“A CAPITAL EXPERIENCE:”
NATIONAL URBAN RENEWAL, NEOLIBERALISM, AND URBAN GOVERNANCE ON LEBRETON FLATS IN OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA

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This thesis investigates both Keynesian and neoliberal urbanism on LeBreton Flats, a mixed working-class district deemed a “blighted” slum unfit for a national capital. By studying the time-delayed *embourgeoisement* of the Flats, this study considers the production of the modern capital as an “event” with significant “afterlives” – both backwards and forwards. Using a historical and comparative perspective, this thesis engages with the literature on neoliberal urbanism and neoliberal urban governance to show how the NCC has adopted and adapted neoliberal practices and strategies of New Urban Policy (NUP) to postwar modernist planning imperatives.

The initial expropriation of LeBreton Flats in April 1962, and the dislocation of its marginalized, stigmatized, and racialized residents emerged from an ambitious state-led initiative to remodel Ottawa into a centennial showcase. The model urban redevelopment was part of national subject formation anchored in “pedagogies of the nation.” Although the Keynesian dream ultimately faltered,
three decades later, a new project to fill the “empty” national space was initiated. The NCC’s updated redevelopment plan promised to re-write the script, this time governed according to the “Golden Path” of urban entrepreneurialism. The present-day state-led redevelopment of LeBreton Flats can be considered simultaneously as part of the imagined community of nation-ness and as a variegated form of neoliberal policy experimentation.

Both federal interventions on LeBreton Flats are part of a longer project of state-led intervention in the National Capital. These backwards and forwards governance timelines exemplify the many ways in which neoliberalism is not a radically new project, and how the enforcement of dispossession is part of an ongoing process of socio-spatial displacement. However, there are important distinctions. In the contemporary neoliberal redevelopment, cultural logic has merged with economic rational. Discourses and images of nature and culture have been mobilized to create a site-specific redevelopment for the expression of the nation. In the synergy of capital investments and cultural meanings, this thesis provides evidence on how nature and national pedagogy are mobilized as part “naturalized” behaviour and practices of urban neoliberalism.
A Emily, mon amour, ma confidante, ma conspiratrice.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 A Capital Scene: LeBreton Flats, Before and After

In early 2001, the Canadian federal government announced funding for a new war museum as the centrepiece of a major downtown redevelopment project. The new Canadian War Museum (CWM) would be built on an “empty” site directly adjacent to the central business district known as LeBreton Flats. Alongside the museum, a mixed-use development would help transform Ottawa’s waterfront into a node for green embourgeoisement. Local and national politicians celebrated the site’s potential. As the Chair of the National Capital Commission (NCC) triumphantly pronounced on the day of the official announcement of the mixed-use development, “This is a great day – the first day in the renewal of a community on LeBreton Flats.”¹ Adhering to updated capital planning policies, the redevelopment represented an important transformation.

For over a century the area was the hub of the manufacturing and lumbering trade in the Ottawa River and provided essential affordable housing to workers in proximity to the water power of the Chaudière Falls. The new development would produce a radically different urban landscape.

The contemporary redevelopment of LeBreton Flats was set into motion when, driven by the desire to modernize the capital, the federal government took drastic action to cleanse the Flats from the disorder that was in direct view of Parliament Hill. Modernist capital planners, working under direction of Jacques Gréber’s 1950 Plan for the National Capital, had deemed the Flats as a

dangerous “blighted” slum unfit for the order required by a national capital. A decade later, on April 17, 1962, the National Capital Commission (NCC) notified the residents that their neighbourhood was being expropriated. The Flats would make way for a massive government office complex centred on a new Department of National Defense Headquarters. In total, during a three-year period, 542 dwellings were demolished by the NCC as part of the urban renewal project. By 1965 the last remnants of the Flats were bulldozed. Despite the hype and fanfare from federal politicians, the dream image faded. The Flats would lay fallow for almost forty years: a razed field standing in memory of the tragedy of expropriation and displacement.

The dream of a federally initiated redevelopment of the Flats would be renewed, however. In 1996 the NCC developed a “new” plan for a brownfield redevelopment adhering to “up-to-date” planning principles and policies. In consort with a number of private and public partners, the NCC’s updated redevelopment plan promised – once again – to re-write the script of the Flat’s working-class and industrial history. Emphasizing quality of life amenities – including access to riverfront recreation, large green spaces, convenient transportation and proximity to the central business and entertainment areas and to large cultural attractions – the redevelopment uses all the buzz-words of the dynamic, creative, and hip global city (Florida, 2003; Peck, 2005). LeBreton Flats will be refashioned according to the “Golden Path” of urban entrepreneurialism and the parameters of “New Urban Policy” agenda (NUP) (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez 2002) where culture and city-centre living are
increasingly important to achieving the goals of local economic development. This “local” adaptation of NUP promises a central-city destination where “people can live, work and play” (NCC, 2003). The development, packaged within the “smart growth” planning principles adopted by the City of Ottawa (City of Ottawa, 2003), and as an attractive locale to consume place and culture, promises all the amenities globally cultured residents would expect from downtown living.

Photo 1.1: Announcing the Redevelopment of LeBreton Flats, 2004.²

² Author’s picture
1.2 Time-Delayed Events

In her brilliant book *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, Kristin Ross (1996) argues that to understand the tensions within postwar liberal capitalist societies, scholars need to carefully study state-mediated economic planning interventions – and especially urban planning initiatives – oriented around creating the smooth, modernized, withdrawn “privatized” of everyday life (Ross, 1996). This postwar modernist project necessitated the huge upheaval of everyday life to make way for national capitalist expansion. By periodizing postwar urban change as an event, Ross (1996) directs attention to the “extraordinarily concerted” character of state-led modernization that “burst” onto postwar society. For Ross, the postwar social scientific rendering of everyday life was dramatic, breathless and swift. In this rapid shift, everyday life was colonized by the relentless consumerism of postwar capitalism. The modern impulse entered every nook and cranny, including the realm of the home, facilitated by the intervention of state bureaucracies and planning agencies (Merrifield, 2006).

The post-World War II urban reform movement proposed non-revolutionary liberal solutions to the excesses of industrial capitalism and mass democracy (Berman, 1982), including building codes, zoning controls, housing reform, public financing of infrastructure, and state-supported mortgage financing (Harris, 2004; Hayden, 2003). The North America urban reform movement

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3 The term is used according to Henri Lefebvre’s description of the deprivation, dissolution, enclosure and withdrawal from participatory everyday life associated with modernization, industrialization, and the expansion of the commodity into the “totality of daily life.” For a discussion of the colonization of everyday life by the postwar commodities see Lefebvre, 2002a, Merrifield, 2006 and Parr, 1999.

4 Modernization, here, at least heuristically, can be read as an “event” (while recognizing modernization properly speaking as a process that looks backward and forward).
latched onto the city planning agenda that was developed in interwar Europe. The transatlantic migration of ideas led to an urban renewal consensus that embraced technocratic management and international modernism within and through vastly expanded state bureaucracies (Rodgers, 1998; Klemek, 2004). The scientific rendering of social and urban life was practiced within an increasingly professionalized field of urban planning (Ward, 2002). This expanding rule of experts was formalized by the rise of planning commissions and urban planning programs in North America and Europe (Klemek, 2004). Experts from a range of fields turned their attention to the problems of industrialization (Purdy, 1997). “The political and economic rationale for urban renewal,” Klemek argues (2004: 12) was “a microcosm of postwar Keynesian liberalism.”

Yet despite the cross-Atlantic consensus, each urban renewal project would leave a particular imprint according to distinctive professional and political cultures and national character. Drawing on Ross’ insight on the national state-led character (in the French context) of postwar modernization, and applying it to the Canadian context, this study will consider the production of the modern capital as an “event” with significant “afterlives” (Ross, 1996 and 2002). In this context, the complimentary stories of postwar urban renewal and neoliberal urbanism help develop a political, ideological and cultural “text of history” (Buck-Morss, 1990).

Recent interventions in the literature on neoliberalism have urged critical scholars to “appreciate both diversity and consistency across particular
neoliberalizations” (Prudham, 2005: 15). This call to search for the “similarities among differences” of neoliberalism (Castree, 2005) can be used to uncover the ways in which the lines between the Keynesian and neoliberal urbanism are blurred both forward and backward: Keynesian impulses are reformulated into the neoliberal urban development projects and neoliberal characteristics blowback onto the Keynesian project.

The initial federal intervention was associated with the systematic disinvestment of the central city of postwar Keynesianism (Smith, 1996; Weber, 2002), and the expropriation was partially premised on the potential of increased land-rents. While the contemporary urban renewal borrows heavily from the preferred urban development practices of neoliberal urbanism, the NCC maintains an ongoing interest in rent-extraction. There are also similarities in how national subjectivity is woven into the landscape of both redevelopments. The National Defense headquarters (part of the initial urban renewal project) and the new Canadian War Museum are eerily similar in their symbolic representation of the nation. Both these projects were anchored in “pedagogies of the nation.” In the 1960s the working-class residents and their neighbourhood were judged to be unfit for the modern postwar nation. Set to be replaced by high-rise office towers, parks and superhighways, the progressive urban renewal project relied on a discursive “territorial stigmatization” (Purdy, 2003). The federal state has continued to engineer new national subjectivities where visitors are prodded to interact directly with narratives of “just war” on the “regenerative” grounds of the new War Museum.
The new development on LeBreton Flats continues the process of displacement and exclusion, extending an abstract national envelope over the differentiated spaces of the Flats. The contemporary redevelopment of LeBreton Flats relies upon the national production of nature to obscure subsequent waves of “displacement” and “dispossession” on LeBreton Flats. Urban dispossession, the process by which white settlers acquire land, occurs through various legal and state practices including “military violence, forcible removal, legal fraud, state expropriation, forced extinguishment, treaty abrogation, and the non-enforcement of protective legislation” (Blomley, 2004: 109). Both dispossession and displacement⁵ are active and ongoing processes that require continued display of “spatial technologies of power” such as surveying, planning, map making, place naming (Blomley, 2004).⁶ In both the initial expropriation, and the current embourgeoisement, the acquisition and maintenance of proper property use and ownership is a guiding principle reinforced by the planning authority of the NCC. This is entirely consistent with the longer trajectory of liberalism which holds property at the centre of its regulatory regime (McCarthy and Prudham 2004). There is no contradiction between state and non-state actions. The state is needed to enforce processes of dispossession, both materially and discursively. The least fortunate are most often targeted and disposed by the state’s legal power to guarantee ownership. Most critical to this case of federal intervention

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⁵ Dispossession is related to the process “displacement” which is the “conceptual removal of aboriginal people from the city” and replacement by white settlers (Blomley, 2004: 109, 112).
⁶ In his study of property and the postcolonial city, Blomley (2004: 109-110) distinguishes between the related and always partial and incomplete processes of dispossession and displacement.
across time periods, “the formation of national identity is, in part, a mediation of the meanings and significance of land as property” (Blomley, 2004: 38). This national narrative of property tells the story of how land should be ordered, and who should be excluded or included from ownership.

These backwards and forwards time lines of governance practices exemplify the many ways in which neoliberalism is not a radically new project. Federal interventions are part of a longer project of intervention in social regulation. Yet, in the messy and long-term reorientation of the state, there are distinct differences in how the state operates in the post-Keynesian struggle over the vestiges of egalitarian liberalism. The contemporary redevelopment, conducted under the more assertive networked style of governance of “advanced neoliberal rule” (Rose, 1999), conforms closely with the norms of neoliberalism. This includes the promotion of entrepreneurship, the assignment of privatization, the deployment of marketization, the creation of market proxies for public services, and the administration of public goods through quasi-public entities such as urban development corporations (Castree, 2005; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002). “Governance-beyond-the-state” and public-private partnerships now dominate federal management of the national capital.

The time-delayed _embourgeoisement_ of LeBreton Flats has renewed mass celebration in the “Nation’s Capital” while simultaneously becoming the centrepiece to a major redevelopment of Ottawa’s downtown core that blankets the past with commodified performance of national culture. The NCC’s enforcement of urban redevelopment, this thesis argues, is an “untidy
agglomeration of impulses.” Although it borrows heavily from the neoliberal development agenda, the redevelopment on the Flats continues to abide by the historically and geographically embedded logic of federal involvement in planning a national capital. The NCC’s dual role is as much director of neoliberal urban redevelopment as it is a promoter of national culture and beautification. The present incarnation of the NCC’s redevelopment grafts the practices of New Urban Policy (NUP) to its traditional role as the defender and promoter of the crown’s interest in the nation’s capital. The NCC’s adoption of neoliberal governance has not displaced the continuing project of national beautification, but rather, neoliberal practices have been adapted to the trajectory of federal governance of the City of Ottawa.

1.3 Placing Literature: The NCC and Neoliberal Governance

In A Brief History of Neoliberalism David Harvey (2005: 2) provides a definition of this process:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework for such practices.

As critical geographers have noted, neoliberalism is a new religion committed to extending markets and increasing competition with overall disdain for any type of Keynesian collectivist strategy (Peck and Tickell, 1994). For many commentators, neoliberalism – or what as been (re)baptized as the process of

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7 I thank my supervisor Jason Hackworth for offering the concept of an “agglomeration of impulses” during the early conceptual stages of my dissertation and to Robert Johnson for suggesting this agglomeration is, in fact, “untidy.”
neoliberalization – is occurring with particular intensity on the urban scale (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Peck and Tickell, 2002).

Cities have become "institutional laboratories for neoliberal policy experiments" (Peck and Tickell, 2002: 368; Harvey, 2005), locales for “variegated policy experimentation” (Larner, 2005a), and more generally the preferred locale for the intensified imposition of “market rule on all aspects of social life” (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 5; Rose, 1999). Through a variety of state interventions and institutional forms, institutions at the sub-national level, such as the NCC, are being mobilized as part of the ongoing uneven, multi-scalar, and multifarious geographical reterritorialization of urban governance.

In terms of urban redevelopment, the reorganization of state functions has externalized local development through privatization, de-regulation, and quasi-private institutional development while interiorizing neoliberalism into urban policy  

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8 Scholars have preferred to consider “neoliberalization as a process instead of neoliberalism as a “thing.”” (Heynen and Robbins, 2005: 6)

9 Geographers have played a key role in the debate over the political economy of scale and the re-scaling of governance associated with neoliberalism. Described as a simultaneous upward and downward shift in the roles and functions of governance (Swyngedouw, 1997), the social production of scale is a complex and messy process “constituted through its historically evolving positionality within a larger relational grid of vertically ‘stretched’ and horizontally ‘dispersed’ socio-spatial processes, relations and interdependencies” (Brenner, 2001: 606). The process of scalar structuration is not “a single nested scalar hierarchy” or an “absolute pyramid,” rather it resembles a mosaic, a messy configuration (Brenner, 2001; Masson, 2005). This includes a reterritorialization of governance outside the state (Rose, 1999; Swyngedouw, 2006) to the global, national, regional, urban scale (Brenner, 2004). Attention to the complex processes of social reproduction and consumption also highlights how neighbourhoods, homes, and bodies, as scales of analysis, are also being reconfigured as part of the radical restructuring of social regulation (Marston, 2000), and part of “everyday social routines and struggles” (Brenner, 2001: 604). This opens up the question of scale to how race, gender, identity, nationalism and citizenship are intertwined in this messy and contingent biopolitical rescaling of governance (Larner and LeHeron, 2002; Hindess, 2005; Isin, 2007; Moore, 2008).
regimes. Additionally, various "shock treatments" such as place-marketing, enterprise/empowerment zones, urban development corporations, private-public partnerships, property redevelopment and boosterism (Fainstein, 1994; Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Hackworth, 2007; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002; Brenner and Theodore, 2002) have been deployed as part of the tool kit used by local boosters, planners, engineers, property developers and politicians to meet the parameters of reconfigured urban policy regimes. The techniques associated with the “golden path” of entrepreneurialism are part of a more assertive networked style of governance, where a host of actors compete for the urban policy agenda, and where flexibility, efficiency, competitiveness, state entrepreneurship and collaboration have become the standard bearer and the “best practices” of urban governance (Harvey, 1989b; Rodriguez, 2001; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002). Informal, network-based governance structures have become the norm, resulting in "a new constellation of governance articulated via a proliferating maze of opaque networks, fuzzy institutional arrangements, ill-defined responsibilities, and ambiguous political objectives and priorities" (Swyngedouw, 2005: 17). These non-transparent, ad hoc, context-dependent and networked institutional ensembles, critics argue, render existing power-geometries even more exclusive, and less democratic (Fainstein, 1994; Swyngedouw, 2005).

As a national-level institution without clear lines of accountability to the local or national population, the NCC’s historic closed decision making tendencies work well with this "opaque and fuzzy" urban governance regime
The NCC is well-placed to act as an agent of neoliberalism’s “fast-policy transfer” (Peck, 2001) as well as a local agent for the globally enforced discipline of neoliberal governance (Hackworth, 2007).

However, as many have noted, the process of urban policy and neoliberal policy experimentation is not just happening to cities. Urban coalitions of politicians, developers, and municipal decision makers are helping reconfigure neoliberalism’s ideal type to local constellations of power and to local institutional challenges (Brenner and Theodore, 2002). As a contested and variegated process, the effects of neoliberalism vary depending on the local social and political context.

Neoliberalism is a “complex cultural project” in constant evolution (Wilson, 2004). Economic and cultural projects are merging in the production of urban landscapes (Zukin, 1982; Mitchell, 2004; Leslie and Rantisi, 2006), creating new subjectivities that can be “deliberately produced to increase the circulation of capital” (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005: 213). Culture is not apart from cities, nor is it an autonomous phenomenon (Mitchell, 1999) but, in fact, “strategically produced” and intimately tied up in the production of cities (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005: 215). This new cultural logic is merging with economic rationality to create vibrant urban landscapes and vectors of fast capital (Mitchell, 2004; Hackworth and Rekers, 2005).

The redevelopment of LeBreton Flats is an example of how urban neoliberalism is conflating an agglomeration of impulses in the “rolling-out” of neoliberal urban development projects (Peck and Tickell, 2002), and how
national culture is being deployed as part of the reterritorialization of urban governance. The redevelopment is being conducted under the more assertive networked style of governance of “advanced neoliberal rule” (Rose, 1999), yet it has shown a simultaneous renewal of the “old” rationale of federal intervention in local development. The NCC has updated the production of national urban space to a new model of capital accumulation where nature and culture are key selling features of urban redevelopment schemes. The present incarnation of the NCC’s efforts to redevelop the site has grafted NUP to its traditional role as the defender and promoter of the crown’s interest in the nation’s capital. In short, neoliberalism has not displaced the NCC’s impulse to design a grand city for the unity and pride of the nation (and the glory of the sovereign) but rather has adapted the NCC’s historic mission to new ends.

Historically the NCC has mediated nature through its various urban interventions. The latest intervention continues this trajectory. Indeed, the state, has not been hollowed-out (Jessop, 2002); rather there has been a shift in how and at which scale the state intervenes, including the production of what recently has been referred to as “neoliberal nature.” Neoliberal nature is the process by which neoliberalism, through a decades-long interaction with environmentalism, has become an “environmental project” (McCarthy and Prudham, 2004: 3). In this paradigm nature is reclaimed, managed, saved, or simply co-opted through further commodification, privatization, marketization, financialization, or accumulation by dispossession (Smith, 2007; Castree, 2005; Prudham, 2006). As part of this deep and intensive capture of nature which is more specific to the
urban context, “neoliberal ventures have increasingly assimilated environmentalism through key discursive shifts” (Smith, 2007; McCarthy and Prudham, 2004: 5). Commodified nature is used to sell “green” urban development projects. In the present redevelopment, the production of neoliberal nature and discourses of nature, have become a key component of the image-selling and promotion of the redeveloped “capital all Canadians can be proud of.” This includes the image projection of wild urban forests, environmental friendly toilets, green roofs, and beautiful views for consumption by condominium dwellers along the green shores of the Ottawa River. Neoliberal nature absorbs environmentalism into new opportunities for further capital accumulation, especially in a site where nature has been scrubbed clean.

1.4 Outline and Question

Drawing on the extensive and expanding literature on neoliberal urbanism (Peck and Tickell, 1994; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2001; Peck, 2005; Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Isin, 1998; Larner, 2000; Keil, 2002; Harvey, 2005; Hackworth and Moriah, 2006) and an emerging concern for neoliberal nature (McCarthy and Prudham, 2004; Prudham, 2004; Heynen and Robbins, 2005; Desfor and Keil, 2004; Smith, 2007), the following chapters excavate a “variegated” neoliberal form in the National Capital Region (NCR). The thesis investigates how neoliberal urbanism is “actually” implemented and how national strategies and the politics of urban renewal play out in a grounded case study. The study of this meso-level institutional adaptation of state-spatial strategies, as

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10 NCC Reflecting a Nation: Creating a Capital Experience for all Canadians, June 2005.
Brenner (2004) argues, allows case studies to be simultaneously sensitive to the specificity of the concrete level as well to political and economic state strategies.

As part of the post-World War II expansion of the Canadian state (Jenson, 1990), the NCC experimented with urban renewal. In the contemporary retransmission of these impulses, the NCC has adapted its old institutional momentum to a neoliberalized form. The NCC’s particularity raises the question of the “untidy bits” that fall outside the neoliberal storyline. Federal interventions in the national capital need to be understood as a mutation of urban governance following its own institutional trajectory. By exploring the NCC’s direct involvement in the management of LeBreton Flats, this thesis examines the ways in which the federal level intervenes in Urban Development Projects, and specifically how the NCC as a federal meso-level urban-based institution operates. In the context of debates over the political contingency of scale, and state-led intervention in urban development policy, this thesis examines the political rationale behind meso-level federal interventions in the National Capital, i.e. how local policy experimentation is actually implemented. In tracing the development and redevelopment of LeBreton Flats, this thesis asks: How has the federal government historically intervened in LeBreton Flats and how, in the current context, does urban development policy adapt old beautification impulses to create a new up-to-date model of green urban renewal?

The remaining sections of this chapter provide an overview of the historical, geographical and social context of LeBreton Flats. The next chapter examines the practices and institutional configuration of neoliberal urbanism
within the context of debates over “variegated” neoliberal urban governance. In drawing on this literature, chapter 2 reviews the various dimensions associated with the emergence New Urban Policy. In particular, the chapter focuses on how the federal state continues to remold sub-national institutions according to the neoliberalized “city-on-display” and how the performance of national pedagogies in museums and sites of pilgrimage are enacted through such urban development strategies. This literature review argues that contemporary interventions on urban neoliberalism and neoliberal nature are key to understanding the configuration, dynamics and impulses driving urban redevelopment, especially in the context of the nation-state’s meso-institutional neoliberal urbanization.

The story of the Plan for the National Capital and how this new model of modern urban planning was promoted through various tools of “democratic propaganda” is the subject of chapter 3. By reviewing the post-World War II story of national urban renewal, the third chapter provides a detailed account of the National Defense Headquarters as heart of the urban renewal project on the Flats. It shows how the expropriation and the dislocation of its marginalized and stigmatized residents emerged from an ambitious state-led initiative to remodel Ottawa into a modern national capital.

In the context of this postwar moment, chapter 4 reviews legal and policy changes in the NCC’s governance structure. The chapter charts political, policy and planning context behind the multi-scalar policy consensus for the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats into a green and national Urban Development
Project. In tracing this development, the chapter shows how the NCC adopted and adapted to the neoliberal urban development paradigm, including the application of fuzzy institutional arrangements such as private-public partnerships.

The last chapter focuses on the geography of the “new” Canadian War Museum to show this particular state-spatial project can be considered simultaneously as part of the imagined community of nation-ness and as a variegated form of neoliberal policy experimentation. This final chapter examines how the memory of war is etched into the “empty” space of LeBreton Flats as an example of how cultural policy has been adapted to the parameters of neoliberal policy experimentation.

In sum, this research project proposes to re-think the urban/nation nexus in the context of Canadian urban political economy to explore how historically embedded ideas about national culture and nature permeated planning practices and reinforced state-spatial strategies in planning the “Nation’s Capital.” In each of these time-delayed episodes, federal planning dispossessed inner-city residents of LeBreton Flats for the good of the nation. National aspirations were etched onto the “empty” space of LeBreton Flats according to dominant social, political and economic conditions, and within the discursive construction of the national narrative. The Flats were refashioned to fit the abstract container of the nation. In the initial expropriation the Flats were cleansed of the unfit subjects to make way for un grand project of national urban renewal. The contemporary strategy builds on these impulses and adapts them to contemporary neoliberal
governance practices. The time-delayed *embroisement* of LeBreton Flats grafts the practices of New Urban Policy (NUP) to its traditional role as the defender and promoter of the crown’s interest in the nation’s capital. However, discourses and images of nature and culture have been mobilized to create a site-specific redevelopment for the expression of the nation in accordance with dominant forms of production and consumption of urban space. This up-to-date green national spectacle and its fuzzy institutional arrangement blur the lines between Keynesian urbanism and neoliberal urbanism, between nature and culture, between subject and nation to celebrate the nation. A back and forth view shows how the contemporary redevelopment of LeBreton Flats builds on and consolidates the federal government historically and geographically embedded interventions in LeBreton Flats. The ongoing project of displacement is intimately tied up in national projects of urban renewal.
1.5 Placing LeBreton Flats: Site History

For almost a hundred years, the Flats served as home for successive waves of lumber industry workers. The residents of the Flats reflected the French-Canadian and Irish background of the majority of the working-class in the Ottawa-Hull region (Taylor, 1986); the French-Canadian lumbermen had been

11 Map of City of Ottawa, 1936, City of Ottawa Corporation, Ottawa Room, Ottawa Public Library.
attracted to the area to work on the river-runs down the Ottawa River to the Montréal timber market (Lower, 1938), while the Irish labourers were attracted to the area to help build the Rideau Canal (Taylor, 1986: 84; Bond, 1984: 47).

Faced with discriminatory hiring policies, a virtual monopoly on work contracts by French-Canadians, and devastating living conditions, Irish workers formed a direct action group using “intimidation and harassment” to push the French off river drives to ensure themselves jobs, higher wages, and better job prospects (Mika, 1982: 131-132; Taylor, 1986: 34). The rivalry which culminated in the infamous “Shiner’s War” of the 1830s (Mika, 1982: 132; Bond, 1984: 47; Cross, 1973), included numerous events in which gangs resorted to “violence, mutilation, revenge, jail-breaking and outright assassination” in a “proletarian war” (Taylor, 1986: 34).

The economic opportunities of the flourishing timber trade of the 1840s near Chaudière Falls encouraged a further wave of migration to the area (Taylor, 1986) and French and Irish workers now battled over the right to build the Chaudière Mills (Taylor, 1986). After the surge, the number of industrial positions for workers near the Chaudière Falls expanded quickly, reducing fierce competition over jobs. In Ottawa as a whole, industrial work doubled between 1851 and 1861, doubling once more from 1861-1871 (Taylor, 1986: 63, 211). A large part of this growth is attributed to the industry at the Chaudière Falls.

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12 French-Canadians, who had developed skills as woodsmen and boatmen in the lumber trade were employed in semi-skilled positions, while Irish workers were generally considered to have little skill, were harshly discriminated against and given in the most menial or dangerous jobs. As Taylor (1986: 32) notes, “They were at the bottom of the social scale… the Irish were looked upon as a sort of sub-human species. As canal labourers they worked – and died – in great numbers.”
During these two decades, the “industrial community of LeBreton Flats mushroomed” and by 1870 the area was “covered with mills, and lumber piles, the modest stone houses of entrepreneurs, and the hundreds of rough-cast wooden dwellings of the new industrial labour force” (Taylor, 1986: 64). The harsh realities of everyday life reflected the economic struggle faced by the Irish and French-Canadians workers who were over-represented in the unskilled and semi-skilled professions.\footnote{During the height of the lumber and milling industry, over 83\% of the unskilled workers were either Irish or French, and 71\% were Catholic (Taylor, 1986: 84).}

The industrialization and urbanization of the Chaudière Falls and LeBreton Flats led to a sudden mobilization of the unorganized workforce. Most dramatically, the strike of 1891 marked a moment in the history of Ottawa’s

\footnote{Topley Studio Fonds, LAC, PA-009427.}

\textit{Photo 1.3: Lumber Mills at Chaudière Falls, 1909.}
labour movement. Sparked by wage reductions initiated by the mill owners of Chaudière Falls in the face of a recession, on September 21, 1891, a strike started at the Perley and Pattee mills (Taylor, 1986: 84; McKenna, 1972). The unorganized strike quickly spread from the Perley and Pattee mill until the entire lumber industry in Ottawa was shut down, with over 1,500 workers walking off the job (including railways workers who had joined the strike) calling for a return to their former wage levels.\textsuperscript{15} The strike grew “into a strike of great proportions” involving over 2,400 workers (Mckenna, 1972: 192). The “spontaneous strike” stimulated a nascent labour movement that would eventually bring the mill owners to the bargaining table with the Knights of Labour (McKenna, 1972). Over the decades following the strike, a number of unions, such as the International Woodworkers of America (IWA),\textsuperscript{16} were able to organize workers in the plants around the Chaudière Falls.

Despite the success of the 1891 strike, most workers of the Flats continued to subsist on the meager wages of the timber trade. When commodity prices fell, such as they did during the 1870s recession, workers and their families suffered as lumber mills cut back production. In one such case in 1875, the Bronson Company cut its labour force by half and offered workers almost half their previous monthly wage. The city depended on a large labour force subject to starvation and depression while unemployed during winter, and to twelve-hour days while employed in season (Taylor, 1986: 88). This dependence on

\textsuperscript{15} LeBreton Flats, with its close proximity to the lumber enclave of Chaudière Falls, was home to many of these lumber workers. The 1891 strike, and subsequent organizing, was aided by the sense of community and the close quarters of LeBreton Flats (Taylor, 1986: 84).

\textsuperscript{16} LAC, ICO, R2374, vol. 42-44.
commodity prices “led to a marginal existence at the best of times… subject to impoverished when times were difficult” (Taylor, 1986: 88). The toll on the workers of the district was evident.

As the lumber and milling industry waned, the Flats became a more diverse district in terms of employment. Just as industrial decline was underway, the civil service began to expand rapidly. Between 1900 and 1910, Ottawa’s employment in the civil service sector expanded threefold, and nearly tripled again in the subsequent decade (Taylor, 1986: 120). This increasing employment diversity changed the employment base of LeBreton Flats and, by the 1940s, a cross-section of residents’ occupations included labourers, housewives, clerks, salesmen, truck-drivers, foremen, painters, waitresses and mechanics.  

The people of the Flats were mostly unskilled and semi-skilled labourers, including clerical and manufacturing workers, and in the period immediately before expropriation workers living on the Flats earned almost one-fifth less than the city average. In terms of education, the Flats had a higher than average portion of its population with under eight years of schooling, only a small percentage who had completed high school, and overall lower levels of education in comparison with the city as a whole. Even as the old lumber town became a more modern city, LeBreton Flats remained a mixed-use, working-class, low-income neighbourhood. LeBreton Flats remained a “community of the

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17 Petition to Minister of Public Works, February 1947, LAC, RG11 vol. 3503, 12880-123.
19 The lumber barons who owned the mills had moved out and into luxury homes along the river’s cliffs in Ottawa’s upscale districts.
“workingman” (Taylor, 1986: 94), though, as with other Canadian central city
neighbourhoods, population was falling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Dwellings $^{20}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>3401</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>2664</td>
<td>642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>2065</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2292</td>
<td>542</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The largely Catholic families of French-Canadian and Irish decent
continued to seek out the area’s affordable rents and housing and in the decades
before expropriation the religious composition of the neighbourhood remained
stable, even as the percentage of residents of British descent was falling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population by religion (over 100)</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1961</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2664</td>
<td>2292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>1699</td>
<td>1511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Church</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


$^{20}$ Statistics Canada, Census 1951, 1956, 1961, City of Ottawa, Tract 32
By 1901, a small Italian community had emerged in relative isolation south
of LeBreton Flats in and around St. Anthony’s Catholic Church (Taylor, 1986:
124; Assen, 1979: 92). Many Italians also moved into the Flats proper altering
the Irish, British and French-Canadian mix. The Flats was becoming an
immigrant catchment area as it experienced significant postwar migration (Taylor,
1986), even as total population was falling.

By 1961, a year before the expropriation, just under 10% of the total
population of LeBreton Flats was of Italian origin, and according to real-estate
reports, newcomers to the Flats were often willing to pay above existing housing
prices to establish themselves and their extended families in the area.21 Still,
even with this influx of owner-occupants, the Flats continued to be dominated by

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tenant occupation at levels far higher than the city average. Contrary to reports marking the Flats as a transient area, many residents had lived on the Flats for several decades. In 1951 over 77 per cent of all the dwellings had been occupied by the same residents for more than five years (Census, 1951). In the census immediately before expropriation this figure remained significantly high though some long-term residents had clearly moved away. By 1961 45 per cent of the dwellings were occupied by the same families for more than three years (Census, 1961). Housing, perhaps the most visual of markers of everyday life in the Flats, was dominated by long-term tenant occupancy.

Before expropriation, taverns, light manufacturing, craft production, foundries, and residential dwellings were all interspersed in the “mixed” neighbourhood. Residential dwellings on LeBreton Flats varied widely and included single detached homes, semi-detached homes, row houses, and mixed-use (commercial and residential) structures, all in close proximity to services, transit, and employment, and all occupied for long periods of time. The built environment of the Flats was a mixed community of “single family dwellings, doubles, duplexes, triples, apartments, commercial, retail, manufacturing, and warehousing,” and given their construction after the fire of 1900, almost all the buildings were between 50-60 years old. This same unzoned, mixed-use

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22 In 1951, census data records no owner-occupied dwellings, while in 1961, it records 103 owner occupied dwellings. This may be a statistical error; nonetheless, it shows that even if owner-occupied buildings were on the rise, the vast majority of dwellings were tenant-occupied.
23 Appraisal of Lieff Lumber Ltd. prepared for the NCC by James A. Crawford, NALC, RG34, vol. 10, F-4-3, 7.
24 Appraisal of Lieff Lumber Ltd. prepared for the NCC by James A. Crawford, NALC, RG34, vol. 10, F-4-3, 7; Census, 1961, Tract 32.
character of the Flats would push real-estate surveyors to deem the Flats as an “unharmonious development” with “a lack of pride and ownership.”

Photo 1.5: Child Pushing Stroller, Ottawa Street after Expropriation and Before Demolition, 1963

25 J. Allan Kelly Realities, Assessment of 77-83 Broad St, RG34, 1979-80/128, F-5-10.
26 Ted Grant Collection, LAC, 1981-181, 63-2374.
1.6 Industrial Promise

LeBreton Flats was physically and economically dominated by the milling and lumber operations of the Chaudière Falls area. The hydraulic power of the Falls would allow the lumber workers to “metabolize” the vast lumber resources of the Ottawa Valley. The industrial promise of Chaudière Falls was set into motion when, in 1849, the Province of Canada, acting as agent for the Crown, “acquired” by purchase all the “right, title, claim and interest of the riparian owners on the North Shore of the Ottawa River.” The Province, acting as an agent of the Crown, subsequently circulated a notice of sale in the provincial papers and city papers of New England. In 1852, the Crown sold the first set of hydraulic lots by public auction. The sale marked the entry of American capital into the Ottawa Valley lumber industry. The American capitalist who bought up the cheap water leases from the Chaudière Falls would use the water power to transform favourable timber limit licenses issued by the Provinces of Québec and

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27 Drawing on Marx, Swyngedouw (1999; 2005) refers to the “metabolism of nature” as the complex processes by which labour power and technology combine to transform physical nature into produced nature (cf. Worster, 1985; Smith, 1991; Castree, 1995). Swyngedouw’s description of the metabolism of nature foregrounds the symbolic, political, ideological and material implications of capitalist production of space and nature, as well as material qualities of this mediated transformation of nature.

28 LAC, MG III 26, vol. 706.

29 The potential power of Chaudière Falls was estimated at between 125 and 150 run of stones “but capable of increases to a much greater extent.” Each water lot was estimated at having the power of 4 to 10 runs of stones. Water lots were apportioned and leased for 21 years and rent was set at 5 pounds payable twice-yearly. To prevent acquisition by speculators lease-holders were allowed one year to proceed “in good faith the work on the machinery for which the water power was intended” and to build a structure with a value of at least 100 pounds, Memorandum Sale of Hydraulic Building Lots, and Leasing of Water power, Chaudière Falls – Bytown, LAC, RG 11, Vol. 4326, File 2991-A-A; Order in Council, 1852, LAC, RG 11, Vol. 4326, File 2991-A-A.

30 Among the buyers were Levi Young, A.H. Baldwin, O.H. Baldwin, H.F. Bronson, J.J. Harris, W.G. Perley, and G.B. Pattee, with Harris and Bronson. Harris and Bronson, and Pattee and Perley who acquired the prime water lots (Brault, 1986: 186) would leave the largest mark on the area (Bond, 1984: 56-57; Lower, 1938).
Ontario into valuable timber and lumber commodities (Lower, 1938; Dales, 1957). Among prominent members of the “American Colony” (Taylor, 1986), E.B. Eddy established a mill on the Hull side to manufacture matches, wooden clothespins and bowls in 1854 (Mika, 1982: 123). A few years later J.R. Booth would start building his milling empire on the southern banks of the Ottawa River near LeBreton Flats to process the over 4,000 square miles of timber rights he owned (Mika, 1982: 123: Bond, 1984: 57). Another group, led by Harris and Bronson, would establish their own mills (with a capacity of up to 100,000 logs annually) along prime water lots of Victoria Island (Taylor, 1986: 54). Altogether, by 1874, the five largest lumber producers in Canada were located in the Ottawa Valley and by 1890 the mills of J.R. Booth alone were producing more board feet of lumber than any mill worldwide (Fisher, 2000: 54). With such a bounty, and the emerging hydroelectric technologies, boosters imagined Ottawa as a potential centre for industry to rival Montreal and Toronto as a “new industrial heartland” (Taylor, 1986; Nelles, 1974).

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31 By 1874, the five largest lumber producers in Canada were located in the Ottawa Valley, including the Bronson and Weston Lumber Company, the E.B Eddy Match Company, and the Perley and Pattee Company, Ottawa Citizen, August 16, 1926.
Photo 1.6: Industry near LeBreton Flats, 1900

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32 Plan showing the extent of Ottawa-Hull Conflagration, Thursday, April 17th, 1900, Ottawa Room, Ottawa Public Library.
In order to meet the both the demands of the local producers and a new desire for the efficient use of water resources, the federal Department of Public Works (DPW) committed to undertake and fund local improvements, including enlarging the dam and the incoming channels. These state-initiated investments, consistent with longstanding Canadian state support for the staples industry (Panitch, 1977; Mahon, 1984), were aimed at increasing the profitability of the local water works and of local firms. From this early period, the federal government played a critical role in the negotiation of land ownership and in mediating the land-rent potential of the Chaudière-LeBreton area. The DPW would continue to mediate conflict over resource use and access to water power on the Flats. Most directly, the Department of Public Works (DPW) intervened under purview of the Chief Engineer to smooth over ongoing disputes over water usage and chronic water shortages in low-water periods, shortages which grew in importance as milling stretched from seasonal into year long operations. With more efficient production in mind, the DPW oversaw a modernization of the water works under the terms of an agreement negotiated between the various users and the federal government. Above all else, the Crown ensured that the distribution, use and control of water rights were exercised in the national interest. These were the first signs of government-led intervention in the urban realm with an eye on the national interest.

34 LAC, MG III 26, vol. 706.
35 Any changes in the engineering of the river could deprive specific downriver lots owners of water flow, of mechanical power, and of profit.
The ambitious dreams of the Chaudière Falls as the centre of a new industrial heartland would fade as the turn of the twentieth-century drew near. The white pine timber trade was drawing to a close, reaching its peak around 1890 (Gillis, 1973; Lower, 1938). Alongside the depression of the early 1890s, this decline would spell the end for smaller lumber companies (Taylor, 1986). In 1900, a huge fire affected the Chaudière region and the adjacent working-class lumber district of LeBreton Flats, adding further stress to an already declining industry. The fire destroyed the majority of buildings and machinery in the industrial district. Damage was estimated at $20 million (Fisher, 2000: 47). With so many operations burned down only some of the larger players were able to rebuild. After the fire only the E.B. Eddy Company, oriented around pulp and paper, and the J.R. Booth Company rebuilt their mills. The Bronson Company focused on hydro-power, and the Hull mills were bought up by the International Paper conglomerate (Taylor, 1986).

### 1.7 Postwar Residue

The Chaudière Falls never became the centre of a new interior industrial heartland that was envisioned by city boosters and by the 1950s what was left

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36 Though only seven deaths were directly related to the fire, 3,000 buildings were destroyed, and almost 8,000 people, or 14% of Ottawa’s population were left homeless (Fear, 1979; Fisher, 2000: 46). The lumber kings were less than sympathetic with the plight of their workers. For example, local lumber baron, J.R. Booth blamed the fire on the wood shingles of the houses of the newly organized workers, of whom two thirds were French or Irish, rather than the hazard of the lumber piles which posed a greater risk (Fear, 1979).

37 Response by G. Brophy June 23, 1900, LAC, MG 28, III 26, vol. 810; The 1901 agreement provided for consolidation of water rights under 5 owners: JR Booth (Lots B to J), the Ottawa Electric Company (Lots K to P), the Ottawa Electric Railway Company (Lots Q, part of R, T), the Ottawa Investment Company (Lots S and part of R) and the Ottawa Power Company Ltd (Lots U to Z).
were the “vestiges of an industrial community” (Taylor, 1986: 77). In the adjacent Chaudière District, only a few hydro-electric power-houses as well as a lone pulp and paper plant (E.B. Eddy) remained. Rather than a centre of industrial production, the area in and around the Chaudière Falls and LeBreton Flats was fast becoming a container of the residue of industrial promise. While the generally mixed character of the neighbourhood (commercial, industrial, residential) had not changed, the “trend to industrialization” had ceased. Very few new industries started up in the early 1960s. However, despite this trend, Booth Street between Oregon and Fleet Streets remained almost exclusively occupied by light and heavy industrial users. A varied base of light industrial manufacturers, warehousing, foundries, automotive services, and a variety of retail outlets serving the community and the city at large continued to operate and locate on the Flats. At the same time, scrap dealers, car parts yards, and other merchants of ruin – some with less than legal intentions – were locating in increasing numbers on LeBreton Flats.

