URBAN RENEWAL IN CANADA:
AN ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PRACTICE

by

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ABSTRACT

Urban renewal is the total process of replacing, repairing, and maintaining the various parts of the urban environment as required, to permit them to continue to contribute to the life of the urban area. This process involves both public and private action when the urban components become deteriorated, obsolete and suitable for alternate use, or are in danger of depreciating in condition. In this paper, however, the broad spectrum of urban renewal has not been examined, but instead, concentrated consideration has been given to public activity in this field.

Federal urban renewal legislation in Canada has evolved out of a national concern about the economic consequences of the collapse of the house construction industry during the world depression of the 1930's. This concept has been altered to some extent by the recognition that not only was new construction required in new areas, but also, provision had to be made to replace and repair the older parts of the city. This broadening scope of urban renewal has been reflected in the successive revisions and amendments to the National Housing Act, from 1944 to 1966.

However, the realization that urban renewal is but part of overall community planning has not yet been fully demonstrated in the Canadian federal legislation. The British North America Act has endowed the provinces with the responsibility for municipal institutions, matters of a local nature, and property and civil rights. Thus, although national economic considerations spawned the initial public urban renewal activity, the national federal government is unable to work directly with the municipalities.
in the provision of financial aid and technical assistance. Instead, the provinces may approve only what the municipalities initiate, and approval of applications for federal urban renewal assistance is made in the Ottawa head office of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

A nation-wide survey of officials involved with urban renewal at the three levels of government, confirmed that the scope of the present program needs to be broadened. Considerable dissatisfaction was also expressed with the procedural delays and the lack of co-ordination between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments. Housing is regarded as the most critical area of urban problem, with civic appearance, traffic and parking, and socio-economic conditions, in decreasing order of importance. Decentralization of federal authority, more local autonomy, and creation of a single department to deal with all urban affairs, have been suggested for reducing administrative delays.

The results of this investigation have confirmed the need for general revision of the program for urban assistance. One of the principal reasons for the deficiencies of the Canadian urban renewal program appears to be the separation of responsibilities as allocated by the British North America Act. Therefore, the hypothesis is considered to be valid, namely that URBAN RENEWAL IN CANADA HAS BEEN LESS THAN TOTALLY EFFECTIVE BECAUSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS OF THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT.
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The Process of Urban Renewal

Urban renewal in simple terms is the process by which the various parts of an urban area are repaired or replaced as they become physically deteriorated, obsolete, or suitable for alternate use. This is a continuous process, and can be carried out by private individuals or corporations, by public agencies, or by a combination of both.

Considered very broadly, urban renewal may be described as the total of all public and private action which must be taken to provide for the sound maintenance of built-up urban areas or for their redevelopment, whichever produces the most desirable results - socially, physically, economically, and visually.\(^1\)

A truly dynamic city must be continuously undergoing this process in all sections of its developed area. Where this does not occur, broad areas of severe social, economic, and physical blight may result. This deterioration appears to be contagious,

\(^1\)Ontario, Department of Municipal Affairs, "Urban Renewal in Ontario", Toronto: 1964, p.3.
and often spreads throughout a neighbourhood and its bordering areas.\textsuperscript{2} Massive efforts to check its growth, and isolate and remove it from the healthy, living urban organism are then required.

Although urban renewal is the action undertaken to remove or prevent physical deterioration, there is considerable discussion about the sequence of events which result in the need for urban renewal. It is a moot question whether social and economic deterioration are the result of poor physical environment or vice versa. There probably is no clear cause and effect relationship, even though they are inter-related. Miles Colean puts it in these words:

Decay and stagnation are the evidences of deep-seated maladjustments in urban organization and development. They are not the maladjustments themselves. Efforts simply to repair or tear down deteriorated structures and build new ones without seeking out and mastering the underlying troubles are likely to be both costly and fruitless.\textsuperscript{3}

Others have justified urban renewal on the grounds that the provision of decent, safe, and sanitary housing will decrease the social problems of the inhabitants of slum areas.

There is little question that the physical and mental health, family welfare, and social behaviour of a substantial proportion of the individuals and families rehoused in Regent Park have greatly improved . . . . Crime and delinquency have all but disappeared among the residents of the new housing . . . . In short, a relatively normal environment has been substituted for one of the poorest slum areas with profoundly significant social effects.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{2}Miles Colean, \textit{Renewing Our Cities}, New York: 20th Century Fund, 1953, p.3.

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., p.4.

\textsuperscript{4}Albert Rose, \textit{Regent Park: A Study in Slum Clearance}, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958, p.221.
Notwithstanding this debate, urban renewal can be regarded generally as the physical manifestation of the normal growth process of a dynamic city. For purposes of this paper, however, the term urban renewal is used to describe primarily that activity which is eligible for federal financial support. An evaluation of the total spectrum of Canadian urban renewal would be beyond the scope of the resources available for this report.

Conservation, Rehabilitation, Redevelopment

In its physical activity urban renewal has been classified into three degrees of intensity dependant on the severity of the conditions sought to be ameliorated: conservation, rehabilitation, and redevelopment.

Conservation is the term given to measures taken by private citizens, usually under the direction of city bylaws, to maintain their property to the accepted standard. Action taken by the local municipal organization to maintain public services and facilities, as well as the enactment and enforcement of zoning bylaws, occupancy and maintenance bylaws, and health and building regulations also fall into this category.

Rehabilitation involves the major repair of existing structures, which show signs of serious deterioration, but which can be economically restored to standard condition without structural change. Both conservation and rehabilitation are possible when the existing land-use patterns in the designated areas have not become obsolete.
Redevelopment is the process of clearing and rebuilding deteriorated areas where a new land-use is indicated or where the condition of the structures precludes any thought of repair. This is the action historically associated with slum clearance. Redevelopment on a large scale often requires municipal expropriation of properties when the normal market forces do not take action in situations where community needs are clearly demonstrated. Rehabilitation and conservation, on the other hand, can be undertaken by private individuals and groups, though not necessarily by those who are currently accommodated in the structures needing improvement.

The Problems of Urban Renewal

The identifiable shortcomings of the present public urban renewal program are as numerous as the persons one might question on the matter. On the other hand, there are some remarkable examples of the success of individual projects. In essence, the problems must be assessed in terms of goals and objectives. If it is desired that everyone inhabit decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings regardless of ability to pay for such accommodation, then a policy designed to provide for new housing, or for the repair of substandard housing, must be judged in this light. However, if it is desired primarily to stimulate economic activity and only secondarily to improve living and working conditions in the urban areas, then subsequent action must be evaluated against these objectives. Realizing that society's goals change, albeit slowly, over time, the activity undertaken by the governmental organizations must be altered in accordance with these changes. The lag of government policy behind changes
in external conditions and societal values appears to be one of the major reasons for current discontent with the urban renewal program.

The problems confronting urban renewal can be classified under two headings: those arising from a lack of action, and those resulting from a lack of success in improving conditions. In the first category fit the expanses of vacant, cleared land from which the previous residents were removed, but on which no further work has been done beyond the initial clearance. In addition, areas which have been labelled "slum" but have not yet been acquired by the public agency, are likely to be allowed to deteriorate even further by their present owners and tenants. There is no incentive to keep one's dwelling up to standard when there is little possibility that the additional investment in maintenance will be returned.\(^5\)

Although there has been legislation in Canada to support urban renewal since 1944, the number of completed projects is small. Many urban areas have undertaken studies to identify blighted sections of their communities, and to make recommendations for the removal of this blight. The majority of these communities, however, have been slow to implement schemes arising out of these studies. Up to June 1966, a total of 80 communities had received approval from Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to conduct studies, but only 15 had received approval to begin implementation of specific schemes.

