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# PEOPLE FIRST

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**- a community Self-Help planning manual**

edited by LINDA F. DUNCAN for  
The Edmonton Social Planning Council

"...A local voluntary resource group was formed to produce a community plan and to foster a community participation process. The process was very much a departure from the traditional planning models especially in that it was designed to remove the old style approach of the "professional planning for the people" and instead successfully substituted a philosophy of "every-man a planner". In the 1970's, there was a number of successful projects: 2 year community-oriented experimental pre-school programme; a joint effort with the city to integrate as sensitively as possible a freeway through the community.

There were several enduring results from all these activities. First, the Inglewood community was creating a new shared interest in its future. Second, it was learning to work effectively with resource and government. Third, it began to understand a whole range of political, psychological and economic issues - the meaning and necessity for persistence, the value of strategy, the need for a plan, the cost factors involved in projects, the commitments required, when to fight, when to apply pressure, and when to compromise. Fourth, it proved to itself and to others that community people with intimate local knowledge can contribute to the resolution of planning problems, that citizens possess a very close identity to their community because of deep, emotional commitment. All that was required was a process whereby this commitment could be harnessed as positive and creative energy for the community."

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**United Way**  
A Member Agency

art direction & graphic design: Monty Cooper

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### Bibliography

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Thank you to my friends and family whose interest and faith in my ability to make this book happen never faltered.

Linda Duncan



## PREFACE

### The Citizen-Planner's Cookbook or The Joy of Planning

I'll start the potatoes at 6:00, then while they're boiling, I can prepare a salad... wonder what greens are in the fridge... lettuce, sprouts, hmmm...this time I'll try tomatoes instead...better stock up on the garbanzo beans...

We all plan for a good part of every day. We plan meals, kitchen supplies, travel routes, parties, holidays, etc. We are all planners, and usually amazingly good at it. Amazing that we can plan our household environments so well but that sometimes we think our responsibility, or our ability, stops there.

What if more people thought that they could, that they should, get involved in planning their community environments? It could be as much fun, as satisfying, and as dignifying as planning meals.

This book is offered to people who are starting to think about taking an active interest in the plans for their community. It presents some ideas on how community planning might proceed and some information which could be useful for a citizen planner. It is based on the assumption that anyone who can plan his or her personal life can plan a community, but it also recognizes two realities. First, community planning is a social activity involving many people with different ideas, values, kinds of knowledge, interests to guard and spare-time energies. Second, your community is part of the larger city and therefore the needs, and directions, of other communities have to be taken into account; thus there have arisen city-level bureaucracies which sometimes work for your

particular community, and sometimes against it. These two facts -- that a community is internally complex and is part of a larger complex city -- mean that a citizen planner may have to learn new things about planning.

Virtually every citizen has the potential to be a good community planner, just as everyone has the potential to be a good cook. But a good cook has to learn the principles of cooking through information and experience; a good community planner will seek to learn from the knowledge and experiences of others and to try out ideas himself in practice.

This book is not just oriented to fighting City Hall or developers. A good cookbook does not simply tell a short-order chef how to prepare dishes in response to demands from a certain type of customer; a good cookbook tells you how to create a meal -- an enjoyable, satisfying, sustaining meal where every ingredient is carefully, but creatively, matched and every dish is selected to complement the preceding. What this book attempts to do is set forth some principles for creating enjoyable, satisfying, sustaining communities. Only people confined in institutions have no control over their meals. Surely, the city should be more than an institution.

It's a changing world, and all our communities are going to change -- the people will change, the buildings will change, the transportation system will change, our heating systems will probably change. The question is: Who is going to decide how they change? We hope it will be all of us.

- Peter Boothroyd

## INTRODUCTION

Living in Canadian urban centres today has become a particularly frustrating time for people striving to have some effect in determining their own physical, social and economic environment. Because most decisions about the future of our urban environment are made by a political and professional minority, cities are beginning to express the social attitudes and value system of this minority. The ordinary person is left with the role of reacting to an environment which has already been decided for him. In many cases, this leads to a situation of confrontation and disillusionment.

It seems evident, therefore, that there is a need for people living within an urban setting to be given the opportunity to take an active role in planning their communities in order that they can develop an environment harmonious to their social patterns and values. Providing individuals with the skills and knowledge for this form of participation not only allows for the growth and development of the individual citizen but may, in time, lead to development of urban centres in Canada which more sensitively express the true values and ideals of those living within them.

Our research found no one book or manual which dealt with both the community perspective on planning and direction on how to plan. That is our intention. This manual does not pretend to present entirely original ideas. Its purpose is to combine and convey the concepts developed by numerous people working in the field and to make those available to communities in a more concise form.

We were faced with having to edit down a potential encyclopedia of community participation and planning information. As a result, where ideas are only touched on, we have included further source material by way of an annotated bibliography, and an appendix of references and contacts.

This manual is directed to those people already awakened to the fact that planning may be a more productive solution than storming city hall. But planning will serve the community's ends only if it is both initiated and controlled by the community itself.

Planning is not something which should be reserved for specially trained people. It is a process which the majority of us participate in most of our lives. The concept of planning on a community-wide scale simply means we focus our sights beyond our immediate home, apartment, or yard.

While it is not suggested that only communities should plan or that planning should only happen at the local level, it is important to recognize and support the role of neighbourhood groups in the development and decision-making process. The residents of these neighbourhoods represent a valuable first hand source of knowledge and ability yet untapped. The ideas presented are meant to serve as tools to build this information base.

The majority of examples and experiences on which the manual is based are drawn from the authors' personal experience working with Edmonton communities. But outside sources of information tell us that the Edmonton experience is shared by other urban and rural Alberta

and Canadian communities. The common line is the belief in the possibility of the continued life of the community.

Community self-planning can provide a vehicle for the exchange of common concerns, needs and wants held by neighbourhood people. It is one method for investigating, considering and implementing solutions. This planning or assessment process is of equal value to older communities facing severe redevelopment and newer undeveloped communities lacking certain amenities.

While every community can benefit from its own planning, no two communities are likely to experience the same process. For this reason, the authors took great pains to avoid saying that any one solution is the right one, or any one method of planning is the only way. Every planning experience will be unique. No two communities face identical situations nor will they choose the same solutions.

But there are basic tools which are vital to any community planning process. We have identified these as PEOPLE, INFORMATION and MONEY.

For a community planning process, people are the mainstay. If you want to make something happen, you must involve people. You will have to learn how to get them interested in getting involved and how to help them to participate. If you want those people affected by a plan to support it, it will be helpful to have them informed and involved in the plan preparation. Then everyone helps to make your ideas work because it is making what they want to have happen, happen.

To make changes in your community you are also going to need information about your area, the people who live, work and play in it, their needs and concerns, how people travel to and from or through your area, where they live and how they live. You will need information about alternatives and how to put them into effect. Information about what other communities are doing can also be enlightening.

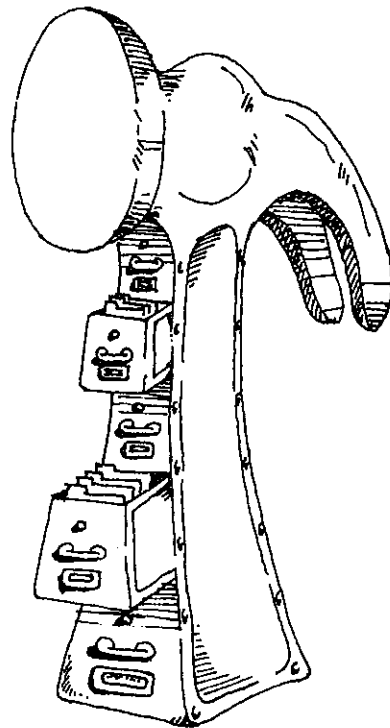
We hope through this book to share with you some ideas on working with

people and finding and using planning information. As for money, hopefully the information, assistance and examples of what other communities have done with their own resources provided here will help you begin to realize much can be done without it. Community participation and self-help will enable you to avoid high planning costs.

By assuming part of the responsibility for the future of your community and doing it yourself, you can begin to create the environment you prefer to live in. Start looking inward to the hidden resources in your own neighbourhood just waiting to be asked to do their part. Money can help though, and we hope to provide some ideas on where and how to obtain it. But don't sit around waiting for vast sums of money you may not need. Start planning!

All it takes is you.

Linda Duncan



## **Part Two: INFORMATION**

## I. WHY GATHER INFORMATION?

You know your neighborhood. You live there--have for years. You know your neighbors, where to get good service on your car, who the available babysitters are, whose dogs make regular trips to your lawn. So why spend time and energy gathering information about your area?

First, you may discover something new. While you may have known that a good number of pensioners live in your neighbourhood, collection of more specific information may tell you that these long-term residents are facing financial difficulty and may soon be forced to sell their property.

Second, you will be in a stronger position to convince the "powers that be" that you know what you are talking about. When you appear before City Council to seek support for a community-sponsored low-rise senior citizens' residence, you will be able to use facts and figures to reinforce your statement of the need.

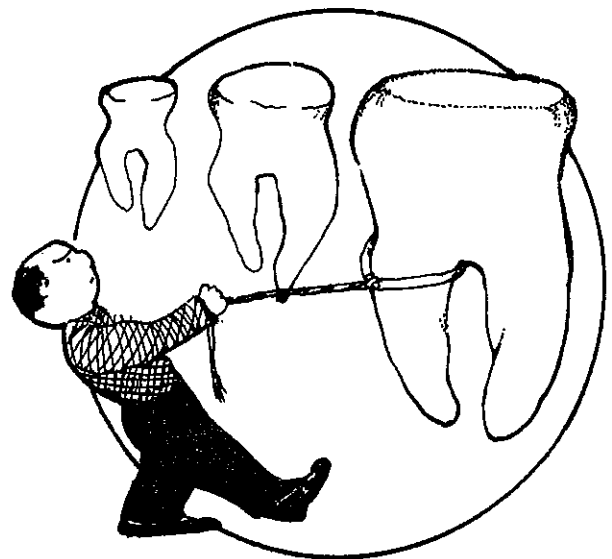
Third, you will have on hand information needed to assess plans and proposals that others, including government and private developers, are designing for your community. On the basis of information collected about your area you will be better able to determine whether these proposals will be beneficial or whether they will create more problems.

Fourth, a good plan cannot be based solely on ungrounded philosophical statements of need or desire. For example, your community expresses the desire for better playground facilities. Before making a major investment or expending considerable effort requesting

government funds, you decide to prepare a study of the community and discover that only a small percentage of the population is small children. You also discover that play facilities are almost non-existent.

With concrete facts you can begin to seek long-term solutions, such as finding ways to attract more young families to increase the benefit/cost ratio of improved facilities. You may choose to locate and design parks enjoyable for the elderly as well as young children.

The choice of solution is yours. What is important is that your decision has a solid foundation. Gathering information is the point of departure for any creative planning endeavour. Information tells you what you have to work with, what your people and physical resources may be, and what you want to work towards.



## II. TYPES OF INFORMATION YOU NEED

Before you start running around collecting facts and figures, a good idea is to sit down together and assess:

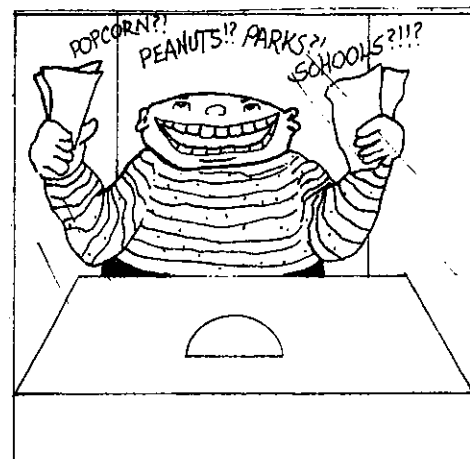
- what information do you require to help achieve your goals?
- how detailed does this information have to be?
- how much money, time and other resources are available for the collection of this information?

If you have already gone through the process of identifying the community's concerns, you will be in a fairly good position to decide what information to collect.

If you have decided that housing is a critical problem, you will focus your attention on housing information supplemented by information on related considerations such as land (what land is available under the current zoning, what are the land values) and population (what is the average family or household size, what are average family incomes). On the other hand, after considering the multitude of concerns facing your community, you may decide that you need a comprehensive community plan, and that will necessitate the collection of a great deal of information about a vast range of topics. But there is no point in deciding to undertake extensive research unless you have the people who are willing to dedicate the time, the financial resources to support that research, and a planning schedule which allows for it to happen.

### A. THE MATRIX

"The Matrix" is an outline of the types of information that you should consider gathering for various types of studies. The chart is not intended to be a "hard and fast" list of what you have to do, but rather it is a suggestion of what you might need. In a sense, then, it is merely a checklist to be used when you are planning your research program. The distinction between "general" and "detailed" information is also only suggestive, and is based on what some planners have found to be useful or necessary. Thus, if you are interested in doing a traffic/transportation study for your neighbourhood, you should consider gathering in detail the kinds of information designated by black circles down the fourth column. The open circles indicate types of information that you should be aware of, at least in an informal way.



The matrix also illustrates how a comprehensive "community plan" differs from the traditional neighbourhood land use plan. For the traditional land use plan, planners primarily consider physical aspects such as land, housing and other buildings, open space and parks, traffic and utilities. A "community plan", as we think of it, includes not only these physical features, but also such "social" features as public services, community spirit and identity, cooperative venture possibilities, economic development, and so on.

If your neighbourhood or community decides at the outset that you want to go beyond the usual physical planning considerations, you will need to collect information about many matters. But don't be disheartened if the task appears too enormous to handle. Many of the categories overlap, and you will also be acquiring "social environment" data. As you collect land use data, you will also likely be obtaining housing data.

## B. HISTORY

While planning for your neighbourhood is largely a task of examining the present situation and what the future will or should hold for you, having an understanding of your area's HISTORY is also important. Knowing what has gone on in the past will give you a sense of the changing role of your neighbourhood within the city. At one time, it may have been a town separate from the city, and many of your old-timers may still recall the annexation proceedings. Or your neighbourhood may have been the head of a major railway line, which would explain why there are now abandoned warehouses along a strip between your area and a newer one. By knowing the history of your neighbourhood, you will be able to identify buildings or even trees which perhaps should be preserved as historic sites. You will also be able to secure support for renovation and preservation proposals if you can remind others of the functions the neighborhood has served in the past.

If you are fortunate, you may find that someone has already recorded the history of your area. This is where a librarian will be a great help--to hunt up written accounts, perhaps as chapters of other histories. If you find that nothing has been done in written form, you may later want to see if there is anyone in your group or perhaps a local historian or historical society who would like to take this on as a project.

## C. ECONOMIC BASE

In a large city, it is usually difficult to specify the economic base of a neighbourhood, except to say that it is more or less dependent upon a nearby university or industrial park. But you will find it useful to have a general understanding of the economic welfare of the city at large, since this will influence the future of your neighbourhood, both in terms of local employment/unemployment and in terms of pressures of growth on your area.

You should try to acquire information about present and future economic growth of the city at large. Where your neighbourhood is especially reliant on a particular industry, you should keep informed about the future prospects for that industry. You may be interested in investigating what general effect proposed changes in the total city's economy could have on your immediate area. Rapid economic growth means rapid population growth. Both mean higher land prices, increased housing and commercial density pressures, and very often expansion of transportation routes.



0 = general, broad

● = detailed

TYPE OF INFORMATION	Community Planning	Land Use Planning	Housing Study	Parks & Recreation	Traffic/Transport.	Social Services
<u>GENERAL BACKGROUND</u>						
History	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic Base	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plans	●	●	0	0	0	0
Graphics	●	●	●	0	0	0
<u>PEOPLE/POPULATION</u>						
Historical Growth	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age-Sex Profile	●	●	●	●	●	●
Family/Household/Marital	●	●	●	●	●	●
Employment/Income	●	●	●	●	●	●
Education	●	0	0	0	0	●
Ethnicity/Mobility	●	0	●	0	0	●
Projections	●	●	●	●	●	●
<u>LAND</u>						
Land Use/Density	●	●	●	●	●	0
Ownership/Values	●	●	●	0	0	0
Zoning/Rezoning	●	●	●	0	0	0
<u>HOUSING</u>						
Types	●	●	●	0	0	0
Occupancy/Density	●	●	●	0	0	●
Condition/Style/History	●	●	●	0	0	0
Programs/Costs	●	●	●	0	0	0
<u>RECREATION/PARKS</u>						
Open Space/Parks	●	●	●	●	0	0
Programs/Facilities	●	0	0	●	●	●
Use/Demand/Need	●	0	0	●	0	●
<u>TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION</u>						
Traffic Volume/Origins	●	●	0	0	●	0
Roadways/Bikeways	●	●	0	0	●	0
Public Transit	●	0	0	0	●	0
Parking/Vehicles	●	●	●	0	●	0
<u>PUBLIC UTILITIES</u>						
Water Supply/Distribution	●	0	●	0	●	0
Sewerage	●	0	●	0	●	0
Street Lighting	0	0	0	●	●	0
Solid Waste Disposal	0	0	0	0	●	0
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u>						
Schools/Day Care	●	0	0	●	0	●
Health Care	●	0	0	0	0	●
Social Services	●	0	0	0	0	●
Commercial/Retail	●	0	0	0	0	●
Fire/Police Protection	●	0	●	0	0	0
<u>ENVIRONMENT</u>						
Physical (aesthetics, odors)	●	0	●	●	●	0
Social (crime, community spirit)	●	0	●	●	0	●



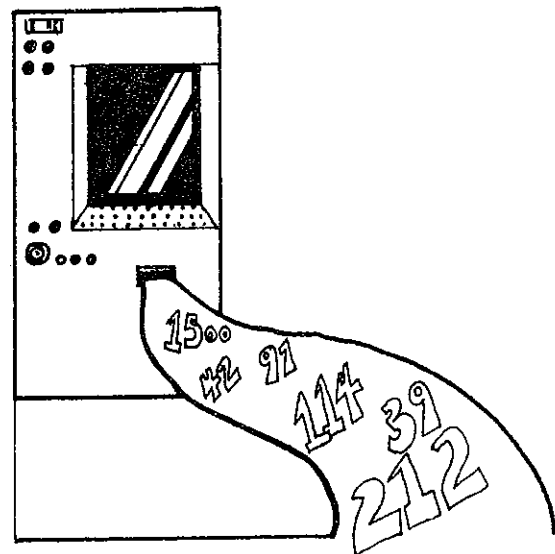
### III. HOW DO YOU START TO COLLECT INFORMATION?

It may be a good idea to carry out a preliminary investigation as to what information already exists about your community and adjacent areas. In this initial overview, you should seek two kinds of information:

- general background information
- sources of existing specific information.

General background information could include anything from historical studies of your area to existing plans and general trends. With this type of information, you are familiarizing yourselves with what general factors are significant or peculiar to your area, and what plans and proposals others may have up their sleeves for you. This general overview will also assist you in choosing what direction more intensive research must take. For example, should you discover a plan for a major freeway through your area, you will probably decide to do a little work on alternative routes.

The second aspect of the initial step is to find out as many sources of specific information about your community as possible. Using the same example, if you discover someone or a group has already done a thorough analysis of transportation alternatives, it may save you a lot of needless research.



#### A. INFORMATION SOURCES

The City Planning Department usually has a full collection of all reports and studies carried out by their staff over recent years. Frequently, there will be a research or administrative assistant who can help you find what information is available in the Department's library. It is wise to look not only for reports about your neighborhood itself, but also for area studies which may include information relevant to your neighbourhood. For example, while there may not exist a report on traffic patterns in your neighbourhood, there may be studies of traffic in the south-east of the City which would include your neighbourhood.

It is usually worth spending an afternoon browsing through the various reports of the Planning Department simply to find out what's available. If your community does not have its own Planning Department, you may have to contact the Regional Planning Commission responsible for your area, or even the Provincial Planning Branch. A telephone call to their librarian before a visit might save time.

The Provincial Planning Branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs may be able to advise you of any existing or proposed special planning areas, or other provincially controlled projects which affect your area. Other departments which may be relevant to contact will depend on the circumstances but should not be ignored. For example, provincial or federal departments or agencies could be important to contact if your community contains or borders on a government institution such as a correctional institute, hospital or office complex.

The Public Library is another good source of information. The Centennial Library has a special section called the Government Information Division which receives copies of all reports prepared by various levels of government. This Division also maintains files of City Council minutes, news clippings, pamphlets and brochures. The librarians will normally be quite helpful if you provide them with an idea of what you are looking for. They may not have all the reports right there, but they can give you leads you can follow.

Universities or Colleges also frequently have information of a research nature done by students or faculty. Sometimes, such reports can be found in the library, if a collection of theses and dissertations is maintained. Make contact with relevant teaching departments: Planning, Geography, Economics, Sociology, Urban Studies, Environmental Design, Architecture. By starting with these, you may get leads to others with interests in urban development. Members of these departments could also

provide guidance on how to collect information and where to look to save time.

You may also consider a brief look through the documents, old newspapers and periodicals at the Provincial Museum and Archives or contact with any local historical societies.

You should consider interviewing or surveying other community groups and consultants to see what kind of information and experiences they have stored away. Residents of your own community may have lots of information on hand or in their memories. In fact, the best historians may be the oldtimers still living in the neighbourhood. Get a group of your "seniors" together for coffee, ask them to bring their old scrapbooks and photo albums, record their recollections and stories, and you will have a good beginning to an historical account of your neighbourhood.

## IV. PLANNING TOOLS

There are a number of materials available which can not only simplify but also make more enjoyable your planning process. Included are plans, laws, policy statements, maps, photographs and graphics.

### A. PLANS

Plans and planning reports for your area should be obtained early in your information gathering. You will want, at least, to have available the Preliminary Regional Plan for your area, the city General Plan, your neighborhood plan (if ever done) and possibly plans for adjacent areas. These are basics to proper planning.

The Preliminary Regional Plan generally sets out the type of allowable development for the city and surrounding area. The General Plan provides the general framework for total city development and includes a map delineating where certain types of development may occur such as residential or industrial. Neighbourhood and area plans provide more specific guidelines for the type of allowable development within the boundaries of your community.

In addition, you should have on hand, or have ready access to, city transportation plans, parks and recreation plans and other citywide plans. With the exception of the Preliminary Regional Plan, all of these documents can be purchased from the City Planning Department, or other Departments. The Preliminary Regional Plan can be purchased from the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. All of these documents are available for study in the

Centennial Library, Government Information Division, or the libraries of the Legal Resource Centre, Communitas, or the Edmonton Social Planning Council.

Also, if your neighbourhood is adjacent to an existing or proposed major institution or land use--such as a college, hospital complex, major park or athletic facility--you should try to get long range planning information about it. If published information is not available, you should arrange to meet with the institution's director or planning officer to find out what plans have been considered. Try to get this in writing or obtain copies of plans. If you meet with difficulties, contact your alderman or M.L.A.

These plans and documents are not so complicated as they appear on the surface. For interpretation, call in a community consultant (Edmonton Social Planning Council, Legal Resource Centre).

### B. LAWS--STATUTES, BY-LAWS, REGULATIONS, RESOLUTIONS

The development and redevelopment of your community is controlled by numerous rules and regulations set forth in statutes, by-laws, resolutions, regulations and policies established by the Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments. For the most part, you will be concerned with what is prescribed in the provincial Planning Act and the local by-laws and resolutions prepared in compliance with that Act.

It is not necessary to understand all of the intricacies of planning law in order to plan. It may, however, be

advantageous to become acquainted with the sources of law, the bodies who are responsible for interpreting and administering the law, and what your rights are as a community. You can use the law for any number of purposes including redesignation of the use of a piece of property, formal recognition of your total community plan or classification of a building as an historic site.

### Sources of Planning Law

There are some sources of law which you will find yourself referring to frequently, particularly the land use by-law and map (zones). Others may be referred to less often. Below is a chart showing titles of the most frequently used planning laws, a brief description and place of purchase.

Depending on your particular interests and needs, you might also consider the Expropriation Act, Building Code, City Policy on Citizen Participation, Development Scheme By-Law, Sub-Division and Control Regulations, Municipal Government Act, Airport Vicinity Protection Regulations, Noise By-Law, Heritage Preservation Act and so forth.

Before you rush out and buy all of this material, it may be a good idea to discuss your particular needs with someone experienced with planning law. You could contact any of the following for guidance:

- Edmonton Social Planning Council
- Communitas, Inc.
- Legal Resource Centre
- A knowledgeable community member
- City Planning Department

## Planning Laws

PLANNING ACT	Sets the stage for land use planning and development for Alberta.	Queen's Printer
PRELIMINARY REGIONAL PLAN	Dictates location and general type of development allowed in Edmonton and region (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.).	Edmonton Regional Planning Commission
GENERAL PLAN	Sets guidelines for all planning and development in Edmonton.	Maps and Publications, Planning Department, City Hall.
LAND-USE BY-LAW (ZONING BY-LAW, DEVELOPMENT CONTROL BY-LAW)	Divides city into zones or classifications which prescribe specific uses of land and buildings (open space, parking, density, etc.).	Maps and Publications, Planning Department, City Hall

If you want to avoid spending any money on these legal materials, they are available to study or borrow from the above sources as well as to a limited extent from the following:

- Government Information Division (G.I.D.) of the Centennial Library
- Law Library, Law Courts
- Law Library, University of Alberta
- Legislative Library

From time to time, the Edmonton Social Planning Council, Legal Resource Centre and Faculty of Law hold seminars on planning law and may do so on request, so give them a call. A booklet and slide presentation entitled "Planning Law in Edmonton" (updated for new act) prepared by the Legal Resource Centre and the Edmonton Social Planning Council provides a simple explanation of planning laws and the bodies who administer them and is available on loan.

Communities which have made a request have also been able to receive on a regular basis the listing of all applications for development permits and re-zoning of property. For further information, contact the Research Branch of the City Planning Department.

### C. MAPS

Fairly early in the information-collecting process, base maps will be required. Maps are tools useful for recording and summarizing data describing the community. Various data can be used and presented more effectively if it has been recorded on base maps. A wide variety of maps are usually available from city government agencies:

- Topographic maps which show the "lay of the land"
- Property maps showing legal boundaries and road rights-of-way
- Utility or transportation engineering maps showing easements, rights-of-way and more detailed information such as watermain size
- Land use maps

- Zoning maps can all be useful to you for planning

In addition there may exist a number of maps describing "social" information:

- Census tract boundaries with population figures, population densities, school attendance boundaries, incidence of criminal activity, etc.

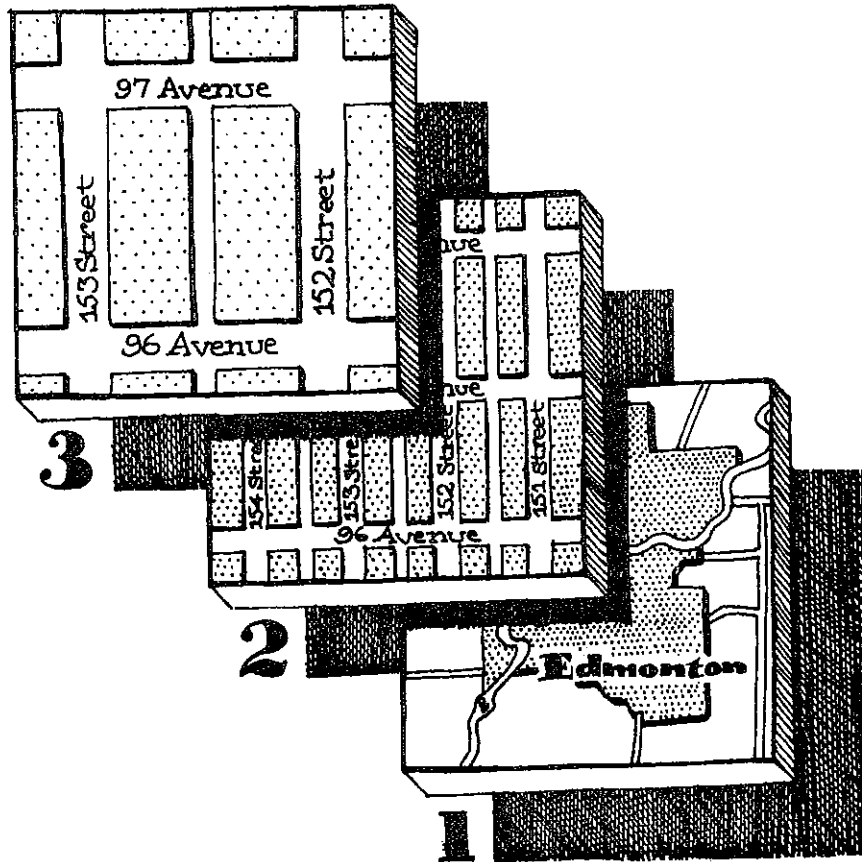
Maps showing certain types of social information may not be generally available, although basic statistics may be. In such a case, you may have to map the social data yourselves. Such a process helps to integrate the social and physical aspects of the neighbourhood in the minds of group members.

