

FORUM PROGRAM

# J.C. Nichols Forum

The Emergence of 18-Hour Cities:  
Exploring Opportunities and  
Challenges in Middle-Tier Cities

September 28–29, 2016

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art  
Kansas City, Missouri



**Urban Land  
Institute**

[uli.org/nicholsforum](http://uli.org/nicholsforum)

## About ULI

The Urban Land Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research and education organization supported by more than 38,000 members in over 100 countries. The ULI mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Founded in 1936, ULI represents the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines and sectors, in private enterprise and public service. ULI facilitates an open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places. ULI members say that ULI provides information they can trust, and that ULI is a place where leaders come to grow professionally and personally through sharing, mentoring, and problem solving. With pride, ULI members commit to the best in land use policy and practice.

## About the J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development

The Urban Land Institute J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development was established to recognize an individual, or a person representing an institution, whose career demonstrates a commitment to the highest standards of responsible development. This prize honors the legacy of legendary Kansas City, Missouri, developer Jesse Clyde Nichols (1880–1950), a founding ULI member who is widely regarded as one of America's most influential entrepreneurs in land use during the first half of the 20th century.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

2:00 P.M.—4:00 P.M.

## Kansas City Development Past and Present

*(At capacity)*

ULI Kansas City will lead a tour that explores Kansas City development past and present. The tour will travel from the River Market to Country Club Plaza, along Kansas City's new streetcar route from the Power and Light District, the Crossroads through to Crown Center; through 18th and Vine and Beacon Hill, the cultural district surrounding the Kansas City Art Institute, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, and The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art; and into the timeless J.C. Nichols neighborhoods that surround Country Club Plaza on both sides of the state line. Over \$5 billion in public and private money has been invested in this area in the past five years, triggering an urban renaissance of mixed-use development.

*Tour will depart from entrance of the Hotel Sorella (901 West 48th Place). Registered attendees should arrive 15 minutes prior to start of tour.*



*A view of Union Station and the Kansas City skyline.  
(Image courtesy of Kansas City Area Development Council.)*

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Shuttles will be provided from the entrance of the Hotel Sorella and Sheraton Suites Country Club Plaza to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. The first shuttle will depart from the Hotel Sorella, 901 West 48th Place, at 7:40 a.m. and from the Sheraton Suites Country Club Plaza, 770 West 47th Street, at 7:55 a.m. Shuttles will run approximately every 25 minutes, with a final shuttle departing from the Hotel Sorella at 9:00 a.m. and from the Sheraton Suites Country Club Plaza at 9:15 a.m.

8:00 A.M.

**Breakfast***Bloch Lobby*

9:00 A.M.

**Welcome and Introductions***Atkins Auditorium***Patrick Phillips***Global Chief Executive Officer  
Urban Land Institute*

9:15 A.M.–10:45 A.M.

**Mayors Roundtable  
Discussion***Atkins Auditorium*

Mayors from around the United States will explore the greatest challenges and opportunities facing cities today. The panel will highlight examples from Charleston, Knoxville, and other middle-tier cities to examine innovations in the areas of city building, equity, community engagement, and civic leadership.

*Moderator:***Paul Goldberger***Contributing Editor, Vanity Fair, and Joseph Urban  
Chair in Design and Architecture, The New School**Panelists:***Honorable Joe Reardon***Former Mayor of Kansas City, Kansas  
President and Chief Executive Officer, Greater  
Kansas City Chamber of Commerce***Honorable Joe Riley***Former Mayor of Charleston, South Carolina  
ULI Distinguished Visiting Fellow  
Nichols Prize Winner, 2000***Honorable Madeline Rogero***Mayor of Knoxville, Tennessee*

10:45 A.M.

**Break***Bloch Lobby*

11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

**Policies, Practices, and  
Lessons Learned with  
Nichols Laureates***Atkins Auditorium*

J.C. Nichols was a private developer who believed in the public realm, and the J.C. Nichols Prize honors individuals who, like Nichols himself, have had a significant impact on American cities. This panel will convene six past Nichols laureates and discuss the role of the public realm, urban innovation, and what environments best foster the greatest impacts in our cities.

*Moderator:***Paul Goldberger***Contributing Editor, Vanity Fair, and Joseph Urban  
Chair in Design and Architecture, The New School**Panelists:***Richard D. Baron***Cofounder and Chairman, McCormack Baron Salazar  
Nichols Prize Winner, 2004***Peter Calthorpe***Principal, Calthorpe Associates  
Nichols Prize Winner, 2006***Bart Harvey***Former Chairman and CEO, Enterprise  
Community Partners  
Nichols Prize Winner, 2008***Gerald Hines***Founder and Chairman, Hines  
Nichols Prize Winner, 2002***Honorable Joe Riley***Former Mayor of Charleston, South Carolina  
ULI Distinguished Visiting Fellow  
Nichols Prize Winner, 2000***Peter Walker***Founder and Senior Partner, PWP Landscape  
Architecture  
Nichols Prize Winner, 2012*

12:30 P.M.–1:30 P.M.

## Lunch

Complimentary boxed lunches are available in the following rooms and seating areas:

*Lens 2*

*Rozzelle Court*

*East Terrace (outdoor)\**

*\*In the case of rain, the Rockhill room will be reserved for dining instead of the East Terrace.*

1:45 P.M.–3:15 P.M.

