

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

NEW TOWNS - INTOWN AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SATELLITE TOWNS

by

MARGOT HUYBERS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

OCTOBER, 1979

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MARGOT ANNE HUYBERS

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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For my mother and my father,
who bore the brunt, put up
with my presence and absence
alike, and made it all possible.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the need to provide an option to suburban development and to satellite towns. This alternative may be the redevelopment of underutilized land within the central city.

A history of English Garden Cities and their Canadian counterpart, the satellite town, is described. Following this, their general advantages and disadvantages are discussed. In this way, the need for a similar development within the central city will have become apparent. Since all income groups can not afford to live in satellite towns, Canadians should be presented with the option of new towns -intown.

A new town - intown could be built in conjunction with urban renewal and rehabilitation programs. By redeveloping vacant and underutilized land, residents and businesses in the central city need not be displaced. Urban rehabilitation in the surrounding area would ensure that the new town - intown does not take on the appearance of a project.

There are three examples of Canadian new towns - intown. They are LeBreton Flats, Ottawa; False Creek, Vancouver and the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, Toronto.

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood is reviewed in detail as an illustration of a new town - intown's advantages and disadvantages. This 44 acre mixed-use community in Toronto's southwest has achieved its objective of providing diverse and affordable housing in an attractive environment.

From the examination of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, it is apparent that a public Development Corporation is essential for the planning of mixed-use communities in other Canadian cities. These public Development Corporations would have the authorization to override municipal rulings in the planning of new towns-intown.

Once legislation is passed for the provision of public Development Corporations, areas such as Winnipeg's East Yards and the Halifax Harbour may be redeveloped as new towns - intown.

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PREFACE

Interest in this topic of research stems from my concern with attractive, affordable housing for all Canadians.

As a life-long resident of Winnipeg, Manitoba I have witnessed the expansion of our urban boundaries. The high costs of this expansion has partially resulted in the deterioration of the central city.

This suburban exodus has been due to the high costs of land in the downtown as well as to the sad fact that suburbia has been our most viable alternative for raising a family.

An alternative to suburbia and downtown high-rise apartments demands the building of new forms of development. Satellite towns may be considered one such livable community. English new towns have been considered successful in providing attractive environments outside the larger urban boundaries as well as in relieving urban congestion.

Their Canadian counterpart was examined to determine whether they, also, have been successful in redistributing population. This background interest led me to the belief that an alternative to suburbia, other than satellite towns,

should be considered. A community in the central city may be the answer to the high costs of suburbia as well as to the erosion of the tax base in the downtown. New Towns - intown may be one such alternative.

This form of development may prove especially feasible for Winnipeg if its railyard in the north-end is relocated. A new town-intown could be built on this prime 200 acre location to provide a community near the central city.

May 1979

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to accept or refute the hypothesis that new towns-intown are an alternative to satellite towns.

In the literature, numerous terms have been used to designate new towns - intown. They include: new towns in-city, new towns in-town and new towns - intown. This author has chosen to use the original term which Harvey S. Perloff coined in May 1966.¹ New Towns-intown will be used throughout the thesis as well as the abbreviated NTIT, for brevity's sake.

The history of the New Town Movement will be discussed in Chapter I. As well, satellite towns, with emphasis on Canadian towns, will be investigated to determine their general advantages and disadvantages. It may then be determined whether they have fulfilled their original function of providing decent, affordable housing outside urban boundaries.

Chapter II will examine whether there is indeed an urban crisis in Canada and whether steps need be taken to alleviate it. Piecemeal efforts to slow down central city deterioration will then be considered. Urban renewal and

¹ Harvey S. Perloff, "New Towns-Intown", American Institute of Planning Journal, Volume 32, No. 3, (May 1966): 155-161.

rehabilitation have been the most widely-used tactics to date.

New Towns-intown may be able to provide the advantages of a satellite town within urban boundaries. In Chapter III, the concept of new towns-intown will be discussed using St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, Toronto as a case study. As the concept is so new to North America, a brief narrative analysis will be made on this particular development. After examining a NTIT's advantages and disadvantages, the thesis will go on to suggest implementation policies.

