

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUPS:  
AN INVESTIGATION OF EXISTING MODELS

by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis was undertaken to examine existing models of municipal government linked neighbourhood organisation structure and thereby to generate lessons for future practice. Four municipalities participated in this research. All were chosen because of their reputation for successfully promoting true democracy through citizen participation. Each neighbourhood organisation structure is explored in detail allowing the reader to learn of their complex infrastructure.

In each of the four municipalities two groups of participants were involved; office of neighbourhoods directors and neighbourhood association members. The involvement of the two groups results in the presentation of structures from both a top down and bottom up perspective. Responses are compared so that similarities and differences in perception between the two groups of respondents are illustrated.

Effective citizen participation offers an ongoing challenge for governments, particularly at the municipal level, and ways of improving citizen participation are constantly being explored. Citizen participation has evolved in this country from the gaining of franchisement to varying degrees of direct involvement in government affairs. Current methods of citizen participation in local government often remain reflective of the reluctance of government officials to let go of their 'power' and this can be seen when initiatives are restricted to 'informing' or 'consulting' with the public regarding government endeavours. Other attempts to empower communities have moved beyond informing and consulting. In British Columbia actual partnerships have been formed between local governments and community members for the purposes of making decisions about the development of programmes. Although successful on some level, these efforts are at best temporary, involving participants on a short term basis only. More permanent, progressive models of citizen participation do exist in both Canada and the United States and these are models through which true

participatory democracy is not only promoted but also maintained. The models referred to are those which involve citizens organised into neighbourhood associations which are linked with local government and which play an ongoing and expected role in local government decision making. Specific examples of these models are the four structures which are examined within this thesis.

A vast amount of information developed from this research. The examples of neighbourhood organisation structure examined fall within the consultation (where citizen groups are consulted but government reserves the right to make decisions) and partnership (where citizen power is expressed in the form of negotiation and sharing decision making tasks with local government) levels.

In light of modern and postmodern theories it was found that local governments exist within a very modern framework while citizens and neighbourhood associations exist within a more postmodern framework. This makes it difficult for government and citizens to work cooperatively and to share in decision making tasks. Because three of the four neighbourhood organisation structures examined exist as departments within their respective local governments, participants remarked that they must be very cautious not to become engulfed by the modernist principles with which they are so closely linked.

Finally, a number of recommendations developed from this research that will hopefully be of use for those municipalities wishing to initiate neighbourhood organisation structures of their own. Neighbourhood association respondents stressed the necessary independence of neighbourhood associations from respective offices of neighbourhoods, the desire for a partnership level of citizen participation, the importance of a flat, non-hierarchical organisational neighbourhood organisation structure framework and the benefits of informal, impromptu communication between citizens, neighbourhood associations, office of neighbourhoods and city officials. Participants operating at the office of neighbourhoods level emphasised the necessity



of liaising with many other community organisations and city hall departments stating that an abundance of connections results in greater knowledge and therefore greater power to influence local government decisions. This group of participants also stressed that ongoing encouragement of citizens to participate at the local government level must be an inherent aspect of the overall design of the neighbourhood organisation structure and that criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations are effective if they are as minimal as possible. Finally, it was mentioned that when initiating a neighbourhood organisation structure it is important to start where the citizens are rather than where you would like them to be.

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This thesis is dedicated to

Timothy Eckart

whom I have thought of often  
while writing...

and to

Alan R. Evans

who has provided endless support  
throughout my years at UBC.

## 1.INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Citizen Participation: A brief overview

Citizen participation is an ambiguous term with positive overtones. It implies an interactive process between members of the public, individually or in groups, and representatives of a government agency, with the aim of giving citizens a direct voice in decisions that affect them.

(Munro-Clark, 1992, p.13)

Effective citizen participation is an ongoing challenge for governments, specifically within municipalities, and ways of improving citizen and neighbourhood participation are constantly being explored.

Throughout history, citizen participation in governmental affairs has grown and continues to grow. The 1960's brought with it greater citizen participation than ever experienced in Canada as the public began to question the economic progresses that were taking place. It was during this time that citizens began to understand that their interests were not necessarily represented by government and that the simple act of voting was not an adequate method through which to voice concerns. Since the 1960's citizen proactivity and participation at the local government level has progressed steadfastly, while at the same time remaining limited. In keeping with modernist tradition, government has been reluctant to entertain forms of citizen participation which push the boundaries of power and control; economic concerns continue to dominate the amount of space in which citizen participation can occur (Tester, 1992).

In the 1990's, the situation is such that local government can no longer ignore involving the public in decision making processes. The public are demanding involvement and local government, although constrained by economic limitations, is beginning to realise that sharing its power is advantageous and that citizen



participation is a crucial element to the functioning of a democratic society (Berry, Portney and Thomson, 1993). The absolute necessity of involving citizens in local government affairs is pronounced by Kubiski (1992),

As a society, we have tough choices to make, and complex issues to address. At stake are the health and viability of our communities as living and working places, our future as a nation, and even the survival of our planet. As citizens of a democratic society, we need to participate in making the choices and resolving the issues which are before us. As a society, we are faced with real emergencies, both social and economic, which are interdependent. We need all the human resources and judgment available to us in our communities to address these emergencies.

( p.2).

Current methods of citizen participation in local government often remain reflective of the reluctance of government officials to let go of their 'power'. This can be seen when initiatives are restricted to 'informing' or 'consulting' with the public regarding government endeavours (Arnstein, 1970). Other attempts to empower communities have moved beyond informing and consulting. In British Columbia actual partnerships have been formed between local governments and community members for the purposes of developing programmes and plans (The City of Vancouver's Ready or Not Project on Aging, and the provincial government's Healthy Communities initiative). Although successful on some level, these efforts are at best temporary, involving participants on a short term basis only (Murphy, 1992/1993). More permanent progressive models of citizen participation do exist in both Canada and the United States, and these are models through which true participatory democracy is not only promoted but also maintained (Berry, Portney and Thomson, 1993). These 'progressive' models are those which involve citizens organised into neighbourhood associations linked with local government and which play an ongoing and expected

role in local government decision making (Murphy, 1992/1993).

The issue of citizen participation in local government can be seen in the context of modern and postmodern theories. For years governments have been existing within very modern structures; structures that include strict hierarchy, abundant bureaucracy and the strong belief that government officials objectively know what is best for the populace. Modernism has served to limit public participation, and has meant that citizen input into decisions directly affecting their neighbourhoods has been minimal.

Postmodern theory, on the other hand, rejects the notion of the existence of expert, objective knowledge in favour of looking toward the individual (and community) as expert and as having, "...the power to define problems, determine access,...and control resources and information" (Henning, 1993, p.45). Hence, neighbourhood associations (and neighbourhood organisation structures) can be viewed as being postmodern in their structure for they embrace the heterogeneous nature of individual residents and individual communities (Harker, 1993).

Neighbourhood associations and citizen groups are actually very convenient avenues through which local governments can enhance citizen participation. Neighbourhood groups, associations and clubs occur naturally within communities usually involving many residents; in order to launch a permanent neighbourhood organisation structure, local government need only work toward connecting with these groups, at least initially, and build from there (Caley and McKnight, 1994: Read, 1994).

Currently, the District of North Vancouver in British Columbia is exploring the ways in which citizens participate in local government affairs. The District's plan follows that described by Caley and McKnight (1994); they will begin by building a connection with the existing neighbourhood groups and then work toward encouraging other citizens to form such groups as the neighbourhood organisation structure expands. As this thesis explores existing models of neighbourhood organisation structure, it is the intention of the Social Planning department at the

District of North Vancouver to utilise its contents to aid in their pursuit of developing such a structure.

## 1.2 Purpose

This thesis was undertaken to examine existing models of municipal government linked neighbourhood organisation structure and to generate lessons for future practice. Eleven areas of information were focused upon including motivation behind formation of neighbourhood structure, goals and objectives of neighbourhood organisation structure, communication, organisational framework, liaison with other community organisations, encouragement of neighbourhood association involvement in city hall affairs and criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations.

Four municipalities participated in this research. All were chosen because of their reputation for successfully promoting true democracy through citizen participation. Each neighbourhood organisation structure is explored in detail allowing the reader to learn of their individual infrastructure.

Two groups of respondents in each of the four municipalities participated in this research; office of neighbourhoods directors and neighbourhood association members. The involvement of the two groups result in the presentation of structures from both a top down and bottom up perspective. Responses are compared so that similarities and differences in perception between the two groups of respondents are illustrated.

## 1.3 Research Methodology

With the assistance of experts in the field of citizen participation and neighbourhood organisation structure, four municipalities (two in Canada and two in the United States) were identified and selected for participation within this research. Theory (modernism, postmodernism and citizen participation) guided the development

of both data gathering measures - interviews and questionnaires. Standardised, taped face-to-face interviews were utilised to collect data from each of the four individuals at the office of neighbourhoods level. Questionnaires were mailed to 12 neighbourhood associations (three within each of the four municipalities), 8 responded. Data analysis is descriptive and qualitative and is reported in four sections. Within the first section information from the interviews is examined, in the second section questionnaire responses are reported, in the third, a general comparison between the two groups' responses are presented and finally in the fourth section, some important major themes are put forth.

#### 1.4 Scope and Organisation

This work commences with an examination of modernist theory, its beginnings, and its continued influence on our communities and ourselves. Three specific aspects of the modernist agenda are focused upon; universalism, individuality and the rejection of the historical past. Chapter three offers a look at postmodern theory. Postmodernism represents a direct criticism of modernism as it embodies a movement away from all that is modern: universals are rejected, individual diversity is celebrated and the link with the historical and traditional past is restored. Chapter four focuses upon citizen participation and begins with a discussion of the historical development of government and democracy. A brief history of citizen participation in Canada is presented followed by an exploration of a working definition of citizen participation. Models of citizen participation are examined, and strengths and limitations of each are highlighted. The chapter ends with a presentation of methods which can be utilised to encourage citizen participation. Chapter five contains the reporting and analysis of participant responses. Research methodology and design are described and data is reported over four sections - interview responses, questionnaire responses, comparison of interview and questionnaire responses and identification of major

themes. Finally, in chapter six some overall conclusions are made and strengths and limitations of the research are discussed.

### 1.5 Definitions

For the purposes of this research the definition of a neighbourhood association will be that developed by Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) which states:

...a neighbourhood association is defined as a civic organisation oriented toward maintaining or improving the quality of life in a geographically delimited residential area.

(p. 69)

Through these neighbourhood associations (as defined), common community resident interests are put forward, discussed, and often acted upon in some way (Logan and Rabrenovic, 1990). The neighbourhood associations are generally linked with local government through an intermediary level (for example a district coalition) and an office of neighbourhoods. At the office of neighbourhoods level there usually exists a director who oversees the entire operation. This director takes on a variety of roles (advocator, funds provider, liaison) and works cooperatively with local, municipal government for the betterment of those residing within the municipal geographic boundaries. The entire structure - the neighbourhood associations, the district coalitions, the office of neighbourhoods - is referred to throughout this thesis as a neighbourhood organisation structure. Figure 1 presents an example of what a model of 'neighbourhood association/organisation structure' might resemble.

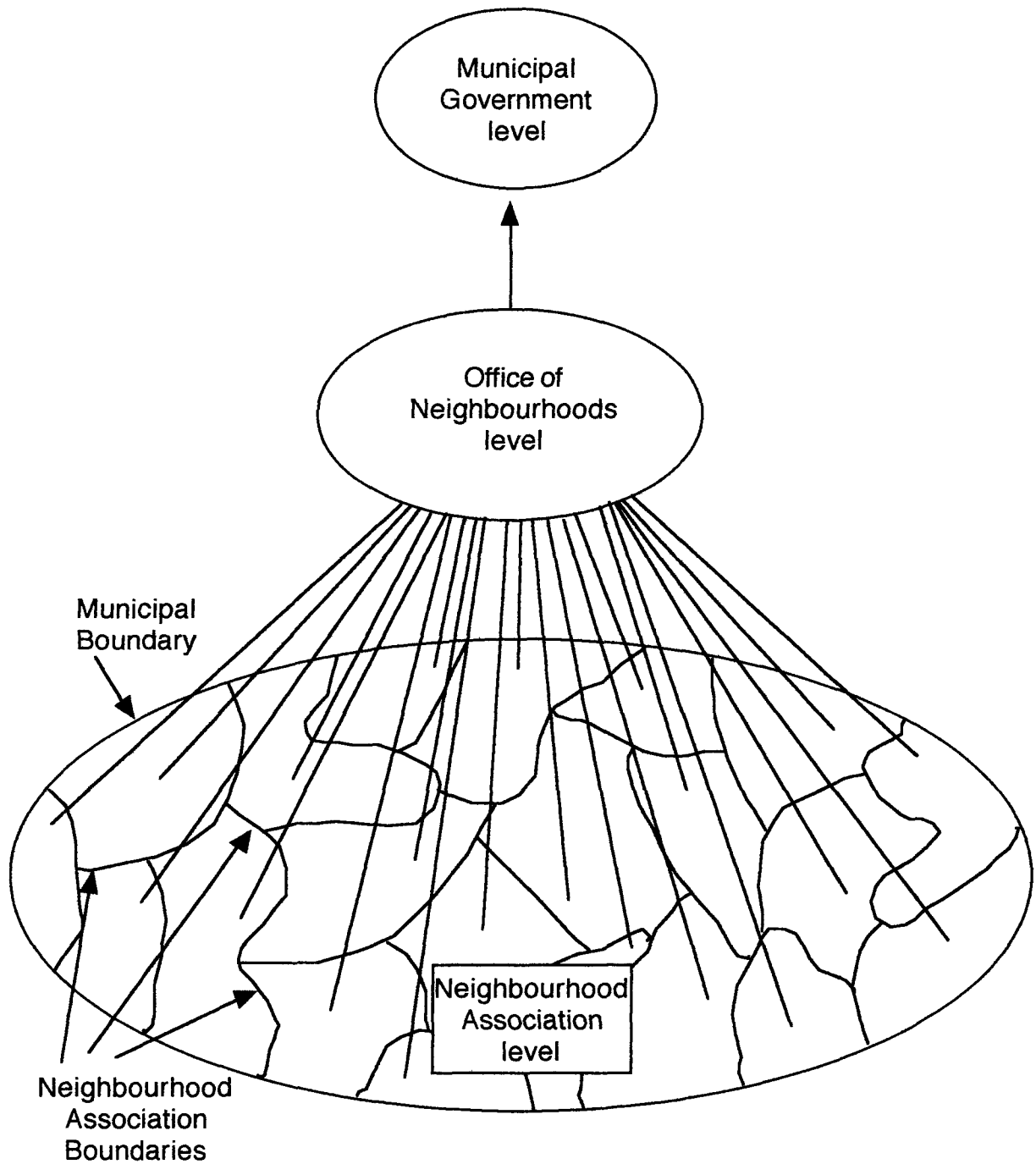


Figure 1: Possible model of neighbourhood organisation structure

## 2. THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT, THE BIRTH OF MODERNISM, THE DEMISE OF COMMUNITY

This chapter will examine modernist theory, its beginnings and the continued influence it has on our communities and therefore on ourselves. Three specific aspects of the modernist agenda will be focused upon; universalism, individuality and historical rejection.

### 2.1 The Period of Enlightenment:

In pre-modern European times there basically existed one belief system which remained unquestioned simply because there was essentially nothing in existence to challenge it. Gradually however, as contact with other cultures began to take place, knowledge of the existence of other belief systems became apparent. This resulted in the questioning of Western European belief systems which had governed social structure for many years. In continental Europe chaos ensued as there were many opposing belief systems from which to choose. In the midst of this confusion, "...a great intellectual movement - the Enlightenment - attempted to establish a new universality based on reason" (O'Hara & Anderson, 1991, p.21). The Enlightenment project's intent was to end the confusion surrounding the multitude of available belief systems through the creation of one overarching belief system (Harvey, 1989; O'Hara & Anderson, 1991).

The period of Enlightenment can be defined as an intellectual movement commencing during the early 1700's and representing a period of massive transition of social thought. It was aimed at promoting a transformation from the social thought that controlled and constrained the populace (through religious, mythological, feudal, monarchist structure) to social thought which promoted human emancipation (Gaggi, 1989; Habermas, 1981; Jencks, 1989; Mayhew, 1984; Williams, 1989).

Enlightenment thinkers saw this process of human emancipation as having its foundations firmly rooted in the principle of universality based on reason and also in the, "...values of rationality and order, increased individualism, autonomy and freedom" (Hemming, 1993, p. 36).

In addition, Enlightenment thought included and promoted the belief that science could control and dominate the natural world, and that this would mean that human beings would no longer be held captive by, "...scarcity, want and the arbitrariness of natural calamity" (Harvey, 1989, p.12). Unfortunately, this domination over nature included the domination over human beings themselves - one of the major criticisms of Enlightenment ideology (Taylor-Gooby, 1993; Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972). The claim that Enlightenment thought offered nothing more than another form of domination (perhaps a more acceptable one) over the populace is one that has been put forth by numerous writers (Berman, 1986; Fox-Genovese, 1991; Habermas, 1981; Harvey, 1989; Williams, 1989). Harvey (1989) has stated that it offered nothing more than, "...a system of universal oppression in the name of human liberation" (p.13) - a virtual wolf in sheep's clothing.

From the Enlightenment project's promotion of universality based on reason (a principle central to the intent to promote a single belief system) flowed the development of a series of universal 'grand narratives'. Harvey (1989) describes these grand narratives as, "...large-scale theoretical interpretations purportedly of universal application" (p. 9). Grand narratives were 'superstructures' which were applied to all areas of society - economic structures, philosophy, science (mathematics, astronomy), politics, law, bureaucratic administration, and nature (both human and non-human) (Bernstein, 1985; Harvey, 1989). They served as 'umbrella theories' by which all social structure could be governed (Harvey, 1989; Taylor-Gooby, 1993; Henning, 1993; Harker, 1993). Grand narratives were thought of as, "...the final arbiter in all matters" (Harker, 1993, p.1).



The Enlightenment project, "...never fully succeeded, but its values of rationality and order became the core of modern culture..." (O'Hara & Anderson, 1991, p.21) a culture dictated (past and present) by the principles embodied in Enlightenment ideology and modern theory. These principles have had great influence on our social structure, influence which is visible everywhere. Some of these influences are outlined in the following discussion of modernism's key themes.

## 2.2 Modernist Theory

There is a mode of vital experience - experience of space and time, of the self and others, of life's possibilities and perils - that is shared by men and women all over the world today. I will call this body of experience 'modernity'. To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world - and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are. Modern environments and experiences cut across all boundaries of geography and ethnicity, of class and nationality, of religion and ideology; in this sense, modernity can be said to unite all mankind. But it is a paradoxical unity, a unity of disunity; it pours us all into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish. To be modern is to be part of a universe in which, as Marx said, 'all that is solid melts into air.'

(Berman, 1982, p.15)

Berman (1982) refers to modernity as a theory, "...that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are" (p.15). Through examination of the principles of modernism which are central to modernist thought, this destruction becomes quite evident. Modernist principles which illustrate this and which

will be the focus of this section are, universalism (totalisation), individualism, and the necessary complete break with historical and traditional past. These main themes are embedded in the very fabric of our existence, for, it is argued, they have formed the structure within which we must operate. They have had particular impact with respect to our communities and neighbourhoods (the death and decline of those communities) and this impact will be discussed in the following presentation of modern themes.

## 2.3 Principles of Modernist Theory and Its Effects Upon Community

### 2.3.1 Universalism

The modernist theme of universalism was conceived in the Period of Enlightenment and was the central feature in the belief in grand narratives (Harvey, 1989; Harker, 1993; Henning, 1993; Taylor-Gooby, 1993). Universality was based on the idea that, "...there was only one possible answer to any question,...that the world could be controlled and rationally ordered if we could only picture and represent it rightly,...that there exists a single correct mode of representation" (Harvey, 1989, p.27). The result of the theme of universality over time has been tremendous: it is a principle which has been and continues to be embedded in the foundations of social structure. Universalism argues that there is a right way of meeting human needs thus promoting the homogenisation of society, and the creation of monoculture (almost on a global scale). It has colonised our very minds - brainwashed us to accept that if our needs cannot be met in the 'right way' something was wrong with us. If everyone's needs can (and should) be met in this one particular 'right way' then we respond by developing the 'right' needs - needs that are surprisingly similar to those around us. It has created a social structure that we have come to accept. Essentially, it has resulted in the, "...the externalisation of the human will" (Murphy, 1989, p.13).

For communities and neighbourhoods this has meant a distinct movement away from the uniqueness which once existed - a uniqueness which served to distinguish

one community/neighbourhood from the next - a uniqueness which was once closely linked to the notion of neighbourhood identity and sense of belonging. Homogeneity has resulted in the obliteration of boundaries, production of similar architecture (subdivisions are a prime example), and the loss of landmarks which once served as indicators of specific areas (Harvey, 1989; Jacobs, 1961).

Unique communities and neighbourhoods have become amalgamated into larger, monotonous districts and cities. Harvey (1989) sees, "...the city as some lost but longed-for community,..." (p.5) and Williams (1989) identifies, "...the modern city as a crowd of strangers..." (p.39). Both suggest that we hold little identification with any particular neighbourhood but rather associate ourselves more within the larger universal cities which have, through modernism, engulfed us.

This lack of identity brought about through modernism has been observed by many community development writers (Checkoway, 1991; Giloth, 1985; Kaul, 1988). Its effects have also been noted and associated with dilemmas faced by present day society such as vandalism, racial/ethnic tensions and youth violence (Checkoway, 1991; Giloth, 1985; Jacobs, 1961; Kaul, 1988). Universality is also closely linked with capitalism (Ashley, 1991; Harvey, 1989; Williams, 1989). In fact it has been referred to as a driving force behind capitalism (Harvey, 1987; Harvey, 1989). The accumulation of wealth has been gained through promotion of perceived universal need. If a lot of one thing is to be sold, many people must be led to believe that they truly require it. Our minds have been successfully colonised as mass production thrives in our Western culture (Harvey, 1989). We believe Nike's can do well for our running feet, we believe that our taste buds can be satisfied with a Big Mac, large fries and a Coke, we believe that living in a subdivision (where every house on the block is practically identical) is what we desire. We have been universalised. We are living examples that modernism has been successful. Large scale and very recent examples of modern universalism are exemplified in the trend toward transnational markets (ie. building

freeways in rural Africa where they are blatantly unnecessary) and toward global economies (North American Free Trade Agreement, European Common Market). The effects of modern universalism continue to be felt on a worldwide scale.

Capitalism has been an avenue through which modern ideology has inadvertently furthered community decline. The drive toward universal production and consumption of goods has resulted in increased resident mobility rates, growing distance between place of employment and place of residency, increased (forced) reliance on the automobile and increased rates of suburb residency (where one never really has to even be seen - in most modern suburbs one can drive into the garage and enter one's home from within) (Gilothe, 1985; Jacobs, 1961; Rule, 1992; Walker, 1990). Each of these phenomenon has contributed to the extreme isolation of the individual from those surrounding him/her (Archer, 1988; Gilothe, 1985; Harvey, 1989; Jacobs, 1961; Rule, 1992).

Harvey (1987) suggests that modernism, through capitalism has resulted in neighbourhoods becoming 'hot beds' for informal modes of capital accumulation. He labels this phenomenon as 'the growth of the informal sector' and states that it has meant that community individuals who were once involved in helping one another (part of what community truly consists of) now have time only for money making ventures - both legal and illegal (Harvey, 1987).

### 2.3.2 Individuality Through Universalism

The modernist view in the individual is in keeping with universalism as described above. Modernism's interest of the individual is with 'universalisation of the individual' as consumers with universal roles, and as producers of universally marketable goods. Once again, the emphasis is on no tolerance for diversity. The idea has been and is to create everyone similarly, to mould everyone so that they come to 'understand' that their needs are similar because they can be met in similar ways

(Harvey, 1989; O'Hara & Anderson, 1991; Williams, 1989). A prime example of the modernist ideology of individuality can be seen in our universal health care system as it does not provide (financially) for individually desired, diverse means of medical treatment (ie. naturopathic treatment) (Taylor-Gooby, 1993).

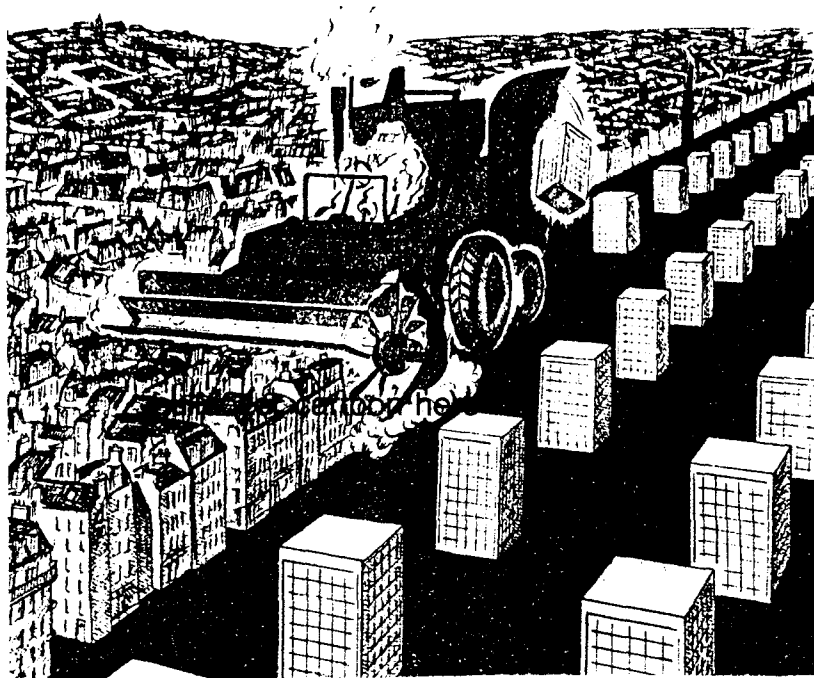
This theme of modernism is in keeping with its promotion of the decline of community. Assuming that everyone's needs are similar and can therefore be met similarly, there is no recognition that diversity is necessary in a modernist tradition. It follows then that our living requirements can be met similarly - identical homes can meet all our needs, and the mall represents a place we can all enjoy consuming within. If we reside in a neighbourhood where each home is identical, we begin to assimilate, we begin to accept the constraining structure, we begin to believe that we like living in such an environment, and we begin to lose our sense of individuality.

A prominent aspect of the modernist view of individuality (and universalism and the belief in grand narratives) is that expert opinion reigns and the few decide for the many. It follows that that which is decided for the many is done from a homogeneous perspective - what is good for the majority is decidedly good for all. Because homogeneity is assumed (prescribed) there is no room for individuality. The individual is almost absorbed into the majority (Harvey, 1987, 1989). This aspect of modernism is illustrated in our system of government as stated by Taylor-Gooby (1993), "The application of rationality involved the creation of a particular class as the key personnel of Western political economy: above all is this true of the trained official, the pillar of both the modern state and the economic life of the west...government officials" (p.5).

This aspect of modernist thought applies particularly to communities and neighbourhoods where modern tradition has dictated that their fate be left in the hands of the local government officials. Public participation at the neighbourhood level has been obliterated under modernism's domination.

### 2.3.3 Out With the Old, In With the Modern

Yet a third modernist principle that emerged out of the Period of Enlightenment is the necessity for a complete break with past ideology, social structure and governance. It was believed that modern thought could not be complete unless it essentially broke with anything that was pre-modern. The transformation of thought which occurred during the Period of Enlightenment meant a total rejection of the old methods of thinking. Only through forgetting and ignoring the past could human emancipation truly take place (Habermas, 1981; Harvey, 1989; Jencks, 1989). This break with the past is accurately illustrated in Figure 2, a cartoon depicting older, diverse and interesting buildings bulldozed and replaced with new, modern, 'monotonous' structures.



(Batellier cited in Harvey, 1989, p.18)

Figure 2. A pictorial depiction of the modernist belief in replacing the pre-modern with the modern.

The desire for a break with tradition can also be observed in the transition from the popularity of small, diverse, traditional shops and boutiques to the popularity with the modern, universal, monotonous mall. The cartoon featured in Figure 3 captures this popularity (a popularity fostered by modernism's universal colonisation of the populace).



(Globe and Mail, 1993, p.A20)

Figure 3: The shopping mall has replaced the smaller, more diverse boutiques which once existed.

The modern theme of breaking completely with tradition and history (with anything considered pre-modern) has often been referred to paradoxically as, 'creative destruction' and 'destructive creation'. The unsightly monotonous subdivision, lack of city and community character and identity, and large, grey, plain

looming office towers, are all indicative of modernist creative destruction and destructive creation. The diversity that once existed has been destroyed to make room for monotony (Jacobs, 1961; Harvey, 1989).

Past history is an important aspect in the definition and identity formation of a particular community. It is through the past that we develop a sense of belonging with a neighbourhood. Ignoring the history of a community or neighbourhood only serves to promote the isolation of individuals as described extensively through the examination of universalism.

## 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the birth and history of modernism and has explored three modernist principles most closely related to the demise of our communities and neighbourhoods. Modernism has resulted in neighbourhoods which resemble one another and are void of individually identifying/historical characteristics; for inhabitants this has meant a loss of neighbourhood identity and sense of belonging. Modernism has also served to limit public participation as it holds that expert opinion reigns and that what is good for the majority is good for all; for residents this has meant little local citizen input into decisions directly affecting their neighbourhoods. Berman (1982), accurately summarises modernism when he states, "To be modern is to be part of a universe in which, as Marx said, 'all that is solid melts into air' (p.15).



### 3. POSTMODERNISM NEW LIGHT THROUGH A NEW WINDOW OR NEW LIGHT THROUGH AN OLD WINDOW?

This chapter examines the deconstruction of modernist theory. Postmodernism represents a movement away from all that is modern, rejecting the notion of universals, celebrating individual diversity and embracing the historical and traditional past. The enhancement of community is discussed with respect to the principles of postmodern theory.

#### 3.1 Postmodern Theory

Post-modernism signals the death of... 'metanarratives' (large-scale theoretical interpretations purportedly of universal application) whose secretly terroristic function was to ground and legitimate the illusion of a 'universal' human history. We are now in the process of waking from the nightmare of modernity, with its manipulative reason and fetish of the totality, into the laid-back pluralism of the post-modern, that heterogeneous range of life-styles and language games which has renounced the nostalgic urge to totalise and legitimate itself... Science and philosophy must jettison their grandiose meta-physical claims and view themselves more modestly as just another set of narratives.

(Eagleton, cited in Harvey, 1989, p.9)

Comparisons have been made between the massive transformation of social thought which occurred during the period of Western European Enlightenment and the massive, slowly emerging transformation of social thought which is occurring at present - in the shift from modernism to postmodernism (Brym, 1990; Habermas, 1981; Harvey, 1989; Harker, 1993, Taylor-Gooby, 1993). Postmodernism has been

described as a deconstructionist theory as it argues against all that has been and is embodied in modernist tradition (Flax, 1990; Harvey, 1989). Postmodernism moves away from, "...the primitive innocence of the premodern...[and] the well-adjusted conformity of the modern...people can find meaning in many ways" (O'Hara & Anderson, 1991, p.25).

The section which follows presents a focus upon three main postmodern themes which are critiques of the modern themes presented in the last chapter and which relate strongly to reversing the dilemmas facing today's communities. These principles are: opposition to grand narratives and universals, individuality as acceptance of diversity and the essential reclamation of history and traditions.

### 3.2 Principles of Postmodern Theory and Its Effects Upon Community:

#### 3.2.1 Opposition to Grand (meta) Narratives, and Universals

Postmodernism...privileges heterogeneity and difference as liberative forces in the redefinition of cultural discourse. Fragmentation, indeterminacy, and intense distrust of all universal or totalising discourses are the hallmark of postmodernist thought.

(Harvey, 1989, p.9)

A basic postmodern theme is that there are no universals. Postmodernism rejects the idea that there exists one single belief system that can work for everyone. Rather it celebrates difference and diversity on all levels, and encourages individual belief systems, and the formulation of individual truths (Henning, 1993). For the postmodernist, true human emancipation can be achieved only through development, acknowledgment and acceptance of the heterogeneous qualities of human existence (Harvey, 1989).