The question of success is a different matter. In cities where urban renewal has resulted in the removal and

redevelopment, or the rehabilitation, of buildings in blighted areas, the new physical structures, initially at least, have improved civic appearance. Aldermen point with pride to the numbers of families rehoused in public housing at subsidized rents. In a large number of these cases however, the families dispossessed by the urban renewal projects have not moved into decent, safe, and sanitary housing either public or private. The stigma attached to public housing by those who have been content to fend for themselves, either as owners or tenants, precludes their moving into accommodation where independence and privacy are somewhat restricted. Instead, at additional cost to themselves, they are forced to look elsewhere for housing which may be of higher cost, but with no improvement on their present surroundings. This move often involves relocation at a considerable distance from their friends and familiar urban environment.\(^6\)

Even the cost of rehabilitation is often prohibitive for those who are subsidizing their own housing by deferred maintenance. When urban renewal is selected for the area in which they live, they are forced to sell and leave when no funds are available to assist them to bring their housing up to standard, other than home improvement loans which require repayment with interest.

In summary, it appears that a great many of the problems associated with urban renewal arise from a lack of locally and nationally accepted goals. If such goals were clearly set forth and policies and programs formulated to work towards these

goals, urban renewal might be more successful than it has
been to date. The public as well as the decision-makers require
a framework against which public and private actions can be
assessed. Improved co-ordination of activities plus an
acceleration of the various public programs might result, if
urban renewal goals were clearly defined.

Objectives, Scope, and Limitations of the Study

This study has been undertaken to attempt an evaluation
of the legislation and administration of the public urban
renewal program in Canada, and hopefully to make some
recommendations for its improvement.

The urban renewal program in the United States has been
examined critically in recent years by a number of professional
people. Deficiencies have been exposed and recommendations
offered for its improvement. Some have even suggested that the
program be dropped.

No similar comprehensive study has yet been undertaken
in Canada, to attempt an assessment on a nation-wide basis.
The class of 1966 in Community and Regional Planning at the
University of British Columbia, under the direction of Dr. K.J.
Cross, analysed thirty-one specific urban renewal studies.
This work was initiated in September 1965 with the aim of:
"discovering why the stated goals of Canadian urban renewal
programmes are not being realized as effectively and
efficiently as possible." 7 This group determined that the

7 Graduate Students in Community and Regional Planning,
"The Progress of Urban Renewal in Canada: A Critical Evaluation",
unpublished report, Division of Community and Regional Planning,
studies per se did not provide any significant answers to the above question, as they were primarily an inventory of conditions, rather than an analysis of cause and effect. The examination of these studies, however, did provide some interesting data on procedural omissions and bottlenecks.

From this starting point it became evident that a survey of professional opinion at the three levels of government should be undertaken in the light of the recommendations of the above study. These recommendations were chiefly that the goals of urban renewal at national and community level be re-evaluated and that research be undertaken to determine the causal factors of blighted conditions, as well as the results of completed urban renewal schemes.

It was originally intended that this study attempt to compare the goals of the planners involved in policy formulation and implementation, with the goals of the general public, towards urban renewal. The present work, however, is devoted mainly to an examination of the legislation and administration of the existing program, as seen through the eyes of the professionals directly involved.

A questionnaire was compiled and distributed to officials in the head office of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to the five regional offices of CMHC, to the departments in each of the ten provinces which are involved in urban renewal, and to sixteen municipalities which have had actual experience of urban renewal scheme implementation. In addition to matters of legislation and administration, the questions dealt with citizen attitude, and general urban problems. Twenty-five
responses to the questionnaire were received which is 27% of the 92 originally sent out. The distribution of these replies appears to offer a good sampling of current opinion.

The Hypothesis

The evaluation of any situation requires some background assumptions and a point of view explicitly stated. In this study it is assumed that there is general public acknowledgement in Canada of the need for government intervention in the field of urban affairs. As the nation's population is increasingly concentrated in urban metropolitan areas, wholesale alterations to the urban landscape are required to accommodate the pressure of higher density and higher rate of interaction. Because of their scale, these changes are virtually beyond the capability of individuals to finance, and the people as a whole, through their political structure, must take action.

The problems arise when different agencies with differing points of view are called on to administer these public works as a joint venture. Urban renewal is a case in point. Although the federal government's basic function is to administer matters of national concern, it has become involved with matters of urban dimension, which under the terms of the British North America Act of 1867, rightfully belong to the provinces.

92. In each Province, the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to Matters coming within the Classes of Subjects next hereinafter enumerated; that is to say --
Although the "states' rights" cry is not so vehemently proclaimed in Canada as in the United States, there is still a considerable amount of friction between federal and provincial organizations on matters not clearly defined by the B.N.A. Act, which was drawn up when Canada was essentially a rural nation. It is not to be expected that the Fathers of Confederation could prepare a comprehensive and complete list of matters, and allocate them between the two levels of government for all time, but it is remarkable what little change has taken place in this constitutional allocation since those days.

Therefore the hypothesis of this thesis is that URBAN RENEWAL IN CANADA HAS BEEN LESS THAN TOTALLY EFFECTIVE BECAUSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS OF THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT.

Organization of the Thesis

In general this thesis will examine the development of urban renewal legislation chiefly in the federal Parliament, the present administrative procedure for approval and implementation, the professional opinion of the present process, and make some recommendations for further investigation and improvement of the existing system.

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8British North America Act, 1867, Section 92.
Chapter II considers the evolution of the concepts of urban renewal from the days following the depression of the early 1930's. At that time an economic crisis of national dimensions provided the initial impetus for federal government intervention in housing and other urban matters.

Chapter III examines in some detail the various processes and subdivisions of activity which make up the entire urban renewal program. The roles of the three levels of government in setting policy and making administrative decisions are also illuminated.

In Chapter IV, the planning process is evaluated and the relationship of urban renewal to this process is examined. The results of a nation-wide attitude survey of professionals involved with urban renewal are reviewed and the extent and distribution of public activity in this field are presented and discussed.

Chapter V summarizes the entire study and outlines suggestions for alteration of the present system as well as directions for further research.
CHAPTER II

THE EVOLVING CONCEPT OF URBAN RENEWAL

"Urban renewal in Canada, as in the United States, has its roots in social housing legislation . . . However, the utilitarian trunk of slum clearance and public housing is crowned by an exotic growth, the extent and ramifications of which are perhaps even yet not fully revealed".¹

In the Federal Legislation

Following the collapse of the Canadian economy in the world financial depression of the 1930's, unemployment and falling real estate values combined to place many Canadians in dire straits. Mortgage foreclosures and municipal bankruptcies resulted. The housing construction industry was particularly hard hit and it was apparent that bold economic measures were required of the government, to halt the downward spiral of employment and demand, and to provide adequate housing for a significant portion of the population.

In 1935 the Dominion Housing Act was introduced, to be administered by the Federal Department of Finance. This Act

recognized that the housing problem was a national one and that government intervention was required in what up to that point had been the domain of private enterprise. However, this Act only provided partial assistance to mortgage financing, assuming that the economic institutions of society would be able to cope with the task, given government encouragement. After three years it became obvious that the remedy proposed was not equal to the disease, as only 5000 loans had been made in which the Federal Government had contributed one-quarter of the loan value.\(^2\)

In 1938, the National Housing Act was passed, incorporating the provisions of the 1935 Act and increasing the total loan value to 90% of the appraised value instead of 80%. The economy was gradually recovering and 6000 loans were made in 1939.\(^3\)

At this point World War II occurred, and housing construction was relegated to a low rank in the priority of construction demands towards the war effort. An advisory Committee on Post-war Reconstruction was established, however, in 1941 to investigate the physical, social, and economic conditions likely to ensue after the end of the war. The Subcommittee on Housing and Community Planning under Professor Curtis, after intensive study reported that, because of the depression and the war, there would be a shortage of 320,000 urban housing units by 1946.\(^4\) This committee also examined

\(^2\)R.G. Lillie, "Twenty Years of Housing", Habitat, vol.9, no. 3 & 4, August 1966, p.3.

