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## Roldo: 1975 Cleveland Plan

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## **Roldo: 1975 Cleveland Plan hailed as real civic vision**

by Roldo Bartimole  
*City News Ohio*  
Originally posted 4/23/2003

Cleveland is famous for plans that gather dust. Here's one that needs dusting off. It recently was designated a national treasure by a national planning group. The 1975 Cleveland Plan Commission's unusual planning document had the audacity to suggest that the city's resources should help tilt toward those with needs not economically content.

It was honored by the American Institute of Certified Planners of the American Planning Association as the first in the nation to call for "equity planning," a policy to help the powerless rather than the powerful. What a novel idea!

Under the plan, Cleveland today would not be eager to build a new convention center or subsidized hotels or other exotic ventures aimed at attracting national headlines and tourists. In fact, under the 1975 plan, those items would be so low on the priority list that you wouldn't likely find them.

Indeed, if the equity plan had been followed we likely would not have built Gateway, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame or Browns Stadium or even Tower City's The Avenue. At least not with scarce public resources.

The 1975 Cleveland plan was cited for its historic value as "a pioneering work as the prime example of equity planning being broadly applied in an American city."

It was a Cleveland planning staff effort under former city planner Norman Krumholz, now an urban affairs professor at Cleveland State University, with contributions by Janice Cogger, now a Cleveland school teacher, [Ernie Bonner](#) and John Linner, who went on to do similar work elsewhere. It was a staff recruited during the tenure of Cleveland's first black mayor, Carl Stokes, though the plan issued under his successor, Mayor Ralph Perk.

"The plan was a challenge to change the way we make political and philosophical decisions," said Krumholz, a long-time friend of mine who knows first-hand of economic hardship. He hails from Passaic, New Jersey, the son of Romanian immigrants. His father died when he was three years old and his mother toiled as a seamstress in sweatshops.

The plan is oddly devoid of the jargon one would expect from a profession that typically worries about matters of design, zoning and beautification when it isn't simply ratifying the desires of developers.

One has to remember that in 1975 even the most cheery of civic boosters were not calling Cleveland a Renaissance City but were still trying to hang on to the motto of the Best Location in the Nation. Outsiders were more attuned to the Mistake by the Lake appellation.

The point is that Cleveland was in an economic desperate state, not too much as today.

Krumholz, who was also acclaimed as one of some 330 Fellows of the 33,000 member planning group, and his gang looked upon their plan as a manual to fight for the majority of the city's population, mostly poor and with little political power. To follow its dictates meant to look at issues and ask what's good for the powerless, not simply ratify corporate development desires.

How would the 1975 plan fit today's city agenda? Krumholz, 75, says a new convention center would never be built following the equity concept.

"The city's resources should not be used for providing what you'd call 'architectural jimmy cracks' but should be used to provide the highest level of public services and education and job training for the people of the city. That's how the city's resources should be used. The city's not Santa Claus. You don't take public funds and use it on stuff that's not cost effective from a basic business standpoint, which, incidentally, applies to the convention center. You use the resources you have on helping the people who have sort of fallen off the road or who are in the ditch," he said.

Krumholz questioned subsidizing a convention center. "Every single convention center in the country is losing money. Why would you build something that surely will lose money? No business would invest in that kind of enterprise," he said.

He continued, "The problems of the city are not physical problems. They don't respond to physical solutions. They're social and economic problems and that's where we should be thinking the hardest (for answers) and spending our money." A review of the 43-page 1975 plan reveals that it is more a document of philosophy than what one would consider a conventional planning document. As such, it's likely the only city planning document ever to quote Jesus of Nazareth: "Think ye that building shall endure which shelters the noble and crushes the poor." The document elevates the philosophy of helping the poor.

It quotes Franklin D. Roosevelt: "There is nothing mysterious about the foundation of a healthy and strong democracy. The basic things expected by our people of their political system are simple. They are: equality of opportunity, jobs for those who can work, security for those who need it. The ending of special privilege for the few... the inner and abiding strength of our economic and political systems is depending upon the degree to which they fulfill these expectations."

However philosophical the plan was in tone, in application the 1975 planners were highly practical and political. They used the philosophy to look at problems and develop intelligence that could (and was) fed into the public discourse on many issues. The dearth of such activity today is telling.

The importance of quality information and data based on the needs of most Clevelanders, rather than the narrow set of data that flows ordinarily in the public discourse over public decisions, cannot be overstated. It attests to the need for politically putting up the "good fight" for those with little power to do so themselves. It's the difference between an agenda set by Cleveland Tomorrow, narrowly mirroring the whims of corporate Cleveland, and a plan that examines the needs of the larger community of residents who have been shunted aside for decades. Having watched closely, I would say that if the same 1975 crew existed at Cleveland City Hall in 1990 the construction of Gateway would have been far different. Certainly, the lease, which so heavily favored both team owners, would have been grist for the 1975 planners' theories of examining public decisions. They would have been advising of its defects before its signing. It would have protected the public interest instead of falling in line for the private interests.

