

# Urban Planning

## The State, Urban Planning, and Politics

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## Capitalism, The State, and Urban Planning

Cities play an important role in our society by providing places to live and work. The way a cities is planned is thus an important and contentious issue. Because there is potentially a lot to gain or lose in the field of governance—there sometimes forms what's known as a ‘growth coalition’.

In the contemporary North American city, the state plays an important role in sustaining capitalist production. This can be seen in planning policy as the majority of decisions are ‘who gets what and why’

**Growth Coalitions** Growth coalitions are groups of business organizations and politicians who use their money and influence to maintain their common business interests with little regard for the people living in the city. They tend to focus on land policy in a way that promotes future land value growth as well as public-private partnerships. Thus, if we can see how influential these groups are, we are forced to ask the same question as previous classes: Cities For Whom?

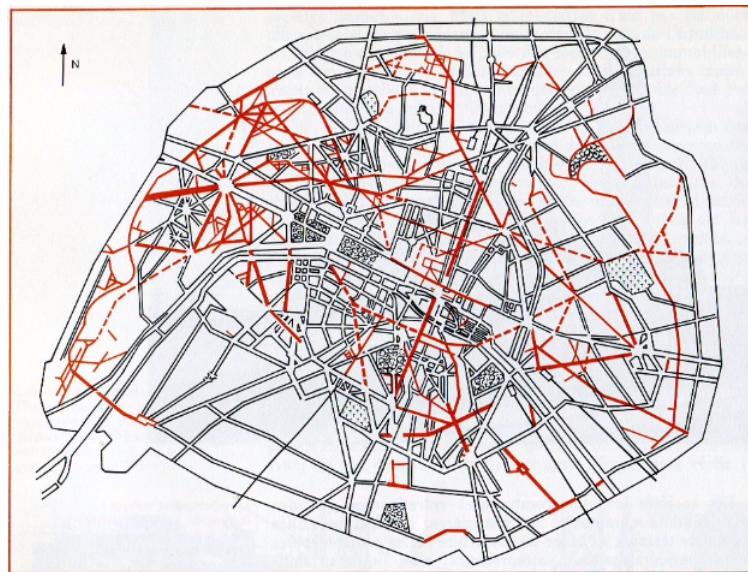
An example is the HighLine in New York City, where an abandoned railway was turned into a park, and making it a worldwide tourist attraction. It brought a lot of opportunities for investment; but it also disenfranchised and made the area un-liveable for the existing residents.

## What is Planning? A Modern Profession

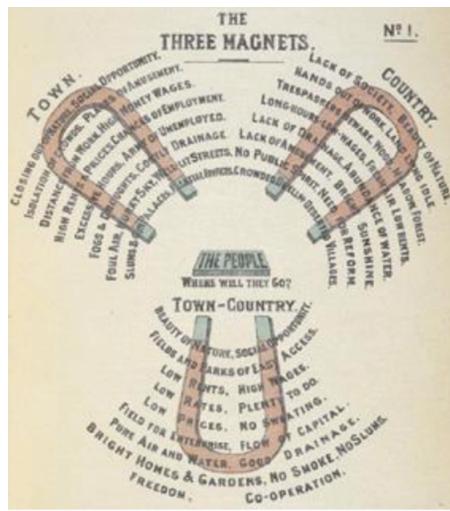
Urban planning is the process of designing and managing change in the urban environment. There is planning as a ‘transhistorical’ practice that has existed as long as cities have; and planning in the context of the modern industrial and postindustrial city.

**Planning as a Modern Profession** As the industrial revolution began and went on more people came to cities that were never meant to hold such a large population, thus the job of a ‘planner’ was born. This new profession began in Europe as a modern, utopian, idealist way of thought of the city.