It follows then that systems of modernist thought - ideologies and philosophies - are labelled by postmodernists as 'social constructions of reality' a concept which exemplifies the basis of the postmodern theoretical movement away from single belief systems embodied in modern, universal grand narratives (Henning, 1993; O'Hara & Anderson, 1991). Henning (1993) states that a single system of beliefs cannot exist because, "...we live in a world of multiple, often competing realities" (p.38), and that each of these, "Belief systems are 'stories' humans tell themselves to interpret their experience" (p.38). Different experiences within different realities result in different interpretations and hence in different belief systems - in different social constructions of reality (Harker, 1993; Henning, 1993; Taylor-Gooby, 1993).

Also encompassed within the postmodern rejection of universality is the concern that the needs of the majority are not representative of the needs of all but rather that each of us has very different needs and requirements. Hence as modernism seeks to externalise the human will, postmodernism seeks to internalise it (Murphy, 1989). It promotes a movement away from the elite few determining the fate of the many and toward individuals determining their own needs and their own fate.

At the neighbourhood or community level, the rejection of universal realities and truths is clearly applicable. Postmodernism suggests a movement away from modernist creation of monoculture and towards a heterogeneity of neighbourhoods (Harvey, 1989). Neighbourhood uniqueness is closely related to the notion of neighbourhood identity and sense of belonging for those who reside within (Checkoway, 1991; Harvey, 1989; Jacobs, 1961). Therefore, the development of neighbourhood uniqueness (with respect to boundaries, landmarks, specific architecture etc.) might increase residents' sense of attachment with their specific neighbourhood. Modernism resulted in the amalgamation of neighbourhoods into larger districts and cities, postmodernism seeks to reverse that process and set neighbourhoods apart once again.

Postmodernism also argues against the large-scale, universal shopping mall created through modernist thought. Small, unique, traditional, neighbourhood stores would be in keeping with postmodernism's desire to internalise human and in turn community will (Murphy, 1989). Movement away from the monotony of modernist urban design (the suburb in which each home is practically identical, the monotonous office buildings, etc.) would also be indicative of postmodernism's rejection of universals (Harvey, 1989; Jacobs, 1961).

On a grander scale, postmodernism also promotes the rejection of universal production and consumption associated with capitalism, and hence promotes the movement away from promotion of transnational markets. Postmodernism's rejection of modern universals points in the direction of movement toward sustainable communities, which would be self-sufficient and self-satisfying and truly increase community resident's sense of identity and belonging.

### 3.2.2 Individuality as Acceptance of Diversity

The postmodern view of the individual is closely linked with its rejection of universalism as described above. In direct opposition to modernism, postmodernism celebrates individuals and individuality, stressing that everyone is different, everyone has different needs and that these needs cannot be met similarly (Flax, 1990; Harvey, 1989; Taylor-Gooby, 1993; Williams, 1989). The postmodern individual is thought of as an end in his/herself, rather than a part of the whole (Harvey, 1989).

Moving away entirely from the modern construct of overarching grand narratives, postmodernism recognises the existence of alternative 'knowledges' (Harvey, 1989; Harker, 1993; Henning, 1993; Murphy, 1989; O'Hara & Anderson, 1991). Hence, postmodernism rejects the notion of the existence of expert, objective knowledge and instead looks toward the individual (and community) as expert, as having, "...the power to define problems, determine access,...and control resources

and information..." (Henning, 1993, p.45). The few (ie., the experts at the municipal government level) can no longer adequately determine and meet the needs of the many (ie., the citizens within municipal jurisdictions) due to the heterogeneous nature of each individual resident and each individual community (Harker, 1993; Harvey, 1989; Henning, 1993).

Postmodernism focuses on the link, "...between power and knowledge..." (Fox-Genovese, 1991, p.147), calling for the widespread availability of knowledge (Taylor-Gooby, 1993). The information once held in the hands of the experts needs to reach the hands of individuals for it is their individual interpretation that is of ultimate importance. The dispersement of this information will in turn result in the destruction of modernism's, "...implicit power relations..." (Henning, 1993, p.46), which serve(d) to keep the populace under continual oppression. For communities this would refer to reclaiming some of the information held by local government and possibly working with local government in an effort to enhance the community. Harvey (1989) uses such phrases as, "local determinism" and "interpretative communities" (p.47) when referring to the postmodern notion of putting the power back into the hands of the community.

Is it possible, however, that the link between knowledge and power as discussed above is a link in principle rather than in reality? Postmodernism as a theory promotes the movement away from the few deciding for the many, for the identified experts deciding for the general non-expert population. Yet the very language utilised by postmodern theorists is elitist in its jargon. It is not a theory or ideology which can be understood (through brief reading) by the average individual. As much as postmodernism promotes widespread availability of knowledge it seems to serve to promote the placement of knowledge into the hands of the elite few, thereby perpetuating the very structure of society it criticises modernism for creating and nurturing. In order to practice its propositions, postmodernist discourse needs to be written in such a manner that the knowledge it represents can have widespread public

accessibility.

### 3.2.3 In With the Old: Reclaiming History and Tradition

Postmodernism is critical of modernism's desire to completely ignore the past. Where modernism believes that human emancipation can only be achieved through forgetting anything pre-modern, postmodernism holds that only through inclusion (reclaiming) of history and tradition can we truly understand ourselves, our identity, and our future direction (Harvey, 1989; Jencks, 1989; O'Hara & Anderson, 1991; Williams, 1989).

Hewison (1987) examines postmodernism's embodiment of the necessity of a connection with the past and remarks,

The impulse to preserve the past is part of the impulse to preserve the self. Without knowing where we have been, it is difficult to know where we are going. The past is the foundation of individual and collective identity, objects from the past are the source of significance as cultural symbols. Continuity between past and present creates a sense of sequence out of aleatory chaos...

(cited in Harvey, 1989, p.86).

Reclaiming history and tradition has positive implications for community enhancement. Past history is an important aspect in the definition and identity formation of individuals within any specific community (Checkoway, 1991). Jacobs (1961) remarks that reclaiming a community's collective historical roots results in enhanced and observable uniqueness - as each community will have a distinct history. This will serve to distinguish communities from one another, forming separate identities to which residents can relate (Jacobs, 1961).

Recapturing history and tradition is already evident in the movement which Harvey (1989) identifies as the, "...manufacturing of heritage..." (p.86). This includes regentrification of older buildings, reconstruction of urban landscapes and preservation of existing historical sites (Harvey, 1989). In addition, it has been suggested that the renewed popularity with local shops is also indicative of postmodern reclaiming of history and tradition. Corner grocery markets are gradually reappearing - might this suggest a movement away from larger, impersonal, 'modern' grocery superstores? Harvey (1989) suggests that the revival of local stores results in greater contact between community members. He states that this is due to the fact that local shops are just that - local. Greater pedestrian access is promoted and improves the likelihood of bumping into one's neighbours.

### 3.3 No Universals: What are the Implications?

Although it is generally agreed upon that modern conceptions of universals have had detrimental effects (Habermas, 1981; Harker, 1993; Harvey, 1989; Taylor-Gooby, 1993) many find problems with, "...the postmodern consensus that consensus is no longer possible [and with] the authoritative announcements of the disappearance of final authority..." (Harker, 1993, p.13). Complete rejection of universals means that only individual constructions of reality exist. What are the implication of this? How can the needs of everyone be adequately met in a postmodern world? If there are no universals how can national social policy be set? And how can human rights be globally protected?

An answer to this daunting question might be to combine modern universals with postmodern individuality. Perhaps global, universal principles could exist that would be open to individual interpretation. Such a structure would have to be extremely mindful of simply serving to perpetuate the existing, "...cult of individualism which dominates people's lives within capitalist societies" (Leonard cited in Mullaly,

1993, p.170). The universal principles would have to be determined in such a manner that this would not be perpetuated, although it is unclear how this might occur.

### 3.4 Community Enhancement Through A Combination of Postmodernist and Modernist Principles

Is it possible to combine principles of modern and postmodern theory in an attempt to promote community enhancement? Can a structural framework (universal and modernist in approach) that is linked with local government and that will allow for neighbourhood and resident diversity (individually focused and postmodernist in approach) be developed?

The combination of modern universalism and postmodern individual constructions of reality has definite implications for creation of a community or neighbourhood structure which would promote community enhancement. A set of universal principles might serve to govern and determine a structure within a district or city which would allow for individual neighbourhood interpretation. Community residents and local government employees could work together as experts in order to develop a structure which would enhance community. Throughout the process information could be shared, and individuals and communities/neighbourhoods could determine their own specific needs (with respect to neighbourhood enhancement, restoration, etc.). Ideally, the approach would be a dialectic one as community/neighbourhood residents (as well as local government employees) would shape the structure within which they would act. And their further actions would serve to alter the shape of the structure on an ongoing basis.

Examples of successful attempts at creating such a structure are presented in chapter five with the analysis of research results from four separate municipalities.



### 3.5 Conclusion

The modernist project conceived in the Period of Western European Enlightenment has had numerous detrimental effects upon society in the Western world and beyond.

The application of modernist ideology has resulted in a general and very observable community decline and deterioration especially with respect to the principles of universalism, the neglect of individual diversity and the complete rejection of the historical and traditional past.

Postmodernism represents a direct criticism of modernism as it embodies a movement away from all that is modern. Universals are rejected, individual diversity is celebrated and the link with the historical and traditional past is embraced. Through the application of these postmodern principles community enhancement might occur, although perhaps not completely on their own.

Although rejection of modernist principles is the basis of postmodern thought, it has been suggested that perhaps a combination of modernist and postmodernist ideology might be helpful in promoting the enhancement of community. A specific structure based upon universal principles which allow for and enable unique community/ neighbourhood interpretation as presented might be one manner in which this combination could be realised.

#### 4. BUILDING COMMUNITY FROM THE GROUND UP: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

This chapter will focus very specifically on citizen participation. The chapter will begin with a look at the development of government and democracy in historical times. Next the history of citizen participation in Canada will be presented. A brief discussion regarding the connection between democracy and citizen participation will occur. Then, some of the definitions of citizen participation will be presented. Following this, a selection of models of citizen participation will be outlined and the pros and cons of each will be detailed. Next, the advantages and disadvantages of citizen participation will be presented. Demographics of those who take part in citizen participation schemes will be outlined. Finally, a discussion as to how citizen participation can be promoted will be presented.

##### 4.1 From Philosopher Kings to the Modernist Agenda: Have We Come Full Circle?

In order to understand where it is we are with our politics, our government, our idea of democracy, it is necessary to look to historical times. Particularly to the time of ancient Greece when Socrates was sentenced to death and 'democracy' was reinstated. It was following this transitional time that Plato began to express his ideas and it was not long before he had quite a following. Central to Plato's philosophical thoughts on Athenian politics was that, "He thought it absurd to give every person an equal say, since not everyone is equally knowledgeable about what is best for society." (Stevenson, 1987, p.32-33). The knowledgeable were the philosopher kings, and education was the means of producing such competent individuals - the 'elites' - who would be responsible for ruling society. This group constituted the first class of Plato's three-tiered society (de Cocq, 1969).

The 'non-elite' would have their role as well. Plato divided this group into two sections. The first was, "...the Auxiliaries, who perform the functions of soldiers, police,

and civil servants.” (Stevenson, 1987, p.34). The purpose of this second class was to enforce the Rulers’ directions. Finally, the third and lowest class was comprised of artisans, farmers, and producers of goods, “...all those who produce the material necessities of life.” (Stevenson, 1987). Everyone had a place in society, a duty, a responsibility. It was, according to Plato, impossible to conceive of changing one’s place - if one was born a worker one would remain a worker (de Cocq, 1969; Stevenson, 1987).

This method of governing seemed to prevail from Plato’s era throughout early European history. The feudal system, which operated throughout most of Europe for decades is a definite testament to this hierarchical system. In fact, Plato’s philosophy, it might be argued, has weathered the storms of opposition and has remained intact throughout much of the world to the present day.

As people from Europe began to settle in the ‘New World’ however, a rejection of hierarchical government was visible - if only for a brief, fleeting historical moment (Cayley & McKnight, 1994). In Democracy In America, Alexis de Tocqueville provides his observations of the type of governance that was taking place when he visited America in 1831. In their summary of that visit, Cayley and McKnight (1994) state that,

...he came here and he found a society whose definitions and solutions were not created by nobility, by professionals, by experts or managers, but by what he identified as little groups of people, self-appointed, common men and women who came together and took three powers; the power to decide there was a problem, the power to decide how to solve the problem - that is the expert’s power - and then the power to solve the problem.

These little groups of people weren’t elected and they weren’t appointed and they were every place, and they were, he said, the heart of the new society - they were the American community as distinct from the European community.

(p.3)

How is it that the method of governance, described by de Tocqueville, where the populace defines a problem, proposes a solution and works toward that solution reigned only for a brief period in history and was restricted to one specific geographic area? Plato's ideology was not so easily erased as we presently find ourselves living within a political system that is not truly democratic, that does not serve the good of the populace and that does not encourage citizen participation. The modernist agenda can be offered as a general answer - for it is an agenda which holds that government officials are experts and can effectively make decisions for the populace. Liberalism and capitalism born within the modern age can also be recognised as accomplices upholding the tradition of democratic rule developed in ancient Greece. Both Barber (1984) and Tester (1992) comment upon the current lack of true democracy and citizen participation.

For Barber (1984) this lack of true democracy is enormously attributed to liberalism (recall from chapter 2 the connection between liberalism and the modernist agenda). "Liberalism has sanctioned thin democracy that can conceive of no form of citizenship other than the self-interested bargain." (p.xiii). Barber states that liberalism has also resulted in the encouragement of neighbourhoods where people remain unacquainted with one another, alienated from their fellow citizens. Barber maintains that this isolation from one another has made it easier for those involved at the top of the hierarchy to govern, to pass laws and to sanction developments because groups of citizens in opposition are less likely to stand in their way (Barber, 1984).

Tester (1992) also states that the lack of democracy is attributable to liberalism and the modernist agenda. However, Tester (1992) goes a step beyond and notes that another dimension (also connected with the modernist agenda) exists which serves to discourage greater citizen participation and therefore democracy: capital accumulation. Citizen participation, "...has been circumscribed by the exigencies of an economy organised and managed with capital accumulation as its essential *raison*

*d'être.*" (Tester, 1992, p.38). Hence, economic parameters govern the limits of citizen participation. Anything that impedes this drive to accumulate capital is not particularly desirable - and citizen participation is seen as such an impediment.

Opposition to the modernist agenda, to liberalism, to capitalism, and therefore to the lack of true democracy is taking place - most strongly from the 1960's to present day. Citizens are acting out, they are demanding greater citizen participation, they are questioning the 'taken-for-granted' world with increasing vigor (Tester, 1992). The depth, strength and frequency with which citizen participation occurs today is the result of many decades of build up - beginning with the right to vote and continuing with the development of citizen based coalitions, advisory councils, and community boards. The following section highlights the progression of citizen participation in Canada from the beginning of the century to present day.

#### 4.2 History of Citizen Participation in Canada

Tester (1992) follows the development of citizen participation within Canada's historically liberal democracy and suggests that three distinct stages can be identified. The very first stage of citizen participation roughly spans between the years 1918 to 1961 and is marked by the granting of franchisement to more and more of the population. Women were granted the right to vote federally in 1918, yet it was not until 1961 that status Indians were able to do so. Tester (1992) attributes the slowness with which the extension of franchisement occurred to, "...a strong Tory theme, combining hierarchy and elitism with a limited franchise..." (p.38). The association with the modernist agenda is evident in the amount of time it took government to grant franchisement to various groups - this reluctance marked the desire to keep power and control in the hands of the officials; the experts.

Overlapping and building upon this initial stage of increased representative democracy was a second stage in the evolution of citizen participation in Canada. This

second stage evolved approximately from the end of World War II until 1965 and was influenced by, "...the development of a limited form of the welfare state [which] was concerned with the procurement, administration and distribution of wealth in Canadian society." (Tester, 1992, p.38). It was during this stage that both citizen and labour groups formed with respect to the concerns raised through the development of the welfare state (Tester, 1992).

The tail end of the second stage of the evolution of citizen participation in Canada marked the beginning of a third stage, a stage which extends to present day. Greater citizen participation occurred than ever before as the populace began to question the events - the progresses - that were taking place at an ever-increasing rate. Tester (1992) expresses this in greater detail,

In the 1960's, citizen participation was something actively demanded by a public increasingly affected by the rapid economic developments which followed the Second World War. Confronted with the bomb, the cold war, the destruction of Canadian farm land to accommodate urban expansion, growing indications that chemicals, herbicides, pesticides and industrial practices had major implications for the woods and streams a post-war generation had played in, Canadians started to question conventional developmental wisdom.

(p.38)

Moving away from the 1960's and through the 70's, and 80's Tester (1992) remarks that the progression of citizen participation has been steadfast yet at the same time somewhat limited. In keeping with modernist tradition, government has been reluctant to entertain forms of citizen participation which push the boundaries of power and control; economic concerns dominate the amount of space in which citizen participation can occur.

In his article, Tester (1992) suggests that perhaps a fourth stage of citizen participation is presently emerging in Canada. This fourth stage houses a form of citizen participation where an even greater amount of power and control is taken by citizens. It marks a citizen participation, "...that would go beyond citizen involvement in conventional intervention to actual citizen management of an economic resource with regard for ecological, cultural and spiritual as well as economic values" (Tester, 1992, p.38). The very workings of the, "...undemocratic structure of the modern business enterprise" (Tester, 1992, p.40), would be scrutinised and eventually transformed by this depth of citizen participation. If democracy means government by the people then is this not the form citizen participation ought to take? Tester (1992) believes this to be the direction that is being taken particularly in the environmental arena.

#### 4.3 Citizen Participation Defined

Perhaps the words [citizen participation] are best treated like a kaleidoscope - twist it gingerly this way, turn it about slowly, and examine the configurations and designs which emerge.

(Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974, p. 3)

The comment above, remarks upon the difficulty in developing a precise and accurate definition of citizen participation. How can we possibly comment or differentiate between one type of activity and another, stating confidently that one is representative of citizen participation and the other is not? Where does the line exist that allows one to cross into the realm of citizen participation?

Kasperson and Breitbart (1974) tackle this dilemma by focusing firmly upon the individual who is participating. Their definition is contingent upon three 'dimensions'. The first is promoted as most important and involves examining the meanings the

particular individual fastens to the act of participation. The second revolves around the intensity of the meanings and feelings attached to the participation. "The intensity of feeling on the part of any individual finds expression in the frequency of involvement, the type of participation chosen, and the duration of the activity." (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974, p.4). Finally, the third dimension consists of the actual quality of participation. Here, quality takes on two meanings. It refers to the outcome in the sense that the participation has been fruitful but it also refers - perhaps more importantly - to the quality of the participation with respect to the participants' personal betterment and growth (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974).

The authors also describe what citizen participation does not consist of. For example those individuals who simply 'watch' are not participants, rather they are referred to as 'spectators'. Kasperson and Breitbart (1974) go on to say that,

Participation does not occur when individuals are attached to institutions or processes where the agendas are already set, the issues defined, and the outcomes limited. Participation is 'unreal' when the motivation is legitimation and support rather than creation. Meaningful participation grows out of faith in the capabilities of man [sic] despite all his limitations.

(p.5).

Kubiski (1992) shares some of the aspects of the definition as presented above. However what is different about Kubiski's definition is that he identifies citizen participation strictly in terms of its relations to government. Specifically he states that, "...citizen participation refers to the actions that citizens take to influence the structure of government, the selection of government authorities, or the policies or administration of government." (Kubiski, 1992, p.1). For Kubiski, identification of citizen participation is found outside of the individual, devoid of any personal meaning and interpretation. It seems that some sort of visible outcome (success or failure) would be



the evaluative measure in determining whether or not an act was termed participation.

For Arnstein (1977) citizen participation is deeply rooted in citizen power. More specifically, "It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included....it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society." (p.40-41). Power is inextricably linked to true participation for without it, Arnstein remarks, individuals will simply be going through the motions without making any actual changes - it would solely be a lesson in process.

Still another definition of citizen participation points to the educational aspect of the participation process for the participant. Draper (1991) states that citizen, "...participation is referred to as educative and integrative, a process that facilitates the acceptance of decisions." (p.267). This definition then implies a certain knowledge acquisition and perhaps transformation of the individual simply through the process of participating.

As with Kasperson & Breitbart (1974), Munro-Clark (1992) finds the term citizen participation quite allusive and hence, difficult to describe. Having recognised this, she does bring to the definition something that others fail to mention - the consideration of 'group' involvement in participation. For Munro-Clark (1992), citizen participation, "...implies an interactive process between members of the public, individually or in groups, and representatives of a government agency, with the aim of giving citizens a direct voice in decisions that affect them." (p.13).

If I were to develop a definition from those presented above I would utilise Munro-Clark's (1992) as the root onto which I would then add specific aspects of the other definitions presented. The combined definition would be as follows,

Citizen participation is an interactive process between members of the public, individually or in groups, and representatives of a government agency, with the aim of giving citizens a direct voice in decisions that affect them. Citizen participation involves influencing the structure of government, in that it promotes a redistribution of power in society. Citizen participation is also educative, and serves to foster the betterment and personal growth of the individuals and groups involved.

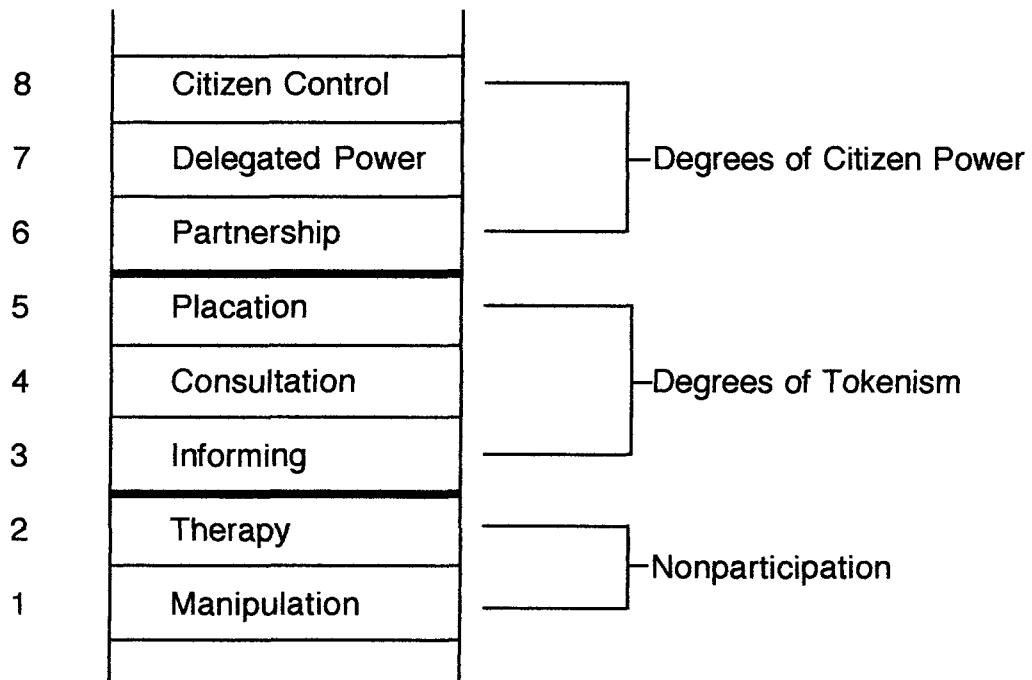
(Munro-Clark, 1992, p.13; Kubiski, 1992; Arnstein, 1977; Draper, 1991; Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974).

Although this definition encompasses components of each of the definitions presented, it by no means affords the reader with a complete description of citizen participation. Nor does it introduce the 'continuum' upon which varieties of citizen participation can be found. There are a number of models of citizen participation which will be examined to further identify and describe the concept of citizen participation.

#### 4.4 Models of Citizen Participation

##### 4.4.1 Arnstein's Ladder

The first model of citizen participation which will be addressed was developed by Sherry Arnstein (1969, 1977). As stated in her definition of citizen participation found earlier in this paper, Arnstein (1977) remarks that, "...citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power." (p.40). This linkage with power is central to the development of Arnstein's model. The model is expressed with the use of a ladder which has 8 specific rungs (see Figure 4) which are categorised into 3 groupings, "...nonparticipation,...degrees of tokenism...[and]...degrees of citizen power..." (Arnstein, 1977, p.41).



(Arnstein, 1977, p.41)

Figure 4. Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation.

The least amount of power/citizen participation is located at the bottom of the ladder (represented by the first rung) and the greatest amount of power/citizen participation at the very top of the ladder (represented by the eighth rung). Ascension of the ladder results in the acquisition of greater power in, "determining the end product." (Arnstein, 1969, p.217). Alternately, descension of the ladder results in a loss of power for the government official (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974).

The bottom most rungs on the ladder are *Manipulation* and *Therapy*. Both of these rungs fall into the category of "nonparticipation" (Arnstein, 1977, p.41), and refer to activities such as participation on advisory councils or committees where cooptation occurs and citizens are educated and moulded, "...into public relations vehicles by power holders." (Arnstein, 1977, p.43). Arnstein's view is that the two bottom most rungs are examples of nonparticipation. In a more positive light, these rungs may at the very least afford citizens with the chance to acquire information which they may not otherwise have had access to. This information might then in turn be utilised effectively to promote change.

Rungs 3, 4 and 5 constitute the "degrees of tokenism" (Arnstein, 1977, p.41) and are *Informing*, *Consultation* and *Placation*. *Informing*, Arnstein states is exemplary of the one way communication that often occurs from government officials to citizens and which affords the citizen with no method of providing feedback regarding the issue at hand (Arnstein, 1977; Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974). *Consultation* occurs when citizens are asked to respond to a specific issue but have no impact on the issue. Decisions have been made and consultation is used to provide citizens with the feeling that they have taken part when in reality they have not. The bottom line is that citizens, at this particular level of citizen participation, are not making decisions. Examples of consultation are, "...attitude surveys, neighbourhood meetings, and public hearings." (Arnstein, 1977, p.45). *Placation* results in more actual participation on the part of the citizen but a degree of tokenism still lingers. Cooptation looms large at this level in that

citizens are actually chosen to sit on boards and advisory councils etcetera on the criteria that they already share the philosophy of the officials.

Finally, rungs 6, 7, and 8 represent the kind of citizen participation which Arnstein refers to as, "...degrees of citizen power." (Arnstein, 1977, p.41). Rung 6 is referred to as *Partnership* and is the first rung upon which exists some degree of power for the participating citizens. This power is expressed in the form of negotiation and sharing in decision making tasks (planning and development) between citizens and government officials (Arnstein, 1969, 1977; Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974).

*Delegated power* results in even more power for the citizens and infers that they have more decision making power than do the government officials with respect to certain planning and development schemes. It is important to note however, that this power, because it has been delegated, can be taken away at any time. Finally, *Citizen Control* represents the last rung on the ladder. This level, according to Arnstein illustrates the greatest amount of citizen power and control. At this level, "...participants...can govern a program or an institution, be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and be able to negotiate the conditions under which 'outsiders' may change them." (Arnstein, 1977, p.48).

Arnstein's model is comprehensive and although developed in the late 1960's has stood the test of time - it is frequently cited by those interested in citizen participation (McNeil, 1993; Munro-Clark, 1992; Painter, 1992). There are, however, a few noted criticisms of her model. First, Kasperson & Breitbart (1974), find that Arnstein focuses primarily upon those who are considered 'have-nots' (ie. citizens who lack political and economic decision-making power) and thereby fails to remark on how the 'haves' (ie. government officials and others with political and economic decision-making power) might be able to participate as well (or how the have-nots and the haves might work together). This is a good point which has relevancy for today's citizens because it is paramount that everyone be involved - both the 'haves' and the

'have-nots' if we are to build true democracy.

The most impacting criticism is that Arnstein fails to acknowledge fully the citizen's role at each rung of the ladder rather it is felt that, "Her framework is oriented...to policy or the system,..." (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974, p.5). In addition, Arnstein's ladder represents another hierarchy - it uses the masters tools to dismantle the masters house - with which to fuel the drive toward true citizen participation. Should not participation by individuals and groups be celebrated at each level? Is the goal to reach the top or to grow, learn and gain power and knowledge as the ladder is ascended?

#### 4.4.2 Burke's Model

While Arnstein's model focuses more upon the policy and system, Burke's looks toward the activity of the organisation out of which a citizen might participate. From the outset Burke's interest in the actual citizen is somewhat limited, as he concentrates primarily on the question, "How can citizen participation best be managed to accomplish the objectives and meet the maintenance needs of the organisation?" (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974, p.6).

Burke's model offers 5 stages each building on its predecessor (Burke, 1968). The first stage is *Education-therapy* which focuses upon the education and training of the citizen which will ultimately serve to better the citizen participation - priming for involvement. Burke's second stage is *Behavioural change*. This stage involves the individual adopting new behaviours as a result of becoming part of an organising group. *Staff Supplement* is the title used by Burke to describe the third stage in his citizen participation model. At this stage the goal is to replace or supplement, "...the expertise of the agency with the expertise of particular citizens." (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974, p.6). An example of participation at this level might be citizen inclusion on advisory boards - what Arnstein (1977) refers to as a kind of 'tokenism'.

The fourth stage in Burke's model is referred to as *Co-optation*. This stage does not relate to the cooptation of citizens by government officials but rather the cooptation of 'dissenters' by citizens thereby, "...neutralising the opposition..." (Burke, 1968, p.289). The idea behind this stage of the model is to elicit as much participation as possible and to gain acceptance and validity from both the opposition and the community at large (Burke, 1968). The fifth and final stage of this model is entitled, *Community Power*. At this stage Burke calls for the, "...creation of new power centres to confront established centres as a means of generating social change." (Kasperson & Breitbart, 1974, p.6). Neighbourhood associations might fall into this category if located in a municipality which provides them with a certain amount of power in planning and decision making efforts (for example the Seattle and Portland neighbourhood structures). Advocacy groups and social movements would also be examples of this category.

The basic criticism to develop from this model is the lack of acknowledgement of what occurs for the citizen in citizen participation. The *Co-optation* phase is rather worrying in that it seems as though the citizens are almost being brainwashed for the betterment of the organisation. Is there room for personal difference within the organisation? What would occur for the citizen if there were to be a conflict between what the organisation believed and what the citizen believed? Kasperson & Breitbart (1974) remark that for Burke, "The citizen is a resource for the organisation, an instrument for improving intelligence, a means for maximising 'rationality', a catalyst for implementation." (p.6). The citizen has a much larger role to play than that which Burke is suggesting here - the importance of space for individuality must be noted.

#### 4.4.3 Van Til and Van Til's Matrix

Van Til and Van Til (1970) propose a model for citizen participation that differs from both Arnstein's and Burke's as it is presented as a complex matrix (see Figure 5). For Van Til and Van Til (1970), both who participates (the scope) and the focus of the participation are of equal importance. In addition, for Van Til and Van Til (1970) the participation of 'elites' - Arnstein's 'haves' - and the 'non-elites' - Arnstein's 'have-nots' - are fundamental to the citizen participation process. In order for change to occur both groups need to work together. But Van Til and Van Til (1970) are cynical about the two groups effecting change together, "...rather than the emergence of a creative 'pluralistic participation,' in which elites and non-elites seek an accommodation of their interests, we find an inability of social policy to provide solutions by the mutual adjustment of the interests involved." (Van Til & Van Til, 1970, p.320-321).

The model consists of two axes (see Figure 5). The first is the scope, or who is actually doing the participating. The scope includes three options, "Elites only, elites and non-elites, and non-elites only." (Van Til & Van Til, 1970, p.313). The second axis is the focus, what the participation focuses upon. There are two options with the focus, that which focuses upon the process (administrative affairs) and that which focuses upon the final product (both administrative and political affairs) (Van Til & Van Til, 1970).

From this matrix there exists six categories of participation. The first, *elite coalition*, refers to elite involvement only focusing upon process-oriented affairs. Within this category Van Til and Van Til (1970) stress consensus among those involved. The second category is *citizen advice*. This involves both elites and non-elites in process concerns. The participation here can be pictured on a continuum where at one end the elites maintain complete power to propose solutions and to design plans (Van Til & Van Til, 1970). At this end of the continuum the non-elites could be seen as being on the *informing* or *consultation* rungs of Arnstein's (1977) ladder. On the other hand,



participation is by (scope)	participation focuses on (focus)	
	focus on means: administrative concerns only	focus on ends: political and administrative concerns
elites only	elite coalition	politics of reform
elites and non elites	citizen advice	pluralist participation
non elites only	client participation	grass-roots participation

(Van Til & Van Til, 1970, p.313)

Figure 5. Van Til and Van Til's two-factor matrix.

participation might truly include the non-elites as if they were in what Arnstein (1970) referred to as *partnership*.

