

American Society for Public Administration Series in Public Administration and Public Policy

# CITY PLANNING FOR THE PUBLIC MANAGER



Nicolas A. Valcik, Todd A. Jordan, Teodoro J. Benavides, and Andrea D. Stigdon

## City Planning for the Public Manager

Why should public administrators care about city planning? Is city planning not a field ruled by architects and public works personnel? Much of city planning in fact requires expertise in areas other than buildings and infrastructure, and with city planning expertise, urban administrators are empowered to make more informed decisions on matters that involve budgeting, economic development, tax revenues, public relations, and ordinances and policies that will benefit the community. *City Planning for the Public Manager* is designed to fill a gap in the urban administration literature, offering students and practitioners hands-on, practical advice from experts with diverse city administration experience, demonstrating where theory and practice intersect.

Divided into three sections, the book provides an overview of the life cycle of a municipality and its services, explores city planning applications for planners on a strict budget, and walks the reader through a real-life planning research project, demonstrating how it was formulated, implemented, and analyzed to produce usable results. Topics explored include justifications for specific city services, internal and external benchmarking used for city planning, common technical tools (e.g., GIS), legal aspects of planning and zoning, environmental concerns, transportation, residential planning, business district planning, and infrastructure. *City Planning for the Public Manager* is required reading for students of urban administration and practicing city administrators interested in improving their careers and their communities.

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First published 2017 by Routledge 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge 2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-1-4822-1456-7 (hbk) ISBN: 978-1-315-10167-5 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon by Apex CoVantage, LLC Nicolas Valcik would like to dedicate this book to Joe Valcik.

Todd Jordan would like to dedicate this book to his parents, who never hesitated to support and encourage him throughout the years.

Teodoro Benavides would like to dedicate this book to his sisters Irene M. Benavides and Patricia S. Benavides.

Andrea Stigdon would like to dedicate this book to her sister, Dr. Sharrah Pharr, whose unrelenting drive to improve the educational opportunities of disadvantaged children has been a source of inspiration.



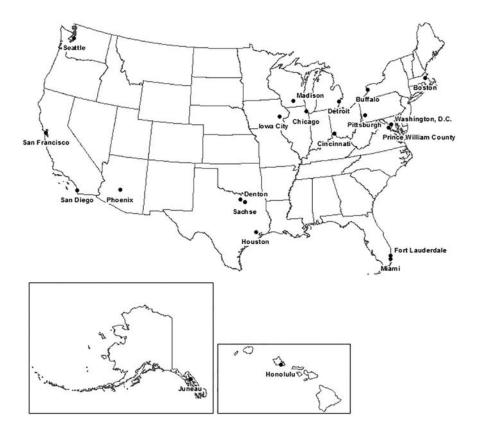
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## Foreword

For many years, I advised MPA students at the University of New Orleans. A majority of these students worked in local government, or aspired to do so. The curriculum was composed, for the most part, of required courses. In choosing electives, I always recommended city planning. We had an excellent introductory course, with an outstanding instructor. However, a general acquaintance with city planning is not exactly what the city government administrator needs to know. City managers need to think about the intersection of city planning with other management concerns.

To some degree, I compensated for this gap in teaching my own courses. I was well acquainted with the city planning literature, and I served on a city planning commission for twenty years. However, there was one basic problem in teaching city planning to administrators: the lack of suitable course materials. The International City Managers Association (ICMA) had published a book, *Management of Local Planning*. Its publication date of 1984 is more than thirty years ago, at this writing.

*City Planning for the Public Manager* is an attempt to fill this void. In my view, it does so, successfully. The heart of the book is found in the chapters related to the fundamental work of local government planning: budgetary issues, environmental concerns, housing problems, transportation planning, and economic development questions. The numerous examples enhance the reader's experience.

The authors bring a rich and varied background to their work. Nick Valcik is Director of Institutional Research at the West Virginia University, and has extensive background in local government. Ted Benavides was the City Manager of Dallas, Texas, and is currently a Clinical Professor at the University of Texas at Dallas. Todd Jordan is the Director of Community Impact for the United Way of Wyandotte County, Kansas. Andrea Stigdon is an administrator in the Office of Strategic Planning and Analysis at the University of Texas at Dallas.