\(^3\)Ibid. \(^4\)Ibid., p.4
the condition of existing housing, and recognized that the legislation and market activity at that time made no provision for the one-third of the population who were unable to purchase or otherwise provide accommodation for themselves, within the limits of their income.

As a consequence, the National Housing Act of 1944 sought to relieve the slum conditions and intolerable housing exposed by the Curtis study, through the "construction of new houses, the repair and modernization of existing houses, the improvement of housing and living conditions, and the expansion of employment in the postwar period." This Act consolidated all existing housing legislation and provided limited federal financial assistance to municipalities for slum clearance. One aspect of present-day urban renewal activity was introduced. One-half of the costs of acquisition and clearance of slum housing areas would be paid by the Federal Government if the land was re-used for low- or moderate-income housing, built by insurance or limited dividend companies.6

On January 1st, 1946, the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation was established to conduct the semi-commercial affairs of the Federal Government as outlined in the 1944 Act, thus replacing the Department of Finance.

In 1954, the National Housing Act was revised to permit low-rent housing to be built by a Federal-Provincial partnership on land which had been cleared of slum housing. It was the

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5National Housing Act, 1944, subtitle.
6Pickett, loc.cit.
1956 amendments, however, which gave legislative substance to the realizations, (1) that slum housing areas might not be suitable for housing re-use, and (2) that the assistance offered to municipalities for acquisition and clearance was inadequate for comprehensive programs against urban blight. The 1956 amendments thus made provision for urban renewal studies to be conducted to determine "the condition of urban areas, means of improving housing, and the need for additional housing or urban redevelopment. 7 The cost of these studies was to be shared 75% by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and 25% by the municipality. Areas selected for clearance and redevelopment had to be primarily residential either before or after redevelopment, but not necessarily both, as had been required under the previous legislation. These amendments provided the impetus for many communities to undertake planning studies to determine the need for urban renewal, and permitted public revitalization of the urban core.

It was further realized, however, as the years passed, that the drastic surgery of clearance and redevelopment might be avoided if preventive medicine was applied at an earlier date. Also it appeared that residential areas were not the only areas which required public intervention and assistance for renewal. Therefore, in 1964, additional

7National Housing Act, 1954, Chap.23, Sect.33(1)h.
amendments to the National Housing Act of 1954 removed completely the residential content requirement for urban renewal areas, which now included sections of redevelopment, rehabilitation, and conservation. Provision was also made for Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation to bear 50% of the costs of preparation of specific urban renewal schemes, as well as certain staff costs with respect to implementation of the schemes. The scope of the 50% Federal financial assistance towards redevelopment acquisition and clearance was also expanded to include the provision, and/or improvement, of municipal services in urban renewal areas. Funds were made available to municipalities for loans of up to two-thirds of the local share of urban renewal scheme costs, and to private home owners to enable them to undertake rehabilitation of their homes, if located in an urban renewal area. The idea that urban renewal included all three aspects: redevelopment, rehabilitation, and conservation, was firmly established by the 1964 legislation. Definitions of what was meant by "urban renewal area" and "urban renewal scheme" were also included in the legislation.

A further amendment to the National Housing Act, introduced in October 1966, extended the availability of Federal loan funds to persons wishing to purchase, improve, and occupy existing housing. In effect this permits rehabilitation with a Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
loan to be undertaken anywhere within an urban area, and not just in designated urban renewal areas.  

In summary, Canadian Federal legislation dealing with urban renewal has evolved from the provision of assistance for the clearance of slum housing and its replacement by low-income housing, into an attack on the physical problems affecting all parts of an urban area. This program involves redevelopment, rehabilitation, and conservation of not only housing, but also municipal services, commercial areas, and public institutions. Direct Federal assistance for redevelopment or rehabilitation, however, is limited to residential properties, and the conservation program is left to the municipalities through the enforcement of maintenance and occupancy standards.

**Underlying Goals and Implications**

Scott Greer has indicated that a gradual evolution has occurred in the goals of urban renewal in the United States. He postulates that the goal of a decent home and suitable environment for every American initiated the program. This was followed by a second: the revitalization

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of the central city, particularly the central business district. Both of these developed into, and are combined to some extent in the third: the goal of a "planned city".

This evolution and the component goals have broadened the scope of urban renewal from an initial preoccupation with physical conditions, to include social and economic problems as well. The attempt to provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing for the residents of slums and solve all social problems of the urban community through clearance and redevelopment alone, has been recognized as ineffectual. The slum dwellers were often forced to leave a familiar urban environment and relocate elsewhere when their residences were pulled down. Many of these people found new accommodation with only marginal improvement, and usually at increased cost. Others settled in alternative slum areas or in adjacent areas which rapidly became slums.\(^{10}\) Their behavioural norms and social values did not correspond to those of the average society, and they often lacked the education and skills necessary to enable them to compete in the economic activities of society. Consequently, the attainment of the first goal required increased emphasis on social and economic conditions in the urban areas. Housing and new buildings without concern for raising the standard of living, changing

\(^{10}\) Peter Marris, "A Report on Urban Renewal in the United States", *The Urban Condition*, ed. L.J. Duhl, New York: Basic Books Inc., 1963, p. 120.
land policy and public ownership, and an increase in health and welfare services, and education offered no solution.\footnote{11}{L.J. Duhl, "The Human Measure", Cities and Space, ed. L. Wingo, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963, p. 139.}

Revitalization of the central city also required more consideration of the process of slum formation. Rehousing the slum dwellers on the same site in public or low-rental housing would not counter the migration towards suburbia of those people upon whose buying power the downtown business interests depended. Therefore in many cases in the United States the cleared slum sites were redeveloped with new uses which would not only bring the spenders back to town, but also reconstruct the urban, downtown tax-base.\footnote{12}{Marris, loc.cit., p.118.} This resulted in the destruction of the slum community, the movement of its residents elsewhere, and the spread of physical blight to a new location.\footnote{13}{Duhl, loc.cit., p.147.} Clearly this consideration of economic issues alone did not work towards the attainment of the first goal.

The third goal of a planned city has therefore evolved out of the recognition that single purpose renewal has some undesirable consequences. Improvement of housing conditions, and commercial revitalization, occurring without reference to the overall goals of urban society, may in actual fact work against each other. For this reason the United States Federal Government has required since 1954 that communities seeking Federal urban renewal assistance
must present a "workable program". This program has seven components:

1) codes and ordinances establishing adequate standards of health and safety for the community's housing,

2) a comprehensive plan for the community's future development,

3) analyses of the neighbourhoods in the community to identify areas where action should be taken to remove blight,

4) an administrative organization to co-ordinate and implement a community program,

5) financial resources to support the community's share of the urban renewal program,

6) sufficient resources to meet the housing needs of those dislocated by urban renewal, and

7) assurance that the community as a whole is fully informed and has participated in the development of the urban renewal program.14

Despite the workable program requirement that comprehensive planning be undertaken with respect to urban renewal, the comprehensive approach was largely ignored until 1959. At that time, the United States federal government offered financial assistance to communities for the preparation of a Community Renewal Program. This incentive of federal

funds stimulated greater consideration in many cities of the overall social and economic consequences of urban development and redevelopment. It also provided substance to policies directed towards the "planned city" goal.  

In Canada, the economic and social consequences of redevelopment have been recognized by the Federal Government, but the over-riding goal of the National Housing Act still appears to be the provision of "a decent standard of housing for all Canadians". The Act does state that an urban renewal scheme must be developed in accordance with an official community plan, but does not specify what such a plan shall include. Assistance is provided for urban renewal studies, but no direct provision is made for assistance in the preparation of an official community plan.

