THE PLANNING AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF GATED COMMUNITIES

Jill Grant
School of Planning
Dalhousie University

Katherine Greene and Kirstin Maxwell
Masters of Urban and Rural Planning Program
Dalhousie University

Résumé
Une enquête en cours, des quartiers clôturés au Canada, révèle l'existence de plus de 300 communautés de ce genre, allant de quelques maisons à plus de 1000 unités d'habitation. Bien que cela ne soit pas habituel de clôturer les banlieues au Canada, comme c'est le cas aux États-Unis, certains promoteurs dans plusieurs régions du pays ont adopté l'idée comme stratégie de marketing. Les aînés sont particulièrement intéressés à acheter des maisons dans ces quartiers clôturés. Cet article décrit les résultats d'un inventaire de quartiers clôturés, ainsi que les implications qui en découlent pour les politiques municipales en matière d'aménagement. La popularité des quartiers clôturés reflète des inquiétudes envers la capacité des gouvernements municipaux à offrir des services et un type d'espace urbain dont s'attendent les résidants. En même temps, cet article soulève des questions importantes en ce qui concerne le développement urbain intégré et connecté d'une ville.

Mots clés : Quartiers clôturés, banlieues pour les aînés, politique d'aménagement

Abstract
An on-going investigation of gated developments in Canada has documented over 300 gated enclaves, ranging in size from a few homes to over 1000 units. While gating is not as common in Canada as in the US, enclosing new suburbs is a popular marketing device for developers in some regions. Seniors prove especially interested in purchasing homes in gated projects. This paper describes

the results of an inventory of gated projects and considers some policy implications for municipal planning. The popularity of gating may reveal concerns about the ability of governments to provide amenities and values that residents expect. At the same time, it raises significant questions about how planners can maintain an integrated and connected urban realm.

Key words : Gated communities, seniors projects, planning policy

Introduction

Since the 1980s, gated projects have become increasingly common in many parts of the world. Gated enclaves constitute a significant facet of development in the United States, with over four million households living inside access-controlled projects in 2001 (Sanchez and Lang 2002). Gated developments are on the rise in Britain (Atkinson et al. 2003), and are documented in Argentina (Thuillier 2003), Australia (Hillier and McManus 1994), the Bahamas (Gonzalez 2000), Brazil (Caldeira 2000; Carvalho et al. 1997; Faiola 2002), Costa Rica (Rancho Cartagena 1999), Indonesia (Leisch 2003), Lebanon and Saudi Arabia (Glasze and Alkhayyal 2002), Portugal (Raposo 2003), South Africa (Gated communities SA 2003; Jurgens and Gnad 2003; Landman 2003), and Venezuela (Paulin 1997). In the insecure urban landscape of the late 20th and early 21st century, the ancient fortified form of the walled city has re-emerged, both in the developed and developing world. Canada has not escaped the trend.

This paper explores the planning and policy implications of gated communities in Canada. After a brief introduction to the topic of gated developments, we present recent research documenting the distribution and number of gated projects in Canada. We then proceed to consider some of the social and physical implications of enclosed enclaves in the Canadian context, and offer suggestions regarding the issues they raise for planners. We argue that the planning profession needs to begin discussing the impacts of gating in order to establish appropriate responses to this emerging form.

Gating on the rise

As Blakely and Snyder (1997) noted in their major study on gating, Americans are attracted to gated communities by the lure of security, privacy, and exclusivity. In a time of mounting insecurity, especially in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 9-11, and rising levels of crime in some countries of the developing world, households want to believe they can find a secure domestic oasis. The flight from fear, and a search for community, push home-buyers and renters to gated developments (Dillon 1994; Hubert and Delsohn 1996; Low

2001; Marcuse 1997; Wilson-Doenges 2000). Protected enclaves, with walls and gates to keep strangers out, offer the promise of a secure environment.

While many gated enclaves are small developments, some fortified communities are large and regionally significant. For instance, Alphaville, in Sao Paolo, has 30,000 residents, with its own shopping centres, schools, and local security force (Caldeira 2000; Too much archives 2002). Most private communities are managed by homeowners' associations with extensive powers and responsibilities (McKenzie 1994). Several gated communities in the US have incorporated as towns (eg, Hidden Hills, CA). In some US cities, especially in the south and west, a significant proportion of the population lives in access-controlled developments (Sanchez and Lang 2002). While gated projects have had limited impacts in certain regions (like the north-east), in other places they have become a significant local phenomenon.

