Points of interest – grant apps content:

Celebrated Minneapolis architect Ralph Rapson died of a heart attack Saturday in his home. He was 93.

His son, architect Toby Rapson, told The Associated Press on Monday that his father had the heart attack Saturday after going upstairs to bed and could not be revived.

Rapson led the University of Minnesota School of Architecture from 1954 to 1984. Current Dean Tom Fisher remembered Rapson as the "Dean of Minnesota's architectural community and the last of the second generation of modernists in America still practicing."

Ralph Rapson has been described as a prolific architect whose most famous work was the former Guthrie Theater building in downtown Minneapolis. He also designed the United States embassies in Stockholm, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark.

His other works in Minnesota include St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in St. Paul Park and the former Pillsbury House in Wayzata.

He also had his own furniture line in the 1950s, and in recent years, his Minneapolis-based company has developed a line of prefabricated modern houses.

Rapson, born in 1914 in Alma, Mich., studied at the University of Michigan and Cranbrook Academy of Art. He led the architecture department at the Bauhaus School in Chicago and practiced in Cambridge, Mass.; Stockholm and Paris.

Renowned Minneapolis architect Ralph Rapson, a pioneer in modernist architecture style and creator of the original Guthrie Theater, has died.

Rapson, 93, suffered a heart attack Saturday night at his home, his son Toby confirmed in an interview Monday.

Rapson was the founder of Minneapolis-based Ralph Rapson and Associates Inc. Apart from the Guthrie, he also designed United States embassies in Stockholm and Copenhagen, St. Paul Park's St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, St. Paul's Prince of Peace Lutheran Church for the Deaf and the Riverside Plaza housing complex in Minneapolis.

Born in Alma, Mich., in 1914, Rapson was actively engaged in designing as well as lecturing at various locations across the world.

Rapson's son described his father as a "Forrest Gump" of architecture, explaining that his father was born with a birth defect that eventually resulted in the loss of his right arm. However, his disability did not prevent Rapson, who was artistically inclined from a young age, from pursuing a love for drawing.

Rapson began his studies in architecture in 1930, at the University of Michigan, which was at the time considered pioneering in its offering courses in modernist ideas. He then went on to study at the Cranbrook Academy of Art and began his career practicing architecture before World War II.

After the war, Rapson's son explained, " He was really captivated by post-war ideas of new construction, using new materials, and new building techniques, and rethinking ideas of how space is used were his passions."

Rapson was also a designer of furniture and accessories for Knoll Furniture in the 1940s and then developed own furniture line in the 1950s.

In addition, he served as a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was head of the experimental new Bauhaus School in Chicago and led the University of Minnesota School of Architecture from 1954 to 1984.

His company has recently developed a line of prefabricated modern houses called Rapson Greenbelt, based on one of his original 1941 designs.

Rapson worked up until his death. "He always joked that he would be carried out on his drafting board," Toby Rapson said, adding that his father was in the office Friday, writing and designing.

- Jonathan Montessori school is one of the biggest in the state of Minnesota

An early precursor of an internet-type of communication system (Community Information System) was designed by Jonathan resident Ed McCormick, who was an early pioneer of chip storage capacity and an exec with Burroughs Corp.

- New Communities Act was passed by US Congress in 1967

Chaska is an historic Minnesota River community. Jonathan is named after Jonathan Carver - an 18th century American born explorer who discovered the Minnesota River - and it borders on Hazeltine National Golf Course and the University of Minnesota's Landscape Arboretum.

From it original concept the present Jonathan has evolved and continues to establish and preserve a harmonious relationship between homes and nature.

Jonathan's population consists of people of all ages, races and backgrounds with an equally diverse mix of housing. Types of housing include single family homes, twin homes, apartments, condominiums and townhomes - all different in style and price range. The Jonathan Association has continued to work with the city of Chaska and developers to ensure that new neighborhoods reflect the original concept.

Backyards and neighborhoods are connected to an extensive park and greenway system with winding paths that pass under major streets. Throughout the system are picnic and playground areas (Totlots), all designed to blend into the landscape. Lake Grace, a man-made lake, provides a beach with many recreational opportunities.

Residential property within Jonathan has protective covenants designed to preserve the original goals for the community. By making all Jonathan residential property subject to certain restrictions, a high quality community, both in appearance and lifestyle, has been achieved. Jonathan's protective convenants govern a wide range of items affecting the external appearance and use of homesites within the community. Exterior building appearance, homesite maintenance, fences, landscaping, storage buildings and dog runs are a few of the examples of issues governed by Jonathan covenants.