The Chaudière Falls and LeBreton Flats Districts were fading in terms of their importance and scope of their capacity to metabolize the Valley’s natural wealth through the timber trade. Yet, in the doomsday of demise, some of the remaining shareholders and managers of the once-powerful Bronson Company argued that the vestiges of industry could be cleaned up into a new beautified facility for power generation. As a longtime employee of the Bronson Company,

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38 Area Neighbourhood Data, LAC, RG34, vol. 10, F-4-2.
and grandson of E.H. Bronson, Bill Munroe argued in a letter to the President of the Bronson Company:

The place is littered with evidence of abandoned pioneer water power sites and equipment, and all existing developments on the Ontario side, are over fifty years of age. The time is ripe for Ottawa to clean house as regards this picturesque, historic, and commercially valuable feature located close to the very centre of the City.\(^{40}\)

The new hydro plant would provide an updated version of the material and symbolic metabolism of nature’s wealth in the Valley. The dam would be an ode to the looming Canadian centennial. The attempt to promote hydro-power shows the enormous hold of dreams of progress, and how fragments of the past were used to reconstruct collective imaginations of nature on the Flats. Fragments of history become reformed into new forms. This last ditch holdout was only a dream image. In the decade to come the old architecture of a bygone era was erased from the landscape by federal expropriation, opening the possibility of another form of state-directed intervention decades later under the parameters of neoliberal urbanism.

1.8 Notes on Method

The archive for this study consists of a wide range of textural and visual documents. Sources include the Library and Archives of Canada (LAC), the City of Ottawa Archives (COA), the NCC Library and Archives, the National Art Gallery Library, the City of Ottawa, the NCC, and documents acquitted through Government of Canada Access to Information Requests (ATIP). Read against

the national landscape, these documents show how state-led interventions in urban planning had direct and long-lasting effects on the everyday life of the residents of LeBreton Flats. To follow the story of expropriation the following archival sources were consulted: the records of federal planning agencies, the collections of federal departments and ministries, cabinet documents and decisions, personal archives, architectural plans, and photographic records. Other historic sources include newspapers, planning and policy documents, promotional films, legislation, and House of Commons Debates. To trace the neoliberal extension of this story into the 21st century, the following sources were used: access to information requests, planning and policy documents, city reports and committee meetings, promotional pamphlets, and major dailies. For a more detailed list of archives and documents consulted, please see the Annex 1.

“History,” Benjamin argues "has no meaning in itself” and only in translation is it possible to understand. Benjamin’s challenge to the insurgent scholar is, as Arendt (1968: 51-52) argues, to "wrest thought fragments from the past... to pry loose the rich and strange, the pearls and corals in the depths and carry them to the surface" (1968: 51-52).41 It is in the wreckage of the past that the promise of modernity lay buried, and only in salvaging objects from that wreckage is translation of its maelstrom possible. As residues of power and knowledge, the aforementioned administrative records, films, drawings, photographs, policies, and newspaper reports are used to account for how

41 Benjamin’s novel contribution to Marxist thought was to allow history to speak through these historical fragments. Benjamin shared with other urban Marxist scholars a passion for the minute things, a fascination for phenomena (not ideas), and sought like other urban Marxists (most prominently Henri Lefebvre) to reconcile philosophy with the minutia of everyday-life (Merrifield, 2002)
knowledge circulated through institutions of urban governance in the national capital.

However, the present work does not accept the argument that meaning is only derived from discourse, or even the circulation of discourse. As Smith (2007: 25) argues, discourse in itself does not “steer social change.” With such a warning in mind, political economy is considered crucial to understanding these archival materials. This follows Jessop (1982) who argues that an evaluation of textural and visual documents needs to consider both discursive and extra-discursive moments. Discursive practices are only one part of the formation, re-organization and re-formation of the constitution of subjects, hegemonic power blocs, and state power (Jessup, 1982). Moreover, space is a dialectical process as active and made through struggles between conceived, lived and performed spaces (Lefebvre, 1974; 1991). The selective archive reflects ideological struggles between political forces, and the battle over ideological positions to produce urban space. As Jenson (1990) argues, an analysis of actor-centered politics is a crucial complement to structural analysis and is necessary to both rigourous social theory and to understanding past and present political action. Within this frame, these documents are evaluated as residues of the larger political and economic conflicts and struggles.

The present study also uses a “materialist-driven approach” (Ross, 2004: 130) to film. Like written documents, film is not simply a series of texts and images, but rather film images “are structured and used to convey ideas” (S. Ross, 2004, 130). Using this approach it heeds the advice of historical-
geographical scholars of urban film, and probes the connections between film representations, everyday life, ideology and power (Purdy, 2005; Siciliano, 2007). The films used in this study area are located within the material and political context of their production and consumption.\textsuperscript{42} Context requires historical research, and quite specifically, archival research is central to understanding how a film’s ideas are constructed, consumed and received (Ross, 1996; Ross, 2004). Special attention is given to framing visual fragments with the evidence gleaned from archival materials.

The research materials were chosen to show how the NCC is part of a larger configuration of institutions. They were selected to define how and why it operates at certain times, what kinds of mutations it undertakes, during particular periods in time. A historical-geographical reading of the NCC can provide glimpses of what kinds of mutations, at various points of crisis and uncertainty, were undertaken, and of how governance was adjusted in relation to the political and economic context. The tracing of these points of uncertainty provide glimpses behind the curtain of the failed spectacle transforming Ottawa into new dream images. These documents provide the raw materials from which to build an understanding of the afterlives of politics, aesthetics, and ideology.

While this archive provides a wealth of data from which to reconstruct the story of expropriation and urban revitalization, the analysis will take into account the limitations of such a textual and visual archive. As critical scholars have noted, stories of time and place, history and geography must consider more than

\textsuperscript{42} Prudy (2004, 524) explicitly draws on the ‘historical-geographical studies of the representational images of the city in the material, ideological and political context of film production and the wider society.’
story of elite decisions (Mitchell, 1997; Smith, 1991). In the field of geography scholars must be mindful of over-privileging a textual reading of built form, urban plans, and administrative decisions (Jacobs, 1996). Aware of such limitations, the documents have been read to glean resistances and experiences of marginalized subjects. In many ways, the official documentation has left these stories outside official memory, yet reverberations remain, and the selected archive is read critically for silences and lapses, for the force of power and knowledge of elite decision makers.

Chapter two situates LeBreton Flats within the critical literature on urban governance. This second chapter charts the development and emergence of the hegemonic form of neoliberal urban governance, and examines questions of neoliberal contingency and collaborative governance. In addition, it reviews how state-led real estate development has become central to current modes of economic development. In the race to implement neoliberal best-practices, public agencies at the sub-national level have become more active in enabling urban revitalization and producing landscapes of consumption, including recent strategies which integrate culture and nature as part of these strategies of urban renewal and redevelopment.

Chapter three examines the history and rationale behind the expropriation of LeBreton Flats. Using textural and visual archival fragments, it shows how the Flats was completely razed as part of the grand new dream of making “the capital into a showcase for the nation” in time for the national centennial in 1967. Using this archive it provides an overview of official representations and
appraisals of LeBreton Flats, and the territorial, racialized, and class-based stigmatizations of the Flats.

Chapter four investigates a multi-scalar policy favouring New Urban Policy (NUP) which emerged as a result of the efforts of local agents. It shows how the NCC innovated a partnered infill redevelopment with a green tinge. As part of the experiment in NUP, this meso-level institution was mobilized and reorganized to promote market-led economic development through a major urban development project.

Chapter five investigates the landscape and architecture of the NCC’s urban redevelopment. Using planning documents, it exposes how nature, culture, and national pedagogy are intertwined and mobilized as part “naturalized” behaviour and practices of urban neoliberalism. This final empirical chapter shows how the re-imagination of the Flats as a world-class waterfront cultural destination, as terra nullius, provided the grounds for a new utopia for the tourist-city. In this context, the regenerative landscape of the new War Museum is a cultural stage for the performance of the national, built around the green, a regenerative imaginary with urbanized features: its recovered fragments provide the commodified materials for performance of pedagogies of nationhood. This investigation shows how cultural policy has been adapted to the parameters of neoliberal policy experimentation.

To allow further analysis of how government intervention on the Flats has shifted over time, in both the initial expropriation (chapter 3, 1962-1967) and the subsequent neoliberal urban renewal (chapter 4 and chapter 5), the next chapter
explores the literature on neoliberal urbanism and its various governance practices.
CHAPTER 2: Urban Neoliberalism and Neoliberal Natures

2.1 Introduction

Recent innovations in critical socio-spatial theory continue to define and evaluate the post-Keynesian neoliberal project. Drawing on the extensive literature on neoliberalism, this chapter examines the character, practices, regulatory features, institutional configuration and geographic reach of neoliberal urbanism. First, the chapter highlights the features of Keynesian urbanism in order to situate the transition to neoliberal urbanism. It reviews the links between postwar modernism, urban reform and urban renewal as separate, but related, aspects of Keynesian liberalism. Beginning with a general account of state-led urban renewal, the chapter shows how Keynesian interventionism began to unravel in the early 1970s, leaving behind a legacy of institutions and practices which could be adapted to enforce the principles of neoliberalized governance. Second, this chapter reviews the literature on the intensification of neoliberal market rule and revisits contentious debates over the relative contingency and variegated character of urban neoliberalism. Third, the chapter examines New Urban Policy as a dominant form of urban development policy, and the concomitant rescaling of urban governance practices. Furthermore, it shows how the symbolic economy and large-scale cultural attractions have become central features of the urban development agenda. Fourthly, this chapter investigates institutional variations and Canadian adaptations of institutional forms of neoliberal urbanism, including a close study of how urban development corporations operate within this new policy regime. Finally, it discusses recent
interventions into the debate over neoliberalism around the implications for the production of nature, and argues that the urban dimensions of the production of nature are crucial to understanding shifts in urban development policy.

In drawing on this literature, this chapter argues that contemporary interventions on urban neoliberalism and neoliberal nature are key to understanding the configuration, dynamics and impulses driving neoliberal urban redevelopment, especially in the context of the nation-state’s meso-institutional neoliberal urbanization. This chapter builds the theoretical groundwork and allows for an unpacking of how neoliberalism operates on the meso-level and how federally mediated urban redevelopment policies and projects operate within this conjuncture. More specifically, it argues that economic and cultural projects are merging in the production of urban landscapes, and that culture is being “strategically produced” as part of the production of urban landscapes. This chapter concludes by arguing for a more concerted effort to probe the intersection of neoliberal nature, culture and urban neoliberalism. Such an investigation, the chapter argues, is needed to further knowledge on how nature and culture operate within the process of neoliberal urbanization.

**2.2 The Rise and Fall of Keynesian Urbanism**

As part of the post-World War II social and economic reconstruction project and the broader parameters of egalitarian liberalism, the Keynesian state instigated large-scale reinvestment in housing and urban renewal (Purdy, 2003a; Hackworth, 2007), alongside other redistributive policies. Characterized by state-interventionism, the promotion of demand-side urbanization, and the expansion
of domestic consumption (Harvey, 1989a; Smith, 1996; Parr, 1999; Ross, 1996), the postwar urban planning agenda resulted in the creation of a state-assemblage of new institutional and legal forms (Brenner, 2004). This included the creation of a vast array of new institutions, appropriation acts, and enabling legislations centered around housing, urban renewal, and social redistribution (Klemek, 2004). The promotion of consumption and the massive investment of government investment in urban infrastructure also allowed for the incursion of capitalism into all aspects of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1974; 2000).

Fuelled by these new institutional resources, the utopian dreams of the modernist International Style – which first surfaced in Europe in the mid-1920s and coalesced in the Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) – were re-invigorated after World War II. Led by the maxim that “form follows function,” the modernist aesthetic proliferated within the “golden age” of postwar planning (Klemek, 2004). Represented by a break with classical styles, a tendency towards abstraction, and the adoption of industrial construction processes, modernism adhered to the strict functional segregation as a solution to social ills. By the 1950s the international movement, as a postwar intellectual current, had migrated from Europe’s intellectual centers and influenced state-led urban renewal in North America (Klemek, 2004; Voldman, 1997b). Strongly influenced by this planning and design movement, architects and planners promoted urban eradication plans that exposed cities to high-rise promenades, housing and office super blocks and high-speed traffic (Klemek, 2004; Weber, 2002).
This ambitious and well resourced modernist urbanism appealed to the highly effective middle-class movement of moral reformers, church groups, charitable organizations, business leaders and industrial capitalists shocked by the bad living conditions of overcrowding and the disorder of the city (Berman, 1982; Boyer, 1983). Social reformers and modernist designers “were united by a faith in environmental determinism” (Klemek, 2004: 11). Modern aesthetics and politics would be united in the promotion of new city planning agenda heavily oriented toward large scale urban renewal. This postwar urban agenda demanded the demolition and reconstruction of congested and crowded neighbourhoods to create new clean, functional cities, and the modernist aesthetic would create new urban forms. Often, these reconstruction projects were based on class-based and racialized assumptions that tagged low-income neighbourhoods as undesirable slums, making it easy, if not necessary to run expressways, large office blocks and other grand projects through working-class districts (Berman, 1982; Rose, 1997; Purdy, 1997).

The rational reorganization of cities was conducted by a variety of planning commissions and urban renewal agencies. Through the aegis of these institutions, national and local states collaborated in identifying blight, and instigated the “creative destruction” of low-income neighbourhoods through “slum” clearance and urban redevelopment (Boyer, 1983; Purdy, 1997; Brushett, 2001). At the height of the Keynesian interventionism, regional planning was enormously successful in reshaping the city according to reformist or modernist principles (Berman, 1982). Technocratic experts helped to construct natural,
scientific “truths,” giving credibility to these state-spatial projects, and encouraging further adoption of these elite-based urban planning models (Weber, 2002). State and non-state institutions, relying on the role of experts, “neutralize some of the conflict in the built environment… in hopes of achieving some semblance of ideological “closure”” (Weber, 2002: 177). The urban renewal project was seen as both rational and necessary under the logic of the bureaucratic elite (Scott, 1998). Large-scale urban dispossession and urban renewal followed (Weber, 2002). Huge city swaths lying ready for reconstruction led critics to wonder if “modernist planning was merely an aesthetic preference masquerading as social reform” (Klemek, 2004: 10).

By the late 1960s urban renewal, as a project of Keynesian urbanism, was being questioned. The underlying assumptions of the transatlantic postwar planning consensus had disintegrated as a result of the “internal contradictions” of urban renewal (Jacobs, 1961; Klemek, 2004), and by the early 1970’s, Keynesian managerialism and egalitarian liberalism “would begin to unravel” (Hackworth, 2007: 9), leaving behind the institutions, practices, and policies of postwar Keynesian urban reform. In its wake, the financial deregulation of capital by federal governments displaced banks as the key holder of credit, unleashing the forces that would create secondary mortgage markets and securitized debt. The regulatory-assemblage was being dismantled; real-estate was steadily dematerialized and deterritorialized (Weber, 2002); the Keynesian state’s thick structure with contracted out; urban governance was replaced by entrepreneurial and associative forms of urban governance (Harvey, 1989b). The progressive
principles of egalitarian liberalism which had fostered massive urban renewal projects had given way to urban development policies judged as “little more than property giveaways to guide and place speculative activity” (Weber, 2002: 190). For economic liberals, this deregulated field created a new entrepreneurial dream, a new utopia, from which to contend against what they saw as the erosion of public freedoms associated with egalitarian liberalism. While neoliberals celebrated, progressives decried the Reagan and Thatcher administrations for rolling back the social guarantees of the Keynesian state.

2.3 Urban Neoliberalism

In the early 1980s, critical scholars awoke to the Reagan-Thatcher nightmare. Critical geographers and state theorists, turned their attention away from debates between structural and humanist Marxism, to explain the emergence of fierce market-oriented regulation and to ascertain how a neoliberal offensive had radically changed the practice of government (Massey, 1984; Harvey, 1989b; Smith, 1993; Jessop, 1993; Smith, 1996; Peck, 1997). “By the 1990s,” Hackworth notes (2007: 9), “neoliberalism had become naturalized as the proper mode of governance.” Described as a new religion committed to extending markets and increased competition with overall disdain for any type of Keynesian collectivist strategy (Swyngedouw, 1999; Peck and Tickell, 2002), critical scholars charted neoliberalism’s “thin” policies (Peck, 1997). Neoliberalism’s new market-oriented regime provided the political-economic framework for the retrenchment of social and regulatory functions through the active “rolling-out” of market rule (Peck, 1997). The new gospel proclaimed
competitiveness, privatization, the retrenchment of the welfare state, supply-side innovations, flexibility, and the internationalization of capital as the holy grails of public policy (N. Rose, 1999; Swyngedouw, 1997; Peck and Tickell, 1994) with global institutions policing the neoliberalized “rules of the road” (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Hackworth, 2007). Neoliberalism was ruled by the trinity of the individual, the market, and the noninterventionist state (Hackworth, 2007) – at least according to official doctrine.

Critical scholars are intensely concerned with how neoliberalism has affected urban and regional economies. “Neoliberalized space,” as Peck and Tickell (2002) noted, stretched a new regulatory regime across space while concomitantly rescaling government functions at the national, regional, state and local levels. Drawing on a synthesis of empirical and theoretical evidence, interested observers have concluded that neoliberal market rule is occurring with particular intensity on the urban scale and especially within reconfigured urban policy regimes (Rodriguez, 2001; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002; Brenner, 2004). On an urban scale, a simultaneous downloading of responsibilities and risks and uploading of governance functions into international institutions has directed governments away from national policy and towards localized development strategies and regulatory fixes. Cities have adopted an entrepreneurial mode of governance (Harvey, 1989b; Hall and Hubbard, 1996; Hunt, 2001) and have become strategic “geographical targets and institutional laboratories for neoliberal policy experiments” (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 21) deploying various “shock treatments” such as place-marketing,
enterprise/empowerment zones, urban development corporations, private-public partnerships and public boosterism (Hackworth, 2000; Hackworth and Smith, 2001; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002).

2.4 The Contingency Debate

As neoliberalism emerged as an ontological category, urban political economy, geography and urban studies scholarship has attempted to map out the trajectory, spatial dimensions and character of neoliberal urbanism. In a literature ranging from place-specific case studies to state-theoretical approaches, Hackworth and Moriah (2006) argue that, as a result, neoliberalism has become a contested term. Scholars have debated to what extent neoliberalism is an ideal-type or to what extent it is contingent (Wilson, 2004). In most cases the charting of neoliberalism follows a knife-edge between specific and generalized accounts, defining neoliberalism as a locally contradictory process rather than an ideal type, where localities filter wider economic process, and whereby contingent accounts only provide a starting point towards a much needed exploration of the generic, abstract and extra-local features of neoliberalism (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Castree, 2006; Hackworth, 2007). As Brenner and Theodore (2002) argue, “actually existing neoliberalism” is in constant change through the policy experimentation and geographic expression. In short, a debate over neoliberalism as an ideological project or a contingent local project has emerged (cf. Hackworth and Moriah, 2006).

In trying to be sensitive to the contingent characteristics and the overriding ideological underpinnings of neoliberalism, Peck and Tickell (2002) argue that
neoliberalism is not an end-state “thing” but a process with contradictory counter-tendencies and specific historical and geographically contingent forms. Neoliberalization, they argue, is not only successful because it represents the world of markets as the state of nature, but also because in its actualization, it is always a hybrid or composite. Neoliberalism is a “highly contingent process that manifests itself, and is experienced differently across space” (Hackworth, 2007: 11). Peck and Tickell (2002) identify two periods within the process of “actually existing” neoliberalization: first, a period of a shallow process of deregulation and dismantling which they call "roll-back neoliberalism;" second, a deep and constitutive active phase of state building and regulatory reform they call "roll-out neoliberalism." The later phase of “roll-out neoliberalism” includes the extension of market logic from the economy into other spheres of society, and includes the socializing of individualized subjects. The reproduction of “roll-out” neoliberalism includes disciplining non-compliant individual subjects through deep intervention in “social issues” such as crime, immigration, and welfare reform (Peck and Tickell, 2002).

While neo-Marxists, such as Peck, Tickell, Brenner, Jessop and Theodore, have drawn mainly from strategic-relational theory to evaluate the theoretical underpinnings of neoliberalization and its contingencies, another set of interventions have relied on Foucault’s understanding of governance to highlight the highly variegated and contradictory form of urban neoliberalism. These neo-Foucauldian interventions claim that changing technologies of power have blurred distinctions between state, market, and civil society. Most
prominently, Rose (1999: 10) has argued that “all aspects of social behaviour are now re-conceptualized along economic lines.” Neoliberal governance, then intervenes “to create the organizational and subjective conditions for entrepreneurship” (Rose, 1999). Drawing on both neo-Foucauldian and neo-Marxist interventions, Larner (2000; 2005a) has urged scholars to move beyond an understanding of neoliberalism as a coherent project that can be attributed to policy or to ideology and to consider neoliberalism as both a political discourse and a set of practices of governing from a distance. Larner argues that by investigating the practice of governance, neoliberalism can be seen as a political configuration that is a multi-vocal and contradictory project subject to what Masson (2005) has called “complex, messy and contingent historical phenomena.” Larner emphasizes identity formation, contention, and struggle among institutions of governance and individualized active neoliberal subjects that are part of the “messy actualities” of particular projects, path dependencies and policy pathways. Cities and regions are locales for “variegated policy experimentation” and “mutating forms of economic and social rule” (Larner, 2005a).

Despite the wealth of these interventions, Hackworth and Moriah (2006) argue that the recent attention given to the question of contingent neoliberalism has overlooked the influence of ideal-type neoliberalism. The attention to the variegated forms of neoliberalism, although a potentially “politically useful construction… tends to obfuscate the very coordinated and effective assault... on egalitarian institutions.” Hackworth and Moriah urge scholars to note that despite
the significant fissures that deviate from the norm, neoliberализation continues to be driven by an underlying logic and to abide by an ideal-type close to the parameters established by the gurus of neoliberalism, Hayek and Friedman. The principles of state retrenchment, full deregulation of markets, and liberation of capital from any restrictions, define neoliberalism in its ideal form. This holy trinity represents the desire of neoliberalism’s high priests for an “unattainable purity, for a clean slate to build a re-engineered model society” (Klein, 2007: 24). The pioneers of neoliberal ideology in their “ideological rejection of egalitarian liberalism and the Keynesian welfare state in particular” have built their assault based on a radical (market-based) interpretation of classical liberalism (Hackworth, 2007: 9). While the features of neoliberalism are debated, and the list is constantly changing, certain regulatory and institutional features can be attributed as common features of neoliberalism. These include: the assignment of privatization, the deployment of marketization, the roll-back of the state regulation, the roll-out of state regulation to encourage marketization and privatization, the retrenchment of the welfare state, the creation of market proxies for public services, and the internationalization of capital (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Castree, 2005). On the urban level, this includes the promotion of entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and the administration of public goods through quasi-public entities such as urban development corporations (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002).
2.5 Re-scaling Urban Development Policy

In their approach to the contingency debate over neoliberalism, Hackworth and Moriah (2006: 514) recognize the “analytical problematic posed by ideal-type neoliberalism, while also recognizing the importance and power of the very top-down imposition of neoliberalism in individual places.” In this approach neoliberalism can be considered from an analytical point of view as a variegated and contingent form, while the common roots and overarching features of neoliberalism as a political-economic project are not overlooked.

Despite criticism of misguided case studies, a host of empirical and theoretical accounts have addressed “translation rules” between these variegated forms to define neoliberalism through concrete research (Castree, 2005). Among the most poignant observations, studies have emphasized the state’s central role in enacting the conditions for urban neoliberalism to thrive (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Mahon, 2006). Despite what the true neoliberal adherents proclaim about the absolute rule of the market and state action as a barrier to absolute market rule, the national state remains crucial in imposing market discipline on all aspects of social, political and economic life. Neoliberalization cannot exist without state intervention; in fact it depends on it. Rather than an inconsistency with Hayek’s ideal-type, state intervention is a central feature of neoliberalization (Klein, 2007). As Harvey (2005: 21) points out, neoliberalism is built on a contradictory tendency between “free market” rule and the “strong and if necessary coercive state” required to defend property rights and entrepreneurial freedoms.
In this context, the “golden era” of the Keynesian city has been replaced by the new utopia of the “golden path” of the entrepreneurial and competitive city (Swyngedouw, 2005). In the race to become truly “Global,” cities have intensified competition over investment, resources and skilled migrants (A. King, 1990; Sassen, 1991). As part of neoliberalism’s “search for a new institutional fix” (Peck and Tickell, 1994), state institutions and individuals, at various scales, including the sub-national context (Swyngedouw, 1997; Hackworth, 2002; Hackworth, 2003) have been reworked “to conform to the norms of the market” (Larner, 2003) and to adhere to the parameters of inter-local competition (Harvey, 1989b).

Faced with the policed imposition of neoliberal forms of governance (Hackworth, 2007), the state continues to remold sub-national institutions into the neoliberal mold, and to encourage the adoption of the hegemonic impulses of market-led economic development. A result of such top-down pressures (Harvey, 2005; Hackworth, 2007), the “fast policy learning” of sub-national jurisdictions (Peck, 2001), and the emergence of a neoliberal urban policy consensus, a competitive regulatory regime has emerged.

New Economic Policy (NEP), the emergent hegemonic form of urban policy deriving from conservative liberalism (Keil, 2002), maintains an intimate relationship with state intervention. However, NEP marks a shift away from redistributive Keynesian demand-side redistribution and a movement towards “indirect promotion” of entrepreneurship and other market-led approaches aimed at economic promotion, particularly through urban revitalization and urban
renewal (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002: 200). As Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez (2002: 200) note:

In most cities, urban revitalization is presented as an opportunity to change economic hierarchies and functions within the urban region, creating new jobs and strengthening the city’s position in the urban division of labor. In this way, the search for growth turns urban renewal into a mediated objective, a necessary precondition for economic regeneration.

Cities and city-regions are fully embracing the main components of NEP and adopting them as part of their governance practices (Swyngedouw, 2005). Cities have increased their reliance on NEP by enacting the closely related principles of New Urban Policy (NUP) (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002). This form of urban entrepreneurial policy relies on the principles of flexibility, efficiency, competitiveness, state entrepreneurialism, selective deregulation, city marketing, and collaboration. It draws upon private-public partnerships as the centre-piece of local economic development with an intensified reliance on producing land rent and closing the rent gap (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002). In short, private-public cooperation at the local level is a foundation of neoliberal urbanism that has become “naturalized” behaviour and practice (Hackworth, 2007; Jessop, 2002).

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\text{NEP} \implies \text{NUP} \implies \text{Urban Development Projects} \\
(\text{Economic Policy}) \implies (\text{Urban Policy}) \implies (\text{Property Development}) \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Urban Development Corporations} \\
(\text{Coordinating Authority})
\]

*Note: After Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002; Leo and Fenton, 1990.*
In this race to implement neoliberal best practices, public agencies have become more active in enabling urban revitalization. Thus, the confluence of NEP and NUP relies on redirecting state investment towards infrastructure developments, to the advantages of flexible accumulation and market-led urban development. As Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez (2002: 200) conclude, NEP:

seeks to reorient state intervention from monopoly market regulation and towards marshaling state resources into the social, physical, and geographical infra- and superstructures that support, finance subsidize, or otherwise promote new forms of capital accumulation by providing relatively fixed territorial structures that permit the accelerated circulation of capital and the relatively unhindered operation of market forces.\(^{43}\)

In this new constellation of power, state-led and/or state financed or guaranteed investments have become the “catalyst of urban and political change” (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002). In the reorganized institutional space of the competitive and entrepreneurial city, developers supported by public agencies are often the first “to orchestrate reinvestment” (Hackworth and Smith: 2001, 468). Concretely, the adaptation of NUP for urban revitalization is overwhelmingly focused on physical factors and project-led “public investments in central locations” (Rodriguez, 2001: 169) through site-specific UDPs, with most of the projects “decidedly rent-extraction-based” (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002: 205). Often managed and administered by quasi-public entities such as the urban development

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\(^{43}\) This includes spatially targeted promotion of entrepreneurship, directing state resources at providing the territorially fixed infrastructures that support capital accumulation, and state withdrawal from redistribution of income and wealth.
corporations (UDCs), these private-public partnerships, oriented around increased rent-extraction and increasing the tax base, offer a formal vehicle for government and private developers to cooperate in meeting economic development objectives.

Private developers have come to depend on state-directed financing of UDPs towards development projects (capital investments in the built environment, infrastructure investments) and coordinating functions (overall planning and management, tax breaks for real-estate development). The role of these UDPs are especially significant since real-estate is an increasingly common centrepiece of local economic development, to the extent that UDPs have become the primary economic driver of the neoliberal city’s productive economy (Fainstein, 1994; Smith, 2002; Hackworth, 2007) – with the increase in value almost always to the benefit of the private sector (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002).

2.6 The City-on-Display and National Pedagogies

Picking up on this debate between contingency and generalization, Wilson (2004) argues that local neoliberalisms are “complex cultural projects” where local politics, political cultures, active resistances, and institutional paths play an active part in the constitution, development and construction of improvised urban neoliberalism. In the urban context, partly as a reaction to discipline of interurban competition, and partly as a result of the initiatives of local institutions, economic and cultural projects are merging in the production of urban landscapes (Zukin, 1982; Mitchell, 2004; Leslie and Rantisi, 2006). New cultural institutions have
been promoted as part of new interventionist agenda surrounding culture (Leslie and Rantisi, 2006). Sometimes relying on nationalist culture (Leslie and Rantisi, 2006), and other times multiculturalism (Mitchell, 2004), or ethnic commodification (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005), cultural projects based on competitiveness have created new subjectivities that can be “deliberately produced to increase the circulation of capital” (Hackworth and Rekers, 2005: 213). As with other aspects of neoliberal governance, the national state mobilizes nationalism to further the competitive agenda and to provide the best business climate (Harvey, 2005). The legitimacy of the territorial state, Mitchell notes in the context of the interaction of economics and culture, “comes not only from the economic realm… but also from the cultural sphere wherein the narratives of the nation predominate” (Mitchell, 2004: 9). From an epistemological point of view, the dismantling the culture-economics dualism provokes scholars to study the interaction between these two spheres (rather than their autonomy) and to consider how the national state helps support this dialectical relationship.

State-led intervention is most prominent in “soft-locations” – abandoned or devalued locations that have the potential to be transformed into “new” amenity laden redevelopments that provide attractive land-rents. These soft-locations include waterfronts, brownfields, areas of concentrated public housing, historic areas, centrally located manufacturing districts, and areas within close proximity to the CBD (Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000). Public funding has often provided the catalyst for transforming defunct industrial locations into spaces for luxury and elitist consumption (Zukin, 1982; Zukin, 1991), resulting in the partial
or complete gentrification of working-class areas (Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000). The desire to create the “livable city” for elite and upper-middle class workers, including lifestyle marketing (Smith, 1996; D. Rose, 2004), is directly related to the NUP goal of attracting and retaining the “creative class” of entrepreneurs, knowledge workers and cosmopolitan migrants (Florida, 2003).

The development, construction and marketing of museums and large cultural facilities, the promotion of artists and artist life, the creation of historic and heritage districts, and the re-use of buildings are examples of how culture is used as part of “post-industrial” urban renewal and economic development (Ley, 1996; Eade, 1997). The selling of cultural products such as museums, galleries, and historicized shopping districts (Zukin, 1996), are the hallmarks of the pursuit for “quality, entertainment and festivity” in the central city (Hannigan, 1998). As Harvey notes (1989: 9), “Above all, the city has to appear as an innovative, exciting, creative and safe place to live or visit, to play and consume in.” In an implicit transformation of economic development strategies, industrial boosterism (Zukin, 1991) has been overtaken by the pursuit of the “symbolic economy.” This “symbolic economy” is shaping our urban public spaces and relying extensively on reservoirs of museums, art galleries and cultural life to expand the consumption of culture, where icons of revitalization are part of image construction (Rodriguez, 2001).

Among other strategies, cities have oriented urban redevelopment schemes around the “historic” revitalization of the downtown core and historicized narratives have become prominent features of localized attempts to
sell new regimes of desire in the urban realm (Zukin, 1991; Jacobs, 1996; Hannigan, 1998; Sorkin, 1992). The re-making of historic urban spaces into cultural products has become central to economic development (Jameson, 1991; Zukin, 1998). This “urban spectacle” (Harvey, 1989c) is circulated through the production and consumption of museums, galleries, shopping districts, and other “contemporary spaces of consumption” (Zukin, 1996). “Creative cities” mark their place on the well-defined tourist circuit by constructing “signs and signifiers that name and enshrine particular places as sacred objects of the tourist ritual” (Judd and Fainstein, 1999: 7). Cultural policy has been adapted to the entrepreneurial age by producing commodified products which can be distinguished as a unique and localized experience. On this newly minted touristic “heritage trail” (Crang, 1993), narratives of history have been re-created and embedded into the cultural fabric of the “city on display” (Eade, 1997). The result: a “dreamscape of visual consumption” (Zukin, 1991: 221) where people are taught how to “gaze” onto the heritage, architecture and culture of the tourist-city (Urry, 1990).

Through his own gaze, Walter Benjamin long ago identified the contradictory dimensions of the modern aesthetic in the city. Intimately concerned with the urban spectacle, and cultural representations, Benjamin’s literal explorations of the city, in such texts as Berlin Chronicle, One Way Street and his Arcades Project, drew out the hidden and invisible city developing a “way of seeing” urban phenomena (Buck-Morss, 1989; Arendt, 1968). By melding the mythic and material underpinnings of modernity, Benjamin provided a look at how decay is crystallized, and how it survives to be reformed – in short to see
how fragments of history become reshaped into new forms. Benjamin’s critical approach to historical inquiry noted how scraps and relics of the past are recovered and remade into new forms, transformed into new wish images and new collective memories.

The relentless search for a touristic dreamscape recycles relics of the past and forgets certain historical dimensions. The historic city is “displayed, interpreted, reproduced, and sold in a putatively universal repertoire of visual consumption” (Zukin, 1995: 227) thus reducing “multiple dimensions and conflicts of culture to a coherent visual representation” (Zukin, 1995: 226). In the post-industrial and neoliberal urban renewal script, cities are encouraged to cleanse and empty urban spaces that do not fit with the image of a hip and global urban experience. To mold cites into a cultural attraction, these new clean urban spaces are preferred and showcased over heterogeneous urban spaces (Smith, 1996; Mitchell and Staeheli, 2006). Conflictual, multiple and historically embedded histories have been steamrolled by sanitized, clean, packaged spaces.

The aesthetic representation of the urban landscape is not confined to the representation of historical districts, to the building and re-building of cultural institutions, or to the commodified fields of cultural production; it extends into to the very performance of a city’s identity in a neoliberalized context. The production of space into a “synergy of capital investments and cultural meanings” is also the “currency of commodity exchange and the language of social identity” (Zukin, 1995: 24). As part of the investment in cultural social identities, museums
have become icons of the city’s symbolic economy (Zukin, 1995). The development of new technologies of government, including fostering of new economic subjectivities resulting from the merging of economic and cultural policy in state-supported interventions in local economic development has created such hybrid subjects as the “design citizen” (Leslie and Rantisi, 2006). In this constantly evolving processes, cultural institutions “engage in a more competitive and rational economic behavior on one hand and more nationalist cultural behavior on the other” (Leslie and Rantisi, 2006: 332).

Displays of social identity are not simply nostalgic recollections built into a commodity form but are part of the “invention” of collective memory and the pedagogy of the modern nation. Among these cultural institutions, museums - alongside the map and the census - are central to the creation of imagined communities (Anderson, 1991: 164). Furthermore, modernity has been especially enamored with the use of recovered artifacts to sell narratives. As Arendt (1968: 43) notes in the preface to Walter Benjamin’s Illuminations “there was probably no period before ours in which old and ancient things, many of them long forgotten by tradition, have become general educational material which is handed to schoolboys everywhere.” Museums and their artifacts secure the ancestry of the nation state, helping to communicate values of solidarity, civilization and community.

Even before the deployment of NUP and the creative-cities agenda, national museums and memorials have had a crucial role in developing new

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44 For Anderson (1991), these institutions “profoundly shape the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion – the nature of human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain and the legitimacy of its ancestry.”
social identities where as urban icons, they perform the function of smoothing over spaces of contradiction (Young, 1993; Vale, 1992). Pilgrimages to sites of the “national symbolic” generate types of knowledge and memory that exercise the national pedagogy and show citizens how to “love” their nation (Berlant, 1997). Performed on that high ground of fate and faith, the national capital, rites of visiting national sites instill in the “citizen-pilgrim” an understanding of what it means to have full membership in the given “we” of the nation. Citizenship-pilgrimages, as Berlant (1997: 30) notes, are “all about the activity of national pedagogy, the production of national culture and the constitution of competent citizens.”

When officially sanctioned by government institutions, stories of the nation designed to promote national identity are, as Mackey (2001: 71) argues, “pedagogies of patriotism” which act to reinforce “narratives of nationhood.” In the Canadian context, these linear stories of the nation “became more institutionalized after the Second World War” (2001:49) and in the late twentieth-century they were “formed through mass media, spectacles of nationhood, and social institutions” in sites such as national museums and nationalist festivals (Mackey, 2001: 71). In the past twenty years there has been a manifest transformation in how museums operate. Museums have adopted “characteristics of consumer society” including “corporate sponsorship, mass spectacle and entertainment packaging” (Ames, 1992: 11). Representations of history have “become driven by consumerism, tourism and a flight from the ugliness of the past” (Wood, 2000: 41). Curators and administrators are dealing
with an entirely new set of struggles are attempting a new set of representations to mimic shifts in the political economy.

2.7 Institutional Variations

Proponents of “cappuccinos and circuses” urban development such as the much-maligned/celebrated Richard Florida have touted the advantages of central city redevelopment despite the increasing uneven development, social exclusion, and socio-economic polarization associated with NUP (Smith, 1996; Rodriguez, 2001; Zukin, 1995) and the creative cities agenda (Goonewardena, 2004; Peck, 2005). “Mercenaries of cultural urbanity” (Keil and Kipfer, 2000) have been pursued with renewed vigour by cities and city-regions to fill in urban post-industrial landscapes. The redevelopment and embourgeoisement of industrial locations and nearby working-class areas has become a crucial urban strategy for city governments to solidify the role of real-estate development as the centrepiece of the city’s productive economy (Hackworth and Smith, 2001) including the central-city development of post-industrial spaces. Through mechanisms such as UDPs, government agencies on the sub-national scale have become more, not less, active in post-recession gentrification. Conducted like private firms under an entrepreneurial style (Fainstein, 1994), the conduct of UDCs raises questions of public accountability, representation and exclusion (Rodriguez, 2001; Leo and Fenton, 1990) and offers at best limited and formalized democratic participation (Swyngedouw, 2005).

45 In short, intensification and gentrification has become globally generalized and the “central motive force of urban economic expansion” (Smith, 2002). As Hackworth and Smith concluded (2001: 475), “in an environment of privatization, the state has become more direct in its encouragement of gentrification.”
The UDPs central to NUP are part of a shifting “geometry of power” (Massey, 1993), and introduce a “new amalgam of corporate and state practices” (Smith, 2002). The agents of change in this new form of urban governance are governments, corporations, and corporate-government partnerships. In such cases, the imposition of market rule and the adaptation of NUP mark a shift from rule by government to neoliberal governance by a variety of actors and institutions. But as Larner (2000: 12) argues “while neoliberal may mean less government, it does not follow that there is less governance... it involves forms of governance that encourage both institutions and individuals to conform to the norms of the market.” Actors such as real-estate agents, property developers, and commercial merchants are lubricated by local governments and empowered by advanced neoliberal strategies of economic development.

These broader strokes of neoliberal political ideology have resulted in particular institutional formations. Neoliberal urban renewal and revitalization has led to a more “assertive style of urban governance, where a multiplicity of agents, including the local government, compete for access and control over the urban policy agenda (Rodriguez, 2001).” Urban revitalization schemes have adopted the new entrepreneurialism of “governance-beyond-the-state” where governance is organized "as associational networks of private, civil society and state actors" (Swyngedouw, 2005). “Governance-beyond-the-state” involves the subordination of formal government structures to quasi-private and highly autonomous organizations. The informal networked-based governance structures of pluralist

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46 NUP “actively produces, enacts, embodies, and shapes the new political and economic regimes that operate at the local, national, and global scales” (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002: 199).
liberal democracy have been transformed into "a new constellation of governance articulated via a proliferating maze of opaque networks, fuzzy institutional arrangements, ill-defined responsibilities, and ambiguous political objectives and priorities" (Swyngedouw, 2005: 17). Such new organizations often supersede or compete with existing organizations (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002) and subordinate and/or displace local planning authority (Rodriguez, 2001). They retain government powers but are not subject to normal requirements such as public meetings, filing reports and undertaking community consultation and participation (Fainstein, 1994). As Leo and Fenton conclude (1990: 202-203) "an urban development corporation is located in the twilight zone between the state and capital and, involved in secret, high-stakes land ventures, is well placed to engage in multifarious abuses of power." In brief, the non-transparent, *ad hoc* and context-dependent networked institutional ensembles render existing power-geometries even more exclusive, less democratic, and lead to the "uneven incorporation of 'civil society' within these constellations of governance" (Swyngedouw, 2005:17). UDCs maintain secrecy and adapt strategy in changing circumstances. As such they provide greater flexibility while also offering the greater possibility of abuse (secrecy, convoluted accountability). The danger is that such concealed dealings will lead to public loss of control and to a “great deal of scope for abuse” (Leo and Fenton, 1990). As Harvey (2005: 69) argues, “neoliberals have to put strong limits on democratic governance, relying instead on undemocratic and unaccountable institutions to make key decisions. This creates the paradox of intense state interventions and
government by elites and ‘experts’ in a world where the state is supposed not to be interventionist.” Urban policy reflects this “tenuous balance between local-state-as-arbiter and local-state-as-entrepreneur” (Hackworth, 2007).

Despite an extensive literature on private-public partnerships and entrepreneurial behaviour, Hackworth (2007) concludes that there remains a lacuna of understanding how urban alliances work in this rearticulating neoliberal order. Private-public alliances, or PPPs, are not simply local phenomena; they function within a multi-scalar re-articulation of urban regimes, including the organization of sub-national institutions. Political economists have investigated the radical reconstitution of scale under contemporary capitalism (Sheppard and McMaster, 2004; Keil and Mahon, Forthcoming). Yet, within this body of literature around rescaling of neoliberalized sub-national institutions there has been a relative absence of meso-level inquiry (Brenner 2004), and an under-appreciation of the national scale (Mahon, 2006). The relative absence of analysis of how Canadian federal institutions operate to enforce directly and regulate neoliberalism’s NUP is an equally gaping omission in the understanding of the process of sub-national neoliberalization. Indeed in some instances, the Canadian federal government, through institutions such as the Canada Lands Company (CLC) and the National Capital Commission (NCC), has extended its reach beyond traditional subsidiary funding by directly aiding and abetting NUP and entrepreneurial behaviour – acting both in tandem and independently of cities. The study of institutions that operate at the national-local intersection of such inter-scalar configurations can shed light on the rescaling process, and on
how sub-national and local institutions are “filters for wider economic processes” that have become “more important articulators” of the shift towards neoliberal urbanism (Hackworth, 2007: 43). The study of the NCC examines how a sub-national institution operates at the intersection of the urban-national frontier of enforced and variegated neoliberalism. By organizing a study around such institutions, Brenner suggests (2007) we can understand how institutional mechanisms have facilitated neoliberal urbanism and how the rescaling process is intensifying on the urban scale.