Policy guidelines are crucial if other Canadian cities wish to build new towns-intown. Chapter IV will outline these recommendations.

A number of planning terms will be used throughout the thesis. These terms will be defined in the following section.

* * * * *

DEFINITIONSNEW TOWN

a planned development that is built over a predetermined time period (usually 15-20 years) balancing the delivery of goods and services with the needs of a resident population (ranging from 100,000-500,000). They are built for the purpose of equalizing regional disparities in population and services

SATELLITE TOWN

a planned development built on the outskirts of a large urban centre for the purpose of relieving congestion in the existing city and of organizing future urban growth. The community contains from 15,000 - 175,000 residents. Although the town has some economic base it is not self-sustaining

NEW TOWN-INTOWN (NTIT)

a planned redevelopment in an existing city which facilitates central city revitalization. Resident population

which includes all income groups, is 8,000 - 30,000. A NTIT includes mixed use facilities and is not self-contained or self-sustaining. It acts as a "companion" to urban renewal by housing those residents and firms displaced in the renewal process. Unlike urban renewal, a NTIT is built on underutilized or vacant parcels of land. Therefore, there is little or no razing of structures on the site. As well, preservation of historic buildings is not a component of a NTIT

CENTRAL CITY

an area enclosed by the political boundaries of the municipality which is the historic core of the metropolitan area - Central Business District and the area in transition¹

¹ cf. Burgess, E.: "The Growth of the City", Park, R. and Burgess, E., (eds.): The City, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1967.

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING

housing which is built and/or
purchased by a group of people,
to be jointly owned by those who
will occupy it

NON-PROFIT HOUSING

housing which is built and/or
purchased by organizations in which
no part of the income is payable
or available for the personal benefit
of any resident, member or shareholder

* * * * *

NEW TOWN MOVEMENT

In this chapter, the history of the New Town Movement will be briefly examined with emphasis on satellite towns. Canadian satellite towns will then be discussed in order to determine their general advantages and disadvantages. In assessing their merit in today's urban framework, the need to provide an alternative to satellite towns may be considered.

HISTORY OF NEW TOWNS

The concept of new towns is not new. Philosophers throughout the ages have condemned the living conditions of their time and with reforming zeal have described the society of their dreams-the perfect state, the perfect city, the perfect system of government.

Aristotle and Plato both wrote of the perfect town, self-supporting and controlled in size to provide a cohesive social unit best suited to the needs of the time. While these Utopians were writing of their dreams, other people were building with their hands. Leonardo da Vinci was one of these, and he may be the true originator of the new towns hypothesis. He conceived and saw partly built a regional canal system in northern Italy. That regional system for land development was, in his mind a working foundation to a network of satellite towns.¹

¹ For further information see Mumford, Lewis: The City in History - Its Origins, Its Transformations, and its Prospects, Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., New York, 1961.

The squalor of the nineteenth century industrial cities in Britain brought to a head the need for new towns. At that time, large cities were regarded as being conducive to social, mental and physical pathologies. This point of view is derived from early nineteenth century conceptions of urban and rural life, as expressed in Disraeli's Sybil (1881) and first espoused by the entrepreneurs who founded model industrial cities.

Utopian idealists such as Robert Owens and socially conscious industrialists such as Wedgwood were responsible for a wave of new towns. As well, chocolate and soap manufacturers such as Cadbury, Rowntree, Lever and Price played a major role in the building of towns for their workers. Although these men were philanthropists, they were keenly aware that people living in a healthy environment would also be more efficient workers. The towns they built span the century from Owen's New Lanark (1816) to Cadbury's Bownville (1879) and Lever's Port Sunlight (1886).¹

The modern Garden Cities movement was founded by Ebenezer Howard, author of Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform (later revised as Garden Cities of Tomorrow).² The Garden City idea was developed as a solution to the problem of overcrowded

¹ These projects are further described in Thomas, Ray and Cresswell, Peter: The New Town Idea. Social Sciences - Urban Development (Unit 26), Open University Press, London, 1973.