The Jonathan Association is entirely self-sufficient, deriving the majority of its annual revenues from Association dues assessed against each residential property.

Jonathan offers the best of two worlds: countryside living and urban convenience. This growing residential community continues to lead the way in quality of life standards. Advance planning was a key element in developing Jonathan's neighborhoods; and the residents know that planning continues. Through existing protective covenants on residential property, the Jonathan Association helps ensure that future development is aesthetically compatible with the existing community. Furthermore, it provides assurance that affinity with nature, so much a part of the original development, is maintained and fostered.

Recreational facilities, either Association or city owned, have been designed for easy access and sharing by all residents via a walkway system. The original idea of walkways, besides movement of residents, was to segregate pedestrian traffice from the automobile as well as to bring the residents closer to the natural environment in which they reside. This concept remains a good idea for community cohesiveness and is popular with new residents.

The initial planning for the community, the protective covenants of the Jonathan Association, the ongoing careful and open planning by Chaska and the Jonathan Association Board of Directors and the people who live here make this the special community that is Jonathan in Chaska.
Mailboxes are deliberately clustered in Jonathan so as to encourage a
sense of community
among the residents in each neighborhood.

McKnight's original vision: to purchase 2,200 acres of land and create a new, self-contained community within the city of Chaska. It would be called Jonathan after Jonathan Carver, an 18th century explorer whom McKnight admired. Jonathan was to be a "new town" in Chaska,

a place that would offer Americans an alternative to suburbia as they knew it.
Jonathan would be the first "new town" in the country to be built within the framework of an existing municipality. Each village within Jonathan would have a variety of housing grouped around drug stores, churches, markets and schools. Each village would have its own
unique physical characteristics based on the topography of its site. There would be hiking trails and bike paths linking villages.

McKnight said: "One of our basic criteria is to save and preserve absolutely everything we can. We must re-do our thinking to save the land rather than re-do the land to serve us."
The Jonathan story has been told many times. The vision of one man, a cattle raiser and real estate developer, who borrowed ideas from new towns he visited in Europe, ended with McKnight's untimely death in 1972.

Although the scope and magnitude of the plan was curbed, the vision remained alive. The acreage, the villages, the concepts were all reduced to a workable size and the Jonathan community continued to exist.
"Jonathan has always provided incubation for ideas," said Marsh Halberg, a resident and historian of Jonathan. These ideas included one of the nation's first house-to-house modem and internet hookups, road patterns that curb heavy traffice within neighborhoods, walking and bike trails, the Renaissance Festival, cluster mailboxes to bring neighbors together and more. The mailboxes were clustered to encourage neighbors to interact.

The cost of housing varies for renters and buyers. "The houses really are modest financially," Halberg said. "We are not overly affluent here in Jonathan."
According to Halberg, the philosophy that guides Jonathan is "willingness to give up something in exchanged for others, preserving natural resources, safety and mixing people
of different economic backgrounds." Thus the rules govern everything from the color of
paint used on homes and fencing materials to driveway construction and location of satellite
dishes.
miles of nature trails, trails that run along the backside of every home and meander through woods, over creeks and beneath streets, you begin to grasp the radical nature of the idea.

Jonathan was to be a counter point to the ugly chaos of suburban sprawl, a low-profile town that hugged its rolling terrain, a place where people with various incomes would live side by side in a blend of apartments and single family homes, where the automobile wouldn’t be needed for a trip to the store, where neighbors could meet and chat at clustered mailboxes, where kids would never have to cross a street. And in those ways, Jonathan has succeeded quite nicely.

Jonathan, with its common spaces of meadows, woods and trails was one of a dozen fully planned “new towns” that sprouted in the heady 1960’s, the most notable of which were Reston, Virginia and Columbia, Maryland – both near Washington, D.C. (itself a new town from an earlier era).

The hope was that strict planning could stem the sprawl that was overtaking the suburban landscape. The new towns would build houses closer together in exchange for big common areas where nature could be preserved. Jonathan was the brainchild of Henry T. McKnight, a conservation-minded state senator who was heir to a downtown Minneapolis real estate fortune.

