



January 9, 2019

GREEN NETWORKS A Short History

A Very Selective History....

THEMES

1. Pioneers of green space systems
2. Greenspace systems and urban form
3. Early green neighbourhoods

EARLY GREEN SYSTEMS THINKING & PLANS
Olmsted(s), Kessler, Cleveland

ATWENTIETH CENTURY FUND ESSAY
OPEN SPACES
The Life of American Cities
AUGUST HECKSCHER



FREDERICK LAW OLNSTED



FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED 1822- 1903



Farmer, social reformer, journalist,
social critic, public administrator and...

First to coin “landscape architect”
Father of Landscape Architecture

designer of ~100 parks, park systems,
estates, 27 campuses

FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED (FLO)

With Calvert Vaux, designed
Central Park in 1858

Landscape architecture
consulting firm 1865- 1898

Olmsted Brothers: FLO Junior
and John Charles 1898- 1980



source Getty Images

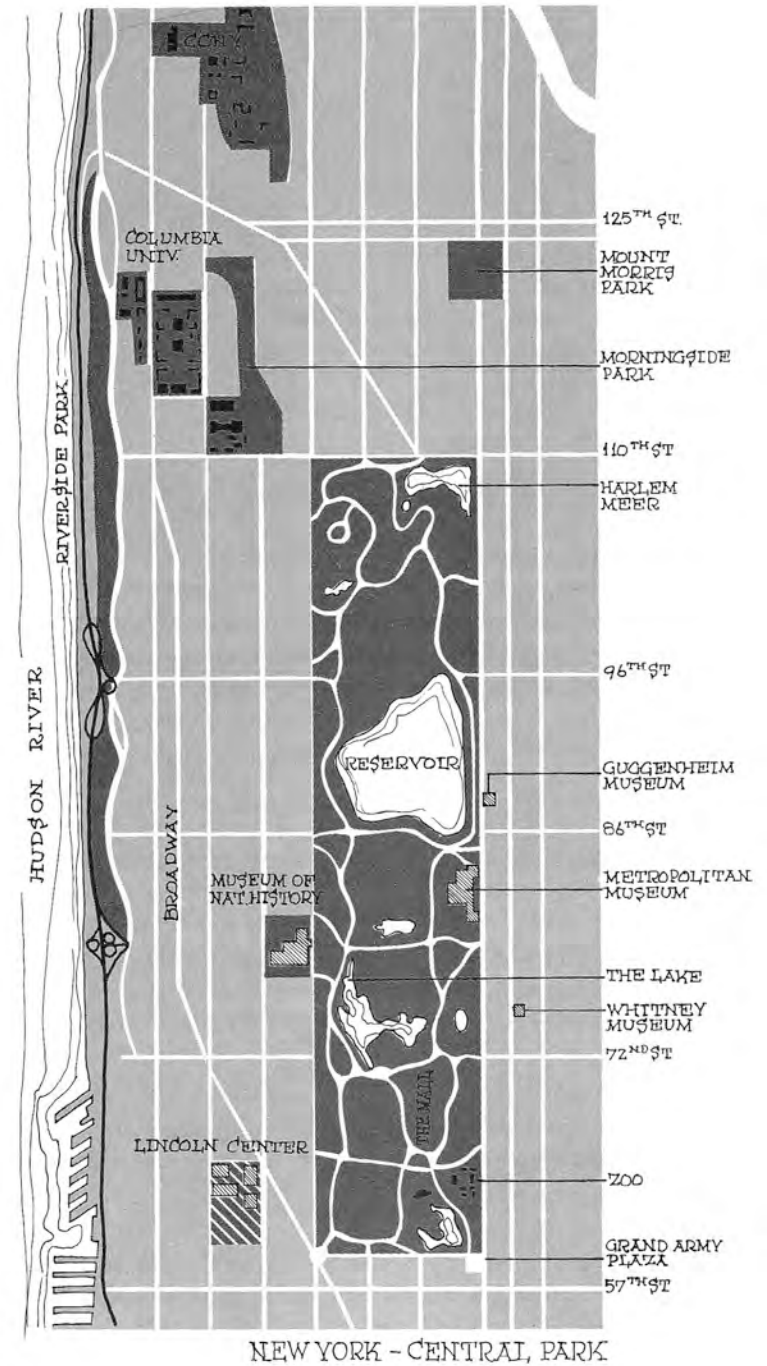
OLMSTED- Central Park, NYC

A place of respite for the working class from the industrial city

beauty, sanitation , health

Olmsted envisioned a system of green spaces extending throughout NYC - parkways and linear parks interconnecting the major parks

*Central Park - diagram showing Riverside,
Heckscher 1977 p. 169*



OLMSTED- Pleasure drives

Prospect Park, Brooklyn

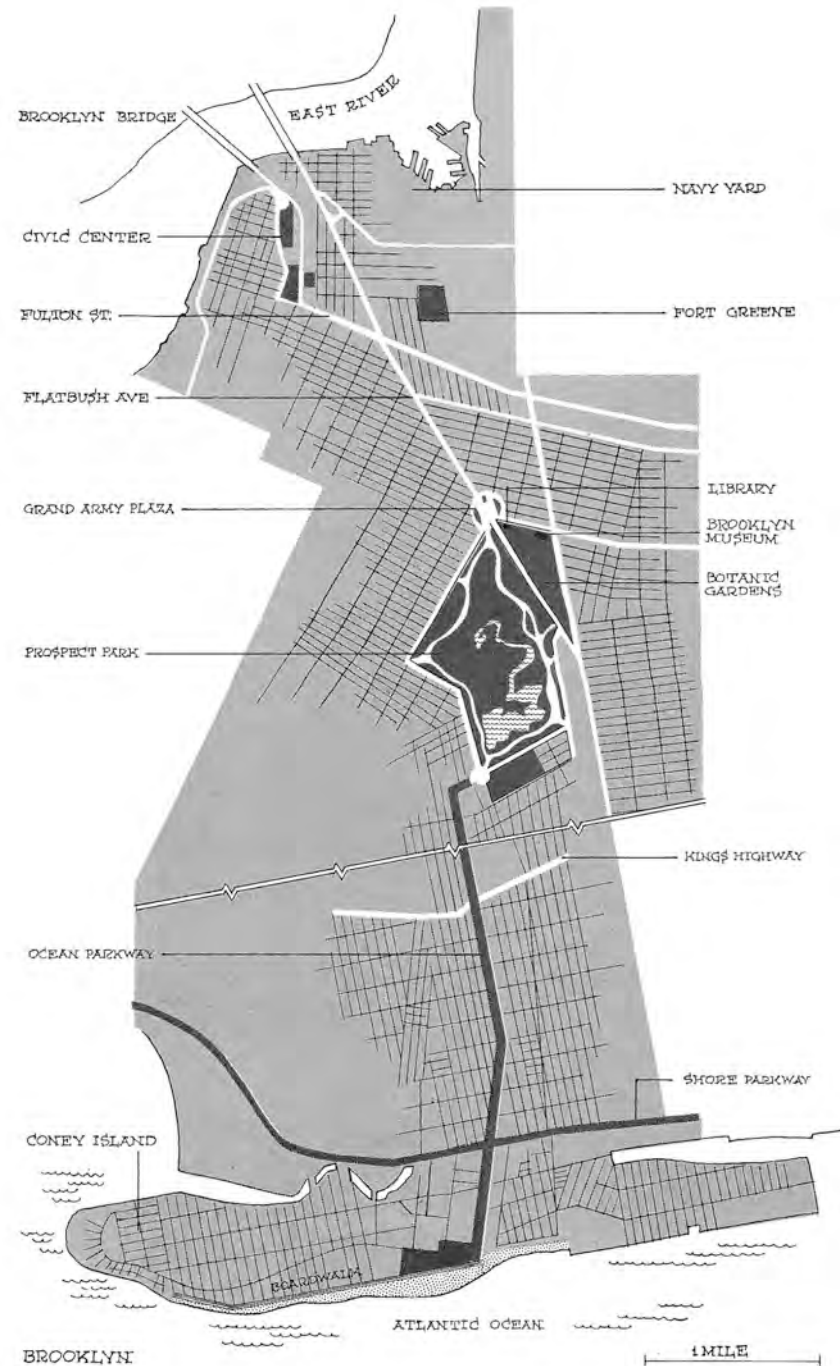
Parkways (pleasure drives to and between parks)

interconnected parks systems

Lewis Mumford:

“The park system is thus the very spearhead of comprehensive urban planning”.

