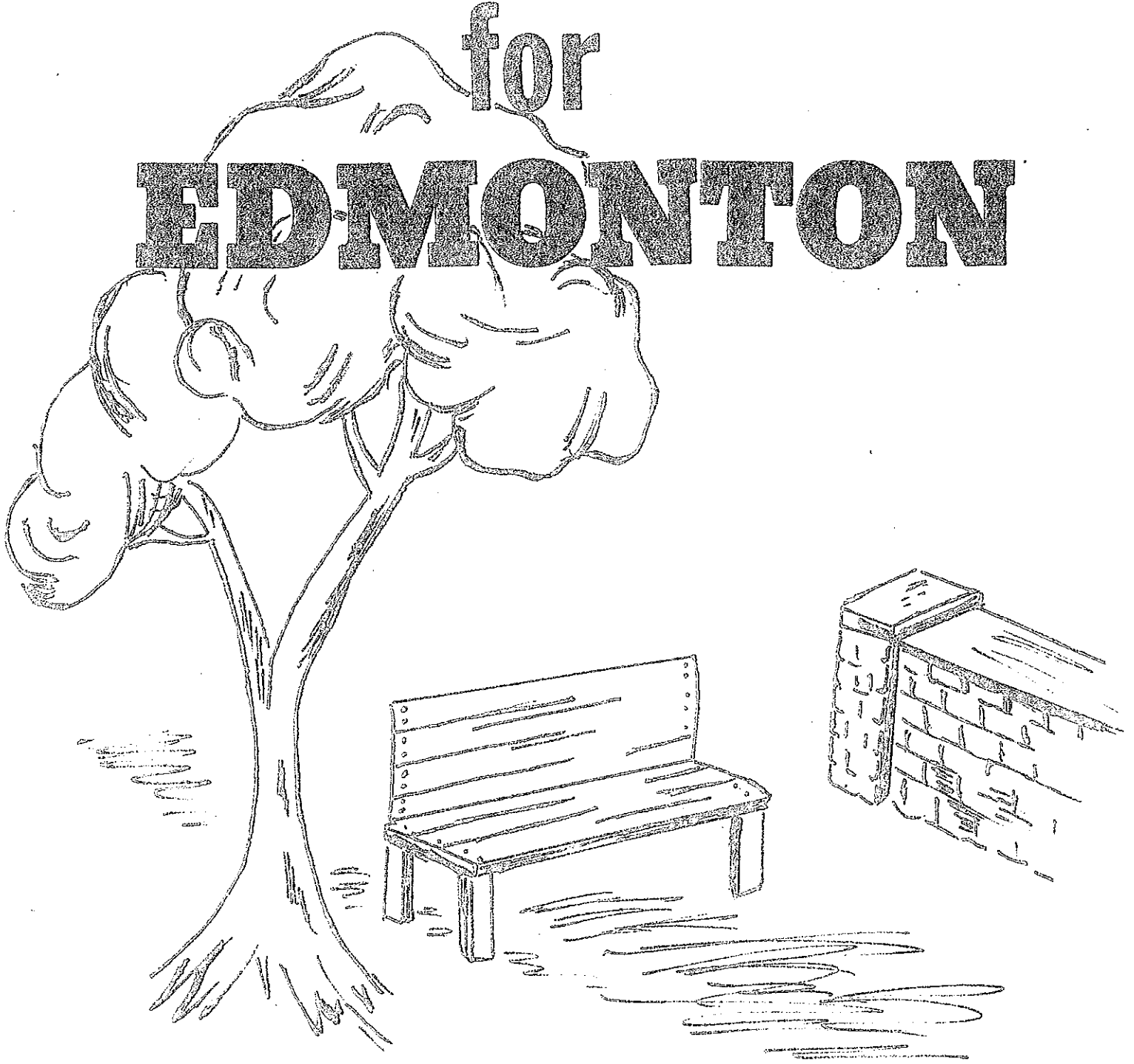# MINI-PARKS
for
EDMONTON

MINI-PARKS FOR EDMONTON

BY

THE EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL
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Edmonton - Alberta

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The purpose of this report is to survey the situation in Edmonton with regard to mini-park development and to make appropriate recommendations. The approach has been to form a Task Force of persons interested in mini-parks to oversee the work of researchers contracted by the Edmonton Social Planning Council. This report represents the findings of these researchers and the conclusions of the Task Force.

Mini-parks are defined in this study as parks meeting the following four criteria:

- small in size: less than one acre,

- cultured: containing a tree, shrubs or planted flowers, in addition to greenery, mini-parks may be constructed with non-organic materials in an aesthetically pleasing manner,

- recreational: providing for passive recreation through a pleasant place to sit; as well may provide for active recreation on a playlot for instance,

- accessible: is easily accessible for the casual pedestrian; has either a sidewalk running alongside it, or through it, so that the park may be enjoyed as part of a trip for another purpose.

The Task Force on mini-parks has developed in the following way: Community workshops were established to discuss the mini-park potential and possible design at four city sites: a blocked street in Norwood, the grounds of Christ Church, a strip of Centennial Shopping Centre, and open space at the Keegano housing co-operative, in Millwoods. (The activities at these workshops, and the results, are presented in this study report). On conclusion of the workshops, members were invited to form the Task Force and to review the draft of this report. The following persons attended this meeting, approved the draft with some modifications, and adopted the four general recommendations presented in the summary of "Conclusions and Recommendations".

Helen Fisher, 11643 - 94 Street, (Norwood)
Theodore Fisher, 11643 - 94 Street, (Norwood)
Reg Lawrence, #405, 10160 - 116 Street, (Oliver)
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Charlotte Schaufelbuhl, #203, 10140 - 120 Street, (Oliver)
Dorothy Sproule, 10123 - 123 Street, (Oliver)
Wendy Stalker, 11612 - 93 Street, (Norwood)

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MINI-PARKS FOR EDMONTON

APPENDICES

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GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There should be more small parks in the City. These should be located in residential, commercial (including the downtown core) and industrial areas. The nature of these parks and the possibilities for their design are discussed in Chapter 4.

2. There should be participation by the users in the design of small parks at all stages of the designing process. Suggestions as to how this participation might be achieved are provided in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. These suggestions are based on the experience of the four workshops conducted through this Task Force.

3. The Parks and Recreation Department should develop a specialty team to develop mini-parks. This team should have responsibility for identifying priority areas and working with potential users to locate suitable sites and to design appropriate mini-parks on these sites.

4. The City should commit itself to a program of experimentation in mini-parks design, both in terms of user participation in the design process and in terms of varying kinds of parks to be developed. The experimentation will answer many problems regarding relative maintenance costs and user desirability of different types of mini-parks.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS (From Chapter 2).

1. That the City conduct a new survey of existing "Mini-park" areas within neighbourhoods deficient in park area.

2. That the City also conduct a survey to locate any small pieces of city owned land in such areas, and assess their suitability for development as small parks (either amenity parks, playlots, or a combination of the two).

3. That planning in the commercial area of downtown include provision for small "amenity" parks for the use of shoppers and workers in the area.

4. That the City compel commercial developers in suburban areas to devote a percentage of the total cost of their development to external landscaping. The City should co-operate in the design of the open space, and provide ongoing maintenance.

5. That the City provide a mechanism for consultation and co-operation with developers, organizations and homeowners concerned with planning of small parks on privately owned land.

6. That the City establish a Parks and Recreation program for industrial areas in the City:

   i) to encourage and enable industrial firms to provide landscaped areas for their workers enjoyment.

   ii) to co-operate with industrial firms in the provision of recreational programs for their workers.

SOME DO'S AND DON'TS IN MINI-PARK DESIGN (From Chapter 4).

1. DO remember that mini-parks in low income areas get heavy use; design with sturdy materials and budget for repairs and replacements.

2. DO plan the park with a purpose; with poor planning a park becomes a liability rather than an asset.

3. DO plan for adequate, ongoing, maintenance.

   (a) Maintenance should be by paid employees, not by volunteers.

   (b) There is some disagreement as to whether this maintenance should be contracted to a community group, or the financial responsibility of a citizens group. In Edmonton, our community leagues have traditionally been responsible for the maintenance of their own recreation facilities with operative grants.

4. DO plan for ongoing supervision of children's or teen's parks. (One leader, and untrained aides can circulate to several small parks).

5. DO NOT fence the park; fencing encourages fence climbers to vandalize the park.
(There is some disagreement on this point. An insurance company insuring parks in New York will only insure if the park area is fenced; yet experience shows that open parks are not as subject to vandalism).

6. DO NOT design a park to look like a gaol: if you must fence, do not use 10 feet high chain link fencing with barbed wire on the top.

7. DO design a park that will generate enthusiasm and affection.

8. DO plan the location of the mini-park; a park, like a store, needs a good location to be popular.

9. DO plan to attract people to the park (activities and programs can do this).

10. DO NOT plan a mini-park unless the community wants it. Then they will use it and care for it.

11. DO plan for the park to be safe.

   (a) Ensure adequate police patrols.
   (b) The park should be well lit at night.
   (c) All corners of the park should be visible from the street.
   (d) A block association can keep an eye on the park and protect it.
   (e) A busy park is a safe park.

12.   **DO** plan in co-operation with the community.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MINI-PARK WORKSHOPS (From Chapter 6).

1.   Potential participants should receive a written invitation to the workshop, with information on the purpose of the workshop and the commitment expected of them.

2.   Workshops such as this should be conducted, as far as is possible, with natural communities; i.e., with groups of people who share an interest in a particular piece of land, because they live, work, play, shop, or worship there.

3.   Citizen planning workshops are more effective when part of an ongoing citizen development process; in turn, the workshop aid this process.

4.   Where there is conflict about parks, planning the decision to involve (or not involve) the opposition in the workshop brings particular problems. To involve the opposition brings the need for compromise which may be inconsistent with good design. To exclude the opposition may prevent the mini-park being built at all.

5.   An institutional setting, office, community centre or church hall, is preferable to a private home, for a citizen planning workshop.

6.   The day-long (9:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.) workshops, with a short break for a working lunch, were more effective than two subsequent three-hour evenings.

7.   A one-day workshop is sufficient for a group of twelve people to come to grips with the problem of design involved in a small park design.

8.   Residents contribute information to a site analysis that would not be known to outsiders.

9.   The experience of site analysis was an educative one for the participants. They learned to <u>look</u> as well as to <u>see</u>.

10. The functional analysis by community residents should be a minimum prerequisite for the design of neighbourhood parks by professional planners.

11. People without design training are capable of understanding the concepts involved in park design.

12. Designs produced by "loners" were more simplistic and more visually cohesive than those produced by groups. The designs produced by groups were more flexible, taking more needs into account and involving more compromise.

13. People values are reflected in the parks they design. All of the designs were feasible (barring some difficulties with out-of-scale drawings) and could be built with reasonable cost.

14. Given the authority to plan, and a stake in the success of the plan, citizen planners produce reasonable, practical and buildable ideas.

15. There is a planning mystique which inhibits the involvement of the citizen in planning.

16. Once he has become involved as a citizen planner, the planning mystique falls away and the untrained citizen has a real contribution to make.

17. The _politics_ of establishing mini-parks are more of a problem than the practicalities of design.

18. These four mini-parks will be entirely different in character; so would any others designed by the communities around them. Such mini-parks, interspersed within the fabric of the City, would add a vitality and variety that usually only comes with history.

19. Although each mini-park is unique to its community, and to its designer, certain elements reoccur in every mini-park design:

    - A way to move through or past the mini-park,

    - Somewhere to sit, and an excuse to be seen sitting there,

    - Use of planting; ground cover, trees and shrubs, to counteract the sterile effect of a concrete urban environment.

URBAN OPEN SPACE: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

There have been open spaces within cities for almost as long as there have been cities. The function of these spaces, and their forms, have changed with the changes in form and function of the cities around them. Urban parks as we know them today were unknown to the city residents of earlier ages. With the countryside at everyone's back door, and a life that was 'nasty brutish and short'(1), there was no concept of mass recreation. Leisure was the prerogative of the elite, pursued within an environment designed to meet their own needs, and not those of the public. This first chapter will review briefly the development of open spaces within urban areas, showing the origins of urban parks as we know them today, and the various elements that lead to the recognition of the need for 'mini-parks' in densely urban areas.

Open spaces within an urban area have always been created for some specific purpose. Urban open space can serve any one (or combination) of six basic functions(2): these are -

1. **Religious**: as a forecourt to a religious or sacred building, or as a place of worship in itself.

2. **Economic**: as a place for exchange of goods, a market place.

3. **Political**: as a forecourt to increase the impressiveness of state buildings, or as a place for political meetings.

4. **'Commons'**: an area of grazing land within a town or city where livestock could be protected.

5. **Military**: a parade ground for training and display of militia.

6. **Amenity**: an ornamental, health giving open area for recreational purposes.

The last, the recreational function, has been the latest in development in our urban areas. Only in the last century have we begun to learn of the importance of urban open space for its own sake, rather than for a specific purpose or function.

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(1) Hobbes' "Social Contact Theory".
(2) Zucker, Paul, <u>Town and Square: from the Agora to the Village Green</u>.

In India the gridiron street patterns of ancient cities precluded open areas linked to the street system. Temples however, were approached through courtyards (3), which were also considered sacred. (Open space with a religious function).

Similarly, in the cities of early Greece, the open space would be that around the sacred buildings, in this case, the acropolis. Only in the fifth century before Christ, as democracy began to develop, was the need felt for secular open space. (4). The agora was the Greek solution to this need; at first a market place, and a place for meetings of citizens to discuss the government of their city (commercial and political). As democratic forms became established and ritualized, they became associated in the Greek mind with religious ceremony. Formal meetings of the City government were then relocated within the sacred confines of the acropolis. The agora remained the commercial centre, where the exchange of slaves and other goods took place.

Within the Roman city the open space became strong symbols of imperial power, and of the central authority of Rome (5). The many cities and towns laid out by the Romans during their conquest of Europe took the same form (6). There would be two main axes, with a void at their intersection. This void would become the forum, bordered by shops, temples, and public buildings. This would serve both commercial, sacred and public purposes in smaller towns (7). Larger cities developed several squares, some with specifically sacred functions and others as market places.

In medieval Europe the idea of designed open spaces within the urban environment was lost (8). Streets were irregular and very narrow, and the squares, if any, had hardly any width. Occasionally a dominating building, such as a church, would have a small 'parvis' in front. Generally there

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(3) Zucker, ibid., p. 20.
(4) Zucker, ibid., p. 3.
(5) Zucker, ibid., p. 60.
(6) Zucker, ibid., p. 46.
(7) Zucker, ibid., p. 56.
(8) Zucker, ibid., p. 65.

would be no attempt to design or plan the space between the Church and the surrounding (often closely surrounding) buildings. Some of the cathedral squares also doubled as market places.(9). The open air stalls, living side by side with the audience to the miracle plays on the cathedral porch. In other towns the market place would be found within a widened main thoroughfare, or at the town gate. If the town had been a Roman settlement, then the open central square might be used for this purpose.(10).

With the coming of the renaissance, urban open spaces were again designed;(11), this time as part of the cultural rebirth of Europe. Men searched for the ideal, in architecture, in painting and in sculpture. Many architects designed civic centres with squares that would show the symmetry of their buildings, and provide settings for their sculptures. The design of the space itself, however, was not considered. Palladio, for example, though his architecture was among the first to succeed with a complex three-dimensional design, had a very utilitarian attitude to the space itself. Palladio's concept of the renaissance civic centre focuses on the palace, the exchequer, the prison and the madhouse.

> "To return to the principle squares, to those that
> ought to be joined to the Prince's palace, or that
> for meeting of the states as the country is either
> a monarchy or a republic. The exchequer or the public
> treasury, where the money and treasure of the public
> is lodged, ought to join them likewise, as well as
> prisons. These latter were anciently of three sorts;
> one for such as were debauched or immodest...and which
> we now assign to fools or mad-folks; another was for
> debtors and the third was for traitors or wicked
> persons."(12).

The renaissance city square, like many of the renaissance streets, was not a place to linger after dark; certainly not a recreational area!

Renaissance design became baroque with the added element of movement.(13). Urban space became a series of interconnected areas, not static, but experienced in sequence as one moved through them. Technological advance was, in part, responsible for this development. The old fashioned solid wheel was replaced by the lighter spoked wheel in the 16th century, and carts and wagons came into more general use in cities. The streets were not adapted to wheeled traffic, and citizens protested, begging that wheeled traffic be

(9) Mumford, Lewis, The Culture of Cities, (Harcourt Brace and World, New York, 1938), p. 55.
(10) Zucker, ibid., p.p. 74-85.
(11) Zucker, ibid., p. 99.
(12) Mumford, ibid., p. 133.
(13) Zucker, ibid., p. 233.

forbidden to use their neighborhood. (14).

Military necessity also brought pressure for wide avenues, and large squares. A rabbit warren city could not be controlled by military force; troups could not be assembled for a show of force (a parade), and they could not move around easily within the narrow streets. In an era of tyranny, a city plan convenient for military operations was a necessity. (15).

Also in the baroque period the need for open markets decreased (although they still survive in some towns to this day). Merchants moved into shops of their own, with work rooms at the back. The market square began to disappear.

A more beneficient legacy of the baroque era are the inner city parks (16). (For example, Regent's park in London). Originally, these were the private parks attached to the palaces of the nobility. Also in the baroque period, pleasure gardens became popular. Within these ordinary citizens could buy some of the pleasures available to the mobility within their own homes. These pleasures, however, were available only to the growing middle class. For the working class and the poor, there was little within the City to remind them of country living.

As the nineteenth century advanced, the Industrial Revolution brought many more poor and working people into the cities; into sweat shop jobs, crowded and ramshackle homes, and streets that were open sewers. There were no parklike open spaces in these slums.

> "The neighborhood was a dreary one at that time; as
> oppressive, sad and solitary by night as any about
> London. There were neither sharves nor houses on the
> melancholy waste of road near the great blank prison.
> A sluggish ditch deposited its mud at the prison walls.
> Coarse grass and rank weeds straggled over all the
> marshy land in the vicinity. In one part, carcases
> of houses, inauspiciously begun and never finished,
> rotted away. In another, the ground was cumbered with

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(14) "In England...vigorous protests were made, and it was asserted that
      if brewers carts were permitted in the streets, the pavement
      could not be maintained; while in France, Parliament begged the
      king in 1563 to prohibit vehicles from the streets of Paris - and
      the same impulse even showed itself once more in the Eighteenth
      Century. Nevertheless, the new spirit of society was on the side
      of rapid transportation."
      (Mumford, ibid., p. 94) "Early Echoes of Protest Against Truck
      Routes!" (Author's note).
(15) Mumford, ibid., p. 95.
(16) Mumford, ibid., pp. 111 - 112.

rusty iron monsters of steam boilers, wheels,
cranks, pipes, furnaces, paddles, anchors, diving
bells, windmill-sails, and I know not what strange
objects... There was a story that one of the pits
dug for the dead in the time of the Great Plague was
hereabout; and a blighting influence seemed to have
proceeded from it over the whole place."(17).

The London known to Dickens contained areas of urban blight similar to those decaying and desolate areas which plague most of our larger cities today. The horrors of Victorian industrial cities are well described in many of Dickens' works, although by the time he came to write about them the movement towards reform had already begun.

One new element within the movement for reform was the introduction into the city of the landscape park.(18). In a sense this was only the remodeling of the baroque park which, as a setting for the royal palace, had remained in the capital cities of Europe. Under the pressure of democratic and humanitarian demands, these parks had been thrown open to the public. With increasing numbers of county families coming to the city for "the season", and the cities growing in size, these temporary residents demanded the space for recreation that was available to them at home. Now there was a conscious attempt to provide within the city, for everyone, the equivalent of a visit to the countryside. The concept of open space for its own sake, of open space as having "amenity" value, was born. This was the beginning of urban parks as we know them.(19).

One source of land for new urban parks was the cemeteries; landscaped for the dead, they were returned to the use of the living. In some older cities, obsolescent fortifications circling the city centre were removed providing a circle of green through which the city could breathe (for example, in Vienna and Bremen).

In the United States, Olmstead was the first planner to lay out natural park areas (he called them lungs) within the urban area. In his design for central park in New York he deliberately separated pedestrian traffic from wheeled traffic by creating overpasses. Olmstead saw that the City would grow, and he planned an entire park system linking the expanding

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(17) Dickens, Charles, _David Copperfield_, Ch. XLVII, p. 679.
(18) Edwin Chadwick, (1800-1890) a well known reformer; published a report
    "The Effects of Public Walks and Gardens on the Health and Morals of
    the Lower Classes" _The Modern City: Planning in the Nineteenth Century_,
    Francois Choay, (George Brazulier, New York, 1969).
(19) Mumford, ibid., p.p. 218 - 222.

city with the countryside beyond. There would be small squares, small playgrounds, linked to each other and to larger areas of green by "Parkways"; roadways with green awards and rows of trees. This concept of the country and the city as inter-related was entirely new, and completely unknown in earlier forms of urban organization.(20).

Olmstead's concept had included small squares as well as large lung like parks. As the cities grew, the small open spaces were lost in the competition for land. It was too valuable to leave vacant. Then, as the automobile came into the cities (resisted at first like the brewers carts in London two centuries earlier), land was needed for car parking. In the densest cities residents were pushed into highrise living in the struggle for space. In smaller cities open space was gobbled up by the automobile; for driving to the door of every dwelling; for parking near to every store. Whether moving or in storage, the automobile demanded space. Traffic arteries carved up the major parks in our cities, and in the inner city parking lots took the small areas of open space that were left.

Robert Moses became responsible for the parks in New York in the 1930's.(21). Originally he was responsible for many improvements to his department, but his park philosophy was narrow. He adopted a system of parkways, similar to those conceived by Olmstead. But there had been no automobiles in Olmstead's time, and Moses's whole park system was automobile based.(22). Parks, playgrounds and waterfronts were made accessible from expressways through the City, Moses did not recognize the hostile environment created by the noise, fumes, and danger of autombiles. The worst place for a park, according to Moses's opponents, is next to a major roadway.

Moses was an opponent of the small neighbourhood park. He believed that no park was feasible unless it was three acres or more in size. Residents of the heart of New York City knew that their large parks were unaccessible or unsafe and there was little chance for desperately needed parks nearer home. There just wasn't the space in their communities and expropriation and destruction of existing buildings would be prohibitively expensive; the expense could only be justified if new homes, not parks, could be placed on the site.

(20) Downing and Eliot are two other landscape architects well known for their work in this period; Hugo-Brunt, Michael, "The History of City Planning - A Survey", Harvest House, Montreal, 1972, p. 186-187.
(21) Seymour Inc., Whitney North "Urban Open Spaces", p.p. 4-5. (Parks Association of New York City, 1969).
(22) Gruen, Victor, The Heart of Our Cities, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1964, p. 128.

So, in the pressure for improvement to the inner cities, the mini-park concept came to New York City, to Boston, and other large United States cities.

The mini-park proponents probably felt they had discovered mini-parks for the first time; actually, they had only re-invented them.

New York's own Bowling Green, established in 1733, was her own first mini-park. It was established through the efforts of three neighborhood residents who persuaded the city fathers to lease them half an acre of land for games of bowls:

> From the Council minutes:
>
> "Resolved that this corporation will lease a piece of land
> lying at the lower end of Broadway fronting to the Fort to
> some inhabitants of the said Broadway in order to be inclosed
> to make a Bowling Green thereof, with walks therein for the
> beauty and ornament of the said street as well as for the
> recreation and delight of the inhabitants of this City." (23).

Jacob Riis in 1897 rediscovered the notion of vestpocket parks when he was secretary of a Committee on Small Parks in the City of New York. His committee reported:

> "Any unused corner, triangle, or vacant lot kept off the
> market by litigation or otherwise, may serve this purpose
> well. There are such corners and lots to be found around
> the City, the property sometimes of the municipal corporation,
> and these could be used to advantage and without expense.23.5".

It was in Europe, however, that "mini-park" development first became a general policy, and mini-parks a reality. Many cities in Britain and on the continent were bomb scarred after the Second World War. These small open spaces could have become parking lots or derelict eyesores, but they were redesigned for children's play. Many became adventure playgrounds, and the special concern of Lady Allen of Hurtwood.(24). These open spaces were painful reminders to residents, but through imaginative planning they provided much needed open space in high density urban areas.

Urban renewal, by design rather than by war, was implemented as a solution to "urban blight" and "slum conditions" in the fifties. Unwholesome tenements were placed by slabs of apartments, with green space between; the developments echoed the ideas of Corbusier thirty years earlier.(25).

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(23)   Seymour, ibid., p. 1.
(23.5) Hoving, Thomas, P.F., "Think Big About Small Parks", in Small Urban
        Spaces.
(24)   Allen, Lady, of Hurtwood, Planning for Play.
(25)   Mumford, Lewis, The Urban Prospect, Harcourt Brace and World, New
        York, 1968, p. 89.

By the 1960's the problems with the redevelopments had become evident. The social problems in the new housing were greater than those in the old, and the housing deteriorated. The open spaces between the buildings were not used for recreation, but became barren areas of fenced grass. The park areas were still unsafe: a no-man's land after dark. The new housing was sanitary, but it did not meet social needs.

Disillusion with the new public housing programs arose first in New York City (every urban problem comes first, and is worst, in this incredibly dense urban area). The problems were documented in many books of the early sixties,(26) and within the cities of the United States various alternative solutions were tried.

The mini-park, the development of a park on a vacant lot, was tried as one of these alternative solutions.(27). In 1963 the Park Association of New York presented an exhibition "New Parks for New York", which argued the case for vest pocket parks in the midtown area; the parks would provide

> "a pool of space removed from the flow of traffic -
> even pedestrian traffic; an outdoor room, human in
> scale, enclosed and protected, and sheltered from
> noise."(28).

The exhibit caused a minor furore, as the Parks Commissioner again insisted that three acres was the smallest feasible area for a park. Then the publicity following the exhibit brought a philanthropic organization, the William Paley Foundation, onto the scene. The Paley Foundation provided funding for a prototype park; the park was built, using the design presented at the Parks Association exhibit.

Political changes brought more support from the City. The election of Mayor Lindsay, and the introduction of a new parks commissioner, Tom Hoving in 1965(29), brought more flexibility in the attitude of the authorities.

Philadelphia, Boston, and other North American cities(30) have adopted "mini-park" or "vest pocket" park programs. Their experience has been documented in a book edited by Whitney North Seymour Junior, entitled "Small Urban Spaces; The Philosophy, Design and Politics of Vest Pocket Parks and Other Small Urban Spaces".

(26) Jacobs, Jane, Life and Death of Great American Cities, H. G. Gans, The Urban Villagers.
(27) Mumford, The Urban Prospect, p. 90.
(28) Seymour, ibid., p. 3.
(29) Whitaker, Ben and Kenneth Brown, "Parks for People", p. 1, Seeley Service Co., London, 1971.
(30) Gruen, ibid., p. 322.

In Canada there has been some experimentation with "vest pocket" parks. Winnipeg has a "Port-a-Park" program(31) which introduces modular units of play equipment onto vacant land in areas short of park space. In several cities there are small public playgrounds on vacant land adjacent to settlement houses in inner city areas (in both Vancouver and Winnipeg for example). Our cities are not as dense as those of the United States, and we have not yet placed a high priority on increasing the availability of park areas in the centre of our urban areas.

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(31) "Port-a-Parks Replace Empty Downtown Lots", Recreation Canada, No. 31-2-73.

PARKS PLANNING IN THE CITY OF EDMONTON

Early Planning in Edmonton

The original settlements in Edmonton were subdivided into pie-shaped
lots running from the river bank, providing each settler with a portion of
river bank frontage.(1). As the City grew it adopted, in 1907, the standard

Plan for Edmonton Settlement 1883
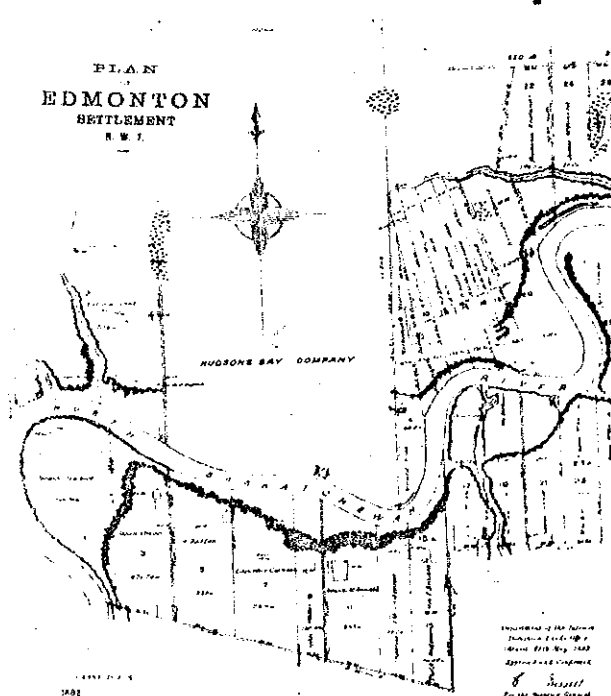
Grid Dominion Land Survey pattern for streets and parks, and extended this
beyond the North Saskatchewan River lots which themselves projected about
a mile from each bank of the river. Super-imposed on this pattern was a
system of diagonal arterial streets (St. Albert Trail, Fort Trail, etc.),
which trace the routes of the original paths and trails into Edmonton.