The parameters of Jonathan have been defined to include that area north of Highway 212, south of the railroad tracks, west of Highway 41, and east of County Road 11. There are also several other pockets of development, including the area around Hazeltine Golf Course including Autumn Woods, the Carver Green Townhouse development, and Hazeltine Shores. In addition there are also a few homes on the east side of Lake Bavaria that are part of Jonathan. The Jonathan Association continues to oversee the maintenance and preservation of these assets for the benefit of Jonathan residents. The primary source for revenue to have this work performed is the annual assessment paid by residents.

Jonathan in Chaska – Minnesota’s first completely new town:

In a “new town” all the parts are planned from the start to fit together into the best possible pattern to provide all the benefits of city living without the disadvantages of haphazard or accidental growth.

In one way, the planned city has always been a part of civilization. Records exist of plans for new towns back as far as the ancient Egyptians. Most of the “planned towns” in history, however, were based on providing for military, trade or harbor needs. The idea of planning a city for the needs of the people who would live there didn’t really crystallize until the end of the 19th century when Sir Ebenezer Howard, an Englishman, first suggested a series of “garden cities” which became the forerunners of today’s new towns. One of the finest and most famous new towns in the world was Tapiola, on the outskirts of Helsinki, Finland. It wasn’t until the end of World War II, however, that major development of new towns began in Europe, and not until the 1960’s did the idea begin to take hold in this country. Among the most notable American new towns are Columbia, Maryland; Reston, Virginia; Foster City, California; and now, Jonathan, Minnesota.

The real problems most existing cities have today come from the fact that people have been “adding on” to them for too long. Without plan or design, they have grown in disorderly fashion wherever there was open space to grow into.

In the case of Jonathan, the physical layout of an existing community (Chaska) is such that our new town could be started “from scratch” under the aegis of the existing city. Thus, Jonathan did not have to start at the edge of present development of Chaska to build out; our founders were able to go out to the limits of Chaska’s boundaries and plan our new town for space somewhat separated from the existing development.

This gave our founders the opportunity to plan every stage of Jonathan's growth in advance to avoid the problems of haphazard growth in the new area. For example, one-fifth of all the space in Jonathan is permanently reserved for recreational use – woods, parks, lakes, tree-lined walkways – and all of those areas have been included in the master plan.

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The real difference between ordinary towns and the new town of Jonathan is this: Our new town is for people. And it will grow with people. It is planned that way.

Planned for all kinds of people, with all kinds of needs and all kinds of ideas about how they want to live. With a choice of homes: single family houses, multiple dwellings, modular designs, or apartments.

Planned not for how many structures can be crammed into it…but for the quality of life its people can enjoy. Planned for quiet hours of strolling on forest paths…for times of laughter at sparkling lakesides…for family times…planned for clean air, clean streets…to be a clean place to live…always.

Jonathan is a new town…and it will always be new. For Jonathan is designed to be an adventure in meeting the changing future. And when you live in Jonathan, you'll get all the benefits of neighborhood recreational facilities – safe playgrounds, walkways, woods, wetlands, ponds, and a lake.

Living in Jonathan offers the best in housing designs…the newest in convenience and comfort…the opportunity to live in an interactive community – one where people can enjoy each other.

- Respect for the land: preserving and enhancing natural resources – trees, open space, lakes, recreational areas – keeping them accessible for all residents…from every home and neighborhood
- Planned to offer the fullest possible range of housing to enable everyone to find the home they want – now and in the years ahead
- A community without barriers of race, income, education, or age
- "We must utilize the land with full regard for the quality of the environment people seek." – Henry T. McKnight (Founder & President)

Gently rolling farmland studded with woods and artificial lakes sets the scene for the Midwest's first "new town." Named Jonathan, after Jonathan Carver, an 18th-century English explorer who discovered the Minnesota River, the community is situated 25 miles southwest of Minneapolis…a warm, casual, somewhat rustic community where people and land coexist in pleasant harmony…particular care has been given to avoid the cookie-cutter monotony so common in most suburban developments…one-fifth of all the land will remain untouched – unspoiled wilderness areas wind casually through all of the neighborhoods, assuring residents of lovely, natural vistas…

Jonathan is more than a new town. It's a natural and organic thing – perhaps the beginning of the real greening of America.

To founder Henry McKnight, Jonathan is:

"Jonathan is a town whose primary purpose is to have open space and parks and elbow room, <u>after</u> the town is completely built."