The third category also focuses upon process oriented concerns but involves the non-elites only. This category is entitled, *client participation*. Van Til and Van Til (1970) use this term to indicate the participation that can occur when a group of 'clients' form together to act out against a certain organisation (ie. government) in order to exact some sort of change in that organisation. The idea is to exact change which will make the organisation's services more applicable to the participating population of citizens. The fourth category involves elites only in a focus upon both process and end results. This category is labelled *politics of reform* and concerns elites struggling with other elites in a fight to have their ideas included in the plan or decision process and final outcome. An example of this might be groups of opposing government officials, each attempting to have their plans for a particular site implemented over the plans of the other (Van Til & Van Til, 1970).

The fifth category includes both elites and non-elites together focusing on process and an end product and is referred to, by Van Til and Van Til (1970) as *pluralist participation*. This type of participation would entail both groups working in cooperation with one another for the same process and end product (ie. the design and implementation of a specific development plan for a neighbourhood) (Van Til & Van Til, 1970). The sixth and final category is *grass-roots participation* and describes the highest type of citizen participation in Van Til and Van Til's model. *Grass-roots participation* involves non-elites only focusing on both the political and the administrative concerns, hence engaging the participant in both the process and the end results. The Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA) in Vancouver as well as other neighbourhood organisations are exemplary of *grass-roots participation* as described by Van Til and Van Til (1970).

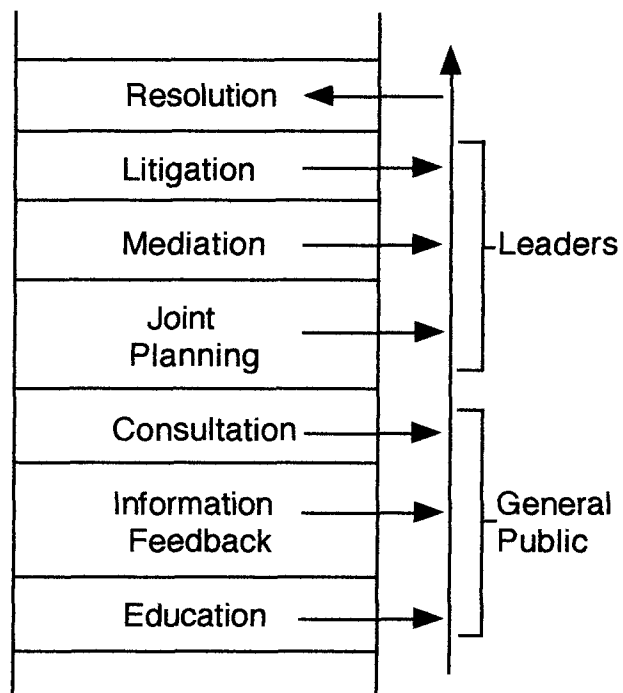
Van Til and Van Til's (1970) model of citizen participation is fairly complex addressing the numerous meanings of participation. It also covers some of the aspects that both Arnstein (1977) and Burke (1968) neglect. Most importantly, Van Til and Van Til (1970) focus upon the actual participants in combination with participatory activities. But how easily applied is this theory? Is it too complex? At the very least, for today's purposes some of the terminology would have to be changed (ie. non-elites and elites) in order for it to be effectively applied.

Arnstein (1977) as stated, neglects to focus upon the participant as primary to the process, choosing to address as paramount the activities a participant might be engaged in. Burke (1968) focuses upon the individual as a tool to carry out the deeds of the organisation. The 'straightforwardness' of Arnstein's (1977) ladder is definitely appealing. It is also flexible enough to apply to situations today even though it was developed over 20 years ago (McNeil, 1993; Munro-Clark, 1992; Painter, 1992). Burke's (1968) model seems to be too restrictive and not wide ranging enough in scope - the individuality of the participant was completely left out. Van Til and Van Til's (1970) model is interesting and all-encompassing but somewhat outdated for use now.

Two authors have recognised the potential of Arnstein's (1977) model and have modified it so as to create 'ladders' of their own. These authors are Connor (1988) and Potapchuk (1991) and will be the focus of attention in the following paragraphs.

#### 4.4.4 Connor's Model

Connor (1988), as stated, utilises a ladder to denote the varying types of citizen participation (see Figure 6). Rather than describing very distinct and separate rungs (as Arnstein does (1977)), Connor (1988) promotes the rungs on his ladder as joined, as if they were stepping stones. In fact, it may even depict his model better if the rungs on the ladder were diagrammed as stepping stones on a pond - at least the ladder could be turned on its side so that the steps were horizontal rather than hierarchical.



(Connor, 1988, p.252)

Figure 6. Connor's ladder of citizen participation.

The steps that constitute Connor's (1988) model include two sections. The first section (bottom three rungs on his ladder) is labelled 'General Public' and includes education, information feedback, and consultation. The second section which includes rungs four, five, and six is referred to as 'Leaders' and includes joint planning, mediation and litigation. The final rung, represented at the top of the ladder, is entitled resolution/prevention - the ultimate achievement (Connor, 1988).

What is very different from Arnstein's ladder (1977) is that Connor (1988) perceives all of the rungs of his ladder to be examples of citizen participation. In fact the model has been developed so that each step builds upon its predecessor. Also, Connor (1988) includes a very necessary stage at the very bottom of his ladder that Arnstein (1977), Burke (1968), and Van Til and Van Til (1970) do not include - education. As Kubiski (1992) states, "...conscious raising...is the first step in forming citizen participation..." (p.15). What perhaps is not apparent in the diagram of a one-dimensional ladder is that the type of participation on rungs 2 and 4 or rungs 1 and 2,3,4,5,6, and 7 could be occurring at the very same time. Perhaps a three dimensional 'spiral' diagram might be more effective as it would depict such an overlap.

#### 4.4.5 Potapchuk's Model

McNeil (1992) remarks that there is yet another model of citizen participation that has greater present day relevance - Potapchuk's (1991) model which describes "...levels of shared decision making." (p.163) (see Figure 7). McNeil (1992) states that, "Potapchuk's typology reflects a move away from models that imply an inherent struggle for power in the political arena, toward models that incorporate a means of power balance." (p.18). Thus it is more reflective of present day activities in which citizens do not want to take power for themselves alone, but want to work with the government to better meet the needs of the citizens (Potapchuk, 1991).

Government Decides
Government Consults with Individuals and Decides
Government Consults with a Representative Group and Decides
Government Works with a Representative Group and They Jointly Decide
Government Delegates Decision To Others

(Potapchuk, 1991, p.163)

Figure 7. Potapchuk's levels of shared decision making.

The levels outlined in Potapchuk's (1991) model include from bottom to top, 'government delegates decision to others', 'government works with a representative group and they jointly decide', 'government consults with a representative group and decides', 'government consults with individuals and decides' and 'government decides' (p.163). With this model, progression downward results in greater representation of citizens - greater citizen participation. In Potapchuk's (1991) opinion, the most efficient and effective method of citizen participation is found on the fourth level from the top where the government and the representative group work collaboratively to develop a decision. In some cases, however, it is best to allow the citizens to decide because, after all, they are the experts in their area. Of all of the models presented within this chapter, Potapchuk's is definitely the most reflective of our current times.

#### 4.5 Benefits and Risks to Citizen Participation

There are a number of advantages and disadvantages (or benefits and risks) expressed in the literature regarding citizen participation. Some of the disadvantages, as will be illustrated, are not disadvantages at all but merely negativism on the part of skeptics of citizen participation and believers of the old traditional system that has seemingly 'worked' for decades (Berry, Portney & Thomson, 1993).

Kubiski (1992) addresses three main 'unpleasant realities' attached to citizen participation. The first is that citizen groups stand to run the risk of cooptation and persuasion by government officials. "This could mean that they are manipulated by the agencies, or that they are expected to accomplish with fewer resources what the agencies could not accomplish with larger resources (Kubiski, 1992, p.10). Second, Kubiski (1992) believes that there is a strong chance that citizen organisations may become just as bureaucratic as government itself. This risk is expressed by others as well (Arnstein, 1977; Berry, Portney & Thomson, 1993). Third, the 'have-nots' will

remain unable to gain access to resources and programmes because, "...programs and resources [will be] captured by the stronger and better organised interest groups." (Kubiski, 1992, p.10).

Draper (1991) provides two other disadvantages to citizen participation. He states that citizen participation can create, "...divided interests within a community..." (Draper, 1991, p.268). This, he feels, may lead to greater focus of attention on the opposition than on the initiative each set out to achieve. As well, Draper (1991) finds that a we/them dichotomy can develop as a citizen group becomes entrenched in its initiative - a distrust of professionals and government can be formed (Draper, 1991).

The three deadly sins - conflict, alienation and delay - have been described by Berry, Portney and Thomson(1993) in The Rebirth of Urban Democracy. These risks do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the authors, rather they are disadvantages noted within their text by others in the citizen participation field. The first risk, conflict, reflects what Draper (1991) refers to as a great divide between interest groups or citizen organisations within a community. Berry, et al., (1993) further this explanation by asking, "If there is a disagreement in a community, does participatory democracy make things worse than if the conflict were handled by representatives experienced in the art of compromise?" (Berry, et al., 1993, p.199). This risk can be avoided through the use of mediation programmes such as those that exist in both Portland and Seattle.

Alienation is the second drawback mentioned in Berry, Portney and Thomson's (1993) text. They cite Huntington (1975) who believes strongly that, "...conflict and disappointment lead to alienation from the political system...Increased alienation leads to declining trust in government and [a] sense of powerlessness." (Berry, et al., 1993, p.203). This risk is similar to the we/them dichotomy referred to by Draper (1991) above. Finally, the authors focus attention on delay, the third deadly sin (Berry, et al., 1993). By this they are referring to the fact that citizen participation, "...makes



government inefficient by needlessly slowing down the policymaking process.” (Berry, et al., 1993, p.206). This indeed is a reality of citizen participation but many would argue that it is a necessary one if the end product is to meet the needs of its users.

To counter the remarks promoted as risks and disadvantages to citizen participation are a number of advantages and benefits. Most of the authors writing about citizen participation recently, find that the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages and that if government is to be successful in meeting the needs of the populace it will be forced to support some degree of citizen participation (Berry, et al., 1993; Bregha, 1991; Cayley & McKnight, 1994; Draper, 1991; Kubiski, 1992; Munro-Clark, 1992).

When Kubiski (1992) states the risks to citizen participation he labels them positively as, “...less attractive realities.” (p.9) as opposed to disadvantages. He states that he cannot deny that these risks are prevalent but that there are many benefits which are prevalent as well. Kubiski (1992) reminds us that even though it has been tough, citizen participation has, “...survived a turbulent time and even expanded.” (p.11). This alone, he believes, is testament to the fact that citizen participation will only become stronger.

Kubiski (1992) also remarks that citizen participation has resulted in a great many citizen groups forming across North America, which means that more and more citizens are partaking, and which in turn means that more interests are attracting attention. Jim Diers of the Seattle Department of Neighbourhoods (a department that promotes citizen participation throughout Seattle) believes that it is healthy to have a number of interest groups. “They get at different angles...if one isn’t doing a great job then a new one comes along and holds them accountable...a little challenge is good.” (Interview, March 1, 1994). In addition, Kubiski (1992) feels that the increase in interest groups, “...has enlarged and integrated the political agenda.” (p.11).

McNeil (1993) describes citizen participation as a problem solving technique which is actually, "...helping to carry out the work of government." (p.10). McNeil (1993) agrees with Kubiski (1992) in that citizen participation means that the process and outcome of an initiative are more representative of what the citizens desire and need and that this is actually a positive selling point for government.

Berry, Portney and Thomson (1993) express concern about the three deadly sins that they review in their text. The authors state that,

...when administrators make a good-faith effort to make citizen participation work rather than trying to undermine it, the performance of public involvement programs is dramatically different from that described in the literature.

(p.213).

The authors go on to say that through their study of citizen participation structures they found citizen participation to be nonconflictual, and that it served to build community thereby lessening alienation. Delay, the authors report, is a drawback, "...but they overwhelmingly felt that the benefits outweighed the costs." (Berry, et al., 1993, p.213). In theory, the three deadly sins may take on negative hues but in practice they prove themselves to be otherwise.

#### 4.6 Demographics: Who Participates ?

Munro-Clark (1992) contends that there is an actual citizen participant continuum with characteristics of those most likely to participate on one end and characteristics of those least likely to participate on the other (See Figure 8). The determinants upon which these traits rest are, "...education, socioeconomic status, economic power, residential stability and sex..." (Munro-Clark, 1992, p.14). The author states that there are more of these factors (age, agility) but regards those mentioned as being most influential.

Smallest  
Amount  
Participation

●  
young  
female  
low SES  
rent home  
nomadic  
high school or less

Greatest  
Amount  
Participation

●  
middle-aged  
male  
high SES  
own home  
stable  
university or higher

(Adapted from Munro-Clark, 1992, p.14)

Figure 8. Demographics continuum: who is participating?

Berry, Portney and Thomson (1993) feel that the factor which divided the participants from the non-participants most often was socioeconomic status. In their study the authors found that generally, the higher the socioeconomic status, the greater the citizen participation in a community or neighbourhood.

Given these 'established' traits, Miller in Munro-Clark (1992) states that, "...the [typical] participant is a married, middle-aged, well-educated man who is active in voluntary organisations. His income is higher than average; he owns his own home and a car; he has resided in the area a long time and is active in local politics" (p.14).

What does this tell us? It seems as though there is some work to do if citizen participation is to be evenly encouraged. Certainly the entire spectrum (as presented on the continuum in Figure 8) of citizens must be focused upon. However, the demographics of who participates and who does not certainly indicates that there is a gradual need to provide greater support (encouragement, knowledge) as one moves left along the continuum. Jim Diers' (1994) recognition of this necessity is reflected in the programmes offered by the Seattle Department of Neighbourhoods to enhance neighbourhood empowerment. Jim Diers (1994) states that there are no programmes specific to lower income neighbourhoods but that the programmes available (to all citizens in the city) to enhance community building, and therefore citizen participation are requested more often by neighbourhoods requiring support.

The following section will address some tactics that can be utilised in the promotion of citizen participation.

#### 4.7 Promotion of Citizen Participation: Kubiski's Five Steps

Kubiski (1992) stresses that if citizen participation is not encouraged in Canada we will continue on our current path of powerlessness and alienation toward certain social destruction. To turn this process around is to avoid our most certain doom. Kubiski (1992) offers five steps to fostering greater citizen participation which he believes will initiate the route toward more efficient democracy.

The first step involves reminding, "...ourselves that we have a collective responsibility to preserve and improve our democracy." (Kubiski, 1992, p.15). Kubiski (1992) feels that meeting this step is the shared responsibility of individual citizens, public institutions and government. For the citizen, action within this step would entail gaining knowledge about current political events, and thinking about the role they might play close to home in a variety of community initiatives. Government and public institutions might create methods to encourage citizen input in their policies and programmes (Kubiski, 1992).

The second step is actually a combination of four sub-steps, 'consciousness raising', 'working through', 'resolution' and 'action' (Kubiski, 1992). 'Consciousness raising' involves the acquisition of knowledge regarding a particular issue. The 'working through' phase represents the change within as the information in the 'consciousness raising' phase alters former opinion on the issue at hand. 'Resolution' applies to the phase, "...in which the public resolves where it stands cognitively, emotionally and morally." (Kubiski, 1992, p.16). Finally, 'action' represents the phase where course of action is chosen and carried out by those involved (Kubiski, 1992).

The third step in the five step plan focuses upon education. Information regarding specific issues needs to be provided in a manner that is understandable to all without government bias (Is this even possible?). In addition, this step points out that, "We need ways of encouraging public dialogue on issues, making creative use of technology and the media." (Kubiski, 1992, p.17). Kubiski (1992) suggests that

methods of accomplishing this include kitchen table discussions, open line on a radio talk show, and informative local television shows.

The fourth step builds on the 'consciousness raising' that occurred in step two by stating that we need actual structures that would serve to, "...motivate citizens to become involved." (Kubiski, 1992, p.18). Examples of such structures exist in many cities across Canada and the United States. One such example is the Seattle Neighbourhoods Programme which has in place a number of mechanisms whereby citizens are encouraged to become actively involved in decisions concerning planning, service delivery and parks and recreation (Diers, 1994).

Finally, the fifth step involves recognition by the politicians and bureaucrats that, "...a major change has already taken place in the expectations of many citizens as to how their affairs will be managed and administered." (Kubiski, 1992, p.18). At the same time, citizens must be prepared to see not only the interests of their particular group but the interests of the larger community (Kubiski, 1992).

Kubiski's five steps are by no means utopian. Although there are many cities and municipalities that have yet to reach even the initial step, there are numerous areas that have reached the fifth step - Seattle, Portland, St. Paul, San Antonio, and Dayton in the United States and Richmond, Calgary and Edmonton in Canada. Those involved in the community association networks in these cities claim that the structure has served to bring people together, create long-lasting friendships, build parks, raise money for playgrounds, enable citizens to work with government to design developments, enhance community cultural, educational and recreational life, etcetera.....the list of positive effects the structures have had for respective communities is almost endless.

#### 4.8 Conclusion

And he named these little groups 'associations.' Association is the collective for citizens, an association of citizens. And so we think of our community as being the social space in which citizens in association do the work of problem -solving, celebration, consolation, and creation - that community, that space, in contrast to the space of the system with the box at the top and lots of little boxes at the bottom. And I think it is still the case that the hope for our time is in those associations.

(Cayley & McKnight, 1994, p.3)

As Kubiski (1992) has stated, the move toward involving citizens in local decision making has already begun - citizens are demanding participation. It is my opinion that the numerous cities in which a structure for citizen participation exists have paved a smooth road for citizens in other areas to demand the same (or similar). This type of neighbourhood city structure (such as that which exists in Seattle, Portland, San Antonio, Richmond and Calgary) seems most natural and all encompassing.

There is no denying that citizen participation in some form will eventually be welcomed (if not demanded) in most cities, for after all, the citizens are the experts about their communities and about what they need. Who better to bring to the decision making table? What better way to take some pressure off of local government with respect to issues such as developments, planning and rezoning? Those who have studied neighbourhood programmes in Portland, Dayton, St. Paul, Birmingham and San Antonio would certainly agree that befriending and working with the thorn is better than having it in your side (Berry, Portney and Thomson, 1993).

## 5. THE RESEARCH STUDY

### 5.1 Introduction

#### 5.1.1 Chapter Contents

As stated in chapter one of this thesis its purpose is to examine existing models of municipal government linked neighbourhood organisation structure. This chapter provides such an examination as it contains the reporting and analysis of participant responses from four separate municipalities. To provide the reader with an in-depth description of the models of neighbourhood organisation structure examined within this chapter, analysis of responses is reported over four sections. In the initial section, data collected from the office of neighbourhoods respondents (through interview's) is examined. In the second section, data collected from the neighbourhood association respondents (through questionnaire's) is detailed. The third section provides a comparison of office of neighbourhoods and neighbourhood association respondents. Finally, the fourth section presents some overall themes that were evident in both the office of neighbourhoods and neighbourhood association respondents' data. The chapter begins with an overview of the research methodology, sampling technique, measures and data collection procedure utilised for the purposes of this investigation.

#### 5.1.2 The Participating Municipalities

To maintain confidentiality, the names of the actual cities involved within this research are not revealed. Instead they are assigned false names and are referred to throughout this chapter as City 'A', City 'B', City 'C' and City 'D'.

Within each of the four municipalities there exists a long-standing history of citizen participation. In all four cities, neighbourhood associations formed initially, with office of neighbourhoods forming much later. Early development of each neighbourhood organisation structure was definitely of a grass roots nature.



In City 'A' neighbourhood associations have been in operation for many years - the current director of neighbourhood associations for this city vividly recalls being dragged to neighbourhood association meetings as a child. The office of neighbourhoods formed in the middle 1970's in response to local governments realisation of the need to establish a formal process for recognising the numerous neighbourhood associations and for providing assistance to them.

City 'B' has a long-standing history of local government organised citizen participation programmes in addition to the numerous neighbourhood associations (developed solely by citizens) which have existed for many years. In the late 1980's the office of neighbourhoods was established to ensure ongoing citizen participation in local government affairs as well as to empower citizens to work on their own agenda's (such as the improvement of their specific communities).

The citizen participation history of City 'C' began over 50 years ago when a group of citizens banded together to discuss the state of recreational facilities within the municipality. A proposal to local government for the development of a playground marked the beginnings of the first neighbourhood association within City 'C'. This neighbourhood association continued its fight for recreational facilities with the purchase of a community centre and playing field. Gradually, the community centre grew to be too large of an operation for a small group of citizens to manage and so the neighbourhood group that developed it decided to turn it over to local government. This initial neighbourhood association offered an example to citizens of other neighbourhoods and it was not long before new neighbourhood associations were formed. The office of neighbourhoods in City 'C' developed to act as a support for the neighbourhood groups, to act in partnership with them to ensure that the needs of the community were being met, and to encourage the initiation of neighbourhood associations where they did not already exist.

City 'D' has a history of organised neighbourhood groups that dates back to the early 1960's when the working class sought to protect their neighbourhoods from the influx of the wealthy. The tradition of neighbourhood associations has grown so strong in City 'D' that an association exists in every developed neighbourhood of the municipality. In the early 1960's it was recognised by the neighbourhood association members that it would be better if they came together to form one overall group so that they could learn from one another and so that they could create more of a united front when dealing with local government. The result was the formation of the office of neighbourhoods in City 'D'.

## 5.2 Methodology

### 5.2.1 Description of the Research Design

The methodological design utilised within this research is both purposive and descriptive and yields qualitative data. It is purposive in that participants were chosen purposefully by the researcher and it is descriptive in that it describes the models of neighbourhood organisation structure examined. The complete description of the design of this research is illustrated in Figure 9.

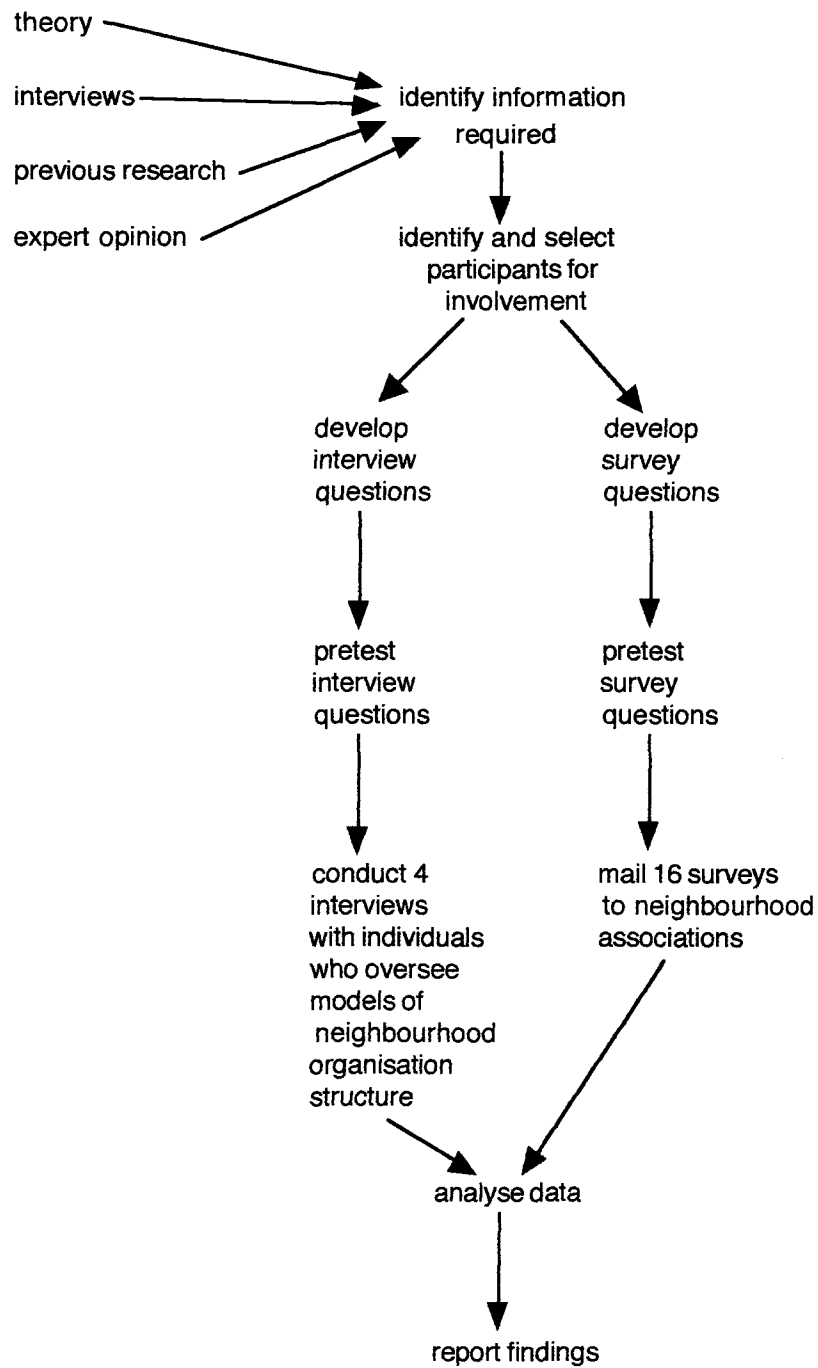


Figure 9. Diagrammatic description of the research design.

Initially, theory and previous research in the area to be studied were carefully examined. At this beginning stage key informant interviews were also conducted. This 'background information gathering' was necessary in that it resulted in the identification of precise information required for the purposes of this research. In addition, the key informants provided advice as to the models of neighbourhood organisation structures which would yield the most variety and the most fruitful data for the purposes of this study.

Next, the questionnaire and interview questions were developed. Both were guided by the knowledge provided by the key informants and the knowledge gained through previous research and relevant theory. Both the questionnaire and interview were pretested and examined by a second set of key informants (also experts in the field). This pretest was conducted in order to ensure that the measure would yield all of the desired information.

Standardised, taped, face-to-face interviews were conducted with each of the 4 individuals responsible for overseeing models of neighbourhood organisation structures linked with respective local governments. Three of the interviews were conducted in person and 1 was conducted over the telephone due to travel constraints. Personal interviews were chosen for use with these four individuals as it was desired that as much information as possible be acquired from them. Questionnaires were mailed to 12 neighbourhood associations (three within each of the four jurisdictional areas). The questionnaires contained questions similar to those used during the interviews but, due to time constraints, were mailed rather than conducted face-to-face. Following receipt of the information provided by participants, data was coded and analysed and recommendations were identified.

### 5.2.2 Sampling Design and Size

Sampling design is purposive as units of analysis (participants) were specifically and intentionally selected from a larger population of potential participants. Rationale for this was threefold. First, it was desired that models of neighbourhood organisation structure that were at different stages of government linked development were examined; three structures are municipal government linked and of these two are well established and one is in the beginning stages of development, the fourth structure is linked with its municipal government but does not operate within that municipal government. Second, the number of participants involved in the study had to be limited in order that all information could be collected within the time frame of the study. Third, in order to develop useful recommendations, it was important that successful neighbourhood association structures be examined; each of the four neighbourhood organisation structures chosen have reputations for genuinely and effectively promoting citizen/local government relations. The neighbourhood associations selected within each of the four jurisdictions were also chosen purposefully. A list of all neighbourhood associations in each municipality was obtained from the office of neighbourhoods participant. Three neighbourhood associations were chosen from each municipality; a mature neighbourhood association, a newly formed neighbourhood association and a middle-aged neighbourhood association. This was done to ensure representativeness of both newly developing and older, more established associations.

In total, 12 participants were involved in this study. Four of the participants are individuals responsible for overseeing models of neighbourhood organisation structure. Of these, two are located in the United States and two are located in Canada. Each of the four models of neighbourhood organisation structure operate within a city.

Eight of the 12 participants involved are neighbourhood association presidents or members. Of these five are located in the United States, and three are located in Canada. A minimum of one and a maximum of three neighbourhood associations were involved from within each of the four municipalities in which the models of neighbourhood organisation structure operate.

Recruitment of all participants occurred initially through the mail. Participants were provided with a letter requesting their involvement in the study and outlining what that involvement would entail (see Appendix 1). Individuals were asked to respond to the request either through the mail, by telephone or by facsimile. Following this initial contact, telephone communication was used.

### 5.2.3 Measures

The purpose of the measures for use within this study is that they encourage data which relate to the research question: 'What factors are of primary importance in implementing and maintaining a model of neighbourhood organisation structure?' Each question in both measures relates to this research question. Hence the measures relate directly to the variables which are of importance to the study.

Two types of measures were chosen in order to collect data for the purposes of this study. Both measures are similar in content in order that they yield comparable information (so that comparisons can be made between the information provided by the governing bodies and the neighbourhood associations). Although similar, one measure was utilised as a personal interview and the other as a mailed questionnaire. Both the questionnaire and the interview contain primarily open-ended questions as well as some nominal and contingency questions (see Appendix 2).

The reason for choosing to utilise questionnaires and personal interviews was that they seemed to be the most feasible and efficient methods by which a large amount of qualitative data could be acquired from participants. Another type of

measure would not have suited the nature of the enquiry (the type of qualitative information required). The main reason for choosing measures which contain primarily open-ended questions was that the acquisition of a wide breadth of information from participants was desired; it was thought that the utilisation of a measure which contained mostly open-ended questions would yield the maximum amount of information. In addition, the type of questions contained within the measure enabled participants to respond with information which the researcher had not considered (or even requested).

The measures utilised for the purposes of this study are such that their reliability is relatively low. The measures used to gather data within this study were used in three different ways - over the phone, in person, and as a mailed questionnaire - so it cannot be said that similar information was yielded each time. In fact, it was obvious from the data received that the face-to-face interviews yielded an abundance of information, the telephone interview yielded less information and the questionnaires yielded an even lesser amount of information.

With respect to validity, the measures can be said to contain face validity, content validity and construct validity. The measures utilised have face validity; that is on the face of it the measures measure what they are supposed to measure. Face validity was determined by the judgment of the researcher and the key informants. It is possible also to state that both measures (interview and questionnaire) contain content validity, that is they cover the range of information regarded as being included within the concept of models of neighbourhood organisation structure linked with respective local governments. As with face validity, content validity is also determined by the judgment of the key informants (Rubin and Babbie, 1989). Finally, the measures can be said to contain construct validity. Construct validity refers to how well a researcher's measures correlate with the theoretical concepts that surround the problem in question. Construct validity is determined through making comparisons



with other measures that are visibly related theoretically with the concepts that the researcher's study is examining (Bloom and Fischer, 1982). It appears that the measures have construct validity as the questions asked within this research are similar to those asked in measures utilised in other research studies examining the same topic area (Berry, Portney and Thomson, 1993).

### 5.2.4 Data Collection Procedure

#### i. The Interviews

Before the interviews began, participants were asked to read and provide their consent for audio taping (see Appendix 3). The interviews were audio taped to assure that the researcher was certain not to miss any information provided during the interview process. Three of the interviews were conducted face-to-face with the interviewer travelling to the interviewee. One interview was conducted over the phone due to both time, travel and financial constraints. The interviews were conducted question by question although responses often strayed outside the 'boundaries' of each question.

Each interview was transcribed, and then the audiotapes were erased. Transcripts were made available to the researcher only, in order to respect the confidentiality of the participants. Interview response was 100 % with four out of four interviews completed. Data from each of the four interview transcriptions are included in the analysis.

#### ii. Questionnaires

The questionnaires were mailed out and respondents were asked to return them in completed form four weeks from time of reception. A covering letter (see Appendix Four) accompanied the mailed questionnaires stating the participants' rights with respect to the study. Questionnaire response was 67 % with eight of the 12 questionnaires completed. Data from each of the eight returned questionnaires are included in the data analysis.

### 5.2.5 Data Analysis

#### i. The Interviews

The interviews contained 23 questions in all. Some questions (ie. those relating to communication) could easily be grouped into specific categories and so interview responses regarding neighbourhood organisation structure were divided into 11 categories (see Table 1).

These categories were decided upon subjectively by the researcher and by key informants so that comparisons could be made between the qualitative data collected from each of the four transcripts. The 11 categories are directly reflective of the type of information desired by the District of North Vancouver.

