Garden Cities of the Americas: Greenbelt and El Palomar, a Comparative Case Study on the Model's Translation to the American Continents

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GARDEN CITIES OF THE AMERICAS: GREENBELT AND EL PALOMAR, A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY ON THE MODEL'S TRANSLATION TO THE AMERICAN CONTINENTS

By

Maria Gabriela Dines

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

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GARDEN CITIES OF THE AMERICAS: GREENBELT AND EL PALOMAR, A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY ON THE MODEL'S TRANSLATION TO THE AMERICAN CONTINENTS

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The Garden City model proposed by Ebenezer Howard in the 1890s has proven to be highly adaptable to different environments, political and historical contexts, and different cultural backdrops. However, this inherent flexibility has also left the Garden City model vulnerable to appropriation and misinterpretation. This vulnerability has been extensively tested through a number of adaptations and international translations that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century.

To develop this thesis, the essential elements and the theory behind the original British model are used as a basis for a comparative case study that focuses on the translation of Howard's urban scheme to the United States and Argentina: Greenbelt in Maryland (1937), and Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar in Buenos Aires (1944). An analysis of their planning components allows for a critical view on the adaptation and interpretation carried out in each of these endeavors. This approach is tested through an understanding of the historical, political, social, and cultural precedents that have shaped the materialization of the chosen North and South American examples.

In conclusion, the Garden City model has proven to be flexible enough to adapt to a wide range of local determinants, although it is in retaining the essential elements in the original scheme as a whole that the true success of the model resides.
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INTRODUCTION

There are many considerations that arise in any given translation process. In literature, for example, the translator needs to be especially careful in transferring content while keeping the literary quality of the text intact. In the case of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, it is the consideration of every essential element proposed within the theory's framework that ensures the model's urban quality and success. In his Garden City, conceived as a whole, every aspect plays a relevant role in its configuration. The present analysis, deals with the translation of the Garden City urban model beyond its original territory. It is then by establishing and understanding the meaning behind the essential elements embedded in the British theory that we are able to weigh in on the degree of success reached by its translations.

All planning and building considerations aside, the Garden City model proposed by Ebenezer Howard\(^1\) is deeply rooted in social determinants that can only be analyzed by taking into account the socio-cultural and political framework in which these developments are brought to life. The fundamentals and the theory behind the original British urban planning model establish a foundation for the comparative case study of the

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\(^1\) Ebenezer Howard was born in London, in 1850. After completing his formal education, Howard worked as a clerk for the city of London, while teaching himself the trade of shorthand writing. In 1871, he traveled to the United States. He settled in Nebraska from where, after a failed attempt at estate farming, he left for Chicago where he was employed as a stenographer of the court.

Howard returned to Great Britain in 1876, where he continued to work as a parliamentary shorthand reporter. His first work on garden cities *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Land Reform* was published in 1898, followed by its later widely spread version, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* in 1902. Founder of the Garden City Association in 1899, Ebenezer Howard devoted his life to the implementation of the Garden City ideal. As many relevant historical figures, Ebenezer Howard achieved recognition later in life. He was knighted in 1927, and died at his house in Welwyn Garden City in May 1st, 1928.

As the epitaph inscribed on his headstone located in Howardsgate, Welwyn, reads: "His vision and practical idealism profoundly affected town planning throughout the world."

North and South American versions of the Garden City. Both, Greenbelt, Maryland in the United States, and Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar in Buenos Aires, Argentina, interpret and adapt the original urban model through different operations. A critical view on the interpretations and the adaptations performed by these examples develops through the analysis of the components of each of these urban models.

When considering the issue of the strong government-policy applied at Greenbelt, versus the real-estate operation behind El Palomar, similarities and differences arise. The analysis of said conditions serves as a basis for an understanding of the working model, while revealing the flexibility implicit in the core values that allowed for the spread of the scheme beyond England's borders. Based on a historical analysis of the precedents--the local, the social, and cultural determinants that set the grounds for each case study scenario--we are able to get an understanding of the driving forces that prompted and shaped these particular urban planning examples. The present study also deals with the role played by stewardship and the impact it had on the condition in which each of these urban models has reached the present. This situation is especially relevant in the case of Greenbelt, given its historic designation and cooperative ownership model, allowing for a look into how these conditions affect the evolution of the built environment.

The Garden City model has proven to be a relevant scheme, capable of transcending the determinants posed by geography, culture, and even time. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of all of its physical components, along with a critical view on its origins and underlying philosophy, is paramount to the history and analysis of modern urban planning.
HISTORIOGRAPHY

Much has been said (and written) about the Garden Cities since Ebenezer Howard published his *Garden Cities of To-morrow* in 1902, opening a debate that is still a centerpiece in the search for planning solutions to the pressing urban issues that have arisen from the forecasted and unstoppable growth of cities. But far more interesting than Howard's proposal for "a peaceful path to real reform," as F.J. Osborn expressed on the preface of the 1946 edition, is "the history of the book and its effects full of paradoxes. It endowed all modern languages with a new term (Garden City, Cité Jardin, Gartenstadt, Ciudad-Jardín, Tuinstad), and though this term was given a most precise meaning by Howard, everywhere it has been used persistently in a sense entirely different from, indeed opposed to, the author's definition."3

It is, therefore, from this understanding or constant misunderstanding of the Garden City model, specifically in its translation to the American continents, that it becomes imperative to analyze some of the literature that has been produced on the topic. It is important to understand the reasons behind the selection of this particular urban utopia as a response to the issues faced by the cities that are part of the present comparative case study. It is also important to differentiate the critics' views on the Garden City model from the promotional literature in the early 20th century. The view of the Garden City as a solution to the social issues that were a part of the status quo of urbanism in the United Kingdom, versus the issues posed by the rise of unemployment and the dire need for social housing policies, as in the case of the greenbelt towns

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proposed by the New Deal in the United States in the 1930s, or the Argentine Garden Cities proposed by the Peronist movement in the 1940s.

Relevant to understanding the core values embedded in Howard's proposal, the analysis on the performance of the first Garden City becomes an invaluable source. C.B. Purdom, for example, in his Garden City: A Study in the Development of a Modern Town published in 1913--only four years after Letchworth was completed--provides a detailed overview of the materialization of the model: from the theory that inspired it to the built realization of the project, including an analysis of all the elements that brought Howard's dream to life. A good addition to this book is the article written by Edgar Bonham-Carter, Chairman of the Garden City Ltd, the company that owned Letchworth, "Planning and Development of Letchworth Garden City" (1951). This publication corresponds with the peak of the New Towns movement in the UK, considered "the natural successors of the two Garden Cities." Both publications, Purdom’s and Bonham-Carter’s, provide good account of some of the elements that have not been specifically addressed in later analysis of the Garden City.

In that same year, coinciding with Bonham-Carter's review of Letchworth and the Garden City model, Clarence S. Stein's book--undoubtedly one of the prominent proponents of the British urban model in America--is published in the United States. In spite of being contemporary to the British publications, the definition of the Garden City that Stein establishes as a basis for his analysis of Greenbelt, Maryland, one of the chosen

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case studies in his book, somehow feels incomplete when we compare his interpretation of Howard's model with later authors.

In the words of Stein: "The accepted definition of a Garden City is: 'a town planned for industry and healthy living, of a size that makes possible a full measure of social life, but no larger, surrounded by a permanent rural belt, the whole of the land being in public ownership, or held in trust for the community'."\(^7\) This is accurate if we compare it to the definition Howard outlined in the Garden City Association Report at the Garden City Conference at Bournville (1901).\(^8\) But as both Peter Hall and Robert Fishman have introduced in their publications, there is an underlying "incompleteness" that comes from not addressing Howard's proposal of the Garden City as a system: the Social City.\(^9\) As Peter Hall notes, "ignoring the fact that his garden cities were merely vehicles for a progressive reconstruction of capitalist society into an infinity of cooperative commonwealths."\(^10\) Similarly, Stephen Ward argues "Howard recognized that his Garden City--far from being self-contained--could never reach its full potential unless it was part of a regional network."\(^11\) This aspect would render the individual analysis of any of the materialized examples--irrespective of their location, whether completed or not--as lacking of an essential aspect to be deserving of the Garden City

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7 In the edition used during the course of the research, there is no citation to indicate the source of Stein’s definition of a garden City as quoted in his book. See Clarence S. Stein, *Towards New Towns for America* (Cambridge, Mass, MIT Press, 1966), p. 130.
label. The ideal of a "social city as a system" becomes a relevant aspect to contemplate when establishing an analysis of any given translation or adaptation of the Garden City.

The social aspect embedded in Howard’s model is also an unavoidable issue in any analysis, yet it is one that has been understated in much of the literature reviewed. In this sense, Daniel Schaffer, in his contribution to Stephen Ward’s *The Garden City: Past, Present, and Future* (1992) states that "what garden cities' advocates managed to do so brilliantly was to tie the fate of the poor to the middle class."\(^{12}\) The selection process of the people who would inhabit these cities, takes the discussion to the impact that the process had on the conformation and evolution of these settlements in a way that historical distance allows us to assess. The discussion involves not only how faithful this selection was to Howard's ideal, but also the way in which these social values were embodied in the design of these cities, thus resulting in their present status quo. The notorious Joseph Arnold, in his comprehensive analysis of *The New Deal in the Suburbs*, (1971) gives an accurate description of the selection carried out through a thorough system of applications for tenant selection.\(^{13}\) In addition, Philip K. Wagner develops other set of selection standards in his article of "Suburban Landscapes for Nuclear Families," where he delves into the issue of the proponent’s choice to codify and enforce conventional family values within a "progressive" planning ideal.\(^{14}\)

Another interesting aspect developed by Joseph Arnold, is the analysis of the interaction between the New Deal policies, the city planners, the interest groups, and the


individuals involved in the greenbelt towns program, dealing with its perceived failure to adhere to the garden city ideals. Arnold follows the idea of the need to separate the physical planning aspect from the socio-economic. In assessing the greenbelt program, his analysis becomes a valuable addition to the aforementioned Clarence Stein's input on Greenbelt, Maryland, developed in the chapter devoted to this location in *Towards New Towns for America* (1951).\(^{15}\)

Overall, the literature regarding Greenbelt and the New Deal policies is very extensive and deals with the development of the North American experience in a comprehensive and detailed manner. The numerous publications that are mentioned throughout the references and in the bibliography, are supplemented by the archival sources available at the Tugwell Room located at the Greenbelt Public Library. Area maps and local publications, along with an ample stock of newspaper clippings covering the historic arc of the town, become invaluable to analyze the development of this politically oriented urban experiment.

In regards to the Latin American translation, Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar, introduced in this comparative case study, the bibliographic references are much more limited. In the case of El Palomar, we are not only dealing with a garden city at the scale of a neighborhood, but also one that was conceived and developed outside of government housing policy. Nevertheless, there are many publications that are able to help understand the historic and political driving forces behind the real-estate operation of El Palomar. The comprehensive publication by Ramón Gutiérrez, *Buenos Aires, Evolución Urbana 1536-2000* (2012), analyzes the housing policies and social conditions that led to social

housing endeavors, both from government and housing cooperatives. The topic that is most valuable to the present study lies in the introduction to the financing systems and housing credit loans that would drive the urban transformation of Buenos Aires through the rise of the conurbation. In regards of the financing systems set in motion at the time, Gutiérrez quotes Socialist Congressman Enrique Dickman: "I personally advocate the individual house on a garden neighborhood, filled with air and sunlight, accessible to the people in an economic way. The solution to the problem is in the financing system." Dickman’s statement makes it clear that economic structures played a role in the Argentinian developments, as they also did in Howard's proposal.

Charles Sargent, in his book _The Spatial evolution of Greater Buenos Aires, Argentina 1870-1930_ (1974), develops an analysis on the population shifts that shaped the modern city. He covers the aspects that led to the modern metropolis, such as immigration, and the evolution of transportation systems, which paved the way for the development of economic initiatives that would drive the city inhabitants towards the conurbation. A perfect supplement to this study is James Scobie's _Buenos Aires, Plaza to Suburb 1870-1910_ (1974), developing the outward movement of the city, away from its original centralized scheme, where "the city dominated the nation." A strong statement that is very much appropriate, even today.

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18 Charles Sargent, _The Spatial Evolution of Greater Buenos Aires, 1870-1930_ (Center for Latin American Studies, Arizona State University, Tempe, 1974).
In regards to the financing systems in place at the time of El Palomar, there are standard sources as Oscar Yujnovsky's *Claves Políticas del Problema Habitacional Argentino, 1955-1981* (1984), which in spite of dealing with later events provides a valuable input on the period of time framed by this case study.\(^{20}\) José Silva’s *El Cooperativismo y la Vivienda* (1944) holds the seductive subtitle of "A house for each family and each family in a house of their own."\(^{21}\) In addition, the contemporaneous work by Eduardo Perotti, *Política de la Habitación, Sistemas y Medios Financieros para el Hogar Propio* (1944), provides a clear outline on the laws, financing systems, and institutions that shaped housing in 1940s Argentina.\(^{22}\)

Juan Lucas Gómez provides a comprehensive account of the Building Societies and urban housing finance that would affect the creation and development of El Palomar through the relevant and accurate analysis developed in his research paper "La Unión hace la Fuerza. Las Compañías de Crédito Recíproco y el Financiamiento Hipotecario Urbano a Bajo Interés en Argentina entre 1936 y 1955" (2014), in which he skillfully approaches the unique aspects of this financial system aimed at home ownership funding.\(^{23}\)

Lastly, a note needs to be made regarding the literature and ongoing research carried out by renowned professionals at present times, thus maintaining the Garden City


front and center of every urban discussion. Robert Stern's *Paradise Planned* (2013) provides an impressive account of 735 garden cities spread throughout thirty countries, and it has soon become a valuable reference for any research on the topic, as well as an impressive catalogue that manages to bring the Garden City ideal to the present. In spite of its undeniable scholarly and professional value, it still leaves out almost all of the developments in Latin America with only a brief overview of Mexico and Brazil.\(^\text{24}\) In addition to Stern’s encyclopedia, and to the contemporary relevance of Howard’s urban model, Andres Duany, Paul Roberts, and Emily Talen's through their *General Theory of Urbanism*, (2014),\(^\text{25}\) seek to take the past tense out of the garden city issue by developing an interesting system of analysis based on the values aspired in Howard's Third Magnet and the zoning diagrams. This operation would lead to an urban equilibrium to solve most of the ecological and sustainability issues that modern cities face today.

In conclusion, in terms of the analysis on the evolution of these international adaptations, the pre-eminent elements in Ebenezer Howard's scheme--the theory, its materialization through Letchworth, and the "Social City" idea--become relevant to develop an analysis on the translation of the model and the adaptations that resulted from the international spread of an urban ideal. These will open two lines of investigation to be developed through the case studies: the local materializations of the Garden City model, and how their evolution has been impacted by the initial choice of the core values that were applied.

In words of Stephen Ward, "the fact that the original Garden City idea was capable of being taken apart and applied selectively was of huge significance in allowing the idea to persist and spread. It permitted parts of the idea to take root in widely different economic, institutional, cultural, and aesthetic values." Or the stronger statement on this issue of adaptation--and more relevant to this comparative case study--made by F.J. Osborn when referring to Howard's masterpiece as a book that "led to two experiments in town-funding [Letchworth and Welwyn] which by imitation, and imitation of imitation, have had immeasurable influence on practical urban development throughout the world." It is through the analysis of the references covered throughout the research that this comparative case study aims to get a better understanding of the issue of the extent that any urban planning model may be sustained in time, in regards of the evolution of its core planning values.

