

TENANCY AND BLIGHT: AN EXAMINATION OF THEIR CAUSAL
RELATIONSHIP IN A SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREA
OF VANCOUVER, B.C.

by

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ABSTRACT

Urban Renewal in North America is turning its focus from Clearance and Redevelopment of already deteriorated areas to the Rehabilitation and Conservation of areas which are beginning to deteriorate. This preventative approach is deemed to be much less expensive as well as being effective for a much larger area. This new focus is backed up by federal legislation to provide financial assistance and by an increasing sense of collective responsibility in federal and municipal governments for the physical condition of the individual properties which together comprise the physical city.

Single family residential areas comprise the largest single land use in most North American cities, and it is these areas particularly which could be aided by positive Rehabilitation-Conservation programs. It is frequently claimed that "absentee landlordism" is a major cause of residential blight. The absentee landlord has largely become a villain in the eyes of social reform groups who provide part of the motivation for urban renewal. Tenancy is defined for the purposes of this study as a form of tenure in which occupancy is by persons other than the registered owner thus objectively describing the same

situation which is decried as "absentee landlordism." As the validity of the causal effect of tenancy upon the level of housing condition has been questioned by F.H. Hendricks,¹ and as clarification of such facts is necessary before establishing objectives for Rehabilitation-Conservation this question has herein been investigated.

The specific hypothesis is that:

Tenant occupancy of urban single family residences (1) is a major cause of blight; and (2) requires special treatment in municipal Rehabilitation and Conservation programs.

A review of the literature reinforced by a case study of tenancy in single family dwellings in Vancouver, B.C., suggested that there is reason to doubt such a causal effect. The relation between tenancy and poor building condition was verified for low income areas in Vancouver although it did not hold true for higher income areas. A correlation however does not establish a causal relation and subsequent analysis suggests tenancy is more caused than causal. The establishment of a general causal theory of blight by analysis of urban renewal literature indicates tenancy has a minor deteriorating effect on single family dwelling condition in areas already deteriorating. More significantly the theory indicates tenancy is caused by the two factors of encroaching incompatible land uses and low income, which

¹Francis Howard Hendricks, Measuring Housing Quality for Urban Renewal Areas, MCP Thesis, Berkeley (Berkeley: University of California, 1951), pp. 7-8.

are determined to be the basic causes of residential blight.

It is concluded that in a consideration of the relation between tenancy and blight there are two areas of concern: low income which is a basic cause of both tenancy and blight; and the secondary blighting influence of tenancy itself within low income areas. It is in these low income areas that the incidence of both tenancy and blight are concentrated.

A comprehensive urban renewal program is recommended which includes two essential features. They are increased low income family housing within viable neighbourhoods, followed by enforced renewal of blighted existing housing. Housing in the form of row houses or maisonettes could include the advantages of the single family dwelling while at the same time keep the cost of the required land to a minimum. Political factors suggest the financing of housing, as compared to increasing the financing of individual families directly, is also the more practical means of increasing low real income.

It is posited that these two measures in the order recommended will expand the choice of the low income tenant beyond the supply of single family dwellings predominantly offered by speculators in rental housing, and will increase the low level of dwelling condition within the problematic low income areas without throwing an unmanageable financial burden upon the area's present occupants.

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CHAPTER I

TENANCY IN THE CONTEXT OF URBAN RENEWAL

I. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this study has been to investigate the causal significance of tenancy in the deterioration of urban single family dwellings. The hypothesis is that:

Tenant occupancy of urban single family residences (1) is a major cause of blight, and (2) requires special treatment in municipal Rehabilitation and Conservation programs.

The research method used to test this hypothesis has been to make a review of available literature and to do a case study of predominantly single family residential areas of Vancouver, British Columbia.

II. BASIC CAUSES OF URBAN BLIGHT

In investigating the causal significance of tenancy in the deterioration of urban single family residential properties it is first necessary to view the overall picture of urban renewal--the basic causes of blight, present methods of attack and some future possibilities. It is not tenancy which threatens the quality of urban living; it is its alleged consequence, blight, and blight has many other causal factors. Since treatment policies must consider all causal factors, tenancy must be viewed in context.

The meaning of the generic term, blight, is probably best defined by Coleman Woodbury who describes it as a physical condition,

. . . the two basic characteristics of blighted areas are substandardness and either stagnation or deterioration.¹

The inevitable process of physical decay is the ubiquitous and most basic cause of blight.² It is not necessary to elaborate on this physical cause of blight; the causes of blight which urban renewal planners should focus on, and which are considered here, are the reasons why maintenance, repair or replacement often do not take place in order to check the physical deterioration.

The reasons for blight considered in this context are similar for all privately owned urban properties and they are thought generally to be caused by persons who are socially unwilling or financially unable to uphold minimal standards of maintenance.³ In analyzing the more specific reasons why people are socially unwilling or financially unable, certain causal factors are found to occur with a high degree of regularity. There are two broad classifications of these causal factors. They are economic and social,

¹Coleman Woodbury, Urban Renewal Problems and Practices (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 11.

²Albert Potvin, "Neglect and Urban Decay," Habitat, Vol. 7 (January-February, 1964), p. 20.

³Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, A Better Place to Live, first interim report (The Department, Toronto, 1960), p. 15.

of which the economic factors are the most significant and pervasive.

Economic causes. Despite the fact that Canadian and American society is the most affluent the world has ever known there are a large number of people who simply cannot afford adequate housing--these may include for example, some citizens who are unemployed, disabled, widowed or pensioned. Many of these people must cope with substandard or deteriorating housing despite the fact that in the long run maintenance provides a higher economic return.⁴ The Community Planning Branch of the Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs has investigated the problem of housing in that province and reports that:

. . . evidence gathered here and elsewhere indicates that the problem of maintaining minimum standards of occupancy and maintenance is really twofold. The first is essentially an economic problem--the maldistribution of adequate housing accommodation for all income groups and the limited availability of dwellings for low income groups. Associated with this is the overcrowding and multiple conversions which occur largely due to economic constraint.⁵

The problem of money, or the homeowners' lack of it, was the first and foremost problem encountered in Baltimore's Pilot Area attempt to rehabilitate a neighbourhood. It was found that more than forty per cent of the area's residents were homeowners and most could not afford rehabilita-

⁴Richard Ratcliff, Real Estate Analysis (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1961), p. 32.

⁵Ont. Dept. of Municipal Affairs, op. cit., p. 16.

tion, nor could they borrow the necessary money.⁶

Another major economic aspect which causes blight concerns those rationally calculated decisions by owners of property to whom return on their investment is a major consideration. This rational calculation concerns both owner occupants and absentee owners, but it is of more significance to the latter with whom the decision to maintain and improve are not complicated by pride in one's own home. The effect of such social influences, pride in one's home and neighbourhood influence, are discussed below under social causes.

Possibly the most important of these rational considerations is the nature of the neighbourhood and its location. Like land values, blight is nearly always a localized phenomenon. Richard Ratcliff has pointed out the factors which, other things being equal, determine the residential property values of an area.⁷ He considers an area will deteriorate in the absence of such factors as the physical attractiveness of the area which is determined largely by the quality of architecture and landscaping and the relative social and economic status of the neighbourhood. He sees the property values as depending on such facility conditions as the degree of transportation facilities, the proximity of an elementary school (particularly

⁶Martin Millspaugh and Gurney Breckenfeld, The Human Side of Urban Renewal (Baltimore, Fight-Blight Inc., 1958), p. 9.

⁷Richard Ratcliff, op. cit., pp. 75-80.

important in developing suburban areas), the proximity of churches, the availability of recreational and cultural facilities, the availability of utilities and services, and the proximity of commercial centers (particularly those providing the staples of living). The nature of the occupant families is the final factor Ratcliff mentions. The more pride they take in their homes the more maintenance and visual appeal results. He says increased tenancy and reduced neighbourhood integration also foster deterioration and lower property values.

This final factor is more applicable as a social cause of blight and will be more fully considered as such. When all these factors begin to disappear the capital value of the individual property owner's investment also begins to decline because the value of the property depends largely upon the neighbourhood within which it is situated.⁸ In such a case it is difficult for the owner to rationally make maintenance expenditures which will be subject to a similar loss on investment.