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(1) Edmonton General Plan, 1967, p. 13

In 1906 City Council appointed the first street and Parks Committee which commissioned a report from Frederick Todd, a Montreal consultant:

> "that a crowded population, if they are to live in health and happiness must have space for the enjoyment of that peaceful beauty of nature, which, because it is opposite of all that is sordid and artificial in our city lives, is so wonderfully refreshing to the tired soul of city dwellers."(2).
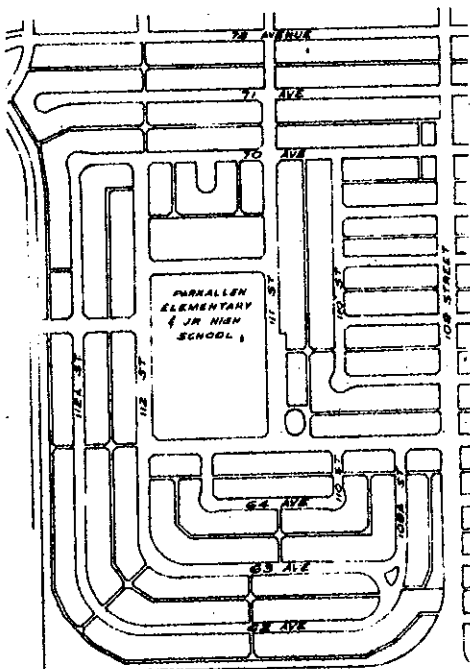
In 1910 Edmonton had a land boom, sparked by the extension of the Canadian Pacific Railway across into Edmonton from Strathcona. In 1912 Strathcona was amalgamated with Edmonton, and in that same year a Parks Commission was established as an advisory body, and a Parks Department within the City Administration. In 1913 the boom collapsed, and the new department was disbanded.

For the next 30 years there was no concerted planning for Parks development, and City Council played with plans for a Civic Centre. The Engineers Department did a limited amount of development and maintenance of parklands and athletic facilities. In some areas, community leagues were formed by residents interested in providing recreational opportunities.

Parks Planning

In the economic growth that followed the Second World War, Edmonton reestablished the Recreation Commission. The discovery of oil in Leduc in 1947 added impetus to the City's development, and the Parks Department was reestablished. In 1950 the Planning Department was established with professional staff, and the first "comprehensive neighbourhood unit", Parkallen, was planned. The neighbourhood has no through traffic, and a central school and park area - the first subdivision of its kind in Edmonton.

Edmonton's First Comprehensive Neighbourhood Unit, "Parkallen", 1950

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(2) Parks and Recreation: Master Plan, 1970-1980, City of Edmonton, 1970, p. 13

In 1955 the Parks Department presented to Mayor Hawrelak its first comprehensive assessment of Edmonton's park needs and resources. The document lays out standards for "playlots", "playgrounds", "neighbourhood parks" and "district parks", as well as City wide facilities.(3). (It should be noted that in this report the deficiency in park area in Norwood is already documented; the authors recommended to Mayor Hawrelak that an area totalling one City block be bought in the Norwood area; the land was not bought, and Norwood is still sadly deficient in park space.)

The report did not talk about "mini parks" or "vest pocket" parks. Small "playlots", however, are recommended for inclusion within the larger neighbourhood parks:

> "Playlot or Block Playground
>
> Function: The playlot is a small area intended primarily for use by pre-schoolers. The provision of these small recreational lots must be justified by special survey as many areas do not require this facility and high maintenance costs and supervisory problems are encountered. Mothers of small children wish to keep them in sight from home for safety reasons; this factor discourages sufficient use of small playlots to justify their initial cost in many cases.
>
> Location: Playlots should be carefully sited to provide easy and safe access.
>
> Size: The overall standard for the provision of land for play-lots, neighbourhood playgrounds and neighbourhood parks is 1.5 acres per 1,000 population. In most instances, both playlots and playgrounds would constitute a part of a larger park area to provide flexibility of function."(4).

The neighbourhood parks mentioned above when combined with school grounds were to be 14 acres in size, providing space for community league facilities, playground programs and school sports, etc. The possibility of small "amenity parks" (rather than playlots) is mentioned, and the report mentions that they are "suitable in more remote areas of the neighbourhood but should not be used in calculation of land requirements".(5).

The threat of METS plans (Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study) to existing and planned park areas increased the pressure for an overall Master Plan for Parks and Recreation in Edmonton.(6). This plan "Edmonton

---

(3) Report on Active and Passive Recreation Park and Open Space Facilities Within the City with Recommendations as to Immediate and Future Needs, City of Edmonton, 1955, p. 4.
(4) Edmonton General Plan, p. 8.2.
(5) ibid., p. 8.4.
(6) Master Plan, p. 14.

Parks and Recreation; Master Plan; 1970-1980" was presented to City Council in 1970.

The 1970 Master Plan

The Master Plan includes playgrounds, of around five acres, in every neighbourhood, to be within half a mile of every home, away from major traffic arteries, and adjacent to elementary and junior high schools. The Plan also mentions the possibility of a need for more additional smaller parks in some neighbourhoods.

> "Since neighbourhood playgrounds are essential
> recreation areas, standards and criteria should not
> be compromised. Additional small play areas from
> .5 to 1 acre in size may be necessary in high density
> residential areas which are isolated by major traffic
> routes. Small play areas may be constructed as part
> of walkway systems." (7).

In its discussion of neighbourhood parks ("landscaped open spaces, designed primarily for passive, informal recreational use"), the Master Plan, like the report of 1955, mentions "small amenity parks":

> "Small landscaped areas or "amenity parks" which are
> the incidental result of subdivision design, should
> not be used to fulfill the requirements" ... for
> neighbourhood parks. (8).

Mini-Parks and the Master Plan

The City's own documents, therefore, include several statements relating to the development and maintenance of "mini-parks" in Edmonton. These, however, do not amount to a conscious policy on the development of small parks, and the Parks Master Plan has several significant omissions.

The City of Edmonton does have "small amenity parks" in many residential areas. These are developed and maintained by the Parks Department. They do not exist as a result of a conscious policy on the development of small parks, but as "an incidental result of subdivision design". Our only idea of the number and distribution of these small amenity parks within the city

---

(7) Master Plan, p. 28.
(8) Master Plan, p. 28. In fact, however, park deficiencies calculated for
     each neighbourhood in the Master Plan are based on data which includes
     incidental "amenity" parks.

comes from a six year old study which appears to contain inaccuracies
even for those neighbourhoods largely developed at that time. (See
Chapter 3 for an analysis of that study).

The Master Plan also discusses "playlots" but places continued
emphasis on locating these within the larger neighbourhood playgrounds.
Attempts to develop decentralized playlots, close to the families who need
them, (i.e. in corners of subdivisions with a heavy concentration of
walk-up apartments, or in areas without an accessible neighbourhood playground)
have only begun in response to vociferous community demand (e.g. in St. Francis
in 1971, and in Norwood this year).

Because of the lack of policy on the development of small parks, we
have only an outdated, and seemingly inaccurate, idea of the number of such
parks existing and no idea of the number of areas available for development
for such parks, or of the extent of the need for such parks.

> Recommendation 1
>
> That the City conduct a new survey of existing
> "mini-park" areas within neighbourhoods deficient
> in park area.
>
> Recommendation 2
>
> That the City also conduct a survey to locate any
> small pieces of City owned land in such areas, and
> assess their suitability for development as small
> parks (either amenity parks, playlots, or a
> combination of the two).

The parks Master Plan deals entirely with residential communities in
Edmonton. There is no mention of industrial or commercially zoned areas.
There is some mention of the need for pedestrial plazas in the central
business district:

> "The creation of squares, plazas or parks, perhaps
> with special landscaping fountains, flags or
> sculpture at key entrance points" (10) ...to the
> downtown core.

It seems significant that the planning and development of such areas

---

(9) Master Plan, p. 35.

(10) Edmonton General Plan, p. 10.6.

have been omitted from the Parks Master Plan. We already have several areas used as parks in the downtown area. Sir Winston Churchill Square, between City Hall and the Library, is heavily used by shoppers, office workers and loafers; it provides some green relief in the concrete canyons of downtown. South of the Library there is a courtyard, used sometimes for outdoor theatre. This could be developed with additional planting to provide shelter from wind and sun, to provide an additional "amenity" park in the downtown area. There are also plans for a system of linked pedestrian walkways through the central districts, but the description of the proposed system makes no mention of the use of planting.(11). It is concerned with weather protected corridors rather than linked landscaped urban spaces, (i.e. mini-parks).

In the west end of the downtown area, the Legislative Grounds are available to the provincial employees and other workers in the area. These, however, are the only "oases". In our search for an area for a "mini-park experiment" we were unable to find one in the west downtown area; open land was too valuable for parking to be devoted to recreational purposes.

There are no specific policies relating to park spaces within the downtown area of Edmonton and we need a planned approach to the development of mini-parks (even on roof spaces) in the central business district.

Recommendation 3

That planning in the commercial area of downtown
include provision for small "amenity" parks for the
use of shoppers and workers in the area.

Large shopping malls in the City's suburbs now compete with the downtown area. These, like the downtown area, have not been landscaped to include parks, whether amenity parks or playlots. Some shopping malls, for example Southgate, have attempted some landscaping, but in most cases the attempts have been totally overwhelmed by the acres of asphalt made available for car parking. Although many mall managers have developed attractive and exciting internal spaces for shoppers, the parking area remains a desert; too hot in summer and exposed to bitter winds in winter. The Edmonton General Plan recommends that there be more landscaping in such areas, but makes no provision for enforcing their recommendation.

"Much greater emphasis should be given by developers
to 'humanizing' these vast parking areas by imaginative
layout, screening and planning." (12)

---

(11) Edmonton General Plan, p. 10.4.
(12) Edmonton General Plan, p. 6.4.

Our second "mini-park project" was made in co-operation with Centennial Shopping Centre in the west end of Edmonton and shows some of the possibilities and difficulties in such developments.

Recommendation 4

That the City compel (perhaps by performance bond) commercial developers in suburban areas to devote a percentage of the total cost of their development to external landscaping. The City should co-operate in the design of this open space and provide on-going maintenance.

There have been several small playlots planned within private developments within the last few years. Some are within commercial developments, and some within condominiums.

Recommendation 5

That the City provide a mechanism for consultation and co-operation with developers, organizations and home-owners concerned with planning of small parks on privately owned land.

Three of the four "mini-park planning workshops" described in this document were for residential communities. Two were planned for areas deficient in park area according to the Master Plan (Norwood and Oliver); and one was within a co-operative town house development, just being completed in the Mill Woods area of Edmonton. The Norwood site is the only one owned by the City, being a (controversial) road closure. The Oliver site is owned by the Anglican Church, and the Mill Woods site is owned by the Co-operative.

We have no parks policy for industrial areas within the City. The General Plan recommends "good standards of site development including landscape treatment of visable yards and parking areas". (13). Landscaped boulevards and buffer-zones are also advocated. With the isolation of industrial activities within industrial zones in the City, workers in these areas have no access to parks or recreational programs. If small parks were available in such areas, they could be used by workers on their lunch hours, or for some recreational activity before or after work. After a breath of fresh air, a worker would be more alert for the rest of his work day and the possibility of daily recreation during the work day would lead to a higher level of physical fitness.

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(13) Edmonton General Plan, p. 7.9.

Recommendation 6

That the City establish a Parks and Recreation program for industrial areas in the City:

1) to encourage and enable industrial firms to provide landscapped areas for their workers enjoyment,

2) to co-operate with industrial firms in the provision of recreational programs for their workers.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF MINI-PARKS IN EDMONTON

In this chapter, the extent of mini-park development in Edmonton is explored. It should be noted first that no completely adequate census of mini-parks exists. The closest study to such a census appears to be the Neighbourhoods Study, February, 1969, produced by the City of Edmonton, Parks and Recreation Department. This study provided the basis for parts of the Parks Master Plan. In the study, maps similar to the accompanying Map 3-1, Map 3-2, and Map 3-3, are provided for all 102 neighbourhoods planned or occupied at that time. The ornamental parks mapped in each of these neighbourhoods may be regarded as mini-parks within the definition being used for this study: an area of less than one acre; planted with trees, shrubs or flowers; containing a place to sit; featuring a sidewalk by or through the park. However, no definition for ornamental parks accompanies the study, so it is difficult to determine whether all parks classified as ornamental by the Parks and Recreation study would be mini-parks as we define them, although by observation most fit at least two of the four criteria listed above.

A further problem with this study is that there appears to be some discrepancies between maps and reality. This can be seen by taking a look at one neighbourhood - Glenora (Map 3-4). Here we find that in addition to those parks designated ornamental in the Parks and Recreation study, there are parks which would seem to fit this category which are not indicated in that study at all - some of which are zoned as parkland (AP), some not. Further, some of the designated ornamental parks seem to be so in name only; in one case in Glenora a designated ornamental park is an extremely narrow short boulevard containing some trees and shrubs rather like a large planter, another is an inhospitable stretch of weeds between two converging laneways, a third is a small field beside a major roadway.

We have in Edmonton a situation where a mini-park may fit into any of the following seven categories:

- designated as an ornamental park (by the Parks Department), zoned as parkland and functioning as a mini-park (in Glenora 3);

- designated and zoned but not functioning (in Glenora 1);

- designated and functioning but not zoned (in Glenora 1);

- designated but neither functioning nor zoned (in Glenora 2);

- not designated but zoned and functioning (in Glenora 3);

- not designated, not zoned but functioning (in Glenora 9);

- not designated, not functioning but zoned (in Glenora 1).

It is interesting to note that in Glenora, three of the designated ornamental parks really do not appear to be functioning as such, while twelve ornamental parks are in fact being maintained by the Parks Department, but not designated for some reason. Thus the Neighbourhoods Study has its limitations.(1).

Nevertheless, it gives us an indication of the distribution of mini-parks throughout the City. Map 3-5 indicates the ratio of population to acre of mini-park throughout the City based on the acreage of ornamental parks computed in the Neighbourhoods Study. Map 3-6 indicates the ratio of population to number of ornamental parks in each neighbourhoods. It is clear that there is a great disparity between neighbourhoods (in the ratios).

TABLE 3:1

NUMBER OF NEIGHBOURHOODS BY RATIO OF
POPULATION TO MINI-PARKLAND ACREAGE (1967)

Population Acre of Mini-park	Number of Neighbourhoods	% of Total
Less than 1,000	17	19%
1,000 - 1,999	25	28%
2,000 - 4,999	15	17%
5,000 - 9,999	7	8%
10,00 or more	26	29%
Not calculated *	12	-
	102	101%

Lowest ratio: 315 persons per acre of mini-park (Windsor Park).
Highest ratio: infinity, i.e. no mini-parks (15 neighbourhoods).

* The ratio in 12 neighbourhoods was not calculated because the 1967 population was less than half that estimated for the neighbourhoods by 1980; i.e., the neighbourhood was still in the developing stage.

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(1) The distribution of mini-parks using neighbourhoods as the unit is not entirely satisfactory, quite apart from the problems of definition and quality (functionality) discussed above. In some neighbourhoods, the parks are placed at the extreme edge; e.g., Oliver (see Map 3-5) not only has a small amount of acreage, but its mini-parks are at the extreme west end of the area.

CUMULATIVE TOTAL OF NEIGHBOURHOODS BY NUMBERS OF MINI-PARKS

No. of Mini-parks in Neigh-borhoods	No. of Neighbour-hoods *	No. of Mini-parks	Cum. Total of Neigh-bourhoods	Cum. % of Neigh-bourhoods	Cum. Total of Mini-parks	Cum. % of Mini-parks
8	3	29	3	3%	29	12%
7	6	42	9	10%	71	29%
6	5	30	14	16%	101	41%
5	6	30	20	22%	131	53%
4	6	24	26	29%	155	63%
3	16	48	42	47%	203	82%
2	14	28	56	62%	231	93%
1	17	17	73	81%	248	100%
0	17	0	90	100%	248	100%

* - Largely populated by 1967.

In terms of numbers of parks (as opposed to acreage) Table 3:2 indicates that 10% of the neighbourhoods account for 29% of the parks; less than a quarter of the neighbourhoods account for over half of the parks.

Two primary variables that seem to account for the distribution of mini-parks by neighbourhood are: neighbourhood wealth and age.

Most of the upper income areas have relatively large acreages and numbers of mini-parks -- in the southwest from Glenora to Quesnell Heights and Windsor Park to Grandview, and in the Capilano area. Further, as these areas lie along the river valley, they are also graced with abundant parkland along the top of the bank. Much of this parkland has many of the features of cultured planting, resting places and accessability to pedestrians. Of the 17 neighbourhoods indicated in the study as having a population to mini-park acreage of less than 1,000, nine may be considered to be in the upper income areas. (See Maps 3-5, 3-6 and 3-7).

In terms of age, we may separate neighbourhoods into three categories: those largely developed prior to 1947, those built after that date but primarily before 1968, and those built since then. Table 3:3 indicates that mini-parks are found to be most densely located in those neighbourhoods

developed from 1947 to 1968. 83% of the fifty-three neighbourhoods developed during this period have population to mini-park ratios of less than 2,000 compared with 20% of those neighbourhoods built before 1947, and 25% of those neighbourhoods built after 1968 (based on projected populations and subdivision designs at that time). Prior to 1947, the streets were laid out as a gridiron with few odd-shaped lots on which to locate parks. The new subdivision designs of the fifties and sixties provided for ornamental parks, but after 1968 or so, it was decided that such parks were too costly.

Coincidently, starting about 1968, responsibility for subdivision design was transferred from the hands of the City to the individual developers. It may be that mini-parks are regarded as too expensive, not only by the Parks and Recreation Department who must maintain them, but as well by the developers since large compact parks might reduce service costs.

It is interesting to note that the neighbourhood planned to be developed after 1968 which has the lowest population to mini-parks ratio, is Westbrook Drive and that the next two are Patricia Heights and Lansdowne. One of the two neighbourhoods built before 1947 which has a low population to mini-park ratio is Glenora. (The other is Riverdale which includes for calculation purposes the so called Oliver Park.)

As a result of the two forces, wealth and age, acting to determine the number of mini-parks in a neighbourhood, we see that certain areas of the City fare better as a whole, than others.

Map 3-8 which is based on Table 3:4 indicates that the older areas of the City to the east and the newest areas in the north-east have the majority of neighbourhoods with few or no mini-parks; a belt of areas built during the fifties and early sixties have the majority of neighbourhoods with quite a few mini-parks (less than 2,000 population per mini-park).

**NUMBER OF NEIGHBOURHOODS BY RATIO OF POPULATION
TO NUMBERS OF MINI-PARKS, AND BY AGE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Population / Mini-Parks	Prior to 1947*		1947 to 1968*		After 1968**		Total	
	No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 1,000	2	6%	21	38%	1	8%	24	24%
1,000 - 1,999	5	14%	25	45%	2	17%	32	31%
2,000 - 4,999	13	37%	4	7%	4	33%	21	21%
5,000 - 10,000	4	11%	0	0%	1	8%	5	5%
∞ (no mini-parks)	11	31%	5	9%	4	33%	20	20%
TOTAL	35	100%	55	100%	12	100%	102	100%

* - Based on 1967 population and mini-parks existing in 1968.
** - Based on projected population for 1980 and planned ornamental parks.

**NUMBER OF NEIGHBOURHOODS BY RATIO OF POPULATION
TO MINI-PARK AND BY AREA OF CITY**

Population / Mini-Parks	AREA*																Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	10	11	12	13	14	15*	16	17	
Less than 1,000	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	5	2	0	0	4	2	2	2	0	23
1,001 - 1,999	4	6	0	0	1	2	3	1	2	3	0	2	3	3	1	0	32
SUBTOTAL	6	6	0	0	2	3	5	7	4	3	0	6	5	5	3	0	55
2,000 - 4,999	0	0	4	3	1	0	3	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	3	2	21
5,000 - 10,000	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	5
∞ (no mini-parks)	0	0	3	3	2	2	2	1	0	2	4	0	0	1	0	0	20
SUBTOTAL	0	0	7	6	4	2	5	1	2	4	6	1	1	1	3	3	46
TOTAL	6	6	7	6	6	5	10	8	6	7	6	7	6	6	6	3	101

* - Parks and Recreation boundaries.

It is also interesting that of the 48 neighbourhoods designated by the City Planning Department for some kind of improvement program, almost half have a ratio of population to mini-parkland acreage of greater than 10,000 persons to one acre. In those cases where the Planning Department's boundaries do not coincide with the Parks study boundaries, the ratio is determined by the ratio category in the greater portion of the neighbourhood. (See Map 3-4).

TABLE 3:5

NUMBER OF NEIGHBOURHOODS BEING CONSIDERED FOR
NEIGHBOURHOOD IMPROVEMENT BY AMOUNT OF RATIO OF
POPULATION TO MINI PARKLAND ACREAGE (1967).

Population Mini-Parkland acreage	Number of Neighbourhoods	Percentage
Less than 1,000	3	7%
1,000 - 4,999	13	28%
5,000 - 9,999	8	17%
10,000 or more	22	48%
TOTAL	46	100%
Not Calculated *	2	

* - The ratio in 2 neighbourhoods was not calculated because the 1967 population was less than half that estimated for the neighbourhoods by 1980; i.e., the neighbourhood was still in the developing stage.

It will be seen that in the two categories of highest ratio of population to mini-parkland (more than 10,000, and 5,000 to 10,000) are found 65% of the areas designated for improvement (by the Planning Department), compared to 37% of all neighbourhoods (defined by Parks and Recreation) in the City as a whole.

In the 48 designated areas there are only a total of 45 mini-parks (ornamental parks) according to the 1969 study, compared to a total of 248 in the City as a whole. These figures suggest that one of the first priorities in the neighbourhood improvement programs will be to investigate the need for mini-parks.

CONCLUSION

By the City Parks and Recreation Department's own 1969 study, the City now has some 250 mini-parks (ornamental parks). While some of these really do not meet the criteria used in this study to define such parks, this fact may be counter-balanced by the fact that there are mini-parks which, for some reason, have not been counted by the 1969 study. A new census might provide better and more up-to-date data.

Despite the reasonably large number of parks in the City, there are severe discrepancies in their distribution. While some 15 neighbourhoods (in 1968) had no mini-parks at all, 17 neighbourhoods had a ratio of less than 1,000 people per acre of mini-parks, some with very low ratios; (for instance, Windsor Park with 315 people per park). Generally speaking, those areas laid out on the gridiron pattern (pre-1947) have the greatest deficiencies in such parks, although not all such areas are deficient, as Table 3:3 indicates. Those parks that are found in older neighbourhoods are usually located where the gridiron pattern has been disrupted by an odd road alignment; (e.g., St. Albert Trail, Stony Plain Road, Kingsway), which creates odd shaped lots. On the other hand, the newest areas of the City (post-1968) also generally lack mini-parks - apparently because of judgements made regarding their maintenance costs, and perhaps because of the economics (from the developers' point of view) of subdivision design.

Thus in addition to upgrading older neighbourhoods with mini-parks through neighbourhood improvement, attention needs to be paid to current design approaches which disfavor mini-parks for financial reasons. Since mini-parks have been judged as valuable amenities by the Mini-Parks Task Force participants, it is suggested that the City's parks priorities need to be changed. Further, as is discussed in Chapter 4, the mini-parks can be designed to be low in maintenance costs.

It should be noted that in this chapter we have concerned ourselves solely with mini-parks in residential subdivisions and adjacent commercial areas (including the downtown). While commercial areas including the downtown have been included in the 1969 Parks and Recreation study, the ratios of population to mini-parks are not meaningful for commercial areas as they deal only with the residential population, not the much larger population found in a commercial area on any given day. The lack of mini-parks in commercial areas is apparent from the fact that in the 1969 study

only three of the 248 ornamental parks mapped, (the back of the Library, the front of the C.N. Tower, and the Oliver Park - all downtown), are located in commercial areas. While industrial areas were not investigated in the 1969 study, there are no examples of mini-parks in industrial areas to the knowledge of the Task Force members, or the Parks Department.

Thus, the distribution of mini-parks is skewed not only by favoring certain residential areas over others, but as well by ignoring the needs of the working and shopping population.

MAP 3-1

CRESTWOOD

142 ST

POPULATION

1951	633
1956	1919
1961	3207
1967	3239
1980 PROJECTED	3300

1967 UNDER 21 YEARS

PRE-SCHOOL	251
ELEMENTARY	483
JUNIOR HIGH	267
SENIOR HIGH	256
NOT AT SCHOOL	230
TOTAL	1487

PARK & OPEN SPACE SHORTAGES

RECOMMENDED NEEDS BY REVISED STANDARD	6.60 ACS.
EXISTING OR 'AS-PLANNED'	11.99 ACS.
SHORTAGES TO BE MADE UP	ACS.

RECREATION FACILITIES

HORSE SHOE		PLAYGROUND	
LITTLE LEAGUE		JUNIOR	1
PONY. LEAGUE		SENIOR	1
REGULAR BASEBALL		TENNIS	2
SOFTBALL		CONCESSION	
SOCCER FOOTBALL		LIGHTING	1
RUGBY FOOTBALL		HOCKEY "B"	2
BASKETBALL	1	SOCIAL RINK	1
VOLLEYBALL	1	TABLES	
TETHERBALL	1	BENCHES	
TOBOGGAN HILL		WADING POOL	
SLEDD HILL		SPRAY DECK	
DRESSING ROOMS	2	C/L BLDG.	1
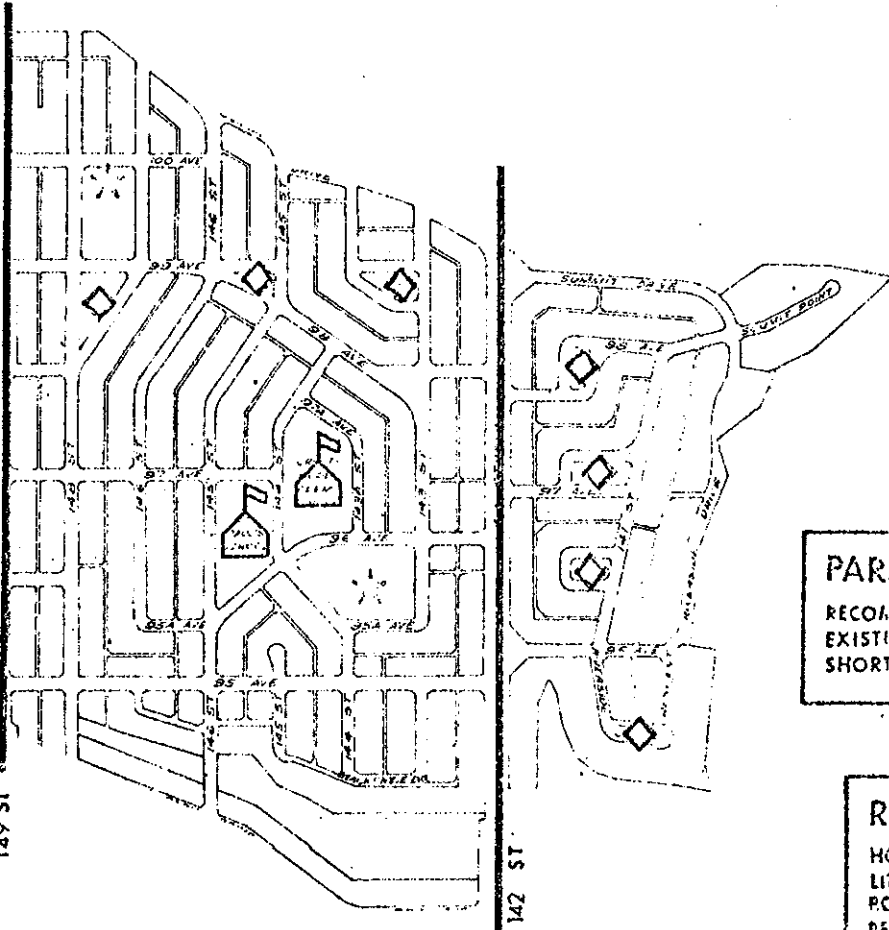
LAND USE

	ACRES	
RESIDENTIAL-SINGLE FAMILY	171.49	62.4 %
LOW DENSITY		
HIGH DENSITY	1.25	0.5 %
COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL	4.60	1.7 %
SCHOOLS - PUBLIC	6.08	2.2 %
SEPARATE	4.24	1.5 %
PARKLAND - ORNAMENTAL	5.83	2.1 %
PLAYGROUND	6.16	2.2 %
SPORTSFIELD		%
DISTRICT		%
ROADWAY LANDSCAPING	2.49	0.9 %
RIVER VALLEY & RAVINE		%

NORTH

PARKS & RECREATION DEPT
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

0   500   1,000   2,000

◆ = Ornamental Parks

MAP 3-2

ALBERTA AVENUE

122 AVE
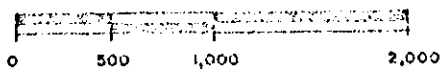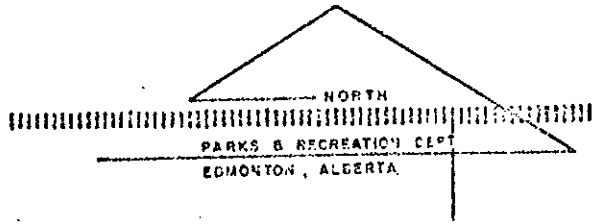
111 AVE

POPULATION

1951	10153
1956	10127
1961	10301
1967	9349
1980	
PROJECTED	9600

1967 UNDER 21 YEARS

PRE-SCHOOL	1068
ELEMENTARY	1049
JUNIOR HIGH	322
SENIOR HIGH	334
NOT AT SCHOOL	522
TOTAL	3395

RECREATION FACILITIES

HORSE SHOE		PLAYGROUND	
LITTLE LEAGUE		JUNIOR	ı
PONY. LEAGUE		SENIOR	ı
REGULAR BASEBALL		TENNIS	
SOFTBALL		CONCESSION	
SOCCER FOOTBALL		LIGHTING	ı
RUGBY FOOTBALL		HOCKEY "B"	
BASKETBALL		SOCIAL RINK	ı
VOLLEY BALL	ı	TABLES	
TETHERBALL	ı	BENCHES	ı
TOBOGGAN HILL	ı	WADING POOL	ı
SLEDD HILL		SPRAY DECK	
DRESSING ROOMS	2	C/L BLDG.	ı

LAND USE

	ACRES	
RESIDENTIAL-SINGLE FAMILY	187.15	49.2 %
LOW DENSITY		%
HIGH DENSITY	43.77	11.5 %
COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL	24.53	6.5 %
SCHOOLS- PUBLIC	5.60	1.5 %
SEPARATE	2.48	0.7 %
PARKLAND- ORNAMENTAL		%
PLAYGROUND	1.55	0.4 %
SPORTSFIELD		%
DISTRICT		%
ROADWAY		
LANDSCAPING	1.49	0.4 %
RIVER VALLEY &		
RAVINE		%

PARK & OPEN SPACE SHORTAGES

RECOMMENDED NEEDS BY REVISED STANDARD	19.20 ACS.
EXISTING OR 'AS-PLANNED'	1.55 ACS.
SHORTAGES TO BE MADE UP	17.65 ACS.