2.8 Canadian Adaptations

Despite a wealth of studies on urban re-development in “Global Cities” such as New York and London (King, 1990; Sassen, 1991; Fainstein, 1994; Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000), little attention has been given to contemporary Canadian adaptations of NUP. Although there is an expanding body of literature on federal interventions in the redevelopment of Toronto’s waterfront (Desfor, 1993; Desfor, Keil, Kipfer and Wekerle, 2006) and, more generally, Toronto’s adaptation of the competitive city agenda (Keil, 2002; Kipfer and Keil, 2002; Goonewardena, 2004; Keil and Boudreau, 2006), Canada’s less populous “global cities” (Luke, 2003), or “second tier” cities, (Larner, 2005b) have been overlooked.

These lacunae aside, studies on federal intervention during the late eighties and early nineties provide key evidence about the evolution of UDPs in

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47 In Luke’s estimation (2003: 12) “focusing upon such extraordinary Global Cities misses another qualitatively different transformation unfolding” to those living in “global cities.” Too much attention has been given to studying the “metageography” of Global Cities, while those large in number but smaller in stature that are key to sustaining the major metropoles, have been overlooked.
the Canadian context. These studies of federal involvement in redeveloping Toronto and Vancouver’s waterfronts and Winnipeg’s “core area” provide a baseline to assess a contemporary Canadian versions of “actually existing” neoliberal urbanism. In particular, Leo and Fenton’s (1990) study of downtown redevelopment in Winnipeg and Toronto in the 1980s shows how UDCs were initially introduced to the Canadian context. The introduction of third-party multi-level government partnerships in Canadian UDCs such as Toronto’s Harbourfront and Winnipeg’s North Portage Initiative allowed for the implementation of projects the government might otherwise have difficulty pursuing (Leo and Fenton, 1990; Desfor, 1993). As self-governing bodies appointed by the federal government to plan and implement major redevelopment projects, these redevelopment agencies “mediate” redevelopment. Highly adaptable to changing conditions, and acting with public assistance, these UDCs leveraged government assistance to increase total investment through private capital. Operating without the same scrutiny as public bodies, these agencies conveniently shifted accountability and responsibility away from formal government structures (Leo and Fenton, 1990).

In this context, Ley’s (1996) investigation into the rise of the middle class in Canadian cities provides essential insight into the federal government role in the “post-industrial” embourgeoisement of inner-city and downtown landscape. As Ley (1996) argues, various state actors are at the vanguard of shaping the “convivial city” and, in coordination with private sector partners, led the animation of urban space into the spectacles of “jouissance” and encounter of festive
atmosphere.” Specifically, both in Ottawa and Vancouver, the federal government decided to undertake the commercial gentrification of markets into spaces of consumption of arts, crafts, and restaurants. As others have noted in the American context (Smith, 1996; Hackworth and Smith, 2001), the flood of the professional middle-class into city-central locations has displaced tens of thousands through various forms of gentrification. In essence, progressive struggles for preservation had perverse consequences, often accelerating the process of gentrification, increasing patterns of exclusion, and creating neighbourhoods hostile to social and affordable housing (Ley, 1996). In most cases, such perverse consequences were facilitated by state-spatial policy, and UDCs.

UDCs continue to be part of the growth coalition of city boosters who mediate and align regulatory and capital institutions to promote the entrepreneurial urban state (Sussman, 2006). The Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, for example, operating “like a conventional development corporation” has taken an active role in enforcing an embourgeoisement of the waterfront lands by building luxury condominiums, and other cultural and new media facilities to attract the “creative class” (Desfor, Keil, Kipfer and Wekerle, 2006). As much as UDCs have adapted their governance strategies, any debate over the constellation of neoliberalism requires an acute awareness of the historically and geographically embedded condition of the local and national economies. The evidence on existing UDCs suggests that

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48 For example, in 1988 the Granville market was developed by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The redevelopment of Ottawa’s Byward Market was prompted by the creation of a federal historic preservation district (Ley, 1996).
institutional trajectories and policies are important in understanding how local actors extend new projects of rent-extraction with the help of senior levels of government. A closer examination of these state-spatial strategies allows us to ask how local development strategies adapt to national development trajectories and to the localized history of state and market intervention and to consider the political contingency of Canadian urban politics that are key to understanding the new associative governance structure of the NCC.

2.9 Neoliberal Nature

The geography of actually existing neoliberalism has prodded geographers interested in the biophysical to wonder about “new dimensions of the capitalist production of nature” associated with neoliberalization (Smith, 2007). Scholars have argued that the question of "neoliberalism as environmental governance" needs to be added to the debate over neoliberal rule (McCarthy and Prudham, 2004). Only then, they argue, can we demonstrate how neoliberalism simultaneously acts as an environmental project and how environmentalism pushes back against the frontier(s) of neoliberalization.

The question of the production of nature has been an ongoing frontier of critical geography. Geographers such as Harvey (1989; 1996; 2003), Smith (1991), and Swyngedouw (2004) have continued the anglophone rediscovery of Lefebvre (Elden, 2001) and extended the analysis of the production of space to the production of nature. If the production of urban space is the accumulation of dead labour morphed into living space (Harvey, 1989a), so too then is labour the mediating force between humans and nature. Labour metabolizes nature:
humans and nature are inseparable. Most famously, Neil Smith (1991) has harvested Marx’s materialist thought and defined the production of nature as a historically and geographically embedded process. Smith’s (1991) thesis and subsequent work on the production of nature draws on Marx’s initial observation about the relational interaction between nature, labour, and capital. As Marx noted in *Capital* (1976: 283):

> Labour is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature. He confronts the materials of nature as a force of nature. He sets in motion the natural forces which belong to his own body, his arms, legs, head and hands, in order to appropriate the materials of nature in a form adapted to his own needs. Through this movement he acts upon external nature and changes it, and in this way he simultaneously changes his own nature, and subjects the play of its forces to his own sovereign power.

The production of nature then, is an added dimension to Lefebvre’s (1974) understanding of the production of space: both are central to the survival of capitalism and to capitalism’s uneven development. Smith argues that bourgeois capitalism has made “nature” become a stand-alone (external) category devoid of human relations. This ongoing and historically embedded separation of society and nature, Smith argues, was a result of the ideological and material dynamics of capitalist production. As an ontological conceit, the production of external nature has been doubly ideological as it made nature into an immovable force denied of social relations. Nature, Smith concludes, relying on Lefebvre’s (1974; 2000) understanding of space as relational, was conceived outside of politics as a mere container for capital accumulation. The result of an externalized nature
has been socio-natural domination (Leiss, 1994; Fitzsimmons, 1989). Attempts to unveil the hidden dimension of external nature, and to understand the relationship between humans and nature as relational concepts is premised on revealing the ontological position of a dialectical unity between society and nature. This explicitly relational and non-dualistic approach to the society-nature nexus insists "on the inseparability of society and nature" (Swyngedouw, 1999), and on the key role of dead and living labour in the production of nature (Kirsh and Mitchell, 2004).

In revealing the connection between “neoliberal nature and the nature of neoliberalism,” McCarthy and Prudham (2004) have urged scholars to undertake historically and geographically specific research, empirically grounded and theoretically provocative, that investigate the complex connections between neoliberalism, environmental change and environmental politics. For these authors (2004: 275), the "various parallels and tensions between environmentalism as ideologies, discourses, and class projects" of neoliberalism must be unpacked. Recently, Smith (2007), drawing on his own production-of-nature thesis, (and echoing McCarthy and Prudham) has argued that empirically and theoretically grounded case studies on neoliberal nature have made only vague connections between discourse and materiality. More specifically, Smith charges that discursive accounts often substitute constructionism for the political economy of nature. Smith has argued for a renewal of the production-of-nature thesis as the grounding for the study of neoliberal nature since it “expresses the

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49 As Lefebvre has noted (1974: XI), “L’espace et la nature sont aussi des analyseurs des contradictions sociales.” Or as Marx himself noted, “The exploitation of the worker is simultaneously the exploitation of the soil” (Marx, 1967: 500).
historical generation of ideological discourse within shifts in social productive practices” (Smith, 2007: 10). This is especially pressing, Smith argues, since late twentieth-century capitalism has adopted the “intensification of nature as accumulation strategy” as the new frontier of capitalist accumulation. “The extensive production of nature” that has existed since the 1970s, Smith notes (2007: 16), is “increasingly superseded by an intensive production of nature.” In short, neoliberalism has made the “fate of capitalism more dependent on nature” (2007: 18) and led to an accelerated destruction of nature.\(^{50}\) This recolonization of nature by the market, Smith argues, needs to be exposed – and research on the production of nature is crucial to understanding contemporary variations in capitalist accumulation.

In his own reflection on the epistemology of nature’s neoliberalization, Noel Castree (2005) has charged human geographers with providing a number of “ill-conceived case-studies” which do not provide a “clear understanding of common roots and shared features” of neoliberal nature. He calls on political ecologists to take “greater clarity in defining objects of analysis” since research on the path-dependant, contingent and varied outcome of neoliberalism has failed to identify “commonalities among differences” of neoliberal nature.

Despite epistemological and ontological disagreements over the direction of the study of neoliberal nature, there is consensus on the need for a closer examination of the connection between ideology and materiality, abstract and

\(^{50}\) As Smith (2007:18) notes, “Capital is no longer content simply to plunder an available nature but rather increasingly moves to produce an inherently social nature as the basis of new sectors of production and accumulation. Nature is increasingly if selectively replicated as its own marketplace.”
concrete, theoretical and empirical, as it relates to the practice and ideology of neoliberalism and nature. The present study accepts the argument about the need for theoretically grounded cases studies on the new dimensions of capitalist accumulation. Following these interventions, it will examine how discourses of environmentalism are more than ever integrated into urban development schemes. Nature is mobilized as part of the ideological project of revanchist urbanism. Moreover, as participants in debates over neoliberal nature have suggested, this study investigates the scaled dimensions of the intersection of nation and nature, and more specifically, how the green dimensions of urban redevelopment furthers processes of exclusion and displacement.

2.10 Conclusion

Critical socio-spatial theory has not yet adequately explained how the production of urban nature is empirically related to specific building programs and urban redevelopment projects, especially in the context of the nation-state’s meso-institutional neoliberal urbanization. This research agenda calls for continued work on nature, culture and the production of space – especially in the context of multiscalar urban governance. An examination of the production of urban nature within the neoliberal urban renewal context, as well as theoretically informed and empirically grounded study of how Canadian urban policy changed in face of NUP, will help clarify how the inter-scalar dynamics of neoliberal urbanism, culture and neoliberal nature operate, and move this research agenda forward. The work I propose attempts to further empirical accounts of the social production of nature, and of the relationship between nature and culture in the
institutional context of neoliberal governance in the nation’s capital. In relation to the literature reviewed above, this thesis will posit that national urban neoliberalism is a political struggle that produces new cultural spaces amidst local and national constellations of power, including the production of neoliberal natures. This case study of the NCC elucidates how the urban and the national meet, and the importance of considering the issue of national culture in relation to the production of national nature. As the literature suggests, Canadian postwar urban alliances have to be considered within the institutional context of emergent forms of accumulation and production of space and nature, and as historically and geographically embedded processes of change. Empirically, it remains unclear as to how national-level organizations such as the NCC have participated, historically and in the current context, in the process of reproducing urban spaces. Thus, the present incarnation of urban development as a particular constellation of state-led urban development and of exclusive nationalism, performed in and through federally mediated urban redevelopment policies and projects, needs to be examined through longer historical trajectories. The NCC’s historical attachment to the mediation of nature and the production of urban environments allows us to begin to unpack the agglomeration of impulses and how these are historically and geographically embedded. The following chapter examines some impulses behind this historical trajectory in the context of postwar urban renewal in LeBreton Flats.
CHAPTER 3: Federal Expropriation and Postwar Dreams on LeBreton Flats

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is primarily interested in the story of federal intervention in LeBreton Flats between 1962 and 1967. The central event prior to this moment of intervention was a notice of expropriation sent out to the residents of LeBreton Flats on April 17, 1962. Federal capital planners had deemed the Flats as a dangerous “blighted” slum unfit for the order required by a national capital. The Flats were being expropriated under ambitious modernist planning imperatives. The entire neighbourhood would be flattened, in time for the national centennial, to make way for a massive government office complex centred around a new Department of National Defense Headquarters.

This chapter charts the impulses that led to and followed this event. The first section replays the story of the national model of modern urban planning for the National Capital. Initiated in 1945, and carried out in the 1950s and early 1960s. This dream of a modern capital and its associated “ideal” planning practices would be sold to Canadians through up-to-date promotional and propaganda techniques developed during World War II. National urban renewal was a key component of the new national mores of “active” citizenship, and federal institutions, including the National Capital Commission (NCC) and the National Film Board (NFB), sold the ideals and practices of modernist urban planning developed by the National Capital Planning Service (NCPS) through the medium of film, the commodity vehicle of the automobile, and the “slum” recovery narrative. Second, this chapter revisits the debate over housing renewal as a
multi-scalar debate in which the NCC “passed the buck” for its nefarious impact on the everyday lives of the residents of the Flats. Third, the chapter provides a detailed account of the planned National Defense Headquarters as the heart of the urban renewal project on the Flats. It shows how the expropriation and the dislocation of its marginalized and stigmatized residents emerged from an ambitious state-led initiative to remodel Ottawa into a modern national capital. By showcasing this model urban renewal project, federal proponents hoped that national urban renewal would become a major component of the postwar national dream. In the end, the promise of urban renewal would fail; the chapter concludes that the story of the expropriation and the new dream image is key to understanding some of the contemporaneous “impulses” driving the NCC. The “market-led” redevelopment of the Flats four decades later, under the guise of entrepreneurial liberalism, would in fact, help consolidate this massive intervention.

3.2 Initial Federal Interventions

In a famed 1893 proclamation, Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier committed to making Ottawa “the center of intellectual development of this country and above all the Washington of the North.” A few years later, the Ottawa Improvement Commission (OIC) was created to implement state-initiated beautification of the capital. Created in 1899, the OIC was charged with transforming this lumbering hinterland into a great capital that would rival Paris, London, Washington and other “great” capital cities (Hillis, 1992). With support from the federal

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51 Ottawa Evening Journal, June 19 1893.
government, the OIC would initiate a process of regional planning and would call for “coherence, visual variety and civic grandeur” for the national capital. Early beautification projects concentrated on removing such unsightly visual obstructions as commercial signs, unpaved roads, telephone poles, cables and other visual blemishes from the central core and the government district. Renamed the Federal District Commission (FDC) in 1927, the federal capital planning authority would continue to undertake its mandate of capital beautification. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the FDC’s authority, planning expertise, mandate, budget and control over property grew substantially (Taylor, 1986), partly as a result of Prime Minister Mackenzie King’s personal interests and support for planning the national capital (Gordon, 1998). In 1950 the FDC was buttressed by the National Capital Planning Service’s (NCPS) Plan for the National Capital which set out the parameters for the postwar beautification and rationalization in the National Capital Region (NCR). In 1958, with implementation of the Plan already underway, the federal planning authority was given new powers over real-estate, planning, and expropriation. The new entity, the National Capital Commission (NCC), given adequate funding, would undertake several urban renewal and regional planning projects over its 1,800 square mile domain (Taylor, 1986). The determined leadership of the NCC would use the full force of its institutional capacity and resources to carry out ambitious projects. This included acquiring property for a greenbelt, expanding the parkway and expressway for the intensification of automobile traffic, and perhaps most

52 Todd Report, 1903.
53 LAC, RG 13, Ottawa Improvement Commission, 2296, 1899-906.
dramatically, expropriating several inner-city neighbourhoods, including the Flats, to make way for postwar modernization. However, as with the OIC, the even postwar urban renewal would adhere to the principles and practices of beautification, this time relying on the social-scientific pathologies of “territorial stigmatization.”

### 3.3 Federal “Territorial Stigmatization”

In 1963, NCC Chairman Major-General Howard Kennedy noted plaintively that the “great natural beauty of the area” had been sullied by industrial

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54 LAC, RG34, vol. 10, F-5-14.
development of the “very beautiful Chaudière Falls” and by distasteful everyday life of the lumber workers. Ottawa, as Major-General Kennedy noted, had:

the dubious distinction of having the worst reputation of any community in Canada... a distinction due mainly to its antecedents, the nature of its activities and the kind of people who inhabited it. These last were largely Irish lumbermen and other immigrants, who had been brought in to build the canal, and French Canadian lumberman and rivermen... They were known far and wide as a lawless lot, and their pleasures were few and simple – mainly drinking and fighting. Riots were common and on more than one occasion took on major proportions.55

In the years surrounding the expropriation, long-standing anglo-elite distaste for Ottawa’s Catholic French-Canadian and Irish working-class districts resurfaced (cf. Taylor, 1986). Rather than a benevolent act of “noblesse oblige,” as some have argued (Gordon, 1998), state-directed beautification had severe consequences for marginalized groups, where representations of class, race, and poverty enabled slum identification and urban renewal. This institutionalized dislike for the habitus of the lower class played to both racialized and fearful “Victorian imaginaries” (Rose, 1997; Boyer, 1983; Wilson, 1991) held within the domain of the federal urban planning cadres and their invasive planning techniques.56 In the wake of the announced redevelopment of the Flats, the NCC re-deployed the federal socio-scientific “seeing eye” on the Capital to evaluate

55 Address by Major-General Howard Kennedy, Acadia University, April 15, 1953, LAC, MG30, 44, FDC (1952-1953).
56 Not all had agreed with such accounts. In his comprehensive account of the Canadian lumber industry in 1938, Lower had shown the labouring class of the milling and lumber industry in a much more positive light (but equally paternalistic view). The French-Canadian, Lower wrote (1938: 189), “as bushman, river driver, and mill hand... was reliable, docile, cheerful, efficient, and cheap. He had a pride of calling, a low standard of living and an authoritarian type of society behind him to keep him contented with his lot.”
the capitalized value of the entire neighbourhood.\textsuperscript{57} The NCC sub-contracted a small army of professional assessors and real-estate experts to survey each individual property and resident of the Flats.\textsuperscript{56} The red line which delineates LeBreton Flats as an urban renewal target in \textit{Photo 3.1}, mimics the military analogies of the frontier of urban renewal. As Klemek (2004: 264) explains in reference to the postwar project of urban renewal:

The frontier is essentially a military construct, defining a boundary of control, something to be defended and if possible extended. In this sense, urban renewal was conceived and executed as kind of frontier action, drawing red battle lines around entire districts and neighborhoods, advancing against blight, imposing form.

The NCC’s own property records provide key archival documents from which to revisit both the discursive and the materialist impulses that justified the militarized devaluation of the housing and building stock in LeBreton Flats. These extensive real-estate appraisals provide a comprehensive account of the individual characteristics of each property. They offer a detailed archive of how the individual properties and dwellers were deemed undesirable by the real-estate appraisers. By assembling these various micro-histories, the archival collection provides textual and visual fragments documenting the stigmatization of the Flats and the harsh desire to “creatively destroy” the urban landscape. Far from being static documents, these judgments mobilized the federal juridical-

\textsuperscript{57} Reflecting on his legacy at the NCPS, Jacques Gréber had been insistent that “our Service has to maintain an unceasing survey work” and expected the expert-driven professional planning to continue its operations beyond his tenure, Address by Jacques Gréber, Château Laurier, Nov. 18, 1953, LAC, MG30, vol. 44, FDC (1952-1953).

\textsuperscript{56} The professional appraisals of LeBreton Flats are a scaled-down and updated version of the 1948-1950 surveys conducted by the NCPS under the guide of the Gréber Plan for the National Capital.
legal apparatus into the extinguishment of the Flats and helped secure the federal regulation of the urban lands of LeBreton Flats.

The property surveys churned out seemingly innocuous descriptions of the Flats which reflected this materiality of the housing stock. In the descriptive narrative the Flats was shown as a neighbourhood in flux. Yet, while showing the Flats in plain, “objective” terms, the above description reflects the social Darwinist understanding of natural neighbourhood change that underpinned the NCPS’s guiding logic. These descriptions were part of the federal charting of urban land to assess the desirability of various sectors of the central city, and a desire to the move the Flats “forward.” The professionalized judgment of these appraisals helped embed the stigma of the Flats as a slum into the public record, and this view would become the dominant representation of the Flats. Most appraisers argued that the “spotty mixture of commercial, industrial and housing development scattered throughout the area” created “heavy traffic, noise, dust or noxious odors, an atmosphere not homogenous with residential use of any type.” The “inharmonious development” of the Flats, and the semi-detached, row housing and conversions into multiple-family occupancy led to professional claims that “the area does not represent a desirable community.” For many

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60 J. Allan Kelly Realities, Assessment of 77-83 Broad St., LAC, RG 34, 1979-80/128, F-5-10.
62 J. Allan Kelly Realities, Assessment of 77-83 Broad St., LAC RG 34, 1979-80/128, F-5-10.
appraisers, federally induced change was necessary to empty what they perceived as a noxious, undesirable, and unregulated zone taking up crucial land directly adjacent to so the central business district (CBD).

Still, this representation was far from complete: others portrayed these general characteristics of the Flats in a more positive light. As “one of Ottawa oldest sections” the Flats was also characterized as a neighbourhood with “schools and churches for all denominations within easy commuting distance” including convenient “shopping facilities” in neighbourhood stores. Located “within a mile of the centre town shopping area,” with extensive bus service, one appraiser noted that “the neighborhood is quite attractive from the standpoint of its proximity to downtown shopping, office, and commercial area.” In the eyes of its assessors, as with those of its residents, there was more than one LeBreton Flats.

Nonetheless, despite some positive assessments, the general consensus provides a narrative of a “scattered and spotty” development, with depressed property values naturally progressing towards an area of higher commercial use. “The neighbourhood” was, in the words of Oliver, Carter and Company, “regressively residential in general character with many old residences in various styles and conditions.” As other agents noted the residences were “mediocre in

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66 J. Allan Kelly Realities, Assessment of 77-83 Broad Street, LAC, RG34, 1979-80/128, F-5-10.
67 “The neighbourhood is regressively residential in general character with many old residences in various styles and conditions. Styles range from detached residences and
character"\textsuperscript{68} and "under tenant occupation in low rental category."\textsuperscript{69} In general, its status as a zone of “unregulated” use, real-estate experts noted, had led to depressed property value “as a result of inharmonious development and a lack of pride of ownership.”\textsuperscript{70}

There was an added dimension to the stigmatization of the area. The harsh criticism was interspaced with a racialized critique of migration into the area, which followed up on Major-General Kennedy’s disdain for the “other.” The Flats was becoming an increasingly popular immigrant catchment area, and the demographic make-up was shifting. While the residents of the area were mainly in “the lower income class, mostly of French-Canadian origin,” they were being complemented by “an influx of Italian immigrants.”\textsuperscript{71} Both the human and physical dimensions of the neighbourhood were changing. This “noticeable integration of the Italian Ethnic group” of an area with a strong French-Canadian presence was semi-detached structures to row housing. Accommodation is mainly under tenant occupation in low rental category,” Oliver, Carter and Company Ltd. Property Appraisers, Report to D.L. McDonald, Director of Planning and Property, NCC, re: Therien Cleaners, February 12, 1963, LAC, RG34, 1979-198/128, vol. 15, F-9-22.

\textsuperscript{68} “The area is heterogeneous in character, that is, mixed with residential, commercial and industrial improvements, with most of the residential structure mediocre in character,” Strung Real-estate Limited, Report to D.L. McDonald, NCC Director of Planning and Property, re: Therien Cleaners, November 3, 1962, LAC, RG34, p. 11.


\textsuperscript{70} “In the area known as “Le Breton Flats” which area has lacked zoning controls over the years and as a consequence of development has been spotty with a mixture of commercial, industrial and housing development scattered throughout the area in question with property values depressed as a result of inharmonious development and a lack of pride of ownership,” J. Allan Kelly Realities, Assessment of 77-83 Broad St., LAC, RG34, 1979-80/128, F-5-10.

\textsuperscript{71} Assessment by Fitzsimmons and Co. Ltd of 29-33 Lloyd Street, LAC, RG34, 1979-80/128, Box, 12, F-6-2.
accompanied by changes in the physical nature of the housing stock. Since the "influx," noted one real-estate appraiser, "considerable rehabilitation of the older residential structure has taken place in recent years by new Canadians, who have settled in the area." Referring to Uga and Antonia Deangelis, Bert Katz noted that:

The couple, Italian immigrants, were anxious to buy a stake in this their newly adopted land. The price they paid would normally be considered high for the area and condition of the house. A tremendous change has taken place in the building, the back yard and the lane. The building has reverberated to the clanging of hammers, saws, chisels and paint brushes. The yard has been converted from dust and garbage to a garden and vegetable patch and even the laneway has taken on character.

Even so, while the “influx” increased the value and the overall condition of the building stock, such improvements were not seen in positive light. As noted in a report to D.L. McDonald, NCC Director of Planning and Property, such rehabilitations “carried out by a few homeowners” only “retarded the deterioration of the area as a whole.” The improvements were only slowing down the “natural” decline of the area, and perpetrating an “unnatural” upswing. In addition, many appraisers blamed the “noticeable integration of the Italian Ethnic group,” consequent on the influx of Italian immigrants, for the “unnatural” increase in

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72 “The area has a history of a French Canadian population, but in the last three years there has been a noticeable integration of the Italian Ethnic group,” S.G Macy and Son, Appraisal of 97 Sherwood, LAC, RG 34, 1979-80/128, vol. 15, F-10-7.
73 Strung Real-estate Limited, Report to D.L. McDonald, Director of Planning and Property, NCC, Re: Therien Cleaners, November 3, 1962, LAC, RG 34.
housing prices in the area (despite earlier lament for the deterioration of the
neighbourhood). As R.E. Assessments noted to D.L. MacDonald:

A fair proportion of the houses in the “Flats” have been purchase by Italian families and this has had the effect of pushing sale prices up due to the fact a house is often shared by two or more families… these families frequently pay more for a property than a typical buyer.

As another assessor noted:

Living conditions are poor and vacancies low in this particular area. I feel that the reason for this demand is caused by the influx of Italian immigrants in this area. For the most part the subject neighbourhood is in a period of disintegration and ripe for redevelopment and to a higher and better use.

Not only were the contributions of new residents of the Flats overlooked, but the spending habits and the family structure of these families were also viewed with suspicion. Most mortgages were still guaranteed by neighbours, family, or other personal contacts - often guaranteed by another resident. All of these practices adhered to lending habits that pre-dated the postwar state-supported corporate finance of the housing market (Harris, 2004). These “new Canadians” were deemed by the experts to be out of step with the postwar norms of institutional lending and the nuclear (non-extended) family ideal.

Moreover, many of the improvements were conversions for multiple family

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77 “I feel that the reason for this demand is caused by the influx of Italian immigrants in this area,” S.G Macy and Son, Appraisal of 97 Sherwood, LAC, RG 34, 1979-80/128, vol. 15, F-10-7.
78 Excerpts from R.E. Assessments as shown in Letter to D.L. MacDonald, June 5th 1962, from J. Allan Kelly, LAC, RG34.
79 Ibid.
80 Sales Analyzed, LAC, RG34, vol. 10, F-3-3.
occupation which was seen as undesirable and a shift away from the postwar nuclear family structure.\(^{81}\)

Despite the influx of new residents, and the gradual increase of housing prices and continued low vacancy, real-estate appraisers argued that improvements were only retarding the natural deterioration of the neighbourhood and expansion of the CBD. The net result of all of the professional accounts was to deem the Flats as incorrigible and of need of complete redevelopment. Macy and Son concluded that the “subject neighbourhood is in a period of disintegration and ripe for redevelopment to a higher and better use.”\(^ {82}\) The neighbourhood of second-class accommodation for low-income workers seeking low-cost housing, despite the recent influx of immigrants, was clearly deteriorating and in need of massive government intervention.\(^ {83}\) Appraisers King and Constam reflected this catastrophic view of the Flats:

> There are no apparent factors or trends which would tend to indicate that development would occur which would revitalize the area. It is our opinion that unless the area were completely redeveloped, no changes in character would occur and the area generally would continue to gradually deteriorate from its present unsatisfactory level.\(^ {84}\)

An army of surveyors descended onto each property and assessed the property

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\(^{81}\) “Many are also converted for either multiple family occupancy or commercial uses. In short, the area does not represent a desirable community,” Strung Real-estate Limited, Report to D.L. McDonald, Director of Planning and Property, NCC, re: Therien Cleaners, November 3, 1962, LAC, RG34, 1979-198/128, vol. 15, F-9-22.

\(^{82}\) “For the most part the subject neighbourhood is in a period of disintegration and ripe for redevelopment to a higher and better use,” S.G Macy and Son, Appraisal of 97 Sherwood, LAC, RG 34, 1979-80/128, vol. 15, F-10-7.

\(^{83}\) The “lack of planning and controlled development has resulted in the creation of a heterogeneous neighbourhood furnishing second class accommodation for residential, commercial and industrial users,” Strung Real-estate Limited, Report to D.L. McDonald, Director of Planning and Property, NCC, re: Therien Cleaners, November 3, 1962, LAC, RG34, 1979-198/128, vol. 15, F-9-22.

\(^{84}\) King and Constam R.E. Appraisal of Shenkman Properties, LAC, RG 34, vol. 10, F-3-1.
according to their professional expertise, and re-wrote its individual parts as an undesirable whole. The “territorial stigmatization” (Purdy, 2003a) of such older low-income neighbourhoods was a powerful tool of the bureaucratic elite and the rulings of real-estate experts gave them the evidence to make catastrophic conclusions about the fate of inner-city neighbourhoods.

The stigmatization of the physical housing stock extended to views of the residents of the area. Postwar urban planning viewed districts like LeBreton Flats, consisting of substandard housing quality, as an unnatural “slum” – a source of disease and immorality that negatively affected the quality of family life and led to questionable morals. Representations of “slum” neighbourhoods have long intersected with racialized and class-based discourses – especially in regards to the exoticized representations of “deviant” subjects, dwellings, and neighbourhoods as a danger to the white, middle-class, postwar nuclear family ideal (Purdy, 2003b). Such representations “singled out certain urban working-class and poor neighbourhoods as socially, culturally, and morally inferior” (Purdy, 2003a). These representations formed an integral component of the reformist imagination of social scientists, and housing and community activists during the 1940s and 1950s (Brushett, 2001; Berman, 1982; Jacobs, 1961).

Representations of the physical and social “blight” of the neighbourhood reflected the sociologically driven idea of the “pathology of slum areas.” More than simple representations, these ideas would anchor the rationale for ambitious redevelopment schemes (Purdy, 2003b: 531):

Images of poor housing conditions, poverty, filth and moral wickedness were condensed into one striking picture of abject misery that was
propagated en masse by the reform lobby, state officials and the main media outlets in Toronto and nationally. Exoticizing the physical shabbiness of dwellings and neighbourhoods and the troublesome behaviours ostensibly produced by them was not only an instrument of moral indictment, it was also a rhetorical technique intended to sufficiently unsettle the social imagination of the public to acquire support for slum clearance and public housing.

Experts agreed that the unregulated zone was in need of a severe correction to ensure the proper process of neighbourhood change. In the imagination of reformers, media and state offices, “slums” were “blots on the map” that need to be surgically removed to stop further infection of the city (Brushett, 2001). Combined with comprehensive city planning, large-scale Keynesian housing renewal would produce normalized single-family homes (Brushett, 2001), good morally fit subjects, and result in “‘decent’ ways of living in line with the norms of postwar middle-class notions of family and community” (Purdy, 2003b: 531). In the imagination of rational scientific urban planning it was a simple equation: a “normal” home fostered a healthy nation (Purdy, 1997).

The discourse of improvement, combined with the historic disdain for French-Canadians and the rising discomfort with the nascent Italian character of the area, points to the racialized dimensions of urban renewal on LeBreton Flats. The dominant view of social reformers was an extension of the view that non-British subjects, especially those of the working-class, would “jeopardize the future of the Anglo-Saxon ‘race’” (Purdy, 1997) and make immoral citizens. This discourse of “territorial stigmatization” was an extension of the genealogical stigmatization of the area that went back to the 1950 Plan for the National Capital. The modernist impulses for urban renewal were clearly being
implemented; calls for “eradication” of the old city were clearly winning out. Expertise provided the rationale for expropriation, helping state actors often conceal policies by “making them administrative, not political issues” (O’Connor, 1973: 6). Yet, neither the discursive formation of “blight” by real-estate appraisers, nor the modernist design principles of architects, were enough to provide on their own the conditions for devaluation, destruction, and renewal of the Flats. Urban renewal requires a balancing of accumulation and legitimation to manage the political repercussions of profitable capital accumulation (Weber, 2002). The destruction of the built environment, central to further accumulation as it frees immobilized capital and land (Harvey, 1982), was in fact dependent on modernist impulses of elite expert rule to ensure the conditions of further capital accumulation.

3.4 Federal Urban Renewal: The Plan for the National Capital

On August 23rd 1945, Prime Minister Mackenzie King requested that the French Ambassador cable French architect and planner Jacques Gréber asking him to return to Canada to renew work he had undertaken in an earlier commission (1937-1939) for beautification “of the heart of the city.” One of Prime Minister Mackenzie King’s first acts at the conclusion of World War II was to renew plans for the beautification of the national capital. At the Prime Minister’s urging, Cabinet quickly approved Gréber’s new commission to develop a regional plan for the national capital “as the best type of war memorial.”

Mackenzie King’s personal interest in the beautification of the national capital

85 Mackenzie King Diaries, 1945; LAC, Mackenzie King Diaries, October 14th, 1936, LAC.
86 Mackenzie King Diaries, August 23rd, 1945, LAC.
(Gordon, 2001) and Gréber’s close personal contact with the Prime Minister would ensure that his imported comprehensive regional planning principles were brought into the inner sanctum of the federal government. The Plan would beautify and rationalize the regional space to create a more hygienic and morally secure future for the National Capital Region (NCR), pumping traffic and air into the city smoothly.

Educated at France’s influential École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Gréber boasted of the superiority of the French planning genius (Ward, 2002), while also adapting new principles as the turn of the century eclecticism of l’École waned in architectural influence (Klemek, 2004). In Ottawa, he re-deployed the urban planning principles he had developed while directing the reconstruction and renewal of central city locations in several mid-size French and North American cities from his offices at l’Université de Paris (Voldman, 1997a). Mostly undertaken between 1950 and 1965, these urban renewal projects were seen as unique opportunities to radically alter urban landscapes: to improve living conditions, to maintain or construct monuments to the nation and to re-engineer socio-environments. Under the type of pragmatic regional planning Gréber advocated (Gournay, 2001), strong central planning agencies would direct extensive urban renewal plans. Gréber’s second cross-Atlantic trek to the Capital would have a lasting effect.

Charged with its development as principal consultant for the National Planning Capital Service (NCPS), Gréber would re-deploy the urban planning principles he had honed working for Vichy France during the reconstruction of
several mid-size French cities (Voldman, 1997a). This re-deployment of extensive and now renewed survey techniques would radically alter the national-city landscape.\textsuperscript{87} The result of his efforts was the Plan for the National Capital, presented to Parliament just days before Mackenzie King’s death. Gréber’s Plan succeeded in marrying the principles of the Garden City to the Modern Movement’s functionalism, and in superimposing these principles on his plans for the region’s “unspoiled spaces” (Lortie, 1997; Gournay, 2001).\textsuperscript{88} Ottawa’s crowded, congested, disordered city, Gréber (1950: 148) argued had not yet been organized into a well-ordered natural setting for the “attainment of wholesome living, work and environmental conditions.”

The \textit{Plan} included extensive attempts to create open spaces for “the rational exploitation of all elements of nature” (Gréber, 1950). Key components included restructuring the central core, creating and expanding parks and green spaces (including a greenbelt), decentralizing industry, and connecting these segmented nodes with an extensive parkway system. At the top of the list of “urgent problems to be solved’ were “the railroad situations, the blighted areas, congested and unsanitary housing” (Gréber, 1950). This ambitious urban renewal program was all to be completed through deliberate and detailed implementation of the comprehensive regional plan, according to a set timeline,

\textsuperscript{87} Gréber’s early thinking had been shaped by his extensive and influential study of the North American design of \textit{les villes ouvrières} and Garden Cities. He had in fact made several round-trips across the Atlantic cleverly grafting principles from each side of the Atlantic to his planning principles. However, unlike rigid adherents, Gréber maintained an ambivalent relationship to schools of thought and maintained a “pragmatic” approach to his Canadian project (Gournay, 2001).

\textsuperscript{88} Gréber drew strongly from his own pre-war design for the city’s core as well as from early studies by Todd (1903), Holt/Bennett (1915) and Cauchon (1922), (Hillis, 1992).
to be implemented diligently by a socio-technical elite.\textsuperscript{89} To succeed, the sanctity of regional planning had to be protected from the counter-proposals of an immature (and meddlesome) cohort of local planners who were ill-equipped to deal with cosmopolitan high-order “principles of planning,” and from local critics who might disrupt the smooth functioning of the \textit{National Plan}.\textsuperscript{90}

Gréber clearly favoured this type of elite-driven development. As Gréber (1920: 141) noted in his influential study of American architecture (in reference to North American cities):

\begin{quote}
Built too quickly, these cities are now studying the remedy to the disorder, to prevent the worsening of conditions. City plans, generally rectangular, are corrected, even in the Heart of the city and without concern for the expense, by adopting a plan for Haussmannization, which stamps them with diagonal arteries, public squares, and boulevards, and by combining improvements of traffic and hygiene through the beautification of traffic and hygiene with the beautification of the city centre.\textsuperscript{91}
\end{quote}

Using intensive survey techniques and invasive surgery, what Gréber wanted was nothing less than a massive correction of the scars of unplanned growth though Haussman-like diagonal arteries that would clean up the city, to be implemented through anti-democratic techniques modeled on Haussman’s own practices (Berman, 1982; Harvey, 2003).\textsuperscript{92}

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\textsuperscript{89} Gréber reserved a particular disdain for the local (and meddlesome) professionals unschooled in technocratic planning.

\textsuperscript{90} As Gréber noted to the Minister of Public Works, “This kind of educational enterprise eliminates public opposition or indifference and should gradually create a unanimous support for planning,” Memorandum to Minister of Public Works, A. Fournier, from Jacques Gréber, October 18, 1950, LAC, RG2, vol. 18, F-21-3.

\textsuperscript{91} Author’s translation.

\textsuperscript{92} Haussmann’s approach to urban design emphasized wide avenues instead of narrow medieval streets, purportedly allowing for better draining and sanitation but also by cutting down on ‘over’ population. The large avenues and squares also prevented the blockade of streets during peasant uprisings and allowed troops and cannons easy access to the streets. The Plan suggested a similar decentralization of residential spaces and industry to alleviate congestion in the city centre which was, Mackenzie King
Gréber advocated, nature is not only planned: it is surgically repaired. The high regard Gréber held for the natural escapes from urban life underscored his belief in the state’s ability to renew with corrective zeal through scientific socio-spatial strategies. It was a dream for the new national capital and Gréber took being called a dreamer “as a great compliment, because where there is no dream or far-reaching vision there is no progress possible.”

Under his guidance the master plan also called for the relocation of inner-city residents in blighted and congested neighbourhoods to pristine, clean, and low-density environments. As the NCPS noted to NCPC, “In the greater Ottawa area, the manifestations of urban blight, such as poor housing, crowding, of families and poor maintenance, need betterment, but not of a particularly severe nature.”

With its keen attention to the physical environment, and to practical and logical placement of the Cartesian order, the Gréber report demonstrated the federal capital commission’s disregard for issues of social welfare. As the caption to photos of “Blighted Houses” notes in the report, “these regrettable conditions do not arise from poverty, but from lack of foresight and regulation resulting in blight and misuse in the development of land” (Gréber, 1950: 148). More than a grandiose report destined to collect dust on the shelves of Ottawa’s mandarins, the Plan, with its representation of LeBreton Flats as a “slum,” would prove decisive in the implementation of Ottawa’s postwar urban renewal.

noted in agreement with Gréber, “the most important matter.”” Mackenzie King Diaries, May 13th, 1947, LAC.


3.5 Democratic Propaganda: Selling National Urban Renewal

The Plan for the National Capital was part of an ambitious effort to sell new practices of corrective urban planning to the nation’s citizens. As part of the preparations for its release, a Public Information Sub-Committee was established within the NCPS “to develop national support for the Plan” and “to foster public demand for the modern practices of urban planning.”95 The Sub-Committee was charged with dissemination of the Plan and its planning practices to the Canadian public.96 Film, ribbon-cutting ceremonies, and traveling exhibits were among the promotional techniques used to prepare the public for national urban redevelopment.97 The Information Sub-Committee’s activities included preparing press and photo releases, a national traveling exhibit, full-scale models, promotional pamphlets and, later, three promotional films.98

Representations of poverty and social conditions were embedded in the promotional efforts of the NCPC’s Information Office. The “blight” of LeBreton Flats, within a short distance of the Hill, would be picked up by the communications specialists at the NCPC as one of the key themes of its multi-pronged promotional campaign. As the Information Office writers noted in their press release of the Plan, “the National Capital Planning Committee expresses concern that this blight is appearing within a short distance of the Parliament

98 NCPS Memorandum, April 25th, 1949, LAC, RG2, vol. 18, F-21-3.
Buildings." The plight of the Flats would be tied inexorably to a multi-pronged publicity campaign, and to these representations of the community.

In the first volley of this campaign, press highlights were provided in advance of the formal release of the Plan so that “suitable articles could be prepared by weeklies and local newspapers.” The initial softening of public opinion would be followed by a national traveling exhibit featuring full-scale models. First exhibited in the lobby of Parliament Hill, the traveling exhibit of “models, drawings and photographs of the present and future National Capital” prepared by the Information Office was designed to demonstrate “the latest concepts in urban development” and to showcase the capital as the clean, modern city of a newly emergent nation. The goal of this traveling show was to build up public support for “modern” urban planning and to highlight the Plan as the national ideal of how to correctly implement these principles. “This kind of educational enterprise,” Gréber noted in a memorandum to the Minister of Public Works, “eliminates public opposition or indifference and should gradually create a unanimous support for planning.”