## Connected Citizens: Leveraging Technology for Change

*Atkins Auditorium*

Local and national innovators discuss how technology can be used to achieve a city's economic development, equity, and engagement goals, and address past land use policies and decisions.

*Moderator:*

**Calvin Gladney**

*Managing Partner, Urban Mosaic Partners*

*Panelists:*

**Peter Calthorpe**

*Principal, Calthorpe Associates*

*Nichols Prize Winner, 2006*

**Rachel Hack Merlo**

*Community Impact Manager, Google Fiber*

**Tyrone Poole**

*Founder, NoAppFee.com*

**Rick Usher**

*Assistant City Manager for Entrepreneurship & Small Business, City of Kansas City*

3:15 P.M.

## Closing Remarks

*Atkins Auditorium*

**Paul Goldberger**

*Contributing Editor, Vanity Fair, and Joseph Urban Chair in Design and Architecture, The New School*

**Jonathan Kemper**

*Chairman, Commerce Bank Kansas City*

A shuttle will be provided from the entrance of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art to return to the Hotel Sorella and the Sheraton Suites Country Club Plaza, departing at 4:00 p.m.

# SPEAKER PROFILES

## Richard D. Baron



*Cofounder and Chairman  
McCormack Baron Salazar*

Richard Baron is cofounder and chairman of McCormack Baron Salazar, a real estate development company focusing on revitalizing urban areas throughout the United States, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. The firm, founded in 1973, has developed 182 communities that have resulted in 19,703 residential units and 1.4 million square feet of retail/commercial space with development costs exceeding \$3.5 billion.

McCormack Baron Salazar has focused on redeveloping blighted areas and neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into economically integrated communities. The firm was involved in the national HOPE VI Demonstration Program creating mixed-income communities in 19 cities. More recently, McCormack Baron Salazar projects have been awarded seven Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grants in San Francisco, Sacramento, Columbus, New Orleans, San Antonio, Memphis, and Pittsburgh. The firm has also received allocations of \$220 million worth of New Markets Tax Credits, which have been used for economic development in its redevelopment areas. McCormack Baron Management Services, the firm's property management subsidiary, currently manages more than 30,000 units nationwide.

In addition to his leadership of McCormack Baron Salazar, Baron was the cofounder and cochairman of the Vashon Education Compact, a partnership of the St. Louis Public Schools and major corporations, and he is the founder and developer of the Center of Creative Arts (COCA), in University City, Missouri, which serves more than 40,000 students annually.

In October 2004, Baron received the Urban Land Institute J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development.

Baron is a graduate of Oberlin College and holds a master's degree in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, and a juris doctorate from the University of Michigan. He has been awarded honorary degrees from Oberlin College and St. Louis University.

## Peter Calthorpe



*Principal  
Calthorpe Associates*

In 1983, Peter Calthorpe founded the award-winning firm of Calthorpe Associates devoted to sustainable urban design and planning globally. *Metropolis* magazine claims: "The titles of Peter Calthorpe's books trace the recent history of urban design in its most vital and prescient manifestations, starting in 1986 with *Sustainable Communities* followed by *The Regional City: Planning for the End of Sprawl* and most recently *Urbanism in the Age of Climate Change*." In the early 1990s, he developed the concept of transit-oriented development described in his book *The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, Community, and the American Dream*—an idea that is now the foundation of many regional policies and city plans around the world. Peter Calthorpe is one of the founders and the first board president of the Congress for the New Urbanism. For his contribution to redefining the models of urban and suburban growth, Calthorpe was named one of 25 "innovators on the cutting edge" by *Newsweek* magazine and was awarded ULI's prestigious J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development in 2006.

Internationally, his work in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East has demonstrated that community design with a focus on environmental sustainability and human scale can be adapted around the globe. His current work throughout China is focused on developing standards and examples of low-carbon cities in Beijing, Chongqing, Kunming, Zhuhai, Jinan, and other major cities. This experience led to the publication of *TOD in China: A Manual of Land-use and Transportation for Low Carbon Cities*. Through design, innovation, publications, and realized projects, Peter Calthorpe's 30-year practice has helped solidify a global trend toward the key principles of new urbanism: that successful places—whether neighborhoods, towns, urban districts, or metropolitan regions—must be diverse in uses and users, must be scaled to pedestrian and human interaction, and must be environmentally sustainable.



## Calvin Gladney



*Managing Partner  
Mosaic Urban Partners*

Calvin Gladney is a trusted adviser to cities and nonprofits seeking to sustainably regenerate urban communities. He is also a nationally recognized public speaker on the revitalization of cities and urban neighborhoods.

Over the past three years, Gladney has served as a strategic adviser on projects with estimated development costs exceeding \$1 billion and totaling more than 5 million square feet of planned development. He has worked on urban revitalization projects throughout the United States including projects in Baltimore, Baton Rouge, Boston, Denver, Detroit, the District of Columbia, Houston, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Memphis, Oakland, Pittsburgh, and Prince George's County, Maryland.