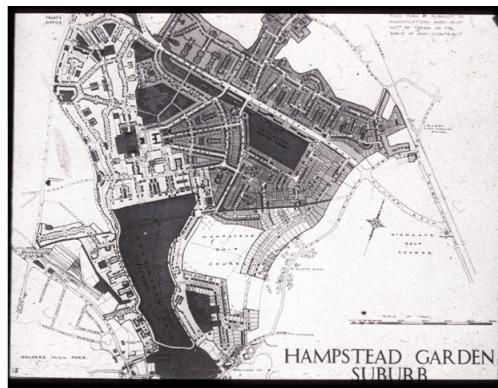
**Haussman's Paris** An example of planning in the industrial city is Haussmann's remaking of Paris. During the industrial revolution Paris was a dark and cramped place which was very helpful to urban revolutionaries blockading roads. It was so unpleasant in fact, Napolean III demanded that the situation be rectified and so Baron Haussman was tasked with redesigning Paris. He created long, expansive boulevards and mandated a strict code for the appearance of buildings in central city. While this certainly improved the appearance of the city, it did so without regard for the existing residents and plowed through many homes to make way for the new roads and buildings.



**Howard's Garden City** The idea of the garden city is to create satellite cities outside of a major urban area. These would be inexpensive properties built around a factory or industrial complex. What is unique about the Garden City however, is that the people would share ownership of the land and 'city'. This provided a safe and affordable place for people to live—near a city but without the clamour. And in the country—without the idleness.



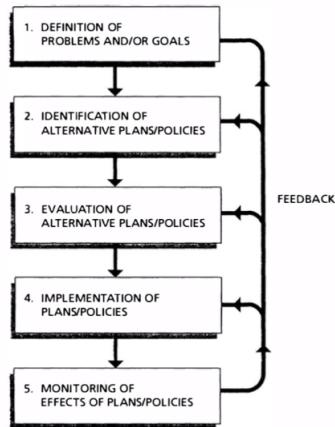
Unfortunately, the radical elements like changing who owns the land and the social order were stripped from the implementations of the Garden City; resulting is merely, very well designed Suburbs



## Evolutions in Planning Thought

Since the 1950's there have been many changes to how urban planning is thought of. In the 50's, the scientific method was very prevalent in many professions; this resulted in the planning practice becoming a practice of science.

**The Rational Planning Model** Edward Banfield introduced the Rational Planning Model. This promoted the idea of planning as an objective science.



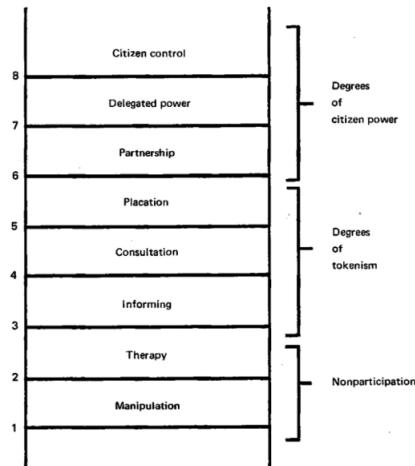
This idea however, was challenged by the 60's.

**Robert Moses** The most infamous proponent of Rational Planning is Robert Moses; who blew through whole neighborhoods with Highways in New York City with genuine and blatant disregard for people's wellbeing. Only focusing on the fact that he was able to build the leviathan that was the Cross-Bronx Expressway.

**Jane Jacobs** Jacobs was the loudest opponent to Moses in NYC and rational planning in general. She argued that cities are inherently complex and assuming that the simple, rational solution is the best solution is incorrect. She says that people should be allowed more involvement in urban planning.

**Urban Renewal** Urban Renewal was the term used by planners in the 60's to justify the demolition of so-called blighted areas. These blighted areas tended to be made up of minority communities which were chosen because of their ethnic makeup. An example of urban renewal is the destruction of AfricVille in Halifax, N.S. There was however, resistance similar to Jacobs' methods like conducting alternate surveys and studies. Although, This did not help them in the same way it Jacobs and New York.

**Real Public Input Planning Processes** In 1969 the idea of public opinion was more important in the planning profession, as is shown by Arnstien's Ladder of Participation.



This was also done through the idea of the planner as an advocate for the disenfranchised by communicating with the community. Generally, there was a shift towards a more communicative approach to planning.