This argument is most applicable to older and already blighted areas. Ratcliff makes the point that

There is no encouragement for the individual owner in a blighted district to replace or modernize his structure, for it would then be surrounded by blight and would soon fall back to the level of its surroundings.⁹

⁸Ibid., p. 62.

⁹Ibid., p. 326.

Otto Davis and Andrew Whinston have demonstrated this factor by game theory analysis and Table I shows the dependency of a profitable rehabilitation investment for property owner A upon the investment decision of his neighbour B. It is assumed that if he does not rehabilitate his investment capital will remain in four per cent bonds.

TABLE I

THE PERCENTAGE RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR PROPERTY OWNER A¹⁰

	B rehabilitates	B does not rehabilitate
A rehabilitates	.07 %	.03 %
A does not rehabilitate	.01 %	.04 %

A second barrier to rationally calculated decisions to maintain or rehabilitate property is the municipal tax structure. In Vancouver and in most other Canadian and American cities there are inequitable tax structures favoring blight. Owners whose houses which show improvements

¹⁰Otto A. Davis and Andrew B. Whinston, "Economic Problems in Urban Renewal," Edmund S. Phelps, Private Wants and Public Needs, revised (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1962), p. 142.

are penalized with exceptionally increased rates of tax through an increase in assessed values and those whose properties are not improved receive a decreasing tax levy. This is the gist of the problem as noted by numerous critics.¹¹

Social causes. There are certain social factors necessary for a natural maintenance process, the absence of which fosters blight. It is suggested here that these prerequisites are: pride in one's home; and a reference group which will evaluate the individual at least partly according to the state of his home. The Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs has recognized the importance of pride:

Individual initiative will continue to play a large role in the protection of private investment. Pride in one's own home--rented or owned--is the sole deterrent to complete collapse of many neighbourhoods.¹²

The underlying sociological assumption is that the recognition by others of one's personal identity is one of man's basic motivations.¹³ This is essentially a drive for status of which a man's home is a significant measure. Because a man's home is bound up with his personal identity he endeavors to improve and maintain it in accordance with the values of his reference group.

¹¹Notable amongst these critics is Mary Rawson, in Property Taxation and Urban Development (Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute, 1961).

¹²Ont. Dept. of Municipal Affairs, op. cit., p. 16.

¹³Robert Ardrey, African Genesis (N.Y.: Dell Publishing Co., 1961), p. 18.

This assumption posits that the absence of the two prerequisites fosters neglect and blight. In the time available here it is not possible to develop adequate proof to substantiate this assumption. It is sufficient to note that people behave as would have been predicted if the assumption were true and it is here in the results on the urban condition that attention should focus.

In analyzing the socially motivated behavior of persons directly involved in residential deterioration and rehabilitation there are three classes of persons which should be considered: the homeowner, the non-resident owner, and the tenant. Throughout this analysis the importance of the neighbourhood or community reference group is a factor and it is dealt with in the following section.

The homeowners are theoretically posited as the class of person most likely to look after their residences, because they take more pride in them. Millspaugh found,

Most homeowners, on the other hand, [as opposed to tenants] seem to have a built in incentive to better their surroundings. . . .¹⁴

There are numerous additional examples demonstrating the correlation between ownership and natural rehabilitation with the exception of the lower income brackets. This is largely a function of economic necessity previously discussed but, as will be shown it is also bound up with different reference group values of the lower class.

¹⁴Millspaugh and Breckenfeld, op. cit., p. 226.

In this theoretical construct the landlord normally has very little social motivation to maintain and rehabilitate his properties. They are not identified with his personality; he is normally anonymous, with no reference group to assess his status in accordance with the property. As such, his sole motivation would tend to be economic, fostered by common property tax laws and assessing practices as mentioned above under economic causes.

Where homeowners have a built-in incentive to improve their neighbourhoods, most landlords have a built-in incentive to perpetuate the slum. . . . As a result, landlords usually did as little as possible in the way of rehabilitation. . . .¹⁵

However there appears to be a great deal of conflicting evidence on this point. Many studies have shown that tenant occupied units will not necessarily be the worst maintained. Francis Howard Hendricks states,

Later studies [than 1945] show that the assumption [that tenant occupied units will be worst maintained] becomes less true the older the structure, until a point is reached when it is completely false.¹⁶

It is reasonable to suggest that a tenant would have less personal identity with a dwelling than would an owner occupant. Several studies show the relatively adverse effects of tenant occupancy on building condition. Richard Ratcliff observes that:

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Francis Howard Hendricks, Measuring Housing Quality for Urban Renewal Areas, MCP Thesis, Berkeley (Berkeley: University of California, 1951), pp. 7-8.

. . . a neighbourhood where property owners take pride in their homes will indefinitely retain most of its visual appeal and the strength of this value support lies in the character of the occupant families. . . . An area in which the original families have matured, the children have left home, and the parent couples or widows are beginning to move out into smaller and more convenient quarters is open to a diversity of occupancy which leads to falling property values. As tenant occupancy increases the level of property maintenance falls off, and the social integration of the neighbourhood falls off.¹⁷

Similar conclusions, associating tenancy and lower standards of maintenance, were observed by Millspaugh and Breckenfeld following a study of five American rehabilitation programs.

In each neighbourhood studied, it became apparent that changes in a family's attitudes [towards rehabilitation] usually hinge on whether the family owns or rents. Homeowners are more susceptible to higher standards than renters. . . . most tenants have less incentive to boost their neighbourhood. . . .¹⁸

The quotations above evidence the relatively higher tendency towards neglect of property which is compatible with the social attitudes of tenants. They also indicate the importance of the community or neighbourhood as a reference group.

The neighbourhood factor. It may be that the existence of a sense of neighbourhood is the most important key to rehabilitation. A neighbourhood may be defined as:

. . . an area set off by natural or other boundaries
 . . . and containing within it basic services as well
 as those elements making for neighbourhood cohesion,

¹⁷Ratcliff, op. cit., p. 79.

¹⁸Millspaugh and Breckenfeld, op. cit., p. 226.

namely, 'school, library, church, convenience shopping, recreational, and local assembly facilities.' It is an area of frequent face-to-face contacts and is, at least potentially, the area which corresponds most closely to the residents' sense of identification and participation.¹⁹ (underscoring by the writer)

The most favorable social situation for compatibility of families and their social integration into a neighbourhood is constituted of common cultural background, similar family composition, and similar economic status.²⁰ There are subtle and natural forces which act through the neighbourhood reference group and which in middle class areas encourages property maintenance. The neighbourhood is most effective in providing social sanctions for property maintenance when the composition of its residents are stable and socially homogeneous. Under this situation neighbours are more subjectively aware of each other and of reference group esteem. In striving for approval and status the individual conforms to the esteemed behavior. This form of control is widely recognized and is the same quality which has been documented in the famous Hawthorne experiments.²¹ It is called "spontaneous field control" by Dahl and Lindblom who consider it as ". . . sometimes the most tyrannical Control to which a

¹⁹Helga M. Hicks, "Citizen Participation in Neighbourhood Rehabilitation" (M.S.W. Thesis, U.B.C., 1962), p. 8.

²⁰Ratcliff, op. cit., p. 77.

²¹George C. Homans, "The Western Electric Researches" in S.C. Hoslett (ed.), Human Factors in Management (Harper and Bros., rev. ed., 1951), pp. 21-241.

person is ever subjected in his entire lifetime. . . ."²²

In making persons aware of each other and their properties the neighbourhood reference group reinforces individual pride in one's place and provides part of its "raison d'etre."

As suggested by this excerpt and those above concerning tenants the neighbourhood awareness has been found to be insignificant in blighted or deteriorating areas.

Louis Wirth attributes irresponsibility in regard to property maintenance to tenants, who because of circumstances, do not identify themselves with the property or the community.

The major urban problems of today . . . are associated . . . with the area of blight and slums which is eating its way from the center of the city outward and enveloping ever larger areas. This upheaval leaves no district of the city immune. No home or homeowner can be assured of stability against deterioration and decay. Schools, churches, libraries, and community centers which once served relatively stable and homogeneous populations are inundated by restless, migrant, heterogeneous assortments of people who are strangers to one another and to the areas where they find temporary abode, in which they fail to take root, and for which they feel no responsibility because they are neither owners of property nor sharers in the traditions of the community.²³

At this point it is necessary to suggest the relevance of social class values upon residential maintenance. Not only do middle class homeowners have more money to spend on their homes than do lower class homeowners and not only

²²Robert Dahl and Charles Lindblom, Politics, Economics, and Welfare (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), p. 100.