Prior to founding Mosaic, Gladney served as vice president of the Anacostia Waterfront Corp. (AWC), a D.C. quasi-public real estate corporation where he assisted the CEO with the management of the corporation and was the project manager for a master-planned, mixed-use redevelopment of 67 acres of city land. Gladney also previously served as the general counsel and transactions manager at Bridge Housing Corporation, a private developer in San Francisco. At Bridge, Gladney was the lead businessman in the investment of \$60 million of CalPERS equity in multiple real estate development deals. He also provided strategic advice on the development or management of more than 2,700 apartments throughout California.

Gladney graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School, received his BS degree from Cornell University, and is a LEED Accredited Professional. He is a trustee of the Urban Land Institute and a member of ULI's executive committee for the Americas. He is also a member of ULI's national Public/Private Partnership Council (Blue Flight). Gladney serves as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University's Master's in Real Estate Program, where he teaches a class on real estate entrepreneurship. Gladney can be reached on Twitter and on Instagram @mosaicurban, or on his blog at [www.publicprivatepassion.com](http://www.publicprivatepassion.com).

## Paul Goldberger



*Contributing Editor, Vanity Fair,  
and Joseph Urban Chair in Design  
and Architecture, The New School*

Paul Goldberger, whom the *Huffington Post* has called “the leading figure in architecture criticism,” is now a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*. From 1997 through 2011, he served as the architecture critic for the *New Yorker*, where he wrote the magazine's celebrated “Sky Line” column. He also holds the Joseph Urban Chair in Design and Architecture at The New School in New York City. He was formerly the dean of the Parsons School of Design, a division of The New School. He is the author of several books, most recently a full-length biography of the architect Frank Gehry, titled *Building Art: The Life and Work of Frank Gehry*, published by Alfred A. Knopf in 2015.

He began his career at the *New York Times*, where in 1984 his architecture criticism was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Distinguished Criticism, the highest award in journalism. In 2012, he received the Vincent Scully Prize from the National Building Museum in recognition of the influence his writing has had on the public's understanding of architecture. In 2016, Architizer named him the “Architecture Advocate of the Year.” In addition to the Gehry biography, Goldberger is the author of *Why Architecture Matters*, published by Yale University Press; *Building Up and Tearing Down*, a collection of his articles from the *New Yorker*, published by Monacelli Press; and *Christo and Jeanne-Claude*, published by Taschen.

Goldberger lectures widely around the United States on architecture, design, historic preservation, and cities, and has served as an adviser to museums, schools, and corporations around the world on the process of selecting an architect, including advising the Obama Foundation on the selection of Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners to lead the design team for the Obama Presidential Center in Chicago. A graduate of Yale University, Goldberger has been the recipient of five honorary doctoral degrees.

Goldberger is a trustee of Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, and the Urban Design Forum, and is a trustee emeritus of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C. He also serves as chairman of the advisory council for the Glass House, a historic property of the National Trust. He resides in New York City with his wife, Susan Solomon. They are the parents of three sons.

# SPEAKER PROFILES

## Bart Harvey



*Former Chairman and CEO  
Enterprise Community Partners*

Bart Harvey is a director of Fannie Mae, conservator and chair of the Calvert Social Investment Foundation, and a director/trustee of other organizations since his retirement from Enterprise Community Partners and Enterprise Community Investment in 2008.

Harvey joined Enterprise soon after its founding in June 1984 and succeeded James Rouse as chairman and CEO in October 1993. Enterprise is a leading provider of capital and expertise for affordable housing and community development. Under Harvey's tenure, Enterprise worked with partners—developers, investors, government, and primarily community-based nonprofits—and raised and invested over \$9 billion in equity, grants, and loans and produced more than 240,000 homes for low-income households while also improving surrounding neighborhoods in other ways.

In 2004, Harvey led the Green Communities initiative, a \$555 million demonstration that produced more than 9,000 affordable homes that promote health, conserve energy and natural resources, and promote easy access to jobs, schools, and services.

Harvey was appointed by Congress to the Millennium Housing Commission from 2000 to 2002 and has been a director of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta as well as numerous other housing and civic boards. He was chosen as the 2008 recipient of the Urban Land Institute J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development as well as the National Housing Conference's 2008 Housing Person of the Year.

Before joining Enterprise, Harvey worked for ten years in domestic and international positions for investment bank Dean Witter Reynolds (now Morgan Stanley), leaving as managing director of corporate finance. He has an MBA and a BA degree from Harvard University and lives in Baltimore with his wife and three children.

## Gerald D. Hines



*Founder and Chairman, Hines*

Gerald Hines founded his namesake firm in Houston in 1957. Since then, Hines has steadily grown into a global powerhouse in real estate investment, development, and management. As a co-owner, along with his son Jeffrey, he sits on the firm's executive committee, participates in new business and investor relationships, and advises the firm's regions on architectural excellence.

Hines graduated from Purdue University with a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering and later received an honorary doctorate from the school. He is a frequent guest lecturer at major universities and a sought-after speaker at industry events. Hines is a recipient of the J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development and an honorary fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Among his proudest accomplishments are the support of the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture at the University of Houston and the establishment of the ULI/Gerald D. Hines Student Urban Design Competition.