NORTH

PARKS & RECREATION DEPT.
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

0	500	1,000	2,000

MAP 3-3
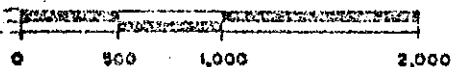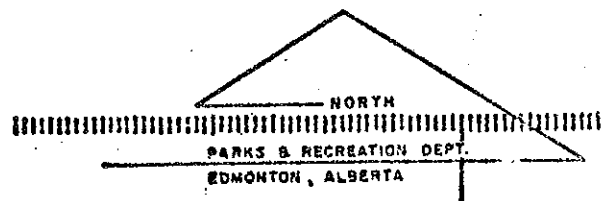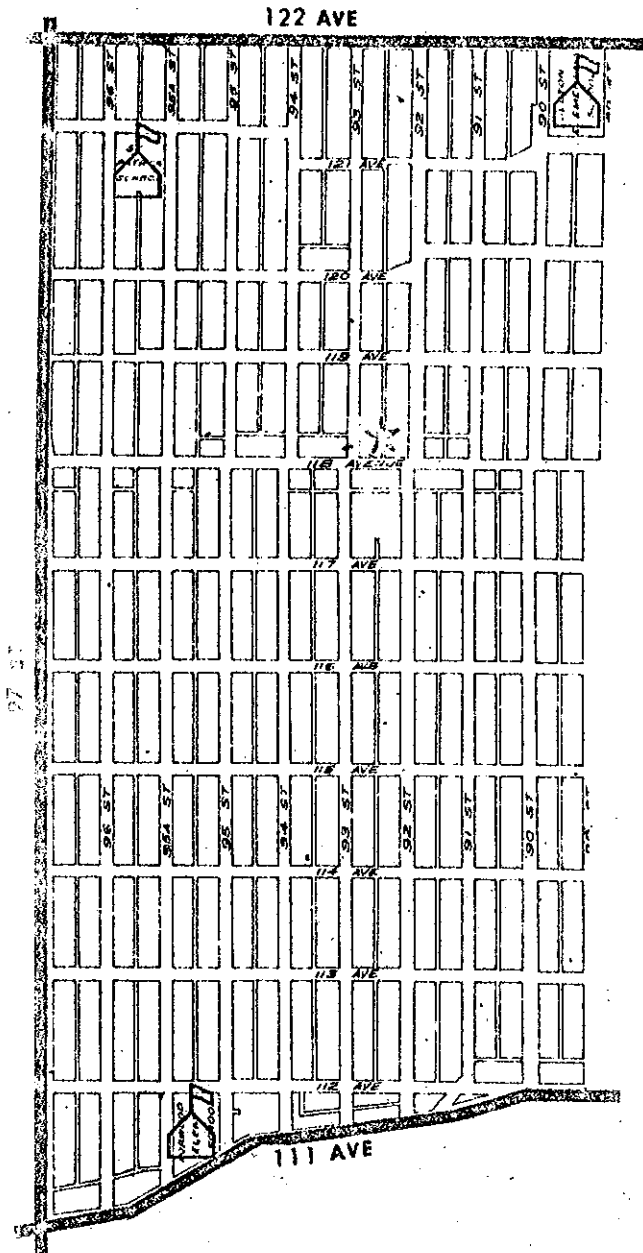
LONDONDERRY
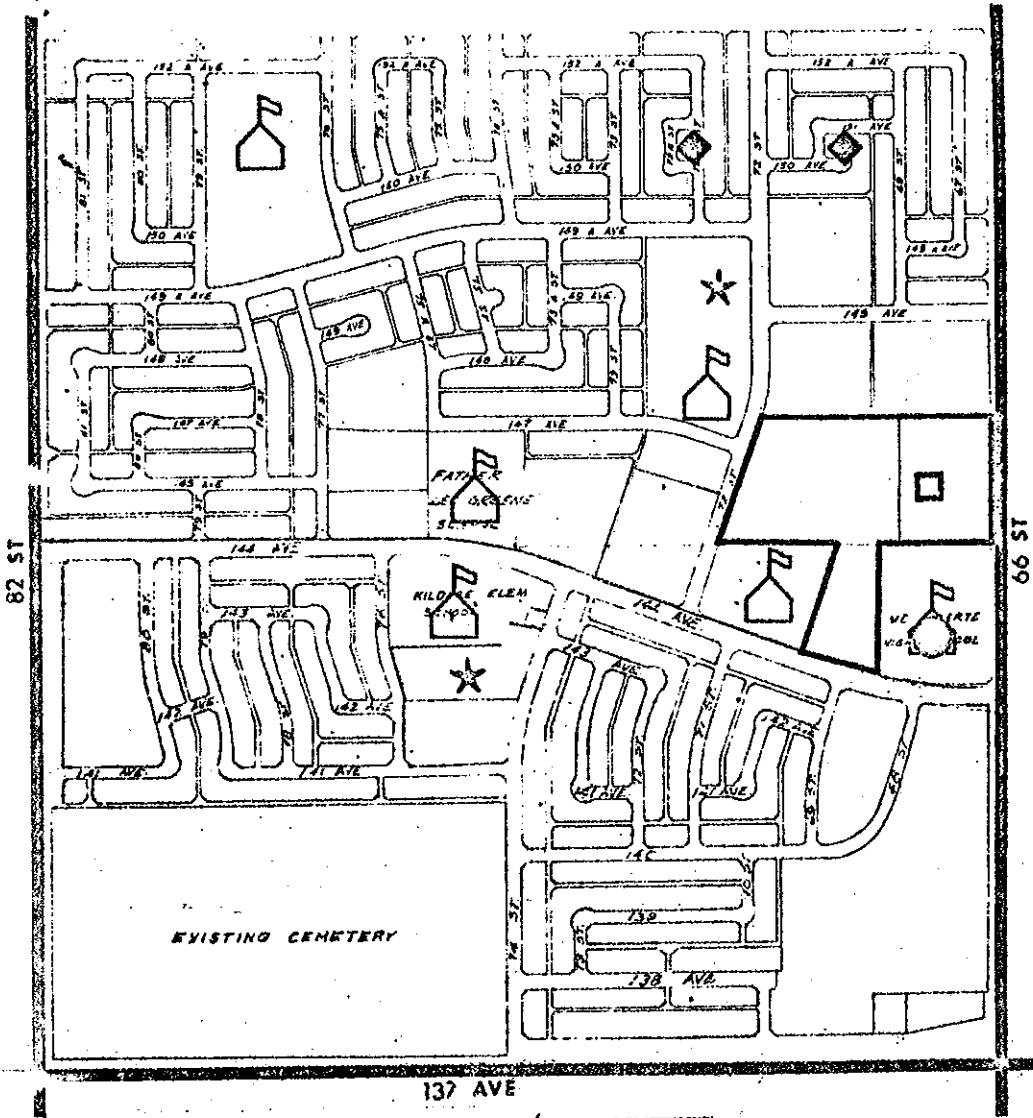
POPULATION

1951	
1956	
1961	
1967	600
1980	
PROJECTED	10500

82 ST

66 ST

FATHER LEO GREEN SCHOOL

KILDARE ELEM. SCHOOL

VI. PORTE VIC. SCHOOL

EXISTING CEMETERY

137 AVE

LAND USE	ACRES	
RESIDENTIAL-SINGLE FAMILY	188.94	29.5 %
LOW DENSITY	13.17	2.0 %
HIGH DENSITY	41.79	6.5 %
COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL	124.76	19.5 %
SCHOOLS- PUBLIC	51.69	8.1 %
SEPARATE	6.86	1.1 %
PARKLAND- ORNAMENTAL	0.30	%
PLAYGROUND	13.86	2.2 %
SPORTSFIELD	32.63	5.1 %
DISTRICT		%
ROADWAY		
LANDSCAPING	1.01	0.2 %
RIVER VALLEY &		
RAVINE		%

NORTH

PARKS & RECREATION DEPT.
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

◆ - Ornamental Parks

0   500   1,000   2,000
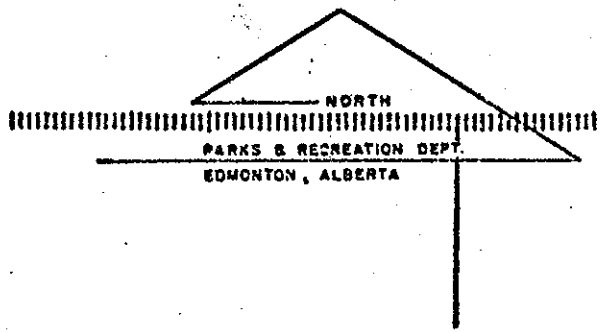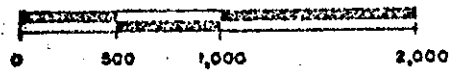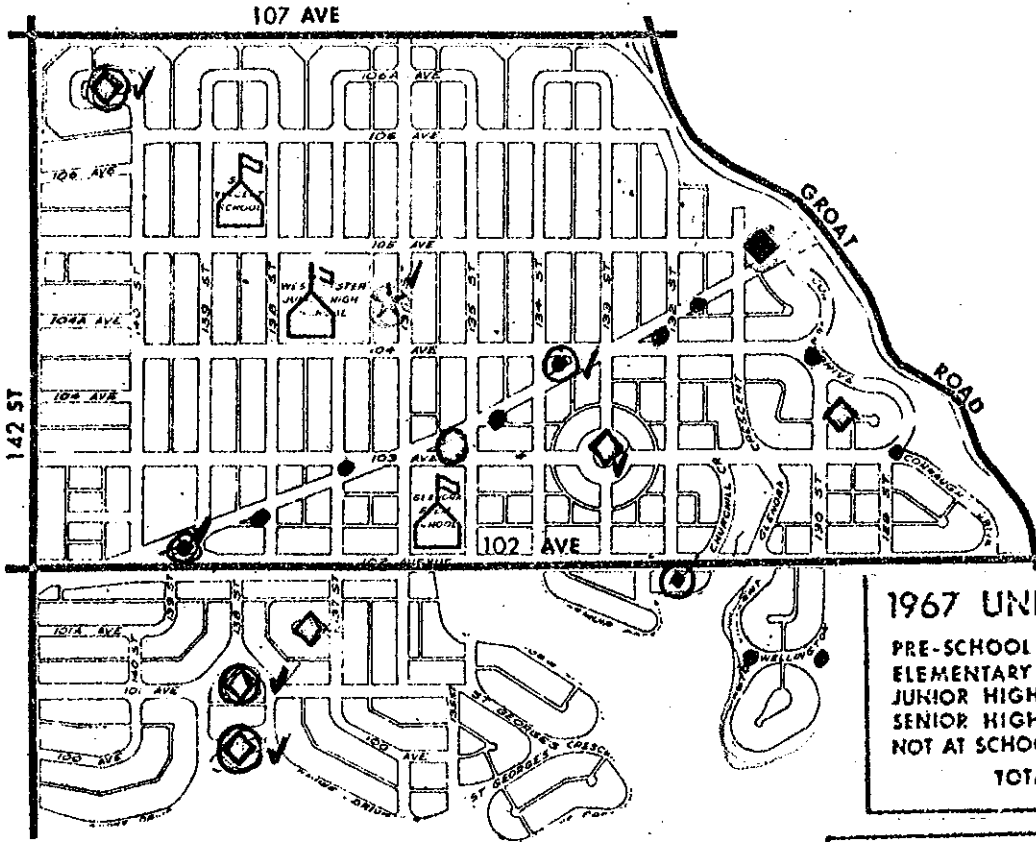
POPULATION.

1951	4155
1956	4896
1961	4560
1967	4087
1980 PROJECTED	4000

1967 UNDER 21 YEARS

PRE-SCHOOL	265
ELEMENTARY	435
JUNIOR HIGH	272
SENIOR HIGH	329
NOT AT SCHOOL	287
TOTAL	1588

RECREATION   FACILITIES

HORSE SHOE	1	PLAYGROUND	
LITTLE LEAGUE		JUNIOR	1
PONY. LEAGUE		SENIOR	1
REGULAR BASEBALL		TENNIS	
SOFTBALL		CONCESSION	
SOCCER FOOTBALL		LIGHTING	1
RUGBY FOOTBALL		HOCKEY B	2
BASKETBALL	1	SOCIAL RINK	1
VOLLEY BALL	1	TABLES	
TETHERBALL	1	BENCHES	2
TOBOGGAN HILL		WADING POOL	1
SLEDD HILL		SPRAY DECK	
DRESSING ROOMS	2	C/L BLDG.	1

PARK & OPEN SPACE SHORTAGES

RECOMMENDED NEEDS BY REVISED STANDARD	8.00 ACS.
EXISTING OR 'AS-PLANNED'	6.97 ACS.
SHORTAGES TO BE MADE UP	1.03 ACS.

LAND USE

	ACRES	
RESIDENTIAL-SINGLE FAMILY	209.71	67.6 %
LOW DENSITY		%
HIGH DENSITY		%
COMMERCIAL & INSTITUTIONAL	7.38	2.4 %
SCHOOLS- PUBLIC	9.92	3.2 %
SEPARATE	3.44	1.1 %
PARKLAND- ORNAMENTAL	5.37	1.7 %
PLAYGROUND	1.60	0.5 %
SPORTSFIELD		%
DISTRICT		%
ROADWAY LANDSCAPING	6.62	2.1 %
RIVER VALLEY & RAVINE		%

NORTH

PARKS & RECREATION DEPT.
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

| 0 | 500 | 1,000 | | 2,000 |
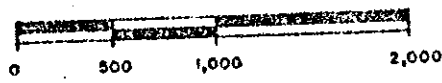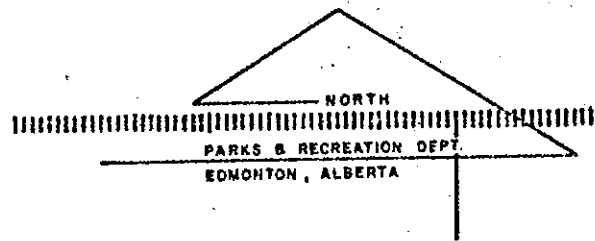
◆ - Designated Ornamental Parks.

● - Ornamental Parks not designated in study (according to E.S.P.C.)

✓ - Designated parks functioning as mini-parks (according to E.S.P.C.)

O - Zoned parkland (according to E.S.P.C.)

MAP 3-5
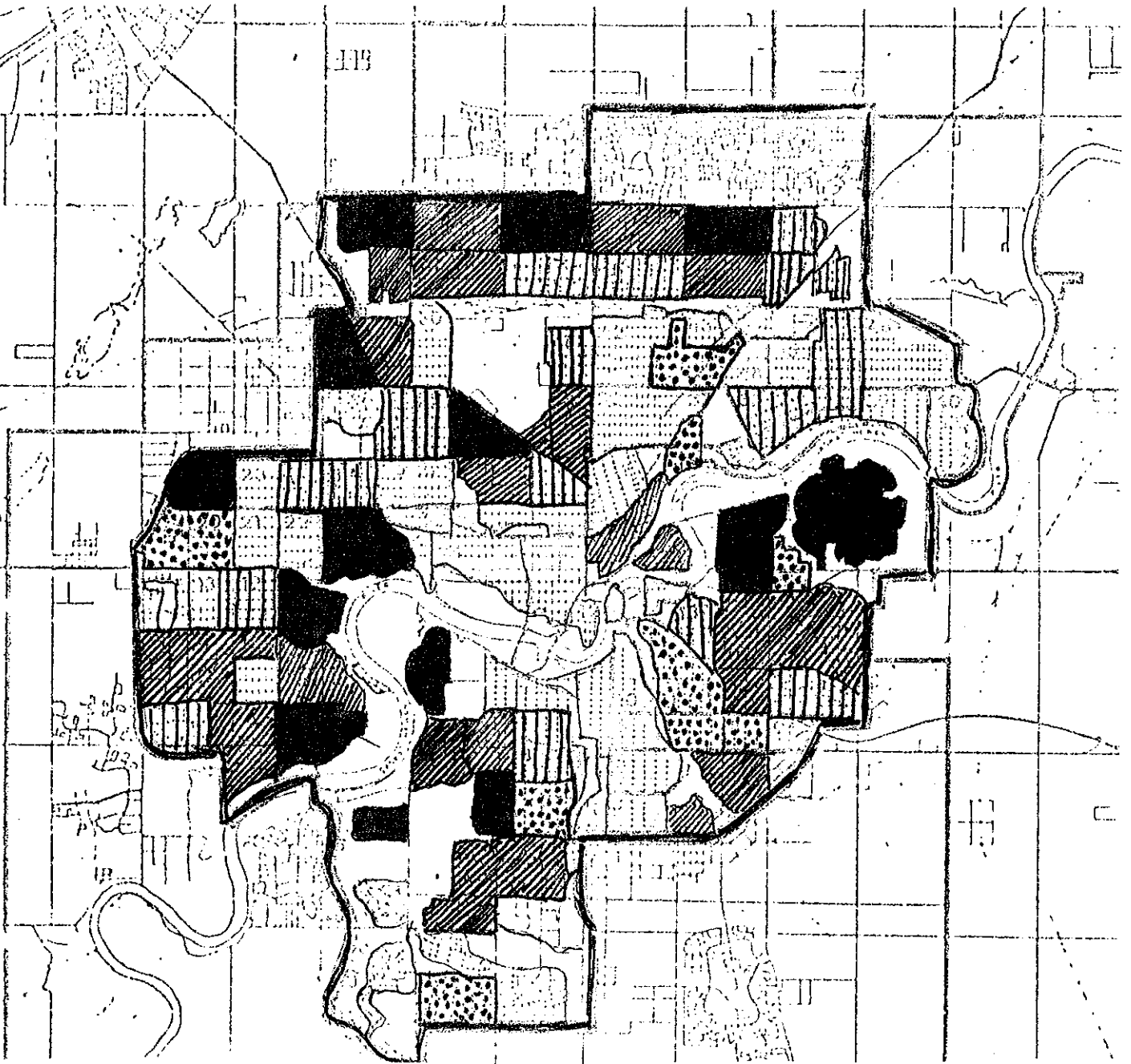
NEIGHBOURHOODS BY RATIO OF POPULATION
TO MINI-PARKLAND ACREAGE

■ - <1,000 persons per mini-park acre

▨ - 1,000 to 1,999

▥ - 2,000 to 4,999

▨ - 5,000 to 9,999

□ - >10,000

━━━ - Study area boundary.

MAP 3-6
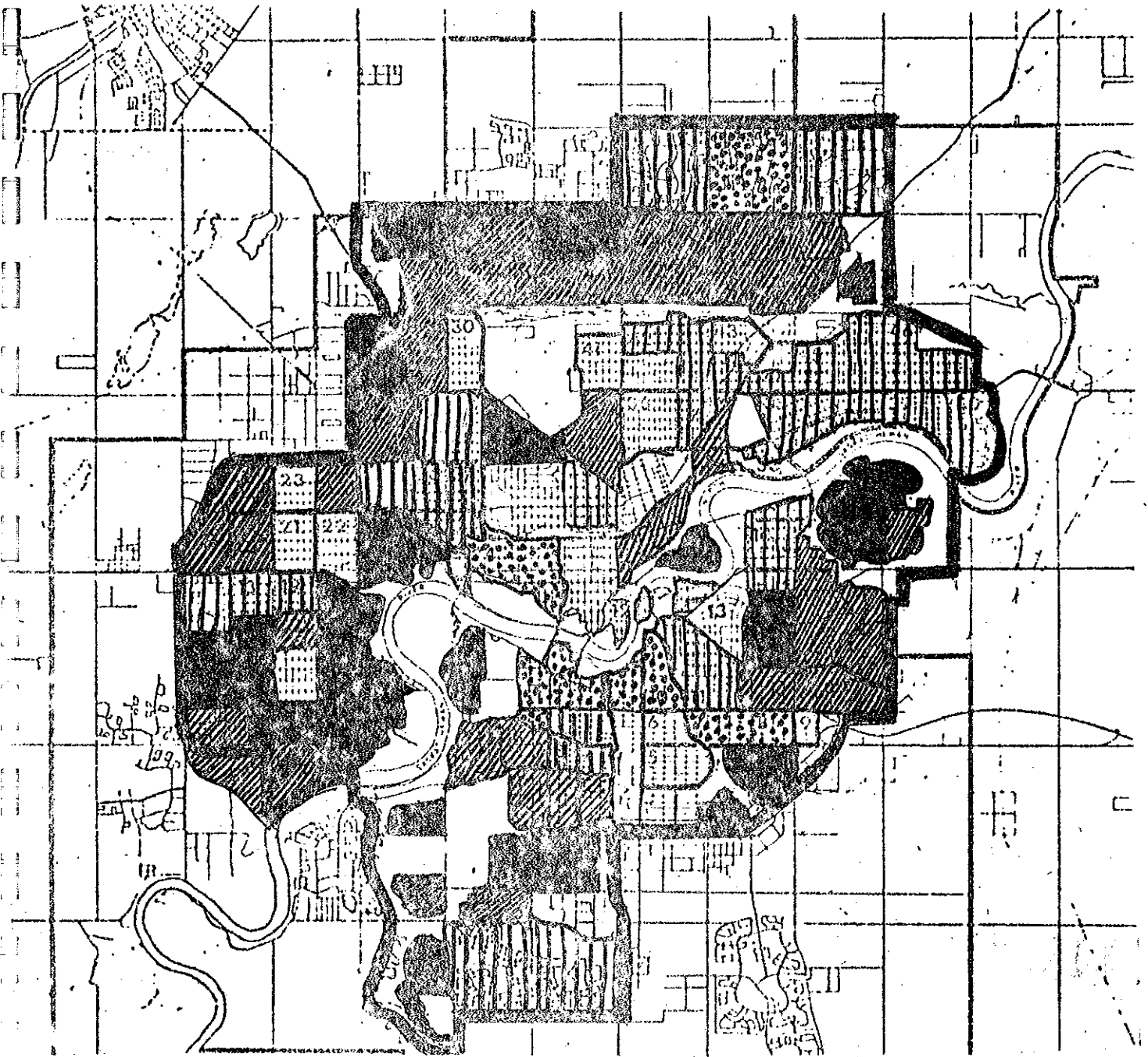
NEIGHBOURHOODS BY RATIO OF POPULATION
TO NUMBERS OF MINI-PARKS

- ⟨ 1,000 people per mini-park

- 1,000 to 1,999

- 2,000 to 4,999

- 5,000 to 10,000

- ∞ (no mini-parks)

- Study area boundary.

