



# The Planning Game: Lessons from Great Cities

By Alexander Garvin

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**The Planning Game: Lessons from Great Cities** By Alexander Garvin

**Can planners?or anyone?improve a neighborhood, city, suburb, or region?  
Planning does work: this book explains how.**

*The Planning Game: Lessons from Great Cities* provides a focused, thorough, and sophisticated overview of how planning works, generously illustrated with 200 colorful photographs, diagrams, and maps created expressly for the book. It presents the public realm approach to planning?an approach that emphasizes the importance of public investments in what we own: streets, squares, parks, infrastructure, and public buildings. They are the fundamental elements in any community and are the way to determine our future. The book covers planning at every level, explaining the activities that go into successfully transforming a community as exemplified by four cities and their colorful motive forces: Paris (Baron Georges-Eugene Haussmann), New York (Robert Moses), Chicago (Daniel Burnham), and Philadelphia (Edmund Bacon). *The Planning Game* is an invaluable resource for planners, students, community leaders, and everybody involved with making better places to live.

235 color illustrations

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

“[H]ighly readable . . . Anyone who teaches – or is preparing to teach – introductory planning, economic development, or real estate development in the American context should be familiar with the Garvin perspective on planning and the greatest hits catalogued in this book. . . . Students of economic development, real estate development, and public works – Garvin’s future ‘stars’ – could be well-served by the city case studies and their inclusion of both the projects and the people.” (Journal of Planning Education and Research)

“*The Planning Game*, with clarity of voice and purpose, is a timely resource of insights and ideas much needed at this time.” (e-Oculus)

“The book is a fine production, with high quality illustrations, and would be of interest to a diverse audience beyond those with a planning expertise. . . . Each person and city is the subject of a detailed and substantial chapter, and each personality, project and process has been thoroughly researched and compellingly communicated through writing and illustration.” (Urban Design (UK))

“[B]eautifully illustrated . . . Original maps and custom photographs enrich Garvin’s verbal descriptions of these transformative projects. Those alone are worth the price of the book, but what really makes his scholarship exceptional is the knowing interpretation of how the players played the game successfully: their strategies, their playing the rules, and their physical imprints on the respective cities. . . . Read this book to uncover the extraordinary knowledge and insights he possesses. It’s an experience of discovery and inspiration for city lovers everywhere.” (Constructs)

“Author Alexander Garvin, an urban planner and academic, brings a down-to-earth practicality leavened with just enough starry-eyed idealism to his exploration of how to build better cities. . . . The colorful personalities of the planners behind the transformations and the colorful maps and photos make for easy reading or grazing.” (The New York Observer)

“This extremely beautiful, large-size, superior-quality hardcover book is very illuminating, informative, and insightful. It contains 202 full-color diagrams, maps, and photographs – created especially for this book – that add tremendous value to this one-of-a-kind treasure.” (Bizindia)

“Alex Garvin’s *The Planning Game* delivers a most articulate and compelling reminder that the fundamental rules of effective city planning are timeless. Here, lessons from the greats and their cities?from Haussmann, Burnham, Moses, and Bacon?serve as a wonderfully practical guide for current players in the game. *The Planning Game* is a total pleasure to read.” (Daniel Doctoroff, CEO of Bloomberg L.P. and former deputy mayor of the city of New York)

“The insights Alex Garvin brings to *The Planning Game* are the product of hands-on experience dealing with real cities, and he supports them with absolutely fascinating historical material. I found this book to be a practical and indispensable road map for communities wishing to achieve excellence.” (Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr., City of Charlestown, South Carolina)

“No one writes about the modern city with more knowledge, insight, and imagination than Alexander

Garvin. *The Planning Game* is about hope and possibility. The color illustrations alone are enough reason to spend precious hours alone with this book.” (Kenneth T. Jackson, Jacques Barzun Professor of History at Columbia University and former president of the New-York Historical Society)

#### About the Author

Alexander Garvin heads a planning and design firm and lives in New York. He is an adjunct professor of urban planning and management at Yale University.

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