

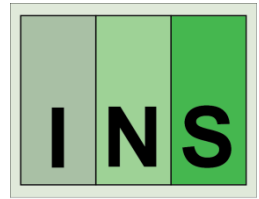
The Institute for New Suburbanism

12 July 2017

H A R D Y
S T E V E N S O N
A N D A S S O C I A T E S



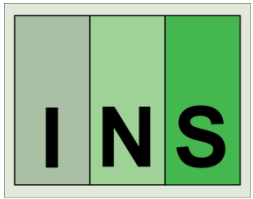
What is “New Suburbanism”?



New Suburbanism is a philosophy and flexible planning approach for improving existing communities and enhancing new suburban development.

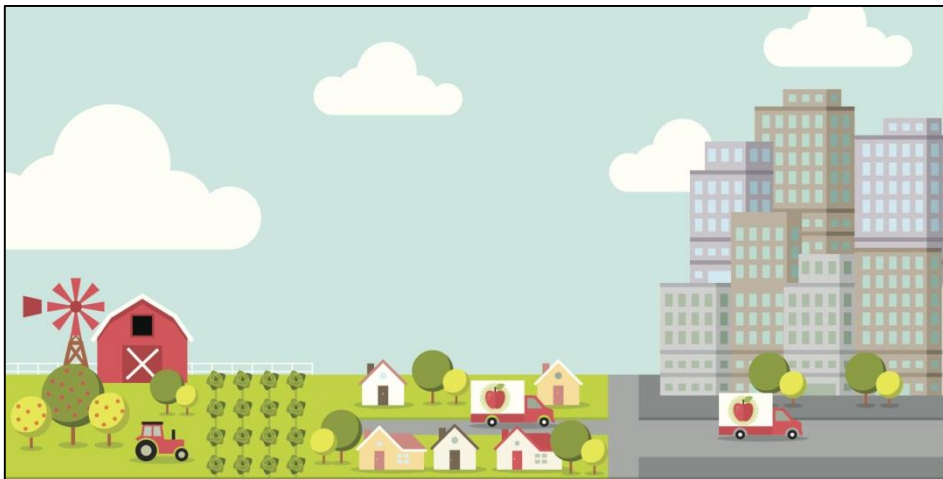
- People love to live in the suburbs
- Suburbs are well-planned communities
- Majority of people in North America live in suburbs

What is “New Suburbanism”?

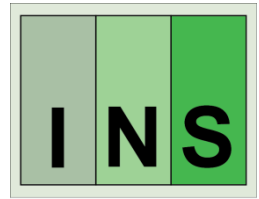


New Suburbanism ***IS ABOUT:***

- Changing the narrative about suburban life
- Fostering inter-regional conversations
- Being better prepared to address international changes occurring locally
- Integrating new ideas with existing urban/suburban planning and architectural practices



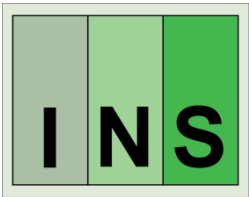
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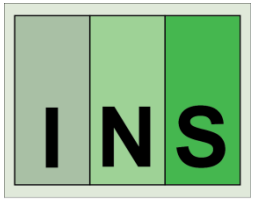
New Suburbanism ***IS NOT***:

- Supporting sprawl.
- Disrupting existing neighbourhoods.
- A new paradigm in planning and architecture.
- Rejecting ‘New Urbanism’ and other planning philosophies.
- Fixing, retrofitting or urbanizing the suburbs.

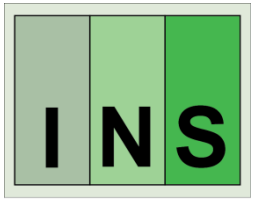
The Suburbs



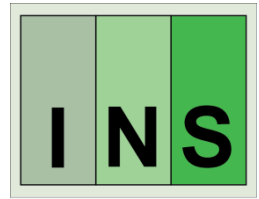
Suburbs



What is New Suburbanism?



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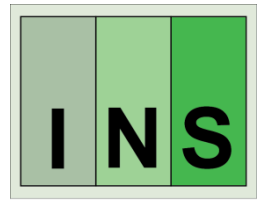


Five Defining Elements

1. Narratives

- New Suburbanism encourages planners to think beyond standard narratives, oversimplifications and stereotypes of suburbia.
- We need to understand the nuance and complexity that exists in the suburban landscape.