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100 Memorandum to Prime Minister, February 18, 1949, LAC, RG2, vol. 127, F-21.
101 Memorandum, April 25, 1949, LAC, RG2, vol. 18, F-21-3.
103 “The travelling exhibit consisting of models, drawings and photographs of the present and future National Capital was shown in six cities...It was accorded a most favourable public reception and there is little doubt that it has contributed greatly towards building a favourable public reaction to the development of the National Capital and has encouraged the interest in local planning. Further, its effect on the development of Canadian Citizenship has been marked by installing in the public mind a symbol for Canada.”
104 Memorandum to Minister of Public Works A. Fournier from Jacques Gréber, October 18, 1950, LAC, RG2, vol. 18, F-21-3.
In short, the *Plan* was above all a model for national urban development: a guide for future "national" urban planning practices. As a NCPC press release noted in 1949, the *Plan* was "more than a Master Plan for the Capital Area; it will be a guide of great importance to municipalities throughout Canada who are becoming conscious of the need for long range planning." The model's first public showing in the rotunda of Parliament Hill’s Centre Block was a most symbolic act. Only thereafter would the model tour around the country, disseminating urban planning practices from the core of political power out to the regions. Accompanying the model and touring exhibit was a fifty-page booklet designed to introduce the Capital and the plans for its development; the booklet was to be distributed to the Senate, the House of Commons, schools, libraries, and other public institutions.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the NCPC contracted the National Film Board (NFB) to complete two initial documentaries on urban planning and the Plan for the National Capital. Relying on the NFB’s experience as a producer of propaganda, the films would perform an important pedagogical role equal to the one film performed in World War II. During the war, the NFB, under the direction of John Grierson, had developed techniques to stimulate new national mores of active citizenship (Evans, 1991). For Grierson film was a central tool of the postwar state which could deliver the message of the good life to the people. It created a democratic impulse of consent and through generating public discussions helped overcome social conflict and promoted social compromise; it

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helped translate “the materials of citizenship” into an “active and participant citizenship” by absorbing the revolutionary techniques of film production (Druick, 1999). As Grierson (1947: 192) noted:

> We can, by propaganda, widen the horizons of the schoolroom and give every individual, each in his place and work, a living conception of the community which he has the privilege to serve. We can take this imagination beyond the boundaries of his community to discover the destiny of his country. We can light up his life with a sense of active citizenship.

The NFB films would help bring the city beyond its lumbering, industrial and working-class past, and towards a future built environment which fostered active, healthy city dwellers. Screened in community halls, church basements, and schools by some of Canada’s 250 voluntary film councils, the films would be used to sell the Plan and Gréber’s imported planning practices to the nation. Using trained projectionists and “democratic facilitators,” as per NFB practice (Evans, 1991), the NFB aimed to “become a living part of the community’s life, a real education in the business of civics. the linking of people together in a common purpose.”¹⁰⁷ With a wide audience, community screenings performed the pedagogical role of what NFB founder John Grierson referred to as “democratic propaganda” (Grierson, 1947).¹⁰⁸ Strongly influenced by Walter Lippmann, who had advocated the role of propaganda in enlightening the average citizen, Grierson wanted to reclaim a virtuous position for propaganda

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¹⁰⁷ The Developments at the National Film Board of Canada 1939-44, Raymond Spottiswoode, Sydney Newman Fonds, LAC, R738, vol. 7, 7.
¹⁰⁸ Community screening were quite popular. According to the NFB’s own inflated estimates, in 1948 over nine million people attended community screenings (Evans, 1991)
and pioneered the use of film as an essential tool of the postwar state. NFB films, such as the *Canada Carries On* series, promoted postwar social policy and the policies of government partners such as the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC), the NCPS and the Federal District Commission (FDC) (Druick, 1999). The NFB was to be part of the reform movement trying to alleviate the ills of unabated capitalist industrialization through alternative paths.

The NCPC’s multi-pronged information campaign was widely perceived as being successful in achieving its dual goal of promoting urban planning and active citizenship. As the Federal District Commission (FDC) – the federal planning authority which would institute many of Gréber’s ideas – noted in its annual report in 1950, the traveling publicity campaign:

> contributed greatly towards building a favourable public reaction to the development of the National Capital and has encouraged the interest in local planning. Further, its effect on the development of Canadian Citizenship has been marked by installing in the public mind a symbol for Canada.  

The films would, as the Clerk of the Privy Council wrote in his screening notes, “stress the long-term benefits to be derived for the next generation in Canada and they will give, probably, a degree of understanding to the aims and objects of community planning.”

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109 Grierson valued film as a way to show the advantages of liberal democracy to a nation’s citizens and as a way to overcome social antagonisms, labour-capital tensions, thus securing a harmonious future for the country (Nelson, 1982). He aimed to produce films about everyday life and the values and ideals that showcased the good-life of capitalist democracies. Films “about the everyday thing of life, the values, the ideals which make life worth living,” Grierson (147: 190) opined “helped secure the future and better serve the still wider needs of the people of Canada.”


Years later, in a self-congratulatory note, Gréber gloated that the preemptive preparation of the public for his principles of urban planning ensured that “everything now goes finely and rapidly on the National Capital planning” since “public opinion has been prepared and educated.” The national public had been prepared to accept the Plan; however, it would be local Ottawa neighbourhoods that would bear the brunt of Gréber’s planning imperative.

### 3.6 Envisioning LeBreton Flats as a National Slum

Initially two versions of the same film were prepared: a colour version, to be distributed as part of the Canada Carries On series through theatrical release, and a black-and-white version, intended for release to the community film councils. The first version was aimed primarily at urban audiences and the second was prepared for rural viewers. Pathological representations of the physical and social fabric of the neighbourhood as “regressive” featured prominently in the NCPC’s multi-pronged promotional campaign. These films repeated the narrative of the need to remove the unsightly relics of the “old” staples production of lumber and the “blight” near Parliament Hill.

*A Capital Plan* as the first NFB film would be called, made clear the dangerous and nefarious quality of life in the un-planned and un-modern capital. According to the film’s overriding narrative, chaotic conditions ruled in Ottawa: heat, dirt, noise, squalor, and above all else the “strain of rush-hour.” These were

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the “symptoms” that “disfigured” the NCR (A Capital Plan, 1949). As the authoritative narrator informs the viewer, the overcrowded, dirty, and noisy industrial city was “a capital city in name but not in appearance” (A Capital Plan, 1949). Despite being built “on one of the finest sites in the world,” the narrator adds that “much of the natural beauty of the capital has been marred” by “a town that grew without a plan”: a town that was “allowed to grow-up uncared-for” (A Capital Plan, 1949). In a key sequence of A Capital Plan, the camera pans onto the mills of LeBreton Flats, clouded in smoke and mist. While the film shows the bleak and stark industrial landscape with Parliament Hill barely visible in the distance, the narrator adds in a tragic voice that, “The beautiful Ottawa River is for the most part inaccessible to the people of the region. From south, east and west, Parliament Hill, the hub of the capital, can hardly be seen from the jungle of buildings that surround it” (A Capital Plan, 1949). The Flats was an aesthetic as well as a moral blight on the national image.

A second film in the series, Ottawa: Today and Tomorrow, produced for international distribution as tourist information showed these same impulses. Largely with the same re-edited footage from A Capital Plan – presented with a less didactic script – this second film also identified the “slums” of an “industrial city that grew too quickly” as impediments to the area’s natural beauty. “Ottawa,” the narrator noted in the 1951 redux, “not designed as a seat of government, continued to grow helter-skelter. A capital city that still showed the marks of a pioneer town.” Like the Plan and the earlier film, the federal view took aim at the Flats: “The jungle of industrial plants around the Falls has crept right up to the
foot of Parliament Hill” (*Ottawa: Today and Tomorrow*, 1951). As a later NFB film reiterated, these “old” school factories were in “direct contrast with the elegant capital” (*Capital on the Ottawa*, 1967). The symptoms of an unhealthy capital were a symbol of an unhealthy nation, where the Flats lay at the centre of this “disfigured” city. Clearly, the city was in need of a serious spatial and aesthetic correction, and the Flats was one of the principle symptoms that required invasive surgery.

*Photo 3.4: Industry at LeBreton Flats Before Expropriation*¹¹⁵

The horror of everyday life in an unplanned city was a dominant theme of the NFB’s promotional films, reinforced with dark, brooding music. Mixed together with the luminous chime signaling five o’clock, and the end of work, the

¹¹⁵ Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
music orally conveyed the horrendous “strain of rush-hour” (*A Capital Plan*, 1967). Visually, this time-bomb is represented in a massive traffic jam near Confederation Square – a major arterial junction in downtown Ottawa – where truck drivers and commuters are shown honking and berating each other in slow-moving traffic. Amidst the chaos of rush-hour, the narrator, though his masculine and gendered lens, warns of the dire consequences of unplanned metropolitan life where “tempers get hot and dinner gets cold” (*A Capital Plan*, 1967). Presumably while the working-man is stuck in traffic, the domestic work has gone to waste as a result of the city’s inefficient circulation.

By the time of the third film’s release, a number of the aspects of the *Plan* had been implemented (Gordon, 2002) and this last film uses a series of juxtaposed images to reveal the contrast between the modern vision and city of the past, between the “evil” industrial city and the pleasant “green city.” In one such scene, the industrial smoke of a paper factory is contrasted with a swimsuit clad man looking through lush greenery onto bathers in Gatineau Park. In a second example, reminiscent of the earlier scene at Confederation Square, a traffic jam on an old bridge near Parliament Hill caused by a stalled delivery truck is juxtaposed with repetitive scenes of easy driving on new parkways. Both scenes provide a view on to Gréber’s preferred urban landscape: segregated districts connected by smooth functioning parkways surrounded by a green necklace (a greenbelt) and Ottawa’s bucolic natural retreats.

As the viewer is informed, in the “green” city of the future, life would be more pleasant, orderly and healthy. In city of the past, the film noted, “houses are
little more than extensions of factories” where “life becomes unpleasant” (*Capital on the Ottawa*, 1967). Improvement through slum elimination would rid the city of these districts and, in this last film, the demolition of early nineteenth-century row housing is featured in one of the key sequences. Juxtaposed with a newly built modern office tower, where white-collar commuters patiently wait in straight organized lines for the bus to arrive in some vast open green space, this sequence provides evidence of the prescription of slum pathology exactly at the time the national centennial (1967) is being celebrated. The elimination of slums is crucial to celebrating the nation. In the future view, gone are tempers, rickety street-cars, traffic jams, and the heat and grime of the city. The open fields of the outer areas of the city are characterized by contained administrative spaces which have sprouted. Placid commutes to suburban homes are the norm: here tempers are cool and dinners are hot. In the modern city, streets are empty of people, and instead of congestion and tight living confines, central-city neighbourhoods are efficient, open, and un-congested landscapes. People are kept in efficient, suburban, industrial and administrative landscapes.

The grief imposed on Ottawa’s residents by its lack of planning, the viewer is told, could be alleviated by creating segregated and scientifically determined districts for housing and industry in the suburbs connected by the key commodity vehicle: the automobile (cf. Ross, 1996). Based on these dreams, attempts to manage uneven development provoked the “creative destruction” of urban socio-environments and cleared away the “dead weight of past environments… destroying familiar places” (Zukin, 1991, 4-5). The postwar planning consensus
favoured highrises, housing and office superblocks, and high-speed traffic lanes, perhaps most infamously when Robert Moses took a “meat-axe” to familiar New York neighbourhoods (Klemek, 2004; Smith, 1996: 110; M. Berman, 1982; R. Caro, 1974). In Ottawa, parkways would whisk federal employees away from the city centre into their newly prepared suburban homes and funnel industrial workers to the new suburban industrial parks developed on land assembled by the NCC. They would relieve the unhealthy congestion of the city’s circulatory system and provide “a new system of main arteries and parkways” (Gréber, 1950: 160, 173) appropriate to the spatial re-organization of the city, around the automobile. The rational city was reorganized into discrete spaces of industrial production, domestic harmony, and national administration.

Like others of his generation, Gréber had been influenced by the images of rapid movement of “the American Way of life” that had filled postwar Europe. In many ways, the Plan and the propagandist NFB films were replicating what Kristin Ross (1996: 38) has dubbed the “illustrated joys and rewards of American capitalism” and the “objects and gadgets of the lifestyle.” As Ross observes (1996: 38-39), the speed of film was the perfect medium from which to display the automobile and produce a desire for the automotive way of life:

In production, cars had paved the way for film; now, film would help create the conditions for the motorization of Europe: the two technologies reinforced each other. Their shared qualities – movement, image, mechanization, standardization – made movies and cars the key commodity-vehicles of a complete transformation in European consumption patterns and cultural habits... the intensification of two burgeoning technologies, acting in tandem, would produce a qualitative acceleration in panoramic perception; for both cars and movies create perception in movement.
The rapid transformation of the city would be performed through its being ritualized into a "modern and pleasant city" with "pleasant driving," "smoother moving traffic" and a "general upgrading of various districts" (A Capital Plan, 1967). The shared qualities Ross refers to were primary images essential to Gréber’s cross-Atlantic transfer and adoption of movement as the new dream image of a smooth-functioning modern capital.

These films performed an important pedagogical role. For its designers, they helped move the city beyond its lumbering, industrial and working-class past and in its place activate a bucolic city, based on a national plan. The key to this progression, they believed, was to move traffic over expressways, cloverleafs, and fast-moving, pleasant roads and parkways. With the lumbering albatross removed, the landscape of the modern capital could be brought to life through controlled domesticity and planned landscapes of power. Parkways would whisk federal employees away from the city centre into their newly prepared suburban homes and funnel industrial workers to the new suburban industrial parks developed on land assembled by the NCC (cf. Andrews, 1983). They would relieve the unhealthy congestion of the city’s circulatory system and provide “a new system of main arteries and parkways.” (Gréber, 1950: 173).

“Ottawa’s new respectability” was, as the narrator noted in Capital on the Ottawa, “compromised by haphazard development and public indifference.” (Capital on the Ottawa, 1967) The Canada Carries On series of films were not simply about selling the plan to the larger public, but were also meant to foster public awareness and citizen engagement around national urban renewal. In this
sense, the films were part of NFB’s goal of achieving social compromise, resolving polarizing contradictions, thwarting the threat of radical politics (Grierson, 1947) and promoting social policies (Druick, 1999), including the policies of government partners such as the CMHC, the NCPC and the NCC.

In the context of the National Plan, new (national) mores of social citizenship were deployed from the central symbolic hub of Parliament Hill out into the regions of the country. Film, ribbon-cutting ceremonies, public exhibits and planted media stories prepared public acceptance of technocratic state involvement in the redevelopment of national urban (and private) spaces not only within Ottawa but also on a national scale. What democratic propaganda had been for Grierson, it was for Gréber; the rule of experts was essential to disseminating faith in the new techniques of urban planning, and over the long term, for overcoming obstacles and opposition. As the FDC noted in its *Annual Report*, the campaign had:

[c]ontributed greatly towards building a favourable public reaction to the development of the National Capital and has encouraged the interest in local planning. Further, its effect on the development of Canadian Citizenship has been marked by installing in the public mind a symbol for Canada. ¹¹⁶

In a self-congratulatory note in 1958, Gréber gloated that the preemptive preparation of the public for his principles of urban planning ensured that “everything now goes finely and rapidly on the National Capital planning” since “public opinion has been prepared and educated.”¹¹⁷ Gréber assessed his own

work as “practical progress, aiming at the welfare and health of the population, at easy movement, distribution of activities in their logical place, and consequently resulting in increased land values and general prosperity.” In his view, the Plan had resulted in logical spatial relocation of activities, as well as increased land values and prosperity – primarily oriented around the automobile. Once implemented, the Plan would perform a ritualized clean-up and segmentation of the city worthy of the capital of a modern nation that relied on the principles of movement and the smoothing of local spaces into national spaces. Gréber’s corrective zeal would leave a permanent scar on the Ottawa landscape – especially in inner city working-class neighbourhoods.

119 The power of the urban reform movement was reflected in the cities own housing program and policies, City of Ottawa, 1962; Letter from Mayor Charlotte Whitton to CMHC President Stewart Bates, LAC, MG 30, E256, Vol. 62.
3.7 City of Ottawa: Blight and Urban Renewal

Compared with other cities, Ottawa was, according to reports, “lacking the heavy slum areas of larger, and particularly industrial or rundown, communities.” Nor did it have “the extensive slums of larger cities.” Yet municipal leaders made grand calls – similar to those on the federal level – for urban renewal. Despite its “fortunate position,” there existed, according to the Ottawa Citizen, “enough substandard houses to warrant an energetic attack on

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120 Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
the problem.” The City, with support from the local media and the local establishment was a willing and, at times, aggressive participant in the diffusion of the discourse of slum identification and urban renewal that would eventually lead to large-scale clearance of poorer districts.

In 1959, the City hired a special counsel to conduct a study of urban renewal to be presented to the 1959/1960 Board of Control. The Report on Urban Renewal directed an attack on substandard housing and aimed to eliminate slums “to pave the way for more modern housing and improved city housing.” It was felt that the city was now “subsidizing slums” through family assistance payments. Several aldermen advocated wholesale change, calling for the Ottawa Housing Standards Board (OHSB) to “take the bull by the horns on slum clearance and urban renewal.” In one notable moment, Alderman James McCauley showed his personal commitment to the issue by taking a two-hour personal tour of the city’s “poor houses.” The Alderman’s promotional tour fueled the campaign to “correct adverse conditions.” He urged the OHSB to take “remedial action” to address exposed wiring, dirty interiors, rats, inadequate plumbing, and yards filled with “refuse and debris,” noting that rents of $65-$70 a month were “excessive” for the housing they offered. In brief, for McCauley, “[t]he question of urban renewal has been too long delayed.” The city was

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122 “Delay in Slum Clearance,” Editorial, Ottawa Citizen, June 24, 1960
123 The “overall plan aims at the elimination of areas where demolition may be carried out to pave the way for more modern housing and improved city housing.” Ottawa Citizen, March 28, 1961.
126 “Little Done About Our ‘Slums,’” Ottawa Citizen, April 12, 1961.
127 Ibid.
being urged to take advantage of the province’s willingness to fund new public housing projects. The report’s release was followed by a public campaign, led by local politicians and service providers, for “urgently needed” subsidized housing.

The OHSB was charged with enforcing housing standards and ensuring that deviance was corrected. As the 1962 OHSB report noted, this included addressing “other” traditions that might run counter to “accepted standards”: In all levels of society there are standards by which individuals conduct themselves. Such standards may be customary or based on law, but to deviate to something less than the accepted standards is not regarded with favour. However, standards change with society and new situations create new standards in different ways, depending on the tradition of the group [emphasis added].

The 1962 OHSB report makes the same tangential notice of the changing character of the City in a similar, if more coded language, than the NCC. It is to be understood, clearly, that certain groups are more deviant than others.

As a result of this campaign in Ottawa, from 1962 to 1966, at the bequest of the OHSB, 1,665 "substandard" dwellings were repaired (or “face-lifted”) and another 1,628 units demolished. “By “excising” “bad and infected units” the OHSB was able to direct housing improvement without sweeping slum-clearance schemes.

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128 According to the shared-cost formula of the period the city was responsible for 7.5% of the cost of public housing, the province for 7.5%, and the federal government for 76%. Editorial, “Ottawa’s Substandard Housing,” Ottawa Citizen, April 14, 1961, p. 6.
Despite this concerted action, two years later, the OHSB report noted that “there is still much to be done... the City’s Urban Renewal Report indicates that there are approximately 10,500 dwelling units in poor condition and that a further 2,100 are in need of major repairs.”134 There remained an 800-person waiting list for public housing and limited-dividend housing, a need that “would be further accentuated as the N.C.C. clears the LeBreton Flats.”135

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132 Under figures submitted to Hellyer Task Force on Housing and Urban Renewal, between during this period the City built a 2634 low- and moderate-income units with another 1800 under development. However, if the figures for repairs (no net change in units) and units demolished are considered there was an absolute loss rather than gain in housing units.

133 A new bylaw passed in July 1964 required hearings before an order to demolish could be issued.


Although the City of Ottawa participated in some of the same slum-clearance language as its federal counterpart, it clearly advocated for new public housing to be installed as replacement housing before removal. Supported by the Ottawa Welfare Council, the OHSB and municipal politicians, and a series of editorials in the Ottawa Citizen, the campaign demanded quick action on subsidized housing. In contrast to the federal government’s obsession with a beautiful national capital, the City’s leaders were much more concerned with social welfare and the importance of providing housing for its residents. City officials, including the Housing Standards Officer, understood that housing was “a valuable resource” that “exercises an important influence on the environment of its citizens” and “should be one of the prime objectives of every community.”

As the Housing Standards Officer noted in his 1964 report, “Re-housing for low-income families forced to vacate because of Demolition Orders, continues to be a pressing problem.”

In the view of many local proponents of urban renewal, large-scale renewal was still necessary, yet the lack of replacement housing hampered such efforts. Local reformers were concerned that that demolition would only proceed with adequate replacement housing being provided. As the Citizen noted in June 1960, “Ottawa’s failure to construct subsidized rental housing, undoubtedly stands in the way of demolition of substandard dwellings, as required under the

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Housing Standards Bylaw.”¹³⁸ The concern for replacement housing stood in stark contrast with the NCC’s complete disregard.

3.8 Expropriation and Housing (1962-1966)
In 1958, the NCC benefited from an expansion of the scope of its powers through the 1958 National Capital Act (NCA).¹³⁹ The NCC was given extensive powers, including real-estate management, planning control and expropriation. Despite the relative health of Ottawa’s communities, the NCC would quickly exercise these new powers with a renewed vigour to, as the NFB film pointed out, continuously seek out “solutions to the problems of urban renewal” (Capital on the Ottawa, 1967). The NCC would avert impending doom “as initiator and coordinator” and act decisively with its new powers to reshape the Flats into the capital dream.¹⁴⁰

On April 17, 1962, the Flats would meet its fate. Under provision of Chapter 106 of the Expropriation Act (1952) and Chapter 37 of the National Capital Act (1958), Order-in-Council 1962-566 sanctioned the “acquisition of LeBreton Flats by the National Capital Commission, without the consent of the owners of the lands.” Over 270 affected owners were notified by mail twenty four hours before the public announcement; LeBreton Flats was a “low taxation area”

¹³⁸ Editorial, “Delay in Slum Clearance,” Ottawa Citizen, June 24, 1960
¹³⁹ Among other things, the 1958 NCA also removed municipal representation from the Commission’s Board of Directors.
¹⁴⁰ Until 1958, the Mayor of Ottawa was an ex-officio member of the FDC. NCC Chairman Kennedy had informed Diefenbaker that he would not be able to operate the NCC with the “stormy” Whitton as a member of the Commission. As a result, the NCA removed municipal representation, “No Hope of Municipal Representation on NCC,” Ottawa Citizen, Jan 5, 1961.
that needed to be cleared to complete the national dream. At a cost of $17 million, 53 acres would be expropriated as part of the grand new dream of making “the capital into a showcase for the nation” (Capital on the Ottawa, 1967).

Only days after the expropriation notice had gone out to homeowners, the Minister of Public Works' announced a “spectacular government development” to “beautify the capital” and to correct the “real eyesore” the Flats had become. Added to the 29 acres it planned to reclaim from Nepean Bay, and to the 60 acres of CPR land being transferred to the NCC (the railway was to be relocated by 1964), the total footprint of the urban renewal site was to be 153 acres. Altogether, the federal government planned to spend $70 million on ten government buildings to be completed in time for the July 1, 1967 centennial.

Newspaper coverage of the Minister’s announcement was positive, and noted that residents were “generally happy” as the expropriation would mean an end to the “unsightly junk piles, rundown commercial buildings, and better housing for some of their unfortunate neighbours.” For an “area which must be an eyesore for the occupants and visitors to Parliament Hill,” the redevelopment would, according to newspaper reports, represent “a rebirth for... one of the

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142 NCC powers were formalized under the National Capital Act (1958) c.37, s.1. The NCC’s real powers are captured under Article 10, (2), (a)(b)(e), and also Article 11 (1) of the NCA (1958). This would work in tandem with the Expropriation Act, which permitted the NCC to undertake such expropriations with consent of the Minister of Public Works.

oldest settled parts in Bytown.”¹⁴⁴ Though she often disagreed with the NCC both privately and publicly, Mayor Charlotte Whitton was equally caught up in the dream of grandiose developments, and initially shared in the enthusiasm for the renewal of LeBreton Flats. The “huge development in public and private lands” of LeBreton Flats was, for Mayor Whitton, a “very fascinating and exciting plan” for rejuvenating the heart of Ottawa.” The federal plan, Whitton noted, “is so much greater than anything we’ve anticipated. It’s a bigger thing than even the National Capital Commission.”¹⁴⁵

This exuberant praise for the Plan seemed out of touch with most of the residents who were interviewed by the local papers. Rather than extolling the virtues of the development, residents relayed various grievances and misgivings, while others had simply drawn curtains and locked doors to shut out the gaze of photographers and reporters in an attempt to avoid the resented “slum” tag. Among the grievances, many residents were dismayed at having to move away from their home and family links.¹⁴⁶ Despite the portrayal of the Flats as a transient “slum,” most had made the Flats their home for extended periods of time. For many long-time residents the expropriation would sever community and family ties. For example, Mrs. Cora Albert lived on the Flats for 36 years, 26 of those at 116 Sherwood, and her family, two daughters and a son lived in three other units of the four-unit row house. As she noted, “I’m not too happy to move because this is my home and my family is all happily settled here,” and they had

recently undertaken several renovations. Similarly, Eugene Raymond had lived on the Flats all his life and had worked at Davidson and Sons for over forty years. Mr. Raymond continued to work on the Flats by doing woodworking jobs on the ground floor of his dwelling. The question of replacement housing was also a key concern. “Before they put people out,” said the Ottawa Citizen, “they must provide housing at low rents for them.” As Mayor Whitton expressed to mandarins in the Progressive Conservative Party, “The N.C.C. expropriation of LeBreton Flats has created considerable concern among the people involved as to where they may expect to find suitable alternative housing accommodation.” As the Ottawa Citizen editorial added, even if the area had been earmarked as being an area with a “heavy concentration of blight... extreme care must be taken” to make sure that alternate housing was provided for displaced families to make sure “nobody was found wanting.”

In short, local residents, politicians, activists and editorialists rejected the federal government’s assurances. Many feared that the expropriation of the Flats was only part of a larger scheme of urban renewal in the area. They suspected urban renewal would march on and exacerbate their search for new homes and new communities. As another resident noted, “Mechanicsville will be next, you wait and see.” Alongside these residents, Mayor Whitton now feared that the

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147 Ibid.
149 “Expropriation Good News for Most in the Flats,” Ottawa Citizen, April 21, 1962
Expropriation would be the first stage for further federal government intervention in urban renewal.\textsuperscript{153}

\textbf{3.9 Housing Pressures and Jurisdictional Rivalries}

Despite concerted efforts to improve housing conditions, the city continued to experience difficulty in providing adequate volumes of low- and medium-cost housing. The federal incursions in urban renewal had only exacerbated conditions.\textsuperscript{154} As the City Clerk noted in a letter to the Provincial Minister in charge of housing and urban affairs, federal incursions and expropriations “being implemented daily” in 1962, including the expropriation of LeBreton Flats, had resulted in “very unusual pressure.”\textsuperscript{155} Two of the largest and costliest renewal areas (out of a total of sixteen city-wide) were located in LeBreton Flats and significantly reduced the stock of housing. Altogether, alongside the over 153 acres of LeBreton Flats, the three largest federal projects involved 207.8 acres in the city’s core, equivalent to the combined acreage of major redevelopment projects of Montreal, Toronto, and Halifax.\textsuperscript{156}


\textsuperscript{154} As early as 1960, the “The Government’s decision to place large concentration of office buildings near the city’s perimeter is creating great difficulties for the municipality…the city has come under great pressure to contribute toward new roads and services that might not have been necessary had the government not decided to build there,” \textit{Canadian Architect}, May 1960.

\textsuperscript{155} Letter to Minister Robert McCauley, Department Economics and Development (includes Planning and Development) Province of Ontario from City Clerk, October 22 1962, LAC, MG 30, E256, vol. 62.

\textsuperscript{156} “The LeBreton Flats project covers 154 acres, in which two of the costliest of our own 16 renewal areas are located…Along with the relocation of Union station, these three projects “involve 207.8 acres in the very central area of the city p over twice the acreage of the combined major development projects of Montreal, Toronto, and Halifax,” Letter to Allister Grosart, May 18, 1962, PC National Headquarters, from J.M.P Kelly, re: N.C.C. Expropriation, MG30, E256, vol. 62 “LeBreton Flats.”
In light of these developments, Whitton directed city staff to prepare a special report on the question of housing. The draft report titled *Housing Needs, Policies Programme and Projects 1962-7*, presented on June 20 1962, made special mention of the pressure federal expropriations had imposed on the city’s housing stock. “Such extensive redevelopment by the federal government,” the report noted “cannot but suggest a shift of emphasis, in the City’s major planning…in which priority should be given in municipal works and funds to providing more housing and shelter.” The report signaled the need for multi-scalar action on housing policy, and emphasized the need for senior levels of government to contribute to the construction of new housing stock. The report also noted the impact on the residents of expropriations, including LeBreton Flats. As the report noted, primary effort had to be directed at attenuating the needs of these former residents:

> The City must take on, with federal authorities, the heavy and urgent responsibility of reasonable assurance of accommodation for occupants of some 700 dwelling units, being displaced by the huge LeBreton Flats and the Sussex Drive-Bolton Street-King Edward Avenue area projects of the N.C.C. and Department of Public Works.¹⁵⁷

For his part, the Minister of Public Works downplayed the importance of providing alternative housing. “In similar government developments elsewhere,” the Minister noted, “it has been found that the families concerned have shown an amazing facility in finding new housing accommodation themselves.”¹⁵⁸ In short, there was no assurance that the Minister of Public Works, who was also

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The Minister went as far as to note that the householders “will be pleased in being able to find new and better housing surroundings elsewhere... They will consider the development as a God-send in the end.”\textsuperscript{159} For its part, the NCC, Ottawa’s largest landlord and most powerful landholder, was unwilling to trade or donate any its land for subsidized housing. As the federal campaign for urban renewal moved on, housing remained of no concern to the federal government or the NCC.

Several comprehensive City reports on urban renewal (1960), housing standards (1962), and housing needs (1962), had shown the pressing need for affordable and low-income housing. The Minister of Public Works’ single-minded focus on the new development showed a complete disregard for the consequences of the expropriation. In fact, the Minister’s comments were outright misrepresentations since his comments did not correspond to the documented reports of the huge support payment requested by households in other federal expropriation schemes.\textsuperscript{160}

The draft report on \textit{Housing Needs, Policies Programme and Projects 1962-7} was passed by Council July 9, 1962. It called on the Board of Control to consider the reports’ findings with “immediate priority.” In passing the report, City


\textsuperscript{160} In many other federally managed national redevelopment projects, despite promises to address the housing needs of those expelled, no such care had been taken by the federal government; Minutes, Joint Conference on Housing, Special meeting no. 68, August 9, 1962, LAC, MG30, E256, vol. 62 “Housing 1960-63.”
Council emphasized the need for a quick turn-around so that a special Council meeting could consider recommendations for “immediate provision of more low-cost rental housing for the city.” If the matter had been of little importance to Minister Walker, the City had shown a selective sensitivity to the residents of the Flats in its commitment to housing and better housing standards.

3.10 Playing the Feds: The Whitton Housing Campaign

For the entire length of her career, from her work for the Canadian Council on Child Welfare until her election to the Ottawa Board of Control, Whitton had made low-priced housing her “pet scheme” (Rooke and Schnell, 1987: 148). Housing was also an electoral priority for Whitton. As she noted in her 1960 nomination speech, “the housing of people is a top priority... the further extension of low-cost rental housing, which is what the city now needs, under every provision, I shall press.” The Mayor also paid special attention to the spatial distribution of housing projects noting she would not “place [them] miles from people’s work” (Rooke and Schnell, 1987: 170). The OHSB, like Whitton, also argued that affordable housing should be located in older neighbourhoods where there would be the least disruption to family life. Unlike the federal government, these municipal actors wanted to ensure that any housing renewal took into account the everyday life of lower-income citizens.

City Council and Mayor Whitton took issue with the secrecy and heavy-handed tactics involved in the federal government urban renewal projects.

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162 According to the Housing Standards Officer, “public housing appears to be the only solution to this problem. In order to keep disruption of family life to a minimum, these units should be located in older sections of the City,” Housing Standards Officer, Annual Report, 1964, City of Ottawa, COA.
However, on another front, Whitton would continue to lobby the federal government for some assistance in meeting its housing targets. In short, city politicians continued to act as much with, as against, the federal government. The City’s efforts for a sustained housing program, as well as the associated public campaign, were part of an effort to guilt the federal government into funding Ottawa’s housing needs. Municipal officials lobbied at various scales to secure funding for its housing and re-housing program. In an effort to stem the pressure on the rental market being exerted by federal expropriations, the Mayor and City officials simultaneously lobbied the Provincial Minister of Economic Development, then responsible for provincial housing and planning, the President of CMHC, the Chairman of the NCC, and sympathetic members of the governing federal Progressive Conservative Party.

The final report on housing, adopted by City Council on October 15, 1962, was immediately transferred to the province for consideration. In a letter to the Provincial Minister responsible for Housing and Urban Development, the Mayor requested “earliest possible favourable consideration,” and also asked that the province fast-track Ottawa’s application for funding under the Federal-Provincial Partnership. The letter advocated multi-scalar collaboration between various city functionaries (e.g. Co-ordinator of Housing, Director of Department of Planning, Commissioner of Finance, City Solicitor), and pleaded for federal and provincial

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officials to ramp up the “immediate advancing” of an “active course” for housing. In a parallel letter to the Ministry of Economic Development, the City Clerk brought to attention the pressure the NCC expropriations had imposed on housing conditions and pleaded with the province for immediate respite.

Municipal leaders used the city’s status as a national capital to lobby for immediate assistance for affordable housing. In particular, local politicians used their links to federal politicians, including intra-party links, to harness federal action in an area that could be deemed a local concern. Federal incursions in urban renewal provided the City with an argument to ask for the province and the federal government to fast-track the approval process for joint provincial-federal housing funding programs. As well the City had also forwarded a parallel explanation and application to CMHC to accelerate the process. 165 The Mayor, Ottawa City Council, the Board of Control and the OHSB shared a vision of a benevolent state providing the mechanisms for housing provision. An informal civic coalition continued to be a strong voice for housing as part of any redevelopment scheme. Strategically, the Mayor hoped that by criticizing the federal government, the City could entice the province to act quickly and take credit for overcoming the morass of “pass the buck” federalism (Harrison, 1996).

The Mayor continued to lobby the federal government, including the CMHC, for sustained financial assistance towards a city-directed housing project,

165 “I am further instructed to ask to bring to your attention of your colleagues the very unusual pressure which has arisen from this renewal of existing housing, because it is the capital, and two major Federal projects have expropriated several hundred homes in two different areas in the City and these expropriations are being implemented daily,” Letter to Minister Robert McCauley, Department Economics and Development (includes Planning and Development) Province of Ontario from City Clerk, October 22nd, 1962, LAC, MG 30, E256, vol. 62.
as the City continued to perceive its role as central to the construction and
gprogramming of housing. This was a view shared by the CMHC President.
CMHC’s policy was that municipalities were considered to be in the best position
to assess the need and location of low-cost housing projects. However, this initial
reaffirmation of municipal power came with a key caveat. The federal-provincial
agreement stipulated that an application must be presented to the province and
approved before consideration of any housing project. The CMHC would only
consider proposals brought forward by the province. In his letter to the City,
Bates also noted that he was awaiting the results of a study to “identify areas of
blight in the City of Ottawa, and to establish priorities for treatment by means of a
renewal program.” Responding to the Mayor’s request for negotiation with the
DND for availability of excess lands, Bates also suggests in his letter that the City
should negotiate directly with DND. The City was caught in a first round of inter-
jurisdictional morass.

Despite this initial cold reception, the City continued to work over the
summer to get action on housing. Municipal authorities expressed their concern
over the expected housing shortage and organized a special joint conference on
housing at a Board of Control meeting to consider “the particular situation arising

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166 “Ottawa must face urban redevelopment on an incredible scale, in partnership with
the Nation in its plans for the Capital; but she must also pursue urban redevelopment
and renewal within her municipal responsibilities for her own people.” Letter to Stewart
167 “We have always felt that a municipality is in the best position to determine the need
for low rental housing projects, and to determine the location of such projects within the
community that would best meet this need,” Letter to Mayor Whitton from Stewart Bates
168 Letter to Mayor Whitton from Stewart Bates, President of CMHC, July 19, 1962, LAC,
from the expropriation and lands, and the relocation of 500 housing units in LeBreton Flats, and some 150 to 175 in the Sussex-Drive-Redpath-Boulton area." Brought on by high rates of federal expropriation in the city’s central core, the special meeting between the Mayor, City Controller, General Manager of the NCC, representatives of CMHC, and the City Finance Department tried to find room for cooperation between NCC and the City.

The NCC, represented by General Manager E.W. Thrift, reiterated the NCC’s hands-off approach to the housing question, noting that the NCC had no plans for any housing projects, and was unlikely to consider any action on this front. Thrift noted there was “little pressure or concern” for the NCC to relocate residents displaced by “the comparatively heavy and progressive expropriation” undertaken by the NCC. Moreover, he noted, as extra insult to hopeful City officials, that the NCC had “little land available or likely to be available” for housing projects. Despite being the area’s largest single landowner, holding over 10 percent of total land in the NCR, the NCC continued to “pass the buck,” as often happened within Canadian federalism (Harrison, 1996). Having crushed the City’s hopes by denying any cooperation, a paternalistic Thrift went further and added that, in any event, the central location of the land would make it “too costly” for public housing. Now the housing expert, Thrift was in essence rejecting any claims for affordable housing in the Government district where land prices had been driven up by the NCC’s speculative purchases. The place for

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169 Minutes, Joint Conference on Housing, Special Meeting no. 68, August 9, 1962, LAC, MG30 E256, vol. 62 “Housing 1960-63.”
low-cost housing was far from the city’s historic working-class neighbourhoods.\textsuperscript{171}

The NCC’s disregard for the consequences of relocation was especially scandalous in the opinion of the Board of Control members, since approximately 30 percent of residents requested aid during projects in other jurisdictions (according to the federal government’s own CMHC reports). Thrift’s comments display once again the NCC’s denial of their impact on the everyday lives of the citizens of Ottawa.\textsuperscript{172} In this case, the NCC – as an agent of the federal government beautification and modernization scheme – effectively relegated itself to land purchases, sales, development, and planning. The NCC was fervent in its abdication of responsibility: under no conditions would it enable low-cost housing construction, not even through favourable or non-market sale of its vast land reserves, much of which was acquired through expropriation.

3.11 Disrupting the “National” Centennial Project

With the centennial year only 54 months off, City officials were “working, against time” to plan and secure housing before December 31, 1966. They were, as the federal government was for its beautification project, using the centennial year as an incentive – in this case to advance the housing agenda. These lobbying efforts unabashedly appealed to the upcoming centennial year as reason to clean up slums or blighted areas and to prepare the city in time to

\textsuperscript{171} In Smith’s (1991) terms, if they could not displace the industrialists the NCC would increase (differentiate) labour costs by increasing travel costs.

\textsuperscript{172} Minutes, Joint Conference on Housing, Special Meeting no. 68, August 9, 1962, LAC, MG30 E256, vol. 62, “Housing 1960-63.”
celebrate Canada’s centennial year. Municipal officials preferred urban renewal projects more broadly than one or even several housing projects: it should incorporate the principle of planning a capital, and the spectacle of the centennial. As the special report on housing noted:

It [renewal] must embrace not only the whole area of housing and rehousing, but also development, renewal and redevelopment of the entire area of the City; and all in an integration of housing with the over-all planning and rebuilding of Ottawa itself as the Capital, – and for the opening of the Centennial Year of Confederation... we now have a deadline to meet, not only for ourselves, but for the nation, by 1966-7.

Whitton’s focused attack on federal interventions provided special ammunition for her “pet project.” As Whitton noted to the President of the CMHC, in her usual bombastic style, the “shelter problem” caused by the federal interventions was an urgent problem where “time is of the essence.” Municipal leaders eagerly lobbied the federal government by claiming the federal government’s landholdings and Ottawa’s “special” status as national capital put extra pressure on housing.

Ottawa’s problems and characteristics are different from those of any other municipality in Canada by reason of being the Capital, and having the federal authority as owner now of one third of our realty... the federal authority’s recent and vast urban development plans... shift much of Ottawa’s urgent emphasis on housing.

For Whitton and other observers, Ottawa bore a special cost for federal meddling in urban affairs. The federal government’s obsession with postwar “capitalization” had created a unique situation: “these vast federal plans set in

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175 Ibid.
course, at once, urban redevelopment, on a scale beyond anything yet undertaken in Canada.\textsuperscript{176} Ottawa, city officials noted, had suffered more than other cities because of its status as a federal capital. At all scales, housing and urban renewal advocates noted the ceremonial importance of cleaning up any “blighted” areas of the Capital in time for the Centennial.

\subsection*{3.12 New Promise: Defending a New Heart for the National City\textsuperscript{177}}

As part of the joint NCC and Department of Public Works (DPW) ten-year plan for the national capital, the massive government complex at LeBreton Flats proposed six million ft.\textsuperscript{2} of new office space, of which one million ft.\textsuperscript{2} would be used by a new National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ).\textsuperscript{178} The new HQ would centralize thirty five “inadequate,” “inefficient and wasteful” locations spread out across the Capital as part of the reorganization of the Army, Navy, and Air Force into a single command. The new HQ would bring an end to over two decades of discussions around centralized defence operations stretching back to Gréber’s reign as principal planner for the NCPS.\textsuperscript{179} On a symbolic axis, the plan for a new

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{177}{“The Parkin Plan,” Habitat (CMHC), Nov-Dec 1963, LAC, MG30, E256, vol. 78.}
\footnotetext{178}{Since 1948 deliberations had been held within the inner sanctum of the Department of National Defence regarding a new headquarters, though most of these discussions focused on location rather than design. Letter to J. Pickersgill, Clerk of PCO from Jacques Gréber, RG2, 18, vol. 159, F-21-3, January 16, 1951; Letter to H.R. Cram, NCC Secretary from C.D. Wright, Director of Planning and Development, City of Ottawa; Cabinet Minutes, September 8, 1954; Joint Memorandum, Minister of Public Works and Minister of National Defence, September 7, 1954, RG2, 188-54.}
\footnotetext{179}{DND reorganization required 1 million ft.\textsuperscript{2} of office space: “It is important to the ultimate efficiency of the new organization to plan and have available at the earliest practicable date new accommodation designed to meet the needs of the re-organized headquarters” Memorandum to Cabinet on New National Defence Headquarters, April 2, 1964, LAC, RG2, vol. 6260, file 141/64. Centralized operations would prove “important to the ultimate efficiency of the new organization.” Memorandum to cabinet on New National Defence Headquarters, April 2, 1964, LAC, RG2, vol. 6260, file 141/64; Letter}
NDHQ “would make a significant contribution to fostering the drive and enthusiasm for these new defence goals” and “fulfill part of the National Capital Plan.” defence would be central to the new national-city dream.\textsuperscript{180}

\textit{Photo 3.6: The New Heart of the City: NDHQ and the Government Complex at LeBreton Flats.}\textsuperscript{181}

\textsuperscript{180} Memorandum to cabinet on New National Defence Headquarters, April 2, 1964, LAC, RG2, vol. 6260, file 141/64.

