



Website and author background, history, and experience

No work ever emerges from thin air. It has a history, one that provides the raw material from which it is made. Here is the lineage of some of the information contained on this site. In addition to that identified in on linked and related pages, it is drawn from my training and work and that of my many employers, clients and colleagues. I worked at Barton-Aschman Associates, the cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul, Somerville, MA and Delaware County, and Phoenix, AZ. The cities of Chicago, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Indianapolis, Kalamazoo, Montevideo, Mankato, Worcester, Syracuse, Madison, Des Moines, Columbus and some forty or fifty others generously permitted me to learn while helping prepare plans for their downtowns.

I started my professional work in 1949 as a draftsman and all-purpose “gopher” with the newly established Housing and Redevelopment Authority in Minneapolis. I was then attending the University of Minnesota in architecture. Work in Minneapolis included plans for two blighted areas, one in Downtown Minneapolis and one, Cedar-Riverside, lying between Downtown Minneapolis and the University. Talbot Jones supervised my work. (Federal legislation authorizing redevelopment, renewal and new programs in public housing had just been adopted, initiating massive programs in these areas that were to extend for the next thirty years.)

Development within the downtown proceeded. The Cedar-Riverside project, across from the University of Minnesota on the bank of the Mississippi River, did not move forward until the late 1960's. It was revived under the then new Federal New Towns program. At this point I joined Ralph Rapson (then dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Minnesota) as a consultant for this project. With related freeway, university and college development, it covered over 300 acres and included 100 acres for private development for 12,500 units of new housing and support uses. Thirteen hundred housing units were built before legal hurdles and resulting financial problems ended the project in 1976.

In the interim, I received a bachelor's degree in architecture (Minnesota) and masters of city planning (Harvard). I worked summers for St. Paul planning its citywide redevelopment program and in Somerville, Massachusetts, on renewal and housing planning under Ralph Taylor (who later became Under Secretary of US HUD). I next worked in suburban Philadelphia for Todd Cooke in Delaware County, and close enough to Philadelphia to observe Ed Bacon's work in the revival of its city center.

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I returned to St. Paul in 1955 working with Dave Loeks and Warner Shippee in preparing plans to guide redevelopment of downtown St. Paul and its environs. Two years later I returned to Minneapolis where I worked with new planning director Larry Irvin to create an entirely new planning program and to prepare the city's first "central area" plan. Consultants Ted Aschman, George Barton and Real Estate Research Corporation helped with this work. Stimulated by new Federal programs for renewal and the Interstate Program, Minneapolis was in the throes of increasing its planning staff five-fold.

After two years I left Minneapolis to join Ted and George in creating a new firm, Barton-Aschman Associates, in Evanston, Illinois.

Work then expanded in every direction in terms of location, subject matter, types of projects and size and complexity. Over the next twenty years the staff grew to nearly 300, with offices in a half dozen cities and downtown projects from Edmonton, Alberta, to the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida and San Diego C.A. to Syracuse and Rochester, N.Y. and Worcester, Mass. Our work was heavily oriented to downtown planning eventually including downtowns in over seventy five communities.

As an advisor to Terry Goddard, mayor of Phoenix, for four years with responsibility for downtown and similar areas of the city, provided some of the best background for this website.

Many projects followed related to the concepts of downtown and core planning. These included major research projects for the City of Chicago as well as Federal agencies, such as:

- *Chicago Streets Study*, 1960: This involved looking at streets and land use together to develop a strategy for the improvement of streets that would compliment programs for redevelopment and renewal of land uses adjoining them. In addition to guidance on the City's then current street improvement program this work led to a second project to more rigorously identify opportunities for coordinating redevelopment and street improvement projects.
- *Needs and Opportunities for Coordinating Renewal and Transportation*, 1963, which was used to develop city wide programs for Chicago in these two areas.
- *Chicago High Accessibility Corridors Study*, 1968: Also an outgrowth of the Chicago Streets Study this study looked at the potential for stronger coordination of selected major transportation routes and land use to create strong "corridors" of functions highly oriented to transportation. The results of this study were incorporated into the Chicago General Plan and to plans for the Cicero corridor. However construction of the freeway in this corridor was never built.
- *Guidelines for New Systems of Urban Transportation*, 1968: Prepared for the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to identify land use patterns and practices to help the agency assure compatibility of programs and policies under their jurisdiction (that is, coordination of public transit and land use).

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- Numerous research, evaluation and feasibility Studies on subjects such as Shared Use Parking, Skyways, Transit and Rail Terminals, Malls and New Towns.
- Travel to examine transit, new town and downtown development in Great Britain, Denmark, Sweden and Finland.
- Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Land Use for the Transportation Research Board for six years.

People Who Have Helped

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- Derek K. Engelen: (Owner of consulting practice, Financial Data Management) Management of website and conversion, and editing of material to be placed on the site

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