

**Planning the (dis)connected city  
Why gated projects get approved  
Planifier la ville discontinuée  
Pourquoi les projets de communautés fermées sont-ils  
approuvés**

Jill Grant

Conflits, Proximité, Coopération

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Résumé de l'article

Les théories contemporaines de planification urbaine valorisent de manière consensuelle, du moins en Occident, la mixité des usages du sol, la trame de rues continue et les modes de transport alternatif. Les modèles du *Smart Growth* et du développement durable urbain font la promotion de la diversité, du moindre coût ainsi que de l'interconnexion des réseaux et ce, dans un espace public animé. Pourtant, en parallèle, on peut observer le développement de collectivités fermées. Comment peut-on comprendre une telle prolifération d'enclaves isolées, socialement homogènes et organisées sur le principe de la dépendance à l'automobile, alors que les personnes chargées de l'aménagement urbain ne partagent pas ces options? Cet article identifie les principes que les aménagistes appliquent au Canada et montre pourquoi les projets de communautés sont approuvés. Dans le contexte où les consommateurs affichent une nette préférence pour les aménagements homogènes et exclusifs, et alors que les gouvernements municipaux envisagent d'appliquer les principes de l'efficacité des coûts (*cost-effective*) aux nouvelles infrastructures urbaines, les décideurs sont obligés de considérer les enclaves fermées comme des options viables.

# Planning the (dis)connected city

## Why gated projects get approved

**Jill Grant**

Dalhousie University

Jill.grant@dal.ca

### Abstract

A strong consensus around values of mixed use, connected streets, and alternative transportation modes drives urban planning theory in most Western nations today. Smart growth and sustainable development models promote diversity, affordability, and connectedness in a vibrant public realm. At the same time, though, we note that gated developments are on the increase. How can we account for the proliferation of homogeneous, isolated, and car-oriented enclaves when those who regulate land use advocate quite different options? This article identifies the principles that planners agree on and uses a case study of Canadian planning practice to illustrate why gated projects get approved regardless of planners' preferences. In an environment where affluent consumers prefer homogeneity and exclusivity, and where local government is looking for cost-effective options when investing in new urban infrastructure, decision makers may feel compelled to accept gated enclaves as a viable development option.

**Keywords:** gated communities, planning principles, theory and practice, Canada, United States

### Résumé

**Planifier la ville discontinue. Pourquoi les projets de communautés fermées sont-ils approuvés**

Les théories contemporaines de planification urbaine valorisent de manière consensuelle, du moins en Occident, la mixité des usages du sol, la trame de rues continue et les modes de transport alternatif. Les modèles du *Smart Growth* et du développement durable urbain font la promotion de la diversité, du moindre coût ainsi que de l'interconnexion des réseaux et ce, dans un espace public animé. Pourtant, en parallèle, on peut observer le développement de collectivités fermées. Comment peut-on comprendre une telle prolifération d'enclaves isolées, socialement homogènes et organisées sur le principe de la dépendance à l'automobile, alors que les personnes chargées de l'aménagement urbain ne partagent pas ces options? Cet article identifie les principes que les aménagistes appliquent au Canada et montre pourquoi les projets de communautés sont approuvés. Dans le contexte où les consommateurs affichent une nette préférence pour les aménagements homogènes et exclusifs, et alors que les gouvernements municipaux envisagent d'appliquer les principes de l'efficacité des coûts (*cost-effective*) aux nouvelles infrastructures urbaines, les décideurs sont obligés de considérer les enclaves fermées comme des options viables.