## Jonathan Kemper



*Chairman, Commerce Bank  
Kansas City*

Jonathan Kemper is chairman and chief executive officer of Commerce Bank (Kansas City), a commercial bank with deposits

of \$4.8 billion.

Prior to his return to Kansas City, he held various positions in the financial industry in New York and Chicago, including Citicorp, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and M.A. Schapiro and Company.

As chairman of Commerce Bank, he oversees management of the commercial and retail banking groups, and is a member of the Senior Loan Committee. He is responsible for the regional strategic planning and market development.

Kemper is involved in several community and business organizations in addition to his responsibilities at the Commerce Bank. He is on the board of the following: the Chamber of Commerce; the Downtown Council, member of the executive committee and formerly cochairman; the Kansas City Design Center; the Citizens Association; Tower Properties, a Kansas City real estate development and management company; and president of the board of the Kansas City Public Library. He is the named trustee, along with Commerce Bank, for the William T. Kemper Foundation. In addition, Kemper is on the national board of the Smithsonian Institute.

Kemper is a native of Kansas City, attending the Kansas City, Missouri, public schools and Pembroke Hill School. He holds an undergraduate degree in American history from Harvard College, where he graduated in 1975. He is also a 1979 graduate of Harvard University's Graduate School of Business, with a master's degree in business administration.

Kemper lives in Kansas City, Missouri. He is married and has one daughter and two sons. He enjoys classical music and jazz, is a regional history enthusiast, and has a personal interest in architecture and urban design.

## Rachel Hack Merlo



*Community Impact Manager  
Google Fiber*

Rachel Merlo is the community impact manager for Google in Kansas City, where she manages community affairs and initiatives

in the company's first Google Fiber city. In addition to leading initiatives related to digital inclusion, entrepreneurial community engagement, and STEM education, she serves as a primary point of contact for several city partners involved in the deployment across the metro area.

Merlo serves on the boards of directors of Central Exchange, Visit KC, the Kansas City Startup Foundation, and the Women's Center at the University of Missouri–Kansas City, which she chairs in the 2015–2016 term. She is also a graduate of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce's Centurions class of 2016.

Merlo was an honoree in the 2016 class of 40 Under 40 and the 2016 Emerging Volunteer of the Year award from Nonprofit Connect. She was recognized in 2012 by *KC Business Magazine* as a Rising Star among Kansas City leaders under the age of 40, then again in 2014 as an Influential Women honoree, celebrating local women in the creative, entrepreneurial, and nonprofit communities. She was named to the 2015 Kansas City Techweek 100, which identifies community leaders who have made a significant impact on the technology and innovation ecosystem. Merlo was also recognized as a 2013 Verizon Nueva Latina Estrella Community Service Award winner, recognizing emerging professional leaders who embrace diversity, integrity, and creativity while achieving success.

Merlo is a proud lifelong Kansas Citian who lives with her husband and dog in the Brookside area. Her passion lies in making Kansas City better every day.

# SPEAKER PROFILES

## Patrick Phillips



*Global Chief Executive Officer  
Urban Land Institute*

Since assuming the chief executive position in 2009, Patrick Phillips has overseen an expansion of ULI's global reach, particularly throughout Asia, guiding the Institute's focus on creating thriving communities in rapidly urbanizing countries. Under his leadership, ULI's program of work has grown steadily to encompass a variety of economic, demographic, societal, and environmental issues that are reshaping urban development worldwide in the 21st century. To reinforce the Institute's delivery of high-quality services for members around the globe, Phillips guided the restructuring of ULI's district and national council system and worked with ULI's volunteer leadership to overhaul the Institute's governance.

Phillips has a career in the economic analysis of real estate and land use that spans more than 20 years. Prior to his service at ULI, he was president and chief executive officer of ERA AECOM (formerly Economics Research Associates). In that role, he coordinated all aspects of ERA's organization, strategy, business development, and service delivery. His own consulting practice focused specifically on the intersection of private investment and public policy. Phillips is a frequent speaker on urban development issues and is the author or coauthor of eight books and numerous articles.

## Tyrone Poole



*Founder, NoAppFee*

Tyrone Poole, the founder of NoAppFee, did not develop his concept in a sleek Silicon Valley incubator. He developed it in a Portland, Oregon, homeless shelter, as a resident. Nine years ago, while training to become a fireman, Poole suffered a serious leg injury that put him in a hospital bed for nine months and on crutches for nearly a year. By the time he was released, he had lost everything. He was evicted, his car had been repossessed, and he had incurred over \$20,000 in medical debt. After months of couch surfing, he checked in to the YWCA homeless shelter. This is where NoAppFee was founded. He worked as a housing advocate for the shelter, while being a resident, to find low-income and homeless families places to live. Using what he had learned at the YWCA, Poole worked with a team to develop a technology that can house families within a single day. By filling out a single application through NoAppFee.com, renters are instantly screened against thousands of vacancies simultaneously and are shown exactly where they qualify as well as where they aren't. Poole is starting to partner with cities across the country to address the growing housing crisis.

## Honorable Joe Reardon



*President and Chief Executive Officer  
Greater Kansas City Chamber  
of Commerce*

Joe Reardon, former mayor and CEO of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas

City, Kansas, is president and CEO of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the area's oldest and only regional chamber of commerce.