MAP 3-7

MEDIAN VALUE
OWNER-OCCUPIED DWELLING UNITS
EDMONTON: 1961

INDUSTRIAL
AIRPORT

UNIV OF
ALBERTA

UNIV OF ALTA
EXPERIMENTAL
FARM
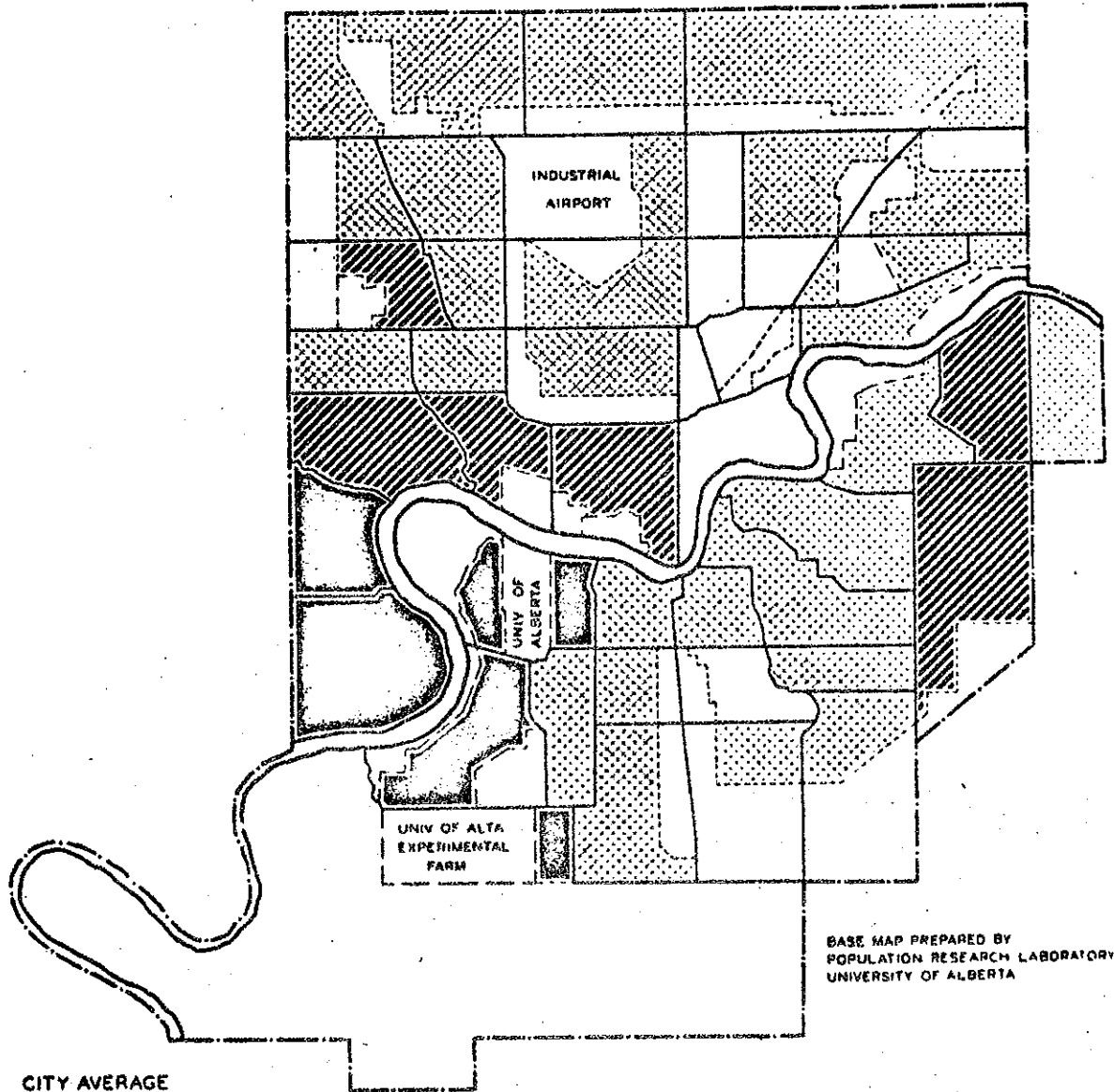
BASE MAP PREPARED BY
POPULATION RESEARCH LABORATORY
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CITY AVERAGE

14,692

SOLID LINES DELIMIT THE 1961 CENSUS
TRACTS OF EDMONTON

DOT AND DASHED LINES DELIMIT PARKS,
CEMETERIES AND OTHER RELATIVELY
LARGE AREAS OF PUBLIC PROPERTY

DASHED LINES DELIMIT INDUSTRIAL,
RAILROAD AND VACANT PROPERTY

LEGEND:

MEDIAN VALUE IN DOLLARS,
OWNER-OCCUPIED DWELLING UNITS

9000-11,999   16 000-19,999

12,000-15,999   20,000
                   AND OVER

Figure 1:27

MAP 3-8
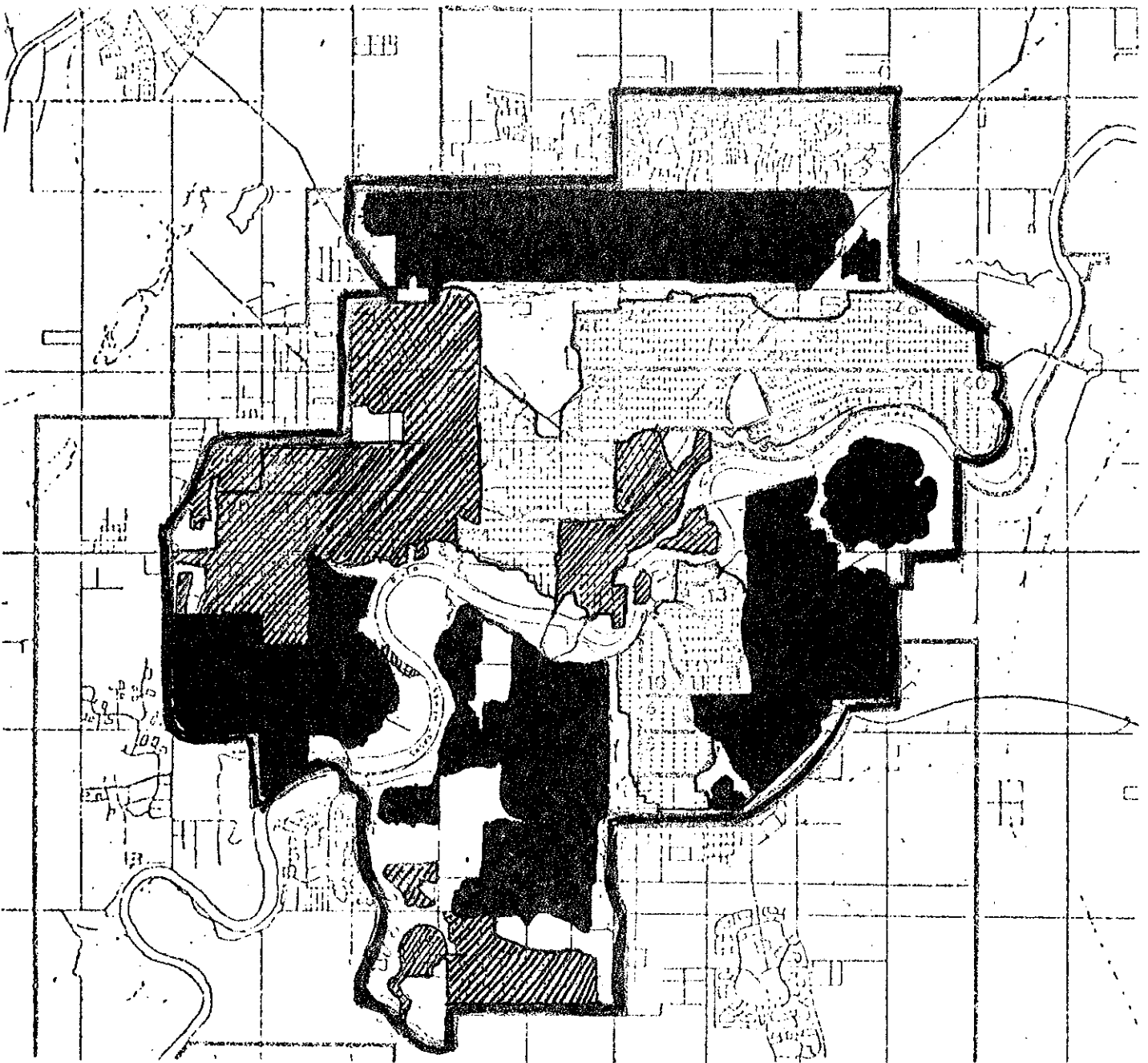
CITY AREAS AND MINI-PARK DISTRIBUTION

■ - Lots of Mini-Parks: Areas (according to Parks and Recreation Area Council Boundaries) in which neighbourhoods with $<$ 2,000 people per mini-park outnumber neighbourhoods with $>$ 2,000 people per mini-park by $>$ 2:1.

□ - Few Mini-Parks: Areas (according to Parks and Recreation Area Council Boundaries) in which neighbourhoods with $>$ 2,000 people per mini-park outnumber neighbourhoods with $<$ 2,000 people per mini-park by $>$ 2:1.

▨ - Some Mini-Parks: Other areas.

▬▬▬▬ - Study area boundary.

THE DESIGN OF MINI-PARKS

Since the Second World War, there has been considerable experience with mini-park design, both in the United States and in Europe. These designs are as varied as their locations, and are diverse in both function and form. A current truism in design states that "form follows function". This is as true of mini-parks as any other designed space or structure. In this chapter, we will review a range of the intended "functions" for planned mini-parks and also present a summation of design suggestions from more recent experience.

In the first chapter, presenting a historical perspective on urban open space, we suggested several functions that such open spaces could perform.

1. **Religious:** as a forecourt to a religious or sacred building, or as a place of worship in itself.

2. **Economic:** as a place for exchange of goods, a market place.

3. **Political:** as a forecourt to increase the impressiveness of state buildings, or as a place for political meetings.

4. **'Commons':** an area of land within a town or city where livestock could be grazed and protected, and some vegetables grown.

5. **Military:** a parade ground for training and display of militia.

6. **Amenity:** an ornamental, health giving open area for recreational purposes.

Some of the mini-parks described in this chapter have elements of "religious", "political" and "commercial" functions. Most, however, are predominantly recreational in purpose. They are most successful when their purpose is closely defined, when the designer knows who will use the park and why. Parks inserted in the urban fabric because they "ought" to be there, with no further clarification of purpose and function, are unlikely to be successful, unlikely to be places valued by people and unlikely to be used. Urban parks should be designed to be useful.

A Wide Range of Purpose and Design

1. A place for office workers to have their lunch; band concerts provide entertainment.(Bowling Green, New York).(1).

2. A place for shoppers and office workers to stop; waterfall screens noise and cools air; shade trees; tables and chairs; concessions sell snacks.(Paley Park, New York).(2).

3. A small park to stabilize a deteriorating residential neighbourhood; to inspire confidence.(3).

4. The creation of a mini-park as an educational process in co-operative and community living.(4).

5. The mini-park to create a recreational resource for low income residents who lack mobility.(5).

6. "A sanitary green" providing fresh air in a polluted city (probably a psychological phenomenon rather than a physical reality).(6).

7. A mini-park as a "communal backyard".(7).

8. A concrete playground, built by children, and used by children.(8).

9. A small park as a city's "lungs" (Jane Jacobs says this is nonsense. It would take three acres of woods to absorb the carbon dioxide for three people breathing, cooking and heating).(9).

10. A mini-park to "develop citizenship". The experience of leadership and the lack of anonymity in a neighbourhood park encourages purposeful co-operation.(10).

11. A mini-park as a theatre in the round; for informal and formal theatricals.(11).

12. A mini-park as somewhere to walk through on the way to somewhere else.(12).

13. A mini-park as an outdoor room; with walls, a floor, and a ceiling of trees.(13).

14. A mini-park as the start of a reform movement; to create ripples of change which spread through the neighbourhood.(14).

15. A mini-park can be an adventure playground.(15).

16. A mini-park can be a passive place, for unorganized activity(16), or

17. A mini-park can be a place designed for active and organized activities.(17).

18. A mini-park can be a centre for educational programming.(18).

19. A mini-park can be a sports centre (ping-pong, putting, gymnastics and a backboard for ball games).(19).

20. A mini-park can facilitate "social adjustment": by providing a place for co-operative play with skilled leadership.(20).

21. A mini-park can be a place to stop on your way somewhere else.(21).

22. A mini-park can improve the neighbourhood.(22).

23. A mini-park can supplement other recreational facilities; fill a gap.(23).

24. Mini-parks can be portable; moved from place to place as they are needed.(24).

25. Mini-parks can provide an active playground for children; to experiment, discover and to grow.(25).

26. A mini-park can be a totlot; a place near home for young children to play.(26).

27. A mini-park can be designed for teenagers; providing sports, music, and self programming under skilled leadership.(27).

28. A park can be designed for adults; for relaxation, for peaceful people watching.(28).

29. A mini-park can be the project of a community group, that sponsors the park, guides its development, and with help from the City, maintains the park and its program.(29).

30. A mini-park can be tenant gardens in a housing project.(30).

31. Mini-parks can be "a spring board to community action".(31).

32. A mini-park can be an oasis.(32).

33. A mini-park can be modular: a standard design inserted in any size or shape of open space.(33).

Every mini-park is unique. The four mini-parks projects described in this report all contain some of the functions described above; the forms designed by the project participants followed the functions they had chosen for their mini-parks. Three were designed to accommodate the "totlot" function; one is purely an "adult park" (the Christ Church site in Oliver), but also has a religious function.

Although the "functions" of mini-parks vary, the experience with mini-parks in other cities indicates certain general design criteria. There are things one should do, and things one should not, in the design and development of mini-parks.

Some Do's and Don'ts in Mini-park Design

1. Do remember that mini-parks in low income area get heavy use; design with sturdy materials, and budget for repairs and replacements.(33).

2. Do plan the park with a purpose; with poor planning a park becomes a liability rather than an asset.(34).

3. Do plan for adequate, ongoing, maintenance.
   (a) Maintenance should be by paid employees, not by volunteers.(35).
   (b) There is some disagreement as to whether this maintenance should be contracted to a community group, or the financial responsibility of a citizens group.(36). In Edmonton, our community leagues have traditionally been responsible for the maintenance of their own recreation facilities with operative grants.

4. Do plan for ongoing supervision of children's or teen's parks. (One leader, and untrained aides, can circulate to several small parks.)(37).

5. Do not fence the park; fencing encourages fence climbers to vandalize the park.(38).

(There is some disagreement on this point. An insurance company insuring parks in New York will only insure if the parks area is fenced; yet experience shows that open parks are not as subject to vandalism.)

6. Do not design a park to look like a gaol; if you must fence, do not use 10 feet high chain link fencing with barbed wire on the top.(39).

7. Do design a park that will generate enthusiasm and affection.(40).

8. Do plan the location of the mini-park; a park, like a store, needs a good location to be popular.(41).

9. Do plan to attract people to the park (activities and programs can do this).(42).

10. Do not plan a mini-park unless the community wants it. Then they will use it and care for it.(43).

11. Do plan for the park to be safe.
    (a) Ensure adequate police patrols.
    (b) The park should be well lit at night.
    (c) All corners of the park should be visible from the street.
    (d) A block association can keep an eye on the park and protect it.
    (e) A busy park is a safe park.(44).

12. Do plan in co-operation with the community.(45).

Beyond these practical "do's" and "don'ts" lies the art of the landscape designer. Whether a playground expert such as Lady Allen of Hurtwood, an urban designer such as Jacob Riis, or a community group with more enthusiasm than professional expertise; the design problems remain the same: to transform a multiplicity of design criteria, functions and restrictions, into a cohesive and integrated design.

The plans of a landscape designer are plans in space and volume:

"Architectural and landscape design thinks normally of sequence and continutiy of spacial and sensory experience; relations between simple, regular, and special elements; the repose of unity and the sparkle of variety; small and large spaces, low and high, narrow and wide, long and short, regular and irregular, precise and soft, dark and light, warm and cool, neutral and colourful, simple and complex; the reliability of balance and rhythmic repetition, the stimulation and inspiration of freer, more dynamic, and less stable arrangements; the richness of combination and contrast of varying materials, textures colours and forms."(46).

The designer of the park chooses materials to express his design. He chooses for prosaic reasons of maintenance and durability, or from the sense of need for "something green":

"Think of hardwood floors, rag rugs, brick terraces, neat
lawns, vacant weedy lots, ankle-deep litter on the forest
gloor, grassy meadows strewn with wild flowers, glassy lake
surfaces, beaches wet and dry, cobble strewn stream beds.
Think of stucco glass, boards-and-batts, concrete-block
walls, split-rail fences, cedar sapling fences, wide-board
fences, narrow-board fences, buildings of steel and glass,
brick, stone, ornate terra cotta, polished granite; trimmed
hedges, shaggy shub boarders, neat rows of flowering fruits,
free drifts of white trunked birches, inpenetratable earth
banks and rock cliffs, contoured grassy mounds and hollows.
Think further of flat plaster ceilings, slope beamed ceilings,
cantilevered roof overhangs, geodesic domes from within,
hyperbolic paraboloids from beneath, the fabulously variable
structure of tree tops. trunks, limbs, branch, stem, twig,
petiole, leaf arbors, pergolas, pavilions, gazebos, exedras,
lath houses, tents, carports, posts, beams, rafters, laths,
one-by-ones, two-by-twos, one-by-fours on edge, two-by-fours
on edge, egg crates, fiberglass sheets, expanded metal panels,
the clear blue sky, the dull gray sky, magnificent castles built
of clouds. All these, and many more, are the floors, walls and
ceilings which shape the spaces that create the sequences of
landscape experience."(47).

Minipark Designs for Edmonton

To test the feasibility of miniparks in Edmonton, and to explore the
functions and designs possible within a fairly new northern City, we chose
four sites within the City, and set up workshops to design miniparks for
each site. The communities ranged from inner city highrise, to newly
developed suburban; the participants ranged from an enthusiastic neighbourhood
group, to a seriously ambivalent church congregation; the sites, while all
being less than an acre, ranged from a road closure, to a church yard, and
suburban parking lot. The same process, described in the next chapter,
was used in each community; the results(48), however, were very different.
In each neighbourhood the needs were unique, and the design concepts were
particular to the participants at each workshop.

CHAPTER 4: REFERENCES

(1) Seymore, Whitney North Junior, "An Introduction to Small Urban Spaces" in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, (Parks Association of New York City, New York University Press, New York, 1969), p. 2.

(2) Zion, Robert L., "Parks Where the People Are - The Small Midtown Park in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p.p. 73 - 78.

(3) Hoving, Thomas P. F., "Think Big About Small Parks", in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p. 82.

(4) Seymour, Whitney North Junior, ibid., p. 7.

(5) Weaver, Robert C., "Recreation Needs in Urban Areas", in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p. 24.

(6) Lewis Mumford quotes Camillo Sitte in "The Philosophy of Urban Open Space" in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p. 13.

(7) Robbins, Ira S., "Open Space in Public Housing - The New Approach" in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p. 35.

(8) op cit., p. 37.

(9) Jacobs, Jane, "The Uses of Neighbourhood Parks" in <u>The Death and Life of Great American Cities</u>, Random House Inc., New York, 1961.

(10) Guggenheimer, Elenor C., "Recreation and Vest Pocket Parks" in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p. 101.

(11) Robbins, in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p. 32.

(12) Breines, Simon, "Planning for Pedestrians" in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p. 59 - 71.

(13) Zion, Robert L., op. cit.

(14) Guggenheimer in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>.

(15) Lady Allen of Hurtwood, "Adventure Playgrounds" in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p.p. 91 - 96; and Henke, Horst A. and Glen McDougall, "Playgrounds Should Counteract the Non-inventive Society", in <u>Recreation Canada</u>, No. 31/1/73.

(16) Guggenheimer, Elenor C., "Recreation and Vest Pocket Parks" in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>, p.p. 97 - 106.

(17) op. cit.

(18) op. cit., p. 100.

(19) op. cit., p. 98.

(20) op. cit., p. 99.

(21) Breines, in <u>Small Urban Spaces</u>.

(22) Guggenheimer, op. cit., p. 103 and "California City Converts Littered Lot to Park", in Parks and Recreation, January, 1974.

(23) op. cit.

(24) Friedberg, M. Paul, "Systems for Play" in Small Urban Spaces, p. 107 - 119; and "Porta Parks Replace Empty Downtown Lots", in Recreation Canada, No. 31/2/73.

(25) Friedberg, op. cit.

(26) Peterson, Julian R., "Vest Pocket Parks in Harlen" in Small Urban Spaces, p. 127; and Wilkinson, Paul, "Neighbourhood Parks and Their Use", in Recreation Canada, No. 31/3/73, p. 30.

(27) Peterson, op. cit., p. 130.

(28) Peterson, op. cit., p. 132.

(29) Peterson, op. cit., p. 134.

(30) Robbins, Ira S., "Tenants Gardens in Public Housing" in Small Urban Spaces, p.p. 139 - 147.

(31) Shiffman, Ronald, "The Vest Pocket Park As An Instrument of Social Change", in Small Urban Spaces, p.p. 149 - 158.

(32) Jacobs, Jane, "The Uses of Neighbourhood Parks", in The Death and Life of Great American Cities.

(33) Goodman, Charles and Wolf Van Eckardt, "Life for Dead Spaces, The Development of Lavanburg Commons, Harcourt Brace and World Inc., New York, 1963.

(33) Seymour, in Small Urban Spaces, p. 7.

(34) Seymour, ibid., p. 9.

(35) Kuhnreich, Duvie Clark, "A Little About Lots", in Small Urban Spaces, p. 162.

(36) Shiffman, "The Vest Pocket Park as an Instrument of Social Change", in Small Urban Spaces, p. 154, sais a neighbourhood group should not be responsible for ongoing maintenance. Eve Asner in "Philadelphia's Neighbourhood Park Program" in the same volume, p. 1971, sais neighbourhood groups can and should be involved in maintenance.

(37) Hoving in Small Urban Spaces, p. 87, and Gugginheimer in the same volume, p.p. 104 - 105.

(38) Jane Jacobs sais don't fence it. Zion enclosed Paley Park with a fence. All adventure playgrounds should be fenced sais Lady Allen of Hurtwood. The one fenced vest pocket park in Harlem suffered more vandalism than the two unfenced, sais Peterson.

"A vest pocket park can be unfenced, if it is lit at night and contains no moving equipment. Otherwise, the vest pocket park must be enclosed by a see-through fence."

(39) Jane Jacobs, ibid.

(40) Jane Jacobs, ibid.

(41) Jane Jacobs, ibid.

(42) Jane Jacobs,ibid.

(43) Hoving, in Small Urban Spaces, p. 86.

(44) Hoving, op. cit.

(45) Guggenheimer, in Small Urban Spaces, p. 104.

(46) Eckloo, Garret in Urban Landscape Design, p. 178 (McGraw Hill, U.S.A.,
     1964)

(47) Eckbo, ibid., p. 20.

(48) Day, John H., "Community Residents Plan Their Own Park" (Mississauga,
     Ontario), in Recreation Canada, No. 31/2/1973, p. 29.

MINI-PARK PLANNING WORKSHOPS

A similar design process was used for each of the four mini-park planning workshops (1), though with some minor variations. The participants worked through five stages of design, starting with Site Analysis, and finishing with a presentation and critique of Sketch Design.

Materials Available to Participants

Some preliminary work had been done for each workshop, and an 1/8th scale drawing of the site was made available in quantity. The participants then used these plans as "base maps" for their designs.

Drafting materials were made available; scales, set squares, and felt-tip pens (participants were forbidden to use pencil; it encourages timidity and overconcern with detail); large quantities of news print paper, scotch tape, drafting tape, scissors, and bead board for modelling.

A limited reference library, showing some planting materials, some principles of landscape and playground design, were available in the room.

The spaces (a community centre, a board room, and a church hall) used were suitable; (a home, used in the last workshop was not suitable), they had extensive wall space for hanging drawings; and space for people to work on the floor or on tables, individually or in groups. There was black out for the slide presentation, and suitable arrangements for refreshments, washrooms, etc.

Stage 1 - Site Analysis

The group was divided into three teams for the Site analysis. Each team was assigned a specific set of tasks. Team "A" analyzed the site "Microclimate", looking at the sun, shade, exposure and shelter on the site. This team usually used Jack Long's book, Stage 1 Site Analysis, about design of open space in downtown Calgary for reference. Team "B" looked at the existing site and noted the materials used, the planting, the colors and textures. They also noted the "desirable" and "undesirable" qualities of

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(1) Day, John H., "Community Residents Plan Their Own Park" in
     Recreation Canada, No. 31/2/1973, p. 29.

existing elements on and around the site. Team "C" looked at the community around the site; the social rather than the physical factors. They looked at traffic patterns across and around the site, and the various people who might make use of the mini-park.

Each team recorded their findings on a large sheet, either a plan (for the microclimate and existing site analysis) or a large sheet of newsprint. At the end of half an hour contributions of the various teams were hung on the wall, and each team was given ten minutes to explain their findings to the others.

This work in small groups allowed for participants who were unknown to each other to meet, and work together, before they had to work as a large group.

Stage 2 - Functional Analysis

In this stage the participants worked as one large group, with the design consultant as leader. First there was an open "Brain Storming" session, where each of the participants in turn was asked for a suggestion or idea about the use of the park. All ideas were written on a large sheet of paper, by the leader, without any editorial comment. Open brain storming continued until no one could think of anything else they wanted to add.

Then each item, was discussed and assigned a priority (one star, two stars, etc.). Comments were added about feasibility, safety, cost, etc. This sheet, with the brain stormed ideas in one color, and the comments in another, was then hung on the wall and used by the participants as guidelines for their own designs.

Stage 3 - Library of Design Elements

In this part of the workshop, the design consultant attempted to give the participants some of the basic principles of design. This included a fairly thorough discussion, with illustrating slides, of the range of choice available in ground cover, and the criteria (2) for choice. (ie. durability, maintenance, texture, warmth, softness, hardness, comfort, color, etc.). The text of one of these slide presentations is attached as an appendix. This was followed by a general presentation of the use of planting (3), of 'things to sit on' in a variety of styles and materials; of steps, lights, trash cans,

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(2) Buckley, Arthur R., "Junipers Provide Permanent Maintenance Fee Ground Covers" in Recreation Canada, No. 32/2/74, p.31.
Pick, Martin and Pick, Otto, "Here are some Alternatives to Blue Grasses and Closely Mown Turf" in Recreation Canada, 31/3/73.

(3) Zube, Ervin H., "Urban Trees - Their History and Our Need for Them Now", in Natural History, November, 1973.
Rich, Saul, "Trees are Increasingly Beneficial to Urban Citizens" in Recreation Canada, No. 32/2/74.

and notice boards, of water, and of the human activities that give vitality to the urban environment. This general series was followed by a section dealing specifically with playgrounds; this section was omitted for the workshop in the Christ Church area, where childrens activities were specifically excluded from the park design.

Stage 4 - Sketch Design

The participants then "self selected" working groups for the sketch design stage, some choosing to work alone. They then worked for several hours, with a break of approximately one-half hour for lunch (or in the case of the workshop extended over two nights, continuing the following evening after supper). During this stage the design consultant "hovered", encouraging, commenting and occasionally suggesting.

Stage 5 - Group Presentation and Critique

When the deadline, with inevitable extension, came the designers put their work on the wall and began the stage of critique. The design consultant explained that this is a painful, but necessary, part of the design process and explained the "rules". Everyone had time to explain their design, to justify their decisions, without interruption. Then there would be time for comments from other participants, and from any guests to the workshop. This procedure was varied in the different workshops. Representatives from Parks and Recreation provided their comments in Norwood, and Christ Church, but were not present at Centennial or Keegano. In the Centennial situation, the critique was provided by residents who came to the last part of the workshop. In Keegano other members of the Co-op including the architect not participating in the rest of the workshop were invited.

Stage 6 - Final Design

This stage was not reached in any of the workshops and in each case, the final decision about the form of the mini-park was not in the hands of the participants at the workshop. The ideas of the participants and a record of the discussion of these ideas was presented to those who did have the responsibility for the planning decisions.

NORWOOD - July 27, 1974.

The site for this mini-park is a proposed street closure in the Norwood area of Edmonton. Residents have been active in promoting the street closure, because of the shortage of parks in the area. The City departments involved have approved the closure, but because of some resident opposition, the road has not yet been closed.

The community leaders active in requesting the street closure were those who were responsible for inviting people to the workshop. These were young mothers, a child care worker, a father and a number of older residents, involved in the planning. However, because of community politics, those likely to oppose the park were not invited; i.e. the Norwood United Church Clergyman, and his suburban congregation; the residents immediately adjacent to the park site and the lady who circulated the petition opposing the site.

9:30 Site Analysis - (Team Study)

> TEAM A - analyze the site; 'micro-climate'; look at the four seasons; sun and shade; wind and shelter; rain and snow; orientation; (look at the book by Jack Long about Calgary).

This team found that there was little shelter from wind or sun on the site. The building and hedge on the north side provides some protection from the northwest wind. Prevalent in winter. The ledge on the south side provides very little shade. Just in front of the Church there is shelter from the wind, and the sun reflects off the building making it warmer for seating. (See Diagram 1, over).

> TEAM B - look at the existing site; the buildings, the trees and shrubs; the materials; record materials, colours, and notes about things you want to keep, or to use more of on the site plan.

(See Diagram 1, over).