#### ii. The Questionnaires

The questionnaires contained 43 questions in all. As with the interviews, it was possible to group some of the related questions together into a smaller number of categories. The questionnaire categories correspond greatly to the interview categories described in Table 1 and include those found in Table 2.

#### iii. Comparison of Information Received

In order to summarise the information obtained, comparisons will be made between interview and questionnaire responses. This will be done subjectively by the researcher using only the relevant categories outlined in Tables 1 and 2. Table 3 outlines the categories that will be used for comparison and illustrates how they were developed.

Category Number and Category	Interview Question Number
a. Motivation behind formation of neighbourhood structure	1,2
b. Goals and objectives of office of neighbourhoods for neighbourhood organisation structure	3,4
c. Communication	5,6,7,8,9
d. Organisational framework	10,11,12
e. Involvement and liaison with other organisations	13
f. Encouragement of neighbourhood association involvement in city affairs	14
g. Criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations	15,16,17
h. Role of and type of support offered by the office of neighbourhoods	18,19,20
i. Role of neighbourhood associations	21
j. Value of the overall neighbourhood programme	22
k. Suggestions for new neighbourhood organisation structures	23

Table 1: Interview Analysis Categories

Category Number and Category	Questionnaire Question Number
a. Motivation behind and involvement of office of neighbourhoods in the initiation of the neighbourhood association	2,3,4,5
b. Goals and objectives of neighbourhood association	6,7
c. Communication	10,11,12,13,14
d. Perception of neighbourhood organisation structure and office of neighbourhoods	24,25
e. Neighbourhood association involvement in City Hall and office of neighbourhoods affairs	28,29,30,31
f. Neighbourhood association membership eligibility requirements and criteria	8,15,16,17,34,35,36
g. Role of and type of support offered by office of neighbourhoods	32,33,37
h. Role of the neighbourhood associations	20,39,40
i. Structure of the neighbourhood associations	18,19,21,22,23,26,27
j. Value and benefit of the link between neighbourhood associations and the office of neighbourhoods	38
k. Suggestions for new neighbourhood associations and new neighbourhood organisation structures	9,41,42,43

Table 2: Questionnaire Analysis Categories

Section 5.2.1 Interview Category (title and letter)	Section 5.2.2 Questionnaire Category (title and letter)	Section 5.2.3 Comparative Analysis Category
Communication (c)	+ Communication (c)	= A. Communication
Organisational framework (d)	+ Perception of neighbourhood organisation structure and office of neighbourhoods (d)	= B. Perception of neighbourhood organisation structure
Encouragement of neighbourhood association involvement in city affairs (f)	+ Neighbourhood association involvement in City Hall/office of neighbourhoods affairs (e)	= C. Neighbourhood association involvement in City Hall
Criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations (g)	+ Criteria for recognition as a neighbourhood association (f)	= D. Criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations as set by the office of neighbourhoods
Role of and type of support offered by the office of neighbourhoods (h)	+ Role of and type of support offered by the office of neighbourhoods (g)	= E. Role of and type of support offered by the office of neighbourhoods
Role of the neighbourhood association (i)	+ Role of the neighbourhood association (h)	= F. Role of the neighbourhood associations
Value of the neighbourhood programme (j)	+ Value and benefit of the link between the neighbourhood association and the neighbourhood structure/office of neighbourhoods (j)	= G. Benefits to the link between the neighbourhood associations and the neighbourhood organisation structure/office of neighbourhoods

**Table 3.** Categories for comparison of office of neighbourhoods (interviews) and neighbourhood association responses (questionnaires) and how they were developed.

#### iv. Identifying Major Themes

An overall qualitative coding process was utilised in order that major themes could be illuminated throughout both the interview and questionnaire data. The text of both the interviews and the questionnaires were combed line by line in order to draw out main points from the dialogue (open coding). Then, these main points were grouped according to similar properties (axial coding). Finally, a subjective category was developed which identified the groupings (category stage). An example of this from the text is as follows.

The main points taken directly from the data and grouped together because they share similar properties are,

“...we have to react...” (ie. react to the neighbourhood associations)

“...we have to be responsible...” (ie. to the neighbourhood associations)

“...we have to be there to serve and help them do what it is they need to be doing...”

These three statements seem to demand the heading, 'Community Accountability' of the neighbourhood organisation structure (see Appendix 4 for an example of transcript coding).

Other major themes were developed without the use of this process. In all, the themes which will be discussed include:

Independence of Neighbourhood Associations

Accountability of Neighbourhood Organisation  
Structure and City Hall to Neighbourhood  
Associations (citizens)

Repetition of Bureaucracy/Hierarchy

Open Information Exchange

Functional Organisation versus Geographic  
Organisation

## 5.3 Findings and Results

### 5.3.1 The Interviews

As stated in the methods section of this document, data from the interviews have been grouped into 11 categories. In this portion of the findings and results section the interview responses are examined category by category. Differences and similarities among the four neighbourhood organisation structures (from the point of view of the interviewees - individuals at the office of neighbourhoods level) will be discussed.

#### a. Motivation Behind Formation of Neighbourhood Structure

With two of the four neighbourhood organisation structures, the impetus or motivation behind formation originated with the respective City Hall. Development occurred for a variety of reasons. One respondent stated that the city wanted to know who was out there, and that,

We wanted to establish a formal process for  
recognising neighbourhood associations and  
for providing support and assistance to them.

The second respondent remarked that although the city had numerous citizen participation programmes they wanted to recognise and assist in the independence of neighbourhood associations. They wanted to, "...support citizens to work on their own agendas and support their own organisations."

The remaining two neighbourhood association structures developed as a result of citizen initiative. With one neighbourhood association structure initiation was, "...very grass roots." Members of an existing neighbourhood association approached the city because they no longer had the financial ability to serve their growing community. A partnership between the city and the citizen association was forged.



The fourth neighbourhood organisation structure was, "Initiated by a number of communities (six) getting together...who thought it better if they formed one overall group so that they were not reinventing the wheel." There was some municipal involvement in the development of the neighbourhood organisation structure but the control was in the hands of the citizens.

b. Goals and Objectives of Office of Neighbourhoods for Neighbourhood Organisation Structure

Of the four neighbourhood organisation structure respondents, one stood out as encouraging real empowerment within the citizens and as promoting a relationship between citizens and city departments. This rings true in the goals and objectives for this particular structure,

Give neighbourhoods tools and resources to be more proactive in dealing with the city and in developing their neighbourhoods...to strengthen the grass roots organisations...and to help other [city] departments relate better to neighbourhoods.

Another respondent spoke of the need to create a structure,

To provide a process for recognising and providing support and assistance to the neighbourhood associations.

The third and fourth respondents also spoke of the need to support the neighbourhood associations, but included working with the groups for the betterment of the entire community. Their goals and objectives are,

...to act as a support for these groups. To try and work in partnership with them to ensure the needs of the community are being met.

To assist community associations to function efficiently and effectively.

For both of these structures, the neighbourhood associations are seen almost as a conduit through which the city can provide its services. One respondent referred to this process as inevitable given the,

...expansion at the lower levels of government  
because of cutbacks from the top.

### c. Communication

Communication between the office of neighbourhoods and their respective neighbourhood associations occurs in a variety of ways. Basically these can be grouped into 'direct communication' and 'indirect communication'. Direct communication refers to communication which takes place between the director or staff of the neighbourhood organisation structure and the neighbourhood associations. Indirect communication refers to that which takes place through someone else or some other organisation.

Methods of direct communication reported consist of (Information in brackets indicates number of neighbourhood organisation structures out of four who use the method of communication, and frequency of use):

- ◆ telephone to neighbourhood association presidents (3, daily-weekly)
- ◆ personal meetings, both formal and informal (4, as they occur)
- ◆ special mailings to neighbourhood associations (2, as required)
- ◆ newsletter (2, monthly)
- ◆ meetings with the neighbourhood association presidents (2, as they occur - every second month)
- ◆ facsimile to the neighbourhood association presidents (2, weekly - as required)
- ◆ meetings with neighbourhood associations (1, weekly)

- ◆ workshops with neighbourhood associations (1, as they occur)
- ◆ luncheon with all neighbourhood association presidents (1, semi-annually)
- ◆ town hall meetings in neighbourhoods with Mayor, department representatives and neighbourhood associations (1, regularly)
- ◆ neighbourhood walking tours with the Mayor and specific department representatives (1, regularly)

Methods of indirect communication reported consist of:

- ◆ in-person, informal contact with satellite staff person who is located within a neighbourhood and has direct contact with area neighbourhood associations/neighbourhoods (3, daily - biweekly)
- ◆ memos sent through intermediary to neighbourhood associations (2, as necessary)
- ◆ telephone to intermediary who has spoken directly to neighbourhood association (1, weekly)
- ◆ facsimile message sent through intermediary to neighbourhood/neighbourhood associations (1, weekly)

When asked if they thought overall communication took place often enough all of the respondents said yes. It quickly became clear that the frequency of communication was not the issue in need of attention. One of the respondents remarked that, "...we're looking to improve the efficiency and the form of communication, not the frequency...we need to improve the effectiveness of it." In keeping with this, another neighbourhood organisation structure director stated that it matters little how much communication takes place but rather, "What does matter is that someone is at the other end receiving it and distributing it to the right person." Effectiveness and efficiency seemed to be the areas in need of attention if communication were to be improved.

How could the effectiveness and efficiency be improved? Three of the four respondents stated that computers might help. One interviewee specifically stated,

There's so much paper...and computers can probably help with that...people can then access what they need rather than us sending everything to people and then they have to sort through all sorts of paper.

Another respondent alluded to the fact that although a great deal of communication is directed to the neighbourhood associations,

It takes person power to get the message to the members, not every association has time to do all of that.

This respondent is waiting to be linked with respective neighbourhood associations through E-mail which the respondent believes will vastly improve communication throughout the neighbourhood network.

Finally, the suggestion was made by one respondent that communication could be made more, "...accessible and manageable for an average citizen." This is perhaps a blanket statement which can improve effectiveness and efficiency of any method of communication between an office of neighbourhoods and their respective neighbourhood associations.

Although not directly asked, each of the four respondents stated that it was the informal communication which proved most beneficial.

That personal communication is really important... you know...people really hate the bureaucracy, hate government.

Trying to maintain an informal relationship too... that's the big part.

We have close communicative ties...informal ties.

The associations also have things called appreciation weeks during which they invite counsellors to a barbecue. And its amazing how much communication comes out of an informal setting such as that as opposed to the formal methods.

#### d. Organisational Framework

Of the four models of neighbourhood organisation structure, three exist within the framework of city government as departments. The remaining one exists outside of city government but is linked quite strongly to it. The organisational frameworks of the four models of neighbourhood organisation structure range from being quite hierarchical (due to outside constraints such as those imposed by city government) to being very non-hierarchical. All agreed however, that information flowed quite freely in all directions throughout the organisational structure and that no matter what the degree of hierarchy, the citizens had powerful influence in city affairs.

##### City A. The inverted pyramid.

The first respondent described the framework of their respective neighbourhood organisation structure as an inverted pyramid with the city and council at the bottom and the citizens at the top. Figure 10 provides a visual representation of this framework.

In reference to Figure 10 the citizens have the, "...option to be a part of any number of neighbourhood associations." In all there are approximately 89 neighbourhood associations. Each neighbourhood association is part of one of seven 'neighbourhood coalitions' depending upon geographic location. These neighbourhood coalitions comprise the next level in the framework. Each of the neighbourhood coalitions is made up of one or two individuals from each of the neighbourhood associations in its geographical area. The number of neighbourhood associations involved with each coalition varies from six to 22. The respondent

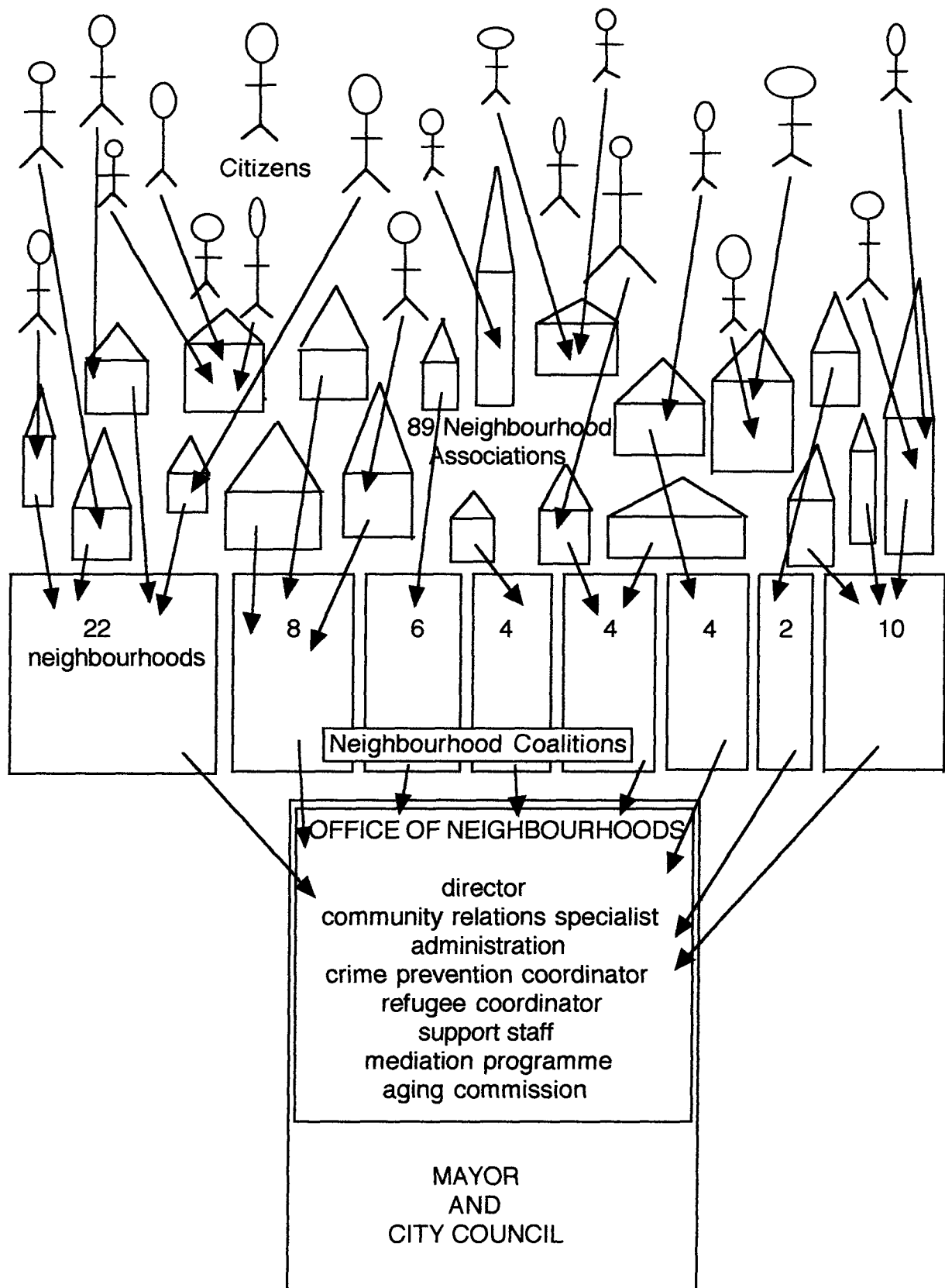


Figure 10. The inverted pyramid.

remarked that the fight to be the neighbourhood representative on the coalition ranges from "...all right, I'm kind of interested, I'll do it for a while." to, "...tremendous jockeying for position among members of a neighbourhood association." Positions on the neighbourhood coalitions are completely voluntary.

The next level in this inverted pyramid framework is the 'office of neighbourhoods' which exists within the framework of the city as a city department. Within this portion of the structure exists a number of paid staff as follows,

- ◆ a director
- ◆ a crime prevention coordinator
- ◆ a refugee coordinator
- ◆ administration
- ◆ a community relations specialist
- ◆ two support staff
- ◆ seven full time equivalents for the mediation programme

Finally, at the bottom of this inverted pyramid is the Mayor and City council. It was stressed that this level is by no means an isolated entity and that often neighbourhood associations will proceed directly to the Mayor and city council with their projects and demands bypassing all of the levels in between. Information and process then does not only flow from one adjacent level to the next.

When asked what changes might be made to the framework the respondent expressed that the role of the coalitions would need to be examined and that this was indeed something that was being looked into. With respect to the coalitions the respondent posed the following question,

...in the end, in the wash, when its all said and done,  
do they [the coalitions] promote citizen involvement  
and participation, or have we created another level of  
bureaucracy?

### City B. The circular framework.

The second respondent spoke of the difficulty in diagramming the framework of the particular neighbourhood organisation structure with which the respondent is involved. As with framework 'A' described above, this respondent believed that citizens were able to access any part or level of the framework as necessary. Unlike framework 'A' however, all departments of the city (including the office of neighbourhoods) as well as city council are diagrammed as separate from the neighbourhood programme. This is to demonstrate visually, the "...fierce independence..." of the neighbourhood structure.

As can be seen in Figure 11 two circles are used to portray the framework. In one circle can be found the city departments (including the department which oversees the neighbourhood organisation structure) and the Mayor and council. In the other circle, separate from the first circle, is the neighbourhood association programme (minus the department of neighbourhoods responsible for the neighbourhood organisation structure). Within this second circle are three basic parts.

The very outside of the circle represents the numerous neighbourhood associations and groups (of which there are approximately 200). The middle portion of the circle represents the 'district councils' of which there are 13. Like the 'neighbourhood coalitions' discussed in framework 'A' the district councils are comprised of one representative from each neighbourhood association within the particular district area. These district councils do not operate in place of the neighbourhood associations and interest groups but rather offer a setting in which information sharing can take place and be reported back to the respective neighbourhood associations. The respondent states of the district councils,

The district councils are really the only place where they all come together, both business and residential, so its sort of a unique form that way where you get all the neighbourhood interests at the table.



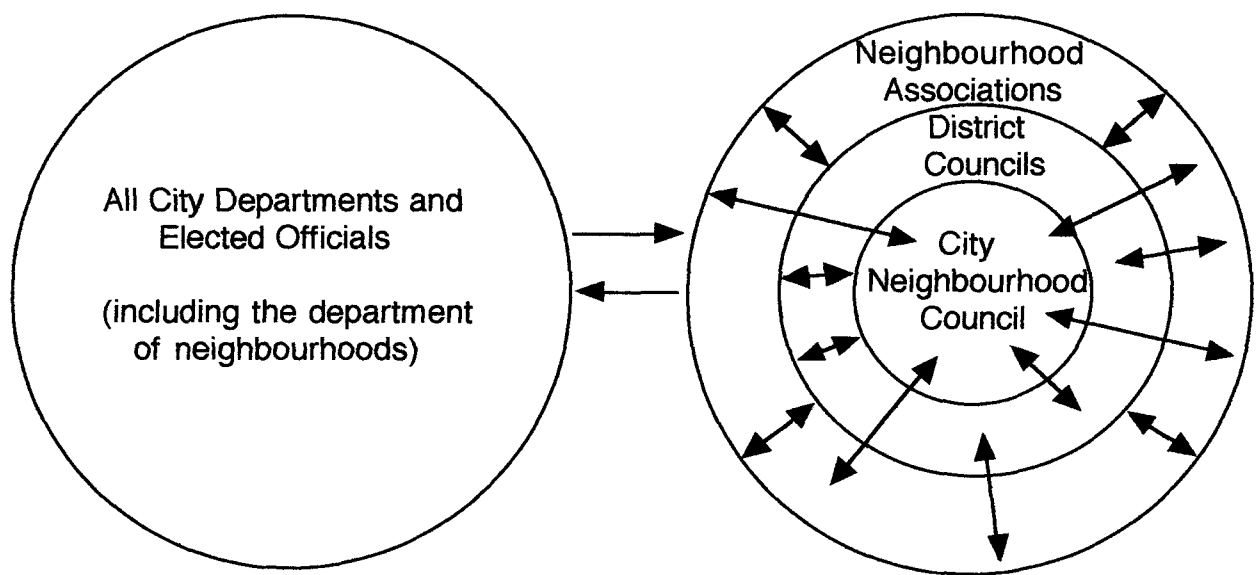


Figure 11. The circular framework.

The respondent also stressed that the city staff in the service centres which operate in each of the 13 district areas do not control any of the activities of the neighbourhood associations or district councils in the particular district area but rather assist, and empower them to be, "...proactive..." in their activities.

Finally, the centre of the circle marks the position of the 'city neighbourhood council' which consists of two individuals from each district council - one from a neighbourhood based organisation and one from a business based organisation.

The arrows represent the flow of information and communication and contact which occurs (as represented on figure 11) in all directions, between each portion of the right hand circle and between the portions of the right hand circle and the left hand circle.

When asked what changes could be made to provide an even better overall neighbourhood organisation structure the respondent stated that he would work on improving and modifying the city neighbourhood council. To begin with, the respondent would work on reinforcing the ties between the city neighbourhood council and the district council. This, the respondent felt, was paramount,

..because one concern that we've always fought against is that these groups can take on a life of their own...we always need to remember that the reason they're there is to help make neighbourhood associations stronger and not to take power for themselves. So the more we can reinforce these ties back the better.

In addition, structural changes would be made to the city neighbourhood council. Instead of having two representatives from each district council (one business and one neighbourhood based) the respondent feels that one representative would prove to be more effective. The representative would automatically consist of the chairperson of each of the district councils because, it is felt that this person is best able to represent the district council.

### City C. The hierarchy.

The third neighbourhood organisation structure is described as operating within a framework which is formally quite hierarchical in nature. The respondent reminds, however, that although the framework appears to be extremely hierarchical information still flows between all of the different levels allowing the citizens to contact the highest level in the hierarchy directly.

...citizens can bypass us staff and go directly to members of the commission or council...

The framework is diagrammed in Figure 12. At the top is the Mayor and council followed by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Next is the Director of Parks and Leisure Services. Under this director lies the Manager of Community Programmes and Services. It is on the final level, the bottom-most level that the neighbourhood associations are located. Of this framework the interviewee states,

I think it is hierarchical - when you're dealing with the bureaucracy at City Hall you really have to go through the formal (reports) - but it's also informal in the sense that the individuals on community association boards have their individual contacts with their counsellors and other people in the community that allows them to be informal. So from a staff perspective it's more hierarchical but from the community perspective depending on the individual they can make it as flat as they want to.

### City D. The independent framework.

Finally, the fourth neighbourhood organisation structure operates independently of its city government. It is a citizen driven framework within which the different levels try to work cooperatively with one another. The respondent states that,

The structure is supportive and inclusive. If the community associations didn't exist, we [neighbourhood organisation structure] would not exist - it's consumer driven so it can't be hierarchical. It's a fairly flat structure.

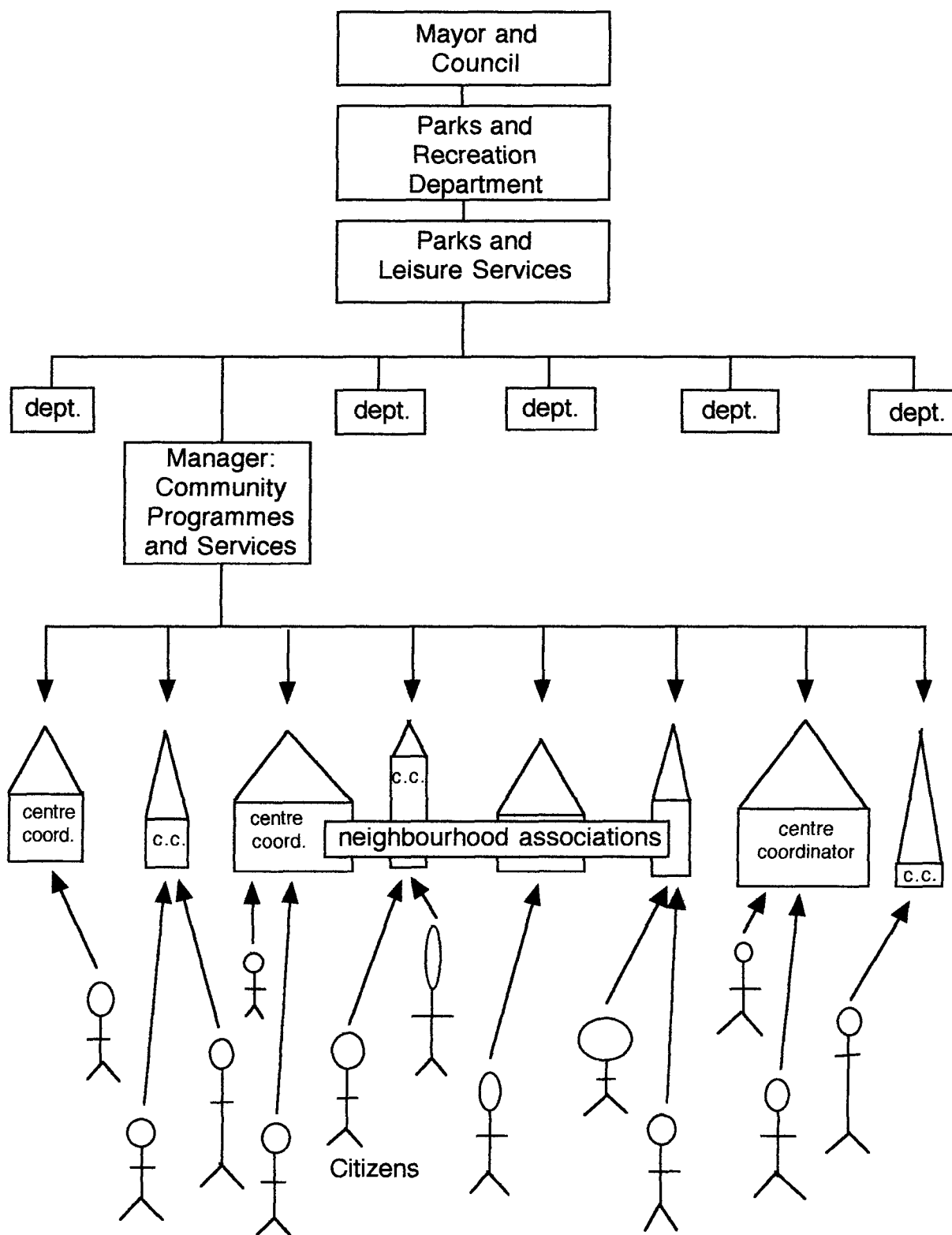


Figure 12. The hierarchy

Figure 13 offers a visual look at the framework of this particular neighbourhood organisation structure. The Central Council is at the top of the framework. This body consists of those neighbourhood associations who choose to become members of the neighbourhood organisation structure. Of the 124 neighbourhood associations, 85 are members and therefore make up the Central Council. Below this level is the Central Council Board of Directors. Members to this Board are elected annually from the pool of the 85 Central Council members. This Board of Directors includes an Executive Committee (made up of board members elected to positions by other board members), an Internal Committee (made up of board members who volunteer for positions), and an External Committee (comprised of individuals other than existing board members that are appointed by board members).

The next level in this framework is the neighbourhood organisation structure office staff of which there are four. These include the director and 3 other support staff. Finally, at the bottom of the framework are the community associations of which there are 124 in total - 85 members to the neighbourhood organisation structure and 39 non-members.

The arrows are drawn to display that the flow of information and communication can occur in a variety of directions and between a variety of levels. The circle surrounding the entire framework depicts the inclusion of it's parts as well as its separateness from municipal government. The jagged line represents the structure's influential tie to the municipal government (which is quite strong and implies involvement in such areas as planning, rezoning, and development).

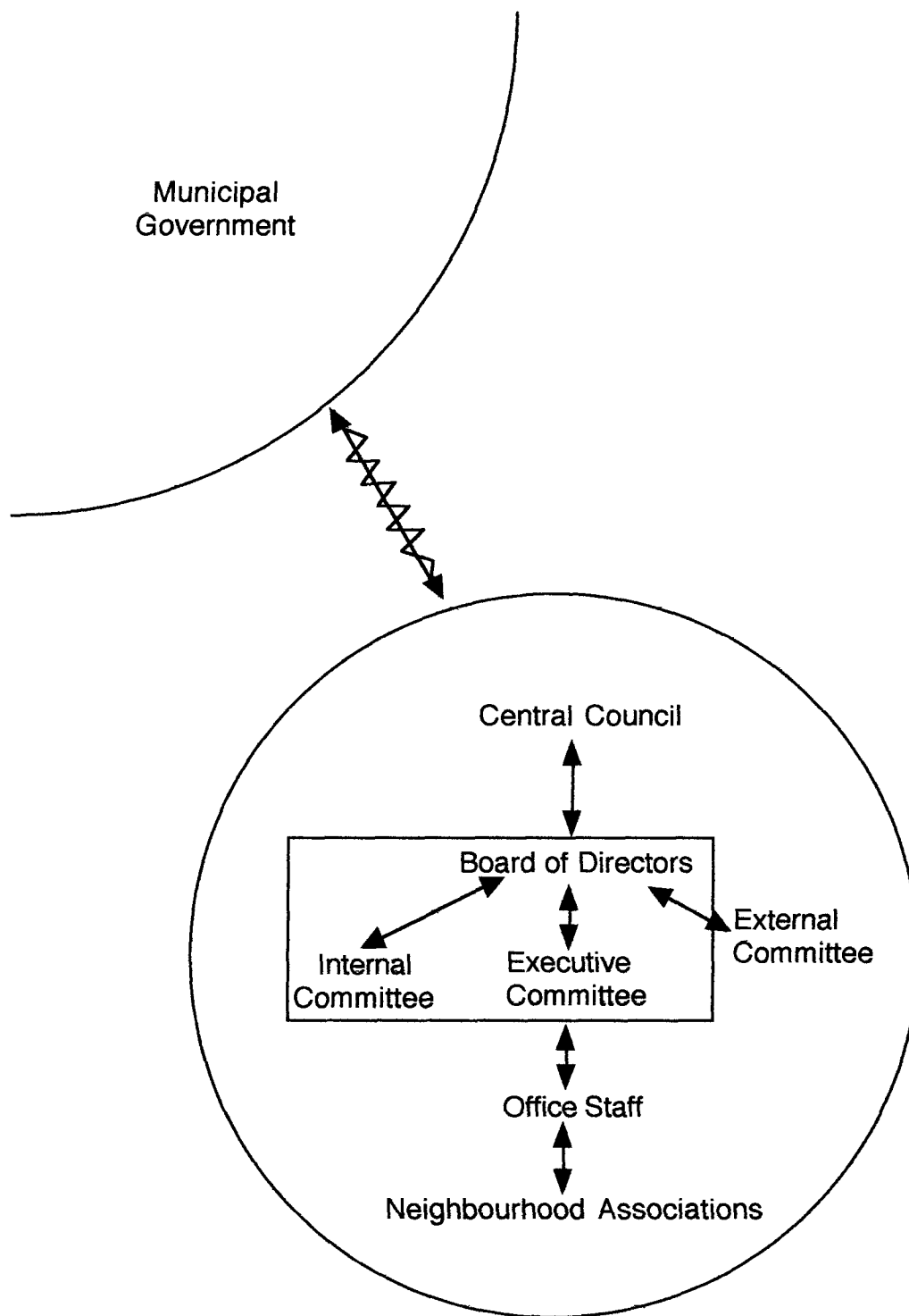


Figure 13. The independent framework.

#### e. Involvement and Liaison With Other Organisations

Respondents were asked what types of liaisons their particular office of neighbourhoods/neighbourhood organisation structure had with each of the following: federal government, provincial/state government, municipal government, recreation department, police, sports associations, and business groups. Among the four neighbourhood organisation structures liaisons varied greatly in terms of which organisations they were involved with and in terms of the type of involvement (ie. financial, policy setting).

Connections with the federal government occur with three of the four neighbourhood organisation structures although the connection is referred to as very minimal, "...we don't have a lot of federal involvement." For two of the three that had some connection with the federal government that tie was related directly to provision of funds. One received funding for two staff positions as well as for an historical buildings programme and the other received GST breaks for community associations that are registered as charities. For the third neighbourhood organisation structure, the relationship to the federal government was policy related, "...policies that have any inner city orientation, we can get looped into that."

State and provincial government connection was equally as limited. Again three of the four neighbourhood organisation structures had contact with the provincial or state governments. For one structure the connection was again policy related,

...certain policies come out of state agencies that have a direct impact on the neighbourhoods.