Heckscher 1977 p. 193



BUFFALO PARK SYSTEM

Olmsted & Vaux

1868-1872

USA- “first system of parks and historic parkways”

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

VISION:

- parkway as form-givers
 - connecting key parks
- armature for interconnecting future parks

Heckscher- as system aborted

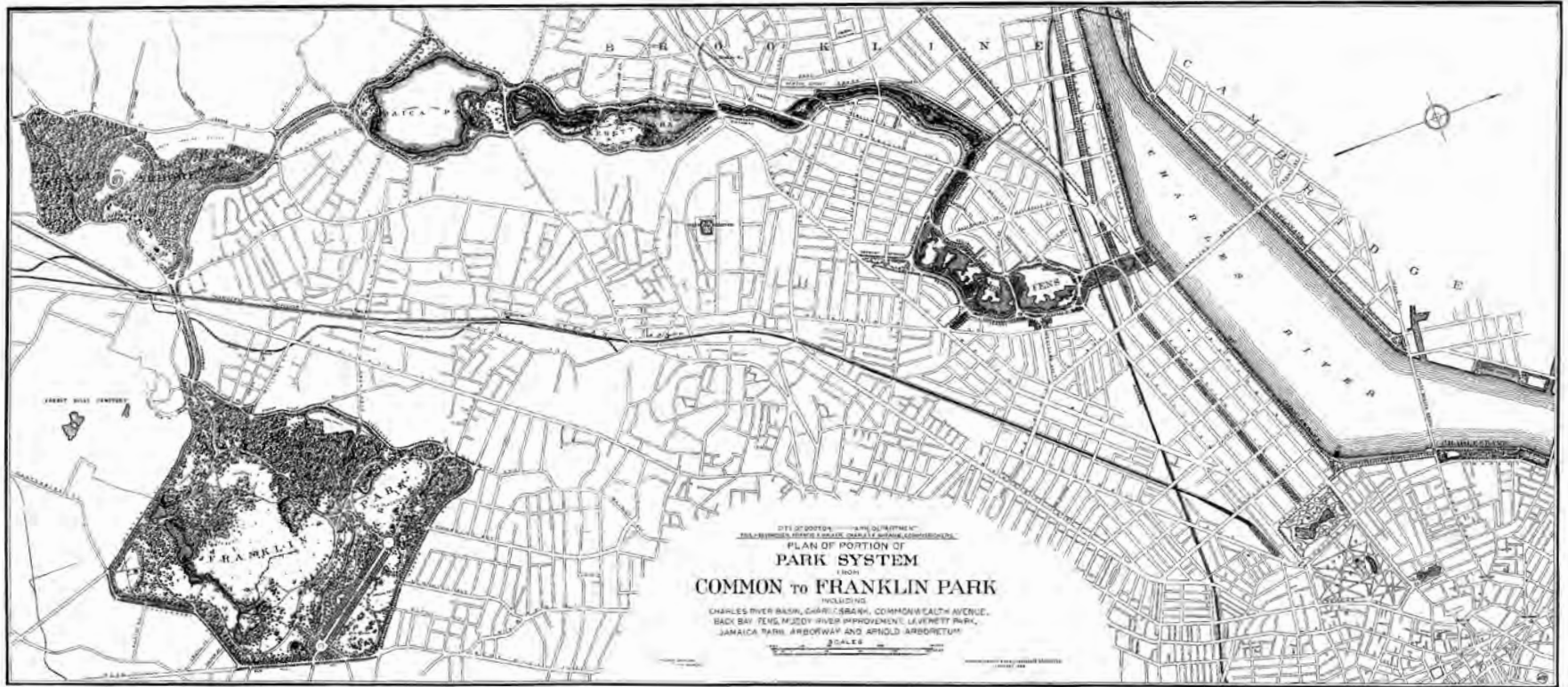
Source: Albert Fein, 1972 *FL Olmsted and the American environmental tradition.*



51. Olmsted's Sketch Map of Buffalo, 1876, F. L. Olmsted. "Buffalo is forming the most complete system of recreation-grounds of any city in the United States."

BOSTON PARK SYSTEM aka Emerald Necklace (1878-1895)

Frederick Law Olmsted, Charles Elliot, John Charles Olmsted, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.



National Park Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

OLMSTED ARCHIVES

99 Warren Street Brookline, Massachusetts 02146

(Olmsted coined the term “park system”)

BOSTON PARK SYSTEM aka Emerald Necklace (1878-1895)

Frederick Law Olmsted, Charles Elliot, John Charles Olmsted, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.

envisioned as a circumnavigating
greenbelt around Boston (never
completed)

begins at Boston Common (1634)

“a chain of parks linked by parkways
and waterways”

Wikipedia

walking, pleasure drives, small parks,
arboretum, large park (Franklin), along
waterways



BACK BAY FENS- First Green Infrastructure

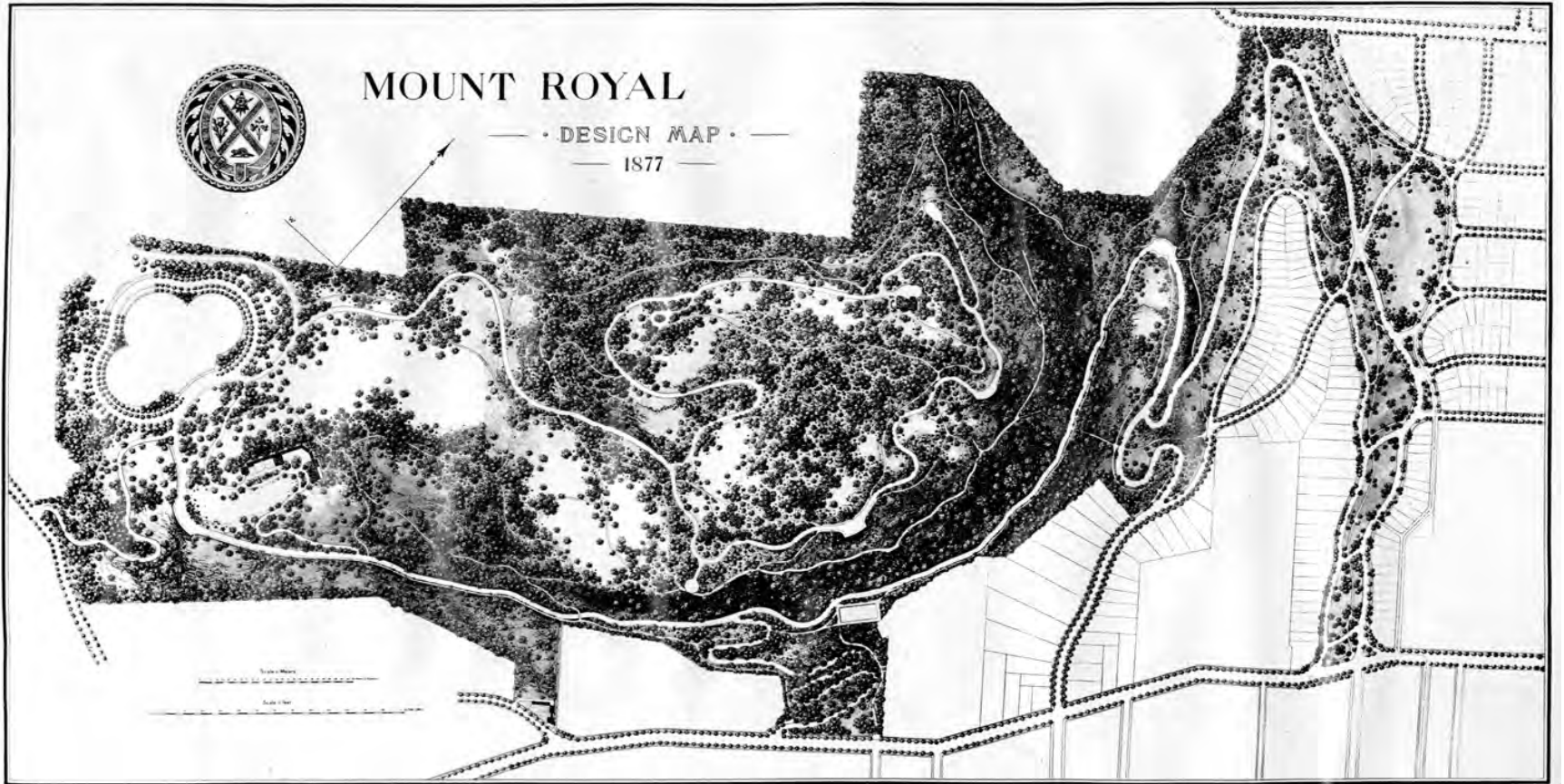
“Frederick Law Olmsted....proposed to flush out the stagnant waterway and add naturalistic plantings to emulate the original tide marsh ecology of the Fenway area. His plan was true to both the character of the land and the needs of the growing population.”

Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh



Boston Park Department & Olmsted Landscape Architects, “Map of the Back Bay Fens,” *The Urban Imagination*, accessed September 4, 2017, <http://dighist.fas.harvard.edu/courses/2015/HUM54/items/show/70>.