Jonathan adheres to the strictest ecological standards. Ground vegetation essential to erosion control is conserved; neighborhood clusters are separated by belts of green; homes and apartments complexes, roads, pedestrian walks and bicycle paths have all been carefully placed to disturb as little of the terrain as possible – and also to preserve the existing natural watershed system.

Preserving land is one thing: making it serve the great demands of a growing population is another. But Jonathan aims to do both, providing its residents with the best of two worlds: countryside living and urban convenience.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, Chaska's population averaged about 2,000 and the nature of the City remained unchanged. The City retained its small town image until the 1950s when the transition to a metropolitan community began. The expansion of the seven county metropolitan area reached Chaska in the 1960s. With that expansion came the introduction of the Jonathan New Town design concept in 1966. The Jonathan "new town" development within Chaska brought new land, new jobs and new people to the community.

This period of transition and expansion continues today. Dozens of modern industries have located to Chaska and continue to do so; residential construction adds 300 to 400 new homes per year; commercial business continues to expand offering a variety of retail and service opportunities to its residents; redevelopment of commercial areas in the downtown began in the 1980s and still continues. Although the community has seen much growth, development regulations and sound planning have ensured Chaska's small sense of community and the preservation of its rich heritage.

A '''homeowners' association''' (abbrev. '''HOA''') is the legal entity created by a real estate developer for the purpose of developing, managing and selling a community of homes. It is given the authority to enforce the [[Restrictive covenant|covenants, conditions, and restrictions]] (CC&Rs) and to manage the common amenities of the development. It allows the developer to legally exit responsibility of the community typically by transferring ownership of the association to the homeowners after selling off a predetermined number of lots. Most homeowners' associations are [[non-profit corporations]], and are subject to state statutes that govern non-profit corporations and homeowners' associations.

Since 1964, homeowners' associations have become increasingly common in the USA. The [[Community Associations Institute]] trade association estimated that HOAs governed 23 million American homes and 57 million residents in 2006.<

Like a city, associations provide services, regulate activities, levy assessments, and impose fines. Unlike a municipal government, homeowner association governance is subject to corporation law, and sometimes specific legislation governing homeowners' associations. HOAs are considered private corporations and are not subject to all of the Constitutional constraints that public government must abide by.<ref>Privatopia, p. 142</ref> Some of the tasks which HOAs carry out would otherwise be performed by [[local government]]s. A homeowners' association can enforce its actions through private legal action under [[Civil law (common law)|civil law]].

Association boards appoint corporate officers, and may create subcommittees, such as "architectural control committees," pool committees and neighborhood watch committees. Association boards are comprised of volunteers from the community who are elected by owners at the annual meeting to represent the association and make decisions for all homeowners.

Many homeowners' associations include management of a community's recreational amenities, maintained for exclusive use of its members. This can allow an individual homeowner access to a maintained pool, clubhouse, gym, tennis court or walking trail that they may not be able to otherwise afford or desire to maintain on their own. Each member of a homeowners' association pays assessments that are used to cover the expenses of the community at large. Some examples are landscaping for the common areas, maintenance and upkeep of community amenities, insurance for commonly-owned structures and areas, mailing costs for newsletters and other correspondence, employment of a management company or on-site manager, security personnel and gate maintenance, and any other item delineated in the governing documents or agreed to by the Board of Directors.

While many criticisms of HOAs are made, everyone living under the jurisdiction of such a governing body has made a decision to do so, and many are happy to have the governing body in place to enforce shared values and community standards. A survey by [[Zogby]] International showed that for every one owner-member who rated the overall experience of living in a community association as negative, seven rated the experience as positive. <ref>[

A **homeowners' association** (abbrev. **HOA**) is the legal entity created by a real estate developer for the purpose of developing, managing and selling a community of homes. It is given the authority to enforce the covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs) and to manage the common amenities of the development.

The fastest growing form of housing in the United States today is common-interest developments, a category that includes planned-unit developments of single-family homes, condominiums, and cooperative apartments.[1] Since 1964, homeowners' associations have become increasingly common in the USA. The Community Associations Institute trade association estimated that HOAs governed 23 million American homes and 57 million residents in 2006.[2]

The new town is the most complex form of planned community. Its intention is to rationalize land-use, transportation, and building location by incorporating residential, industrial, commercial, cultural and recreational facilities in a single new development. The construction of a new town is a lengthy and expensive undertaking. It requires "patient money," sponsors who are willing and able to make a substantial up-front investment in land acquisition and infrastructure (roads, utilities, water systems, etc.) and to wait years before the investment shows a return. For this reason new towns are more common in countries with strong traditions of direct government involvement in development, notably western Europe, Scandinavia, and the state socialist economies of the former Soviet bloc, than in economies like the United States dominated by the ideology of private enterprise.

