburbs of Desire: The Suburban Landscape of Canadian Cities, c.1900–1950,” in *Changing Suburbs: Foundation, Form and Function*, ed. Richard Harris and Peter Larkin (London: E. & F. N. Spon, 1999), 111–145. I am researching the many links between land development, residential design and town planning, multi-level governance, and social segregation in the making of the suburban landscape of several major western and eastern Canadian cities, including Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax, and Saint John. The research has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
4. See, for example, Larry McCann and Peter Smith, “Canada Becomes Urban:

Cities and Urbanization in Historical Perspective,” in *Canadian Cities in Transition*, ed. Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1991), 66–99; Larry McCann and Jim Simmons, “The Core-Periphery Structure of Canada’s Urban System,” in *Canadian Cities in Transition: The Twenty-First Century*, ed. Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 76–96; and Larry McCann, Ian Buck, and Ole Heggen, “Family Geographies: An Urban Perspective,” in *Household Counts: Canadian Families and Households in 1901*, ed. Peter Baskerville and Eric Sager (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, in press).

5. Harris, *Creeping Conformity*, 13.
6. *Ibid.*, 174.
7. David Jordan, “Working-class Suburbs in Turn-of-the-Twentieth-Century Victoria, British Columbia” (master’s thesis, University of Victoria, 1999); Clyde Griffin, “The New World Working-class Suburb Revisited,” *Journal of Urban History* 27 (2001): 420–45; and Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820–2000* (New York: Pantheon, 2003).
8. Immigrant communities remain a little-researched strand of Canada’s suburban narrative. We know little about the Chinese, “Hindoo,” and Japanese experience on the outskirts of British Columbia towns and cities; about Eastern European suburbs in the Prairie region; and except for Africville outside of Halifax, little about the African-Canadian settlements on the margins of Maritime towns and cities.
9. See, in particular, Harris’s award-winning book, *Unplanned Suburbs: Toronto’s American Tragedy, 1900 to 1950* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). Harris and his McMaster University graduate students have published valuable case studies on suburbanization in Hamilton. These are referenced in *Creeping Conformity*.
10. Robert Lewis, *Manufacturing Montreal: The Making of an Industrial Landscape, 1850 to 1930* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).
11. Robert Lewis, ed., *Manufacturing Suburbs: Building Work and Home on the Metropolitan Fringe* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004).
12. Harris, *Creeping Conformity*, 59–60.
13. Allan Hazen, Report on Sewer System and Water Supply, 19 February 1905, file 7488, City Clerk’s Office, City of Winnipeg Archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba [hereafter CofWA]; and Frederick Huebach to City Clerk re: Manufacturing Site, 19 July 1910, file 8962, City Clerk’s Office, CofWA.
14. City Planning Commission Report, 27 January 1913, file 9700.5, City Clerk’s Office, CofWA.
15. Some historical maps of suburban Tuxedo and a brief review of Frederick Huebach’s life and enterprise are presented in an informative pamphlet by Ian McDonald and Rosemary Malaher, *Tuxedo: A History and Walking Tour* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Historical Society, 1991). My own research on Tuxedo draws heavily on the archival records of the Olmsted Brothers firm (held at the Library of Congress, Washington), of the University of Manitoba, and of Town of Tuxedo, since the early-1960s part of the City of Winnipeg.
16. The urban economic context is discussed in Jim Simmons and Larry McCann, “The Canadian Urban System: Growth and Transition,” in *Canadian Cities in Transition: Local Through Global Perspectives*, 3rd ed., ed. Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2006), 40–64. For the Maritimes, see Larry McCann, “Shock Waves in the Old Economy: Maritime Cities and the Great Transformation, c.1867–1939,” in *Shock Waves: The Maritime Urban System in the New Economy*, ed. George J. DeBenedetti and Rodolphe H. Lamarche (Moncton: Institute for Research on Regional Development, 1994), 2–44.
17. The latter are illustrated in two recent surveys of Vancouver and its region: James P. Delgado, *Waterfront: Maritime Greater Vancouver* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2005); and Derek Hayes, *Historical Atlas of Vancouver and the Lower Fraser Valley* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2005).
18. With the recent release of the nominal manuscript returns for the 1911