\textsuperscript{181} Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
With support from institutions at several scales of governance, the project proceeded quickly. The NCC had given notice for all existing buildings to be vacated by the end of 1964, and installation of services and roads was to begin in 1965.\textsuperscript{182} Estimated time for completion was five to six years with various estimates ranging from $45 million in 1963 to the total outlay of $33.1 million approved by Cabinet in April of 1964.\textsuperscript{183} Under the approved plan, an initial $3.1 million was allocated to initiate the project planning “immediately,” since the celebration of the centennial was looming, as part of an early approval of the National Capital Commission’s five-year funding package starting in 1966.\textsuperscript{184}

The project was to be carried on in a tripartite basis between NCC, ND and the DPW. The NCC was responsible for clearing the site, preliminary planning of the overall scheme, providing serviced land, and extending the parkway system. The DPW was in charge of coordination and building design, in consultation with DND and NCC, including the preparation of detailed plans, and the supervision of construction. DND was responsible for the justification of requirements and preparing terms of reference for architectural competition.\textsuperscript{185}

Out of the total area of 153 acres,\textsuperscript{186} planned occupancy was: 27 acres for DND; 34 acres for other federal buildings; 16 acres reserved for future government

\textsuperscript{182} Cabinet Minutes, December 21, 1963, LAC, RG2, A-5-a, 6254.
\textsuperscript{183} Cabinet Minutes, December 21, 1963, LAC, RG2, A-5-a, 6254.
\textsuperscript{184} Memorandum to Cabinet on New National Defence Headquarters, April 2, 1964, LAC, RG2, vol. 6260, file 141/64.
\textsuperscript{185} Memorandum to cabinet on New National Defence Headquarters, April 2, 1964, LAC, RG2, vol. 6260, file 141/64.
\textsuperscript{186} This total includes the 56 expropriated acres, 60 acres of CPR land transferred to the NCC and 26 acres reclaimed from Nepean Bay.
buildings; 32 acres for parkways; 42 acres for other streets and streets and proposed freeway; 8 acres of parking; and 4 acres of parks.\textsuperscript{187}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.7\textwidth]{photo37.png}
\caption{NDHQ Presentation to NCC Advisory Committee January 27, 1966.\textsuperscript{188}}
\end{figure}

Cabinet confirmed the approval in August 1964, providing the first clear signal for the various government departments involved to move forward with a detailed architectural plan for a new headquarters. The “well and favourably known” architectural firm of Morani, Morris and Allan was to be selected as architectural consultants without competition\textsuperscript{189} to “bring out the full potential of the LeBreton Flats area as a worthy part of the new Ottawa scene.”\textsuperscript{190} By 1964, most of the site had already been cleared to make way for the new government

\textsuperscript{187} October 1966, House of Commons Debates, Minister of Public Works G. J. McIlraith.
\textsuperscript{188} Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
\textsuperscript{189} A competition would have involved according to the Memorandum to Cabinet, “unwarranted additional expense and time” since the pre-selected firm was best suited to collaborate with DPW, NCC and ND, Memorandum to Cabinet, August 24, 1964, LAC, RG2, vol. 6261, file 374-64.
\textsuperscript{190} Memorandum to Cabinet, August 24, 1964, LAC, RG2, vol. 6261, file 374-64.
buildings¹⁹¹ and “preliminary plans” had “been made for the construction of the first major building group, a new headquarters for the Department of National Defence.”¹⁹²

In May 1966, Cabinet approved the general scheme for NDHQ.¹⁹³ The preferred design consisted of a low base of four to five stories, upon which three towers of different sizes would rise for a total area of 1,650,000 ft.² Two of the towers would rise 55 feet below that of the Peace Tower,¹⁹⁴ while a third central tower would stand 67 feet higher.¹⁹⁵ The NDHQ office towers would be grouped around a pedestrian area, which included 20,000 ft.² of commerce and services, which was joined to a dedicated bus-loading area for 14 buses. This elevated transportation centre would be the focal point of pedestrian activity on an exclusive level separated at grade for pedestrian activity free from interference.¹⁹⁶ The massive complex would eventually provide space for around 18,000 employees. The cost of the 12.9-acre NDHQ site was estimated at $4 million;¹⁹⁷ anticipated costs of site preparation included $1 million to acquire the land and buildings, $50,000 for demolition, and $1 million for utilities before

¹⁹¹ “Progress on redevelopment of LeBreton Flats has proceeded this year on several fronts. Most of the buildings have been demolished and considerable progress has been made in the construction of the Ottawa River Parkway through this area. The Parkway should be finished by the Centennial of Confederation. Many thousands of tons of free fill have been store in order to regrade low parts of the site,” NCC, Annual Report, 1964.
¹⁹⁴ A long-standing City by-law limited buildings in the central area to the height of the Peace Tower.
¹⁹⁵ Memorandum to Cabinet, May 12, 1966, LAC, RG2, 6317, 272-66.
occupation. One of the first objectives of the redevelopment was to have the Ottawa River Parkway (OPR) completed, and running through LeBreton Flats by the centennial year in 1967.

The proposed design would have made the NDHQ the tallest structure in the city-centre. By reaching above the Peace Tower, the proposed plan would break a long-standing City by-law limiting the buildings in the central area to the height of the Peace Tower. The NDHQ was competing with a local developer for bragging rights in the Capital, since upstart developer Robert Campeau was at the same City Hall lobbying for permission to exceed these limits for his “massive” Place de Ville office-retail-hotel complex (Taylor, 1986: 190; Ottawa

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199 Letter to the Honourable Lucien Cardin, Minister of Public Works from Lt. Gen. S.F. Clark, Chairman of the NCC, 27 April 1965, LAC, RG34, vol. 10, F-4-6.  
200 Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
The NDHQ would attempt to beat Ottawa’s golden local developer for bragging rights over the symbol of the expanding and modernizing CBD.

In order to beat Campeau to the task, the NCC was willing to break a previous agreement with the City of Ottawa to limit government buildings to the restricted height of 490 feet, and to overlook looming questions about height and aesthetics of the proposed NDHQ. Having decided to overlook these objections, the NCC Advisory Committee recommended to Cabinet that the NDHQ proposal prepared by the National Defence Headquarters Planning Group be approved in principal. Cabinet agreed with the NCC’s submission and ruled that the proposal met both the functional requirements of the DND and “was likely to produce the most effective building aesthetically.”

During the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Communications and Works on May 12, 1966, it was decided that the proposed general scheme for the preferred LeBreton Flats site be accepted as submitted by DND and DPW, as

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201 Campeau’s proposal was eventually accepted under somewhat murky conditions. The City of Ottawa, under the direction of pro-growth councillors, sold the land for the complex, then subsequently increased the zoning density, in essence doubling the land’s capacity, and finally removed the height limit. Even the NCC had objected to the building (Deachman and Woffrey, 1982). This victory was also part of a larger battle with Mayor Whitton, who objected to the subsidization of suburban developers like Campeau through the building of new infrastructure. Curiously, during the approval, the acting mayor was Lloyd Francis, a staunch Liberal and Whitton adversary in both municipal and federal politics. The contentious relationship between the well-connected Liberal Francis and the Conservative Whitton would mark Ottawa politics until Whitton’s eventual retirement from City politics.

202 Although at this point no building was over this limit, an application by Campeau for the block bordered by Kent, Queen, Lyon, and Albert Streets had been approved.

203 “The Commission acquired LeBreton Flats for the purpose of providing suitable sites for the construction of large scale government employment centres close to the central area of the National Capital,” Memorandum to Cabinet, May 12, 1966, LAC, RG2, 6317, 272-66.
accepted by the NCC, and that civic authorities be informed before the plan was to be unveiled. In other cities, central-city redevelopment was conducted by real-estate developers and private sector tenants. In Ottawa, however, expansion of the Central Business District was driven primarily by the federal government—either as direct agent or indirect initiator of urban renewal. The “Capital” trumped capital, and “crown” control would rule at least for a few more years (Taylor, Lengellé and Andrew, 1993).

3.13 Failure to Launch

The building’s cost was revised on several occasions. In the summer of 1967, the cost of NDHQ was estimated at $69.1 million, and in 1968, the building’s cost was revised downward to $61.7 million. In both cases Cabinet confirmed its approval as long as there was no major expenditure before the 1969-1970 fiscal year. Still, despite the streams of approvals, and a new target date of June 1, 1969, in June 1967 no work had yet been undertaken. A year later, delays continued to mount, and there was a looming possibility that a complete redesign would be necessary. A call for tender was now expected by 1970, and with construction to start only in 1971. The 1967 target had long since come and gone.

Such delays proved costly as the fiscal climate of the federal government was beginning to change. The huge government surpluses attached to increases

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206 NCC Memorandum on LeBreton Flats and Confederation Square, December 23, 1968, LAC, RG34, C-3, vol. 70, F-General (2).
in productivity during the previous decade were coming to a close. The government fiscal situation was putting a damper on the hope and promise of a new nation-city symbol. Dreamers were now relegated to discussing the minutiae of who would pay for the site. Various departments involved in the development wanted to make sure they received payment before the Treasury Board closed access to funds for office development. The NCC, in particular, sought assurances that it would receive payment for the land assembly in the Flats – demanding that DPW promptly provide a $4 million payment for the property. It was a sign that, for the first time since the Minister’s announcement in 1962, the fate of NDHQ was in serious doubt. Its visionaries were fighting over scraps, and concerned with limiting their exposure in the now uncertain redevelopment scheme.

For its part, the DND hedged its bets. The sum of $4 million had been transferred to the NCC to acquire the site, yet no transfer of title was ever completed, and no one seemed to want to take possession in a climate of uncertainty. The LeBreton site was clearly becoming too expensive and fraught with the potential for interdepartmental squabbling. DND now preferred

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209 NCC Memorandum from D.C. Symons, Planner, Urban Design, LAC, RG34, C-3, vol. 70, F-General (2); NCC Memorandum on LeBreton Flats and Confederation Square, December 23, 1968, LAC, RG34, C-3, vol. 70, F-General (2).
210 The development plan was approved on the understanding that the project “would be slowed down consistent with the current financial situation,” NCC Memorandum on LeBreton Flats and Confederation Square, December 23, 1968, LAC, RG34, C-3, vol. 70, F-General (2).
211 Until the precise boundaries are known, DPW “suggest[ed] that the responsibility for administration and control of the property remain with National Capital Commission.” Letter to Robert M. Leary, AGM, NCC from E.C. Martel, Regional Director, Capital Region, DPW, February 24, 1969, NALC, RG34, vol. 70, F-General (2).
212 Letter to J.A. MacNiven, AGM, NCC from T.W. O’Brien, Regional Manager, DPW, September 18th, 1972, LAC, RG34, vol. 70, F-General (2).
the cheaper building that had been started at Confederation Square for the Department of Transport (Wright, 1997). As the Minister’s handwritten correction to brief noted: “Late in 1969 it was decided by the government not to proceed with N.D. Headquarters in the LeBreton Flats but to handle the requirements on the former D.O.T. site 9 Laurier Ave. Alternative plans for the area know as LeB Flats are to be analyzed.” Department officials had asked for “a Chevrolet – not a Cadillac” and would get what they wanted (Wright, 1997).

The pressures on the federal treasury had reduced capital allowances for federal buildings. However, DPW cleverly adapted to these new conditions. With the assistance of private sector real-estate moguls such as Campeau, DPW developed an early form of public-private-partnership (P3) to ensure the postwar building boom would continue. Under direction of Andy Perry, who before his appointment as Assistant Deputy Minister of DPW had built Campeau’s Place de Ville complex, the DPW abandoned the “crown-construct” model preferred by past and current functionaries at the NCC and launched the “lease-purchase agreement programme” (Deachman and Woolfrey, 1982). Under the program, developers such as Campeau would use government leases as the collateral to raise capital in bond markets and from friendly financial institutions to finance the construction of government offices. At the end of such agreements, the federal government would buy back the building from the developer. It would prove a mutually favourable innovation. These “lease-purchase agreements” would allow

214 Letter to Parkin and Associates from Department of Public Works, quoted in Wright (1997: 268).
215 This included Gréber and the NCC Chair Douglas Fullerton.
DPW to continue its building program despite restrictions on capital allowances imposed by the federal treasury, and for his part, Campeau would use these agreements to launch a transnational commercial real-estate empire – the agreements having provided a guaranteed and low-risk clientele. The strategy proved to be a huge coup for Campeau who, by 1976, was leasing 90 per cent of his office space to the federal government. Over a short period of time, Campeau Corporation had become the Government of Canada’s largest landlord (Deachman and Woolfrey, 1982). Of course, as Deachman and Woolfrey (1982) astutely demonstrated, the cost-effectiveness of such agreements was often questionable, since over the long term, costs for office-retail-hotel developments such as Terrasse de la Chaudière were considerably higher under the “lease-purchase” agreements than the “crown-construct model.”

In early 1974, further restrictions were imposed on public works expenditures. Stagflation had set in and as part of his battle against inflationary pressures Prime Minister Trudeau negotiated a federal-provincial agreement to restrain public spending on works projects (Deachman and Woolfrey, 1982). The federal building program of the 1950s and 1960s, the “last and most significant expansion” of the DPW’s vast real-estate empire had collapsed (Wright, 1997: 270). Yet, despite the official moratorium on public works, the outsourcing of capital expenses would allow the DPW to continue its expansion through a series of lease-purchase agreements signed in the immediate

216 Deachman and Woolfrey estimated the Terrasse de la Chaudière development would over the full 35 years cost $1 billion, and $900 million more than it would have under the crown construct program.

217 Coincidentally, in 1974, future Prime Minister Jean Chrétien became Minister of Public Works for the Trudeau government.
aftermath of the moratorium. From now on, dream-building would be directed by
domestic capitalists, such as Campeau Corporation and Toronto-based Olympia-
York and Cadillac-Fairview (Wright, 1997; Taylor, 1986; Deachman and
Woolfrey, 1982).

DND had captured one of the last “crown-jewels,” and grandiose
discussions of transforming the city centre were fading. The centennial had long
since passed, and the memorial to the fallen soldiers of World War II was being
forgotten. By 1971 the promise was officially put off into some distant future.
LeBreton Flats, the official line now stated, would be “held for future Government
buildings and private sector development.” The promise had failed and the
modernist dream had become a nightmare.219

218 In vacating the Colonel By Drive location for DND to occupy, the Department of
Transport would instead be located in Campeau’s Place de Ville development.
219 Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of
National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
3.14 “Excess Condemnation”

By the end of the 1962-1963 fiscal year, 104 property owners had reached a financial settlement for their properties, and another 26 cases were scheduled for a settlement in Exchequer Court. The NCC planned to settle the remaining cases before the end of 1965. In total, the cost of acquiring lands and buildings in LeBreton Flats had risen to just under $18 million by 1966. The government-driven form of “creative destruction” was not cheap. However, in the minds of the

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220 LAC, RG-34, vol. 71, F-Plans Section 2.
222 According to the Minister of Public Works’ response to questions by the MP Bell, the cost of $17,791,139.37 plus improvements (up to 1966) of $206,750.39 came to just over $18 million. This was before additional future costs of $1 million for land and building acquisition before starting construction; $50,000 for demolition; $1 million for utilities before occupation by DPW and DND. October 1966, House of Commons Debates, Minister of Public Works G. J. McIlraith.
masters of urban renewal, this disbursement would be offset by future returns from increases in land value. These expected increases in land values, and recouped investments, were part of the rationale behind the *Plan for the National Capital*. As the Secretary of the NCPC noted to the Chairman of the Federal District Commission in 1951, the “plan of Ottawa, Hull and vicinity is an excellent guide for the planner... Improvement of such sections is therefore made possible, and, by fostering land revaluation, becomes a profitable operation.” The NCPC not only wanted to encourage land revaluation, but also was planning ahead by engaging in extensive land-banking practices. Completing the expropriation quickly was of the utmost importance, as a delay in closing the streets would put off the deadline for completing the parkway and providing basic services for the NDHQ.

The principle of inner-city land revaluation had been, as well as beautification, a central feature of the FDC-NCC urban planning program. In 1951, the NCPC had urged the FDC to follow the example of several Western European counties by targeting low-income communities for its land-assembly program. As a senior official noted in a memorandum to the Chairman of the FDC, “countries like France, England and Germany, by applying the principles of excess condemnation” had been able to “effect many improvements and to rapidly repay their costs from the resale of such excess lands at enhanced values and from the appreciated assessable values of the land bordering on the

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223 H.R. Cram, Secretary on behalf of the NCPC, May 21, 1951, Memo to Chairman and members of the FDC, p. 2, RG2, 18, vol. 127, F-21.
224 Letter to the Honourable Lucien Cardin, Minister of Public Works from Lt. Gen. S.F. Clark, Chairman of the NCC, April 27, 965, LAC, RG34, vol. 10, F-4-6.
improvements.” This strategy was far from secretive and was a key aspect of the NCPC public relations campaign. As their press release noted in 1949, “the project is economically sound because of the great increase in land values which will result from the improvements.” As much as the redevelopment of the Flats was a national project of beautification, consolidation of government functions and slum clearance, the urban renewal project for LeBreton Flats was also aimed at increasing land values. In the calculations of the NCC technocrats, the “best practice” in regards to under-valued land was to clear “problematic” housing stock that depressed land prices, and to maximize municipal tax receipts from the appreciated land value in and around urban renewal projects. Public costs could be retrieved through an eventual sale of the appreciated land – a strategy that would be redeployed forty years later (see chapter 4) – and an increase in tax receipts

Local boosters also promoted urban renewal as a means to extend the tax base, by encouraging city-centre business and tourism development. Boosters called on the city to emulate Montreal and construct major cultural facilities in “slum” districts in order to attract hotel, apartment and restaurant construction in areas that were formerly “derelict.”

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225 H.R. Cram, Secretary of the NCPC, May 21, 1951, Memo to Chairman and members of the FDC, LAC, RG34.
226 NCPC Press Release, April 20, 1949, RG2, 127, F-21
227 The Ottawa Citizen Editorial read, “by taking advantage of this offer the city could relocate a number of those now living in blighted housing areas. The vacated dwellings could be demolished to make way for business development that would bring needed tax revenue to the city,” April 14, 1961, p. 6.
3.15 The Dream Falters

If there had been high expectations for the LeBreton Flats development, many, including Mayor Whitton, quickly soured on the NCC’s promise. In the immediate period after her defeat in the 1964 mayoral election, Whitton made one of her spirited attacks against the NCC. She charged the NCC of being a land speculator, of expropriating land, “mixing it up a little,” and re-selling re-assembled land parcels for profit – including portions of LeBreton Flats. Whitton, in her customary style, claimed NCC expropriations were “a brutal invasion and

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229 Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
230 Whitton called upon the NCC to disclose information relevant to this land purchase. Complaints of the NCC’s less than noble interest in land acquisition were not completely off-base. Between 1959 and 1964, NCC made profits of $310,272 selling property it had previously expropriated, House of Commons Debates, June 29, 1964.
disregard of civil rights." In her hand-written response to an editorial calling for factual support of her allegations, Whitton referred to LeBreton Flats as an example of how the NCC disregarded the rights of Ottawa’s citizens. Urban development, Whitton maintained, required new housing and the NCC urban renewal scheme of LeBreton Flats and Chaudière Park did not meet this criterion. Of course Whitton had long objected to the use of expropriation against what she called “the rights and interests of ordinary, humble people” and to subsidizing sub-dividers and land assemblies. The NCC’s involvement in urban planning, the ex-mayor claimed, especially in the case of the Flats, placed large-scale beautification of the capital ahead of the pressing needs (especially housing) of its residents.

Whitton was not alone in her criticism of the NCC. Several groups reacted unfavourably to federal interventions in the land market. For some, such as the property owners just outside the expropriated area, the expropriation actually had the inverse effect on property values. These properties had become undesirable as they now faced a debris-filled wasteland, and several of their owners pleaded with the NCC to acquire theirs. Though the Commission did not plan to acquire

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232 Whitton also noted projects on Bronson Cliffs, Cathedral Cliffs, and Juliana Apartments as other examples of the NCC’s disregard for local issues.
235 As one resident noted, “I feel that the houses on the west side of Lorne will present a most undesirable background for any development of ramps etc., in this area as the backs of these houses are not at all pretty. I, therefore, wonder whether you would consider recommending to the Commission, the acquisition of the balance of the houses on Lorne Street in order that the investment the Commission has already made in the Flats will be protected.” Memorandum to D.L. McDonald from F.S. Marshall, June 4, 1965, LAC, RG34 C-3, Vol. 70, F-F.
these lands, the NCC noted in an internal memorandum that “expropriations in the area have made this side of the street in particular a most undesirable place to live.”

Showing its usual disdain for its impact on local residents, the NCC only reacted because it feared complaints and negative press coverage. The NCC was concerned that if “people get stirred up” it could create negative publicity and would affect their investment and redevelopment plans.

Picture 3.11: Expropriation Border

The NCC’s longstanding land-brokerage practices were also causing great consternation among certain members of the local business class. The NCC had taken to eliminating all signs of industrial activity from the centre of the city –

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236 Memorandum to D.L. McDonald from F.S. Marshall, June 4, 1965, LAC, RG34 C-3, Vol. 70, F-F.
237 LAC, RG 34, vol. 70.
often without the full consent of the once-powerful lumber barons. Some of the city’s lumber aristocrats took great exception to the NCC’s secrecy and to the NCC Chairman’s exclusive domain over the Flats - perturbing most of all the custodians of the Bronson Company’s dwindling Ottawa power base.\(^{238}\) The NCC’s expropriation and heavy-handed tactics were too much for the Bronson Company executives. After all, at one time, Frederik Bronson had himself served as FDC chair. In a series of letters with Bronson Company President A.M. Laidlaw, longtime Bronson Company employee Bill Munroe displayed his clear objection to the expropriation.\(^ {239}\) Munroe attacked NCC Chairman Lt.-General S.F. Clark and railed against the highly secretive Commission. “It would appear,” Munroe noted in a letter to Laidlaw, “that the N.C.C. has allowed this man to develop into a stupid overbearing bureaucrat.” The Commission has grown so much, he noted, that an army of members has given each one of them a sense of freedom from really being active, that all they have to do is turn up at meetings & vote. This includes the Chairman. In such case, a pushing, ambitious, senior member of the hired help would see his opportunity to make himself useful to the members of the Commission by relieving them of irksome work, by smooth talk and undertaking every job for them... It is an old game that puts the performer in the saddle of the real power and the main spring of the Commission.\(^ {240}\)

\(^{238}\) The lumber barons once had a favourable relationship with the DPW over water rights, and had transformed these privileges bestowed upon them by the state into large capital reserves (Taylor, 1986; Gillis, 1974). Now, the federal state had new interests, and the tactics of the old staples class had also become relics (see Mahon, 1984).


Clearly, the flailing industrialists were upset at being excluded from the very locale they had once dominated, and they took aim at the new source of power, the NCC Chairman, who enjoyed the support of complacent commissioners, and who used his executive position to ensure ambitious urban redevelopment was completed according to the 1950 Plan.

Laidlaw and Munroe, and other industrial barons, were relegated to developing a negotiation strategy with the NCC on its remaining interests in the Chaudière area. Once highly effective in lobbying for favourable growth conditions, these faded lumber barons were now outside the urban growth machine and left to negotiate the conditions of handing over the dwindling capital of their expired lumber empires to the NCC. In a stunning reversal of power, the men charged with the limited future of the Bronson Company tried to join into an unruly coalition of the old staples workers and industrialists against the increasing power and ruthlessness of the NCC. In an odd twist that fused their plight to the rights of local residents, Munroe noted to his confidant his anger over the expropriation of the Flats: “I cannot believe” Munroe noted “that the sweeping, wholesale, carelessly carried out demonstration of so called expropriation, by the N.C.C., in the Flats at Ottawa, is according to law – the expropriatees not even being told of it except by newspaper comment.”

These powerful interests, even if in severe decline, were subject to the same rubble and ruin. In a move reminiscent of the battle with the federal and local authorities over control of water power decades earlier, Munroe tried to

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muster other local capitalists into a struggle with the federal government. Munro suggested connecting with the Ottawa Board of Trade (just as early conservationists had) and publishing a series of commentaries by Company directors in the Ottawa Journal. Munroe wanted to “stir the pot” and bring attention to the injustice carried upon them. His overtures were largely ignored by the Board of Trade, as by most others in power, many of whom would profit from the large turnover of land, and the building contracts to come.

Some signs of resistance emanated from less powerful, and in somewhat less legal forms. The NCC’s expropriation had left many buildings vacant, some of which were occupied for alternative uses. In the NCC expropriation files, there are police reports of arson, deliberate fire, and breaking and entering, both to reclaim any objects of value left behind and for free use of non-tenured buildings. For example, the building occupied by National Applicators up until October 1962, was re-occupied by a Mr. St. Louis, recently out of jail, and used to store old cars in “various states of demolition” (the police suspected St. Louis was part of a car theft ring). Incident reports show evidence of “illegal” reclamation in face of the impending demolition of such objects as old wash basins and hot water tanks, with the likelihood of further clandestine reclamation of heaters,

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244 The Ottawa Citizen’s criticism of the NCC was similarly muted. While suggesting that the NCC try to alleviate the impact of its secretive deliberations on local politicians, it agreed with the overall need for secrecy in matters of property expropriations, “Keeping the City1991 Informed,” Editorial, Ottawa Citizen.
thermostats, cables and motors likely to continue. Others used the Flats as a playground and to set fire to several of the abandoned buildings.

Photo 3.12a: Post-Expropriation Ruin, Fire in Store on LeBreton Flats

245 NCC Memorandum to Mr. C.A. Bradfield from M.W. Millar, November 29, 1962, re: Shenkman building, LAC, RG34.
246 LAC, RG 34, vol. 10, F-10-18.
Attempts to reclaim the relics of the disappearing working landscape were feeble. The last vestiges of the industrial staples trade were no longer viewed with much respect, and fire, theft, and abandonment marked their demise. The death bell was ringing for the local capitalist staples class. With their power waning, they would not win special consideration from the federal government as had earlier executives of the staples trade (see Lambert and Pross, 1967; Gillis, 1973; Nelles, 1974). The Bronson Company’s last gasp at social justice, like the power of the illicit reclaimers, was painfully weak. All users – the residents of the

\[247\] LAC, RG 34, vol. 10, F-10-18.
Flats, Company, and squatters – were relegated to negotiating the terms of their disappearance from the Flats and the adjacent islands.\textsuperscript{248}

3.16 Looking back at the dawn of the 1970s

The NCC was at the apex of its urban renewal power: its influence easily overcame the complaints of men with hats from another era. The powerful land baron with a self-imposed mandate of “radical” social and geographical change reacted defiantly to criticism from local elites and from property owners. In a speech to the Ottawa Real Estate Board, NCC General Manager Thrift, with a brazen tongue, stated the NCC’s complete disregard for complaints:

In the past few months there has been great emphasis placed on the changing role of the National Capital Commission. I fail to see why anyone should be upset by this. The Commission, by virtue of its very functions, is a tool of change. Originally the Ottawa Improvement Commission was brought into being to bring about radical changes in the social and geographical environment which was not suitable to Canada’s Capital... We were not created to preserve the “status quo” – otherwise there would still be sawdust heaps and lumber piles along the length of the Rideau Canal and the Ottawa and Rideau Rivers would still run past hulking obsolete warehouses of another era.\textsuperscript{249}

Those calling for the “status quo” were, like the piles of lumber, relics of the past. It was time, Thrift maintained, for “Canada’s Capital” to be rid of the memory of the lumber industry and the railways that “scarred the face of the city of Ottawa.” The NCC property management functions, Thrift noted, consisted of “an imaginative forward-looking program well-suited to the 1970s which, in

\textsuperscript{248} In 1966, an agreement between the Bronson Company (BC) and the NCC was reached. The NCC purchased land from the BC for $580,000, and the NCC was to lease it back to BC for $1 a year until September 20, 1992. The BC retains any water rights and water powers until October 1992. This includes the water rights and powers held by the BC as per the lease between BC and the Ottawa Electric Company signed in 1909, NALC, MG III 26, vol. 809, National Capital Commission. Expropriation Correspondence and Appraisal (1963-1965).

\textsuperscript{249} Emphasis added.
Canada, will be a time of change and transition.” This “imaginative,” “necessary” and “progressive” action had removed the unsightly industry and created “open spaces... to hold them for future generations.” Those hulking residential, commercial and industrial residuals of the past were in the way of national progress and had to be cleared of the mind and the sight of Parliament Hill. It was a vision for the 1970s, and a marker of how creating “open” space was essential to the urbanization of the nation.

![Photo 3.13, Rubble and Ruin of LeBreton Flats, Wellington Street, July 1965](image)

The streets of the Flats had fallen silent, and in a short time, the expropriation would be exposed as a gigantic disaster rather than a centennial celebration. Large-scale slum clearance was fast becoming démodé.

In 1969, the Ottawa Brief to the Hellyer Task Force on Housing and Urban Renewal noted the inability of large-scale urban renewal programs to mitigate

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250 Speech by NCC General Manager Eric Thrift to Ottawa Real-estate Board, October 1969.
251 Briefing Slides, National Defence Headquarters Planning Group, Department of National Defence Collection, LAC, OS0067 1B/DAP-30, 1985-171.
poverty: “the physical improvement of a residential neighbourhood by means of urban renewal projects and the provision of public housing in themselves do little to eliminate low levels of education, social problems and poverty.”²⁵² In its final report the Task Force echoed the Ottawa Brief, noting the lack of funding for social programs as “a serious gap.” The Task Force called on all federal urban renewal programs to end their single minded devotion to physical improvements by making the funding of social development programs an integral part of any urban project.²⁵³ This was of direct relevance to the former residents of LeBreton Flats. The professional appraisals had left unattended the question of how dislocation would affect the residents with low financial reserves.²⁵⁴

The impact was felt beyond the immediate area of expropriation. The southern extremity had stopped just south of Albert Street. However, the property market in the adjacent Dalhousie community, which lay just beyond the expropriation, continued to be destabilized by the NCC’s initial intervention. The disruption was finally recognized by the NCC in a 1979 report:

The LeBreton Flats expropriation and demolition created a considerable climate of uncertainty for the Dalhousie area. While the expropriation order included only the lands as far south as Primrose Street, there was little indication to property owners that land acquisition would stop there. Indeed, even to-day the “rumour mill” produces stories of imminent

²⁵³ “There is nothing in the National Housing Act which requires the provision of social development programs as part of an urban renewal project. We regard this as a serious gap... Federal urban renewal programs should include the cost of, and be conditional on, the municipality undertaking social development programs,” Helleyer Task Force on Housing and Urban Renewal, 1969.
²⁵⁴ A retrospective study aimed at identifying the impact of the expropriations on real-estate market and rent levels in the Dalhousie area was co-commissioned by NCC and CMHC. Impact of LeBreton Flats on the Dalhousie Neighbourhood, DPA Consulting/NCC/CMHC, 1979, p. 27, COA.
expropriation in the area adjacent to Primrose, perhaps as far south as Spruce Street. As a result, a small number of units are put on the market either to sell them or simply to test the prevailing real-estate market.255

The overall effect of the expropriation not only destabilized local housing markets, the 1979 report concluded that the “rehabilitation of housing in Ottawa has reduced the availability of housing for moderate income residents in the inner city areas.”256 The residents of the “Flats” – living-labour and dead-labour both – might have agreed with the report, and insisted that they were more than mere “sawdust heaps” of a defunct era. The workers of the “Flats” had built and re-built the town after the fire of 1900 and they had been an essential part of the staples economy that drove Ottawa’s development. Their stories, their lives were not to be forgotten as easily as Thrift would have liked. For these silent voices, justice was slow in coming. The report of the Hellyer Task Force on Housing and Urban Development marked the death of urban renewal principles, calling for the “wholesale destruction of older housing” to be suspended and for “greater sensitivity... in the demolition of existing housing” (Milner, 1969). This had set the wheels in motion for a new type of urban policy. The 1979 report revisited the impact of the massive expropriation in light of shifts in federal urban policy. Large-scale urban renewal had been discredited in Ottawa and elsewhere, though the Flats would continue to lie silent as testimony to this tragedy.

255 Ibid.
256 The area directly south of the Flats continued to provide residential accommodation for lower and moderate income. With rents in the area rising more slowly than elsewhere in the Ottawa region, and with a highly developed network of community services, the area south of the Flats provided Ottawa’s largest residential accommodation for families of low and moderate income. “Impact of LeBreton Flats on the Dalhousie Neighbourhood,” DPA Consulting/NCC/CMHC, 1979, p. 27.
3.17 Conclusion

The federal urban planning agenda and the city-based low-cost housing lobby were both part of the Keynesian reform movement, though each had a clearly different view of the priorities of state-intervention in the national capital’s postwar urbanization. The NCC enacted a comprehensive planning approach oriented around wholesale changes to urban form. This federally driven planning agenda perpetuated the modernist impulses of the Plan for the National Capital. In contrast, the City of Ottawa resisted wholesale expropriation and housing removal without adequate replacement housing, and lobbied all levels of government for a sustained low-cost housing program. The NCC’s power to overcome local objections, and to promote its version of urban reform, was considerable. The postwar state, in full expansion, bestowed the NCC with considerable power to transform the landscape(s) of power in the national capital. The NCC, equipped with a rash of new enabling legislations, was able to plan and execute radical geographical change. The NCC played with a visible hand over the local housing and land market, and exercised its new powers without much regard for the local neighbourhood of LeBreton Flats. Without a care for the past, local history, municipal objections, or the pressing housing needs of Ottawa’s residents, it acted swiftly to buy up and level the Flats to make way for the Department of National Defence (DND). By 1965 the last buildings were demolished, and an era ended with a clean scar: the rubble and ruin of expropriation. It would stay that way for the next forty years.

Between 1958 and 1965, the NCC had activated a new mode of intervention in the urbanization process: it had become a major land speculator.
A new urban-national dream, reflected in the images of promotional and propaganda techniques developed during World War II, was sold through the medium of the film, the commodity vehicle of the automobile, and the “slum” recovery narrative. This new modernist capital, the NCC had hoped, would also lead to new national mores of active citizenship and a new ideal of urban development. Despite the massive expropriation, the dream image faded at the dawn of the 1970s. Still, the effort was not without its lasting impact; decades later, the NCC would renew many of these impulses in its newest vision for the Flats. The division between Keynesianism and neoliberalism was not a clean break, and federal state intervention in the national capital urbanization – like its predecessors the OIC and FDC – would be updated to fit the parameters of preferred by NUP.
CHAPTER 4: New Urban Policy and the Redevelopment of LeBreton Flats

4.1 Introduction
The events of 1962 to 1967 prepared the ground for future federal interventions in LeBreton Flats. While the “empty” Flats lay fallow for almost four decades, the popularity of modernist interventionism faded. This chapter charts the NCC’s adaptation to neoliberal urbanism, and how the NCC has integrated the key features of the NUP agenda into its policy and planning framework. By examining the contemporary role of the NCC in the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats, this chapter shows how urban coalitions and local trajectories actively contributed to urban policy experimentation. The chapter argues that the NCC’s mediated enforcement of urban redevelopment helped “orchestrate” a “decidedly rent-extraction-based” urban development project on LeBreton Flats (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002: 205). The NCC’s primary aim was land disposal and enabling time-delayed embourgeoisement of the Flats. Working alongside a series of governmental and private sector partners, this chapter concludes that the federal planning authority “naturalized” the practices of neoliberal urbanism and, at the same time, consolidated the Keynesian intervention.

4.2 New “Neoliberal” Powers
In the midst of Canadian adaptations to neoliberalism’s hegemony (Caroll and Shaw, 2001), the NCC’s mandate was updated to fit the parameters of the new governing paradigm. After a short two-year review conducted between 1986 and 1988, the NCC’s mandate review panel suggested two key amendments to
the National Capital Act (NCA). These amendments were enacted under the 1988 NCA, and eventually became prominent features of the NCC’s activities from 1988 to 2007.

First, legislative changes gave the NCC the power to pursue and engage in joint-partnerships with the private and public sector, including the right to sell, grant, lease, or dispose of property to third-party actors. Furthermore, under this new constellation of joint-partnership governance, the management and maintenance activities were also allowed to be “transferred to private sector through sale or privatization.” Partnerships in land sales, development, concessions, and sub-contracting management would “provide access to new sources of funding.” Since the NCC was subject to chronic funding shortfalls in its annual operating budget, the panel projected these new revenue streams would give the NCC operational stability and reduce its dependence on emergency cash infusions from federal government general revenues. As part of this operational flexibility, the NCC was given the statutory powers to make land deals and sell large tracts of land. It would also give NCC the same market-oriented powers held by any large urban development corporation. The NCC would now be able to make side-deals with large developers, such as land swap, without having full cabinet approval.

Second, under the provisions of the new NCA, the NCC was charged with the activation of the national experience through additional programming responsibilities. Under the purview of the Act, the NCC was now authorized to “organize, sponsor or promote public activities” in the NCR, including the

\[257\] NCA, Chapter N-4, 1988.
planning and promoting of activities throughout the tourist year such as Winterlude, a winter festival, the Canada Day celebrations, and other festivals.\textsuperscript{258} Additionally, the NCC was bestowed with coordinating the policies and programs of all Government of Canada departments in regards to the “organization, sponsorship or promotion of all public activities and events” in the NCR.\textsuperscript{259}

However, as the legislation made clear, the NCC’s original purpose and impulse remained a potent rationalizing force. The NCC was mandated to “continue to perfect” the Gréber Plan and to extend “a twentieth-century plan well into the 21\textsuperscript{st}”. The NCC would continue with the implementation of the Plan.\textsuperscript{260}

Rather than a complete overhaul, the changes to the NCA are more accurately described as a melding or “agglomeration of impulses” than a complete change of direction. Under the 1988 amendments, the NCC became a hybrid creature. In many cases the newly acquired powers over land sales and partnerships were used in tandem with the new programming role. For example, the revenues from land sales were often used to fund programming and the NCC’s operating budget.\textsuperscript{261} Land powers fueled promotional activities. The land-banking and land-management practices used to expropriate LeBreton Flats in the previous era were updated and used to sell national culture. While in the 1950 and 1960s, the NCC was largely engaged in providing land assembly for industrial and housing suburbs, in the new century, it would provide land-assembly services to local

\textsuperscript{258} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{259} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{261} NCC Brief to NCC Mandate Review Panel, 2006.
firms interested in urban intensification and a return to the city. The changes in the policy regime would coincide with an emerging condominium boom.\textsuperscript{262}

\textbf{4.3 Emerging Government Partnerships}

After the 1962 expropriation, the streets of LeBreton Flats had remained in the ownership of the City of Ottawa, despite the NCC’s ownership of property lots. As a result, the federal government remained dependent on an agreement with the local jurisdiction for any future development. Armed with new partnership powers, the NCC made conciliatory overtures to the City in 1989 which were key to the site’s eventual redevelopment. After a seven-year delay, an agreement was reached in 1996 between the NCC, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton and the City of Ottawa to form a partnership for the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats. Under the purview of an \textit{Ottawa Planning Act}, the streets were finally handed over in 1999 to the NCC, allowing the NCC to develop a plan for LeBreton Flats that used its new statutory powers.\textsuperscript{263} Much of this energy would be directed at servicing Ottawa’s growing condominium boom.

Beginning in early 2002, Ottawa’s top builders initiated a push to market condominiums to professionals and empty-nesters as a preferred lifestyle choice.\textsuperscript{264} Ottawa’s condominium market expanded rapidly from a relatively small two per cent of total sales in 1998, to 20 per cent of new regional housing sales

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{262} LeBreton Flats Master Land Agreement between the NCC, the City of Ottawa and the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, City of Ottawa, 1996.

\textsuperscript{263} NCC, Rapport d’examen préalable, Projet de viabilisation et d’assainissement des Plaines LeBreton, 2004.

\end{footnotesize}
just six years later.\textsuperscript{265} Ottawa’s big three developers, Urbandale, Minto, and Claridge, constructed a range of units priced between $350,000 and $2 million. This new slate of luxury condominiums was marketed aggressively, and their popularity rose rapidly. Altogether, from 2004 to 2007, between four and five thousand condo units were built in the Ottawa area, with 2,600 mid-rise and high-rise condos going up in 2004 alone.\textsuperscript{266}

Among the local firms, Claridge Homes – Ottawa’s second-largest home developer – was a key player in the local real-estate market, and an active participant in the booming condominium market. In 2004, Claridge was developing five towers, including 500 units and 10,000 ft.\textsuperscript{2} of retail space in two twin 27-storey towers near Ottawa’s popular Byward Market.\textsuperscript{267} As the developer Neil Malhotra explained: “It’s a cliché, I know, but location is everything – and here you’ve got location. You’re right downtown. Everything is within walking distance. It’s perfect for two demographics – the young crowd who loves the night life, and older people who’ve maybe decided to downsize.”\textsuperscript{268} Claridge President Bill Malhotra (Neil’s father) added a similar sentiment: “People,” he noted “want the lifestyle. They want to live downtown, close to restaurants and shops.”\textsuperscript{269} Claridge Homes coveted an expansion of its real-estate empire by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{265} Tencer, D. “Breathing new life into downtown,” \textit{Ottawa Citizen}, October 21, 2004. This was the equivalent of approximately 1000 units a year. The total percentage was still quite low compared with the 50\% of new sales in Toronto.
\item \textsuperscript{266} Ottawa–Carleton Home Building Association, 2004.
\item \textsuperscript{268} Enman, C. “Living the High Life: Rideau Street’s twin towers promise urban location, elegant condos,” \textit{Ottawa Citizen}, February 12, 2005.
\item \textsuperscript{269} Turner, K. “Big prices, Big Sales at the Big Three,” \textit{Ottawa Citizen}, March 20, 2004.
\end{itemize}
developing new condominium units. The family firm wanted to be a dream-maker of the downtown lifestyle espoused by young urbanites and empty nesters.

Started in 1982 by Bill Malhotra, Claridge Homes has, over time, fostered and maintained a close relationship with the public sector. In particular, Claridge has a history of bidding and being chosen as the preferred builder for government-initiated housing projects. For example, between 1991 and 1996, Claridge had built 1500 units for City Living (now Ottawa Housing) – the City of Ottawa’s low-cost housing provider. The firm had developed the experience needed to negotiate the government tendering process and had learned how to accept strict budget and building guidelines. Most important, though, Claridge had developed the skills needed to extract more out of their contracts by renegotiating more favourable terms in mid-construction. Ottawa’s condominium fever provided new grounds for the extension of the NCC’s partnership model with local capital.