The last century has shown a pattern of increasing land use segregation: of industrial activities, of class and ethnic groups, and of residential forms. On the one hand, we might argue that the new trend of gated residential compounds continues the dominant pattern by generating an extreme case of land use segregation by class, interest, household type, and/or age. In some ways the popularity of gated developments constitutes a backlash against liberal ideas of an integrated and classless society: a retreat from the idealism of the welfare state (Garland 1996). In contemporary suburbs, the affluent close themselves off in exclusive districts that transform class barriers into physical boundaries, thereby reinforcing a landscape of fear and separation.

On the other hand, we might suggest that private communities provide opportunities for people to band together in intentional, self-governing communities of like-minded individuals. People choose neighbourhoods that feature amenities they seek, where they can enjoy lifestyles that meet their needs. Gated developments offer clear benefits to their residents, and provide attractive revenues to local municipalities. They manage their own affairs and take responsibility for the quality of their immediate environment, thus creating an internal landscape of identity, privacy, beauty, and security.

Whichever perspective we take on gated enclaves, we cannot ignore their implications for community planning. They represent a new way of defining and managing space within the urban realm. In the next section, we report on a recent inventory of gated communities in Canada to understand their distribution and features before proceeding to discuss the issues they generate for planning.

Gating in Canada

In 2002, we began a national study[1] to try to identify and catalogue gated developments in Canada. We defined gated communities as projects where entry to the development is restricted by gates across the roadways.[2] Gated developments are almost exclusively on private roads, since Canadian municipalities rarely agree to close public roads to traffic. As new development increasingly employs private roads, the opportunities for gating will grow.

We first conducted an email survey of planners in towns and cities across Canada to determine whether they knew of local gated projects, and to collect policies dealing with gating. From 123 planners contacted between January and fall of 2003, 78 replied (response rate = 63%). Only nine municipalities reported that they had explicit planning or other policies to address gating.

Concurrently, we launched a web search to find properties and developments marketed as gated, secure, enclosed, or restricted entry. This enabled us to find new developments, but proved less successful in tracking down older gated projects.

Based on the first phase of the inventory and responses to the email survey, we conducted field studies in British Columbia, Ontario, and Nova Scotia: the first two provinces had the highest number of gated projects, while the third was readily accessible to the research team. In 2003 and early 2004, we conducted personal semi-structured interviews with approximately 30 planners, developers, council members, and residents' association officers in study communities in those provinces.[3] Field visits in several cities allowed us to document the way enclaves fit within the landscape.[4] Finally, we did a follow-up study of fire and emergency service providers in British Columbia, Alberta and Nova Scotia.

As of March 2004, we had identified 314 approved or built gated developments in Canada (see Table 1).[5] British Columbia has 228, or 73% of

Table 1: Documented gated projects in Canada (March 2004)

Province	Total gated projects	500 units or more	Projects with guards	Project vide surveil
British Columbia	228	3	5	5
Alberta	21	3	1	2
Saskatchewan	8			
Manitoba	1			1
Ontario	49	8	9	5
Nova Scotia	7			2
Canada total	**314**	14	15	15

Note: "Adult" communities discourage children: some suggest 19+ ye classified those that use the word "Seniors" or have age limits over 40

the total. We found 49 in Ontario, 21 in Alberta, 8 in Saskatchewan, 7 in Nova Scotia, and one in Manitoba. We have not located projects in the other provinces.

A third of the gated developments are adult communities or aim at seniors with active lifestyles.[6] Only 15 projects have guards (most in Ontario), and 15 use video surveillance. The largest gated community, proposed to have over 1100 units at build out, is Swan Lake in Markham ON. The projects often have games rooms, pools, or other attractive common amenities.

Most enclaves are under 100 units; some have only a handful of homes within them. Fourteen have more than 500 units: most of those are in Ontario. As Table 2 shows, the data we have shows that the average size of projects may be larger in Ontario and Alberta than in Nova Scotia and British Columbia.

Table 2: Number of Units in Gated Communities by Province

Province	Gated projects	Projects with unit c... available
British Columbia	228	150 (66%)
Alberta	21	12 (57%)
Ontario	49	35 (71%)
Nova Scotia	7	5 (71%)

Note: We could not obtain data on the number of units for every p... it for 64% of communities in the inventory.