²³Louis Wirth, Community Life and Social Policy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 213.

has this wealth allowed them to move out into suburbs, leaving the older housing for those less wealthy, but the middle class also have social values which are more conducive to property maintenance.

Two such values are suggested by Max Weber.²⁴ One is an orientation towards the future and a "worldly asceticism" which involves the postponement of immediate rewards. It involves also the use of forethought and the allocation of resources in an efficient rational manner. Another value is that of "respect for property." Property must be carefully accounted for, respected as belonging to a specific person and not wasted. The comparable lower class values have been outlined by Allison Davis in his description of the motivational differences between lower and middle class people in regard to food, shelter and clothing. He suggests the lower class person grows up constantly facing the possibility of going without basic necessities within the immediate future.²⁵ As a result he indicates how they generally adopt the philosophy of living for today and of being unconcerned for tomorrow.

These divergent value systems have implications for the condition of housing. They would indicate that in the

²⁴Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism (London: George Allan and Unwin Ltd., 1930).

²⁵Allison Davis, "Socio-economic Influences Upon Children's Learning," Proceedings of the White House Conference on Children and Youth (Washington D.C.: 1958).

case of the middle class, property maintenance would follow from "respect for property" and as a means of providing for the future. In contrast, the values of the lower class would indicate a probable heavy expenditure of resources on immediate desires with no allocations for maintenance of future assets. Derek Baker cogently states, this lower class characteristic of "Getting things 'while the getting is good' is the expression of a drive for physical forms of gratification which results from the learned fear of the effects of deprivation."²⁶

III. THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS REHABILITATION AND CONSERVATION

Difficulties experienced with redevelopment. Redevelopment entails acquisition and clearance of blighted areas followed by appropriate reconstruction.²⁷ This program used alone, has run into considerable difficulties in both the United States and Canada. The problem has been one of high financial and social costs and the large areal scale of the problem combined with a relatively low effec-

²⁶Derek Baker, "'Social Class' Differentials For Social Work Practice," M.S.W. Thesis, University of B.C. (Vancouver: 1961).

²⁷The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, "Glossary of Terms" (a reprint distributed by Mr. Maxwell Cross at the "Short Course on Urban Renewal" held May 1965 in Vancouver, B.C. at the University of B.C.), p. 1.

tiveness in achieving the goal of the elimination of blight.

The financial costs of acquiring and clearing have become enormous. In Toronto and Montreal they have been as much as \$300,000 per acre, and of these gross amounts usually one third is borne by the governments concerned.²⁸

The social costs arise from the forced dislocation of persons who must relocate. Although it is now, and has been the policy of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the administering body in Canada, that decent, safe and sanitary housing be made available to the dislocated at prices that are fair and reasonable, many choose not to take advantage of it. Of American experience Martin Anderson suggests,

The personal costs of the program are difficult to evaluate. Hundreds of thousands of people have been forcibly evicted from their homes in the past. . . . The indications are that these people have not been helped in any significant way. . . . It appears that the federal urban renewal program has not achieved its social objectives to any measurable extent in the past, . . . and it is unlikely that it will achieve them in the future.²⁹

A common criticism is that those forcibly relocated crowd into other areas and hasten the deterioration of those areas, thereby nullifying the overall gain of the project by merely shifting the location of the community problem.

²⁸Hon. J.R. Nicholson, Statement to the House, June 1, 1964, p. 7.

²⁹Martin Anderson, The Federal Bulldozer (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1965), p. 230.

This suggests the next difficulty.

It has been found that the total impact of redevelopment is much lower than anticipated. Stanley Pickett has stated redevelopment has been only moderately successful in improving the urban environment in that it affects only pockets of blight here and there resulting only in ". . . a fine series of projects of individual value standing in a steadily declining environment. . . ." ³⁰

The redevelopment programs can be criticized also for being too narrowly conceived in that not only have they been concerned with housing to the exclusion of other uses, but they have been concerned only with the quality of housing, whereas its quantity and distribution are equally as important. As such, redevelopment has tended to deteriorate housing quantity and magnify the distribution problem. ³¹

As a result of the difficulties and limitations of redevelopment a more comprehensive approach is being taken. Particularly because of the high money costs of urban redevelopment and the social costs of the elimination of blight there is an increasing focus on the preventative measures: rehabilitation, and conservation. These measures are used alone or in conjunction with redevelopment where redevelopment is essential. These two additional techniques allow

³⁰ Stanley Pickett, "A milestone in Urban Renewal," Habitat (July-August, 1964), p. 41

³¹ Walter Thabit, "Renewal--A Planning Challenge," J.A.I.P., Vol. 26 (May, 1960), p. 86.

a more comprehensive program which is now known as urban renewal.

Although the term rehabilitation is sometimes used to include limited clearance it is used here to mean the combination of,

. . . public and private action to improve and repair deteriorated or substandard areas and structures not yet in need of redevelopment.³²

It is a method designed to halt deterioration of declining neighbourhoods, usually twenty years old or more, in which dwellings are still basically sound. It is not an interim program until clearance is necessary; the critical consideration in decisions to rehabilitate the normal single family dwelling should be the cost of repairs necessary to meet required standards. There would of course be exceptions to this criterion when such a motivation as historic preservation of the dwelling is involved. Rehabilitation is not normally valid when the cost of rehabilitation plus the present value of the dwelling approach the replacement cost.³³

Conservation is a more subtle and preventative measure. It means,

. . . action by a municipality to prevent the deterioration of sound neighbourhoods by the enforcement of occupancy, maintenance and zoning by-laws.³⁴

³²C.M.H.C., op. cit., p. 1.

³³G.W. Fitzpatrick, "Towards a Positive Local Government Policy for Residential Rehabilitation," M.A. Thesis, Department of Community and Regional Planning, University of B.C., (Vancouver, B.C.: April, 1963).

³⁴C.M.H.C., op. cit., p. 2.

It is distinguished in definition from rehabilitation, but in fact the two measures are not so distinct in implementation. The enforcement of maintenance by-laws, for instance, is often a major means of causing the improvement and repair of deteriorated structures. The conceptual difference lies in the fact that rehabilitation is concerned with areas already deteriorating and conservation is concerned with areas which have not yet begun to deteriorate.

It is to be hoped that effective implementation of this comprehensive urban renewal process will achieve the rebuilding and maintenance of the physical condition of North American cities. A recent indication of the importance of this new movement is a planned development by President Johnson's special task force on urban affairs, "demonstration cities program" which is estimated to cost 2.3 billion dollars over a six year period. Among its objectives as stated by the New York Times, are that "... cities would have to revise tax codes to encourage rehabilitation by private landlords, and rigorously enforce building codes. . . ." It is also stated that:

. . . , urban renewal projects have often replaced slums with middle income dwellings . . . shoving the former tenants into ghettos elsewhere. The new program, its inventors hope, will solve the problem by encouraging rehabilitation of dwellings in addition to mass clearance, by stiffer relocation standards, and by the provision . . . in advance . . . of decent housing for those displaced.³⁵

³⁵New York Times, Sunday, January 30, 1966, p. 2E.

IV. THE CORRELATION BETWEEN TENANCY AND BLIGHT

"Tenancy," for the purpose of this study, is defined as a form of tenure in which occupancy is by persons other than the registered owner. The "absentee landlord" tends to be invidiously stereotyped, and it would be worth while to know whether this reputation, as a deteriorating influence on urban residential areas, is justified completely or only in part.

Natural reasons why a correlation might exist. As evidenced by the research of the Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs there is a growing trend towards "mass ownership" by groups of investors in large Canadian cities.³⁶ This research indicates that these absentee owners recognize that the structures have outlived their economic usefulness and are due for eventual demolition. They "mine" the properties by extracting income and by putting very little in the line of maintenance back into them.