DIAGRAM 1.
NORWOOD MINIPARK

CHURCH

SHADE UNDER TREE

GARDEN

SHELTER FROM WIND

WARM SPOT REFLECTED SUN

WIND

N

PORTABLE WIND SCREEN NEEDED

SHADE

G/GE

G/GE

SHADE

NORWOOD CENTRE

SITE ANALYSIS - TEAM A

MICROCLIMATE

←————— 260'.0" —————→

GRAVELLED LANE

NORWOOD UNITED CHURCH
LIGHT RED BRICK
BEIGE PAINT
BROWN DOOR

GREEN PICKET FENCE

LIGHT

3' FENCE

5' HEDGE

ROCK GARDEN

5' HEDGE

GRASS

GRASS

YIELD SIGN

ASPHALT

FIRE HYDRANT

PARKING SIGN

TREE

LIGHT

96 ST.

116 AVE

←—— GOOD PAVED ROAD ——→

116 AVE

95 A ST.

TELEPHONE POLE

CEMENT

GRASS

7' HEDGE

5' HEDGE

GARAGE
BEIGE
GREEN ROOF & TRIM
NEEDS PAINT

GARAGE
WHITE &
GREEN
POOR ROOF

NORWOOD CENTRE
WHITE &
GREEN
GREEN ROOF

SITE ANALYSIS - TEAM B

THE EXISTING SITE

SKETCH DESIGN 'D'

Parking

Movable Wind Screen

Dirt

Interlocking Blocks

Playhouses

climbing net

Sewer Pipes

Swing tires

SAFE SLIDE

PADDLING Pool

chain

N

SKETCH DESIGN 'E'

Barricade + + Trees

SWINGS TIRES

GARAGE

PATIO

FORT
ROPES, CHAIN LADDER
WOOD COVER

SAND HOUSE

CAT FLAP

GARBAGE

CRAFT

WINTER

Dump Trucks Cars

RAILS SPINDLE

BENCH

Fountain → Stream

Garden Plot

SHRUBS

RAILS

SHADES

Trees, Backing Ground

Barricade

N
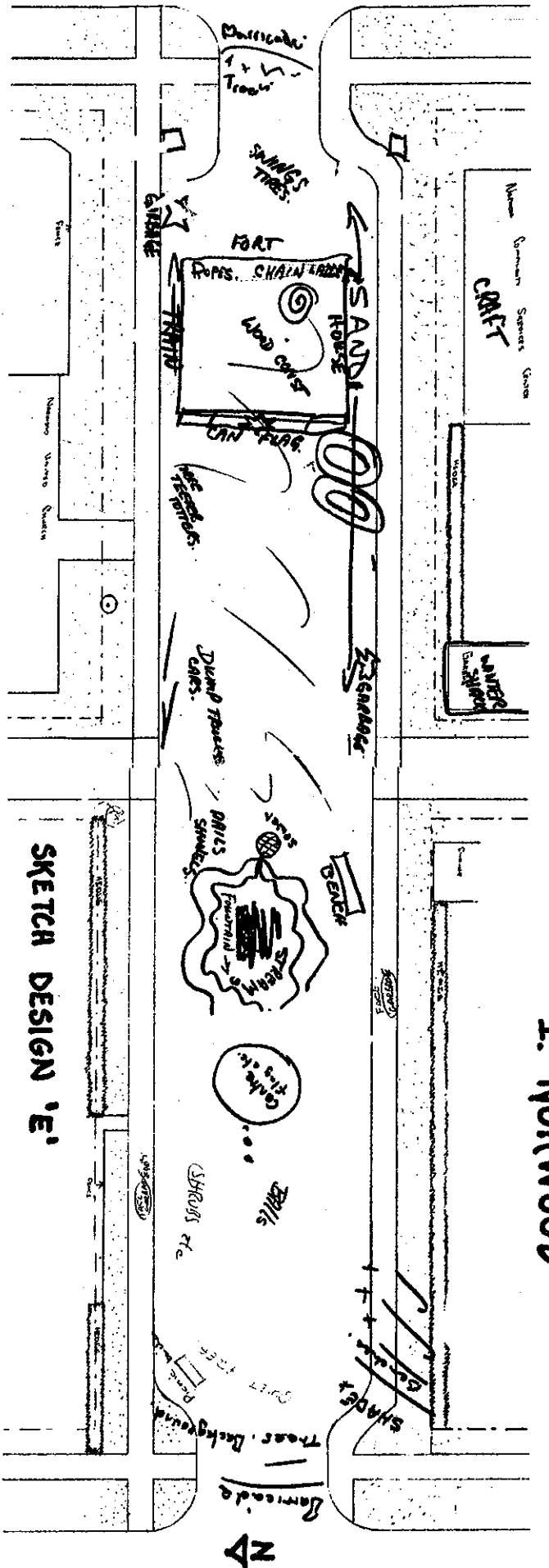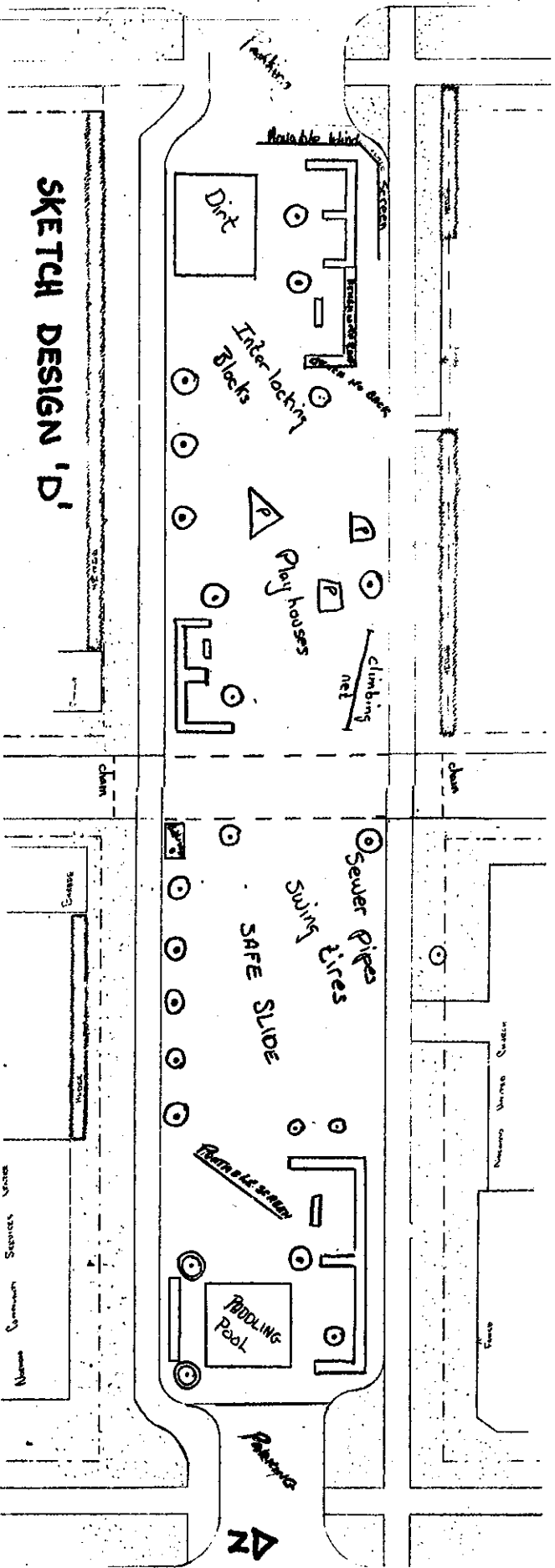
TEAM C - look at the community around the site; who uses it now
and what for? Traffic patterns (cars, bikes, pedestrians) at different
times of the year or of the day. What ages are the people in the
community? What kind of community is this?

Present use of the site - The site is used by the Church for parking, mainly
on Sundays. The Mini-Park design, to be acceptable to the Church, should
offer other alternatives for parking.

The Norwood Readiness Centre parks their bus on the site at present,
and the mothers' group park there during their meetings. The bus could,
perhaps be parked on the back of the Readiness Centre lot. There is some use
of the site for residential parking, and those residents involved would have
to make other arrangements.

Traffic - There is only light automobile traffic on the site (116th Avenue).
The closures necessary for the park would not hinder through traffic on
95-A Street or 96th Street. The alley would be closed off to through traffic.

Some neighbourhood children use their bikes on the site, but most of
the traffic is pedestrian; children on their way to school, to friends'
houses, playing, etc..

The Community - Norwood is an older residential community, with children
and adults of all ages. (Unlike a suburb with many families at the same
stage of their life cycle, e.g. all with pre-schoolers). There are many
large families and many different ethnic groups. Senior citizens in the area
are as interested in the park as the parents of small children.

Because of the lack of other park facilities near to their own homes,
this mini-park should be planned specifically for the under-12 age group.

Functional Analysis - First the group "brainstormed", collected all their
ideas about "what you want to do in the mini-park", and "what you want the
mini-park to do for you". Then we discussed each item in turn, assigning
it "one star" "(*)" to "three-stars" "(***)", and making comments about the
feasibility of each.

Lots of equipment for children	***
Safety first	***
Benches for people to be able to sit - nice environment	***
Sandbox	***
Shade	***
Dirt to dig	**

Boards and bricks	too portable; part of program.
Table for crafts, etc.	***
Trees with small peaceful places to sit	***

Adventure playground - ?

This concept was not fully understood until after the slide presentation. Then some elements of an adventure playground were approved; but the idea of a total adventure playground was neglected; they are noisy, messy places, and are therefore bad neighbourhoods and need constant supervision.

Challenge - * ?

This was later discussed in the context of adventure playgrounds. Vetoed!

Flowers - *, refer back to dirt. May also have maintenance problem.

Water taps - ***.

Bathroom facilities - *** XX, Pay someone to let children in to use the Readiness Centre, or bring in portable washrooms.

Small, fenced, shaded paddling pool with benches - ***

Problem with regulations re: standing water. Better to have a fountain and continuous trickle of water. Also portable!? Use the fire hydrant for hook up?

Barbeque pit -	* Needs to be supervised
Bike rack -	**
Bike path -	* Not enough room.

IN WINTER

Ice rink - free skating; not hockey	***
Slide - igloos -	Children can make these themselves.
Youth program -	*** Use the centre and bus and other facilities to take teens out of the area.
Rink shack -	Heat the Readiness Centre garage.
Play houses and forts -	***
Swings and slides -	Vetoed.
Use of tires for swings -	*** Incorporated with fort/play houses.
Rope ladders -	*** Ditto
Portability -	Should be able to move equipment to another site if one becomes available in the area.

11:00 <u>Library of Design Elements</u>

A slide presentation showing a variety of materials and their properties and uses; some examples of things that could be included in a mini-park. (See Appendix I).

11:30 <u>Sketch Design</u>

In self selected teams, or individually if they wished, everyone worked on some ideas for mini-parks.

1:30 <u>Group Presentation and "Crit."</u>

Each group presented their 'sketch design' for the mini-park, and the others, including our visitors from the City Parks and Recreation Department: Bob Block and Ted Norris, were invited to make comments.

<div align="center">

<u>THE SKETCH DESIGN</u>

</div>

<u>DESIGN A</u> - In this design the site was divided into four sections by a knee high stepped wall; around the edge of the site the wall was fenced. Between the first area, the 8-12 action area (adventure playground) and the adjacent area there was a brick wall built by the children. The second area is grassed and contains some trees and a small stage. The third area contains traditional playground equipment; the swings, toys for climbing, sand, climbing nets, shaded by several trees and overlooked by benches on the top of the wall. The fourth area contains a flower shaped pool fed by four fountains, with shaded benches around it.

The park is entered by a gate on one end, and a hedge protects the other. There are several sun walls to protect from the wind and to make the seating area warmer.

<u>Critique</u>

The stepped walls make much of the park inaccessible to wheelchairs or to the elderly. Also, it will be difficult to cut the grass in the inner areas.

Divisions of areas is interesting.

Pool will have to be drained when not supervised; can be a chore.

Some seating should mix in with the children's activity, not always outside looking in.

DESIGN B - This design has provided for the lane to be a throughway, and for additional parking at each end of the park. The park is divided into two areas: one with benches, trees and a pool, for adult relaxation, the other more child oriented, with the noisiest areas separated from the adults by a crafts area and a sand-box. There is a dual purpose central area for use as a rink in winter and semi-adventure area in summer; a slide, play house and swings are placed at the far end.

Critique

The critics emphasized their reluctance to see park planning cater to the automobile.

The "sand box" principle was discussed, suggesting that the whole of one area could be covered in sand. The separation of adults from children was also mentioned; this prevents children and older people from getting to know one another; story telling doesn't happen, etc.

DESIGN C - In this design there is a higher area on each side, with a lower area down the centre. Seating is arranged along the outside, with plentiful addition of trees and shrubs for shade and shelter. The designer has included the following elements; a bike rack; climbing net; teeter-totters; tree swings; walls to bang balls against; tether ball; rope or log structure with lookout towers; child's puppet theatre; playhouse; crafts table; bowls; checkers; capentry area; climbing lookout; a public path to the church, and stage and creative drama circle; a bonfire pit in the centre, and an arched entrance at each end of the tree park.

Critique

Again, the separation of "lookers" and "doers" may make the lookers feel left out. An arched entrance way is good; it will draw people into the park. Similarly, the flag pole. Perhaps this park tries to do too much - but there are many interesting ideas.

DESIGN D - The principle of portability is emphasized in this design. Straight benches in "U" and "E" forms, allow groups to sit and talk to each other. Trees are in portable planters, each with benching around it. Portable wind and sun screens are used. The equipment for the children includes a mound for sliding, swing tires, sewer pipes, climbing net, play houses, interlocking blocks for building things, and a paddling pool one end with a dirt pit in the other. Parking is provided on each end of the park, and a chain allows for a throughway along the lane.

Critique

This design has achieved a good deal with simple design and equipment. Again, the paddling pool has some disadvantages, suggest a sculpture and waterfall fountain as more practical. Otherwise a feasible design, although more attractive if it had a major focal point and an entrance which seems to say "now you are somewhere" important.

DESIGN E - This design provides for a major arched entrance at the east end of the park with a barracade, and with some climbing equipment on it. The eastern part of the park is covered in sand, with a major playhouse/fort and other equipment (tires, teeter-totters). The western end of the park is grassed with trees, picnic benches and shrubs. The two areas are divided by a flag pole mounted on a rock structure with a fountain and waterfall. National flags of resident children will be flown from the area.

Critique

Good design presentation; a sense of place; focal point and entrance. Entrance arch should not become a steeple chase with climbing ropes and swing tires. Should have more seating areas in the active part of the park - do not just put them off in one corner.

3:00 FINAL DECISIONS

Two major tasks face the group:
(1) To get final approval for the street closure, and
(2) To decide the things that they want in their park design.

The first task has top priority and the group used this part of the meeting to develop their strategy, with the help of suggestions from the Parks and Recreation Department (with visitors from the Parks and Recreation Department).

The civic department have all approved the proposed street closure but the City has received a petition from residents opposing the closure. Until the City has received assurance that the residents opposed are in a minority, they cannot proceed to close the street. Another survey of residents will have to be done, and the Parks and Recreation Department will help get it done. This time those doing the survey will have a clearer idea of the form the park will take; they will take a copy of this report and a letter of support from the Planning Council, with them when they visit their neighbours.

EVALUATION

A survey of those attending the workshop showed that they had found it interesting and worthwhile and felt that it was going to be helpful to them in getting what they wanted.

The attendance at the workshop was biased as mentioned in the introduction, towards those already convinced that the park was a good idea.

It is possible that had the "opposition" also been involved, the workshop experience would have reduced their opposition to the park. They would have been able to influence the form it would take, and reduce any difficulties they would think it might cause for them.

CENTENNIAL SHOPPING CENTRE - August 3, 1974.

The site of this proposed mini-park was the parking lot of a major suburban shopping centre on the western outskirts of Edmonton. A strip of tarmac 30 feet wide and 500 feet long, set between two curbs with a row of light standards on each curb. The site has only nuisance value to the mall managers at present, being a "no parking area" that attracts parked cars and not the pedestrian area originally intended. The prospect of a mini-park on the site was attractive to mall management and they co-operated with us in setting up a "mini-park" workshop to discuss possible plans for the area. With the co-operation of the Alberta Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation, the workshop was held in their premises, directly opening onto the shopping mall.

This workshop was basically different from the one in Norwood as there was no neighbourhood group to co-sponsor the workshop; the participants had to be gathered together from various different places. Representatives of the Provincial Parks Association were invited and also some professional planners who had indicated an interest in the project. Their presence might have overpowered a "neighbourhood" type workshop but in the context of this meeting their attendance was considered valuable. There was also some attempt to bring some residents from the row housing behind the shopping centre to the meeting and some were invited by Michael Roth who visited some of them on several occasions. One resident came to the workshop because of this contact but was distressed to find herself the only "non-professional". She protested that the meeting was worthwhile and learned a lot but that she knew her neighbours would be interested. They should have been given an opportunity to come! We suggested that while the other workshop participants complete their plans that she go home and bring back some neighbours with her to give a "crit" on their designs. She later returned with two others; their enthusiasm indicated that on a different date and with sufficient manpower to conduct a community development process, we could have built a similar workshop to the one in the Norwood area.

The workshop was held on the Saturday of the August long weekend; there was good representation from the Provincial Parks Association and the various City Departments having responsibility for planning; but the failure of others (three residents from housing next to the mall, two residents

from Britannia-Youngestown Community League, two residents from Glenwood Community League) to show up was probably attributable to lovely hot weather and a long weekend.

SITE ANALYSIS

A.   Micro-climate

Group A decided that the existing micro-climate on the site was poor for development of a park. The prevailing wind (in winter) from the north-west swept across the site, with very little shelter provided by the mall buildings. The sourthern part of the site, away from the shopping centre, was totally unprotected. Some shelter would have to be provided if the park was to have any winter use.

In summer, the micro-climate on the site is also unsatisfactory. There is very little shade, except that from the one-story "Shakeys Pizza Parlor" in the morning when it isn't needed. The black asphalt of the parking lot absorbs and radiates heat, also making the parking lot unbearably hot on warm days. In addition, Group A remarked on the pollution caused by surrounding cars (fumes, noise, etc.) and summed up that this was not a very promising site for a park and would require considerable expenditure on planting if it was to become a pleasant place to linger. (N.B. This Group consisted of representatives from the Provincial Parks Association - environmentalists rather than City planners. They tend to regard the urban environment as inherently hostile).

B.   The Existing Site

The site runs north-south, from the front of Woolco on the North to Stony Plain Road on the South. There are three traffic corridors which cross the site, one at each end, and one in the centre. The managers asked for all to be kept open and also required that access continue to be provided to the back door of Shakeys Pizza Parlor which abuts the site on the south-east side. Curbs divide the site from the rest of the parking lot, and cars do not park directly adjacent to the curb. Lamp standards, 44 feet apart, line each curb.

Existing materials in use on the site include the asphalt surface of the parking lot, the concrete curbs and the white lamp standards; the Pizza Parlor is brick, textured with stucco and red brick. The front of Woolco is mainly glass with some brick and a row of flags jutting out from the fascia board.

This group also noted that there is no pedestrian right-of-way across the parking lot, that we did not know the fire department's needs (if any), or the location of utility corridors underneath the parking lot. Also there did not appear to be any drains on the lot, or any water outlets. (N.B. This group included a predominance of professional planners).

C.   The Community

The major focus of the shopping centre is a large Woolco store. There is also a Safeway store, restaurant, shoe store, etc., within the mall. On the parking lot there is a liquor store and Pop Shoppe, a Pizza Parlor and a gas station. The mall also contains an office of the Alberta Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation, a regional office of the Department of Health and Social Development and other offices. The mall therefore attracts a variety of clientele as well as shoppers from outside the immediate community.

The shopping centre is presently on the out-skirts of the built-up area of the City and does not serve a natural community. Some row housing units, and apartments, behind the shopping centre are the only residential units within walking distance of the centre. The families in these units include some older people and some single parent families. There are many children under school age who need a park area to play in. The site presents some problems for use by smaller children as the traffic in the parking lot could be dangerous, particularly if no barrier is built around the shopping centre. There also needs to be a pedestrian path to the park with controlled crossings, including signals and speed bumps, where the path intersects with any traffic route.

Residents from the housing on the north side of the shopping centre have to cross over to the south side of Stony Plain Road to catch their bus to downtown. At present they use the path within the cemetery to the east of the shopping mall, where there is grass, trees and shrubs, and no traffic. "It's too hot to cross the parking lot," said one resident, "and in winter it's too windy." The proposed park could provide an alternate route to the one through the cemetery for residents heading for the bus stop or for Stony Plain Road.

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

A brain storming method was used for getting everyone's ideas for the possible uses of this mini-park. We then added some comments, linked up ideas that seemed related to one another, and categorized activities as Active - "A", or Passive - "P".

P	Outdoor cafe	Shakeys Pizza Parlor Hot dog stands Picnic area - free to sit down
A	Skating rink	Winter use; good shape for skating; Community League is not near
A	Little kids play area	Climbing, sand, equipment; supervision?
P	Buffering (see Site Analysis A)	Fence or such needed
P	Trees	(Evergreens for winter protection), flowers, shrubs and things
A	Tricycle path	Traffic training for trikes; getting kids own trikes there could be a problem; perhaps these could be loaned or rented by the hour, by Woolco.

Active/Passive areas should be separated; the passive may overlook the active, but not be disturbed by it.

A	Tobaggan slide	(Temporary for winter use).
P	Fountain	A small wading pool would be desirable, but supervision required by provincial regulations may be impractical. The need for the cooling effect of water, however, is acute in summer, and a fountain/waterfall, where children could get themselves wet, and adults could trail their hands, would help.
P	Drinking fountain	-
P	Bus shelter	Protection from wind in winter, sun in summer, and rain anytime; somewhere to sit and watch for the bus, and then cross the road to the bus stop.

Solid fence	To protect the park from wind; provide privacy; reduce noise from cars.
Stop traffic either side	Suggest speed bumps and stop signs for traffic at entrance points to the park.

Benches for all people	(Outdoor eating area, and in "Active" children's area, and in bus shelter/ waiting area).
Shakeys back door	Continued access.
Flower pots	Who will maintain?
Picnic tables	See outdoor eating
Stage	Travelling theatre in the city; children's creative drama program of Parks and Recreation Department.
Canopy over benches	Protect from glare of the sun
Mural on the fence	Could be done by children
Something to draw on	See above
Change concrete and asphalt	Introduce a variety of surfaces
Games for people to play	Giant chess and checkers, board painted on pavement; pieces the size of children.
Path to park	Safe pedestrian access, protected from traffic
Supervision	Possibly by arrangement with Parks and Recreation during peak use in the summer.
Programming	As above, or by mall management.
Crafts area	See above
Sandboxes	Could use sand over the entire area intended for small children; protect children who fall from equipment.

LIBRARY OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

The slide presentation and discussion was presented as for the first workshop, including the discussion of children's playgrounds.

SKETCH DESIGN STAGE

The participants worked in five main groups. A group of students produced a conceptual design (Design A), as did one local resident (Design B). One planner (Design C) worked alone; three worked together (Design D); the Parks Association representatives worked together (Design E).

SKETCH DESIGNS

As each group presented their design ideas, the other made suggestions and comments. The residents also made their own comments and were asked to choose their "favorite" design.

DESIGN A.

This design was not taken beyond a basic conceptual stage. The site was enclosed by a fence of logs placed on end, with variable heights, and a minimum height of four feet. On the south end of the site, the ground was cobbled and provision made for an open market in summer. In winter, this area would be iced over for a skating rink, with an ice mound built for sliding. The part of the park immediately behind Shakeys was arranged as an outdoor eating area with benches and tables, shelter from the summer sun by canopies. This area would be protected from the noise and fumes of traffic by a grouping of trees and shrubs.

The north section of the park is surrounded by a hedge rather than an fence, with a sanded area in one part, containing play equipment; the section of the park immediatly in front of Woolco is grassed and arranged as a 'passive' area. Seating, trees and shrubs, a fountain/waterfall, a birdbath, and a flower-bed are contained within the area. The north entrance to the park is flanked by flags, giving the park a "sense of place".

Criticism

One participant criticized the "commercialism" implied in an "open market" concept; she would prefer an extension of the policy of providing space to cultural groups and other nonprofit ventures.

It was also suggested that seating should be provided in the children's play area so that parents could supervise their children in comfort.

DESIGN B.

This design, while not drawn accurately or to scale, shows the concept as developed by a resident in the area. She has divided the park into two sections, separated by the traffic corridor; in the south section she has planned a children's play area, and has left the northern section for more adult activities.

The children's play area is entirely covered in sand; there are tunnels, teeter-totters, swings, a merry-go-round, and a vertical ladder surrounded by a circular slide. The whole area is fenced to protect children from traffic and the children would be encouraged to "paint-in" on the inside of the fence.

The north section of the park is planned imaginatively to include a decorative park and seating area and a tourist and information centre linked

FENCE:

WITH WOOD
SCULPTURE

SAND DUNE ISLAND

WOOD SCULPTED
FENCE
5-6 FT. HIGH

TABLE H
(QUIET)
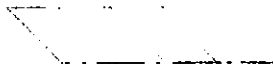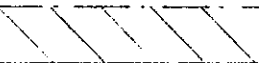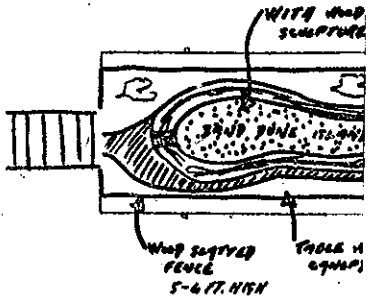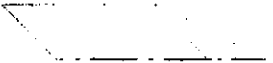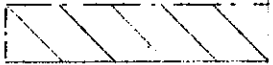
with an open air cafe. Most of the area is paved in brick, and surrounded by hedges. The seating area includes a fountain and flower beds, and walkway of paving stones leading into Woolco.

Criticism

This design is the only one to recognize the potential for the Centennial Centre as the first centre tourists see as they approach Edmonton from the west. The north section of the area could work well if additional shade were provided by trees or umbrellas over the tables and benches. The children's playground is traditional in concept, not using some of the more inventive equipment now available for children. The design is only practicable for summer use, and does not provide for any winter activities.

DESIGN C.

The focal point of this design is the raised deck, which spans the traffic corridor between the two sections of the site, tying the two elements together visually. The deck serves both to shade a seating area underneath, and to provide an extension to the indoor seating of the pizza parlor on the top. The upper level would provide a view of both sections of the park (so that children could be supervised, and the view of the planting, sculpture, etc., enjoyed), but also be screened from the prevailing north-east winds and the warm afternoon sun from the west. The section of the park nearest to Woolco provides a skating area in winter (to become a paddling pool in summer). Within the rink there is an island, in the form of a sand dune, with a wood sculpture for climbing. Three bridges provide access to the rest of the park. A board walk extends right through the park, from Woolco to the south end, where it widens to provide a patio for those waiting for the bus. This patio also contains some sculptures and bench seating is arranged along the rest of the board walk. Trees are planted intermittently throughout the site, situated to provde some shelter and shade to the benches. The entire site is surrounded by a wood slatted fence 5 to 6 feet high, and the predominant ground material is grass, planted by berms (i.e. gently sloping mounds, rather than flat ground). An additional play area is situated just north of the raised deck, with a sculpture and a slide from the deck into the sand beneath. Under the shelter of the deck there is provision for a washroom and a shelter for use during the skating season.

Criticism

This design was the only one to treat the site as if it had any potential as a park. The attempt to tie the two elements of the park

together and to provide a focal point was worthwhile. The paddling pool may present problems, as supervision will be necessary by provincial regulations while there is water standing in the pool. However, the water is a very welcome element to counteract the heat generated by the asphalt parking area during the summer.

This design has recognized the limitations of the site and overcame some of them, while not providing a design that would be prohibitively expensive. The area will be usable both in summer and winter.

DESIGN D.

In contrast to Design C, this one divded the site into a series of short segments, each with its own purpose and design. (Interestingly enough, this group held their plan vertically as they worked on their design; Group C held theirs horizontally).

Group D consider this design to be a "minimum solution", requiring the least necessary cost for implementation to a standard that will at least attract people to linger in the mini-park.

The site is protected by a cedar fence down the whole west side and the skating rink/trike track is entirely enclosed. A path threads through each segment of the site varying in material in the different areas. The segment nearest Woolco is planted in grass (or clover, if lawn maintenance would be a problem) with a gentle slope to one side of the crushed brick path, several benches, and two groups of planting.

The second segment is enclosed by a fence on three sides and the area within the two concrete curbs is covered in beach sand. The path through this area is a series of paving slabs set in the sand. The children's play equipment includes a "paint me" fence, painted sewer pipe tunnels, logs planted on end, and a "labyrinth".

The third segment is the skating/trike track. The area is totally enclosed and no changes in the existing materials are anticipated. The trike track can be laid by painting the pedestrian path and the trike path on the asphalt, and placing the necessary hand operated minature road signals, etc., at the various intersections. In winter the area between the two curbs can be flooded and will provide skating. Benches have been set along the cedar fence to allow for spectators. The design also provides for a small storage area and warm-up shack.

This design makes generous provision for access to Shakeys back door, and from there to an outdoor seating area, intended as an extension of the Shakeys premises. The seating area is designed in an "L" form and extends around the south-west corner of the building. The area has a raised wooden floor and contains round tables with seating around them and umbrellas over them. Planting (in plant containers rather than naturalized) protect the clientele from some sun and traffic noise.

The final, and southern most segment is also, like the first, a passive seating area. There is a brick path with seating, a hedge at each end, and some natural planting and a flower bed with a statue. The tree species suggested are blue spruce and little leaf linden (the latter having good resistance to fumes from vehicles and being a good boulevard tree).

Criticism

While containing many good ideas, this design does not have any coherent concept. There is no focal point and no sense of place. The residents, in criticising this plan, regretted the absence of water. The designers justified their decision because they did not know the location of utilities and drains, they also cited the necessity of supervision.

The decision to extend the outdoor seating area to the south side of Shakeys may prove to produce extra problems; the pizza eaters will have a direct view of the gas pumps unless a screening fence or planting is provided.

DESIGN E.

The park is again entirely fenced in this design but its line is broken with indentations providing a view of the interior of the park to attract people in. Wood and brick are used in the fence together with plenty of conifers. (Conifers used because they also provide protection in winter). The area of the park nearest to Woolco contains a children's play area with a climbing structure with fire-pole and slide, and an entirely sanded area. The next section intended as a "passive" area is entered through an arch set in a hedge. This area has some grass,benches and picnic tables and a path that leads to a rockery and waterfall/pool at the south end. Several gates give access to and from the parking lot.

Behind the waterfall there is the seating area for Shakeys with circular tables with umbrellas. A low brick wall containing a planter separates the seated eaters from those walking through. Beyond the "eating out" area is an open air stage, well protected from noise and fumes

by a thick belt of planting. The designers intend this whole area of the park to be an outdoor "dining and entertainment" centre.