In the United States, the first important advocate of the garden city idea was architect Clarence Stein. As head of the New York State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning, Stein traveled to England in 1919 to visit Letchworth and Welwyn and returned a disciple of Howard and Unwin. In 1924, together with landscape architect Henry Wright and realtor Alexander Bing, Stein founded the limited-dividend City Housing Corporation to build an American garden city. Their first project, Sunnyside Gardens, in Queens, New York (1924-1928), was not a garden city but a residential neighborhood built within the confines of the existing street grid. Consisting mostly of traditional two-story row houses, the site plan is distinguished by shared landscaped gardens in the block interiors.

The planned industry never materialized. Although falling short of the garden city ideal, Radburn introduced several other concepts which influenced the course of American suburban development, notably separation of vehicular from pedestrian traffic through a system of cul-de-sacs (dead-end streets) and tunnels, and reduced private yards in favor of a large shared central greenway. As at Sunnyside, efforts were made to keep housing affordable by tight space planning and construction of a variety of semi-detached and row house types in addition to rental apartments.

Notwithstanding the success of these early models, it was forty years before the federal government again sponsored new town construction. The model came from two successful private initiatives launched in the early 1960s: Columbia, Maryland, founded by mortgage banker and shopping-mall developer James W. Rouse; and Reston, Virginia, named for its founder Robert E. Simon. Although each encountered early financial difficulties (Reston was forced into bankruptcy), both survived to become successful new towns with populations in excess of 75,000 in 1990. Both eventually attracted significant industrial and office developments, and are known for the quality of their schools, services, and recreational opportunities made possible by the use of cluster planning. They pioneered in clustering higher-density row housing in order to preserve large areas of the natural landscape, a concept later codified in many local zoning ordinances as Planned Unit Developments (PUD's). Because both Virginia and Maryland are states with strong county government systems, neither new town has municipal self-government; both have residents' associations to maintain public green spaces and recreational areas. Although most housing is privately built and owned, both towns have a sprinkling of subsidized units. Columbia has been notably successful in achieving a racially integrated community.

As private ventures, these new towns meshed better with the US private enterprise ideology than the government-financed European model. Consequently, when the federal government established a program to guide regional development through the construction of new towns, it did so by offering loan guarantees and grant assistance to private developers through the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (Title IV) and the Urban Growth and New Communities Act of 1970 (Title VII). For a variety of reasons, including understaffing at the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the inadequacy of proposal evaluation criteria, the program was a failure: only 1 of the 13 new communities funded under this program survived. The government had far better success when it built new communities directly, under the greenbelt program in the 1930s and earlier housing for shipbuilders and munitions workers during World War I. These efforts were undertaken during clearly defined national emergencies, and the government invested in high quality construction and engaged nationally prominent architects and planners to direct the programs.

A variant of the new towns program, the new-town-in-town, aims at applying the benefits of comprehensive planning to redeveloping the central city. One successful project is New York City's Roosevelt Island, located in the East River just off mid-town Manhattan, begun in 1968. The Urban Development Corporation (UDC), a non-profit agency chartered by the State of New York, used proceeds from the sale of tax-free bonds to finance the necessary site preparation and infrastructural development. Housing construction was assisted by state and federal low-interest mortgage programs and rent subsidies. With construction two/thirds complete in 1995, the Island has a residential population of 7,500, linked to Manhattan by subway and aerial tramway. The housing stock, a mixture of rental and cooperative apartments, offers a wide range of unit sizes. All new construction on Roosevelt Island is barrier-free.

With the withdrawal of federal backing, and a shrinking supply of inexpensive land for development, there has been little new town development activity in recent years. Notable exceptions have been communities like Las Colinas, outside Dallas, Texas, and Irvine, in Orange County, California, incorporated in 1971, where unified land holdings in large family-owned ranches obviated the need for costly site acquisition.

For the most part, suburban development in the United States continues to be dominated by speculative tract developers on land made accessible by private automobiles traveling on a federally-subsidized highway network. The post-War period has seen the decentralization not only of the residential population, but of corporate offices and industrial plants, entertainment complexes and service facilities as well. The concentration of each of these activities in separate enclaves clustered near major highway intersections has produced a phenomenon described as "edge city," a spontaneous settlement form driven by the individual investment decisions of private developers that is in many ways the antithesis of new town planning practice and principles.