Base maps become essential if all information collected for the study area is to be integrated. The type of base maps required will depend upon the project and the size of the area being studied. The best way to decide on appropriate base maps is to visit the Map Section, Planning Department and look at what maps are available (see Appendix). For most studies, you will likely need three types of base maps:

- one showing the entire city
- one showing the study area in relation to the areas around it, and
- one showing the study area in detail.

The city-wide map will be useful towards reaching an understanding of how your area relates to and compares with other areas in the city. For example, it will enable you to visualize how a proposed city-wide transportation plan will effect your area. The map of surrounding areas can be used to show how your community proposals and proposals for surrounding areas will cooperate or conflict. The map of your community should include a small section of the bordering areas as well.

To determine which base map is required for your study area, you will have to answer the following questions:



Area: What is the agreed upon boundary of the study area?

Content: What kinds of information will be collected in the study?

Suitability: Can most of that information be mapped onto the map being considered as a base?

Clarity: Is the map uncluttered enough to allow clear mapping of information? For example, a map showing building outlines, property lines, rights-of-way and topography might be too cluttered if you wish to show census tract boundaries and population figures on it.

Scale: Is the scale large enough that mapped information can be read clearly? The scale of one inch to 200 feet (1":200')\* is often a good

\* A scale shown simply as 1:200 is different from 1":200'. 1:200 means a ratio of 1 to 200 (1 inch to 200 inches, 1 foot to 200 feet or 1 centimeter to 200 centimeters).

working size for land use mapping. If a map available from the city is at a scale unsuitable for use by the neighbourhood group, private copying businesses may be able to enlarge or reduce the size. If such work is done, be sure the scale indicated on the final map is correct. Also, remember that reduction or enlargement of maps causes some distortion in the map. The company providing reduction/ enlargement services can advise you in this regard.

Size: Is the map the proper size? Page-sized maps are good for reports. Table-sized maps are useful for most hand mapping tasks. Larger maps may be required for group presentations.

Copies: Are copies of the map readily available? Obtaining copies of the map from a private company can be expensive.

Obtaining a good base map is a first step in the neighbourhood study.

Generally, the Map Section of the Planning Department will be able to assist the group in the proper selection. The Appendix provides more details for Edmonton groups seeking maps, whether base maps or information maps.

You may also consider drawing your own maps for certain purposes. This is not a difficult process and might on occasion be a useful exercise to help the group become acquainted with their area. It will also lessen the expense and preserve the purchased maps. It also helps to get your group thinking innovatively to get away from the existing guidelines.

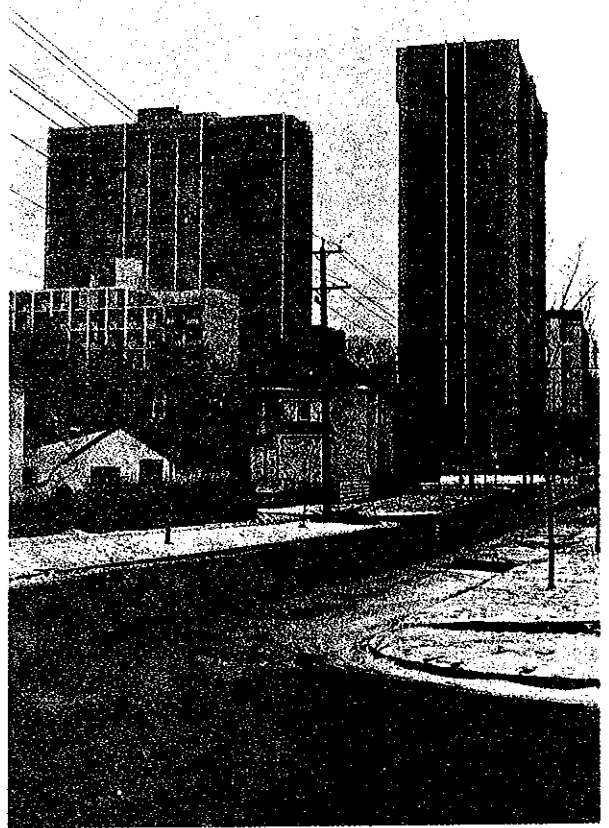
The group should also consider making several copies of the basic base map and keep each alteration separate so as to avoid confusion. For example, transportation routes, existing and proposed, could be done on separate maps or on one using contrasting colors.

Maps can be useful for just about anything--plotting land ownership, open space, income distribution, block captains.

#### D. PHOTOGRAPHS

Aerial photographs are often used by city agencies, such as planning departments, for land use and general transportation planning maps. If aerial photographs have been taken at various times in the past, they can show land use, transportation and environmental changes over time. Such information may be useful evidence regarding how some aspect (housing, parkland, transportation) of the neighbourhood has changed or could be changed. In Edmonton, aerial photographs are available from the City Engineering and Transportation Departments as well as Provincial Department of Transportation.

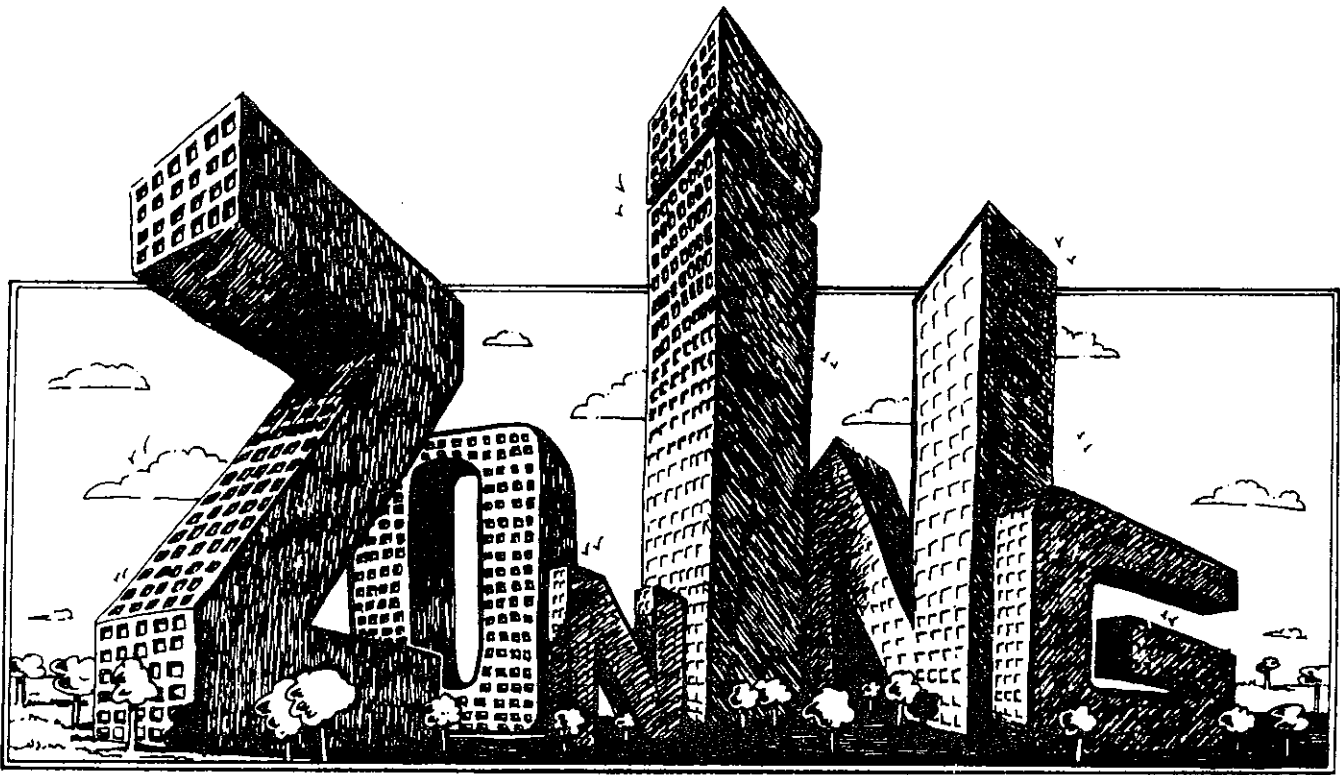
A time series of ground photographs can show how the character or qualitative aspects of an area have changed. Photographs of the past may be available from oldtimers in the neighbourhood or from the city or provincial archives. Recent photos could be taken by a member of your group.



Photographs can be very effectively used at presentations. For example, an aerial photograph (at a scale large enough for people to identify the roofs of their own homes) of the neighbourhood with proposed transportation routes or high density development marked on it can make residents more aware of how proposed developments may affect them. Photographs of well planned neighbourhoods or good neighbourhood rehabilitation projects may stimulate your planning group or the city to solve problems in the neighbourhood. When discussing an innovative proposal, photos of similar projects existing elsewhere could assist you in reaching a positive or negative decision.

Earlier on we mentioned the use of movies and videotape as tools for examining your community and bringing people together.

If you decide to undertake a fairly major photography project, it is probably



*...a picture is worth a thousand words*

advisable to locate someone in your group or larger community who has access to a dark room. Otherwise the expense could be burdensome. Some agencies such as Communitas make developing facilities available for a small fee. All types of cameras are available on loan from the University of Alberta Extension Department and Communitas, including movie cameras and videotape equipment.

#### E. GRAPHICS

Here's a chance for all those closet artists to put their talents to work. Drawings and sketches are important throughout your planning process for everything from rough plans and information circulars to graphic interpre-

tations of other members' ideas. What better way to brainstorm than to have someone transforming your ideas into pictorial form on paper or maps? To get a good idea of how effective the use of art can be, view the film entitled "Chairs are for Lovers", available from the National Film Board.

If you have no resident artist, or you require a more polished product or perhaps assistance in designing a report, poster or handout, you could consider contacting the Department of Graphic Arts, University of Alberta. Often students will undertake community projects for their practicum. You may also consider hiring an unemployed artist on a project basis through Canada Works or Secretary of State.



## V. POPULATION

Population information is one type of background research that is useful for nearly every kind of planning task. Data about the age and sex of people in the area can be used for purposes of comparing your neighbourhood with others, for projecting future growth and change in your neighbourhood, and for planning of services and facilities in the area. By knowing the number of senior citizens, pre-schoolers, school aged children, teenagers and young singles, you can help assess the need or demand for such services as senior citizen programs, day care or after-school care, youth programs, housing need and so on. For example, information about the households and families is essential for planning housing since a high proportion of large families would indicate the need for single family dwellings while the presence of a large number of singles, or couples--old or young--could signal the desire for smaller units such as apartments or townhouses.

Knowledge of the community's population before you plan and develop allows you to create an environment to fit the needs of its inhabitants rather than making people fit the environment. It also saves the time and energy of dealing with the side effects of environments which did not consider the people in them.

### A. SOURCES

Population or demographic information comes from a variety of sources, some of which are the following:

#### 1) Canada Census

The basic and most frequently used source of population data is the Canada Census carried out every five years by the Federal Government. At the beginning of every decade, e.g. 1971, a very detailed census is conducted to gather information about numbers, ages, sex, marital and family status and employment of all Canadians; in addition, information about education, ethnic and language background and housing is collected. At the middle of the decade, e.g., 1976, another census is conducted but its scope is not as broad.

Use of federal census data will be discussed in more detail further on, but it should be mentioned that one problem with using federal census data for planning is the time delay between the census and the publishing of data: the 1976 census was carried out in June of 1976 but the results did not begin to come out in detailed form until July of 1977.

#### 2) Municipal Census

The City Election Office carries out an annual census primarily for purposes of establishing voter lists, taxation information and municipal grant information. In comparison with the federal census, the Edmonton Civic Census provides minimal information. From it you can determine the total number of persons in your area, the number of males and females under the age of 18 and the number over 18, and the total population in five year age categories. The civic census can be used to update

information from the federal census. Enumeration areas for the two censi do not necessarily correspond, but the larger census tracts do.

### 3) Other Sources

Other government departments frequently gather and make available population information of a specific nature. The Alberta Bureau of Statistics (ABS) collects information on matters including employment, wages and business, which can be used for comparison with your own neighbourhood. The Alberta Health Care Commission, Edmonton Telephones, Edmonton Parks and Recreation, and the Edmonton Planning Department also have information that can be useful to your planning endeavours.

Local universities and colleges frequently carry out research on population which can be useful to you. For example, in Edmonton, the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta not only has a complete collection of federal and civic census information,

but also conducts special studies and surveys related to population. Of particular interest and potential use is the Pop Lab's recent beginning of an Edmonton Area Study in which they hope to collect and provide information on "quality of life" in the Edmonton area.

The Lab has indicated its interest in providing assistance to neighbourhood or other groups who want to gather population information, carry out surveys, and so on. When computer time and/or programmer time are required to carry out a project, the Lab might have to pass these costs on to the user group. The Population Lab is a good place to start when you are beginning your population analysis.

### 4) Self-Census

You may find that you will have to do your own neighbourhood census. Circumstances under which this would occur could include the following:

- when you find that the Census Tract (CT) and Enumeration Area (EA) boundaries do not correspond



with those of your neighbourhood as you have defined it, and when use of these CT's and EA's would be misleading

- when the census data available is old or otherwise invalid, as for example if during the five years since the last census your neighbourhood has experienced a great deal of conversions from single family dwellings to apartments. Such a census will probably best be carried out as part of another survey, for example, about neighbourhood concerns or about housing. It is important that when you are preparing your survey questionnaire, you not only ask the right questions but also in the right way. The staff at the Population Lab can advise you on preparing and administering your population survey.

#### B. OBTAINING AND USING CANADA CENSUS DATA

Since the Canada Census will probably be your chief source of population data, you should be aware of some of the problems and shortcuts in using it. The following are suggested as steps you might take:

- Make an appointment to meet someone who can provide the data to you and can advise you on its use. As suggested above, the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta has a very complete collection of federal census data, including not only the publications, but also the computer tapes. The latter are necessary for special analyses, particularly at the neighbourhood level. The Alberta Bureau of Statistics also has a complete collection of publications and tapes, and the City Planning Department has a collection of the publications.
- Determine by examining a map of census districts, tracts and areas what enumeration areas and census tracts are in your area. Enumera-

tion Areas (EA's) are the smallest areas on which census data are collected and made available; an EA usually consists of several city blocks, although sometimes a high density project may be a single EA. Census Tracts (CT's) are larger areas combining about ten EA's.

The census information reported in printed form is based on CT's. If you are lucky and find that your neighbourhood boundaries and those of a CT are the same, you will be able to get the census information directly from the publications. If you are not in luck and find that your neighbourhood is covered by parts of several CT's, you will have to calculate your data from the smaller EA's which may be available only on computer tape. The Population Lab has analyzed the 1971 Census on the basis of Community League boundaries and therefore has EA level information in printed form.

- Determine, in discussion with someone familiar with this type of information such as staff at the Population Lab, which population tables and printouts would be most useful for your study. For example, if a major concern is housing, you may want to get several of the housing tables; if a concern is economic development, you might want all of the analyses of income, type of work and education levels.



- Be aware of one problem with the Federal Census: it is called "random rounding". In an attempt to provide anonymity and protection to individuals, all data has been rounded to 5 or 10. This is especially critical at the EA level. For example, the data may indicate that in EA 372 there are 5 people with university degrees; this could have been arrived at if there were really 5 such people or any number between 1 and 9. Presumably, the "randomness" of the rounding procedure eliminates problems of over-counting or under-counting when EA's are combined. However, when you deal with census data at the EA level, you can expect some "strange" things to occur. Because the effects of random rounding are not so severe at the Census Tract level (the numbers from the EA's are not rounded until after they have been combined), it is advisable to use CT data whenever possible.

### C. HISTORICAL CHANGE

Study of the population changes over the years in your neighbourhood is frequently interesting, but not essential for planning. Because data from past years of Federal and Civic Census are not easily available at the neighbourhood level, trying to get the information may not be worth the effort. However, if your "historians" find some population figures for past years, you may want to refer to them, perhaps in comparison with city growth figures.

At the minimum, you should try to find out what your neighbourhood's population was when it was first established, and what it was at the time of the last two or three census counts in 1971, 1966 and 1961. This information will at least inform you as to whether your community has grown or depleted in numbers of people. Numbers of people alone may not be the only significant variation over time. You might be interested in checking to see which

age groups have increased or decreased, or changes in ethnic makeup. This information is very important for planning of facilities and services.

### D. AGE-SEX PROFILE

You should definitely get as accurate as possible a count of your area's people, in total and broken down into sex and age groups. With such numbers in hand, you can indicate trends and projections for the future, and you can assess demand and need for services and facilities.

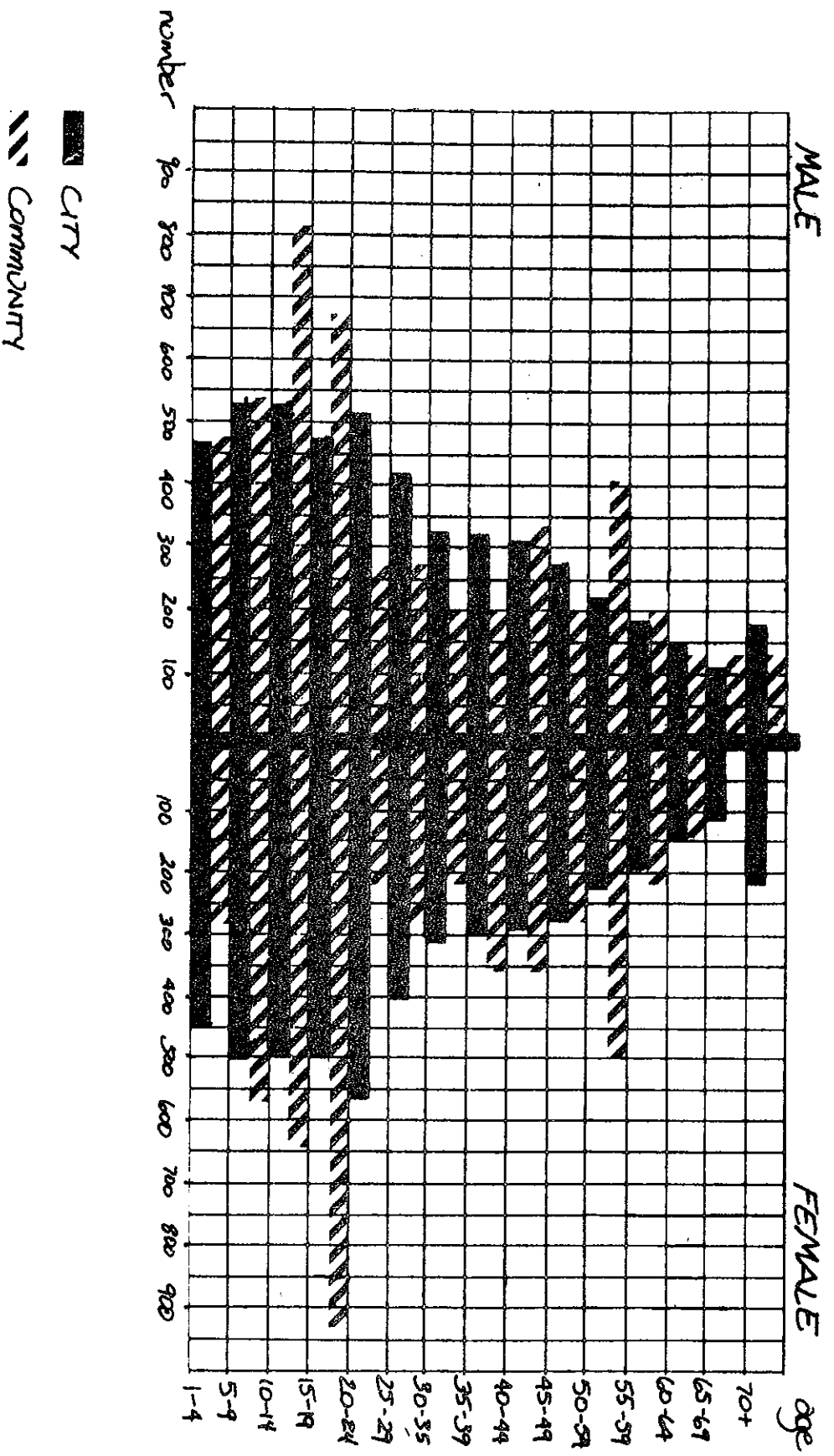
You may find it useful to put your population information into either a table, chart or population pyramid. This makes it easier to see the information at a glance.

#### How to Prepare An Age-Sex Population Table and Population Pyramid

To prepare an age-sex table and a population pyramid, the following steps are suggested:

- If using Canada Census data, identify the Census Tracts or Enumeration Areas in your neighbourhood.
- Select the age groups into which you will sort your population. To prepare a population pyramid, it is best to use 5 year age groups (0-4, 5-9, etc.). For other purposes you may want to use other groups, such as 0-4, 5, 6-12, 12-15, 15-18, which will illustrate school population age groups.
- Add up the number of people in each age and sex group and record these totals on a sheet as in Table XX. This table will be your basic reference tool. You can use it to assess the potential number of children needing day care, or number of teenagers who could become involved in a drop-in centre, or number of senior citizens.

# AGE-SEX PROFILE



- If you want to illustrate the number (not percentage) of people in each age group, you can prepare a population pyramid based on these numbers. The pyramid is simply two bar graphs on their side, one representing males in different age groups, and the other females.
- If however, you want to prepare your pyramid for comparison with other neighbourhoods or the city, you will have to convert the number in each box in the table into percentages of the total (add up total number of people and divide each box figure by this total). The calculations go quickly with an electronic calculator. Be sure to check your figures by totaling them -they should not total more than 101% or less than 99%.
- Plot these percentages on a chart (graph paper makes the task easier) showing males on one side and females on the other.

If the data is available you can do several of these percentage pyramids for comparison with other populations, or for different years for your neighbourhood. The latter can show how your area has been changing.

Your work is not done when you have completed the pyramid. You have yet to analyse what it means. It is probably wise to show and discuss your table and pyramid with other people, who will give you some ideas on what they "see" in it. This kind of discussion with your planning committee, or your full community group can be quite productive, both in terms of understanding your data and in making your community aware of its composition. The population pyramids are simply tools to help you visualize causes and effects in your community and are usually much easier to interpret than lists of facts and figures in lists on charts.

## E. FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD/MARITAL STATUS

The main source of data regarding families and households in your neighbourhood will be the Canada Census. Alternatives will be your own survey, the Henderson Directory, the Edmonton Telephone Numerical Street-Address Directory and possibly the Civic Census. For the most part, you will want to obtain numbers and percentages for your neighbourhood and for the city at large, the latter for comparison purposes. In addition you may want to get numbers and percentages for different years (for example, 1966, 1971, 1976) in order to show changes or trends over a time period.

### 1) Marital Status

From the Census, you can find the numbers and percentages of people who are single, married, divorced or widowed. Comparisons over time can show trends, such as more "singles" as apartment blocks are built to replace single family dwellings. This information can be useful for planning of social, recreational and housing needs.

### 2) Family Make-Up

Under this category, you will be looking at the type and size of families in your neighbourhood. If you have a substantial number of families with children, your planning of educational, social, recreational, open space and housing needs will have to take these families into account. On the other hand, if you discover that you have numerous families with no children, your planning may take a different direction. Furthermore, you will want to determine whether this latter group, often called "empty nesters", are made up primarily of young couples who have delayed having children or of older couples whose children have grown and left home. Not only do these two subgroups usually have differing desires and needs

for services and community facilities, but they also can influence trends for the future--with the younger couples moving to neighbourhoods where they can afford a single family dwelling (if no option for them is provided in their present neighbourhood).

#### F. HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP

"Households" differ from "families" in that they indicate the number of persons living under the same roof, whether or not they are related. In particular, you should watch for "non-family households" which indicate unrelated individuals living together (e.g., young singles rooming together), individuals living alone, or people taking in boarders. Often, such non-family households arise due to economic considerations - two roommates can share the high cost of rent or a retired couple can supplement their meagre income by renting a basement suite. But as often as not, such households indicate that people prefer living with someone else rather than living alone.

If you find that your neighbourhood has a high percentage (compared to the city) of non-family households, you may want to study the matter further to determine how many find their current situation satisfactory or would prefer a change. Indeed, it may be to everyone's benefit if non-family households were increased through provision of suites within single family dwellings or co-op housing ventures, thus providing alternatives for accommodation in face of high costs. This would also enable a subtle increase in density without the necessary costs and interference of reconstruction of high density structures. If your study indicates a need for and desire for more non-family households, it can serve as an indicator of needed zoning changes to enable this to happen.

#### G. EMPLOYMENT/INCOME/EDUCATION

The depth of your analysis of employment and other economic factors

will be largely a reflection of the level of concern among residents. That is, if employment--or unemployment--is not considered a major problem for the community, you will probably look at these factors broadly as they affect other concerns. On the other hand, if economic improvement is a major concern among your neighbours, then you may have to undertake a special economic development study. Since the latter is a complicated kind of study and beyond the scope of this book, we will be looking primarily at the kinds of information you can be gathering as input to community planning efforts. For an example of an innovative solution for altering the economic situation in your community, refer to the Section on Economics.

You will be looking for background information about levels, types and location of employment of community residents. "Level" of employment refers to two things:

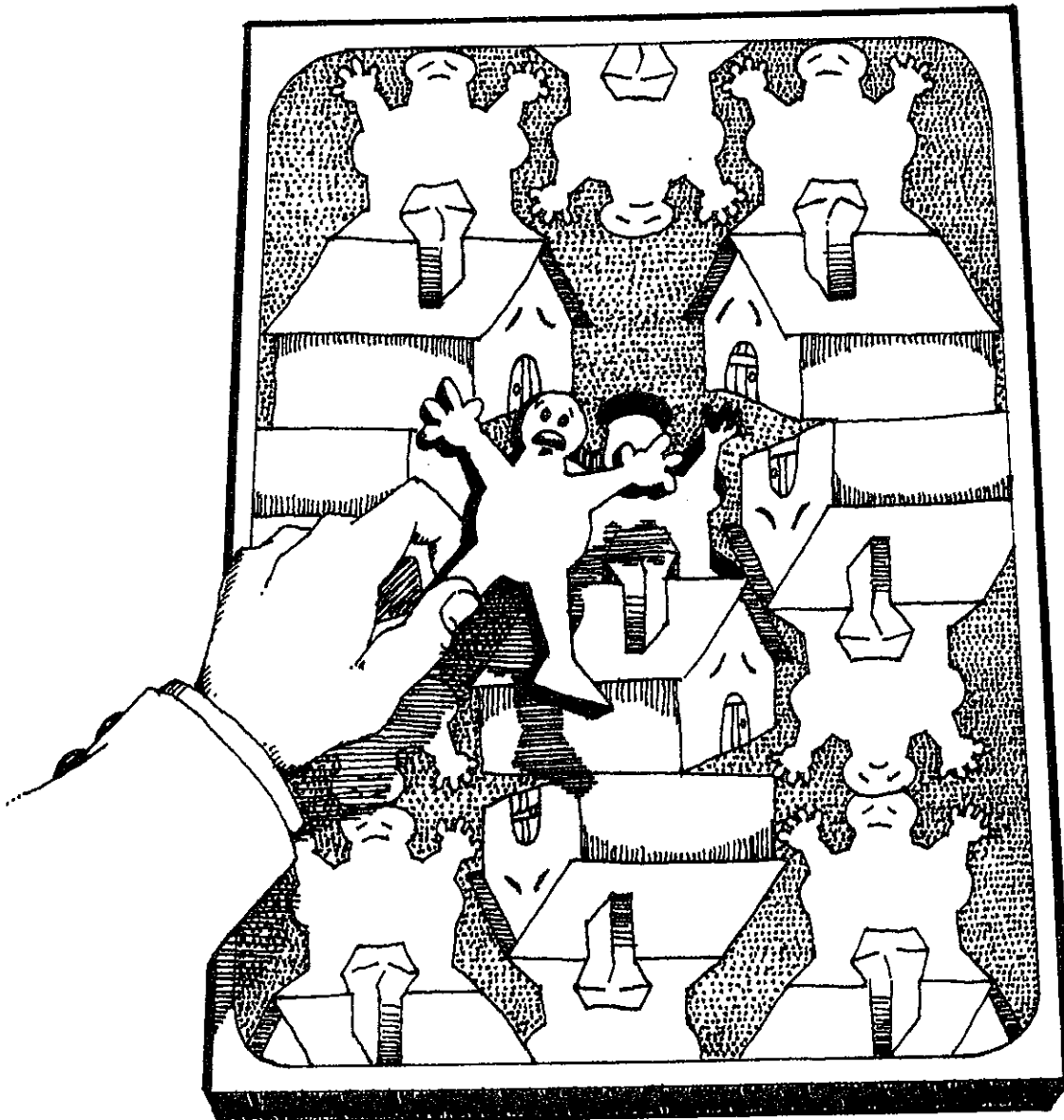
- The extent to which those desiring work are able to get it, that is, the "unemployment rate"
- Level of income derived from employment and other sources. Knowledge of how many people in your neighbourhood work outside the home is important not only for planning services and facilities (e.g., need for day care, design of homes that are relatively easy to care for, provision of public transit, provision of security for those working during odd hours) but also for group organization (e.g. holding community meetings at times and places when residents can attend). Knowledge of income levels is essential for planning of housing and other neighbourhood improvements. You may have great ideas for rehabilitating housing, paving backlanes or providing mini-parks, but such improvements will always have to be weighed in light of affordability. In other words, will residents be able and willing to increase their mortgage or rent to cover the improvements or will they be willing to face the increased

local improvement levy to pave that back lane?