INFLUENCES IN CANADA



*1877 Mount Royal Park, Montreal
F. L. Olmsted Sr.*

*FREDERICK TODD, Landscape Architect
First resident landscape architect in Canada*

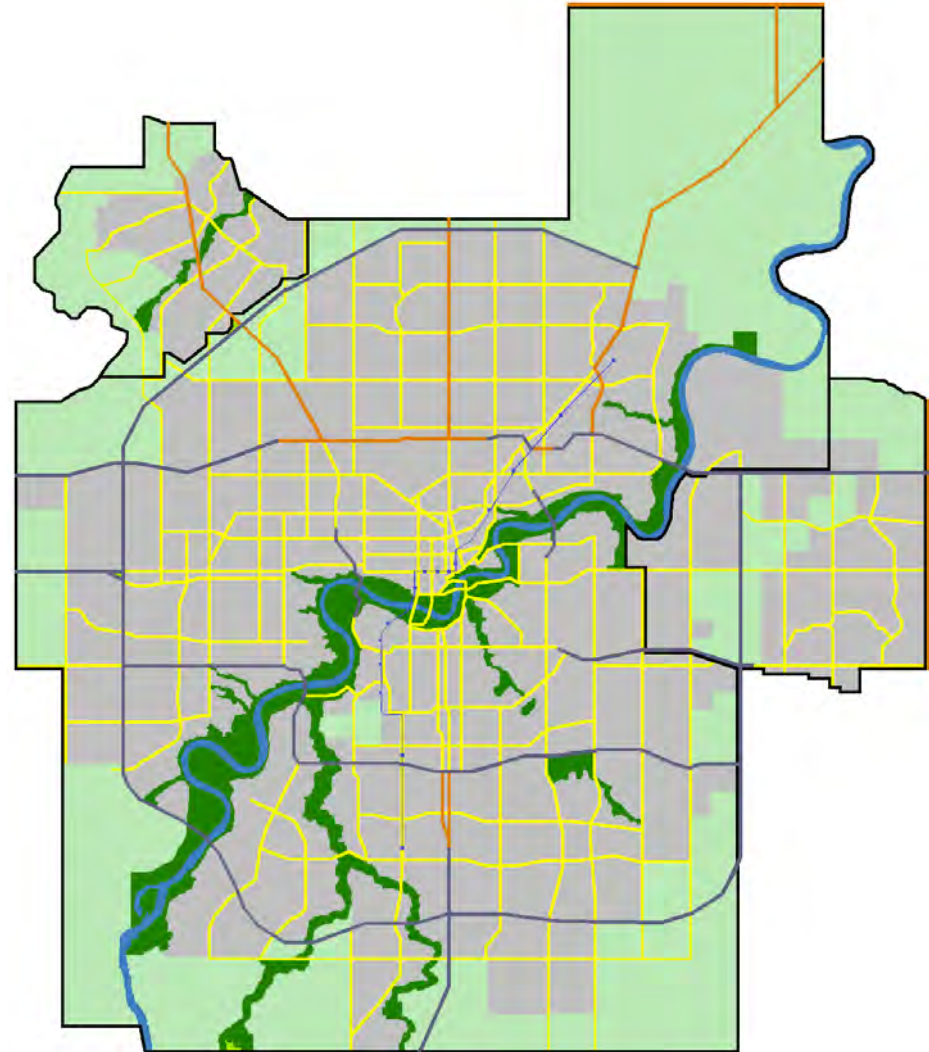
EXAMPLES OF WORK:

1904 Assiniboine Park, Winnipeg

*1899 Park system of the National
Capital- Ottawa*

1905 Park system, Edmonton

*Residential developments in
Vancouver-
Shaughnessy and Point Grey*



*Greenspaces along the North
Saskatchewan River, Edmonton*

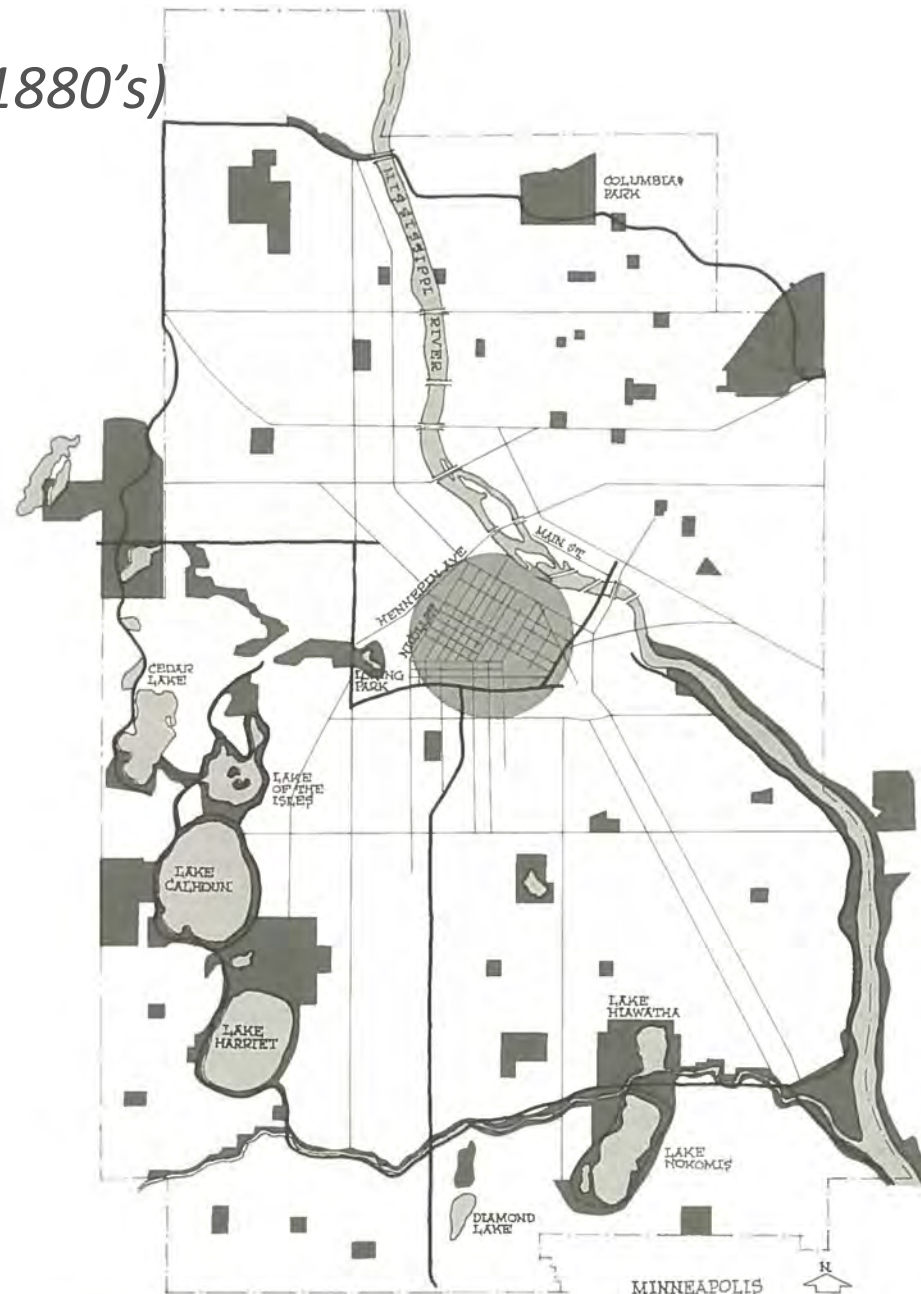
MINNEAPOLIS PARK SYSTEM (1880's)