During his two terms as mayor/CEO, Reardon led the successful effort to bring Google high-speed fiber to his community in a competition that included more than 1,100 cities across the nation. Prior to his appointment as president/CEO of the chamber of commerce, he served as president and CEO of the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority. In this role, Reardon developed a regional transit system by negotiating and implementing strategic partnerships to manage service in Johnson County and Independence; successfully negotiated and entered into a cooperative agreement with Jackson County to acquire the 17-mile Rock Island Rail Corridor for future public and transit use; and developed the first-of-its-kind public/private partnership to deploy Bridj, an app-based microtransit system in Kansas City.

As an adjunct professor at Rockhurst University, Reardon developed and taught an MBA-level class on regionalism, an interdisciplinary course focused on the political and economic aspects of metro areas, with Kansas City as a case study. A lawyer by training, he also served as a partner at McAnany, Van Cleave & Phillips, with a practice focused on economic development, public/private partnerships, and digital infrastructure projects.

Reardon received his law degree at the University of Kansas in Lawrence and earned a bachelor of arts in political science from Rockhurst University.

## Honorable Joseph P. Riley Jr.



*Former Mayor of Charleston,  
South Carolina, ULI Distinguished  
Visiting Fellow*

Joseph P. Riley Jr., the longest-serving mayor of a major U.S. city, was the first recipient of

the ULI J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionaries in Urban Development, which recognizes a person whose career demonstrates a commitment to the highest standards of community building. Riley was awarded the prize in 2000 to honor his significant contribution to Charleston's renaissance and his national leadership on urban design and community revitalization issues.

In the decades following Riley's election as Charleston's mayor in 1975, the city achieved a substantial decrease in crime, revitalized its historic downtown district, created a highly successful waterfront park, increased its supply of affordable housing, and experienced dramatic growth in its Spoleto Festival U.S.A., a world-class arts festival held each spring. Each of these achievements was made possible through the use of innovative public/private partnerships cultivated by the mayor.

A former president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Riley is nationally renowned as an expert on urban design and livability issues. He was a founder of the Mayor's Institute on City Design and has provided visionary advice and counsel on urban design and development issues to hundreds of mayors across the United States.

Since stepping down as mayor on January 8, 2016, Riley has returned to his alma mater, the Citadel. There he is the first occupant of the newly created Joseph P. Riley Jr. Chair of American Government and Public Policy in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. From this, his primary, post-mayoral position, Riley will be teaching, completing an oral history, writing his memoirs, providing support to organizations involved with urban planning and design, and assisting with the completion of the International African American Museum to be built in Charleston.

# SPEAKER PROFILES

## Honorable Madeline Rogero



*Mayor  
City of Knoxville, Tennessee*

Madeline Rogero was elected the 68th mayor of Knoxville, Tennessee, and took office in December 2011. The first woman to hold the office, she was reelected and began her second term in December 2015.

Rogero is dedicated to promoting a vibrant local economy, strong neighborhoods, a high quality of life for residents, a thriving downtown, and a greener Knoxville. She believes that the city's strength comes from the diversity of its people and the beauty of its natural resources.

Her career includes serving as the city's community development director, Knox County commissioner, a nonprofit executive, an urban and regional planner, a community volunteer, and a neighborhood champion. She is a former consultant to Capital One and America's Promise, and a former executive director of Dolly Parton's Dollywood Foundation and Knoxville's Promise—the Alliance for Youth.

Rogero serves as cochair of the advisory board of the Smart Growth America Local Leaders Council, and is a member of the advisory board for the U.S. Conference of Mayors. She served on President Obama's State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience and also on Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam's Task Force on Aging.

She has a BA degree in political science from Furman University and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from the University of Tennessee.

## Peter Walker



*Founder and Senior Partner  
PWP Landscape Architecture*

Peter Walker has exerted significant influence on the field of landscape architecture over a five-decade career. Educated at the University of California, Berkeley, and at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Walker has designed hundreds of projects, taught, lectured, written, and served as an adviser to numerous public agencies. The scope of his concerns is expansive—from the design of small gardens to the planning of cities—with a particular emphasis on corporate headquarters, plazas, cultural gardens, academic campuses, and urban regeneration projects.

Cofounder of the firm Sasaki, Walker and Associates (established in 1957), Walker opened its West Coast office, which became the SWA Group in 1976. As principal, consulting principal, and chairman of the board, he helped to shape the SWA Group as a multidisciplinary office with an international reputation for excellence in environmental design. In 1983, he formed Peter Walker and Partners, now known as PWP Landscape Architecture.

Walker has served as consultant and adviser to numerous public agencies and institutions: the Sydney 2000 Olympic Coordination Authority; the Redevelopment Agency of San Francisco; the Port Authority of San Diego; Stanford University; the University of California; the University of Washington; and the American Academy in Rome. He played an essential role in the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University as both the chairman of the Landscape Architecture Department and the acting director of the Urban Design Program. He was head of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1997 to 1999. A fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and the Institute for Urban Design, Walker has been granted the Honor Award of the American Institute of Architects, Harvard's Centennial Medal, the University of Virginia's Thomas Jefferson Medal, the ASLA Medal, and the IFLA Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe Gold Medal. He is codesigner with Michael Arad of the National September 11th Memorial.