In conclusion, it would seem that, although the Canadian Federal legislation has expanded in scope from consideration of slum clearance and rehousing initially, to a combined program of redevelopment, rehabilitation, and conservation for all sectors of the urban community, there is still an over-emphasis on the physical aspects of the urban renewal program. Even in the United States the social and economic effects of this program have only recently been


17Ibid., p.6.
fully recognized. As Canadian legislation has been generally some years behind that of the United States, opportunity is provided to assess the results of the American experience before similar steps are taken here. It is considered important, however, that increased consideration be given to the social and economic ramifications of this public action, and provision be made for correcting the imbalances created.

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CHAPTER III

ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Constitutional Provisions

The growing recognition that urban renewal is but one aspect of overall community planning as outlined in the previous chapter, has led to constitutional conflicts which detract from the success of urban renewal in Canada. Because of the division of responsibilities of the British North America Act, the program undertaken by the federal government is subject to delays and misunderstandings which result in a reduction in the effectiveness of the funds provided.

When the initial federal housing legislation was enacted, the state of the national economy was the prime concern. However, as the concept of urban renewal evolved, from an adjunct of national economic and housing policy, into a program of assuring the long term soundness of homes and communities, the enabling federal legislation has increasingly
exerted influence in matters which were delegated to the provincial governments by the British North America Act of 1867. Section 92 of this Act outlines the exclusive responsibilities of the provincial governments, among which are "municipal institutions", and "property and civil rights". The federal government, through its power of superior finance,\(^1\) shapes to a considerable extent the direction and rate of growth and renewal of these municipal institutions.

Community planning, essentially, is a matter of property and civil rights, and therefore, the federal government has endeavoured to avoid any direct involvement in this field, providing assistance only for housing and urban renewal. However, as has been emphasized by Stanley Pickett among others, putting urban renewal and urban planning in separate compartments is a serious error.\(^2\) Abrams has also stated that "housing (and urban renewal) is only a single phase of city planning".\(^3\) Therefore, it would seem essential that urban renewal only be carried out under the aegis of a comprehensive community plan.

Under the present Canadian constitutional framework, formulation of a community plan must be directed by the


\(^2\)S.H. Pickett, "Urban Renewal in the Dynamic City", *Urban Renewal Seminar*, a report of a meeting held in Ottawa, Sept. 1959, Ottawa: Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 1959, p.11.

provincial governments, or by the municipal governments, to whom many of the provincial responsibilities have been delegated. This belief in local autonomy also requires that the municipalities initiate any urban renewal project, and obtain the approval of the provincial government before any disposal of federal funds is permitted. The priorities and standards upon which a project is formulated are similarly determined at the local level.

Final review and approval of an urban renewal project by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, upon which federal funds and often, the viability of the project, depend, are completed in the Ottawa head office, despite the fact that, in many cases, a comprehensive understanding and informal consultative arrangement already exists at the local, regional level, between the municipal, provincial, and federal officials. This central approval requires a large quantity of background information to be compiled and forwarded to Ottawa. As a consequence of this centralization, decisions are made only for or against specific projects, and not within the context of the total local requirement.

Administrative Processes

The urban renewal process as outlined in the 1956 amendments to the National Housing Act contains two distinct concepts: the urban renewal study, and the urban renewal
scheme. The urban renewal study is a "broad examination of urban conditions, to identify blighted or substandard areas of a municipality, to determine requirements and formulate an urban renewal program based on the physical, social, and economic factors affecting renewal". Such studies can be undertaken for specific areas within the municipality if the needs are already apparent, or for the municipality as a whole. The latter type of study entails a thorough inventory of conditions existing in the municipality. It would seem that a community-wide study would also require a reasonably comprehensive community development plan before priorities could be established with respect to the allocation of municipal funds for renewal or other needs. The inclusion of the study concept in the federal legislation was an attempt to avoid the problems of "projectitis", a vision which does not extend beyond the limits of a single development.

An urban renewal scheme, on the other hand, is a "program for the renewal of a blighted or substandard area through redevelopment, rehabilitation, and conservation. The preparation of the scheme will include the social, physical, and economic studies necessary to support renewal proposals, and the programming for implementation." The scheme must designate a specific area within which the proposed urban

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4Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, "NHA - Urban Renewal", a pamphlet issued by CMHC; NHA 127, March 1966.


6Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, op.cit.
renewal activity will occur, and will include a plan indicating specific buildings to be acquired, a plan of proposed street pattern and land-use, a program for the provision of municipal works and services, a program for the rehousing of those to be dislocated, and a description of the supporting municipal bylaws and regulations, and proposed methods for improving, rehabilitating, or replacing other privately owned facilities. Several communities undertook the preparation and implementation of schemes or projects in the 1950's without benefit of prior urban renewal studies, but since 1956, many small communities have undertaken the studies as a means of achieving some elementary community planning.

Both of these processes, the study and the scheme, require an agreement between the three levels of government, before any federal financial assistance becomes available.

**Governmental Roles**

Within the limits of the constitutional framework, the federal government may take only a permissive and supporting role in the renewal process. The provinces have delegated most of their responsibility for matters of a local nature to the local units of government. Therefore initiation of any urban renewal activity, which is a part of the whole of community planning, must usually emanate from the municipal governments.
1) **Municipal Role**

Once the municipal council has decided that an urban renewal study should be undertaken, it must make application to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation if financial assistance is desired from the federal government under the terms of the National Housing Act. This application must contain: (1) the formal council resolution defining the objectives of the study, (2) an estimate of the cost of the study, (3) an estimate of the staff required, and (4) proof of provincial approval of the intent of the study. If this study is to be community-wide, it is eligible for federal assistance to 75% of the total cost, but if the study is limited to a specific area, only 50% of the cost may be provided by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

If it is decided by the municipal council that an urban renewal project or scheme should be undertaken, the council may again make application for assistance to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Federal assistance of 50% of the costs may be obtained for the preparation of a scheme, as well as for certain implementation costs such as acquisition and clearance of lands for redevelopment, design and installation of municipal services, staff salaries, and relocation costs for families and small businesses. The application for assistance must again show proof of provincial approval for the scheme, the enabling municipal council resolution, and details of the proposed scheme.
The municipalities may undertake urban renewal studies and schemes with their own planning staffs or they may hire outside consultants. Although the completion of a study is not a prerequisite to obtaining federal assistance for the implementation of a scheme, the approval of an application for such assistance requires much less supporting data if a study has been previously completed.

2) Provincial Role

The scope of the role available to the provinces in this process varies from active participation to passive, aloof approval or disapproval. For example, the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia, provide 25% of the costs of preparation and implementation of urban renewal schemes to municipalities within their borders, while some other provinces allow the entire burden to be borne by the municipalities. Because the provinces are ultimately responsible for the activities of their municipal creations, the federal legislation requires that any municipal application for assistance be approved by the province before being forwarded to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The provinces themselves can also seek federal assistance to conduct province-wide urban studies, as Manitoba has done, or can act as an agent for the municipalities where urban renewal is contemplated, as has occurred in Quebec.
3) **Federal Role**

The federal government, while recognizing the need for an urban renewal program of national dimensions, has been limited to using the carrot technique, without the benefit of the stick. Although the fiscal power rests here, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, acting for the federal government, has not been able to promote urban renewal, or planning, activity directly with the municipalities. Rather, it must wait for the municipalities or the provinces to initiate the action, and then judge the applications for assistance in terms of federal policies and standards. More effective co-ordination of federal and provincial policies is hindered at present by the restrictions and general frictions resulting from the 1867 allocation of powers in the British North America Act.

4) **Co-ordination**

During the initial stages of municipal study and preparation of an application for senior government assistance, no formal machinery exists to permit inter-governmental consultation. As a result, the municipality must proceed without knowing whether the plans are acceptable to the provincial and federal governments until the application is approved or rejected.