² Howard, Sir Ebenezer: Garden Cities of Tomorrow, Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1902. First published in 1898 as Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform, London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1898.

and deteriorating cities. Howard's idea came from the writings of Thomas Spence, the land reformer, and James Silk Buckingham who had published a plan for a model insitutional town in 1848, as well as from travelling extensively through the United States. However, his most important influence was Edward Bellamy's futuristic novel, "Looking Backward".¹

Howard's proposal was a reaction against the nineteenth century megalopolis. He objected to the growth of the big city at the expense of the countryside, the crowded and noisy slums, the increasingly long journey to and from work, the unearned increment of the landlords and the rootlessness, dislocation and other social problems of the migrants from rural areas.

To reverse this trend, or at least to change its character, he devised a now classic image: three magnets labelled town, country and town-country are grouped around a triangle labelled The People: Where Will They Go? The town and country each contained advantages (the positive pole) and disadvantages (the negative pole). Only the "town-country" was free of all disadvantages, taking the best of the two.

In order for the town-country, or Garden City, to be successful Howard proposed five prerequisites:

¹ Bellamy, Edward: Looking Backward, World Publishing Company, Cleveland, Ohio, 1946.

- 1) land must be under single ownership and the town must be planned by an inter-disciplinary team of experts. This team would be employed by a Public Development Corporation
- 2) the town must grow in a balanced way (i.e. be self-sustaining at every stage) and only up to 1000 acres so that the city would be small enough for residents to walk to work, to shops or to school. It would be large enough to accommodate 32,000 people in houses with space for private gardens.
- 3) 5000 acres of greenbelt should surround both the residential and industrial to act as a buffer between them and to limit growth on the outskirts. This greenbelt could be optimally used for agricultural purposes.
- 4) the balanced community must include industrial, commercial, residential and cultural facilities
- 5) each town would have a thriving centre, including linkages to the larger central city¹

In order to minimize the distance between all points and make it a city for pedestrians, Howard's model for a Garden City was to be circular in shape. At the centre would be a garden surrounded by public buildings such as the town hall, the library and the hospital. Six roads were to radiate from

¹ The last chapter of Garden Cities of Tomorrow details the importance of larger cities as cultural, economic and political centres.

the centre, dividing the town into wards that would be neighbourhoods. The City would be further defined by a series of circular roads surrounding the centre in concentric rings. The commercial area would be clustered around the circular road nearest the town centre. The last circular road, on the outskirts of town, would be part of the industrial zone containing factories, warehouses and coal yards. In this way, industry could be near the railroad lines while the residential section would be completely separated from the smoke, noise and traffic of industry.¹

In 1900, Howard formed the Garden City Association and the first Garden City of Letchworth, England was built three years later. Since it was very difficult to find investors who were willing to take a great risk for limited (5%) return, the second Garden City of Welwyn was not built until 1921. It would never have been completed had not the Public Loans Board, under the Housing Act of 1911, began making loans to "authorized associations" involved in building Garden Cities.

Although both new towns have been considered successful² it was not until after World War II that British attention was focused on new towns.

¹ For more information on the design of Garden Cities, see Howard, E.: Garden Cities of Tomorrow, Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1902.

² Booth, Shirley: "A Crisis in Maturity", Town and Country Planning, Volume 43, No. 12, December 1975, p.541.

"One of the lessons of the second war was the need for the dispersal of population and industry... At an early stage of the war, development of aerial warfare showed the danger of large concentrations of population, and the danger increased until the atom bomb demonstrated what enormous destruction and loss of life could be caused even by a single bomb. The decision that large centres of population must be broken up followed."

In 1946, the New Towns Act was passed making the building of new towns a national policy. The New Towns gave the government the power to set up government-financed, public Development Corporations. Each Corporation would be responsible for building a single new town and would be given the authority to buy the land it needed, by direct purchase or by condemning it and then buying it. The British Trade Board has jurisdiction over the choice of sites for industrial expansion - a power which it utilized to draw factories to new towns.