For example, when the city in the 1970s got into financial trouble and had to give up its transit system for a regional transit system (RTA), the Krumholz planners provided the back-up data to those politicians willing to be real advocates of their constituents. Part of the strategy, based on the equity planning concept, was to get as much as possible for transit-dependent Clevelanders. Krumholz and Cogger jousting with the powerful managing partner of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey as part of the Perk negotiating team. They argued for community responsive transit (CRT) for the elderly and handicapped. At one point the Squire-Sanders' leader James Davis ordered both Krumholz and Cogger out of a hot session. In the end, however, with Perk's backing, the city negotiated for three-year preservation of a 25-cent fare, the creation of CRT, now a most popular RTA program. Starting with a base 25-cent fare has kept rates relatively low here, saving the transit-dependent millions of dollars over the years. Equity planning as a philosophy would serve the present political leaders of Cleveland well. They seem, however, to have forgotten its message: represent the people who elect you.

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Knowledge Exchange / **Pathways in American Planning History**

## Pathways in American Planning History: A Thematic Chronology

**View by Period**

**View by Theme**

**By Albert Guttenberg, FAICP**

A chronology can be a convenient way of gaining an overall view of a field of human endeavor—a view of its origins, its outstanding personalities, its watershed events. In constructing a chronology the first question must be: What information to include?

I have been guided by my belief that American planning is not simply a profession, it is also a broad movement embracing many fields of social and economic action. The movement gave rise to the profession but is not identical with it. Therefore, I have felt free to go outside the limits of the history of professional planning to draw pertinent items from wherever I find them—in the histories of housing, agriculture, ecology, and so on. With so many possible entries to pick from, I had to make some hard choices that not everyone will agree with. I would, however, welcome suggestions for future revisions. Send e-mail to: [a-gutten@uiuc.edu](mailto:a-gutten@uiuc.edu).

This chronology is organized two ways—by year and by theme. You can see the whole chronology by clicking on the years:

[1785-1899](#) | [1901-1919](#) | [1920-1939](#) | [1940-1959](#) | [1960-2000](#)

Or, if you want to follow a particular theme, click on the appropriate category and all the items under that theme will come into view.

[Landmark Publication](#) | [Planned Communities](#) | [Conservation & Environment](#) | [History of Planning Profession](#) | [Housing](#) | [Regional Planning](#) | [Landmark Laws](#) | [Economic Development](#)

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Knowledge Exchange / **A Thematic Chronology of Planning - 1960-2000**

## Pathways in American Planning History: A Thematic Chronology

#### View by Period

- Select Period -

#### View by Theme

- Select Theme -

### 1960-2000

[Click to View Previous Segment of Timeline](#)

- 1960** *Image of the City* by Kevin Lynch defines basic elements of city's "imageability" (paths, edges, nodes, etc.). [Landmark Publication](#)
- 1961** *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, by Jane Jacobs, includes a critique of planning and planners. [Landmark Publication](#) [History of Planning Profession](#)
- 1961** Richard Hedman and Fred Bair publish *And On the Eighth Day*, a hilarious book of cartoons poking fun at the planning profession by two of our own. [Landmark Publication](#)
- 1961** Hawaii becomes first state to institute statewide zoning.
- 1961** A Delaware River Basin Commission representing the states of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania is created to foster joint management of the river's water resources. [Regional Planning](#)
- 1962** The urban growth simulation model emerges in the Penn-Jersey Transportation Study. [Regional Planning](#)
- 1962** "A Choice Theory of Planning," seminal article in *AIP Journal* by Paul Davidoff and Thomas Reiner, lays basis for advocacy planning concept. [Landmark Publication](#)
- 1962** Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring* is published and wakes the nation to the deleterious effects of pesticides on animal, plant and human life. [Landmark Publication](#) [Conservation & Environment](#)
- 1963** *Columbia, Maryland*, a new town situated about halfway between Washington and Baltimore, featuring some class integration and the neighborhood principle. [Planned Communities](#)
- 1964** T.J. Kent publishes *The Urban General Plan*. [Landmark Publication](#) [History of Planning Profession](#)
- 1964** Civil Rights Act outlaws discrimination based on race, creed, and national origin in places of public accommodation. [Landmark Laws](#)
- 1964** *The Federal Bulldozer* by Martin Anderson indicts then-current urban renewal program as counterproductive to its professed aims of increased low- and middle-income housing supply. With Herbert Gans's *The Urban Villagers* (1962), a study of the consequences for community life in a Boston West End Italian-American community, contributes to a change in urban policy. [Landmark Publication](#) [Housing](#)
- 1964** In a commencement speech at the University of Michigan, President Lyndon Johnson declares war on poverty and urges congressional authorization of many remedial programs, plus the establishment of a cabinet-level Department of Housing and Community Development. [Economic Development](#)
- 1965** White House Conference on Natural Beauty convened. [Conservation & Environment](#)
- 1965** Housing and urban policy achieve cabinet status when the Housing and Home Finance Agency is succeeded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Robert Weaver becomes HUD's first Secretary and nation's first African-American cabinet member. [Housing](#) [Landmark Laws](#)
- 1965** Congress passes the Water Resources Management Act authorizing Federal-Multistate river basin commissions. [Landmark Laws](#) [Regional Planning](#)
- 1965** The Public Work and Economic Development Act passes Congress. This act establishes the Economic Development Administration to extend coordinated, multifaceted aid to lagging regions and foster their redevelopment [Economic Development](#) [Landmark Laws](#) [Regional Planning](#)
- 1965** The Appalachian Regional Planning Act establishes a region comprising all of West Virginia and