While single-detached houses are most common in Ontario and Alberta, BC projects more commonly feature attached ground-oriented units (see Table 3). Growth on the suburban fringe in cities near Vancouver, like Abbotsford and Langley, involves a high proportion of gated townhouse projects. Common maintenance of grounds and buildings by condominium or strata corporations provides a worry-free existence for residents. Although some gated projects cater to an extremely affluent elite, others sell homes at competitive market rates, or lease land for long periods. In a few cases, people can buy or rent mobile homes in gated enclaves.

Table 3: Housing Forms in Gated Projects by Province

Province	Single detached	Townhouses and semis	Apartments	Recreatio... Vehicles
British Columbia	69 (41%)	111 (66%)	18	1
Alberta	12 (70%)	3	2	4
Ontario	26 (70%)	15 (40%)	7	
Nova Scotia	4	3		

Note: Singles include cottages and manufactured homes. We have housing...

Gated pockets of infill development are proving popular in some BC cities, such as Vernon in the Okanagan Valley. Because many of these developments are small, about 10 to 20 acres, they do not greatly disrupt the urban fabric. They make the street grain coarser than it would be otherwise, but the main traffic arterials pass easily around them. Only pedestrians and cyclists might note an inability to short cut through the developments.

Gated projects are typically regulated through special negotiated districts (eg, planned unit developments). For the most part, our findings seem to indicate that they are on land zoned medium-density or multi-family. While we do not have reliable data to calculate relative densities, planners and developers interviewed suggested that gated developments reflect higher densities than conventional suburban patterns. Visits to gated projects confirmed the observation that compact lot layout and narrow roads are as common as high landscaping standards in many of these suburbs.

Some larger Ontario retirement communities on the suburban fringe, or in rural resort areas, may be a hundred or more acres in size. Such projects could constitute significant obstacles to through traffic if urban areas grow up around them. Some are attracting commercial and medical services and alternative forms of housing for older seniors. Thus, large projects typically have a wider mix of uses and housing types than smaller developments.

To a large extent, however, gated enclaves remain invisible to residents outside the gates.[7] Their private streets do not appear on local maps. Gates are usually tucked out of sight, off unimposing side streets. Their walls, hedges, or open spaces are not dissimilar to those that surround other up-scale suburbs. Unless one looks for the gates, the controlled access can prove easy to miss. Moreover, high-end homes within the enclaves are often seen as good neighbours by those in nearby communities because they improve property values and add cachet to the area. Thus, neighbours who know the projects are there appreciate them, while outsiders may not see them.

The appeal of gating

Setha Low (2003) suggests that those moving inside the gates are searching for a measure of social control and "niceness." They long for a landscape where they can enjoy privacy, quiet, and security. To an extent, they seek civility in an urban context where the rules of behaviour are changing in ways that make them uncomfortable. They want to be able to control access to the amenities in their community so that they can protect their property. They want to distance themselves from the messiness of everyday urban life, where graffiti, pan-handling, vulgar language, and violence are seen as evidence of urban decline.[8]

They want neighbourhoods free of the discomforts and dangers of excessive or fast traffic. See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Speed limit posted on BC gate

Despite declining crime rates, fear of crime shows no sign of relenting (Law Commission of Canada 2002). Moreover, some residents believe that the state cannot guarantee security and therefore people need new strategies to protect themselves (Law Commission of Canada 2002; Owens 1997). Private communities give residents strong sanctions to control behaviour. Within the walls, residents can enforce a degree of niceness and predictability where community standards reign.

Several factors have converged to make gating an option in recent years. Most importantly, gated developments appear to meet the interests of a significant segment of the market. Developers, consumers, and local governments all have interests in promoting private communities.

Consumers: Critiques of modern city life, popularized by the mass media, may have made affluent households and the older singles feel vulnerable. Some households enjoy a level of affluence that gives them a wide range of options for their golden years. They want independence, often in a community of people with similar interests and characteristics. They will pay for security, privacy, and amenity. For some, gated developments may provide the appropriate

constellation of features to meet their needs. Rapid absorption of gated projects in many market areas reflects the attractiveness of the form.[9]

The gated enclave satisfies the need for community for many residents. Those who want to live near others of similar backgrounds and interests can make strong friendships and develop an ethic of neighbourliness and mutual aid. The enclosure creates a defined identity and sense of pride for those within. Shared recreational facilities provide opportunities for social interaction. Working together on the homeowners' association or participating in planned activities can create social cohesion and reinforce social capital.[10] The sense of community identity and interaction generated has a strong appeal, especially to seniors.