Building on its reputation as a reputable private partner, the Ottawa-based firm solidified its hold on publicly initiated projects when it obtained the rights to develop a contentious vacant downtown lot known as the Daly site. Adjacent to Ottawa’s famous Chateau Laurier Hotel, to Ottawa’s large downtown mall, and to Ottawa’s bustling Byward Market area, the prime downtown location had previously been home to the landmark Daly Building, a turn-of-the-century Chicago-style building that housed Ottawa’s first department store. Left vacant since 1978 (while it awaited an NCC-led expansion of a nearby traffic intersection), the Daly Building was abruptly demolished by the NCC in 1991.

Despite the canceling of the road-expansion project (Taylor, 1986). In the subsequent years, several cancelled or abandoned projects followed (the most fantastic being a private-public partnership for a hotel-aquarium-shopping complex). After years of delays, and repeated re-tendering of the site for development, the NCC finally agreed to lease the site to Claridge Homes for 60 years at the cost of $100,000. With the prime site secured, and the NCC’s planning approval, Claridge set out to construct an 11-storey luxury condominium complex on the Daly site. Among other luxury perks, the exclusive condominium complex would feature views of the Rideau Canal and the Gatineau Hills, a 24-hour concierge, a health club, and a communal roof garden. The new complex would become the exclusive residence for Ottawa’s “lifestyle” enthusiasts. Units were priced at between $500,000 and $2 million, ensuring only a select group of residents would be able to afford “downtown living.” These up-market residents could enjoy the convenience of the city and the beautiful vista of the Ottawa Valley without having to mix with the publicans below. It was a building appropriate to the national-city dream.

The selection of Claridge for the redevelopment of the Daly site cemented a relationship between the developer and the NCC. Claridge had stepped in to develop the site after years of failed tenders and proposals, thus saving the NCC from further embarrassment. In return, the NCC was in a giving mood and, a short time after awarding the land to Claridge, they agreed to renegotiate more

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271 Prentice, M. “Million-dollar babies,” Ottawa Citizen, January 21, 2006; Turner, K. “Big prices, Big Sales at the Big Three,” Ottawa Citizen, March 20, 2004; Even former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien had been priced out of the market, and could not afford to purchase a unit in the Daly Building according to reports.
favourable terms at Claridge’s urging. The NCC, concerned about the aesthetic quality of the house of riches, handed over $1.2 million of public money to cover the building’s exterior in stately and capital-worthy stone.  

This initial foray into the condominium market and Claridge’s experience as a private partner to government-led projects, especially the Daly condominium, gave it the institutional capital to “slip through the cracks” and to proceed with projects which may otherwise have had difficulty being completed (Leo and Fenton, 1990). Private-public partnership models provide the flexibility to proceed with projects that may otherwise be stalled because of public opposition or financial restraints. Located in the twilight zone between public and private, P3s give developers a screen from which to protect themselves from direct public scrutiny. They are not directly accountable to the public, giving them the institutional flexibility to conduct business that public authorities might be unwilling to undertake for fear of electoral repercussions from public opposition to urban development projects. The modified third-party agreement allows each level of government to take credit for the project’s success, and yet under conditions of failure to be able to deflect blame. Second, urban development corporations (UDCs), as a form of P3, leverage government investment to attract private capital, thus increasing the total investment. The tendering of the Daly project to Claridge allowed the NCC to move the project forward despite a lack of funds and several aborted projects due to questionable financing. Finally, and

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perhaps most importantly, UDCs are able to maintain secrecy and adapt strategy in changing circumstances.

The Daly site redevelopment would serve as a handy test-pilot. The private-public agreement between Claridge and the NCC would serve as a model for future developments and prove useful in Claridge’s bid for LeBreton Flats.

4.4 Multiscalar Planning Policy and NUP

Under the parameters of the new NCA, and of what is broadly considered neoliberal urban governance, the NCC adopted key features of the New Urban Policy (NUP) agenda into its policy and planning framework.\textsuperscript{273} The NCC developed a public policy framework that integrated the principles of market interventions: innovation, competitiveness, flexibility, public-private-partnerships and public boosterism. These new impulses fit alongside the old impulse of state-directed beautification and the production of national landscapes of power. From the long-term vision of the high-level Plan for Canada’s Capital to the “area plans” that stipulated the “nuts and bolts” of development,\textsuperscript{274} the parameters of NUP were set out within the NCC’s planning hierarchy.

The high-level principles for LeBreton Flats redevelopment were established under the guidelines of the 1999 Plan for Canada’s Capital (PCC). A successor to the 1950 Plan for the National Capital, the PCC was, as the subtitle suggested, “A Second Century of Vision, Planning and Development.” It was an uninterrupted continuation of the Ottawa Improvement Commission’s early beautification, and of Gréber’s rationalization of the urban region. As the NCCs

\textsuperscript{273} See chapter 2 for a description of NUP.

lead planning document, the PCC was a guide to development in the NCR over the next fifty years. The Plan was the first comprehensive high level planning document since 1988 and, as such, the first to recognize the changes associated with the changes to the NCA in 1988.

The NCC’s vision of bucolic harmony was part of a long tradition of imagining the capital in a picturesque frame, much like Gréber’s hawkish view from atop the Peace Tower (see chapter 3). The PCC’s authors called on the reader to “Imagine the beautiful capital as a unified space for working, living and celebrating the Capital.” In its overall framing, the PCC promoted a “national” and “green” vision for the NCR. In this newest of plans, the “future Capital” was projected as “a place where city and nature meet, a green space of rolling hills, powerful rivers and dramatic forests.” In this vision, the Capital is a completely integrated space that develops “extensive and diverse built heritage,” parks and parkways though new public places, vistas “ringed by the Gatineau Hills, the urban parks and the Greenbelt,” and regional waterways “safeguarded for the benefit of all of Canada’s citizens.” This vision, the document notes, will “reflect” both the “great history and the exciting reality of the 21st century Canada.”

Once again in this “second century” of federal capital planning, the prescription was a nature absent of human interaction: the city was an entity separate from nature’s metabolism. More than one hundred years later, nature remains a separate entity brought into the city from the outside, something that recalls the great uncivilized and good nature, and a lesson to the city residents, and to

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276 Ibid.
national citizens who may forget the “romantic” roots of the nation. It is a clean space devoid of the messy relationships of its capitalist past.

Similarities aside, several new strains were present in the NCC’s guiding document, including the concept of sustainable development. The PCC provided an “integrated policy response” that would secure “a vital and dynamic economy” for the region as well as building a healthy, safe city bestowed with “naturally diverse ecosystems that function well.” Economy and environment met under the de rigueur “umbrella principle” of sustainable development which by 1999 had been completely integrated into all federal government high-level policy.277

The PCC also took into consideration the promotional responsibilities added to the NCC’s mandate in 1988. The capital was the “symbolic heart of the nation” and the NCC had a mandate “to communicate Canada to Canadians and to develop and highlight Canada’s national identity.” The national-city was to meet its future destiny through the safeguarding and preservation of cultural heritage and natural history (PCC Summary, 1999, 2). Steeped in the symbolic language of being “a symbol and window onto Canada,” the policy goals and planning principles for the national-city were more than allusions to an imagined community. They were to be etched into the national capital through beautification, maintenance, preservation, and most recently, federally driven initiatives such as “institutions, events, attractions, symbols, parks, pathways and associated facilities.”278 Under this grand vision, LeBreton Flats once again was to be the subject of a new dream-image, and was identified as a priority both for

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277 Ibid, p. 4.
278 Ibid, p. 3.
the long-term vitality of the core area and as a location for national cultural institutions.

Just as the NCC was developing its high-level fifty-year-plan for its “second century,” the City was engaging in a soul-searching exercise to draft a new city plan in the wake of the provincially mandated amalgamation of ten municipalities into the new City of Ottawa in 2000. After a long, deliberative process, including town hall sessions and extensive consultations, the newly amalgamated City of Ottawa released its new official plan in 2003. The high principles of the Official Plan (OP) promoted managed growth, livable, and green cities and environmental integrity under “Smart Growth” principles entrenched during the 20/20 consultations.\footnote{City of Ottawa, Smart Growth Consultations, 2001; City of Ottawa, Ottawa 20/20 Official Plan, 2003.} It was the City’s own long-term vision.

Like the NCC, the City borrowed from previous work. The development guidelines for LeBreton Flats set out in a 1997 amendment to the Secondary Plan of the Official Plan were reset into the 2003 OP. The 1997 Secondary Plan for LeBreton Flats recognized the “Flats” as a “unique site” to be developed with “a mix of uses, surrounded by open spaces, pathways and pedestrian friendly streets,” including residential, retail, office, entertainment, cultural and recreation facilities.\footnote{City of Ottawa, Staff Report to Amendment No. 57, Minutes, City of Ottawa, Planning and Development Committee.} The 2003 OP extended these planning principles and folded them into the City’s “Smart Growth” principles. LeBreton continued to be a target for “residential intensification” and “Community based employment opportunities.” The plan also adopted a mandate calling for an “urban community where people
can live, work, socialize and play,” as a locale where a mix of housing and jobs could be located.

Negotiating between its identities as city and national capital, as “both national capital city on the international stage, and as an exciting yet comfortable place to call home,” the plan identified LeBreton Flats as “a unique site, critical to the heart of the Nation’s Capital.” LeBreton Flats, the Secondary Plan noted, “would help define the role of Ottawa as the National Capital.”

Once again, great things were expected of the Flats. “LeBreton Flats,” the document noted, “has a destiny”: a destiny that is both national and local.

4.5 Policy Consensus: Strengthening Multi-Level Partnerships

A multi-scalar policy consensus emerged which prioritized the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats into a mixed-use community. The NCC’s 2005 Core Area Sector Plan (CASP), a document which sets out land-use designations and long-term development goals for the central city, including LeBreton Flats and Chaudière Falls, echoed the call for a “vibrant mixed-use community.” The NCC’s dirigiste document for the core area proposed a mixed-use neighbourhood of mid- and high-rise commercial, residential, and office uses, including abundant park spaces, connections to the central core and surrounding communities, luscious waterways, and “National Cultural Institutions.” As with the 2003 City of Ottawa OP, the Sector Plan evoked the national and city connection. The Core Area was the “Heart of the Capital” and “a space for working, living and celebrating Canada,” where “the capital showcase


is linked with and knitted into the interestingly and lively surrounding precincts and neighbourhoods.”

The CASP set out the implementation details for each of the “districts,” the term used by the NCC to map out the borders of its self-anointed divisions for the downtown core. As part of the district planning process, LeBreton Flats was divided into a northern and southern sector. LeBreton Flats South, the area nearest existing residential areas and the 1979 CMHC project, was one of several “Partnership Character Areas” to be developed in a multi-level partnership with other levels of government and with the private sector, under the lead direction of the NCC. In this area, the NCC would “lead planning, development, programming and commemoration initiatives within LeBreton South” in cooperation with other partners (CASP, 2005: 133). The language of UDPs had made it from legislation into high-level policy documents and finally into detailed federally driven urban planning policy.

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283 NCC, Core Area Sector Plan (CASP), Final Draft, June 2005, p. 2.
Photo 4.1: Planning Ottawa’s Capital Area

The NCC’s vision of its “place-making initiative” extended to the “LeBreton North” and the old milling and industrial district near Chaudière Falls as part of a reclamation of “prime waterfront land.” Though noting the limits imposed by “existing” industrial uses that “do not support favourable public experiences,” the NCC expected to take advantage of the “authenticity” as offering “unique opportunities for industry-related and historic interpretive programming.” This cultural tourism agenda would include new cultural institutions, “living museums,” and “a finely grained mix” of commercial and retail use. A number of industrial relics would be preserved, and adapted for public consumption, including the old Bronson Company Office, the Ottawa Electric Railway Steam Plant and Hydro

Ottawa’s #2 Power Station, and in the future, the Domtar buildings at Chaudière Falls.\footnote{Ibid, p. 113.}

\section*{4.6 “Creating a Capital Experience for all Canadians”: Remembering and Forgetting}

In the same month, June 2005, the NCC also released a high-level document for the public programming activities in the Core Area of the NCR. \textit{Reflecting a Nation: Creating a Capital Experience for all Canadians} (RAN) set the parameters for shaping “a Capital Experience for all Canadians.”\footnote{NCC, Reflecting a Nation: Creating a Capital Experience for all Canadians, June 2005.} The NCC’s activity program was designed to celebrate the values, the “connection to the land” and the “authentic experience” of national heritage in the NCR. The programming guidelines promised to enhance the public experience for residents and other Canadians making a “pilgrimage” to the capital.\footnote{Ibid, p. 5, 7.}

As part of its citizenship activation, the NCC selected a “theme” for each of its thirteen “Core Area Districts.” The theme of “Memory and Celebration” was chosen for LeBreton Flats. The commemoration theme formed a central component of the NCC’s celebratory activation meant “to reflect our collective efforts in overcoming challenges.”\footnote{Ibid, p. 26.} As the document noted in its “Key Principle” section: “Commemoration in the Capital will be inspirational in scale-powerful national symbols that remember and reflect significant people, events, ideas and places for present and future generations.”\footnote{Ibid, p. 12.} Coupled with the quality of life
agenda and re-invention of the industrial history of Victoria Island, the NCC’s visionary cultural innovation relied on art, tourism, commemoration, and beauty.

Attempts to re-imagine the Flats as a world-class waterfront tourist destination and focal point of federal power were lauded by the NCC as an important contribution made by the federal government to the local scene. In a media release, the NCC contentedly reflected on its ability to transform the shores of the Ottawa River.²⁹⁴

There was a time when the whole shoreline of Hull was defined by smokestacks and industry. In recent decades, federal acquisition of shore lands, and the construction of federal office towers and the Canadian

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²⁹³ NCC, RAN, p. 27.
Museum of Civilization, have transformed the Hull skyline as part of the capital region.

In the larger time-space trajectory of the national vision, the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats North and South into a new cultural, residential and retail neighbourhood was to act as a “bridge” to the city and to the “area’s industrial, aboriginal and natural heritage.” Without any irony, the CASP refers back to the “unique blend of old and new,” to the mix of stately heritage and modern structures and the need to “restore and reconnect” LeBreton Flats to “the urban fabric.”²⁹⁵ It was as if the built heritage remained largely intact and free of the large-scale demolition perpetrated from 1962 to 1965. Despite making reference to the “fascinating industrial heritage” of the area,²⁹⁶ and despite historic hoopla, the planning documents make no mention of the expropriation and subsequent silence on LeBreton’s 164 acres. As if some great mystery happened in the 1960s, the description of the Flats simply mentions that the area had been a mixed industrial-rail-residential area until the early 1960s. It is a glaring erasure considering the federal government’s central role in the destruction of the Flats, and evidence of the continued amnesia and historical white-and-green-washing. The “renewed commitment of the federal government and the NCC in the planning and animation of the Core Area” did not include a commitment to local memories. Tragedy had once again been forgotten and new planning principles would simply glide over the past.

The area would be finally cleansed of its industrial and working-class past since working industry did not fit in with the NCC’s planning vision. The erasure

²⁹⁶ CASP, Final Draft, 2005, p. 112.
of working nature was a central component of the spatial exclusion of non-national-city life. Instead, the history of industry and labour was re-imagined as an updated “phantasmagoric wish-image” (cf. Buck-Morss, 1989; Kaïka, 2003). The international tastes of “green travelers” attracted through “cutting edge cultural programming” were featured prominently in event and facilities planning, and took the place of working nature. The NCC’s programming principles and land management policies entailed a national-driven animation of the waterfront without any of the ‘messy’ social activities such as mills, community centres, daycares, playgrounds, or social housing. Centres of consumption of culture and beauty that were of national significance fit with the policy consensus on the desirability to attract and retain a desired class of residents and tourists. These consumers would not have to worry about butting into past ghosts or existing challenges of city life: they would be allowed to “relax and linger” in this placid destination. The Flats was a natural and cultural treasure to be safeguarded and enclosed. Art was contained, and public life stifled, by the container of memory and national aspiration.

4.7. LeBreton Planning Process

“‘It’s your methods I’m against, not the buildings.’

Councilor De Vita, *Hands on our City* (50:10)

On July 25, 2002 an application for subdivision was made to the City of Ottawa by Robert Walters, the NCC’s Senior Development Planner. The official

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297 In the words of NCC chair Marcel Beaudry, “…the NCC seeks to communicate Canada to Canadians and to inspire them with pride in the natural and cultural treasures that are safeguarded in this extraordinary place,” Speaking Notes for Marcel Beaudry, Public Annual General Meeting 2005, http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca, accessed September 12, 2005.
planning process for the development was under way. City of Ottawa staff responded to the NCC request by suggesting amendments to the 2003 OP and to the LeBreton Flats Secondary Plan (1997). These amendments, if adopted, would modify the OP’s designations for land use, development conditions, requirements for pre-development studies, and height restrictions as requested by the NCC.298 “In their initial report to the Planning and Development Committee, City staff concluded that the request made by the NCC did not undermine the Secondary Plan for LeBreton Flats. Under the proposed amendments, lands would also be re-designated from residential zoning to mixed-use to accommodate the NCC’s mixed-use development plan, the maximum allowable height limit was increased from six to ten stories and exemptions were granted from various studies. Official plan standards for park construction and day care would be delayed until later stages of the development. Overall, the proposed changes would “increase flexibility” for redevelopment.

Initial reactions to the Staff report included concern that the new measures could result in some buildings being completely 100 per cent commercial, which was not consistent with city plans for the area. Most directly, the City Councilor for Somerset Ward (Elizabeth Arnold) questioned the NCC’s commitment to housing affordability and urged local housing activists to meet with the NCC to ensure these concerns were addressed.299 There was general dismay that the

NCC had not made explicit its commitment to meet the minimum housing requirements that had been included in the new Official Plan. Trying to stifle NCC critics, NCC Chair Marcel Beaudry had previously noted in a letter to the City that 25 per cent of the total redevelopment would be affordable housing. However, as Councilor Arnold noted in Committee, “there was no clear direction” in the NCC proposal to ensure that “core need housing targets” would be met.\textsuperscript{300} The concern over adequate affordable housing would be central to the controversy over Claridge’s new development.

Aware of the area’s history, the City Planning and Development Committee released a careful motion noting the 25 per cent target was “actually greatly diminished from the housing demolished in the 1960s when (the federal government) was into “slum clearance.”\textsuperscript{301} In response to Beaudry’s promises, the motion noted that “LeBreton Flats is a significant neighbourhood that prior to being expropriated and demolished by the federal government was home to a diversity of housing types and housed many individuals and families with low incomes.”\textsuperscript{302} In addition, housing activists objected to the “affordable” quota, voicing particular concern over the definition of affordability. The NCC’s initial definition of “affordability” was pegged at the 60th percentile of home income, the

\textsuperscript{300} City of Ottawa. Report to Planning and Development Committee, Official Plan Amendments 57.
\textsuperscript{301} Drafted and presented by the Councilor for Somerset Ward the motion also called on the NCC to incorporate child care spaces. City of Ottawa, Planning and Development Committee, Minutes, March 27, 2003.
\textsuperscript{302} City of Ottawa, Planning and Development Committee Meeting, Minutes, March 27, 2003.
equivalent of a $220,000 condominium which, in the judgment of local housing observers, was "not really affordable."\textsuperscript{303}

In response to this acute concern, the City of Ottawa Planning Committee altered the OP amendments to provide more specific language stating 25 per cent of total housing would be affordable according to Action Ottawa criteria, rather than the NCC’s self-selected criteria – until the new OP was officially approved by City Council (meaning that average market rent does not exceed 30 per cent of income). The approval also stipulated that reserve lands be put aside until 50 per cent of the residential unit permits have been issued. Should the developer not meet its obligations, land on the Flats would be available for future purchase by the City. The Committee also amended the staff report to urge the NCC to make lands available to non-profit housing providers, and to negotiate partnerships between developers and non-profit housing providers that would include affordable housing. These motions were strengthened by an affordability quota for the new subdivision. These motions were supported by community housing advocates such as Catherine Boucher of the Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation (CCOC), Sue MacLatchie of the Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC), and Margaret Singleton of the Ottawa-Carleton Community Housing Corporation.\textsuperscript{304} Finally, the approval required that 50 childcare spaces would be built prior to the issue of the first 500 units.\textsuperscript{305} More than an act of historic remembrance, the city was working towards remembering

\textsuperscript{303} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{304} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{305} City of Ottawa, Draft Plan of Subdivision Approval, March 13, 2003
the fabric of the Flats — a historic fact the NCC, in its own documents, continued to obscure.

In March 2003, the Draft Plan of Subdivision Approval was forwarded to City Council for approval. Several additional conditions were included in response to concerns expressed in the committee. The NCC was required to cover 100 per cent of the costs of proposed construction: street name and traffic signs; the cost of design and construction of water mains, water meters, water services, utility conduits, and sewers; the construction of an off site storm-water storage facility; and the cost of designing and construction of transit stops. An aggressive target of 45-55 per cent modal split (public transport/walk/cycle vs. automobile) was required as was a transportation master plan.\footnote{ibid.}

The compromise agreement heeded the NCC’s demand for commercial and mixed use zoning in exchange for the affordable-housing commitment. The modifications to the 1997 OP made the land more desirable to local developers. In this sense, the NCC had acted as an agent for developers. At the same time the NCC appeased housing activists by promising affordable housing. However, as time progressed, the NCC’s actions would prove its dedication to these housing principles was somewhat suspect. In many ways, social housing proponents were right to raise concerns, considering the NCC’s past actions in regards to affordable housing. Doubts continued to surface during these negotiations, as the local Councilor noted in the staff report: “I continue to be
concerned that there is no requirement for a portion of the housing to be affordable.”

Still, a policy consensus was emerging. As the City’s “smart growth” principles had filtered into the NCC’s planning framework, the NCC’s own preference for national symbolism was also permeating the City’s OP, and the City would ensure that Parliament Hill was protected from encroachment. Height limits would be applied to the redevelopment to avoid “a continuous high-profile wall of buildings” so that the development did not interfere with the “protective view of the Parliament Buildings and other national symbols.”

With planning approval from the City, the Beaudry-led NCC was eager to proceed with the long-awaited and much-anticipated redevelopment of LeBreton Flats. LeBreton Flats, in the NCC’s view, represented “a unique opportunity to create a vibrant community in the heart of the Nation’s Capital” and for waterfront re-development. Foremost, the development was designed “to positively contribute to the image and character of the Capital” and to construct a “vibrant mixed-use community in the heart of the Nation’s Capital.”

The protection of national symbols, promotion of the national capital, a capital aesthetic, and green urbanism were prominent features of the design guidelines circulated widely to interested developers. Presented briefly to the local public in a “town hall” session in a local arena in April 2003, the design criteria included a set of strict colour guidelines. The new neighbourhood-by-

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307 City of Ottawa, Panning and Development Committee Meeting, Minutes, March 27, 2003.
308 City of Ottawa, Panning and Development Committee Meeting, Amendment 57.
309 NCC, Call for Expression of Interest, LeBreton Flats Phase 1, April 2004.
design would be covered in the veneer of “capital colour palette” mandated by the design guidelines. This range of soft earth tones such as warm-grey, taupe, beige and ochre would “protect important views of the Capital’s national symbols and of the Capital skyline” by ensuring that the colours matched those of the gothic and modernist buildings up the hill from the Flats.\(^{310}\)

As prescribed by the multi-scalar policy consensus, the first phase, totaling 10.87 acres would be a mixed-use development where “people can live, work, socialize and play,” surrounded by landscaped open spaces, a capital park, pathways and pedestrian-friendly streets. As these details indicate, the design objectives were wrapped up in a ubiquitous form of national symbolism. The design guidelines lauded “the unique location along the Ottawa River, in the heart of the Nation’s Capital.”\(^{311}\)

Green amenities would also feature prominently in the new future of this “vital, green and diverse community.” The features of this green capital community would include a regenerative War Museum, the Ottawa River, Chaudière Falls, a green commons, and a “network of treed streets and landscaped pedestrian pathways.” The redevelopment — in the typical green-speak of the NCC — was an “environmentally responsible and sustainable residential development, which builds on the green image, extensive open space and remediated lands of LeBreton Flats.”\(^{312}\) With its officially sanctioned colour

\(^{312}\) Ibid.
palette of greys and browns, the newly renovated LeBreton Flats would function as a “gateway to Confederation Boulevard and the Parliamentary Precinct.”

In the next stages of the project, the NCC would continue to drive an upscaling of economic development, under the parameters of the entrepreneurial city, while simultaneously downscaling social housing responsibility. The wheels for development were set in motion, as well as the rules for real-estate speculation on LeBreton Flats.

4.8 Proposal Process: Chasing the P3

With the policy and design objectives established, the NCC launched Phase 1 – itself divided into two stages - of the redevelopment. In Stage 1 (of Phase 1), the NCC solicited expressions of interest from developers. These initial submissions would be used to assess the financial capabilities of proponents. Proponents would have to pay a $50,000 security deposit and agree to interviews with NCC staff, after which three firms would be selected by the NCC to submit proposals. The second stage would consist of a conceptual design proposal by qualifying firms. This second submission would include a detailed site layout, landscape, views, description of vision, floor plans, materials, conceptual design etc. The proposal would also include an offer of purchase and a $500,000 security deposit.

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### PHASE 1 Planning Timelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1- Expression of Interest</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>NCC (Action)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                                 | Open to all with $50,000 security deposit | Assesses financial capabilities  
Selects qualified proponents |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 2- Conceptual Design Proposal</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>NCC (Action)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                                   | Submission of general design principles  
Requires $500,000 security deposit | Selects winner |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winning Bid</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>NCC (Action)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Winner provides detailed development proposal</td>
<td>Sale of land to developer</td>
</tr>
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</table>

In keeping with the market rationale, the NCC took a “hands-off” approach. Submission guidelines stipulated that the NCC would not accept the following: in-trust submissions, submissions where the NCC acts as mortgagee, joint ventures or partnership with the NCC, or any application that required a financial contribution by NCC. In short, the NCC would not engage in any financing or financial support. As the NCC document notes: “It is expected that due to the size of the offering, only the large well experienced development companies with complementary expertise and financial resources will be in a position to submit proposals.”

Considering the murky conditions under which the Daly site was built, this could be perceived as a sound management decision; however, the requirements limited development to private capital interests and excluded small scale, municipal non-profit and co-operative housing providers from applying.

Despite the hype and fanfare, only six expressions of interest were submitted. Considering more than fifty development firms had requested the

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information package for tenders, this was a weak showing.\textsuperscript{315} If LeBreton Flats was such a “unique opportunity,” as Beaudry boasted, it was not very popular among developers. This light interest was an early indication of the NCC’s questionable competence as a real-estate broker. As a local architectural critic noted at the time: “This is the national capital, on prime land, on superb waterfront. It’s an indication of the inability of the NCC to act as a developer broker.”\textsuperscript{316}

The six firms selected by the NCC to make submissions included Ottawa’s three largest developers – Minto Developments, Claridge Homes and Ashcroft Homes – as well as Alliance Prevel from Montreal, Concert Properties of Vancouver and big-box developer Mady Development Corporation of Windsor.\textsuperscript{317} From the six submissions in the expression-of-interest stage, the NCC selected three firms to make development proposals for Phase I. The short-listed firms were Alliance Prevel, Claridge Homes, and Minto. The NCC’s Chairman Marcel Beaudry continued to sound very much like a developer and an entrepreneurial booster: “These teams are very strong, they’ve got great architects. They’ve got the financial capabilities of developing a project of this magnitude. I think we can rest assured that we’re going to get the very best.”\textsuperscript{318} In reflecting on the site, he remembered to promote its green amenities. LeBreton Flats, Beaudry remarked “is a jewel. You’re right next to Parliament Hill. You’re sitting on a great river, the

\textsuperscript{315} NCC, Call for Expression of Interest, April 2004.
\textsuperscript{318} M. Cook, Ottawa Citizen, May 15, 2004.
Ottawa River. It’s going to be an exciting site.” Beaudry was comfortable in the real-estate promoter role. During the 1980s, he was a real-estate developer well-known in Hull for his dubious real-estate dealings, to the extent that *Le Droit* – the Ottawa Valley’s francophone daily – had once included Beaudry in their top-ten list of real-estate speculators (Deachmen and Woolfrey, 1982).

Beaudry’s enthusiasm seemed misplaced. Only one of the three finalists followed through with a conceptual proposal. Trying to influence the selection process, Minto and Prevel publicly threatened to pull out of the bidding claiming that the “unexpected requirements” for a minimum bid price, land price, and for low-cost housing provisions were too onerous. Eventually, both firms withdrew from the process, citing new conditions which made the project no longer feasible. Prevel specifically noted both the minimum purchase price and the 25 per cent quota for affordable housing as insurmountable barriers, while the local firm was more diplomatic, in stating only general concerns, perhaps fearing future retribution. In a letter to the NCC, Minto Developments wrote: “While we believe that many of the development’s challenges associated with this site can be readily overcome, there are other considerations that have seriously compromised the business case for development.” In the end developers, with the exception of Claridge, rejected Beaudry’s “jewel.” With the final decision pending, the NCC had lost the bidders with the highest evaluation scores, and most dramatically had lost the developers which its own evaluation committee

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had lauded for having an “impressive, diverse” design team, and a “clear comprehensive approach,” which it judged as “the best of statements.”

Exasperated, the NCC continued to urge Minto back into the bidding process as late as October 12, 2004.

Despite these last-ditch attempts, the NCC was left with little choice but to select Claridge as the sole bidder for the rights to build 850 units on the 4.4 hectares of Phase 1. The NCC’s Director of Property Development and Planning tried to justify selecting the bidder with the lowest evaluation score in the conceptual stage (stage 2) by noting that the selection process was not “a question of first, second or third.” McCourt was right. The initial evaluation did not matter, since Claridge was the only one to participate.

4.9 A Race to the Bottom: Finance Rules

The tender process used perverse methods to reach their goal of city centre renewal. The NCC’s decision to hand over the entire five-block area of Phase 1 of the LeBreton Flats redevelopment to a single tender had limited the pool of developers. The terms of reference were designed to exclude small and public developers. The scale of the project not only excluded non-profit and social housing providers that already operated in the area, but also smaller

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private, more design-oriented firms such as infill experts Domicile Developments.\textsuperscript{325}

The NCC’s ambitious design stipulations would be quickly overshadowed by its decision to sell off blocks of land in one large offering and to seek a financial return according to market value of the land. The NCC’s preferred disposal method showed a clear preference for large-scale developers. Despite the emphasis on human scaled urban design, the NCC’s own correspondence demonstrates the incongruity between the design objectives of the NCCs Planning Department and the financial goals of the NCC Real-estate Transactions Division. In telling internal correspondence, the NCC’s Real-estate Transactions Division noted that “selection of the successful proponent(s) would not be based on design” but “expertise, financial stability and amount offered to NCC.”\textsuperscript{326} As with the Daly site, a clear preference for a quick disposal and a favourable return on the land sale dominated the NCC’s decision-making process.

By holding the entire parcel for sale to one developer, and requiring a large initial investment, the NCC blocked out boutique developers, non-profit housing corporations, co-ops and smaller housing providers who would have the flexibility to meet the NCC’s preferred design and housing mix criteria. The NCC mandarins held to the claim that developing the parcel in small sections would

\textsuperscript{325} A local single-project firm which had successfully converted several former schools into condominium units, Domicile was known for working with local residents in older established neighbourhoods and for adapting projects to meet some of the concerns of local residents.

\textsuperscript{326} NCC, Internal Memorandum, Real-estate Transactions Division, September 26, 2003.
“complicate” life for the NCC and compromise their “vision.” As local architect Barry Hobin argued, this decision seemed entirely contrary to the NCC’s stated desire to provide a diverse human-scaled development. Once again, the NCC had separated design from execution. The NCC Property Division was more concerned to seal the real-estate deal than to fulfill its planning oversight. With such a tepid relationship with many community activists, the NCC was eager to hand over responsibility to the private sector developer and distance itself from any potential fallback once construction had started.

The NCC was petrified of having to continue to cover any “front-end costs,” or to repeat the tender process as with the Daly site. Even more, the NCC was concerned about extending its forty years of futile reign on LeBreton Flats and wanted above all to get the project started. The quick start would be guaranteed by the stipulation that if the construction did not begin by June 2006, then the NCC could buy back the blocks of land at 90 per cent of original sale value. By helping to craft these stringent criteria, NCC Chair Marcel Beaudry was intent on making his mark on the Flats and gaining the glory of overcoming forty years of inter- and intra-governmental inertia. With the ground-breaking, Beaudry could be one step closer to ensuring his place in the pantheon of national-city builders such as Holt, Gréber, and Mackenzie King.

The NCC leaders feared having the relic of the 1960s dream blowback into the present - thus exposing its failure. The NCC’s primary aim was to rid itself of the land, and its principle function was in land assembly and land

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327 In the words of Director of Planning and Development Peter McCourt, “There was no point in doing it without a large vision,” quoted by Mohammed, A. and Cook, M. “Flats project ‘too big a bite’ for smaller, creative developers,” Ottawa Citizen, April 22, 2004.
disposal. The NCC acted as market facilitator and real-estate agent, providing high-level direction to a waterfront redevelopment project. As NCC Director of Planning and Development Peter McCourt noted: “If we’re to sell it off block by block or lot by lot, we would have to act as developer. We would have to be installing the local roads and services, which is beyond the mandate we received from government.”

Once again, the NCC hid behind its mandate to avoid responsibility for social questions related to its urban policy decisions. The NCC was intent on washing its hands of the details of development just as it had ignored the plight of the renters pushed off the land in 1965. Any problems would now be borne by the developer who could more easily duck from public outrage. Claridge would provide a screen to protect the NCC, as the private developer would not be directly accountable to the public. Perhaps more importantly, it would not have to adhere to strict federal accountability rules and, most significantly, to any aboriginal land claims brought forward.

4.10 Unveiling Green Heritage: A “Brand New Neighbourhood”

With a bid of $8,002,220 for the land, and its development proposal accepted, Claridge would be the new ruler of the Flats. On October 20, 2004, Claridge unveiled its vision for LeBreton Flats. The design embraced the NCC’s Master Plan, and City of Ottawa’s 20/20 Growth Management Strategy. The conceptual design made sure to underline all the buzz words of the up-to-date neoliberal development agenda – quality of life, green, downtown living,

The project, to be broken down into six phases consisting of condos in low-rise and high-rise buildings, would create a healthy, vibrant, urban community “complemented with sustainable development design.” The new LeBreton Flats would exist in complete and “harmonious relationship with the project’s surrounding environment.” Attuned to the green-city image aspired to by the City and the NCC, the first stage of development would be an “extension of the natural fringe onto the heart of the project,” perfectly “weaving together the city and nature.” Here the allusion to nature is almost surreal. The project would become, as described in Claridge’s vision of a green nirvana, a “contemporary community... enriched with the interplay of nature and urbanism of public and private realms; of national culture and individual living; and of history/heritage and vision for the future.”
Claridge’s conceptual team gave evidence of some policy learning. It had adapted the neoliberal agenda to the aspirations of a national capital. The proposal hit all the high concepts of NCC-speak: merging city and capital; melding city and nature; remembering heritage; greening the city; and, most importantly, celebrating the nation. The proposed green, sustainable, “healthy Community” with a “high quality of Life” would focus both “on national culture and individual living.”

In the newly privatized sphere of development circles, echoes of Jacques Gréber’s monumentalism rang loud.

Central to the new development’s green agenda was the linking Phase I to its forest past by extending the “natural fringe into the heart of the project.” In practical terms, this entailed the planting of “small forests,” made up of a variety of trees planted inside the project’s inner courtyards, to “simulate a typical mixed forest...creating a more woods-like environment.” Located away from the street, these “urban spaces” would be “imbuing the project’s urban structure with a feeling of pleasant wilderness.” These “indigenous landscapes” would paint a green veil over the history of lumber production on the Flats, cleansing the markings of its dirty industrial past. The new forest dream would bring the Flats ever closer to its saintly original state of nature.
As well as providing a new veil over the denuded landscape of the Flats (of trees, homes and aboriginal title), the conceptual team made sure to connect this forest dream to the built heritage of the Flats. The Claridge design team aimed to take complete advantage of the “green heritage” that “percolates” at the margins of the site, including a “canal” (the old tailrace/aqueduct of LeBreton Flats), the Ottawa River and the “crown of vegetation” which ran along these historic waterways. Several public spaces would be built around an existing aqueduct with historicized glitzy names that made faint reference to the anglo-metropole’s canal-life, such as the “Pooley’s Bridge Mews,” “Canal Mews” and “Canal Square.” Historic features, such as the Fleet Street Pumping Station,

Photo 4.4: A Forest Dream, Phase 1, October 2004. 

would be specially lit with “points of light that would randomly blanket the
ground,” to look, the designers gloated, like a French Chateau.\textsuperscript{335}

The project’s new buildings would also embody green principles by
applying “green building technology”: the housing would be equipped with dual-
flush toilets, low-flow plumbing and appliances, and slow-emitting building
materials.

On the housing front, the Claridge bid would offer a “variety and range of
housing options” and “broad levels of affordability” for all levels of income
earners. Practically this meant that 20 per cent of the units would be priced at the
40th percentile of home income - mainly studio and small one bedroom
condominiums varying in size from 430 to 700 ft.$^2$. At least 130 condominiums, or
12.5 per cent of the total portion of affordable units, would sell for below
$180,000. The remainder of the affordability requirement would be fulfilled by
rentals including: 63 units at the 20th percentile or $754/month; 63 units at the
30th percentile or $1063/month; and 71 units at the 40th percentile or
$1362/month. The affordable rentals included studios, one and two-bedroom
apartments with a maximum size of 900 ft.$^2$. These 197 apartment units would be
guaranteed affordability for a minimum of ten years, thus meeting the City of
Ottawa’s 25 per cent target. Altogether, as of changes made in December 2005,
the 197 rental apartments, plus the 130 condominiums out of a total of 850 units,
equalled the 37.5 per cent of the total 850 units as affordable housing, a number
used by Claridge to promote the site. Altogether, the five blocks of residential

design would consist of six buildings (at six storeys), several stacked townhouses (at four storeys), and four towers (at twelve- or thirteen storeys). The buildings would be topped off with ground cover, which Claridge referred to as “vegetated roof systems.” The entire 4.4 hectare site would be centred around a twelve-storey “landmark” building at the northwest corner of the site, described as a “glass sheathed object” placed on a 6 storey masonry platform. It was an eerie recall of the 1967 NDHQ design, which was also built on a six-storey platform and centred around a set of landmark towers.\footnote{Phase 1 fell far short of meeting the needs of the 10,000 families on the City of Ottawa’s affordable housing waiting list.}

Claridge would break ground on its new project with two twelve-storey towers. Units would range in size from 600 to 2000 ft.\(^2\) and cost between $170,000 and $900,000. The cheapest unit at $170,000 would provide the purchaser with 607 sq. ft on the second floor. For an investment of $895,000, the three-bedroom penthouse suite could be bought. The mid-level unit of 1260 ft.\(^2\) was priced at $470,000. Extras included parking for $50,000 and $28,000 for storage.

On April 2006, the grand opening of the model suite marked the permanent return of housing to LeBreton Flats under the fanfare of its promoters. Claridge’s advertisements placed in the \textit{Ottawa Citizen} announced the coming of “Ottawa’s New Riverfront Urban Village: An incredible new master-planned community.” The rejuvenated “LeBreton Plaines/Flats” development would feature “1,2,3 Bedroom Suites w/den from 600 ft.\(^2\) to 2,100 ft.\(^2\) from 170s.” As the ads noted, the new LeBreton Flats would be: “An \textbf{eco-friendly} community. A
downtown community. A riverfront community. And best of all, a Claridge Homes community." These features the ad continued would be “All wrapped up in the brand new neighbourhood that all of Ottawa was waiting for.”

4.11 The Question of Housing Affordability

A hopeful NCC Director of Property Development and Planning gloated, in the wake of the plan’s release, that the development proposal was “reminiscent of the old LeBreton Flats.” For Peter McCourt, and the NCC planning staff, the ambitious project design had met the NCC’s aspiration for the Flats to be a “rather unusual and unique community” with “active street life, less reliance on the car” and urban sustainability. The NCC’s public face, Chair Marcel Beaudry was equally exuberant on the day of the official endorsement of Claridge’s proposal. In a closed media briefing, Beaudry triumphantly pronounced, “This is a great day – the first day in the renewal of a community on LeBreton Flats.”

Despite the NCC’s unwavering enthusiasm, criticism of the NCC’s methods and its proposal mounted. Both the NCC and Claridge Homes faced severe criticism from the architectural observers, local residents, local politicians, and even the developer-friendly Ottawa Citizen. These attacks were centred on several themes, including affordability, design quality, transparency, and most pointedly, around questions of governance.

337 Advertisement, Ottawa Citizen, April 13 2006 (Bold in original).
In general, the disgust at the overall scheme had led some vocal community activists to call on the NCC to either abandon the Claridge plan, or to scrap the bidding process and begin again. As one resident noted, the NCC should either “leave the Flats to weeds, wildlife and trees, or break up the parcel and allow a variety of developers and commercial interest.” As this resident noted, only such a measure would create the conditions necessary to redevelop the Flats “into a real community rather than the dystopia that the Claridge proposal appears bent on.”\textsuperscript{341} Only a smaller-scale operation would “honour the beauty and history of the Flats.”\textsuperscript{342} Many expressed disbelief at the Claridge proposal, calling it, among other things. “lifeless and uninspiring.”\textsuperscript{343} Carleton Professor of Architecture Janine Debanne wondered aloud if “we (are) just tourists on the waterfront?”\textsuperscript{344} The design guidelines, she noted, spoke to the “clean speedy vitality associated with in-line skating and fit cyclists, or tourists arriving at the War Museum.” What about community rinks, parks and vendors she asked?\textsuperscript{345} The NCC’s Chair of the Advisory Committee on Planning, Design and Realty (ACPDR), the highly regarded urban planner Larry Beasley,\textsuperscript{346} had himself pointed out that the design lacked colour, variety and poetry.\textsuperscript{347}

\textsuperscript{346} The former Director of Planning for the City of Vancouver, and chargé d'affaire of South East False Creek redevelopment, known as the driving force overlooking Vancouver's urban intensification movement, has translated his reputation into an international consulting company advising on urban intensification.
\textsuperscript{347} Eagan, K. “Commission's LeBreton plan is bland and no one seems to care much,” Ottawa Citizen, December 3, 2004.
The question of affordability was an issue for the neighbouring residential areas, which had one of the largest concentrations of low-income earners in the city. The area had been the site over struggles to ensure a diversity of housing options. The area directly adjacent to the Flats included Ottawa Community Housing/City Living, co-operative housing and retirement residences. As well, there were several other retirement residences in close proximity, as well as large pockets of single-room occupancy (SRO) buildings. The question of housing affordability was becoming even more acute with the growing popularity of the area. The area nearest LeBreton Flats was facing an accelerated process of gentrification on nearby streets that had survived the expropriation, with the result that housing prices were increasing at double-digit rates. Simultaneously, rental stock was decreasing as multiple-unit dwellings were converted back into single-family homes. Thus, the availability of affordable housing remained a key concern for local service providers, such as the SWCHC and the CCOC, which were not specifically addressed in the Claridge proposal. In total, as the SWCHC representatives noted in a public meeting on the subject, only 126 (or 15 per cent) of the units were below the 30th percentile. This relatively small number was even more problematic since rental affordability was only guaranteed for the first ten years of the development.