For a second structure involvement entailed connections with a number of departments,

...with gaming, municipal affairs, community development, education departments and other departments as issues arise.

For a third structure connection meant simply that they received transfer payments from the provincial government. This funding actually came through the municipality and so the connection is considered very indirect.

Each neighbourhood organisation structure stated that they had (and this is obviously not surprising) very close contact with their respective municipal government. One respondent summed up his structure's connection with municipal government by stating,

Every issue in the city is a neighbourhood issue  
so there's no department that we don't relate to.

Although it was reported that every department can potentially be liaised with when issues arise, those departments specifically noted by respondents include the planning (and building) department, the engineering department, the public health department, the licensing department, the city port department, the transit commission, parks and recreation commission and the police department.

The police department was closely liaised with in all of the neighbourhood organisation structures examined. Three respondents in particular stated that very strong associations exist between their respective structure and the local police. Two of these liaised closely with community policing programmes. Both of these structures had some sort of 'store front' policing where one or two policemen at a time were assigned to neighbourhood store front offices that encouraged citizens to walk in with any type of assistance requests.

As with the police departments, the parks and recreation departments in each of the four municipal areas are closely liaised with. This was the case particularly for all four respondents. One stated that the connection was linked with neighbourhood development of parks,



A lot of the issues that happen are related to parks - neighbourhoods wanting open space, neighbourhoods wanting new community centres, neighbourhoods concerned about the impacts of new community centres, neighbourhoods supporting recreation programmes.

Another neighbourhood organisation structure is so closely linked with the recreation department that is actually a subset of that department (see Figure Five in framework section). This particular structure has its roots in recreation and although it has grown to include citizen involvement in a great many other city departments the recreation component is still very strong.

Sports associations were liaised with tenuously. For one structure there was no connection, the sports associations were quite independent of the structure. For a second structure, sports associations were considered neighbourhood groups. For a third, sports associations were connected with only when they utilised the mediation programme. The fourth structure had the strongest connection in that it assisted in the forming of relationships between the neighbourhood associations and the sports associations,

We help them get together...if they want to build a field house we would connect them.

Each of the neighbourhood organisation structures except one is somehow connected with business associations. The nature of the connection seems to be a symbiotic one,

Neighbourhood business associations and groups are theoretically integrated into our neighbourhood network.

Some of the district councils have formed committees made up of both residents and businesses. They're starting to realise their common interests...that they aren't different interests...that without business it's difficult to have a vital neighbourhood and vice versa.

The respondents were asked to mention any other organisations they liaise with aside from those listed above. Responses included,

Hundreds of community-based organisations.

Recreation advisory councils, block watch, human service agencies, food banks.

Legal aid, volunteer centre, crisis centre, churches.

Insurance company.

#### f. Encouragement of Neighbourhood Association Involvement in City Affairs

For the offices of neighbourhoods, encouragement of their neighbourhood associations' involvement in municipal affairs is embedded in the very fabric of their existence. The common thread that is woven through each of the offices of neighbourhoods is their encouragement of the neighbourhood associations to be involved in the planning and development of projects in their respective communities.

For one structure encouragement of the neighbourhood associations is reportedly no longer necessary, "People are almost tuned in enough to knowing how to get involved here, that's what they already know to do, practically." In this same city official encouragement is made as citizen advisory committees exist for every municipal government bureau and department.

With a second office of neighbourhoods the encouragement is inherent in the design of the overall neighbourhood programme. Elements of the design which encourage neighbourhood involvement include a matching grants fund which enables citizen groups to propose a neighbourhood project and complete it with the city providing half of the funding and citizen advisory committees. In addition, a city wide review team (comprised of one citizen representative from each district council; see Figure 4) makes a multitude of planning recommendations to the city. With respect to

this initiative the respondent stated that,

Technically, the decisions are made by the City Council and the Mayor but they've never gone against the recommendations of the city wide review teams so in effect they [the citizens] make the decisions.

In the third and fourth structures encouragement is enmeshed as well. Both have experienced the backlash that occurs when citizens are not involved and hence continually encourage proactive citizen involvement. With these structures as with the others, it is true that officially, the Mayor and city council have the final say but, "The developers and City Hall have to listen or they know they'll hear about it later." Informally then, it is the citizens who carry a lot of weight in planning and development issues.

#### g. Criteria for Recognition of Neighbourhood Associations

Each of the offices of neighbourhoods have some criteria outlined by which they officially recognise the neighbourhood associations within their municipalities. Of the four structures, three operate using detailed criteria and one operates using minimal criteria; three use geographical boundaries as a determining factor and one does not; and one uses payment of membership fees, three do not. For each of the structures the criteria for recognition is applied to all neighbourhood associations within the jurisdictional area.

The office of neighbourhoods which is most 'lax' about criteria feels that it is much more positive and effective if the citizens decide whether or not they are a neighbourhood association. Why should this be the task of the office of neighbourhoods? In addition, this respondent felt that criteria always serve to leave some groups out. For example,

Native Americans, Latino's, Gay's and Lesbian's...  
tend to not be concentrated in any one neighbourhood.  
Yet they have community based organisations that  
represent their interests.

The only criteria that this particular respondent reported was that,

They [the neighbourhood associations] aren't  
onerous and that nobody's being excluded.

For the three remaining neighbourhood organisation structures the criteria set out by the offices of neighbourhoods are much more stringent. Their criteria include the following (numbers in brackets indicate the number of structures which operate using the specified criteria):

- ◆ constitution and bylaws (3)
- ◆ a method by which grievances can be made (1)
- ◆ open membership (3)
- ◆ very clear non-overlapping boundaries (3)
- ◆ a nondiscrimination policy (2)
- ◆ registered as non-profit organisations (2)
- ◆ resident of the municipality/city (2)
- ◆ yearly election of board of directors at AGM (3)
- ◆ yearly submission of AGM minutes (1)
- ◆ yearly submission of financial statements (1)
- ◆ payment of membership fee to neighbourhood organisation structure (1)

Each of the four respondents stated that they would not change their existing criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations.

#### h. Role and Type of Support Offered by the Office of Neighbourhoods

The overall roles that all of the offices of neighbourhoods play include (number in brackets refers to number of respondents who feel the office of neighbourhoods with which they are involved plays the specified role):

- ◆ advocator (3)
- ◆ supporter (3)
- ◆ funds provider (4)
- ◆ community developer (4)
- ◆ neighbourhood association initiator (4)
- ◆ facilitator (4)
- ◆ mediator (2)
- ◆ 'empowerer' (4)

The methods by which the offices of neighbourhoods support their neighbourhood associations are numerous. They are as follows (number in brackets refers to number of offices of neighbourhoods who reportedly provide the identified support):

- ◆ provision of non-monetary resources (4)
- ◆ mediation (4)
- ◆ research assistance (ie. needs assessment) (2)
- ◆ monetary (2)
- ◆ encouraging them to maintain their independence (1)
- ◆ leadership training (1)
- ◆ 'how to organise' workshops (1)
- ◆ use neighbourhood experts to provide specialised training sessions (1)
- ◆ provision of an assessment tool so that groups can see what is missing (1)
- ◆ representation on global issues (1)

The methods by which the office of neighbourhoods supported the development of new neighbourhood associations in their areas varied from structure to structure. For one of the neighbourhood organisation structures the development of new neighbourhood associations was not really an issue of focus because, "...we have very

few areas where neighbourhood associations don't exist."

Another respondent stated that the methods of support for all neighbourhood associations also serve to encourage the development of new neighbourhood associations. Yet another respondent remarked that in their particular city, because there are so many neighbourhood associations in existence, non-organised communities often learn from or are assisted by existing adjacent neighbourhood associations, "...it's sort of a chain reaction."

#### i. Role of Neighbourhood Associations

Overall it was felt that the role of the neighbourhood associations should be an extension of the role of the office of neighbourhoods itself - to provide a mechanism by which widespread citizen involvement can take place. Specifically, it was felt that their role is to,

Bring additional resources to the city...new ideas,  
a fresh perspective...a force for change.

Provide the main connection between the city  
and the citizens...community development initiators.

Provide leisure, recreation, social and issue  
related services to members first and to the  
community at large, second.

#### j. Value of the Overall Neighbourhood Programme

Each of the respondents are devout believers in citizen participation at the local government level and so feel strongly that their structures have a great deal of value. When asked to state the most valuable aspects of their respective structures they provided the following responses,

Citizen participation is the most valuable aspect... it may make the process longer and more complicated but it provides a better product in the end.

Bringing a geographic focus to the city's work so that it's better integrated and relates better to the people we're serving.

Observing people caring about their community and making a difference in it...the sense of pride.

Speaking with a common voice...the [structure] provides an avenue for this...to work more effectively with government.

Having a structure in place as the downloading effect [of responsibilities for provision of services] hits communities...for example, health boards.

#### k. Suggestions for New Neighbourhood Organisation Structures

Looking back to the development of their own neighbourhood organisation structures, respondents involved at the neighbourhoods level were able to identify some interesting suggestions for new structures. Two of the four respondents stressed that the best way to foster growth of neighbourhood associations was to,

Maintain independence and don't try to control, in any way, the neighbourhood associations; this is really fundamental.

Communication and information sharing was also stated as paramount to a strong neighbourhood organisation structure.

A very crucial element of it is open and honest communication at every step of the game.

Information held by city officials must be shared with the public,

You must enlighten unenlightened elements of the [city] bureaucracy.

Two respondents also noted that it was important to focus upon the strengths rather than the weaknesses of the neighbourhoods in a particular municipality. In other words, an asset based approach to community development must be adopted,

There are certain things that you think, 'God, I wish we had that' but there are probably some things that you've got that we don't that are real strengths that you can take pride in. Why do people like living there? What is it that makes the area work? Build the programme on the strengths.

Another respondent felt that an issue-based approach was most successful in fostering community development,

In order to get people involved they've got to have a reason to be involved; an issue to grab hold of.

Finally, one respondent offered a very blatant but often overlooked suggestion,

Start where the people are at, not where you'd like them to be.



### 5.3.2 The Questionnaires

Each questionnaire, sent out to neighbourhood associations, included a total of 43 questions. As explained within the description of data analysis for this research, data from the questionnaires has been condensed into 11 different categories. As with the reporting of interview data, questionnaire responses will be examined category by category and differences and similarities among the eight neighbourhood associations will be illuminated.

#### a. Motivation Behind and Involvement of Neighbourhood Organisation Structure in the Initiation of the Neighbourhood Association

Motivation behind the initiation and development of each of the eight neighbourhood associations varied. For three of the neighbourhood associations the desire for organised community representation to local government was the catalyst for origination. Respondents stated,

We wanted to provide an organised way for residents to participate in discussions of proposals affecting the community.

We wanted to insure that the interests of the businesses in the area were represented before City Council.

We desired to have organised representation of the community to address livability issues, particularly to government (county and state).

Four respondents stated that reasons for initiation of their association involved the necessity to respond to a particular community issue. These four communities felt it crucial to organise in response to “proposed highway changes”, “preservation of low income housing stock...”, “...the impending threat of shoreline development” and, “...rapid redevelopment pressures.”

Two neighbourhood association respondents stated that reasons for initiation involved providing recreation facilities for area residents. One neighbourhood

association respondent stated,

It was obvious that the society would be devoted to the improvement of civic and recreational standards and specifically to improve and facilitate recreational development.

Finally, one respondent reported that there were a number of related reasons for initiating the neighbourhood association. These include the desire to promote community building, improve public empowerment and enhance neighbourhood livability. This respondent stated specifically that the driving forces behind initiation were,

To provide instruction to help individuals reach full potential; to cultivate, through education and sharing of cultural resources, a community spirit; to maintain a vigilant awareness of government activities which might effect resident's quality of life.

Each respondent was asked to remark on the extent of involvement of their respective office of neighbourhoods in the development of their particular neighbourhood association. For each, the drive to initiate came solely from members of the community. All respondents replied that the office of neighbourhoods in their respective areas were not involved in the initiation of their particular neighbourhood organisations. Five of the eight respondents simply stated, "No" that there was absolutely no office of neighbourhoods assistance, support or involvement. Three of the respondents stated that their respective neighbourhood associations developed prior to the formation of the neighbourhood organisation structure in their respective cities and that this was the reason for lack of involvement. Of these three neighbourhood associations, one acted/acts as the hub for all others, "Our format was and is the nucleus of all neighbourhood organisations within our area." This particular neighbourhood association also prompted the development of the overall

neighbourhood organisation structure within which it presently exists.

#### b. Goals and Objectives of the Neighbourhood Associations

The goals and objectives for each neighbourhood association were and are closely linked to the motivational forces behind actual initiation. For five of the neighbourhood associations involved in this research, original goals and objectives were identical to the motivational forces stated. For three neighbourhood associations they were related but slightly different. One respondent stated that the original goals and objectives were,

To provide a facility for education, research and exchange of information for citizens within the boundaries of [the neighbourhood organisation structure] and to broaden the channels of communication between the businesses in [the neighbourhood organisation structure's boundaries] and local government. To assist in furthering activities and developments which will raise the level of the industrial and business activity consistent with interests of the citizens of [the City] and with sound economic development."

A second and third respondent remarked that their original purposes and goals were related to maintaining the quality of life of the community. One respondent stated specifically that goals included,

...obtaining and providing participation in land-use planning, decision-making, and solving community problems and in the implementation thereof for the...area, in order to improve the quality of life for the area citizens.

Half (four) of the respondents replied that the original goals and objectives of their respective neighbourhood associations continue to be utilised at present. One respondent stated that the goals and objectives remain the same but the association's approach has increased in its proactivity. Three respondents remark that

their present day goals and objectives are quite different. For these three respondents modifications have proved necessary and have occurred naturally along with the planning and redevelopment activities in their respective communities. Originally focused upon maintaining low income housing stocks in it's downtown core, one neighbourhood association now moves it's energy toward more current growth trends. The respondent explains,

Low income housing stock has been stabilised by city requirements. Emphasis now is on balanced growth of residential population and services for these residents.

Another neighbourhood association has shifted it's focus (and hence it's goals and objectives) from the specific to the general,

We still offer recreation facilities, but we also conduct programmes, tackle planning and transportation issues, work closely with other communities, do lobbying and provide a monthly newsletter.

Finally, respondents were asked to discuss the 'goodness of fit' between the goals and objectives of their neighbourhood associations and those of the office of neighbourhoods in their respective municipalities. Four respondents replied positively stating that their goals and objectives fit well with those of their office of neighbourhoods. Of these four, one respondent stated that the office of neighbourhoods actually worked with them in the development of goals and objectives. Of the remaining four respondents, one felt that their goals and objectives both fit and at the same time did not fit with those of their respective office of neighbourhoods. The respondent stated that the reason for this 'in between' answer is that the neighbourhood association is not formally recognised by it's neighbourhood organisation structure as being official.

The final three respondents replied that the goals and objectives of their neighbourhood associations are different from those of their respective office of neighbourhoods and hence there is little 'goodness of fit' between the two. Of these three, two operate within the same City and state that,

The [neighbourhood] association and the [office of neighbourhoods] are separately registered societies. The [office of neighbourhoods] serves [neighbourhood] associations while the [neighbourhood] associations serve their residents.

Our goals and objectives are broader than the [office of neighbourhoods']. The [office of neighbourhoods] is an umbrella group for all of the communities in [the City]. They are an information source, advisor, and advocate on behalf of [neighbourhood] associations in [the City]. So their goals and objectives must be different from ours.

### c. Communication

This section examines the various methods by which the offices of neighbourhoods communicate with the neighbourhood associations in their respective municipalities. The range of communication between the offices of neighbourhoods and their neighbourhood associations ranged from absolutely no communication to an overabundance of communication. Methods of communication varied as well with some methods being utilised more frequently than others. Reported modes of communication for each of the eight neighbourhood associations were found to be either direct or indirect; direct communication taking place directly between neighbourhood association and office of neighbourhoods and indirect communication taking place with some kind of liaison between the two.

Methods of direct communication reported consist of (information in brackets indicates number of neighbourhood associations out of eight who reportedly use the

method of communication, as well as frequency of use):

- ◆ telephone to neighbourhood association (5, daily - when necessary)
- ◆ newsletter (4, monthly - yearly)
- ◆ memo to neighbourhood association (7, daily - when necessary)
- ◆ electronic mail to neighbourhood association (1, daily)

Methods of indirect communication consisted of (information in brackets indicates number of neighbourhood associations out of eight who reportedly use the method of communication, as well as frequency of use):

- ◆ in-person, informal contact with satellite staff person who is located within a neighbourhood and has direct contact with area neighbourhood associations/neighbourhoods (3, weekly - when necessary)
- ◆ memos and newsletters delivered by satellite staff person (1, monthly)
- ◆ neighbourhood block captains reporting to neighbourhood association (1, when necessary)
- ◆ city council meeting minutes to neighbourhood associations (1, when necessary)
- ◆ informal and formal contact between City staff persons and neighbourhood association president, volunteers, members (1, when necessary)

When asked whether or not they felt communication took place often enough all eight respondents stated yes. One respondent, however, stated that, "Basically we never hear from them. If they went away we would never notice." This respondent reported that very little communication takes place between its neighbourhood association and the office of neighbourhoods and that overall it operates very independently from the office of neighbourhoods.

When asked how often they felt communication should take place three neighbourhood association respondents stated, "When necessary", one stated, "When necessary but at a minimum of once per month", another stated, "To different

[neighbourhood association] committee heads when needed and an update to executive members monthly or sooner”, and the final respondent stated “As current.” Two respondents did not answer the question.

Six respondents felt very satisfied with the effectiveness of the current methods and frequency of communication. One respondent remarked that although communication methods are effective overall, the methods most useful are the newsletter and those that occur in writing. Two respondents did not remark on communication effectiveness.

When asked how communication effectiveness could be improved respondents varied in opinion. One neighbourhood association respondent stated that,

The office of neighbourhoods generates  
so much paper making it difficult to read it all.

Solutions to the overabundance of paper were mentioned,

E-mail would be great.

Maybe have a telephone recording listing  
pertinent events and other community  
information.

Six of the eight respondents remarked that from their perspective, there was nothing they could think of that would serve to improve the effectiveness of the communication between the office of neighbourhoods with which they operate and their neighbourhood association.

#### d. Perception of the Neighbourhood Organisation Structure and Office of Neighbourhoods

Respondent perceptions of neighbourhood organisation structures and office of neighbourhoods yield interesting information. In general, four of the eight respondents felt that the neighbourhood organisation structure was extremely hierarchical yet at the same time reported that communication occurred freely throughout the structure.

Independence of neighbourhood associations from respective office of neighbourhoods was stressed by two respondents; the consensus being that the more independent neighbourhood associations proved much stronger. Detailed responses including diagrammatic explanation of neighbourhood organisation structure (where available) are presented below.

In order to minimise confusion and enable the reader to make comparisons with office of neighbourhoods responses, neighbourhood association responses have been grouped by jurisdiction and are referred to as operating in city A, city B, city C, or city D (corresponding labels have been used in the analysis of interview responses).

#### City A

Three neighbourhood associations involved in this research operate within this jurisdiction. Of these, one describes itself as being completely independent from the neighbourhood organisation structure and provides no diagrammatic explanation. The respondent from this neighbourhood association remarks on how it fits into the city wide neighbourhood organisation structure,

We are an independent neighbourhood association that is not part of a district coalition. We withdrew from our coalition a couple of years ago because it did not serve our needs. The [office of neighbourhoods] processes city money. They negotiate a contract on our behalf with...a business promotion group...for crime prevention services and communication services. We have very little direct contact with [the office of neighbourhoods]. Generally, we have better and more contact with City bureaus and the City Council than the [office of neighbourhoods] does.

This neighbourhood association respondent described the overall city-wide neighbourhood organisational structure as being chaotic. The office of neighbourhoods is described as being distant from the neighbourhood associations.



The respondent states,

Basically [the office of neighbourhoods] passes money through to the neighbourhood coalitions and little else. They meet regularly with the coalitions but mostly fight over process. Not many associations have any direct contact with [the office of neighbourhoods].

Distance of the neighbourhood associations from the coalitions (an intermediary between the office of neighbourhoods and the neighbourhood associations themselves) is evident also as the respondent remarks,

Stronger neighbourhood associations do their own thing. Weaker associations use the coalitions as a resource.

When asked what could be changed to make the neighbourhood organisation structure work more effectively and efficiently the respondent wrote,

Reduce the [office of neighbourhoods] staff to that necessary to pass through money and to settle disputes between [neighbourhood] associations.

The second neighbourhood association respondent within city A explains that the neighbourhood association fit into the city-wide structure, "As a recognised neighbourhood association by the City and as a member of the District Coalition." The respondent describes the city-wide neighbourhood organisational structure as being extremely hierarchical with the office of neighbourhoods situated at the very top (as a department within City government), the district coalitions in the middle and the neighbourhood associations at the bottom (see Figure 14).

"Extremely hierarchical, particularly under the present administration," are the words used to describe the city-wide neighbourhood organisational structure by this particular respondent. It is also stated that although the hierarchical structure is present, "Information flows freely to those involved." What could be done to improve the existing neighbourhood organisational structure? This neighbourhood association



representative remarks that if it were possible the respondent, "Would improve the administration of [the office of neighbourhoods].

The final neighbourhood association respondent operating within city A provides a slightly different perception of the overall neighbourhood organisational structure. For this respondent, the neighbourhood associations exist at the top of the chart with the district coalition (within which this neighbourhood association operates within) at the bottom and the office of neighbourhoods off to one side (see Figure 15). No written explanation is offered regarding the description of the overall structure and any suggestions with respect to improving the overall structure are left out.

### City B

Two neighbourhood associations located in city B are involved in this research and both have very similar perceptions of the office of neighbourhoods and the overall neighbourhood organisation structure. Their descriptions of the structure are only slightly different. Both neighbourhood association respondents provide diagrams and explanations of the structure within which they operate.

The first respondent provides a diagram which is quite hierarchical in appearance (see Figure 16). The office of neighbourhoods is positioned at the top of the structure with the district councils directly below and the neighbourhood associations at the bottom. The respondent remarks that although hierarchical, the neighbourhood association, "...deals directly with the [office of neighbourhoods] on various issues." As observed in the responses from neighbourhood associations in City A, information flow seems to have the ability to ignore the hierarchy that exists.

Written description provided by the respondent regarding the overall, city-wide structure supports the diagram. The respondent states that the city-wide structure is, "Hierarchical" and that, "Information sometimes gets stuck" within the structure. Would this respondent change anything about the current structure? The only criticism

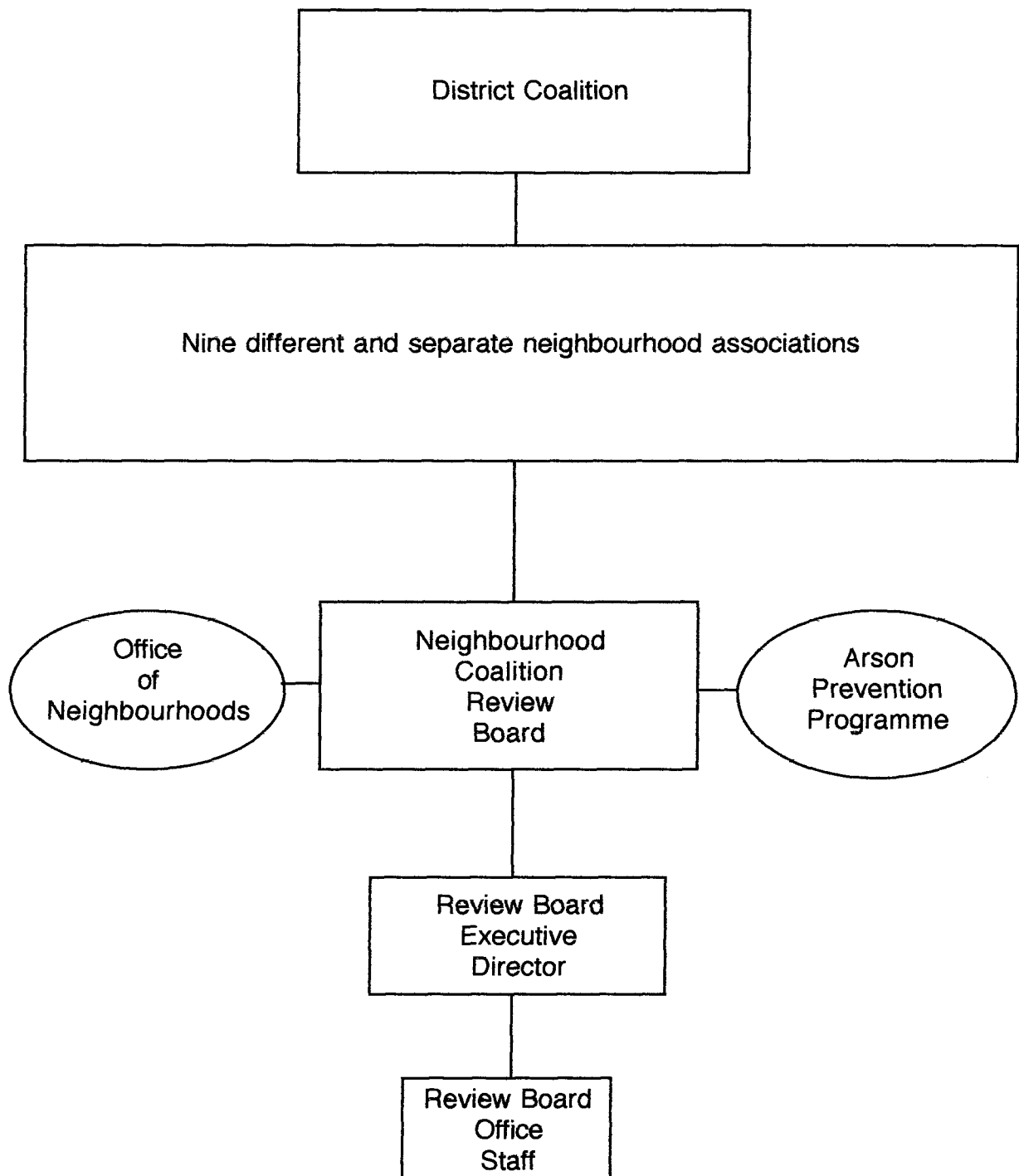


Figure 15: A second neighbourhood association respondent's perception of city 'A' structure (described in Figure 10 by office of neighbourhood respondent and entitled 'The inverted pyramid').

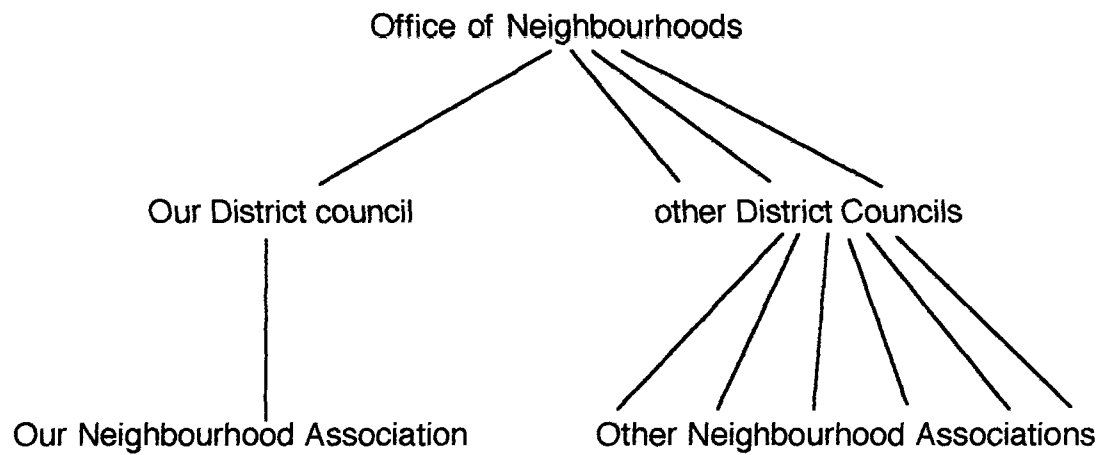


Figure 16: A neighbourhood association respondent's perception of city 'B' structure (described in Figure 11 by office of neighbourhood respondent and entitled, 'The circular framework').

provided is that, "It works pretty well. Documentation is burdensome for volunteer organisations but seems necessary." Suggestions for improvement are, "Simplify, simplify, simplify!" and relate directly to the necessary but burdensome documentation.

The respondent representing the second neighbourhood association within city B presents a very similar diagram of the city-wide neighbourhood organisational structure (see Figure 17). The only difference between the two diagrams is that this respondent has drawn in another level - the city neighbourhood council - between the office of neighbourhoods and the district councils. There is no explanation provided as to what the city neighbourhood council does. The overall structure as drawn is described as being, "Fairly flat, but ineffectual." No further explanation is provided. The respondent stated that to, "Integrate existing neighbourhood clubs" would serve to improve upon the present city-wide neighbourhood organisation structure.

### City C

Only one neighbourhood association from city C is included in this research. This respondent provides no diagrammatic representation of the city-wide neighbourhood organisation structure. The respondent does provide, however, a very positive written description of the city-wide structure as one which promotes, "Learning to work together as volunteer groups." When asked what changes could be made to make the existing structure more effective, the respondent presented the following,

As a local volunteer, I feel our [neighbourhood association] is concerned with the [city] area. We help all other [neighbourhood associations] when asked. We are a very responsible group and take exception when politicians or City staff make changes. So how would I change the structure? I wouldn't, but the structure should be aware of volunteers and their needs and short comings.

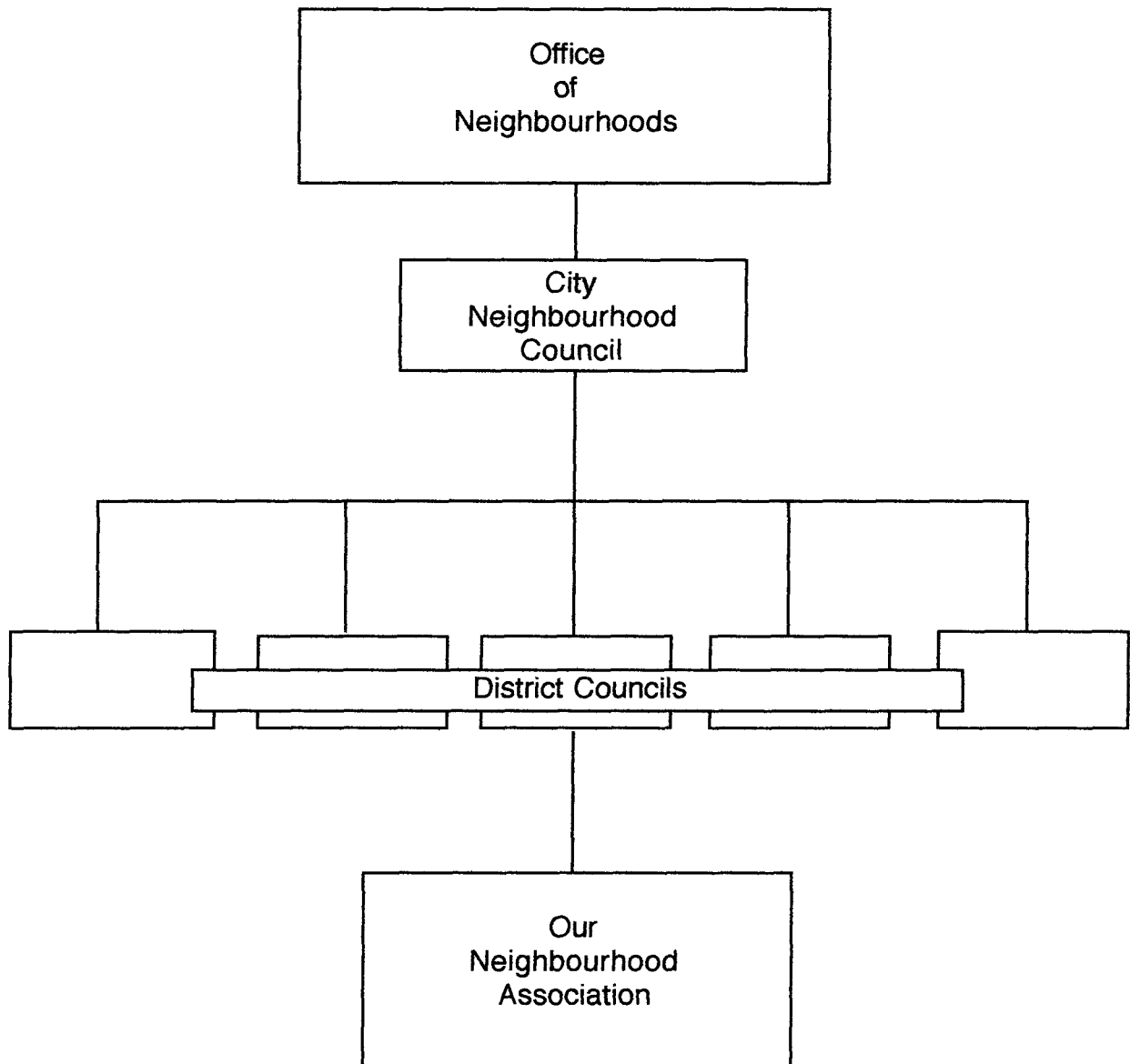


Figure 17: A second neighbourhood association respondent's perception of city 'B' structure (described in Figure 11 by office of neighbourhood respondent and entitled, 'The circular framework').