PART I
The Garden City

CHAPTER 1
History and Theory

_Ebenezer Howard and the essentials of the Garden City_

There are very few books in the urban planning field that have been--and still continue to be--as influential as Ebenezer Howard's _Garden Cities of To-Morrow_, since its release in 1902. Even fewer have been able to transcend the decades, now centuries, to become an unavoidable reference when it comes to the development of new urban theories and trends. Through his publication, Howard set the grounds for developing a new urban planning model following a series of principles, while providing specific guidelines for its materialization.

The theory behind the garden city urban ideal, "based on the notion of self-contained, balanced communities for working and living," is clearly outlined in the garden city statement provided by the Garden City and Town Planning Association in 1919: "... a town designed for healthy living and industry; of a size that makes possible a full measure of social life, but not larger, surrounded by a rural belt; the whole of the land being in public ownership or held in trust for the community." This statement summarizes a series of elements developed in detail by Howard, considered to be essential in the configuration of any garden city. In this sense, the _Outline of Garden City_

Project developed by Howard, leaves very little room for speculation, by providing a straightforward description of the elements that would shape the urban planning model.  

1. The purchase of a large agricultural estate of, say 6,000 acres (about 3-1.3 miles square) with the object of establishing a Garden City, as an experiment in housing and other important social and industrial reforms. 
2. The purchase of a estate to be effected by a Joint Stock Company, with sufficient capital to acquire the estate and to develop it on the best municipal lines. The share and debenture capital of the Company to bear a fixed and limited return, not exceeding 4 per cent, or 5 per cent. All profits beyond this to be applied in local improvements and for the benefit of the community to be formed. 
3. The estate selected to be carefully planned, under the best expert advice, so that as the town grows, its factories and workshops, the homes of the people, the parks and open spaces, the schools, churches and other public buildings may be placed in the most convenient positions, so as to minimize the ill effects of any necessary objectionable features, and to secure the best and most widespread results for all natural and artificial amenities.

Through the outline, we are able to find every specific concern behind Howard’s theory. Of course, in the eyes of architects and urban planners, a more detailed outline of the physical and built configuration is to be expected, but as it can be easily assessed, the stress is set in the question of size, cost of land, and the revenue of the garden city, all aspects of the urban planning model that represent the bulk of Howard’s ideal and which are extensively developed throughout his book. It may be due to the depth into which Howard delves into the financial aspects of the urban planning model versus the physical and design ones--far more appealing to planners and architects--that the majority of the analyses performed on Howard’s proposal stay within the confinements of the first chapter, in which the “layout” diagrams and the Three Magnets theory are presented.

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Without getting into very much detail given the amount of literature on Howard's Three Magnets diagram, it is worth noting how every aspect singled out as "good" and "bad" in each category--Town and Country--deals with all the issues that concerned urban living at the time, being masterfully resolved by extolling only the "good" to achieve a perfect balance of both—thus the Town-Country third magnet. This first chapter, which scholars dissect as the corpus of the garden city theory, accomplishes the task of laying out the driving forces behind the urban proposal. It is through the following four chapters of Howard’s book--unsurprisingly all labeled under the premise of "Revenue of the Garden City"--where the ideal of these Garden Cities of To-morrow achieves its practicality and sense.

The entire revenue of the city that derives from rents and the city infrastructure services--such as water, electricity, and gas supplies--is the main selling point of the proposal, and is thus extensively developed throughout the four chapters. This was also the case in the following books and publications that dealt with the analysis of the model.
in a short time frame after its completion.\textsuperscript{32} As concluded by C.B. Purdom in \textit{The Building of Satellite Towns}, in spite of the figures used by Howard to illustrate, the revenue system "had little relation with reality. The figures, however, did appeal to many people because the knowledge on which criticism of them could be based was almost non-existent, the process of land development being little known. There is no need to discuss them."\textsuperscript{33} In fact, almost nobody did, although for Ebenezer Howard behind these operations lay the means to prove his end.

The absence of specific building and planning guidelines is also noticeable in the diagrams used by Howard to convey the model’s ideal. In spite of being clearly labeled by the author as "Diagrams Only," these have been persistently taken literally, and his diagrams "of a circular town divided into areas by broad avenues rather like the spokes of a wheel aroused particular interest and even amusement. \textit{The Times} (October 19, 1898) called it an ingenious and rather entertaining attempt, " adding that "the only difficulty is to create it."\textsuperscript{34} Although Howard’s diagrams are not meant to be literal resources for the development of the garden city scheme, they do succeed in illustrating the necessary elements to ensure the success of said urban endeavors. This particular issue will become

\textsuperscript{32} Further and detailed figures of the scheme proposed by Howard as the revenue system of his Garden City that are not part of the present comparative case study, can be found in a series of publications contemporary to the spread of the model’s ideal. Starting from chapters 2 through 4 of Ebenezer Howard's \textit{Garden Cities of To-Morrow}, in which he lays out the scheme for the entire revenue of the city; followed by C.B. Purdom's \textit{The Garden City. A Study in the Development of a Modern Town} (E.P. Dutton&Co, New York - J.M. Dent&Sons Ltd, London, 1913) as a comprehensive analysis on the function of Letchworth as a working model, and his later, \textit{The Building of Satellite Towns. A Contribution to the Study of Town Development and Regional Planning} (J.M. Dent & Sons, London, 1949), pp. 147-172, in which he explores the revenue scheme in a manner that distance in time allows.


clearer through the analysis of the materialization of the garden city developed in the next chapter.

Figure 1.2, The diagram depicting the "rings" configuration in Garden City zoning

Figure 1.3, The "Wards and Center" diagram configuration

Going back to the "Three Magnets" diagram developed by Howard, in his own words, one simple scheme "in which the chief advantages of the Town and of the Country are set forth with their corresponding drawbacks, while the advantages of the Town-Country are seen to be free from the disadvantages of either," we find in the Third magnet the "master key" meant to unlock the solutions to cure the ails of the post-industrial city. Therefore, with the main focus of Garden Cities of To-morrow set in the practicability of the model, it is fair to say that Howard did not have great theoretical ambitions. He did certainly intend, however, to lay out the core ideas of his Garden City as a place safe from the effects of land and property speculation, thus devising a unique revenue system where equality and social progress are essential. His intent introduces a scenario loaded with the complexity of social, physical, and environmental interactions that succeeds in codifying a series of social aspects through an innovative urban model that has remained relevant until today.

CHAPTER 2
Practice

Letchworth and the Garden City working model

Howard--let me emphasize this--was not a political theorist, not a dreamer, but an inventor. The inventor proceeds by first conceiving an idea of a possible new product or instrument, next by evolving a design on paper with patient thought for the adaptation of the structure to the conditions it has to fulfill, and finally by experimentation with models to test the design practice.36

The impact that Howard's proposal had at the time of its publication can be measured by the speed in which the actions towards developing the first garden city working model took place.37 Just one year after the publication of its first version--To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform, in 1898--the Garden City Association is founded, as published in its first Minute of Proceeding on June 10th, 1899, "... for promoting in its main features, by educational and other means, the project suggested by Mr. Ebenezer Howard in his book." Later known as The Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, renamed after the monthly publication that became the organ of the Garden City and Town Planning Movement,39 is not the only voice to consider Letchworth as

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37 This chapter intends to provide an overview on how the elements pertaining the garden city theory are materialized in the first town planning experience that is Letchworth. An extensive and detailed account of the elements of the city are developed in both books by C. B. Purdom, The Garden City. A Study in the Development of a Modern Town (E.P. Dutton&Co, New York - J.M. Dent&Sons Ltd, London, 1913), and the later, The Building of Satellite Towns. A Contribution to the Study of Town Development and Regional Planning (J.M. Dent & Sons, London, 1949). Also on the specifics of the development of Letchworth, F.J. Osborn provides an in-depth analysis in Green-Belt Cities, the British Contribution (1946) where the whole of Part II is entirely devoted to an analysis of the working model, pp. 56-113.
"the first and only proper Garden City,"\(^{40}\) raising the issue of adherence to the essentials proposed by Howard, thus labeling it as the perfect working model.

In September 1903, the First Garden City Ltd., the company that would be responsible to materialize the town's establishment and the one that would handle all contractual activity, is incorporated under the Companies Acts.\(^{41}\) Following the premise of the scheme of land tenure proposed by Howard, where the "purchase of estate [was] to be effected by a Joint Stock Company,"\(^{42}\) a piece of land was acquired by the First Garden City Ltd, "a company with a dividend limited to 5 per cent cumulative, whose memoranda and articles embody the root principles of the movement."\(^{43}\) Apart from holding ownership of the estate, the First Garden City company was in charge of bringing the whole plan of Letchworth to completion, including ownership, and development of all the infrastructure necessary for the autonomous function of the town. In addition, following the relevance that the need for ownership and financial autonomy had within the garden city scheme--on top of the by-laws in place in the rural district where Letchworth was placed--the company exercised the power to regulate its own building code along with "supervision over design and specifications to ensure proper conditions being observed."\(^{44}\) This statement takes us to the physical aspects of the materialization of the urban model.


\(^{44}\) Ibid. p. 21.
The estate acquired consisted of 3,822 acres, and it was located thirty-four and a half miles away from London, connected by the Great Northern Railway line. The village only contained a handful of buildings--mainly cottages--and a population of only fifty people with no infrastructure of any kind.

Even though Howard provided neither a definitive spatial configuration, nor building specifications in his garden city proposal, there was very little discussion on the picturesque layout of the resulting scheme, this characteristic being a natural consequence of the town and country mixture embedded in the proposal. Raymond Unwin (1863-1940) and Barry Parker (1867-1947), the architects that were commissioned the task of

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45 Since the objective of this chapter is to provide an overview on the essential elements considered in Howard's proposal and how these were applied in the first Garden City of Letchworth, specific details on the financial considerations regarding First Garden City Ltd. are not developed. An extensive and detailed description of said elements can be found in C.B. Purdom's *The Garden City*, (J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., London, 1913), Appendix C, pp. 230-241.
developing the town plan, combined the architectural duty to provide the community decent living conditions embedded with Howard's humanistic views. In Unwin's own words, the plan was to be "arranged in conformity with the land ... sites for our civil, religious, and recreative public buildings ... have been determined, dominating the city. Wide avenues or roads must be planned to lead off from these sites in all directions, so that glimpses of the open country shall be obtained from all parts of the town, and vistas leading up to the finest buildings shall greet the visitor from every direction." Upon deeper analysis of the town-plan, Howard's utopian zoning and essential components may be observed, with the "rings" scheme still noticeable in spite of the town being shaped by the limits imposed by the state lines (Fig. 2.1 and Fig. 2.2).

Some of the specifics on the architecture of the garden city will be developed in following chapters of this work, but one of the aspects worth an early mention is the intention of the architects to improve housing, with a particular emphasis on individual, free standing cottages. In terms of the aesthetics, as it was noted before, although Howard did not provide specific guidelines, Parker and Unwin did incorporate "General Suggestions and Instructions Regarding Buildings other than Factories on the Garden City State" in Letchworth's pamphlet. Aspects such as "simple, straightforward building, and from the use of good and harmonious materials" along with the "desire as far as possible to discourage useless ornamentation" were included in the company's manifesto. These aspects were accompanied by a series of building guidelines and regulations considering built area, the height of buildings, security, traffic, and most

important, "The position of houses must be adapted to the configuration of the land, and must be such that an adequate supply of sunshine in the rooms is secured."\textsuperscript{48} In securing these basic elements laid the intention of discovering a new kind of town architecture, one that would provide the benefits of the city and healthy living embedded in the garden city ideal, while preserving the positive qualities of rural life.

Going back to the essentials behind Howard's proposal, there is indeed one specific built element that was completely in sync with the cooperative and socially conscious spirit embedded in the Garden City scheme, and that is the development of Homesgarth, in Letchworth. Through a simple layout of a group of apartments arranged

as a quadrangle circumscribing a courtyard, with a series of communal areas dedicated to
dining and general services, Homesgarth was Howard's realization of a cooperative
lifestyle that is at the core of the Garden City ideal. Managed by a committee, Howard
Cottage Society Ltd., was composed of the total number of tenants who held an equal
voice and power to vote, and they agreed upon common expenses budget on a monthly
basis, "with each tenant in turn being responsible for the catering for a period of two
weeks."49 It is in Homesgarth and its cooperative system of living where the Garden City
ideal achieves its highest expression.

There are, of course, many other elements that are considered essential to the
successful function of this working model. It is through the fulfillment of every necessity
to achieve the perfect marriage between town and country ideal that Letchworth achieves

the Garden City label. Starting with education, which as C.B. Purdom notes: "... in the new garden city received attention before even the site was known,"\textsuperscript{50} becomes clear from the fourteen educational buildings that exist in Letchworth today. Followed by the perfectly oiled mechanism to attract industry to the garden city, supplying the much necessary jobs for its inhabitants, providing a reasonable rent quote for the land based on a 999 years lease system, along with enough land for expansion, and even housing for the workers. Commercial buildings and shops, including a cooperative market, and lastly, the development of public areas and recreation, all owned and maintained by First Garden City Ltd, but devoted to the recreation of all of Letchworth's inhabitants.\textsuperscript{51}

![Figure 2.9, Commercial area.](image1)

![Figure 2.10, Commercial area, bird's eye view.](image2)

The town planners set specific guidelines in regards to the public areas, which also include streets and the management of vehicular and pedestrian circulation in the garden city. The goal behind the development of the roads and circulation engineering feature is not one to be taken lightly as "many different objectives are aimed at, such as artistic appearance, a width that, while making the macadamised roadway and paths


\textsuperscript{51} All the topics pertaining these components of the Letchworth Garden City are developed in detail by C.B. Purdom in \textit{The Garden City. A Study in the Development of a Modern Town} (E.P. Dutton&Co, New York - J.M. Dent&Sons Ltd, London, 1913), through Chapters IX to XII, pp. 120-162. In the present research project, these elements are mentioned as a mean to clarify the relevance of said elements in the success of the working model represented by Letchworth.
sufficient for present needs, will allow the road to be widened hereafter, and planting of trees so as to prevent them overhanging and damping the road or obstructing the landscape."\textsuperscript{52} This affirmation by C.B. Purdom is clearly illustrated through a detailed layout of road sections to be applied in the planning of Letchworth.\textsuperscript{53}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure2.11.png}
\caption{Plan of road sections.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure2.12.png}
\caption{Views of Norton Way, Letchworth.}
\end{figure}

One last separate note needs to be made regarding the physical realization of this working model, and that is the layout of the rural belt, commonly referred as the green belt. The reason why this element is singled out is because it is essential to the garden city scheme, not only when it comes to the spatial configuration of the town in its role of establishing a clear boundary, but most relevant of all in its conception as a piece of land

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid. p. 259, Plate VI.
being devoted to farming. This condition of the green belt as agricultural land is paramount to the revenue aspect so strongly stressed by Howard, considered the measurement tool for the success of any garden city endeavor. As Purdom recognized: "The rural belt is thus no mere lung. It is not pleasure land; it is an agricultural occupation."\(^{54}\) With agriculture in a tight relationship with the rest of the industry developed at Letchworth, its essential role was to fulfill the garden city's objective of self-sufficiency.

