Urban History Review
Revue d'histoire urbaine

URBAN HISTORY REVIEW
REVUE D'HISTOIRE URBAINE

"Canada's Urban Past": Canadian Urban History Conference

Gilbert A. Stelter

Aller au sommaire du numéro

Découvrir la revue

Citer cet article

CANADA'S URBAN PAST:
CANADIAN URBAN HISTORY CONFERENCE
- - - - - - - - - -

Gilbert A. Stelter

The abstracts which follow represent most of the papers to be presented at a conference at the University of Guelph, May 12-14, 1977. By way of introduction, several comments should be made about the character of the conference program. First, the program has been designed to emphasize only one of the major concerns of urban history, the city-building process. Ten years ago, in an article in the Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Roy Lubove called for an urban history that was more than synonomous with everything that had happened in cities.[1] Specifically, he suggested a rekindling of the interest Patrick Geddes and Lewis Mumford had shown in their examination of the formation of the urban environment.[2] In addition to Lubove, several scholars have been influential in giving this kind of direction to urban history, including H. J. Dyos with his Victorian Suburbs (1961) and Sam Bass Warner with Streetcar Suburbs (1962). The extent to which historians, geographers, planners and architects have adopted this approach in Canada is illustrated by the program of this conference. The papers will not cover all of the major topics possible within the general concept of the process of city-building over time, but at least three related topics will be discussed: 1) the factors involved in urban growth; 2) the role of planners, developers and builders in the shaping of cities; 3) the place of government, especially provincial and municipal, in determining urban form.

Many of the papers will be dealing with subjects that previously have not been seriously explored in Canada. To make the results generally available, some of the papers will be published in a revised form in a volume tentatively entitled, The City-Building Process in Canada, edited by Gilbert Stelter and Alan Artibise. The emphasis on the city as a physical entity is thus to be considered as somewhat distinct from the other major theme of urban history, urban society.

Ultimately, of course, the function of urban history is to relate these two themes.

Another comment about the character of the conference program involves the controversial question of the relationship between the past and the present. Perhaps we should make a distinction between proposing solutions presumably derived from the past and discussing the relevance of the historical dimension in examinations of the present. This conference has not been designed as a forum for presenting answers to contemporary problems; a host of meetings and publications are more suitable and effective platforms. Historians have generally been reluctant to search for a usable past, probably because of the abuse of history by non-historians. As John Taylor has pointed out, these abuses include a tendency to use history to substantiate positions arrived at by other, non-historical means, and to assert qualified historical opinion as fact.[3] On the other hand, this conference offers an opportunity to pursue the question of the uses of history seriously, if only because it provides for an exchange between contributors who are planners and consultants but also are sympathetic to the historical dimension, and historians who deal with historical topics directly related to contemporary issues.

The planning of this conference has required the assistance of a large number of people and I wish to acknowledge the contributions of several in particular. Terry Crowley (History, Guelph) has been responsible for local arrangements and has served as a partner in coordinating the conference; W. W. Straka, the chairman of Guelph's History Department, first suggested the idea of an urban history conference and has facilitated arrangements; Alan Artibise (History, Victoria) represented the Urban History Committee of the Canadian Historical Association on the planning committee; Mark Waldron and Virginia Gray of the office of Continuing Education at Guelph expertly introduced the rest of us to the mysteries of conference planning. We also consulted a number of others in setting up the program; among

those who should be mentioned are Jim Lemon (Geography, Toronto),
Paul-André Linteau (Histoire, Québec à Montréal) and J.M.S. Careless
(History, Toronto).

A report on the conference will appear in the October issue
of the Urban History Review.

-----

[1]"The Urbanization Process: An Approach to Historical Research",
reprinted in Alexander Callow (ed.), American Urban History (New York,
1973).

[2]Patrick Geddes, Cities in Evolution (London, 1915); Lewis
Mumford, Technics and Civilization (New York, 1934).

[3]"Habitat 1976", Canadian Historical Association   Newsletter,
Vol. 1 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 5-8.

ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED PAPERS

Session on: *Metropolitanism and Regional Urban Development*

A. Ronald Rudin (Concordia) - "The Montreal Banks and the Urban Development of Quebec, 1840-1914".

Between 1840 and the start of World War I the growth of cities in Quebec was influenced by their accessibility to the capital controlled by banks located in Montreal. This capital was made available to parties in these towns through the establishment of branch banks by the Montreal institutions. Entrepreneurs would often decide upon locating in a particular town on the basis of whether a branch bank was present. In the absence of a branch it was nearly impossible for a local party to obtain either short-term credit or a long-term loan from one of the Montreal banks.

There were two types of Montreal banks which could be approached about the establishment of a branch in a given town. A number of these banks, such as the Bank of Montreal, were controlled by anglophones and were generally unwilling to establish branches in Quebec, particularly in areas lacking a substantial anglophone population. A second group of banks was controlled by francophones. Institutions such as La Banque d'Hochelaga tried to establish branches in Quebec wherever possible.

Urban development in the province was generally retarded by this situation. The anglophone financial community of Montreal which controlled the bulk of the capital had no interest in providing services to most of the cities of the province, while the francophone community although enthusiastic was too poor to really aid in economic development. Due to an inaccessibility to capital Quebec towns had great difficulty in developing into important urban centres.