### City D

Two neighbourhood associations involved in this research operate within city D, however, only one of these neighbourhood associations responded to questions regarding the city-wide neighbourhood organisation structure. The city-wide neighbourhood organisation structure is described by the respondent as follows,

[Neighbourhood] associations are the members of the [office of neighbourhoods]. Member [neighbourhood] associations elect the [office of neighbourhoods] board. The [office of neighbourhoods] board elects the [office of neighbourhoods] officers. The [office of neighbourhoods] has formed 14 area councils which are groups of 10 -15 [neighbourhood] associations in a specific area of the city. Each [office of neighbourhoods] officer has an area council which is used to allow more personal contact between [neighbourhood] association presidents and the [office of neighbourhoods].

In addition to the above, the respondent also notes that although the neighbourhood association is a member of the office of neighbourhoods, they are by no means dependent, "The [office of neighbourhoods] structure is independent of ours." No suggestions are provided regarding how the overall neighbourhood organisation structure might be improved upon.

### e. Neighbourhood Association Involvement in City Hall Affairs

The eight neighbourhood associations participating in this research are involved in local government activities in varying degrees. Five of the eight neighbourhood associations responded with lengthy lists of activities and affairs they partake in. Two neighbourhood association respondents provided general statements of involvement without being precise while one neighbourhood association



respondent chose not to provide an answer to the question.

Listed below are the involvements of the five respondents who provided specific examples (number in brackets signifies the number of neighbourhood associations out of eight who partake in the specified activity).

- ◆ developing and responding to proposed neighbourhood and city plans (5)
- ◆ transportation/traffic planning (4)
- ◆ safety and security/crime prevention issues (5)
- ◆ issues of redevelopment (5)
- ◆ issues of new developments (5)
- ◆ input to planning neighbourhood beautification and clean-up (5)
- ◆ environmental concerns (5)
- ◆ coordination of major city-wide events (1)
- ◆ new parks and playscape planning (2)
- ◆ car parking solutions (1)
- ◆ coordination with local police department (2)
- ◆ coordination with local fire department (1)
- ◆ planning for community/city recreation opportunities (5)

The same five neighbourhood associations who provided lists of activities involved with (as outlined above) also put forth some additional comments. One respondent stated that, "At any one time we may be involved with all or none of the activities listed." Another added that, "We're involved with all aspects of city government." And a third stated, "We do all these things as directed by our board of directors. The [office of neighbourhoods] has almost no influence on us."

Two of the eight neighbourhood association respondents did not provide lists but rather commented on a more general level. One respondent stated,

We are informed of issues involving political sensitivity and issues affecting our community. We have little affect over priorities set for budget or plan. It is very difficult to really influence the administration without making a significant public outcry.

It appears that from this comment, that this particular respondent perceives that the neighbourhood association to which he/she belongs has very little influence in local government affairs. Unfortunately, no explanation is provided as to why the respondent feels non-influential.

A final respondent provides a very general remark regarding the issues with which his/her neighbourhood association involves itself with,

The [office of neighbourhoods] deals with city wide issues. We deal with our community issues. The [office of neighbourhoods] is on many city wide committees and brings a community perspective to them. We bring our specific community perspective to anything we are involved in. Our involvement is independent from the [office of neighbourhoods].

#### f. Neighbourhood Association Membership Eligibility Requirements and Criteria

Each neighbourhood association operates within a specific geographically determined boundary. Two of the respondents stated that their boundaries were determined by neighbourhood association founding members, one stated that boundaries are (and have always been) dictated by City planning codes, and one remarked that area residents determined boundaries. The remaining four neighbourhood association respondents did not specify the manner in which their boundaries were designated.

Five of the eight neighbourhood associations use boundaries to determine membership eligibility, two do not, and one offers different levels of membership in

order to accommodate those outside of its geographical area. Of the five who do use boundaries the following criteria for membership eligibility was stated,

Membership is limited to residents, businesses and land owners within our geography.

Membership shall be open to all residents (including renters), property owners, and business operators within the...area, which is defined as being within the boundaries of the [neighbourhood association].

Residents, business owners and employees property owners and representatives of non-profit institutions within our boundaries can become members.

Anyone who owns property, operates a business or represents a non-profit organisation within the neighbourhood boundaries. All must have resided in the boundaries for at least 30 days.

Another neighbourhood association provides full membership to area residents and associate or partial memberships to those residing outside of the designated boundaries. Rights to vote, however, are restricted to those who reside within the community.

The remaining two neighbourhood associations have an open membership policy where the sole criteria for membership is the paying of yearly dues (or the equivalent of). Respondents of these neighbourhood associations stated,

Anybody anywhere can become a member for \$ 20.00 per year (family) or by working two bingos.

Anyone can join as long as they purchase a membership.

For four of the neighbourhood associations, eligibility criteria was determined by voting members who adopted bylaws outlining such criteria. For two of the

neighbourhood associations, it was the board of directors who set the criteria. For one neighbourhood association both the board of directors and the voting membership outlined the criteria. And for the final neighbourhood association it was the actual neighbourhood organisation structure which determined who would be able to become a member.

Respondents were asked to provide information regarding the requirements which must be met in order for them to be recognised by their respective office of neighbourhoods as neighbourhood associations. For three of the neighbourhood associations eligibility requirements are identical because they operate under the same neighbourhood organisation structure. The requirements that these three neighbourhood associations must meet are,

- ◆ open membership to residents and land owners
- ◆ clearly stated boundaries in bylaws
- ◆ a non-discrimination policy
- ◆ membership contributions collected on a voluntary basis only
- ◆ file and maintain complete set of bylaws with neighbourhood organisation structure
- ◆ a method by which grievances can be made and resolved
- ◆ set forth meeting requirements for the membership in the neighbourhood association bylaws
- ◆ record all official action(s) taken by the neighbourhood association

Those neighbourhood associations who meet all of these requirements receive a 'letter of recognition' from the neighbourhood organisation structure and are then informed by City Hall with respect to issues regarding their particular community.

Another neighbourhood association respondent cited requirements that are much less involved. Two basic requirements were mentioned; the neighbourhood association must be organised under the office of neighbourhoods, and must pay a yearly membership fee to that neighbourhood organisation structure (this fee, however, can be waived by the office of neighbourhoods in special circumstances).

A fifth respondent stated that in order to be recognised a neighbourhood association must,

Have a formal constitution and bylaws,  
have open membership, be located within  
a specific boundary, have elected board  
members, ensure that every member of the  
neighbourhood association has equal  
opportunity to be on the board of directors.

Of the three remaining neighbourhood associations, two did not provide answers to the question of eligibility and one remarked that it abided by no such requirements as it was not officially part of the neighbourhood organisation structure. When asked if the eligibility requirements set out by the office of neighbourhoods were the same for all neighbourhood associations within the neighbourhood organisation structure boundaries, four replied that they were, two replied that they did not know and two left the question blank.

For five of the eight neighbourhood associations volunteers carried out the city and neighbourhood activities they were involved with. One respondent stated that members were also frequently involved as consultants and decision makers but that they suffered for taking on such responsibility. No comment was made as to what this suffering consisted of. Another respondent distinguished between two types of volunteers,

- ◆ Volunteers who comment on proposed projects.
- ◆ Volunteers with the responsibility to advise City Council on a project.

Finally, one neighbourhood association respondent remarked that the capacity for volunteer involvement is almost forced because,

Many of these issues must pass through  
our [neighbourhood association] before a  
city bureau or the City Council can act on  
them. Our input is advisory to the city.

Respondents were asked to comment upon the existence or non-existence of encouragement to neighbourhood association members to participate at the office of neighbourhoods level. Four of the eight respondents stated that their neighbourhood association and its members were encouraged and three stated that their neighbourhood association and its members were not encouraged to participate. One respondent failed to provide an answer to the question.

Of the four who responded affirmatively, two offered the following remarks,

[Neighbourhood] association members can participate in various ways - workshops, seminars, courses, committees, be elected to the [office of neighbourhoods] board.

There are lots of varied boards and programmes offered to us.

One neighbourhood association respondent stated that encouragement existed but that structural limitations at the office of neighbourhoods level prevented any real opportunities for involvement. The respondent states,

We are encouraged but there are really only a few significant positions and most of the city's problems are with inner city and poorer neighbourhoods - most people working on these issues are chosen from among the neighbourhoods most affected.

Three respondents felt that they were not encouraged to participate at the office of neighbourhoods level. One reported that it simply was not necessary to be involved explaining that,

It would be a waste of time for our members as we can directly access the city bureaus that are responsible for specific activities (police, planning, etc.).

Another alluded to the rigid roles seemingly governed by the office of neighbourhoods stating that,

The [office of neighbourhoods] is administrative, not participatory. Neighbourhoods work at the neighbourhood level or the District Coalition level only.

g. Role of and Type of Support Offered by the Office of Neighbourhoods

Respondents were asked to provide their perception of the role of and type of support provided by their respective office of neighbourhoods. A variety of responses were presented. For three of the neighbourhood associations the office of neighbourhoods within their particular jurisdictions played a broad variety of roles. Conversely, for four neighbourhood associations perceived roles were quite restricted. The following list provides a synopsis of respondents remarks (number in brackets indicates how many neighbourhood association respondents noted the specific role or type of support).

- ◆ provides general support to neighbourhood associations (8)
- ◆ funds provider (4)
- ◆ neighbourhood association initiator (4)
- ◆ advocates on behalf of neighbourhood associations (2)
- ◆ community developer (2)
- ◆ communication conduit (1)
- ◆ dispute settlement between neighbourhood associations (1)

Three of the neighbourhood association respondents expanded on the listed roles as stated above. One respondent noted that the office of neighbourhoods was responsible for the following,

- ◆ To bring a community perspective to various city wide committees.
- ◆ To make representation to City, Province and Federal government on city wide issues.
- ◆ To provide workshops, seminars, courses and conferences.
- ◆ To provide consultative services.
- ◆ To provide financial services (ie. audits).
- ◆ To provide important information (ie. mail-outs, reference material).
- ◆ To support the initiation of new neighbourhood associations.

A second respondent provided a much more general response stating that the office of neighbourhoods role involved being a,

Resource for community needs and networking with other communities.  
The [office of neighbourhoods] recognises [neighbourhood associations], therefore they exist for the city to that extent at least.

Two roles seem to be outlined in this statement. The first being one of overall resource provider and the second being that of authoriser for recognition of neighbourhood organisations within its jurisdiction.

A third respondent remarks on the independence of the neighbourhood associations from the office of neighbourhoods by stating that the role of the office of neighbourhoods is restricted to duties of a financial nature. The respondent states that the office of neighbourhoods,

Provides funds to neighbourhoods through the district coalition boards and monitors the contract that stipulates performance requirements for the funds.

Respondents were asked to provide information regarding the duties and responsibilities of the office of neighbourhoods that are specific to the neighbourhood associations with which respondents are involved. Seven of the eight respondents



provided answers to this question. Four of the seven respondents replied that the office of neighbourhoods duties and responsibilities are the same for all neighbourhood associations and that they mimic the perceived roles of the office of neighbourhoods previously stated. Three respondents mentioned duties and responsibilities to their particular neighbourhood associations that differed from their perceived roles of the office of neighbourhoods. The duties and responsibilities of the offices of neighbourhoods to these three neighbourhood associations are as follows,

No real responsibilities other than to keep in touch.

Administer grant programmes and stay in communication with [neighbourhood associations].

Give us staff, give us a budget, give us support, give us ideas.

Finally, respondents were asked to expand upon the process by which the office of neighbourhoods encourages the development of new neighbourhood associations. Responses were provided by seven of the eight respondents. Of the seven respondents that replied four stated that the office of neighbourhoods was, in some form, directly involved with the development of new neighbourhood associations. These four respondents stated,

The [office of neighbourhoods] has tried to start several new [neighbourhood associations].

Most associations seem to be generated by local residents and business people. [The office of neighbourhoods] helps them work out boundaries and provides money for crime prevention and communication.

[The office of neighbourhoods] furnishes information to those wishing to organise.

[The office of neighbourhoods] provides workshops, seminars, courses and conferences.

A fifth respondent states that the office of neighbourhoods in his/her particular jurisdiction is indirectly involved in the encouragement of new neighbourhood associations. Encouragement occurs through an intermediary. This respondent explains,

The [office of neighbourhoods] has not been known to encourage the development of new neighbourhood associations. The coalitions have taken that role.

Yet another respondent remarks that the office of neighbourhoods does not actively seek to develop new neighbourhood associations but that assistance is provided once a newly forming neighbourhood association approaches the office of neighbourhoods. The respondent comments,

They come to the [office of neighbourhoods] for help in incorporating their association with consumer and corporate affairs.

A final respondent states that encouragement to new neighbourhood associations exists in the form of, "Staff support to present to council" the ideas and proposals of the newly developing neighbourhood associations.

#### h. Role of the Neighbourhood Association

Within this category, it was requested that respondents comment on their perceptions of the role their particular neighbourhood association plays within the community. Seven of the eight respondents provided information to this end. Five of the seven respondents provided lists of the various roles their neighbourhood associations play within their respective communities. These roles are as follows (number in brackets indicates how many neighbourhood association respondents

reported the specific role):

- ◆ to bring members of the community together (7)
- ◆ advocate for general planning issues (5)
- ◆ advocate for traffic and transportation issues (5)
- ◆ provide community services (4)
- ◆ to provide recreation opportunities for the community (3)
- ◆ advocate for public safety (in cooperation with police and fire departments) (1)
- ◆ advocate for environmental concerns/improvements (1)
- ◆ to encourage community members to take charge of their affairs (1)
- ◆ to provide community members with library access (1)
- ◆ to provide free meeting and/or programme space to all city neighbourhood associations (1)

One of the neighbourhood association respondents further remarked upon the evolution of the role of his/her particular group,

The neighbourhood association was, within my memory starting here 15 years ago, reactive in nature with few board meetings and no strong neighbourhood identification except during crises. From a reactive position, we have now moved to a very proactive position. We publish a newsletter, have voluntary dues, regular board meetings...We are trying to build a sense of neighbourhood community and letting people understand that we have the ability to take charge of our own destiny.

As listed, for each of the seven respondents it was felt that one of their main roles is to bring members of their respective communities together. Six of the seven who responded mention a variety of ways in which this particular role is fulfilled. Two of the six respondents felt that community members were drawn to the respective neighbourhood associations because it provided them with the ability to have their

concerns addressed,

It gives us a common voice - together we can influence city policies. Apart we have little hope to influence government.

It provides an organised response to issues.

Another respondent stated that the mere existence of the neighbourhood association provides a hub of activity toward which the community can gravitate,

Community centre and [association] activities provide community members with the chance to meet one another.

For two other respondents it is the necessary neighbourhood association tasks such as projects, open meetings, special events, telephone parties, and newsletter deliveries which serve to bring community members together. Finally, one respondent replied that although very important, the neighbourhood association does not adequately bring area members together. This respondent states,

This is a weak area. We need to better communicate with the several thousand people we represent.

#### i. Structure of the Neighbourhood Associations

All but two respondents provided an organisational chart detailing the structure of their specific neighbourhood associations. On the surface one of the six organisational charts appears very flat in its organisation while the other five appear hierarchical in organisation.

The first neighbourhood association organisational chart (see Figure18) depicts the neighbourhood association members at the very top of the hierarchy followed by the elected board of directors, the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. Directly below the president position there exists a number of standing committees.

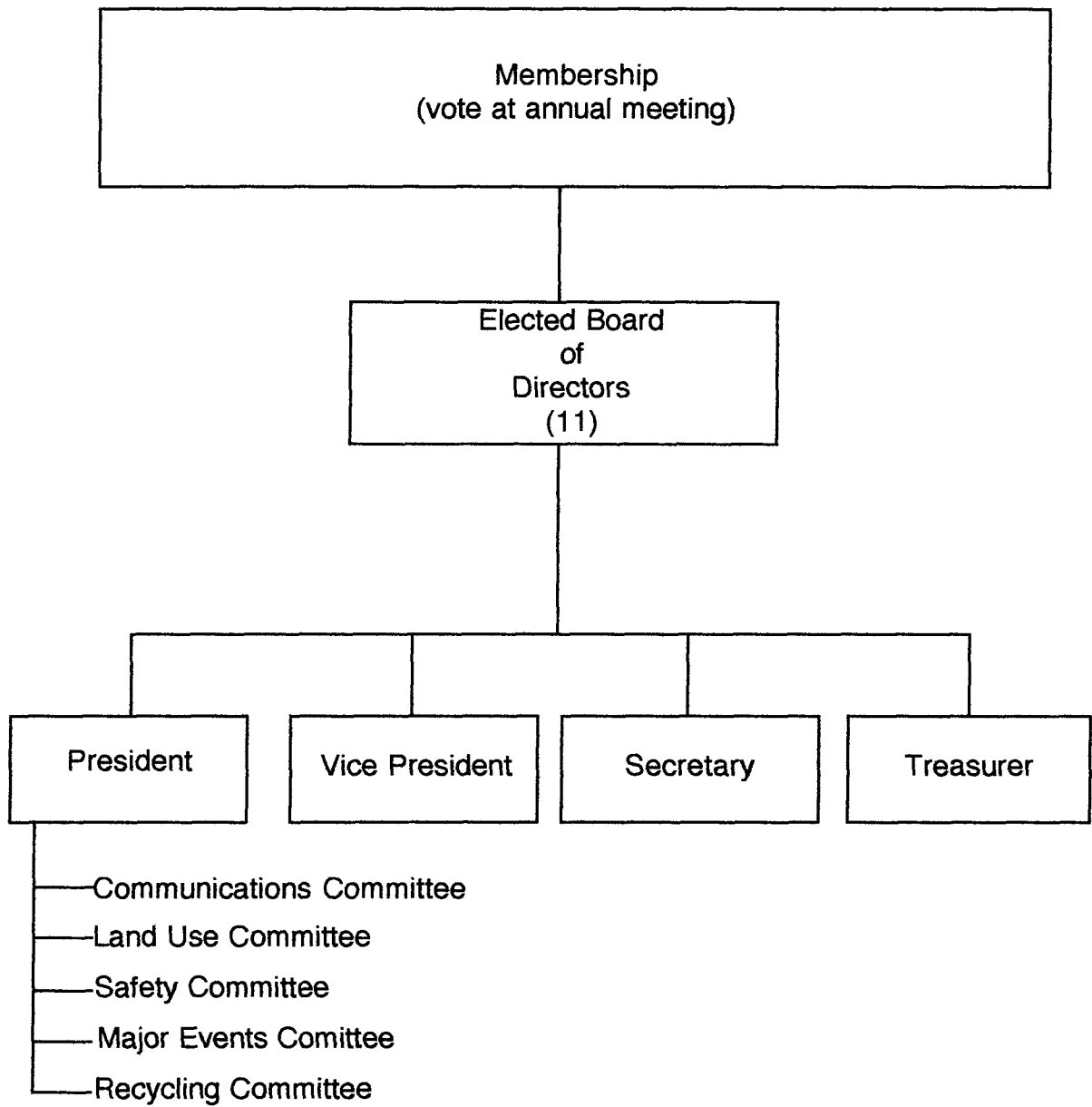


Figure 18: Neighbourhood association organisational chart.

This respondent remarked that if provided the opportunity, there was nothing he/she would change about the structure. When asked to describe the structure the respondent stated,

General membership not very active  
Strong board. President sets direction  
with approval by the board. Standing  
committees very active and speak  
directly to public, government and the  
press.

The second neighbourhood association respondent provided an organisational chart that is quite different from all others (see Figure 19). It is drawn so that the board of directors (comprised of one chairperson, one vice chairperson, one secretary and four directors) is on the same level with the general membership; so as to describe the flat, informal structure that exists. The respondent verbally describes the structure as,

Flat. Information flows throughout -  
information comes to the chair and  
secretary and is passed to members  
at monthly meetings and to board of  
directors at special meetings.

This respondent also states that he/she would not make any changes to the existing structure, that it works well as it exists at present.

The third respondent remarks that his/her neighbourhood association has quite a large organisational structure with a variety of programme committees and cabinet of representatives (see Figure 20). It is hierarchical in appearance although the general membership is situated at the top of the pyramid. Underneath this is the board of directors, below which the president, executive committee and programme committees are located. Finally the cabinet of representatives is situated directly below the president. The only explanation provided is that the structure is, "Very flat." The respondent stated that he/she would change nothing about the neighbourhood association's organisational structure.

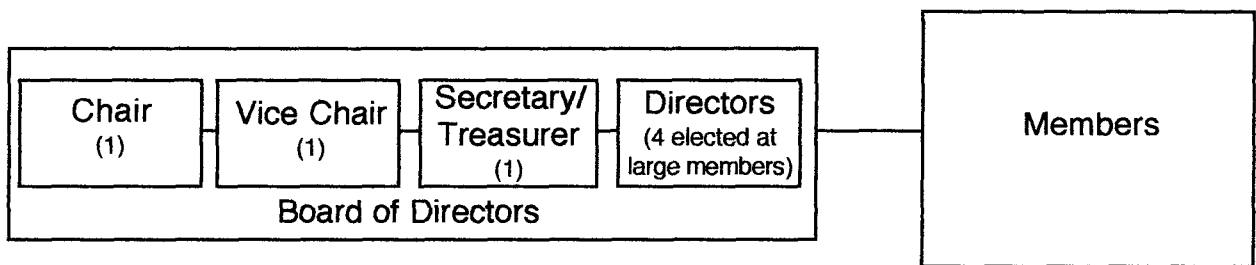


Figure 19: Neighbourhood association organisational chart.

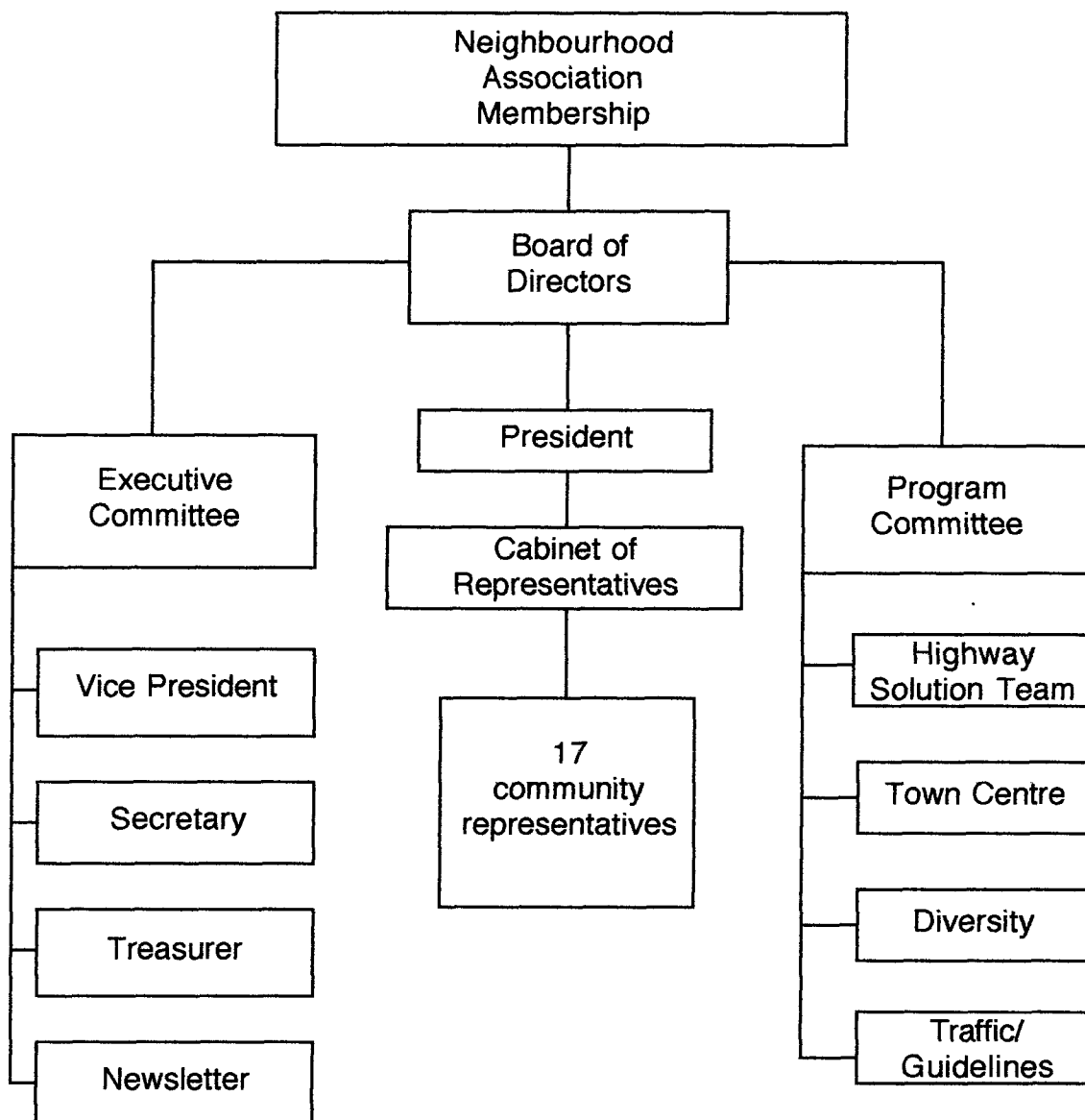


Figure 20: Neighbourhood association organisational chart.



The fourth organisational structure is one which the respondent describes as flat because, "Information flows to all people involved." The organisational chart is somewhat similar to the others presented with respect to its basic components (see Figure 21). It appears to represent a hierarchical structure with the president located at the very top level of the structure followed by the building chairman, the first and second vice presidents, treasurer and secretary on the second level. The third level consists of the board of directors and the fourth of committees. Members are not depicted on the organisational chart. When asked what could be done to improve the structure the respondent stated that he/she would, "Try to add more volunteers on committees."

The organisational structure depicted in Figure 22 is described by the respondent as being a very open one in that all community members can attend any of the neighbourhood association's meetings. The structure is a busy one with the president positioned at the very top followed by a second level which includes two vice presidents, a treasurer and a secretary. Each position at this second level is responsible for a different committee (see Figure 22 for names and subsets of committees). The respondent of this particular neighbourhood association commented that ensuring that information flows freely throughout all areas of the neighbourhood structure is, "Always a challenge because [members] don't live or work in one place." There were no comments made with respect to possible improvements to the organisational structure.

The sixth organisational structure (see Figure 23) is the final one to be depicted in diagrammatic form. Unlike any of the other structures reported, this particular organisational chart pictures the trustees at the very top of the structure. The president falls directly below the trustees and the past president appears alongside the president although not linked to the trustees. Just below the president and past president level there exists seven vice presidents all responsible for a different facet of

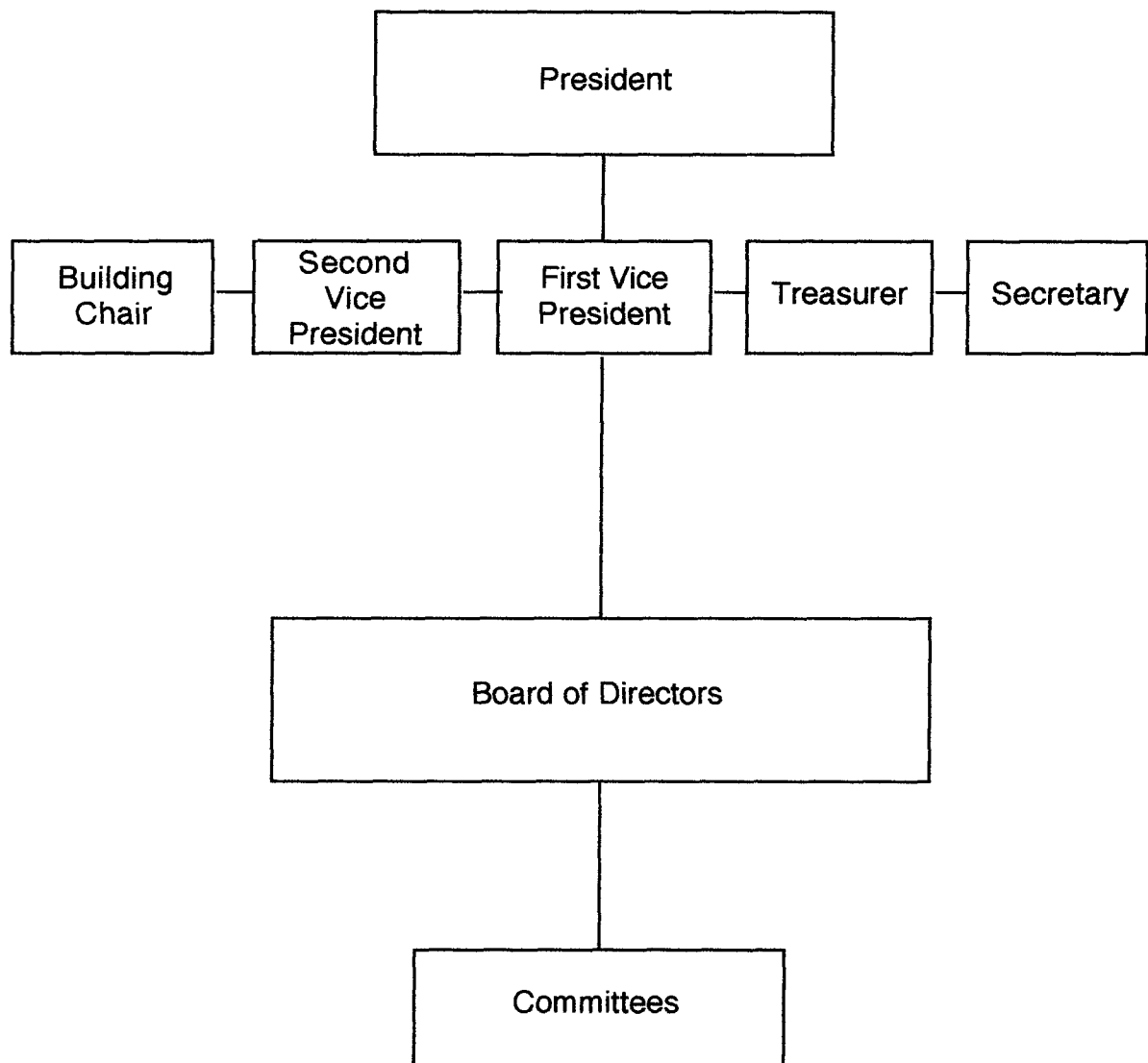


Figure 21: Neighbourhood association organisational chart.

