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# The Birth Of City Planning In The United States, 1840–1917 (Creating The North American Landscape)



## Synopsis

This long-awaited book by Jon A. Peterson presents a sweeping narrative history of the origins of city planning in the United States, from its nineteenth-century antecedents to its flowering in the early twentieth century. Deeply researched, well-written, and engaging, the text is supplemented by an outstanding selection of historic plans, illustrations, and photographs. Topics covered in detail include the McMillan Plan for Washington, D.C. (the first comprehensive plan for an American city), the City Beautiful movement, the major planners—Daniel Burnham, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Charles Mulford Robinson, John Nolen, and others—who led the planning movement; the ascendancy of a generalist approach to the shaping of the physical city, the role of the Progressive Era reform, and the emergence of city planning as a novel field of public endeavor. This book will appeal to students and scholars in urban studies, community planning, American history (the Gilded Age and Progressive Era), American studies, architectural and landscape history, as well as environmental and planning history, including practicing professionals in related fields.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"No understanding of early twentieth-century political and cultural history will be complete without this thorough account of the Progressive Era's most visible legacy." (Journal of American History)"The rise of city planning in the United States was tied to several issues and movements that long have concerned historians of environmentalism. Peterson's outstanding account of the

birth of city planning therefore ought to be part of all future discussions of environmental activism in the period before World War I." (Adam Rome Environmental History)"In this clearly written, meticulously researched, and profusely illustrated monograph, Peterson describes the birth, growth, and decline of city planning in the US." (Choice)"A terrific book, absolutely essential reading for students and scholars of U.S. planning, urban, and Progressive Era history." (Christopher Silver History: Reviews of New Books)"Peterson has given us a first-rate account not just of the City Beautiful Movement, but of planning in the U.S., one of the best I have read. He shows his mastery of presenting material in a concise, straightforward manner that is also engaging, filled with nuance, and rich in its depth." (Richard Longstreth, George Washington University)"A masterpiece, impeccable in its research and brilliant in its interpretation... an authoritative reference for planning history and a basic resource for planning theory." (Eugenie L. Birch Journal of Planning Education and Research)"Taken as a whole, this careful work should please anyone seeking both an aesthetic and social justice perspective. Scholars owe Jon Peterson many thanks for this definitive history of modern American city planning's birth in the Progressive Era." (John L. Hancock Planning Perspectives)"Delightfully well written and soundly researched, The Birth of City Planning is essential reading for anyone wishing to gain insight into how we think about American cities." (Steven J. Hoffman Urban History)"An excellent piece of research and constitutes a significant contribution to the literature in this field." (Carlos Nunes Silva Material Culture)

Jon A. Peterson is a professor of history at Queens College, City University of New York.

A very well written and lucid exploration of the development of City Planning in the United States. It is very easy to live your entire life in the US and not realize the history that surrounds urban dwellers, especially in the North East. Mr. Peterson's book provides a clear, detailed look into how our great cities and parks have developed and how that has influenced much of the layout of daily life in America

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