Type and location of employment and levels of education can influence your planning in a number of ways. If your neighbourhood is characterized by a high level of people employed in managerial and professional occupations, their aspirations for neighbourhood amenities, services and recreation facilities may be of one sort; those employed in manufacturing, trades, construction or transport may wish a different type of recreation of leisure facility. For example, people who spend their working day behind a desk may express a desire for bike

paths and other physical exercise facilities; those who spend their working day in physical activity may prefer passive leisure activities and facilities.

Location of employment can have a bearing on your local transportation planning. If many people work at the same time and place (e.g., downtown or at a nearby industrial park) you may want to explore possibilities for car pools or direct "dial a bus" service. If many people work within or near to the community, you may want to encourage them to leave their cars at home by providing safe and pleasant bike and pedestrian routes through the community and lunch hour leisure and recreation facilities.





Where the community bears the side effects of a large influx of workers into their community from other areas, part of your planning process may include requesting funding or other assistance from those areas or another source to provide facilities and services.

To collect data and information about employment, you should probably start with the Canada Census, at least for an overview. From the 1971 census, you can get information about occupational distribution (numbers and percentages of men and women in various occupational categories), income level and educational level. The 1976 census collected information on educational level and employment (whether individuals were employed or looking for work), but unfortunately did not collect information on type of occupation or income level. Thus, if you want more current and detailed information on occupational type and income levels, you will have to turn to other sources, the most likely being your own neighborhood survey.

Other possible sources of income data may be the Alberta Bureau of Statistics or the City Planning Department. These departments can probably provide you with general information about income levels at the City or Provincial scale. However, it is unlikely that they would have such information at your neighborhood level.

#### H. ETHNICITY

From the Canada Census, there are several other types of information that you may want to explore. One is "ethnicity" data, that is, the ethnic background and language background of neighbourhood residents. Examination of this information can reveal cultural differences within your neighborhood which may require consideration during planning. For example, if within your neighbourhood you have a significant number of French, Ukrainian or Cree speaking people, you may want to explore the possibility of establishing a bilingual or multi-lingual program in



your local school, or of utilizing the talents of these people through the community centre programs, or of at least providing these minorities a sense of belonging with the larger community. Try to bring these people and their views into your planning process.

Knowledge of the language base is vital to the process itself. You may find numbers of certain language groups significant enough to warrant seeking an interpreter. If people cannot comprehend what is being discussed, you cannot hope for great participation.

Data on ethnic background, language and mobility is available from both the 1971 and 1976 Canada Census. Also, the schools in your area may be able to provide information--formal or informal--

regarding these factors. Further information on location of ethnic groups and services available to meet their needs can be obtained from Immigration Services, Alberta Culture, Department of Manpower and Immigration and the Social Planning Unit, Edmonton Social Services. After you have discovered which ethnic groups are in your area you might also consider contacting the applicable ethnic organizations. A list of all these organizations has been prepared by Alberta Culture.

Another helpful resource is the Edmonton Immigrant Services Association. This organization can provide you with updated information on services available to immigrants and interpreters. A non-citizens' group is also operating at Student Legal Services, the Law Centre, University of Alberta.

## I. MOBILITY

Mobility and transiency, as measured by the length of time individuals have resided in their home at the time of the census, can also be a major influence on your planning. If you have a high level of mobility in your area you may face difficulties in involving residents in your planning efforts.

Indeed, one of your planning goals may be to reduce transiency in the neighbourhood through such means as increased home ownership, increased satisfaction with neighbourhood services or increased family facilities. In addition, a high rate of mobility may also signal the need for such community services as a housing referral or other information service. Therefore, it won't suffice to merely inquire if there is a high mobility rate. It is important to find out why.

## J. PROJECTIONS

At some point in your planning, you will probably want to take a look at what future population you would like to plan for in your neighbourhood. Estimating or projecting future population is an

art or a science all to itself and is one area where you would be well advised to seek out expert advice from City Hall planners, demographers at the University of Alberta Population Lab or private consultants. Some approaches to projections which are possibly applicable to neighborhood planning include:

### 1) Cohort-Survival Projections

"Cohort-survival" techniques are frequently used for projections at a large scale, such as national, provincial or city-wide populations. Described simply, these projections take the existing population, subtract those assumed to die, add assumed new births, and add or subtract those migrating in or migrating out. If your neighbourhood population is fairly stable, these techniques may be useful to you. The major difficulty will be coming up with appropriate or agreed upon estimates for assumed births and deaths.

### 2) Employment Component

The "Employment Component" method is used primarily for new growth or high growth areas, such as new towns or new subdivisions. This method usually starts with assumptions about new jobs to become available and the number to be filled by new employees. The total figure population is determined on the basis of assumptions about the number of dependents that each new employee will bring with him or her. This technique would rarely be applicable to existing inner-city neighbourhoods, but it has potential for use if your community is facing major industrial or other economic development. The difficulty with this approach is reaching agreement on the assumptions about the number of dependents each new employee will bring.

### 3) Maximum Density

With the "maximum density" approach you take the present zoning and

estimate the total permissible population based on this density. Given this total population and some assumed percentages in various age and sex categories, you could break down the total for estimates of how many children, adults and senior citizens there would be based on this density. This approach is useful for projecting potential impact of density change on schools, recreation facilities, and other area services. The difficulty with this approach is to take into account the demographic changes that would accompany density change; the usual solution is to look at an area which has already been developed in a similar way and use its demographic profile as your "assumed percentages" in various age and sex categories.

#### 4) Proposed Change

An approach similar to the maximum density approach is what we'll call "proposed change". In essence, you will gather together information on all the new construction underway or planned for your area and will estimate how many new people these new developments will generate in your neighbourhood. The City Planning Department has statistics on the average number of people in various age categories living in dwelling units of various sizes. Thus, if you know that plans for your neighbourhood will create X number of three-bedroom townhouses and Y number of one-bedroom apartments, you can estimate the number and ages of people living in these units.

This number added to those already living in your neighbourhood will provide a total for the future. Don't forget to subtract those families who will be displaced by new developments. This approach can be quite useful for assessing impact of proposed housing projects. The main problem with this method is it requires that a project be fairly well advanced in design (i.e., to the point of knowing how many units of what size) before it can be used with any degree of accuracy.

Combinations of the above approaches, or others, are also possible. Decisions as to what approach you should take will be influenced to a large degree by what data and information you have to work with. Advice from someone who is experienced with the "projection game" and knows the pitfalls as well as the tricks to success would be recommended.

## VI. LAND USE

When we speak of "land use" we are talking about the purpose for which land is being utilized. For planning purposes, the use of land is usually classified in the following way:

- Industrial
- Commercial
- Residential
- Recreational
- Agricultural
- Government or Institutional
- Vacant

These general categories can also be further divided into more specific uses. Residential property can be classified into a variety of groups based on allowed density of population. Commercial property will be classified to allow for a variety of uses ranging from used car lots to small grocery stores. You might find it appropriate in preparation of your own studies to add other categories to those listed above or create your own categories.

The land use of a neighbourhood is influenced by the area's history, its function within the city, economic factors (including property values), transportation and other factors such as major uses in surrounding areas. Knowledge of land uses existing in a neighbourhood is basic for any group wishing to prepare or participate in a plan for their area whether the planning project is a housing study, a transportation study or a total community plan. It can also be useful to look into land use of adjoining communities.

Four aspects of the use of land are worth examining. They include:

- existing or actual uses of land
- legal zoning of land
- intended or proposed uses for land by the owner or developer
- potential uses of land by the community.

Each aspect warrants separate study and consideration. The following information provides assistance in how to carry out these studies and how to use them to the community's advantage.

### A. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 1) Planning Department, City of Edmonton

The Planning Department staff are a useful resource for assistance in methods of determining existing land use, identification of non-conforming land uses, understanding land use (zoning) maps and classifications and informing you about allowable densities. The Department may, depending on the circumstances, provide information on proposed uses for land in your area. The staff can also provide information on concepts such as non-conforming uses, replots and density transfers.

- 2) Edmonton Social Planning Council, Communitas, Legal Resource Centre

All three community consulting organizations can provide information and assistance in understanding land use by-laws, policies and terminology. They also have materials in their libraries including information on innovative ways of controlling and designing land use.

3) Companies Branch, Land Titles Office, Assessor's Office

These sources are useful for collecting information about property ownership and property value. For more detailed information on how to obtain this information read the sections on Land Ownership and Land Value.

4) Other Resources

Where your community needs to address a particular land use problem such as an obnoxious or annoying industrial site or designation of a green belt (Restricted Development Area) apart from contacting the above resources you may find it useful to discuss the matter with your Aldermen, M.L.A. or relevant Provincial Minister.

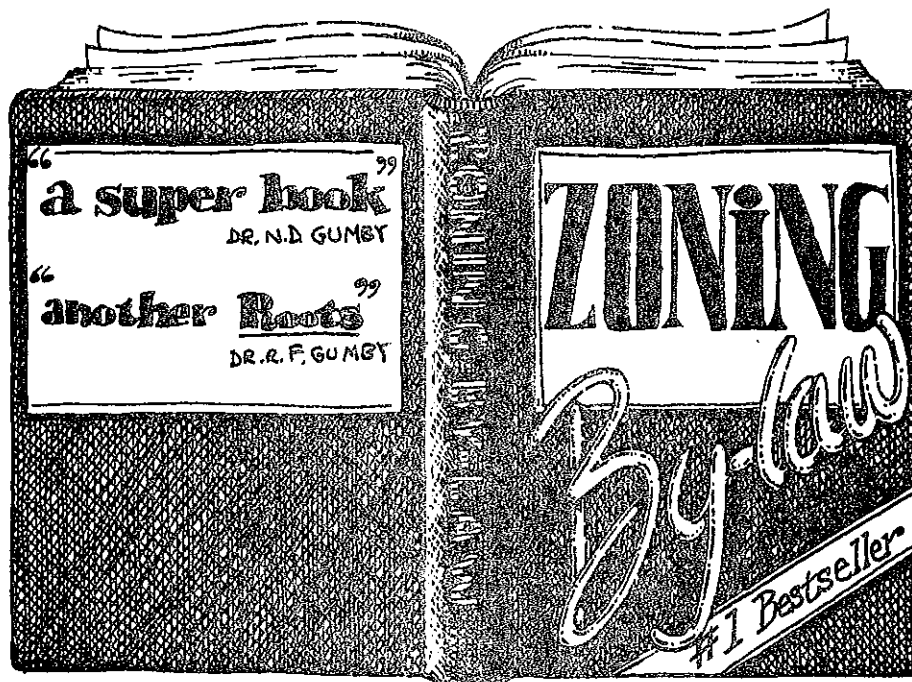
5) Written Materials

You would be well advised at the outset of your planning process to obtain a copy of the land use by-law and land

use map. For a general overview you can refer to the General Plan and Preliminary Regional Plan available from the Zoning Branch, City Planning Department and Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, respectively. All of these documents can be borrowed or studied at Government Information Division (G.I.D.), Centennial Public Library.

B. EXISTING LAND USE

An essential step to planning is finding out what exists in the community. This is a simple matter of plotting out on a map what use is presently being made of every piece of land in the neighbourhood. Before you make decisions about what you want to do in the community, be it provision of a playground, senior citizen housing or recreation centre, you should be aware of facilities and space that exist. By comparing your map of existing uses to the land use map showing allowable or legal uses, you can identify non-conforming uses not otherwise known.



You can also save yourself a great deal of time and possibly money by identifying existing useable land without the necessity of purchase.

Generally, the end product of a neighbourhood land use study is a colored map showing the type of use (residential, commercial, industrial, government/institutional/public/semi-public, parks/schools) for each piece of property in the study area. The most useful map will show not only the general classifications but the specific sub-categories of use as explained above.

The City Planning Department has conducted land use surveys of most neighbourhoods. You should obtain copies of any existing land use maps for your area if possible. Generally, an updating and correcting of the survey will be required. The process for preparing a land use study described below is generally the one which can be followed whether you are updating an existing survey or starting from scratch.

#### How to Prepare a Map of Existing Uses

- Obtain copies of a base map for the survey area. Maps should be of a size and scale suitable for use during the land use survey field-work. In other words, choose maps which can be easily carried with you to record data.
- Determine what level of land use information is required. Is it useful to know the square footage in each building? The collection of such information may be very time consuming and for most neighbourhood studies would not be required.

Generally, it is useful to obtain information about the number and type (one bedroom, two bedroom) of living units in each building, the number and kind of businesses and industries, and the type of recreation facilities (such as playgrounds, hockey arenas) in the area. This data shows the sample relationships among uses, indicates which uses

are heavy traffic generators and indicates which uses have special requirements (loading docks, special access, parking). In addition, the information may indicate the kind of people living in or frequenting the area.

- Decide on the land use categories to be used. The general categories employed by the City's planners in land use surveys are usually the best ones for use by the neighborhood group. The colors used on City maps to indicate land uses may be standardized as follows:

yellow, orange, brown: residential  
(gradations of color indicate density)  
red: commercial, business  
purple or black: industrial  
blue: government, institutional, public, semi-public  
green: parks, schools, open space, private recreational land  
uncolored: vacant land

You may want to be even more specific and indicate housing in good and poor condition; conflicting and compatible land uses; well equipped and poorly equipped park space; and so on. Remember, the categories are for your own use so they should be determined from your perspective, not another's.

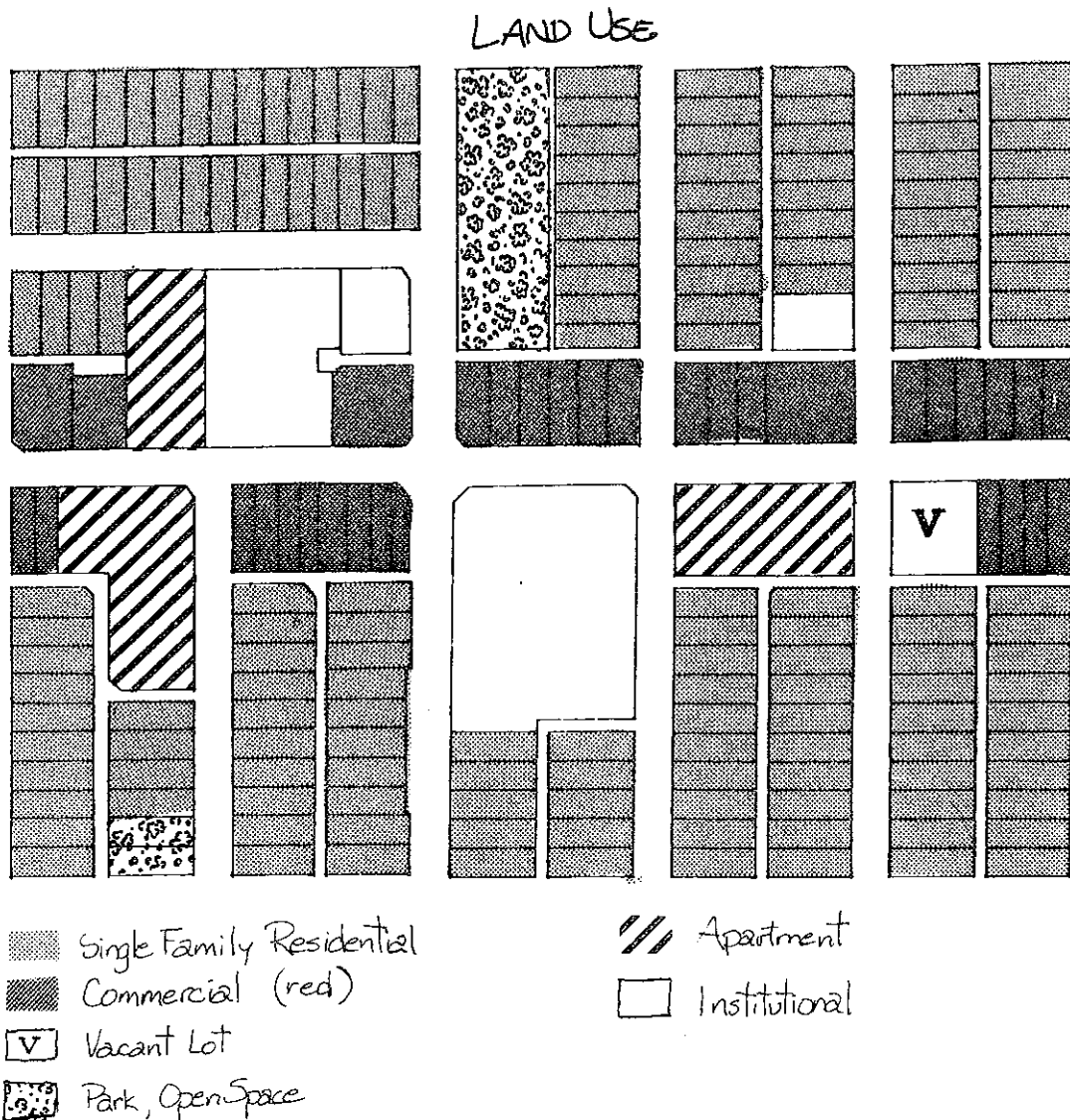
- Conduct the survey. Once the people who will be conducting the survey have been briefed on the above items, the survey can begin. If the survey is only a spot check and updating of an existing land use map or is only being conducted to give a rough idea of what exists in the neighborhood, a windshield survey can be done. One person can drive while a passenger records the land uses onto a map, dictaphone, or notebook.

For a more accurate survey, the field work should be done on foot. When the surveyor is in doubt regarding the use of a plot of land, he should try to interview someone who can provide accurate information. A survey by foot allows the surveyors more time to get a "feel" for the community's physical character. The survey is an excellent time to note possibilities for photographs or sketches which will convey the community's amenities and problems. In addition the surveyors may note physical features (lack of sidewalks, poorly maintained streets) which need further attention.

Vacant land and its character (well

treed, barren) should be identified along with land uses. Parking lots and, if possible, on-street parking areas should also be indicated. Generally, parking lots are colored the same as the use they primarily serve. You may find it useful to distinguish between actual parking space and green areas or sidewalks.

- Map and analyse the survey. Using the color and code classification systems decided upon before the field survey, the field data should be recorded neatly on maps. This stage usually requires some field rechecking to clarify the surveyor's notes. Below is an example of what a portion of a land use map might look like.



### C. CALCULATION OF DENSITY

Knowledge of the existing density for your total area, density of proposed developments and density of other communities can be useful to you in your planning process. The information is important for decisions about how many more people existing services can handle. It will help you to determine the need for other services and to lobby for their development.

Density means the total number of persons living within a specific area of land. It can be calculated by dividing the total number of people living within the boundaries of your community by the total acreage of land lying within those boundaries. A population count may possibly be determined from census data or if you have the volunteer labor, an actual count done by the community. If your community is large an actual count may not be feasible.

When determining the amount of land in the community, it is more accurate to calculate the "net acreage". This means all land minus space taken up by roads and alleys. If you wish to measure residential density as opposed to total population density, you should also exclude land used for school yards, shopping centres, parks, offices and so on.

If you do not have available an actual population count or recent census

data, you can use another method to determine density. Older or general census data and city land use by-laws may indicate the number of persons estimated to live in different types of dwelling units (single family homes, walk-ups, highrises and so on). Assistance in finding these estimates can be obtained from the Population Laboratory, University of Alberta, or Zoning Branch, City Planning Department. With this information it is possible to calculate a reasonable estimated density by multiplying the number of assumed persons per dwelling unit by the number of each type of dwelling unit and adding the results.

A word to the wise. To not come to any quick conclusions about density based only on a mathematical calculation. How an area is designed is as important as the number of people who will live or work there. Read also the information on density in the section on Housing.

NOTE: A concept you may choose to investigate is transfer of density. This occurs where a land owner is permitted to develop one parcel of land to a higher than legally allowed density in return for relinquishing the right to development another parcel of land to the highest allowable density under the land use by-law. A noteworthy example which drew much attention to the existence of this aspect of land use was the transfer of

#### SAMPLE DENSITY CALCULATION

Net Residential Acreage	Dwelling Unit Type	Number of Dwelling Units	Estimated Persons Per Unit	Total Persons
200	Single Fam.	100	3.00	300
	Walk Up (1BR) (2BR)	150	1.96	294
		300	3.10	930
	Highrise (1BR) (2BR)	600	1.80	1080
		600	2.67	<u>1602</u>
				4206
Density:	$\frac{4206}{200} = 21.03$ persons per net residential acre.			



densities from the Marchand Mansion to the adjoining properties, with the intention of preserving an historic site. For further information, contact the Community of Oliver Group (C.O.G.) or Communitas Incorporated.

D. LAND USE SUMMARY

If you want to compare the land uses in various parts of the neighbourhood, or want to compare the uses in the entire neighbourhood with those in other areas, a table might be prepared showing the percentages of all land developed for each use. Percentage comparisons can be time consuming since

they require calculating acreages for each land use category. However, a summary table based on lots or housing units can be prepared without major area calculations. The table might look like the one below.

An updated land use map and chart can be useful for quick reference. Where a need is identified to provide a service or you hope to develop an innovative housing project such as infill housing you can quickly assess whether the land exists to allow you to act. You will also be able to do a quick calculation of the cost of assembling land for your project based on the existing use of your selected location and what sort of interference you will likely encounter.

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Number</u>
Residential	
Single Family	600 units
Duplex	60 units
Townhouse	150 units (100 2BR*, 50 3BR)
Walk-up	500 units (200 1BR, 300 2BR)
Highrise	500 units (100 1BR, 400 2BR)
Commercial, Business	
Architect Office	2
Bakery	1
Convenience Store	3
<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Number</u>
Industrial	
Glass Repair Shop	1
Government, Institutional, Public and Semi-Public	
Hospital	1
Church	4
Parks, Schools	
Playground	2 (on school grounds)
School - elementary	1
- junior high	1
Vacant Land	15 lots
*BR is an abbreviation for bedrooms	

## E. LAND OWNERSHIP AND LAND VALUE

You may wish to collect information about property ownership and values in your area. A list or map showing the names of owners for all lots in the area can indicate:

- large holdings by a single individual or company. Large holdings of single family lots by an individual or a company may indicate a potential area for redevelopment to higher densities or to commercial use. It is important to note the names of all shareholders of property holding companies. This data can indicate "interlocking directorships" and perhaps can point to potential areas where the companies may consolidate their holdings for large scale redevelopment.
- the number of absentee landlords with property in the area. Although not all individuals who own property in the area but who live elsewhere will be negligent with respect to property maintenance, a large number of absentee landlords may indicate that an area is in transition from a stable owner occupied housing area to a rental area.
- properties which are publicly owned. It may be important to determine what plans public agencies have for their properties.

A comparison of ownership changes, owner-to-renter occupancy changes and renter-to-owner changes over a five year period can indicate whether the neighbourhood is undergoing rapid change.

The Assessors Office in most cities will have a list of all property owners, often in computer print-out form. You should check with the Assessor's Office to see if you are allowed direct access to such information. If the information is not directly available there, you could request that the City Planning Department or one of your Aldermen obtain the information for you. The City of Edmon-

ton Planning Department (either the Research Section or Rehabilitation and Redevelopment) may be able to provide information regarding property ownership. The Garneau Community Planning Committee was able to obtain a computer print-out showing owner name and address and general land use for each property in their area.

You can also consider doing a door-to-door survey and/or an indepth search at the Land Titles Office and Companies Branch.

At the Land Titles Office you can find out the registered owners of all of the properties in your community. In order to make a land titles search you will require the legal description of the properties. This information can be obtained at the tax assessors office by providing the street address. To avoid a large expenditure (a small fee much be paid for each search) you may find it advisable to determine as many property owners as possible by survey and search only those you cannot discover by other means.

The Companies Branch will provide assistance where the listed property owner is a holding company. Here you can discover the names of directors or shareholders of the company. To carry out a companies search you must provide the correct name of the company and pay a fee of 50¢ per company searched. You will be provided with a file which you may examine. Assistance is available if needed. Other information on file includes annual reports, financial statements and information on whether the company is in a stage of liquidation or bankruptcy.

Land values in an urban area influence considerably the way in which individuals or companies seek to use land. Geographical distribution of land uses, types of uses, intensity of use and land values are strongly interconnected. Requests for rezoning are indications of changing land values resulting from land market forces.

Information regarding land values may be difficult to obtain from tax offi-

ces. However, a questionnaire survey of all property owners might provide some information on property values. In addition, an examination of selling prices of posted properties over a period of time can be useful. The prices will reflect the lot frontage, the value of structures on the property and the current and potential zoning for the property. The group collecting property value information should also determine how long posted properties have been on the market and compare property prices with those in other areas of the city. Rapid increases in property selling prices (over and above inflation increases) may indicate that the potential for large scale redevelopment of an area is high.

#### F. LEGAL USES OF LAND

One of the essential community planning tools is the land use by-law and zoning map. These tell you what uses are legally designated for each plot of land. Both are worth purchasing. They will be referred to constantly throughout your planning process.

The zoning or land use classifications designate the specific permitted or conditional uses for land such as commercial, industrial or residential. Within each of these broad classifications are more specific uses. For example, residential areas may be zoned to allow for a range of densities from single family to highrises. The classifications are reasonably straight-forward and become second nature after frequent use.

Just as an aside, you should not feel restricted by these designated classifications in the development of your own maps and plans. The land use by-law can be amended to add new classifications for an innovative use of land.

Land use by-laws (until 1979) referred to as the zoning by-law and land use classification guide) and maps can be purchased from the Zoning Branch, City Planning Department. For

assistance in interpretation contact the Edmonton Social Planning Council or Community Planning Branch, City Planning Department.

The General Plan indicates general land uses for the entire city and is philosophical in nature but can be useful to gauge the general intent for your area.

You should consider keeping your land use map updated. The map is constantly being amended as owners of land apply for rezoning. This map is only useful as a planning tool if it is accurate. You might consider having someone responsible for monitoring rezoning applications.

Some communities are also protected by restrictive covenants or caveats. These are legal restrictions attached to the land which allow only prescribed uses for that land. A search at Land Titles will inform you if these exist.

The Legal Resource Centre or Edmonton Social Planning Council could assist you here or refer you to a lawyer for further explanation and assistance.

A number of Edmonton communities including Glenora and McDougall have been involved in court cases involving attempts to remove these protective measures.

As mentioned earlier, you will also become aware of non-conforming uses of land in your community by knowing what the property is legally zoned to allow for. Non-conforming uses normally arise where the land use by-law came into existence after a use of land had already existed for some time.

For example, the brick factory existed in Riverdale long before the zoning by-law was passed which designated the area as parkland. The brick factory, now a retail outlet, consequently is allowed to remain but is considered a non-conforming use. By law, the business can continue to operate but only so long as the use remains the same and does not expand its operations. If either occurs the business can be legally closed down and moved

out. In fact, a number of river valley residential communities, including Riverdale, Rossdale, Lavigne and Cloverdale, are considered non-conforming uses of land, the entire area being zoned as parkland.

Non-conforming uses then are also important to note in planning for continued or new uses for community land. If you want to retain a corner grocery but it presently operates as a non-conforming use you will have to designate a new land use on your proposed plan or apply separately for a rezoning.

### G. PROPOSED OR INTENDED LAND USES

A third map worth maintaining is one showing development proposals. Oliver community, because of its land use classification is constantly experiencing redevelopment, in most cases from single family dwelling to highrise. The Community of Oliver Group maintains a separate map indicating sites where development applications have been submitted to the City Planning Department.

By contacting the Zoning Section of the City Planning Department your community can be put on the mailing list to receive the daily development proposal bulletins. You must submit a written application and pay a monthly fee of \$10.00.

Both Oliver and Garneau planning committees have maintained their own monitoring system over proposed developments in the hope of discovering development intentions even before the formal application is made. Planning legislation was amended in 1978 to ensure notice be given to adjoining land owners of all proposed developments. Formerly this was not the case. Where proposals complied with the zoning by-law requirements, public notice of a redevelopment was made only after the application was approved.