Developers: In a highly competitive industry, developers always look for an edge in the market. Some companies have clearly mastered the niche of gated projects. In each area where gating is common, a few developers concentrate on that niche. They recognize that, with a relatively modest investment, gating can add value to projects that otherwise might have limited amenity. Good quality walls and gates can improve the attractiveness of high density and infill developments, and hence facilitate marketing. Multi-family housing may prove easier to sell if located within walls rather than in an open suburb. Gating thus may increase the returns for development.

Government: Local governments may find it difficult to refuse quality development that brings in good tax revenues while demanding little in the way of public expenditures. Private communities provide and maintain their own roads and recreational amenities. With predominantly affluent adult populations, enclaves generally make limited demands on schools or public recreational facilities. Their principal need is for good health care facilities: a provincial rather than municipal responsibility. Fiscal downloading from higher levels of government has made local government vulnerable and eager to find cost-saving strategies. If developers tell local councils and planners that they need gates to sell houses, and if constituents are happy to buy homes in cloistered enclaves, then it is hard for local government to say no. Moreover, for urban governments hoping to encourage infill development and more compact forms, developers' arguments that gating is necessary as a marketing amenity for such projects may prove persuasive.

Of course, gated developments are well-known to Canadians who travel to the US south and west. Developers interviewed indicated that they had seen the success of the gated form in the United States and felt that the market here would embrace it. Canadians have often visited Florida, California, Texas, or Arizona; several residents reported admiring gated developments before buying in one. Even most municipal councillors and planners interviewed mentioned

that they had seen or stayed in gated projects in the US. While many respondents emphasized the differences they saw between Canadian and American cities, noting that Canadians do not really "need" gated suburbs in the same way that the Americans do because of crime concerns there, analysis of the literature and of our interview results leads us to conclude that the widespread nature of the phenomenon in the US offered some license to Canadians to see gated enclaves as a viable development option.

With consumer groups, the development industry, and local governments all seeing advantages in approving gated projects, it is not surprising that enclaves are spreading in areas with high concentrations of seniors and strong market demand for compact building forms. The greater the concentration of such projects, however, the greater the potential impacts on the larger community.

Planning implications

Has planning for conventional suburbs created development forms that do not adequately reinforce desired elements of community for potential residents? Certainly, the new urbanists think so (eg, Duany et al. 2000; Talen 1999). Many development marketing strategies try to reinforce elements of community, whether with new urbanist forms or through gated projects. The gated development offers an attractive option to those for whom conventional development does not deliver sufficient privacy, identity, or control. Those interviewed suggested that some buyers are willing to accept smaller lots or multi-family housing forms provided that they gain the added amenities available in gated developments.

Our interview results and observations do not lead us to believe that Canadian gated projects are primarily about security, despite the walls and gates around them. Most walls are under four feet high, and easily scaled. Many projects are not completely surrounded by walls, but simply close off the entrance roads. Gates are often left open, especially during the marketing period. Secondary access routes may have low fences, or simple chains across them. Guards and video surveillance are rare. (See Figure 2.) Residents interviewed suggest that the greatest security comes from knowing their neighbours are watching out for them. In this sense, we argue, Canadian gates function differently than gates in American communities where security is an acknowledged priority. Instead, gates here serve primarily to keep unwanted traffic out of the residential environment (Greene and Maxwell 2004), thereby enhancing privacy, safety, community identity, and quiet enjoyment of the domestic realm.

Figure 2. False guard house at gate entry

Gated communities raise significant policy issues for planners. Not only do they affect the physical connectivity of the city, but they present challenges to the social connectivity of the urban landscape. Limiting access may have safety implications that local governments cannot ignore, while building walls around development may generate aesthetic issues. Gates may exacerbate the separation of the affluent from the rest of society. While we cannot deal with social questions in depth here, in this section we consider some of the immediate policy issues that planners might consider. We begin with discussing the transportation implications, and then consider broader issues of equality in the landscape.

Although we have not found recent studies on the topic, anecdotal information and interview results suggest that development on private roads is common in many parts of the country, and not only in gated developments. New growth on private roads allows developers to reduce the cost of urban infrastructure: private streets are usually built to municipal standards for depth and materials, but not for width, curbs, sidewalks, and lighting. If developers construct private roads, then the municipality minimizes its ongoing costs of maintenance, snow plowing, street lighting, and garbage collection. The transfer of such responsibilities to private communities generates significant savings for local governments.