H.W.S. (Horace) Cleveland

Heckscher:
Protecting and interconnecting
natural features

A city of parkways
A city characterized by natural
features

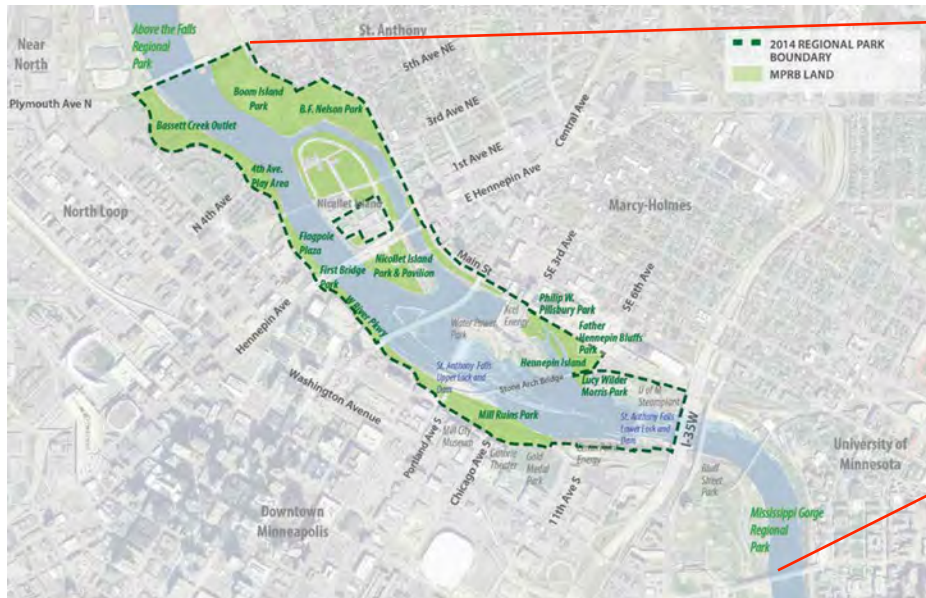
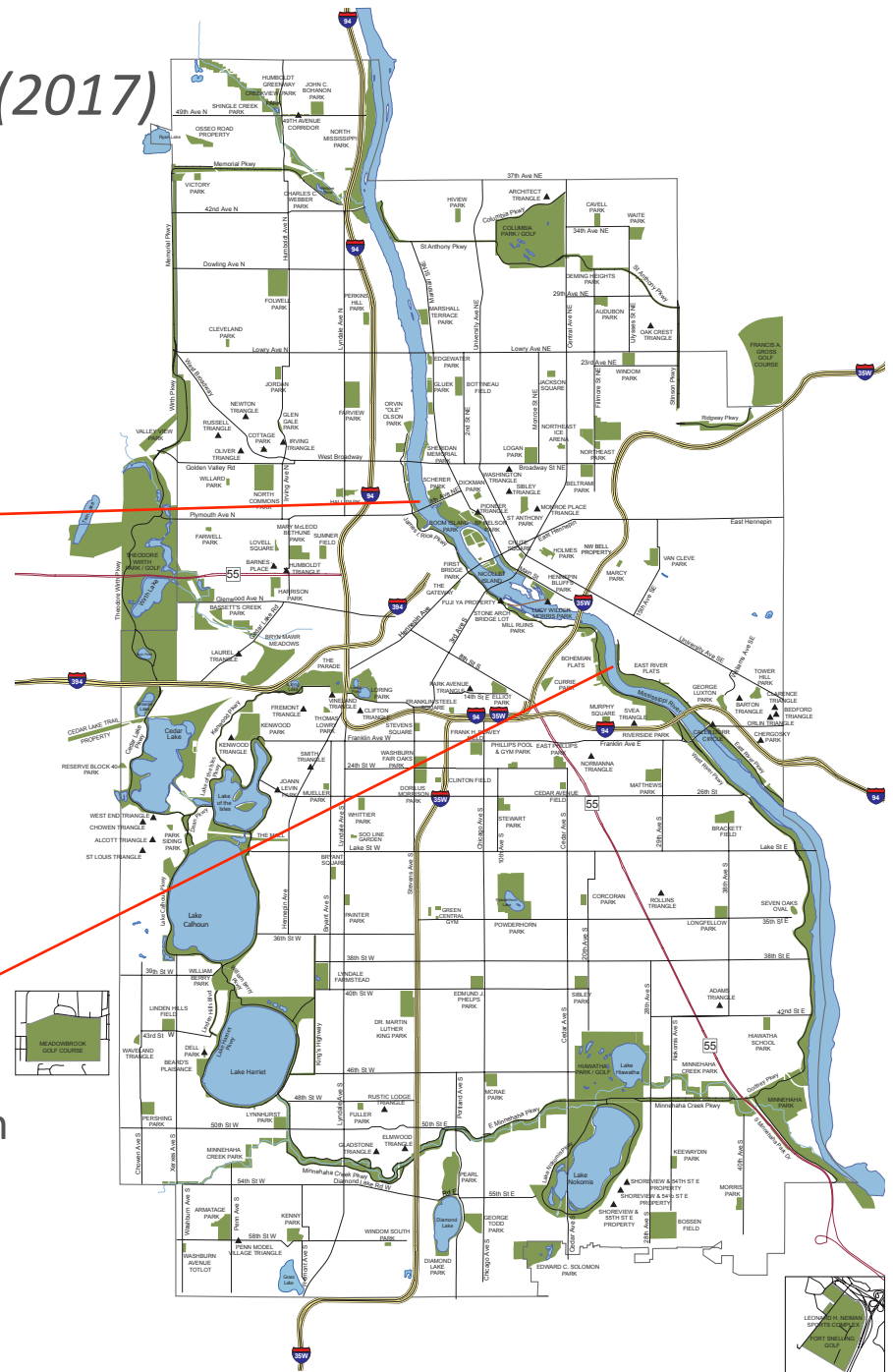
Minneapolis Park System Plan, 1883
source Heckscher 1977, page 207



The Minneapolis park system as it exists within city borders, designed by H. W. S. Cleveland in 1883 and virtually unchanged today. The principal organizing feature of the scheme is water—lakes and the river.

MINNEAPOLIS PARK SYSTEM (2017)

Best Park System in continental US- 2013 Trust for Public Land ParkScore ranking



Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Plan

minneapolisparcs.org

GEORGE KESSLER

Educated in landscape architecture
in Germany

1892 Landscape Architect for
Kansas City Park Board

worked briefly in New York/
communicated with Olmsted

Private practice:
designed notable parks and park
systems in Memphis, Dallas, St
Louis, Indianapolis...



OLMSTED BROTHERS- PORTLAND

John Charles Olmsted,
December 1903

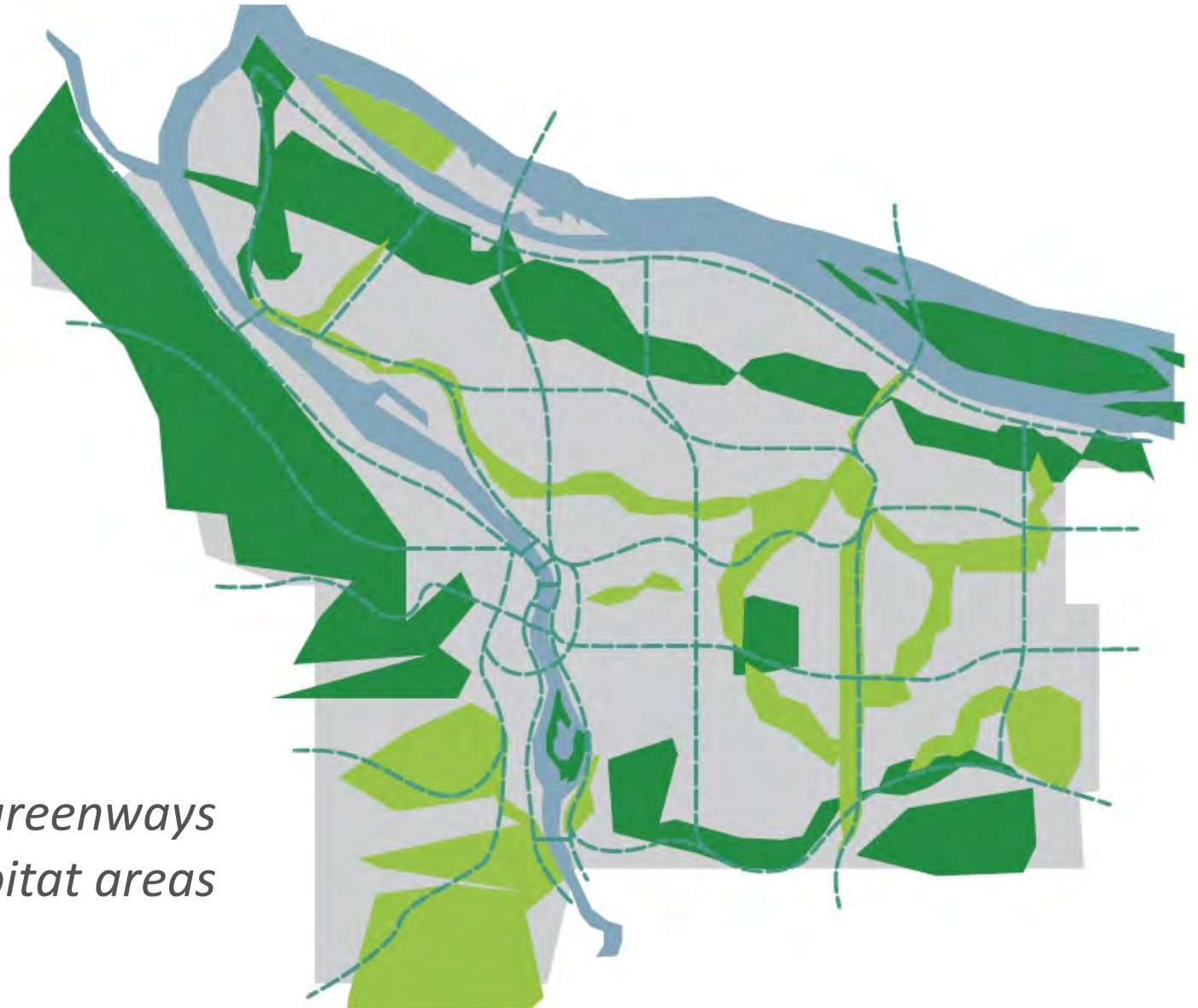
Proposed system of parks for
Portland, Oregon

- parks should be part of a system
 - park systems should be comprehensive
- connected by boulevards and parkways
 - sited to take advantage of natural landscapes & scenery
- include ill-drained areas and areas subject to flooding



*Unknown author_graphic interpretation of the
John Charles Olmsted proposal*

PORTLAND 2035 Comprehensive Plan (2016)