Criticism

This is by far the most ambitious scheme. It involves extensive planting and would require considerable digging out of the site and bringing in of top soil. One most attractive feature neglected in the other designs, is the provision of views into the park from many parts of the parking lot, both by a number of gates and by breaks and set backs in the fence. The other designs could be improved by these additions.

This design also disobeyed the rules and cut off the through traffic corridor in the middle of the site. This was defended by the designers who felt an outdoor seating, eating, and entertainment area could not be compatible with a "drag strip". This group was also the first to introduce speed bumps at either end of their park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Workshop participants agreed that the experience had been interesting but that the opinion of the community on the park designs was also needed. It was suggested that the designs generated by the workshop be displayed in the shopping mall and that visitors to the mall be encouraged to contribute their comments on the various designs.

Each design had some major attractions; we suggest the fencing arrangement in Design E is preferrable to that in the other designs. The raised patio design of Design C provides a focal point, and a needed shelter for diners underneath. Design D provides a trike track/skating rink which would prove attractive to children as well as being comparatively inexpensive. The seating areas in Design C could be made more attractive in summer by adding some water fountains and/or waterfalls as in Design B or Design E.

The mini-park does not have to be built all at once, but in stages as money becomes available. However, enough must be built in the first stage to ensure that the park is attractive to its potential users, or the whole project will fail. To neglect the need for shelter from the sun in summer or the wind in winter, would be to endanger the project from the start. Depending on the date at which building could start, the first project could be the fencing of a skating rink as proposed in Design D, with a fencing arrangement similar to that used in Design E, with some shelter and storage built at the south end. This could then be incorporated into the raised deck for use as an outdoor eating area next year.

EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP

Apart from the one resident who spent the morning with us, and the two who dropped in later, the participants in this workshop had no real "stake" in the building of the mini-park. They came because they were interested in the concept and wanted to see if it was feasible. Their own comments on the evaluation forms reflected this sense of the need for more local residents to be involved. The failure of the mall management to attend was also a disappointment to several participants; there was no way of knowing what the management considered feasible in terms of budget, etc.

The evaluation forms also show that participants found the workshop enjoyable and interesting; that they regretted the absence of local residents and the mall management; the lack of time to complete their ideas; the circumscribed terms of reference provided by the management. When asked to grade the meeting, two gave it a C, and three a B, and one an A. We tend to agree.

THE GROUNDS OF CHRIST CHURCH, 102 Avenue and 121 Street - August 10, 1974

Christ Church is in the Oliver area of Edmonton, an older district where some of the large older homes have been torn down for highrise apartments and others have been converted into suites. Some homes now have absentee landlords and have not been adequately maintained. Within this high density community the grounds of Christ Church form a quiet oasis, set apart from the noisy and busy streets, and enjoyed by the members of the Christ Church congregation.

Some members of the Christ Church congregation feel the Church has a duty to share these beautiful grounds with others in the community and that they should be open to the public. Others in the congregation are bitterly opposed to any change. The workshop included representatives from both sides of the issue, as well as others from the community; senior citizens from a near-by highrise, a blind person from the C.N.I.B. residence, and representatives of a citizens' planning group in the area (the Oliver Social Action Committee - OSAC). The designs produced by the workshop reflect the ambivalence many feel to opening the grounds to the public.

Site Analysis

Group A - Microclimate

This group recognized that the trees in the grounds provide shade in various parts of the ground at most times during the day. They show an area in the centre which is sunny most of the time, and an area near the entrance to the Church Hall where the sun reflected from the white stucco provides added warmth.

The Church and Church Hall buildings protect the ground on the north and west from prevailing winter winds, and hedges on the south and east provide some protection from southerly or eastern winds. These hedges also provide a visual and partial sound barrier between the grounds and the streets. The grounds have a sense of enclosure, and of being cut off from the outside world; a sense of sanctuary.

Group B - The Existing Site

The buildings are white stucco, in tudor style, with grey paint and red roofs. The Church is approached through a pair of lych gates, and the path bends east from these to the Church Hall. The grounds are laid in grass, well tended but possibly in need of fertilizing. The walkways are "insitu" concrete, laid in curves through the grass. Flower beds are maintained either side of the door to the Church Hall.

The grounds contain many trees, including lilac, weeping birch, manchurian elm, maple and mountain ash. The trees are mature and healthy, though in need of pruning. The grounds are surrounded by hedges; the cottoneaster hedge to the east is in good condition, but the caragana to the south appears to need some attention.

The only other element present in the grounds is a flag pole.

Group C - The Community

This is a high density area. Most of the older homes are scheduled to be replaced by highrise and walk-up apartments and maintenance on these homes appears to be minimal. Some homes have been subdivided into smaller suites for single people or small families. Some highrises have been designed to meet the needs of the elderly (Athabasca, Valleyview Manor, Kiwanis Place, Oliver Place, Regency). The better apartments have facilities such as sundecks and balconies for the use of people that live in them.

Areas presently available in the community for recreation purposes include the River bank, with walks and benches; the community grounds with a playground and ball diamond; the Kitchener Park playground; Molson's House with a park area; and the Wadhurst Road Park.

Traffic on 102 Avenue, in front of Christ Church, is heavy. The road is used as a short-cut for people going to and from downtown, who thereby escape several lights on Stony Plain Road. Traffic is heaviest during the morning and evening rush hours but continues all through the day and at weekends.

Pedestrians using the area include those walking dogs, senior citizens out for a stroll, joggers and others. There are also bicycles used in the area.

CHURCH PARISH HALL RECTORY

CHURCH PROVIDES SHELTER FROM STRONG N.W. WINDS

EVENING SHADE

REFLECTED SUN EXTRA WARMTH

SHADE MOST OF THE DAY

AFTERNOON SUN

SUN

EVENING SHADE

PARTIAL SHADE

121 ST.

102 AVENUE

SITE ANALYSIS - GROUP 'A' - MICROCLIMATE

0' 8' 16' 24' 32' 40'

N

CHURCH PARISH HALL
WHITE STUCCO - TUDOR STYLE RECTORY

DOOR
FLOWERS FLOWERS

SLOPE

BIRCH

ELM

LILAC

WEEPING BIRCH

LILAC

FLAG POLE WEEPING BIRCH

WEEPING BIRCH

MOUNTAIN ASH

COTONEASTER HEDGE (IN GOOD CONDITION)

LYCH GATE

CARAGANA HEDGE (IN POOR CONDITION)

121 ST.

102 AVENUE

SITE ANALYSIS GROUP 'B' - EXISTING SITE

0' 8' 16' 24' 32' 40'

The community is varied, including many senior citizens. The other age groups include a high percentage of babies and toddlers, and there are few school age children. There are many single parents, particularly with pre-school children. The community has mixed cultural groups, including many Indian and Metis families. This group noted that there are many "undesirable" people in the area whose behaviour tends to be disruptive to community life.

The community contains many transients, and vandalism in the area is high. It is notable, however, that the Christ Church grounds themselves have almost completely escaped damage by vandals.

Functional Analysis

The following three factors became evident during the community analysis; these restrict considerably the "function" for which the Christ Church grounds could be replanned.

1)   There appears to be a fair number of recreational areas within adult walking distance of the Christ Church grounds. Senior citizens, and the blind residents at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind would appear to be those for whom the Christ Church grounds would fill an unmet need.

2)   There is a considerable fear on the part of the Christ Church congregation that the grounds, if opened to the public, would be used for purposes that the congregation had not originally intended. There was fear that the men often seen worse for wear on the street on Sunday mornings would then hang around the church grounds, and perhaps even sleep there if there were benches. It was thought that hitch-hikers, often seen in the area, might also use the grounds for sleeping. Also, since some children in the area have been known to be very destructive, they might damage the Church property if allowed into the grounds.

3)   The members of the congregation, particularly the older members, have a great affection for the grounds as they are and do not want to see any changes.

We did not do a "brain storm" and formal functional analysis at this workshop. This process would have disrupted rather than been productive, as the final decision was not that of the workshop and consensus would have eluded us. There appeared, however, to be agreement that the continued function of the grounds was "to be"; to be preserved and to be looked at (and listened to) and to be enjoyed, preferrably or possibly by a larger number of people than at present, but not materially altered in any major way.

The opinions of those at the workshop reflected the age old dillemma of the "deserving" (i.e., the old and the blind) and the "undeserving" (i.e., the drunk shut out of his home by his wife, the transient youngster who doesn't want to pay the price of a bed for the night). The designs produced by the workshop reflect the ambivalence of the participants and their wish to restrict the use of the park to the "deserving" - a judgmental but understandable position.

Sketch Designs

Design A

This design introduces several new elements to the grounds. There is a sundial and new flower bed west of the entrance to the Church Hall, a path from the present lych gate to a new one east of the rectory, a semi-circular backless bench, looking onto a new goldfish pond in one direction and a new flower bed in the other. Nesting facilities and feeding trays have been introduced to attract more birds.

Criticism

The direction of the path invades the privacy of the rectory; the lych gate should probably be south of the rectory. The curved bench is good; it allows for flexible use; people can talk to each other, or face away from each other. The goldfish pond may prove impractical, particularly in winter and some thought it was too likely to attract children.

Design B

This design creates a new path from the existing lych gate to the south eastern section of the property. South of the curve of the new path are grouped benches (to allow for conversation), of wrought iron with brick

ends (so that they cannot be removed). A bird feeder has been added and a light over the new lych gate. New planting includes a flowering plum near the new gate, and a flower bed within the grouping of benches.

Criticism

It should be remembered that a conversation cannot be held when people are farther than eight feet from one another; the grouping of benches should allow for this, perhaps providing a table between rather than a flower bed.

The path design in this plan differs from the previous one; in this plan, the new path represents a detour; in the first plan, it is a short-cut. The decision to plan a short-cut which people will use even if they hadn't intended to enjoy the grounds, or the decision to plan a detour which only those who appreciate the beauty of the ground already will want to take, is basic; it reflects the genuineness of the designers' intentions to allow the public to share the beauty of the grounds.

Design C

This design also shows a "detour" route for the new path, with benches lining the path intermittently. There is some consideration given to new planting, and a sundial is added, and also a flower bed with evergreens in the centre and a bird bath. A plan is also introduced for a possible hedge to isolate the area accessible to the public from the area immediately in front of the church hall.

Criticism

This design shows extreme ambivalence, the "detour" path is planned, encouraging only the appreciative to enter the grounds. Also, the Church Hall itself is protected from possible public contamination by an added hedge. In our view, this hedge would destroy the open quality, and the sense of completeness of the grounds, so that they would not be enjoyable to either the congregation or the public. The flower bed has been added but has been placed in the shade where it is unlikely to provide good blooming flowers.

Design D

This design has divided the rectory grounds from the rest with a wood fence, with a rockery on the slope below it. The new path winds through

the grounds, allowing for people to try for a short-cut, but meander on the way. The seats are placed in three places along the path, one next to a new sundial. Two new flower beds are introduced, and perrenials are suggested. The path is pea gravel.

Criticism

The fence introduces an alien element; a low hedge would probably be better. We like the rockery concept. The seating along the path does not allow for people to talk to one another. The pea gravel path will not be comfortable to walk on, and may present difficulties for wheelchairs or the elderly infirm. We like the form of the path, and the location of the sundial and one seat. This is the only design thus far to allow seating anywhere near the Church Hall. This, however, is the warmest place to sit. (See Site Analysis A.) The most sheltered, and the sunniest. It is also the most likely location to be used by people of the congregation when they are using the Church Hall itself.

Design E

This was the only group design produced. One new path crosses the property to a new lych gate on the centre of the hedge on the east side. There is some new evergreen planting in the south eastern corner of the grounds. Two benches are introduced, set back from the path itself. A litter bin is provided. A pair of benches, arranged for conversation, are placed in front of the door to the Church Hall. There is a bird bath near them. Two new flower beds have been introduced, one north of the new path, and one around the flag pole.

Criticism

This was the most thorough of the designs and shows careful thought. Some benches are placed in shade and allow foc ontemplation; others are placed together, in the sun, near the Church door, to allow for fellowship. Litter containers have also been added, which shows thought. The proposals for new planting might prove too elaborate for present. We suggest that such a project be engaged upon in stages.

SKETCH DESIGN 'C'

CHURCH PARISH CHURCH HALL HOUSE

NEW TREE PLANTING

SUN DIAL

POSSIBLE FUTURE HEDGE

SOLID WOODEN BENCHES

BIRD BATH
LOW EVERGREENS
FLOWERS

NEW LYCH GATE

121 ST.

102 AVENUE

0' 8' 16' 24' 32' 40'

SKETCH DESIGN 'E'

CHURCH PARISH HALL RECTORY

NEW FLOWER BED

BENCHES
brick uprights, wood seat

BIRD BATH

BENCH

NEW FLOWER BEDS
spring bulbs, low annuals
juniper, cedar chips

LOW ANNUALS

LITTER

FLAG POLE

LITTER

NEW LYCH GATE

NEW EVERGREEN TREES

LITTER

LYCH GATE

121 ST.

102 AVENUE

RECOMMEND LIGHTS
FOR 102 AVE & 121 ST.
WITH GONG FOR USE
BY C.N.I.B.

0' 8' 16' 24' 32' 40'

Design F

This design cut off the south east corner of the property, with a hedge or fence, put a pair of flower beds, some grass and a bench within this small area. The rest of the grounds are left untouched; there is no view into them from the bench, which looks onto the flower beds and the street.

Criticism

This is perhaps the most honest design of the lot. It probably reflects the action that most of the congregation would like to take; it represents a minimal sharing with the public, without any danger to the grounds themselves. We doubt if the bench would be used.

Design G

This design separates the east portion of the ground from the rest by a hedge. Seating is arranged with a number of flower beds and a fountain. A light on the corner provides an attractive element at night.

Criticism

While this plan introduces a dividing hedge, which we have already said will not add to the beauty of the ground, it does also include some other attractive elements. The corner light could be a spot light, designed to show the trees at night. The fountain would be attractive as would the flower beds and seating.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The representatives from Parks and Recreation made several comments, and a lot of suggestions:

1. Paths are not necessary if the grass is healthy; you could always put in a path if you thought the grass was getting too worn.

2. Fixed benches are inflexible; consider using moveable chairs so that people can sit in social groups. Parks and Recreation can provide only benches, however, so you will have to provide your own chairs. (Participants voiced concern about the theft of chairs.)

3.   Seating could be placed directly under some of the trees, perhaps in a circle around the base.

4.   Just opening up another gate will not necessarily bring in the public; if you really want to attract them you must have something for them to do (a putting course, a garden party, a lunch counter, a croquet set, a stage, a concession stand, music, checkers and chess, a giant chess set).

5.   Maintenance - the Church could negotiate for this to be done by Parks and Recreation except for the maintenance of flower borders.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

The input of Parks and Recreation representatives showed the extent of the choices available to the congregation of Christ Church.

1.   Leave things as present; the public feels at present they should not enter, and do not.

2.   Cut off a small corner for public use, as in Design F. This would not do much good to anything but the consciences of the congregation. It would not be used.

3.   To allow the public to make a detour through the grounds, providing a bench or two, both in "social" and "anti-social" arrangements, for those who appreciate the grounds enough to want to sit down for a while. One additional lych gate could be added, and a path laid if traffic warranted (would you want a sign saying "Please walk on the grass"?). We do not feel that this would make any great difference to the number of people using the grounds.

4.   To allow the public to make a short-cut through the grounds with the way out visible from the entrance. The design could be arranged as above, with a path laid if warranted. Design E would provide the best arrangement of benches for the short-cut design. We think this would increase the parish's own enjoyment of the grounds and perhaps provide a sanctuary for others who would appreciate them.

5.   To encourage and invite (rather than allow) the public to use the grounds by providing attractive passive activities for those that enter. This is the option opened up by the Parks and Recreation representatives, and would result in some changes to the grounds as they presently exist.

This need not be to "spoil" them, but to make them "useful" rather than just something that is nice to look at. Please consider this option before you reject it.

6. Nowhere has any one suggested that this area become a child oriented playground. This should not be even considered.

EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP

I feel the workshop probably clarified the options available to the Christ Church congregation. The evaluation forms showed that the participants enjoyed the workshop, found it interesting and graded it "B". Criticisms included "too long", "too short", the choice of slides to include projects that were to grandiose for the Christ Church site, and the "negative" attitude of some participants, and the indecision of the Church vestry. Positive comments were made about the slide show, the resource people, the informality, the participation and the lunch.

POSTSCRIPT

In September, 1974, the Church vestry met to discuss plans for Christ Church grounds. They decided to maintain and improve the grounds for the purpose they presently serve. (See Appendix II for letter.)

KEEGANO - August 27 and 28, 1974.

Keegano is a mixed income housing co-operative of 45(?) units in the Millwoods area of Edmonton. The development is new, and much of the landscaping has not been completed. A member of the co-op approached the Planning Council to request that a mini-park workshop be provided for Keegano residents to allow them to study the sites they have available for landscaping and to decide the best uses for these sites.

The architect of the development, Bruce Watt, is also a co-op resident. He agreed that it might be helpful if some co-op members studied the plans for outdoor space in the co-op so that he would be able to check his own ideas against those of other co-op residents. To help with the workshop he provided several 1/16th scale plans of the whole development (for the Site Analysis) and 1/8th inch drawings of sections of the site for more detailed planning at the workshop.

After an attempt to book a school for the workshop, it was decided to hold it at a home; it was also decided that the workshop should take place over two consecutive evenings, since Saturday (the day chosen for the other workshops) was "work party" day in the co-op, when everyone was expected to help with the landscaping.

Site Analysis

TEAM A - Micro-climate

This team used "Plants People and Environmental Quality" by the United States Department of the Interior, National Parks Service as a guide. This was found more useful than Jack Long's book used in the previous workshops.

This team found that the long corridors between the front doors of the town houses were likely to be cool and shady in summer, and to act as wind tunnels in winter. The area between the back patios of the houses, which is planned for communal use (landscaping, playgrounds, etc.), is fairly sheltered from winds, and would be warm in summer. The area intended by the architect for parking lots and playgrounds, at the outside edge of the site, were found to be exposed to the winds and to have little, if any, shade from surrounding buildings. This team recommended that the playgrounds be surrounded with hedges, and shade trees planted at intervals.

4. KEEGANO
SITE ANALYSIS
TEAM 'A' MICROCLIMATE

NORTH

PREVAILING NORTH WEST WINDS

COLDEST, HOTEST AND WINDIEST

COLDEST, HOTEST & WINDIEST

COLDEST, HOTEST AND WINDIEST

HOT IN SUMMER

HOT IN SUMMER

HOT IN SUMMER

SHADE AND WIND TUNNEL

SHADE IN WIND TUNNEL

WIND TUNNEL

WW WINTER WARMTH SUNNY + SHELTER FROM WIND
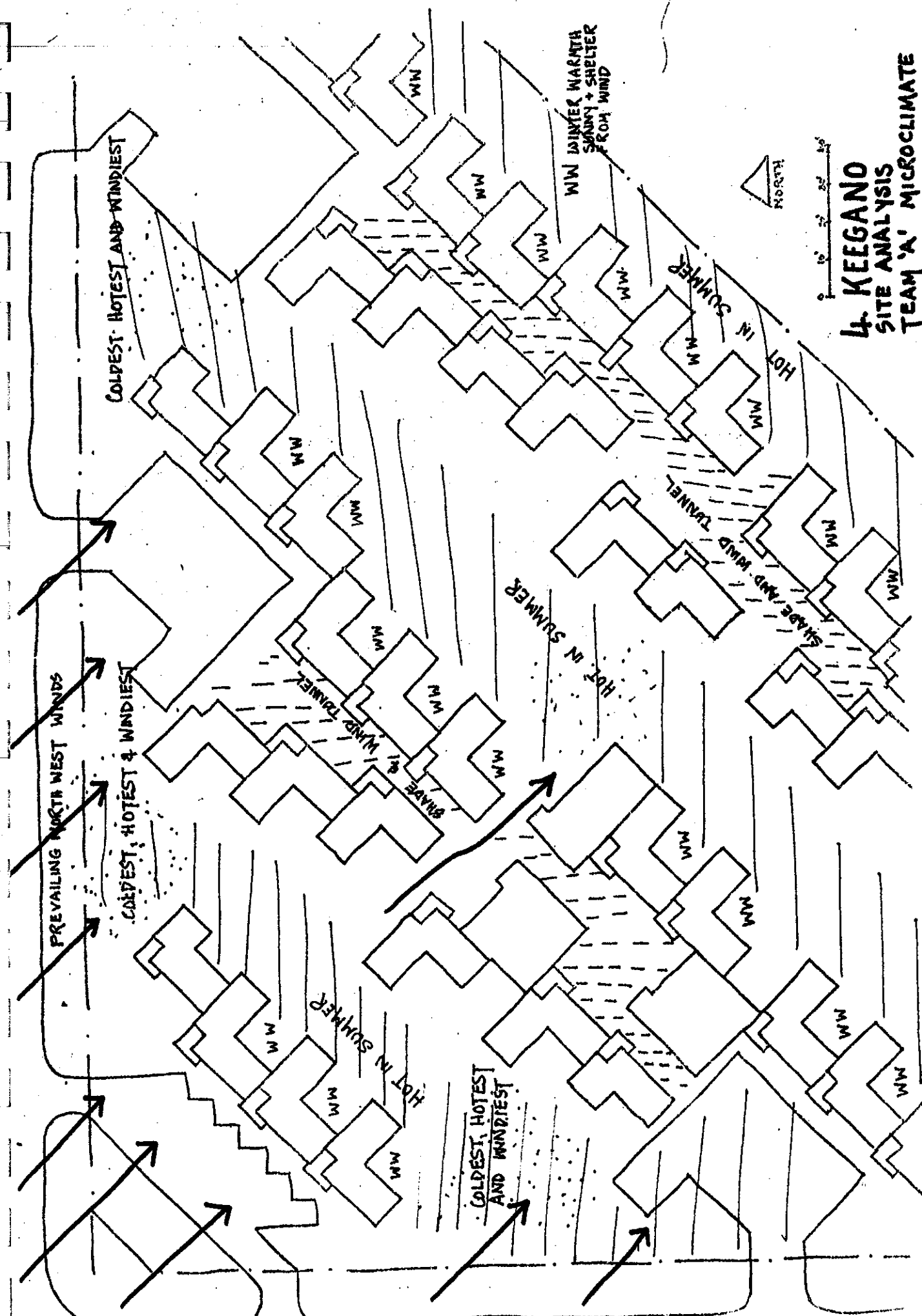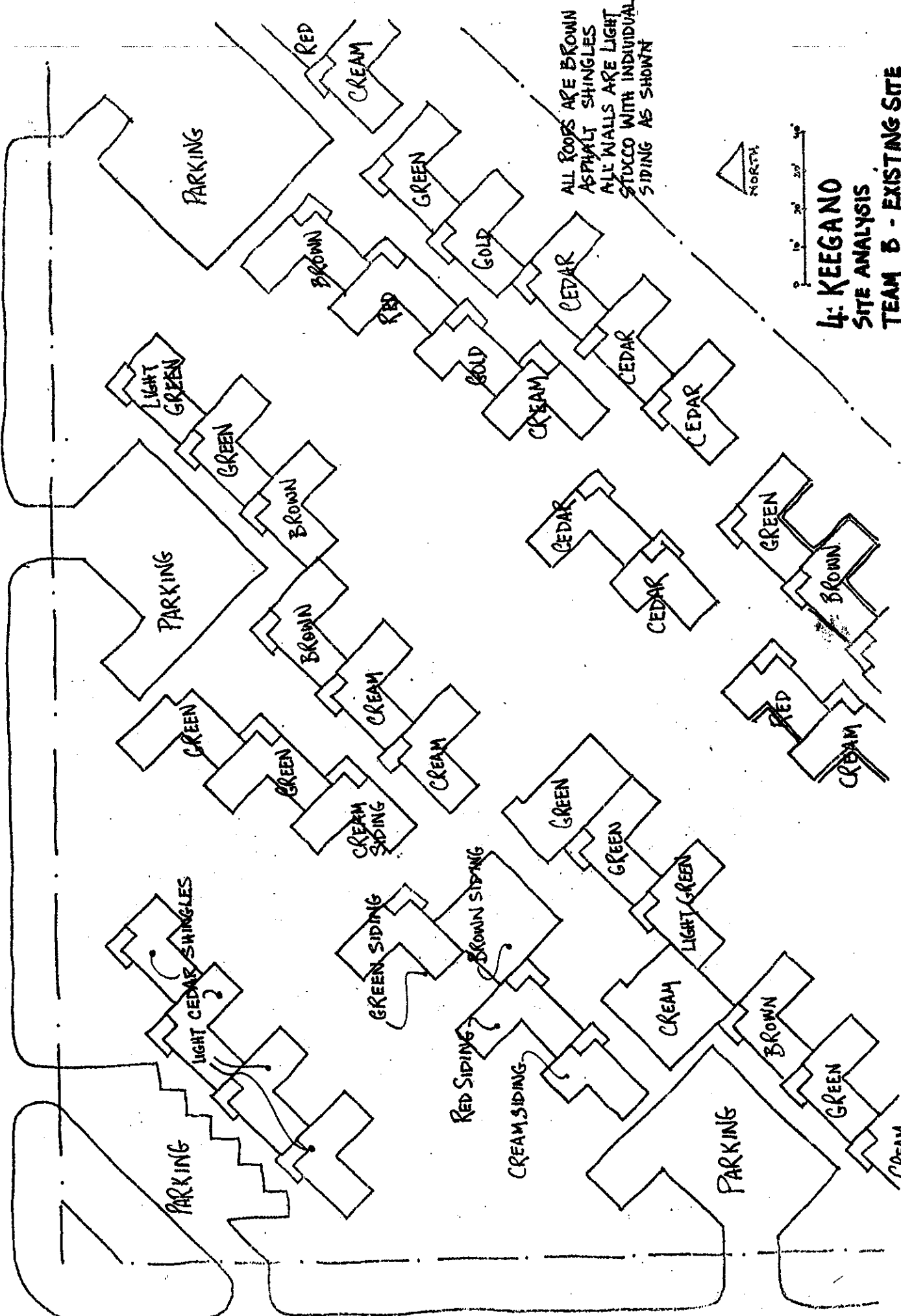
4: KEEGANO
SITE ANALYSIS
TEAM B - EXISTING SITE

ALL ROOFS ARE BROWN
ASPHALT SHINGLES
ALL WALLS ARE LIGHT
STUCCO WITH INDIVIDUAL
SIDING AS SHOWN

NORTH

PUBLIC HOUSING

DOME

OVERABUNDANCE
OF CATS
RAPIDLY INCREASING
DOG POPULATION

FANCY HOUSES BEYOND
GREEN STRIP

○ SENIOR CIT.
⊕ ADULT
× SCHOOL AGE
• PRESCHOOL

NORTH

4. KEEGANO
SITE ANALYSIS
TEAM 'C' - THE COMMUNITY.

BUSY ACTIVE
NOISY CMTY!