**Mots-clés:** collectivités fermées, principes, théorie et pratique de l'aménagement, Canada, États-Unis

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## THEORY VERSUS PRACTICE

Contemporary town planning principles generally promote an integrated and connected urban realm. Theories such as sustainable development, healthy communities, new urbanism, and smart growth have helped to create a consensus around the idea that good communities should feature a mix of uses and people, open and connected street and pedestrian networks, and compact form. Professional organizations such as the American Planning Association (APA) and the Canadian Institute of Planners, lobbying groups like the Congress for the New Urbanism or the Smart Growth Network, and development industry associations like the Urban Land Institute (ULI) promote such ideas in their publications, workshops, and conferences. Professional theory about how to plan cities is clear and reasonably consistent in its articulation of the features of good communities.

In practice, however, the goals and objectives are less transparent. While some projects experiment with mixed-use, connected street patterns, and compact form, the broader trends in urban development in North America today involve separated land uses, discontinuous street patterns, and dispersed form. A large proportion of growth in the United States is in gated communities, and in some regions of Canada as well enclaves are appearing with some frequency (Figure 1). Gated projects contradict some of the dominant principles of those who regulate and manage land use. How, then, can we explain this incongruity of theory and practice in contemporary land use planning in North America? If planners think that gated developments are not the best form for the city, why do they approve such projects?

**Figure 1**



*Source: Langley Township (BC), July 2003, photograph by Jill Grant*

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This paper considers the ways in which land use planning principles and practices, in association with municipal financial constraints and power politics, frame gating as a development option. Drawing on field research in Canada, supplemented with analysis of literature on planning in the United States, I explore the relationship between planning principles and development practices. On close inspection of Canadian projects, we find that gated developments may facilitate the implementation of some planning principles, such as higher suburban densities, reduced road dimensions, and high design standards. In a context where local governments prefer the market to provide urban infrastructure and where enclosure proves politically popular, condominium projects or planned unit developments with private roads are rapidly becoming the standard mode of urban accretion. How do planning practitioners reconcile their envisioning open, vibrant, and cooperative communities when in many cases their daily practice involves permitting closed enclaves?

## PLANNING THEORY ON GOOD URBAN FORM

A century ago, modern town planning got its start with a remarkable level of consensus around the model of the garden city as a paradigm for new development (Fishman, 1977; Howard, 1902). By the late twentieth century, however, the garden city idea and associated modernist notions had come under severe attack by authors such as Jane Jacobs (1961), Leon Krier (1978), Edward Relph (1987), and James Howard Kunstler (1993). The open suburban landscape that resulted from efforts initially intended to integrate town and country stood accused instead of facilitating wasteful consumption and hopeless monotony. A revolution in thinking generated a new model of urban development that by the 1990s enjoyed widespread appeal.

The planning principles most commonly held in the twenty-first century derive from over-lapping theories that have been influential in recent decades and which share faith in a common set of means for achieving good urban form. Two of the movements had wide international appeal: healthy communities and sustainable development theories were linked to agencies associated with international organizations that lent authority to the messages. The other two movements—new urbanism and smart growth—developed in the United States, but have had considerable effect on planning ideas abroad as well (Grant, 2005c). In recent years, we see considerable convergence around several basic premises underlying smart growth and sustainable development.

New urbanism has had a remarkable impact on urban planning ideology in North America. In the 1980s, Florida architects Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk built projects in Seaside, Florida, and Kentlands (Gaithersburg, Maryland) that illustrated the promise of what they called neo-traditional town planning or “traditional neighbourhood design” (TND): TND advocated communities built according to the principles and with the techniques that generated small towns throughout America in an earlier era (Krieger, 1991). During the same period, Peter Calthorpe (1993; Kelbaugh, 1989) offered an alternative model: transit-oriented development proposed high-density nodes and corridors that would offer “pedestrian pockets” as options to replace car-oriented suburbs. By 1994, these principles of urban form united under the rubric of “New Urbanism” (Katz, 1994; Leccese

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and McCormick, 2000). The Congress for the New Urbanism became a major promoter of the principles, organizing annual conferences and producing a series of publications to spread the message.