Once approval for an urban renewal scheme has been obtained, the municipality enters into separate contractual agreements with the senior governments, for the provision of
financial assistance. A three-member co-ordinating committee is usually established, representing the federal provincial, and municipal interests. This committee oversees the development of the project, through discussion of the progress of implementation, approval of expenditures and supervision to ensure that the three partners perform in accordance with the terms of the respective agreements.  

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EVALUATION OF THE LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATION

In the democratic system of government, actions undertaken by the body politic are supposed to reflect the goals and aspirations of the people represented. Since the federal, provincial, and municipal levels of Canadian government have become increasingly involved in urban renewal, it is reasonable now to consider whether this action is directed towards the fulfilment of the popular goals, and whether this action is being effectively pursued. Lacking any definitive public statement of urban renewal goals, this evaluation of the Canadian process appraises the present legislative and administrative framework chiefly in terms of its efficiency in achieving the avowed objectives.

In order to obtain information about the status of the urban renewal process across the nation, a survey was
undertaken to determine the opinions of professionals currently involved in the public program. Although urban renewal is a complex, dynamic issue, it is felt that the responses to the questionnaire provide useful evidence of certain deficiencies in the present program.

This chapter examines the planning process and the position of urban renewal within this process, both actual and suggested. A summary of the results of the survey, and a brief examination of the extent and distribution of urban renewal activity is also included.

The Planning Process

The urban planning process, of which it is postulated that urban renewal is a part, provides, in its theoretical form, for the formulation of goals, the preparation of a program, the implementation of proposals, and the review of subsequent conditions as they affect the goals, program, and other proposals. This process is continuous and permits goals to be related to collective decisions and actions. It is the means whereby man can consciously order his environment once consensus has been obtained with respect to the desired form of urban life.¹

In the Canadian system, as in the United States, the legislative program which provides the major portion of the

financial support for public urban renewal has been evolved by the federal government out of a national consensus about the desired style of urban life. The administration of this program is then entrusted to a federal crown corporation, Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, which is responsible for assessing applications for funds in terms of this national policy. The desired, or acceptable, style of urban life, however, varies considerably from community to community. Consequently, a source of potential conflict arises. Why should the national consensus determine the particular local urban environment? In terms of explicit policy, this situation does not occur, because the federal legislation does not specify what shall be considered blighted or substandard, or what standards shall apply to the official community plan. These decisions are left up to the provinces or municipalities. In this case, the goal-program-proposal-review-goal system appears to break down. Although the goals and programs are determined at the national or federal level, the standards and proposals are locally determined, and little review, if any, takes place on a comprehensive basis at any level.

If it is a national responsibility to provide assistance for urban renewal and housing, and to ensure that the urban renewal is "in harmony with an official community plan", it would seem irrational not to provide funds to ensure that

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2National Housing Act, 1954, Chapter 23, Section 23, (b).
such a community plan is established. The judgement of a specific urban renewal scheme proposal in terms of national policy alone does not necessarily ensure that the scheme is in fact "in harmony with an official community plan." "The simplest solution would be if all measures of any sort whatsoever, designed for this purpose (of continuously adapting the cities to changing needs), were eligible as part of one programme." ³

This solution is thwarted at the federal level because of the allocation of responsibilities under the British North America Act. In fact, both housing and urban renewal might be adjudged to fall within the realm of "matters of a local nature" or "property and civil rights", which are exclusively assigned to the provinces. National economic conditions and the lack of provincial action, however, permitted the initial entrance of the federal government into these fields, subject to provincial approval, during the post-depression period and World War II. Since that time, the awkward separation of the various components of a unified planning process has persisted.

There are three fundamental anomalies in the present arrangement. First, the municipalities have the necessary initiative but are ineffective because they haven't enough money. Second, the provinces have the necessary power but are ineffective because they see their role as a

passive one, and do not offer leadership and direction, and have an anachronistic concept of their relationship to urban growth problems. Third, the national government has the necessary money but its range of participation in urban development is severely limited by both law and custom.\textsuperscript{4}

It has been suggested that many of the problems arising from the confusion surrounding the roles of the various levels of government in urban affairs could be avoided through the establishment of a permanent joint federal-provincial-municipal board or committee.\textsuperscript{5,6} Such a partnership is possible under the present legislation as has been evidenced in the field of agricultural and rural development. A similar arrangement could be established as well for urban development to permit a unified planning approach to the increasing municipal problems.

\textbf{Survey Results}

\textit{1) Distribution and Response}

It is evident that the professionals and politicians involved in urban renewal at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels are perhaps best equipped, to evaluate


\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., p.100.

whether the situation outlined above presents problems in terms of effecting the Canadian program. For this reason a nation-wide survey was undertaken by mail in November 1966. A questionnaire was formulated to determine in general terms, the attitude of officials towards the existing legislation and administration, their opinion of citizen participation, and their assessment of the relative priority of the problems facing the urban areas.

A total of 92 questionnaires and covering letters were distributed, with 14 directed to officials of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, both at the head office and in the five regional offices, 30 to ministers, deputy-ministers, and planning officials in each of the ten provincial departments concerned with municipal affairs, and 48 to the mayors, clerks, and planning directors in each of sixteen municipalities where implementation of an urban renewal scheme had been approved for federal assistance. Although it was hoped that all persons contacted would reply directly from their own personal experience, most of the more senior officials delegated the responsibility to a member of their subordinate staffs. No response was received from any elected official except for letters of acknowledgement. A total of 25 completed questionnaires were received, giving a 27.4 per cent return. Of these,

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7See Appendix "A".
four were received from federal officials, seven from provincial officials, and fourteen from municipal officials.

The geographic distribution of the responses provides a range of experience as well. Replies were received from Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation head office, and the regional offices in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver. The provinces of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba (2), Saskatchewan and British Columbia are represented, as are the municipalities of Halifax, St. John (2), Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston (2), Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, Sarnia, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Victoria.

Little attempt has been made to correlate the nature of the response with the level of government its source represents. It was felt that due to the general nature of questions asked, and the broad range of position and responsibility represented by the respondents, the responses would not be particularly indicative of official opinion at each level.

The length of the questionnaire, and the open-ended nature of the majority of the questions, required more time for responsible consideration and reply than many of the respondents were willing to devote. Considerable comment was also received with regard to the vagueness of the wording of the questions and the lack of precision in the meaning of some terms. Despite the acknowledged validity of these criticisms, it is felt that the responses obtained lend support to the contention of this thesis.
2) **Analysis**

Statistical analysis of the responses to open-ended questions is difficult. An attempt has been made, however, to reduce and categorize the answers under various ideas, and to determine the most prevalent concept. Questions 8 and 9 required the ranking of a list of problem types, and an assessment of the effectiveness of present legislation and procedure in dealing with the problems. Establishing concensus for these two questions was therefore a little more straightforward.

3) **Legislation and Administration**

Questions 2 and 3 dealt with the suitability of, and suggestions for change in, the existing legislation and procedure of urban renewal. There was a general tendency for the respondents to make suggestions for administrative changes under the legislative question, indicating some confusion between the functions. The fact that the legislative question was first in order may have caused responses to the administrative question to be included in it. In fact, in several cases Question 3 was answered by direct referral to question 2.

Because of this confusion both questions have been analysed as one, and the answers categorized into procedural and legislative aspects. The most common complaint voiced by the respondents was that procedural bottlenecks and "red-tape" reduced the efficacy of urban renewal. This
point was made by sixteen of the twenty-five respondents (64%), of whom four were provincial officials, and one a federal representative. The desirability of broadening the scope of the federal and provincial legislation, to include the various social, physical, and economic aspects of overall planning, was emphasized by fifteen respondents (60%). Two of the replies in this category were made by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation officials, and four by provincial representatives. Ten responses (40%) indicated a general dissatisfaction with the degree of provincial participation and initiative in urban renewal. This attitude was expressed by one federal official and by one provincial official as well as by eight municipal representatives. A summary of the categories and the magnitude of response is tabulated in Table I.