As evidenced in Toronto, non-resident ownership can lead to flagrant abuse of housing by-laws. In the deteriorated areas of Toronto there was a desire by non-resident owners not to rehabilitate because it would reduce rental return. They therefore sold the property after being given orders by the city to rehabilitate within three months. The new owners obtain a further three months to rehabilitate

³⁶Ont. Dept. of Municipal Affairs, op. cit., p. 32.

and would frequently resell or default on payment, thereby returning the property to the previous owners and again extending the time of rehabilitation. This shifting ownership defeats the purpose of by-laws and allows deterioration to continue.³⁷

Natural reasons why the correlation may not exist.

The main reason tenancy would not cause deterioration exists in the case when the non-resident owner is interested in long range recurrent income. He would then be guided, as pointed out by Richard Ratcliff, by the "economic soundness of maintenance."³⁸ If it could be assumed that there was a lack of pride in the property by the non-resident owner then the suggested economic incentives for avoiding maintenance previously mentioned would be crucial. Such things as assessment practices, municipal property taxation scales, and the profits of overcrowding would be significant determinants of maintenance policy.

Some observed facts of the situation. Facts have been found to back up the arguments for and against a causal correlation. Chester Rapkin finds there is often no correlation or causal relation:

³⁷Ibid., p. 51.

³⁸Ratcliff, op. cit., p. 32.

Many of the residential structures best maintained and most humanely operated are in the hands of those estates and absentee individuals more interested in recurrent income than a quick dollar turnover. Conversely, some of the structures most offensive in such matters are in the ownership of persons resident on the premises or in the general vicinity.³⁹

On the other hand the Philadelphia Leadership program found,

Experience shows that when his (owner's) residence is on or near his holdings, there is a greater likelihood that the owner will be sensitive to neighbourhood pressures and concerned with the future of the area.⁴⁰

In the Baltimore Pilot Area rehabilitation area non-resident ownership showed the highest resistance to the rehabilitation program.

. . . the Public Health Service Statistics showed that absentee-owned houses were in almost as bad condition 'after' enforcement as the owner-occupants' houses had been 'before.'⁴¹

Francis Kendricks was quoted on page seven to the effect that the correlation between tenancy and lack of maintenance decreases in accuracy in proportion to the age of the dwelling studied.

In the light of these disparities and general lack of specific information it may prove profitable to determine under what conditions this correlation does exist and of what significance it is to rehabilitation and conservation programs.

³⁹Chester Rapkin, Real Estate in an Urban Renewal Area (New York: City Planning Commission, 1959), p. 15.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 15-16.

⁴¹Millspaugh, op. cit., p. 49.

V. SUMMARY

The inevitable process of physical decay is the ubiquitous and basic cause of blight. As indicated in planning literature, economic constraint is the major overall reason why this natural process remains unchecked in certain parts of urban areas. Social factors as outlined in the literature are the second most important. Lack of such social factors as pride of ownership, favorable attitudes by individuals towards dwelling maintenance or a neighbourhood reference group which will evaluate an individual's maintenance efforts, are claimed to allow the deterioration process to continue. There are logical reasons why these economic and social causes of blight might be exacerbated in the case of tenant occupancy of single family residences.

Canadian and American programs for renewal of urban areas are turning from Redevelopment to Rehabilitation and Conservation due mainly to Redevelopment's merely localized impact and its high costs in terms of both money and human dislocation. The new approach is hoped to be effective for much larger areas, to cost less and to arrest the development of blight before it reaches the stage where clearance is necessary.

In these new programs of Rehabilitation and Conservation the very large single family residential areas

which now provide standard housing will be a major concern. Awareness of the specific causes of deterioration in these areas is a necessary prerequisite to the implementation of an effective renewal program. At present there is a certain amount of disagreement in planning literature over one factor which is claimed to be a specific cause. This is the correlation and causal relation between tenancy and blight.

CHAPTER II

A CASE STUDY OF TENANCY IN VANCOUVER, B.C.

A case study of the City of Vancouver was carried out, in order to make a more detailed investigation of the hypothesized blighting influence of tenant occupancy upon single family residential areas. The first part of the case study was based on a survey of census information. The second part was based on a windshield sample survey of building condition. The objectives were twofold. One was to test the validity of the thesis hypothesis which asserts a causal relation of tenancy upon building deterioration. The second objective was to gain further insight into the causal factors of blight.

I. CITY WIDE DISTRIBUTION OF TENANCY, INCOME, AND BUILDING AGE

The first step in investigating the relation between tenancy and building condition was to establish their incidence within selected Vancouver census tracts. This was restricted to those census tracts which covered areas zoned single family residential and which were within the legal boundaries of the City of Vancouver. Map 1, page 27, shows the census tracts included. Census tracts were excluded in which apartments constituted twenty-five per cent or more

of the dwelling units. The census tract basis was chosen because relevant Dominion Bureau of Statistics information on population and housing characteristics are readily available for them. Although census tracts are not deliberately designed in order to circumscribe populations of social and economic homogeneity, "it is possible to classify urban areas by the status of their inhabitants"¹ and as shown by Map 4, page 30, areas also include persons of relatively similar income levels.

The basic information obtained from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics concerned the number of tenant occupants, the period of construction of dwellings, and average family income. The number of apartment dwellings in each census tract was subtracted from the number of dwellings tenant occupied to arrive at the number of tenant occupied single family dwellings. The census classes all dwellings as either apartment or single detached. This tenant occupancy was then converted to a percentage of the total single family dwellings in the census tract. Included in this calculation was the basically valid assumption that apartment dwellers are tenant occupants. Determination of the areal distribution of building condition was a more difficult and less precise matter. There appears to have been no useful assessment of this information done of the city. In the

¹Dennis Chapman, The Home and Social Status (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), p. 23.

absence of such information relative age was initially used as an index. This was justified by the 1957 Vancouver Redevelopment Study which found three factors to be indexes of blight: age, exterior condition and incompatible land uses.² Knowing the number of existing dwellings constructed in each of three periods constituting Vancouver's development allowed the assignment of an age weight to each census tract. This is an approximate but meaningful representation of the relative average age of dwellings within the census tract and was used initially as a representation of building condition.

After arranging percentage tenancy by census tract, in rank order (see Appendix I) this continuum was divided into three convenient rank groupings and mapped as Map 2, page 28. Weighted average age of single family dwellings in each census tract were similarly grouped and mapped to form Map 3, page 29. A comparison of the two suggests there is a crude relationship between them. Twenty-one tracts correlate while twelve do not.

The author's empirical knowledge together with a brief field inspection of the city, however, were sufficient to indicate certain gross discrepancies in the use of age as a condition index. Using this index the most prestigious area in the city, Shaughnessy Heights, ranked in

²City of Vancouver Planning Department, Vancouver Redevelopment Study 1957 (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 1957), p. 3.

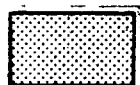
Map 1

LAND USE BY CENSUS TRACT. VANCOUVER, B.C. 1961

Source: City of Vancouver
Zoning Map (Oct. 1965)