B. J. G. Snell (Guelph) - "Metropolitanism as a Factor in American
    Relations with Canada".

An extensive examination of American perceptions and policies
towards Canada in the 1860's has revealed metropolitanism to be
one of the basic elements. This is particularly the case with a
series of urban centres across the northern tier of States - from
Portland and San Francisco on the west coast to Portland and New
York City on the east. As evidence of this, a case of study of
Boston indicates a highly developed, broad image of the Provinces
as an economic, political, and even cultural hinterland; and it
is important that spokesmen and leaders of Boston acted (and
acted strongly) within the parametres of that image.

C. David B. Knight (Carleton) - "Boosterism and City Support Regions
    in the Province of Canada".

Deeply rooted inter-city jealousies between Quebec and Toronto in
Lower Canada and between Kingston and Toronto in Upper Canada
were raised to a higher level in 1841 when the two colonies were
united as the Province of Canada. During the following two
decades, a divisive issue tore at the body politic. This issue,
claimed by a Canadian newspaper in 1858 to be "the most vexatious
question which has arisen among us", was called "the seat of govern-
ment question". In short, the question was, where should the
capital city of the Province of Canada be located? Four cities
held the metropolitan honours between 1841 and 1865-66 before
Ottawa became functional as capital, Ottawa having been accepted
as permanent seat of government in 1859.

The seat of government question was divisive because of several
factors, most notably powerful city-centred and sectional (that
is, Canada East and Canada West) attachments. Suspicions and
bitterness that existed within the culturally plural society were
bared during the long decision making process. In addition,

however, politicians, newspaper writers, and others, also gave
spoken and written expression to images of and attitudes held
towards the main cities, that is, Quebec, Montreal, Kingston,
Toronto, and Ottawa.

Not unexpectedly, in the 1856 words of a Montreal editorialist,
"the patriotism of each man [in the Legislative Assembly], with
rare exceptions, has been bounded by his county, or his immediate
district". Clearly, each man had his own favoured city and this
fact led him to speak - or write - favourably of it and to
condemn all other cities. Examples of this "boosterist" pose, in
which exaggerated claims were made for one place over all others,
stand as useful indicators of perceptions of the various cities,
both as distinct places and from the perspective of relative
location.

From 1841 to 1859, 218 divisions were taken in the Legislative
Assembly that related in one way or another to the seat of
government question. Some of the divisions taken had pronounced
sectionalist qualities. For example, the removal from Kingston
to Montreal in 1844 and the 1856 decision to have Quebec as the
permanent capital both resulted from sectional attachments. At
other times, divisions showed some political party influence.
More often, however, there were marked city centred patterns as
votes were cast for this place or that. Many divisions were
complicated by two- or three-city alliances, such as happened
from 1850 to 1856 while the government perambulated between
Quebec and Toronto. During these years, and at other times,
rivalries, intrigue, and alliances developed as supporters for
each city tried to obtain a majority of parliamentary supporters.

The legislative divisions thus are revealing for, when mapped,
they provide a measure for determining the areal extent of the
major support regions for the five major cities of the Province

of Canada. These regions are in a sense "attitudinal regions", and find further meaning when compared and contrasted with the "boosterist" expressions made by members of the Legislative Assembly and newspaper editorialists.

. . . .

Session on: *Planning and Housing Policy in the Early Twentieth Century*

A. D. W. Holdsworth (British Columbia) - "'Far from the Maddening Crowd's Ignoble Strife': Corporate Images of Suburban Home in Vancouver".

The availability of large quantities of inexpensive land and an extensive streetcar network combined to create a widespread suburban landscape in Vancouver. Stoked by desires for spatial separation of home and workplace and the dreams of home-ownership in a detached house, outer land was constantly in demand. This paper examines strategies used by critical land developers in regulating that demand and in encouraging distinct images of home environments through their manipulation of the social and visual identity of parts of the city.

Attention is focussed on: (1) the CPR's controlled release of land, using distinct cadastral systems and building conditions to create several area-identities within its 6,000 acre land grant; (2) a similar taste-setting management of 'bonus lands' acquired by the British Columbia Electric Railway streetcar interests; and (3) the fabricated subdivision landscapes of selected real estate and building companies. Dominant styles encouraged in distinct areas included Tudor Revival, California Bungalows, Voysey-like cottages, and prefabricated cabins. Evidence is also presented noting subsequent small carpenter-builder activity that reinforced the appearance of city neighbourhoods around these dominant images.

The land corporations behaviour tapped broad anti-urban sentiment in encouraging suburban movement away from the notion of the 'madding crowd's ignoble strife'. Similar sentiment lay behind the dominance of Arts and Crafts-inspired building styles. It is argued that the history of land development and house construction in Vancouver is a response to 'crowds and strife' elsewhere in the urban industrial world. The Vancouver landscape shows evidence of massive private-sector assimilation of these sentiments, at a time when many other cities were hesitantly experimenting with public or philanthropic attempts to assure acceptable shelter for their working populations.