The response to these two questions indicates support for several aspects of the discussion in Chapter III. The delay and frustration due to the submission of applications for financial assistance, through the provincial governments to the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation head office, is underlined by the high percentage of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with the present procedure. The recognition by the professionals of the need for a broader application of urban assistance in Canada, to include factors other
than the essentially physical aspects of present urban renewal, is also demonstrated. The third major response category emphasizes that some consideration need be given to a review of the role played by the provincial levels of government in the urban renewal process.

4) The Success of Urban Renewal

Question 4 asked whether urban renewal was effective in relocating the residents of urban renewal areas in "decent, safe, and sanitary housing". Out of the twenty respondents, eight replied in the affirmative, seven said no, six made no comment, while two didn't know and two responded maybe. The intent of the question was to determine whether urban renewal resulted in the relocation of the residents into better housing without a net increase in their personal social or economic costs. Several respondents made mention of the additional problems faced by the displaced families, while ten replies suggested that increased consideration needed to be given to the social effects and costs of relocation. In addition, there seemed to be a general feeling that more research and/or followup studies were required to determine the consequences of urban renewal projects which have been, or are being, implemented.

Question 5 was concerned with the success of the National Housing Act and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation in improving the living and working conditions in the municipalities. Six of the respondents stated that
### Table I. Category and size of response to Questions 2 and 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Response</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Procedure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dissatisfaction because of &quot;red-tape&quot; and delay</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Suggestions: increase local autonomy generally</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- decentralize CMHC authority to regional level</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- explain more fully NHA scope and intent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- co-ordinate all urban affairs under one department</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Broaden scope of legislation to cover all aspects of planning</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Suggestions: increase assistance to community services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- increase consideration of social aspects</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increase provincial activity through legislation and contributions</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increase local initiative and participation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increase consideration of regional differences and inequalities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Institute controls to prevent speculation in urban renewal areas</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Problems due to shortage of competent personnel</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table II. Response to Question 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>No. of Responses</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has urban renewal been effective in providing &quot;decent, safe, and sanitary housing&quot;?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Comment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

these objectives were being met, eight felt that partial success was being achieved, and seven replied negatively. Three respondents made no comment. This question failed to acknowledge that the public urban renewal program is only part of the process of adapting the community to meet changing conditions, as several respondents pointed out. No meaningful conclusions can be drawn from these responses, but several officials reinforced their comments under questions 2 and 3 in the replies to this question.

5) Citizen Attitudes

Question 6 dealt with the official's interpretation of the public attitude towards urban renewal. Thirteen respondents indicated that the public was apathetic, eleven suggested that they were uninformed, and five felt that the public was in favour of urban renewal. Six respondents indicated both apathetic and
uninformed on the returned questionnaire. The answers to this question indicate the range of attitude which prevails from one community to another, and the lack of public concern in general.

Question 7 was open-ended, seeking suggestions for improving citizen attitudes and for increasing public participation in urban renewal. This question did not present an unbiased choice to the respondent, for it assumed that the professionals wished to obtain more public participation. Only one reply did not offer a suggestion for increasing public awareness of urban renewal. This respondent reasoned that until the professionals are fully aware of the ramifications of the program, it is not right to seek wider public support. The other twenty-four respondents inferred, however, that they were convinced of the merits of urban renewal, and various suggestions were put forward, chiefly for informing and involving the residents of a selected urban renewal area. These suggestions ranged from the use of modern advertising techniques, through the extensive use of social workers to contact and inform, to the circular letter, public meeting, and site office technique in current use. The necessity of establishing a representative local residents' association with some responsibilities and a role in decision-making was also stressed by a number of the respondents. Quite
obviously, if a public program in a democratic system is to succeed, it requires public support.

6) **Urban Problems and their Solution**

Question 8 requested a ranking of the problems facing urban areas, as suggested in a list of ten. Most respondents interpreted this question in the light of the problems of their own urban environment. It is interesting to note that housing does appear to be the most serious problem in the opinion of the professionals across the country. These results are probably skewed by the fact that the questionnaire was slanted towards urban renewal and its patron, housing, as well as being directed towards planners who were involved with urban renewal most specifically.

Of the twenty-five respondents, four did not complete this question, and only thirteen indicated rankings for all the items listed. One of the latter submitted rankings by two different persons, both of which are included in the final analysis. Twenty-one questionnaires indicated rankings for at least three items. The first three rankings by each respondent were considered to be the most significant. By assigning the first, second, and third choices of each of the respondents a value of 3, 2, and 1 respectively, the following total scores are obtained from the opinions of twenty-two officials:
Table III. Total scores of ranked list of urban problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of problem</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Appearance</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic and Parking</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare (Socio-economic conditions)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Services</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One drawback to this type of analysis is that it presumes equal intervals between the various choices. In reality, one respondent may have very strong feeling about his first choice and very little for his second and third. Another may have strong feelings about all three of his first three choices. By utilizing only the three problems ranked first, second, and third, however, it is felt that a more significant assessment has been made, than if all ten ranks had been analysed.

The lack of specificity of the problems listed probably permitted a variation in interpretation of the terms by each of the respondents. This breakdown of the ranked responses, however, does indicate the directions of professional opinion behind the public urban renewal program.

Question 9 asked whether existing urban renewal and other legislation had been "most effective, of little value, or useless" in attempting to solve the urban
problems listed as in Question 8. Unfortunately, this question did not allow a sufficient range of choice to be expressed, with the result that a number of the respondents wrote-in an intermediate category: "of some value", between "most effective" and "of little value". Despite this deficiency, ten out of the twenty respondents who completed this question felt that the legislation was "most effective" in the solution of the housing problem. Eleven out of the twenty indicated that the existing legislation was "of little value" in solving traffic problems, which ranked third in importance in the total scoring of urban problems. In addition, six respondents felt that the legislation was "useless" in providing solutions to the other third-ranked problem: socio-economic conditions. Statistically, this question may lack reliability and validity, but the replies do provide some indication of the shortcomings of the existing legislation.

7) Summary

Overall, a few points stand out. Official opinion appears to question the procedural delays and lack of co-ordination between the three levels of government. There also seems to be considerable professional recognition that the scope of the existing urban renewal legislation is inadequate to cope with the increased variety of problems besetting the urban areas. The
role of the provincial governments in facilitating the solution of urban problems through legislative and administrative action is criticized by 40% of the officials responding. Although housing appears to be the most urgent problem in the urban areas, it is recognized that physical renewal of housing and other structures does not automatically make the community a better place to live. The social and economic conditions must also be considered.

**Urban Renewal Activity**

Although urban renewal legislation was initially passed by the Canadian federal government in 1944, the number of projects or schemes which have been implemented is small. Up to the end of 1956 only three communities: Toronto, St. John's, and Montreal, had received federal approval for assistance in slum clearance for residential reconstruction.

The 1956 amendments to the National Housing Act, 1954, provided federal assistance to municipalities undertaking studies to determine the need for redevelopment, and reduced the residential content requirement for federally assisted slum clearance areas. In 1964 federal assistance was extended to the implementation of rehabilitation within urban renewal areas, and the residential content requirement was removed entirely.
Up to the end of June 1966, under these legislative revisions, a total of twenty-eight urban renewal schemes, affecting an area of 1412.3 acres in fifteen communities, had been approved by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Eighty communities had received approval for federal assistance to conduct a total of ninety urban renewal studies. The increased scope of the 1964 amendments is reflected in the large increase in the number of studies since then (see Tables IV and V). These changes are not yet demonstrated in the number of schemes approved (see Table IV).

Because of the dynamic nature of the program's concepts and legislation, and the lag between approval and completion of both studies and schemes, it is difficult to evaluate the physical accomplishments of the recent changes in the urban renewal legislation. The provincial distribution of the approved studies and schemes is indicated in Table VI.