The healthy community movement originated in the late 1980s with new links between planners, policy makers, and public health advocates. Promoted by organizations like the World Health Organization, healthy communities advocated a holistic approach that considered how public policy and land use practices might affect human health. The movement generated widespread interest in Canada, bringing the Canadian Institute of Planners together with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Canadian Public Health Association to solicit federal government funding to implement community-based initiatives (Hendler, 1989). The European healthy cities movement proved quite influential in focussing attention on new ways of building communities that would promote health (World Health Organization–WHO, 1998).

The idea of sustainable development got a boost from the report of the Brundtland Commission (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) offering advice on the relationship between environment and economy in development: the movement discovered the wisdom of early town planners like Thomas Adams (1917) who advocated living off the interest or excess produced by the environment instead of eroding basic natural capital. Strategies for reducing resource consumption and encouraging human development as an alternative to escalating growth supported ideas of the compact city and options to automobile use (Hygeia, 1995). Institutes and agencies were set up in many jurisdictions to promote sustainability. The word “sustainable” became a favoured adjective in the planning lexicon.

In the later 1990s, smart growth infiltrated the political agenda in the United States. States like Maryland launched major smart growth initiatives under the governor’s leadership (Frece, 2001). Smart growth built on the ideas of compact form, mixed use, and transportation alternatives, offering state incentives to enhance implementation (Smart Growth Network, 2004). Organizations like the National Governor’s Association, the American Planning Association, and the Urban Land Institute became major proponents of smart growth in the United States. Smart growth also caught on in Canada, especially as a strategy for local governments.

## SHARED PREMISES

Despite their differences of emphasis and strategy, these contemporary movements share the belief that particular principles contribute to good urban form:

- Urban areas should include a mix of compatible uses at a fairly fine grain to create a vibrant urban environment. This might include vertical mixing: for instance, residential uses over businesses, or combined live/work units. It could also involve horizontal mixing of activities along a street block.
- A mix of housing types and sizes is favoured to allow social and economic diversity, and to facilitate affordable options for a range of households.

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- A variety of transportation options, from public transportation to walking, should be available as alternatives to automobile use.
  - A connected street network is advocated to distribute traffic more evenly and to enhance pedestrian access to all points.
  - Good streetscaping should create pedestrian-friendly environments. Narrow streets provided with sidewalks will reduce road infrastructure demands and encourage walking.
  - Growth can be good if it is managed effectively in the right location and form.
  - Communities should take a compact form with higher densities than suburban areas have conventionally shown.
  - The built environment should generate a sense of place with an identifiable character. High quality urban design will be encouraged through design standards.
  - Open space networks will provide green areas for recreation, mobility, and wildlife habitat.
  - The traditional over-arching values of town planning—equity, amenity, health, and efficiency—are the fundamental notions underlying these approaches. This much has not changed from the garden city models of an earlier generation. All of the models seek to generate residential areas safe from traffic and crime. They all hope to reduce the sprawl of twentieth century suburban development.

We find considerable professional and academic consensus around these positions. Municipal plans, policies, and vision statements generally reveal the normative appeal of the principles. For example, the American Planning Association conference in April 2004 in Washington DC had more than 80 sessions on these themes. The planning educators' conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, held in October 2004 in Portland, Oregon, had almost 90 papers and sessions on related topics. Finding appropriate strategies to implement these principles are dominant interests for both theoreticians and practitioners.

Planning academics keenly explore the relationship between urban form, transportation, and health (e.g. Frumkin et al., 2004). The key questions they ask include: do the suburbs make people fat? Can good urban form encourage people to use alternative transportation options? Will good form convince people to live active lives? The North American mass media has taken a great interest in the topic of obesity recently, documenting the "epidemic" of fat sweeping the United States and linking it to sprawling suburbs where people spend more time in cars than walking (Kreyling, 2001; Stein, 2003). Health-related funding organizations are sponsoring research in this area, driving a torrid agenda of investigations into the links between neighbourhood form and human behaviour. Some of the research and writing succumbs to spatial or environmental determinism, reflecting designers' hopes that by manipulating urban form they can control behaviour.