All in all, the experience of Letchworth is to be taken as a lesson where every principle of town construction as envisioned by Ebenezer Howard was put in practice. Founded to prove how an orderly development of communities could be achieved by

following a series of rules, it cristalizes the effort to reach an ideal that would shape town planning for decades.

Figure 2.15, Aerial view of Letchworth development, circa 1949.
CHAPTER 3

Philosophy

Social(ist) Urbanism. The Philosophy behind the Garden City Ideal

I will not cease from mental strife,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England’s green and pleasant land.55

William Blake

Apart from any built and planning considerations, it is undisputable that the essence of the Garden City model finds its raison d’etre as a salutary solution proposed by Howard in reaction to the ills of the post-industrial city. However, there has been some neglect regarding the relevance and uniqueness behind Howard’s proposal of the “Social City”--thus, the realization of the Third Magnet--as a core element of his Garden Cities ideal. To this end, it is necessary to understand the urban planning ideal in its entirety, not only through the individuality of any given Garden City. The following chapter deals with the early abandonment--and a partial neglect by scholars--of the strength of the socialist component embedded in the Garden City ideal.

It is through the social(ist) component, that we can challenge the pertinent use of the Garden City term when dealing with an analysis of the urban developments that are labeled as such, whilst they are lacking this core element in their materialization. The question arises: should a partial model be considered and recognized as a whole? To understand the relevance of this issue, a closer understanding of Howard’s socialist

concerns is imperative. This understanding is made possible through an examination of the cultural and literary influences of the time.

According to Dugald MacFayden in his analysis of the Town Planning Movement, by devoting a specific chapter of his *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* to provide a detailed account of this "Unique Combination of Proposals," Howard acknowledges that “there was something for every kind of idealist” embedded in his scheme, combining several features from various urban experiments. These features contemplate not only physical planning elements, but also land tenure considerations, given that the success of the endeavor relies primarily on the issue of land and property management. In the main list of credits provided by Howard—as later cited by J. F. Osborn, one of Howard’s most active advocates—we find acknowledgement “for the principle of organized outward migration to Edward Gibbon Wakefield and Alfred Marshall; for the system of quasi-public land tenure to Thomas Spence and Herbert Spencer; and for the conception of a model town in an agricultural estate to James Silk Buckingham.” In the development of the features proposed by this group of planners lies the determination of the physical conditions of the Garden City model, as well as in those that deal with the practical aspects of its realization, as developed in the previous chapter.

When it comes to the social element of the Garden City model, the literary influences take the lead. These references are easily found all over Howard’s publication, all of them rooted in a deep concern for the social issue that stemmed from the living conditions of the post-industrial city. It is also worth noting that some of the quotes

chosen by Howard were left out from one edition to the next, although they all portray a very close picture of his conception of the Garden City ideal. Particularly relevant is the quote from John Ruskin’s 1865 *Sesame and Lilies* chosen by Howard as an introduction to Chapter One in the 1898 edition:

> Thorough sanitary and remedial action in the houses that we have; and then the building of more; strongly, beautifully, and in groups of limited extent; kept in proportion to their streams and walled round, so that there may be no festering and wretched suburb anywhere, but clean and busy street within and the open country without; with a belt of beautiful garden and orchard round the walls, so that from any part of the city perfectly fresh air and grass and sight of far horizon might be reachable in a few minutes’ walk. This is the final end.\(^{59}\)

What is interesting about this quote, versus the one by Blake that replaced it in the 1902 version of Garden Cities of To-Morrow, is its descriptive quality, providing a glimpse of the physical aspects that could realize his vision. In this particular case, apart from the environmental details that paint an ideal picture in contrast with the conditions of the city at the time, one of the most important elements of the Garden City urban model is addressed: the green belt. Since its conception, the green belt was intended to protect the Garden City not only from its own expansion but also from the pressure brought about by the growth of neighboring towns, "like the walls of the medieval city. It limits its boundaries, protects it from the attack of other towns, and preserves its shape and style, to act as a medieval city wall."\(^{60}\) This reference remains accurate in the physical conception of the model.

Besides all physical planning considerations, a concern on the social issue is omnipresent in Ebenezer Howard’s proposal. In the biographies consulted throughout the


course of this research, it is clearly after his return from a 5-year long visit to the United States (1871-1876)\(^{61}\) that Howard’s deep concern for the social status-quo turned into action. In 1879, he becomes a member of a freethinkers debate group, the Zetetical Society of Conduit Street, where "No topic, political, religious, or sexual, was excluded provided it was discussed with decorum"\(^{62}\). Howard’s participation, as well as the social relationships he built through his active involvement within the group--one that had G. Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) and Sidney Webb (1859-1947) among its most noted members--were instrumental in the germination of the urban planning ideal.

A year short of a decade later, in 1888, a copy of Edward Bellamy’s socialist utopia *Looking Backward* (published in that same year), fell into Howard’s hands. In spite of not agreeing fully with Bellamy’s idea of the state as a sole capitalist supported by a centralized and highly bureaucratic society, many of Bellamy’s principles transpire in Howard’s Garden Cities ideal on a smaller scale. It is within the novel’s core message of a "common sense socialism" that several pieces of his urban scheme fall into place. The public interest for Bellamy's utopia was the driving force behind the establishment of the Nationalisation of Labour Society in 1890, with Howard among its twenty founding members, set out to promote and spread the author’s socialist ideal in England.\(^ {63}\) For Ebenezer Howard, as it may be inferred from the following passage, it was also an

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\(^{61}\) In the preface to the 1946 edition of Garden Cities of To-Morrow, J.F. Osborn gives a brief account of the years that Howard spent in the United States. Osborn accounts that at twenty-one years of age, Howard joined two friends in trying to carry out farm work in 160 acres they acquired in Howard County, Nebraska, but was soon discouraged and left to Chicago to resume employment in an office as a shorthand writer--a craft he had learned back in London--what lead him to become an "expert reporter both to the press and courts". This fact undoubtedly gave him first-row seat to the goings on at the time, what we may only speculate, might have helped increase his awareness on social issues. See Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* (Faber and Faber Ltd., First M.I.T. Press Paperback Edition, February, 1965), p. 19.


influential imagery tool that would impact on the physical conception of his Garden Cities. The description of Boston in the year 2000, as envisioned by Bellamy, is filled with a lot of the elements that have undoubtedly influenced the physical conception of the urban ideal:

At my feet lay a great city. Miles of broad streets, shaded by trees and lined with fine buildings, for the most part not in continuous blocks but set in larger or smaller enclosures, stretched in every direction. Every quarter contained large open squares filled with trees, among which statues glistened and fountains flashed in the late afternoon sun.64

Although Howard found somehow unsettling Bellamy’s vision of a city in the year 2000 to be "organized as one great business corporation’ with the state as ‘the one capitalist in the place of all other capitalists, the sole employer, the final monopoly’”65, if we replace the idea of "great business corporation" with the concept of the Central City located at the core of his Social City diagram66, we are able to establish a parallel to Howard’s ideal of "the planning and building of town clusters--each town in the cluster being of different design from the others, and yet the whole forming part of one large and well-thought-out-plan."67 Even though there is a clear distinction to be made in regards of the "monopoly" of the central city in Howard's plan--given that the satellite garden cities were meant to be self-sustainable, although still a part of a larger scheme as a guarantee of their success--the parallelism between the two is remarkable.

It is through the materialization of the Social City ideal that Howard’s Garden Cities proposal would reach its final purpose. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise

that he develops this concept in the next to last chapter of his book, as the realization of this urban planning ideal where "Town and Country must be married and out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilization." The Third Magnet then becomes said union’s love child. It is only through the materialization of this Social City ideal— and not through the creation of a single, disconnected Garden City— that the urban planning model would reach its full, and desired, salutary potential.

![Figure 3.1, The Social City diagram](image)

Cities of To-Morrow--may have contributed to the neglect of this aspect of the proposal. This issue becomes evident not only in most of the literature that the analysis of this urban planning model has produced throughout the years, but also in its countless materializations all across the globe. One thing that becomes clear, going back to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter, is that the social component of the Garden City urban model is one of the predominant forces behind the realization of the scheme, and one that should be considered when applying the "Garden City" label to some--if not most--of its translations. It is undeniable that for further analysis on this issue, several regional elements pertinent to these adaptations should be considered. The social issue--or as it was stressed, the socialist element embedded in the original Garden City model--is one that that cannot, and should not, be separated from the cultural, social, and political forces behind these endeavors. This aspect goes hand in hand with a necessary overview on the financial considerations proposed by Howard in the original scheme: one well-oiled mechanism whose success lies in the adherence to the administrative principles developed by the author and codified through the establishment of the Town Planning & Garden Cities Company Ltd. in 1913, after the foundation of Letchworth.

The Company's manifesto, clearly states that "Landowners are coming to realize that the old-fashioned style of Estate Development, with no regard to the future, was against their permanent interest, and that in many cases the whole was sacrificed to the part."69 This idea of the whole must be applied when dealing with this and every element of the Garden City model. As Raymond Unwin states in his 1912 pamphlet Nothing

Gained by Overcrowding, regarding the lessons learned from his involvement in the design and planning of Letchworth along with Barry Parker: "In the arrangement of the space to be devoted to dwellings, as in the laying down of the main city plan, a complete acceptance of natural conditions must be combined with some definite design. No weak component of town and country, composed of meandering suburban roads, lined with semi-detached villas, set each in a scrap of garden, will ever deserve the name of 'Garden City'."

Nowadays, when the Garden City model is leading the urban discussion, being front-and-center in the considerations sought after by planners and architects, along with a renewed appreciation of the human scale, and the issues of sustainability at the forefront of every urban forum, an opportunity has come for a revision of the ideal: to achieve a Garden City for the 21st century. A model city that stays true to the core values embedded in its conception and, in the spirit of Ebenezer Howard's "Unique Combination of Proposals", providing compelling solutions to the ills of the contemporary city.

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PART II

Lost in translation? The Garden City in the American Continents

From the first ideal through its subsequent versions, the Garden City model in Great Britain gradually evolved. The 1913 manifesto of the Garden Cities & Town Planning Association\(^{71}\) acknowledges the early spread of Howard's model, and voices an early concern on said materializations stating that "although growing out of the garden city movement, not all of these ventures are upon the lines pursued by Mr. Ebenezer Howard ... there are quite a number of schemes which take the title 'Garden City' promiscuously, without having any claim whatever to use the name, their objects being as foreign as possible to the conceptions of the founder of the movement."\(^{72}\) It is then by considering the essential elements and driving forces behind Ebenezer Howard's original Garden City theory and practice that we will deal with the issue of the adaptation of the model through its international transfers. These essentials will be developed throughout the following chapters and will serve as basis for the comparative case study.

Under the light of its international proliferation, the Garden City urban planning model has proven to be strong and versatile enough to be reinterpreted and reapplied, resulting in the vast spread of the ideal. In the same line as the members of the Garden City Association in 1913, Robert Stern's *Paradise Planned*, exactly one century later, hints through the choice of its subtitle *The Garden Suburb and the Modern City* that many of these international translations are the result of an adaptation and reinterpretation.

\(^{72}\) Ibid. p.1.
of the original model by steering away from the use of the Garden City label.\textsuperscript{73} Therefore, these translations need to be understood through the analysis of how a theoretical, relatively abstract idea—such as Howard's Garden City—adapts and changes when considering the political, social, and cultural distance between the original model and its foreign interpretations.

With the focus of the present work set on the American continents, and on United States and Argentina specifically, two local translations of the garden city idea were selected for the present comparative case study: Greenbelt, Maryland in the United States (1937), and Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar, in Buenos Aires (1944), Argentina. A comparative analysis between these two urban examples shows the way in which each of these developments permitted parts of the garden city idea to take root while adapting to different historic, political, social, and even aesthetic values. The characteristics that render each of these urban settings relevant to the present work thesis will be further clarified, through an overview of the local, historical, and political context in which they were proposed and materialized, as well as the main planning and aesthetics aspects that shaped them.

There are clear distinctions to be made between the two case studies chosen for this work regarding the forces driving their implementation. From the politically-oriented Greenbelt, to the private real estate operation behind El Palomar, we will analyze the influence said factors had on the development of each location. Also, by grounding the analysis on the essentials embedded in the original garden city proposal, we are able to

establish the way in which the Garden City components, originally established as a whole are taken apart and selectively applied in these particular translations.

Figure 4.1. The Greenbelt Towns, as depicted in the propaganda issued by the Resettlement Administration.

Figure 4.2. "From the horror of the inferno to a peaceful dream, there's only one way: Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar", as promoted by F.I.N.C.A. (Translation by author)
CHAPTER 4

History and Politics

How it all started. The Status Quo and politics behind the North and South American Garden City endeavors.

In the same manner that Howard's Garden City proposals aimed to spur a movement of the population from the crowded and unhealthy metropolis to the undeveloped countryside, the germination of the North and South American garden city models in the first decades of the twentieth century, is rooted in how the development and growth of modern transportation systems allowed for a migration beyond the city limits. This shift of population from the urban to the rural proved to be fertile ground for the adherence to the essentials proposed by the appealing and versatile garden city model. At the same time, this new urban condition paved the way for planners and promoters to experiment with the design of entire towns that answered to the needs of a rising working class. The context in which each of these case studies is developed turns each of these translations into a unique and regional interpretation, and application, of the Garden City urban model ideal. Therefore, we will provide an overview of the political and social elements that drove the establishment of these urban developments, as it is behind the physical realization that results from these determinants that we are able to value the permanence of the essential elements contained in the original British idea.\footnote{It is important to consider that the present work only aims to analyze the way in which each of the case studies chosen has adopted, and adapted, the essentials of Howard's ideal in their translation to the American Continents. Therefore, per the author's discretion, only some of the facts presented are stressed and developed in detail, and the ones omitted--subject to further research--will be duly noted and referenced through the bibliographic notes.}
Greenbelt and the American New Deal

As early as 1917, with the creation of the U.S. Housing Authority and The Emergency Fleet Corporation, run by Frederick Law Olmsted (1870-1957) the former, and Frederick Ackerman (1878-1950) the latter--both relevant actors in the American urban planning scene at the time--laid the grounds for the creation of projects that would provide, as stated by Joseph Arnold in his analysis of the precedents to the planning endeavors carried out by the New Deal, "war laborers with housing and town planning available in the past only to the middle class. While they were not garden cities, the two towns [Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Yorkshire Village in Camdem, New Jersey] brought together all the latest principles of design being experimented with in England and America--curvilinear streets, cul-de-sacs, interior parks, row houses, and many other features." These elements would feed the suburban trend that in turn would dominate the American urban planning scene long after the First World War was over.