## Richard Harris's *Creeping Conformity*

- Census of Canada, there is a splendid opportunity to research the social structures of industrial suburbs across Canada during the phase of suburban diversity in the early twentieth century.
19. The problem is covered extensively for the 1920s in various issues of the *Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada*.
  20. P. J. Smith, "Planning for Residential Growth since the 1940s," in *Edmonton: The Life of a City*, ed. Bob Hesketh and Frances Swyripa (Edmonton: NeWest, 1995), 243–255.
  21. See, for example, Aman Gill, "Staying the Course: Resisting Change in a Planned Middle-class Neighbourhood" (master's thesis, University of Victoria, 2005).
  22. See, for example, Donald G. Wetherell and Irene R. A. Kmet, *Homes in Alberta: Building, Trends, and Design* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1991); Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, *The New Spirit: Modern Architecture in Vancouver, 1938–63* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1997); Fred Hollingsworth, Barry Downs, Greg Bellerby, and Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, *Living Spaces: The Architecture of Fred Thornton Hollingsworth* (Vancouver: BLUEIMPRINT, 2005); and Serena Keshavjee, *Winnipeg Modern: Architecture 1945–1975* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2006).
  23. Harris, *Creeping Conformity*, 74.
  24. Robert M. Fogelson, *Bourgeois Nightmares: Suburbia, 1870–1930* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). Fogelson makes extensive reference to the use of deed restrictions in Canada.
  25. Marc A. Weiss, *The Rise of the Community Builders: The American Real Estate Industry and Urban Land Planning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987).
  26. Harris, *Creeping Conformity*, 103.
  27. The "new suburban history" has a decided political orientation, focusing on such issues as local political struggles, the workings of the marketplace, the links between class and housing types, tax reform, sprawl, and race and segregation. See especially the recently published collection of essays edited by Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, *The New Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). Other books of interest to Canadian suburban scholars who might venture along these new avenues of interest include Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Robert Bruegmann, *Sprawl: A Compact History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Richardson Dillworth, *The Urban Origins of Suburban Autonomy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Gerald E. Frug, *City Making: Building Communities without Building Walls* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Carolyn S. Loeb, *Entrepreneurial Vernacular: Developers' Subdivisions in the 1930s* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Sylvie Murray, *The Progressive Housewife: Community Activism in Suburban Queens, 1945–1965* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Becky Nicolaidis, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920–1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); and Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). A new and comprehensive collection of classic writing on suburbs, including some Canadian material, is Becky Nicolaidis and Andrew Wiese, eds., *The Suburb Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
  28. The generalizations in this paragraph (and elsewhere in the paper) draw upon archival records and data sets collected for various suburbs, municipalities, and cities across Canada (including Oak Bay, West Vancouver, Edmonton, Tuxedo, Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax), particularly where a partner or associate of Olmsted Brothers planned a subdivision in the early twentieth century. These databases draw upon censuses and street directories, and upon municipal records such as council minutes, subdivision plans, assessment rolls, property transfers, and building cards that give particulars of a dwelling's construction. For comments on these data sets and references to archival sources, see McCann, Buck, and Heggen, "Family Geographies"; Larry McCann, "Olmsted Brothers and the Making of the Middle-class Suburban Landscape in Western Canadian Cities: Deed Restrictions, Exclusionary Zoning, and Neighbourhood Planning, c.1900–1955" (unpublished paper, Department of Geography, University of Victoria, 2006); and *Neighbourhoods in Transition*, Studies in Geography 2 (Edmonton: Department of Geography, University of Alberta, 1975).
  29. Smith, "Planning for Residential Growth"; and "Changing Forms and Patterns in the Cities," in *The Prairie Provinces*, ed. P. J. Smith (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 99–117.
  30. This is an argument, of course, that was first mooted in several classic studies of suburbia published in the 1950s and 1960s. See William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956); John R. Seeley, R. Alexander Sim, and E. W. Lossley, *Crestwood Heights: A Study of the Culture of Suburban Life* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1956); and S. D. Clark, *The Suburban Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966). There was discussion at the "Author Meets Critic" session that these classic studies warranted revisiting. See also Veronica Strong-Boag, "Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945–1960," *Canadian Historical Review* 72 (1991): 471–504.
  31. Harris, *Creeping Conformity*, 107.
  32. For example, in the pre–World War I era, a full decade before provincial town planning legislation was enacted, British Columbia's *Municipal Act* gave local governments the means to "zone" industry from residential areas.
  33. For a general Canadian survey of the provincial function, see Gerald Hodge, *Planning Canadian Communities: An Introduction to the Principles, Practices, and Participants*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2003), 63–89. Western Canada and Alberta in particular are discussed in P. J. Smith, "The Principle of Utility and the Origins of Planning Legislation in Alberta, 1912–1974," in *The Usable Urban Past*, ed. Alan F. J. Artibise and Gilbert A. Stelter (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), 196–213; and "American Influences and Local Needs: Adaptations to the Alberta Planning System in 1928–1929," in *Power and Place: Canadian Urban Development in the North American Context*, ed. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986), 109–32.
  34. Sprawl is not directly considered in *Creeping Conformity*. Many early-twentieth-century photographs, especially the aerial photography undertaken by the federal government during the 1920s for use in mapping Canada's expanding urban areas, effectively document its occurrence. These aerial photos are held by the National Air Photo Library in Ottawa. The speculative and irresponsible use of land in the rural-urban fringe across Canada first received attention in the pre- and post–World War I era by the federal government's short-lived Commission of Conservation. During the 1920s, sprawl was called "suburban jumbling" by Canada's practising town planners, who brought attention to the problem in issues of the *Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada*. There is clearly a need in Canada to explore the historical dimensions of sprawl, as done recently and effectively in Robert Bruegmann's *Sprawl: A Compact History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
  35. These comments on the land development and planning of the Hudson's Bay Company in Victoria and Edmonton are drawn from the extremely rich and comprehensive records of the company's Land Department held at the Winnipeg-based Hudson's Bay Company Archives, a division of the Public Archives of Manitoba.
  36. A recent article that examines the interplay of corporations and local, provincial, and federal governments (including the CMHC) in financing and planning two suburban land assembly and housing schemes—and suggestive of how the public–private dialectic can be examined—is Robert McGeachy, "Polson Park and Calvin Park, 1954–1962: Two Land Assembly Subdivisions in Kingston, Ontario," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada* 20 (2005): 25–34.
  37. Harris, *Creeping Conformity*, 132.
  38. Valerie Krinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in*

