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Highland Park and River Oaks: The Origins of Garden Suburban Community Planning in Texas (Roger Fullington Series in Architecture)

Cheryl Caldwell Ferguson

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In the early twentieth century, developers from Baltimore to Beverly Hills built garden suburbs, a new kind of residential community that incorporated curvilinear roads and landscape design as picturesque elements in a neighborhood. Intended as models for how American cities should be rationally, responsibly, and beautifully modernized, garden suburban communities were fragments of a larger (if largely imagined) garden city—the mythical "good" city of U.S. city-planning practices of the 1920s.

This extensively illustrated book chronicles the development of the two most fully realized garden suburbs in Texas, Dallas's Highland Park and Houston's River Oaks. Cheryl Caldwell Ferguson draws on a wealth of primary sources to trace the planning, design, financing, implementation, and long-term management of these suburbs. She analyzes homes built by such architects as H. B. Thomson, C. D. Hill, Fooshee & Cheek, John F. Staub, Birdsall P. Briscoe, and Charles W. Oliver. She also addresses the evolution of the shopping center by looking at Highland Park's Shopping Village, which was one of the first in the nation. Ferguson sets the story of Highland Park and River Oaks within the larger story of the development of garden suburban communities in Texas and across America to explain why these two communities achieved such prestige, maintained their property values, became the most successful in their cities in the twentieth century, and still serve as ideal models for suburban communities today.

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