University
Endowment
Land

LEGEND



single
family
residential



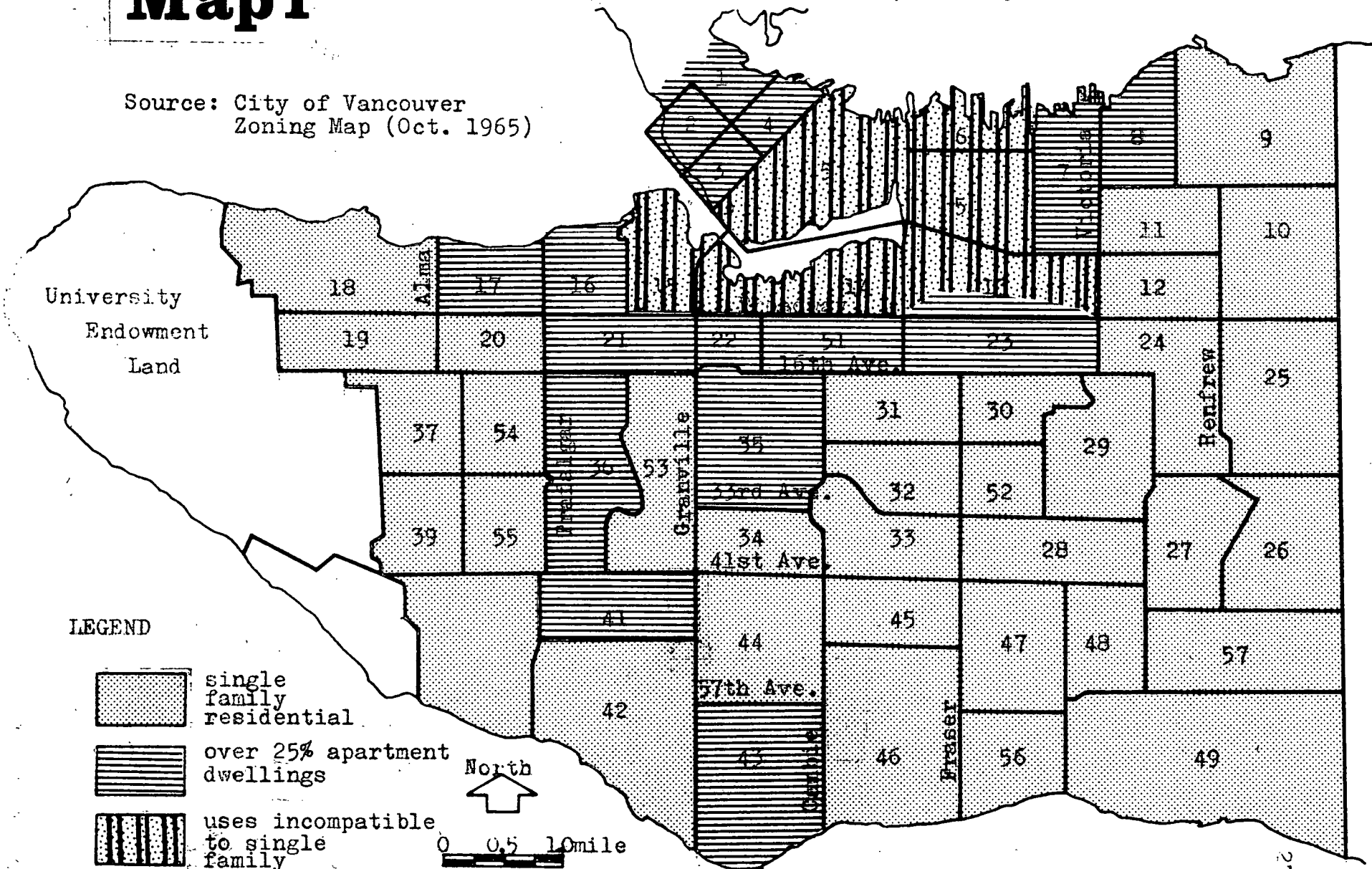
over 25% apartment
dwellings



uses incompatible
to single
family
residence



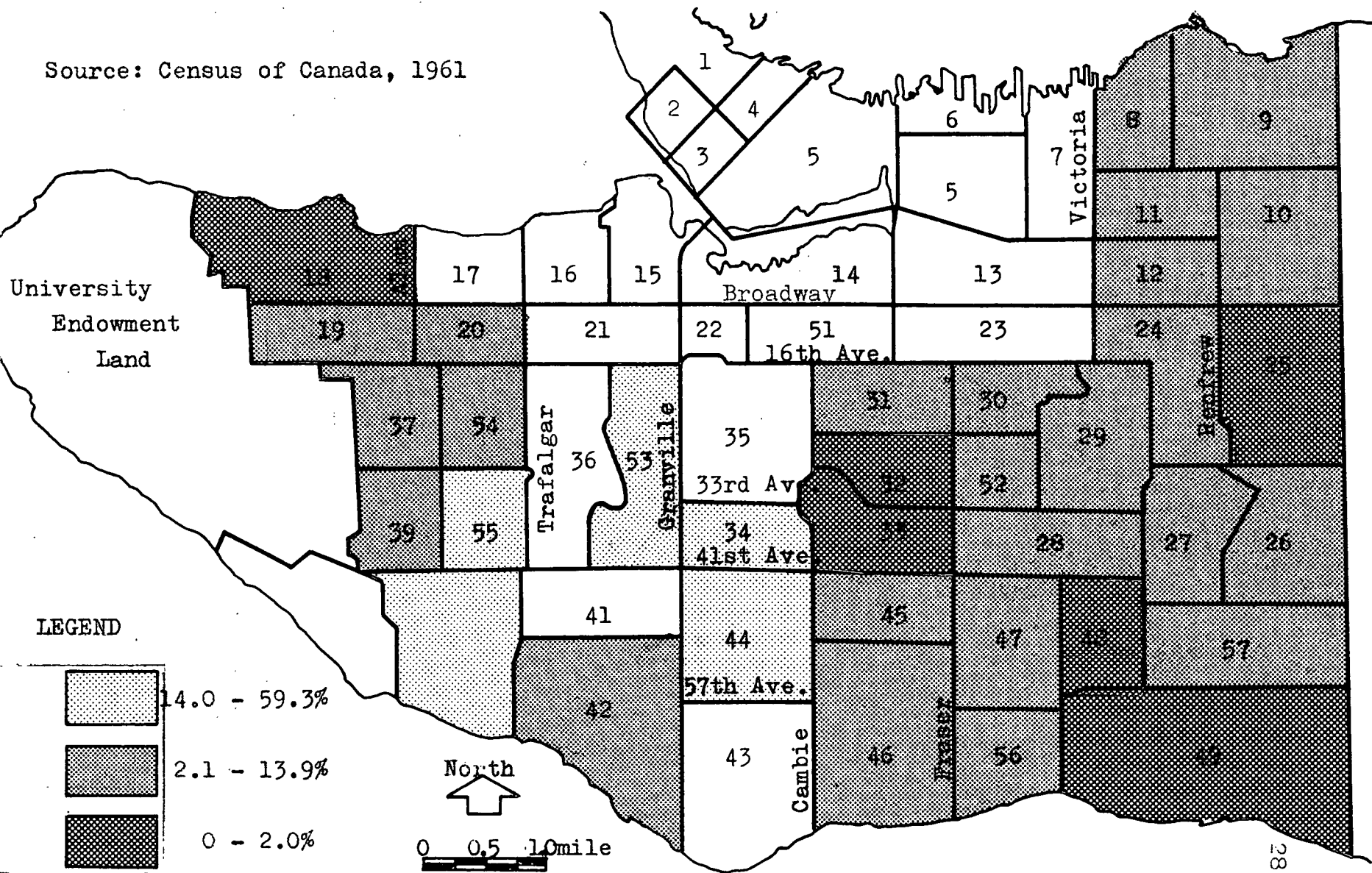
0 0.5 1 mile



Map 2

PERCENTAGE TENANCY OF SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS BY CENSUS TRACTS IN PREDOMINANTLY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS. VANCOUVER 1961