B. Shirley Spragge (Queen's) - "Early Housing Reform - A Confluence of Interests".

What justifies the selection of housing reform as a theme to be studied in relation to urban development; why is this issue picked out of the matrix of social reform in the first twenty years of the twentieth century? Housing reform, seen as the effort to provide for the urban wage earner who could not compete in the housing market, has the advantage of being both a practical and theoretical problem. It can be related to the physical development of the city in connection with expansion in city size, transportation networks and concentration of industry; it can be related to population movement and composition, and to economic and monetary conditions. On the theoretical side, housing reform can be related to concepts of the public good: condemnation of overcrowded and unsanitary housing, maintenance of a pool of cheap labour, the sanctity of the home and communal participation in solving the shelter problem through legislation and financial backing. More theoretical again were the concerns of those who saw a solution for the housing problem in the co-operative movement or controlled urban growth through the development of garden city nuclei.

Although the concern was nation wide the locus of Toronto is a
convenient one in which to study the pattern of reform because in
the twenty year period Toronto mounted two efforts to house
workers: the quasi-public Toronto Housing Company in 1913 and the
totally civic Toronto Housing Commission of 1920. Both efforts
had a framework of legislation and public funding so there was a
public policy component. An examination of the groups involved:
the public health advocates, the businessmen and manufacturers,
the women and the idealists, will reveal some of their aims and
perhaps explain what impact housing reform had on city development.

. . . .

Session on: *Urban Planning: Theory and Practice*

A. Walter van Nus (Concordia) - "Towards the City Efficient: The
   Theory and Practice of Zoning in Canada, 1919-1939".

The period 1919-1939 represents the first two decades after the
founding in 1919 of the Town Planning Institute of Canada, in
which only architects, engineers, and surveyors were eligible for
"Full Membership". This paper uses the example of engineers' and
surveyors' discussion of zoning to illustrate and help account for
the fact that these professionals tended in the inter-war years
to forsake the ideal of relatively permanent plans for the
creation of optimally efficient cities in favour of a more passive,
managerial sort of planning which sought little more than the
co-ordination of the desires and development policies of private
interests. This tendency was in part due to the political
impracticability of the severe restrictions which a relatively
permanent plan would place on property rights, but it was also
facilitated by planners' own doubts (eminently justified) as to
their competence to devise a relatively permanent plan that
worked.

Planners' deference to businessmen reflected the latter's
political power, which job-hungry professionals hoped to harness
to persuade municipal councils to employ them. In addition, the
benefits of zoning, sympathetically applied, had after the
collapse of the pre-war land boom become obvious to some in the
real estate fraternity. As well, the housing reform movement, so
important in popularizing planning in the 1910's, declined in the
1920's, perhaps because of the general post-war disillusionment
with social reform and also the stabilization of workers' living
costs in the early 'twenties. Local businessmen replaced that
movement in many localities as the major interest group
sympathetic to planning.

Planners' doubt about their current ability to produce workable,
relatively permanent plans was based first of all on the lack of
fundamental data, which was often uncollected or uncollated.
They retreated in the face of the overwhelming difficulties of
predicting urban growth. For some, lack of interdisciplinary
training constituted an inhibition. No city in this period,
moreover, gave the generous, ongoing funding necessary rapidly to
improve the competence of a planning staff.

As a result, the elastic zoning which emerged in practice served
chiefly to protect better residential areas, and to allow orderly
distension of expanding kinds of land use (as opposed to scattered
intrusions into other areas), at a rate slow enough to prevent a
decline in value of that type of property. The municipal
engineer's ideal of an optimally efficient urban organism was
diluted to that of, as one Institute member put it, "a stabiliza-
tion of the merchandise the realtor sells".

B. Peter W. Moore (Toronto) - "Zoning and Planning: The Toronto
Experience".

In contemporary Toronto, zoning and planning are closely linked,
with zoning being viewed as one among many planning tools used in

the governmental control of the city building process. This was
not always the case, however, for zoning in the city developed
independently from planning.

The rudiments of zoning, or residential restrictions, in Toronto,
can be traced back to 1904, when the city began prohibiting
certain kinds of non-residential activities from residential
areas. In later years these restrictions were further developed
to differentiate between different kinds of residential develop-
ment. These restrictions were enacted, not as corollaries to any
overall plan for the city's development, but rather as a response,
on the whole, to neighbourhood-based demands to protect the
residential environment of the neighbourhoods, and along with
that environment the values of residential property. In the
early decades of the twentieth century, "planning" in Toronto,
had concerned itself first with the concerns of the City
Beautiful movement in the U.S., and later with the more efficient
movement of downtown traffic-basically through street widening.

In the 1930's, the idea of planning as the direction and control
of city development, developed in Toronto, and a City Planning
Department was established, followed, in 1942 by a quasi-
independent City Planning Board, which was closely related to the
Board of Trade. At the same time, in the late 1930's and early
1940's Toronto began preparation of a comprehensive zoning
ordinance, intended at first to be a consolidation of the
existing residential restrictions. This consolidation came to be
related to planning, partly because the Planning Commissioner
spearheaded the work and a debate ensued over whether a plan
should precede a zoning by-law, or vice versa. The Zoning By-law
was finally passed in 1944, but was not approved immediately by
the Provincial Government. Then in 1945 and 1946 the Provincial
Government instituted a Planning Act which required that Master
Plans precede zoning ordinances. A new City Planning Board was

established, and a Master Plan produced in 1949. A new zoning
by-law followed in 1952, and final approval was given it in 1954.
Throughout the development of the zoning by-law, from 1936 to
1952, the residential restrictions had continued to operate, and
the City Planning Board(s), and the Planning Commissioner
(connected to the City Planning Department) had assumed an
increasingly important role in their implementation.

