

Executive Summary
**How the Community Planning Association of Canada Influenced the Development of
Planning in Canada, 1946 - 1964**

by Miranda Virginillo

The Community Planning Association of Canada (CPAC) was influential in the development of Canadian planning and best practices between 1946 and 1964. Planning histories to date have rarely acknowledged the CPAC and have not adequately assessed the role of the CPAC in the immediate post-war period. The *Curtis Report* of 1944 recommended forming an association to educate the public and members of other professions on the necessity and importance of planning. The Community Planning Association of Canada was formed for this purpose by Central (now Canada) Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) from professionals, politicians, and concerned citizens united by common objectives.

A chronological time-series case study approach is used to demonstrate the interconnectedness of CPAC and institutions such as CMHC, the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, the Canadian Federation of Mayors and Municipalities and others. The archival documents of the CPAC retained by Library and Archives Canada and the Housing Knowledge Centre in Ottawa informed the analysis and this report's appendices. These appendices are intended to provide tools for future research on the CPAC at the national, provincial (divisional) and municipal (local branch) levels.

This report illustrates the CPAC's role in the immediate post-war period (between approximately 1946 and 1964) on the Canadian landscape through physical planning and on the planning profession itself. The CPAC's administration through the national office and national council ensured consistency in the ideals promoted through their publications and conferences. The CPAC's federated structure with provincial divisions and local branches to focus on important local issues Examination of the national offices financial records shows that the CPAC was largely dependent on funding from CMHC and that the largest expense was for publications and employees (Figure 1; Figure 2). As a result, this report focuses on the publications and the staff of the national office.

Analysis of the actions, actors and interests of the CPAC reveals that the CPAC was interested in three areas in the post-war period. First, the CPAC educated the public on the benefits of good subdivision and community design principles, such as street hierarchies, the Neighbourhood Unit, curvilinear subdivision design, New Towns, and the City Nuclear, among others (Figure 3). The strongest tools used to promote these principles were the CPAC's regular periodicals and special publications, such as Harold Spence-Sales' *How to Subdivide*.

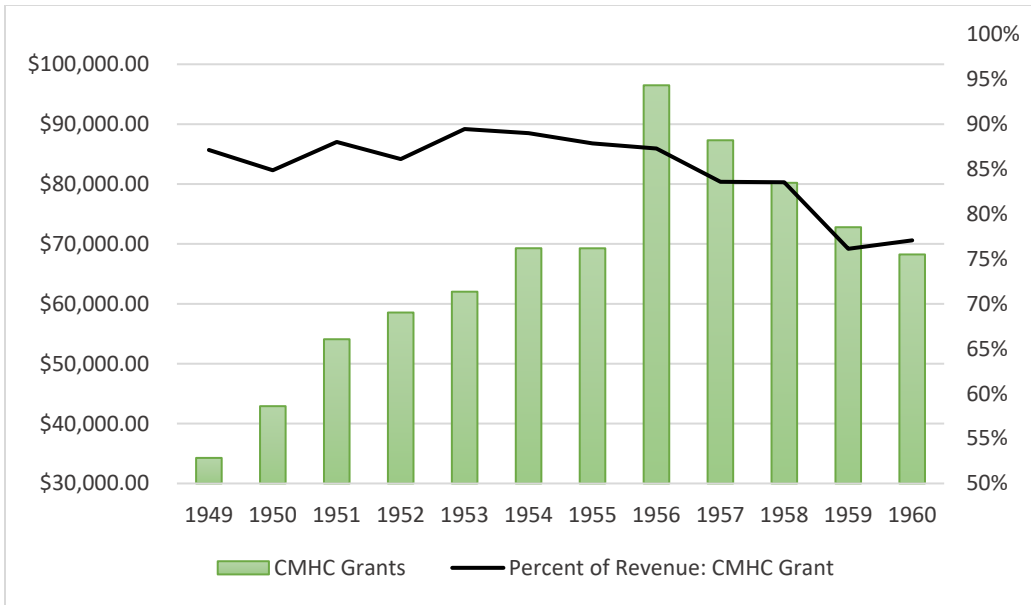


Figure 1: Graph comparing the value of CMHC grants (left y-axis) and the percent of revenue the CMHC grant accounted for (right y-axis).