One of the first aspects to differentiate the American suburban marked tendency that followed the First War from the driving forces behind the British endeavor, is that this trend was eminently an upper-middle-class movement. Lewis Mumford openly criticized this situation by exposing the failure of suburbia as a remedy to the lack of decent life in the American cities. It is in line with his thoughts, along with the emergence of planners, architects, and thinkers with an interest on the question of the city, that the Regional Planning Association of America (R.P.A.A.) established in 1923,

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propelled the greenbelt towns program that would shape the New Towns movement in the United States.\textsuperscript{78}

The R.P.A.A. was led by a group of architects, planners, and social critics, all of them enthusiastic proponents of the garden city ideas although with certain modifications, to suit local needs. The architect and planner Clarence Stein (1882-1975), along Lewis Mumford (1885-1990) in the role of the critic and communicator, among others,\textsuperscript{79} spearheaded a movement that was not meant to be a "nostalgic return to the country, but a progressive re-entry into the city."\textsuperscript{80} Regarding the spread of the garden city ideal and its reinterpretation through the filter of a set of distinctive and American cultural beliefs and practices, the ability that the group of proponents and advocates of the British urban ideal in the United States developed, was the powerful skill to communicate through accessible language. Focused on persuading the educated public and concerned policy makers by laying out the theory in plain language avoiding the use of academic, inscrutable jargon, they managed to influence several generations of planners addressing all issues through a collaborative and multi-disciplinary approach.\textsuperscript{81} The R.P.A.A. managed to materialize a

\textsuperscript{78} A complete account of the New Towns movement is presented by Clarence Stein's \textit{Towards New Towns for America} (MIT Press, 1966), with an introduction by Lewis Mumford, both relevant proponents of the garden city ideas and the greenbelt towns programs in the United States.

\textsuperscript{79} For detailed account on the origins and composition of the R.P.A.A., as well as on the actions that lead to the greenbelt program see Carol A. Christensen's \textit{The American Garden City and The new Towns Movement} (UMI Research Press, Michigan, 1986), pp. 55-69. Also, Edward K. Spann gives an account on the endeavors of the Association lead by Mumford, Wright and Stein in "Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Regional Planning Association of America, 1931-1936", \textit{New York History}, Vol. 74, No. 2, April 1993, pp. 185-200.


\textsuperscript{81} The issue of the relevance that the powerful writings by Lewis Mumford had in influencing the spread of the British garden city ideals in the United States, and the role of accessible language, is also mentioned by Daniel Schaffer in his contribution to Stephen Ward (Ed.) \textit{The Garden City. Past, Present, and Future} (E&FN Spoon, 1992), p. 142.
series of endeavors,\textsuperscript{82} that applied and reinterpreted the principals set by the garden city idea, and that would undeniably set a planning standard that would be present in many urban enterprise in the United States for the following decades.\textsuperscript{83} The adherence to these urban ideals along with the Great Depression of 1929 that fueled Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal policies and the initiative of Rexford Tugwell would bring the Greenbelt Towns Program to life in 1935.

Rexford Guy Tugwell (1891-1979) was an American economist, member of President Roosevelt's "Brain Trust".\textsuperscript{84} This advisory group had its main focus on economic and social issues, and would shape FDR's public policy during the years of financial and economic hardship that the country endured.\textsuperscript{85} It was through the consolidation of a group of government agencies into the Resettlement Administration (R.A.),\textsuperscript{86} that Tugwell pursued his idea for the construction of a model community, as described by Joseph Arnold in his analysis of \textit{The New Deal in the Suburbs}, combining "work relief for the unemployed, low-cost housing for the slum dweller, long-term community planning, and subsistence farming."\textsuperscript{87} The creation of the Greenbelt Towns--a program composed by three new towns: Greenbelt in Maryland, Greendale in Wisconsin, and Greenhills in Ohio--was paramount to the relief of the close to ten million

\textsuperscript{82} For detailed account on the origins and composition of the R.P.A.A., as well as on the actions that lead to the greenbelt program see Carol A. Christensen's \textit{The American Garden City and The new Towns Movement} (UMI Research Press, Michigan, 1986), pp. 55-69.
\textsuperscript{84} \url{http://www.britannica.com/biography/Rexford-Guy-Tugwell}
\textsuperscript{85} \url{http://www.britannica.com/topic/Brain-Trust}
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid. p. 37.
unemployed workers nationwide that the economic depression had caused. One of the first issues is that although most of the content in the abovementioned statement avoids making a direct reference to the garden city ideas, everything in it except the intention to establish a factory area, can easily be extrapolated from Howard's vision. Even more so, in Tugwell's own words, we are able to acknowledge the elements of the British model that appealed him the most, as he recalls a conversation with Franklin Delano Roosevelt on the birth of the Greenbelt Town Program:

... FDR let me off city housing, though he laughed at me for not wanting to do it. I talked to him about satellite cities as an alternative and interested him greatly. My idea is to go just outside centers of population, pick up land cheaply, build a whole community and entice people into it.

Later that year, in 1935, the Resettlement Administration took over 3,371 acres located in Prince George County, Maryland, where Greenbelt would be developed.

**El Palomar and the rise of the Conurbation**

The convergence of several historical occurrences have marked, and shaped, the evolution of housing in the Buenos Aires of the early XX Century. This part of the analysis concentrates on the period between 1900-1940 as it aims to set the precedents for the case study chosen, Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar.

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88 The goals behind the unemployment relief program carried out by Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration are stated in his Fire Side Chat Speech, given on April 28, 1935, where FDR states that “...our responsibilities for the immediate necessities of the unemployed have been met by the Congress through the most comprehensive work plan in the history of the Nation. Our problem is to put to work three and one-half million employable persons now on the relief rolls.” The full speech is available online from the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library Digital Archives at http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu, (accessed February 10, 2016).


Argentina, as many other South American cities after the First War, underwent a considerable immigrant flux that set the focus on the problem of habitation. According to Charles Sargent, the greater growth in population took place in the first 30 years of the new century, from 945,000 inhabitants in 1904, to 1,561,000 in 1914; peaking in the decade between the 1920's and 1930's, with the population rising from 1,693,000 to 2,287,000. This rapid growth of population called for several actions towards granting relief to the strain posed by the housing situation, which at the time exceeded the policies fostered and promoted by the National State.

Until the enactment of Law #9677 in 1915, known as "Ley Nacional de Casas Baratas"--National Law for Low Income Housing--the role of promoting "popular" housing had been carried out almost exclusively by private enterprise. This private realm was conformed mainly by charitable, Catholic, associations, as well as cooperatives that would provide affordable credit lines for developing housing to its members, among which the Cooperativa El Hogar Obrero (C.H.O.) was its most relevant exponent.

By 1936, year of the Conferencia Nacional de Vivienda, the ideas around the status of habitation gravitated around the need for the National State to become a much more active character in the promotion and the building of housing, as well as to provide

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93 The National Conference for Housing (Conferencia Nacional de Vivienda) brought about the occurrence of the First Panamerican Congress of Popular Housing (primer Congreso Panamericano de la Vivienda Popular) to take place in Buenos Aires in October, 1939, of which the United States, among a group of Latin American countries which included Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Perú, Uruguay, and Venezuela, was a part of. Details of the scope of the resolutions reached at the Congress towards public, low-cost housing are detailed in http://www.dipublico.org/101538/primer-congreso-panamericano-de-la-vivienda-popular-buenos-aires
access to ownership. Ramón Gutiérrez, in his analysis of the urban evolution of Buenos Aires, illustrates this aspect by quoting Walter Hylton Scott, an American engineer of known socialist affiliation,\(^94\) editor of the influential publication *Nuestra Arquitectura*, on the fact that "only on the basis of cheap money supplied by the Government, the issue of 'popular' housing would be able to find its solution."\(^95\) It was this question of "cheap money" materialized through the grant of low rate mortgage loans by the *Banco Hipotecario Nacional* (B.H.N., the National Mortgage Bank), what would shape the growth of the city and its housing stock for the following decade.\(^96\)

Another relevant aspect of this period, and one that paved the way to the city's expansion beyond the boundaries of the Federal District, was the culmination of the public transportation network. The works that had been started in 1898, reached 1925 with three fully functioning connectivity modes: trolley, railroads, and buses. The expansion of transportation, along with the economic and business models that rose from the easy access to credit lines aimed at housing,\(^97\) allowed for the development of the area


\(^{96}\) This aspect of the Government's policy shift on the subject of housing has been analyzed in depth by Oscar Yujnovsky in *Claves Políticas del Problema Habitacional Argentino 1955-1981* (Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1984), in the chapter devoted to the precedents prior to 1955, addressing the fact that "substantial raise of credit lines with ample payment facilities is the key instrument of the housing policy in this period" p. 75 (Translation by author).

\(^{97}\) Regarding the issue of cooperativism and the financial systems that would emerge from the credit policy in the 1940s, there are two relevant works that provide the framework for these proposed models: José R. Silva, "El Cooperativismo y la Vivienda, 'Una vivienda para cada familia y cada familia en su vivienda propia'", *La Habitación Popular* published by Comisión Nacional de Casas Baratas, Buenos Aires, 1944; and Eduardo J. Perotti, *Política de la Habitación. Sistemas y Medios Financieros para el Hogar Propio* (El Ateneo, Buenos Aires, 1944).
that we know today as "Greater Buenos Aires." In the case of C.J. El Palomar, out of the variety of housing credit systems that emerged during the 1940s in Argentina, we must set focus on the Building Society model in general, and on Financiera Industrial Construcciones y Anexos (F.I.N.C.A.) in particular.

The building society model, prominent in Argentina between 1935 and 1949, embodied a loan and savings system that was instrumental in the creation of many real estate endeavors of the time, being C.J. El Palomar the most relevant both in terms of size and success. Harold Bellman in his analysis of The Building Society Movement, defines the building societies as "a combination of investors and borrowers operating under a measure of Government control to promote the ideals of thrift and home ownership."

They functioned as "saving circles" for its members, whom once achieved a predetermined cost on the house through a system of monthly installments, would be granted a very low rate loan, guaranteed throughout the mortgage period on the property. The building societies were composed by two types of partners: those who made the deposits and the mortgage investors, and they were allowed to function only on the basis of providing housing credit loans, by promoting savings towards the purchase of a house.

It is within this context that Erich Zeyen (1899-1969) founded F.I.N.C.A. in 1935.

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Zeyen, a visionary German developer, embodies the story of the many immigrants that were welcomed to the sparsely developed Argentina at the time. Born in Colony, a self-declared 'commercial employee' in the port of entry form, he arrived in Buenos Aires on the "Cabo Polonio" transatlantic from Hamburg in 1929,\(^{102}\) to settle permanently in Argentina, "hoping to create a garden city on virgin land in a new world."\(^{103}\) After a successful trial in the creation of a neighborhood in Beccar, San Isidro, province of Buenos Aires in the early 1930s, he takes the leap to fulfill the personal project of creating his garden city. To that end, on November 12 1942, along with his business associate--yet another German immigrant--Dr. Germán Wernicke, Zeyen acquires the fraction of land then known as "Parque Richmond". The land was located within the partido Tres de Febrero, in an area connected to the city center by the F.C. Pacífico railroad, 24 minutes away from the main station in the city center, Retiro. It is on these "90 hectares on a hillock filled with ondulations and populated by vegetation, with trees of the most beautiful and rich species,"\(^{104}\) where the project of El Palomar would be carried out.

\(^{102}\) Online Database for Immigration at http://comunidad.dateas.com/erich-zeyen, accessed on 02/08/2016
\(^{104}\) F.I.N.C.A., No.53, June 1944, p. s/n (Translation by author)
CHAPTER 5

Planning

From Garden City to Ciudad Jardín, building the socio-cultural adaptation of a model.

One of the characteristics that have allowed the widespread of the Garden City urban planning model is its versatility when it comes to adapting to the local needs and conditions. With this characteristic in mind, we will analyze the way in which the model was adopted, and adapted, both in the North American and South American example, taking into consideration the environmental and cultural differences between these two. It is also relevant to note which elements embedded in the original version of the urban model were omitted from these schemes, in response to the local social and cultural values.

Nothing embodies the spirit of the garden city as Raymond Unwin's own words--as it was mentioned before--in expressing that "no weak compound of town and country, composed of meandering suburban roads, lined with semi-detached villas, set each in a scrap of garden, will ever deserve the name of 'Garden City'."\(^{105}\) It is by this standard that we will delve into the planning characteristics of Greenbelt and C.J. El Palomar.

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Greenbelt: "Stumping out the Slums."\textsuperscript{106}

It is important to keep in mind that the planning process of Greenbelt was a result of a gubernatorial administration seeking the challenge to plan a complete suburban community, instead of designing and producing a mere housing project. In 1935, the founding of the Division of Suburban Resettlement set the wheels in motion for the materialization of the greenbelt town program. Hale Walker, the appointed town planner for Greenbelt at the Suburban Division, "laid out a sweeping, crescent-shaped town along a beautifully wooded ridge with the open end of the crescent facing prevailing summer breezes."\textsuperscript{107} This description given by Joseph Arnold, suggesting that the layout of the town plan was guided by nature, is in tune with Raymond Unwyn's own statement where the garden city plan was to be "arranged in conformity with the land."\textsuperscript{108} But besides the aesthetic planning considerations tied to a language that is inherent to these picturesque developments, one of the main issues--and one showing a direct tie to the garden city model--was to determine the size of the town so that it would "support adequate public and commercial facilities, amortize the mortgage, and still retain a sense of 'community'."\textsuperscript{109} For Greenbelt, a population limit of 30,000 was established, being this number very close to the 32,000 originally proposed by Howard.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{106} "Stumping out the Slums", \textit{Boston Herald}, September 5, 1937. Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.


\textsuperscript{109} Detail of the studies regarding the determination of town size developed by Clarence Stein for the R.A. can be found in Joseph L. Arnold, \textit{The New Deal in the Suburbs} (Ohio State University Press, 1971), pp. 90-91.

\textsuperscript{110} "But the population of Garden City, including its agricultural land is, when completed, 32,000." Ebenezer Howard, \textit{Garden Cities of To-Morrow} (Faber and Faber Ltd, First M.I.T. Press Paperback Edition, February, 1965), p. 59
indication that low residential density was also pursued in the towns contemplated on the greenbelt program, as it was in the scheme proposed by Unwin for Letchworth. This number, in the case of Greenbelt, was established to be of four families per acre.111

Before getting into the spatial configuration of the town plan, even though a point has been made on Howard's diagrams being just a graphic indication, not to be taken literally as a planning tool, it is interesting to notice how these have been picked up by the planners and incorporated into the town's zoning scheme in both the British and the American examples. Through a simple graphic comparison, in the case of Greenbelt, we are able to notice how the zoning follows Howard's "rings" scheme (Fig. 1.2). This configuration was also the one addressed by Parker and Unwin in their planning of Letchworth.

![Figure 5.1](image1.png) Figure 5.1, shows an interpretation of Letchworth's zoning diagram through GIS.

![Figure 5.2](image2.png) Figure 5.2, shows an interpretation of Greenbelt's zoning diagram through GIS. Notice the absence of industrial area in the original scheme.

The information used to build these graphic images was interpreted from the data provided by the historical plans and field research, and then processed through ArcGIS.