After 1952, zoning became an integral part of the planning
process, with the Planning Board dealing with major zoning policy
changes and proposals as part of its district appraisal schemes,
while the enforcement of the restrictions was still left in the
hands of the Property Department. However, the residents of the
city did not divest themselves immediately of the pre-1952
experience, and they continued to view zoning as the mechanism
through which they could protect their property values, rather
than guide the development of their neighbourhoods and the city.
It is the Planning Board which has primarily used zoning in this
latter role.

. . . .

Session on: *The Development Process*

A. Michael J. Doucet (Toronto) - "Land Ownership in Hamilton, 1847-1881".

Land ownership has always been an important consideration for
Canadians. Indeed, many people were lured to this country during
the nineteenth century because of the apparent spaciousness of
this nation. They expected to be able to become property owners,
and many Canadian historians have assumed that this was the case.
If we look closely at the identity of the property owners,
however, this myth quickly evaporates. Perhaps some historians
have confused the apparent opportunity to own land with the actual

figures on property ownership. This is not surprising, for even today realtors firmly believe that "the basis of a stable society rests with each individual having the opportunity and capacity of owning private property".

In this paper, I intend to explore landownership in one Canadian city, Hamilton, Ontario, during the period 1847 to 1881. The data for this analysis derive from an examination of land transactions for some 1,668 building lots over this period. These data were taken from documents in the Hamilton Registry Office. My purpose is to show that certain groups were much more likely than others to own property in nineteenth-century city. I will, therefore, discuss the identity of Hamilton landowners according to such criteria as their occupations, places of residence, and degree of participation in the land market. Finally, I will examine the nature of property development in the city at this time, through an analysis of the people who owned the lots at the time they were converted to an urban use. For the most part, this group was quite different from those who initially purchased the properties. This, of course, serves to underscore the fact that certain individuals had no intention of becoming involved in land development. For all intents and purposes, such people were simply land speculators. In relation to the entire population, however, such individuals were the members of a very tiny group. It is quite clear that the opportunities for land ownership in a nineteenth-century Canadian city were far more apparent than they were real for the vast majority of urban residents at that time.

B. Isobel Ganton   (Toronto) - "Toronto, 1850-1883: the Subdivision Process".

Toronto in 1850 was entering a period of rapid expansion into privately owned lands, within the city limits but beyond the boundaries of the early government urban lot surveys. By 1883 most of the area within the city had been built up, and urban lot

subdivision and some construction had taken place well beyond. In the suburban area some concentrations of construction were about to be annexed to the city in the first territorial additions since the incorporation of the city in 1834.

This paper is part of a larger study of the development process as a whole in the area shown as Toronto and suburbs in Goad's Atlas of 1884. Here the focus is on the first stage in the process - the transformation of non-urban land into streets and urban building lots through subdivision and resubdivision. Using registered subdivision plans, contemporary maps, city directories and The Globe newspaper as principal sources, the characteristics and distribution of subdivision over time and space are described and explained.

The result of subdivision activity during this period was the articulation of the basic pattern underlying most later develop-ment in the study area. It was accomplished by the decisions of a multitude of individuals operating at different scales but sharing common motives and concepts of urban patterns and prospects. Their decisions were made in a period of virtual laissez-faire in terms of official control, but within a framework of pre-existing patterns and accepted practices. They also reflected both local and general conditions, and in many instances, individual situations and pressures.

C. Max Foran (Calgary) - "Patterns of Land Usage Development in Calgary, 1884-1944".

Although geographic factors were major determinants in influencing the growth and expansion of Calgary, other forces were at work that produced patterns not consistent with that suggested by geography. The roles of the CPR, the street railway and the land speculator were causal in deciding residential, commercial and

industrial land-usage. Similarly, the reactions of the various
local governments to the problems posed by the physical expansion
were also of prime importance. When Calgary's period of rapid
expansion began in the 1950's, and the city planners began to look
seriously at the planning problems associated with urban growth,
there were really very few alternatives open to them. Early
patterns of development dictated urban sprawl.

. . . .

Session on: *The Economics of Urban Growth: A Broad Perspective*

A. Ruben Bellan (Manitoba) - "Canada's Urban Development"

Canadian urban development conforms closely to the logic of Innis'
"staple thesis". Most urban centres came into being as collection
centres for the natural products of surrounding hinterlands; their
products were thence forwarded to a more advanced economy across
the sea or across the border. In reverse direction they served as
distributing centres of the imported goods which constituted the
real payment for the goods exported. Towns were typically located
therefore at sites that had advantages in relation to the
movement of exports and imports. The largest urban centres were
those located at sites that were strategic in transport systems
and at which very large volumes of goods were handled. In Eastern
Canada, developed before the railroad era, these focal points were
river, lake or ocean ports; in Western Canada, developed after the
coming of the railway, these were mostly points in railway networks.
The thesis is not all-embracing: special function urban centres
emerged such as capitals, mining towns, resorts, that played
little or no role in the outward movement of exports and the
inward movement of imports. For manufacturing and service
industries that preferred market locations, already established
urban centres were strongly attractive; as a consequence the early

achievement of substantial size tended to assure permanent superiority.