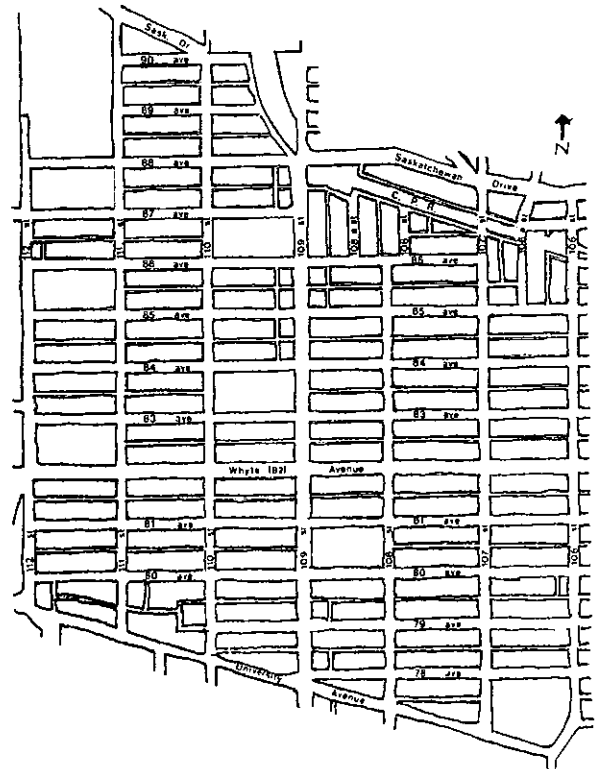
Some communities have also made it a practice to gain the cooperation of developers and land owners to discuss development proposals before they be-

come formal applications. Communities have found this to be a useful exercise in some cases, as have the developers.

You should also consider keeping a close watch on government proposals for your area. Develop a rapport with your Aldermen and the Planning Department to ensure advance notice. This is an area where you will make full use of your group's diplomatic and investigative talents.

### Community Land Use Proposals

This is the fun part of planning. Once you have informed yourselves about all the legal and other restrictions on land use, you can put it all aside and conceive your own designs for your community. The best tool is an empty base map. This can be purchased from the Zoning Branch, City Planning Department. You can, of course, develop your own free drawn maps.



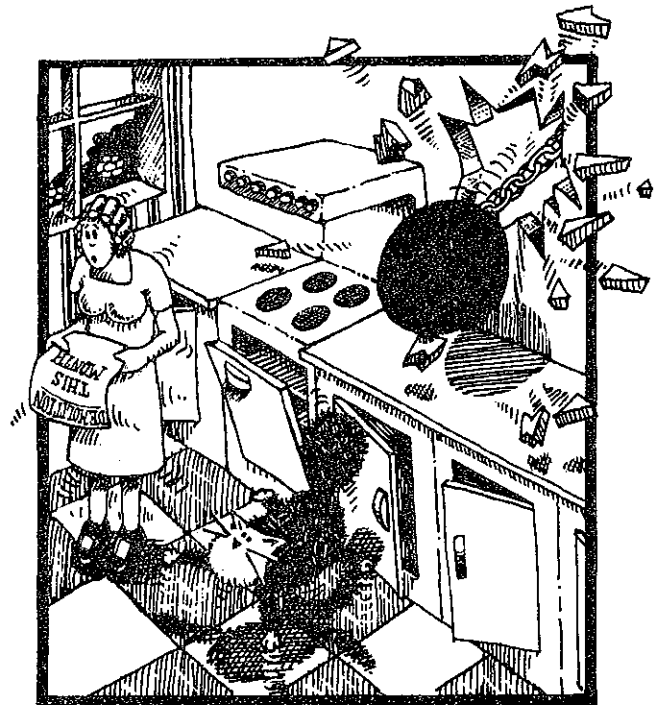
- base map of Garneau

There is no particular order to follow in addressing these four avenues of land use study, although all of the input is valuable. You may prefer to begin with your own open brainstorm among community residents for proposals for using the land in your area. Eventually you will have to refer to the other factors discussed to come up with a more realistic and appropriate proposal acceptable to all parties including your community, other development interests, bordering communities and city officials.

Research into innovative land use designs and concepts prior to trying to come up with your own proposals may make the process more enjoyable and useful. Considering alternatives is more workable than staring at a blank map. At the initial stages it is more important to collect as many ideas as possible from residents whether or not they conflict with each other. You can prioritize and select the best land use ideas at a later stage. An enjoyable and useful film entitled "Chairs are for Lovers" documents a process of collecting ideas for the development of an area in downtown Vancouver. The film is available on loan from the National Film Board.

The development of your own land use maps and plans is an on-going process. Do not feel discouraged if the first attempts yield little material of practical use. The important thing is that you develop ways of encouraging the community to participate and share their ideas. It will serve no purpose to exclude the rest of the community in your decision about land uses. When you seek a plan, development or rezoning approval other opinions are certain to be voiced. Your chances are better of reaching consensus outside of City Council chambers.

NOTE: In considering what land use patterns are desirable, communities might want to consider the benefits of maintaining smaller scale commercial, recreational and perhaps even industrial facilities which are sprinkled through the residential sections of the community. You might want to introduce small stores into areas where shopping can presently only be done by car, or small parks where they can add beauty, resting opportunities for older people, or playground opportunities for young children--or all three. Keeping different land uses well separated can produce communities which look neat on paper but perhaps very boring to live in.



... land use changes

## VI. HOUSING

Your concerns may be more specific than land use classifications and zoning requirements. Radical changes in the availability and designing of housing can affect other aspects of the community. For instance, a decline in school enrollment can be caused by the replacement of single family dwellings by singles apartments.

Even so-called "stable" communities might want to ask themselves whether there are changes in their residential characteristics which they would like to see. For instance, it might be desirable to allow the creation of suites so that elderly relatives can be supported close to home, or so that older people living in houses larger than what they need can supplement their income by renting the unneeded part of their house.

This chapter suggests various information sources and resources as well as factors you may find useful in examining your community housing situation. A number of alternative housing solutions are also discussed.

### A. INFORMATION SOURCES

#### 1) Statistics Canada

The Statistics Canada Census is taken on June 1st, every five years. The 1971 Census includes information about the number of dwelling units, whether they are owner or tenant occupied, length of occupancy, average values, average rents, time of construction, type of unit, some particulars such as existence of plumbing and so forth.

The 1976 Census contains less information than the 1971 Census, but

does have information on ownership, dwelling type and household characteristics.

It is important to note that the smallest areas for which Census information is available is the "enumeration area". In a very dense area, this might be as small as a couple of blocks. Enumeration Area data is available on microfiche through the Users Advisory Service at the Edmonton office of Statistics Canada. The next largest areas are "census tracts". Information on these is more readily available in published form. Census data can be used to provide an overview of the housing and population characteristics of a community. Comparing data from several census years can give an idea of general trends, but often the boundaries for statistical areas change from census to census.

For help in getting and using census data, consult the Statistics Canada Users Advisory Service, the Alberta Bureau of Statistics or the University of Alberta Population Laboratory. (See also POPULATION.)

#### 2) City Census

The City of Edmonton undertakes a census every April. It is primarily concerned with a simple population count by age and sex but it does include other questions as well. These additional questions vary from year to year, some prior topics including bicycle, automobile and smoke detector counts.

City census enumeration areas are not the same as Statistics Canada enumeration areas. Consequently, the two statistical records cannot really be stud-

ied together; more recent city statistical information cannot really be correctly used to update the less frequent national census. It is also important to be aware that census data is rarely 100% correct. If you want more than a general overview, you will likely be advised to carry out your own survey.

City census data can be obtained from the City Clerk or Executive Services.

You may want to consider contacting your alderman to have certain questions added to the next census. The likelihood of their agreement would probably be increased if several communities requested the same questions. Contact other communities who likely share your concerns.

### 3) City Assessor's Office

The Assessment Office maintains files on every residential property including such information as name and address of owner, type of housing, age of buildings, number of bedrooms, square footage, improvements, assessed value and taxes. This information may not be readily accessible as its nature is deemed personal and confidential, and because considerable clerical and computer time is required to produce it for a specific area or neighbourhood. Your best approach might be to speak to your community planner, other friendly city administration contact, or one of your aldermen to request the information on your behalf. You will likely still have to pay the computer costs.

### 4) Department of Real Estate and Housing

This department can provide you with information on allowable densities in different areas of your community. This information is important to have on hand when examining alternative forms of housing. A major housing study was also undertaken in 1978.

### 5) Planning Department

Here you will find information and advice (unfortunately limited because of other staff duties) about everything from explanation of land use by-laws and zoning classifications to city housing cooperatives and community planning mechanisms. The Planning Department will explain what is involved in developing land in accordance with existing designations as well as what is involved in order to reclassify or rezone an area to allow for a different housing density.

### 6) City Department of Social Services

The Social Planning Branch of City Social Services has carried out a number of housing-related studies. Published studies include:

- Plans for Development of Services for Senior Citizens in Edmonton
- Report on Homelessness
- Site Selection for Senior Citizen Housing

Yet unpublished studies include:

- Factors Affecting Residential Satisfaction with Physical and Social Planning in New Communities
- Design Guidelines to Multiple Family Housing

This branch can provide advice and assistance in carrying out your own research.

Also worth contacting is your area Community Worker, attached to the Department of Social Services. These people work in your area and hold a great deal of expertise in all aspects of planning and organizing.

### 7) Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (C.M.H.C.)

This federal government agency provides financial assistance for housing projects. Insured mortgage loans are available to prospective home-owners,

builders and special projects such as cooperative and non-profit housing. Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation also makes direct loans on a frequent basis to non-profit projects and less frequently to cooperatives. Start-up funds are available for the developmental stages of a housing project. It may be worthwhile prior to making any firm decisions about plans for housing in your community to contact your local C.M.H.C. office or to obtain some of the information pamphlets explaining the various programs.

#### 8) Communitas Incorporated

Communitas, an Edmonton based non-profit corporation, provides assistance to groups throughout Alberta interested in the development of innovative and affordable housing. Specifically, they provide information on landlord and tenant issues, housing options, and implications of different forms of land tenure including ownership, rental, condominium and cooperatives. They house a lending library containing much of this information.

Communitas also offers a consultation service providing planning and design information, advice on innovative alternatives and assistance in the development and organization of housing projects. Examples of groups they have assisted include Sundance, Salvador, Synergen and Homestead Cooperative Housing Projects.

Communitas provides information and referral free of charge to community groups as well as the initial developmental work in setting up a housing project. If long term involvement is requested, a contract is entered into on a fee-for-service basis.

#### 9) Alberta Department of Housing and Public Works

Two branches of this provincial government office of relevance are the Alberta Housing Corporation and Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation (A.H.M.C.).

The Alberta Housing Corporation can be contacted for information about rental supplements, public housing projects, senior citizen housing projects, and community service programs such as the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (N.I.P.). The Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation provides mortgage funds and direct lending for cooperative and other housing projects. The Department also sponsors programs to assist senior citizens for the maintenance of their homes and to assist the handicapped to adapt their homes.

#### 10) Community Self-Survey

You may find it desirable to conduct your own surveys to get information which is more up to date than that available from the last census. You may want to get information on topics or for geographical areas which are different from other sources.

As well as getting census-type housing and population data, you might want to survey your residents to see how they feel about their own and others' housing, and how they feel housing should be designed. Are there senior citizens who are anxious about their present housing conditions or their housing prospects? Is there concern about the lack of children to maintain the local school? Is there anxiety about higher density developments, and what is the anxiety really about: the housing or the new residents?

Surveys will give you good information on existing conditions and attitudes, but they do not tell you what the best answers to problems are. Only people working together in groups trying to resolve different interests can do that.

For more detailed information on community self-surveys, see Part One, Chapter 3, Developing a Communication System.

### B. IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

#### 1) Social Factors

In Compact Housing: An Answer to



the Housing Crunch\*, the authors identified five stages in the family life cycle which one should be aware of in determining basic housing needs:

- "1. a place for one;
2. a place for two;
3. the family at the beginning
4. the main period of family life;
5. retirement."

The authors also stress that people at each of these stages will have particular habits, needs and expectations distinguishable from the others in terms of suitability, privacy, mobility, affordability, recreation, social and community facilities, storage, parking and easily adaptable space.

It will also be necessary to find out whether each of these groups are interested in adopting new designs to enable a population mix in the community. Most residential areas today are designed to accommodate only one age group--high density/highrise areas for singles, single family residential areas for families, or

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\* Ken Arcuri et al, Faculty of Environmental Design, University of Calgary, Alberta, December 1977.

apartment complexes for seniors. A number of communities are aware that their population is shifting with seniors no longer able to maintain their homes and school age children disappearing. They are realizing that certain types of development must be encouraged and introduced to enable young families and elderly to return or remain.

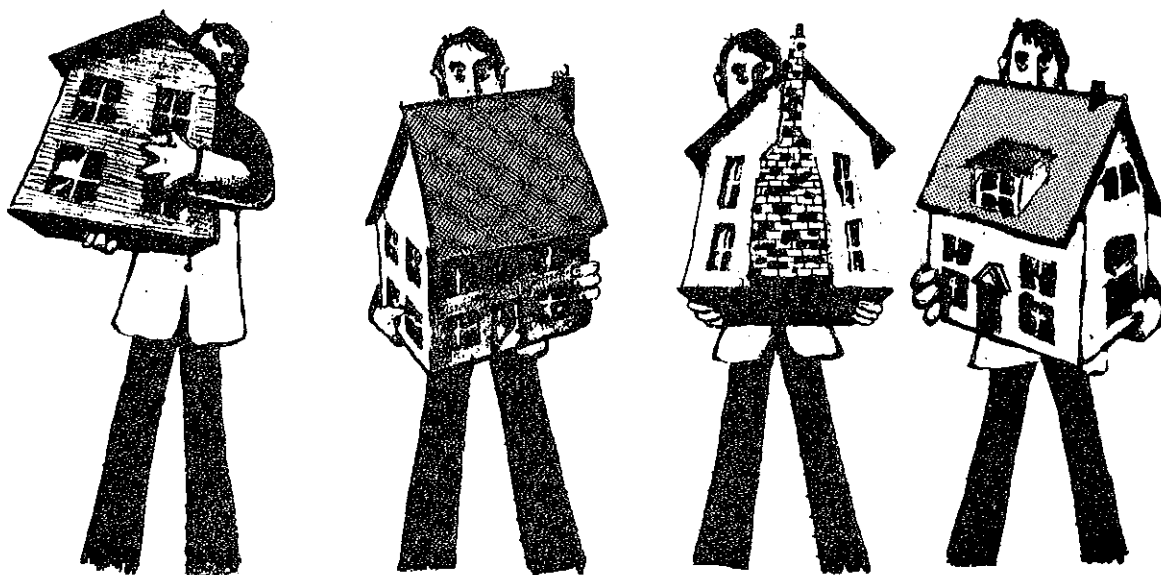
Many of the criteria raised in Chapter 7, Population, will also merit attention in determining housing needs.

### C. PHYSICAL FACTORS

Collection of factual information on the status of existing shelter can go hand in hand with your land use study. Additional work may, however, be necessary to fully understand housing needs in your community. Investigation into the following may assist you:

#### 1) Housing Types

You may find it useful to examine the housing in your neighbourhood in terms of type of dwelling unit, that is, single family dwelling, duplex, rowhousing, mobile home or apartment. As well, information about "conversions" such as



single family dwellings that have been converted to suites or which include basement suites, can tell you much about your neighbourhood.

Information on housing types can reveal how and where changes are occurring in your area. It can illustrate the degree of housing mix in the neighbourhood. Used in conjunction with your land use data, this information can point up areas of your community with a significant number of multi-family units and probably a higher density of people.

This information can be used in your planning of bus routes and shelters, parks and playgrounds, and pedestrian/bike routes from areas of higher density to schools, recreation and commercial facilities. It can also be useful if you are looking for units or sub-areas that have potential for conversion or infill housing concepts which are discussed later on in this chapter.

## 2) Owner Occupancy/Tenancy

It has already been suggested that as part of your land use analysis, you should examine ownership; that is, the extent to which lots and dwelling units are owned and occupied by area residents, owned by an area resident but rented to other occupants, or owned by a non-resident and rented. For an indepth housing study, you should probably take a closer look at tenancy, particularly as it relates to transiency. That is, what proportion of your renters consider themselves permanent residents and what proportion are short-term.

While students or temporary residents may not be willing or able to take an active part in your long-term community planning process, they are undoubtedly interested in knowing that their housing and community services needs will continue to be met. If it is accommodation located next to a university or college, many students or student housing agencies may get involved to guarantee housing for the students as a whole. Indeed, many renters are, or become, permanent community members when they

find that they and the community fit well together.

Information regarding tenancy, that is, general levels within the community, is available from the census. Information regarding location of rental quarters is available from Assessor's records. However, the best source of tenancy information, especially that dealing with satisfaction with housing and community services, will have to come from your own survey within the neighbourhood.

## 3) Vacancy

Investigate the status of vacant buildings and lots, including how long they have remained in that condition and why. It will be important also to note who owns the properties--private or public ownership--and the intended future use. The locations of these properties and their proximity to one another may be important to record in order to plan alternative uses.

High vacancy rates for rental properties and rate of turnover of real estate may also indicate problems in your neighbourhood. Common causes include run-down properties, location adjacent to noisy streets or noxious industries or inadequate services. Find out why these properties remain vacant.

It may be worthwhile comparing your vacancy rate with that of other communities to discover whether the problem is significant only to your area. Knowledge of vacant units can also come in handy if you are planning a housing rehabilitation program. These units may be rehabilitated first to provide temporary accommodation for families while their own homes are being upgraded. Information regarding vacancy rates can be obtained from the City Housing Registry, the local Real Estate Association or Housing Authority. Information regarding location of vacant units will have to be obtained from your land use survey or housing survey.

#### 4) Condition of Existing Housing

For an indepth housing study, especially if you have hopes of preserving the character of your neighbourhood, you will need information about the condition of the existing housing stock. This information is needed to determine which units require minor repairs, which ones require more extensive rehabilitation, which ones could be converted, and which ones would best be replaced. The information, when mapped onto your land use map, could indicate areas or blocks that could be good target areas for infill housing or other rehabilitation measures.

Unfortunately, you will probably find very little existing information to use in assessing the condition of housing in your area. The Canada Census can provide a rough idea of the age of housing stock, and the Assessors records can provide age (and in some instances renovation) information for each unit. Otherwise, you will probably have to undertake your own assessment through one or two types of survey:

- a "windshield" survey of the exterior of housing stock. You (preferably with the assistance of a local contractor or architect) will look at exterior features such as the roof, soffit and fascia, windows, steps, porches, brickwork or other cladding and judge its general condition or need for repairs. Your notes should be recorded on a standard form. It is also useful to accompany these notes with a photograph. A word of warning: if residents have not been advised that you are undertaking this walk-about survey, some may object or refuse you access to their property. This is only one of the many good reasons to inform and involve the total community. Also, this kind of survey is only preliminary at best, since it merely provides information about the exterior condition;

- a questionnaire type survey among property owners regarding their assessment of the exterior and interior systems (plumbing, heating, electrical). As the sample questionnaire from Groat Estates indicates, you would seek information regarding when repairs were most recently carried out.

You will undoubtedly require assistance in assessing housing conditions. Inspectors from the Building Inspection Branch and/or planners from the Rehabilitation Branch of the City Planning Department can provide advice on what to look for. You should be aware of the rules and regulations contained in the Minimum Standards Bylaw since these will affect planning for conversions. For example, it is illegal to create a basement suite if the ceiling height is not a specified height and if there are not a sufficient number of windows and exits. In addition to these "official" views, the advice of a contractor familiar with renovation can be invaluable, especially if they are positively inclined toward rehabilitation.

#### 5) Historical or Architectural Significance

Another aspect of your assessment of the condition of housing stock is that of its historical significance. If your neighbourhood is an older one in the heart of a city, you may find that some of the homes are significant in one or several ways. They may be architecturally significant in representing an early building style, or they may be historically significant in being home for some early pioneer or leader. Identifying such buildings is important not only because it may generate interest in heritage preservation, but also because funds for preservation and upkeep may be available.

In order to properly conduct an historic study of buildings for soundness or historic merit, the community should contact the Historic Sites Branch of

## D. PLANNING TO MEET THE NEED

### 1) Analyzing, Displaying and Presenting the Information

The trick in using information is to get it into forms which will tell you answers to questions you have now or will give you insights into matters that you had not otherwise thought about. You will probably want to reduce information from various sources to maps, charts and graphs. In these forms, the material is readily communicated to a large number of people at meetings and through newsletters.

### 2) Interpreting the Information and Formulating Alternative Plans

In the initial stages of interpreting data and formulating plans, it will probably be best to work through some kind of workshop format where differences of opinion can be expressed face to face, and if not readily resolved, at least clarified. A set of alternative plans might be developed which reflect these differences.

These alternative plans might be presented for reaction to as many members of the community as possible--through newsletters, or public meetings. In the Summer of 1977, the Community of Oliver Group presented a number of housing concepts to fellow residents along with other community plan information. It might be worthwhile to contact this group or *Communitas* to find out how it was presented.

## E. FREQUENTLY ARISING ISSUES TO RESOLVE

### 1) The Role of Rental Accommodation

The role of rental housing is an issue that needs to be addressed frankly but fairly. If certain absentee landlords are irresponsible, are there alternatives to just trying to eliminate rental housing? What about people who cannot maintain their own home because of age,



*Le Marchand Mansion*

Alberta Culture. Since the passing of new legislation in the Spring Session of 1978, both municipal and provincial governments are empowered to designate sites.

The Historic Sites Branch will examine the site, assess the feasibility of preservation (soundness of foundation, etc.), research its history and prepare a report for the Historic Sites Board. While the Board makes recommendations to the Minister of Culture, he in some cases and the Cabinet in others, has final power to designate a site. Because of its political nature, historic site designation would require a well-organized lobby on the part of the community, particularly where other persons, especially the owner, may wish to redevelop the property. Oliver Community's battle to save Le Marchand Mansion is a good example.

If your group decides to consider historic preservation, you should carefully scrutinize the Alberta Historical Resources Act and contact groups who are familiar with this process such as S.P.A.R.E. (Society for the Preservation of Architectural Resources in Edmonton) or the Strathcona Historical Foundation.

disability, family situation or whatever? What is the community's responsibility to those residents of the city who cannot afford to purchase homes? What about people who necessarily are short-term residents --like students and temporary workers? Do they have a place in the community? Community planning means considering the local community's responsibility to the larger community as well as protecting the interests of the local community from those who would destroy it.

## 2) Density

The population distribution in a given area is usually measured in terms of either number of people per acre or number of buildings per acre (see Chapter 6, Land Use). The actual impact of more people and buildings in your community will be extremely dependent on how those people are housed or how the buildings are designed and placed on the land. The important consideration in an examination of density is whether an increase or decrease will benefit the community.

An increase in density without proper planning or adequate allocation of funds can place a heavy burden on existing park and recreational space, overtax social and health services and create a heavy flow of traffic. On the positive side, an increased density can more readily support an economic public transit system, a diversity of specialized shops and services and allow for a greater opportunity to mix with different age groups, interest groups and cultures. The development of land to a higher density is also more economically feasible.

Again, whether or not a housing development is liveable is dependent on the design. There are a number of methods of slightly increasing the population without major impacts on the character or quality of your community, some of which include construction of housing on empty lots, replacement of existing run-down buildings with low

scale multiple family dwellings, infill housing and any number of possibilities worth investigating. Just as a reminder, increased density could keep your schools open.

Another aspect of housing that you should probably take a look at is internal density--the number of people living within a dwelling unit. Generally speaking, when the number of people living within a unit exceeds the number of rooms, internal density is considered to be high, or crowded.

While it is generally believed that high internal density is undesirable, "crowdedness" is a desirable way to live for some. If you find in your fact-collecting that existing housing conditions are crowded by Canadian standards or if residents express a wish to live together in larger numbers, explore the reasons why. Is it because of housing costs? Is it because units large enough to accommodate large families do not exist in sufficient supply? Is it because these people prefer close living conditions? Information regarding the reasons for high internal density can be useful for future planning. For example, you may make it an objective to provide more dwelling units large enough for large families or to make housing more affordable to improve the situation.

Information regarding internal density is available from the census in general form. Otherwise, the best source of information will be your own household or resident survey.

## 3) Mixed Use

In planning your community you will find it difficult to avoid the topic of mixed use. A simple example is a discussion about the disappearance of a local grocery or arrival of a chain food store. It is difficult to make a blanket decision about whether you want mixed uses for the land in your neighborhood or not. The issue is complex.

Many communities feel strongly that they want to preserve their area for single family dwellings. These commun-

ities from time to time unfortunately face situations such as declining school enrollment and the exodus of seniors unable to maintain their homes. The addition of some higher density housing or senior citizen residences could provide a more balanced population. It will be important to assess long-term goals of the community and how best they can be accommodated.

Communities also face decisions about the existence of non-conforming, possibly obnoxious, industries or commercial enterprises. While some residents may wish the removal of non-residential enterprises, others may prefer to live close to their place of work. Providing homes near to work places can of course help to alleviate traffic congestion.

There is no predetermined answer on where and how to provide housing, places of work, leisure areas or places for shopping. Essentially a decision about introducing new uses of land into your area will best be made on the basis of what changes can best meet the total community needs. Rather than rejecting suggestions for new shops and services, try to come up with ways they could be introduced in the most compatible way possible. You may not like the idea of a day care centre next door to you but consider the convenience for working parents in your neighbourhood.

## F. INNOVATIVE HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

### 1) Infill Housing

Oliver Community is presently involved in a feasibility study for development of infill housing. Realizing the pressures for increased density in their area, Oliver is considering infill as a possible route to preserve some of the remaining single family homes yet provide more housing.