All readers—students, practitioners, and general readers—can look forward to an interesting experience with this book. They will find a great deal of applied knowledge, and considerable food for thought.

> Robert K. Whelan University of Texas at Dallas (retired)

## Preface

Why should public administrators care about city planning? Is this not the field ruled by architects and public works personnel? The truth is that understanding city planning is critical for upper-level public administrators who wish to become a director of a department, an Assistant City Manager, or a City Manager in any size municipality or county administration. City planning is more than just buildings and infrastructure. City planning is about using or obtaining resources for a long-range plan, which allows a city to grow, to thrive, and to exist. Physical planning is only part of the equation. The other part of the equation has to do with public administrators working with people in their own organization, elected officials, federal and state officials, and yes, even the residents within their community. To work with so many entities successfully, the public administrator needs to have a good understanding of how and why city planning occurs throughout the many facets of city planning.

In today's complex society, the needs of planning for municipalities have only increased. With the advent of new technology and new environmental concerns, city planning has evolved and will keep evolving over the next fifty years. The days of driverless cars, remote access, and green buildings are fully upon the city planner. Where cities once had intents to draw big corporations into their realm to create jobs and tax bases, the chance of drawing in new residents to their communities for those jobs have decreased with the ability to have many jobs worked remotely and even outsourced to different countries.

Additionally, many jobs that were previously required for manufacturing have disappeared entirely due to automation or manufacturing sub-components from abroad. Car manufacturers such as Ford, GM, and Chrysler all have parts manufactured in other countries and in many cases the entire vehicle is assembled in other countries such as Canada and Mexico. Once proud and vibrant cities such as Detroit that relied on these industries have struggled to retain residents, services for residents, and the inherent culture of their municipalities.

Other cities such as Pittsburgh have defined their city from a steel city of old to a new city of technology and medical research. Downtown areas in older cities such as Washington, D.C., Dallas, and New York City, have been redeveloped for downtown living and businesses within those communities. The new challenge for cities going forward is how to adapt to an ever-changing world to retain residents, a tax base, and their identity all while cutting down emissions, providing green spaces, and planning to have a vibrant community where people want to live, raise a family, and spend time after their work day is completed. Over the past few decades the culture of work has been evolving, which has impacted municipalities' city planning. Workers are now working remotely and many organizations offer flexible hours, which impacts traffic flow patterns. Other issues for city planners are the over-arching aspect of economic development with a goal to increase revenue for not only municipalities, but also the surrounding communities.

In many instances, economic development is used to redevelop areas of a city which has previously been in decline and needs an injection to revitalize the city or a particular community in the city. Cities will need to be cautious, however, since economic development can be extremely costly without resulting in the city benefiting economically (e.g., athletic stadiums). So, city planning is crucial in not only determining how a project should be planned within the city, but also if the project *should* go forward in the first place.

National elections will always influence city planning since funding can be uncertain during political changes in which political party has control of the legislative or executive branch. Whether federal funding is increased or decreased to fix cities' infrastructure remains to be seen when a new administration comes to power in Presidential elections. Depending upon what funds are made available, this could be an economic development opportunity for cities to redevelop some of their areas for new businesses and make existing tax bases more stable. However, if the funding is decreased by political decree or by a miscalculation with budgeting, then an economic downturn could end up crippling many municipalities across the nation.

With the Republican Party now in the majority of statehouses (Democrats losing 850 seats, 12 Governorships) and legislative positions (Democrats losing 39 House seats and 3 Senate seats) in the United States, only time will reveal whether or not federal programs are slashed that benefit municipalities (Brownstein, 2017). Agency theory would support the notion of a tendency for politicians to gain funding for their area of influence. A politician's votes determine whether or not he retains his elected position no matter what political party he represents. What does matter for local elected officials is what party is in control at federal and state levels who will dictate and direct funding to their party counterparts at the local level (e.g., mayors, etc.). What tensions occur between the federal, state, and local levels of government are also uncertain at this point in time in regard to funding and projects being supported for economic development.