- parts of 12 other states, plus a planning commission with the power to frame plans and allocate resources. [Economic Development Landmark Laws](#) [Regional Planning](#)
- 1965** John Reys publishes *The Making of Urban America*, the first comprehensive history of American urban planning beginning with colonial times. [Landmark Publication](#)
- 1966** The Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act launched the "model cities" program, an interdisciplinary attack on urban blight and poverty. A centerpiece of President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" program. [Housing Landmark Laws](#)
- 1966** *With Heritage So Rich*, a seminal historic preservation book, is published. [Conservation & Environment Landmark Publication](#)
- 1966** National Historic Preservation Act passed. Establishes the National Register of Historic Places and provides, through its Section 106, for the protection of preservation-worthy sites and properties threatened by federal activities. This act also creates the national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and directs that each state appoint a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). [Conservation & Environment Landmark Laws](#)
- 1966** Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act provides protection to parkland, wildlife refuges, and other preservation-worthy resources in building national roads. Unlike parkland and wildlife refuges, however, privately owned historic sites as well as those in public ownership are protected by Section 4(f). [Conservation & Environment Landmark Laws](#)
- 1967** The "Wetmore Amendment" drops the final phrase in the 1938 AIP declaration of purpose which tied it to the comprehensive arrangement and regulation of land use. The effect is to broaden the scope and membership of the profession by including "social planners" as well as "physical planners." [History of Planning Profession](#)
- 1968** To implement Intergovernmental Relations Act of 1968 the Office of Management and Budget issues Circular A-95 requiring state and substate regional clearinghouses to review and comment on federally assisted projects to facilitate coordination among the three levels of government. [Landmark Laws](#) [Regional Planning](#)
- 1969** Ian McHarg publishes *Design with Nature*, tying planning to the natural environment. [Landmark Publication](#)
- 1969** National Environmental Policy Act requires an "environmental impact statement" for every federal or federally aided state or local major action that might significantly harm the environment. [Conservation & Environment Landmark Laws](#)
- 1969** Mel Scott publishes *American City Planning Since 1890*. Reissued in 1995 by the American Planning Association. [Landmark Publication](#) [History of Planning Profession](#)
- 1970** First "Earth Day," January 1. [Conservation & Environment](#)
- 1970** Federal Environment Protection Agency established to administer main provisions of the Clean Air Act (1970). [Conservation & Environment Landmark Laws](#) [Regional Planning](#)
- 1970** The Miami Valley (Ohio) Regional Planning Commission Housing Plan is adopted, the first such plan in the nation to allocate low- and moderate-income housing on a "fair share" basis. [Housing Regional Planning](#)
- 1971** AIP adopts a Code of Ethics for professional planners. [History of Planning Profession](#)
- 1972** [Coastal Zone Management Act](#) adopted. [Conservation & Environment Regional Planning Landmark Laws](#)
- 1972** General revenue sharing inaugurated under the U.S. State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act. [Landmark Laws](#)
- 1972** In *Golden v. Planning Board of Ramapo*, New York high court allows the use of performance criteria as a means of slowing community growth. [Landmark Laws](#)
- 1972** Demolition of St. Louis's notorious Pruitt-Igoe Project symbolizes a nationwide move away from massive, isolating, high-rise structures to a more humane form of public housing architecture: low-rise, less isolated, dispersed. [Housing](#)
- 1973** Endangered Species Act. Authorized Federal assistance to state and local jurisdictions to establish conservation programs for endangers plant and animal species. [Conservation & Environment Landmark Laws](#)
- 1974** The Housing and Community Development Act replaces the categorical grant with the block grant as the principal form of federal aid for local community development. [Landmark Laws](#)
- 1975** Cleveland Policy Plan Report shifts emphasis from traditional land-use planning to advocacy planning. [Landmark Publication](#) [History of Planning Profession](#)
- 1976** Historic Preservation Fund established. [Conservation & Environment](#)
- 1977** First exam for AIP membership conducted. [History of Planning Profession](#)
- 1978** *Penn Central Transportation Co. v. City of New York*, 438 U.S. 104 (1978): U.S. Supreme Court upholds New York City's Landmark Preservation Law as applied to Grand Central Terminal. In this landmark decision, the Court found that barring some development of air rights was not a taking when the interior of the property could be put to lucrative use. [Landmark Laws](#)
- 1978** American Institute of Planners (AIP) and American Society of Planning Officials (ASPO) merge to become American Planning Association (APA). [History of Planning Profession](#)