Although the early British new towns suffered from a shortage of essential services, facilities and amenities due to financial restrictions, the more recent ventures (Mark II towns) have been successful. Since 1946, 29 new towns have been started.² They house over 1.6 million people. However, the new towns of England and Scotland have absorbed about 10% of population growth that has taken place since World War II.

¹ Purdon, C.B.: The Building of Satellite Towns, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., London, 1925, p.377-8.

² as of December 1974.

NEW TOWNS ELSEWHERE

By this time other European countries had become aware of the necessity to build new towns to disperse large cities population and to provide an alternative for people not wishing to live in the central city or its suburbs. Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands have been leaders in the field.

The new towns movement travelled to North America in the early 1920s when Clarence Stein returned from visiting Letchworth, impressed with the Garden City Association's work. He experimented with the concept by setting up the City Housing Corporation to offset the high cost and low supply of good housing for workers in New York. Morningside, an experimental housing project, was built to test the new towns idea. Response to the project was so overwhelming that he proceeded to build Radburn, New Jersey as America's first new town.¹ Radburn is an example of an important concept of the ideal Garden City, i.e. the separation of pedestrian from vehicular movement.

By this time Canada had also been active in the New Town movement. In fact one could say that all of Canada's cities are new towns due to their young age and the necessity to settle the hinterland. Canada's first new town is Ottawa, built in 1865. On the advice of her ministers, Queen Victoria

¹ Although the design was successful, the original Radburn was never completed due to the Depression. For a further description of Radburn, see Stein, C.: Toward New Towns for America. University Press of Liverpool, Liverpool, 1950, P.37-69.

chose Ottawa as the capital city of Canada. The most prevalent type of new town in Canada is the single-enterprise town. Examples are Kitimat¹, British Columbia, Canada and Leaf Rapids, Manitoba, Canada.

TYPES OF NEW TOWNS

Countries have constructed new towns for various reasons:

- 1) to ease urban congestion, e.g. Tapiola, Finland; Vallingly, Sweden; Mill Woods, Edmonton, Canada and Cumberland, England
- 2) to improve the quality of the environment, e.g. Meadowvale, Ontario, Canada and Columbia, Maryland, United States
- 3) to exploit natural resources, e.g. Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada and Los Alamos, Mexico
- 4) to relocate population to the hinterland by building a capital city, e.g. Brasilia, Brazil; Willow, Alaska, United States and Canberra, Australia
- 5) to assist in central city revitalization e.g., St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, Toronto; Welfare Island, New York City and Cedar - Riverside, Minneapolis.

The most frequent type of new town built is the satellite town which falls under types 1 and 2 above. For this reason, and to more fully understand the new town conception, satellite towns will be discussed in some detail.

¹ Partially designed by Clarence Stein of Radburn.

SATELLITE TOWNS

Satellite towns possess a number of features common to most countries involved in organizing future growth. They are:

- 1) that the town is spatially separate from the parent city and is built on land which has been acquired at a lower cost than that of land at the periphery of the built-up area of the city.
- 2) that the town is comprehensively planned by either public or private interests
- 3) that the growth of the town takes place in phases over 15-20 years
- 4) that there is a town centre containing a regional shopping centre and community facilities
- 5) that the town provide some employment for residents within the town

The term satellite town seems to have been first used by G.R. Taylor¹ in describing a number of industrial suburbs built in Chicago, St. Louis and other large American cities. He examined the tendency of these industrialists to establish satellite communities in the surrounding country in the form of manufacturers'towns, built for the employees of particular

¹ Op cit., Purdon, p.22

industries.

In Britain, the term satellite town was used to revitalize an older term, garden city. Of course the idea that towns should be regarded as satellites of larger urban areas was nothing new. The emphasis, however, was upon the idea of the town rather than upon the fact of its being a satellite and the object was to indicate that it was not a suburb.