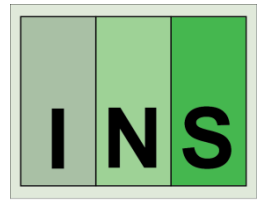
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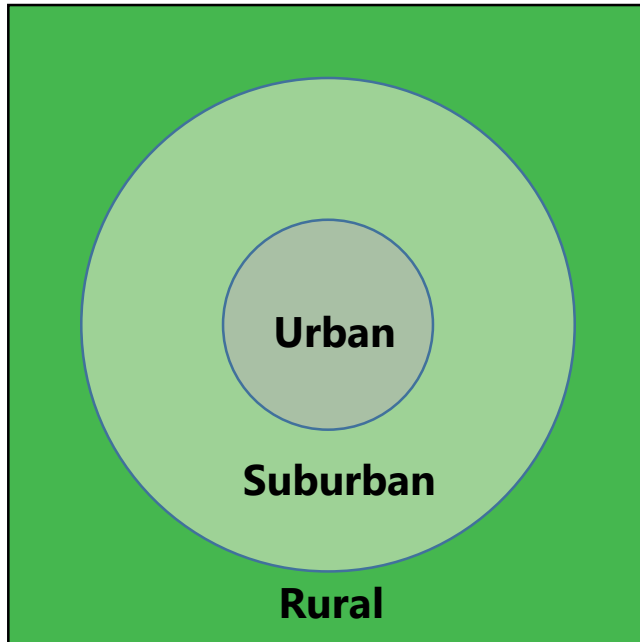
2. Parallel Strengths

- New Suburbanism asserts that a strong city and region needs three areas of parallel strength:
 1. Strong core
 2. Strong suburbs
 3. Strong rural areas
- Conventional thinking tends to hold that strong investment in the core will result in trickle out benefits to suburban and rural areas.
- Parallel core, suburb, rural investments and policy initiatives are essential for strong regions.

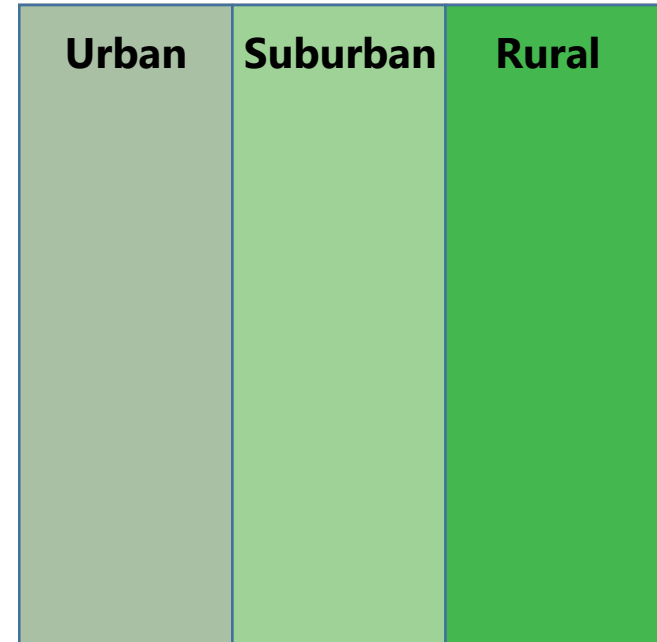
Concentric vs Spectrum Rings



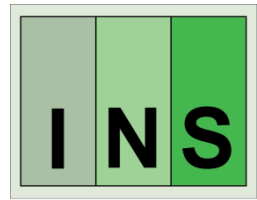
Urban-centric Perspective



Urban-Rural Spectrum



Shifting Provincial Policy Focus



From Stephen Marshall and De Jong...

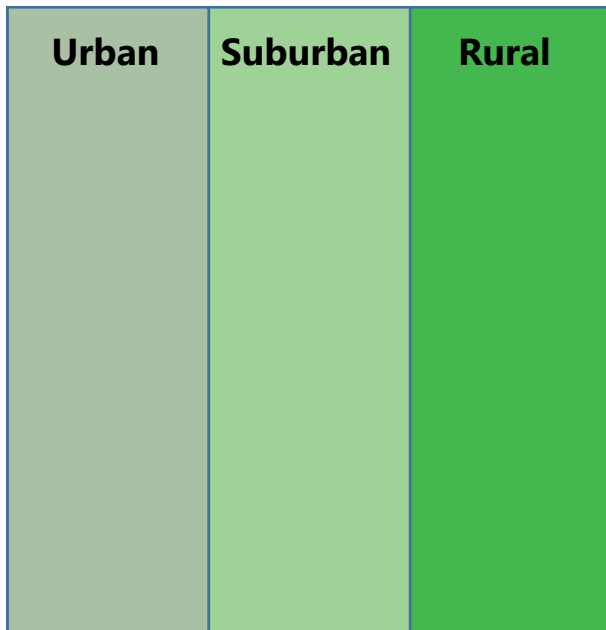
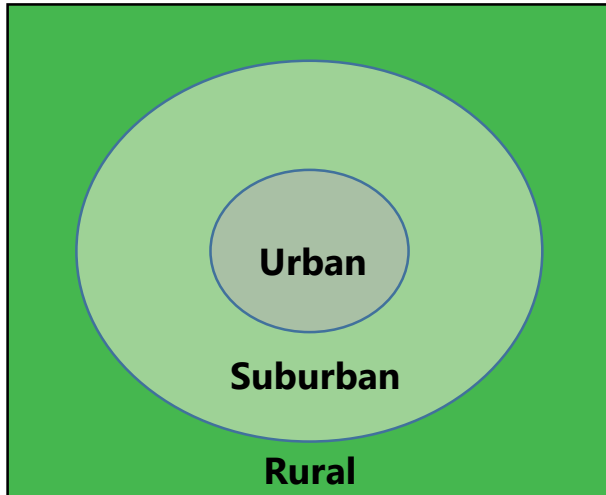
Conventional Urban-centric Perspective