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Whether or not political parties change, the challenge of city planning will remain for practitioners and the issue of resources will need to be addressed by elected officials and city administrators. The authors who have worked on this book realized there was a shortcoming in material for both students and practitioners in the field of city planning, which can potentially be very complex to develop and implement. For such an important topic, the authors felt there needed to be a book dedicated to the applied aspects of city planning which could be linked to more theoretical sources. The authors for this book have a wide variety of knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as experience, which is beneficial to providing different perspectives and insights into the field of city planning. It is the authors' hope that many students and practitioners will benefit from the material within this book to better their careers and their communities.

#### References

Brownstein, R., 2017. "What happens to the democratic party after Obama?", *The Atlantic*. January 12, 2017. Retrieved on February 8, 2017. www.theatlan tic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/the-post-obama-democratic-party/512885/

## Acknowledgments

#### Nicolas A. Valcik

I am very fortunate to work with such a fantastic group of authors. I would really like to thank all the co-authors—Teodoro, Todd, and Andrea—for their great work on this book. Without teamwork and all the authors working on this book, it would not have been completed.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Stuart Murchison who was a friend and colleague to many of the authors on this book. Originally, Stuart was to work on this project with us, but Stuart became ill and passed away before he could begin working on the book. We all miss Stuart and we remember all the work he did with us as a researcher and faculty member.

I would like to thank my co-workers and colleagues who provided support and encouragement while working on this book. I would like to thank the employees in my department who work exceptionally hard and diligently for West Virginia University while making everything look easy. Most of all, I would like to thank my friends, family, and wife Kristi for their love and support of all my endeavors.

#### Todd A. Jordan

I would like to thank Dr. Nicolas Valcik for always being willing to offer chances and opportunities to his students, aside from being a wonderful teacher. I would also like to thank Ted Benavides for being an excellent instructor as well as a great colleague. I owe a great deal to the University of Kansas and the University of Texas at Dallas for providing me with a solid foundation to be an academic and practitioner. Finally, I cannot overstate the importance of my friends and family, who have pushed me when it was necessary, and helped me when it was needed.

#### Teodoro J. Benavides

I would like to thank my mother, Maria M. Benavides, and my father, Manuel T. Benavides, who encouraged me to go to college and become the first one in our family to receive a college degree. I would also like to thank my mentor, Dr. N. Joseph Cayer, who inspired me to seek a career in public service. Most of all I would like to thank my wife, Aretha, who is always on my side and has been the inspiration to continue my new career and passion, which is teaching.

### Andrea D. Stigdon

I would like to thank Dr. Nicolas Valcik for providing me the opportunity to contribute to this book. I would like to thank the University of Texas at Dallas for providing me with an exceptional working environment. Finally, I wish to thank my husband, Rusk Tarrant, for his love and support.

All the authors would like to thank Dr. Robert Whelan for reviewing this book and writing the foreword for this book. The authors would also like to thank Megan Curran for the GIS map in the "City Planning in Practice—Chapter Tie-in List." We would like to thank Donielle Maust and Jessica Michael for reviewing this book from an MPA perspective. We would like to acknowledge Dr. Shawn Reichert for performing the tedious duty of proofing and editing the book and Melissa Watkins for reviewing the manuscript for any possible legal issues. We would like to acknowledge Jeremy Tennant for his assistance and contribution on the "Housing and Neighborhood Integrity" chapter, and Keegan McDonald for his assistance and substantial contribution to production of the "Transportation" chapter. The authors would also like to thank the staff at Routledge/Taylor & Francis/CRC Press who have provided an immense amount of support to all of us on this project.

