

# NEWS RELEASE

## New essay celebrates key ideas and contributions of Jane Jacobs

Feb. 10, 2022  
For immediate release

**VANCOUVER**—A new essay—part of a collected series summarizing the lives and ideas of women who helped shape the free and prosperous societies we enjoy today—examines the key insights of Jane Jacobs, an activist who helped shape how we think about cities, neighbourhoods and the field of urban planning.

Published by the Fraser Institute, the *Essential Women of Liberty* is accompanied by a website and animated videos spotlighting Jacobs and other remarkable women.

“Due to Jacob’s advocacy and writing, centrally planned housing developments have been roundly rejected, and in city after city across North America have been demolished and replaced with low-rise mixed-use communities,” said essay author Lydia Miljan, a professor of political science at the University of Windsor and senior fellow of the Fraser Institute.

Born in Pennsylvania in 1916, as a teenager Jacobs moved to New York City where she spent more than three decades writing about cities and urban planning. As an activist, Jacobs often clashed with city planners.

For example, in the 1950s and 1960s, city planners declared that certain areas were slums—including Jacobs’ own neighbourhood of Greenwich Village—and proposed to replace the inhabitants, businesses and communities with towering blocks of low-income housing or superhighways cutting through the city.

But Jacobs documented how cities thrived based on natural interactions and exchanges among their inhabitants, and conversely, how cities declined because of central urban planning efforts, which destroyed the vibrancy and diversity that made them liveable and safe. Her efforts paid off, and her 1961 book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* helped change urban planning.

In the late-1960s, Jacobs and her family moved to Toronto where she lived until her death in 2006 at age 89.

The Fraser Institute will release the complete *Essential Women of Liberty* essay and video series on International Women’s Day (March 8, 2022).

To learn more about the Institute’s Essential Scholar series, visit [www.essentialscholars.org](http://www.essentialscholars.org).

-30-

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

*To arrange interviews or for more information, please contact:*

Mark Hasiuk, Senior Media Relations Specialist @ (604) 688-0221 ext. 517 or

[mark.hasiuk@fraserinstitute.org](mailto:mark.hasiuk@fraserinstitute.org)

[Follow the Fraser Institute on Twitter](#) | [Like us on Facebook](#)

effects of government policies, entrepreneurship and choice on their well-being. To protect the Institute's independence, it does not accept grants from governments or contracts for research. Visit [www.fraserinstitute.org](http://www.fraserinstitute.org)