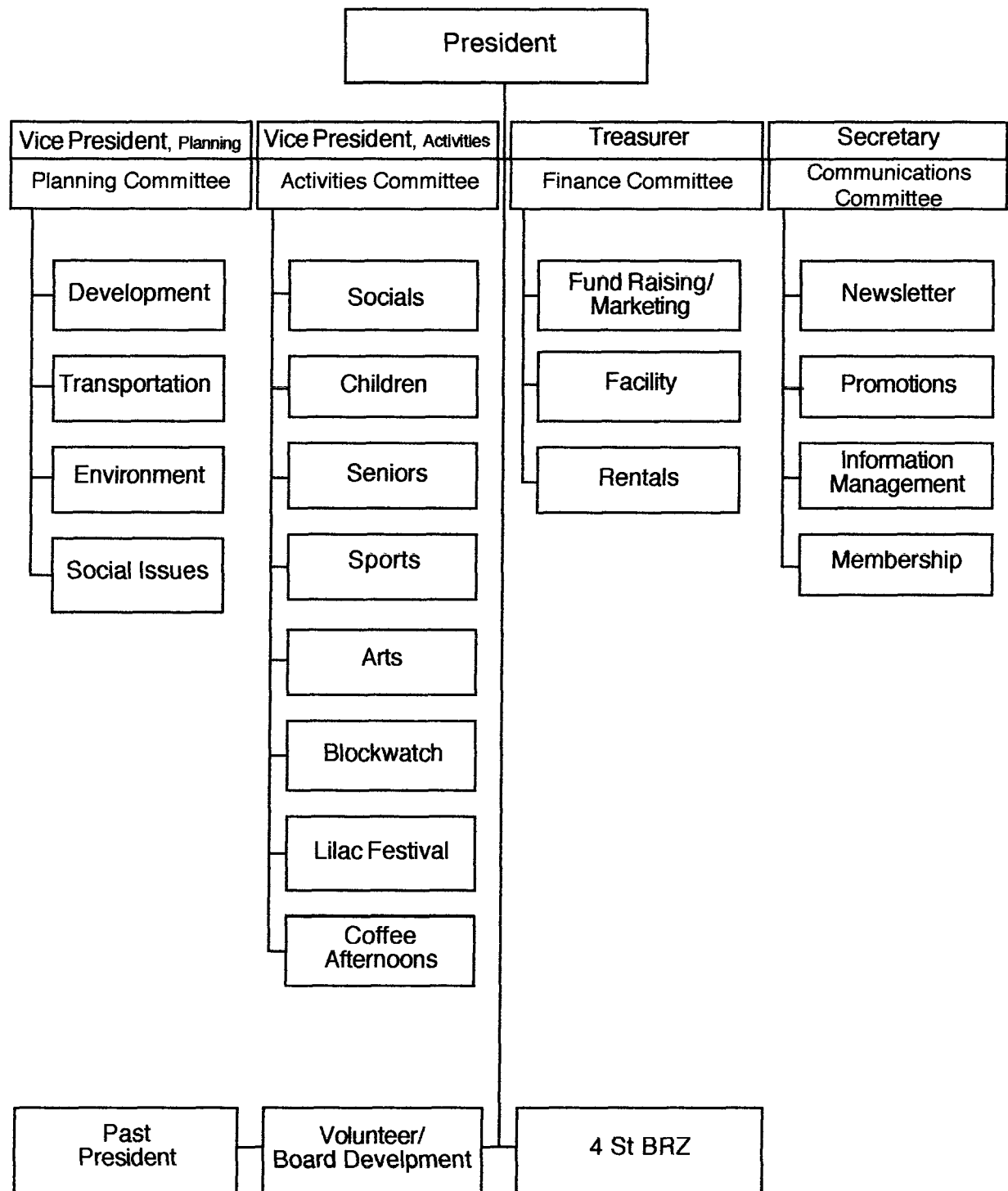


Figure 22: Neighbourhood association organisational chart.

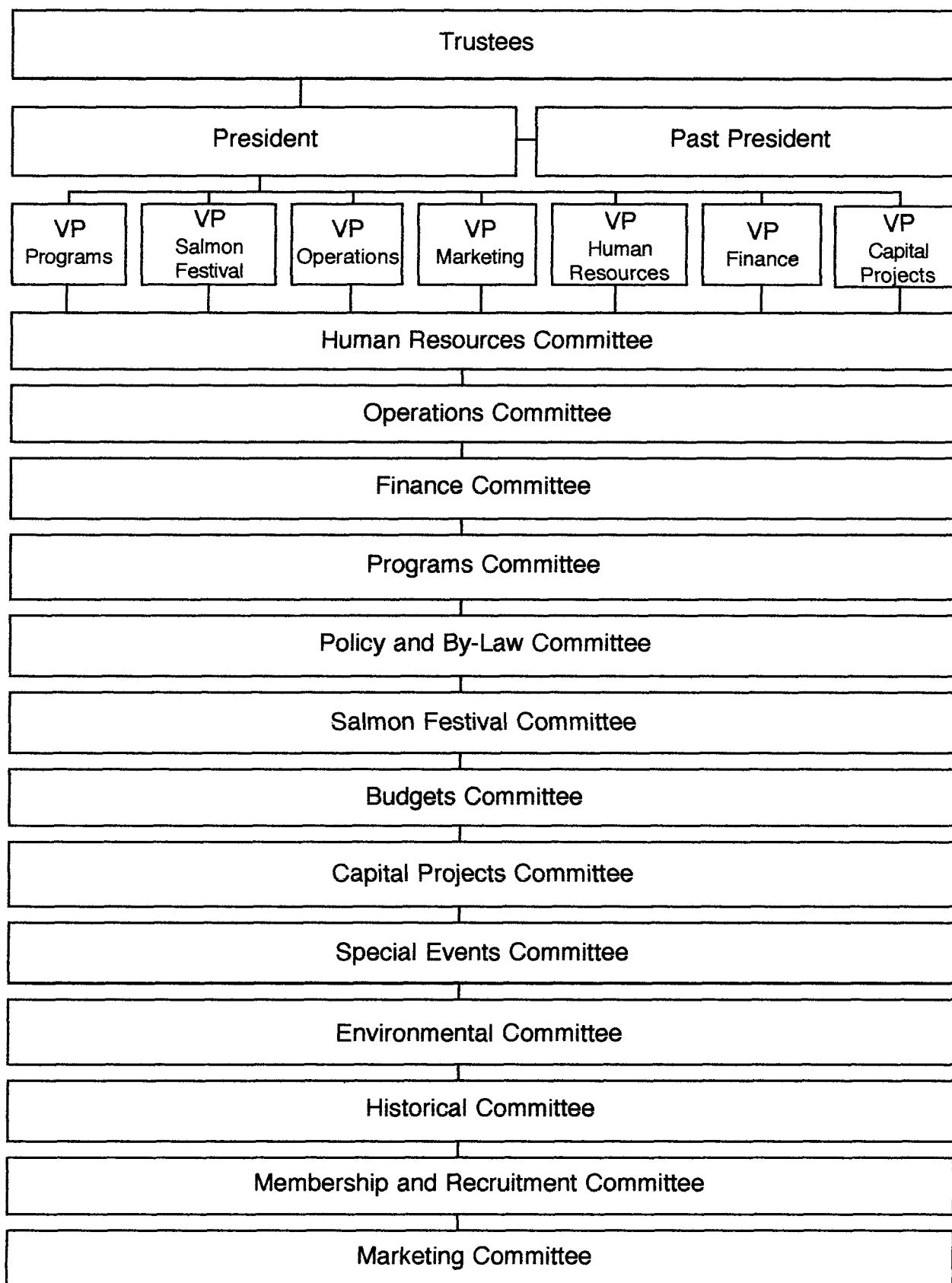


Figure 23: Neighbourhood association organisational chart.

neighbourhood association activities. Thirteen different committees are positioned beneath the vice presidents and report to them depending upon the particular project involved with. When asked to describe the organisational structure of the neighbourhood association the respondent provided the following statement,

We are an old board going through a transition period. I personally feel things are flowing in the right direction to be once again a free idea - free flowing - fun group. We grew from 3,000 to 11,000 [members] in two years, this put a strain on all committees.

Although the seventh and eighth respondents did not provide an actual organisational chart of their respective neighbourhood associations, they did provide written explanations of them. The structure of the seventh neighbourhood association as described by the respondent, consists solely of a board of trustees. Within this board are 18 members; six officers (president, first vice president, second vice president, treasurer, recording secretary and membership secretary), eleven trustees and one past president. This particular structure seems to be quite a formal one judging from the association's bylaws. The following statement from the bylaw document is an example,

Any member of the [neighbourhood association] shall have the privilege of attending any meeting of the Board, but such member shall not have the right to speak unless authorised by the presiding officer.

When asked to describe the structure the respondent stated that it was,

Hierarchical, but good general participation among the Board. Poor general membership participation.

No comments were made with respect to improvements to the neighbourhood association structure.

Finally, the eighth respondent described the structure of the neighbourhood association with which he/she is involved,

We have the four officers called for in the by-laws and seven at large directors. Each director and officer takes some area of special interest except the secretary and treasurer who perform the normal functions of those positions. Items are not undertaken by the association without someone bonding to that issue and accepting responsibility for it. Each board member has the ability to structure ad hoc committees as necessary to accomplish our stated goals and objectives.

In describing the characteristics of the neighbourhood association the respondent remarked that,

It is extremely flat. It operates as a team. The chair or president provides leadership in running board meetings and annual meetings, setting agendas as well as submitting annual plans and objectives.

Would this respondent make any changes to the existing structure? If more money was available the respondent noted that it would be advantageous to staff the permanent office space they are acquiring on at least a part-time basis.

Overall, the organisational structure of each of the eight neighbourhood associations are somewhat similar in terms of their components (ie. president, past president, secretary, membership, etc.). There is no denying however, that the aspects of some neighbourhood association structures set them apart from the others (for example the association that was both pictorially and descriptively flat in structure is quite unique). Another major difference was that some structures seemed open while others seemed very rigid and closed off - even to membership. Unfortunately, because the informal activities of each neighbourhood association are not illuminated it is difficult to make accurate judgments about a structure's hierarchy, information flow and

openness.

j. Value and benefit of the link between neighbourhood associations and the office of neighbourhoods

Respondents provided varied responses when asked to comment on their perception of the value and benefit of the link between neighbourhood associations and the office of neighbourhoods. Three respondents remarked that they had little or no contact with the office of neighbourhoods in their respective areas. Two of these respondents stated the following,

We have very little contact except when they are passing out money and negotiating contracts for services.

There isn't [a connection]. The linkage is through the District Coalitions. The coalition can focus it's resources more effectively and have a larger impact on city policy.

One respondent noted that the most beneficial value of the link between their neighbourhood association and office of neighbourhoods is that issues can be discussed without the two groups leaving the discussion with feelings of resentment toward one another. This respondent remarks,

They have a [neighbourhood association] that usually has a burr under their blanket on many different matters throughout time and that after meetings etcetera, the burr is removed and we continue to have fun.

Three other neighbourhood association respondents also had very positive comments to put forth about the link between neighbourhood associations and the office of neighbourhoods. One respondent noted that there is strength in numbers when he/she stated that, "By [neighbourhood associations] working together through the [office of neighbourhoods] they can be more successful." Another respondent

stated that the provision of, "Guidance on who in government can help us with a particular problem" is the most valuable benefit. And a third respondent referred to the camaraderie by stating that most value can be found in, "The quality of the individual and community relationship."

k. Suggestions for new neighbourhood associations and new neighbourhood organisation structures

Six of the eight neighbourhood association respondents provided comments regarding what it is that new neighbourhood associations might consider when in the beginning stages of initiation. Each of the six respondents seemed to highlight different points; remarks ranged from needing cooperation from the city to ensuring democratic process. There is, however, one theme that seems to be woven throughout all of the suggestions - that the initiators must work hard to reach the members of the community. This theme is illuminated as respondents suggest that neighbourhood associations, "Advertise effectively", "Develop a good method of communication right from the beginning", and, "Need to reach everybody as fast as possible."

How can members be reached as fast as possible? One respondent suggests,

Building a good mailing list with correct addresses and phone numbers is a burdensome first step. I would immediately start out by asking for dues so that there are some funds in the treasury with which to operate.

Another neighbourhood association respondent indicates that the key to success is to maintain a sense of humour,

Be very committed yet flexible and don't take yourselves too seriously, especially when things get really serious.

Two respondents focused on the board of directors as an area for new neighbourhood associations to consider. These respondents suggested the need for,



“Rotating board membership” and that the neighbourhood association should be democratic and have, “Minimum administrative burdens on its officers.”

One neighbourhood association respondent provides a warning to new groups when in the beginning stages of development, “The organisation’s actions must be community focused and not operate out of self interest.”

Finally, a respondent points out the importance of goals and objectives from which the new association will ultimately operate,

I would recommend that the association start up with broad long-range goals rather than knee jerk short-range objectives. The neighbourhood association will not survive after short-range objectives go away.

The second portion of this category consists of suggestions to those wishing to initiate a neighbourhood organisation structure. Of the eight respondents, four chose to present suggestions. Of the four, one respondent in particular stressed that a ‘hands off’ approach be adopted by the office of neighbourhoods. This respondent states specifically that the office of neighbourhoods should,

Restrict themselves to giving away money and settling disputes. Keep involvement slim.

A second respondent provides suggestions directed toward the office of neighbourhoods level,

The people who staff the office of neighbourhoods must remember that they are a conduit into the city leadership and the city bureaucracy and are there to be a service, not a hindrance. They can transmit ideas into or out of or throughout the city but should not see themselves as the final word on everything.

In keeping with the comment stated by the first respondent, this respondent also seems to be indicating a suggestion for a 'hands off' approach from the office of neighbourhoods level. This respondent also seems to allude to the fact that the office of neighbourhoods should not exclude the neighbourhood associations when making decisions - "...should not see themselves as the final word on everything."

A third respondent remarks on the general independence of the neighbourhood associations operating within a neighbourhood organisation structure. This respondent states,

Each [neighbourhood association]  
should be autonomous with open  
communication and mutual support.

Finally, the fourth respondent provides suggestions directed at the overall neighbourhood organisation structure. The recommendations are presented in the form of a list,

- ◆ Follow natural community boundaries,
- ◆ Provide some seed money for publications,
- ◆ Provide a place or assistance in finding a meeting place,
- ◆ Realise that volunteers have little time left and do not call meetings unless there are items of substance for discussion.

### 5.3.3 Comparison Between Interview and Questionnaire Information

In sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2, data from both the office of neighbourhoods and neighbourhood association respondents were examined in detail. In this section, rather than discuss detailed differences between the two groups of respondents, some general incongruencies and similarities will be highlighted. These comparisons will be made categorically as outlined in Table 3.

### A. Communication

Communication between the office of neighbourhoods and the neighbourhood associations was reported similarly by both groups of respondents. Both the interview and questionnaire respondents cited use of direct and indirect communication methods, both reported a concern for improvement of communication through the use of computers (ie. E-mail) and both remarked that informal communication (either direct or indirect) proved most valuable.

The major difference between the reportings of the two groups with respect to this category related to the issue of frequency of communication. All of the office of neighbourhoods respondents stated that they felt the frequency of communication was adequate. The neighbourhood association respondents, however, expressed a range of satisfaction at frequency of communication; with some respondents feeling satisfied and others remarking that communication between themselves and the office of neighbourhoods is nonexistent.

### B. Perception of Neighbourhood Organisation Structure

In order to avoid undue confusion, the offices of neighbourhoods and the neighbourhood associations will be discussed with respect to the cities within which they operate. The headings, city A, city B, city C and city D, used in this section to make comparisons between the two groups of respondents match references made elsewhere in this document.

The office of neighbourhoods respondent in city A describes the overall neighbourhood organisation structure as an inverted pyramid (see Figure 10) within which citizens have the option to be part of any number of neighbourhood associations. The structure is described as being non-hierarchical as neighbourhood association members can bypass levels in the structure to reach other higher or lower levels. The neighbourhood association respondents, however, describe the

neighbourhood organisational structure as being quite hierarchical in nature. Two respondents diagram the structure as a traditional, hierarchical pyramid and one respondent provides a replica of the inverted pyramid as offered by the office of neighbourhoods respondent. Despite the noted hierarchy, one neighbourhood association respondent explains, "Information still flows freely throughout the structure." All three neighbourhood association respondents remarked that they do bypass bureaucratic levels in the hierarchy to reach the tier of government required. Two neighbourhood association respondents describe themselves as operating very independently from the neighbourhood organisation structure.

In city B, the office of neighbourhoods respondent provided a very unique diagram of the neighbourhood organisational structure (see Figure 11). The structure is described as being non-hierarchical with unidirectional arrows representing the existing free flow of information, communication and contact between the various groups. The two neighbourhood associations in city B described the overall structure somewhat differently from one another. One neighbourhood association respondent perceived the structure to be quite hierarchical and diagrams the office of neighbourhoods at the top and neighbourhood associations at the bottom (see Figure 16). This hierarchy, the respondent feels, results in information often getting stuck within the structure. Despite the perceived hierarchy, this respondent stated that a great deal of informal communication does take place and that this serves to hold the structure together. The second neighbourhood association respondent within this area diagrams the structure in such a way as to promote its 'flatness' (see Figure 17). This second description of the structure is certainly more in keeping with that provided by the office of neighbourhoods respondent.

In city C the remarks made by the office of neighbourhoods respondent and the neighbourhood association respondent do not match. However, unlike city A and city B it is the office of neighbourhoods respondent who perceives the structure as being

quite formal, hierarchical and bureaucratic in nature. Information, this respondent feels, still flows freely throughout all levels and is informal as well as formal in its structure (see Figure 12). Within this particular structure, the informal ties between City Hall, the office of neighbourhoods and neighbourhood associations are constantly built upon with summer barbecues and festivals organised to bring city C residents together. The neighbourhood association respondent from city C provides a glowing report of the structure that exists. This respondent does not describe the structure as being at all hierarchical or bureaucratic. Instead this respondent feels that his/her neighbourhood association works with City and office of neighbourhoods staff in dealing with community and municipal issues.

Within city D only one neighbourhood association respondent provided information regarding the overall neighbourhood organisation structure - and this information was limited. The respondent simply remarked upon the strong independence of the neighbourhood associations from the office of neighbourhoods despite being an official member of the overall structure. The office of neighbourhoods respondent went into greater detail describing the structure as supportive and inclusive, and as existing only because the neighbourhood associations exist. Information flow and communication are perceived to occur throughout all levels. Finally, the office of neighbourhoods respondent described the overall neighbourhood organisation structure as maintaining a separateness from, while at the same time having an influential tie to, municipal government.

### C. Neighbourhood Association Involvement in City Hall Affairs

Although five of the eight neighbourhood association respondents report some involvement in many aspects of city planning (transportation, safety, crime prevention, recreation facility planning), two neighbourhood association respondents report having little or no involvement in municipal affairs (one respondent failed to answer

the question). The office of neighbourhoods respondents however, felt that encouragement of neighbourhood association involvement in municipal affairs was embedded in the very fabric of their structures. Each office of neighbourhoods respondent cited aspects of their respective neighbourhood organisation structure which they felt inherently served to promote neighbourhood association involvement in community planning and development. All four of the office of neighbourhoods respondents recognise the fact that citizens have the power to influence decisions (and this they do) but that City Hall retains last word authority.

#### D. Criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations as set by the office of neighbourhoods

Three of the four office of neighbourhoods respondents reported having stringent, detailed criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations. The remaining office of neighbourhoods respondent reported very lax criteria which enables the citizens to decide whether they are or are not formed as a neighbourhood association. For each of the four respondents, the criteria outlined (or lack thereof) applied to all neighbourhood associations throughout the particular jurisdiction.

The neighbourhood association respondent's comments correlated closely with those of the office of neighbourhoods. Four neighbourhood association respondents reported rigid, well defined criteria (such as open membership, specific, exclusive boundaries of operation, constitution and bylaws, and elected board members) for recognition by their respective office of neighbourhoods.. One neighbourhood association respondent reported less vigorous requirements for recognition (yearly dues paid to office of neighbourhoods, organised under office of neighbourhoods), two respondents had no comments and one reminded that it was independent of its respective office of neighbourhoods. Four of the neighbourhood association respondents stated that requirements for recognition were the same for all

neighbourhood associations throughout the municipality (two respondents did not know if criteria was the same, two did not comment on the question).

#### E. Role of and Type of Support Offered by the Office of Neighbourhoods

Roles of the office of neighbourhoods seem clear as both the office of neighbourhoods and neighbourhood association respondents stated similar perceptions. Roles reported by both sets of respondents were: advocator, supporter, funds provider, community developer, facilitator, neighbourhood association initiator, facilitator, and mediator. All respondents were requested to make comment upon a specific and very important role of the office of neighbourhoods; that of 'neighbourhood association initiator'. All four office of neighbourhoods respondents stated that they saw themselves as neighbourhood association initiators - with each reportedly fulfilling this role in a different way. Seven of the eight neighbourhood association respondents stated that they felt the office of neighbourhoods was involved in initiating development of new neighbourhood associations by either helping to mark out boundaries, providing finances, providing initiating information, and offering workshops and seminars.

#### F. Role of the Neighbourhood Associations

The office of neighbourhoods and the neighbourhood association respondents reported very similar perceptions of the role the neighbourhood associations play within the overall neighbourhood structure. The office of neighbourhoods respondents viewed the neighbourhood association role as an extension of the office of neighbourhoods role; to provide a mechanism by which widespread citizen involvement can take place. Other more minor roles include, bringing additional resources to the city, providing the main connection between the city and the citizens, and providing varied services to the community. Neighbourhood association

respondents viewed their central role as simply, "...to bring community members together and to advocate on behalf of citizens regarding community issues."

Neighbourhood association respondents also reported they felt their role was to encourage community members to take charge of their affairs, and to advocate for varied planning issues.

#### G. Benefits to the Link Between the Neighbourhood Associations and the Neighbourhood Organisation Structure/Office of Neighbourhoods

There was no lack of positive response from both sets of respondents regarding the value of the link between the neighbourhood associations and the neighbourhood organisation structure/office of neighbourhoods. Increased citizen participation was one benefit remarked upon by a number of respondents as being most valuable; the structure provides an avenue by which citizens can speak with a common voice and thereby work more effectively with government. Other reported benefits to the link were the development of a sense of community pride, building camaraderie, and empowering the individual through developing the community.



#### 5.3.4 Identifying Major Themes

As stated in the description of data analysis utilised for the purposes of this research, an overall qualitative coding process was utilised in order that major themes could be illuminated throughout both the interview and questionnaire data. The major themes which will be focused upon here are:

Independence of Neighbourhood Associations

Accountability of Neighbourhood Organisation  
Structure and City Hall to Neighbourhood  
Associations (citizens)

Repetition of Bureaucracy/Hierarchy

Open Information Exchange

Functional Organisation versus Geographic  
Organisation

#### Independence of Neighbourhood Associations

This initial theme refers to the necessity or desire for independence of the neighbourhood associations from the office of neighbourhoods and was referred to by both the office of neighbourhoods respondents and the neighbourhood association respondents. One respondent states the necessity of this independence clearly when he/she remarks,

We believe really strongly that the strength  
of our neighbourhood organisations is their  
independence from the city...rather than trying  
to bring them into the city to further empower  
them.

Benefits to neighbourhood associations that are independent from their respective office of neighbourhoods are numerous. One respondent remarked that independence from the office of neighbourhoods allows indigenous groups to spring

up which in turn means there will be a greater variety of citizen voiced concerns and solutions. This matches with the idea that the citizens are key players in that they,

Bring additional resources to the city...  
new ideas, a fresh perspective...a  
force for change.

Also, independence allows for greater diversity in the methods by which community action can be taken. Independent neighbourhood associations can follow their own channels of action, "...without following the stringent rules of participation set out by the city," so that they, "...have the ability to take charge of their own destiny."

Most respondents acknowledge the fact that neighbourhood associations do not adhere to formal channels of hierarchy but rather they make contact and link with levels of government and various departments on their own. For each of the four office of neighbourhoods respondents it was normal to learn of neighbourhood association initiative or action after it had occurred; that is without any involvement of the office of neighbourhoods. Office of neighbourhood respondents explain,

The neighbourhood associations can bypass  
us and go directly to members of the commission.

These independent entities...they know how  
to do it...they go in and they prep for a planning  
commission meeting, they talk to the hearings  
officer and I never hear a word about it. They're  
just gangbusters!

For one office of neighbourhoods respondent, independence is encouraged in that there are no criteria set out by the (office of neighbourhoods) for recognition of neighbourhood groups. Instead, the actual neighbourhood groups define themselves, and this, for the office of neighbourhoods, is the beginning of encouragement of independence, empowerment, and greater self-sufficiency. This respondent states,

It's important to empower citizens on their own terms and not just to work on the city's agenda...it's important to the city that we support citizens to work on their own agendas and support their own organisations.

A neighbourhood association respondent referred to the need for independence very bluntly when he stated that the office of neighbourhoods should,

Restrict themselves to giving away money and settling disputes. Keep the support slim.

This particular respondent appears to be advocating for autonomy as opposed to independence.

#### Accountability of Office of Neighbourhoods, Overall Neighbourhood Organisation Structure and City Hall to Neighbourhood Associations

Throughout the data indirect references have been made regarding the accountability of the neighbourhood organisation structure to the neighbourhood associations and therefore, to the citizens themselves. This accountability was evident from the office of neighbourhoods respondents, "...we have to react," "...we have to be responsible," and "...we have to be there to serve and help them do what it is they need to be doing..."

Accountability of the City Hall (within which three of the four neighbourhood structures exist as departments) to the neighbourhood associations and citizens was also referred to. All four of the office of neighbourhoods respondents stated that the citizens, through their neighbourhood associations would see that city departments were held accountable for many completed projects with which they had not been involved. This type of accountability is illustrated in the following comments,

The developers and City Hall have to listen or they know they'll hear about it later.

If a bureau kind of gets through without establishing some kind of citizen input element in the process, it just gets slaughtered.

In three neighbourhood organisation structures, the developers and City Hall avoid, "...hearing about it later..." by,

Networking with the residents...and the community associations affected...

and/or by,

Setting up a lot of citizen advisory committees and technical advisory committees...to get direct input.

Holding the city departments and the neighbourhood organisation structure accountable seems to provide the citizens, through their respective neighbourhood associations with a certain degree of power. In this manner, accountability appears to be linked with citizen empowerment and legitimacy as their voice is reportedly heard and respected in all four municipalities included in this study.

#### Repetition of Bureaucracy/Hierarchy

The concern that certain portions of the neighbourhood organisation structures serve to repeat the bureaucratic and hierarchical structure that exists within the respective City Halls was noted throughout the questionnaire and interview data. It was made clear that respondents felt a bureaucratic structure did not assist in enhancing citizen participation - rather it presented itself as more of a hindrance.

An office of neighbourhoods respondent felt that the programme's framework itself was fairly non-bureaucratic and that few changes could be made to make it even less so. Three of the four neighbourhood organisation structure respondents, however, stated their awareness of the bureaucratic aspects of their frameworks as well as their desire to work toward minimising them. Their comments include the following,

I think in the next several months to a year we're going to be evaluating the role of the coalitions and whether or not they promote... citizen involvement and participation or have we created another level of bureaucracy.

From a staff perspective it's more hierarchical. If I could I would get rid of the hierarchical, make it as informal as possible. But that's a difficult task.

The neighbourhood association respondents were also very aware of the bureaucratic nature of their respective neighbourhood organisation structure. Their biting comments reflect their feelings about the bureaucratic nature of the structures within which they must operate,

Basically we never hear from them. If they went away, we would never notice.

There isn't a direct linkage [between neighbourhood associations and the neighbourhood organisation structure]. The linkage is through the coalitions. (see Figure Three)

These neighbourhood association groups have a right to be indifferent. Citizens have been manipulated into believing they are participating for long enough. The creation of yet another bureaucracy-like organisation only seems to serve to manipulate them further, to stifle their independence to be effectively reactive and proactive with respect to municipal affairs. Rather than creating so many layers within a neighbourhood organisation structure it seems efforts could be made to improve all direct connections to neighbourhood association groups.

### Open Information Exchange

This theme is related to the bureaucracy which is seemingly developed/ repeated in some aspects of the neighbourhood organisation structures. Open information exchange refers to the information that is shared by the city and the

neighbourhood organisation structure with the neighbourhood associations and citizens. Open information exchange is not so much an issue as it is a requirement for promotion of effective citizen participation and cooperation between the City Hall, the neighbourhood organisation structure and the neighbourhood associations.

Where information sharing does not adequately exist,

There is a tremendous amount of skepticism from the citizens about why we at the [office of neighbourhoods] do what we do.

Unfortunately this skepticism can lead to malcontent and the development of a strong we/they dichotomy. It is cooperation that is required, not opposition. Methods by which information sharing can be improved and hence by which skepticism can be alleviated are found within the data. One neighbourhood association respondent felt that it might be possible to, "...enlighten unenlightened elements of the city bureaucracy." An office of neighbourhoods respondent suggested that it might prove beneficial to, "...open up the budget process...perhaps we could turn over particular areas to [the citizens]."

Overall, the message gleaned from the office of neighbourhoods and the neighbourhood associations was that communication between the two needs to be as open and as honest as possible and that hidden aspects of municipal government must be unmasked if true citizen participation is to flourish.

### Functional Organisation versus Geographic Organisation

This theme is somewhat abstract in its meaning. It was referred to specifically by only one respondent yet referred to indirectly by nearly all respondents. The theme alludes to the different fashion by which cities and people are organised and is fully explained as follows,

Cities traditionally are organised along functional lines and people are organised along geographic lines generally. We aren't organised then the way people live their lives which makes it hard for citizens to relate to the city and the city to relate to the citizens.

It follows then, that a neighbourhood organisation structure's overall purpose within a city is to bridge the gap between the way the citizens and the cities are organised and to provide a context for better working relationships with the citizens (ie. through neighbourhood associations). This particular theme is in effect an almost overarching theme - one which might be viewed as the reason for the appearance of the other themes mentioned. For example it might account for the necessity of the independence of neighbourhood associations - a necessity which might stem from the need for citizens to continue to act within their natural geographical organisation rather than within the functional nature of the city bureaucracy through which they could be rendered ineffective. It may also account for the visible repetition of bureaucracy within the neighbourhood organisation structures (as alluded to within this research) as the neighbourhood organisation structures are consumed by the functional organisation of cities.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Purpose

The purpose of this research was to investigate, explore and describe existing models of municipal government linked neighbourhood organisation structure. Neighbourhood organisation structures and respective neighbourhood associations were indeed investigated and explored through the use of both interviews and questionnaires. The data presented within this thesis provides detailed description of the models in existence in four separate cities as developed from the analysis of data. In addition to the description of models, a number of themes were developed which serve to shed light on the processes of the neighbourhood organisation structures entire.

### 6.2 Levels of Citizen Participation in the Four Neighbourhood Organisation Structures

From the information gained through this research it is possible to roughly identify the levels of citizen participation which exists within the models examined. Overall, it is the opinion of this researcher that each model operates in the area described by citizen participation theorists where citizens have higher degrees of power. Specifically, it appears that the examples of neighbourhood organisation structure examined waiver between falling within the consultation and partnership levels of each of Arnstein's (1977), Van Til and Van Til's (1970), Connor's (1988) and Potapchuck's (1991) models of citizen participation. At the consultation level citizen groups are consulted with but government reserves the right to make a final decision. At the partnership level citizen power is said to be expressed in the form of negotiation and sharing in decision making tasks in partnership with local government - hence, joint decisions are made.

It was reported by the participants that the degree of citizen participation truly



depended upon the type of decision to be made. One respondent remarked that community plans and developments would not even be presented to council without citizen/neighbourhood shared input. Yet another respondent stated that although consulted with, local government most often made the final decisions.

### 6.3 Neighbourhood Organisation Structure, Modernism and Postmodernism

Cities traditionally are organised along functional lines and people are organised along geographic lines generally. We aren't organised the way people live their lives which makes it hard for citizens to relate to the city and the city to relate to the citizens.

This comment, made by an office of neighbourhoods respondent alludes to an interesting and overwhelming difference between cities and citizens. This difference can be observed in light of modern and postmodern theory as presented in chapters two and three. Governments have traditionally operated in line with very modernist principles. Modern theory embodies universalism which is based on the idea that, "...there was only one possible answer to any question,...that the world could be controlled and rationally ordered if we could only picture and represent it rightly,...that there exists a single correct mode of representation" (Harvey, 1989, p.27). This principle of modernism can be seen in government where policy is set with the benefit of the majority in mind - what is good for the majority is decidedly good for all. Unfortunately, government's embodiment of modern universalism has failed to reflect the diversity of individuals for whom decisions are made; decisions that work for one group of people or community may not work for another.

In keeping with modernist universalism is the principle that expert opinion reigns and the knowledgeable few are justifiably provided with the power to decide for the many. This principle is directly reflective of the way governments operate.

Information is hoarded at the government level (recall the link between power and knowledge alluded to in chapter three) while the general public, considered unknowledgeable, is left with a mysterious conception regarding the information and processes behind actions taken by government. Modernist principles within which government operates have meant that citizen participation in government affairs has traditionally been limited.