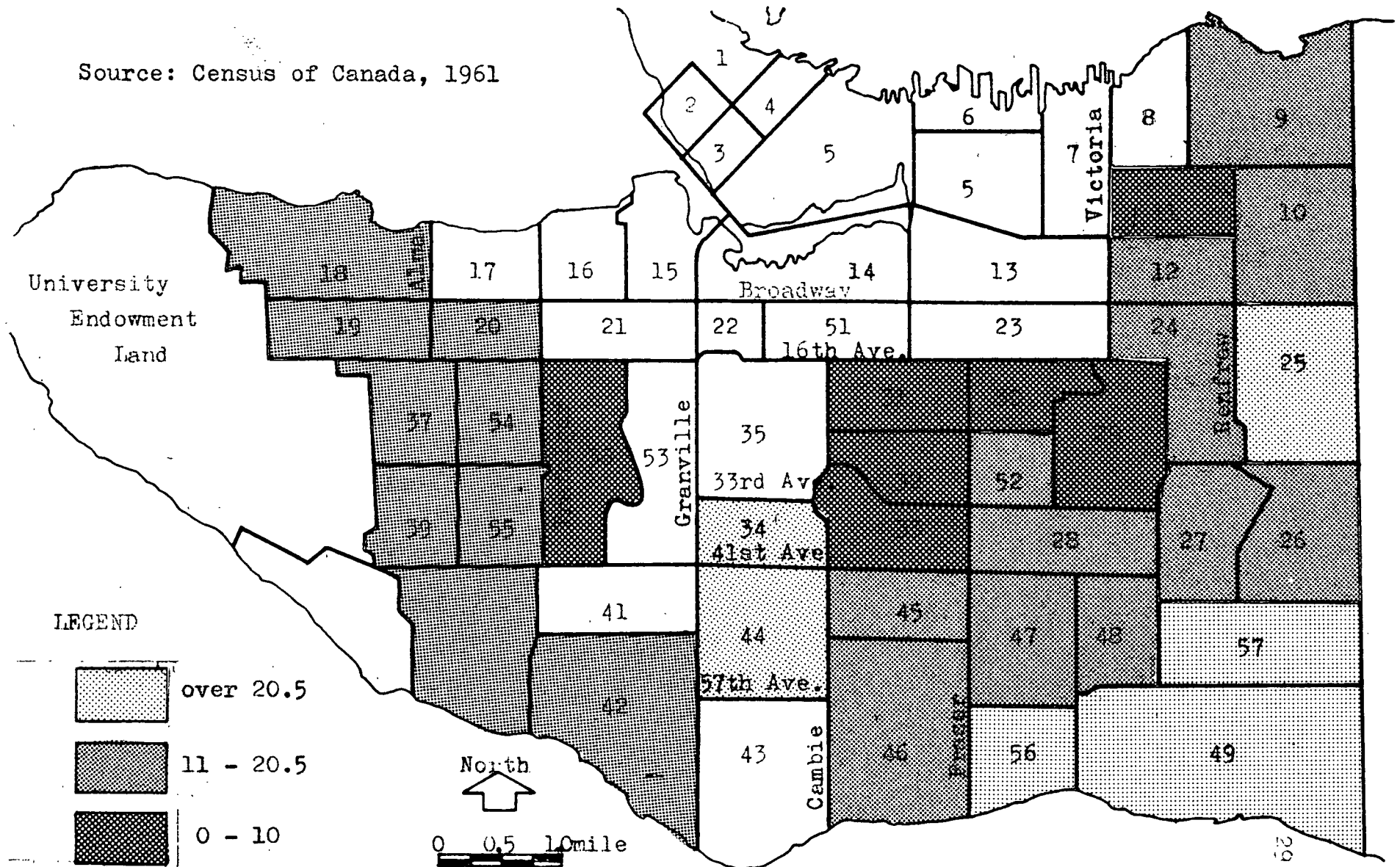
Source: Census of Canada, 1961



Map 3

AGE WEIGHTS REPRESENTING AVERAGE RELATIVE AGE OF RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS
BY CENSUS TRACTS IN PREDOMINANTLY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS.
VANCOUVER B.C. 1961

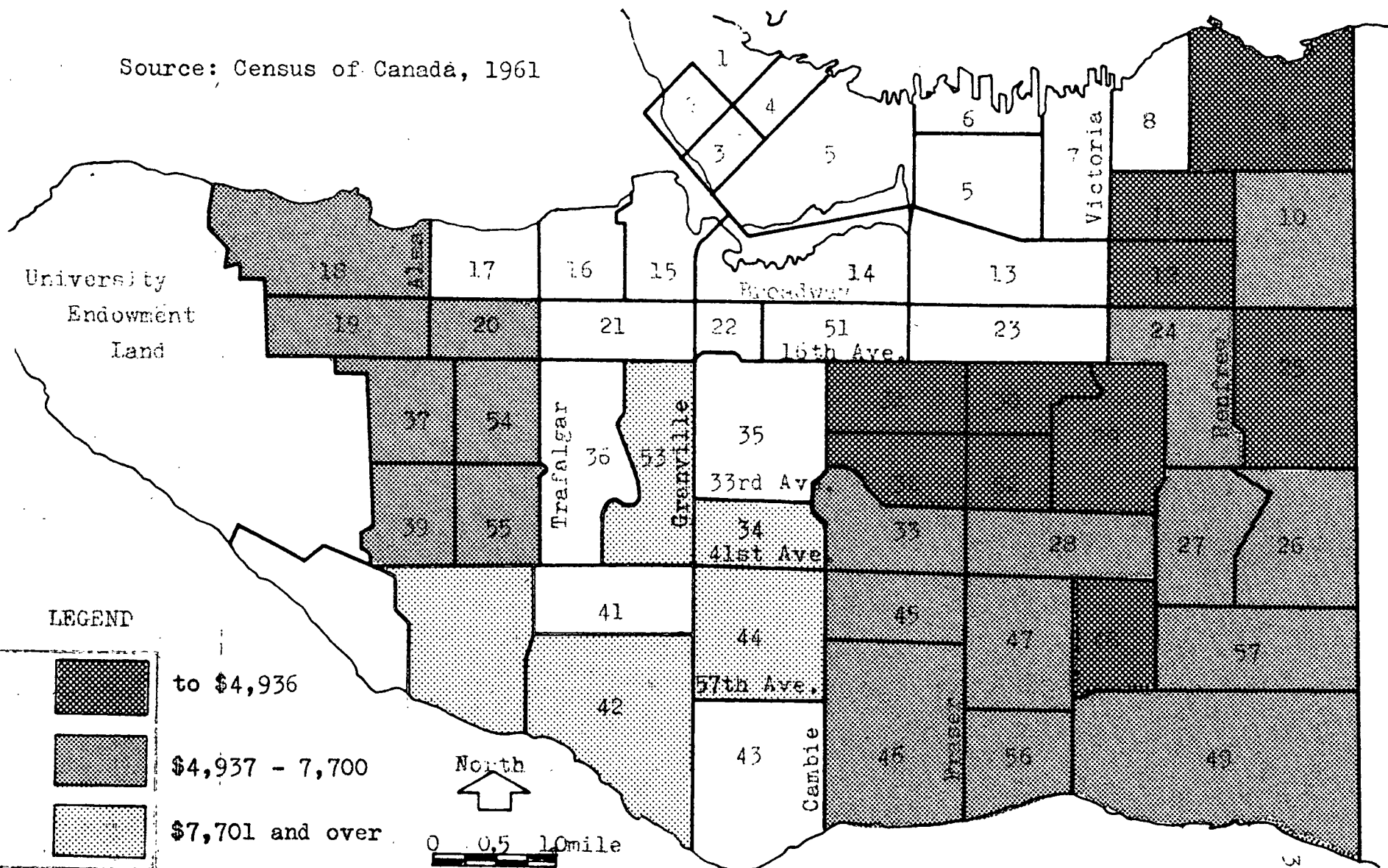
Source: Census of Canada, 1961



Map 4

AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME OF SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS
IN RANK ORDER BY CENSUS TRACT. VANCOUVER, B.C. 1961