The size and appropriateness of the buildings was also brought into question. As local activist and President of the Dalhousie Community Association Archie Campbell noted, "We think many of the units are too small for families and
the buildings look out of character with the neighbourhood.” Many questions were being asked around the housing issue. What would happen after the first 10 years? How would affordability be guaranteed? Was there, in fact, any guarantee of housing affordability? What was the assurance that the developer would follow up on its promise to build affordable units? As local architect Barry Hobin pointed out, Ottawa had many previous examples of multi-phase projects which did not proceed past the first phase. Even Ottawa Citizen columnist Kelly Eagan wondered why the NCC’s “Hallmark” mission failed to have anything to say about “building houses for people who live in Ottawa.” These were unflattering reviews of Beaudry’s gem.

4.12 The Political Economy of “Take it or Leave It” Development

The entire process had left many questioning the selection process. Even the pro-development Ottawa Citizen was quite critical of a “take it or leave it” proposition. Although careful not to chastise Claridge directly, the Citizen meekly criticized the NCC for having rigged a process in which only one tender was made. Preferring a process in which “a public discussion” would take place over details and land price, the Citizen assessed the process as “a shame.” In the end, many, including the Ottawa Citizen City Editorial staff, wondered if the

352 Ibid.
Flats was simply expropriated to make way for other, “nicer” homes.\(^{353}\) The process, and the methods, were being brought into question.

In the aftermath of the selection, Claridge’s Chairman Bill Malhotra had even bragged that the NCC was his firm’s “good luck charm.”\(^{354}\) Perhaps this “good luck” had something to do with the fact that Claridge was the only candidate firm who submitted a complete proposal. Yet, if the site was such a jewel as Beaudry has suggested, why had only one developer came forward with a proposal? As one observer noted, “One proposal means there’s a flaw in the process. It’s a bit embarrassing to get only one bid.”\(^{355}\) Similarly, the new Somerset Ward Councilor Diane Holmes expressed concern over the size of land developed by a single provider, adding that she hoped the NCC would ask small developers to work with smaller pieces of land if the project did not meet all the criteria.\(^{356}\) This tepid opinion was echoed by more determined responses from a number of local observers. Many called for the NCC to abandon what had been done and start the bidding process again or, even more drastically, to let someone else take over the development process.\(^{357}\)

Objections mounted: the most serious cast suspicions on the transparency of the process, as critics took direct aim at questions of accountability and of the possibility of inappropriate linkages between Claridge and the NCC. Interested observers questioned the exact nature of the special relationship between the

\(^{353}\) Ibid.


\(^{356}\) Hughes, G. “Lone LeBreton Flats offer must be evaluated: Mayor.” *Ottawa Citizen*. October 18, 2004.

\(^{357}\) Egan, K. “Let’s have another go at LeBreton: NCC revelations raise serious questions,” *Ottawa Citizen*, August 24, 2005.
NCC and Claridge. These allegations and claims of impropriety included possible breaches of confidentiality, flawed contracting procedures, and conflicts of interest, as well as an overly personal relationship between Beaudry and Molhotra.

The minefield of a publicly designed and privately constructed urban waterfront regeneration project made the NCC very defensive about any kind of public critique. Fearing further delays and continued discussion over its methods, the NCC worked to move the project forward as quickly as possible. NCC decision-makers, such as the NCC’s Vice-President of Capital Planning and Real-estate Management, came to the defense of the process; he continued to put a positive spin on the successful tender. The NCC had, as Curry Wood noted, “an obligation to move forward in good faith.”358 These were bizarre statements to say the least, given that Claridge had the lowest evaluation score of the three companies short-listed by the NCC, and that the NCC’s own documents expressed disappointment in the design proposal and questioned the bid’s leadership.359 The NCC’s own design committee had not only critiqued the proposal and the developer but it remained confused as to who was the lead architect and who was the lead individual in the development team.360 If the ACPDR had called in question both the design quality and the experience of the bidding party, the NCC claimed emphatically that Claridge had the experience and design qualifications to bring about completion of the project. There are a

359 Claridge had the lowest score with 54.04 out of 70. Ottawa Citizen, August 30, 2005.
360 Egan, K. “Let’s have another go at LeBreton: NCC revelations raise serious questions.” Ottawa Citizen, August 24, 2005.
host of questions in regards to accountability, design, and conflict of interest that remained unaddressed. Yet no one seemed to be asking any of these questions despite the murky governance structure.

### 4.13 House Cleaning: NCC Mandate Review

With continued controversy over its governance practices, the NCC faced another mandate review. In the summer of 2006, the newly elected Conservative government’s regional minister, Lawrence Cannon, announced another review of the NCC’s mandate. The three member panel was chaired by University of Ottawa professor and local “governance” guru Gilles Paquet and also included local business person Barbara Farber and management consultant Guy Benoît. The panel was given a very limited mandate. The panel’s terms of reference stipulated that the panel recommendations were to be feasible, socially acceptable, implementable, and “not too politically destabilizing.”

The panel conducted its limited review of the NCC through consultations with several government departments, local experts and interested stakeholders in just over three months. Groups wishing to participate in the public consultations were asked to submit a written brief to the NCC in advance of their appearance in front of the panel for a six-minute presentation, followed by a four-minute question-and-answer period. During its consultation process, the Mandate Review Panel read 88 briefs, heard 33 oral presentations, and held 24 expert meetings over a

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100-day period. Most of the consultations, including the large number of intra-governmental meetings, were not made public.\(^{363}\)

During the consultations, NCC Chair Marcel Beaudry was given an extended time slot to make the first presentation before the panel. Beaudry’s presentation consisted of a vigorous defence of the NCC’s governance practices. Among other things, Beaudry argued that the NCC was exemplary in its disclosure and accountability practices. The NCC Chair gloated that under his guidance, the organization had won over 200 hundred awards in the past 15 years related to its governance and management practices. Point-blank, and much to the chuckling delight of the crowd in attendance, Beaudry blamed the media for the perception that the NCC was a secretive, closed, and insensitive fiefdom.\(^{364}\)

During two, seven-hour sessions of public consultations, an extensive list of local interest groups presented, for the most part, well-researched, articulate briefs to the panel. A number of the presentations countered Beaudry’s rose-tinted vision and presented vocal criticism of the NCC’s continued use of secret decision-making processes and inadequate consultation.\(^{365}\) These detailed briefs provided evidence of the NCC’s insincere willingness to consult with local interest groups around urban questions such as housing, transportation and ecological preservation.

\(^{363}\) Ibid.
\(^{364}\) Ibid.
\(^{365}\) NCC Mandate Review, Public Consultation, Thursday, November 9, 2006, National Arts Centre. Ottawa, Ontario.
Two groups made the strongest presentations to the panel in regards to governance and local planning issues: the Coalition for NCC Renewal and the Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC). In a comprehensive study, coordinated with a large group of environmental, heritage and various other interest groups in Ottawa and Hull, the Coalition for NCC Renewal provided a grounded critique of the NCC’s land operations. Among other things, the Coalition pointed out that, although the NCC has been forced to make public all its land holdings, the NCC’s acquisitions and records of land mass remained incomplete. In trying to assess the NCC’s adherence of ecological integrity principles, it found that the NCC did not even have a complete catalogue of its lands, including those deemed to be of national interest and designated as National Interest Land Mass (NILM). As part of its operations practices, the NCC often allowed for special designation of large development and transportation links within the greenbelt — Jacques Gréber’s “green necklace.” Furthermore, the Coalition pointed out, many of the NCC’s land designations did not correspond with municipal plans, creating both confusion in urban land development and a lack of accountability in NCC land sales and swapping. It was an unflattering account of the management practices of the Capital’s largest land owner.

For its part, representatives of the SWCHC produced concrete examples of the NCC’s questionable adherence to principles of transparency and accountability. To illustrate the obstructionist nature of the NCC’s public participation conduct, the SWCHC cited its own experiences with the NCC. In 2005, alongside other interested parties, the SWCHC responded to a request for

366 Ibid.
a public presentation to the NCC Board of Directors. However, their experience was less than ideal. During the consultation, the NCC Chair cut off the SWCHC’s presentation and singled out the SWCHC for reading from its brief (ignoring the fact others had done the same). Despite the reprimand, representatives of the Health Centre persisted in their presentation, bringing forward a suggestion that a dialogue on affordable housing for LeBreton Flats be established between various organizations. In its report on the public meeting, the NCC seemed to respond favourably to the suggestion. In a follow-up letter, the NCC notified the SWCHC that it would be invited to be part of the LeBreton Flats Working Group to investigate “affordable housing during the next phase of planning this mixed-use community.” Despite repeated inquiries by the SWCHC, neither terms for reference nor a schedule for the affordable housing working group were ever established. Not to be deterred, the SWCHC initiated its own working group with health and housing organizations, and invited the NCC to join the deliberations of the newly formed LeBreton Flats Housing Task Force (LFHTF). As of December 2006, the NCC had still not indicated whether it had accepted or rejected the LFHTF, nor did it set the agenda or terms of reference for its own working group. Instead, the NCC continued to make generalized non-committal statements. This was, for the SWCHC, a prime

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367 Part of the three open meetings a year implemented after a report by consultant Glen Shortliffe in 2000.
368 SWCHC on behalf of the LeBreton Flats Housing Task Force, Submission to the NCC Mandate Review Panel, October 27, 2006, p. 3.
369 The NCC had agreed to launch a special task force to study the housing question as part of the approval process for the LeBreton Flats redevelopment. The Somerset West/LeBreton Flats Housing Task Force (LFHTF) was to be a joint NCC/Community group mandated to look into possibilities for expanding affordable housing.
example of the gap between stated policy and experiences with the NCC and, more generally, an indication of how the NCC proceeded to disregard public consultations and to continue on its chosen path. If the NCC could not shut down the cacophony of requests for action on the housing front, the NCC would simply delay, stall, ignore and spin.

The Mandate Review Panel released its report in December 2006, with no mention of the housing issue. Despite the NCC’s insistence on its excellence, a number of the panel’s recommendations addressed what it perceived as problematic governance issues, including recommendations calling on the NCC to focus more on promotion of national culture and planning coordination. The panel also brought into question the NCC’s land sales and property transfers. The Panel’s recommendations were heavily influenced by Paquet’s personal devotion to flexible governance principles such as greater flexibility, openness, decentralization and innovation in public governance. The report reflected a multitude of reports recently completed by Paquet for public institutions in the Ottawa region. These principles were the hallmarks of Paquet’s popular and successful career as an expert consultant. In light of this philosophical orientation, the report insisted the NCC enhance the openness and transparency of the consultation process, take on additional responsibilities for policy and planning co-operation, devote more attention to ecological management, be given increased funding and independence, and extend the use of partnerships and alternative funding mechanisms.
The Mandate Review Panel also wanted a “renewed emphasis on planning functions” and a greater role in coordinating the collaboration with other government departments, municipalities and advisory committees.\(^{370}\) Acknowledging presentations made by the Coalition for NCC Renewal, the panel recommended that the NCC’s enhanced powers of coordination be complemented with closer attention to ecological management and heritage protection. There should be, according to the panel, an enhanced role for the NCC “as steward of the lands central to the vision of the Capital as a “Green Capital.” This included stipulations within the NCA for the “long-term preservation of Green Capital Lands.”\(^{371}\) In line with the promotional responsibilities given to the NCC under the 1988 NCA, and with this call to extend its coordination powers, the Panel suggested the NCC be given a “greater coordinating role for celebrating and promoting the capital.”\(^{372}\) The panel added that the “programming, commemoration and promotion mandate of the NCC be strengthened and renewed” to ensure that the NCC’s promotional activities “contribute creatively and forcefully to the overall animation and experience of the capital.” As part of this overall promotional mission, the NCC was urged to make “active” use of partnerships.

In regards to questions of openness and transparency, the panel called on the NCC to “eliminate undue secrecy and a lack of transparency.”\(^{373}\) Responding to years of criticism, it recommended “greater openness and transparency in the

\(^{370}\) NCC Mandate Review Panel, MR, p. 5.
\(^{371}\) Ibid, p. 32.
\(^{372}\) Ibid, p. 5.
\(^{373}\) NCC Mandate Review Panel, MR, 2006, p. 5.
NCC’s activities. In order to meet these obligations, the panel suggested a “change in organizational culture,” including reform of the NCC Board to “reflect better the breadth of its constituency.” These efforts were to include enhanced stakeholder access, including opening-up advisory committees to non-expert and public participation — recommendations that were almost identical to those recommend in 2000 by consultant Glen Shortliffe after similar protests about the NCC’s secretive dealings. In typical fashion, the NCC had poorly implemented a number of similar recommendations and had avoided self-reformation.

The panel responded directly to a coalition of environmental and conservation groups who called for an end of the practice of selling off public land to housing and commercial developers, land which in many cases had been judged of national interest, including land which was deemed ecologically sensitive and significant. The panel called on the NCC to abolish surplus land sales, stating among other conditions that NILM no longer be available for sale and remain as public property. Still, consistent with Paquet’s preference for innovation and flexibility, the NCC was given the flexibility to engage in private-public-social partnerships in land transfers, as long as “appropriate compensation” is ensured. Even with such a caveat, this was a very radical transformation of past practices. The principles favoured by Paquet, in the name of organizational innovation and openness, fit seamlessly with the NUP principles of flexibility, efficiency, competitiveness, state entrepreneurship and

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374 Ibid, p. 25.
375 Ibid.
collaboration, and helped “naturalize” neoliberal behaviour and practice within the NCC’s operational and governance structure.

Perhaps most significantly, and most directly related to the changes brought to the NCC since the introduction of the 1988 NCA, the report called for: extended use of PPP’s, user fees and alternative funding, including direct contribution by users of NCC services and facilities; the expansion and use of partnerships; and the potential role of these new sources “in funding the on-going creation and beautification of their national capital” (NCC Mandate Review: 37). As the report accurately noted in its reflection on current practices, “various forms of partnerships have become more important for the NCC” (NCC Mandate Review, 2006: 16), including an increasing reliance on user fees, fines, and rental incomes. In fact, the NCC had become so reliant on these income sources, that it had contracted out the management of Gatineau Park to increase user fee revenues and reduce its administrative costs. With initiatives such as this, the NCC had clearly been neoliberalized through its dependence on individualized and market-based rationale. The trajectory of the beautification process, undertaken as early as 1899 with the creation of the OIC, would continue on a path driven by neoliberal principles. “Public-private-social partnerships” had been successful in the past and, the panel noted, the NCC should “be strongly encouraged” to use PPP’s in the future. Echoing Laurier in 1893, the foreword to the report told the reader: “Canada deserves a world-class capital;” its world-class beautification was now to be achieved in a neoliberal form. The NCC continued to fear the public realm it governed from a distance.
4.14 Scrubbing the land

Over time, the residuals of industrial production had literally settled into the soil of LeBreton Flats. Heavy metals such as arsenic, antimony, barium, chromium, copper, nickel, lead, zinc and mercury had accumulated on the site; 50.7 per cent of the tests showed heavy metals concentrations which exceeded the criteria of the Canadian Council of Ministries of the Environment (CCME).\textsuperscript{376} Soil samples also included significant levels of hydrocarbons (PAH), petroleum hydrocarbons, and ash which exceeded CCME guidelines (mainly from the old CN Rail site). In order to proceed with the project, the site would have to be decontaminated to conform to municipal, provincial and federal legislation.

The NCC contracted a number of firms to prepare the ground for the redevelopment project. Starting in 2002, the decontamination and remediation of contaminated soil was undertaken using a variety of techniques. The majority of the site would be subject to processing and reuse, which entails the segregation of contaminated and non-contaminated soils on site using screening techniques, or alternatively the removal, segregation and disposal of soils. Most of the site was subject to forms of generic remediation which resulted in the removal and replacement of contaminated soil. The soil was simply excavated, trucked away, and replaced with clean fill. A small select area would remain federal property.

\textsuperscript{376} The firm Dessau-Soprin was contracted to conduct a series of environmental assessments to conform with municipal, provincial and federal legislation. Dessau-Sopin, LeBreton Flats Infrastructure and Remediation Project Construction of LeBreton Boulevard, December 2002; Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Phase 3); Dessau-Sopin, Environmental Assessment Report, April 2003.
where no excavation was required - including the riverfront park, the Common and parts of the Canadian War Museum site, where soils were simply capped.\textsuperscript{377}

In addition, the hidden infrastructure of industrial and residential life remained forgotten beneath the surface of the Flats just below the contaminated surface. The buried infrastructure included abandoned sewer, gas and water networks, old telephone cables, and an abandoned underground section of Hydro-Ottawa’s network. Functioning infrastructure included inter-provincial Bell utility ducts, an active section of Hydro-Ottawa’s network (which serviced among other things the remaining power plants on the Bronson Channel purchased from the Bronson Co. in the 1960s).\textsuperscript{378}

The environmental consultants recommended processing and segregation as the preferred techniques as they required a low level of technical complexity, little or future monitoring, and provided the lowest cost of completion. In short, the cheapest and fastest strategy was implemented in a way that emptied the site of the soiled residue of its industrial past. Over 22,774 m\textsuperscript{3} of soil was removed for road construction alone and, in total, an estimated volume of 200,000 m\textsuperscript{3} was trucked away to the outskirts of the city — to be dumped and forgotten until someone else discovered the messy and forgotten socio-environmental relations embodied in the soil. Overall, the cost of decontamination and site preparation to make way for the new dream was estimated at over $99 million.\textsuperscript{379}

\textsuperscript{377} Dessau-Soprin, Environmental Assessment Report, April 2003.  
\textsuperscript{378} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{379} Ibid.
4.15 Conclusion

To the form of the new means of production which in the beginning is still dominated by the old one (Marx), there correspond in the collective consciousness images in which the new is intermingled with the old. These images are wish images, and in them the collective attempts to transcend as well as to illumine the incompleteness of the social order of production. There also emerges in these wish images a positive striving to set themselves off from the outdated – that means, however, the most recent past. These tendencies turn the image fantasy, that maintains its impulse from the new, back to the ur-past. In the dream in which every epoch sees in images the epoch that follows, the latter appears wedded to the elements of ur-history, that is, of a classless society. Its experiences, which have their storage place in the unconscious of the collective, produce, in their interpretation with the new, the utopia, that has left its trace behind in a thousand configurations of life from permanent buildings to ephemeral fashions.

Walter Benjamin, The Arcades Project

Indeed every epoch dreams of the one that follows it. New forms of production such as mass celebration are anchored in the old forms of national development. And in this epoch, from 1988 to 2005, a policy consensus emerged which adapted the NCC’s national beautification practices to the parameters of NUP. The NCC adopted neoliberal urbanism, including its preferred principles of flexibility, innovation, and competition, and adapted them in a renewed emphasis on PPPs and associative governance structures. These principles and practices would be applied in the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats. However, following recent developments in urban neoliberal policy, as Smith (2007) has argued, environmental practice has been recolonized by the market, and green principles embedded in the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats are an example of the emergent forms of accumulation. As a meso-level institution, the NCC is enforcing and promoting a NUP with a green tinge.
The redevelopment of LeBreton Flats has brought nature back into the national capital and made the production of nature a recurring theme of Canadian nationalism and part of the neoliberal production of Canadian nature. It is part of an endeavour to re-imagine the past of the Flats into a new dream-image of the 21st century. The debris of the messy past is cleared out to forge a new neat natural image – a new wish image. The old residue of the Flats was cleared away to make way for the up-to-date green, smart, condominium development. Yet, new wish-images are more than a fantastic collective consciousness. New utopias exist both in the physical structures of buildings and in the ephemeral celebrations. Alongside the clearing of debris, a new LeBreton Flats was rising on the decontaminated soil centred around the War Museum – in itself part of a new collective unconscious traced in the past.
CHAPTER 5: The New War Museum and Neoliberal Urbanism

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the geography of the “new” Canadian War Museum to show how this particular state-spatial project can be considered simultaneously as part of the imagined community of nation-ness (Anderson, 1991) and as a variegated form of policy neoliberal policy experimentation (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Larner, 2005a; Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). This chapter examines how the memory of war is etched into the “empty” space of LeBreton Flats. Once again, Keynesian impulses mutated as part of the process of neoliberalization. The discursive rhetoric of the Keynesian period diffused an ideal national subjectivity and urban planning ideals through film and promotional activities. In contrast, in the contemporary context, the spaces of LeBreton Flats have been remodeled into a mutable space where subjects can interact intimately with the landscape rather than simply gaze upon the modern wonders of a national capital. Pilgrims now create personalized narratives of nationhood through their own interaction with the national soil and the grounds of the new War Museum.

To recall Ross (1996), the event-process of modernization has significant afterlives. Keynesian and neoliberal urbanism bleeds backward and forward across time-lines. The modernist urban planning practices of the postwar state dispossessed inner-city residents of LeBreton Flats for the good of the nation. In a similar fashion, the NCC, by deploying neoliberal practices, has recolonized the Flats according to neoliberalism’s common features. State-led intervention
continues a trajectory of discursive and material dispossession on the Flats. The NCCs violent expropriation in the 1960s was partially premised on increasing land-rent of a depressed neighbourhood. In the contemporary context, the NCC maintains a parallel interest in rent-extraction. Although no longer couched in the modernist centennial spirit, the discursive construction of national narratives makes new allusions to proper national subjectivity. The capital’s new wish image, oriented towards an internalization of nature as an image-commodity, has transformed everyday life on the Flats into an environmental project of *embourgeoisement*. History has been forgotten in the abstract container of the nation, yet a selective use of discursive (national) nature has been used to sell an updated form of urban revitalization.

Through a diverse set of practices, set within common features and processes, urban planning in the national capital displaces certain bodies from the national landscape. In the 1960s the concentrated power of the NCC and the NCPS was used to wash away the “slums” of LeBreon Flats, and to replace the “derelict home” with modernist office towers and fast moving traffic. This control over property regimes continues the neoliberal line, although governance structures and practices have changed. National capital planning is now partnered. “Governance-beyond-the-state,” and P3s dominate the national management of “empty” properties, though the landscape evokes powerful meanings. A back and forth between each of these periods shows how the contemporary redevelopment of LeBreton Flats builds on and consolidates the massive intervention in 1962.
This chapter argues that notions of nature and regeneration are spatially and historically embedded within federally driven urban redevelopment in the NCR. As a new cultural stage for the performance of the national, the new War Museum is both a continuation of the long impulse of federally initiated beautification and monumentalism in the NCR and an example of how cultural policy has been adapted to the parameters of neoliberal policy experimentation.

In the Keynesian period, representations of poverty and the “slum” were central to urban renewal of Ottawa’s city-centre. In the contemporary context, the updated cultural strategy of building and performing spectacle has adapted contemporary neoliberal governance practices as a key feature of federal strategies of intervention. The new neoliberalized grand vision for the Flats, tied to the NCC’s policy goals, is centred around the new War Museum. However, the War Museum, and its location on LeBreton Flats, is more than an expression of globalized forms of neoliberal urbanism. This story of the war museum shows how national cultural desires, long captured in notions of Canada’s natural destiny, are inscribed alongside entrepreneurial forms of cultural policy. Thus, this chapter concludes, the new War Museum and urban development on LeBreton Flats are being driven by a set of dual impulses.

5.2 A New Cultural Stage: Producing Spaces of Consumption
In this localized attempt to sell new regimes of desire in the urban realm, cultural policy has been adapted to the entrepreneurial age by producing products for consumption by the tourist class. On this “heritage trail” (Crang, 1993), narratives of history have been re-created and embedded into the cultural
fabric of the “city on display” (Eade, 1997). The result is a “dreamscape of visual consumption” (Zukin, 1991: 221) where people are taught how to “gaze” onto the heritage, architecture, and culture (Urry, 1990). This relentless search for a touristic dreamscape recycles relics of the past to forget certain historical dimensions and to selectively remember others.

The display of relics is not simply a nostalgic recollection, but is part of the collective memory and the pedagogy of modern identity. National museums and memorials have a crucial role in developing new social identities, and as urban icons of social identity they perform the function of smoothing over of spaces of contradiction and creating new collective identities (Young, 1993; Vale, 1992). The production of national and commodified urban identities is enacted not by accident, but as a way to reinforce narratives of belonging during periods of crisis.

In the postwar period, according to the Plan for the National Capital, the working landscapes and working-class fabric of inner-city neighbourhoods were replaced with national institutions. Once central to the production of lumber and then to Gréber’s beautification of “the heart of the city,” the historic Ottawa River waterfront was transformed into a backdrop for national cultural institutions. The nationalized city was to be performed on the high ground, and on the sanitized, clean, naturalized and packaged spaces of the national capital.

The NCC continues to shape the Ottawa River waterfront into a space for the recovery of national memory and for the performance of national identity. By expanding the number of museums in the tourist precinct, the NCC has
continually pursued its goal of creating a grand ceremonial precinct which celebrates national culture. As the NCC notes in its planning documents, “the Capital is to act as a cultural showcase for the nation through the presence of national cultural institutions such as museums and galleries.” Recent programming policy, such as its *Reflecting a Nation* document (see chapter 4), has made the intensification of cultural activities on these spaces part of the NCC’s mandate “to use the capital to communicate Canada to Canadians and to develop and highlight Canada’s national identity.” This effort to “communicate Canada” is part of the NCC’s updated mandate to enhance cultural programming through art and “cutting edge cultural programming” and to create “a Capital Experience for all Canadians.” Fronting and connecting these various memorials and experiences is Confederation Boulevard, the capital’s ceremonial central loop of museums and federal institutions. The Boulevard, according to the NCC’s strategic plan, is to provide a “continuous programming stage” in and around the NCR central core.

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382 NCC, *Reflecting a Nation: Creating a Capital Experience for all Canadians*, June 2005; Core Area Sector Plan (CASP), Draft, June 2005.

383 NCC, Core Area Sector Plan (CASP), 2005, p. 12
The recent opening of the new Canadian War Museum is only the latest of several institutions of remembrance located alongside Confederation Boulevard and the Ottawa River that have been used to upgrade the city’s position as a national and international cultural destination. The NCC’s high-level plan confirms how such identity-formation is essential both to the physical space of the capital and to the aspirations of its citizens:

This is a city, but it is so much more than just a city – it is the capital of the nation, proud and free, celebrating its achievements and the identity and aspirations of its people, in a setting of natural and built beauty.  

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385 NCC, CASP, Draft, June 2005, p. 3.
Commemoration and memorialization forms an essential component of the NCC’s priorities, constructing national landscapes and national identity-formation — all built on the *tabula rasa* of the national capital.

### 5.3 A New War Museum

In the early 1990s the federal government appointed a Task Force on Military History to respond to charges that the federal government was ignoring military history and under-funding the War Museum. Veteran’s groups, including the Royal Canadian Legion (RCL), lobbied the federal government to expand the War Museum, or preferably to build an altogether new building for the Museum’s expansive collection.\(^{386}\) The old museum in the former Dominion Archives building had long been criticized for being too small. Spillover from the Museum’s 500,000 artifacts was stored at Vimy House, a converted streetcar barn near LeBreton Flats. The situation was unacceptable to the Museum’s curators and to veteran’s groups. The RCL called on the federal government to build a new museum and to “correct a historical wrong.”\(^{387}\)

The campaign to “correct” the way in which military history was being handled gathered steam when York University history professor and best-selling military historian Jack Granatstein was appointed executive director of the Canadian War Museum in 1998. In the years preceding his appointment, Granatstein had devoted much of his career to documenting the role of war in the “nation-building” project. Granatstein’s bestsellers, such as *Who Killed Canadian History*, celebrated the role of war in forging a unitary national identity. As an

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advocate of military history, Granatstein would prove to be invaluable in the lobby for a new Museum.

The federal government, under pressure from the veteran lobby and from the high-profile assault by Granatstein, responded to increased calls for a new home for the Museum. In early 1998, federal agencies involved in planning the ceremonial and celebrative aspects of the capital selected a former Canadian Forces Base (CFB) in Ottawa’s east end (several kilometers from LeBreton Flats) as the preferred site for the new CWM. The Rockcliffe CFB, downsized during the cuts to the Canadian military in the 1990s, was subsequently designated as redundant. By 2000, the base was mostly shut down, and though still used to house military personnel, provided a site ripe for redevelopment.\textsuperscript{388}

In preparation for the siting process, a consultant was hired to conduct an analysis of the site’s 136 hectares, of which 8.6 hectares would be committed to the Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH).\textsuperscript{389} When added to 6 hectares of adjoining NCC land, the Museum’s site would total almost 15 hectares. The NCC reviewed and analyzed a proposal by DND to transfer land of CFB Rockcliffe to Canada Lands Company (CLC) and the DCH.\textsuperscript{390} After analysis of the proposal,

\textsuperscript{388} During and after WWII, the base was part of the wartime effort to relieve housing shortages and facilitate re-settlement of veterans under the auspices of Wartime Housing Limited (WHL), and Wartime Housing Corporation (WHC) and the War Measures Act (Harris, 2004; Ley, 1996). WHL constructed simple minimalist veteran units but included advanced technology, kitchens, and baths (Wade, 1994). Over this period, 467 housing units were built to accommodate short-term housing needs of returning soldiers on Rockiffe Air Base.

\textsuperscript{389} Novatech Engineering Consultants, Proposed Canadian War Museum: Site Analysis, March 2000; Memorandum to J. Almeda, Senior Realty Advisor, from Directorate of Realty and Engineering Policy, National Defence Headquarters, September 21, 2000.

\textsuperscript{390} The Canada Lands Company, a federal crown corporation, acts as a land broker for lands deemed surplus by federal departments and agencies.
the NCC, as per its statutory role as land broker in the NCR, granted permission for the transfer of 8.6 hectares of Rockcliffe CFB Lands (through CLC) to the DCH. The NCC also performed its auxiliary land-management functions on the former CFB lands by categorizing parts of the base’s land as a National Interest Land Mass (NILM).\textsuperscript{391} Crucially, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) also exercised its statutory powers and declared an interest in acquiring up to 50 hectares of the base to use as a claim settlement with the Algonquins of Eastern Ontario.\textsuperscript{392} Within the same operational exercise, the sovereignty of the land was being given quite different meanings. On the one hand, it was being categorized as being an area of special national interest, a place for the War Museum and national memory; and on the other, ownership of the land was being contested.

In November of 1998, Heritage Minister Sheila Copps announced that an 8-hectare parcel would be turned over to the new War Museum project. As a project for “the new millennium,” and scheduled for completion in 2003, the Museum was slated to have about 215,000 ft.\textsuperscript{2} of floor space. The Rockcliffe site was lauded by the Museum’s Director as a superb location that would give the cultural institution room to open a permanent gallery for its collection of war paintings and military vehicles. On a performative front, the riverfront site would provide access to the Ottawa River for naval re-enactments.\textsuperscript{393} The site selection received general support by veteran’s groups, including the RCL and the

\textsuperscript{391} The NILM bestowed special status on parts of the site in the immediate vicinity of the Aviation and Rockcliffe Parkways.

\textsuperscript{392} Memorandum to J. Almeda, Senior Realty Advisor, NCC from Directorate of Realty and Engineering Policy, NDHQ, September 21, 2000.

National Council of Veteran Associations (NCVA). In terms of financing, the Museum’s *Pass The Torch* fund-raising campaign had raised three million dollars and the Museum Director hoped that another ten million could be raised. Overall, the campaign raised over $15 million through corporate sponsorships and donations of the estimated $75-million cost of the Museum. In early 2000, when the Heritage Minister solidified the federal government contribution by announcing a commitment of $58 million over a five-year period, the announcement seemed to have confirmed the new War Museum would be the newest addition to the celebration of national culture in the city.

5.4 Staging a Relocation Plan

Despite support for the Rockcliffe location, and the relatively advanced state of project development, one year later officials were being directed by the higher echelons of the government bureaucracy to investigate the “incremental costs of locating on LeBreton Flats.” Subsequently, discussions between the NCC, the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) - the CWM’s parent organization - and DCH were launched to investigate the possibility of relocating the War Museum to LeBreton Flats. Handwritten notes during a meeting between high-level cultural bureaucrats reveal that the NCC, the CMC and the DCH had received “strong indication that gov. [government] centre is interested

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397 Memorandum to C. Wood, CPRAM, from P. McCourt, Director of Property Development and Planning, NCC, April 4, 2001.
398 The March 6, 2001 meeting included J. Huerts (CMC), P. McCourt (NCC) and F. Cameron (DCH).
in core area.” With the intentions of the highest political offices made clear to them, officials met to discuss the Minister’s options for relocation of the CWM on LeBreton Flats. They produced two options which were to proceed in parallel. The first was to officially proceed with the Rockcliffe site despite interest in locating the Museum in the core area. The second was to provide “some potential for location in core area.” This second option would be pursued as long as it did not impact the timing of the new War Museum, since some officials, including the new CWM Director were concerned over any possible delay. As discussions proceeded, it was clear that the Minister wanted clear evidence supporting LeBreton Flats as a logical location for the Museum to present before Cabinet and the Treasury Board (TB). Under the urging of NCC Chair Marcel Beaudry, and with sanction from the “government centre,” officials decided to continue to develop a stronger case for location on LeBreton Flats. In particular, the officials were to deliver an option that assuaged concerns expressed in a June 2000 briefing note over a possible location off Confederation Boulevard.

The NCC Chair showed a clear preference for the LeBreton Flats location. Beaudry stressed to his less than enthusiastic colleagues that the high-level direction from the Minister “opens the door to significant change in LeBreton Flats Plan.” Cautioning “against waiting,” Beaudry took on the delicate task of

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400 Undated notes of meeting between NCC and Minister of Heritage staff regarding War Museum and LeBreton Development, NCC, ATIP A-2006-009.
developing the LeBreton Flats option as a potential site for the CWM. In taking the lead in building the case for LeBreton Flats, Beaudry would advise the Minister there was ample space for the Museum site on the core area site and volunteered to review the plans and show the Flats as a logical location.\textsuperscript{402} Thus, with strong support from the NCC Chair, the high-level meeting unrolled the process which would provide the bureaucratic rationale of rejecting the CFB Rockcliffe site and choosing in its place LeBreton Flats as its preferred location for the Museum. While his colleagues continued, at least officially, to endorse the Rockcliffe site, the NCC Chair would take charge of the preparation of a new site proposal.

Beaudry’s background was well-suited to these intermediary planning and development functions. A former real-estate lawyer with extensive experience in negotiating lease-purchase agreements with the federal government, most notoriously the Terrasse de la Chaudière deal in the mid-1970s, Beaudry knew how to maneuver within the government planning process, as well as how to overcome bureaucratic and political obstacles to land development in the NCR.\textsuperscript{403} Beaudry charged himself with reviewing the site plan and making sure the LeBreton site selection fit with the plan for the new War Museum.\textsuperscript{404} Shortly before taking on the task of providing the rationale for moving the Museum, Beaudry received the evidence he needed to support the relocation to LeBreton

\textsuperscript{402} Undated notes of meeting between NCC and Minister of Heritage staff regarding War Museum and LeBreton Development, NCC, ATIP, A-2006-009.
\textsuperscript{403} For discussion of Beaudry’s past as a real-estate lawyer, see Deachmen and Woofrey, (1982) and Andrew and al. (1981).
\textsuperscript{404} Undated notes of meeting between NCC and Minister of Heritage staff regarding War Museum and LeBreton Development, NCC, ATIP, A-2006-009.
Flats. In a report commissioned to compare both sites, LeBreton Flats was shown as a superior site. According to the report, the LeBreton Flats location was thought to offer “great symbolic visibility to both sides of the Ottawa River” and would “ensure there is a physical place for tomorrow’s national symbols.” It was the retrospective rationalization needed to make the switch official.

The former air base on the eastern edge of the city had long been the preferred location for the museum by the veterans’ organizations, museum supporters and volunteer fundraisers. However, the high-level redirection had chosen the long-dormant Flats as the new preferred site for the War Museum. After the announced move to the Flats, the NCVA supported the location. However, the RCL would continue to support the Rockcliffe air base site. The new location attracted criticism from veterans who feared a change of location from Rockcliffe to LeBreton Flats could delay the project and that fewer veterans would live to see the opening of the museum. As the Dominion President of the RCL noted in a letter to the editor of the Ottawa Citizen in March 14, 2001:

What is the advantage in moving to a downtown location such as LeBreton Flats? There will not be the same flexibility to establish an armoured/artillery park on the grounds. There will be no room to mount a full-scale submarine or similar exhibit next to the building. And, most significantly, the advantage of co-location with the Aviation Museum and military cemetery will be lost.

The newly appointed head of the CWM, Joe Guerts, would overlook objections and accept the relocation as long as several conditions were met.

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405 Canadian Museum of Civilization, Briefing Note, June 2000.
407 Letter to the Editor, William Barclay, Dominion President of the Royal Canadian Legion, Ottawa Citizen, March 14, 2001.
First, taking into consideration the concern over delay, Guerts stated May 2005 as the last acceptable date for the opening of the CWM. Second, the NCC would cover the costs of clean-up and the infrastructure costs of installing water, sewer, storm, gas, cable and telephone lines under roads. Third, the CWM wanted permission to use LeBreton Common as a parade ground. As long as these conditions were met, the CWM would support the new site proposal. The wheels were in motion for a new design.

5.5 Regeneration on the Flats: Genesis and Design Debates

The high-level plan hatched in the Minister’s office was beginning to take shape. On May 15, 2001, Heritage Minister Sheila Copps stood alongside Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and NCC Chairman Marcel Beaudry to announce a $105 million federal contribution to the new War Museum on LeBreton Flats. As a key fixture in the NCC strategy for “revitalizing Canada's capital,” the CWM would “occupy the pre-eminent waterfront site within the NCC’s planned LeBreton mixed-use community” and “anchor” the redevelopment of the site that was judged to be of “national” importance. Enthusiasm for the War Museum matched its new prominent location on Confederation Boulevard. As the central part of the redevelopment of LeBreton Flats, and the commemoration and memorialization of Confederation Boulevard, the CWM would “take its

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408 Memorandum to C. Wood, CPRAM, from P. McCourt, Director of Property Development and Planning, NCC, April 4, 2001.
409 Prentice, M. “Capital to get major facelift: Copps set to OK Flats war museum, air museum hangar,” Michael Prentice, Ottawa Citizen, May 15, 2001, A.1
410 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO, CWM, from C. Wood, Vice-President, Capital Planning and Real-estate Management, March 5, 2003.
appropriate place as part of the assembly of the most important national symbols, located adjacent to the Ottawa River."  

Toronto architect Raymond Moriyama was selected to head the design team for the new CWM. Before undertaking the Museum’s preliminary design, Moriyama and CWM Director Guerts undertook a multi-city tour to sound the public on what they thought of the memory of war. In taking into consideration the views of these Canadians, Moriyama wanted the War Museum to be "powerful enough to capture the hearts and minds of Canadians" and “to embrace the soul of the nation.” Using the input from this pre-design consultation, the firm started with an initial 64 design proposals, whittled them down to 24 internally, then presented 12 to the client.

Once the preliminary concepts had been fleshed out, the process moved quickly through the various approvals needed to allow the project to move forward. In May 2002, the Director and CEO of CWM, Moriyama and his design collaborator Alex Rankin presented the three preferred options for the CWM design to the NCC Chair and later to the NCC Advisory Committee on Planning and Development and Realty (ACPDR). In late June 2002, the concept was presented to the CWM Board of Trustees. A week later, the Board of the NCC granted approval for the project under Section 12 of the NCA — pending comments and positive advice from ACPDR. However, the NCC Board withheld announcing the winner and, instead, instructed architects "to refine

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411 Ibid; NCC, Urban Design Parameters, Canadian War Museum.
412 Interview with R. Moriyama, on CBC Talks! April 12, 2005.
413 Ibid.
414 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO of CWM, from M. Beaudry, June 20, 2002.
415 Memorandum, June 28, 2002.
some of the ideas in the three designs and to respond quickly." Meanwhile, three models were released, and members of the public were invited to comment. The design team received over 1200 e-mail responses. The model favoured by veterans groups, the advisory committee, and the solicited public input was based on the concept of "regenerative landscape." The model was a bunker-like structure with a grassed outside shell. The Board then encouraged the development of what it called “Option 1,” a design based on a concept of regenerative landscape combined with elements from the other two designs. The preferred model included a fragmented roofscape expressed through a “grassed roof” and “pastoral landscape.” The eventual winning model would incorporate elements from all three designs.

5.6 Designing the Outdoor Dreamscape

The Museum’s regenerative landscape was to be visible from a panoramic viewpoint on the Ottawa River Parkway as it crossed the Lemieux Island Rail Bridge, and would express “fusion between the building and the riverside landscape.” Moriyama was inspired by the Canadian landscape, and his personal experience on the site. He was also inspired from the sounds of the site, and from Sandburg’s poem *The Grass.* The regenerative concept was designed to reflect these narrative underpinnings and the Museum was carefully crafted to fit the riverfront site and narratives of Canadian landscape. The Museum’s river-facing concrete silhouette would slowly dissolve into the

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416 Interview with R. Moriyma, on CBC Talks!, April 12, 2005.
417 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO of CWM, from M. Beaudry, June 20, 2002
419 Interview with R. Moriyma, *CBC Talks!,* April 12, 2005.
riverbank on the waterfront edge and “form a seamless integration between the museum building, its landscaped roof-forms and the surrounding public spaces.” The Museum’s “other” face would be constructed of rigid “battered concrete” to relate to its urban edge. Interrupted only by a glass bunker, the urban, concrete face was “strongly supported” by the ACPDR for its “historic association with military structures.” As the main exhibit hall, this bunker-like structure would display the Museum on Confederation Boulevard’s urban face. The museum’s “open-bunker” concept was dissected by a triangular pillar, a kind of outstretched hand, that rose from the bunker and up towards the sky projecting the museum’s sacred character onto a vertical axis.

Photo 5.3: Regenerative Landscape, Architectural Drawing for the CWM, November 2003.

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420 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO, CWM from C. Wood, Vice-President, Capital Planning and Real-estate Management, NCC, March 5, 2003.
421 Ibid.
The buildings and the surrounding landscaping made explicit references to war and to the experience of war, and to the personalized feeling of regeneration. As the ACPDR noted, the design was “a combination of complex and diverse elements as metaphors for the experience of war,” for which landscape would “tie the elements together and heal through regeneration.” These elements were carefully selected to display the memory of war onto the visual landscape of the national-tourist city. Covered with a green self-seeding rooftop, the Museum would provide an updated view of Canada’s natural history to visitors of the national capital: Pilgrims and tourists could saunter along the grassed roof-top as they absorbed the architectural connection to war and to pastoral regeneration.