Essentially, infill is just what it says. Buildings are constructed in and around existing structures. Additional living space is provided in spaces nor-

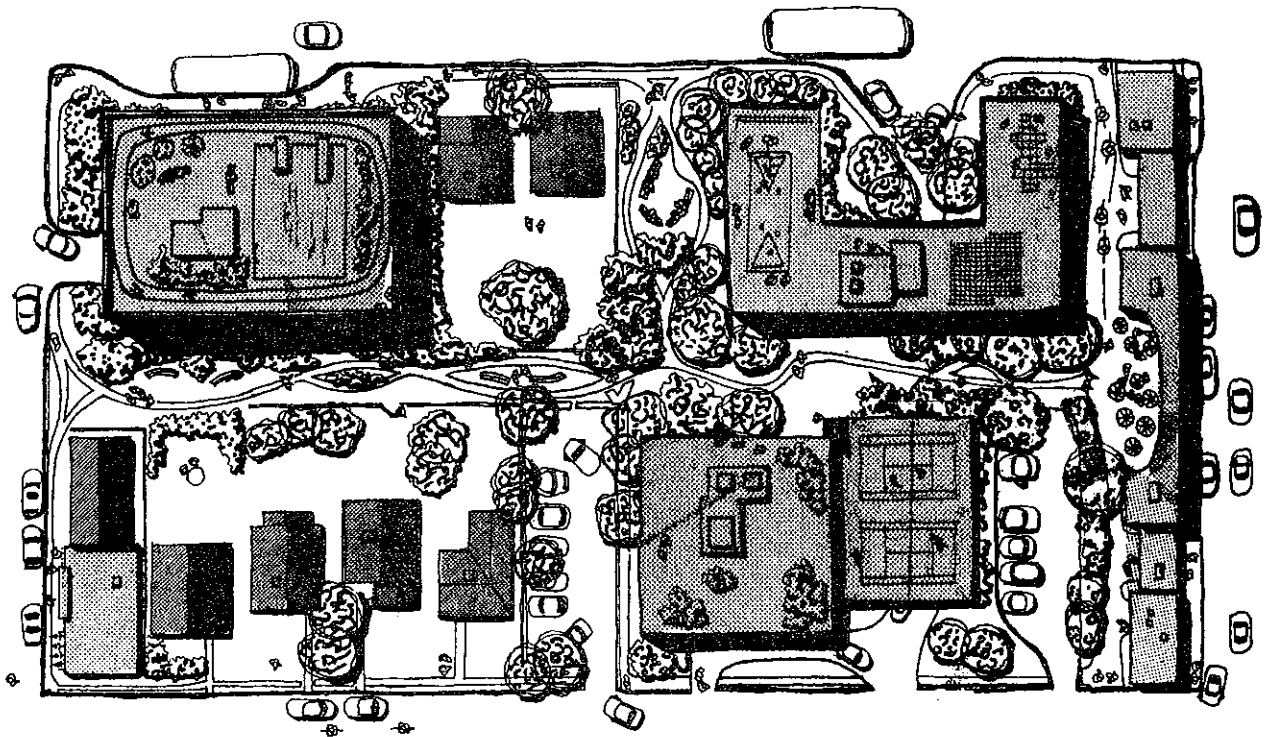
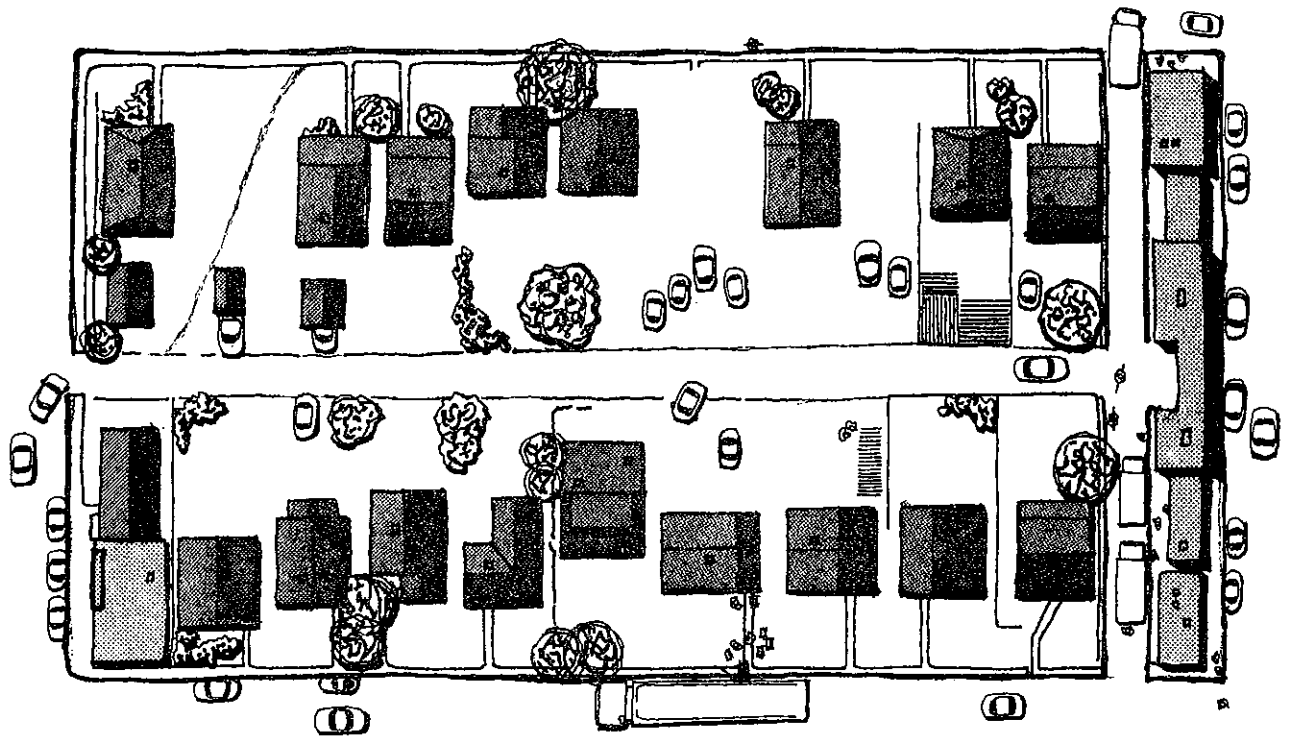
## "THE NEIGHBORHOOD"

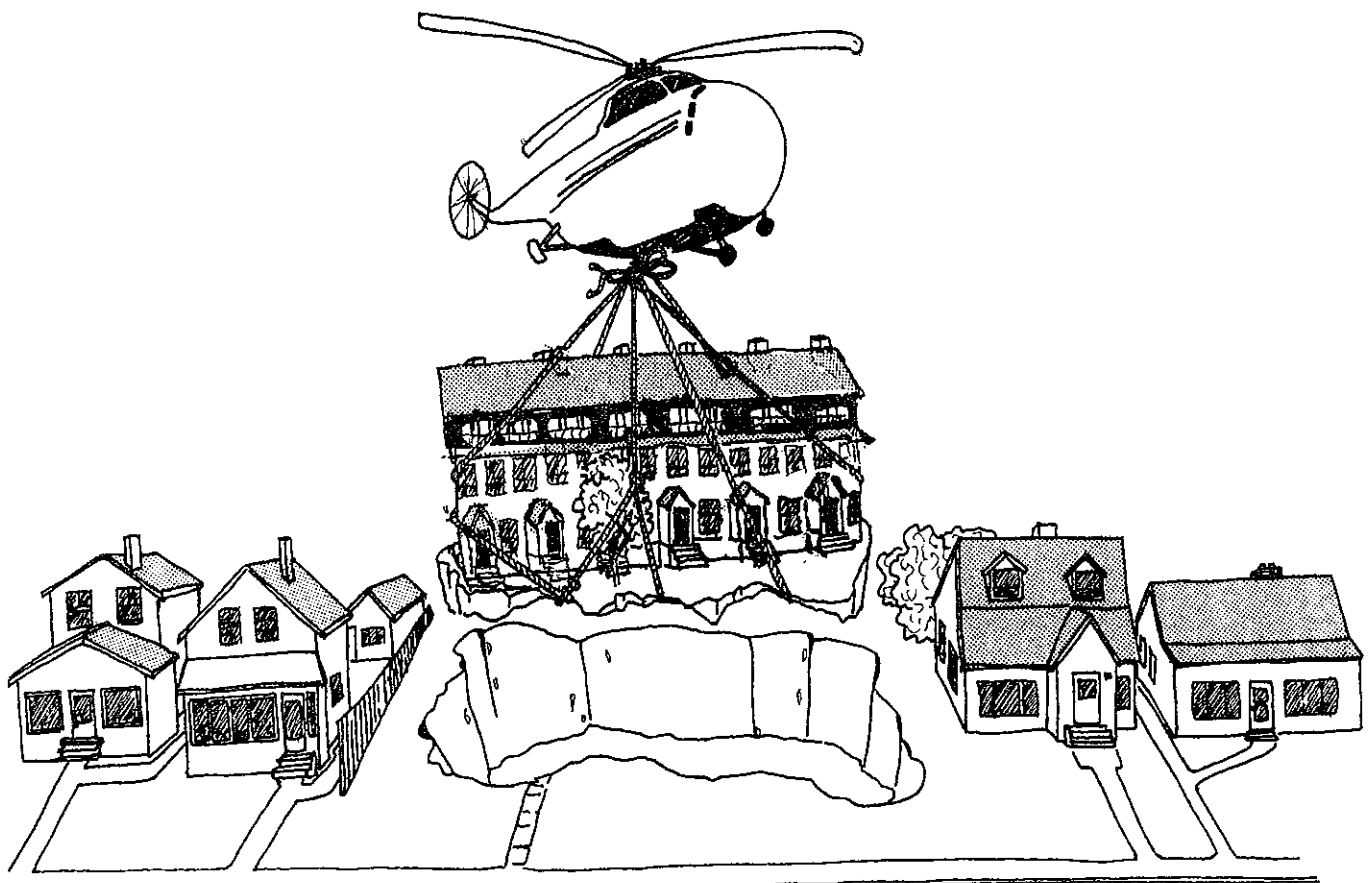
### BEFORE →

- ON-STREET PARKING
- NON-USEABLE OPEN SPACE (VACANT LOTS)
- TRAFFIC CONGESTION (VISITORS, LOCAL RESIDENTS, AND VEHICLES "CUTTING-THROUGH" THE NEIGHBORHOOD.)
- POOR PEDESTRIAN LINKS AND CORRIDORS - AREAS OF PEDESTRIAN/VEHICLE CONFRONTATION, SHORT-CUT ROUTES THROUGH VACANT SPACES.

### AFTER →

- VARIABLE LIMITS/BANS ON ON-STREET PARKING
- PATHWAYS FORM A SYSTEM OF LINKAGES... CONNECTING OPEN SPACES, NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES
- REMOVAL OF DETERIORATED HOUSING STOCK TO PROVIDE HIGHER DENSITY ACCOMMODATION (IN-FILL HOUSING, LOW-RISE, HI-RISE)
- UNDERGROUND PARKING AND AT-GRADE PARKING LOTS REDUCE PRESSURE FOR SPACE
- CUL-DE-SACS, ROAD CLOSURES AND BOULEVARDS SOFTEN THE EFFECT OF TRAFFIC AND REDUCE THE IMPACT
- PLANT MASSING TO CREATE SPACES FOR PLAY/RELAXATION, YOUNG/OLD.
- EFFICIENT USE OF PREVIOUSLY UNUSED SPACE - EG. ROOFTOPS, ALLEYS AND LANES, CORNER LOTS.
- INTEGRATION OF MOVEMENT BY BICYCLE, CAR, PUBLIC TRANSIT, OR ON FOOT; AND OF SEVERAL DENSITIES OF HOUSING WITHIN THE AREA.





"IN-FILL HOUSING"

mally set aside for alleys, back yards, front yards and side yards. New buildings can replace dilapidated structures and vacant lots. With infill housing, density can be increased on varying scales while retaining private courtyard or garden space, keeping the height down and preserving the character of the neighbourhoods.

Infill housing allows for greater variation in design and flexibility than design concepts like walk-up and high-rise apartments. With infill, you can demolish or retain as many existing buildings as you desire. It is not necessary to raze entire blocks of otherwise sound, usable housing. Many residents can remain living in the community while construction occurs. Depending on the financing and design, this type of redevelopment facilitates the return of the same people to the area or other people of similar income levels.

This facilitates community stability and cohesiveness. Too often new development provides housing only for income levels higher than those of previous residents. People are removed with no option to return.

Major hurdles to overcome are the financing of the project and rezoning or land use by-law amendments. Financing can be arranged by any number of means including pooling of local resources, bank or credit union loans, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation grants or private development. In order to obtain a development permit, you will be faced with amending existing land use by-laws as the infill housing concept conflicts with most legal restrictions concerning parking, set-backs, lot lines, access routes and so forth.

Another problem will be locating a suitable site. As Oliver discovered, many potential sites for infill are swal-



lowed up by highrise development while the community is occupied with negotiations for financing and municipal support.

Noteworthy examples of existing, successful infill housing projects include the Diamond and Myers pilot projects in Toronto and the Kitsilano, Vancouver, housing cooperative. The latter was financed by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (C.M.H.C.). The planning process for the Kitsilano project is documented by Shouri, Schmid and Gutstein in "Infill Housing Project", City Magazine, May-June, 1978, Vol. 3, No. 4 and 5. The article is recommended reading for any community planning for housing.

## 2) Continuing Cooperative Housing

Continuing cooperative housing means group ownership of property on a non-profit basis. Title and mortgage are held by the society or non-profit corporation formed by the future residents. Payments are frequently prorated by income level of the cooperative member.

A continuing cooperative can be formed to construct new housing or to purchase and rehabilitate existing housing or both. The cooperative can be set up to provide any form of housing ranging from single family dwellings to apartments.

In establishing and constructing this form of housing, you will be involved in a process of gathering members and discovering their housing needs and wants. You must obtain financing in order to purchase or lease property. A building site must be located and approved for the project. Where your project is receiving outside financing you will be bound by the funder's specifications.

Your group will likely want to seek outside expertise including architects, planners, builders and group facilitators. It is up to the cooperative to choose to construct the housing themselves or to contract with a builder. This choice depends of course on your

financial situation and building skills.

Federal government grants and mortgage loans are available to continuing cooperatives on a limited basis through Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Funds are allocated for both the development and construction stages. Examples of continuing cooperatives which have been assisted by C.M.H.C. funds include the Oliver Housing Cooperative formed to renovate existing housing stock; Sundance, Salvador, Keegano, Synergen and Homestead Housing Cooperatives formed to construct new housing; and Sam Greer Place, a Kitsilano, Vancouver, infill housing cooperative project.

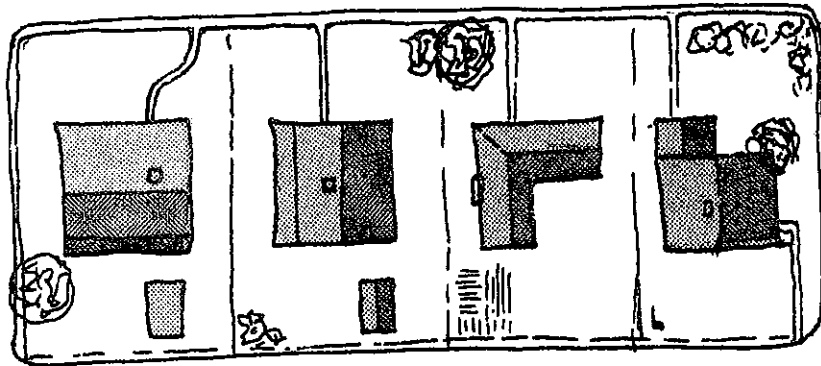
Information and assistance is available from Communitas.

## 3) Renovation to a New Use

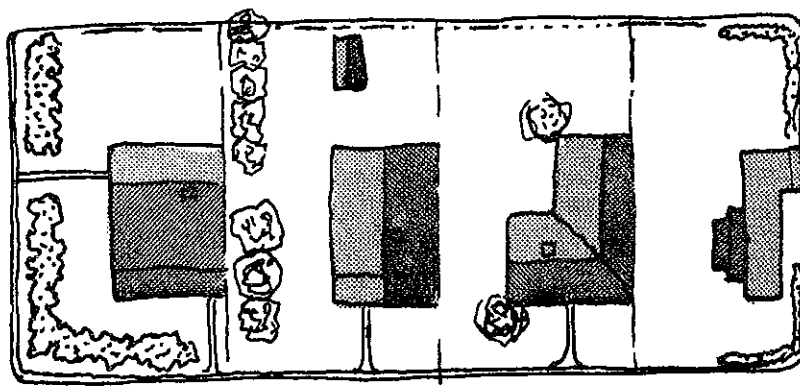
Housing can be provided by minor or drastic rehabilitation of existing structures. By careful scrutiny of buildings or structures which already exist in your community, you can avoid major capital costs. Virginia Park Community, concerned with senior residents unable to maintain and afford their large homes, has come up with a possible way to help them stay in the neighbourhood. A block of small houses, if renovated, could provide a feasible alternative to costly and large scale institutions located far from the residents' community. The concept is based on the community as an extended family.

Intermet, a non-profit housing society founded in Edmonton in 1976, is attempting to find viable uses for older unused schools. In their opinion, the near vacant school buildings in the older inner city communities could be put back into productive use rather than building new facilities to meet other needs. One of their ideas is that by partial renovation of a school and redesigning the school yard the one structure could function as both a residence and school. They particularly favor housing for seniors.

A second possibility other than



TRADITIONAL  
SETTING



ZERO LOT LINE  
SETTING

renovating an existing school would be to design the building at the initial stages in a new neighbourhood as a demonstration project. As the school age population declines in the area, more of the building could be converted to housing. In that way, the potential space remains in the area for catering to the educational demands of the time, without considerable capital investment. The idea has been tried in the United States with former schools now converted for use as offices, apartments, shops and housing for the elderly.

More extensive rehabilitation ideas for otherwise unuseable structures include the transformation of a parkade and factory into attractive and unique housing. While these housing projects were developed in the United States, the concepts apply equally to Canada. Information on these housing projects is available in the form of written material

and film from Urban Studies, Department of Extension, University of Alberta.

#### 4) Zero Lot Line

In the simplest of terms, zero lot line development means building to the property line with no set-back being required. In practice, this is a new alternative which is available for the development of detached residences. Where the development control by-law allows zero lot line development, the residence may abut one lot line. For example:

The result is that the lot will be divided into fewer separate yard spaces; that is, one side yard is eliminated. The purpose of this alternative is to reduce the size of the lot required for a single family home and thereby the cost of such housing.

Although the zero lot line concept

introduces what seems to be one very simple change, there are more complex implications. One is that the siting of each house on its lot must be coordinated with the siting of adjacent houses to prevent houses abutting each other. Another is that since houses will be closer together (in effect they will be only one side yard apart instead of two) design innovations should be made. For example, the design of adjacent residences should be coordinated so that window placement does not allow privacy invasion and the internal design of units should be more effectively related to outdoor privacy zones.

This is the essence of the zero lot line concept. Many variations of this type of development may be conceived, these being largely dependent upon the configuration of the sub-divided lots and other development control requirements that may be applied.

#### 5) Sweat Equity

The basic principle underlying sweat equity is also a simple one. Instead of making payment for a home totally in cash, a portion of the payment is made or the cost is reduced by the contribution of a future resident's own labor. The purpose of the idea is to reduce the necessary cash outlay in the short and long term so that home ownership will be possible for more people.

Although the underlying principle is simple enough, the complicating factor is how the idea can be turned into reality. Sweat equity is an American term which has been applied to citizens' efforts to rehabilitate deteriorated housing by contributing their own labor. Mortgages have been arranged usually with the help of governmental agencies. A condition of these mortgages has been that a certain portion could be paid in the form of labor-hours spent on the renovation work. This eliminates the need to hire expensive labor assistance for the renovation work, yet the equity or value of the building will increase as it is renovated.

A more immediate example of the use of self-contributed labor to reduce the cost of home ownership is available in Edmonton. A program has been instituted by Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation whereby special low cost mortgages are made available to future home owners who are willing to build their own homes. As part of the program, a course has been developed through N.A.I.T. which is designed to teach the basic of home building. Lots have been made available in Millwoods and on-site technical guidance is available during construction. To date, an impressive number of good homes have been built with the assistance of this program at a greatly reduced cost. Further information about this program can be obtained by contacting the cooperative housing program, Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation.

## VIII. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation planning is tricky. Decisions made about the locating or relocating of an industry or business influences not only travel habits within your community but also travel through it, and parking on your streets. Most heavily affected are the older residential areas which were not planned for today's massive per-capita car ownership. As a result, the street system in these areas is plagued by parking problems, high traffic volume, high rate of accidents and pedestrian/traffic hazards.

This chapter outlines suggestions to help you examine the transportation system from a community perspective and possible solutions for the problems you identify. The more attention you pay to understanding the source of transportation inconveniences and irritants, the more likely you will come up with a long-term solution. Included in this chapter, therefore, are ideas to encourage your community to take a fresh look at transportation planning.

### A. INFORMATION SOURCES

#### 1) Documents

The following documents can be purchased from the Transportation Branch

Planning Department, City of Edmonton, or borrowed from the Centennial Library, Government Information Division, the Edmonton Social Planning Council or the Transportation Branch:

#### - Basic Network of Routes:

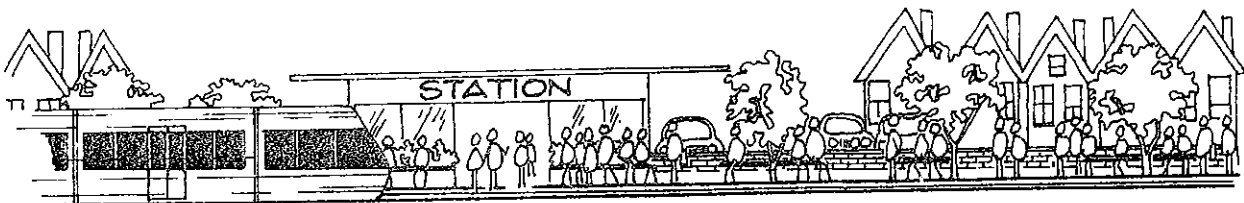
Published in 1973 by the City of Edmonton, this is essentially a listing of all new roadways, widenings and significant improvements or upgradings that have been recommended in a wide range of functional and planning studies. It was compiled in preparation for the City of Edmonton Transportation Bylaw and does not outline priorities that are placed on the roadway alternatives or what City Council has actually approved.

#### - City of Edmonton Transportation Plan, Part 1

This document, adopted as a bylaw of City Council, sets out both approved transportation policy and an approved network of routes. This is the City's statement on transportation.

#### - Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study

Although published in 1963, it contains roadway proposals that continually recur. It can be read for a sense



of what could ultimately happen in Edmonton without an emphasis on mass public transit.

- Functional Studies

There are numerous smaller studies that have been prepared by the City itself or by consultants. These include such reports as the Downtown Freeway Loop, the West End Corridor Study and the University Area Transportation Study. They are too numerous to describe individually, but they are available for review through the Government Information Division of the Centennial Library.

2) References for Additional Information or Assistance

i) Government Information Division, Centennial Library

This is a good place to find transportation planning documents, consultant reports, and other civic roadway planning material. Much of the material is available on loan; some of it is for reference only. You will find the staff helpful and knowledgeable about current transportation issues and the City administration.

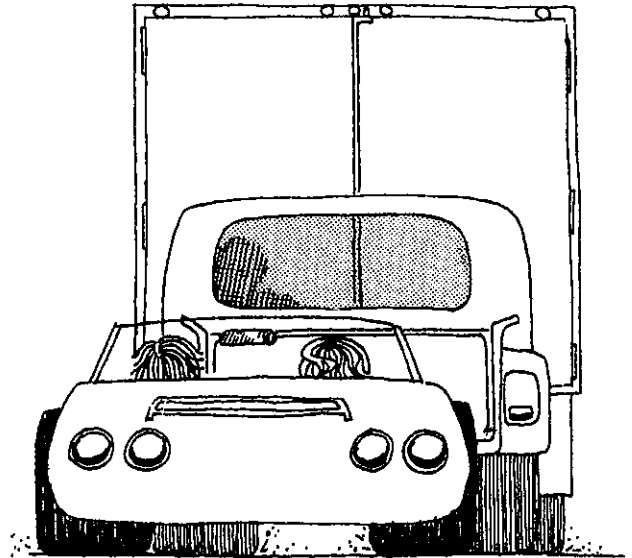
ii) Transportation Department, Government of Alberta

The Provincial Government develops broad policies about urban transportation and provides conditional grants or cost-sharing arrangements to the City to permit roadway construction, development of Light Rail Transit, subsidization of mass public transit. Major transportation corridors which could affect Edmonton, such as the Yellowhead Highway and the Edmonton Ring Road, also are decided by the Province.

iii) Civic Administration

- Utilities & Engineering Committee

This body is a standing committee of City Council. It is composed of Aldermen and the Commissioner of Utilities and Engineering.



It reviews matters referred to it by City Council and advises Council on questions of transportation and utilities.

- Transportation Planning Branch (City Planning Department)

This portion of the administration is broken into three sections: 1) Land Use and Development, 2) Functional Planning and 3) Studies and Research. The divisions between these responsibilities are not always clear and there is a close working relationship with the Engineering Department.

In a general sense, "Land Use and Development" is responsible for roadway planning in newer areas and look at bus routes, bikeways and overall road network in new residential and industrial areas.

"Functional Planning" reviews the functioning of the overall network and recommends such improvements as widenings, intersection changes, one-way streets or development of new corridors. "Studies and Research" collect and analyze transportation information for the City. This includes traffic volume counts

origin-destination studies, measurements of noise levels, traffic demand forecasts and information on movements through intersections. They supply this and other requested information to other departments, transportation planners and engineers.

- Engineering Department

Of interest in the Engineering Department are the following sections:

- Design Section: outlines in detail (grade, width of new right-of-way) proposed improvements.
- Construction Section: undertakes the actual building of roadways and improvements.
- Roadway Operations Section: responsible for maintenance of constructed roads.
- Traffic Section: responsible for signage, traffic lights, pedestrian lights and crosswalks, and the analysis for local operations. Should you want changes in traffic flow in your neighborhood, this section will have to be involved.

- Transit Department

This Department is responsible for the operation of both the bus and Light Rail Transit systems. New bus routes, changes in existing routes, driver training and bus maintenance are all the responsibility of the Transit Department.

iv) Urban Studies, Department of Extension, University of Alberta

A wealth of information can be obtained from Professor Gerry Wright of this Department. He has spent a great deal of time researching transportation questions and working with community groups on various transportation issues since the late 1960's. He can give you a good understanding of why certain transportation problems exist, refer you to a wide range of civic documents and transportation planning literature and

generally provide some perspective on the strategies you might try for solving your neighbourhood's transportation problems.

B. SOLVING NEIGHBOURHOOD TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

The planning of transportation for your community affects not only bordering communities but the entire city. Bearing this in mind, it is still possible to improve your situation by studying local needs and concerns and implementing local solutions. The Canora Community as part of its Neighborhood Improvement Program (N.I.P.) designed and constructed a network of road barriers to reduce the amount of traffic using their residential streets as shortcuts. McCauley Community persuaded City Council to ban on-street parking or through traffic for stadium events. A public transportation program was instituted in its place.

There are transportation problems both common and unique for each community. The following series of steps can enable you to examine what is happening in your own area and to identify reasonable solutions at the community level:

1. Identifying Neighbourhood Transportation Concerns
2. Verifying Your Concerns
3. Selecting the Right Solution
4. Getting What You Want: Implementation

This last step outlines the contacts you should develop with City Hall to ensure that your work results in some real benefit for your neighbourhood. It is important to recognize from the start that eventually you will have to involve City Hall in your transportation problems and situations. The sooner you let City Council and the responsible civic departments know that you want something changed, the better your chances of success.

## 1) Identifying Neighbourhood Transportation Concerns

The first step towards solving the problems in your area is to have community people identify their concerns and clearly state what they are. This step is important because how the problem is phrased will determine, in some cases, how it is perceived and dealt with. For example, if the concern is the heavy traffic volume on an arterial roadway, there will likely be no solution. But, if particular consequences of that high traffic volume such as speeding vehicles, noisy trucks or pedestrian problems in crossing the road are listed as the concerns, then these may have solutions.

This information can be collected by any of the methods outlined earlier in the manual. Particularly useful would be a separate community self-survey or the inclusion of questions about transportation in an overall survey. Observation of travel patterns and noting of areas of concern may help. In collecting concerns, try to be as specific in your

description as possible. The following suggestions may help:

**Time:** When do the problems occur--all the time, morning and evening, rush hour, during the day, on weekends, only in the evening? The time of occurrence may suggest some of the causes, who the offenders likely are, and what possible solutions might be used.

**Location:** What streets or intersections are involved? Is it part of a larger problem or pattern?

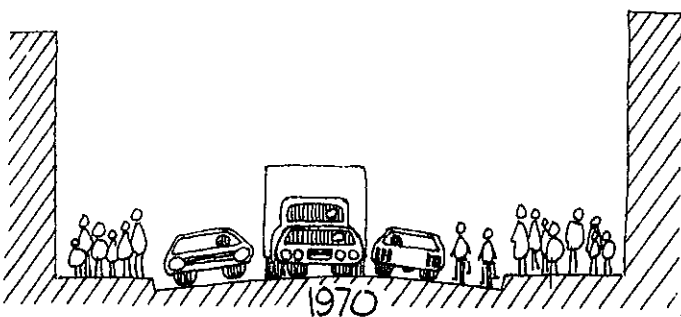
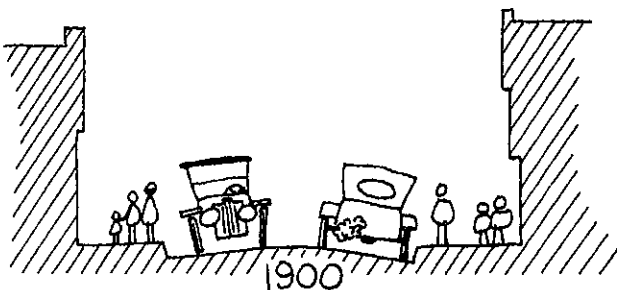
**Causes:** For example, do you think the problem is the result of any specific land use in the area, a particular pattern of short-cutting traffic or government priorities (e.g., low budget for public transit)?

**Magnitude:** How severe is your problem and how many people are concerned or affected?

## 2) Verifying Your Concerns

Once you feel you have identified the concerns of people in your area, it is important to verify them by collection of supporting data. It will also be important to analyze all of the collected information in order to discover the sources or causes of your overall transportation problems. To find proper solutions, it is not sufficient to know merely that many people are using your community as a short-cut. You must endeavour to find out why and thereby redirect the traffic. The following steps can assist you in this process.

- i) Obtain a street map of the neighbourhood giving the size of the streets, their classification (local, collector, arterial, freeway) and condition. These can be obtained from the Maps and Publication Counter, 7th Floor, City Hall, in the Planning Department.
- ii) Request through Transportation Planning Branch of the Planning Department what information the City has on traffic volumes, peak hour flows, origin-destination infor-



mation, street capacity, etc., for streets in your area as well as any major roadways that may form a boundary of your area. This can be done by submitting your letter of request either through City Council or directly to the Department.

- iii) Request information on accident statistics including their location. This will allow you to identify dangerous intersections or stretches of road. This can also be requested by letter to Council or to the Transportation Planning Branch.
- iv) Request information on existing and proposed public transit routes from the Engineering Department and Transportation Planning Branch of the City.
- v) Survey and mark all current traffic and parking controls (signs, lights, one-way roads, and directional turns) on a map.

Some additional field survey work may be needed to assess your problems. Following are some examples. Do not be restricted to them, but use any measurements which you feel highlight your concerns.