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At the same time as we see growing faith in ideas such as mixed use and street connectivity dominating planning discourse, evidence demonstrates that gated communities constitute a considerable share of new development in many countries. For example, Sanchez and Lang (2002) say that the United States census showed that four million households lived in access-controlled developments in 2000. We have documented over 300 gated developments in Canada and find new ones being advertised each month (Grant, 2005a; Maxwell, 2004a, 2004b). Atkinson et al. (2003) located over 1000 gated enclaves in the United Kingdom. Gating is happening in dozens of countries and is arguably among the more common expressions of elite residential development types. By contrast, we find many fewer suburban projects that offer good representations of smart growth or sustainable development principles.

Despite the large number of people now living in gated developments, and the rapid spread of this urban form around the world, we find relatively little interest in the planning literature in documenting the extent of gating and the issues around it. Neither do we see evidence that practitioners are encouraged to consider the practical implications of the proliferation of enclosed residential districts. The 2004 American Planning Association conference program of several hundred presentations lacked a single session or paper on gated projects. The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning conference in Portland had only one paper on gated communities—mine (Grant, 2004). Although many papers and workshops at both the practitioners' and the educators' conferences stressed the importance of street connectivity, mixed use, and transportation alternatives, planners in North America barely seem to consider the spatial consequences of gated enclaves.<sup>1</sup> Seldom do the publications of the organizations that write about planning in the United States carry articles about the implications of gated enclaves. The issue remains largely invisible, as planning organizations overlook the contradictions of contemporary practice in favour of confirming the principles of the ascendant normative paradigm (i.e. smart growth and sustainable development).

What are planners doing about gating? What can they do? What should they do? What is an appropriate land use response to this urban form? These are essential questions for the regulation of land in our communities. We find a significant gap between what planning theory promotes as its principles and the realities of planning practice in North America. We face an urgent need for research to document practice and to offer insights for practitioners interested in alternatives to gated projects.

In the next sections of the paper, I explore the planning response to gating in Canada as a case study of practice. While gating appears less often in Canada than in the United States or the United Kingdom, Canada does have districts where enclaves have become popular. The Canadian case will help to illustrate the complex issues that may account for the gaps between theory and practice. We discover that planners have mixed feelings about whether gated developments are good or bad, and we learn why they have little power to resist them.

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## CANADIAN EXPERIENCE WITH GATED DEVELOPMENTS

As of March 2004, we reported on an inventory of gated projects in Canada (Grant et al., 2004). We counted projects with interior road systems that have workable gates to keep them private, using the following definition: "Gated communities are housing developments on private roads that are closed to general traffic by a gate across the primary access. These developments may be surrounded by fences, walls or other natural barriers that further limit public access." This definition intentionally excludes walled developments with open streets and enclosed apartment complexes.

Our research methods included reviewing literature, surveying planners by email, scanning internet real estate listings, and conducting field visits<sup>2</sup> in three provinces (Grant et al., 2004). We identified over 300 gated communities in six provinces (Table 1); after we completed the inventory we discovered anecdotal information about enclaves in Québec and Newfoundland, but have not confirmed them. While we searched doggedly to try to locate gated developments in the time available, the study was not comprehensive. We estimate that there may be two or three times as many such projects in Canada, but with limited resources we could not locate them all.

**Table 1 Documented gated projects in Canada (March 2004)**

Province	Total gated projects	Projects with 500 units or more	Projects with guards
British Columbia	228	3	5
Alberta	21	3	1
Saskatchewan	8		
Manitoba	1		
Ontario	49	8	9
Nova Scotia	7		
<b>Canada total</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>

Most gated projects in Canada are in British Columbia. Concentrations of enclaves occur in the Okanagan Valley and in the suburbs of Vancouver. Gated projects prove popular with older adults and are commonly found in retirement destinations. About a third of the projects selectively recruit adult or senior residents. For the most part, Canadian projects have proven to be small, with fewer than 100 units. By contrast with American gated developments, few Canadian enclaves employ guards or video surveillance.