- Suburb is peripheral to core
- Suburbs are sub-optimal version of urban

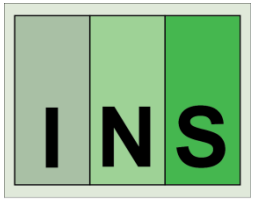
Need to decouple conventional ideas

Assertion of Urban-Rural Spectrum

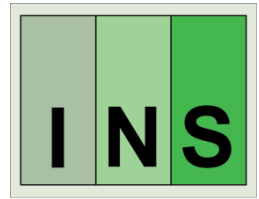
- Suburbs are both semi-urban and semi-rural
- Suburbs are central to regions
- Where people live and what they prefer
- In New Suburbanism – suburbs are the focus of policy



Flattening



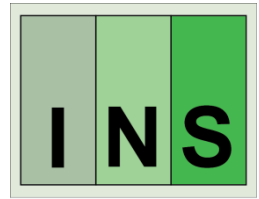
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3. Flattening

- New Suburbanism observes that as global cities grow, they flatten
- In this process, suburbs become more like their core areas and core areas become more like their suburbs.
- This flattening leads to conditions whereby urban and suburban areas become more similar than different (e.g. higher density in the suburbs, big box retail in the core).
- In response, we need to plan for the suburbs as having a hybrid of urban and suburban characteristics.

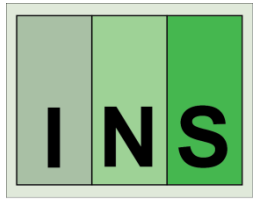
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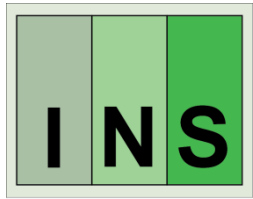
4. Designing

- New Suburbanism asserts that as suburban areas develop, planners and architects need to advocate the best architecture, design and planning of built form.
- This will support quality of life through the full life cycle of residents.

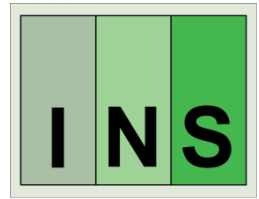
New Suburbanism Planning & Architecture



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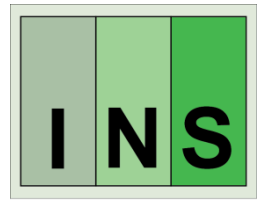
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5. Learning

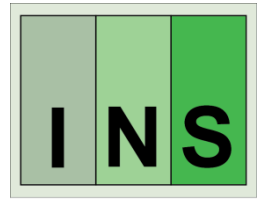
- New suburbs in the GTHA are planned to be sustainable starting with Master Environmental Servicing Plans anchored in environmentally-focused Provincial Policy.
- New Suburbanism advocates that as older inner and outer suburbs redevelop, planners have an opportunity to learn how suburbs are responding to change over time so as to provide lessons for planning new suburbs.

Changing the Narrative



- The suburbs are often overlooked by urban policy; yet, most people in North America live in suburbs.
- The debate around key urban and national issues has shifted focus as suburban communities assert their needs and priorities.
- Need to reopen the density/ sustainability discussion.
- Planners in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and Ontario can benefit from innovations of suburban thinking at regional and global scales.

Some Key Questions



- How do we enhance existing suburban communities without gentrification? Or, cultural commercialization?
- How do we manage density increases without losing tranquility?
- Raise desirability without losing affordability?
- Given advances in AI, uber and electric cars, will sustainable regional planning practice change?
- Create homes and work for new populations, while making the suburbs better for those already there?
- What is a desirable physical and population density and what quality of life enhancements should come with that density?