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with the City of Dallas, including director of the Budget and Research Department, assistant director of the Health and Human Services Department, assistant director of capital budget programs, capital budget administrator, and budget analyst. He joined the City of Dallas in March 1978. Benavides earned a bachelor's degree in Education, Political Science, and History from Texas A&I University (now Texas A&M University-Kingsville) and a master's degree in Public Administration from Southern Methodist University. He is also a graduate of both Leadership Dallas and the Executive Institute of the Texas Municipal League at the LBJ School of Public Affairs in Austin and is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. Benavides serves as the President of the North Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration and is on the Academic Relations Committee of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators. In 2014 Ted co-authored with Nicolas Valcik and Kim Scruton Non-Profit Organizations: Real Issues for Public Administrators for the ASPA series with Taylor & Francis. In 2011 Ted co-authored with Nicolas Valcik Practical Human Resources Management for Public Managers: A Case Study Approach for the ASPA series with Taylor & Francis.

Andrea D. Stigdon currently works at the University of Texas at Dallas in the Office of Strategic Planning and Analysis. She is responsible for completing various surveys (Peterson's, The Princeton Review, College Board, etc.), preparing charts, graphs, and presentations, and conducting comparative analyses of peer institutions. Andrea co-wrote the article "Working with Business Affairs Data for Mandatory Federal and State Reports", New Directions for Institutional Research: Using Financial and Personnel Data in a Changing World for Institutional Research, volume 140 (N. Valcik, A. Stigdon). Andrea was a co-presenter at the Association for Institutional Research 2015 conference in Denver, Colorado (L. Redlinger, S. Etheredge, A. Stigdon) and the Rocky Mountain Association for Institutional Research 2008 conference in Missoula, Montana (N. Valcik, L. Redlinger, M. Letteer, A. Stigdon, M. Worley, R. Wallace, S. Herzog, and S. Carrigan). Andrea prepared the graphics for "Institutional Research and Homeland Security", New Directions for Institutional Research, Volume 146 by Nicolas A. Valcik (Editor) and for "Chapter 21-Homeland Security in the United States: An analysis of the utilization of novel information and virtual technologies for Homeland Security" by N. Valcik, C. Aiken, X. Xu, and M. Al Farhan, in K. Jaishankar (Editor), International Perspectives on Criminology and Criminal Justice. Andrea designed the cover art for Terrorism and Espionage in the Middle East: Deception, Displacement, and Denial by H.H. Cooper and L.J. Redlinger; Regulating the Use of Biological Hazardous Materials in Universities: Complying with the New Federal Guidelines by Nicolas A. Valcik; Institutional Research Initiatives in Higher Education by Nicolas A. Valcik and Jeffrey Johnson; Hazardous Materials Compliance for Public Research Organizations: A Case Study by Nicolas A. Valcik; Extracting Data from Mainframe Applications Using Job Control Language, FOCUS, ACCESS and SAS by Nicolas A. Valcik; and The Fifth Dimension: Strategic Planning and Practical Aspects for Higher Education and the Public Sector by Nicolas A. Valcik. Prior to joining UT-Dallas in 1999, Andrea worked at Emporium Fine Art Galleries and at Sierra General Contractors. Andrea received a bachelor of arts degree in studio art from Southwestern University in 1995.



## Section I

## The Foundations of City Planning



# 1 Introduction

### The History of Cities in Europe and the United States

In *City Planning for the Public Manager*, the authors will explore various themes pertaining to the planning and management of cities. Although city administrators spend a great deal of time finding new methods for effectively and efficiently manage their cities, few people spend much time contemplating what a city actually *is*. Why do people live in cities? When did the first cities arise? How has the city evolved over time? What attributes define the concept of "city"? And how can knowledge of the origins and evolution of cities help to understand and manage the challenges that contemporary cities and their citizens now face?

Cities arose at a moment in history, in various places on Earth, when humanity learned to control their food supply through agriculture rather than rely upon hunting and gathering. As stated by Leonardo Benevolo in *The History of the City*:

Neolithic settlements were not sited in a purely natural environment, but in a part of nature transformed according to a human plan. It included cultivated land where food could be produced rather than merely gathered, shelters for people and for domestic animals, stores of food for a whole season or even longer, the equipment needed for crop-growing, cattle-rearing, defense, decoration and worship.