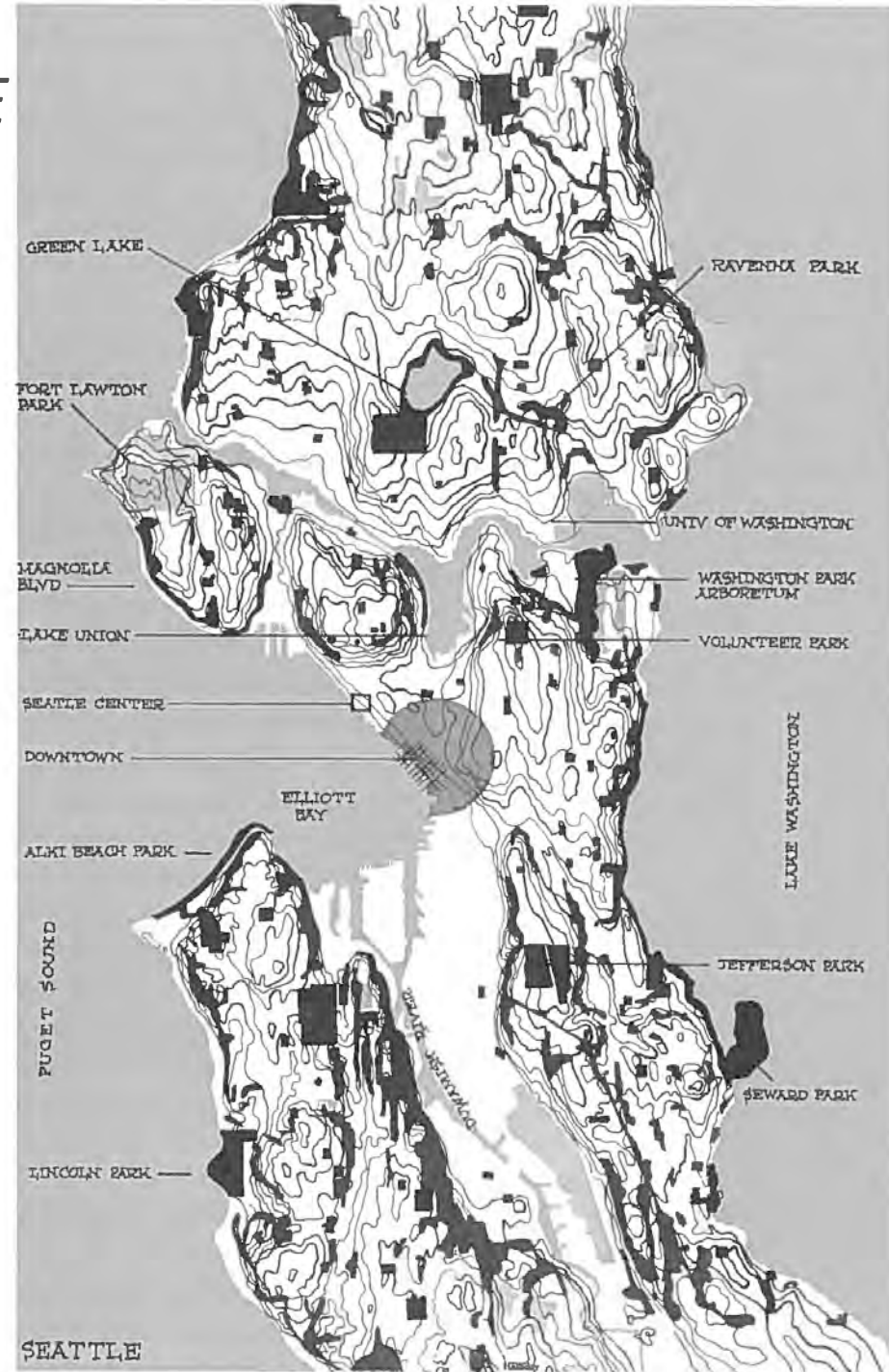


*Vision for greenways
and habitat areas*

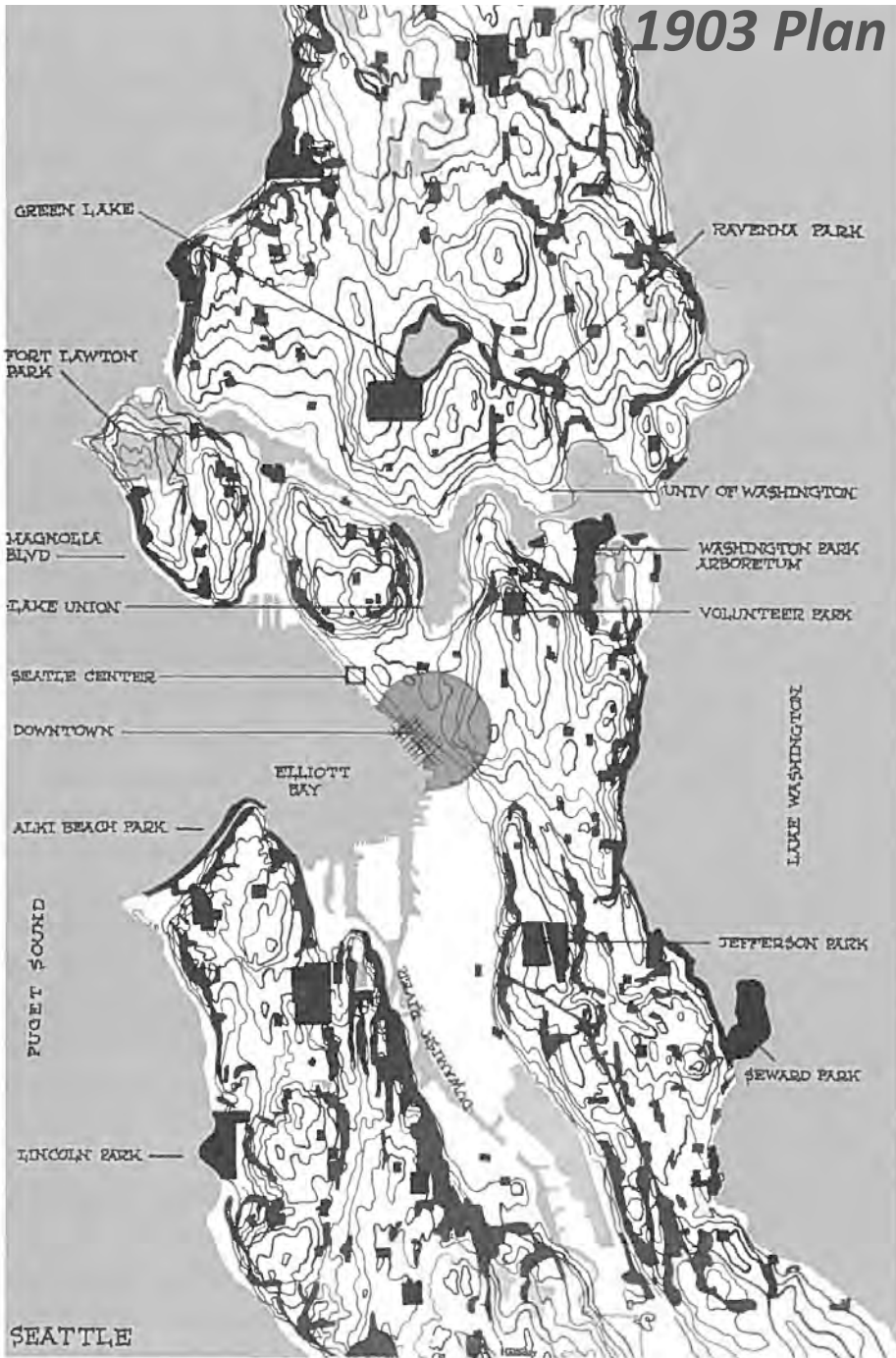
OLMSTED BROTHERS- SEATTLE (1903 - 1941) 1903 Plan for a parks system

“The primary aim should be to secure and preserve for the use of the people ... these advantages of water and mountain views and of woodlands... An ideal system would involve taking all of the borders of the different bodies of water...and to enlarge these fringes at suitable and convenient points.”