Although some celebrate this regional landscape as the natural and proper working of the private market, growing concern about the environmental consequences of unplanned sprawl has produced a resurgence of interest in planned communities generally. The Neo-Traditional Development (NTD) promoted by architects Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, following the success of their resort community of Seaside, Florida, champions the virtues of urban design guidelines. The Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) concept developed by Peter Calthorpe is based on high density, mixed-use "pedestrian pockets" organized around surface light rail links to urban centers. These two current models are not complete new towns but fragments, a shift in scale which may improve their chances of implementation. By the mid-1990s a growing movement coalesced around these pioneering efforts under the banner of "the new urbanism."

Perhaps ironically, a movement conceived as an antidote to urban congestion is being reborn as a response to suburban sprawl. The inability to accomplish decentralization in an orderly fashion has led to a rediscovery of the merits of concentration. The new town, an idea which began a century ago by detaching itself from the central city, is in the process of restoring the umbilical connection. In the intervening years, however, suburban migration has increased regional segregation and stratification by race and income, thereby exacerbating urban economic and social tensions. As a result, the present challenge for advocates of planned regional development is to address issues of racial and social balance as well as environmental conservation. A hundred years of new town practice has demonstrated the validity of Howard's conviction that the goal of creating vibrant human communities is a matter of social reform as much as of physical development.

Under the new-communities clause of the 1968 Housing Act, the Department of Housing and Urban Development can guarantee $250 million in loans for land acquisition and development to those builders whose newtown plans meet standards prescribed by HUD.

THE NEW COMMUNITIES ACT OF 1968 - TITLE IV OF THE 1968 HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ACT AUTHORIZED FEDERAL GUARANTEES TO LENDERS SUPPLYING PRIVATE CAPITAL FOR NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT. MANY ESTABLISHED CITY OFFICIALS VIEWED THIS LEGISLATION AS A THREAT TO THE CAPABILITY OF CITIES TO SURVIVE. THE NEW COMMUNITY ACT HAS THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS THAT THE COMMUNITIES MUST: (1) HAVE A BALANCED USE OF LAND INCLUDING HOUSING, COMMERCE, AND INDUSTRY, (2) MAKE SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SOUND AND ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE AREAS IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED, (3) HAVE A BROAD RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES, AND (4) EMPLOY NEW TECHNOLOGY IN HOME BUILDING, REHABILITATION, AND MAINTENANCE. INCIPIENT NEW TOWNS IN THE UNITED STATES ARE REVIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE. SPECIFICALLY, COLUMBIA, MARYLAND AND RESTON, VIRGINIA HAVE MADE ENOUGH OF A START THAT THEY SERVE AS EXAMPLES OF THE ANALYSIS. IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE FROM JANITORS TO PRESIDENTS OF CORPORATIONS, THE NEW TOWNS HAVE STATED OBJECTIVES OF PROVIDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERY RESIDENT. HOWEVER, EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT SUCH WILL NOT BE THE CASE. THERE WILL BE COMMUTING IN BOTH DIRECTIONS, FROM OLD CITIES TO THE NEW TOWNS, BECAUSE IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO MATCH HOUSING AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE DESIRE OF MANY PEOPLE TO LIVE IN PLACES REMOTE FROM THEIR EMPLOYMENT. IN ENGLAND, IT IS OFTEN NECESSARY TO HAVE A JOB IN A NEW TOWN BEFORE GETTING A HOUSE THERE. WITH THE EXISTING HOUSING SHORTAGE, THE ONE TENDS TO LEAD TO THE OTHER. OPEN HOUSING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT LEND TOWARD INCREASING RACIAL INTEGRATION. NEW TOWNS ARE PROVIDING FOR A GROWING

POPULATION AND ARE ALSO PROVIDING AN EXPANDING ECONOMIC BASE. THE NEW TOWNS CAN BE AND SHOULD BE A USEFUL TOOL IN HELPING TO REVITALIZE THE OLDER CITIES.