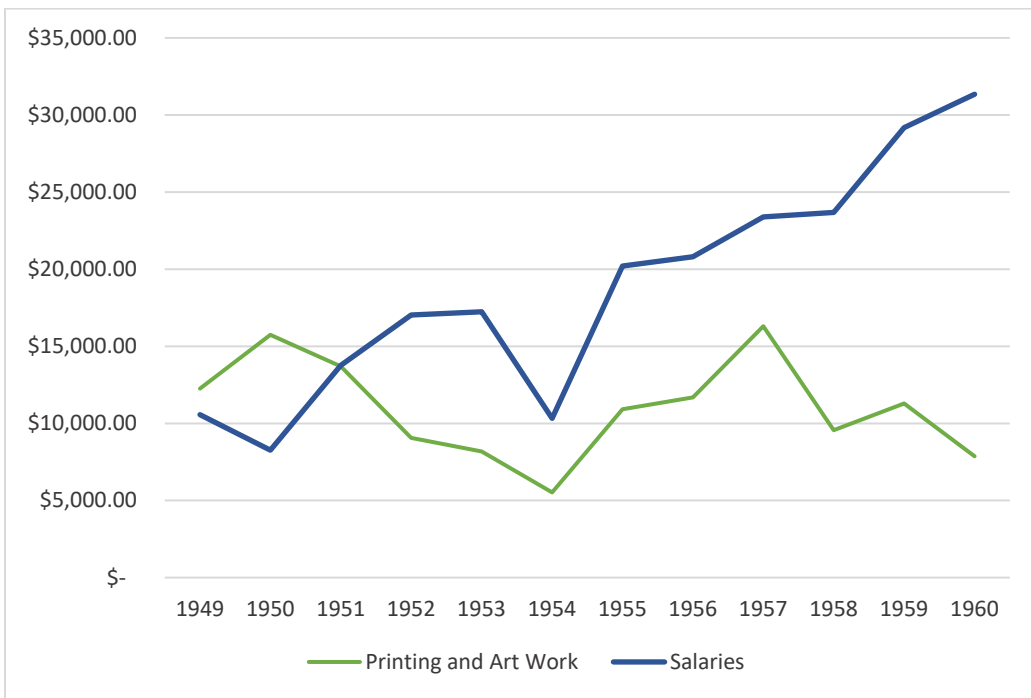


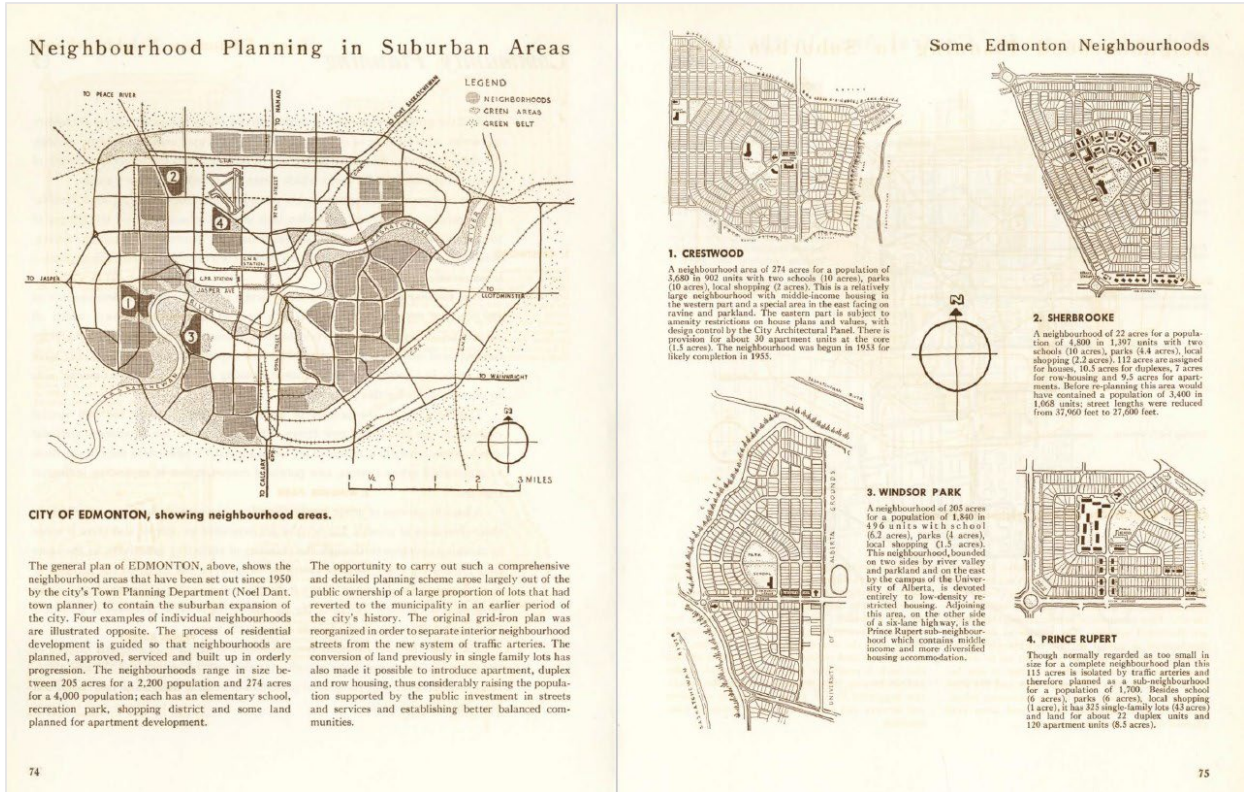
Figure 2: Graph comparing the CPAC's spending on Printing and Art Work and Salaries.