Private roads are separated from public street systems. They discourage through traffic. Even without gates, private communities post signs: "Private road," "Residents and guests only" or "No thoroughfare." Condominium

associations responsible for maintaining the roads do not want non-residents using the streets.

Patches of private roads increase the grain of the larger urban fabric. If people cannot use streets that traverse a development, then cars, cyclists, and pedestrians have to circumnavigate the area. While some gated projects have pedestrian easements, most do not. For instance, at Village by the Arboretum, a gated development on land leased from the University of Guelph, students who previously reached the university by crossing fields now walk or cycle around the walls of the development.

Because private roads allow residents to control access, parking, and speeding within the neighbourhood, they prove quite effective at calming traffic (Greene and Maxwell 2004). Since gates keep out unwanted vehicles and discourage sight-seers, they make the local environment generally more pleasant for residents. The powerful condominium or strata associations that run projects have the authority to enforce strict standards. Accordingly, streets in gated developments are generally safe for walking, cycling, playing, or travelling by wheelchair or scooter. For seniors this feature is especially important: their risk of death or injury as pedestrians is higher than that for other age groups (Transport Canada 2000). Furthermore, Appleyard (1981) notes that streets with less traffic enjoy higher levels of social interaction. Thus, by excluding traffic, residents improve their opportunities to build social networks within a safe community environment.

The impacts of gating on transit are less clear. Planners and developers say that gated projects are built at higher unit densities than conventional suburbs, which might suggest better prospects for transit. Anecdotal evidence, however, indicates that household sizes in gated projects are small, and most households are car-oriented. With their narrow dimensions and restricted entry at the gates, the streets in Canadian gated enclaves are certainly not permeable to transit. As residents age, their need for transit may increase. Further study is required to gauge the overall effect of widespread gating on mass transportation systems.

Gates and walls may reduce or remove public access to lakes, ocean waterfront, forests, and mountains. If roads and trails to amenity sites are blocked or privatized, then public access is denied. Private neighbourhoods have reduced access to public sites such as beaches or lakes in several of the provinces studied.

One question raised about gated developments is that of emergency access. Gates may delay fire, police, and ambulance response times. Some enclaves give emergency crews keys or codes, or trigger the gates to open to the sound of sirens; however, these technologies are not foolproof. Narrow private roads may impede the movement of large fire trucks. Emergency access is a bigger issue for municipalities in some areas than in others. In Halifax Regional Municipality, fire personnel interviewed indicated their commitment to fight

gating, traffic calming, and private roads because of concerns about service delays; they suggested that approving development forms that increase insurance risks may make municipalities liable for service delays. By contrast, BC fire personnel contacted in the email survey did not note concerns about delays caused by gating; some had adapted their practices to the new regime.

While gates can have a negative impact on ambulance and fire response times, they may actually improve policing, said respondents. Many projects have Block Watch or Neighbourhood Watch groups that contribute to good internal security systems. Based on observations from the field visits, house alarms are fairly common. With a high proportion of senior citizens and homemakers, these communities have many "eyes on the street." In small developments, everyone knows who is supposed to be there.[11] This level of community surveillance may reduce the local incidence of crime, and supports contemporary trends that encourage active crime prevention among the populace (Garland 1996).[12] In this sense, then, one might argue that gating has positive spin-offs that local government often encourages.

As gates multiplied in British Columbia in the 1980s and 1990s, councillors and planners noted a concern with the visual impact of the walls. Some of the earliest developments constructed long fences, creating imposing corridors along collector roads. Planners disliked the lack of "eyes on the street" and worried that the projects had created unsafe areas along their edges. In those cities, planners and councils responded by developing design guidelines to ensure that new walls provide attractive features. Guidelines may control wall height, materials, sight lines, articulation, setbacks, and vegetation screening. According to the email survey and review of plan documents, these are the most common tools planners use to regulate gated projects (Grant 2003).

Some planners and councillors interviewed raised social concerns about gated projects. Contemporary building trends like gating are creating unequal landscapes that trouble planners committed to facilitating inclusive communities.