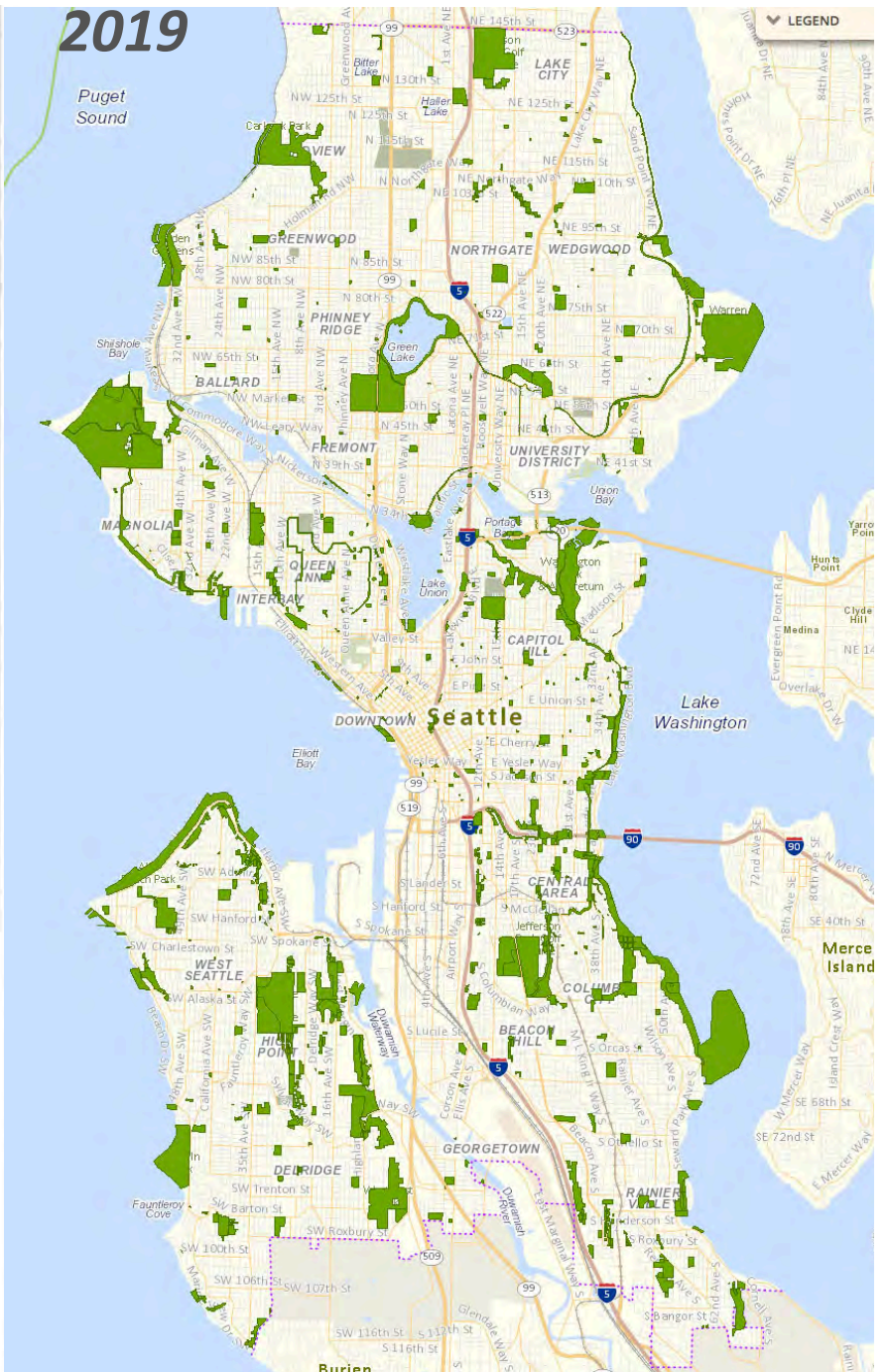
John Charles Olmsted, 1903



1903 Plan



2019

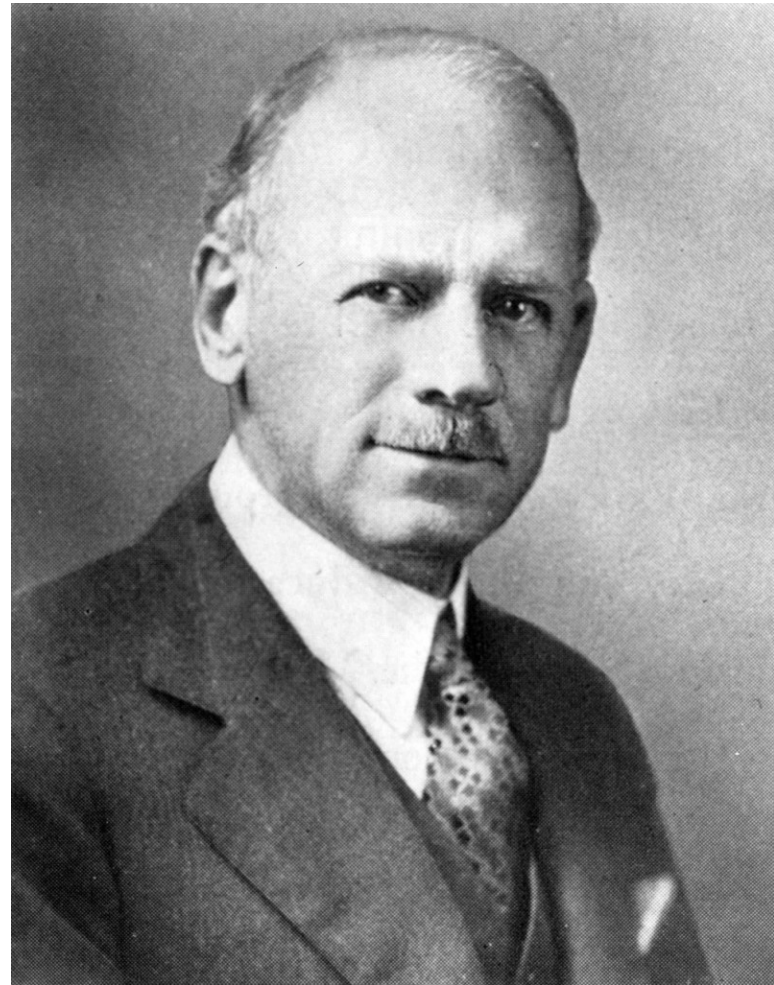


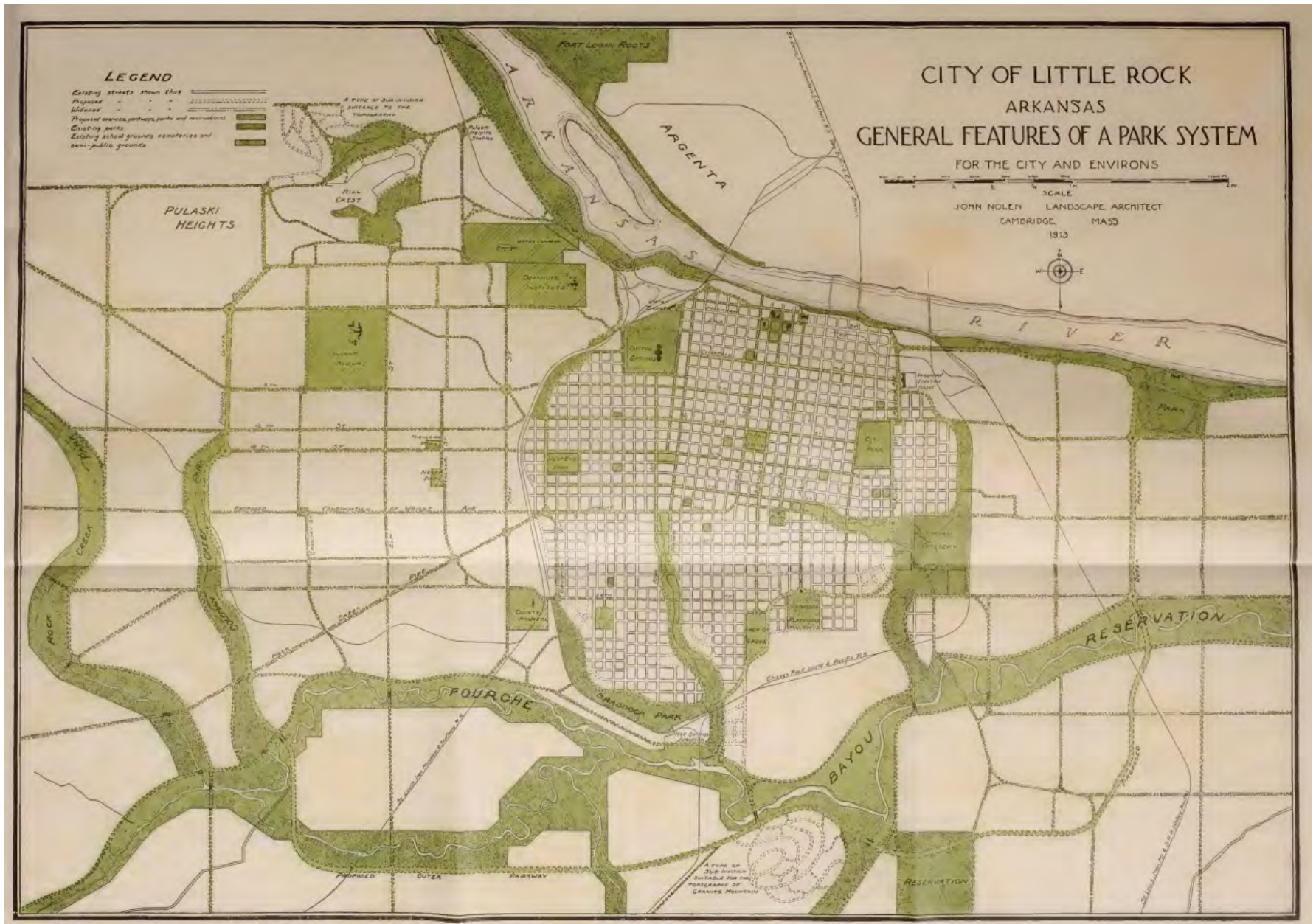
JOHN NOLEN: Landscape architect and town planner