New towns for the Great Society: a case study in politics and planning

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This article deals with the US Congress's • awed legislative attempt in the late 1960s to address urban redevelopment's shortcomings by resurrecting resettlement programmes akin to the earlier garden city and greenbelt town designs. Despite the opposition of real estate and building interests, as well as public housing advocates and big city mayors, new towns legislationwas passed in 1968 and 1970. The federal government provided .nancial assistance to the private developers who built the thirteen new towns in various locations around the country. By the early 1980s, however, of.cials of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development concluded that the experiment had failed in all but one of the thirteen new towns and arranged for bankruptcy and foreclosure proceedings. The article discusses the reasons for the inef.cacy of this little-known Great Society programme and suggests that the episode re• ected the chequered history of urban planning in the US.

In 1966 the Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization of the US Senate Committee on Government Operations held hearings on the state of the nation's cities. Subcommittee members heard comments from liberal Democrats, most notably Senators Robert Kennedy and Abraham Ribicoff, that lambasted Lyndon B. Johnson's administration for the inadequacy of its response to the burgeoning urban crisis.

The years following the passage of the enabling legislation saw the completion of few new communities, all of which soon suffered severe .nancial dif.culties. By the mid-1970s, the new towns were beset by bankruptcies and foreclosures, and even the most avid reformers had to admit defeat.

Rationale behind the introduction of the new towns

Drawing on the experiences of European governments and private developers in the United States and convinced that the urban redevelopment and renewal schemes implemented after the Second World War had failed to meet the needs of rapidly-changing central cities, many planners and architects argued by the early 1960s for the creation of new towns just outside existing metropolitan areas. The problems of the degenerating central cities, they adduced, called for decentralization, but random growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had resulted in suburban sprawl and snarled commuter traf.c as well as unsightly and dysfunctional community design. Instead of haphazard development with no attention to the environment, each new town would be part of a comprehensive regional plan encompassing transportation, public utilities, leisure facilities, and housing for *c*. 20 000 people from varied social and economic strata.

The new towns idea emanated from the writings of Ebenezer Howard, a London court stenographer who became interested in urban reform and planning. In *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, which was published in 1898 and reissued four years later as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, Howard considered the daunting task of improving the quality of urban life in industrial societies

proposing the creation of new communities, surrounded permanently by greenbelts, whose carefully planned residential, industrial, and commercial sectors would guarantee the best of both urban and rural living. Howard's concept resulted in the creation of two garden cities north of London, Letchworth and Welwyn, as well as a host of garden villages and garden suburbs

Progress in the early 1960s

Interest within the federal government surfaced during John F. Kennedy's presidency because of the efforts of Robert Weaver, chief administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA). An economist with a long-time interest in comprehensive urban planning, Weaver recommended to Congress that the federal government provide mortgage insurance for the purchase of land designated for new community development. In 1961 Weaver's proposal found few supporters on Capitol Hill or in the White House, but his sustained efforts fared better during Lyndon Johnson's administration.

Pursuant to the recommendation of the President's 1964 Task Force on Metropolitan and Urban Affairs, the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965 again contained a new

towns provision. In order to 'help break the pattern of central-city ghettos by providing low- and moderate-income housing in suburban areas', Title X of the bill called for federal insurance of mortgages to private developers and low-interest federal loans to states for land acquisition.

The beginning of the end: the 1970s

By 1970, however, much of the momentum generated by the passage of the 1968 law seemed to have been lost. Not until February 13, 1970 did President Richard M. Nixon's Administration approve the .rst loan under Title IV for the creation of a new town, Jonathan, Minnesota. On July 1, 1970, HUD announced commitments for two other communities – St Charles, Maryland, and Park Forest South, Illinois – but dozens of other applications went unheeded. Although President Nixon commented favourably on federal government involvement in new town building in his 1970 State of the Union address, he declined just two months later to endorse the Ashley bill. At the same time, Nixon overruled plans by HUD Secretary George Romney to forward alternative legislation that provided for new town development. Both Romney, who strongly af.rmed his commitment to the idea of new towns and declared his intention to re.ne Title IV, and Nixon, whose commitment to the enterprise was less evident, assailed the Ashley bill as excessively expensive at a time of rising in• ation [20].

Few new towns materialized, however, because the executive branch of the federal government still responded haltingly to the legislative mandate. At a time when Nixon was recounting the virtues of .scal restraint and urging a 'new federalism' whereby state and local governments were being induced to supplant the federal government in social welfare provision, Title VII's allowances for increased spending directed from Washington sounded a discordant note in the White House.