We observed that private communities enjoy attractive open and green spaces, beautifully landscaped, and sometimes including fountains, parks, golf courses, pools, and gardens. Their common areas are restricted to members: "club goods" limited to those who pay for the privilege of use (Webster 2002). By contrast, new developments in the suburbs may be poorly endowed with public goods. Cash-strapped municipalities that lack the resources to maintain their current stock of parks and playgrounds may prove reticent to accept required dedications of park land. In some communities, public parks and playgrounds are declining in quality, and public infrastructure needs an infusion of investment. The quality of "public space" within the walls may far exceed that available outside.

Long term maintenance and reinvestment in private community facilities may prove another important issue for planners to consider. At some point in future, private roads will need major repairs or replacement. Will resident associations have saved sufficient reserve funds, or will they turn to municipalities for help in meeting the costs? Halifax Regional Municipality council considered a moratorium on private roads in 2003 because of concerns about poor maintenance. In Markham ON, respondents told us that condominium associations have lobbied local governments for tax rebates or for access to municipal services to justify the high taxes paid. McKenzie (1994) suggests that taxpayer revolts in areas like California reflect the political and fiscal impacts of private developments. The prospect of reduced financial burdens may lead local government initially to see private communities as attractive; however, should enclaves increase significantly in numbers, they can change the political dynamic in ways that may threaten the long-term financing of local government.

Provincial governments have remained silent on gating. Few municipalities have developed clear policies on either private roads or gated enclaves. These forms have crept into our communities without comment. As we come to recognize the issues they raise, we might increasingly turn our attention to considering appropriate planning responses.

Will planning respond?

Despite the evidence of growth in the market place, most planners surveyed do not expect gating to increase in popularity. Some suggested that the trend peaked in the late 1980s. While gating has declined in some markets (such as North Vancouver, according to an email survey respondent), our field study shows that it proceeds apace in others. If anything, security concerns have grown since September 11, 2001. The gap between rich and poor is increasing. Baby boomers reaching retirement age create new opportunities in the market. These factors lead us to conclude that the trend may continue.

Given municipal governments' interest in intensification (Isin and Tomalty 1993), infill projects seem likely to continue to attract new development. Where infill occurs in mixed-use areas, or in poorer parts of the city, some developers may request walls to separate new growth from pre-existing urban tissue. Studies of gating in England show that developers often use walls and gates to set infill development projects apart from the rest of the city (Atkinson et al. 2003).

Where they expressed an opinion, most planners surveyed and interviewed indicated that they do not like gates. Gates and walls contravene planners' commitment to providing communities that meet the needs of the range of citizens. At the same time, however, few cities have adopted planning policies

to minimize gating (Grant 2003). In many markets, planners are operating with relatively weak policies and regulations that "discourage" gates, or "encourage" open street patterns. Planners may not feel comfortable with gates, but have rarely created policies that can prevent them. Often, because of local development dynamics, planners are reconciling themselves to learning to live with gated developments.

Despite its growth, gating has not yet become an issue in professional practice. We believe that planners should generate a discussion within the profession, and within our communities. Are gated developments a manifestation of "the public interest?" Do they serve a greater good beyond the interests of those who live within them? Should planners accept gated communities as a new fact of urban life and seek to manage them to minimize impacts and optimize returns? As a profession, should we develop a position on gating as an urban form?

Some may suggest that the success of private enclaves in the city has the potential to undermine the viability of planning as a public service. Those who live within well-planned private realms may not accept the need for planning at a larger urban scale. Planning's principal mandate has been that of managing the public realm for public health and safety. If our cities become little more than collections of private enclaves, what will be left for common management?

Clearly, we cannot deny that gated communities meet certain of the principles we advocate as planners. Gated developments can facilitate higher densities by making compact urban form more palatable to consumers. They have strong amenity standards, design qualities, and green spaces. They often employ reduced lot setbacks and road dimensions. They facilitate traffic calming. They may generate a sense of place, character, and community. Other principles that planners promote today, however, are not supported by gated enclaves. Gated developments limit street connectivity and rarely further transit goals. They seldom include a mix of uses or affordable housing. They enhance land use, class, and age segregation. They fly in the face of aims of social integration and cohesion at the larger urban scale.