B. James Simmons (Toronto) - "The Evolution of the Canadian Urban System".

Although the temporal sequence of urbanization in Canada proceeded regularly as a consequence of social and economic processes, the spatial pattern is much less comprehensible. The Canadian urban system has been extremely open - to flows of labour and capital, and to international markets - and the production of primary products, which still provides the economic base of most Canadian cities, is inherently cyclical. A brief examination of the pattern of economic specialization, intercity interaction, and urban growth patterns in the Canadian urban system suggests the importance of spatial interdependency in explaining urban growth rates. A model of intercity interdependence is put forward, which stresses the role of economic linkages between cities in trans- mitting growth, and of generating growth by means of changes in the linkage pattern.

The difficulties in calibrating such a model are considerable and as yet we can only speculate about changes in the interdependency pattern over time. In Canada the continued dependence on primary products maintains a simple hierarchic structure of linkages, in which final demand linkages (i.e. the purchase of consumers) appear to play a larger and larger role. To some extent the importance of distance in determining linkages has been overcome by the increasing variation in city size. Unbalanced growth by region can permanently alter the linkage pattern. Shifts in the strength of linkage between orders in the hierarchy can produce regular variations in growth rate by city size. The overall distribution of urban growth rates in space and time, then, is closely related to the pattern of interdependency.

. . . .

Session on: *The Economics of Urban Growth: A Regional Perspective*

A. Larry McCann (Mount Allison) - "Staples, Urban Growth, and the Heartland-Hinterland Paradigm: Halifax as an Imperial Outpost, 1867-1914".

The production of staples has stimulated regional urbanization in Canada. Through such functions as processing and exporting staple commodities and financing and servicing their exploitation, the economic growth of many Canadian cities has been tied directly to the development of the regional resource base. As a consequence of the location and timing of staple production, the Canadian economy is now characterized by the heartland-hinterland spatial design in which cities in Ontario and Quebec hold sway over their western and eastern counterparts in many areas of functional activity, and even in some spheres of social and political development. Typically, the heartland city is differentiated from the hinterland city by the diversity and strength of its manufacturing and financial sectors. Centralizing forces heighten the distinction between city types, and can limit the function of the peripherally located city to that of an intermediary for either exporting or processing staples for the heartland. In Canada, dependency upon the heartland has been reinforced where the local resource base offers only limited growth potential. The growth of Maritime cities in the post-Confederation period took place under such conditions of dependency.

In this paper, the growth of Halifax between 1867 and 1914 is examined within the context of the heartland-hinterland paradigm and the staple model of urban growth. Theoretical premises related to the growth of heartland cities are contrasted with those affecting hinterland cities. This discussion provides the perspective for analyzing the growth of a selected sample of Canadian cities. From this analysis, the case of Halifax as a

regressive hinterland city is selected for specific interpretation.
Various arguments related to the heartland-hinterland paradigm
and the staple model of urban growth are assessed to evaluate the
causes of Halifax's slower and limited development. It is shown
that the character of the region's resource base, the failure of
businessmen to mobilize capital and labour in the face of western
Canadian competition, the nature of entrepreneurial leadership,
and the imposition of national industrial and transportation
policies were critical factors which affected the economic
development of the city. Halifax is an example of an imperial
outpost whose economic well-being is largely dependent upon
decisions emanating from external matropole.

B. Alan F. J. Artibise (Victoria) - "Boosterism and the Development
    of Prairie Cities, 1871-1913".

This paper examines the role played by boosters in the rapid rise
of the five dominant prairie urban centers - Winnipeg, Regina,
Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon. Following a general discussion
of the philosophy of boosterism and the policies of its practioners
in the areas of railway attraction, immigrant encouragement,
industrial promotion, government reform and municipal ownership,
the paper examines in detail some of the less well known policies
of the boosters. These include early and usually premature
incorporations as cities, massive boundary extensions, deficit
financing, huge public works programs, and unwise taxation
policies (including the single tax). It is argued that in all
these areas booster policies played a key but varied role in
prairie urban development. In the period prior to the recession
of 1913, the policies stimulated growth and development. In
subsequent years, however, prairie cities were faced with a
legacy of planning and financial problems that long caused severe
difficulties. Indeed, as late as the 1950's, prairie cities were
still coping with problems whose origins reached back to the
heyday of the booster.

. . . .

Session on: *Politics and the Provision of Urban Services*

A. Patricia Roy (Victoria) - "The Promoter as Politician: David
    Oppenheimer and Public Ownership in Vancouver".

    No one person was responsible for building Vancouver but one man,
    David Oppenheimer, as businessman, first president of the Board
    of Trade, and mayor (1889-1892) was involved in almost every
    aspect of developing Vancouver during its first decade. A
    wholesale grocer by trade, he was also a land speculator and an
    active investor in such enterprises as the city wharf, the
    electric street railway and the electric interurban railway. As
    mayor, he advocated municipal ownership. Shortly before the
    municipal election of 1890, for example, he told City Council
    that street locomotion as well as "the water supply and lighting
    arrangements of every city should (as much as the sewers or the
    streets) be the property of the citizens, and should not be in
    the hands of any individuals or companies to be worked for
    profit; but that all revenues derived from the working after
    paying expenses should be used to reduce the taxation of the
    ratepayers". His advocacy of public ownership was not contra-
    dictory. While the opportunities in the young city of Vancouver
    were great, so too were the risks. David Oppenheimer supported
    public ownership because promoters had a chance of making a quick
    profit; optimists, without adequate capital, could not sustain
    infant enterprises during slow times. The ratepayers also knew
    this and rejected his schemes for the municipal purchase of
    public works.