Source: Census of Canada, 1961



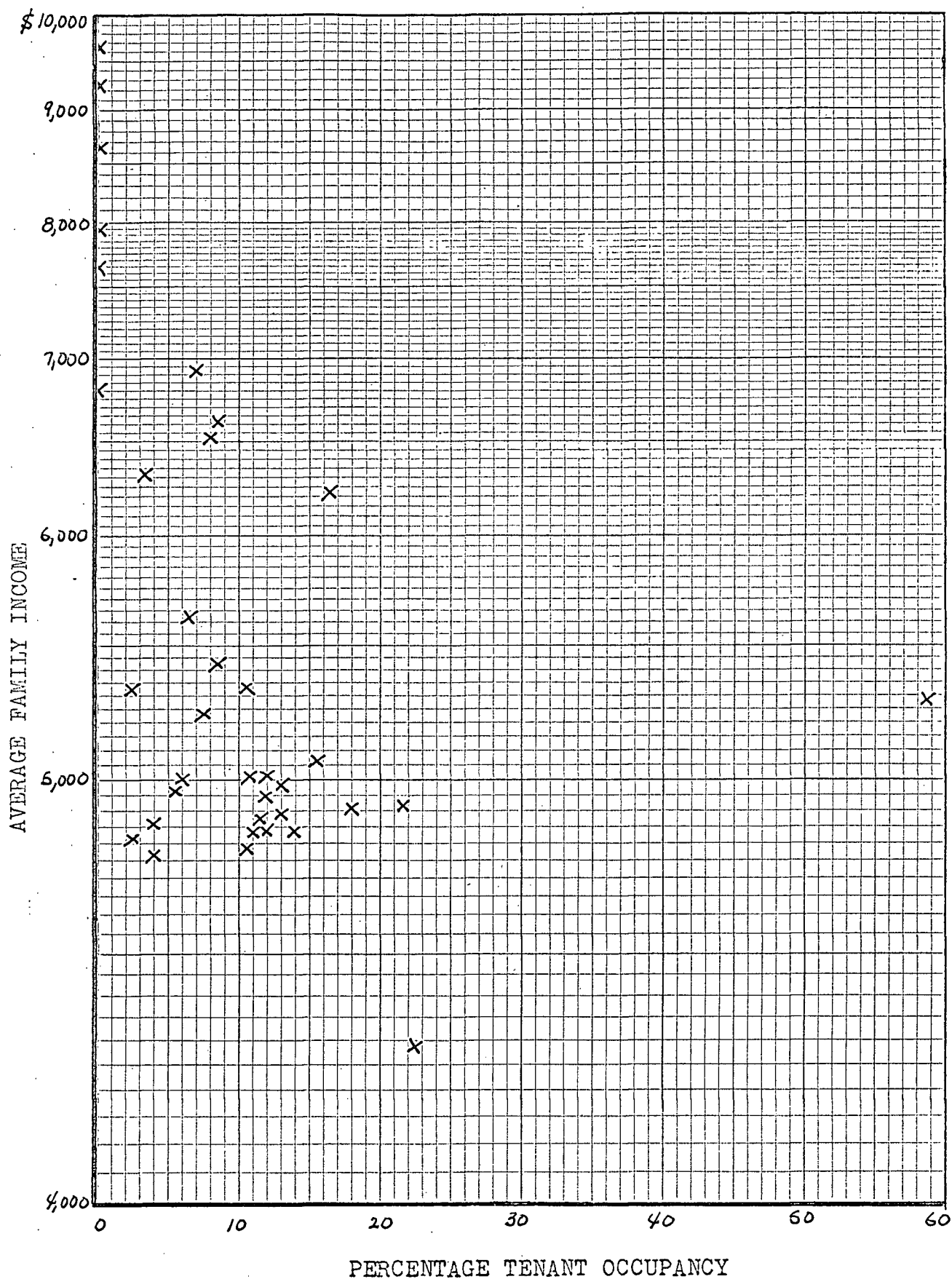
the poorest building condition category because of its age, whereas it should have rated in the best condition category. Building condition east of Cambie Street, in what is generally known as the "east side of town" ranked as high as the Dunbar and Kerrisdale areas, which again is inaccurate and was verified by the building condition surveys described below.

As a result of these discrepancies a more satisfactory indicator of building condition was sought. In reviewing metropolitan census information mapped by the research department of the Community Chest³ it appeared that average family income was a superior index. This was borne out by the results of the windshield survey.

When average family income was plotted on Map 4, page 30, it showed a slightly higher and more accurate correlation with tenancy than did average age of dwellings. Twenty-two tracts correlate with tenancy while eleven do not. A clearer indication of this tenuous relation is given in Figure 1, page 32, in which the two are plotted on semi-log paper. As average family income decreases, tenancy tends to increase at an increasing rate, until the six minimum average family incomes of below \$5,900 are reached, when

³L.I. Bell, Metropolitan Vancouver. . . . An Overview for Social Planners (Vancouver: Research Department of the Community Chest and Councils of the Greater Vancouver Area, 1965), p. 7.

FIG. 1 RELATION BETWEEN TENANCY AND AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME 32
BY CENSUS TRACTS ZONED AS SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



tenant occupancy of single family dwellings tends to decline absolutely.

II. BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY

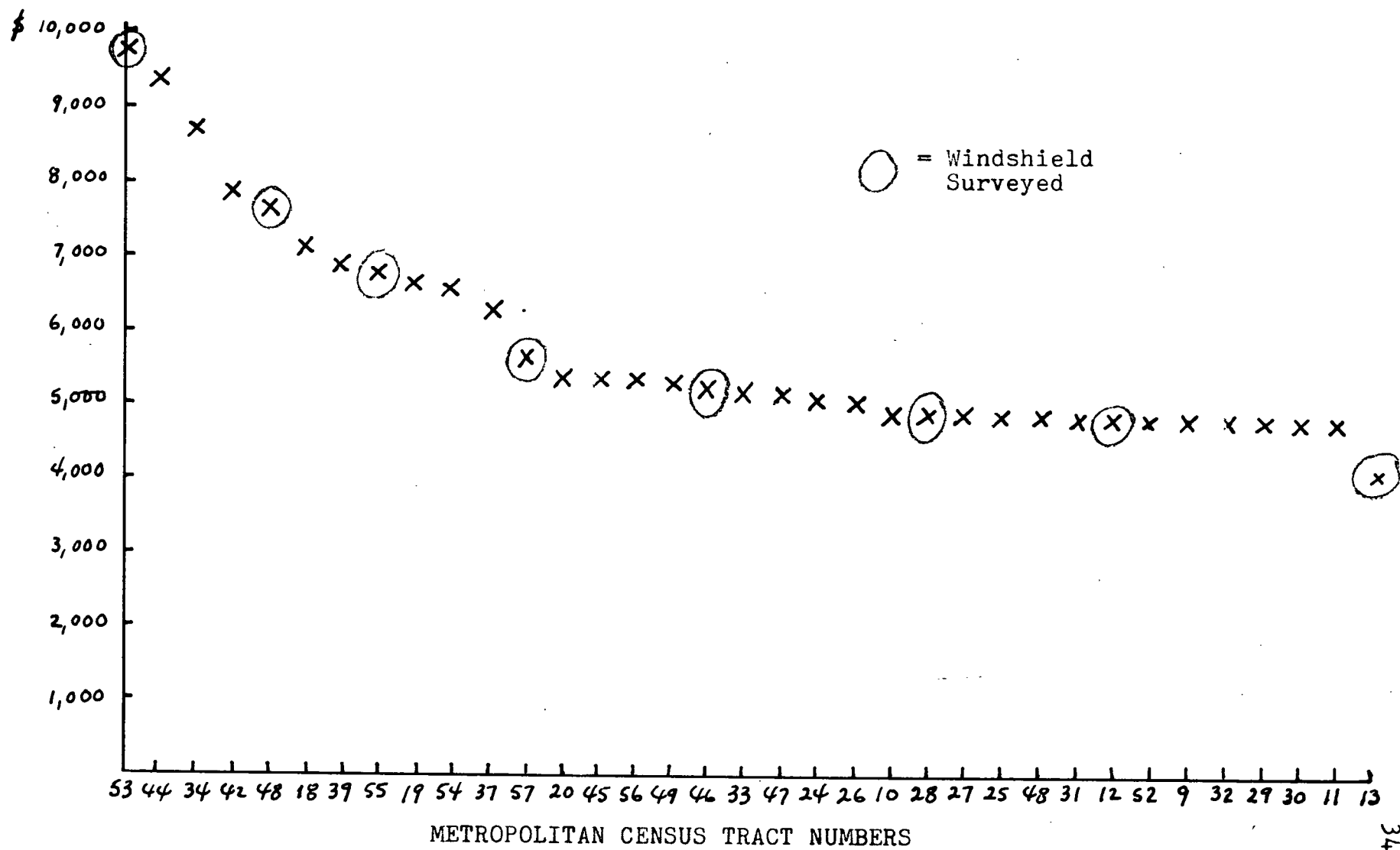
Purpose. The investigation of the city wide distribution patterns for tenancy and dwelling condition was followed up by a windshield sample survey of this relationship on an individual dwelling basis. The purpose of the survey was to see if the rather dubious areal correlation was substantiated in individual cases and to gain insights into the relative importance of tenancy amongst causes of blight in Vancouver.

Method. Blocks to be surveyed were chosen by a random selection method within each of eight census tracts. As shown in Figure 2, page 34, the census tracts surveyed were chosen to represent approximately equal intervals in a rank order of predominantly residential census tracts according to average family income. The number of blocks surveyed in each census tract contained ninety to ninety-five single family dwellings. This conforms to sample sizes suggested by the Vancouver Redevelopment Study⁴ and they are considered to yield representation to an accuracy of plus or minus 10 per cent. In census tract thirteen a 3.3 per cent sample was sufficient, as the Community Chest has recently done a

⁴City of Vancouver Planning Department, op. cit., p. 114.