By email survey, we contacted 123 planners and received responses from 78 (response rate = 63%). Only nine of the municipalities responding had plan policies or guidelines to deal with gating (Grant, 2005a). Although some plan policies

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discouraged gating (Burnaby, Coquitlam, Nanaimo, Kelowna, Qualicum Beach, Ottawa Region 1999 plan), policies that could explicitly prevent it proved rare. Regulations prohibiting the use of “reverse frontage” lots (e.g. Ajax ON)<sup>3</sup>, or restricting fence heights (e.g. Nanaimo) would lessen the impact of enclosure, but not prevent it. Policies to require public access or encourage street connectivity may have greater impact (e.g. Surrey, Burnaby, Orangeville). Many communities have adopted landscaping guidelines and regulations for walls designed to lessen the visual impact of extensive enclosures (e.g. Regina, Kelowna).<sup>4</sup>

The planners we interviewed and surveyed often expressed discomfort with gated enclaves. Their primary concerns resulted from the visual impact of long walls along collector roads and the disruption of street connectivity. Some also raised questions about the social consequences of separating groups of people by walls. All acknowledged, however, that gates prove popular with home buyers, developers, and councillors. The political context clearly supports gating and limits planners’ ability to oppose enclosure. Several said that their city councils had “no appetite” to restrict gated developments. In these areas, planners had little hope of circumventing public policy that condones gating.

The most strident opposition to gating we encountered came from staff of a few local fire departments worried about response delays due to barriers. While British Columbian gated developments appear to have made accommodations with emergency personnel, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the fire service actively fought private roads of any kind. Fire personnel interviewed indicated that the implications of barriers for emergency response times have become an important issue within the profession. They also acknowledged that the battle to prevent gates had already been lost in several areas.

In most Canadian communities, developers have not yet built gated projects. Gates generally appear where growth is strongest and the housing market, most segmented. In a few towns and cities with no gated enclaves, planners indicated that they had successfully dissuaded developers who proposed gated projects. For the most part, though, planners had not had any experience with gated developments and did not expect to receive proposals for enclaves in the immediate future. Hence, they felt no need to develop policy to anticipate gating. By and large, municipal plans do not have any policy in place should authorities receive applications for enclosed enclaves.

## CONFLICT OVER PLANNING GOALS

The academic planning literature that deals with gating is almost universally negative. Critics describe gated enclaves as landscapes of fear and privilege (see, e.g. Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Low, 2003; Wilson-Doenges, 2000). The literature clearly suggests that gating contravenes professional planning principles of openness, access, diversity, and equity by creating exclusive, reactionary, and socially isolating places (Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Hillier and McManus, 1994; Marcuse, 1997).

The marketing materials for gated communities, by contrast, appear consistently upbeat (Maxwell, 2004b). Those selling and buying homes in gated developments see landscapes of privacy, luxury, security, companionship, and community (Grant, 2005b). They recognize the appeal of safety, shared identity, and homogeneity. They offer buyers the values that consumers want in the residential environment.

Practising planners who have never had to deal with requests for gated developments form opinions about gated projects, in part based on what they have seen in the literature or in their travels, and in part on professional or personal values. Those dealing with gated enclaves within their jurisdictions find developing a professional position on gating much more difficult. As we examine the planning values associated with gated developments, we come to see some of the reasons for the ambivalence (see Table 2). Gating supports some key planning values while it contravenes others.