This review of the Canadian urban renewal activity to June 1966 indicates that Ontario, with the largest urban population and presumably proportionately more urban problems, has been able to utilize the National Housing Act provisions to a much greater extent than any of the other provinces. A second point of interest

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Table IV. Urban renewal studies and schemes approved by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Studies Approved</th>
<th>Scheme Implementation Approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community whole part</td>
<td>Other number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 (Manitoba)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1 (Quebec)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Table V. Communities with more than one urban renewal study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Year and scope of study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>1955 (W), 1963 (Metro)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>1956 (W), 1959 (P), 1965 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>1956 (P), 1959 (P), 1961 (Metro)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>1956 (W), 1966 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarnia</td>
<td>1957 (P), 1966 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina</td>
<td>1957 (W), 1958 (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>1958 (W), 1965 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>1958 (W), 1966 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>1959 (P), 1960 (P), 1960 (W)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (W) : whole community, (P) : part community

Source: Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Table VI. Provincial distribution of studies and schemes to June 1966.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of Communities with Approved Studies</th>
<th>Schemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Source: Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
is the apparent lag between the approval of a study and the approval of a scheme, for a large number of communities. The reasons for this are not too clear. A previous study did indicate that from initial municipal enquiry, through the various stages of administrative approval to the completion of the report, the total time required for completion of studies in twenty-two communities, averaged three years and four months. An average of 76% of this total time was spent in survey and compilation of the report. 9

Summary

This chapter has discussed the separation of the theoretical components of the planning process which occurs in the present Canadian urban renewal program. The allocation of functions between the federal and provincial governments discourages a comprehensive, unified approach to the mounting problems of the urban areas.

A nationwide survey of professionals directly involved with urban renewal, reveals considerable dissatisfaction with the administrative limitations and narrow scope of the existing program. A lack of senior government assistance in meeting urban problems other

than housing, particularly from the provincial governments, is also indicated. Suggestions have been made for the relaxation of procedural bottlenecks between the three levels of government.

The relatively small scale of public activity in urban renewal to date, and the distribution of studies and schemes on a provincial basis have also been examined.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the term urban renewal was virtually unknown fifteen years ago, the process which it represents has been going on since the dawn of civilization. Similar to most things which man has developed or adapted to serve his needs, parts of the urban structure become deteriorated and/or obsolete after a period of use, and require replacement and repair. The construction of new buildings and whole towns, replacing previous buildings and towns on the original sites, has continued since the initial urban settlements of the first agriculturalists.

As the capital value of an urban component depreciates, three possible actions may ensue: 1) the component may be repaired by the owner, 2) the component may be replaced, through the actions of the owner, by a new component
which fulfils the original, or a new, function, or 3) the component may accommodate a less demanding function. When the last event continues to occur indefinitely, without repair or replacement by the owner, this part of the urban structure becomes what is known as a slum. Eventually the urban society may decide that this slum is a liability to the community and take public action to remove it. In literal terms, urban renewal is the combination of all public and private replacement and repair activity, but it is more commonly associated with the public sector alone.

In North America, public urban renewal has only taken place since the depression of the 1930's. In Canada, public action was initiated following World War II. Since that time, public involvement in urban renewal has grown considerably.

Because of the changes in society's values and customs, there has been mounting examination and criticism of this public action. Studies of the United States experience have proliferated since 1960, but no comprehensive study has yet been undertaken in Canada. This present study proceeds in the light of the recommendations contained in a report completed by
Summary of the Study

Federal urban renewal legislation in Canada was first included in the National Housing Act of 1944. The national economic implications of the collapse of the house construction industry during the depression of the 1930’s, were acknowledged by the Dominion Housing Act, 1935, and the first National Housing Act, 1938. The onset of World War II further complicated the housing shortage by deferring new construction and maintenance in favour of the war effort. The report of the Curtis Subcommittee in 1944 recommended national assistance for slum clearance, and with the new Act, urban renewal was launched.

The rate of renewal was slow, however, and recognition of the need to expand the scope of the legislation was reflected in the National Housing Act of 1954, and the amendments of 1956 and 1964. Assistance is now provided for redeveloping and rehabilitating all areas of the community and not just the residential areas.

Assistance is also given to conduct studies to determine the need for urban renewal in its physical form.

In summary, the federal legislation has evolved from the consideration of economic factors related to housing, into the consideration of the physical renewal requirements of all areas of the urban community.

Meanwhile, in the United States, urban renewal has evolved from an emphasis on the physical improvement of housing, through a concern for the revitalization of the central urban core, to the realization that overall planning must precede physical renewal in the slum areas. The United States federal government requires the municipalities to submit a seven-point "Workable Program", encompassing all factors of urban planning, before assistance is given for urban renewal or other urban projects. Canadian federal legislation has not yet acquired this broad planning point of view.

In Canada, exclusive responsibility for municipal affairs is assigned to the provincial governments by the British North America Act. Therefore, direct interaction between the federal and municipal governments is denied, and federal financial and technical assistance can only be provided on the approval of the provinces. The provinces have delegated many of their local responsibilities to the municipalities themselves, and hence initiation of
proceedings to obtain assistance, to cope with the mounting urban problems, must be effected by the local councils. The provincial governments, despite their prime responsibility, have, on the whole, given little help or encouragement to the municipalities in their efforts to solve these problems. The federal government on the other hand, has provided considerable incentive for the municipal governments to undertake urban renewal planning, but thus far has restricted its efforts primarily to the physical aspects. Lack of effective co-ordination between all three levels of government in the initial stages of renewal planning has reduced administrative efficiency and caused delay and misunderstanding.

The planning process is a logical system for coping with the problems resulting from the continuous change affecting man's life on earth. It consists of goal formulation, preparation of a program, implementation of proposals, and constant review of the changing conditions. In the Canadian urban renewal program, goal formulation and program preparation at the federal level are effectively separated from proposal initiation and implementation at the local level, and very little comprehensive review of the results occurs. This is due in part to the inadequacies of the British North America Act of 1867,
in providing solutions for the problems of 1967. The arbitrary division of powers has hampered the development of a systematic approach to urban problems.

The results of a nation-wide survey of officials involved with urban renewal at the three levels of government, confirmed that the scope of the present program needs to be expanded. Considerable dissatisfaction was also expressed with the procedural delays and lack of co-ordination between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments. Housing is regarded as the most critical of the urban problems, with civic appearance, traffic and parking, and socio-economic conditions in decreasing order of importance. Decentralization of federal authority, more local autonomy, increased provincial activity, and a single department to deal with all urban affairs have been suggested to reduce the administrative delays.

The relative lack of urban renewal activity, and the comparative newness of the latest legislative revisions, deny a thorough evaluation of the success of the program to date. Ontario, however, appears to have made the most extensive use of the legislation which is available.
Suggestions for Further Study

This study has provided a rather subjective appraisal of current Canadian urban renewal activity, based in part on a survey of the opinions of officials involved in the program's formulation and implementation. Two fields for further research are therefore indicated.

The first might be directed towards an examination of the attitude of the national public to the growing intensity of urban problems. The present study had initially intended to explore this field, using a questionnaire similar to that sent out to officials. Such a survey could be applied to a sample of the residents of an urban renewal area, and to a cross-section of the municipal population in communities where urban renewal studies or schemes have been undertaken. The form of the questionnaire, however, would have to be simplified considerably and reduced in length in order to ensure a significant response. The criticisms received from several of the respondents indicate that an in-depth study, requiring extensive answers to open-ended questions, is unlikely to provide the desired response. Even when the respondents are fully conversant with urban renewal, it is difficult to obtain comparable, detailed answers to such questions, because of the complexity and changing nature of the subject, and the reluctance of the respondents to devote much time to answer a lengthy questionnaire.
The public attitudes exposed by such a survey could be examined on a geographical basis, and compared with the attitudes of officials as determined by the present study or by some further refinement of the survey. Out of such a study, a comprehensive set of national and local urban goals might be developed to provide a firmer basis for future action. Because of the importance of goal formulation to the planning process, it is suggested that the regional or local offices of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation might support such surveys, using questionnaires mailed to a sample of the municipal populations. The entire spectrum of urban problems should be examined, and not just those concerned with housing and urban renewal. The information thus collected would then be available for interpretation by the various levels of government.