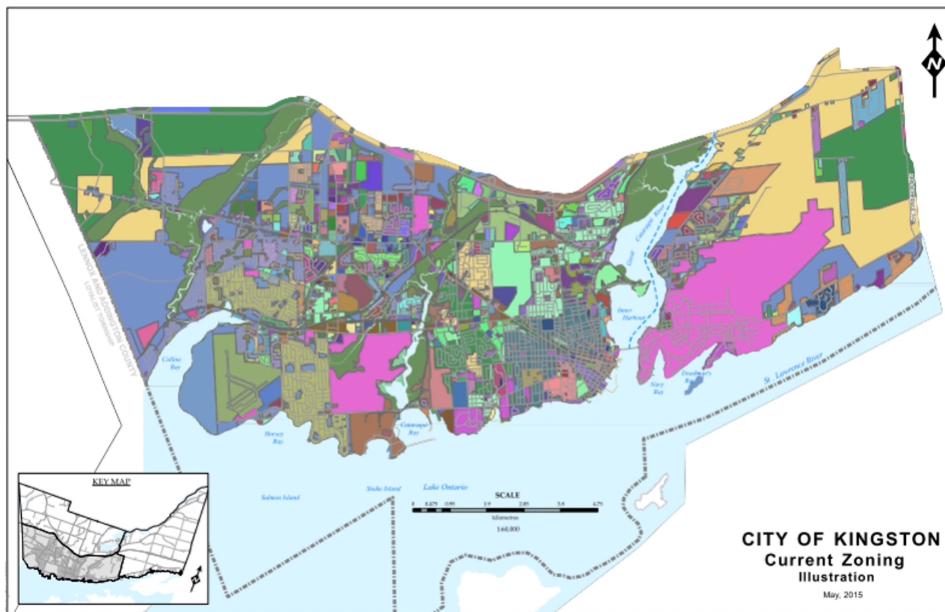
**Indigenous Concerns** Urban planning has bee used as a tool in Canada in order to illigitimize claims by indigenous peoples on the land being occupied by settlers.

**Growth Oriented Planning** Most cities are planned with growth in mind, however this way of thought is not sustainable and thus is not a way to move forward in the future.

## Contemporary Planning Practice

The primary form of planning in the modern world are zoning and official plans.

**Zoning** Zoning is the restrictions on land for what can be built there. Below is a zoning map of Kingston Ontario. Zoning is essentially the map for how people envision and imagine the city to be



There are however, mechanisms that allow a developer to build outside the zoning requirements.

**Plans** Official Plans and Secondary Plans are a more proactive than zoning, focusing on the future growth of the city and policy framework to guide the city. A Secondary plan is one that is more detailed than the Official plan, but less than the Zoning plan.

**New Urbanism** New urbanism draws on urban design interventions to promote walkable, mixed-used neighbourhoods: “design principles produce a life that is well worth living by providing places that enrich, uplift, and inspire the human spirit”

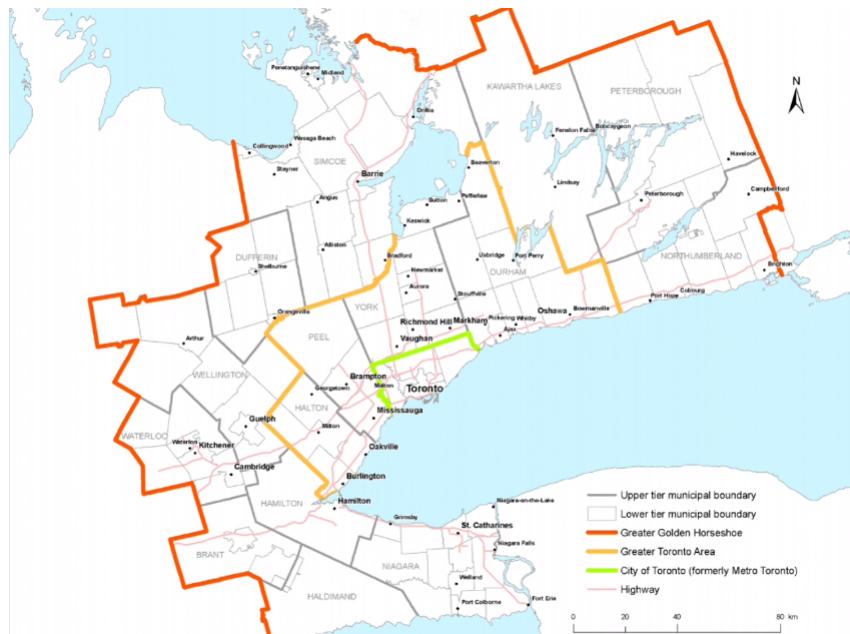
## Planning and the Metropolitan Region

The regional scale of many urban problems does not always match up with existing municipal boundaries. Drivers of Regionalism include:

- Population Growth
- Download of Responsibilities
- The new international division of labour

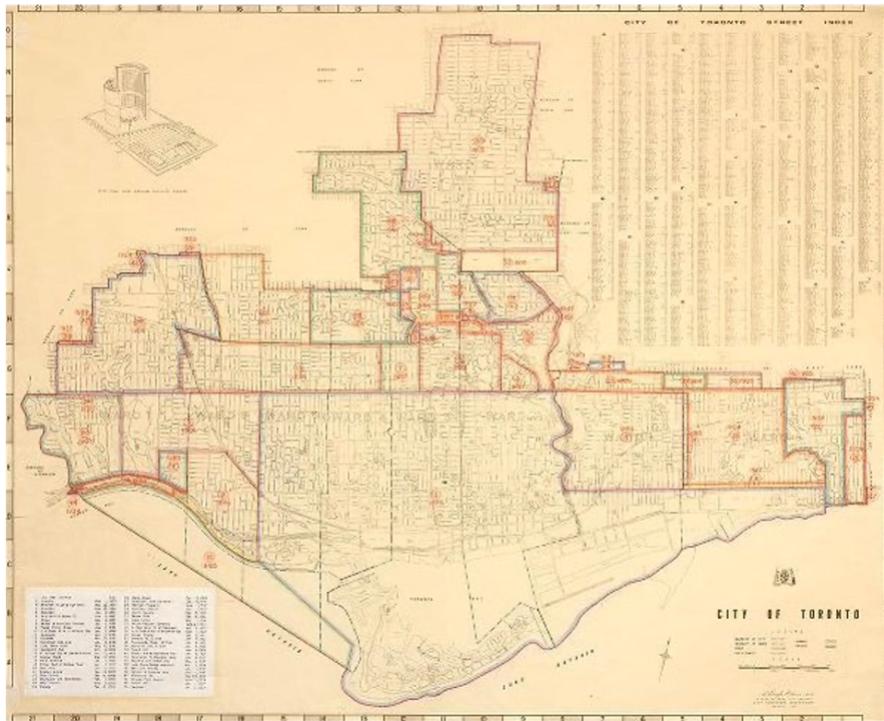
There are many ways to address regionalism that we will discuss.

**New Regionalism** This is the idea that government organizations should cooperate as a region in order to better plan and work together as a region. The problem with this idea however, is that these government organizations do not often work together and there aren't necessarily political means to do so. Furthermore, they tend to compete with each other for investment. An example of a Regional city where many municipalities are within the same metropolitan region is Toronto Ontario



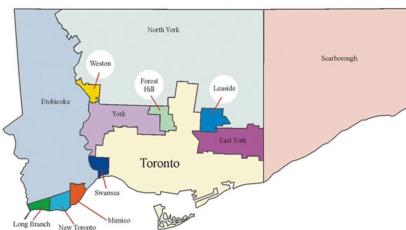
The delineation of the region often shifts based on the identified problem or based on institutional boundaries.

**Annexation** the way cities used to govern a region is through annexation by annexing areas that are thought to be a part of the city. Below is the annexation map of Toronto from 1883 to 1967.



However, the regions that were annexed did not always want to be—fearing they would lose what made them unique.

**2 Tiered Systems** In 1954 during the peak of suburban development, Toronto designed and implemented a 2 tiered governmental system of Metro Toronto. This system allowed suburbs to still manage things within its self but also be a part of the regional coordination of the Metro Toronto Area.



**Intermunicipal Agreements** The idea of a intermunicipal agreements came with the neo-liberal consensus of ‘more government bad’ and so the intermunicipal agreement or special purpose body exists in order to coordinate municipalities on a specific issue without restructuring government