## Rick Usher



*Assistant City Manager for  
Entrepreneurship & Small Business  
City of Kansas City*

Rick Usher is the assistant city manager for Small Business & Entrepreneurship for the city of Kansas City, Missouri. In his 31 years with the city, Usher has worked his way up through Public Works, Codes Administration, City Planning & Development, and now the City Manager's Office.

In 2010, he helped facilitate the city's response to the Google Fiber initiative and in 2011, he assisted in the negotiation with Google Fiber to bring the project to Kansas City. He is now working to drive use of high-speed broadband and defining the path across the digital divide to economic mobility and entrepreneurship.

Usher has developed and implemented a number of programs to expedite economic development in the city. Most recently, the Private Development Permit Expediting Program in the KCStreetcar TDD has been successful in serving over \$1.7 billion in private development.

Usher is a graduate of Louisiana Tech University.





## J.C. Nichols's America: The Suburban World of The Community Builders Handbook

by Robert Fishman

Somewhere on the short shelf of books that define postwar America, a place must be found for a slim volume whose first edition was published in 1947 by the Urban Land Institute, *The Community Builders Handbook*. The book's readership of suburban developers and other real estate professionals was tiny compared with other defining volumes, such as Dr. Benjamin Spock's *Baby and Child Care* (1946), William Whyte's *The Organization Man* (1956), Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). Nevertheless, the book's impact on American culture was enormous: it became nothing less than the instruction manual for the postwar suburbanization of the United States.



Like Spock's *Baby and Child Care* for the parents of the baby boomers, the *Handbook* became essential reading for its target audience because it was concise, comprehensive, authoritative and reassuring.

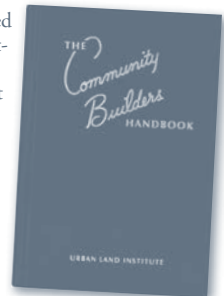
The tone of the *Handbook* was no-nonsense, detailed, professional advice on almost every aspect of suburban development. The *Handbook* was thus immensely influential in speeding the course of suburban development.


It was far less influential, as we shall see, in shaping postwar suburban design to its admittedly idealistic principles. For the *Handbook* called not only for well-built and affordable suburban homes, but also for whole neighborhoods planned to be true walkable communities with a range of income groups, convenient retail

facilities, and schools, parks, and other public amenities that guaranteed lasting value.

And the *Handbook* was least effective in acknowledging the immense costs of suburbanization to older cities and especially to African Americans and other minorities who were not allowed to share in the benefits of suburban life. For example, the *Handbook* strongly recommends "protective covenants" and neighborhood associations in order to safeguard what it called "the permanence, character, and desirability in community development." The *Handbook* then lists such typical restrictions as type and design of dwelling, setbacks, and minimum lot sizes.

Omitted from this detailed discussion—indeed, omitted from the *Handbook* entirely—was any explicit mention of race. Yet the authors knew well that many covenants in 1947 prohibited the purchase of property by African Americans (and sometimes Jews as well), and





that neighborhood associations were often used to enforce these racial provisions. For example, sociologist Kevin Graham Fox has shown that by 1949 the Kansas City metropolitan area had more than 450 subdivisions with racial covenants covering more than 7,000 acres of suburbanizing land. Moreover, he shows that, for J.C. Nichols's own firm, at least through 1949, "his property deeds always warned buyers that 'none of the lots hereby restricted may be conveyed to, used, owned, nor occupied by negroes. . . .'"<sup>1</sup> Racial and religious provisions in restrictive covenants were deemed unenforceable by the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark decision *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948), but the spirit behind them continued to shape real estate practice, not least in the mortgage policies of the Federal Housing Administration through the 1960s.

In defense of its long-term vision, the *Handbook* offered this observation: "American cities have been notorious for the vast losses which occur each decade in large segments of our urban areas through the building and tearing down process." In fact, the suburban vision at the heart of the *Handbook* would result in a "building and tearing down process"—suburban sprawl and inner-city segregation and abandonment—whose destructive scope would be unprecedented in urban history.

Although 27 leading suburban developers were members of the Community Builders Council of the Urban Land Institute, the *Community Builders Handbook* finally expresses the strengths and weaknesses, as well as the theory and practice of the council's chairman, J.C. Nichols.

Underlying the *Handbook* was Nichols's own life experience going back to the early 20th century. Nichols was still in his 20s when in 1906 he began to buy up the unincorporated land south of Kansas City, Missouri, then filled with hog-feeding lots, waste dumps, and other nuisances to transform it into the famous 1,000-acre Country Club District that attracted the elite of the city and proved to be a design model for the best suburban development throughout the United States. As a businessman, Nichols understood the challenge of long-term development: incurring massive upfront debt for land acquisition, road-building, utilities and services, and design and landscape, while at the same time struggling to

sell enough lots to stay solvent and to turn a profit during good times and bad.

Alongside his practical business experience, Nichols was also a forward-looking, indeed visionary, activist who strove throughout his life to define the role and responsibility of the real estate industry in the larger development of the American metropolis. A founder of the Urban Land Institute in 1939, he strove as chair of the Community Builders Council for a transformed suburban real estate industry, one that built for the long term rather than for immediate speculative profits.