(Benevolo, 1981, page 10)

While our species has existed for approximately 200,000 years, human habitations that can be described as "cities"—with man-made structures, passageways, and apparent divisions of labor—arose roughly five thousand years ago and comprise, at most, 3 percent of human history. Even today there are people who continue to live in either hunter-gatherer societies, small farms, or as pastoral nomads. Thus, cities are man-made environments that did not always exist and do not impact all people on Earth.

Cities have four basic characteristics: continuity, complexity, concentration of people and capacity for self-renewal (Benevolo, 1981). Nomadic peoples commonly set up camps where they live for a time, but then disassemble the camp and move on when food becomes scarce. A city is decidedly more permanent, existing from generation to generation in one form or another. Structures are meant to be permanent and arranged according to use or importance. How these structures are arranged provides the city with complexity and often mirrors the complexity of the society that constructed them. A scattering of farms or camps cannot be considered a city because these groupings lack a sufficient concentration of people. Multiple, unrelated families living in close proximity to each other provide the sort of concentration typical of a city. Finally, a city must have some fluidity, some capacity to be changed by the people who live within it to meet changing needs and fluctuating populations. A city can be considered a malleable tool meant to meet the needs of its citizenry, even to the point of being completely remade if necessary.

The cities of the United States are the direct descendants of European cities whose basic traits have a lineage that stretches back into antiquity, particularly to the city-states of ancient Greece. Some cultures, like Babylon and Egypt, were ruled by kings who controlled the most land and wealth and maintained the largest armies. These cities were structured around the needs of their kings. However, ancient Greek society was more decentralized and relied upon input from various members within that society. Unlike Egyptian or Sumerian cities, Greek cities had no restricted or independent areas where ruling classes dwelled. Houses were all built similarly, only differing in size. There was a common area where people met. Hippodamus of Miletus is credited with being the first Greek to lay out a Greek city in blocks and to divide a city into three uses: private spaces for family dwellings, sacred places for worship and public places for political meetings, sport, commerce, and theater (Benevolo, 1981). The Greek government was responsible for maintaining the public areas and held influence over sacred and private areas. The city was an artificial organism set into a natural landscape that respected the lines of the countryside but held only a small link, if any, to nature itself. Greek cities wound around hills and mountains and flowed along rivers. The Greek city grid was expanded and set based on the needs of housing, not by temples or palaces, and was modified as the natural terrain influenced it (Benevolo, 1981). Any population growth either led to a new collection of buildings (thus giving rise to the concepts of "old city" and "new city") or a portion of the population left to form a colony elsewhere. It was important to the ancient Greeks to control the overall population of their cities so that a balance was struck between being large enough to amass an army for city defense but not so large as to become ungovernable (Benevolo, 1981). Thus the hallmarks of the ancient Greek city were unity, lack of rigidity, maintenance of balance with natural landscape, and stability of population growth (Benevolo, 1981). Grid layouts had been used before by other cultures, notably the people of the ancient cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa and other communities in the Indus

Valley area. City administrators would be wise to take note of the usefulness and longevity of a grid-pattern city plan and the clear division of public and private areas.

Another significant influence on modern U.S. and European cities was Rome. Rome's colonization and manipulation of its surroundings focused on three main aspects: creation of infrastructure (bridges, roads, fortifications, aqueducts), division of agricultural land into farmed units, and formation of new cities (Benevolo, 1981). Roman cities were significantly larger than their Greek counterparts. These cities could become larger because they were part of a larger, unified empire. Each city no longer needed to be solely responsible for its own defense nor was input from all citizens required for proper governance. Until the third century C.E., Rome had between 700,000 and one million inhabitants. The census for the end of the third century indicated there were 1,790 domus, single family houses typically inhabited by the wealthy, and 44,300 insulae, multi-family dwellings five to seven stories high with shops on the ground floors and apartments on the upper floors reserved for Rome's poorer residents (Benevolo, 1981). Although these apartments-called cenacula-had no running water, toilets, heating, chimneys for ovens or window panes, the rents were very high. The worst *cenaculum* could cost as much as a farm in the countryside, a situation that present-day residents of New York City know all too well.