**Table 2      Ambivalent values**

<b>Gating supports planning values</b>	<b>Gating contradicts planning values</b>
density, compact form safe, quiet, private traffic calming, pedestrian friendly quality design and character reduced road dimensions local community amenities sense of place and community	mixed use, diversity of uses street connectivity social diversity housing choice housing affordability focus on the public realm open and inclusive community

In some ways, gating supports key planning values. For instance, gated projects are often built in areas zoned for multifamily housing. With condominium or strata ownership, homes have small lots built to medium densities. In this way, gated projects facilitate compact and infill development. They may prove a viable option for dense brownfield projects in mixed neighbourhoods that otherwise might not attract affluent households. The enclosure provides a package of amenities that compensate for smaller private spaces.

Within the gated developments, quality open space creates a walkable environment or a human scale. With limited traffic allowed in, the streets seem safe and quiet (Greene and Maxwell, 2004). Separation minimizes potential conflicts with non-residents. Reduced road dimensions limit the width of streets to create an intimate scale. Unified design guidelines, along with clear boundaries and amenity-laden centres, create a sense of place and character that may not be duplicated in conventional suburbs. Enclaves have a strong identity, reinforced by signs at the entrance and commonality of design features throughout. Many of these principles have become embedded in Canadian planning ideology through the influence of new urbanism and sustainable development (Grant, 2003) and are rendered concrete within gated developments.

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The residents of gated enclaves often enjoy an enthusiastic sense of community, according to those we interviewed. They work together to manage their developments through their residents' associations, potentially building strong social capital. They share common facilities and amenities and encounter each other often as they walk around their neighbourhoods. They can look out for and help each other. Although we did not interview a large number of residents, those we spoke with found their communities to be positive social environments. Because moving to a gated community represents a life-style choice, residents typically share personal interests and characteristics. Common backgrounds and life circumstances of members contribute to the development of social bonds and cooperation within enclaves.

In other ways, gated developments clearly contravene good planning principles. The factors that make gated enclaves strong communities—their social and economic homogeneity—constitute significant challenges to contemporary planning values. One of the key principles of planning supports the idea of diverse and integrated communities. Planners believe that cities have to accommodate a range of people and options. Planners have tended to translate this principle into the need to plan for a mix of uses, housing types, and households within districts of the city. Gated projects fail to meet this criterion because they segregate by use, by class, by age, and in some contexts also by ethnicity.

Because many of their streets do not connect to the larger urban network, gated enclaves increase the grain size of the urban fabric, forcing pedestrians and cars to navigate around them. Few are well-served with public transportation. Proximity no longer guarantees social and physical integration when walls may separate. Contemporary plans often call for connected street networks of relatively small blocks, greenways, and path systems. Gated projects prevent or interrupt such links. They represent the ultimate example of a disconnected street pattern.

While some mobile home parks may be both affordable and gated, most gated developments are affluent enclaves of townhomes or detached houses. Enclosure typically drives up the cost of housing. Gates constitute the ultimate class marker for those whose wealth entitles them to extreme privacy. Constructing gates presents yet another challenge to the goal of ensuring housing choice and affordability in new development. The added burden of infrastructure for the gates and walls offsets any reduced costs from building at higher densities. Moreover, residents face continuing operating costs for snow removal, road and amenity maintenance, and garbage collection since municipalities typically do not cover such services on private roads.

Some say that rather than decreasing crime, gated enclaves increase the fear of crime (Marcuse, 1997; Low, 2003). The presence of walls, gates, video cameras, and guards reveals the growing insecurity of modern society (Blakely and Snyder, 1997). At the same time as planners work to help plan vibrant, safe, welcoming, and resilient communities, the trends we see in the suburbs may tell us that not everyone believes in the open city. Privatized communities represent the principal choice of many consumers, especially in the United States (Kohn, 2004; McKenzie, 1994).