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111 Joseph L., Arnold The New Deal in the Suburbs (Ohio State University Press, 1971), p. 99. Arnold makes reference to this number which he refers to be contained in the "Summary Information Reports for Greenbelt, Greenhills, Greenbrook, and Greendale" included in the Lansill Papers, which I was unable to access during the course of my research. The relevance of this number is that it comes from the most direct source, being John Lansill administrative director of the Land Utilization Division of the Agriculture Department, and the one to set the density standard for the greenbelt towns program. Regarding the density proposed by Raymond Unwyn, for Letchworth, he followed the "more generous Garden City standard of 'twelve houses to the acre'," as Melvyn Miller states in the Introduction of Nothing Gained by Overcrowding (Routledge, London and new York, 2014), p. 14.
The resulting diagrams allow not only for a clear visual comparison of the configuration of these urban environments, thus their adherence to the Garden City principles, but also for an analysis of the evolution of the chosen settlements considering the way in which these elements accomplished their function. The aspect of evolution will be included in a following chapter, but through this first overview we are able to confirm that at least in following the utopian shape proposed in the original model, the planners of the American greenbelt towns had Howard, Parker, and Unwin's garden city working models very much in mind. Also, this analysis of the zoning where the industrial use is completely absent from the scheme, allows us to notice yet another relevant difference with the original working model in terms of the self-sufficiency sought by Howard.

The physical planning of Greenbelt's town plan is contained by two parallel roads—Crescent and Ridge Road—and the whole ensemble is shaped by the uninterrupted loop generated by these two main streets connecting at both North and South ends. All the public and institutional buildings are then placed within the concave curve of the loop, with the original R.A. housing units contained within the main parallel roads. In addition, a man-made lake provides the perfect setting for the recreational area of the town.

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112 The GIS mapping is an approximate one in terms of geospatial references, due to the fact that the intention was to build a zoning diagram applying GIS tools, that would be useful towards understanding how these urban examples applied and interpreted the guidelines established by the first working garden city model. The diagrams presented in this work were developed by the author during the course of the research, under the supervision of Prof. Li Yi at the University of Miami.
Figure 5.3, Greenbelt Town Plan, as depicted in the propaganda issued by the Resettlement Administration. Even though an area devoted to rural development is shown, it was part of a political strategy aimed at acquiring funds, thus never intended to perform as such.

Figure 5.4, Greenbelt original plan.

Figure 5.5, Aerial view of Greenbelt.
The fact that Greenbelt was planned under single government ownership, gave Hale Walker, the town planner appointed by the R.A., along with the chief architects Douglas D. Ellington and R.J. Wadsworth, the opportunity to apply many ideas that have been tried out earlier in other garden city inspired models, as it was the case of Radburn in New Jersey. These aspects are clearly outlined in the description contained in the National Historic Landmark Nomination of Greenbelt in regards of "the use of service courts (modifications of Radburn's cul-de-sacs); attached housing turned 'inside out' with a garden side facing interior public parks and a service side facing the service court; pedestrian foot paths linking housing within the superblocks and throughout other park areas; and underpasses to separate pedestrian and automobile traffic." In this sense, it is natural to consider Greenbelt as a reinterpretation of the American New Towns, which were in turn a result of the adaptation of the original garden city model, hence showing a number of differences with the original British ideal that stem from this development being the result of a translation process occurring locally.

In planning these suburban developments, one element that was considered unique to the greenbelt town programs was, of course, the green belt. As we have established in the case of Howard's Garden City, the green belt was to be the most important element in the physical scheme of the town, not only for its protective qualities of providing a clear boundary and setting a limit to the town's growth, but mainly for its agricultural value deeply rooted in the soul of the garden city revenue system. From the research performed on Greenbelt, neither the agricultural value of the green belt, nor its role as a revenue element has been considered. As scholar Carol Christensen explains in

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her analysis of the American garden city, "land in Greenbelt was unsuitable for profitable farming,"\(^\text{114}\) later adding the fact that when it came to the R.A. planners, "[they] saw the greenbelt as a vehicle for centering the lives of residents within the town itself. The greenbelt also served as an expanse of nature preserved for recreation and renewal. But above all, the greenbelt was to be a buffer protecting the town from undesirable contamination."\(^\text{115}\) Furthermore, Joseph Arnold points to the fact that "the rural use of the greenbelt was given more attention in Resettlement Administration publications and reports than by the planning staffs who generally looked on the greenbelt as an open space buffer area, and land reserve. It may be that its possibilities for agricultural use were publicized to satisfy the comptroller that the towns were in part a rural rehabilitation project and entitled to funds from the Emergency Relief Appropriation."\(^\text{116}\) Thus, granting the greenbelt a political marketing attribute that sets it even further apart from the original conception.

At this point of the analysis, we will go back to one of the elements mentioned above that along with the particular conception of the greenbelt in this American translation, is another one of Howard's requisites for the success of any garden city endeavor: the issue of single ownership. The ownership issue is one of the aspects that places Greenbelt closer to the original model, although at the same time there is a basic, and important, differential aspect between the two that sets them completely apart. That aspect lies on the ownership being carried out by a government division in the case of the American town, versus the model proposed and implemented through companies like

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\(^\text{115}\) Ibid. p. 87.

First Garden City Ltd. in the case of Letchworth. This characteristic is key to the functioning of the garden city model, as single ownership was at the core of Howard's revenue system to ensure the model's success. In the case of federal ownership, as in the case of Greenbelt, it prevented the towns from being taxed thus eliminating the generation of revenue of any kind.117

From this overview of the planning aspects embedded in Greenbelt's conception, we may notice the closeness to the essentials proposed by Howard's model, even though we are able to see which of those essential elements is omitted from the physical planning (the industry), which element morph through a shift of use (the green belt), and which one is altered to its core (Federal ownership and management). One thing that remains relevant is Rexford Tugwell's intention as a person who, as Clarence Stein mentions, "fervently believed in Ebenezer Howard's Garden City."118 His interests, very much like Howard's, were significantly more centered in the spirit of the model as a mean towards a socially oriented enterprise, rather than on the physical aspects of its materialization.119

**Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar: Home ownership for every family.**120

As mentioned in the literature review at the beginning of this work regarding the research on El Palomar--both concerning its origin and development--there is no specific scholarly

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117 This issue is developed in detail by Carol A. Christensen in her book *The American Garden City and The new Towns Movement* (UMI Research Press, Michigan, 1986), pp. 78-81, where she also deals with the implications of Municipal control, and management of the towns.


120 "F.I.N.C.A. Quiere un Hogar Propio para cada Familia" was the company motto for the building society behind the endeavor of El Palomar, as shown in the company's monthly publication for the building society members. The issues of *F.I.N.C.A.* that are referred throughout this work were located in the archives of the Biblioteca Nacional de Buenos Aires in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The editions available for research and consultation are the ones that were published during the period between 1944 and 1947.
published analysis, at least not one recognized as such. The bulk of the studies performed on garden cities and garden suburbs in Argentina focuses on the ones promoted by the Fundación Eva Perón and its social housing endeavors, thus dealing mainly with the official enterprises that would be produced by the Ministerio de Obras Públicas as well as those encouraged by the low rate credit loans provided through the Plan Eva Perón by the Banco Hipotecario Nacional. In this sense, private real estate oriented endeavors as El Palomar are somehow left out of the academic analysis in terms of their history and urban qualities. But in the same manner that happened in the case of the greenbelt town program described above, the garden city ideal also made its way across the Atlantic to South America.

The adoption of the garden city model as a planning trend in Argentina, was preceded by signs that expressed a preference for this urban model to deal with the expansion of the city towards the conurbation. Ramón Gutiérrez quotes J. Dickman, a member of the National Senate, who in 1939 was already passionate about the idea embedded in the garden city model, who expressed to "personally advocate for the individual house on a garden neighborhood, filled with air and sunlight, accessible to the

121 The reason behind choosing El Palomar for this comparative case study, as opposed to a government oriented endeavor--what would be the case of Ciudad Evita, for example--is mainly due to the fact that there are many relevant studies concerning the Peronist social housing endeavors, even those considered local adaptations of the garden city idea. At the same time, what makes the analysis of El Palomar most interesting, is precisely the fact that it happened outside of the public housing sphere, although still within a financing system that provided almost the same ease of accessibility that the official endeavors carried out. This was mainly due to the flexibility of the low rate mortgages that were available at the time were encouraging homeownership was one of the government's top priorities.

people in an economic way.\footnote{122} This mention of the individual house would also influence the housing choices performed in El Palomar.

As we have introduced in the literature review, one of the most relevant sources of information for understanding the development of Ciudad Jardín El Palomar is the corporate publication of \textit{F.I.N.C.A.}, the monthly official media of the building society responsible for the realization of the neighborhood. In the September 1945 issue, even though the editorial deals with the forces driving the planning without making a direct mention of the ones expressed in the garden city ideal, the similarities are clear:

The need [to create El Palomar] existed, as an indispensable condition, also due to the coarsening of the ways in which the modern concepts on hygiene value direct sunlight and fresh air, and it is not possible to think about that among the smoke of the chimneys, the exhaust pipes of the vehicles and the \textit{baraiinda} of the intense traffic at the populated centers.\footnote{123}

Regarding the absence of a direct reference to Ebenezer Howard, or the British experience, in the case of rooting the precedents behind the planning of C.J. El Palomar, the two main sources consulted through the research--the only ones that deal specifically with this development, are those by J.L. Gómez and Eden Gallanter.\footnote{124} These authors do establish a point about Zeyen's inspiration in Ebenezer Howard and the German garden city in general, and Hellerau in particular.\footnote{125} Nevertheless, we will find no traces of said

\footnote{123} "Cómo nació, cómo es la Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar" (\textit{F.I.N.C.A.}, n.65, Julio 1944), p. s/n (Translation by author)
German garden city in the physical planning of C.J. El Palomar, even though there is strong resemblance to Howard's plan for the Grand Avenue.\footnote{This diagram is included in Steven S. (Ed.), \textit{The Garden City: Past, Present, and Future} (London; E&FN Spoon, 1992), p.5. The color version shown here, unpublished, was taken from "Herts Memories, History, Memories, and Photos of Hertfordshire" http://www.hertsmemories.org.uk/page_id__7517.aspx?path=0p34p758p760p793p (Accessed February 22, 2016)}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image1}
\caption{Figure 5.6. An aerial view of the development of Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar taken in 1967.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image2}
\caption{Figure 5.7. "Grand Avenue" diagram}
\end{figure}

In terms of the town plan--as it can be noted from the images above (Fig. 5.6 and 5.7), the case of El Palomar deals with planning at the scale of a neighborhood, covering an area of 90 hectares. This is an urban form that is complete in its entirety, a fact that is
in direct relationship with the development of the real-estate business model. Strategically located between two train stations and two different rail lines--F.C. Pacífico and F.C. Central--the lots are placed equidistant from both, thus enhancing the neighborhood's connectivity to the Capital Federal. These two train lines also establish the boundaries of the neighborhood, which Zeyen preferred to call "a small city."\(^{127}\)

According to a document located at the Dirección de Geodesia of the Ministerio de Infraestructura of Buenos Aires, a lot subdivision was performed by the prior owner of the land, the Pereyra Iraola brothers, in 1935.\(^{128}\) J.L. Gómez refers to it in a note within his work in terms of the land "having been previously arranged by Leonardo Pereyra Iraola as a paseo of concentric streets that departed from a main plaza."\(^{129}\) On the same document, on the entry that follows dated in 1943, the project of Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar was officially included in the registry.\(^{130}\)

The center of the scheme, the Plaza del Avión, is located near the F.C. Central station El Palomar, from which the town gets its name. From the focal point generated by the park, two radial diagonal avenues give shape to the whole utopian-like scheme, while at the same time establishing a connection to the second train station. The radial streets, originally meant to be pedestrian, surround the main park, which also becomes the focal

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127 "Conoce Usted la Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar", *F.I.N.C.A.*, No.53, June 1944, p. s/n (*Translation by author*)
point from where a wider avenue, placed between the two diagonals, connects the main green area to a secondary plaza. Besides the strong reference to Howard's diagram, one characteristic that stands out is the irregular blocks that are generated by the combination of the radial and diagonal streets, very far from the strong metropolitan Buenos Aires' grid.

As shown in the GIS generated image above, the zoning addresses all those uses essential to the garden city ideal, aimed at the self-sufficiency of the small town, showing an important commercial area as well as incorporating industrial use, as read in the promotional magazine issued by F.I.N.C.A.: "Very few steps from Avenue Capitán Rosales are the first 'industrial plants' of the Ciudad Jardín: a woodshop, a brick factory, a roof tile factory, and a third one of floor tiles."¹³¹ This was also part of the company's marketing of the town's self-sufficiency--along with keeping daily commercial, educational, and institutional necessities at walking distance--allowing for the possibility

¹³¹ Also in F.I.N.C.A. there are publications that underscore El Palomar’s self-sufficiency, especially in regards to establishing the factories that would supply the construction materials and supplies locally. "... y también tenemos ladrillos", F.I.N.C.A., No.74, April 1946, p. s/n; "Así crece la ciudad jardin", F.I.N.C.A., No.77, July 1946, p. s/n See also F.I.N.C.A., No.161, August 1946, p. s/n
of manufacturing the materials that it needed to grow and expand. It is important to notice that F.I.N.C.A. acted not only as a building society in terms of providing the credit loan system that has been already described, but also as the construction company responsible for the bulk of the building of C.J. El Palomar. This scheme benefited both the developer and the homeowner, through the local manufacture of supplies, thus keeping the essential building materials at an affordable cost.

Another relevant issue regarding the relationship between F.I.N.C.A. as the credit loan provider, the construction company, and its final users--the buyers--is the fact that as El Palomar is essentially a real-estate development, there is no aspect included in its conception that resembles the revenue scheme proposed in the original British model. This is important in the sense that in spite of this aspect of "ownership" being one that sets El Palomar apart from the Garden City model in terms of management, it will also prove to have significant repercussions in the evolution of the town.

As a final element of planning, we will delve into the issue of the green belt in the planning of El Palomar. As it can be clearly seen in the GIS image provided above (Fig. 5.8), there was never a conception of a formal green belt developed for the site. The piece of land where El Palomar was developed was owned by the same family--Pereyra Iraola de Herrera Vegas--who later ceded the rights to the land adjacent to the Colegio Militar, one that sets a strong limit to the neighborhood's expansion, while keeping an un-built

132 J.L. Gómez points out to this advantage of F.I.N.C.A.'s business model, in terms of their proposal "being implemented through a savings circle and the suppression of intermediary operations, as it was the case of architecture projects and administrative costs, that were taken care by the company as long as the beneficiaries chose F.I.N.C.A. as the construction company as well." In Juan Lucas Gómez, "La Unión Hace la Fuerza, Las Compañías de Crédito Recíproco y el Financiamiento Hipotecario Urbano a Bajo Interés en Argentina entre 1936 y 1955", Historia Económica & Historia de Empresas, Vol.17, No.2, 2014, p. 463.
open space. The rest of the boundaries are established by both rail lines—north and south—and the industrial area to the east, are evident in the aerial photograph above (Fig. 5.6). The area was never conceived as, nor intended to be, a green space. Nevertheless, it is also worth mentioning that in spite of the lack of presence of a "formal" green belt, and the town being protected from growth and encroaching by the aforementioned conditions, there was still an intention to promote and incorporate both agriculture and gardening into the town, mostly aiming as an encouragement of healthy activities in direct connection with the general spirit of the urban village development. This was even incorporated in F.I.N.C.A.'s review of the relevance given at gardening in El Palomar:

Some of the inhabitants prefer above all, a grand predominance of flowers ... Others, endowed with an acute practical sense, farm legumes. Also, fruit trees have already been planted, as the optimists dwellers of the Ciudad Jardín have their minds also set on the future.134

This sentiment is still very much present today in the wide variety of gardens and landscapes that give El Palomar one of its most distinctive qualities, by creating a bucolic environment that still feels like an island amid the surrounding sprawl of the conurbation.