If pedestrian crossings on a busy street are a problem, you could do some timed sampling of the demand. For example, you might count pedestrians that make the crossing in a specified time period (one hour at 11:00 a.m., Saturday). Some particular times that might be good to include:

- morning and evening rush hours;
- for one-half hour before and after operating hours of schools in the area;
- mid-day on Saturday.

The time you select should be when you feel the problem is most severe.

If heavy parking on your street is a problem, observe the patterns to determine if it is:

- local residents and their visitors

parking;

- short-term parking of customers of commercial uses in the area;
- all-day parking by employees of businesses in the area;
- evening commercial parking (i.e., theatre, restaurant, lounge).

Watch for variation in the availability of parking on your street throughout the day. If the parking is heavier in the evening and if there are no evening commercial users, it is likely that it is just residents and their visitors. If the parking is heavy during weekdays, but clears up around supper, it could be employee parking, commercial users parking, or both. Commercial customers parking is usually characterized by a turn-over in the parking. They do not stay all day but only for an hour or so.

If particular turns in or out of the neighbourhood are difficult to make, time how long it takes cars to make the turn whenever the problem is most severe (i.e., usually morning and evening peaks). Also, count how many cars want to make that particular turn in a given period.

If you have a problem with traffic delay generally, it is a good idea to time the delays to verify them. Start timing when a car has to stop and end the timing when the vehicle has cleared the intersection or problem area.

Traffic volumes can be hand-counted but it is time-consuming. A count for an hour or so on several days to document complaints of heavy non-local or short-cutting traffic may be feasible. However, extensive counts, especially on major arterials, are not feasible without machine counters.

Some problems, like speeding, daily traffic volumes, and noise levels, require special equipment for measurement. Unless your group has access to such equipment through a resident, you will likely have to leave it to the experts at City Hall to do the measurements necessary to document your problems.



## Latent Need

Something to keep in mind when collecting your data or preparing your arguments to gain the needed improvements is a factor called "latent need". This term describes the portion of a demand that is not evident in actual people or cars at a particular location because the transportation system cannot accommodate them. Some examples are:

- more pedestrians may want to cross at a particular corner than actually do. However, because there is no crosswalk or walklight, they must choose another route to minimize their delay or hazard.
- more cars may want to move through an intersection than actually try. Because of delay or difficulty in making a particular turn, alternative routes are used.

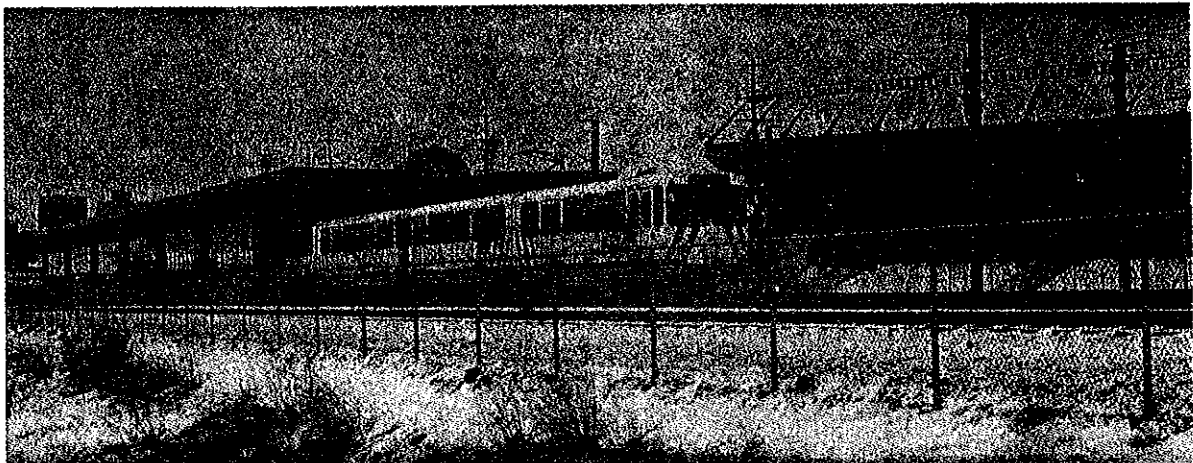
Latent need cannot be measured or even estimated with much objectivity or accuracy. However, transportation planners frequently use it as a justification for upgrading some aspect of the transportation system, and you may find it useful too. One way to estimate latent need would be

to ask people in a questionnaire or survey what changes would simplify their movements in the area. Sometimes latent need can be implied by some other movements in the system. For example, a large number of cars turning left one block before or after a major intersection likely indicates a latent need for a left turning at the intersection itself is not being accommodated.

Where the existing level of demand is assessed as not being sufficient to warrant an upgrading, you can sometimes use latent need to add to your case. Conversely, where this argument is being used to upgrade roads in your area you are opposed to (e.g., road widening) you can counter the reasoning is not based on fact.

## Common Neighbourhood Transportation Concerns: Solutions and Consequences

Included as Appendix B is a list which is by no means comprehensive or exhaustive but merely provides examples to help you begin to approach transportation planning. Whether or not they are concerns of your community will have to be determined through your own data collection and community survey. They may be worth referring to as a beginning point.



### 3) Selecting the Right Solution

Keep in mind that solutions to traffic problems or concerns in your area can have other adverse side effects for the residents. For example, discouraging non-local traffic with forced turns and one-ways also may make movement in the community more difficult for residents. Or, improvement in movement for the residents in and out of their community may also make it easier for other people to move through your area with an increase in traffic volumes. These kinds of trade-offs and costs are something the community has to think about.

Following are some further factors you should consider:

- What impact does the solution have on adjacent areas? If it increases problems elsewhere, it likely is not an acceptable solution.
- Is the solution expensive in terms of initial costs to install (capital cost), in terms of maintenance, or in terms of enforcement? If it is costly, it will be less acceptable.
- Remember that any solution used to deal with problems in your area will be looked at by other neighbourhoods as a possible solution for them. There is a need for the City to be consistent in the treatment of transportation problems. The City should offer similar attention and action to any other area experiencing the same or larger problems as your area. If a large number of areas are experiencing a problem, to offer the solution to one area implies that all should get it. If the solution is not acceptable on a city-wide basis because of cost, enforcement problems, the number of areas that could request it or because it is unsuitable for application over larger areas, it is a less acceptable solution.
- Does the solution interfere with the smooth operation of the transportation system overall? Does the solution cause problems or confusion

- for emergency and service vehicles?  
Does the solution increase the potential of traffic conflicts or problems of safety? If a solution causes these problems, it will be less acceptable.

If a solution you want for your area is not totally acceptable when assessed by these factors, you will be faced with two choices:

- You will have to lobby harder, or
- You and your neighbours will have to ask yourselves if you wish to pursue a particular solution despite your knowledge of its shortcomings.

### 4) Getting What You Want: Implementation

The most important part of planning for your area is ensuring that something happens as a result of your concern and work. You will have to work with City Hall to make changes in your area. Therefore, a good understanding of administrative workings will be important. This section basically outlines two aspects: the contacts you should develop with civic officials and employees, and the staging of implementation.

#### i) Contacts with City Hall

There is a basic perspective that is essential to understanding why things happen the way they do at City Hall. The administration is the work force of City Council. In simplest terms, the work that a department will complete in a year is outlined and approved by City Council during the budget process. Staff is not waiting and available to address your particular concerns but likely has a full year's work and pre-determined priorities waiting. However, there are usually general or miscellaneous tasks outlined in the budget which are intended to provide the resources to address small or unexpected problems. This resource in any department is very small.

The problem a department faces

when you approach them with an information request, a request for a special study for your area or for the installation of a solution to your transportation problems is that it will require the staff time and money that is needed to complete work assigned and expected by City Council. If your request is small enough, it can sometimes be met without disrupting other projects that the department is supposed to do. If not, you will face the reluctance of the department to proceed without City Council's instruction to do so. In the present set up, they simply do not have the authority to expend the resources you are asking for.

It is important to let both Council and the appropriate department know in writing that you want your problems dealt with and that you are proceeding to do something about them yourself. By registering your concerns early:

- You will be able to obtain an early indication of the amount of assistance the administration can make available to you without direct Council instruction. This will likely be very limited. Very minor solutions such as signs may be possible but an area wide plan of roadway change and modification will require Council direction.
- Once you know what portion of your request cannot be met, you can proceed to advise Council of your request and begin lobbying

for the allocation of resources to your area. Once Council is advised of your activity and concern, when you seek their support they will be aware of the long standing nature of your concern. They will keep your needs in mind during their review of budget and when hearing the requests and concerns of other areas.

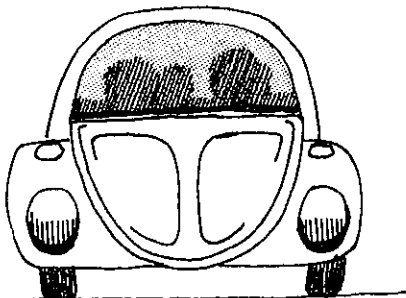
- Both Council and the appropriate departments can begin to schedule staff and resources to meet your planning and implementation needs.

Keep in mind that the City's resources for the improvement of transportation problems are limited and are generally allocated throughout the City to deal with the most severe problems first. While your problems may loom large in the eyes of you and your neighbors, they may not have a high priority when compared to the problems of other areas. If your area is of relatively low priority, you have the following choices:

- Identify your most severe problems and try to have them addressed immediately, and defer the rest until they can be scheduled according to city-wide priorities.
- Wait to have your community's problems considered as a whole.
- Lobby with City and Provincial governments for more resources to be allocated generally to the correction of transportation problems.

#### ii) The Staging of Implementation

If the community's analysis of its transportation problems is credible, it may be possible to simply hold a public meeting to review the recommended solutions and obtain support from City Council to proceed to implementation. Where there are some questions about the accuracy of the community's analysis or the level of support in the area for the solutions proposed by the community, then the civic administration



may want to undertake their own assessment of the problem.

If the administration identified or was directed to examine a transportation problem, they would go through a process similar to the one outlined for residents in this chapter. They would collect data about transportation in the area to establish if there was a problem, to further define that problem and/or measure the magnitude of the problem. They might contact area residents to see if all the problems had been identified and defined.

The transportation planners and engineers would then identify the kinds of solutions that they felt would likely work to resolve the problems, together with the consequences and limitations of these solutions. These could be presented to area residents for their information and reaction.

A preferred alternative would be selected. This would be documented in a report which would be forwarded to City Council for support and approval.

It should be noted that even though City Council may have already supported your request for a certain approach to your area's problems, and has directed the administration to proceed on that basis, it is usually necessary for the administration to take the solutions before Council for approval for implementation. For example, where a road closure is involved, a bylaw requiring three readings by City Council is legally required. Should a local improvement charge be associated with a desired improvement in your area, that will also require specific Council approval.

The process of implementation is basically the same from this point in the process on whether the attention to your problems came about as the result of the initiative of the administration or because pressure from the community resulted in City Council directing the administration to deal with your problems. Following

approval of a solution or a set of solutions, the appropriate civic departments can be instructed to proceed to put them in place, PROVIDED THERE IS MONEY IN THE BUDGET FOR THIS OR CITY COUNCIL APPROVED THE MONEY FOR IMPLEMENTATION WHEN THEY APPROVED THE REPORT. If not, then you will have to wait for your implementation costs to be included in the next annual civic budget. Additionally, many solutions to traffic problems involve construction and are usually installed during the summer construction period. Depending on the timing of the approval of your solutions, there may be some delay with them being put into practice.

Some solutions (depending on their cost, ease of installation and removal, and the potential impact of the change) may be installed only temporarily at first. This allows for a period of monitoring to see if they will work as intended before permanent installation occurs. Others, such as signs or crosswalks, will simply be installed and removed if they prove to cause problems.

Temporary installation will involve taking before and after measurements of the effects of the solutions to determine if the change is accomplishing what it was intended to and if there are any unanticipated problems developing. This may also involve some attempt to measure resident perception, satisfaction and reaction to the changes.

The temporary installation will be for a set period of time (usually six months to a year). If during that time problems develop, the temporary installation period could be cut short or some amendments made to the solution to correct the difficulty. Following the temporary installation period, a report on the consequences and effectiveness of the modifications will be prepared and submitted to Council to seek approval of permanent status for the changes that were effective and approval for permanent installation if necessary for such solutions as road closures and forced turns.

Permanent installations, like tem-

porary installations, are dependent on there being money in the budget to pay for it. If the cost was not included in the last budget or specifically approved by Council in considering the request for approval of permanent status, then installation will be delayed until a new budget is approved and in some cases until the summer construction season following the new budget.

### Closing Comments on Neighbourhood Transportation Planning

The process of dealing with transportation problems in your neighbourhood is a long one. From identification of the problem, to developing a set of solutions, to seeking support for them, to finally obtaining temporary and permanent installation of them could take several years. You will have to be prepared to persist over this period of time and not get discouraged to eventually gain some improvement for your area.

Localized problems dealing with the operation of residential side-streets can be solved on a neighborhood basis. However, problems relating to arterial roadways or light rapid transit routes usually cannot be. They usually are the result of traffic patterns and forces that extend over a much wider area and can only be significantly affected by policies and changes implemented at the city-wide level.

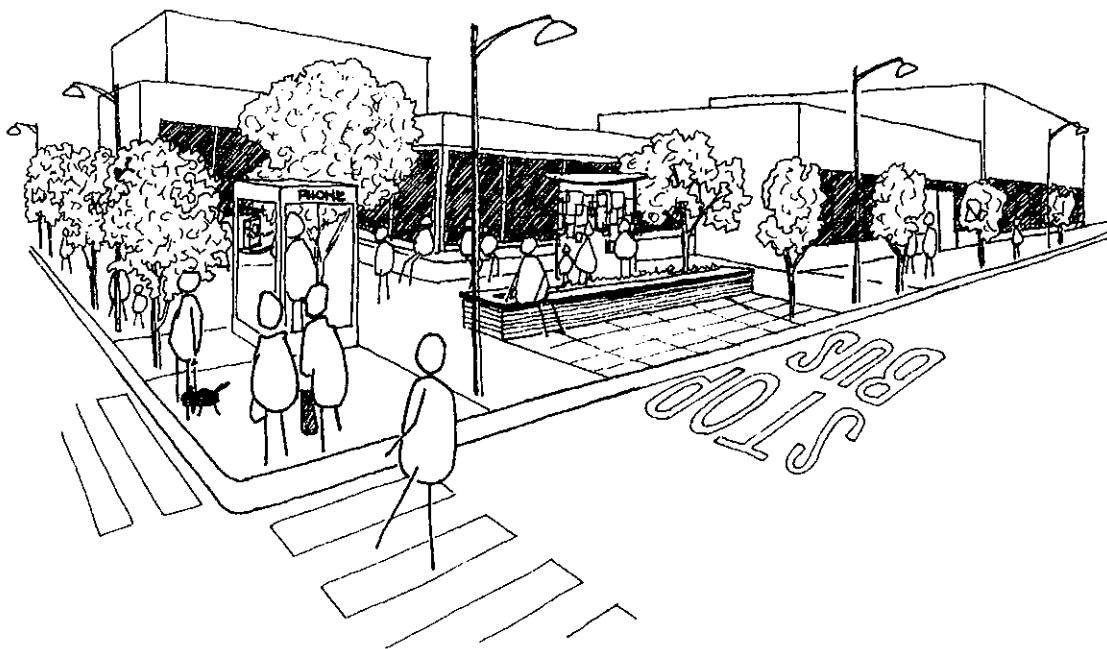
The second part of this chapter considers transportation questions and problems at the city-wide level.

### C. CITY-WIDE TRANSPORTATION QUESTIONS

#### 1) Understanding the System

Your streets are part of a larger system. It is generally city-wide characteristics and problems of the system that affect your area.

The transportation system has been developed in response to the need for people to move from one location in the



city to another. The most important of these movements is the journey to and from work. This represents the most concentrated demand made on the system and results in the morning and evening rush hours.

The need for people to move about the city, and particularly to travel to and from work is a very basic need that cannot easily be denied or thwarted. When major roadways become too congested to meet this demand, the flow of traffic simply begins to use side streets to accommodate the desired transportation movement. This process, called filtering, is most likely to occur where streets are laid out in a grid pattern because there will be a number of roadways paralleling the congested main arterial. This is a common and widespread problem that most inner-city communities experience.

The demand for transportation movement is also the result of land use patterns. By placing residential, shopping and employment uses in separate

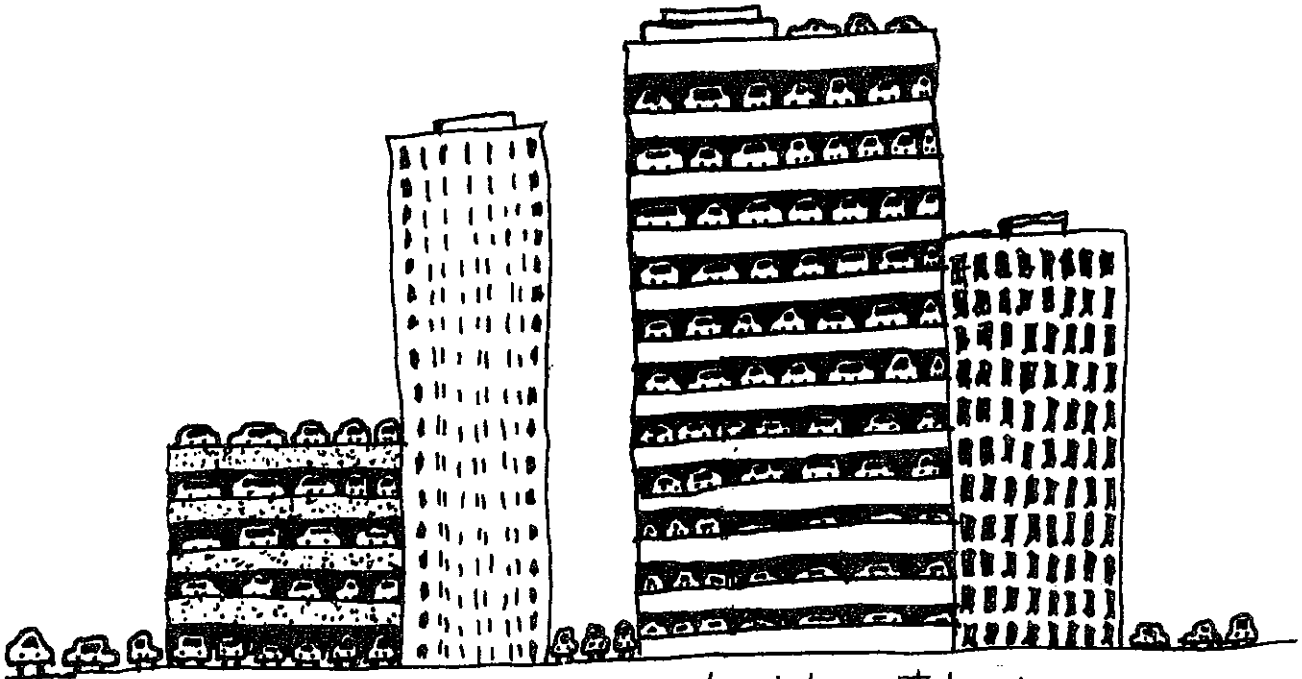
areas, we make it necessary for people to travel between them. Changes in land use patterns which would permit people to work and shop in or near their homes would change the demands placed on the transportation system.

Transportation problems develop when:

- the need of part of the city's population to move from one part of the City to another comes into conflict with the desire of other people to be able to enjoy their neighborhood without the intrusion of traffic; or
- so many people wish to make the same trip at the same time that the transportation system cannot accommodate all of them.

## 2) Perspectives on Transportation Problems

The traditional response to the most obvious city-wide transportation problem, congestion, is to construct additional



*...downtowns are becoming automobile wastelands*

roadways. This approach is usually very costly and when used in the inner city, results in the disruption of inner-city communities.

Concentration on this approach also means that other approaches are ignored. We could look at any and all of the following to deal with transportation problems:

- increasing the number of people in each car
- allowing a decrease in the level of convenience and speed of the transportation system
- spreading rush-hour demand over a longer period of time
- improving public transit.

The basic flaw in how we currently look at transportation problems is that the problem is defined in terms of the number of vehicles that must be accommodated by the transportation system. We need to shift the focus from moving vehicles to the more basic purpose of transportation which is ensuring the movement of people and goods.

The role of transit is critical. Buses and light rapid transit are many times more efficient than automobiles for moving large numbers of people. People will use transit systems if they are convenient, the greater than expected popularity of Edmonton's L.R.T. shows that.

The better transit provided, the more people who use it. The more people use transit, the more efficient it becomes and the more it can be expanded to provide even better service and so on. Conversely, as public transit becomes inconvenient, unpleasant or too costly, those people who can will return to driving their automobile which makes the transit system even more inefficient, the service is reduced and even fewer people again use the transit. So we have the vicious circle. People refuse to use the transit because the service is bad and the city refuses to put more money into it because it isn't used. The end result you are well acquainted with

is rising transit fares.

In short, any measure to improve the popularity of transit helps communities by reducing automobile traffic passing through or parking in the area. Better transit within the community can also cut down on unnecessary car trips to local shops and activity centres. With a decent and accessible bus or L.R.T. route you no longer need to drive your car out of the garage so often or find those non-existent parking spots.

Of course, a good transit system must be complemented by pleasant, safe and convenient sidewalks, shelters and other parts of the pedestrian system. Improving conditions for cyclists would also be a bonus. Most importantly, we have to start looking at transportation systems as more than making life easy for automobiles.

#### D. SELF-HELP TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

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The following ideas, if adopted by your community, could improve your transportation situation and serve as an example to other areas and those who are charged with designing the city and provincial transportation system.

##### 1) Community Run Bus Service

If your community is cut off from the main bus or rapid transit routes of the city but you are seeking a transportation alternative to cars, you could consider establishing your own community operated bus service. Two communities known to have chosen this alternative and succeeded are Beacon Hill near Ottawa and Mantau near Washington, D.C. (Source: Techniques of Community Energy Conservation, Roger Peters, Consumer Interest Study Group, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Ottawa, June 1977).

The Mantau Citizens Association was successful over a six year period in establishing a through bus system between their area and the larger urban area. Initial financing came from small

loans from local businesses, users and the community group itself. The service charged per month and per ride. The pick-up route was determined from responses to a community questionnaire and regularly updated to accommodate new riders. The service was promoted by local newspaper advertising, school children holding placards indicating proposed stops, flyers and most effectively of all, by putting it into action.

Bonus points for this innovative idea include:

- energy conservation;
- time saving (no set route, driver uses discretion for quickest route depending on traffic situation);
- community choice of bus stops;
- reasonable cost
- social contact between residents; and
- local self-reliance.

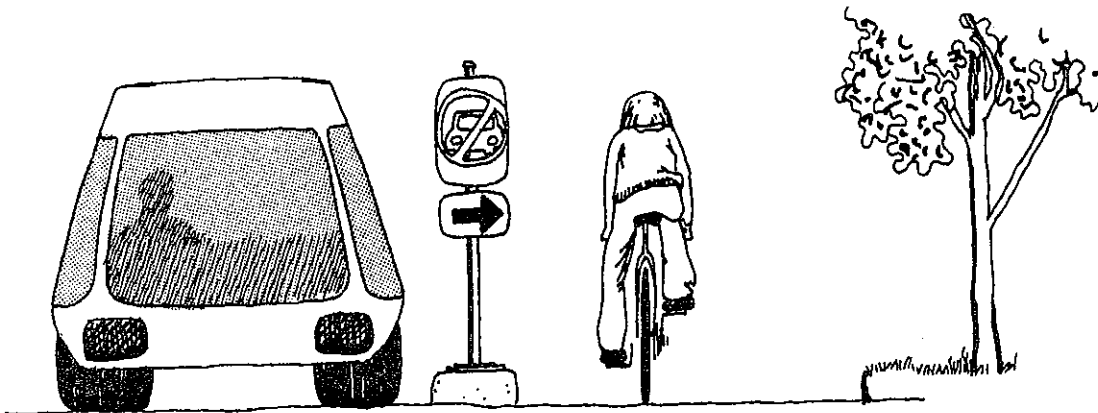
The Beacon Hill Community Association experience was also successful. This group contracted with a locally owned bus company to supply bus, driver and insurance. Three years later the ridership equalled 2000 trips per day and the regional municipality assumed responsibility for its operation. This service helped to redirect the region's priorities from car travel to bus transit

and a bus system was developed for all outlying communities. Most exciting of all, the Beacon Hill bus service was profit-making from the first month of operation. A National Film Board film, "A Bus For Us", describes the Beacon Hill experiment. While it is unlikely this approach will be found feasible in Edmonton, in smaller centres without a transit system, setting up a community bus service might be worth investigating.

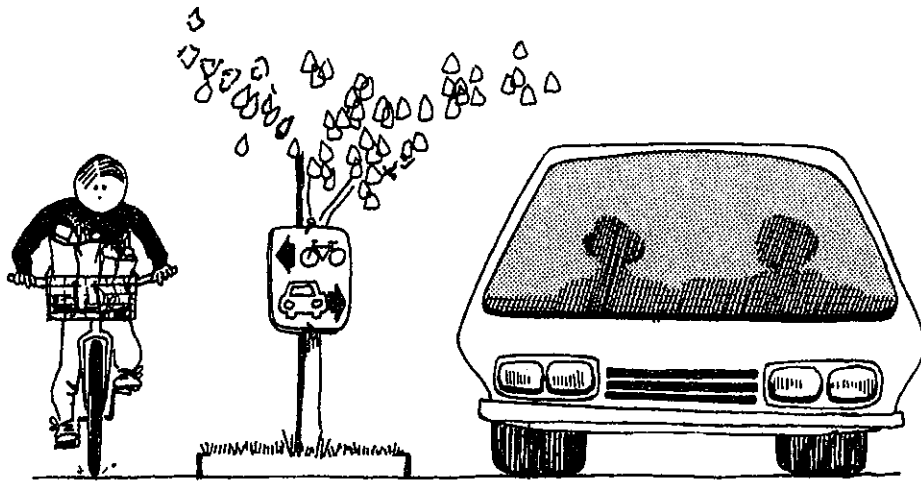
## 2) Bicycle Paths

Bike paths can provide an alternative form of transportation within your community and between neighboring communities. The advantages of biking are: it is cheap; non-polluting; provides exercise; and reduces parking and traffic congestion. The only substantial drawback is the expense of designating and constructing routes. You must, of course, obtain city government permission, cooperation and likely financial assistance.

Where the community undertakes or is given responsibility for planning and designing the bike route, it should concern itself with the following considerations:







**Safety:** what degree of protection is necessary and can be provided from motor vehicle traffic

**Environmental Attractiveness:** the bikeway should be located and designed so as to provide enjoyable riding and a pleasant route

**Continuity:** the bikeway will provide a more useable service if there are few interruptions (e.g., traffic lights, busy intersections) and the route connects with existing and proposed bikeways in other areas;

**Location:** what facilities and services should the bikeway connect with in order to attract users.

Bikeways can vary from separate landscaped, walking and bicycling trails to special lanes on existing roadways separated from vehicle traffic by curbs or pavement markings to bike routes on existing roadways designated by signs. The choice of design will depend on the resources and space available and potential usage. Newly developed areas of course are better able to design an attractive efficient route connecting most of the community since the bikepath is incorporated into the total community plan. The pathways constructed in place of alleys in Westridge serve as an example for all future areas. Still, the

potential exists in older communities along back lanes, right-of-ways, boulevards and city-owned vacant lots. Communities could lessen the costs by assisting in the planning, construction and maintenance of the routes.

### 3) Neighbourhood Delivery Service

Before the days of two car families and shopping centres, goods were cheaply and efficiently transported by the deliveryman. Now people waste hours of their day travelling across the city or looking for a parking spot simply to purchase a small quantity of goods. One step towards consumer convenience is to support local merchants by increasing your purchases and by informing them of goods you are most likely to purchase. The greatest advantage of course will be the home delivery of these goods.

You may wish to provide a delivery service for the use of the total community or only for those in greatest need including the elderly, handicapped, bed-ridden or stranded. Negotiations could be entered into with local shops to provide the service on a cost-shared basis. The community could consider operating a non-profit or profit making enterprise. You may even decide to employ students to deliver goods by

bicycle. Shopping orders could be made directly to the merchant with regular scheduled pick-up and delivery or a central telephone service which, like a taxi company, dispatches a person to pick up and deliver the goods. Whatever the system, it would necessitate a return to a system based on consumer credit and trust.