John Nolen 1869-1937
educated at Harvard 1903 - 1905

studied landscape architecture under
Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

first American to identify himself as a
town planner





Nolen: “let nature lead the way in planning”

JOHN NOLEN

New Towns for Old 1927

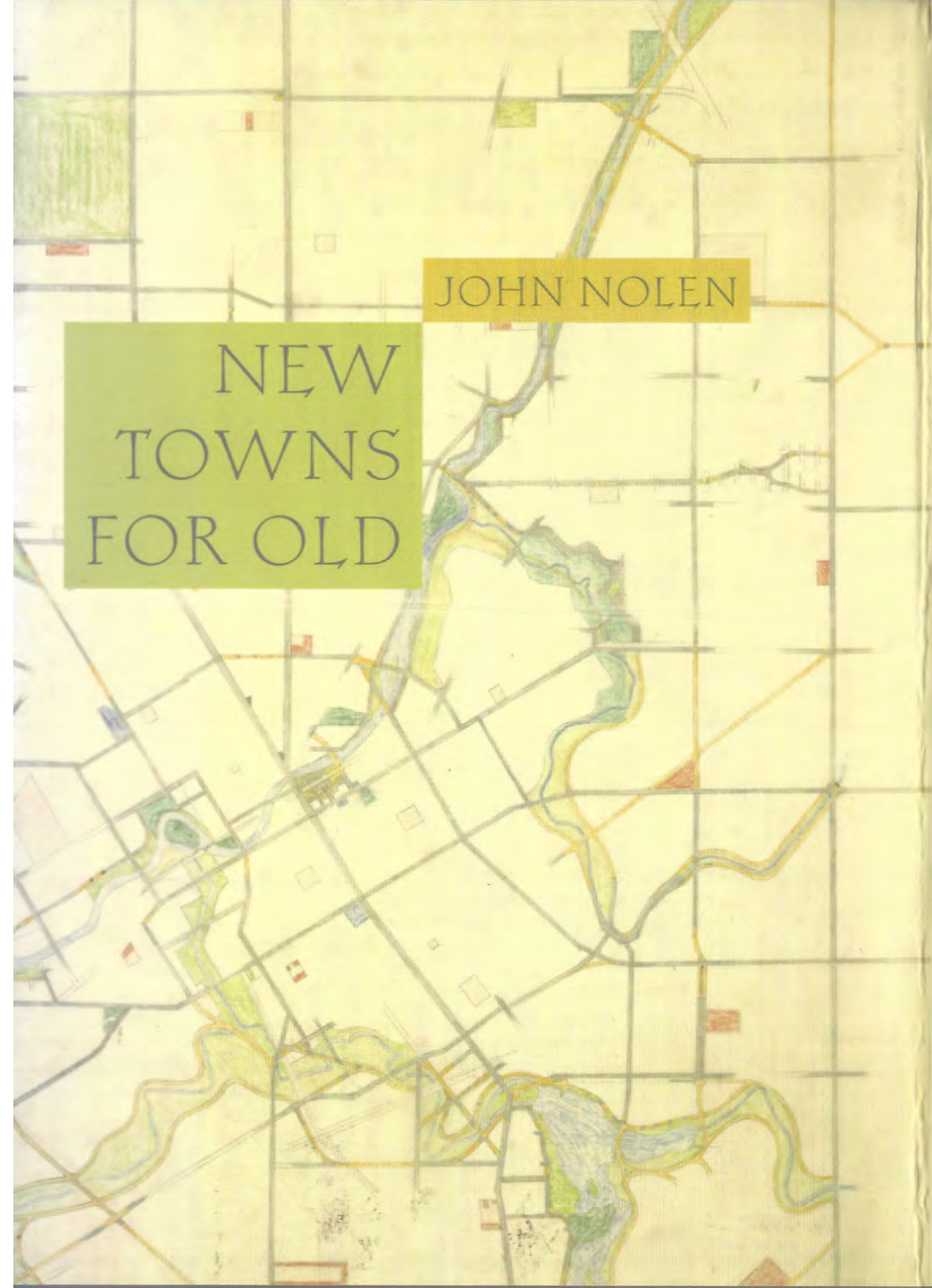
influenced by Garden City movement
in England

orderly street plans+ orderly location
of civic and commercial facilities

let nature lead the way in planning
(based on topography; setting aside
natural features for parks and
recreation)

green spaces should be public

Nolen- preliminary plan for Flint Michigan



Introduction to the new edition by Charles D. Warren

NEIGHBOURHOOD SCALE

OLMSTED- Neighbourhood plans

Olmsted and Vaux Plan for
Riverside, IL 1869

44% public open space
3 miles riverside greenspace

street tree planning



VANCOUVER INFLUENCES FREDERICK TODD

Shaughnessy Heights, Vancouver

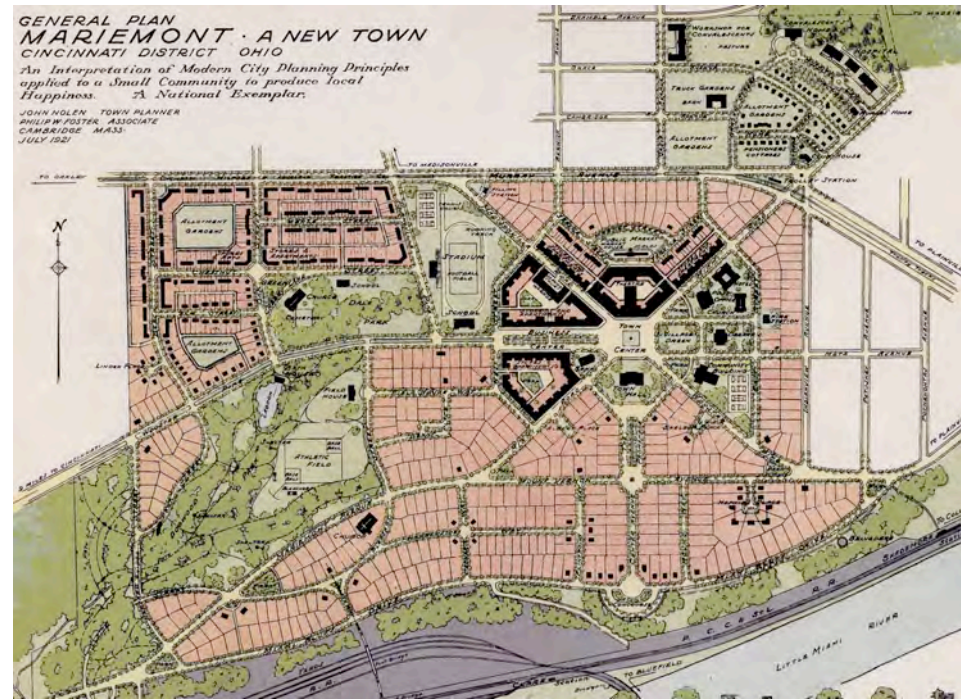
named after Thomas
Shaughnessy, former president of
the Canadian Pacific Railway

designed by **Frederick Todd**,
landscape architect



NOLEN- Neighbourhood plans

Mariemont Plan
John Nolen 1921



a pre-eminent urbanist
Congress for a New Urbanism

- city-beautiful- influenced street plans
- nature-influenced open space plans

Venice Florida Plan
John Nolen 1926



DUANY AND PLATER-ZYBERK

with contributions from Leon Krier

New Urbanists
Founding members of Congress
for a New Urbanism

promoted
traditional neighbourhood
development

walkable neighbourhoods

Seaside Florida 1985



DUANY AND PLATER-ZYBERK

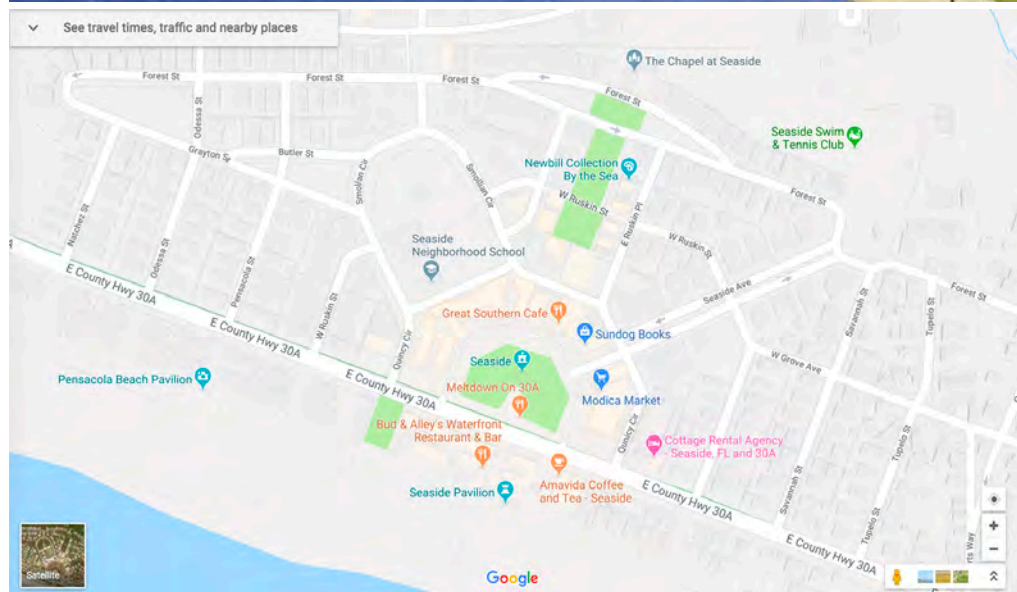
with contributions from Leon Krier

New Urbanists
Founding members of Congress
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Seaside Florida 1985



CLARENCE STEIN & HENRY WRIGHT

with LA Marjorie Sewell Cautley

Regional Plan Association of
America (with Lewis Mumford,
Benton MacKay, others)

influenced by Garden City
movement in Britain (Ebenezer
Howard, Patrick Geddes)

advantages of town/ beauty
and delight of country



TOWN PLAN RADBURN, N.J.