Webster's Dictionary defines a satellite as a secondary planet revolving around the primary one. Likewise, a satellite town revolves around the larger city. An example is Tapiola which is a satellite of Helsinki, Finland. Although there is a visible separation from the larger city, in all cases the satellite town relies on the larger city for many services and employment. Most satellite towns employ only about 30% of their working population within the town's boundary.

The British experience demonstrates how difficult it is to ensure labour market closure. British authorities have had extraordinary power, since, in the face of housing shortages they made the assigning of housing conditional on local employment and vice versa.

"The British new towns still show about the same number of jobs as workers but, after some years, 7.3 workers enter and leave the town in their daily trip to work for every 10 who live and work in the same new town."¹

Tapiola, Finland has about as many jobs as they have workers but, residents work outside and outsiders commute to work inside. Although all satellite towns have some type of industry, it usually consists of light industries such as electronics factories and computer services or institutional facilities, such as airports.

A fine example of a thriving satellite town is Vallingby, outside Stockholm, which was planned in an effort to concentrate suburban growth. Vallingby is located on a rapid transit line connecting it with central Stockholm and has at its core a subregional shopping centre. Vallingby is clearly not a self-contained new town but provides an attractive environment for 23,000 people.

Population of satellite towns range from 20,000 - 100,000.² The age structure of satellite towns is highly distinctive. The largest population group is young adults (from 20-34 years) and small children. This phenomenon is due to the expanding family. Young families are the most

¹ Alonso, W.: "The Mirage of New Towns", Public Interest, Volume 19, Spring 1970, p.11.

² Golany, G.: New Town Planning: Principles and Practice, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1976, p.101.

common population group.

Like the original Garden Cities of Britain, satellite towns are divided into neighbourhood units or wards,¹ each containing community and recreational facilities as well as intersecting green space.

Satellite towns are not, generally, physically isolated entities. The governments of satellite towns are usually federated with other adjacent satellite towns or with the major urban centre.

"It is part and parcel of a metro region and has social, economic and physical relationships that have to be respected within the region and community as a whole. And, therefore, whether you like it or not, in planning the transportation system you have to recognize that there is, in place, or there is planned, a regional transportation system; roads, commuter rail intermediate capacity transit systems and what have you. Of course, the community design lives as a separate entity. It has its relations with the rest of the region, the area, and we have to respect the plans that are being made and the systems that are in effect."²

Satellite towns are built on the premise of providing innovations in housing and transit. Some of the new towns have been successful in this regard. Public transit systems have made some U.S. satellite towns renowned for their innovative transit. Reston Virginia's Commuter Bus Service and

¹ Keller, S.: The Urban Neighbourhood: A Sociological Perspective, Random House, New York, 1968, p.131

² Freedman, A.: "Thoughts on Transportation and Utilities," Pressman, N. (ed.): New Communities in Canada: Exploring Planned Environments, Contact, Volume 8, Number 3, Waterloo, 1976, p.78.

the Minnesota Experimental City are examples of this innovation.

As of 1979, the growth of satellite towns has slowed down. It had been predicted, in the mid-1960s, that the population of England and Wales would increase to almost 70 million by the year 2000. Such an increase meant that there would have to be a crash programme of house building and areas were sought where there could be major population increases. Satellite towns were one option which was considered because of the ability of the Public Development Corporations to build quickly and well. By the late 1960's a series of sites had been chosen which could help to house the expected population boom. Future growth to the year 2000 is currently based on population projections as much as 15 million lower than those of the mid 1960's.¹ The basic need for the new towns of Central Lancashire, Peterborough, Northampton, Warrington, Telford and Milton Keynes must now be seriously reconsidered. Apart from the lack of growth in the population there is also the clear lack of new mobile industry which might provide employment in new towns.

The major problem affecting U.S. satellite towns, apart from the slowdown in population growth, is the Department of

¹ Booth, S.: "A Crisis in Maturity" in Town and Country Planning, Volume 43, No.12, December, 1975, p.540.