

for the province. This is the next urgent need in the matter of legislation in Nova Scotia.

**New Brunswick.**—The preparation of the town-planning scheme for Greater St. John is proceeding somewhat slowly owing to the conditions created by the war. Following a recent municipal election, which changed the personnel of the City Commission, from which a proportion of members of the Town Planning Commission are selected, the latter commission has been reconstituted. Mayor Hayes takes the place of ex-Mayor Frink and Mr. J. H. Burditt has been appointed chairman.

**Prince Edward Island.**—An influential commission has been appointed to take up questions affecting the future development of the province. A conference is to be held at Charlottetown in the early part of August, when various civic problems will be discussed.

**Quebec.**—The need for housing accommodation in Sherbrooke has caused the Board of Trade of that city to take up the question of forming a housing company under the Provincial Act to encourage the provision of dwellings for the people. There is reason to believe that a scheme will be launched to provide additional dwellings in the form of cottages with gardens in one of the suburbs of the city.

At different times there have been proposals for creating a garden suburb near Montreal. One of the difficulties has been to obtain a suitable site at a reasonable price, suburban land around Montreal being notoriously "boosted" in value and hard to acquire. This difficulty is being lessened by the depression in real estate values and there appears to be a prospect of getting a large housing scheme started on an estate of over 1,000 acres. The matter is being investigated by the town planning adviser of the Commission of Conservation.

The presentation of a town-planning bill to the legislature has been deferred till next session.

**Ontario.**—Progress in town planning in Ontario is slow, owing to the absence of suitable legislation, and keen disappointment is felt in many parts of the province that the government was not able to introduce a town-planning bill at the last sitting of the legislature. There is no province in which there is more urgent need for legislation and none in which public opinion has shown itself so strongly in favor of it. It is hoped that something will be done to meet the public demand when Parliament resumes its sittings, but meanwhile several important schemes have had to be deferred.

**THE EXAMPLE OF RENFREW.**—Real estate development is very active at Renfrew and several new subdivisions were placed on the market in April and May. The city council has taken the advice of the town planning branch of the Commission of Conservation in regard to all the sub-divisions. The result has been that all the real estate operators agreed to every proposal made for improving their plans and for linking them up in a satisfactory manner with the general plan of the town. Main arterial roads 100 feet in width were obtained where needed for purposes of traffic thoroughfares, sites for public buildings and recreation have been reserved without cost to the tax-payers, and it has been agreed that a wooded ravine which intersects one of the properties shall be handed over by the owner to the town. All this does not mean that the owners of real estate in Renfrew are philanthropic; on the contrary they are acting frankly in their own interest in thus adapting their plans to the requirements of the town council. But their self-interest is of an enlightened character; they are merely responsive to the argument that their interests and the general in-

terests of the community are in harmony. The Renfrew case proves that the blame for bad land development rests in the final analysis with the local authorities. Without any expert guidance or knowledge of their own requirements, councils are usually unable to make constructive suggestions to owners when plans are submitted. Perhaps, to give themselves some sort of satisfaction that they are looking after the public interest, or to prevent the repetition of some evil that has previously come to their notice, they impose conditions which cost the owners of land a good deal without giving the public any corresponding advantage. What is most exacting and costly to the real estate owner is not necessarily best for the public; indeed, so much are their interests in common that unnecessary loss to the one is loss to the other. Real estate development will proceed on satisfactory lines in proportion as a local authority has, first, adequate powers under a town-planning act and, second, the expert guidance necessary to enable it to put forward constructive suggestions in lieu of destructive criticism.

One unfortunate weakness in the Renfrew scheme is that both the council and the owners alike have, by reason of a provincial by-law, to face the great and wasteful burden of making all the streets, even the subsidiary side streets, not less than 66 feet wide, although to accommodate traffic some are to be made 100 feet wide. The result is to waste large areas of valuable land that might be used for gardening, to increase the extent of surface for accumulating insanitary dust, to cause ultimately the spending of hundreds of thousands of dollars in making unnecessary pavements or boulevards, and too lengthy connections from sewers and water and other mains.

One indirect effect is to cause money to be stinted on sanitary arrangements in the home in order to pay for streets that are not needed.

At a time like this, when economy is so important, it cannot be too strongly urged that the passing of a town-planning act to combat this absurdly expensive system in Ontario should not be further deferred.

**Manitoba.**—The town-planning bill introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba passed its third reading in April last. Although without the compulsory clauses of the Nova Scotia act, it is an excellent measure and will pave the way for a better system of land development in the province.

**Saskatchewan.**—A well-drafted town-planning bill was introduced into the Saskatchewan Assembly in February last by the Hon. Geo. Langley, Minister of Municipal Affairs. The bill passed its first reading but, for reasons connected with other questions of a local character, had to be held over for another year.

**British Columbia.**—The question of civic improvement organization in the cities of British Columbia is being taken up by the town planning branch of the Commission of Conservation. Conferences are to be held in July. When the political situation is more settled it is expected that a town planning bill will be brought forward for consideration of Parliament.

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The Board of Engineers, which will prepare plans for a joint sewer system for municipalities in the Windsor District, consists of city engineer Morris Knowles, of Ojibway; city engineer Edward Brian, of Windsor; city engineer Owen McKay, of Ford City and Walkerville; J. J. Newman, civil engineer, Sandwich; and Chas. R. McColl, Sandwich. It is stated unofficially that a consulting engineer will be appointed to co-operate with this board.