Although residential buildings were constructed by private entrepreneurs, the city regulated the construction of the residences and intervened to set up and manage Rome's public services (Benevolo, 1981). The Roman government built the streets and regulated their size, but made it the citizens' responsibility to keep the streets clean. Roman government built roads and bridges to ensure that journeys were as straightforward and quick as possible (Benevolo, 1981). Roads were also used for a regular postal system to keep the empire connected and for transportation of goods. The government also built all the sewers and aqueducts (Benevolo, 1981). Aqueducts were a public service for public use, private consumption being of secondary importance. Aqueducts included water filtration and a reservoir system (Benevolo, 1981). The empire secured their land with walls and fortresses (Benevolo, 1981). Agricultural land was colonized and connected by a grid of secondary roads, lines of fortification, canals and property boundaries to ensure Roman administrative control over agriculture and economic trade (Benevolo, 1981). Some new Roman cities were set on old military encampments while some were established for civilian purposes along the pre-existing road grid (Benevolo, 1981). Cities established by the Roman Empire include Paris, Lyon, London, Vienna, and Cologne, which still retain traces of the old Roman grid system even after all these centuries (Benevolo, 1981).

The city of Rome also provided food and entertainment to the people. Over 150,000 people were fed at public expense and entertainments were free on the 182 days that were designated public holidays. The city's food supply came in through the Tiber River and then was distributed by a system of unloading points and storehouses. The functionality of the city depended on the political stability and overall wealth of the empire. When the Roman government became unstable and the aqueducts failed due to negligence, the people abandoned the city for the countryside or moved to parts of the city where they could obtain fresh water. This hollowed out the old city center (Benevolo, 1981). There are eerie parallels between the decline of Imperial Rome and the decline of Detroit and other Rust-Belt cities in the United States.

Another template of city living can be seen in the ancient cities of Islamic empires like the Ottomans. Islamic cities retained some ancient qualities with homes, palaces, and public areas forming inward-looking precincts. There were no public forums, theaters, stadiums, or other such structures. Only two categories of public building—baths and mosques—existed. Islamic cities had little regimentation with little central administration. There was emphasis placed on maintaining private homes and the privacy of family life as if each house was its own gated community. Cities became compact with each ethnicity living in its own quarter. City gates led directly into narrow streets clogged with shops, which discouraged large public gatherings. In a culture dominated by one sultan, large gatherings of potentially disgruntled people would not be welcome (Benevolo, 1981).

By the end of the tenth century, the settlement of invaders like the Vikings and the Huns along with improved agricultural techniques led to a population explosion in Europe. People moved to cities looking for work as artisans and merchants (Benevolo, 1981). The influx of new people could not be contained in the old, walled medieval cities. Therefore, suburbs sprang up around these cities to accommodate this new class of people, the bourgeois. These merchants and artisans wanted their cities to benefit them economically and personally. They wanted judicial and political autonomy from old feudal lords. They wanted their taxes to finance public projects, particularly defense (walls and armaments), that benefited them (Benevolo, 1981). These bourgeois groups ran up against old feudal families and church authorities, leading to new governmental structures that included three main bodies: a main council comprised of important, powerful families, a secondary council that held executive powers, and magistrates that arbitrated political disagreements between the administration and the people. In addition to this formal system of government, there were trade and military associations, or guilds, who elected their own magistrates. The Church placed their own officials on council seats to maintain influence (Benevolo, 1981).

In order to provide food and other raw materials for these ever-growing cities, the old, self-sufficient medieval manors had to reorganize to use the existing land more efficiently and to clear more land for agricultural use (Benevolo, 1981). Rural towns copied the municipal organization of these cities. They elected their own magistrates and generally had a good deal of personal freedoms (Benevolo, 1981).

Medieval streets varied considerably and were not just used as thoroughfares. They accommodated places to meet or conduct business. There was a balance between public and private spaces set as a compromise between public law and private interests (Benevolo, 1981). Public areas were complicated because they had to address the interests of many parties—religious authorities, municipal government, and trade guilds. Important cities would therefore have many centers (religious, civil, commercial) with overlapping areas. Cities were divided into quarters, each with their own character and political organization (Benevolo, 1981). The Renaissance gave rise to the importance of the artist in society and by extension the importance of the architect as a designer of buildings, public spaces, and the human environment (Benevolo, 1981).

