

OUTLINE OF TOWN AND CITY PLANNING

A Review of Past Efforts
and Modern Aims

BY

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THE HEART OF A NATION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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To

DEAN AND MRS. WILLIAM EMERSON
IN APPRECIATION OF THEIR SERVICES
TO THE CAUSE OF UNITY OF THE ARTS
OF ARCHITECTURE AND CITY PLANNING

When we mean to build,
We first survey the plot, then draw the model;
And when we see the figure of the house,
Then must we rate the cost of the erection;
Which if we find outweighs ability,
What do we then but draw anew the model
In fewer offices, or at least desist
To build at all? Much more, in this great work,
(Which is, almost, to pluck a kingdom down,
And set another up) should we survey
The plot of situation and the model

HENRY IV, PART II

FOREWORD

CITY planning is as old as civilization, but among the most important needs of our modern civilization is the proper regulation of both urban and rural development. It is especially true in America, where urban expansion has been exceptionally rapid and has tended in recent generations toward over-concentration, and where rural industries continue to bulk so large in our national life. Often this has led to blighted areas and serious economic waste. To meet these needs we must exercise more foresight in regulating the development of land. What is known as city and country planning is desirable in order to safeguard the health and safety of persons and communities, and to promote economy and the general welfare. Successfully to achieve this purpose, the major part of all city and regional plans must consist of proposals that will help to secure a better balance than hitherto in the distribution of industries and population, both within cities and between cities and country districts. With the aid of well-conceived plans, based on sound economic principles and with a high social purpose, we should be able to prevent much waste of money and unwholesome conditions in the environment of dwellings, such as has occurred too often as a result of want of planning in the past.

It is obvious that the city and country planning that is needed must be based on adequate study of social and economic conditions and trends of civic growth, as well as on a sane conception of what constitutes true economy and healthful conditions of living. It is equally obvious that the physical and economic problems of cities have become so complex and difficult of solution that we need to approach their planning in a scientific spirit and with the aid of the best technical skill. The modern city is very different from cities of the pre-industrial age, but it is nevertheless apparent that there is much we can learn from examining the methods of city planning and development in past times.

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In this book Mr. Thomas Adams defines the scope and purpose of city planning and of the preliminary surveys which must precede the making of intelligent plans. He has assembled information regarding the application and growth of city planning both as a science and as an art. He gives an outline of city planning efforts in different periods, discusses the influences that have affected urban growth in these periods, and finally describes the evolution of the city and regional planning movement in the United States.

Such contributions to public knowledge of a movement which is of interest to every citizen are certainly welcome at this time, when the necessity for economy makes it so important to plan ahead and to avoid the wasteful consequences of haphazard growth.

City planning, to be successful, depends on a high degree of co-operation between leaders in public affairs, owners of property, the general body of citizens, and those who practice the profession of city planning. To obtain this co-operation it is essential that there should be something equivalent to an agreement as to the meaning, scope and purpose of the movement, an understanding of what it involves in connection with public policies, and finally the best methods of controlling such developments. The author of this book has drawn on an experience of thirty years, both as a practitioner and teacher of city planning in the United States, in Canada, and in England. He is therefore peculiarly qualified to speak with authority on the subject.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Executive Mansion
Albany, New York
December 23, 1932

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