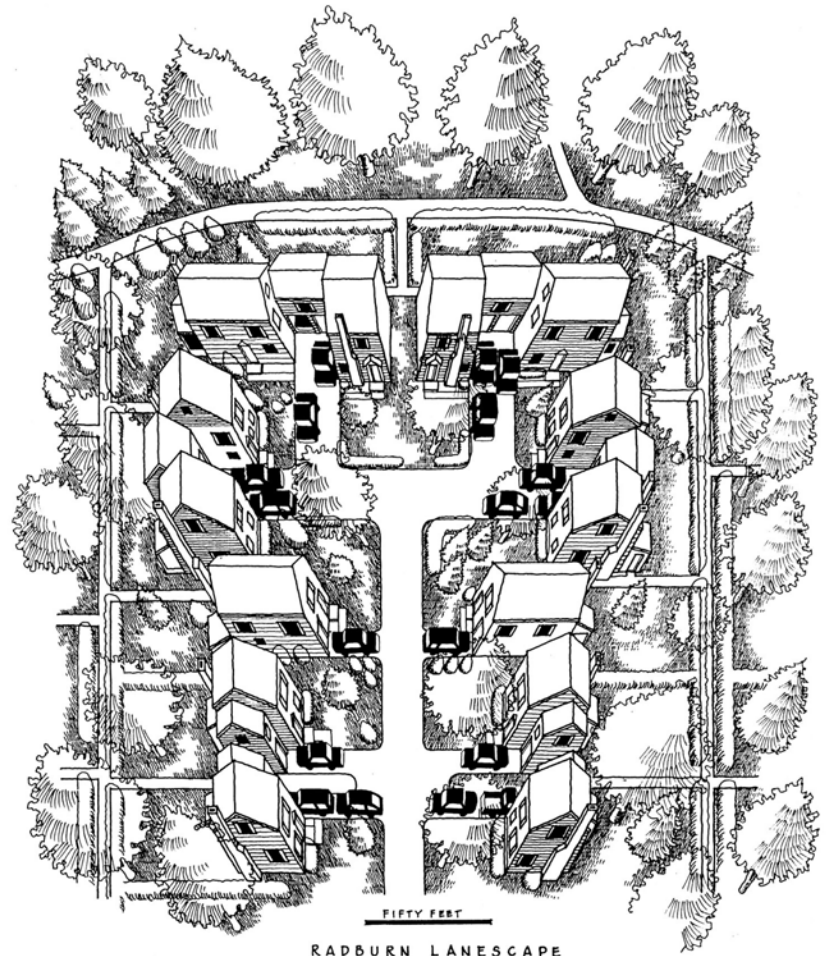
FIG. 15
RADBURN, NEW JERSEY—PLAN OF MODEL COMMUNITY

Courtesy of the City Housing Corporation

Radburn, NJ plan 1929

*RADBURN A Town for Children:
accommodating the car/ safety for children*

walkable neighbourhoods



FIFTY FEET
RADBURN LANESCAPE

VILLAGE HOMES, Davis, CA

designed and developed by Michael
and Judy Corbett 1975

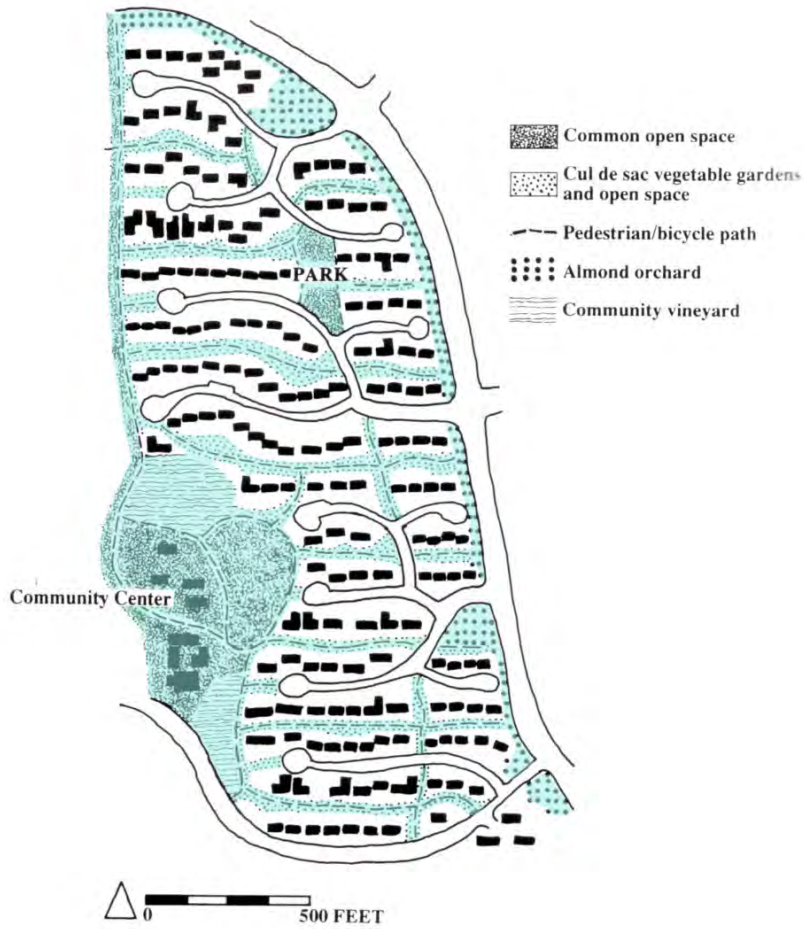
California interpretation of Radburn



street

greenway





VILLAGE HOMES
 + agriculture
 + green infrastructure



Section through the commons at Village Homes.
 Kate Van Rooy.

20 cases GREEN NETWORKS



1996
Orenco Station
Hillsboro, OR



1997
Garrison Woods
Calgary, AB



2002
East Clayton
Surrey, BC



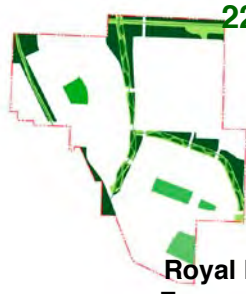
2002
Heritage Park
Minneapolis, MN



1995
Civano
Tucson, AZ



1990
NW Landing
DuPont, WA



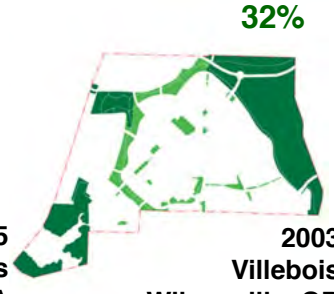
2001
Royal Node
Eugene, OR



2003
Fairview
Salem, OR



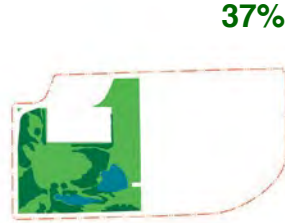
1975
Village Homes
Davis, CA



2003
Villebois
Wilsonville, OR



1996
Cornell
Markham, ON



1998
Beaches
Toronto, ON



2000
Auguston
Abbotsford, BC



1996
Playa Vista
Los Angeles, CA



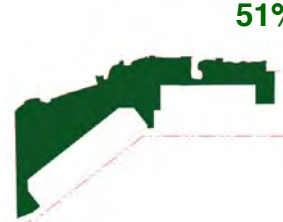
2000
Lowry AFB
Denver, CO



1996
Stapleton
Denver, CO



1998
Coffee Creek
Chesterton, IN



2003
SE False Creek
Vancouver, BC



1998
Prairie Crossing
Grayslake, IL

MOST IMPORTANT TAKE-AWAYS

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF EARLY VISIONARIES:

- capture and preserve landscape structure early (Nolen's let nature lead the way)
- nature's linear systems are the ideal connective tissue for park systems
- plan green space systems at the city scale
- maintain that systems thinking down to the neighbourhood scale
- imagine expandable systems
- urbanism and green space systems can function together

QUESTIONS?
COMMENTS?