B. Elwood Jones and Douglas McCalla (Trent) - "Toronto Waterworks:
    Continuity and Change in 19th Century Toronto".

    From the early 1840's to the mid 1870's, Toronto's water was
    supplied by a private franchiseholder. There were repeated
    complaints of inadequate service and particularly of inadequate

water supply for fire fighting purposes. Public ownership was
increasingly called for, yet it took many years before that
feeling was translated into a municipally owned and operated
water system. Why was this so? More broadly, what significance
for the historiography of Toronto has the waterworks story?

Using this, our paper will consider the emerging role and
structure of the city's government as it sought to cope with the
problems posed by growth. How did the city provide the public
with an essential service and protect the public interest at the
same time? The story of Toronto's move to public ownership of
the waterworks is not a simplistic tale of the battle between the
forces of good and evil. There were many complexities related to
politics, bureaucracy, finance and technical knowledge.
Moreover, the city government operated within tight constraints
imposed by provincial supervision, the power of private
individuals and corporations, and the manifold pressure of
finance.

C. Terry Copp (Wilfrid Laurier) – "Montreal's Municipal Government
and the Crisis of the 1930's".

Montreal, like all Canadian cities, was a creature of its
provincial government. Despite the fact that the city's budget was
larger than the province's (nearly double in per capita terms) it
was required to finance its operations out of a provincially
regulated property tax plus an equally controlled "water tax".
For decades prior to the 1930's the province had boasted of
surpluses while Montreal slid further under a crushing debt load.
"Reformers" had long decried the "irresponsible financial
extravagance" of Montreal's populist mayors and no chief
magistrate, including Jean Drapeau, was quite as unpopular in
respectable circles as Camilien Houde. Yet the Houde administra-
tions of the depression years won broad popular support that was
not simply based on Houde's colorful personality. There is much

truth in Houde's claim that he was trying to help the unemployed while his critics were trying to save money.

The paper examines the basic financial problems confronting Montreal at the end of the 1920's, describes the extent of unemployment created by the depression and offers a comparison of conditions in Montreal with other Canadian cities. The specific policies of the Montreal authorities on unemployment relief, public and other issues are examined in the context of provincial and national developments. The provincial government's decision to place Montreal under trusteeship and impose a "corporatist" city charter on the municipality is seen as an attempt to promote financial stability while ignoring the underlying causes of municipal collapse. The depression experience ended with the onrush of war-industry prosperity. No lessons were learned, no institutional mechanisms to improve the quality of life were created; the city remained powerless, acted upon, unable to act for itself.

. . . .

Session on: *The Planning of Resource-Based Communities*

A. O. W. Saarinen (Laurentian) - "The Influence of Thomas Adams and the British Town Planning Movement on the Planning of Canadian Resource Communities".

Purpose - It is the purpose of this paper to examine some of the influences of Thomas Adams and the British town planning movement on the planning of single-enterprise communities in Canada. In the study, attention is focused specifically on the above influences in the planning of two forest-based resource communities: Iroquois Falls in the Province of Ontario and Temiscaming (Kipawa) in the Province of Quebec.

Influence of Thomas Adams and the British Town Planning Movement
in Canada - The impact of the British town planning movement in
Canada after the turn of the century was considerable. The
diffusion of British planning principles and ideology into the
Canadian setting involved a variety of channels, the most
important of which was the Commission of Conservation and the
work of its Town Planning Advisor, Thomas Adams. After his
arrival in 1914, Adams quickly proceeded to exert an influence on
town planning and housing development in Canada by means of four
distinct, yet interrelated, threads of personal activity related
to education, legislation, administration and consultation.
Other important threads in the diffusion process included the
personal influences of the Governors-General in Canada, notably
Sir A.H.G. Grey, the Duke of Connaught and the Duke of Devonshire
and the writings of the Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King. The experience
of the British in planning was likewise instrumental in attracting
a wide number of Canadian planners to Great Britain.

Thomas Adams, the British Town Planning Movement and the New Towns
of Iroquois Falls and Témiscaming - The planning of the settle-
ments of Iroquois Falls and Témiscaming both fell under the
influence of Thomas Adams and the British town planning movement.
In both communities, the townsite layout reflected a number of
positive aspects related to British physical planning principles
such as the use of curvilinear and radial streets, an emphasis on
green spaces and pleasant vistas, spacious lots and attractive
dwelling units and a sensitive adaptation of the urban environ-
ment to the natural contours of the land. This physical land use
emphasis, however, was paralleled by a lack of planning sensi-
tivity to the social ramifications of community life within a
company-town setting. In considering the planning background of
Iroquois Falls, it is also surprising that no advantage was taken
of the greenbelt principle to provide for some form of controlled
development beyond the boundaries of the original townsite. The

failure to apply this principle was a major factor which spurred
the development of unplanned growth around the fringes of the
model townsite proper.

