

# what they are doing

Competition is as keen among cities as it is among individuals and skilful advertising is as necessary in establishing and maintaining a city in a position of eminence as it is in assuring success in business. The most effective advertising of a city is accomplished through the agency of the street and its furnishings, and the opportunity and encouragement it gives for expressing the civic pride and ambition of the individual and the community; a city whose streets are uniformly commonplace and monotonous will never inspire its citizens with a very high order of civic pride or patriotism, nor will it engage the earnest attention, admiration or respect of the visitor.

There are two classes of streets in foreign cities that are the delight of tourists; one is the narrow thoroughfare of the olden time, full of angles and offsets, curious gables, picturesque open spaces and quaint buildings; the other is the wide, dignified, tree-lined avenue of recent years, flanked by stately buildings and bearing the finished touch of the most skilled architects. The picturesque passageways of the middle ages will never be reproduced, nor should they be; they belonged to an urban condition that has passed with the progress of industrialism, and their legitimate successor will be the minor residential street planned with an enlightened conception of the needs of its dwellers for sunshine, light, air and a little of the charm of nature in its grass and trees. The wide avenue we have in very many forms, but too often it has been unwisely planned, without proper advice, control or supervision, and instead of giving expression to civic dignity, order and beauty, it has degenerated into a desolate waste of paving or a grotesque combination of various experiments in street decoration.

American cities lead the world in the beauty and charm of their suburbs, but as urban improvements are pushed outward much of this is destroyed by inflexible insistence upon some formal scheme of development, regardless of the character of the street or the nature of the adjacent territory. With all our boasted wealth and progress, our great municipalities have failed dismally in both the efficiency and attractiveness of our streets and roads; the best we have to show, with few exceptions, is in our suburbs, in our smaller towns, or where development has been due to broad-gauge private enterprise.

In the building of the town or city many different plans may be worked out and each a good one; the best can only be secured through sympathetic collaboration; some sacrifice of time, labor and money must be made; the municipal officers, the engineers, architects, artists and artisans, and the owners of property, must work together for the common good of all if the great problems of city building are to be satisfactorily solved and fine ambitions achieved.



**FREDERICK G. TODD**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT  
 MUNICIPAL PARK SYSTEMS AND TOWN PLANNING  
 Birks Building, MONTREAL.

**RICKSON A. OUTHET**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT  
 Fel. Am. Soc. Landscape Architects  
 PLANS FOR CITY DEVELOPMENT AND LAND SUBDIVISIONS.  
 Beaver Hall Hill, MONTREAL.

**DUNINGTON-GRUBB & HARRIES**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS  
 Consultants on all matters relating to Park and Garden Design, Real Estate and Suburban Development, Civic Art and Town Planning.  
 24 Adelaide St., East - - TORONTO.

**LEONARD E. SCHLEMM**  
LANDSCAPE ENGINEER  
 Consultant on Landscape Engineering in connection with all matters relating to Town Planning . . . . .  
 43 ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER ST. MONTREAL

**GUY WILFRID HAYLER**  
*Landscape Architect, Town Planner and Municipal Engineer*  
 Member, Institution of Municipal Engineers Member, Royal Sanitary Institute  
 Exhibitor, Royal Academy International Town Planning Exhibition.  
 Town Planning in all its branches, Real Estate, Civic and Suburban Development  
 384 Notre Dame Avenue, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

**GEOFFREY K. BURNETT**  
 (Successor to HILL & BURNETT)  
 CIVIL ENGINEER AND B.C. LAND SURVEYOR  
 PLANS, SURVEYS, REPORTS.  
 NEW WESTMINSTER,  
 P. O. BOX 886 BRITISH COLUMBIA

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ILLUMINATING ENGINEER  
 16 University Street, : : : : MONTREAL.

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