## Richard Harris's *Creeping Conformity*

*the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

39. See in particular, William S. Worley, *J. C. Nichols and the Shaping of Kansas City: Innovation in Planned Residential Communities* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990).
40. Information on these corporations and their suburban endeavours is drawn from a variety of archival and published sources, but see Larry McCann, "Planning and Building the Corporate Suburb of Mount Royal, 1910–1925," *Planning Perspectives* 11 (1996): 259–301, which is not referenced in *Creeping Conformity*; and "Olmsted Brothers."
41. Harris, *Creeping Conformity*, 48, 99.
42. However, attempts at municipal formation sometimes failed to produce results. The Canadian Pacific Railway tried before and after the First World War to separate its Shaughnessy Heights subdivision from Point Grey

Municipality, but was thwarted each time by the British Columbia government. A draft of the *Act of Incorporation*, letters explaining the rejection of the Act, and other important maps and background material can be found in "Town Planning," file 123, box 49, RG441, Premier Richard McBride Papers, British Columbia Archives and Record Service, Victoria.

43. The following excerpt from a letter sent by the municipal clerk of Oak Bay to the municipality's solicitor illustrates the influence of deed restrictions on the development of zoning and town planning practices: "Council wishes you to draft an amendment which would give us the power to introduce into the Zoning by-law building restrictions regarding the cost of buildings, and generally in line with the present restrictions at the Uplands" (italics mine). R. F. Blandy to Messrs Lawson & Davis re: Zoning, 23 August 1934, file 8000, "Zoning 1934," Corporation of the District of Oak Bay Record Service. A similar public–private relationship marks suburban development practices in Tuxedo, Calgary, and West Vancouver.