133 There story and the polemics behind the sale of the lands that were owned by the Pereyra Iraola family to the Ministry of War, which were valuable due to the fact that they were located right next to the land occupied by the Colegio Militar de la Nación were developed by Gerardo Bra, El Negociado de las Tierras de El Palomar (Biblioteca Política Argentina, Centro Editor de América Latina S.A., 1989).
CHAPTER 6

Aesthetics

The issue of regionalism. Housing the North and South American Garden City.

The selection of the house type, as well as those elements that would conform the physical environment of these North and South American Garden Cities, proves to be relevant when considering the significance behind the aesthetic and typological choices made by their architects and planners. In the case of Letchworth, for example, through the design and materialization of Homesgarth--the communal cooperative housing--specific buildings were produced as vehicles to express the ideals embedded in the proposed urban model. The issue of the house type selection as a vehicle for meaning will also prove to be true in the housing choices made both in Greenbelt and El Palomar, which in spite of being driven by different social and cultural forces, are ultimately responsible for the aesthetics and regional aspects of these case studies.

Greenbelt: "New Deal experiment in living." ¹³⁵

In terms of the design of the homes that would populate Greenbelt, as well as the rest of the developments of the greenbelt towns program, we are dealing with a setting that was materialized singlehandedly by the architects appointed by the R.A., Reginald J. Wadsworth and Douglas D. Ellington.¹³⁶ This operation dealt with a set of formulations

¹³⁵ "New Deal Experiment in Living" (The Press, Cleveland, Ohio, September 24, 1937). Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
¹³⁶ Clarence S. Stein, Towards New Towns for America (The M.I.T. Press, 1969), p. 119. There is also a background provided on the chief architects of Greenbelt in Richard Longstreth (Ed.), Housing Washington, Two Centuries of Residential Development and Planning in the National Capital (Center for
that came out from the general policies established for these towns by the R.A.. One of the most interesting issues concerns to a series of questions aimed at making design decisions prepared in the form of a general survey. As J. Arnold cites from the National Archives, this survey was directed "to potential residents concerning their living accommodations at the time--what facilities, rooms, home arrangements (i.e., detached, row, or apartments homes) they would prefer." It comes as no surprise that the ratio of preference obtained between detached and row houses was directly linked to the income bracket of the person filling out the questionnaire--as Arnold also points out, "the poorer families assumed that a detached house was out of the question for them even in a government project," which probably helped the adoption of the row house scheme to prevail.

Regarding the aesthetics of this housing configuration, an interesting source is the town own newspaper, the Greenbelt Cooperator, where in a 1937 issue O. Klein Fulmer, architect and Greenbelt's appointed Assistant Community Manager, devotes a whole editorial to the description of the houses. From the title "Architect describes Greenbelt Homes as Contemporary and Functional where 'Modernistic' is not the word," he makes a point of the issue that the decisions behind the style choices carried out in Greenbelt aimed to design dwellings "so as to require a minimum of maintenance in order

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American Places at Columbus, Ohio, 2010) inside the chapter developed by Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies, Greenbelt, Maryland: Beyond the Iconic Legacy, Chapter 10, p. 336, note 5.

137 A detailed account on the process of developing the housing policies for the greenbelt towns program is provided by Joseph L. Arnold, The New Deal in the Suburbs (Ohio State University Press, 1971), pp. 98-103.


139 Ibid. p.99.

140 O. Klein Fulmer, "Architect describes Greenbelt Homes as Contemporary and Functional where 'Modernistic' is not the word" (Greenbelt Cooperator, December 1, 1937), p. 17. Microfilm, located at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
to keep rents low," adding that "the houses had to be designed for rent instead of sale; they had to be designed for economical construction and they had to be sufficiently flexible to allow for various family compositions and for family growth and expansion."  

This affirmation is completely in tune with the R.A. guidelines where, as Klein Fulmer points out, if one had to label the style, it could be called "functional" or "contemporary." In this line of thought regarding the town's aesthetics, in his analysis of the New Deal endeavors, Arnold goes even further by affirming in regards to Greenbelt's row houses and apartments, that "their appearance is redeemed only by their placement in the landscape." The choice of placement was carried out--according to the general planning--following a spatial pattern conformed by loose volumes and urban residual space of ample dimensions, enhancing the overall low density that is inherent to the town's ensemble.

Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies in their in-depth study of Greenbelt make a special note on the abundancy of "green spaces, pathways, landscaping, parks, and recreational and community amenities," stressing the fact that "an extraordinary eighty-seven per cent of the land for the original town site was reserved as open space." This statement is relevant to establish how the effort set in the communal and outdoor areas, compensates in a way for the austerity of the housing type, with "the original row houses

141 O. Klein Fulmer, "Architect describes Greenbelt Homes as Contemporary and Functional where 'Modernistic' is not the word" (Greenbelt Cooperator, December 1, 1937), p. 17. Microfilm, located at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
142 Ibid.
144 Richard Longstreth (Ed.), Housing Washington, Two Centuries of Residential Development and Planning in the National Capital (Center for American Places at Columbus, Ohio, 2010) inside the chapter developed by Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies, Greenbelt, Maryland: Beyond the Iconic Legacy, Chapter 10, p. 220.
carefully related to the topography, as well to one another, to maximize privacy and capture views." Thus, another strong quality that was prioritized over architectural aesthetics or style. As we may deduce from the research, the need to place the architecture of Greenbelt within a certain architectonic style, is more prevalent in contemporary analysis of the development than in the original R.A. efforts in materializing, and describing the town plan.

Another issue that is characteristic to Greenbelt derives directly from the housing-for-rent-only scheme. In this sense, the houses did not contemplate any additions or alterations of any kind, which will have a strong effect on the evolution of the town. Nevertheless, there were some efforts in marketing the houses as attractive in spite of their simplicity, and the press at the time labeled them as "modern and homelike" filled with "blessed conveniences" for the housewives. The designs were able to accommodate the growing family through the availability of "seventy-one floor plans, from single-story 'honeymoon' end units to capacious downhill models affording a live-in basement," the range of rooms varying from two to six, with a single bath. The housing

145 The chapter on Greenbelt developed by Gournay and Corbin Sies, gives detailed account of the architecture of the town in terms of floor plan configurations and materiality, related both to the housing and commercial facilities. In the present study the focus is set on the overall design decisions that were brought about through the style choices made by the chief architects, stemming from the fact that it was aimed at a rent system versus home-ownership. The study mentioned above is included in Richard Longstreth (Ed.), *Housing Washington, Two Centuries of Residential Development and Planning in the National Capital* (Center for American Places at Columbus, Ohio, 2010), pp. 203-228. In addition, for a comprehensive and thorough description on the architecture of Greenbelt, see United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *NPS Form 10-900*, National Historic Landmark Nomination, Greenbelt, Maryland Historic District, December 2, 1996, pg. 6. Available online at http://focus.nps.gov/pdfhost/docs/NRHP/Text/80004331.pdf (accessed on February 9, 2016), pp. 7-17.


offer allowed for a variety of sizes to meet the particular needs of the eight-hundred-and-eighty-five families that the R.A. aimed to accommodate.148

148 Alfred Friendly, "Controversy Rages over First Non-Profit Town Built in the U.S.", News, Detroit, MI, September 26, 1937. Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar: "The idealization of a dream..."149

Most of the literature about the housing issue in Argentina during the 1940s focuses on the policies and endeavors carried out by the Peronist movement. Given the fact that these gubernatorial enterprises happened contemporaneously to El Palomar, it is fair to say that the housing guidelines that were adopted in Zeyen's town were influenced by similar precedents and equal lines of thought.150 With the preference for the garden neighborhood as a planning standard for the expansion of the city into the conurbation, the choice of the individual house was the one that would prevail.

A lot of the early social housing endeavors at the time of the urban expansion of Buenos Aires, were supported and promoted by the Corporation of Catholic Architects (C.C.A.). Guided by the Código Social de Malinas, the C.C.A. also advocated for the individual house due to an emphasis on the sense of independence and the relationship to nature that this building type could achieve.151 The ideal of the single-family home became even stronger with the addition of the concept of "dignity" to the conditions that the house should embody: "be adequate, hygienic, comfortable, and economic, besides

149 "La Idealización de un Sueño ... es este magnífico chalet construido para un feliz propietario de la Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar", F.I.N.C.A., No. 82, Diciembre de 1946, p. s/n.
150 The issue of the Peronist social housing endeavors is extensively developed in Anahi Ballent, Vivienda, Ciudad, Peronismo en Buenos Aires, 1943-1955 (Colección Las Ciudades y Las Ideas, Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Prometeo, 2009); Ramón Gutiérrez, (Ed.), La Habitación Popular Bonaerense, 1943-1955 (CEDODAL, Buenos Aires, 2011) and Rosa Aboy, Viviendas para el Pueblo (Universidad de San Andrés, Buenos Aires, 2005). In the present work, we will not be delving into the specifics of the enterprises carried out by the Peronist government as we are dealing with a private real estate endeavor.
social, and privately owned." All of these concepts are present in the houses designed and built by F.I.N.C.A., the promoters of Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar.

Regarding the aesthetic issues behind the individual house type developed at the time, Ramón Gutiérrez makes a note of the strong relationship of the house aesthetics with the widely spread image of the *chalet californiano* (the Californian house), omnipresent in architecture and design magazine articles—as well as the movies—thus "adding an element of social prestige into the popular housing solution."

The choice for the Californian house then became the image, and an aspiration object, that would become the style of preference for the public towards whom the marketing of El Palomar was addressed.

*Houses in El Palomar*

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154 As we have stated before, the choice of El Palomar for the present study is based on the fact that it was a privately owned and oriented real estate endeavor, but nevertheless clearly influenced by the strong affordable housing policy being driven by the Peronist movement at the time. Regarding these official endeavors contemporary to El Palomar, see the entry developed by Jorge F. Lliernur in *Diccionario Histórico de Arquitectura, Habitat y Urbanismo en Argentina* (Tomo 1 A-K, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Sociedad Central de Arquitectos, 1992), pp. 204-208.
In the development of the planning of El Palomar--following the scheme of the street as a corridor--the road system generates a series of irregular blocks that are divided into individual lots to create a complete urban form. Although the houses are all freestanding elements within their own block, they give a sense of a building fabric far more dense than the one proposed in the original British model, while maintaining the feeling of low scale that is inherent to the garden suburb.

"Charming modern little house", "A chic house," "A nice house," "A pretty and cheerful house," F.I.N.C.A. did not hold back when it came to promoting their designs, and even though this was part of a construction development marketing campaign, the house ideal of the time still transpires through the choice of adjectives applied. Nevertheless, there is one that stands out within the design offerings that would establish a significant difference not only between the Argentinian and American

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155 There are countless design solutions for the houses that were offered to the prospective buyers of El Palomar as shown in the publication of F.I.N.C.A. magazine to cover a wide range of space and, as we will see, activities. In every issue, there is a section devoted to both model projects and built houses for sale, which maintained this housing aesthetic as a basis for their design.

156 It is important to notice that since all the designs were promoted directly by the developer, there is absolutely no mention of the architect or architects behind the design process. When dealing with the evolution of El Palomar, there will be a mention to the architects responsible for the design of the mid-rise buildings that would complete the ensemble in the 60s, but there is no architect of record before then.
examples, but also with the original model, and that is "The House for Business." The main significance behind the consideration of this house type is that zoning was an essential aspect of Howard's Garden City model. The idea that anybody could choose and buy this house model and thus be able to establish a business anywhere within any lot throughout El Palomar endows the neighborhood with a freedom of uses that was not a part of the original urban model. At the same time, in contrast to Greenbelt where commercial activities are explicitly banned from the private house even today, it allowed for the development of local trades and services that would empower the spirit of self-sufficiency materialized through the incorporation of the formal industrial and commercial area.

Figure 6.9, Development proposed by F.I.N.C.A. for the main commercial avenue in El Palomar where the use of the “recova” as a means to generate a covered street is prominent.

This layout for this type can be found in "Viviendas Individuales en la Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar", F.I.N.C.A., No.59, January 1945.
We have already made a comment on the incorporation of the industrial buildings as a resource to add to the neighborhood's self-sufficiency, especially when it came to its construction. Still, the kind of self-sufficiency that would have a real impact on the inhabitants of El Palomar is the development of the commercial area and the quality of its architecture. The first element that becomes relevant is the adoption of the *recova*, the covered street system that is completely regional to Buenos Aires and every city with an origin on the application of the Laws of Indies established by the Spanish colonization of the Americas during the Sixteenth century, incorporating guidelines regarding town planning. Nevertheless, we are also able to find a precedent in Howard's--Bellamy-inspired--proposal of covered streets when taking a closer look into El Palomar's commercial artery.\textsuperscript{158} Howard developed his idea of a commercial covered area that

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{158} "The mystery was explained when we found ourselves on the street, for a continuous waterproof covering had been let down so as to inclose the sidewalk and turn it into a well lighted and perfectly dry corridor, ... [Edith] She intimated that it would be considered an extraordinary imbecility to permit the weather to have any effect on the social movement of the people."
could be compared to the advantages of the Latin American colonnaded *recova*. He
details it as "a wide glass arcade called the 'Crystal Palace', opening on to the park. This
building is in wet weather one of the favorite resorts of the people, whilst the knowledge
that its bright shelter is ever close at hand tempts people into Central park, even in the
most doubtful of weathers. Here manufactured goods are exposed for sale, and here most
of that class of shopping which requires the joy of deliberation and selection is done." In
el Palomar, this covered *paseo* was developed and proposed for Avenida Capitán
Rosales, along the main access axis to Ciudad Jardin. The developers of El Palomar
planned the commercial street as a *recova* that not only gives shelter to the pedestrians,
but also protects the merchandise that is exposed on the shops' windows and vitrines."  

It is impossible to deny the strong influence that the Laws of Indies' inspired
*recovas* had in Buenos Aires and most of the Argentinian towns, but at the same time it is
difficult to avoid the speculation as to the architects' intention to reference Howard's
Garden City covered street scheme, thus endowing this particular design operation with a
spirit that is even absent from the British working models.  

It is definitely a subject worth of further research and consideration.

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160 Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-morrow* (Farber&Farber Ltd, MIT Press Paperback Edition,
1965), p. 54
CHAPTER 7

The People

Social planning in the North and South American Garden City.

As it was developed in Chapter 3, Ebenezer Howard's Garden City proposal was deeply rooted in his own social concerns, an aspect that is present through every aspect of his urban proposal. The social aspect of the British garden city is so deeply embedded in its theory that it makes it difficult to analyze any translation or adaptation of the model without addressing the human and sociological forces behind the chosen North and South American enterprises. Said forces will be shaped by local policies and social values, as well by standards that are inherent to each of the societies where the urban developments were carried out. Given these differences between the cultural and political tensions that occur locally, the social—or socialist—essential aspect to the garden city theory is the one that places Greenbelt and El Palomar further apart.