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Planners operate under fiscal and political constraints that make it difficult to resist gating. In many parts of the country, private roads are common in new suburbs. While government has to pay for public roads, developers build private roads and then pass on the costs to buyers. Councils approve private roads to facilitate the transfer of development costs from local governments that lack the resources or willingness to finance development. Taxpayer groups may support this transfer of responsibility since the users of the services then shoulder the burden of providing their own infrastructure.<sup>5</sup> Once built, however, private roads are easily retrofitted with gates. Developers eager to give a sense of identity to new projects see entry features and walls as amenities that help them sell units more quickly. Closing off streets may appeal to residents concerned about road maintenance and safety. In some areas, residents lobby to close public streets to prevent short-cutting or to limit traffic nuisances. Gates have become popular in the market place: a kind of extension of the privacy and quiet of the cul-de-sac on a larger neighbourhood scale. The gated enclave offers a safe and enveloping club realm (Webster, 2002) to replace a public realm perceived as threatened by neglect or by bad behaviour (Grant, 2005b).

For the most part, local council members and developers believe that gated projects make good neighbours, bringing quiet and disciplined households into an area and pumping up neighbourhood property values. Some respondents worried about the social exclusion that gating represents, but others saw such spatial segregation as a product of consumer choice. Because enclaves have inconspicuous entries off local roads and attractive fences with excellent landscaping, few non-residents notice them to complain. Even local planners may not realize that they exist, since proposed enclosures may not appear on site plans, or gates may be added after development.<sup>6</sup> To a large extent, gated enclaves seem invisible to all but those who seek them out.

## TURNING A BLIND EYE TO THE GATES?

Given that eight of ten new developments in some parts of the United States are gated (Blakely and Snyder, 1997), we might assume that American planners and planning academics would be actively examining the implications of gated developments. That is not the case. The planning profession actively promotes principles contrary to the values of gated enclaves, but it seems helpless to influence the direction of land development. Professional values do not effectively translate into policy and regulations that might limit the use of enclosure as a building form. Despite the wide planning consensus around issues such as mixing and street connectivity, development practices remain resolutely homogeneous and disconnected in many areas. We might suggest that this reflects the weak political position of planning in North America. The normative visions of planners do not direct development patterns.

Are planners turning a blind eye to the gates? In the face of local political environments that favour gated developments, planners may choose to advocate principles that reflect where they want their communities to go rather than where the communities are now. Clearly, though, gating will not immediately disappear because planners argue for vibrant and integrated urban districts. If planners hope

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to influence the public agenda in development forms, then we need to address gated projects directly. Planners should engage this issue head-on in order to frame a "professional opinion" that can guide local practitioners facing increasing requests to approve gated developments. Planners need policy and regulatory options they can consider as they respond to local demands for enclosure. In the wider context of extensive privatization of the public realm (Sorkin, 1992), enclosing residential communities has not become a *cause célèbre*.

Even in Canada, where the extent of gating remains small, new enclave developments break ground every month. If fears about public security escalate (as is possible in the contemporary era of global terrorism), then more Canadians may try to escape behind the gates. Planners concerned about the questions raised by gated developments need to encourage a public debate about the implications of this urban form, and about appropriate policy options for addressing it.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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#### NOTES

- 1 The newsletter of the Congress for the New Urbanism, *New Urban News*, reported in January 2004 that there were 369 new urbanist projects approved, built, or under construction in the United States. Estimating an average population of 1000, that would mean under 400 000 people living in new urbanist enclaves. Twenty to thirty times as many are in gated projects.
- 2 Field visits included observations of areas predicted to have gated developments, the collection of reports and plans, and interviews with planners, developers and council members.
- 3 Reverse frontage lots have their backyards lining collector roads. To secure privacy, developers or land owners often build fences along the lot edge, thus creating a wall of fences along the collector street.
- 4 Grant (2005a) describes the policy response in some detail.
- 5 In the United States many gated enclaves develop in unincorporated areas and operate outside the constraints of municipal government (Blakely and Snyder, 1997). This is not as often the case in Canada; most gated developments are condominium or strata corporations governed by municipal regulations.
- 6 In most of the communities we visited, planners significantly under-estimated the number of gated projects in their cities.

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