The NCC was impressed with the “pastoral” concept for the Museum. In particular, the grass roof had strong support in the design evaluation. Yet, despite pending final approval, design debates continued. The NCC continued to insist it retain control of open spaces, of the waterside corridor, and reminded the CWM that the NCC retained final approval over any design changes. The NCC also requested a “more integrated relationship with the waterfront.” For its part, the ACPDR suggested extending the regenerative landscape design, and better

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423 Minutes, ACPDR, NCC, December 5, 2002, p. 4.
424 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO CWM, from M. Beaudry, Chairman and CEO NCC, June 20, 2002.
426 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO of CWM from M. Beaudry, June 20, 2002.
integration with the riverside landscape. On an aesthetic front, the ACPDR asked for a more “capital palette.”

The NCC was to keep a close watch on the design and to retain key parcels of adjacent lands for public use, as per the powers of the NCA (1988). In particular, the NCC would maintain ownership for public use twenty four hours a day of open spaces and roads, waterside recreation, and paths. The Federal Land Transaction Approval for the Disposal of Land, granted by the NCC to the CWM, stipulated strict conditions that reinforced the NCC’s control. The NCC was to have “complete control of the design, maintenance, management, rehabilitation and use, including the types of events and activities that can be held on these lands and when they can occur.”

In part because of the NCC’s tight control over the land management process, and in part due to Beaudry’s particularly aggressive management style, the planning process was not always cordial between the various sub-national institutions and private actors. Moriyama, as lead architect, was grudgingly forced to comply with the demands of the NCC. In comments made after completion of the project, he expressed clear disdain for the constant meddling by the NCC and the CMC. Moriyama charged that the NCC changed the design “behind his back.” He also noted that never, during over four decades of work, had a client changed such critical design features without consultation. In a

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427 Minutes, ACPDR NCC, December 5, 2002; Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO of CWM, from C. Wood, Vice-President, Capital Planning and Real-estate Management Branch NCC, September 23, 2002.
428 Ibid; Memorandum to P. McCourt, Property and Planning Division NCC from C. Wood, Vice-President, Capital Planning and Real-estate Management Branch NCC, January 31, 2003.
charge that seems to aim directly at the NCC and the NCC Chair, he fumed at the “relentless needling and haggling, not over important ideas or concepts but over micromanagement of every detail,” and “the shortsighted bureaucratic culture” (Moriyama, 2006). At the completion of the project, Moriyama made a key omission from his acknowledgments, taking special care not to thank the NCC Chair saying instead that “I will not soon forget Marcel Beaudry.”

There were also tensions between Marcel Beaudry and Victor Rabinovitch, the President and CEO of the CMC, which was a key institutional player. In the spring of 2001, Beaudry wrote Rabinovitch to reinforce the NCC’s powers to regulate design of properties within the NCR under Section 12 of the NCA. As Beaudry noted, “any proposal to erect, alter or extend” a structure by a federal department is subject to approval by the NCC, and no project can commence without the NCC’s approval. Rabinovitch rejected the claim that a renewal project planned for the CMC was covered under the scope of Section 12. Relentless in his protection of the NCC’s exclusive domain over federal lands, the NCC Chair reinforced his power by noting that their jurisdiction includes “any undertaking” or work and “embraces any kind of activity, proposal or construction” on NCC property. The Chair of the NCC leaned on the Treasury Board, one of the federal government’s central agencies, to solidify his position of power. “Treasury Board,” Beaudry’s letter to Rabinovitch noted, “itself has recently endorsed, from the central agency perspective, the breadth and role of the NCC and has confirmed our mandate to safeguard and preserve the Capital

430 Letter to V. Rabinovitch, CEO CMC, from M. Beaudry, NCC Chair, May 18, 2001.
for future generations, which includes ensuring designs that benefit the image of the Capital."\footnote{431}{Letter to V. Rabinovitch, CEO CMC, from M. Beaudry, NCC Chair, June 2001.}

In 2004, a new conflict emerged over who should pay the realty taxes and other occupancy costs. The CMC insisted the NCC should maintain ownership of the lands, since municipal taxes are lower as long as NCC owned the land. Beaudry, wanting to remove the land from the NCC’s operating costs, reminded the CMC CEO that the occupancy agreement requires CMC to pay all taxes from date of agreement between the two organizations.\footnote{432}{Correspondance between V. Rabinovitch, CEO CMC, from M. Beaudry, NCC Chair, March 16, 2004, June 18, 2004, June 29, 2004.} By August 10, 2004, the CEOs had patched up differences – at least formally. Rabinovitch accepted an invitation to the opening ceremonies, noting they should “be extremely proud” of their “joint achievement when the Canadian War Museum opens in May 2005.”\footnote{433}{Letter to M. Beaudry, NCC Chair from V. Rabinovitch, CEO CMC, August 10, 2004.}

The conflict between these cultural mandarins shows how Beaudry performed best when using his institutional powers to compel other agencies to follow the NCC’s lead. The NCC, vested with strong legislative powers to regulate the local landscape and property regimes, continued to use these powers of oversight in what it perceived as the interest of future generations of Canadians, without any specific or meaningful input from outside the official structures of the NCC.

5.7 Wild Nature/Hybrid Nature

Located on a bend in the Ottawa River, beside a realigned parkway that funnels traffic up to and past Parliament Hill, the Museum marks the western
gateway to the heart of the national capital. This strategic location at the entrance of the government district showcases the ceremonial importance of “war and regeneration” to the nation. The museum’s low river-hugging silhouette stands in stark contrast to the neo-classical Supreme Court and War Memorial Building, both higher up near Parliament Hill, as well as the modernist row of government office towers of Place du Portage that stand across the river. From the grassy look-out, offering visitors a view onto the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, to the “grassed toe of the roof slope,” the Museum’s biological production is integrally connected to the surrounding soil of the national/natural landscape.

As the NCC’s internal documents note:

The regenerative design concept has progressed to achieve a potentially seamless integration between the museum building, its landscaped roof-forms and the surrounding public spaces, both natural and more formal, of the LeBreton development.

The NCC’s institutional oversight ensured that its “crown jewel,” like Gréber’s “green necklace,” would integrate with the green heritage imagery of the adjacent housing development. The Museum’s pastoral concept would, in the words of Marcel Beaudry, be “an expression of the true rolling nature and roughness of the regenerative landscape idea.”

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436 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum from Marcel Beaudry, NCC Chair, June 20, 2002.
437 Letter to J. Guerts Director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum from C. Wood Vice-President Capital Planning and Real-estate Asset Management NCC, March 5, 2003.
438 Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO of CWM from M. Beaudry, Chairman and CEO NCC, June 20, 2002.
439 Ibid.
The strong emphasis on riverfront integration and the pastoral concept, as well as Beaudry’s allusion to “rough” nature, can be read as a latent reference to dominant narratives of national nature in Canadian nationalism. Canadian nationalism has long tied its national destiny to a wild and free nature (Berger, 1966; Kauffman, 1998; Jessup, 2002). Following this desire to create a Canadian identity above regional and ethnic jealousies and conflict, the “empty” northern landscape has long served as an ideological container for national aspirations (Shields, 1991; Hulan, 2004; Willems-Braun, 1997). In the classical pastoral tradition, representations of uninhabited northern wilderness have acted as an important signifier of Canadian nationalism and the northern aesthetic, perhaps best embodied in the work of the Group of Seven which embodied “the dreamwork of settler nationalism” (MacKay, 2001: 44). Allegorical dreamscapes, such as the Group of Seven paintings, are examples of how anti-immigration, spiritualism and conservative views of national destiny are wrapped in the "great Canadian freeze" by distancing the iconic north from the social upheavals of city-life (Linsley, 1996). As Berger noted in 1966, the tendency to equate the north and the northern climate with Canadian nationalism produced “racism and crude environmentalism” that continues to play out in notions of cultural nationalism. The basic rhythm of national identity has alternated between the penetration of nature and the return to civilization.

Such iconic notions were institutionalized early within federal institutions, and the alteration between wild and rough nature would continue to dominate the Canadian imagination, though in an altered form. The Museum’s green shell

\[^{440}\text{ACPDR NCC, Minutes, December 5, 2002.}\]
would be constructed as a commodified ode to the national landscape and to the pastoral form. However, the new War Museum provides a green imaginary updated to an urbanized nature.\textsuperscript{441} The War Museum’s roof combined with the rough edges of the Museum’s concrete face combine with the NCC’s pastoral tradition to update the nation’s natural imagery. The green roof and pastoral riverside are complemented by “battered concrete,” the “boarded and fly-faced” mould of its walls, and by the “canted glass and copper” of the east-facing bunker.\textsuperscript{442} The design concept provides both “universal access to the grassed roof” and “clear urban edges to the building.”\textsuperscript{443} This recombination is a significant adaptation: it is both natural and urban.

As the CWM’s (2004) promotional material notes, the museum’s “skin” has a hybrid flavour:

Overall, the building is seen as a complex composition of horizontal volumes and planes. The landscaped roof, a native butterfly and bird habitat, blurs the distinction between building and outdoor space.

The Museum’s riverside grass-covered silhouette hugs the land rather than rising above; it blurs the border between the landscape and the building. Additionally, the allusions to organic regeneration directly reproduce the bomb-cratered fields of Normandy, bringing the aesthetic form of the French battlefield back to the

\textsuperscript{441} “Regenerative landscape” will be expressed as grassed roof forms emerging from the riverside, pastoral landscape at the west end of the site, and transform into higher, copper-clad and more fragmented forms, above sheer, transparent walls, at the more urban east end of the building,” Letter to J. Guerts from C. Wood, September 23, 2002.

\textsuperscript{442} Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO CWM, from C. Wood, Vice-President, Capital Planning and Real-estate Management, NCC, March 5, 2003.

\textsuperscript{443} Letter to J. Guerts from M. Beaudry, June 20, 2002.
national capital, and melding past and present.\textsuperscript{444} The Museum continues to be a place to authenticate modern society’s heroic feats of bravery and heroism, yet nature and nation reach a new relationship. The War Museum is conceived both as part of and apart from nature, a hybrid beast whose very transcendence comes from its grounded silhouette that slowly dissolves into the riverbank, a landscape from which emerges the national hopes anchored in war. As the Museum’s promotional material notes, “Nature may be ravished by human acts of war but inevitably it hybridizes, regenerates and prevails. From the healing process emerges hope.” \textsuperscript{445}

The NCC’s internal description of the choice of external materials confirms the importance of hybridity to the evocation of the memory of war. The concrete material was chosen “for its obvious historic association with military structures, especially in grass covered, waterfront locations, and for its plasticity.”\textsuperscript{446} The malleability of the urban face offers the citizen-pilgrim an interaction with a hybrid urban-nature. The Museum’s grey-green skin is a liminal space where the concrete war bunker and the beaches of Normandy, nature and society, the imagined and the real, body and nation can meet. Regeneration has been personalized. Rather than being elevated over nature, as was the case in modern memorials such as the War Memorial in Confederation Square designed by Gréber in 1937 (Osborne and Gordon, 2004), or the commemorative

\textsuperscript{444} As Patricia Wood argues (2000: 34), the type of interactive spectacle offered by the landscape of outdoor museums “blurs the distinctions between past and present, fiction and non-fiction.”

\textsuperscript{445} CMC, press kit for Canadian War Museum launch, March 2004.

\textsuperscript{446} Letter to J. Guerts, Director and CEO CWM, from C. Wood, Vice-President, Capital Planning and Real-estate Management, NCC, March 5, 2003.
beautification presented in the Plan for the National Capital, nature is being integrated more closely through in-site regeneration.

Allegories to nature have been historically tied to communicating the roots of the nation. In particular, trees have been central to the nation-state and to western philosophy (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Schama, 1995; Vance, 1997). Their very growth conveys how the nation is rooted in soil. It is worthwhile to ask if the use of grass on the terrace of the Museum signifies a shift in the communication and expression of sovereignty? Does the grassy-spectacle alter the active expression of continuity in the nation?

The landscaped grounds of its sloped roof bring the citizen-pilgrim directly up to an altar of homage. Visitors can saunter on the museum’s green cover at the top of the museum’s concrete skin. Moreover, pilgrims can interact with the LeBreton Gallery through the “glazed wall [that] invites passers by to enjoy an inside view and a glimpse of the stories of Canadians at war.” This externalized spectacle produces a place where, to recall Berlant’s (1997) term, the “citizen-pilgrim” can “begin to experience some of the museum’s multiple layers of meaning without entering the building.” The pilgrim is no longer exclusively making a visit to the sites of national consciousness: the subject is now seeing through the eyes of the tourist-consumer gaze, and acting out the various adaptive meanings of memory and commemoration on the grounds of the museum.

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447 Ibid.
448 Ibid.
5.8 Celebrating “Just War”

At the time of its launch, over 400,000 visitors were expected to visit the museum annually. These pilgrims will not only interact with the roof-top from outside but also from underneath. Inside the museum’s green skin, visitors can visit the machinery of war in the signature LeBreton Gallery. Within this bunker-like gallery, visitors can saunter along the artillery, tanks, jeeps and various military vehicles from past battles while they look through the glassed mouth of the bunker across the Flats onto Parliament Hill. If one inverts the meaning of this gallery from an ode to “just war,” to a showcase of the residue of dispossession, then the interaction with the machinery of war, with Parliament

449 Author’s picture
Hill's Peace Tower in the background, becomes a twisted reminder of the violent acts of dispossession on the Flats, and especially the violence behind the dispossession of Algonquin Lands.

As a memorial to war and to efforts of Canadian soldiers, the new building proposes an interactivity to pilgrims that links the monument to the fallen soldiers with the nation through their “touristic-gaze” (Urry, 1990). The back-and-forth between the inside and the outside allows the “citizen-pilgrim” to connect more intimately with the museum’s hallowed grounds. The War Museum performs the important task of helping the nation recover from the shock of war by offering a personalized sense of regeneration on the site of the museum. Blood after all, on the battlefield and in the garden of peace, provides a fertile soil: natural regeneration offers redemption for the sacrifice of soldiers and their families and a sense of unity and community in tragedy. The museum offers a central place in the heart of the city where the narrative of national renewal, as part of the “inner landscape” of creative destruction, and is remade through image consumption (Zukin, 1995). Pilgrims to the site of commemoration can experience the battlefields of World War I: they can slowly walk up to the pathways that run atop the grassy roof-top, or they can meander along the grassy fields marked with bomb craters – all to experience the healing of national regeneration. As the Jury confirmed in awarding the CWM with the Governor-General’s Medal in Architecture in 2008, the building invokes an inner landscape of national importance: "As a form of land art, unusual geometries are articulated with a
trueness of material, inside and out, that lend themselves to a brutal yet
sculptural honesty. The result is an evocative and introspective architecture.\textsuperscript{450}

5.9 Performing New Memories

On November 5, 2002, a groundbreaking ceremony for CMW launched the construction phase. Construction started by redirecting the Ottawa River Parkway — the only part of the 1966 government complex ever built — from its riverside location into the heart of the Flats. LeBreton Boulevard, as the renamed roadway would be known, would be the “heart of the new LeBreton Flats” and the “spine” of the development.\textsuperscript{451} Providing the “link” between the Ottawa River Parkway and the “core area of Canada’s Capital,” the “Boulevard” would provide the “seam” between the “Crown” and the “Town” sides of the city.\textsuperscript{452} Green “smart growth” had an eerie similarity to the massive urban renewal plan developed in 1966: the development would be road-centric and placed alongside a major commuter arterial. It was a bizarre plan, considering the policy level consensus for “a lively” and “mixed-use development” based on smart growth principles, and a high public transit modal share. The new Boulevard was closer to the expressway modernism of the postwar period than the “smart growth” principles of new urbanism. The past had become the present.

\textsuperscript{452} Dessau-Soprin, LeBreton Flats Infrastructure and Remediation Project: Construction of LeBreton Boulevard, December 2002, p. 23.
Artists’ renditions had portrayed LeBreton Boulevard as a lively and people-friendly place; however, the Boulevard remains a six-lane roadway carrying the traffic of three inter-provincial bridges into Ottawa and Hull’s central business districts directly through LeBreton Flats. In choosing to realign the Ottawa River Parkway there was little concern for the local environment or alternative forms of transportation: the environmental assessment (EA) never considered removing the roadway. The option of an arterial connection right through a new major residential area was not considered. Creating a cycling right of way was not thought “realistic.” As often is the case with environmental assessments, the EA provided a classic case of “retrospective rationalization” whereby an EA provides the administrative rationality to proceed with a decision that has already been set in motion by the decision-making process (Paehlke and Torgerson, 1990).

The sanitized Boulevard nomenclature did not convince city planners and local residents who gathered at a public “consultation” held by the NCC. They worried about the traffic levels being brought through the area and possible flow-through traffic. Several expressed frustration at the lack of planning by the NCC for transit, cycling, and pedestrian traffic. Regardless of these concerns, the redevelopment project would proceed as planned along the same expressway spine that had driven the NDHQ project in 1964. Forty years later, a realigned transportation corridor tailored for suburban commuters was the first piece of the

453 The EA rejected the cycling right of way since peddle traffic would be “largely locally generated traffic.” Dessau-Soprin. Environmental Assessment Report, April 2003, p. 52. 454 Held at Tom Brown Arena in the fall of 2004.
redevelopment of LeBreton Flats. The process of capitalization was an ongoing affair of new and old impulses.

The fate of LeBreton Flats is closely tied to the exercise of national memory on the grounds of the national capital. The impulses that drove initial development were a recurring feature of federal intervention in Ottawa’s urban affairs. The stigmatization of the Flats as a working-class “slum” had made it easy for the NCC to expropriate. The class nature of these urban renewal projects is undeniable, and this class-based element would continue in the realm of memory-making. The waves of renewing and replacing memory on the Flats were a constant feature of meso-level interventions, established in and through the old and new institutionalized practices. The War Museum is part of a longer process of protecting the national narrative from those unsettling stories which interrupt the grand national narrative of terra nullius. They are a way of protecting the national story. The defensive protection of the national narrative is exemplified in Granatstein’s (the former Director of the CWM) visceral attack from “new” influences on historical scholarship:

You have to write on feminism in Latin America, you have to write on the workers in the Newfoundland fish industry, you have to work on the problems of gay men in 1940s Toronto. What that has done is to distort the sense of the past that Canadians have. It focuses on the minutia, it focuses on the warts. It doesn't focus on the national experience.\textsuperscript{455}

Granatstein felt that teaching and writing “specialized” history was “disastrous for the nation,” and a distraction from the national story. Perturbed by the changes in the historical profession, Granatstein devoted his writing to overcoming “the

death of Canadian history” and to propagating how “universal” Canadian history was forged in the memory of war. “Canada was made by war” and it was his mission to ensure the memory of war was established as the anchor of national identity. The War Museum was part of this project of protecting the national story. As Granatstein argued, the War Museum “is a memorial... designed to make sure that we remember” “certain truths that they need to be reminded of.” Victor Rabinovitch added to this refrain of upholding the essential virtues of military history: "by being on Confederation Boulevard adjacent to many of the National Capital's other tourist attractions, we will be in a highly visible position to remind Canadians of our country’s essential military history.

Despite the horrors, atrocities and fatalities, war was celebrated in Canada (although often not on the front itself) as a victory of civilization over barbarism. The soldier, having defended the nation, preserved good, and saved civilization and Christianity entered “into a special relationship with the country” (Vance, 1997). In this narrative, the citizen-soldier is mobilized as the glue holding

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458 Payne, E. “New war museum reflects the good, bad and ugly sides of war,” CanWest News, May 1, 2005; The former head of the CWM continued to expose his narrow understanding of Canadian identity. Quoting a 1993 committee investigation, Granatstein took aim at dual citizens claiming they did not have “loyalty or allegiance” and “devalued the meaning of Canadian citizenship,” “Reconsider dual citizenship: historian” Edmonton Journal, August 3, 2006.
460 Vance (1997: 41) argues that the fallen were represented as semi-messianic martyrs who gave their lives to save the nation. In sacrificing his life the soldier was fulfilling the messianic destiny of the nation where “death was a community of sacrifice.” The soldier's immortality, like Christ's, in the years following WWI would emerged in public and national consciousness and ensured the mythological basis of the immortality of the nation.
together the disparate multiplicity of the nation, to overcoming provincial jealousies, ethnic antipathies and mutual resentments. The soldier is personified as Canada and becomes central to the myth of war. In these representational acts, which emerged only years after World War I, the nation is reaffirmed in the indistinguishable connection between soldier and country, between past and future: the soldier is equated with the “essence of Canada” in public and national consciousness. “Only the memory of the Great War,” Vance argued (1997: 11), “could breathe life into Canada giving birth to a national consciousness that would carry the country to the heights of achievement.”

When high-level cultural bureaucrats such as Rabinovitch and Granatstein assert the centrality of war to national history. Granatstein in particular argued that historians had to “get it right.” This reinforcement of the story of war-as-central-to-the-nation is reaction against heterogeneous histories. As truth-holders to “[t]he” national story, the War Museum curators guard the sanctity of a certain range of meanings, reproduce “pedagogies of patriotism,” and reinforce “narratives of nationhood” (cf. MacKay, 2001). Museums dedicated to remembrance, such as the War Museum, provide “the opportunity for the reaffirmation of the faith” in the nation and a place to authenticate modern society’s heroic feats of bravery and heroism (Ames, 1992). They become pedagogical tools to construct “full” citizenship.461 However, in this “national” story of bravery, the narrative of peace-making and just-wars often overlooks the racialized, masculine and violent dimensions involved in “the making of the

461 As James E. Young (1993:15) notes, once monuments become “part of a nation’s rites or objects of a people’s national pilgrimage, they are invested with national soul and memory.”
nation” (Razack, 2004). As Razack (2004: 56) notes, severing “both the ideal and the acts of violence from their historical and national roots is to miss how white men and states secure their power, and just how much violence it takes to do so.” (Razack, 2004: 56). There are, as Razack argues (2004: 156), material consequences to mythologies of military intervention since citizens enter these fantasies in “small quotidian ways… through our national mythology… through official acts of remembrance.” The narrative of just-war embedded in the War Museum is much more than an innocent act of remembrance. This placement of the narrative of just-war on the Flats, as well as the performance of citizen-pilgrims on its hallowed grounds, are ongoing acts of displacement which help forget the horror and violence of national landscapes. Through the performance of identity on national sacred grounds, dispossession is forgotten.

The reaffirmed view of just-war discounts the memory of veterans and citizens who resist the glorification and memorialization of war, and especially those who remember the horror of war and resisted hero-worshipping. Perhaps most notably Harold Innis, Canada’s best known political economist, felt strongly that “the sacrifices of war were to be honoured not in the rituals of memorials but in the resolution of the problems of the peace” (Watson, 2006: 78). Such voices of dissent to the national story are important, since for many, wars are not a point of collective convergence but rather a point of contention.

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462 There were major distinctions in English and French Canadian nationalism (Vance, 1997) with different views of the necessity of war in Europe during WWI. At the same time, Native Canadian soldiers, who had sacrificed themselves for the war effort returned only to be once again relegated to second-class citizenship.
At the same time, institutionalized nation-building projects dominate Canadian white Anglophone narratives of identity and culture (Mackay, 2001) and are part of constructing who is (and who is not) part of the universal “we” of nation (Bannerji, 2000; Druick, 1999). In the nationally-driven redevelopment of LeBreton Flats, the redevelopment, and its narrative of inclusion, overlooks the multiplicity of a site’s past, the messiness of war, and the complexity of Canadian identity. The redevelopment obscures the dominance of whiteness, heterosexuality and masculinity, and the gendered, religious, ethnic, regional and class differences within the nation (Mackay, 2001; Vance, 1997). The use of national memorials is in fact aimed at creating this universal abstraction (Berlant, 1997). In Osborne’s (2001:1) estimation, national landscapes often act to “subdue complex realities of plurality and diversity by constructing iconic landscapes and mythic narratives intended to nurture a cohesive collective memory.”

Yet the central question in these acts of representation, as Mackay argues (2001: 49), “is to examine who decides when and how Aboriginal people, French people or more recent immigrants, are or aren’t represented, are or aren’t managed, in the interests of the nation-building project.” The official memory of the Flats serves the white Anglo nationalist project. The myth of the war, acting through symbolic and representational spaces as key sites in memory formation, “become a substitute for cultural diversity. It would give ethnic minorities the opportunity to surrender their own cultural identities in exchange for membership in an imagined community that was homogenous in belief and outlook” (Vance,
1997: 261). Elite-driven memories of war do not fit in with Aboriginal, or French Canadians, immigrant, or working-class memories. As Vance (1997: 261) argues, the creation of national collective memory subordinates the history of some members of the imagined community and reinforces old power-structures:

"The myth assumed that everyone would return to their proper places in the social hierarchy and proceed as if nothing had happened...The imagined community that the myth would forge was not a new Canada at all, but a Canada in which the old power structures were bolstered."

Likewise, the residents of the Flats were never admitted as full and equal partners in the nation (cf. Vance, 1997: 262). The postwar nation, the national "we," erases class identity, and downplays immigrant and native contributions. A new "empty' history was re-inscribed in the updated national regenerative landscape of LeBreton Flats.

5.10 Performance in Crisis: Who Owns History?

The Museum is not only a reflection of the military past, it continues to be an important actor in the expression of national pedagogy. "Canada's new government," as the newly elected Conservatives had dubbed themselves after their victory in 2006, has activated the Museum as a stage for their policy platform. After years of cutbacks to the Department of Defense, the hawkish Conservative government led by Prime Minister Steven Harper promised to "Stand Up for Canada," and promoted pro-military policies, including dramatic increases in military enrolment and investments in new military technologies and equipment. Furthermore, the federal Conservatives made Canada’s contribution to the NATO-led war in Afghanistan a pillar of their foreign policy.
The contributions of the Canadian Forces in the “war-against-terror” also featured prominently in a controlled communications strategy. During its first year in office, the Harper government shunned established venues such as the National Press Gallery, the media scrum, and the parliamentary press gallery which was seen by the Conservatives as having an anti-Conservative, left-leaning bias. Instead, the Conservative government made extensive use of the War Museum to deliver key messages to the public. Prime Minister Stephen Harper used one such occasion to reinforce the military’s central role to the values of the nation.\textsuperscript{463} One day after a bust of Canada’s alleged “home-grown” terror network,\textsuperscript{464} the Prime Minister’s actions were carefully scripted to reinforce the narrative of ‘just war’. Surrounded by tanks, army trucks and other military paraphernalia, the Prime Minister Harper lauded the military’s role in protecting and promoting justice, peace and good order through military action.\textsuperscript{465} During a speech to new military recruits, Harper told them, “We are behind you as you serve your country, defend our sovereignty and keep our citizens safe and promote our values around the world.”\textsuperscript{466} It was a reminder of that the ownership of the country’s destiny was anchored and expressed through links to the military involvement in cross-Atlantic and “just” imperial wars.

How the memory of war is activated continues to be an important question: is this a military museum, or is it a museum of conflict and war? This

\textsuperscript{464} On June 3, 2006, based largely on information collected by a paid police informant fourteen youths and young men were charged with being part of a terrorist cell and accused of training to bomb several targets in Toronto.
\textsuperscript{466} Ibid.
question came to further light, when, during the same spring, a controversy exploded over a CWM exhibit which discussed Canada’s participation in the bombing of German cities in World War II. The panel “An Enduring Controversy” read as follows:

Mass bomber raids against Germany resulted in vast destruction and heavy loss of life. The value and morality of the strategic bombing offensive against Germany remains bitterly contested. Bomber Command’s aim was to crush civilian morale and force Germany to surrender by destroying its cities and industrial installations. Although Bomber Command and the American attacks left 600,000 Germans dead and more than five million homeless, the raids resulted in only a small reduction in German war production until late in the war.

Ever since lobbying efforts to build a new War Museum were launched, veteran’s groups continued to claim ownership over the presentation of the history of war, as well as the Museum’s form and structure. In this latest episode, a coalition of veterans’ groups took exception to the wording of the panel, arguing that the panel’s text did not “present the facts accurately” and that the panel “denigrates the efforts of 10,000 courageous Canadians.”\textsuperscript{467} The Museum responded to the complaints and set up an independent advisory committee of expert historians to study the panel. After a detailed study, the committee, which included Jack Granatstein, affirmed the historical accuracy of the panel.\textsuperscript{468} However, despite the advice, and the confirmation by leading British, American, and Canadian historians of the accuracy of the facts on the panel,\textsuperscript{469} the Museum

\textsuperscript{467} “Veterans Snubbed by Canadian War Museum,” News Release, RCL.
altered the display by adding contextual information to assuage concerns over the tone of the exhibit.\textsuperscript{470}

With these small adjustments, the original panel remained, and the controversy continued. Veterans continued to lobby on the premise that the emphasis on civilian deaths caused by the raids made them feel like murderers, and made veterans look like war criminals.\textsuperscript{471} The coalition of veteran’s groups continued to lobby for more significant changes, going as far as to threaten a boycott of the Museum. Museum officials resisted and continued to argue that the summary of Bomber Command’s motives and achievements was accurate.\textsuperscript{472} A Senate report in June 2007 also confirmed the factual accuracy of the panel, though it also disputed the tone and presentation. Granatstein once again sided with fellow historians in his submission to the Senate Committee: “These are subjects of hot debate that must be included,” adding, “You cannot change the facts by avoiding them.”\textsuperscript{473} Shortly after the Senate report was released, the CWM’s Director, Joe Guerts, who had defended the institution’s curatorial independence, resigned.\textsuperscript{474} Then, in August 2007, almost a year after the initial campaign was launched by the coalition of veterans, the Canadian War Museum announced that it would “adjust” the exhibition and would invite veterans to participate in writing the new text.

\textsuperscript{472} Boswell, R. “War museum display angers veterans.”
Some historians were “disturbed” by the adaptation of the text in face of the political pressure of veterans’ groups. Canadian Research Chair and Associate Professor of History, Randell Hansen, went further. calling the process to change the panel as “farcical.” He argued that historical evidence showed that the British bombing strategy, did in fact, emphasize the destruction of houses, public utilities, transport, and everyday lives, and created a huge refugee problem. Others questioned the governance structure of Canadian national museums, asking if it was the funding structure and appointment process for museum directors that led to the appointment of directors that “often lack the cultural ethos to view museums as forums or places of social responsibility.” Perhaps respected historian Margaret McMillan put the controversy most accurately, “A museum,” she noted “is not a war memorial.”

475 Bomber Command, under which Canadians served, dropped almost 46% of all their bombs directly on the centre of cities (in contrast with 6% of all American bombs). Arthur Harris, the head of Bomber Command, had according to research, relished in the killing of civilians. Hansen quotes Arthur Harris, Commander-in-Chief of Bomber Command as evidence. “What we want to do... is bring the masonry crashing down on top of the Boche, to kill Boche, and to terrify the Boche.” Civilians, nearing almost 600,000, mostly woman, met a gruesome death under the campaign. Clearly the veterans’ groups objected to publicizing these facts. The campaign, which resulted in huge civilian casualties, even as German war production plummeted, continued until the fall of 1944.

476 Kane, K in “Stirring the Pot at the National Museums,” Toronto Star, September 2, 2007.

The Museum attracted 28,000 people in its first week. Over the first eleven months, 575,000 citizen-pilgrims visited the Museum — well above the official predictions of 400,000 visitors per year. In light of this popularity, the Museum’s branding strategy was described as a great success.\textsuperscript{479} Aimed at remaking and updating military history to coincide with a “completely new museum and a completely new approach to telling military history,” the marketing campaign, as Museum staff explained, took advantage of what was “basically a clean slate.”\textsuperscript{480} Once again, the view of LeBreton Flats as \textit{terra nullius} provided the grounds for a new utopia for the tourist-city, this time updated to the green parameters of neoliberal urbanism. The national state re-articulated LeBreton Flats as an empty

\textsuperscript{478} Author’s picture
land ripe for taming and redevelopment, as part of the ongoing displacement process, and as part of national cultural and natural production.

The concerted effort to regenerate the working landscape of LeBreton Flats into a mirror of national aspirations, as a unique place of performance of national identity, extended an ethic of community based on values of peace, the cult of the hero, and the spirit of the land, and eradicated local threats to order. The disorder of “slums,” the postwar socialist leanings of working-class movements, demands for cultural and linguistic recognition, and repeated Aboriginal calls for just-settlement of land claims were all counter to the national narrative. Algonquin, French-Canadian, Italian and Jewish histories on the Flats were relegated to the dustbin of history. This process of managing populations within the nationalist imaginary, institutionalized after the Second World War, would emerge first in the expropriation of the Flats. Almost four decades later, in the variegated neoliberal, partnered, natured, and spectacled redevelopment of the Flats, this cleansed history would be given a new life. The selective sanitization of local memory, during the decades following World War II, and in the present reincarnated frontier of these impulses, has created a palimpsest, with the national story laid over complex local histories. Memories of LeBreton Flats, like the truck-loads of contaminated soil, have been pushed outside the site, beyond the urban frontier to be recovered in some distant future.

While displacing certain histories, the new War Museum performs and authenticates updated national and naturalized narratives. The production of space on the Flats relies on the “recovery narrative” (Merchant, 1998), where
nature is reclaimed as part of the “city-on-display.” This present-day symbolic and material production of cultural spaces of consumption in the heart of the national capital is contained in a hybrid form: the CWM is a fusion of urban and riverside, past and present, outer and inner landscapes. The grass-covered, concrete-edged low-hugging silhouette is to be trampled by the pilgrim making a direct connection to the national memory of war. The NCC’s vision for a naturalized waterfront for pilgrims to perform national citizenship, and to pay homage to the war as a formative component of the national story, provided an updated antidote to the troubling history of the Flats. As Jane M. Jacobs (1996: 160) has noted, in the post-colonial nation “Otherness is no longer a repressed negativity in the construction of self, but a required positivity which brings the Self closer to, say a multicultural present or an ecological future.” The green vision for the Flats and the hybrid form of the Museum has ensured that the immortal power of the nation is etched into an ecological form, and into a new dimension of capitalist production and cultural reproduction.
CHAPTER 6 - Conclusion

On July 31, 2007, the century old dream of an industrial heartland in the Ottawa Valley was dealt a final blow. Domtar Corporation, owner of the historic E.B. Eddy plant, announced the closure of the last remaining plant on Chaudière Island. The slow and steady decline had met its terminal point: an epoch had finally come to an end. Forest would no longer be transformed into a cashable commodity by the practiced hands of unionized labour, but transformed into a saleable commodity by the NCC and its partnered developers. According to the NCC’s phatagasmoric dream, the debris of the messy past is repackaged into a neat natural image of national cultural festivity. The new utopia will fit neatly into the clean and crisp image of a green capital city. The Chaudière Falls and LeBreton Flats will be cleansed of its past. Yet like all epochal shifts, the break will not be clean. “Ye olde” plant will become the festival site for consumption where national culture and global tourism will now, in the place of paper, be manufactured. The traces of past images will be recycled into the new dream embodied in the physical structures of buildings and in the ephemeral celebrations on its grounds. It is part of a national abstract storage of memory performed on the “emptied” Flats.

The brute shock of April 17, 1962 has significant afterlives, both backward and forward. The initial postwar intervention in the Flats was part of the dramatic, breathless and swift moment of postwar modernization. The dislocation of its marginalized and territorially stigmatized residents emerged from an ambitious state-led initiative to remodel Ottawa into a modern national capital. Decades
later, the story of displacement would be replayed using the tools and practices of neoliberal urban governance. In a synergy of capital investment and cultural meanings, cultural logic is merging with economic rationality. The capital’s new wish images – an updated War Museum and a condominium development – transformed everyday life on the Flats into an environmental project of embourgeoisement.

These two time-delayed moments of federal intervention in LeBreton Flats mark very different periods in state-sponsored urban redevelopment. As much as they differ, key similarities can be drawn. The Keynesian project of urban renewal was initiated with state-led assistance and managed through the rule of experts. The federal government’s centralized planning relied on national identity as a motivating discourse for urban reform. In the mind of capital planners, and their associated discourse of slum improvement, the land was “empty,” ready to be remade into a national destination and symbol of the expanding postwar state. It was, as Klemek (2004: 10) argues in regards to modernism, “merely an aesthetic preference masquerading as social reform.” However, as much as the expropriation was wrapped in the modernist aesthetic obsession, the radical reshaping of the Flats was also aimed at increasing the land-rent.

The transition to neoliberal urbanism has not displaced the rule of experts. Federal oversight of planning continues to use national identity as motivating discourse. The land is still “empty,” a ready receptacle for a new national wish image. The redevelopment, like its predecessor, is a rent-extraction-based project, though this time the site-specific redevelopment is closely aligned with
the formation of neoliberalized subjectivity. As institutions learn to conform to the market-rule of New Urban Policy, the NCC is mobilized and reorganized to promote market-led economic development. The reorganization of urban governance externalizes local development through private-public and quasi-private institutional arrangements and partnerships. The partnered governance structure on the Flats offers a formal vehicle for government and private actors to cooperate in promoting the NUP agenda and a green, mixed-use, redevelopment anchored around a major national cultural attraction.

The partnered governance of the current episode is equally exclusionary. However, by orienting housing development towards up-market sales, and by adhering to a tendering process that excludes small scale, municipal non-profit and co-operative housing providers, the development has all but abandoned egalitarian principles and urban reform as guiding principles. Through the redevelopment process, neoliberal behaviour and practice was “naturalized” within the NCC’s operational and governance structure, fitting seamlessly with the NUP principles of flexibility, efficiency, competitiveness, state entrepreneurship and collaboration. In a further departure from the earlier period of intervention, the NCC’s newly acquired powers over land sales and partnerships are used in tandem with its new programming role. The governance of individualized national subjects is simultaneously part of the imagined community of nation-ness and variegated neoliberal policy experimentation. The new interventionist agenda mobilizes cultural nationalism by creating new

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commodified subjectivities. As a result of the merger of economic and cultural policy, state-supported interventions on LeBreton Flats create hybrid subjects, as well as new regimes of desire, and new cultural products created for the consumption of the tourist class and national pilgrims. The national modernist discourse of “slum clearance,” that singled out the urban working-class as socially, culturally and morally inferior, has been abandoned. In its place new national narratives of proper national subjectivity are mobilized. Market logic is extended to socializing the individualized subjects who are making a pilgrimage to the national capital. The new War Museum is a cultural stage for the performance of this national subjectivity, built around the green, regenerative, imaginary with urbanized features. Notions of Canada’s natural destiny are inscribed alongside entrepreneurial forms of cultural policy. History has been forgotten in the abstract container of the nation, yet a selective use of discursive (national) nature has been used to sell an updated form of urban revitalization. The building’s form, and the discourse used to sell the development as green, were included in this naturalized form of neoliberal urbanism.

Oriented towards an internalization of nature as an image-commodity, nature is reclaimed as part of the “city-on-display.” This present-day symbolic and material production of cultural and natural spaces of consumption in the heart of the national capital is contained in a hybrid form: the CWM is a fusion of urban and riverside, past and present, outer and inner landscapes. Its recovered fragments provide the commodified materials for performance of pedagogies of nationhood, and for the green self-learning national subject. As part of the
re territorialization of urban governance, the NCC enforces crass celebration, festivity, livability, while reactivating the nation’s pedagogical roots in war. The Ottawa River waterfront has been reformed into a space for the recovery of national memory and for the performance of national identity. The War Museum serves to smooth over of spaces of contradiction by creating a new landscape of power to express the collective identity in memory of war.

If we follow the NCC’s narrative, the redevelopment is “reminiscent of the old LeBreton Flats.” This thesis confirms this statement, though twisting its intended meaning. Many of the features of the redevelopment are far from new. They are extensions of old impulses. The time-delayed *embourgeoisement* of LeBreton Flats grafts the practices of New Urban Policy (NUP) to its traditional role as the defender and promoter of the crown’s interest in the nation’s capital. Governance practices have been renewed and updated in ways that recall the NCC’s past actions, though with a new green, partnered, and neoliberalized coating. This up-to-date green national spectacle and its fuzzy institutional arrangement blurs the lines between Keynesian urbanism and neoliberal urbanism, between nature and culture, between subject and nation. The redevelopment of LeBreton Flats is an amalgam of new practices that act beyond the state induced centrepiece of real-estate development: it is also a project relying on the production of nature, culture and the national. However, rather than a complete overhaul, the changes to federal planning on LeBreton Flats are more accurately described as a melding or “agglomeration of impulses” than a complete change of direction.
The script for LeBreton Flats has been re-written several times, according to dominant political, cultural, and economic narratives. In each subsequent wave, the history of displacement has been forgotten. The afterlives in the event of modernization are insipid permutation of the NCC’s relentless, and undemocratic, intervention in urban affairs. Displacement and dispossession have been key features of the national pedagogies associated with varied forms of national urbanism conducted in the national capital in the name of the nation and the glory of its sovereign. The new War Museum serves to recover how the military present and pasts have long acted as the gravitas of the nation. In this latest example these impulses have been resurrected in a new form to be performed by national pilgrims on a site which has remembered and forgotten the state’s most violent acts: war, urban renewal and dispossession. Void of any real connection to the past, the complex voices of the past are reduced into a universal national abstraction to be performed and produced by its national citizens.

Still, the memory lingers, despite the best efforts of the NCC to smooth over the spaces of LeBreton Flats. Residents continue to remember the Flats’ storied history. In one such moment, on January 19, 2008, a public dialogue, organized by the local social democratic Member of Parliament, was held to discuss the future of LeBreton Flats. A broad range of residents, community activists, and professional and amateur planners, non-profit housing providers, educators, health professionals, transportation buffs, accessibility advocates, cultural sponsors, local artists and writers gathered to counter the official view. The history of the site was laid out at the forefront, especially that LeBreton Flats lay
within Algonquin territory, on land that was never ceded. Participants were also reminded of the diverse groups who were affected by the expropriation, including those of Italian, Jewish and French-Canadian ancestry. A few of the old residents of the Flats were also there, and risking opening-up old wounds, reminding us of the NCC’s expropriation. Denied once or twice before by administrative enclosure and exclusion, community actors and activists nonetheless engaged once more in a process to define the next phase of LeBreton Flats into an inclusive form. These enthusiastic participants brought forward their hopes and dreams for the future of the Flats. The participants were almost unanimous in calling for a small-scale, diverse, equitable development launched through a community directed planning process. Their vision included real, and long-term affordable housing maintained in perpetuity, provided by multiple builders including non-profit housing providers, for multi-generational, multi-income and multi-cultural users. Participants called on the new phase to respect the past, most importantly by acknowledging the aboriginal past and, in close consultation with the Algonquins ensure that their interests in the land were addressed. The working past of the Flats was also on their minds as participants suggested that places be created for the trades, for artists, and for other workers, with innovative spaces such as tool-cooperatives, workshops, and studios. Despite invitation, no one from the NCC showed up - even to observe. If they have come, the NCC property barons would have heard a clear rejection of a gentrified and exclusionary vision for LeBreton Flats.
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