Greenbelt: "Tugwell's Folly"161

As noted, Rexford Tugwell's drive in developing the greenbelt towns program as a relief to the unemployment caused by the Great Depression, while providing a housing solution for the increasing number of people populating the Capital's slums. Nevertheless, there are other aspects that turn Greenbelt into an interesting example of how cultural standards held by social values impact the development of social--affordable--housing and cooperative communities.

161 "Tugwell's Folly Opens Soon. 'Dream City of Poor' will cost Nation $14,227,000", Post Gazzette, Pittsburg, PA, September 1937. Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
The first aspect that stands out is how the social and democratic processes of living are incorporated into the Greenbelt community. Philip K. Wagner analyzes the relationship between the social standards for the American nuclear family in the 1930s and how these values are incorporated into the greenbelt towns in general, and Greenbelt in particular. In this regard, Wagner addresses how embedding social and family values into design, by stressing a series of issues that shaped the social living of these communities, become the elements that will set Greenbelt apart from the European working model. Undoubtedly, it is the element that deals with the tenant selection process carried out by the R.A. the one that would carry a stronger impact into the shaping of the Greenbelt community.

In the words of the Resettlement Administration, the main goal of the greenbelt towns program was to "provide low-rent housing, in healthful surroundings, both physical and social, for families that are in the low-income bracket." The issue with this proclamation is in the guidelines that were set for the screening and admittance of the tenants that qualified for Greenbelt. As the program progressed it steered away from the original low-income goal, transforming the town into a moderate-income oriented endeavor. As Wagner speculates, the shift of the income bracket, on top of the

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established prohibition against the wives to work outside of the home, may have become an insurmountable hurdle for a large amount of applicants, as the figure established to be the qualifying standard was unreachable without the wife's additional income.\textsuperscript{165} As Joseph Arnold points out, "in the Washington area one-third of all families were ineligible for consideration because of this rule."\textsuperscript{166} Furthermore, the formal regulation against women being able work outside the home thus expecting them to stay within the confines of the community, added to the lack of local industrial development, was the main factor in shaping Greenbelt as a "husband-commuter" community, with its inhabitants living at a regional scale. This aspect alone sets Greenbelt far apart from the British ideal of self-sufficiency aimed to empower local autonomy, to be achieved by the regional network envisioned in Howard's Social City.

There is also another interesting fact regarding the establishment of a fixed income bracket to become eligible as a Greenbelt tenant, and that is the case in which any of the town's inhabitants, having been accepted to become a part of the community, made a career advance--or a change in social status--that put him or her above the income set limit. In spite of not finding official record of this situation during the research, there is a case of tenants being forced to leave due to their income rise, which made it to the press

\textsuperscript{1937. Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland
}\textsuperscript{165} Wagner makes a strong point on how the income bracket was raised by the R.A. even before the tenant screening process began. Wagner speculates on how the enforcing of conventional family values shaped this suburban landscape, and how these decisions might have been forced upon by the need to secure Congressional funding for the greenbelt program. See Philip K. Wagner, "Suburban Landscape for Nuclear Families: The Case of Greenbelt Towns in the United States", \textit{Built Environment}, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1984, pp. 39.

\textsuperscript{In regards to the calculations carried out to establish the income bracket, see Joseph L. Arnold, \textit{The New Deal in the Suburbs} (Ohio State University Press, 1971), pp. 138-139.
Reference to the shift from low to moderate income was found in a series of press clippings where it was referenced that "Tenants of moderate income will occupy it [Greenbelt] this month" (\textit{New York Times}, September 1937). Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
}\textsuperscript{166} Joseph L. Arnold, \textit{The New Deal in the Suburbs} (Ohio State University Press, 1971), p.142
at the time, thus exposing the firmness of the federal management in regards to keeping
the economic and social standards set for the town.167

Another relevant aspect that stands out in the tenant selection process, is the
reference made regarding the goal of translating the religious composition of the area into
the town's population. According to the Orientation document provided by Greenbelt
Homes, Inc. (GHI)--the cooperative who manages Greenbelt at present--the 59 percent of
Protestants, 34 percent Catholic, and 7 percent of Jewish inhabitants intentionally
mirrored the religious composition of the Baltimore and Washington D.C. area, in an
effort to maintain the local diversity of faith168. Furthermore, even though this
consideration of the religious aspect may sound questionable in present times, it is the
existence of the inflexible rule that prevented people of color to apply for a home at
Greenbelt the one that surpasses it. Joseph Arnold makes reference to the lack of official
explanations or considerations to justify this act of racial discrimination happening within
a socially oriented effort. His affirmation of how "a true cross section of the poor, of
course, would have included a sizable group of Negroes ... [is] tragically in line with the
long history of Negro exclusion from suburban areas,"169 brings up an element that is
intrinsic to the social inequalities of the United States at the time, and a discrimination
factor that we speculate could never have been envisioned by an equality-driven mind as
Howard's.

167 “Sisters Must Quit Greenbelt: Earn Too Much”, Washington Herald, March 29, 1938; “Greenbelt Forces
Widow to Move as not 'Low Income', Washington Post, March 29, 1938; "Sisters Leave Greenbelt as
Income Soars", Washington News, March 29, 1938; "Income Too High, Widow Must Leave Home from
Greenbelt", Washington Star, March 29, 1938. Located in the press clippings collection archived at the
Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road,
Greenbelt, Maryland.
Lastly, we will deal with the aspect that makes Greenbelt radically different from any other planning endeavors in the United States: the cooperative program. Greenbelt, like Howard's Homesgarth, was conceived as a democratic community, where the residents held the power to enforce, in this case, the town's policies while the federal government only held land tenure over the territory Greenbelt occupied. The main actor in the development of Greenbelt cooperative was a businessman from Boston, Edward. A. Filene. The Consumer Distribution Foundation, founded by Filene, with "profits accrue to benefit of residents," was so successful and profitable, that was turned over to the residents a little more than two years of the creation of Greenbelt. The cooperative was to be run by a Board of Directors chosen by the inhabitants, along with the shop patron, who held shares of the new company Greenbelt Consumer Services, Inc. The cooperative model included every commercial store operating in the greenbelt town, and the fact that it is still active today--although under a different name--is what makes Greenbelt a unique example within the rest of the American suburban towns

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171 "RA Community to be Ran as a Co-op Project" (Register, New Haven, Connecticut, September, 1937). Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
172 "Life's a Lot of Cooperating" (South Bend Tribune, May 22, 1938). Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
173 "Everything in this Town is Owned by Everybody" (Morning Star Telegram, Fort Worth, Texas, January 28, 1940); "First Town in History Owns All Business, Is Profitable" (News Tribune, Duluth, Minnesota, January 29, 1940). Located in the press clippings collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
El Palomar: "The Great Recreation Park"\textsuperscript{174}

When it comes to the social aspects in the case of Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar, what stands out is how a successful community sentiment can rise from sensible and smart privately oriented planning. In this sense, the efforts of the private developers of Ciudad Jardín, along with the incorporation of some of the best physical aspects of the garden city idea, resulted in El Palomar being able to keep the original rural village feeling, without the imposition of social values of any kind. With this in mind, the development of El Palomar is a lot closer to the British ideal--and Letchworth—despite the clear differences between the responsibilities held by First Garden City Ltd. as town manager of Letchworth, and those of F.I.N.C.A. acting as a real estate promoter.

It could be said that the success of F.I.N.C.A. rests mainly on the easy access that the population had to credit loans aimed at home ownership, although most of the merit is all over F.I.N.C.A.'s marketing strategy for the development of El Palomar. Through an analysis of the real estate publication aimed at the promotion of Ciudad Jardín--F.I.N.C.A.--we notice the aim at exposing the advantages of the small town by stressing every social value embedded in the garden city ideal--such as healthy living, the sense of commercial and industrial independence from the Capital, and a strong community identity\textsuperscript{175}. As in the case of the adjectives used to market the housing offer, the bulk of the articles were devoted to extol the social values of the small suburban village.

\textsuperscript{174} "The great recreation park. To recover the energy lost in the job, so necessary to achieve the daily task of tomorrow, this splendid park not to spend a few hours, but a place to establish for the rest of your life, in Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar", \textit{F.I.N.C.A.}, No.49, February 1944. \textit{(Translation by author)}.

\textsuperscript{175} In every issue of \textit{F.I.N.C.A.}, there is room for one article that aimed at praising the community qualities of El Palomar. There were journalistic-like pieces that celebrated the births that occurred within the community, interviews to the main actors in keeping the function of the town active--from the man behind the wheel of the milk delivery truck, to the workers in the local factory--even including a "gossip" column to deal with the most frivolous facts, or labeling the town as "una ciudad sin gente mala". All these seeking to present the private real estate endeavor through socially conscious advantages, versus any material quality, such as construction, or planning.
Furthermore, in her analysis of Ciudad Jardín, Eden Gallanter makes direct reference to Zeyen's efforts to avoid any conflicts that could stem from religion or race, which he achieved through the construction of churches of different denominations, and by promoting and supporting the creation of neighborhood community groups, such as the Rotary Club, El Club de Leones, or the Asociación de Fomento of El Palomar, all of them still active today. Gallanter also makes a point that Zeyen "wanted to bring the possibility of homeownership to people of many economic classes 'from executives to laborers', thus achieving a much broader sense of community in advocating for social diversity.

In spite of the lack of formal cooperative activity as in the case of Greenbelt or Letchworth, one of the factors that had an impact on the achievement of a high sense of communal living, was the careful and stylistic development of the commercial areas that incorporated Zeyen's and Wernicke's German heritage. This endowment of the town with elements of a foreign national culture undoubtedly helped in creating a strong sense of identity. In this regards, this identity was not one that depended on the cultural heritage of its inhabitants, but one that certainly helped to achieve a sense of differentiation, that may have played a part in enhancing the perception of El Palomar as a community with strong identity roots. In their research on F.I.N.C.A., Juan Lucas Gómez y Edgardo Domínguez, also point to the use of symbols performed by the developers of El Palomar--one that

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176 The Asociación de Fomento Amigos de la Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar, was the pioneer, founded in October 1945. The Rotary and Lions Club started in the 1980s in continuity with the original community sentiment.
178 Ibid. p. 300.
they label as "symbolic manipulation"—when referring to the efforts of Zeyen and his associates in imbuing a deep sense of identity through the creation of a flag and a crest, in the spirit of their European heritage for the Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar. Surprisingly, a regional anthem was also composed, although entirely dedicated to the praise of F.I.N.C.A., reinforcing the identity connection between the development company and the community it created.

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180 Although this observation is based on oral tradition, through research it was possible to find reference to the flag created by F.I.N.C.A., one that was "never made official due to the fact that its colors and design were similar to the defeated German regime at the end of the Second World War." As read in the blog "The City as a Scenario. Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar" at: https://derivasanisidrogomezcechettohaas.wordpress.com/2014/05/14/ciudad-jardin-lomas-del-palomar (accessed February 25, 2016).

181 "Al pueblo de los niños cantemos la canción. Feliz, el joven padre Feliz, la joven madre bendicen su hogar Si quieren humillarnos, si quieren ofender, nosotros nos reímos, en FINCA sí vivimos, aquí en Palomar. A FINCA, la querida un VIVA con fervor, eterna sea FINCA, y reine siempre FINCA en nuestro corazón." https://derivasanisidrogomezcechettohaas.wordpress.com/2014/05/14/ciudad-jardin-lomas-del-palomar (accessed February 25, 2016)
Figure 7.1. The image above shows the crest designed for Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar by its first inhabitants in 1944, developed in the tradition of the European heritage of the small town. It depicts the typical housing type—the Californian freestanding house—along with a graphic interpretation of the "lomas" and the historic "palomar" from where the town acquired its name. An image of a group of children crowns the ensemble, as a symbol of the importance given to children's health and welfare in the conception of the Ciudad Jardín.
CHAPTER 8

The Evolution of an Ideal

Greenbelt and El Palomar To-Day: An overview of the evolution of a planned community.

After having analyzed the translated North and South American chosen examples through the essential elements contained in Howard's Garden City theory, the question that remains is to analyze the physical configuration in which each of these urban developments has reached today. In the case of the comparative case analysis, since the focus is set on the essential elements materialized through the original British model, the following analysis deals with how said elements have been able to withstand the test of time, hence their apparent failure or success in "Garden City" terms.

Through the application of a series of tools provided by the GIS software, we have established a comparative analysis on the evolution of the sites--Greenbelt and El Palomar--according to the principles laid out in the original British urban planning model. Through the interpretation of the information that results from processing the data pertinent to each case study area, the system allows for an analysis of each of these garden city translations. By contrasting the data obtained from each of these urban developments--shaped by two very different political, cultural, and social backgrounds--we are able to analyze the model’s physical evolution and establish a series of considerations regarding the changes that said physical configuration has undergone in time. The materials and data used in the present analysis have been compiled from different sources, and the information has been interpreted from historical and archival
maps researched at the North and South American locations.\textsuperscript{182} Only in the case of Letchworth, the maps that have been used are those that have been published in the literature produced at the time of the development of the Garden City, that serve as a basis for the analysis of the urban model.\textsuperscript{183} In the case of Greenbelt and El Palomar, the maps used for the comparative analysis are chosen from the ones found through research in the archival sources located in each town--Prince George County in the case of Maryland, and La Plata, in Buenos Aires.

**Methodology**

The information derived from the interpretation of the data provided by the maps and field research was processed through the ArcGIS Pro software.\textsuperscript{184} This allowed not only for a clear visual comparison of the configuration of the urban environment, thus their adherence to the Garden Cities principles, but also for an analysis of the evolution of the chosen settlements within the time frame provided by the time span between the maps. The guidelines for the development of the spatial analysis are based on the ones that Ebenezer Howard introduced considered to be predominant and exclusive:

- A Model City on a new area
- Land to be acquired by a single company

\textsuperscript{182} In the case of Greenbelt, several maps were obtained at the collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George’s County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland. The map used for the spatial analysis of Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar, was obtained during the research performed at the Departamento Fotogramétrico located at the Ministerio de Infraestructura de la Provincia de Buenos Aires in La Plata, Buenos Aires.


\textsuperscript{184} It should be noted that the information reproduced in the following GIS maps is approximate in geospatial terms, and was interpreted with the intention of producing a series of comprehensive zoning diagrams that could be of use for the present analysis to establish the comparative case study.
"to develop it on the best municipal lines ... to bear a fixed and limited return not exceeding 4 or 5 per cent. All profits beyond to be applied to local improvements for the benefit of the community"\textsuperscript{185}

\checkmark Estate to be well planned by a committee of experts

"to be carefully planned ... so as the town grows, its factories and workshops, the homes, the parks, schools, churches and other public buildings may be placed in the most convenient positions ..."\textsuperscript{186}

In sum, the success of the model proposed relied on the existence of the following uses and areas:

\checkmark Commercial
\checkmark Industrial
\checkmark Residential
\checkmark Green Belt

The first two elements are relevant to the issue posed by Howard for the Garden City’s self-sufficiency, but it is the last element on the list, the green belt, the one to guarantee the physical success of the model. From its conception, the green belt was intended to protect the Garden City not only from its own expansion, but also from the pressure brought about by the growth of neighbor towns, "like the walls of the medieval city. It limits its boundaries, protects it from the attack of other towns, and preserves its shape and style, to act as a ‘medieval city wall’."\textsuperscript{187}

\textsuperscript{186} Ibid
As it has been established in Chapter 2, Howard developed a series of diagrams to illustrate his urban planning ideal. Although they were not meant to be descriptive of a specific configuration--each Garden City was explicitly expected to adapt to its own environment--they do serve as a basis for the zoning considerations of the urban model.