A second direction for further study involves an analysis of the consequences of urban renewal, both direct and indirect. The actual results, in terms of the effects on the people, the physical environment, and the economic matrix, should be tabulated for each municipal urban renewal scheme. This would entail the collection of data, before and after renewal, with respect to the living conditions and socio-economic circumstances of the people initially resident in the urban renewal area,
and all the costs involved in their relocation. The costs of providing public municipal services to the area residents, again both before and after renewal, should also be examined. These studies should not be limited to the urban renewal area per se, for it has been documented that the majority of the initial inhabitants of "slum" areas, do not return to live in the redeveloped and rehabilitated area. Instead, many are scattered into other deteriorating areas with only marginal improvement, if any, in their living conditions. The rate at which physical replacement and repair takes place should be included in the scope of these studies as well. Changes in assessment and the attendant municipal revenues would also provide an economic index of the results of an urban renewal program.

This type of study should be included as a part of every urban renewal scheme implementation, so that information can be obtained to guide future policy. If the urban renewal program is successful in ameliorating the living and working conditions within a municipality, and the conditions for the residents of blighted areas in particular, the results should be publicized. If the program does not succeed in achieving the local and national goals, the deficiencies should also be made known.
Conclusions

The results of this investigation have served to confirm the need for general revision of the program for urban assistance. Both the procedure and the enabling legislation require changes to permit a more rational approach to the problems of housing, civic appearance, transportation, and socio-economic conditions which face the urban areas. As the larger urban program in the United States has been altered, so generally, should the Canadian program adapt to new conditions.

In conclusion, it appears that the hypothesis of this study, that URBAN RENEWAL IN CANADA HAS BEEN LESS THAN TOTALLY EFFECTIVE BECAUSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITATIONS OF THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT, is only partially valid.

Certainly, one of the reasons for the deficiencies of the Canadian urban renewal program is the distribution of authority and responsibility between the federal and provincial governments as proclaimed in 1867. However, even without sweeping constitutional revisions which would give the federal government responsibility and authority in urban affairs, this hurdle is not insurmountable. The rigorous federal-provincial separation has been overcome in the administration of many joint programs, such as the Agricultural and Rural Development
Administration, ARDA. Under this program a five-man federal-provincial committee, composed of three provincial and two federal members, can be formed if the province so desires, to review the provincially-initiated ARDA program, and ensure that it operates within the intent of the federal legislation. This enables the province to obtain federal funds to support a national objective in a sphere of activity initially assigned to the provinces. It is suggested that this meld of federal-provincial responsibilities could equally well be applied to the realm of urban affairs, including urban renewal. Such integration might work towards overcoming the dissatisfaction with the present procedural delays and lack of co-ordination as expressed by the survey respondents. This would be accomplished by providing a framework for (1) integrating federal, provincial, and municipal policies in specific urban areas, (2) co-ordinating the powers of planning and implementation, and (3) recognizing the ultra-local ramifications of urban problems.

Another prime reason for urban renewal's lack of effectiveness may be found in the lack of a comprehensive program to combat all of the significant urban problems.

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However, a policy designed to increase the scope of assistance to urban areas ought to be based on adequate knowledge of the consequences of such intervention. Therefore it is further suggested that followup studies as outlined on page 62 be instituted. These would collect the information which would permit the present program to be reviewed with respect to existing goals, and the future program to be based on an understanding of the results.
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C. PUBLIC DOCUMENTS, REPORTS, UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL

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— , National Housing Act, 1954.


_____.(ed.). "Urban Renewal Seminar". Report of a meeting held in Ottawa under the auspices of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Ottawa, September 1959.

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Wong, Shirley. Letter to the editor, Vancouver Sun, 2 February 1967.
Lear Sir:

The enclosed questionnaire is concerned with an evaluation of present Canadian urban renewal experiences and will be used as the basis for Mr. John Bunge's Master's Thesis in Community and Regional Planning. As the Professor in charge of the Thesis Program, I am pleased to write this covering letter on his behalf, seeking your co-operation for his efforts.

Urban renewal plays a very important role in the solution of urban problems. With the generous assistance of a grant from the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Mr. Bunge has undertaken an investigation of the Canadian urban renewal process, endeavouring to compare it with the programs presently in effect in other countries, as well as to evaluate it in its own right.

At this point, we request your help, both for the success of Mr. Bunge's work, and for the potential benefit which could be derived from a better understanding of the process of urban renewal. This questionnaire is being distributed to federal, provincial and municipal departments across Canada. We trust that you will take a few minutes of your time to complete and return it, before December 20th, to Mr. John Bunge, c/o Community and Regional Planning Division, University of British Columbia, Vancouver 8, B.C. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Robert W. Collier
Assistant Professor
URBAN RENEWAL EVALUATION

Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is a preliminary attempt to establish a consensus of professional opinion with respect to urban renewal in Canada.

It would be much appreciated if you would fill in this questionnaire personally, from your own professional point of view.

1. Please outline your occupation, responsibility, and place of work.

2. From your experience, do you feel that the existing urban renewal legislation can provide solutions to the problems of urban areas?

If not, what changes in legislation do you feel are required at (a) federal level, (b) provincial level, and/or (c) local municipal level, to provide solutions?

(Please elaborate.)

3. Again, based on your experience, do you feel that better use could be made of the existing urban renewal legislation to solve present urban problems?

If yes, what changes in implementation procedure do you feel are required for improvement at (a) federal level, (b) provincial level, and/or (c) local municipal level?

(Please elaborate.)
4. Do you feel that urban renewal legislation and action has been effective in providing "decent, safe, and sanitary housing" for residents of areas selected for urban renewal action? If not, why not? Please elaborate.

5. The National Housing Act and CMHC have as their objectives: "rebuilding the municipality to improve living and working conditions". Do you feel that these objectives are being met? If not, why not? Please elaborate.

6. Do you feel that the attitude of the general public towards urban renewal is:
   a) enthusiastic
   b) in favour of
   c) apathetic
   d) reluctant
   e) opposed
   f) uninformed? Please elaborate.

7. Please outline any suggestions you may have for improving citizen attitudes and participation in community urban renewal activity.
8. Which of the following problems in the urban environment do you feel are the most serious? Please indicate a rank from 1 to 11 (high to low) in terms of importance.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>i) Traffic and parking (congestion, inconvenience)</th>
<th>ii) Civic appearance (dilapidated buildings, overhead wiring, disorderly arrangement of signs, etc.)</th>
<th>iii) Housing (lack of quality and quantity for all sectors of the population)</th>
<th>iv) Municipal services (lack or inadequacy of water, sewer, sidewalks, etc.)</th>
<th>v) Education facilities (lack of space, qualified staff)</th>
<th>vi) Shopping facilities (inconvenience, lack of variety)</th>
<th>vii) Park and recreation facilities (lack of)</th>
<th>viii) Crime (high rate of)</th>
<th>ix) Health (widespread disease, pollution, etc.)</th>
<th>x) Welfare (social services, economic standards)</th>
<th>xi) Other (please specify)</th>
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9. Do you feel that the existing urban renewal legislation, and complementary legislation in other fields, has been:
   a) most effective, b) of little value, or c) useless, in solving these urban problems? Please indicate your opinion with a check under the appropriate column.

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<th>of little value</th>
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<td>xi) Other (please specify)</td>
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Thank you.