COMMUNITY
BUILDING

DIRT &
CHILD PILE

DUPLEXES & HOUSES

MAIL
BOXES

DUPLEXES

RICHFIELD MEWS
(FANCY APT.)
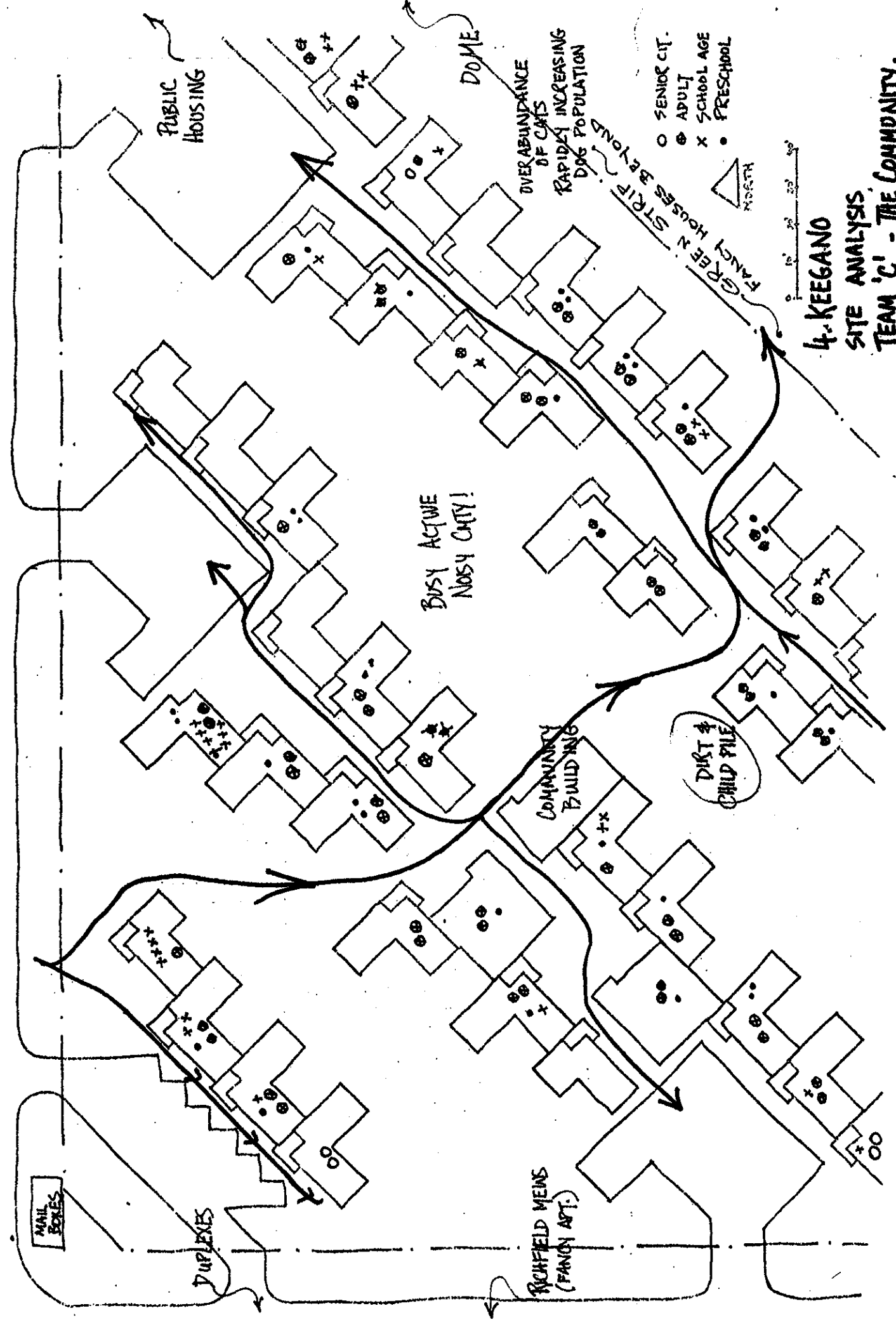
TEAM B - The Existing Site

This team recorded the use of materials on the existing housing. All roofs are brown asphalt shingle. Some houses have walls with split cedar shingles, and some have painted sidings. Stucco is also used, painted various pastel colours. Rough cedar planter boxes are used in the walkways throughout the site.

TEAM C

This team marked with dots the number and ages of people in each dwelling. They also noted an "overabundance" of cats, dogs and bicycles. They showed the popular paths through the site, and the position of community buildings, mail boxes, existing pathways and needed fire truck routes.

This team also showed the nature of adjacent housing; the "fancy houses" backing onto the co-op on the south and the apartments and duplexes to the west.

Functional Analysis

This was conducted as a "brain storm", with all ideas contributed without editing. Comments about each idea were added later, with a "star rating" depending on its priority.

Fort	****	
1 or 2 max. sandboxes (cat boxes too)	***	
Movable things	***	Things that kids can be creative with.
Tree house	***	Raised - see play house.
Things to climb on	****	
Picnic area with trees	*	People can go somewhere else.
Swings and seesaws	*	They're dull (young person said this).
Culverts	**	Use them to put a tunnel in a hill.
Playhouses, small	***	Age differences; small for under fives; in separate playground; more "domestic" than the fort; fenced.
Long crooked slide		for adults too; see slope.
Hill with water at the top	*	Fountain at top; sand at bottom.
Sprinkler	***	
Ice skating	veto	use City park.

Maze		Put it in the fort.
Greenhouse	**	
Swimming pool	veto	Pipe dream.
Boxes		Little kids playhouses; boxes with holes in the sides.
Trampoline	veto	
Covered parking with tennis court on top	veto	
Gazebo		For communal use; incorporate greenhouse and barbecue.
Benches in walkway	***	Check micro-climate; find pleasant place to sit.
Private "no kids" sitting area		Gazebo by invite only; people can use their own courtyards.
Community barbecue	***	
Grocery cart	****	
Moving sidewalk	laugh	
Compost heaps	***	
Garbage disposal	***	
Country		Program or club.
Hill	***	
Archery	veto	Joke.
Cycle track		Around the outside; keep bikes out of walkways and keep trikes in.
Hopscotch, etc., on parking lot	***	On sidewalks too.
Flower garden	*	In planters - check for sun.
Speed bumps	****	
Tarzan ropes		Fort; or on hill.
Bird houses	****	They eat mosquitos; must be cat proof.
Controlled climate walkway; roofed	10 star	
Pit	*	Multi-purpose
Sundial	**	
Garbage cans		Need beautifying.
Vines on stucco	***	
Lamps		Spot light by barbecue pit; need dark places too.
Fountain thing		(see hill)
Clothes lines	****	

Bike racks   ****   On parking lot area.

Car repair pit   Check city regulations; could use
                                                  a ramp instead of a pit.

Sketch Design A

Group A included a variable number of children who drew their own
ideas for a playground that they would like. A ladder with a fireman's
pole, and a climbing net were produced. One child produced an elaborate
drawing showing a complete playground design. This included a clubhouse
on stilts, with a slide down from it, a fireman's pole and a big sign
saying "Boys; No Girls Allowed". The playground also had a climbing
frame, a set of swings with swing tires and hand rings and a large curved
slide.

Sketch Design B

This group suffered from diffusion and uncertainty. There was a
continual change in membership (see evaluation) and the design suffered.
By the end, this group had chosen some playground equipment which they
wanted to use for a 6 - 12 year old playground in addition they also adopted
to the ideas from group A.

This group suggested an "A" frame playhouse with a roof balcony and
fire pole on one side and a slide into a sand pit on the other. The ground
floor would include some space for swings and a playhouse with storage for
"dressup" clothes.

They also suggested a rope grid, a train, a tree set in cement with
swings on it, a cross beam frame with tire swings on it and a balancing beam.

This team also suggested that a vehicular right of way of asphalt
be built to the community building from the parking lot to allow for the
fire truck to gain access from one end only of the open area. There should
also be a 4 foot rise from unit 14 to the parking lot and to the community
buildings. This could be used by wagons, bikes and for roller skating in
summer, and for tobogganing in winter.

4. KEEGANO
SKETCH DESIGN 'A'

no girls allowed

□ club
□ huge Boys

Bus
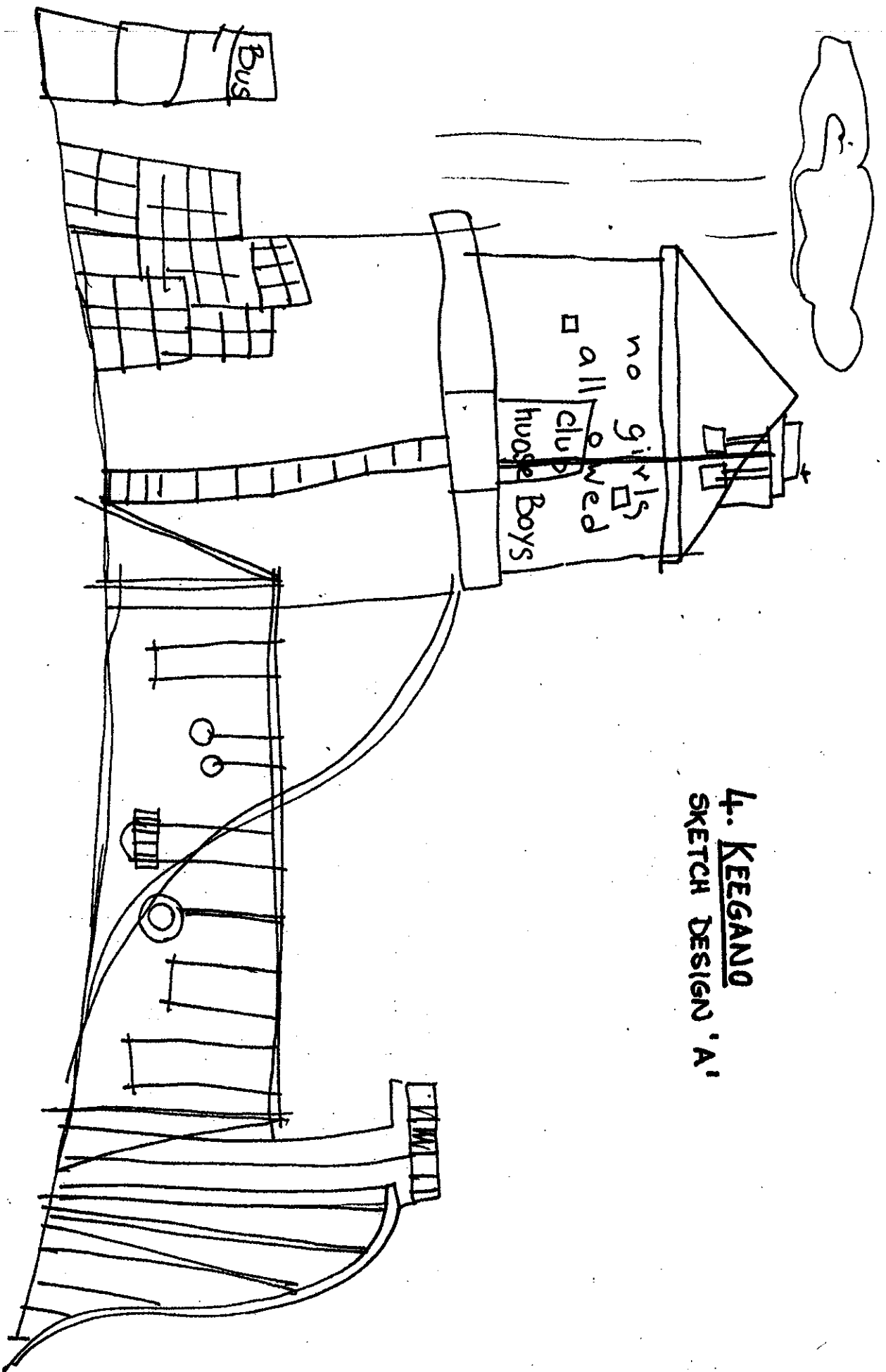
Sketch Design C

This group worked first on the general concept of the use of open space in the development. They wanted to provide more seating areas within the walkways as these are already proving to be an attractive place for people to meet each other and stop for a chat. Trees were also included to provide shade.
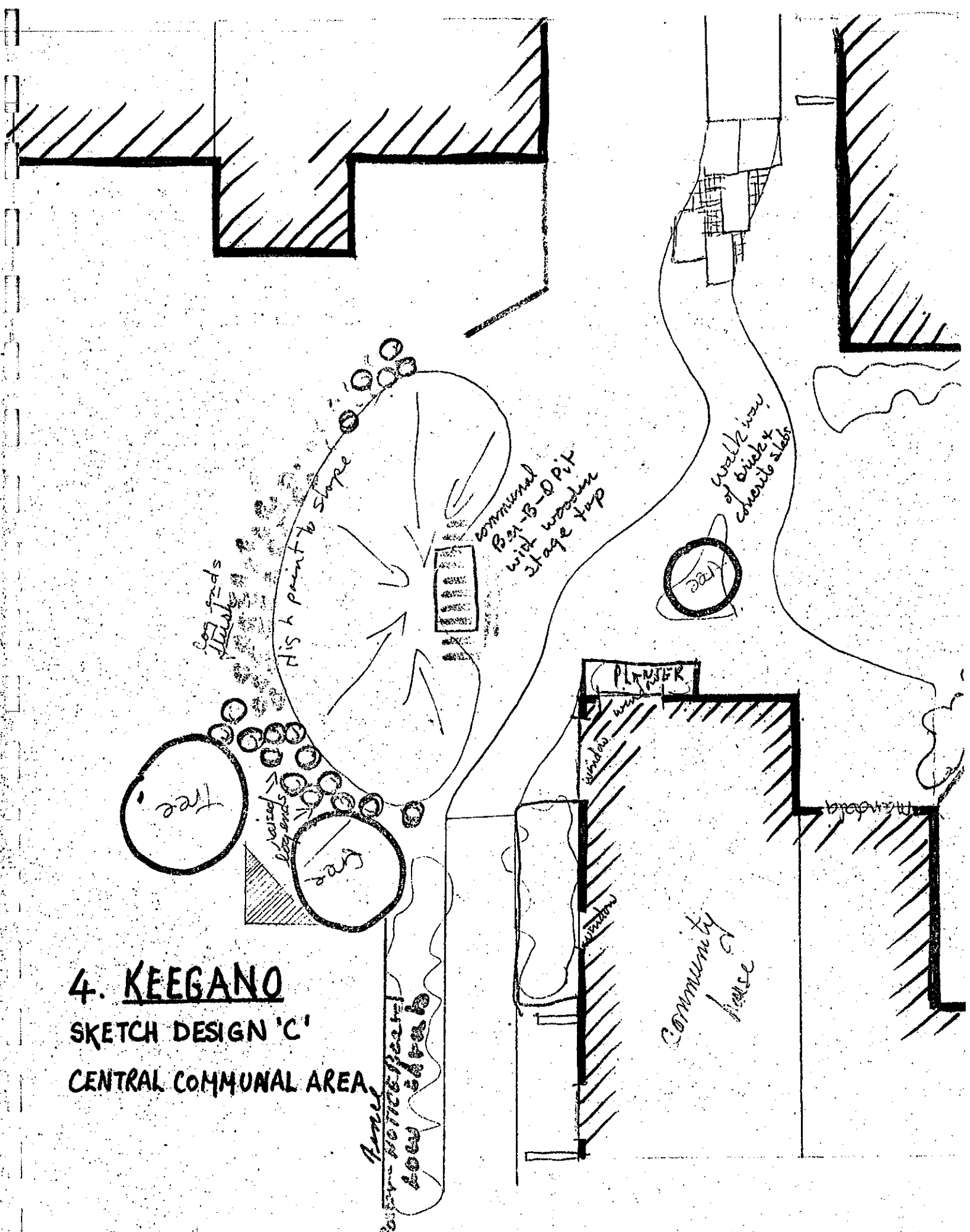
This group adopted the architect's plan for a road of log ends winding through the open space. This is crossed by a walkway of paving slabs, interpersed with brick paving, winding between the houses towards the community building. Also at the community building there would be a notice board, some additional planting including trees and a "mandala" on the wall of one home.

This group then worked on the need for a focal point in the development and a sense of enclosure at the community building in the heart of the site. They designed a ramped amphitheatre with a communal barbecue pit at the centre which could also be used for drama. They surrounded the top of the ramp with log ends, lower in the centre to allow for access by fire trucks.

The paved walkway continues through the site to the pre-school playground on the northern most corner of the site. The play area is protected on two sides (nearest the road) by a fence, and on a third by a hedge with backed benches for adults supervising children. The playground is covered in sand, except for the sloping area on the east side. This is grassed and is enclosed by log ends. The playground is shaded by two trees and contains several circular huts four feet in diameter with holes in the side, some with roofs, some without, and in variable heights. There is also a slide, with ladder up two sides and steps on the end.

This group also had other "bright" ideas which they did not have time to draw into their plans. They included a covered bike rack on the parking lots, a suggestion for active sports on the "strip" with a water tap, some storage and a "johnny on the spot". They also suggested a playground area be set aside for "imaginative" rather than active play with a variety of log structures. Also, a sign "Keegano" should be placed on the garbage cans, and retractable washing lines should be provided which would be useful but not obvious when not in use. This group would also paint the parking lots, grow vines on the stucco and allow cross country skiing but not skidoos.

4. KEEGANO

SKETCH DESIGN 'C'

CENTRAL COMMUNAL AREA

communal Bar-B-Q Pit with wooden stage top

walk way of brick & concrete slabs

tree

tree

seat

PLANTER

Community house

window

high point to slope

log ends

raised log ends

HOUSING UNITS

scul

raised legends

High point of gentle slope

tree

walk way of concrete slabs on

PROPERTY LINE

Sand

Sand

Sand

Sand

side walk lines

side walk

slide
kids circle
ladder ends (two)
rope at end

N
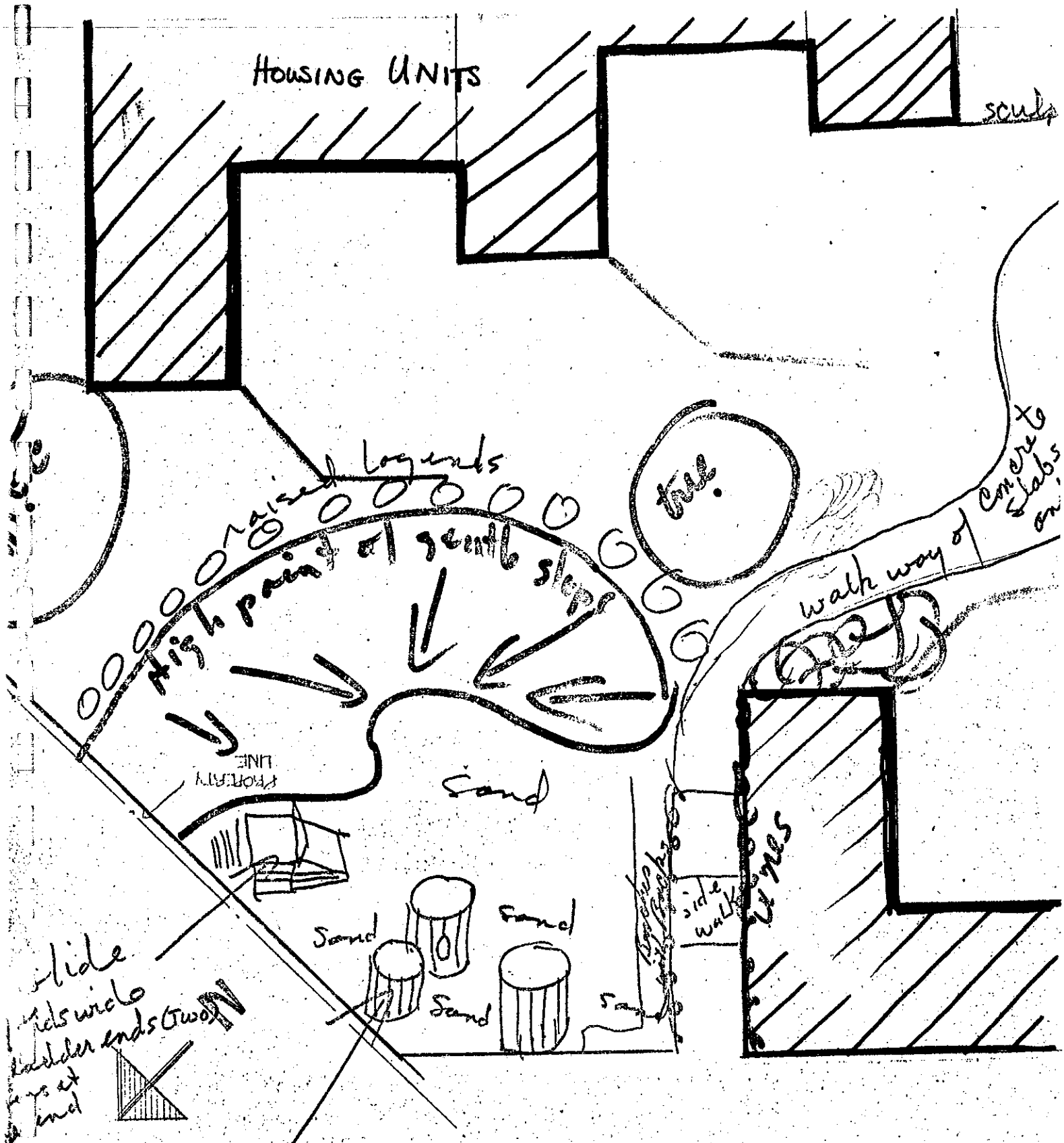
circular huts
4' diameter

4. KEEGANO

SKETCH DESIGN "C"
PRE SCHOOL PLAY AREA

Critique

This was the only design to reach the point where critique would be useful. The architect, Bruce Watt, said that he liked many of the ideas, but questioned whether the group had any clear concept of the use of the total site. The group said they had and their ideas for areas they had not designed in detail were discussed. Such problem areas as the place for bicycles (whether to give up a parking space to put racks next to housing units on the walkway, or to forbid bikes from the walkway areas) and the fire access (how essential is through access and how heavy is a fire truck) were discussed. Ball games were also discussed in relation to playgrounds. It was decided that the site is too small for this to be practical and that there are larger park areas close by for such activities.

Evaluation

This workshop was not as productive as the others; only one "plan" was produced. There were reasons for this:

The location of the workshop in a private home (in two private homes, a different one each night) tended to hinder concentration. People socialized, enjoyed themselves and their concentration was hindered.

There were many interruptions. Small children had to be put to bed (and back to bed) several times. A television program had to be watched, since a participant was on T.V., etc..

Several people had only a hazy (if any) idea of the purpose of the meeting. One lady had come to choose playground equipment, and expected to have a catalogue to choose from. Another came to get advice on the landscaping of her own patio. A third person came to find some free chocolate cake because he was hungry and stayed to run the group that gave him a cup of tea.

Attendance at the workshop was sporadic and intermittent. Only two or three people stayed through the two evenings; some arrived late both evenings and several came one night but not the other. This meant that only the group containing the three consistent members was able to follow through the design process of analysis, priority setting and planning to any sort of design conclusion.

Problems with other meetings in the co-op at the same time, with babysitters and people too tired to continue, led to this attendance problem.

The evaluation sheets handed in by some of the participants reflected these problems. Surprisingly, everyone found the experience enjoyable and/or interesting. (One person said it was too long for I found it frustrating.) Some graded the meeting "C" and some "B"; we grade the meeting "D".

Some comments by a participant* on an evaluation form show the reasons for the problems with this workshop:

Evaluation Form

1. What did you understand the purpose of the meeting to be? How did you find out about it? Why did you come?

    > "I thought we'd be choosing playground equipment.
    > My neighbour told me about it. It was in my home
    > and I wanted to be in on the choice."

2. Do you think the meeting achieved its purpose? If not, what do you think was achieved?

    > "Since I was not aware of the purpose before tonite
    > I don't know. We did exchange a lot of ideas."

3. Was the meeting (CIRCLE) enjoyable, interesting, exciting, boring, confusing, frustrating, too long, too short?

    > "Enjoyable, interesting."

4. What did you like most about the meeting?

5. What would you have done differently?

    > "I would have attended both meeting. (Weds. and
    > Thurs.) although this was just not possible at
    > this time."

6. What did you dislike most about the meeting?

    > "We seemed to achieve very little. These meetings
    > (co-op) seem to be all very social, although I don't
    > object to this. I think it definitely affects the
    > total outcome."

7. Please grade the meeting:

    A   B   C   D   E   F   Grand disaster.

    > "C. As a meeting socially B."

This workshop would probably have been improved had a written invitation describing the purpose of the meeting gone to co-op members.

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* This lady was not present on the first night but was hostess the second evening.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MINI PARKS WORKSHOPS

In all but the Keegano workshop, participants had a clear idea of what was expected of them. They came prepared to fulfill that commitment.

1. Potential participants should receive a written invitation to the workshop, with information on the purpose of the workshop and the commitment expected of them.

In all but the Centennial Shopping Centre Workshop, participants had a direct stake in the product of the workshop, and were therefore more highly motivated, and had more incentive to produce practicable plans.

2. Workshops such as this should be conducted, as far as is possible, with natural communities; i.e., with groups of people who share an interest in a particular piece of land, because they live, work, play, shop, or worship there.

In Norwood and Christ Church, the workshops were linked to a community action program or agency (Norwood Community Centre and Oliver Social Action Committee). The community development input of these two programs made these two workshops more effective than those in Centennial or Keegano. There was also a feedback benefit to the community action process from the workshops themselves.

3. Citizen planning workshops are more effective when part of an ongoing citizen development process; in turn, the workshops aid this process.

In Norwood there was a group of residents opposed to the street closure for the mini-park. The opposition was not present at the workshop and later attempted to sabotage the road closure. They were successful in part. In Christ Church, the representatives of the opposition to the public use of the Christ Church grounds were invited to the workshop, and their opinions were taken into account in the plans for restricted public use (restricted to "desirable" people) designed by the workshop participants.

4. Where there is conflict about the parks, planning the decision to involve (or not involve) the opposition in the workshop brings particular problems. To involve the opposition brings the need for compromise which may be inconsistent with good design. To exclude the opposition may prevent the mini-park being built at all.

The home setting of the Keegano workshop presented problems. There were distractions (TV, small children, etc.). There was not enough wall space or working space. The home setting meant that leadership was required of the "hostess", who was not always prepared for such a function.

5. An institutional setting (office, community centre or church hall) is preferable to a private home for a citizen planning workshop.

Continuity of personnel and of thought was found to be essential. Where both were lacking, people were not able to work productively. In addition it was found that an evening time, with people tired at the end of a day, was less productive than a day time workshop.

6. The day-long (9:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.) workshops, with a short break for a working lunch were more effective than two subsequent three hour evenings.

In several instances, participants said the workshops were too long; in others, they were too short. This judgement varied with the participants' own perception of his role as designer. Those who took their role seriously (as many did) invariably found time too short and were still drawing as the critique began.

7. A one-day workshop is sufficient for a group of twelve people who come to grips with the problems of design involved in a small park design.

The involvement of residents and potential users in the process of "site analysis" produced valuable information about the sites not available to non-residents (short cuts, community characteristics, popular places for children to play).

8. Residents contribute information to a site analysis that would not be known to outsiders.

The residents became aware, through the site analysis, of aspects of their environment that they had not seen before. The significance or orientation of sun, wind and shade, for example, and the use of materials on the site and surrounding buildings. (e.g. Christ Church realized their trees should be pruned and Norwood that the garage needed painting).

9. The experience of site analysis was an educative one for the participants. They learned to look as well as to see.

The functional analysis in the workshops (excluding Christ Church) provided an inventory of interesting ideas for the use of mini-park sites. Analyses such as these, with the subsequent discussion and priority setting,

would be a useful preliminary for professional park designers.

10. The functional analysis by community residents should be a minimum prerequisite for the design of neighborhood parks by professional planners.

The slide presentation of "materials and how they can be used" was fairly well received in all the workshops (although some felt European slides of street scenes were not relevant to their own situation). The concepts that were explained through the slides were picked up by the residents and used in their designs (e.g. "a sense of place", "a focal point", "texture", etc.).

11. People without design training are capable of understanding the concepts involved in park design.

The sketch designs themselves were pursued enthusiastically; some worked singly and some in groups.

12. Designs produced by "loners" were more simplistic and more visually cohesive than those produced by groups. The designs produced by groups were more flexible, taking more needs into account and involving more compromise.

In the Christ Church workshop, the ambivalence of the congregation to share their grounds with the public was reflected in their designs. In other park designs, the North American tendency to segregate children from adults was reflected in the segregated park design. The use of planting by designers varied with the "city oriented" life style of the planners; those who prefer the country and find the city hostile, used more trees.

13. People values are reflected in the parks they design. All of the designs were feasible (barring some difficulties with out-of-scale drawings) and could be built with reasonable cost.

14. Given the authority to plan, and a stake in the success of the plan, citizen planners produce reasonable, practical and buildable ideas.

We underrate the knowledge and skills of "untrained" citizen planners. In this project we found residents willing to research, eager to learn and ready to plan for the environment around them. There was some timidity at the start of each workshop: "You expect me to do this? I've never done anything like this before." Once the initial panic was over, and the citizens began to plan, the mystic of planning disappeared, and they found

they were doing something they could both understand and appreciate.

15. There is a planning mystique which inhibits the involvement of the citizen in planning.

16. Once he has become involved as a citizen planner, the planning mystique falls away and the untrained citizen has a real contribution to make.

17. The politics of establishing mini-parks are more of a problem than the practicalities of design.

18. These four mini-parks will be entirely different in character; so would any others designed by the communities around them. Such mini-parks, interspersed within the fabric of the City, would add a vitality and variety that usually only comes with history.

19. Although each mini-park is unique to its community, and to its designer, certain elements reoccur in every mini-park design:

    - A way to move through or past the mini-park.

    - Somewhere to sit, and an excuse to be seen sitting there.

    - Use of planting; ground cover, trees and shrubs, to counteract the sterile effect of a concrete urban environment.

SCRIPT FOR LIBRARY OF DESIGN ELEMENTS

SLIDE 1 - Introductory Slide of Roger's Pass.