B. Norman Pressman and Kathleen Lauder (Waterloo) - "Resource Towns
as New Towns - The Planning of Urban Outposts".

The framework by which this paper will be guided refers in
general terms to identification of the resource town as a unique
and significant Canadian settlement type in both an historical
and contemporary context. Specific emphasis will be directed to
the 'planned' attributes of this form of settlement within the
regional and national network of Canadian urban development. The
outline of the paper will be as follows:

1. Definitions and overview

2. Importance to Canada of the resource-based community

3. Patterns of change in the evolution of the resource town

    - early stages

    - permanent settlement (company dominated)

    - transition from company control to mixed private and
      public involvement

4. Stages and characteristics of resource town development
   (economic, demographic and social)

5. Resource towns as planned communities

6. Some dilemmas of resource towns

7. The resource town as symbol

An attempt at understanding and highlighting the most critical
problems and issues related to this form of settlement will be
presented and provision for analysis of areas dealing with future
research and investigation will be undertaken.

C. Paul M. Koroscil (Simon Fraser) - "A Historical Perspective of
Planning and Development in Yellowknife and Whitehorse".

Canada is being rapidly transformed into an urban environment.
The form of standardized criteria that has been used to indicate

this transformation is demographic data related to the size or
density of population. The Canadian North, defined as that
territory North of 60° latitude, has become a part of this trans-
formation. In this area, the change has been slow in comparison
to the rest of Canada. The two most significant centres that can
be classified as urban, demographically, are Yellowknife, in the
Northwest Territories and Whitehorse, in the Yukon Territory.

The initial development of these cities can be attributed to a
single economic enterprise, gold mining. In the case of
Yellowknife, the settlement arose because of gold at the site
whereas in Whitehorse's case, the settlement began as a
distribution centre for the miners who were on their way to the
Klondike gold fields.

Both settlements are virtually creatures of the twentieth century.
The concept of planning of both settlements was not a new
innovation within the context of the North American scene. The
planning process related to mining and associated supply centres
had taken place in the United States in the middle of the
nineteenth century.[1]

The purpose of this paper is to historically compare and contrast
the aspects of decision-making in the planning and development of
Yellowknife and Whitehorse from their origins to the post-war
period. To accomplish this purpose, the city-building process
framework[2] will be employed. In utilizing this framework, the
city is viewed as an artifact, a physical container within which
complex human and institutional relationships are found. This
physical container or environment consists of a structure; the
individuals, groups, institutions and service facilities
spatially distributed across the city in response to certain
fundamental living needs and activities, and form; the visually
perceptive features of the city which the structure produces.[3]

Within this framework, the following two stages will be
investigated. First, the planning and development decisions by
the respective economic institutions, Consolidated Mining and
Smelting Company and the White Pass and Yukon Route, which
created the two settlements and the local political bodies the
Boards of Trade, will be examined together with their impact on
the spatial organization, functional and residential growth, of
the two communities. Secondly, with incorporation of the two
settlements, the planning and development decisions by the new
economic institutions and the local political bodies that arose
will be examined along with the resultant changes in the spatial
organization, functional and residential growth, of the two urban
centres.

In the historical growth of both settlements a minimal to total
awareness planning philosophy by institutions and local groups
will emerge.

Notes

1. See John W. Reps, "Bonanza Towns: Urban Planning on the
    Western Mining Frontier", in Ralph E. Ehrenberg (ed.),
    Pattern and Process: Research in Historical Geography,
    Howard University Press, Washington, D.C., 1975, pp. 271-289.

2. See Roy Lubove, "The Urbanization Process: An Approach to
    Historical Research" in Alexander B. Callow, Jr. (ed),
    American Urban History, Oxford University Press, New York,
    1973, pp. 660-671.

3. Ibid., pp. 660-661.

. . . .

Session on: *The Cities and Local Government*

A. Jim Anderson (Alberta) - "The Municipal Reform Movement in Western
    Canada".

    The great movement for municipal reform in Canada rose during the
    latter decades of the nineteenth century and culminated in the

aftershock of the First World War. In this period of rapid
urbanization and industrialization a great variety of social and
humanitarian reform proposals were put forward. An equally
important aspect of the movement was the crusade to change the
traditional structure and function of urban government.

Schemes designed to restructure urban government were most fully
worked out in Western Canada. Several key aspects of local
government reform in cities in the prairie region are examined in
this paper. Particular emphasis is given to municipal reform in
the city of Edmonton prior to 1920.

In response to the growing public function of the modern city,
reformers sought to ensure that benefits and sanctions emanating
from local governmental institutions conformed to their peculiar
conception of the public interest. Urban government reforms were
primarily, but not exclusively, initiated and implemented by
Western urban business elites. The role of organized labour in
opposing and supporting particular reforms is also analyzed.

Reformers sought to replace the traditional ward-based elections
with a city-wide electoral system. Similarly, the council-
committee form of government was often modified with a variety of
schemes designed to strengthen the civic executive and to
separate policy formulation from administration. A third and
related element in the 'reform package' was local non-partisanship.
Political parties active at the Federal and Provincial levels
were to be kept out of civic affairs in part by abolishing wards
and underming the strength of councillors by restructuring the
civic executive.