If Nichols sadly ignored the long-term implications of white-only suburbs for the American metropolis, he did have a clear vision for lasting suburban design, as shown in the *Handbook's* most important theme: the "neighborhood unit." As Jason Brody has recently shown, the neighborhood unit is one of those unifying concepts that stretches back to the Garden City movement at the beginning of the 20th century and goes forward to new urbanism at its end. Clarence Perry's landmark 1929 volume for the Regional Association of New York is usually considered the origin of the neighborhood unit idea. Perry argued that suburbs should be built as walkable, functional, and sociable communities that would provide a human-scale counterpoint to the inhuman scale of the metropolis.

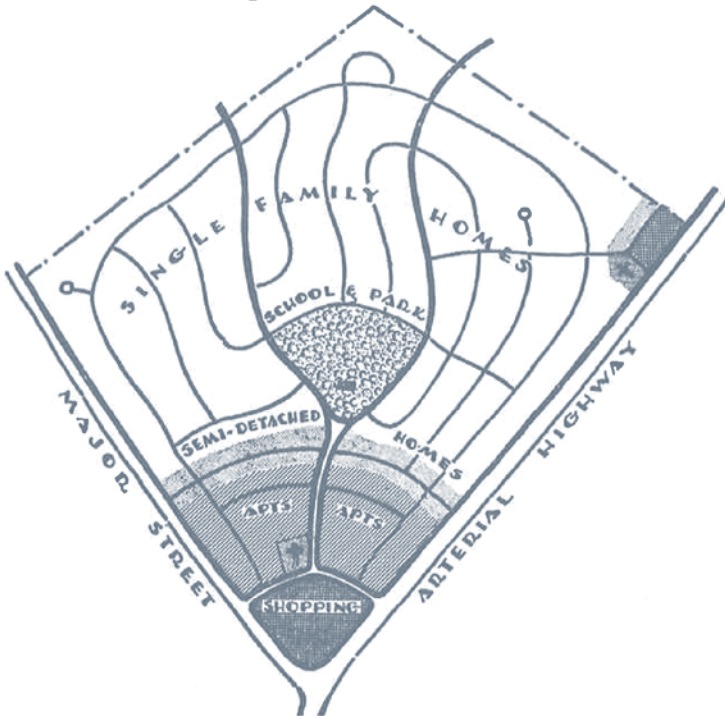
Nichols and his colleagues were attracted to the neighborhood-unit concept because it operationalized their goals of long-term, profitable, and stable development. As they realized, when people bought lots or houses, their real aim was to buy into a neighborhood, a face-to-face community where they would feel at home, where their children would find a good school within walking distance, and where parents would find parks, shopping, and, above all, good neighbors. Through its detailed guidance, the *Handbook* sought to provide the design guidelines for developing true neighborhoods.

Although hundreds of attempts to define the neighborhood-unit have been made, none is more clear or concise than figure 7 (including text) of *The Community Builders Handbook*.

Perhaps the most important element to emphasize in the *Handbook's* analysis is that the "community" in the neighborhood-unit concept always includes a range of income groups and household types. So the community builder must

<sup>1</sup> Kevin Fox Gotham, *Race, Real Estate, and Uneven Development: the Kansas City Experience, 1900–2010*, 2nd edition (Albany: SUNY Press, 2014), 41 and 44.

Figure 7.  
Neighborhood Unit Principles



1. *Size.* A residential unit development should provide housing for that population for which one elementary school is ordinarily required, its actual area depending upon its population density.

2. *Boundaries.* The unit should be bounded on all sides by arterial streets, sufficiently wide to facilitate traffic by-passing the neighborhood instead of passing through it.


3. *Open Spaces.* Small park and recreation space, planned to meet the needs of the particular neighborhood, should be provided.

4. *Institution Sites.* Sites for the school and other institutions having service spheres coinciding with the limits of the unit should be suitably grouped about a central point, or common.

5. *Local Shops.* One or more shopping districts, adequate for the population to be served, should be located preferably at traffic junctions and adjacent to similar districts, if any, of adjoining neighborhoods.

6. *Internal Street System.* The unit should be provided with a special street system, each highway being proportioned to its probable traffic load, and the street net as a whole being designed to facilitate circulation within the unit with good access to main arteries, and to discourage its use by through traffic.

Adapted from New York Regional Plan, Vol. 7



include not only single-family detached houses of varying sizes, but also rowhouses and apartments. Reflecting Perry's 1929 plan, the community has a well-defined center and edge. The center is always the elementary school, whose minimum number of children also defines the minimum size of the neighborhood. The school is so placed not only to be walkable for children from every part of the neighborhood, but its grounds are integrated with a public park and other recreation space to be the true center of the neighborhood. The edges are defined by arterial highways that divert traffic from the local streets, which are relatively narrow, curved, looping, or culs-de-sac, all of which keeps through-traffic off local streets.