![Diagram of Howard's Garden City](image)

*Figure 8.1, Howard's Garden City "rings" zoning diagram.*

It is the presence and configuration--or lack thereof--of the abovementioned elements that have been taken into account to develop the comparative case study that follows. To be able to establish a baseline for a quality-based comparison of the model's translation and local adaptations, analyzing the essential elements contained in the original British working model, Letchworth Garden City. These elements are contrasted to the North and South American endeavors, along with a comment on specific issues that have characterized the evolution of these particular adaptations.
Letchworth

The information used to perform the spatial analysis of the evolution of the British working model was obtained from the maps published by C.B. Purdom in his extensive analysis of Letchworth published in 1913 and contrasted to the data gathered from mapping obtained through the GIS database. The analysis of the data allows us to establish a comparison of the way that the original zoning has evolved, as well as the verification of the success of the land use division, in regards of the garden city postulates. As noted, although Howard's "rings" diagram was not intended to be literal, it was very much present in the layout proposed by Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker.

![Figure 8.2, Letchworth Estate and Plan by Parker and Unwin.](image)

![Figure 8.3, Diagram of zoning where the reference to Howard's "rings" scheme is present.](image)
Figure 8.4, Letchworth, 1913. Data interpreted from the historic map provided by C.B. Purdom, *The Garden City: A Study in the Development of a Modern Town* (E.P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1913), pp. 32, 42, 56, and 57. (Developed by author)

Figure 8.5, Letchworth, today. GIS online database.
By looking at the maps above, the expansion of the industrial area is evident, thus maintaining the core concept of self-sufficiency materialized through employment opportunity included in Howard’s proposal. The residential areas have also expanded, even though they are all still contained by the permanence of the green belt. Going back to the analogy of the green belt as "city wall," it is worth noting how this concept succeeds in its both elementary boundary conditions: the one that prevents the residential area located within the city limits to expand, and the one where the green belt prevents the residential areas that have developed outside of the city limits to penetrate the town. The way in which the different areas have morphed and expanded throughout the time span that separates both maps can be understood further by their superposition, with the residential area being the one that has evolved the most, as shown below:
Figure 8.7, Diagram showing the evolution of Letchworth according to the interpretation of the data gathered from the abovementioned maps (Fig. 8.4; 8.5)

Greenbelt

The data used to develop the spatial analysis of Greenbelt was interpreted from the information provided by the original historic town map found in Stein's book, a map dated in 1955—a few years after the town was put up for sale by the federal government in 1947—retrieved from the town's archive, and the current data at the GIS online database. Through a simple superposition, it is clear how the configuration of the original scheme was broken early. We may attribute this situation to the disappearance of the limit imposed by the green belt—given the lack of agricultural activity and value assigned to this element by the original planners—thus resulting in the residential area expanding beyond its borders due to the failure of the green belt's performance as a physical barrier.

189 Obtained from the map collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland.
Another relevant aspect that derives from the superposition of data is the decrease of the original commercial area that appears to also have been affected by the growth of the area occupied by housing. This situation, along with the fact that Greenbelt is a peculiar case of a garden city translation scheme lacking industry, is an example of how by such a relevant element having been left out of the original planning, precisely the one that drives the local economy and provides jobs for its inhabitants, has rendered the local commercial activity to its minimum expression. Presently, besides the basic necessities that may be fulfilled at Greenbelt's cooperative supermarket, every commercial activity requires commuting to any of the neighboring towns. In the following maps indicating land use, the spatial evolution becomes clear:

![Map of Greenbelt, 1937](https://example.com/greenbelt_map.png)

Figure 8.8, Greenbelt, 1937. Data interpreted from the historic map provided by Clarence S. Stein, Towards New Towns for America (The M.I.T. Press, 1966), p. 129. (Developed by author)

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190 The early decision to leave local industry outside of the planning scope of Greenbelt is explained by Clarence Stein, Towards New Towns for America (The M.I.T. Press, 1966), pp. 130-131.
Figure 8.9. Greenbelt, 1955 Data interpreted from the 1955 map located at the collection archived at the Tugwell Room of Prince George's County Memorial Library, Greenbelt Branch, 11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland, and the current GIS online database. (Developed by author).

In spite of the issue of the lack of industry--one that has been previously addressed--in its original physical conception, the garden city spatial scheme follows Howard's diagram materialized in Letchworth, almost to perfection. Nevertheless, the similarities are lost in the present configuration where the green belt has been pierced by the expansion of the residential area, proving the relevance that said element plays in the success of the garden city model’s configuration. The following superposition provides a clear picture of the abovementioned situation (Fig. 8.10).

191 For a detailed account on the development of new housing in Greenbelt after the R.A, period that is the focus of the present study, see Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies chapter devoted to Greenbelt in Richard Longstreth (Ed.), Housing Washington, Two Centuries of Residential Development and Planning in the National Capital (Center for American Places at Columbus, Ohio, 2010), pp. 203-228.
One consideration that cannot be avoided when we deal with the physical evolution of Greenbelt is the nature of the town's management since its conception. Federal management’s system based solely on rents was carried out until 1947, when the
process to sell the town was set in motion.\textsuperscript{192} Although there was a strong effort in keeping the model community free from private ownership--as it was a condition thought to be essential for the permanence of the community's character--there were some operations that assured the tenants’ perpetual rights of use over some of the units.\textsuperscript{193} The Greenbelt Veteran's Housing Corporation (GVHC) purchased the town in 1947. The GVHC is still alive in Greenbelt's present manager--Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI)--which has successfully maintained the cooperative system until today. This system, where the residents own the right to live in the house as opposed to full private homeownership, added to the National Historic Landmark condition in Greenbelt has certainly shaped the way in which the development has reached present date.


\textsuperscript{193} There is reference made to a letter sent in this regards by Will W. Alexander, Administrator of the Farm Security Administration, addressed in the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, \textit{(NPS Form 10-900, National Historic Landmark Nomination, Greenbelt, Maryland Historic District, December 2, 1996)}, pg. 42.
Figure 8.12, Greenbelt To-Day. Collage developed with photographs taken by author in a research trip to Greenbelt in March 2015.
In spite of the strong activism performed by the residents as part of the local cooperatives, the GHI has proven to be a stern steward when it comes to keeping the historic character of Greenbelt. Through a Handbook issued to every resident—a contractual document—designed to "acquaint GHI members with their rights and responsibilities as members of the housing cooperative [describing] the policies, regulations, mutually contracted rights and obligations, and operating practices of GHI," as it reads on the first page, a series of guidelines are clearly laid out. This set of rules and regulations covers every physical aspect in terms of any improvements or alterations performed on the units, explicitly prohibited by the GHI.

These regulations have helped maintain the historic character of Greenbelt however, they pose a series of considerations regarding the stewardship of historic urban settings when faced with the essential considerations that are paramount to keeping the habitability and urban conditions—irrespective of its historic character. The issue of preservation when it comes to an urban setting, has always proven to be a challenge in terms of the adaptation of historic fabric to contemporary uses and infrastructure. This challenge should bring about a deep concern to avoid the embalming of the environment that would render it stale in terms of urbanity, thus changing its essence to such an extent that all the intentions behind its original design are lost. This is definitely the main concern that Greenbelt needs to face and address today.

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194 The list of cooperatives active in Greenbelt at present date are the following: Co-op Grocery Store, Greenbelt News Review, Greenbelt Nursery School, New Deal Cafe, Greenbelt Internet Access, and Greenbelt Federal Credit Union. Outlined in the GHI Orientation Brochure (August 4, 2012), p. 2.
195 Obtained from the GHI Handbook, as provided by a Greenbelt current resident, Section X on "Improvements, Alterations and Additions", p. 55-07.
Ciudad Jardín Lomas del Palomar

From a first comparative look at the interpretation of data depicted in the diagrams developed for El Palomar it is evident that the spatial configuration of the neighborhood remains almost intact. Further analysis on the zoning changes brings out some interesting conclusions. El Palomar is a great example of how smart planning can transcend the test of time, when every consideration that causes an urban setting to succeed is translated into a successful community. It is good to remember that this was an entirely private endeavor oriented to full homeownership and, essentially, a business venture. One that was also able to keep its character in spite of the Peronist government taking over the development after the crash of the building societies system in 1949.196 This shift from the full private sphere to government public housing guidelines had an impact on some of the planning guidelines that referred to the lot sizes, which were reduced to accommodate to the government housing offer. It also introduced a set of political considerations that will not be developed in the present analysis, as they did seem to have caused a significant impact on the physical layout of the small town.

196 The rise and collapse of the Building Societies in Argentina, as well as the effects that the Peronist takeover had on El Palomar is developed by Juan Lucas Gómez, "La Unión Hace la Fuerza, Las Compañías de Crédito Recíproco y el Financiamiento Hipotecario Urbano a Bajo Interés en Argentina entre 1936 y 1955", Historia Económica & Historia de Empresas, Vol.17, No.2, 2014), pp. 458 and 466.
From an analysis of both maps separately as shown above, the modern development of the industrial area to the east is the one that becomes more noticeable, as
it is usually the residential area the one that expands the most. In the particular case of El Palomar, this aspect derives from the general development of industrial areas in the conurbation of Buenos Aires, and it does not seem to have affected the quality and scale of the urban environment. Another interesting aspect is the growth of the commercial area, not only within the original colonnade avenue, but also through the development of another commercial focus around the Plaza Plate, which has become El Palomar’s second largest public area. From observing the 1967 diagram, it can be inferred that this operation has emerged as a result of the mid-rise development that occurred along the central axis, as the second commercial area is located at said axis' end. 197 It is interesting to notice how this section of the residential area was seemingly left vacant on purpose in the early years of the development, with the intention of generating a shift of scale of the main streets--through the use of the mid-rise development--that radiate from the neighborhood’s center, adding to town's density while maintaining the comfort of the garden neighborhood scale.

In spite of the lack of a formal green belt, the town's expansion is limited by the strong boundaries set through the rail lines--north and south--the open land owned by the Military School to the west, and the industrial land to the east. Even though there has been a portion of the land to the west that has been occupied by new residential areas in modern times, the rail lines still act as a deterrent of any further growth, thus keeping the boundaries of El Palomar fixed up to present date. This can be verified through the superposition of both maps as shown below:

Lastly, within the considerations that deal with the physical evolution of the built environment of El Palomar, there is one interesting aspect that may have played a large role in the housing stock that can be also found in the marketing strategies carried out by
The town's developer and relates to the offer of "casas que crecen" (*houses that grow*). The promoters of the Ciudad Jardín, from the onset, addressed the inhabitants' needs by marketing the houses as they designed and sold, as elements that could have an "internal growth" to be carried out on the owner's own initiative. They strongly advocated for an ideal house that could be built in stages--adapting to the specific needs of its dwellers--by stressing the fact that every lot in El Palomar was apt for performing additions. It was the strong character and smart planning carried out by Zeyen and his business partners, what has kept the character of El Palomar intact until today, in spite of most of the additions and alterations on the houses being carried out by others than the architects of F.I.N.C.A.

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From a closer look at the additions published in the magazine's article cited below, we can verify that a high percentage of the additions aimed at incorporating a covered garage space to the houses. We may conclude that the need for parking space stems from the narrow character of the streets--that we have already commented were originally meant to be pedestrian around the main plaza--but it should be considered that the fact that this space was not originally included in the design of the houses may have been due to the effort of keeping the square footage to the essential uses, thus one that would allow for an affordable market price.

El Palomar, in spite of every addition and its increase in density from its natural urban evolution, remains one of the most successful garden suburb examples in Buenos Aires, having kept all its original qualities throughout the test of time.
Figure 8.20, El Palomar To-Day. Collage developed with photographs taken by author in a research trip to Ciudad Jardín in June 2015.
CONCLUSION

Ebenezer Howard conceived the Garden City model as an integral idea, but as it was established, some of the core elements have been diluted in its multiple translations. In some cases it is the social element that remains, or the cooperative system in others, but it is the physical form--presented as an alternative to the low and medium density suburb--that always prevails. Greenbelt and El Palomar, both in terms of the essential elements embedded in the original model and how those elements have been reinterpreted and applied in the local translation, have proven to be "impure" in terms of achieving the ideal behind the Howardian model in its entirety.

In Greenbelt, the urban form is tied to the strong restraints posed by federal ownership first, later followed by a stern system of cooperative ownership. This scheme has resulted in shaping a town that is essentially a commuter-based community, very far away from the self-sufficiency model that these satellite towns were meant to achieve towards reaching the ultimate Social City goal. It was also established how the lack of the main physical element, the agricultural greenbelt, has weighed on the failure to contain the town's expansion. This uncontained expansion will probably leave the "Old Greenbelt" area isolated, as sole physical testimony of the greenbelt towns program in the United States. The question that remains to be answered lies in the toll that the stern stewardship efforts carried out by the GHI will take on the inhabitability of the community that occupies the original, and historically designated R.A. housing.

Of course, we can only speculate what would have become of Greenbelt if it had gone from federal ownership into a fully private homeownership system in terms of the
social driving forces that were very much present and embedded in its planning. By the ways of the cooperative ownership system and its historical stewardship, Greenbelt has certainly become a valuable testimony of its time, although one that does not allow for the dynamism linked to the Garden City model or any other successful, thriving urban scheme.

El Palomar, on the other hand and ever since its original conception, has managed to allow for constant renewal and even typological changes--which did not result in major alterations to the original spatial layout--thus remaining a highly identified and active community even to this date. In spite of having been originally conceived as a real-estate business model, the fact that the developers managed to imbue a strong sense of community through smart planning and sensible branding has guaranteed the success of the small town. It is noteworthy how Ciudad Jardín has withstood the test of time, in spite of the evolution of its fabric, which has managed to maintain the integrity of its planning by taking full advantage of the flexibility implied in Howard's physical model.

As we have mentioned, Howard introduced his Garden City proposal as a salutary solution to the urban ailments of the nineteenth century industrial city. Today, the challenge resides in the context of the pressing urban expansion placed at the forefront of the global discussion. Therefore, it is only natural that the search for a solution always leads back to an urban model such as the Garden City that has proven to be highly adaptable to different contexts in terms of society, climate, technology, culture, and economy. Also, in a moment where planners must take into account environmental sustainability, the Garden City model manages to provide a high degree of futurity through the inclusion of agriculture-related activities at its very core, thus making it even
more appealing to the ongoing urban planning trend. Nevertheless, as we have established, the model needs to remain whole as a guarantee of success. It is within its inherent flexibility where the threat to the model's integrity lies.

This core idea of integrity needs to drive the search for a new urban model aimed at targeting the contemporary urban ails of the twenty-first century. In so doing, we need to establish a plan and a methodology to take the best features of the historic model to bring it to modern day life. Nevertheless, in maintaining the reference, thus keeping the Garden City label attached, it is paramount to preserve the social, architectural, spatial, and community ideals embedded in its original design. The present work lays the grounds for future research to include a thoughtful and educated consideration of all the determinants that--having understood the valuable urban lessons embedded in the Garden City theory--will enrich the planning and architecture field by endowing them with a new model city fit for new times.
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