The importance of a study of local government change during the
municipal reform era is underlined by the fact that structural
reforms initiated during this period still persist in many

Canadian cities and the class and partisan bias inherent in these structures continues to affect urban residents. Moreover, attitudes which became firmly entrenched during the early crusade for municipal reform have had a lasting effect in restricting legitimate political debate to a narrow range of municipal issues.

While the American municipal reform movement had a strong influence on Canadian reformers, an examination of the indigenous factors in local government reform in Canada is essential to an understanding of the movement. The origin of many measures for the reform of Western Canadian municipal government can be traced back to Ontario, for example. Also, changes in the "form" of local government in the West – (e.g., the Commission board plan) were unique in certain respects and the strong tradition of non-partisanship in the West served to reinforce the anti-party attitude in local politics. Similarly, the tradition of dividing municipal expenditures on the basis of wards under the control of individual aldermen led to allegations of inefficiency and abuse that served as an important indigenous factor in the attack on the ward system.

Political scientists have devoted very little attention to the municipal reform movement in Canada. Too often they have assumed that the reform of urban government in Canada was a 'miniature replica' of the American movement. Canadian urban historians have, in the last few years, begun an examination of municipal government reform in a Canadian context which provides political scientists with the basis for developing a new perspective on Canadian local politics.

B.   Ed Rea (Manitoba) – "Myths & Men: Political Power in Winnipeg, 1919-1975".

By using Winnipeg as a test case, this paper attempts to refute the political mythology of non-partisanship or independence in

civic administration in Canada. It contends that Winnipeg, at least, had an organized, functioning party system from 1919 until the present time; and further, that one party has dominated the city's government throughout the period.

The paper proceeds from the premise that in a free society there is no such thing as non-partisan election. The fundamental polarization of the Winnipeg polity is described as well as the early financing and organization of the anti-labour group which quickly seized control. Group biography reveals the effects of a consistent recruiting pattern and the inherent class bias of this political organization. An examination, over time, of the election rhetoric of this party - referred to generically as the Citizens' League - indicates the manner by which they achieved such astounding success at the polls that they have not lost control of Winnipeg City Council in over fifty-five years.

A more important question to be addressed, however, deals with the impact on the development of the city of this political dominance. What specific issues produced high levels of party cohesion. Were they persistent over time? And with what results for the city and its people? A roll-call analysis of voting on Winnipeg Council is employed to try and resolve these problems. A summary of the implications of such party control will conclude the paper.

. . . .

Session on: *Strategies for Growth: Guelph as a Case Study*

A. Leo A. Johnson (Waterloo) - "Guelph: Ideology and Political Economy of Growth, 1827-1927".

The development of Guelph as a significant secondary urban centre represents the triumph of a business community over an environment

which yielded few natural advantages. Lured to the location by
the extravagant promises and clever promotions of the Canada
Company, Guelph's businessmen found themselves trapped in a
century-long struggle to prevent the loss of their business
investment and to develop an economic environment which would
allow its profitable exploitation.

Critical to their success was the self-conscious development of a
theory of political economy which, although it originated with
the interests of a mercantile community serving an agrarian
hinterland, was sufficiently sophisticated and flexible to enable
them to perceive and to undertake the creation of an industrial
city as a strategy to enhance their mercantile prosperity. In so
doing, they found it necessary to reject theories of free trade
and to create an ideological basis for large scale government
intervention in economic life.

Crucial to the development of their ideology was their definition
of mercantile opportunity: in effect, opportunity was roughly
equated with the number of customers resident in the market area
times the individual wealth of those customers. Thus opportunity
could be enhanced in three ways: increasing the market area (road
and railway building and improvement), increasing economic
returns to customers (encouraging agricultural improvement and
capital investment), and increasing the number of customers in
the area (immigration and industrialization). Before 1880
attention was focused on the first two strategies, after that date,
on the third.

Not only did the local mercantile community conclude that their
own prosperity depended upon having the greatest number of
prospering customers, but that unless those customers were them-
selves directly producers of wealth, any prosperity based upon
their acquisition would be short lived. Thus a maximum strategy

depended not merely upon the promotion of the circulation of
commodities, but upon their local creation as well. To that end
Guelph's merchants consistenly advocated - and later subsidized -
both agricultural and industrial production in the area. Once it
became clear that increased prosperity from exploitation of the
agricultural hinterland was severely limited by slow growth,
transportation costs and commercial rivalry by other centres,
they turned inward to the fostering of industry and the creation
of a large industrial working class as their new means to
commercial growth.

In pursuit of industrial expansion, the Guelph mercantile
community's strategy shifted from advocating municipal and
provincial subsidization of roads and railroads to the direct and
indirect subsidization of factories. When direct grants and tax
rebates proved to be inadequate, they turned to municipal
ownership of utilities - water, sewage, electricity and street
railways as means of indirect subsidization.

In the long run, these methods proved to be effective only as
long as competing centres were slow to adopt them. Once other
cities began to use similar tactics, Guelph's advantages
disappeared, and continued subsidies became indispensable as a
means to keep what industry that had been established locally.
Faced with extremely active competitors, Guelph's growth slowed
and dreams of expansion faded. In the end the city's mercantile
community settled into an uncomfortable acceptance of the city's
limited future. It was not until after World War II that dreams
of grandeur and increased wealth returned.

. . . .