To enter the debate about gating, planners first need to understand what draws people to gated developments. Alternatives to gating have to offer neighbourhoods that can create character, promise privacy and security, feature desirable local amenities, and manage traffic effectively. Inasmuch as we can provide these qualities in general development in our communities, we may limit the demand for gating. If current trends continue, though, many communities seem likely to accept gating, especially in the parts of the country that are growing rapidly, and where older residents constitute an important segment of the market. Planners interviewed said that they typically advise

local governments to keep projects small (under 10 hectares) to ensure street connectivity. If proposed projects would interfere with existing transportation patterns, then planners say they may insist on protecting pedestrian or cycling easements. Strong design guidelines used in many cities with gated enclaves seek to keep walls attractive and minimize the visual impact of the developments. Strategic placement of entries off side streets can make gates less visible. We find that these techniques are common planning responses to managing gated developments where enclaves are accepted in the marketplace.

Concerns about segregated projects and the possible impacts of gating will not make private communities go away, nor will they reduce the demand for enclaves. As a profession, planners need to engage in a public debate about the implications of gated developments and the character of government responses to them so that we can establish appropriate policies and practices for future planning. Only then will we find ourselves prepared to deal with this important issue.

Notes

[1] This research is supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The views expressed are those of the authors. The authors would like to thank respondents who participated in the research, and acknowledge the help of James Bryndza, Jose Canjura, and Craig Walker with some BC field visits. Thanks also to Marc Ouellet for assistance with the French abstract.

[2] Our definition specifically excludes walled projects with open street systems, and condominium buildings that do not have private street networks. Some authors are less precise in defining the terms, and may consider walled compounds without gates to fall within the same rubric. While we use the general term "communities", we note that gated enclaves range from small blocks to full size towns or cities. We use the terms enclaves, gated projects, and gated developments as synonyms for gated communities.

[3] Respondents were recruited through requests to planning departments in the communities targeted for field study (because we knew of a large number of gated developments in the area), and to developers, council members, and residents' association officers suggested by planning staff. Emergency services personnel were recruited through direct requests to their departments.

[4] Field visits involved windshield studies of parts of the city believed to have gated developments. With each gate located, we made notes about the relationship of the project to the street, the type of gate and walls, the number of units included (if immediately apparent from intercom numbers or mail boxes),

type of dwelling units included, and lot patterns (if apparent). We photographed gates and walls, and in some cases made maps or site plans to illustrate particular points.

[5] We believe that our estimate may be low by a factor of two to three. For instance, interviews with local respondents accompanied by a total of 38 hours of field testing in the British Columbia communities of Langley, Abbotsford, Vernon, Penticton, Kelowna, Richmond, Qualicum, Saanich, and Esquimalt more than doubled the number of projects we had previously discovered in BC through email survey and internet search. We expect that additional study in BC cities would significantly increase the count.

[6] Human rights legislation in most provinces limits property restrictions based on age. Both British Columbia and Alberta allow age-restricted developments. Otherwise, developers may market projects as adult-oriented, but cannot restrict sales.

[7] One of the authors doing field visits in Langley BC asked a motel clerk if she knew of gated projects nearby. The clerk thought for a few moments, then directed the researcher several miles north to a new project with an imposing landmark entrance gate. Later the researcher found two gated projects within two blocks of the motel, one a mere 200 metres away on the same street as the motel. The clerk evidently had not recognized these examples so near her employment.

[8] This interpretation derives principally from interview data. Although we interviewed relatively few residents of gated communities, several volunteered information as we walked around documenting their neighbourhoods. Developers, councillors, and planners also commented on the attractions of gated projects.

[9] Some projects, like Swan Lake in Markham ON, have sold more slowly than initially predicted. Homes in Swan Lake are very expensive, and the Toronto area market offers many options for home purchasers. By contrast, in tighter land markets in some BC communities, homes in gated projects sell quickly, even attracting those who had not necessarily seen gated living as their first choice.

[10] Self-governance bodies may, of course, lead to conflict and discontent within communities. Intrusive or arbitrary restrictions, financial mismanagement, crises over maintenance and other common problems may undermine the sense of community in enclaves (McKenzie 1994).

[11] As researchers studying these communities, we can attest to the level of resident interest in strangers' activities. Residents stopped to talk, and to ask why we were taking photographs. Guards scowled, but said little.

[12] Whether gates reduce crime is a subject of debate. General commentators

(eg, Blakely and Snyder 1997; Low 2003) doubt that walls and gates make a difference. Specific studies of gating have shown that crime can be displaced, if not reduced overall (Atlas and LeBlanc 1994; Helsley and Strange 1999).

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