#### 4) Reducing the Need to Travel

Solutions to our transportation hassles are usually directed toward more efficient, safer, quicker and cheaper ways of getting from one place to another. Little consideration is given to finding ways to reduce travel. Basically this would involve the decentralization of central business districts, government offices and downtown commercial centres, the major generators of traffic. Subsidies could be offered to businesses to locate within or in closer proximity to residential areas. This concept is supported by a 1977 Consumer and Corporate Affairs report:

"If the place of work is within walking or cycling distance, both individual workers and the community benefit financially and socially as well as conserving energy. Reduced traffic means safer roads, reduced road maintenance, more leisure time, less stress and better health."  
(Techniques of Community Energy Conservation, Roger Peters, Consumer Interest Study Group, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Ottawa, June 1977, at p. 23.)

Other advantageous side effects would be the trend toward mixed working/living areas and the avoidance of a deserted central core after shopping and business hours.

#### 5) Change of Attitude and Habit

The factor which will have the greatest influence on alleviating transportation problems is a change of atti-

tude in people who travel and plan transportation routes and means. As a community, you can influence trends by educating your fellow residents about alternative solutions. By demonstrating the effectiveness of transit planning, bikeways, car pools, delivery systems and so forth you will encourage other communities to follow suit.

Community groups can play a major role in lobbying with government transportation officials to integrate alternative concepts into their transportation plans. Government attitudes are already showing signs of change. The 1963 METS (Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study) study which proposed mainly massive freeway and bridge systems has been radically altered with the introduction of L.R.T. (Light Rapid Transit) and park-and-ride.

## IX. COMMUNITY RECREATION

"Public input into a new Parks and Recreation department master plan indicates citizens want more neighborhood parks and community involvement in the choice and operation of programs...Citizens surveyed would like to see the parks created in newer areas as well as in established neighborhoods. The people polled would also like to have more input into Parks and Recreation sponsored programs and in some cases would have Community Leagues take over the programs with assistance from the department".

Edmonton Journal  
January, 1978

When we speak of community recreation, we are talking about playing. Play is essential to us all--it brings with it much of the fun in life--and it would be sad to think that any of us leave it behind with childhood. Play is certainly not childish, and it is complex. Fortunately, its very complexity and its different meaning for people of different ages and character can be a wonderful source of new ideas to show us how to meet community recreation needs.

Until recently, community recreational planning, especially in older neighbourhoods, operated with leftover spaces, leftover money and leftover ideas. While it is commendable to examine carefully and to use to the greatest extent possible all of our available resources, recreation planning should not be considered a frill. It is very much a part of the total planning process and should be considered in

partnership with all of the other aspects of your plan.

Community recreation planning should proceed in the following order:

- A identification of need
- B investigation of alternatives to meet those needs
- C implementation of solutions.

### A. IDENTIFICATION OF RECREATIONAL NEEDS: PROGRAMMING

The most fruitful way of determining the recreation or play needs of your community is to approach the whole subject with as few assumptions as possible. Take a fresh look at what people, all of the different people, in your community do to have fun and to spend their leisure time. Examine not only what these people do during the evenings and on weekends, but also what they do in their spare moments during the working or school day and when they are going from home to work, to school, or to the store and back again. This may reveal opportunities to make the trips more pleasant and to strengthen gathering spots and places of social contact within your community that you previously had not considered. You should aim to make the opportunity for play, for relaxation, for refreshment, for enjoyment, continuous throughout each and every day and throughout your community. Study your area closely in order to develop the most enjoyable recreation and leisure program for all the residents.

It is vitally important that you determine the recreational programming needs of your community before you start considering the necessary facilities and space required to satisfy those needs. These facilities and spaces, open or enclosed, are simply the means whereby people can engage in leisure activity. If selected before the community's needs are fully understood, they may seriously limit the potential for play in the community.

### Methods of Identification of Need

The following methods are some which have been found useful for identifying existing recreation or leisure patterns of people in your community.

#### 1) Community Survey

If you are involved in a comprehensive planning process, your group may have already decided to prepare a community questionnaire. If so, you can include questions about recreation; or it may be necessary to prepare a separate questionnaire. Either way, certain factors should be included.

Consider the circumstances, the capabilities and the outlooks of different age groups. The children, the teenagers, the young and middle-aged adults, and the elderly, will all have different interpretations of play and will have different recreational needs. The challenge you will face is how to meet the recreational needs of those different groups while avoiding solutions that will socially segregate them and so divide your community.

Questions should also be directed to existing kinds of leisure and recreation activity, location and level of satisfaction with both. Inclusion of a map of the area onto which people can plot their normal places of activity and travel can prove helpful. Don't forget to ask for suggestions for new activities and ways of providing them.

#### 2) Observing Activity

Another useful technique is to observe the actual comings and goings of people. Observe and record where children play, where the elderly take their walks, where teenagers gather and what routes people choose as short-cuts. Useful tools for recording activity include video-tape, movies, photographs, or simply a written record. Camera equipment can often be borrowed from the University Extension Department or Communitas for such purposes. These recordings can make presentations more effective and also enable discussion based on concrete material.

#### 3) Community Discussion

For more indepth discovery, you should consider bringing people in the area together to exchange information and ideas. The different ways of achieving this are discussed earlier in the book.

#### 4) Recreation Agencies

You may also decide to interview various agencies and departments responsible for the recreational planning of your area. At this step in the planning process, however, the information to seek is about use of facilities, not the facilities themselves or proposed facilities or solutions. Potential information sources include your Community League, recreation directors, community schools, schools, Parks and Recreation Department.

### B. ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO YOUR RECREATION NEEDS

Once you have established the recreational programming needs of your community, you can begin to consider seriously the spaces and facilities that you will need to meet these needs. In older inner-city neighbourhoods, the open space available to residents is limited. Residents must now look to land

that is already developed for another use, and to space which may not previously have been considered in a recreational/leisure context. Our frontier philosophy has often led to wasteful use of space in our cities. As cost pressures and density, and now energy factors, force us to re-think our city ideas, a whole range of use possibilities arise for previously ignored, unused or abused plots of ground.

Using the information you have collected about recreational activities and needs as a base, you can now begin to develop solutions. You should examine existing facilities and how they can be better utilized. You will also want to discover alternative facilities or methods of meeting your recreational needs. The following sources may prove helpful.

1) Sources of Information About Existing Facilities

You will be able to collect this data from many of the same sources as you identified need. The following are suggestions of what to look for.

- Existing Facilities

The existing recreational space system (parks, arenas, bicycle paths,

ski trails,...)

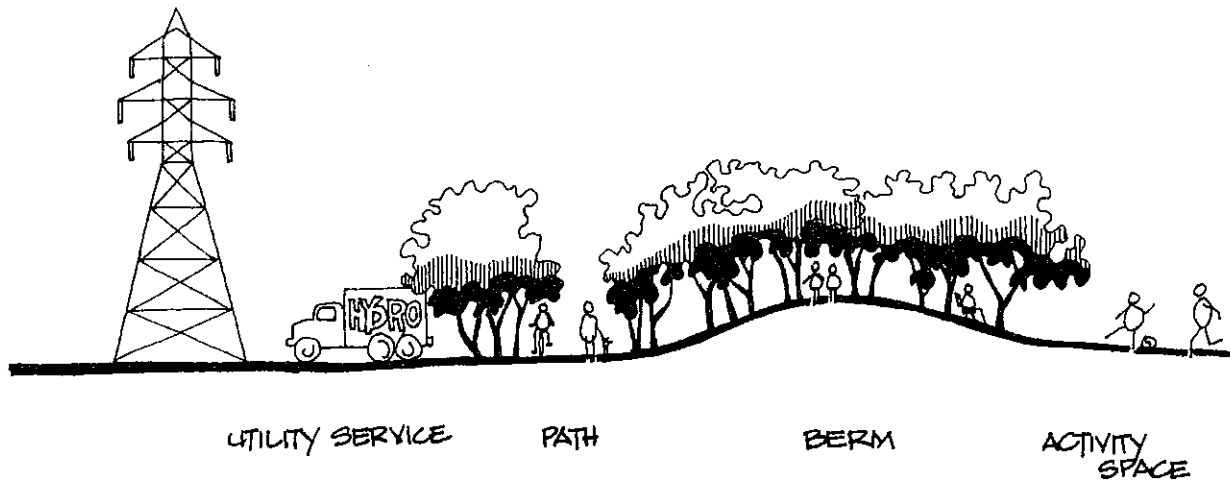
- the location of recreation space in the community and immediate surroundings
  - the amount of space in each park and recreation facility
  - the quality of the space (convenience, accessibility, type of equipment, level of maintenance, etc.)
  - the function of the park space or facility (who uses it?)
  - the level of usage (peak periods of the day, week, year)
  - linkages among recreation spaces (paths, trails).
- Existing Programs

The recreation programs provided in the area...

- parks programs
- school programs
- church and other programs
- the population served by the programs
- how the programs are funded

- Future Plans and Programs

Recreation plans of the city and other agencies...



- physical space and facility plans
- program plans

In collecting information about the existing recreation space system, some information, such as park acreage, will be available from the City Recreation Department. To supplement the information that you have already gathered, actual surveys of recreation areas to determine the level of maintenance and vandalism in the area and the type of equipment and actual counts of persons using the area can be most useful. Interviews with people using the spaces can provide important information about the good and bad aspects of the space. A common problem with many urban recreation spaces is over-use at certain times of the week or year and under-use at other times. The group may wish to explore possibilities for solving this problem if it exists in your community.

In addition, the group may wish to find out from the City Recreation Department what standards of adequacy of recreation space are used in the city. Such standards are only rough guides to determining the amount of recreation space required in the area. The quality of the spaces and the community's actual needs (as perceived by the residents) are much more important in parks planning.

Information about the recreation programs offered in the area is useful in determining whether all age groups and a wide range of interests are being served. The survey of the area's recreation needs may point out programs which should be added.

## 2) Sources of Information About Alternatives

The potential solutions for solving your recreation and leisure needs are limitless. Any of the following can provide inspiration and practical ways of making them happen.

## - Written Material

Sources of valuable material can be found in the public library, legislative library, libraries of the provincial departments of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Wildlife, city departments of Planning and Parks and Recreation, university libraries including the Department of Extension. Suggested subject areas include parks, open space, recreation, park planning and leisure planning.

We suggest that you pursue your subject thoroughly. New material is being published every year. Not all new ideas are necessarily good or better and urban use and design teachings and practices do change. A book published in the 1950's may lead you to inappropriate design conclusions for the 1980's. Bear in mind that "design" is not a "science" but a practice based upon past experience, preference and social values. You do what you want to a large degree. Don't feel guilty about it. Design should serve you. You do not serve design.

## - Other Community Groups

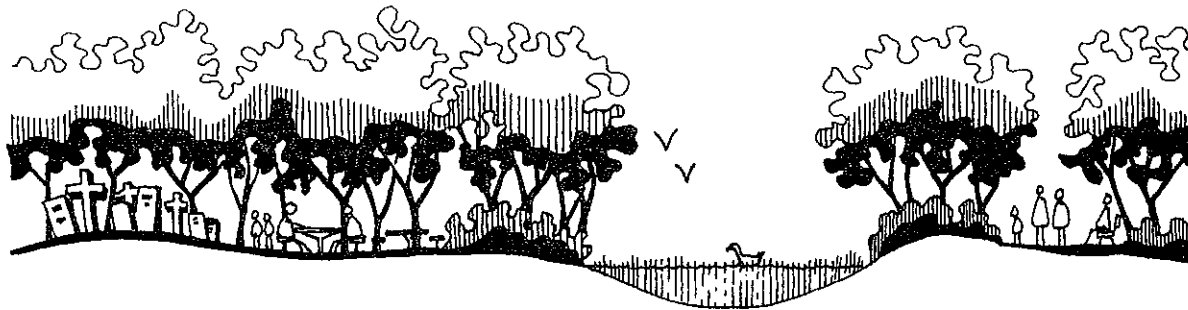
A number of community groups have been engaged in planning for some time and may be able to provide guidance. Groat Estate and Riverdale have been involved in their own community plans. A number of other communities including Canora, Norwood, etc., as participants in the Neighborhood Improvement Program (N.I.P.) could share their experiences.

## - The Community

Don't ignore the potential for ideas from people in your own neighbourhood. You can collect, record and exchange this information by any of the methods suggested earlier.

## 3) Analyzing Your Information

Moving from what has been done



CEMETERY PICNIC AREA

WILDLIFE HABITAT

PATH

and what may be done in the near future for your community, you must now decide what you as a community will do, assuming that there are gaps still to be filled. You can begin to analyze all of the information you have collected about community needs, resources and potential solutions by asking the following questions.

i) People and Needs Analysis

- Who wants open space or recreational facility?
- Can many uses and age groups use the same space at different times? e.g., tots, mothers, seniors, teens?
- What income/social levels or types of persons are in the district? Do they have different needs or different cultural backgrounds that could offer special design ideas? There are often valuable ideas from other lands that are useful to us here, now that our cities are becoming older and crowded.

ii) Space Analysis

- What space and facilities are "apparently" available?
- What would you like if you could get it?

- What might be made available on a loan, exchange or temporary basis?
- Where is the space or facility located exactly?
- What are the neighbouring land uses?
- Is this space accessible?

iii) Operations Analysis

- What land costs, construction costs and administration costs are likely to be involved?
- What supervision might be needed?
- What hours will the space or facility be used?

C. IMPLEMENTING SOLUTIONS: SOME PLANNING IDEAS FOR OPEN SPACE

Remember, you are looking for open spaces and/or facilities to meet needs. This will provide you with a very definite framework and focus which will help you as you proceed with your research and design work.

The term "open space" can be applied to a wide selection of areas ranging from boulevards and corner lots to school grounds, parking lots, court yards and rooftops. Ideally, to generate maximum benefit from a space, you should provide for a variety of compatible activities that keep the space in

use throughout the day and evening. A mixture of uses makes the location available to a greater number of residents, and also makes the location a better place for interaction among local groups and individuals.

A large amount of open space under public and private ownership is denied to general public access, but nonetheless has potential for a variety of aesthetic, recreational and conservational functions. For example, consider golf courses, cemeteries, industrial and institutional land, utility easements, public works properties and railway right-of-ways. These "grey areas" could be put to more productive use simply by making them more attractive and useful. In doing so, they might also better serve the public relations interest of their owners.

Many of these spaces are linear in character. Per acre, linear strips are a very efficient form of open space when they are along the routes which people walk or travel. A linear system of space provides the maximum visual impact and the maximum physical access. The linear system of space also can provide linkages that connect local spaces and community facilities with regional spaces giving an integrated park system.

Here are just a few examples of publicly and privately owned property which at little or no cost, could be turned into useable space.

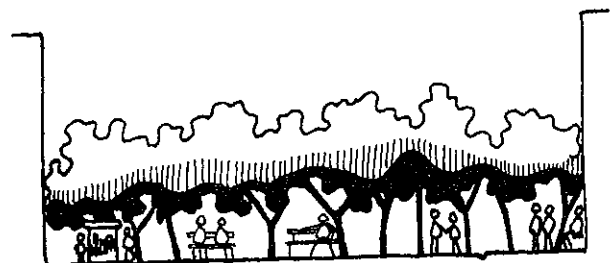
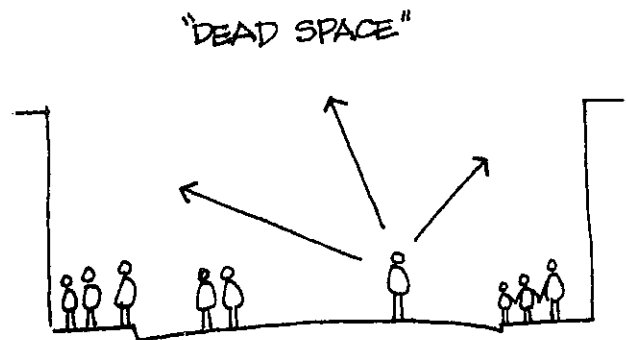
### 1) Vacant Lots

Because most inner-city neighbourhoods are in transitional zones of development, one often sees undeveloped lots in both residential and commercial areas. They may be publicly owned, or belong to a private interest and are usually awaiting some form of redevelopment. Too frequently, they provide an excellent site for dumping of garbage and/or parking of machinery or automobiles. Because of the unsightly nature of such uses, they detract from the quality of the surrounding residences.

The temporary nature of these lots makes the mobile or portable park idea

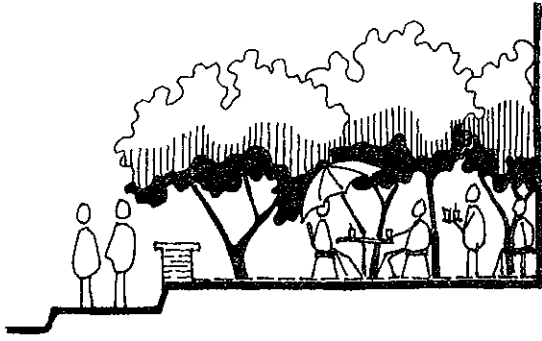
especially attractive. The simple portable park moves around as land becomes available in the neighbourhood and thereby makes use of land that would otherwise be lying idle or abused. Any facility which is constructed would be either inexpensive or consist of portable elements such as playground equipment or benches, which could be used again to serve the needs of other locations.

If the land is owned by a private owner or developer, the community could try to negotiate to lease the land, or to pay the taxes on the property until the space is ready for development. If the land is city owned, application would be made to the Real Estate and Housing Department. The City Parks and Recreation people might help put the case before the Real Estate Department. They might also help with design and equipment. The Abbey Glen Park in downtown Edmonton is one example of a



ACTIVITY GENERATED BY PEOPLE  
ORIENTED ELEMENTS





SIDEWALK TERRACE

temporary park. The park improvements were paid for by the company, but the property will eventually be developed for other purposes.

#### 2) Residential Dwellings Beyond Repair

The City presently owns many deteriorated properties. If the city would remove the buildings, which often pose a health and safety hazard to the community, the Parks and Recreation Department could then plan for their use within the neighbourhood structure. These lots present excellent alcoves for mini-parks, for connectors between alleys and streets which have been closed, and for any number of specialized recreational activities. Some changes in use may be temporary and some may be permanent.

#### 3) School Yards & Community Centres

These often constitute the only space or parkland available in central neighbourhoods. Tot-lots for pre-schoolers, ball diamonds and soccer fields are usually found adjacent to schools and community league facilities, but because of limited space, conflicting areas of responsibility and minimum budgets, these areas are frequently under-utilized, poorly planned and badly maintained. A first step might be to evaluate the existing facilities to lessen the frequency of conflict, and to provide a greater variety of programs.

After hours use of school facilities and increased availability of community centres would increase the number of recreational activities available as well as the periods of use. School use has expanded from eight hours per day to sixteen in some cases. This would require more coordination between the School Boards and the Parks and Recreation Department, but there are existing joint use agreements which you should investigate. You should also visit those major schools that are called "community schools" in the Catholic and Public Systems. These schools have special committees and special obligations to the neighbourhoods which you may be able to utilize. In Edmonton, the Public and Separate School Boards are responsible for all activity which takes place on school grounds and in schools themselves.

The Community League centres are operated by a local volunteer executive under the auspices of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. They lease their land from the City: budget and design plans for any building must be first approved by Parks and Recreation. These leagues offer an excellent means of bringing together the schools, Parks and Recreation and other agencies to discuss new ideas. Talk to them.

#### 4) Cemeteries

Modifying existing cemeteries and guiding the development of new ones could make them useful for other functions. This does not suggest converting them to playfields; but they could accommodate pastoral activities appropriate to their character. Their narrow roads, varied topography, grass and varied plant material provide a secluded haven for walking, jogging or nature study. Cemeteries could play a role in the conservation of wildlife habitats. Seclusion from intense activity provides a good environment for plants and encourages the development of bird and animal sanctuaries.

Since the cemetery operators may

be reluctant to act on an idea which involves a change of attitude and possibly a threat to popular values, it may suffice at first to ask them only to consider a connecting walkway.

#### 5) Golf Courses

Understandably, golf course owners have gone to great lengths to limit the access of the non-playing public to their property. Not only does the public at large represent an element of distraction to the concentrating golfer, but the increased use may well increase gardening and maintenance costs to the owner. However, a more public oriented attitude could do much to increase the enjoyment of unique valleys and well-landscaped properties, and contribute to a more favourable climate of trust and goodwill between landowners and the public. The problem of easements through golf courses relates mainly to levels of noise and to public safety. Foot paths would only be at the edges of fairways, and sheltered by trees and bushes. Benches could be placed at tees and surrounding greens to provide a gallery atmosphere.

Considering the owners' point of view, they should be approached with a very positive proposal showing the benefits possible to both sides, and outlining ways of minimizing the few real areas of conflict. Although this would be easiest to incorporate at the design state for a proposed golf course, careful design and monitored implementation

sensitive to the interests of both sides could be applied to existing courses.

Golf courses usually remain virtually unused during the winter months. Their very nature makes them ideally suited to winter recreation activities such as tobogganning, snow-shoeing, and cross-country skiing, which makes use of existing slopes and open areas. Winter use may be permitted if snow fences are installed to keep people off fragile greens and garden areas. Some Edmonton golf courses, such as Riverdale and Victoria Park, already make their property available for cross-country skiers.

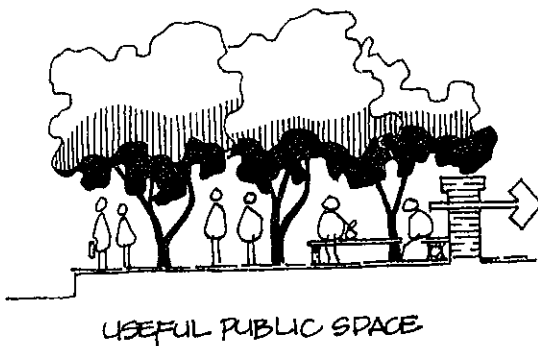
#### 6) Institutional Land such as Hospitals Churches, Colleges

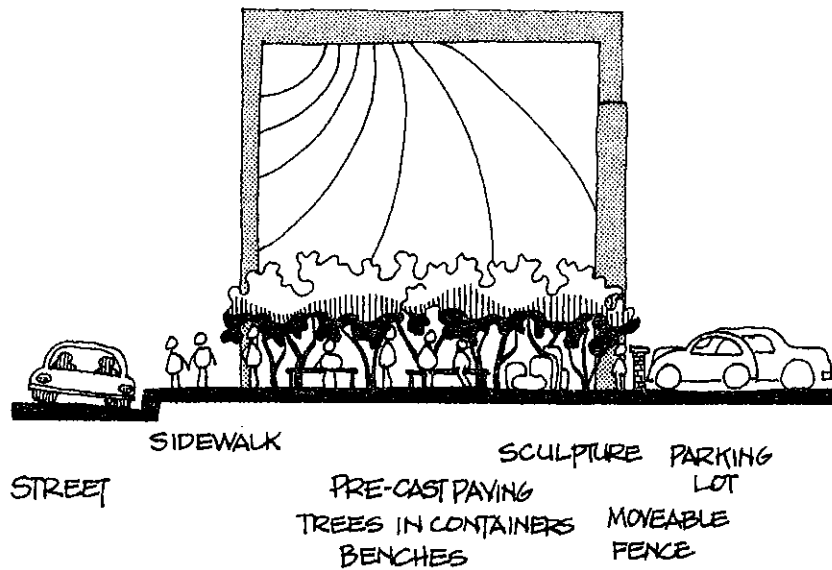
The nature of some institutions often precludes noisy public activities, and use of these spaces would of necessity have to be restricted to passive pursuits.

Older downtown neighbourhoods often contain many of the oldest buildings (both public and private) in the city. The preservation of architecture, land marks, historical sites, views and vistas are all important to the symbolism of a city and to developing an appreciation for its heritage and character.

An enormous amount of new literature is available on rehabilitation of old buildings and neighbourhoods. The Faculty of Extension have some texts and a 30-minute film entitled "Working Places" which demonstrates new uses for old barns, breweries, grain elevators, factories, ship yards, warehouses, railway stations. It makes fascinating reading and viewing, and really opens up your imagination. Edmonton has its own Strathcona Historical Area project you could look at. The Volkswagen plant in the valley at the Low Level Bridge sits waiting for some imaginative renovator.

Hospitals, like shopping malls, have tended to surround themselves with acres of barren parking stalls and meters. A committee that cares just





might create a convincing design to retrieve a small portion for a mini-park space for convalescents and tots and mothers. In the auto rampage of the 50's, spacious greens, gardens and mall entrances were turned over to car lots. That auto-fanaticism is fading. A good idea, well proposed, might convince a public or private services building to go along with a little green revolution in their own front yard or back yard. Try it. Times are changing.

#### 7) Industrial Parks

Today's zoning laws demand that areas of industrial activity known as "industrial parks" incorporate large landscaped open spaces. In some cases this planting acts as a visual buffer for surrounding non-industrial land uses, and often it serves as an employee benefit because companies have provided park seating for workers to eat lunch and enjoy the "outdoors" setting.

The fact that many such areas become vacant after working hours and on weekends points to their potential value as a recreation resource. These areas could provide activity space for bordering neighbourhoods.

Pressure should also be brought to bear on industries in older areas to improve their properties by landscaping and providing street furniture. Aside from the visual benefit, the pedestrian environment in these areas would be greatly improved.

#### 8) Utility Easements

Northwestern Utilities, the Water and Sanitation Department, Edmonton Power, Edmonton Telephones and Alberta Government Telephones all maintain right-of-ways through neighbourhoods. Some facilities are above ground, and some are below ground. All specify little or no development where maintenance or emergency service is anticipated.

These rights-of-ways are a continuous system. They have the potential to become recreational corridors, offering the opportunity for walkways and trails. Path systems would serve both parks and utilities if they were designed to accommodate service and repair machinery. In places where the right-of-ways are cut into small sections by streets, they could be redesigned to accommodate

children's creative play areas, or mini-parks.

Visually, the flat uninteresting topography of power line right-of-ways may be manipulated to modest rolling contours. Earth berms and plants can separate various functions; screen some views, create enclosures and provide a wind screen. This type of space development requires detailed coordination between the Parks and Recreation Department and the utility services involved but is now being carried out in Edmonton's newer areas with some success.

#### 9) Public Works Properties such as Landfill Sites and Reservoirs

The seepage of gas produced in the decomposition of garbage, along with the instability of the final surface makes is sometimes questionable to use landfill sites for anything other than open space development. These sites offer unique opportunities for shaping landforms and creating new kinds of recreational landscapes. Rundle Park in Edmonton was constructed on the site of the Beverly landfill project.

These sites must have a variety of topography with slopes over 3% to ensure positive drainage because water ponding will increase the production of gas. Possible types of recreation suited to these sites include tobogganning, cross-country skiing, cycling, jogging, pitch and putt courses, playgrounds, etc.

Public water supplies and reservoirs offer many recreational opportunities ranging from shoreline activities to swimming and sailing.

#### 10) Railroad Right-of-Ways

The provision of pathways for people and bicycles along railway routes could provide important linear connections. Although railroad crossings and bridges present dangerous situations for pedestrians, they are in many cases the only short cut between destinations. Buffer zones could be established along

tracks as a visual barrier between adjacent lots and the tracks. They could also incorporate a pathway as a link through the neighbourhood. Fences and moveable partitions would allow public use of the right-of-way up to a certain distance from the tracks.

Since the railroads own all railway properties, proposals for development would have to be directed to them. (Canadian National, Canadian Pacific, Northern Alberta Railway)

The opportunity to pursue this idea exists within the City of Edmonton as old railway right-of-ways are utilized for rapid transit and as adjacent communities are re-examined in relation to this new facility.

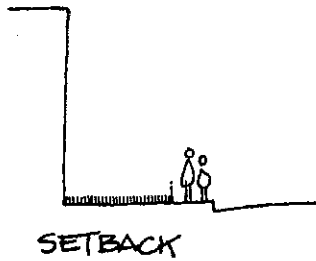
#### 11) Boulevards

Careful planting, proper lighting, informative well-designed signage and graphics could make this small green zone more enjoyable to the motorist, the pedestrian and the street resident.

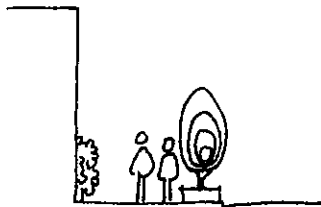
#### 12) Roadways

Acres of space used in roadway interchanges, boulevards, embankments, and areas under elevated roads could be more productive, if only in a visual/aesthetic manner. Soliciting the cooperation of Engineering and Transportation designers to provide buffer zones along major arterials and freeways would help to screen the view of passing traffic. Dense planting of coniferous trees, along with earth berms and changes in level will filter and redirect traffic noise and fumes. Pathways for pedestrians and cyclists can be incorporated into the buffer zones and setbacks. Such systems are now being studied by the Province of Alberta's Department of Transportation.