In opposition to the modernity within which government finds itself is the postmodernity in which citizens and neighbourhood associations appear to exist. Postmodernist theory rejects all that is modern - superior expert opinion, decisions made on a universal basis, withholding of information - embracing individual diversity, observing the individual as expert, and calling for the widespread availability of knowledge. Postmodernism seeks to internalise the human will where modernism sought to externalise it and encourages a movement away from the elite few determining the fate of the many and toward individuals determining their own needs and their own fate. The formation of neighbourhood associations within a particular municipal government jurisdiction provides a structure through which citizens can move to determine their own fate, through which diversity can be expressed and through which individual community members can participate at the local government level.

Three of the neighbourhood organisation structures exist as departments within their respective municipal governments. Throughout the analysis of data, neighbourhood associations within these three municipalities have commented upon the hierarchical and bureaucratic nature of the overall neighbourhood organisation structures and of the office of neighbourhoods level specifically. Working so closely with a structure that is so modernist in its operation means that neighbourhood organisation structures run the risk of adopting similar methods of operation. It seems that neighbourhood organisation structures in this position must be very cautious not

to become engulfed by the modernist principles with which they are so closely linked.

Perhaps a method by which this engulfing can be diverted is through gaining knowledge of the theories of both modernism and postmodernism. If those involved with neighbourhood association structures begin to realise the detrimental effects that are associated with existing within a modernist framework they may be more cautious to steer away from doing so. In addition, learning and understanding the impact modernism has had and continues to have on society in general and on local government operation specifically can assist citizens and neighbourhood groups in their contact with local government. Perhaps through becoming aware of modernist principles local governments themselves may begin to question the very structure within which they exist and begin to acknowledge why such difficulty persists in their encouragement of true citizen participation (at the partnership level) with citizens who are clearly organised along more postmodern lines.

#### 6.4 What Can Be Learned From the Participant Responses Presented in this Research?

There are a great many suggestions which can be pulled from the responses provided by the participants in this research. Although by no means a complete list, the following points may prove useful to those municipalities attempting to initiate neighbourhood organisation structures.

- ◆ It is important that neighbourhood associations are not dependent upon their respective office of neighbourhoods but rather that they are supported by them,
- ◆ The role of an office of neighbourhoods must be multi-faceted but most importantly should encourage neighbourhood association empowerment and independence,

- ◆ In order to encourage neighbourhood association growth, neighbourhoods need to be provided with tools and resources enabling them to develop and strengthen through their own might,
- ◆ A partnership level of citizen participation where local government and citizens share in decision making endeavours, is considered most effective,
- ◆ It is also important to maintain a partnership relationship between office of neighbourhoods and the neighbourhood associations,
- ◆ It appears to be most effective when both direct and indirect methods of open, honest communication are utilised within a neighbourhood organisation structure,
- ◆ It is the efficiency of communication techniques rather than the frequency of communication that appears to be most important,
- ◆ Informal, impromptu communication (which encourages informal ties) between citizens, neighbourhood associations, office of neighbourhoods and city officials is highly beneficial to overall community building,
- ◆ A flat, non-hierarchical organisational framework is most conducive to development of community ties throughout the neighbourhood organisation structure; try to stay away from creating a bureaucratic structure,
- ◆ Those at the office of neighbourhoods level must remember that the office of neighbourhoods exists for neighbourhood associations; neighbourhood associations do not exist for the office of neighbourhoods,
- ◆ It is beneficial for neighbourhood organisation structures (through the office of neighbourhoods) to liaise with many other community organisations and all city hall departments; more connections mean greater knowledge which results in greater power to influence local government decisions,
- ◆ Ongoing encouragement of citizens to participate at the local government level needs to be an inherent aspect of the overall design of the neighbourhood organisation structure,
- ◆ Criteria for recognition of neighbourhood associations should be set out by the office of neighbourhoods in such a way that they do not restrict or inhibit the formation of neighbourhood associations but instead ensure that neighbourhood associations are accountable to the citizens in their area,
- ◆ A neighbourhood organisation structure should be built upon the strengths of the community. Focus should be on what makes the community work rather than on those aspects that appear to be missing,

- ◆ When initiating a neighbourhood organisation structure it is important to start where the citizens are rather than where you would like them to be.

### 6.5 Limitations of This Thesis and Opportunities for Further Study

It is important to note that although the findings of this study will prove useful to cities and municipalities who would like to develop a model of neighbourhood organisation structure, they cannot be directly generalised to other cities or municipalities. The models of neighbourhood organisation structure explored and discussed are particular to the specific characteristics of each municipality included within the thesis only. Other municipalities would be encouraged to examine the particulars of their neighbourhoods in order to determine what type of model of neighbourhood organisation structure would work best for them. This very point is remarked upon by a respondent, “It's important not to copy what some other cities have done...learn from other cities but don't import [their model] totally.”

This research is also not reflective of the great variety of neighbourhood organisation structures that exist across Canada and the United States. It examines structures in four cities only. Perhaps further study could be carried out to identify the diversity of a wider range of cities and districts in which neighbourhood organisation structures operate.

A third limitation of this research relates to the manner in which the neighbourhood association participants were involved. Because of time constraints face-to-face interviews could not be conducted with neighbourhood association participants. Questionnaires were instead used and although they encouraged a great deal of information from participants they were lengthy and therefore some questions were left unanswered. In addition, with questionnaires it is impossible for the researcher to request elaboration on comments requiring further detail. The result of this limitation is that responses from the office of neighbourhoods participants

contained greater detail than did those from the neighbourhood association participants. It is encouraged then, that where possible, others try to utilise direct, face-to-face or telephone interviews when acquiring information in this research area.

#### 6.6 A Concluding Remark About the Value of Having a Neighbourhood Organisation Structure

Throughout the reporting of collected data there was no shortage of critical remarks from participants regarding the particular neighbourhood association structure within which they existed. Despite this, when requested, each respondent provided some very positive statements about the overall value of having a neighbourhood organisation structure. Neighbourhood organisation structures provide an avenue for citizens to be involved in local government affairs; they provide a route through which the community can become a veritable thorn in the government's side. They allow a built-in method by which community voices can be heard - voices which have remained silent for far too long. Neighbourhood organisation structures also serve to alleviate some of the pressure off government officials to perform for the community. By allowing citizens to be part of the decision making, government officials are able to share the responsibility that once rested solely upon their shoulders. Participants remarks about the value of their respective neighbourhood organisation structures are as follows.

Citizen participation is the most valuable aspect...it may make the process longer and more complicated but it provides a better product in the end.

Bringing a geographic focus to the city's work so that it's better integrated and relates better to the people we're serving.

Observing people caring about their community and making a difference in it... the sense of pride.

Speaking with a common voice...the structure provides an avenue for this...to work more effectively with government.

Having a structure in place as the downloading effect [of responsibilities for provision of services] hits communities...for example, health boards.

## 6.7 The Future of Citizen Participation

Neighbourhood organisation structures offer a permanent means by which participatory democracy is continuously promoted and maintained. Within the structures presented in this research citizens have become an integral and essential element to local government decision making. It is hoped that other municipalities will be able to utilise the information gained within this research in order to promote ongoing citizen participation within their jurisdictions.

The necessity of citizen participation is stressed by Johnson in Arnold (1979) when he states that every citizen must be concerned with municipal affairs, for municipal affairs involve every citizen. It follows then, that local government should exist for its citizens. Johnson in Arnold (1979) remarks,

This city, of which we are a part, is not a mere aggregation of people...but is a real living organism. Just as in the human body, the hand or the head or the heart cannot be sick by itself, but the whole body is sick; just as a fever from a wounded limb spreads to every part of the frame, so with this body of ours. The one great difference between the civic organism and the human body must not be forgotten: the cell of the human body exists for the body, but the city organism exists for the benefit of every cell.

(Johnson, in Arnold, 1979, pp.23)

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## Appendices

Appendix One  
Initial Letter Requesting Participation

Initial Letter Sent to Neighbourhood  
Association Presidents

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



**School of Social Work**  
2080 West Mall  
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**Sharon J. Armstrong**  
**2-1896 West 12th Avenue**  
**Vancouver, BC.**  
**V6J 2E8**  
**phone: 604-739-0905**  
**fax: 604-733-5116**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Sharon Armstrong and I am a Master of Social Work student at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. I am writing in the attempt that I may interest you in participating in a research study which I am conducting. This study is being completed under the supervision of the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver in order to meet the requirements of the Master of Social Work degree at UBC. This research project will be a graduate thesis upon completion. My faculty advisor for the project is Roopchand Seebaran, a professor at the School of Social Work, UBC.

The following is a precise explanation of the study and of the extent of your participation should you decide to take part. I do hope that the research study is of interest to you.

## **Purpose of this Research:**

The purpose of this research is to investigate, explore and describe existing models of neighbourhood organisation structure that are linked with municipal government in order to make recommendations to the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver which will aid in their implementation of such a neighbourhood organisation structure.

Although this study is being conducted with a specific municipality in mind the recommendations presented will hopefully be useful to other municipalities attempting similar initiatives. Your participation in this research is desired as you are currently immersed in neighbourhood organisation structure development and/or maintenance.

## **Who Will Be Involved In This Research and How Will It Be Conducted?**

Four individuals responsible for overseeing neighbourhood organisation structures that are linked with municipal government (2 in the United States and 2 in Canada) will be asked to be interviewed personally. Eight neighbourhood associations (2 in each of the 4 jurisdictions) will be asked to complete mailed questionnaires. Both the

interview questions and the questionnaire will request similar information from participants.

**What Will Your Participation Consist of and When Will It Be Requested?**

Initially, you will be asked to contact me (by mail, facsimile or phone) stating that you desire to participate in the study.

In the middle of January 1994, I will mail a questionnaire to you in order that you may answer it. Approximately 1 week following the mailing I will contact you by telephone to ensure that you received the questionnaire. The questionnaire should take no more than 2-3 hours to complete and is set up so that sections can be completed one at a time.

It will be requested of you that the completed questionnaire be returned to me by post or facsimile on or before March 10 1994. Hopefully this will provide you with the necessary amount of time needed to complete the questionnaire.

Following my receipt of the questionnaire it may be necessary for me to contact you in order to clarify any unclear information provided. This will take place over the telephone and at your convenience.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. Even if you do decide to participate please understand that you are free to cease that participation and withdraw from the study at any time without consequence or penalty.

**Confidentiality:**

Please be aware that the information you provide through completion of the questionnaire will be kept completely confidential. Your completed questionnaire will be stripped of all identifying information and assigned a code number that only I will know. The results of each of the questionnaires will be expressed solely within the general findings of the study. Following completion of the research study all questionnaires will be destroyed. You will receive a copy of the final document upon completion.

I would like to thank you for examining the outline for this research study. Please contact me by phone (604-739-0905) by facsimile (604-733-5116) or by mail (2-1896 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6J 2E8) if you have any questions and of course, if you desire to participate. Roopchand Seebaran can also be contacted at the School of Social Work, UBC (604-822-2255).

Thank you in advance for your consideration of participation in this research study.

Sincerely,

Sharon Armstrong



Initial Letter Sent to Office of  
Neighbourhoods Directors

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Sharon Armstrong and I am a Master of Social Work student at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. I am writing in the attempt that I may interest you in participating in a research study which I am conducting. This study is being completed under the supervision of the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver in order to meet the requirements of the Master of Social Work degree. This research project will be a graduate thesis upon completion. My faculty advisor for the project is Roopchand Seebaran, a professor at the School of Social Work, UBC.

The following is a precise explanation of the study and of the extent of your participation should you decide to take part. I do hope that the research study is of interest to you.

## **Purpose of this Research:**

The purpose of this research is to investigate, explore and describe existing models of neighbourhood organisation structure that are linked with municipal government in order to make recommendations to the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver which will aid in their implementation of such a neighbourhood organisation structure.

Although this study is being conducted with a specific municipality in mind the recommendations presented will hopefully be useful to other municipalities attempting similar initiatives. Your participation in this research is desired as you are currently immersed in neighbourhood organisation structure development and/or maintenance.

## **Who Will Be Involved In This Research and How Will It Be Conducted?**

Four individuals responsible for overseeing neighbourhood organisation structures

that are linked with municipal government (2 in the United States and 2 in Canada) will be asked to be interviewed personally. Eight neighbourhood associations (2 in each of the 4 jurisdictions) will be asked to complete mailed questionnaires. Both the interview questions and the questionnaire will request similar information from participants.

**What Will Your Participation Consist of and When Will It Be Requested?**

Initially, you will be asked to contact me (by mail, facsimile or phone) stating your desire to participate in the study.

Following your consent to participate in the study, in late January or early February, I will contact you for the purpose of determining a convenient time for the personal interview to take place. A copy of the interview questions will be mailed to you in advance in order to provide you with some preparation time.

In early or late February we will meet to conduct the personal interview. This should take no more than 2 hours. Pending your consent, the interview will be audiotaped.

Following the interview, clarification of information provided during the interview may be necessary. This will take place over the telephone and at your convenience.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. Even if you do decide to participate please understand that you are free to cease that participation and withdraw from the study at any time without consequence or penalty.

**Confidentiality:**

Please be aware that the information you provide through completion of the interview will be kept completely confidential. Transcription of the interview will be assigned a non-identifying code number that only I will know. Once the audiotape has been transcribed, the interview will be erased. The results of each of the interviews will be expressed solely within the general findings of the study. You will receive a copy of the final document upon completion.

I would like to thank you for examining the outline for this research study. Please contact me by phone (604-739-0905) by facsimile (604-733-5116) or by mail (2-1896 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6J 2E8) if you have any questions and of course, if you desire to participate. Roopchand Seebaran, my faculty advisor, can also be contacted at the School of Social Work, UBC (604-822-2255).

Thank you in advance for your consideration of participation in this research study.

Sincerely,

Sharon Armstrong

Appendix Two  
Measures  
(Questionnaire and Interview)

## Questionnaire

An Investigation of Existing Models of Municipal Government Linked  
Neighbourhood Organisation Structure

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research project and for agreeing to complete a questionnaire regarding the neighbourhood association with which you are involved. As I explained during our telephone conversation, this research project is being conducted by myself, Sharon Armstrong, a Master of Social Work student at the University of British Columbia. This research study will represent a graduate thesis upon completion.

If you have any questions or queries regarding any portion of the research I can be contacted by phone (604-739-0905), by facsimile (604-733-5116) or by mail (2-1896 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6J 2E8). My faculty advisor for this research project is Roopchand Seebaran, a professor at the UBC school of Social Work. He can be reached at the School of Social Work by phone (604-822-2255).

To remind you, the purpose of the research is to investigate, explore and describe existing models of neighbourhood organisation structure that are supported by/linked with a municipal government in order to make recommendations to the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver which will aid in their implementation of such a neighbourhood organisation structure. Although this study is being conducted with a specific municipality in mind the recommendations presented will hopefully be beneficial to other municipalities attempting similar initiatives.

Your participation in this project consists of completing the enclosed questionnaire within which you will be requested to answer questions regarding the neighbourhood association with which you are involved. The entire questionnaire should take approximately 2 hours to complete. It has been divided into sections and can therefore be completed one section at a time.

Prior to beginning the questionnaire, I would like to reassure you that as a participant in this project you have several rights:

1. Your participation is entirely voluntary.
2. You are free to refuse to answer any question within the questionnaire.
3. You are free to refuse participation at any time without any penalty to you.
4. You can add anything that you feel is important but that is not specifically requested.

Return of the completed questionnaire will signify your consent for utilisation of the information you provide within the confines of this study. The completed questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential and will be made available only to myself. The information you provide will be reported within the general findings of the study. Excerpts or sentences from the completed questionnaire may be part of the final research report, but under no circumstances will your name or anything else that can identify you be included.

If you have any questions regarding the procedure of the study or the questionnaire itself please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to learning about your neighbourhood association.

Sincerely,

Sharon Armstrong  
Co-Investigator/Student

February 21, 1994

The questionnaire may seem quite lengthy. This is because a great deal of information is required in order to complete the research project. Because of the length, it may be useful to complete the questionnaire one section at a time. Thank you again for participating in this research project. Your input is very much appreciated and necessary.

Space is provided for each of your answers, however if additional space is required please use the back of the questionnaire or a separate piece of paper.

If your association has a document (flyer, brochure, information booklet) providing information which is requested in this survey there may be a number of questions you need not answer. Simply indicate below the relevant question that I should refer to the document provided and include a copy of the document upon return of the completed questionnaire.

**PLEASE RETURN BY MARCH 21, 1994.**



## **Local Government and Neighbourhood Groups: An Investigation of Existing Models**

Section A. **HISTORY AND ESTABLISHMENT:**

I would like to begin by asking you about the historical beginnings of your particular neighbourhood association/community club/community association.

1. What date was your neighbourhood association established?
2. Please explain the motivation behind the initiation of your neighbourhood association. (Why was it initiated? What were the driving forces behind its initiation?)
3. Was the Office of Neighbourhood Associations involved with the initiation of your neighbourhood association? Please explain the involvement.

4. What approach was used during the process of initiation?

(ie. did the drive toward its development occur from the residents themselves? from an outside force other than local municipal government? from the local municipal government? in response to a particular issue? other?

5. Please explain why you believe the particular approach(es) was(were) utilised.

(ie. whose interests were served through their use?)

6. What were the original goals and objectives of the neighbourhood association?

Are these goals and objectives the same or different at present? If different, please explain what they are and why they are different.

7. Do the goals and objectives of your neighbourhood association as described above fit or conflict with those of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations? Please explain.

8. Are there set boundaries within which your association functions?

(Who or what determined the boundaries? Were they planning areas? Were they determined with respect to environmental/natural limitations? Did the local municipal government determine them? Were the residents responsible for boundary determination? Were they determined by another mechanism?)

Please explain.

9. If you had the luxury of developing the neighbourhood association again what would you do differently? Please be specific.

Section B: **COMMUNICATION:**

This section directs questions toward the ways in which communication takes place between neighbourhood associations and the Office of Neighbourhood Associations.

10. How does the Office of Neighbourhood Associations communicate with your neighbourhood association? How often does this communication take place? (tick the appropriate box)

daily weekly monthly quarterly yearly when other  
necessary (describe)

telephone to president

newsletter

block captains (or the equivalent)

newspaper (advertisements, notices)

memo

electronic mail (on computer)

other (please describe)

other

other

other

11. Do you feel that the communication takes place often enough? (circle)

yes no

12. How often do you feel the communication should take place?
13. Do you feel that the method(s) of communication is(are) effective? Please explain.
14. If you could change the methods of communication what would you do differently? (ie. suggest an alternative method, alter the information route, etc.)

Section C: **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

I would like to ask some questions regarding the structure of your neighbourhood association.

15. What members of your neighbourhood are eligible to belong to your neighbourhood association? (ie. is there specific criteria governing who can belong or can anyone belong?)

Please explain

Who determines the eligibility criteria?

16. Do you have a formal constitution and/or bylaws under which you operate? If yes would it be possible for me to obtain a copy? If no please briefly describe them.

17. Who or what determined that it was necessary to have a formal constitution and/or bylaws?



18. Do you have an executive and/or board of directors?    yes    no

If yes, what positions do you have on the board and what are their responsibilities (describe the responsibilities in point form if possible)?

positions :

responsibilities:

president

vice president

treasurer

past president

secretary

membership

recreation representative

youth

older adults

others? (please list)

19. Is your board of directors broken down into committees? Please name the committees and the responsibilities of each.

20. How would you define your role with respect to the area within which you operate?

(ie. does your association provide recreational facilities, advocate for community issues - planning, traffic, provide community services, etc.)

21. If you have an organisational chart outlining the structure of your neighbourhood association I would be pleased if you would provide me with a copy. If you do not have one, please draw one and briefly describe it.

22. How would you describe the structure of your neighbourhood association?

(Is it flat, extremely hierarchical, does information flow freely throughout all areas, are all those involved equally informed, etc.)

23. If you were able to, how would you alter the existing structure?

Why would you make these alterations?

The following questions focus upon the structure of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations and how your particular neighbourhood association fits within that structure.

24. How does your neighbourhood association fit into the city-wide neighbourhood associations structure?

Please answer with a diagram. Make sure to identify your neighbourhood association on the diagram.

(ie. on your diagram you would show the Office of Neighbourhood Associations, the neighbourhood coalitions, and the neighbourhood associations, etc.)

25. If you could, how would you change the existing overall structure from that described above?

(Specifically describe how you would alter the way the neighbourhood associations fit into the existing structure.)

Answer with a diagram, sentence/paragraph, or both.

Section D: **INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS:**

This section requests information regarding your neighbourhood association's involvement and the Office of Neighbourhood Associations' involvement with other organisations that exist within and outside the district or city municipal boundaries.

26. What type of involvement/liaison does your neighbourhood association have with the following:

Federal government

Provincial government

Municipal government (identify specific departments):

Recreation department (parks board):

Police:

Sports Associations:

Business groups:

Other groups/organisations (please specify all):

27. What role/relationship do you believe the Office of Neighbourhood Associations has with the following:

Federal government

Provincial government

Municipal government (indicate which departments):

Recreation department (parks board):

Police:

Sports Associations:

Local business groups:

Other groups/organisations (please specify all):



**Section E: THE LINK BETWEEN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION  
AND THE OFFICE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATIONS.**

This section requests that you provide information regarding the type of link that exists between your neighbourhood association and the Office of Neighbourhood Associations.

28. With respect to the municipal government with which the Office of Neighbourhood Associations is linked, what tasks/projects/affairs are the neighbourhood associations encouraged to be involved with?

(Possibilities include: involvement with planning issues, transportation, recreation, safety and security issues, redevelopment, new development, neighbourhood beautification, environmental concerns, etc.)

Please be as precise as possible and include every form of involvement you can think of.

29. Of the tasks stated above, circle those that your particular neighbourhood association is involved with.

30. In what capacity is your particular neighbourhood association involved with the tasks circled above?

(ie. as volunteers, consultants, decision makers, other)

31. Do you feel that you are able and encouraged to participate at the Office of Neighbourhood Associations level?

yes no (circle)

Why or why not?

32. How would you define the role of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations within your municipality?

33. What duties and responsibilities does the Office of Neighbourhood Associations have with respect to your neighbourhood association?

34. What are the requirements that your neighbourhood association must meet in order to be recognised by the Office of Neighbourhood Associations?

(ie. must it have a formal constitution and bylaws, have open membership, be located within a specific boundary, board members elected, every member of the association has equal opportunity to be on the board...etc.)

35. Are these requirements the same for all neighbourhood associations within the municipal jurisdiction or are they flexible? Please explain.

36. If you could, would you alter these requirements in any way? If so, how?

Please be specific.

37. By what process does the Office of Neighbourhood Associations encourage new neighbourhood associations to develop?

(ie. how are the residents of new subdivisions encouraged to form neighbourhood associations?)

38. What do you believe is most valuable/beneficial about the link between your neighbourhood association and the Office of Neighbourhood Associations ?

Section F: **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION:**

39. What do you believe to be the most important accomplishments of your neighbourhood association?

Please list and explain the importance.

40. In what way(s) do you feel your neighbourhood association brings the members of your area together? Please explain.

41. Do you have any suggestions regarding what new neighbourhood associations might consider when starting up?

42. Do you have any suggestions regarding what new neighbourhood organisation structures (like the Office of Neighbourhood Associations) might consider when starting up?

(ie. with respect to structure, activity involvement, linkages to community organisations, communication, encouragement of development of new neighbourhood associations, etc.)



43. Is there anything else that you wish to add?

**PLEASE RETURN BY MARCH 21**

Interview

**Local Government and Neighbourhood Groups:**  
**An Investigation of Existing Models**

The interview is divided as follows:

Section A: History and Establishment

Section B: Communication

Section C: Organisational Structure

Section D: Involvement With Other Organisations

Section E: The Link Between the Office of Neighbourhood Associations and  
the Neighbourhood Associations Within the Municipality

Section F: Miscellaneous Information

Section A. **HISTORY AND ESTABLISHMENT:**

1. What date was the Office of Neighbourhood Associations established?
2. Please explain the motivation behind the initiation of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations.  
  
(Why was it initiated? What were the driving forces behind its initiation? Did the drive toward its development occur from the residents themselves? From an outside force other than local municipal government? From the local municipal government? In response to a particular issue? Other?)
3. What were the original goals and objectives of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations?
4. Are these goals and objectives the same or different at present? If different, please explain what they are and why they are different.

Section B: **COMMUNICATION:**

This section directs questions toward the ways in which communication takes place between the Office of Neighbourhood Associations and the neighbourhood associations within the municipality.

5. How does the Office of Neighbourhood Associations communicate with the neighbourhood associations? How often does this communication take place?

daily weekly monthly quarterly yearly when other  
necessary (describe)

telephone to president

newsletter

block captains (or the equivalent)

newspaper (advertisements, notices)

memo

electronic mail (on computer)

other (please describe)

other

other

other

6. Do you feel that the communication takes place often enough?

yes no

7. How often do you feel the communication should take place?

8. Do you feel that the method(s) of communication is(are) effective? Please explain.
9. If you could change the methods of communication what would you do differently? (ie. suggest an alternative method, alter the information route, etc.)

## Section C: **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

I would like to ask some questions regarding the structure of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations.

10. What does the overall city-wide neighbourhood association structure look like?

Please answer with a diagram.

(ie. on your diagram you might show the Office of Neighbourhood Associations, district neighbourhood coalitions, the community associations, etc.)

11. How would you describe the structure of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations?

(ie. is it flat, extremely hierarchical, does information flow freely throughout all areas, are all those involved equally informed, etc.)

12. What changes, if any, would you make to the existing structure?

Why would you make these alterations?

Section D: **INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS:**

This section requests information regarding the Office of Neighbourhood Associations' involvement with other organisations that exist within and outside the city municipal boundaries.

13. What type of involvement/liaison does the Office of Neighbourhood Associations have with the following:

Federal government

Provincial government

Municipal government (identify specific departments):

Recreation department (parks board):

Police:

Sports Associations:

Business groups:

Other groups/organisations (please specify all):



**Section E: THE LINK BETWEEN THE OFFICE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATIONS AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATIONS.**

14. What municipal tasks/projects/affairs are the neighbourhood associations throughout the city encouraged to be involved with?

(Possibilities might include: involvement with planning issues, transportation, recreation, safety and security issues, redevelopment, new development, neighbourhood beautification, environmental concerns, etc.)

Specifically, how are the neighbourhood associations involved in municipal decision making?

(ie. as volunteers, consultants, decision makers, other)

Please be as precise as possible and include every form of involvement you can think of.

15. What are the requirements that a neighbourhood association must meet in order to be recognised by the Office of Neighbourhood Associations?  
(How do you ensure for accountability and representativeness of the neighbourhood associations?)

(ie. requirements might include:

- formal constitution and bylaws
- open membership
- location within a specific boundary
- board members elected through annual democratic elections
- membership size
- incorporation as a non-profit society...etc.)

16. Are these requirements the same for all neighbourhood associations within the city or are they flexible? Please explain.

17. If you could, would you alter these requirements in any way? If so, how?

18. How does the Office of Neighbourhood Associations support the neighbourhood associations in the Portland area?

(financially (through grants), staff provision, in kind (ie. publicity), information provision, etc.)

19. How does the Office of Neighbourhood Associations support the development of neighbourhood associations in areas where they do not exist?  
  
(ie. in lower income areas, new subdivisions, unorganised areas, etc.)
20. How would you define the role of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations within the city ?  
  
(ie. advocator, supporter, funds provider, community developer, community association initiator, etc.)
21. How would you define the role of the neighbourhood associations within the municipality ?
22. What do you believe is most valuable/beneficial about the existence of the Office of Neighbourhood Associations?  
  
(ie. for the municipality as a whole and for specific communities)

Section F: **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION:**

23. Do you have any suggestions regarding what new neighbourhood organisation structures (like the Office of Neighbourhood Associations with which you are involved) might consider when starting up?

(ie. with respect to structure, activity involvement, linkages to existing community organisations, communication, encouragement of development of community associations, etc.)

24. Is there anything else that you wish to add?

Appendix Three  
Consent For Audio Taping

# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



School of Social Work  
2080 West Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z2  
Tel: (604) 822-2255 Fax: (604) 822-8656

## Local Governments and Neighbourhood Groups: An Investigation of Existing Models

Name of Department or Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research project and for agreeing to meeting with me to talk about the model of municipal government linked neighbourhood organisation with which you are involved. As I explained in the initial letter of contact and during subsequent telephone conversations, this research project is being conducted by myself, Sharon Armstrong, a Master of Social Work student at the University of British Columbia. If you have any questions or queries I can be contacted by phone (604-739-0905), by facsimile (604-733-5116) or by mail (2-1896 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6J 2E8).

This study will represent a graduate thesis upon completion. My faculty advisor for the research project is Roopchand Seebaran, a professor at the UBC school of Social Work and he can be reached by phone at 604-822-2255.

To remind you, the purpose of the research is to investigate, explore and describe existing models of neighbourhood organisation structure that are linked with municipal government in order to make recommendations to the Corporation of the District of North Vancouver which will aid in their implementation of such a neighbourhood organisation structure. Although this study is being conducted with a specific municipality in mind the recommendations presented will hopefully be beneficial to other municipalities attempting similar initiatives.

Your participation in this project consists of participation in a face-to-face interview during which you will be requested to answer questions regarding the model of neighbourhood organisation structure with which you are involved. The entire interview should take no more than 2 hours to complete.

Just before we start the interview, I would like to reassure you that as a participant in this project you have several rights:

1. Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary.
2. You are free to refuse to answer any question at any time.
3. You are free to end the interview thereby refusing participation at any time without any penalty to you.
4. You can add anything that you feel is important.

This interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to myself. Completion of the interview will signify your consent to allow the information you provide to be utilised only within the confines of this study.

I would like to use this tape recorder to record what is being said. I will personally type what is on the tape, and then erase the tape. Your name will not be put on the typed notes but instead I will assign a secret number to it that only I will know. The notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet until the end of the project, and then will be destroyed. They will not be used for any other purpose or way except in relation to this particular project. Excerpts or sentences from the interview may be part of the final research report, but under no circumstances will your name or anything else that can identify you be included.

Do you have any questions regarding the procedure of this interview? I would be grateful if you would sign this form to show that you acknowledge its contents.

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby consent to participate in this audiotaped interview. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Printed)

Appendix Four

Example of Transcript Coding

notes + ideas to  
researcher  
(regarding structure)

10.

[The office of neighbourhoods] contracts with the 7 coalitions plus APP for them to provide support services to the neighbourhood associations. So each na sends a representative to the coalitions, the board of the coalitions and that what makes up the board of directors of the neighbourhood coalition. That's our neighbourhood model basically.

Now with the exception of the North area of the city where there is no formal board because they couldn't work together, for a variety of reasons, the city is hiring staff-? directly but it's still going to be neighbourhood controlled and directed, with neighbourhood programmes.

5.

In terms of the communication questions the coalitions are the go between. There is some criticism re. how much they are almost a part of the bureaucracy to some extent. So my goal is to have more direct communication with the neighbourhood associations.

The neighbourhood associations are fiercely independent. We don't control them, or tell them what to do, we don't direct their agenda. The only way that premise of the neighbourhood network can work is if these na's are independent. That's a distinction between something that would be set up for purely political motives and something that is truly driven by the citizens involved because when you do that you have to take the wrath of the citizens when they come at you about something and the city of This city has been very courageous about allowing and promoting active citizen participation when in fact those are the very same people who come at you for any number of things. But the theory is the more you get them involved and the more you communicate with them and the more they feel a part of it the less disenfranchised and angry they are about decisions, and the better the decisions are.

Come challenge us, come ask us questions, give us your perspective from people who live with this stuff. don't want a Machiavellian approach.

communication methods:

crime prevention coordinator has weekly/monthly contact with block captains although she works more directly with the staff of the coalitions who work with the block captains and the foot patrol coordinators.

**So your all interconnected.** Yes, we have close communication.

We certainly use the newspaper to put out notices for public meetings and

Possible Themes  
↓  
(open codes,  
arranged codes,  
categories,  
themes)  
↓

← conditions  
a problem  
BUREAUCRACY

- creation of it  
- copying city  
admin. style

← na's  
independent

← driven by  
citizens but  
guided by  
city.

info. sharing  
- knowledge from  
hands of experts  
to everyone  
= no mystery  
sit back + wait  
Reactivity only  
encouragement

indirect  
communication  
personal  
contact.

close ties  
contact  
direct contact  
use of media