Colonial powers imposed their concept of a city upon the native peoples of North, Central, and South America (Benevolo, 1981). In Latin America, the new cities followed a single plan: a checkerboard pattern of rectilinear streets containing a series of isolated blocks nearly square in shape. At the city center was a main block that held a cathedral, town hall, and the houses of rich merchants and colonists (Benevolo, 1981). A new type of city emerged, one that established a foundation not based on organic responses to the geography of the area but on a flat, map-like plan (Benevolo, 1981). Cities had to be able to grow so the checkerboard was designed to spread out in all directions as need be, block by block. There was no perceived need for a city wall for defense. Therefore, there was no clear delineation between city and country. Colonial houses had private courtyards while the city contained a large open area formed by the main square (Benevolo, 1981). City plans in Latin America were decided in Spain with no regard to the local landscape. Since future development was uncertain and haphazard, many cities grew quite large without ever changing their basic plans. English and French colonies soon adopted the Spanish checkerboard model for their own cities. While the grid and block system lacked artistry and symbiosis with the land, it successfully facilitated rapid economic growth. This new grid system was seen as universally applicable to cities, agricultural lands, even whole states. In 1785, Thomas Jefferson applied the grid and block system to land acquired in the Louisiana Purchase based upon the meridians and parallels on a map (Benevolo, 1981). This grid and block can still be seen in the square shapes of the Midwestern and Rocky Mountain states.

In the 18th century, London became a mosaic of small building ventures by individual landowners. It was the first middle class city in the modern sense. It was also the first to experience significant urban sprawl. Congestion and sprawl would only get worse during the Industrial Revolution (Benevolo, 1981). In the 18th century, the European population increased as technological advances and economic expansion improved standards of living and decreased infant mortality. More people required more goods and services. Europe and the United States experienced widespread redistribution of its population as farmers entered the cities looking for work in the new factories (Benevolo, 1981). Development of communication and transportation systems like turnpikes, canals, railways, and steamships, led to unprecedented mobility. Change now happened in decades, not generations. No problems had permanent solutions anymore. People came to see buildings, not as permanent parts of the landscape, but as temporary things that could be torn down and rebuilt as needs changed. Since Roman days, city governments owned vast tracts of public land and exerted influence over private lands. New trends in political thought championed by Adam Smith, among others, discouraged centralized urban planning by government as unnecessary. There was a massive sell-off of public lands to encourage quick private development (Benevolo, 1981).

The diminishment of government involvement with private enterprise fostered an astonishing pace of industrial development and urban construction. However, decentralized city development led to traffic congestion, squalor, and disease, which disproportionally affected the poorer members of society. By the mid-19th century, the wealthy of Europe and the United States abandoned city centers for the countryside. Inner cities became squalid and over-developed as landlords sought to increase their profits by cramming more people into their tenements (Benevolo, 1981). The social classes settled into distinct areas of the city with little overlap. While tenement buildings proliferated in the city interiors, luxury houses grew in the outskirts with little relation to the overall structure of the city or to each other. City unity fell apart (Benevolo, 1981).

Social upheaval became a concern in the mid-19th century due to the terrible conditions of the working poor who lived in these unplanned cities. Marx and Engels published the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in 1848 just as Europe was rocked by social revolutions. Green space, fresh air, art, and public beauty became the domain of the wealthy and were increasingly denied to the lower classes (Benevolo, 1981). This pattern of unregulated city growth was occurring in the United States as well as stated by John A. Peterson:

"As is well known, American municipalities then exerted few significant controls over their development. Private interests continually reshaped the city, erecting all manners of buildings, introducing drastically innovative modes of communication and transportation, and repeatedly extending suburban limits—virtually unconstrained except by forces registered through the market place. City growth, in short, was a helter-skelter process—haphazard, unregulated, and uncoordinated. Municipal officials commonly reinforced this