Second, the CPAC determined that there was an inadequate supply of qualified planning professionals in Canada in the immediate post-war period. The CPAC announced university courses and promoted scholarships to train planners and other professionals in planning related topics, such as zoning. The CPAC's periodicals served as a job board for employment opportunities in planning, announcing vacant positions as well as successful candidates and scholarship award winners. These periodicals regularly contained articles written by CPAC members who were some of the first planning professors in Canada and abroad, such as V. J. Kostka of the University of Manitoba.

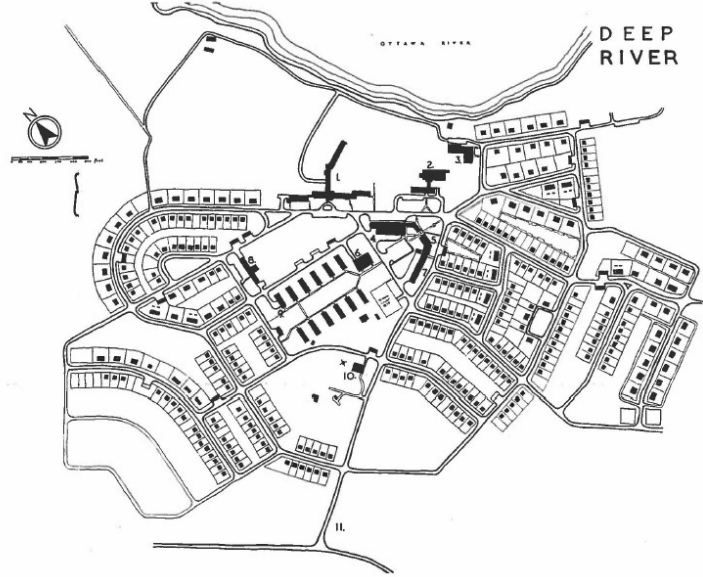
Third, the CPAC lobbied for better planning education and enabling legislation across Canada. Better planning education was won by the CPAC through its close relationship to CMHC. CMHC would fund university programs, provide student scholarships, and grants for research projects, such as Norah McMurray's *Outlines of Canadian Planning Law* (which was also a CPAC publication). Better enabling legislation was more difficult to achieve, however the BC and Ontario Divisions can be credited with successfully winning ribbon development control and amendments to the *Planning Act*, respectively.