While the federal agencies erected roadblocks to hinder programme development and moved with excruciating deliberateness to process pending requests for funding, the number of applications dwindled. As the New Communities Administration itself reported, 'Given the level of risk associated with large-scale development and the clear lack of support for Title VII at the Federal and local levels, few experienced large-scale developers were willing to undertake a Title VII project' [26].

Limited to a scale much smaller than its proponents
envisaged, the new town programme would be judged successful or not based upon the relatively few projects completed during the Nixon presidency [27].
During the life of the programme, under the auspices of Titles IV and VII, HUD provided loan guarantees and direct grants for thirteen new towns, including one new town intown (Cedar-Riverside, near the Minneapolis, Minnesota central business district); one isolated community in an economically backward rural area (Soul City, North Carolina, 45 miles north of Raleigh–Durham); and eleven towns near metropolitan areas – Flower Mound, Texas, 22 miles north-west of Dallas; Gananda, New York, 12 miles east of Rochester;

Harbison, South Carolina, 8 miles north-west of Columbia; Jonathan, Minnesota, 25 miles south-west of Minneapolis; Maumelle, Arkansas, 12 miles north-east of Little Rock; New.elds, Ohio, 7 miles north-west of Dayton; Park Forest South, Illinois, 30 miles south of Chicago; Riverton, New York, 10 miles south of Rochester; Shenandoah, Georgia, 35 miles south-west of Atlanta; St Charles, Maryland, 25 miles south-east of Washington, DC; and The Woodlands, Texas, 30 miles north of Houston. In addition, three communities – Roosevelt Island, New York; Radisson, New York; and Park Central, Texas – received only grant assistance [28].

HUD of.cials and real estate experts readily identi.ed the economic factors that undercut these new towns, citing as the primary reason the inadequate .nancial mechanism provided by Title VII. Developers had to borrow heavily at unexpectedly high interest rates to acquire land, employ planners, construct homes, and market the product just to earn a moderate return on their investments. When residential and industrial sales lagged far below projections, developers charged prohibitively high rents that drove away potential customers. As HUD staffers concluded, developers could pay their bills only if given a considerable writedown on the cost of the land, an impossibility with the scanty .nancial resources made available under the existing legislation. As early as 1965, a White House urban task force that endorsed new towns cautioned that no complement of loans from the federal government would suf.ce; instead, some sort of 'land bank' would have to provide capital on a massive scale and developers must be granted the power of eminent domain to mitigate the high cost of land acquisition. Without these .nancial aids, HUD's investments became irretrievably mired in debt [29].

Compounding the problem of capital shortages, the new towns programme commenced during the rapid decline of the real estate market in the 1970s. Large-scale residential subdivisions typically ran de.cits in their initial .ve or six years, and the already fragile new community programme immediately ran headlong into a series of economic downturns. Because HUD's tortuous application process required at least .fteen months to complete, most of the Title VII communities were unable to begin construction until 1972. A severe housing recession in 1974–5, followed by another real estate collapse and skyrocketing interest rates in 1979–82, produced a wretched economic climate for investors. Crippled in their infancy, these new towns never fully recovered economically. At the same time, the surge in condominium construction and sudden popularity of real estate investment trusts provided more attractive outlets for precious capital in tight money markets [30].

The reasons for the demise of the new towns

By the 1980s, the reasons for the .nal collapse of the moribund new towns initiative were clear. The inability of the Johnson Administration to obtain the desired legislation initially owed not only to the steadfast opposition of the business organizations that traditionally opposed all varieties of housing reform as a threat to free market capitalism but also to the lack of support from liberal groups more congenial to federal government activism to solve urban problems. Big city mayors and the organizations that represented their interests resisted changes that seemed to encourage any form of suburbanization, preferring urban renewal and public housing as solutions that they hoped would create a centripetal effect in the nation's metropolitan areas. By the time that these interests had been suf.ciently molli.ed and the necessary political power mobilized to achieve the legislative victories, the Johnson Administration was entering its last days. Like many other Great Society programmes that foundered in the less congenial environment of the Nixon era, the new towns suffered when the Republican White House suffocated the programme in bureaucracy and refused to provide the .nancial support authorized by Congress – a precarious situation exacerbated by a stagnating national economy that undermined the real estate market and made any speculative building ventures hazardous. Simply put, the new towns perished in • oods of red tape and red ink. As those who have evaluated the Great Society less harshly have argued in defense of the War on Poverty, Model Cities, and other reputed programme failures, inadequate funding over a truncated trial period inevitably provided scant opportunity for success [33].