Although the street patterns clearly anticipate the familiar collector street/local street pattern of subdivision development, one should also note the contrasts with later conventional practice. The neighborhood-unit concept as it was presented in the *Handbook* clearly seeks to establish a true pedestrian realm within the boundaries of the unit. Not only the elementary school, but also parks, recreational facilities, and the shopping center would all be accessible along lightly traveled roads. This contrasts with so many later subdivisions where the local roads lead only to (very similar) houses, and even the nearest elementary school can be reached only by crossing a dangerous and congested collector street.

As Nichols continually emphasized, even (perhaps especially) the most idealistic neighborhood design must be profitable to be stable in the long term. So the *Handbook* begins with the basic issues of market analysis, site selection, and land acquisition, and thus translates the general neighborhood-unit concept into its many components, with precise instructions ranging in scale from the overall site plan to such specific elements as street widths and curbing. There is excellent advice from Nichols and his colleagues about optimal block size; varying lot sizes to support a range of prices and dwelling types; the best locations for multifamily units and public institutions; and infrastructure such as sewers and lighting.

Perhaps the one surprising aspect of the *Handbook* is the substantial attention given to the "planning and management of shopping centers." This is, to be sure, a topic on which Nichols had unique expertise as the developer of Country Club Plaza in the 1920s, arguably the first major suburban shopping center. The neighborhood unit concept clearly required a "shopping center"

to complete its ideal of a relatively self-contained community. And, as Nichols well understood, most developers knew how to subdivide and sell lots, but were inexperienced in the complicated tasks of establishing a viable equivalent of "Main Street" under a single management. Hence the long, detailed sections on such topics as the optimal mix of stores, the best locations for different kinds of retailing and services, the right formula for leases, and, of course, parking.


In 1947, shopping center design was in considerable flux, and the *Handbook's* design recommendations demonstrate well the uncertainties, especially with regard to the parking issue. Nichols and the other members of the council were reluctant to break the traditional pattern of stores fronting on sidewalks with display windows easily visible from the street, and to go to the "logical" solution of the parking problem: the shopping structures in the center of a vast expanse of parking lots where the easily visible ample parking itself was the "attraction" that drew consumers off the highway.

Hence the uncertainty in the *Handbook's* design recommendations, which proved to be the most revised section in subsequent editions. There was also a deep uncertainty in the meaning of the suburban shopping center in the larger context of retailing in the region. The *Handbook* has the following to say about the regional implications of suburban shopping centers, already a topic of hot debate:

"... it should not be assumed that the Council is advocating the accelerated decentralization of business. Rather, it recognizes the importance of maintaining a strong and healthy central business district... with good transportation facilities leading to and from various parts of the city, and with a reasonable number of outlying community centers designed to best serve the needs of nearby residential developments."

This is the ideal that Peter Calthorpe has taught us to call "transit-oriented development," very different from the actual pattern of sprawl-type development that the *Handbook* would help unleash in postwar America. So what went wrong? Why were Nichols's design ideals marginalized in practice?

One way to answer that question is to observe that the *Handbook* as a practical guide to the mechanics of suburban development was, if anything, too successful. Nichols and the other leaders of the Community Builders Council were still haunted by the Great Depression and



hoped for no more than slow, steady growth in the postwar period. Looking back to 1880, “the date of birth of the Council’s Chairman [Nichols himself],” the *Handbook* asserts that 1880–1947 “was a period of rapid growth in the nation’s history, which is not likely to be repeated. Population authorities look forward to a continued decline in the rate of growth, which is likely to reach a static state by 1980.”

In fact, the postwar “baby boom” was already well underway, which pushed the postwar housing shortage to crisis levels. Moreover, the rise in real wages during the 1940s, combined with the economies of scale that the Federal Housing Administration had successfully introduced into homebuilding and home finance, meant that not only the middle class but also a large section of the white working class could now afford a new suburban tract house. The boom made land acquisition on the scale required for a true neighborhood unit more difficult, and developers soon found they could sell lots and houses in rapidly built, small isolated subdivisions off a collector road, leading to the familiar leap-frog pattern of development. Retail development became increasingly detached from residential development, as strip malls, big and small boxes, malls, and office parks spread out along arterial highways with no coordination with the residential development in the area. The compact, walkable neighborhood unit exploded into sprawl. The *Handbook* in its three subsequent revised editions (1954, 1960, and 1968) acknowledged these

changes without abandoning the neighborhood-unit ideal. With each new revision, however, the once human-scale neighborhood unit swelled in size to more than a square mile and became increasingly automobile-dependent and scattered.

Ironically, it is the earliest (1947) edition of the *Handbook*, published just three years before Nichols’s death, that seems most contemporary, indeed prophetic, in its advocacy of walkable, mixed-income, mixed-use suburban development (to use present-day terminology in place of the “neighborhood unit”). The 1947 *Handbook* is also prophetic in its conception of a region balanced between center and edge.

Nichols and his colleagues failed to foresee the traumatic impact of suburbanization on American central cities; they were indifferent or hostile to the ideals of diversity and inclusion that motivate the best American urbanism today. But in his ideal of the American suburb as a human-scaled community built to last, Nichols grasped an enduring element of American culture. The challenge the *Handbook* poses today is to reinvigorate and redefine the concept of “community” in its title, building on its strong design elements to achieve a deeper suburban diversity, while combatting the legacy of the divided metropolis.

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