There are two large scale implications of realizing the CPAC's role in the development of planning in post-war Canada. First, the CPAC provided tools for the public to advocate for a high standard of community design in the post-war housing boom. Without the CPAC, the planned neighbourhoods ubiquitous in the Canadian suburban landscape would not exist to the degree they do today. However, by promoting a dispersed development pattern, the CPAC helped to set a trajectory for continued suburban expansion in Canada. The problems created by dispersed suburban development are being faced by the current generation of planners in Canada. Second, the CPAC and CMHC had an incredibly close relationship during the immediate post-war period with CMHC providing the majority of funding and the initial staff members for the CPAC as well as a national council representative. As a result, CMHC determined to some extent the planning principles that were encouraged and discouraged in the CPAC's publications, which were targeted to the public, government officials, planning students and professionals, among others.

Throughout Canada, the CPAC generated demand for planning through their publications, and lobbied the government for educational and employment opportunities to increase the supply of qualified professionals. For better or for worse, the CPAC aided in the proliferation of community planning in Canada in the post-war period.



1944
Aerial view of Deep River townsite before construction was begun. The block along the river, the cluster of buildings at the curve of the highway, and the winding trail leading down through pastureland and treescoured slopes to what is now the Town Common are all evident. (Photo: RC:IF)



1945
Plan of Deep River at about 100 feet to the inch. Highway No. 17 is at the bottom of the plan, leading northwest (left) to North Bay, and southeast (right) to Pembroke and Ottawa. The Ottawa River is at the top of the plan. The principal buildings are as follows:
1. Staff Hotel.
2. Community Centre.
3. Primary School.
4. Shopping Centre.
5. Town Office.
6. Cafeteria.
7. Town Garage.
8. Hospital.
9. Furniture Store.
10. Heating Plant.
11. Roman Catholic Church and School Site.
The Atomic Energy Plant is about 12 miles by road to the southeast.

the last-named sport engages about fifty regular players. The administration has built a community centre in the common area, with assembly halls, bowling-alley, activity rooms and kitchen; outdoor facilities adjoin it. (See photos.) There is a professional Director of Recreation, who is advised by a representative Steering Committee. The town movies (three nights weekly) are commercially supplied and operated.

Substantial interest groups also include church societies; a Canadian Legion branch; troops of Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and Wolf Cubs; camera, chess, dramatic, reading, music and science clubs; short-wave radio enthusiasts; a child study group; a teenage club, etc. Most of these use the community centre. Their fees appear to be unusually low for such groups. They can arrange refreshments either in the centre or from a canteen on the wide sand beach.

The health of the workers at the nuclear fission project was a major concern. A staff of five doctors, two dentists, fifteen nurses and a number of technicians serve both the Plant and a hospital in the town. But again, as in the schools, the age-composition of the population was miscalculated, with the result that the obstetric ward of the hospital is quite inadequate.

Protestant religious services of non-sectarian character are held in the community centre. The Roman Catholic parish church is located on the highway just outside the town. Separate Church of England services are held. There is a non-sectarian Sunday School.

A citizens' council was created among the scientists before the town was built, apparently motivated by apprehensions about the standard of facilities to be

1946
Left: The Shopping Centre on the south side of the principal street with wide parking area and equipped with frontage all the shops.
Right: Workers leaving the bus that brought them from the Plant. Beyond, on the north side of the main street and west of the Shopping Centre, is the Staff Hotel and Dining Room. It is on the slope marking the north and west sides of the Town Common. (Photos: NFB)

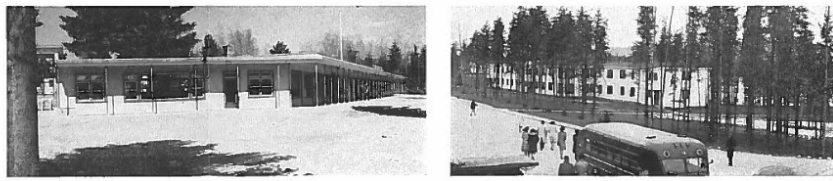


Figure 3: Examples of the types of community planning promoted by the CPAC. Source: (A) JRAIC vol 30 no 5, Housing Design supplement pp. 74-75; (B) LL no. 13 (March 1948), pp. 4-5.