There is one very important thing about mini-parks. This is a slide of the Roger's Pass area, with the archway and stone walls around it. How many of you remembered being in the Roger's Pass area ... driving through there? Were you tempted to get out of your car and to walk around in this mini-park? I wanted to show you this slide because it shows one thing that I think is important - that is a "sense of place" - it's "somewhere". You know that you are somewhere special; the way that the arch is arranged, the stone wall around, the mixture of texture and colour. It is an attractive thing to look at and it makes you want to stop there for a moment. You may not want to stop there for very long, but you do want to stop and walk and linger a little while to look at the view. People would probably look at the view from that platform, rather than walk around on the grass outside. It has a sense of place. In terms of the grounds at Christ Church, you may wish to retain and perhaps build on the sense of place that you already have. So, I have used this slide of the Roger's Pass, although it is not an urban mini-park (it is a mini-park within a huge park). It isn't a mini-park in the sense that we are talking about, but I have used this just as an example to describe to you the sense of place.

SLIDE 2 - Groomed Grass.

This first section deals with material and this shows some very typical materials used in most parks and used in your own Christ Church grounds ... very nicely groomed, clipped grass, neat tidy flower beds; this slide shows gravel, but in most places they use concrete. So these are the typically used materials in a park. Grass is used universally.

SLIDE 3 - Worn Grass.

Unfortunately, grass has a lot of disadvantages that you may have noticed in your own grass. Grass when walked over extensively by heavy traffic (as you can see here, people cut corners on their way to the houses) the grass wears out. It isn't a very hard wearing material ... it isn't durable.

SLIDE 4 - Overgrown Grass.

The other problem with grass as you see in this slide is that it needs cutting. This is a slide showing a chateau (in Hungary actually) where the grass hasn't been cut. As you can see, grass needs maintenance.

SLIDE 5 - Grass in Winter.

It has another disadvantage in our climate; for a considerable part of the year the grass is not green. It looks dead. So, although grass is universally used, it is not necessarily the most useful material. I'll be talking to you later on some alternatives to grass that you don't need to cut or that are more durable than grass.

SLIDE 6 - Too Much Concrete.

This is a slide of another material that is over used in park design and that is concrete. Your own walkways here in the church grounds are concrete. This is a slide of Toronto and this shows over-use of concrete. That is a huge vast area of concrete and it looks really bare. You see the people there are walking around the outside of the concrete, next to the water or near to the buildings, or through the umbrellas; but there is a great open space near to the middle of the concrete area where people don't walk.

SLIDE 7 - Asphalt

So great expansions of concrete are not the solutions to park problems. This is asphalt typically used on our streets and parking lots. The mini-park I was working on last week was an asphalt parking lot and we had a big problem there in that the sun on the asphalt had a great heating effect. So, asphalt is not a particularly good material for use in a park. It is too hot to walk on.

SLIDE 8 - Gravel on Back Lanes.

This shows another material that we use very much in our back lanes and so on - it is gravel. This kind of gravel is fairly sharp. It is not necessarily very good for children to walk on. It is not very comfortable for bare feet (if you anticipate people with bare feet) and it is uncomfortable to fall on. It also presents problems for wheelchairs or the infirm. But, it is a little more comfortable in some ways than the hot asphalt.

SLIDE 9 - Gravel Rounded and Graded.

This is another example of gravel. This is carefully graded gravel ... I am not sure what size that is; you can get pea gravel, the size of peas, and then you can get larger gravel up to one inch. You can get it graded. You can set it out either against grass or against some other material. I am trying to show here that you can choose materials with a contrast of texture. Instead of just having a grass texture against a concrete texture you can introduce different textures. Loose gravel is one of the other textures you can use. You can choose the different grades. You can set it inside a wood frame as they have here, and you get a contrast in texture, a difference in colour, and this variety will give the eyes something nice to look at.

SLIDE 10 - Sand.

This is a poor slide of another material which is fairly widely used in parks and that is sand. Sand is usually more applicable to playgrounds but it can be something that is pleasant for adults to walk in as well. It has some advantages in that it can be walked on bare foot ... it is not uncomfortable to fall on ... you can set sand beside something else and again get contrast; and if you put this against, say, gravel, you would get smooth sand against the nobbly gravel.

SLIDE 11 - Cobbles.

This shows another material familiar to those of you who have been in Europe - or perhaps in Montreal - the cobblestone, rough to walk on in terms of the surface being uneven. The individual cobbles here have been worn smooth by passage of many feet, and probably the wagon wheels (and now automobiles) so you get a surface that has got various colours in the different stones, worn smooth, but an uneven smooth surface. So, this is again a complete contrast to, say, the gravel we looked at earlier or the flat concrete surface that we looked at from Toronto.

SLIDE 12 - Concrete (textured).

This is another slide of concrete and if I can get it into sharp enough focus, you can see that this is not flat concrete. It has a diagonal groove in it and they do this by setting the concrete flat against a grooved board so that when the concrete sets, it also has a groove. You don't have to stick with smooth concrete, like you have on your own property or we have on most of our sidewalks. You can texture it by setting it against another texture of material when you make the slabs. You can also texture concrete by using a brush as the concrete is setting, or by using a hammer to chip it. You can also set it against a rough board. You see that used a lot in buildings where they set the concrete against very rough, wooden boards and you see the texture of the wood in the finished concrete. So we don't have to life with flat concrete.

SLIDE 13 - Exposed Aggregate Concrete.

Most of the concrete we see is flat because most designers are lazy. This is another thing that can be done with concrete. The other slides showed you concrete which was universally sort of flat, dull, concrete coloured. In these slides you see that there is a spotty effect on the concrete and that is created by washing the surface of the concrete slab just before it sets .. so what you do is wash the cement off the top and you reveal the stones which are in the concrete. What you see is actually the stones which are in the concrete and by changing the colour of the stones which you use in the concrete you can get a multi-coloured effect in the final product. So you get something which is more interesting than just flat concrete. It also has more colour variation and so on. This can be used as a paving slab, and is also used as a lot on the surfaces of high-rise buildings.

SLIDE 14 - Exposed Aggregate Concrete.

There's a close-up of that kind of concrete again. The technical term of this is "exposed aggregate". It can be quite useful and quite pleasant to walk on. One disadvantage of that gravel that I showed you earlier is that it tends to move around. If you do have children around they can throw it and this cannot be thrown.

SLIDE 15 - Flag Stones.

This shows some stone slabs, not the concrete type. Again a variety of texture. This is a street scene that reminds me a little of the street outside your own church.

SLIDE 16 - Wood.

Here is another alternative that you can think of in terms of flooring materials ... perhaps familiar to those of you who remember the boardwalk days - this is a framed wooden surface. This is more comfortable; softer to walk on than the concrete. It is more durable than grass but it isn't as fresh looking. It is more restful to the eyes ... it is probably cooler if you raise it a little off the ground than say the concrete or the asphalt.

SLIDE 17 - Terrazzo Flooring.

Terrazzo flooring is more suitable for interior areas, though used in some areas as an outdoor flooring material. Very smooth, very hard, very flat. It can be used in various colours to make a design on the floor.

SLIDE 18 - Brick Tiles.

This is a brick tiled surface in an unusual colour ... this blue ... you can also get it in the same colours as bricks. It usually feels a little softer, more interesting to walk on than a concrete or paved surface, and you can also vary the design by the way that you arrange the bricks. You can see that the bricks there have been arranged in an alternating fashion but you can arrange bricks in a number of different ways. You can arrange bricks in circles, in rows, straight or staggered.

SLIDE 19 - Clover.

This shows one material which I think is not being used as much as it might be ... (unfortunately, this is not a very good slide of it) that is clover. Clover is one of the ground materials that you could use that doesn't need extensive cutting. It limits its own height ... it won't grow higher than a certain height and it doesn't need frequent mowing. It can be walked on but people don't usually walk on it, therefore, you can control the way people walk in an area by planting some clover so that they won't walk through that unless they absolutely have to. There are other materials you can use as a ground material besides clover ... I've got a book of them here ... various kinds of ground covers ... creeping juniper, evergreen materials, etc. None of them are more than six inches high and they all cover the ground. Some of them are very attractive to use in areas where you might have excessive shade and where you might find it difficult to grow grass, or where you have a lot of trees that may take up all the water. And they can be used in areas where you want a low level ground cover, where you don't want people to walk, and you really don't want to have too much maintenance.

SLIDE 20 - Combination.

This is the beginning of a section which shows a combination of ground materials ... here you see a slate paving slab inserted into a sort of cobblestone street; you see the checker board pattern that they've made.

<u>SLIDE 21</u> - Combination.

This is another combination of grass against the paving slab (this is the first slide to introduce water which I'll talk about later).

<u>SLIDE 22</u> - Combination.

Again, this shows another combination material - a ground cover, as I was just describing in clover. Each area of ground cover is surrounded by a brick strip, and then set in concrete frame work. There is a difference in colour, a difference in texture, and the whole of the open area is broken up by the arrangement of the paving slabs.

<u>SLIDE 23</u> - Combination.

This is another combination slide showing the use of different colours placing slabs - you notice how the darker area of paving slab extends down the street into the distance. That is one thing you can use to guide people's feet ... by having a changing ground material. You can guide people's feet down one side rather than the other. There is no reason why that man there should be walking anywhere in that street but he has chosen to walk along the dark strip. Unconsciously, they will choose to walk on the path that you set for them even if they could just as easily walk somewhere else.

So, that is the end of the section on ground cover material. You can use the same principles in terms of colours, texture, warmth, durability, maintenance and so on in the decision about any other materials but I have just used ground materials as an example.

<u>THINGS TO SIT ON</u>

The next section of slides deal with some design elements which you might want to introduce. They are not intended to be models; they are intended to be ideas so that when you move into the next stage of sketch design you can use which ever you think would fit your design. This first section deals with things to sit on.

<u>SLIDE 24</u> - Logs.

These are logs and there you see some forestry students sawing up logs ... actually, these logs that they were sawing up were going to be used as paving slabs and that refers back, of course, to ground cover. You set these on the ground like stepping stones and you could do this within grass, setting stepping stones to guide people's feet so that they don't walk on the grass itself. Everyone wants to walk on the stepping stones rather than the grass because you put them there even if your stepping stones don't go in a straight line.

<u>SLIDE 25</u> - Bench.

This is the first of the benches. It has a combination of materials; brick uprights at the end and wooden crossbeams.

SLIDE 26 - Bench.

Another combination of materials: metal uprights and a wooden backed seat.

SLIDE 27 - Bench.

Another type of bench with a wooden back and a wooden seat; very boxy looking design repeated several times.

SLIDE 28 - Bench.

Here is another design for a bench - this one without a back, just a wooden seat with a concrete upright ... here you see a whole row of people watching other people going past ... a favourite past-time if you have a pleasant place to sit.

SLIDES 29 and 30 - Chairs.

Here is another type of seating which you might consider and that is the basket seating. Basket chairs are restful; some plastic seating was used, and stored during the time the restaurants were not open. There are some very boxy wooden benches sitting around the outside. You can just see the end support and then around the corner, you can see the benches were used for planters.

SLIDE 31 - Picnic Table.

Here is a very typical kind of seating used in this country; not really formal enough for the type of park you are designing but universally used in our major parks - the all-American, all-Canadian picnic table.

SLIDE 32 - Wilderness - Trees and Flowers.

This begins to show some planting elements you might want to use. This is a very informal wilderness area with some coniferous trees and some pretty unruly ground cover.

SLIDE 33 - Big Trees.

Here you see one conifer and a large birch type tree on the right.

SLIDE 34 - Trees.

Again a large major tree, such as you have in your own grounds ... I hope you will be able to retain many of your trees, despite their age.

SLIDE 35 - Tree.

This shows a tree can even exist within a building. Here they set a tree within a courtyard. It looks rather unhealthy but it certainly would be a pleasant view for those in the office buildings around.

SLIDE 36 - Trees.

This shows some elms along a city street. I want to show you one thing about these trees -- they have already been pruned once and they needed pruning ... they don't look particularly pleasant for a little while afterwards but unless you do this you can lose your tree because they can't support the height and length of growth. When they have grown for a while, after pruning, they will regain some of their beauty and shape.

SLIDE 37 - Trees in Winter.

This shows the trees after they have lost their leaves. Your microclimate study already shows that there is a vast difference in your own site in the summer and winter because your deciduous trees loose their leaves.

SLIDE 38 - Bushes.

This shows some principles of grooming hedges...your own hedges are quite well groomed.

SLIDE 39 - Bushes, Trees, etc.

This shows some round clipped hedges and bushes ... your own are square. This is one alternative. This shows a variety of plantings included in on the right ... very loosely growing.

SLIDE 40 - Clipped Hedge - Low.

We deliberately did not use Edmonton slides because we wanted you to think about the materials that you use rather than thinking ... "ahhhhh!, I have been there". We deliberately tried to find slides of places that you have not seen. If you want to go through them later, I know where some of them are but this one I don't happen to know. Here is a hedge quite like your own ... a boxy form; a very low box hedge.

SLIDE 41 - Clipped Hedge - High.

Here is a higher one again cut in a box form ... a winter scene.

SLIDE 42 - Overgrown Hedge.

Here is a hedge out of control - complete privacy within that hedge; it probably cuts down the traffic noise in the yard.

SLIDES 43, 44 and 45 - Flowers

This shows flowers. The permanent perennial flowers growing in bush form, blooming every year. This is a planting similar in some ways to your own, only these are tulips, I think. In this case, the decision was to plant every year and to plant things that were the same colour; this retains formal discipline in the planting area.

SLIDE 46 - Planter.

This shows the use of planters with annuals in them. This shows semi-formal planting, directly on the ground, of a mixed bag of plants.

A little bit about planters ... these planters actually contain trees (that is probably why the flowers look pretty sparse). You can use a planter to contain trees; when I was doing some work with a group that was planning to make a park out of a street closure (a lot more difficult than making changes to an existing park area than this), they used trees in planters.

SLIDES 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 and 54 - Planters.

These planters are a different material. These would be marble.

These planters are made of brick, quite gay; see how the brick contrasts with the material used for the street; a contrast of texture.

Ground level planting with gay flowers; a trim around the planting separating the street from the flower bed.

These planters are used to close off a street. They contain two rather sick trees.

There is a very low level with the planter in the centre here with flowers and an advertising sign above it.

Here is a circular planter with a tree in it.

Some very nice little wooden planters with flowers.

Here's some concrete bowl shaped planters; also notice the introduction to the trash can ... one with straight concrete sides.

SLIDE 55 - Landscaping Area Planters.

Here is another planter with just a very low little fence around to prevent people from walking across the flower bed. Quite an unobtrusive little fence about six inches off the ground.

SLIDES 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62 - Lighting.

This shows some more planting, flowers, and so on. It also shows some hanging lights that are used in some planting area.

This is a section on lighting, probably not relevant to exactly what you are doing here.

This shows a variety of street lighting, neon signs and overhead lighting.

This shows a kind of lighting that might be more compatible to your own neighbourhood - the old-fashioned street lamp. That is probably London.

Here is a modern type of street lamp with the four balls on top.

Here is another modern type typically used in our own pedestrian areas of the city with the mushroom top.

Here is another very interesting modern type with a tiny glass ball.

This is a festival lit with the gay lanterns and so on; really very attractive.

And that is a very elaborate type of lighting used to display a famous building. (I don't even know where it is.)

This next section is on fences.

SLIDE 63 - Fences.

Fences have several functions. This one has a primary function of keeping animals in and people out; it doesn't cut off the view; it doesn't prevent the sun getting in; it doesn't prevent the show blowing through, etc. It is a functional North American fence.

SLIDE 64 - Stone Wall.

This is a complete opposite - it is a man-made stone wall and in the distance on either side of the stairs you can see the railing fence. There are a variety of materials you can use to divide one area from another. Some of them divide visually as well as physically. Some of them are just physical barriers to discourage people from walking on them ... like the little frame around the planter that we looked at.

SLIDE 65 - Fence.

That fence typically used around most of our yards provides a physical as well as a visual barrier. You cannot see through it; you can't see over it; you can't see under it; and children can't get out of it. It's a total barrier.

SLIDES 66, 67, 68 and 69 - Metal Fence.

This is not a visual barrier; it is just a safety barrier.

A larger decorative metal fence.

Again, a metal fence this time either side of a bridge intended to prevent people from falling off - not intended to prevent people from seeing through.

And here is a narrow picket fence. I think your hedges also come into this series of fences but I have already shown you most of them. They perform depending on their height, a visual or physical barrier to discourage people from walking into different areas.

SLIDE 70 - Wire Fence.

Here is a very simple fence intended just to prevent people from taking a short-cut across the grass; a number of posts with one wire between them.

SLIDE 71 - Gate.

In fences you can have gates; you have the supurb example of lych gates in your own church yards. This is another example of a gate ... a very light metal gate within a massive stone wall.

SLIDE 72 - Steps.

This section deals with steps. I talked a bit about how you can use different materials on a flat surface to control where you want people to walk; you can also use steps too. You can use steps to set aside one area from another. You can use steps to separate a flower bed area from where you want people to walk so that people won't walk over the flower bed. You can raise the seating or you can sink it. This is an example of some low flat steps that are used to heighten the impact of a large statue. You can see how people are walking off the main street onto the steps so that they can sit on them because from steps you go to view.

SLIDE 73 - Steps.

This is a different kind of step - a steep step again up to a large monument ... again people will walk up to that step to look at the view from the top.

SLIDE 74 - Steps.

Another type of concrete step usually associated with buildings. It is called "cantelever steps".

SLIDE 75 - Steps.

This is the type of step that you would see perhaps associated with some of the older houses around, here where upper levels have been transformed into suites.

SLIDE 76 - Niagara Falls.

This slide is to remind me that this section is on water ... that is, of course, Niagara Falls. I don't know how many of you have been there but it is a magnificent site. Water can be an extremely attractive element. In summer, it provides a continual source of cooling; in winter, it can provide an interesting icicle formation. You can use it as a waterfall, a fountain or a paddling pool. I will just show you some of the uses of water.

SLIDES 77, 78, 79, 80 and 81 - Fountain.

This is a drinking fountain. People are on a walk somewhere and may want to stop for a drink.

Here is a fountain which could be used in a major plaza somewhere.

This is a two-storey high sculpture and you can see thw water comes
out of the top and trickles all the way down. This does several things:
the noise of that water is very pleasant to listen to and prevents you from
hearing some of the more unpleasant sounds. So, perhaps if you had some
trickling water on your grounds, it would reduce some of the traffic noise.

Here is another attractive water element. A sculpture with a boy on
top and the gargoyles spouting - moving water is really an attractive element.

Little waterfalls and pools run right through this park. On a hot day
those little pools make the air feel a lot cooler. Water really helps.

SLIDE 82 - Waterfall.

You can also use it as a waterfall rather than a fountain, or, you can
combine the two.

SLIDE 83 - Pool.

This is a rock garden. You can use a quiet pool in whatever shape
you want and that can also be quite attractive.

SLIDE 84 - Pond and Stream.

This is an example of water used in a zoo. That is a very angular
sculptured pool, quite a contrast to the other ones that we have looked at.

This section is on statues. I was talking in the beginning about a sense
of place. Sculptures really give an area a sense of place, a feeling of
being somewhere important.

SLIDE 85 - Statue.

That is an older type.

SLIDE 86 - Massive Sculpture.

This is a more modern type of statue sculpture - major sculpture.
This particular little park and this would be a mini-park; has a number
of things all trying to give the park a sense of place.

SLIDE 87 - Sculpture.

This is a muddle! There is traffic lights, there is that major sign,
a statue and I think I can even see some benches inside the park itself.
In that little park there is too many focal points: only one will give a
sense of place - they compete with each other and it looks like a jumble.

SLIDES 88 and 89 - Sculpture.

That is another sculpture; it looks almost obscene; another example
of formal sculpture with the bench at the bottom and the statue at either
end and through relief about it - the huge sculptured staircase down either
side ... very heavy looking and very formal. It would almost be frightened
to sit on that bench in the centre because it would make me feel like I was
sitting on an altar.

SLIDES 90 and 91 - Sculpture.

This is kind of a light plastic sculpture used in a shopping plaza.

Here is a little sculpture probably used in a university ground. It is probably a sun dial used to tell the time; a very attractive element if you put it somewhere where you've got the sun ... it wouldn't be something to put in the shade.

SLIDE 92 - Garbage Cans.

This is the section on garbage cans. They are not a very imaginative collection.

SLIDES 93, 94, 95 and 96 - Garbage Cans.

There is a box type garbage container.

Here is some more bus ticket type garbage containers.

There is another design for a garbage container.

Another garbage container with a very small hole in the top ... very attractive. There is a little wooden one on the left.

SLIDE 97

This section deals with maps and signs. If you are trying to encourage people to stop for a while in an area, you can give them an excuse to stop. Nobody feels awkward stopping at a bus stop, or at a store window, or at a notice board, but they might feel awkward stopping just because it is a bench. They feel conspicuous.

A map on a notice board is one example.

SLIDE 98 - Display.

Here is some: an extension of shop windows set in the middle of a shopping plaza.

SLIDE 99 - Display.

There is a little notice with a planter and an advertisement on it.

SLIDE 100 - Kiosk.

There on the left is a large (I suppose about twelve feet high) circular notice board set onto a street to advertise various things.

SLIDE 101 - Information Kiosk.

Another thing that can be introduced to high traffic areas is a little information booth of some kind.

SLIDE 102 - Kiosk.

There is another one where people can ask questions.

SLIDE 103 - Meters.

This is a form of urban sculpture that has almost got to the point where you can ignore it.

SLIDE 104 - Bus Shelter.

Here is a very poor slide of a bus shelter ... I don't know whether you have any bus stops near here, but quite often an attractive place to wait for a bus can be an important addition to a neighbourhood.

SLIDE 105 - Phone Booth.

Here is a telephone booth on the left ... can be another element on urban parks.

SLIDE 106 - Phone Booth and Mail Box.

SLIDE 107 - Bicycles.

Another thing that is present in urban areas and usually not treated very well is the bicycle. Usually, the bicycles have to share the street with all the automobiles, and the cyclist is subject to far more pollution than the automobile driver. This shows a bicycle stand outside a church.

SLIDE 108 - Motor Bike.

A motor bike ... we have already talked a bit about the impact which motor bikes cause in your neighbourhoods.

SLIDE 109 - Flags.

Another thing which gives a sense of place is flags. You have a flagpost out here that makes a major focus ... I am not sure people outside your grounds would be aware that you have a flag; if you had people walking through your grounds, a flag always inspires a sense of respect.

SLIDE 110 - Woman with Push Chair.

These are some people elements: perhaps some women with push chairs are going through the park; perhaps that will have an impact on whether you put steps in your park or not. We should also probably bear in mind the needs of the people who have to use canes or wheelchairs; they need some-where to go too.

<u>SLIDE 111</u> - Ice Cream Boy.

Another thing which we have in Edmonton - street sellers. In the summer, of course, we would have our Dickie Dees.

<u>SLIDE 112</u> - Popcorn Man.

Popcorn sellers - I am not sure what he is selling.

<u>SLIDES 113 and 114</u> - Markets.

Something else that makes living in the city quite interesting, at least in some parts of Europe, is the use of the open market. You do have some in North America but you don't seem to manage too much in Edmonton. There is the weather ... this shows the market in the rain.

<u>SLIDE 115</u> - People Watching People.

Some other things that people do ... this shows a lot of people just sitting watching other people.

<u>SLIDE 116</u> - Play.

Another thing that can be really attractive (and we do some of this already in Edmonton) is the outdoor theatre where the people can sit and watch the performance.

<u>SLIDE 117</u> - Little Village.

This is another thing that is quite attractive - this is a model of the village that it is set in. You can see the children and the adults are quite fascinated by the layout.

<u>SLIDE 118</u> - Organ Grinder.

Another thing that can be introduced to a street scene and that is music.

<u>SLIDE 119</u> - Kids Playing.

Here are some more things that people do ... children playing.

<u>SLIDE 120</u> - People Strolling, Asleep and Suntanning.

More people watching. See how the children huddle under that tree.

Edmonton Social Planning Council

Mini-Park Planning Workshop   No. 3   Christ Church
                                                     August 10, 1974

AGENDA

9:00   Introduction.

9:30   Site Analysis - (Team Study)

        TEAM A - analyse the site 'micro-climate'; look at the four seasons;
                 sun and shade; wind and shelter; rain; show; orientation;
                 (Look at the book by Jack Long about Calgary).

        TEAM B - Look at the existing site; the buildings, the trees and shrubs;
                 the materials; record materials, colours, and notes about
                 things you want to keep, or to use more of - on the site plan.

        TEAM C - Look at the community round the site; who uses it nqw and
                 what for? Traffic patterns (cars, bikes, pedestrians), at
                 different times of the year or of the day? What are the
                 ages of the people in the community? What kind of community
                 is this?

10:00   Site Analysis Presentation

                A 10-minute presentation by each of the three teams A, B
                and C.

10:30   Functional Analysis

                What do you want the mini-park to do?
                What do you want to do in it?

11:00   Library of Design Elements

                A slide presentation showing a variety of materials and
        their properties and uses; some examples of things that could be
        included in a mini-park.

11:30   Sketch Design

                In self selected teams, or individually if you wish,
        everyone works on some ideas for mini-parks. Lunch will be taken
        12:00 - 12:30.

1:30   Group Presentation and "Crit"

                Each group will present their 'sketch design' for the mini-
        park, and the others, including our visitors from City Hall, will be
        invited to make comments.

2:30   Final Design

                Some decisions about what we want in our mini-park.

Those helping you in this project are:

Leslie Bella - workshop leader and design consultant.

George Kelly - Edmonton Social Planning Council, 424-0331.

Bob Block - Edmonton Parks and Recreation Department, 425-7449.

Ted Norris - Edmonton Parks and Recreation Department, 425-7449.

Canon Pierce - Christ Church, 488-1118.

PLUS - Aldermen if any accept invite.

EVALUATION SHEET

Please fill in this evaluation form so that we can assess and improve the planning of these workshops; either give the form to George or Leslie, or mail it to the Social Planning Council, 10006 - 107 Street, Edmonton, Alberta.   Thank you.

1.   What did you understand the purpose of the meeting to be?   How did you find out about it?   Why did you come?

2.   Do you think the meeting achieved its purpose?   If not, what do you think was achieved?

3.   Was the meeting (CIRCLE) enjoyable, interesting, exciting, boring, confusing, frustrating, too long, too short?

4.   What did you like most about the meeting?

5.   What would you have done differently?

6.   What did you dislike most about the meeting?

7.   Please Grade the meeting:

   A   B   C   D   E   F   Grand disaster.

COPY OF LETTER

The Anglican Parish of Christ Church
12116 - 102 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5N OL6
Telephone 488-1118

The Rev. Canon Frederick W. Peirce, B.A., L.Th., Rector

September 11, 1974

Ms. Leslie Bella,
5840 - 143 Street,
Edmonton, Alberta.

Dear Leslie:

I am grateful to you for the very full report of the recent Design Proposal Workshop held in our Parish Hall on August 10th to consider the possibility of greater utilization of part of our church grounds as a mini-park.

The matter was given fairly full consideration at the regular meeting of the Vestry last evening. As you might expect the views of the vestry-members reflect pretty well the differing views of those present at the workshop. The prevailing opinion is that we have now in fact a park-like setting that is enjoyed and appreciated not only by our own parishioners but by the community at large. Our grounds are well-known by people throughout the city as one of the finest church yards around. The fact that the local community respects the grounds by not abusing them seems further evidence of some appreciation of the place as it is. The decision of the Vestry for the present is to maintain and improve the grounds as they are for the purposes which they seem to serve. This does not preclude the possibility of providing some seating next season to see what further usage might develop. Meanwhile we appreciate the advice on our trees and hope to take measures to give them the attention they need for their further preservation.

I hope you will not regard this decision as negating the workshop and its interesting proposals. A great deal of discussion has been generated by this exercise and a renewed interest in the function of our church grounds. It would not surprise me if further developments took place in the future that would make the area more readily available to the public while at the same time preserving the benefits of what we already have.

Again I thank you for your part in this effort and wish you well in your work of trying to improve the quality of urban community life.

Yours sincerely,

(SIGNED)
Frederick W. Peirce,
Rector.

FWP:rg

COPY TO: Mr. George Kelly
Edmonton Social Planning Council

Top diagram labels:
LOGS ON END
PAINTED SEWER TILES? PIPES
BEACH SAND
PATIO BLOCKS
BENCHES
WOODEN WALK
TRICYCLE PATH (PAINTED WITH MINIATURE STOP, YIELD SIGNS ETC)
OPEN CEDAR FENCE

FENCE ALTERNATELY HEDGE.
LABYRINTH
PAINTING WALL (SOLID CEDAR FENCE)
OPEN CEDAR FENCE
WINTER SKATING AREA

Bottom diagram labels:
WITH WOOD SCULPTURE TO CLIMB ON
WOOD PLAY STRUCTURES
SLIDE
REST AREA
SAND DUNE ISLAND
WATER/ICE
WOOD SCULPTED FENCE 5-6 FT. HIGH
TABLE WITH CANOPY
WHITE - BERMED GRASS AREA
BOARDWALK
STAIRS TO DECK