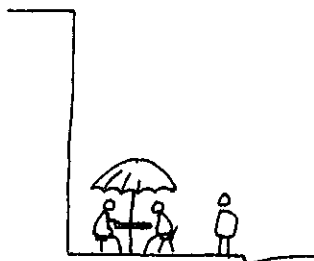
Citizen pressure against freeways and freeway noise (trucks) has resulted in major berming in Edmonton along Whitemud Road, 170 Street and 125 Avenue, to list just a few examples.



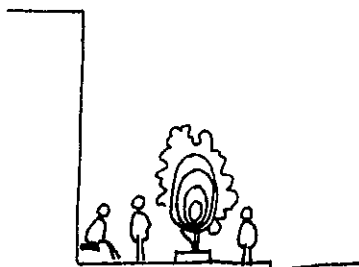
SETBACK



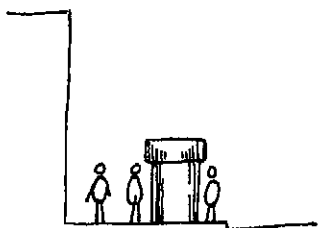
LARGE SCALE PLANTING



SIDEWALK CAFE



QUIET SITTING AREAS



KIOSK & WIDENED SIDEWALK

### 13) Parking Lots

One of the greatest consumers of open space within the City is the automobile, which requires as much as 200 square feet per vehicle in a parkade. Many parking lots are operated as concessions on an interim basis while the owner awaits redevelopment of his land. Parking lots break up the architectural unity of street facades, and usually occupy the most desirable places for people oriented facilities.

Inefficient use of space in parking lots could be redesigned to provide:

- pedestrian easements which are attractive and interesting connections, identified by rows of trees and advertising displays or kiosks;
- centres of activity where pedestrian routes meet sidewalks and streets. These junctions could incorporate design elements to set them apart, and to identify pedestrian ways and crosswalks.
- small parks in parts of the parking lots or along certain axes within the lot.
- screening walls and trees to separate the parking lots from view.

Neighbourhoods which border on large facilities such as football stadiums or shopping centres could have access to acres of parking lot space when the facilities are not in use (in the off-season, or after business hours). With very ample parking for visitors, communities could sponsor flea markets, fairs, neighbourhood carivals, and so on. Car clubs, high school driver training centres and bicycle enthusiasts could also use these large open flat areas.

### 14) Streets and Sidewalks

Historically, in Edmonton, pedestrian movement has meant narrow sidewalks crowded between streets and building fronts. Increased density in central neighbourhoods and business districts has not always been matched

with improvement of the sidewalk structure. In most cases, natural pedestrian movement patterns fail to be satisfied by existing systems, and numerous auto/pedestrian conflicts result. By changing priorities in terms of the auto vs. the pedestrian in some areas, and developing new approaches toward the use of streets and sidewalks, people can attempt to resolve these problems.

- The road surface may be decreased to allow minor traffic (including service vehicles), and the sidewalks increased to allow greater pedestrian movement. The addition of plant material and street furniture would help to accentuate the pedestrian precinct.
- The street may be closed to through traffic--allowing only limited access to service and emergency vehicles. This design is used to create "shopping malls" and "block commons", which rely heavily on pedestrian traffic.
- The street may be closed at certain times of the day to correspond with periods of greatest pedestrian activity.

The effectiveness of a pedestrian precinct on a former street cannot be realistically assessed simply by removing automobiles--this only creates a dead

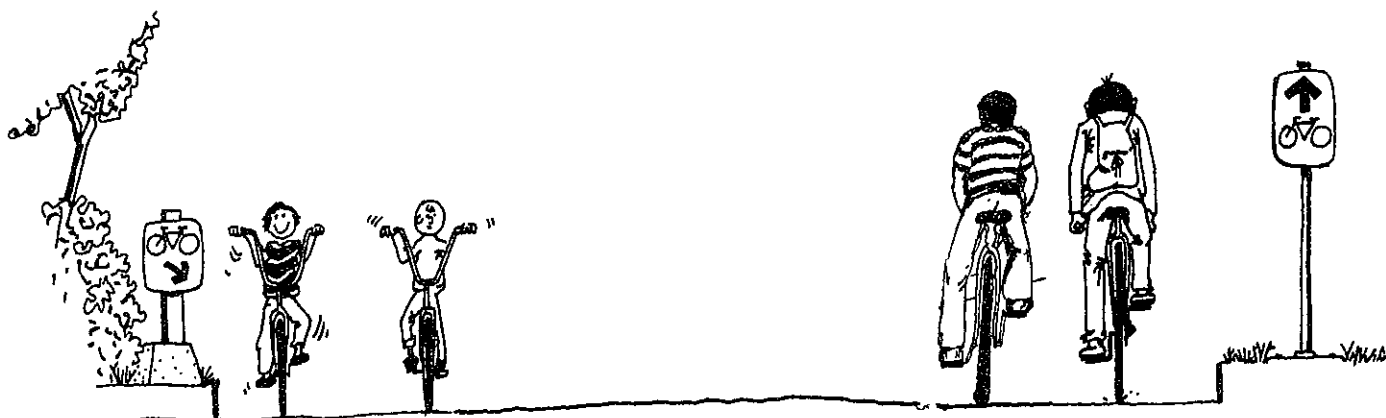
space. A pedestrian environment must be generated by introducing furnishings that relate people to the streets and adjacent buildings and by allowing building uses which attract and cater to pedestrians. A local example of architectural barrenness is the plaza in front of the AGT-Imperial Oil complex at McCauley Plaza.

The proposed Rice-Howard Mall (100A Street and 101 Avenue, in downtown Edmonton) has the potential to become a natural pedestrian precinct as new buildings are erected which contain shops and restaurants. They will attract and support the increased pedestrian movement which will be generated by the opening of the Central Rapid Transit Station.

#### 15) Alleys and Lanes

Redeveloped alleys can provide convenient and interesting routes for pedestrians. The character created by the intimate scale and variety of spaces along them is a feature which could be enhanced. In most cases, compatible use of lanes may be achieved through attractive design and regulation of service times. If provision were made for shops, restaurants, and taverns to open out onto lanes, they could become interesting and lively places.

Alleys, sidewalks, boulevards and



streets are all city owned properties; therefore, development proposals should have input from City Planning.

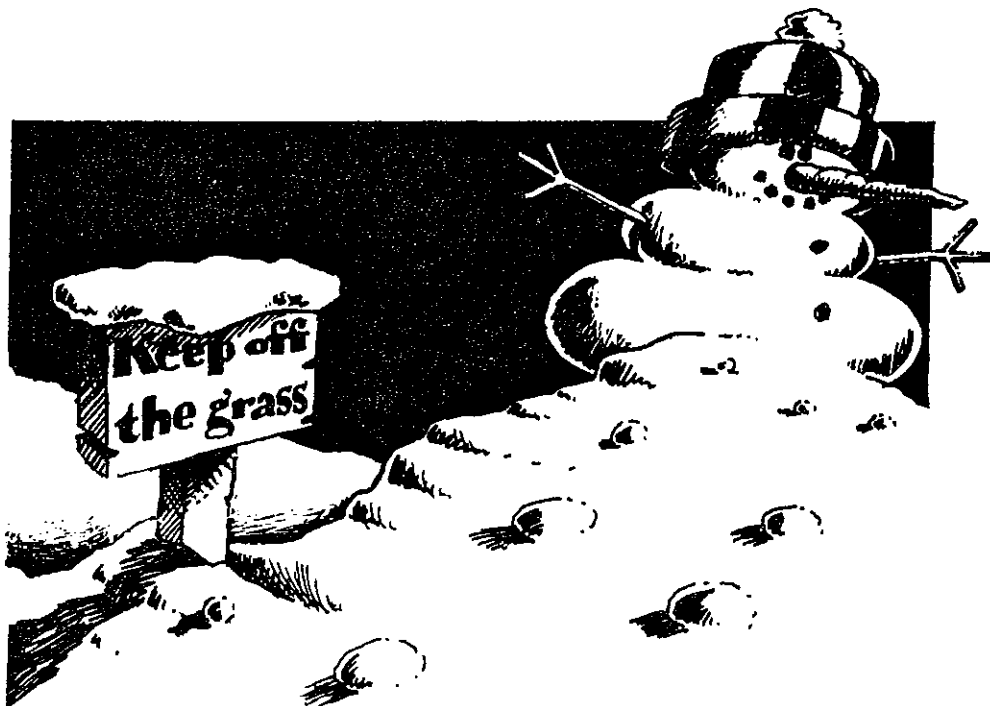
#### 16) Building Rooftops

Historically, the rooftops of row-housing developments have been accessible to the families who lived within--as a safe place for children to play, a space for hanging laundry to dry, a kennel for pets, areas for gardens, and simply as a storage space. Residents in search of serenity could lie in the shadows of the parapet which surrounded the roof; and for those in search of entertainment, there was a new perspective on their neighbours and friends. Almost totally disregarded by modern architects, apartments, office buildings and commercial buildings have the potential for truly special environments: rooftop restaurants, solariums, greenhouses, exercise yards, tennis courts, swimming pools--all with excellent views.

Building employees or tenants, grouped together, could make a presentation to building owners outlining the desirability of rooftop development.

#### 17) Bus Stop Zones and Corner Sites

Bus stops, set back from the traffic, offer a momentary refuge from the busy downtown sidewalks and streets. The introduction of several design elements make them attractive spots for people waiting for the bus or for those just passing by. Whether located at street corners or nearer the middle of the block, these sites offer a refreshing change of pace to pedestrians. Changes in the texture of pavements make the pedestrian aware of a change in atmosphere; benches and planters offer seating for the leg weary travellers; kiosks advertise community events and services and personal notices; the signs provide directional advice and educational aid. Placed at major entrances to the neighbourhood, these sites present a noticeable introduction to the community.



## X. COMMUNITY SERVICES

Clearly, community organizations deserve a place in the delivery of services. Their ties to the community, both through location and through employment of neighborhood persons, gives them an unmatched position in the social service structure.

William J. Sahlein  
A Neighborhood Solution to the  
Social Services Dilemma

Traditionally, the planning process has concerned itself with providing services only where those services affected land use. For example, back lanes had to be planned so they would accommodate fire engines and garbage trucks. But for the most part, planning was restricted to land use or physical planning. Services for the community were someone else's job.

There is a growing philosophy, however, on the part of communities that the one (housing, transportation, parks) cannot be separated or properly planned without considering the other (day care, health clinics, crime control, leisure activities). It could be unwise to rezone a community to allow for a great influx of people without identifying what the effects might be on existing services, or providing for those improved services.

The information you decide to collect and the solutions you seek will depend on the problem areas and priorities your community has identified. It will also depend on your vision of the ideal environment.

### A. CHECKLIST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The following is by no means an exhaustive list, but merely suggestions for services you may want to improve on or bring to your community:

- street lighting
- street and sidewalk cleaning
- road repair, maintenance
- landscaping
- crime prevention
- medical services, home care
- library services
- fire protection
- garbage recycling, pick-up
- community school
- schools, extra-curricular programs
- vocational training centre, employment services
- child care facilities
- shopping
- welfare services
- home repairs and maintenance
- services for handicapped or bed-ridden
- garden plots
- noise berm

### B. SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Where you seek help will depend on the community service you require, but the following are potential sources and resources:

- Your regional or local social service unit. Each area of Edmonton has a local social service unit which can provide information on existing and



proposed services usually including subsidized child care, counselling and welfare assistance. Each area has a community worker who is aware of local needs and willing to share expertise in both identification of needs and organizing.

- Social Planning Unit, City of Edmonton Social Services, can provide statistical information, research material and assistance.
- Separate and Public School Board trustees, administration, school principals and staff are useful resources for your educational needs.
- City departments can provide relevant information on lighting, garbage disposal, street cleaning and maintenance, fire protection, crime prevention, berms, library services and so forth.
- AID Service is a valuable resource for information on existing community services in your area and others. They also have statistical data on expressed needs.
- For information on energy conservation and recycling, contact the Alberta Energy Coalition or S.T.O.P. (Save Tomorrow-Oppose Pollution).
- Your aldermen can provide assistance and support for the development and maintenance of community services.

### C. THE PROCESS

Predicting the social impact of changes such as increasing density or construction of a light rapid transit line is often difficult. Probably the best way to acquaint yourselves with demands for services and plan community services is to proceed through the following steps:

- survey the needs and desires of the community relating to services;
- identify existing services which are meeting those needs;
- investigate ways of making better use of existing services or develop-

ing new services in order to meet those needs.

A survey of needs and desires relating to community services can be carried out separately or as part of a broader survey. The survey questions about existing services will help you to identify concerns not immediately obvious. For example, while you may be aware of an extra-curricular program in your school, you may discover after talking to other neighbours that the program is soon closing because of minimal community attendance or assistance.

It may be worth your while to also meet with outside people and staff presently involved in the planning and operation of community services. They may have valuable insights to share about why certain services are operating successfully or not. They can direct you to possible funding sources and contacts for more detailed information.

You would be surprised what you do not yet know about services in your area. Are there a large number of families with working mothers and fathers? Is any supervised lunch hour or after school program available for unattended children? Does your public library provide materials and programs of interest to your community? Does the library carry large print books for seniors? Do the seniors know about the existence of these books? Is there someone responsible and available for trimming trees and mowing boulevards and empty lots in your community? (Not every community is as fortunate as Rosedale which has its trees pruned regularly by the local beaver population).

The improvement of existing services and development of new ones will likely be furthered if you can identify those people most concerned with and likely to use the services. Provide assistance to get them organized into a group to be responsible for monitoring or creating the service. Your role in planning for services can vary from

simply getting information about little known services out to your community to initiating and developing totally new services.

A further hint for planning and organizing services on a community level is to examine whether it is possible to meet your needs using your own resources before expending a great deal of time and often wasted energy seeking funds. A carefully documented canvas of needs of your residents may indicate possibilities for exchange of resources and skills. Highrise dwellers would be wise to offer assistance shovelling snow or grocery shopping for seniors living in their own homes in return for part of a vegetable harvest or use of the yard. The following examples of community services may give you some direction.

#### 1) Ritchie Recycling Centre

A recycling depot for bottles and cans is presently operating out of Ritchie Community. A group of concerned people received permission from the Ritchie Public School principle to place bins in the school yard to collect those bottles and cans not presently accepted at existing government recycling depots. A group of volunteers then deliver the collected material to companies who recycle them. This project was established as a model to indicate to the government that communities are interested in recycling their waste. Although the Ritchie project was sponsored by an Edmonton anti-pollution group, Save Tomorrow-Oppose Pollution (S.T.O.P.), there is nothing preventing a local group of residents from setting up their own depot.

#### 2) Virginia Park Revives its School

If your community is facing the closing of its school because of low enrollment, or you have decided you want more community involvement in the schools, the Virginia Park Arts Core Elementary School may provide some needed inspiration. Through the joint

efforts of the parents of children attending the Virginia Park School and other community members, a local school facing imminent closure because of low enrollment became a centre for creative schooling for children all over the city. How did it happen?

An initial small group of parents hearing rumours of school closure undertook the task of a door-to-door canvas of the total community to find out whether they were in favor of saving the local school. Having received large scale support, a meeting was called of the parents to examine the possible alternatives. They later met with the school principal and staff to begin to develop programs which would increase the enrollment. Proposals including bilingualism, arts programs and back to the basics were presented at a meeting of community members, school staff, school trustees, M.L.A.'s and Aldermen. Unanimous support was given to a special program in which the basic curriculum would be taught through use of the arts. Formal school board approval was eventually received.

The Arts Core Program has almost finished its first year of operation under the direction of a principal, who as the school's art teacher, had helped develop the idea. The enrollment has more than doubled with an influx of children from across the city. Students are learning the basic elementary school curriculum through music, art, dance and drama. The program is assisted in its operation through tremendous parent and community volunteer participation. A regular newsletter provides information on up-and-coming programs or events and invites ideas and assistance. Community members of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, interest groups and age groups are becoming involved in school activities and sharing their talents and knowledge.

#### 3) Oliver Community School Care

In 1974, the Oliver Social Action Committee (O.S.A.C.) was made aware of

the need for an after school care program in their area. Many children of working parents were being left unattended before school, at lunch and after school. Thanks to the voluntary efforts of several Oliver community members, a thriving program is now operating out of a once empty and run down community hall. A notice posted in the community newsletter brought forward concerned parents who pooled their resources. This group arranged with the community league to use the community hall which was given a new face by weekend clean-up crews and the help of C.H.I.P. (Community Hall Improvement Plan) and Clifford E. Lee Foundation grants. For the first year, they operated with a voluntary board and staff supported by a L.I.P. grant.

Eventually funds were obtained to totally renovate the building and the City now subsidizes the program. The director credits its active volunteer board and involved parents for the success of the program. The program members are also actively involved in helping to keep the local schools from closing down, have piloted a volunteer operated nutritional snack program funded by city churches, and organized a lunch hour program for Oliver School. Participants in these programs feel they are rejuvenating the old neighbourhood support system by providing a safe, fun place for children while giving mothers the freedom to take time off.

## XI. ECONOMICS

To most of us, signs of the decline of a neighbourhood are peeling paint, boarded-up windows, "FOR RENT" signs and rusting cars in back yards. To many communities it also means the arrival of walk-ups and highrises. In both cases the signs are highly visible.

The solution usually suggested for this kind of community decay is some form of "urban renewal". What this means is a surface clean-up of the area: repair roads, renovate buildings, construct housing and replace sewer lines. The "face lift" is likely funded by government (e.g., Neighborhood Improvement Program) or by new higher income buyers. Frequently the residents of the community will have little say in policy decisions about how the money will be spent.

This gradual process of loss of control over the community eventually snowballs. One factor leads into another:

- people can no longer afford on their own budgets to keep up their housing and property
- with the deterioration of property, a high turnover of owners and tenants makes difficult any feeling of security or belonging
- community organization and leadership disappears leaving the community with no effective voice in decisions which affect it
- residents become dependent on outsiders for upkeep and maintenance; the community experiences redevelopment pressure and speculative investment
- the community as such slowly disappears.

The progression of events begins to indicate that loss of community consists of more than just the collapse and replacement of buildings. Social, economic and political aspects are important. Individual property owners failing to afford the upkeep sell or allow homes to deteriorate. A high turnover of tenants makes joint action difficult, particularly if renters feel insecure and powerless to begin with. Home owners begin to care only about getting a good price for their property. Even if a few residents wish to remain in the area and hope to preserve the community character, it will be difficult if these forces are working against them.

For some, significant changes in the direction their area is taking will require more than home improvement grants or government ratified neighbourhood land use plans. Realizing this, some communities facing disappearance are beginning to consider and to test out more far-reaching community action. They are developing community based and community operated employment projects, construction projects and service programs. The long range goal is in most cases greater community control over the future of their own area.

### THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

One example of a strategy for greater community social and economic self-sufficiency is the Community Development Corporation (C.D.C.). The CDC concept has been adopted successfully in a number of American communities. One Canadian federally sponsored project is

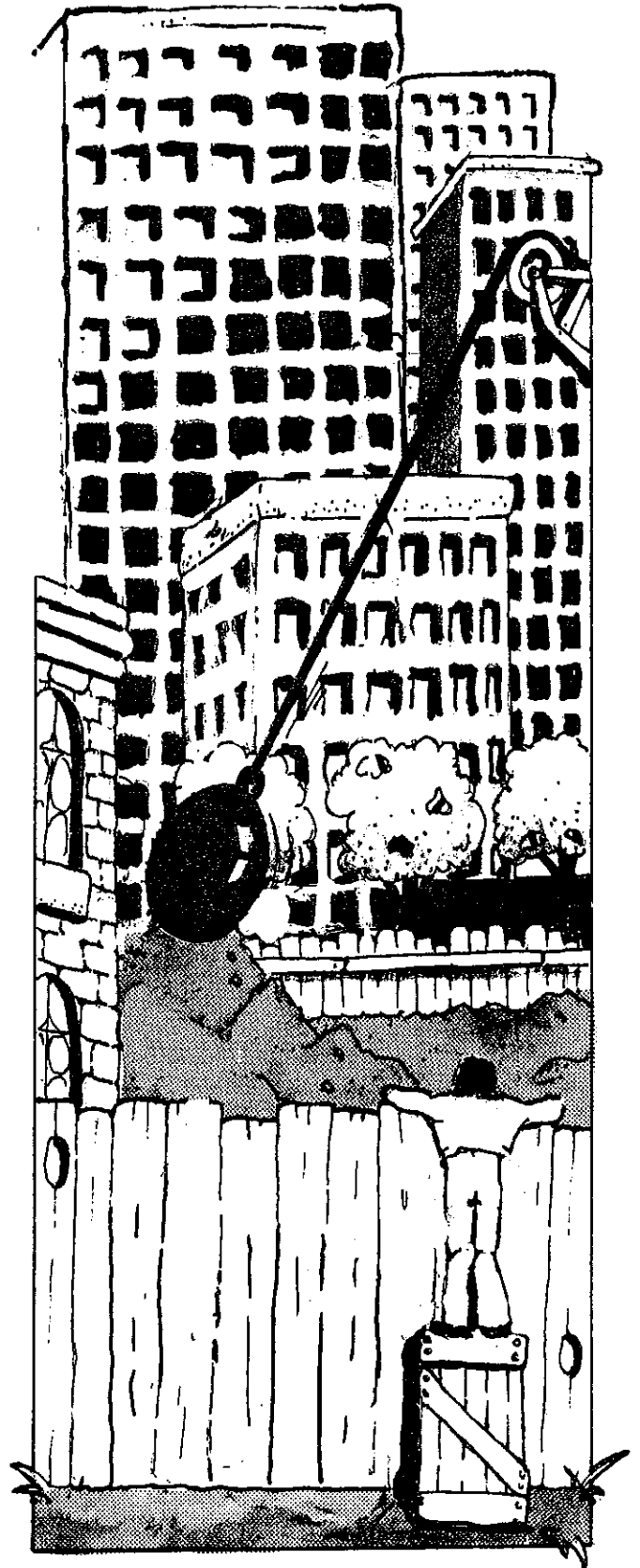
operating in Cape Breton, and another proposed for Parkdale Community in Edmonton.

The overall purpose of the CDC is the strengthening of the community itself. A CDC is a community based enterprise which is owned, operated and controlled by local residents. It is designed to meet the specific needs of the community whether they be housing, day care or unemployment. At the same time, the CDC enables citizens to gain greater influence over the economic and social conditions of their lives. Profits made on the projects are used for the improvement and betterment of the entire community.

Major goals of a CDC include the following:

- providing employment for previously unemployed or unemployable residents;
- providing opportunities for development of technical, managerial and leadership skills within the community;
- increasing the ownership and decision making power among residents;
- rehabilitation of the physical community;
- development of a positive attitude towards the community;
- enhancing citizen involvement in community activities;
- providing needed goods and services for the community;
- reducing the high rate of resident mobility--creating stability;
- developing a greater credibility and respect for the community and its residents in the eyes of government and business.

Specific goals of the CDC and related ventures stress an integrated strategy for neighbourhood improvement. For example, a CDC may undertake a home renovation program which trains and employs previously unemployed residents. Not only does the physical community receive a face lift but the inhabitants also receive a double boost of



money in their pockets and their own homes repaired, insulated or reshingled. Of equal significance a sense of community can grow out of the act of working together towards a common goal by their shared efforts. The snowball effect is now positive.

The CDC is usually controlled by a voluntary community board responsible for policy and planning decisions. A small core staff initiates ventures which will provide employment for local residents. Profits are invested back into the community to provide other needs goods and services or to enable another venture to get started.

Start-up funds may come from government, churches, labor unions, charitable foundations, conventional lending institutions or local residents.

#### New Dawn Enterprises, Cape Breton

Receiving start-up funds from National Health and Welfare, New Dawn Enterprises now provides managerial, planning, liaison and referral services to a number of associated profit making and non-profit ventures. This umbrella organization provides assistance to projects involving housing development, real estate, construction and social services. Each venture trains and employs community residents and is designed to meet a community identified need.

#### Job Start, Kentucky

This CDC is also an umbrella organization for a number of smaller groups. It is a planning body controlled by a 14-member community board. Job Start's major objective has been to create jobs by establishing community owned industries. It owns and operates three related woodworking, cutting and sewing manufacturing facilities. Other ventures within the CDC produce recreational products.

#### TELACU, Los Angeles

This East Los Angeles CDC, formed in 1968, brought together a planning group of residents which implemented a plan for a 504-unit housing project which includes recreational and health care facilities and social services.

In 1977, the Edmonton Social Planning Council was sponsored by National Health and Welfare to do a feasibility study for the adaptation of the CDC concept to Edmonton inner-city communities. Parkdale Community volunteered to try out the concept but the project has been delayed because of government cut-backs.

Other communities have identified the need to gain greater control over the economic trends but have taken different routes. Garneau residents have begun to buy up as much property in their community as possible, finances allowing, in the hope of finding buyers more interested in living in the existing homes than reaping a profit. Community of Oliver Group (C.O.G.), as mentioned in the Housing chapter, is hoping to gain some control over the economic development of the community by initiating ventures including cooperative and infill housing projects.

Any project or venture your community decides to undertake can assume broader implications and results. Whether or not you decide to look towards increasing your voice in the economic status of your community is up to you. It is simply a question of degree. The vehicles do exist to make it happen.

## XII. UTILITIES

A neighbourhood group may be interested in gathering information about the water and sewer systems in the area. The capacities of these systems can have some effect on the costs associated with increasing densities or new developments in the neighbourhood. For some communities, sewer systems have been major concerns and have been the focal point for organizing. See, for example, the National Film Board's "Some People Have to Suffer", an excellent documentary about a British Columbia community attempting to solve its planning problems.

The major sources of information in this area are the City Water Department and Sewage and Drainage Department. In the City of Edmonton residents can obtain copies of maps showing the water distribution system at a scale of 1":100'. Since a large number of maps would be required to cover a neighbourhood, the residents may prefer to examine the maps at the Water Department, 8th Floor, Century Place. Maps at a scale of 1":500' may also be viewed at the Water Department. These maps are on very large sheets which are difficult to reproduce. The City of Edmonton Servicing Standards Manual provides specifications for the design of sewer and water systems in new subdivisions. The manual is available for use at the Realty Development Office, City Hall.

### Water

The water distribution system provides the water required by residential, industrial, commercial and institutional users, and in addition, water for

fire fighting. The major points that the group will want to learn about the water distribution system include:

- the size and locations of water-mains. Watermains larger than 12 inches in diameter are transmission or feeder mains, and mains equal to or less than 12 inches in diameter are distribution mains. A looping or grid system is used to ensure that if service is interrupted in one main, other mains can still serve the users.
- the capacity of the water distribution system.
- the city's plans for expanding and improving the system.

A water supply and distribution system is considered adequate if it can supply all users in the area at peak-use times and at the same time can furnish enough water at a high enough pressure to fight a local fire for a specified length of time. The Canadian Underwriters Association has adopted criteria which specify, for particular land uses and densities, the fire flow (amount of water per minute) and the duration for which the water system should be able to maintain the fire flow. In Edmonton, spot checks (hydrant flow tests) are done annually, primarily in commercial and industrial areas, to determine if the fire flow is adequate.

Whether the water distribution system is adequate to meet projected needs of existing land uses and to meet the demands created by new commercial, industrial or residential development is also assessed by hydrant flow tests. If

the system is inadequate, a number of alternatives for improving the system can be employed. One such procedure involves leaving the existing system in place and providing a larger parallel system adequate to serve the new development.

A group concerned about the increasing density in their neighbourhood should get information from the city water department regarding the costs of such expansions or improvements and the densities the expansions are planned to serve.

### B. SEWER

The sewer system functions to transport residential, commercial, industrial and institutional wastes and precipitation run-off from their sources. The sanitary and storm sewers may be combined into one system or separate systems may exist. The neighbourhood group will want to know the same kinds of information about the sewer system as about the water distribution system--the sizing and locations of sanitary and storm sewers, the capacity of the sewer system and the city's plans for improving or expanding the system.

Sanitary sewers are generally designed to accommodate projected peak sewage volumes and to allow for some infiltration of ground water through leaky joints and other structural defects. Storm sewers are designed to accommodate run-off. The portion of total precipitation which reaches the storm sewer depends on a number of factors such as the percentage of impervious surfaces, the type of soil, and slope of the drainage area. Formulas are used to estimate the quantity of run-off.

Like the water system, the sewer system may require improvements or expansion to meet the needs of new developments. Information about the densities for which the system will be expanded and the costs of such expansions should be sought from the city sanitation department.

### C. LIGHTING

A simple thing like street lighting can have a big impact on the character of a community. A couple of communities in Edmonton have kept their traditional street light standards and the incandescent bulbs. Old Glenora and Windsor Park may be among the more wealthy neighbourhoods, but this does not mean they should have exclusive rights to these amenities. Just what changes could be made and how much they would increase taxes might be worth investigating. Many cities around the world have changed back to more traditional street lighting to enhance the character of certain communities. Questions of aesthetics should not be decided by engineering criteria alone.