FIG. 2. AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME OF SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS
IN RANK ORDER BY CENSUS TRACT. VANCOUVER, B.C.

Source: Census of Canada, 1961



comparable and more extensive building condition survey of this area, and their figures may be utilized.⁵ The purpose of surveying it in the present study was a check on the comparability of the criteria used by the author and by the Community Chest, and as a special study of a developed stage of blight.

Criteria used. The criteria for measuring quality of building condition were those used both in the wind-shield surveys of the 1957 Vancouver redevelopment study and the March, 1966, study by the Community Chest for the Vancouver City Planning Department. It is a five level scale as follows, in which exterior condition is considered an index of the building's quality:

- Very Good: Good structures and good maintenance: free from deficiencies, solid and plumb.
- Good: Generally acceptable structures not necessarily the most modern or fully up to standard, but still essentially free from any form of deterioration.
- Fair: Mediocre structures: no serious structural deficiencies but indifferent maintenance and state of repair.
- Poor: Structures which are either old or of poor quality construction, or both, and showing evidence of disrepair.
- Very Poor: Serious structural deficiencies or marked dilapidation, or both.⁶

⁵Community Chest and Councils of the Greater Vancouver Area, "Urban Renewal Scheme III--Mount Pleasant" (Vancouver: The Community Chest, March, 1966), p. 28.

⁶Vancouver City Planning Department, op. cit., p. 23.

As in the two studies mentioned above the check list of deficiency items included: the roof, foundations, walls, chimney, gutters, porch, and steps. It also included yards and surroundings, two items which were included in consideration only by the Community Chest study. Surroundings were important only in doubtful cases but as found by the Community Chest, the condition of yards correlated highly with the condition of the building. A look at the rear yards and backs of buildings as done in the Community Chest survey was very revealing and frequently indicated a level of condition belied by the appearance of the front of the property.

The Community Chest study has only recently been completed and the author was able to interview the two persons who carried out the windshield survey, Mr. Max Beck and Mr. Andrew Armitage. They were extremely helpful and gave a detailed demonstration of their criteria and methods in a short field trip. This allowed a high degree of correspondence between the results of this survey, and the Community Chest survey as well as the 1957 Vancouver redevelopment survey. Special efforts to achieve this correspondence are necessary because of the subjective nature of the criteria.

As pointed out by Mr. Beck and Mr. Armitage, the most important division in the five quality grades is between fair and poor. As a preliminary indication for the

making of policy decisions, a dwelling is allocated to one or the other according to whether it appears to be economically feasible to rehabilitate it or whether it should be demolished. A building in which the roof sags or the exterior walls are skewed would automatically go in the very poor category. Old structures showing signs of deterioration and poor original construction such as tarpaper siding, lack of flashing and lack of eaves would rate poor, but structures which were basically sound would not rate below fair.

The survey was done using the five level rating scale, but for practical purposes three categories were sufficient and more easily used. It is felt that greater accuracy was gained in the three categories by originally rating five. Very good and good were subsequently combined into good, fair was unchanged while poor and very poor were combined into poor.

Information on the ownership of the individual buildings surveyed was readily obtained from the assessment rolls of the City of Vancouver and was recorded along side the rating for each dwelling surveyed. The assessment rolls also code each building type which assured that no duplexes or other type of multiple family dwelling were mistaken for single family. As defined in Chapter I tenant occupancy is assumed to exist when the owner's address is listed as different from that of the dwelling's address.

Results. The basic results of the survey are recorded in Table II, page 39, and Table III, page 40, For each of the census tracts Table II shows the percentage distribution of categories of building condition. Although it appears the samples in census tracts fifty-three and forty-six do not conform closely the table gives solid proof that as the level of dwelling condition decreases in quality, income decreases at an uneven rate, and average age of dwellings increases in the area of poor condition. The fallibility of age alone as an index of condition is indicated by these results. Census tracts fifty-five and twenty-eight for example have identical average ages, but twenty-eight which is in the "east side" of town has markedly poorer condition ratings.

The actual number of tenant occupied dwellings found in the windshield survey was too small to accurately represent, in any one census tract, the proportional distribution of tenancy according to dwelling condition. However, this distribution is recorded in Table III, for all census tracts surveyed and shows a decided increase of tenancy as the level of dwelling condition decreases.

Analysis of building condition survey. A breakdown of tenancy by census tract as in Table III suggests that tenancy in the higher average family income area (\$6,865 and above), besides occurring much less frequently occurs

TABLE II
PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF DWELLING CONDITION BY
SELECTED CENSUS TRACTS. VANCOUVER, B. C.

condition Category	Tract 53	Tract 40	Tract 55	Tract 57	Tract 46	Tract 28	Tract 12	Tract 13
Good	79.7	85.0	84.1	82.4	49.0	51.4	37.8	13.2
Fair	16.9	13.0	14.4	17.6	46.0	40.0	48.3	34.0
Poor	3.4	2.0	1.5	.0	5.0	8.6	13.9	52.8
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Relative age weights	25	15	18	6	11	18	13	30
Average family income	\$9,756	\$7,701	\$6,865	\$5,651	\$5,236	\$4,987	\$4,866	\$4,270

TABLE III
PERCENTAGE OF TENANCY IN EACH CONDITION CATEGORY

	Tract 53	Tract 40	Tract 55	Tract 57	Tract 46	Tract 28	Tract 12	Tract 13
Good	75.0	75.0	60.0	42.8	11.1	40.0	30.8	5.7
Fair	25.0	.0	40.0	57.2	77.7	50.0	53.8	17.6
Poor	.0	25.0	.0	.0	11.2	10.0	15.4	76.7
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
% tenancy in sample	4.4	3.7	3.3	6.0	9.0	7.0	9.0	32.0
% tenancy in whole tract	*	*	*	6.6	7.1	5.7	8.6	22.5
Relative average age weight	25	15	18	6	11	18	13	30
Average family income	\$9,756	\$7,701	\$6,865	\$5,651	\$5,236	\$4,987	\$4,866	\$4,270

*Census information, which was not available.

predominantly in the "good" category. In the intermediate average family income area (\$4,866 to \$5,651) tenancy occurs twice as frequently but predominantly in the good and fair category. In the low average family income area (\$4,270) it occurs ten times as frequently and is 76.7 per cent in the poor category. The relationship of tenancy to poor building condition, established in the building condition survey and shown in Table III, does not suggest tenancy is a cause of blight. In fact tenancy in areas of poor condition appears more to be caused, than a cause. It exists because poorer people cannot afford the capital investment of their own home and are forced to rent.

There are several possible reasons for the discrepancy between tracts fifty-five and twenty-eight but difference of income of the resident appears to be the basic one. Physical differences such as the existence of curbs in tract twenty-eight cannot be considered determinants of building condition. Although such physical facilities and services have been proven to affect dwelling maintenance to a degree they are actually functions of income. This is so because in the normal situation services in residential areas such as curb and gutter are provided in the City of Vancouver on a petition basis and the area's residents are then assessed for a major portion of the cost of the services. The significance of income appears obvious in the comparison between tracts fifty-five and twenty-eight.

Whereas the weight is the same the average family income of tract twenty-eight is \$1,878 less. In census tract thirteen as compared to twenty-eight there is a sharp increase in building age (.66 per cent) and a \$717 decrease in average family income.

Census tract thirteen is an exception to the type of dwelling area chosen for study. Although its housing is still constituted 48 per cent by single family dwellings its residentially zoned section is presently entirely multiple family. Approximately the northern half of the census tract is zoned and used for industrial activity.

The sample in tract thirteen which is in the Mount Pleasant area, indicates as shown by Table II, that building condition in this area is in a serious state of deterioration with 53.2 per cent assessed as poor, while tracts fifty-five and twenty-eight have only 1.4 and 8.5 per cent respectively in the poor category. The sample actually lies within the area of Vancouver's "Urban Renewal Scheme III," which is also subsumed in census tract thirteen and is being studied for possible rehabilitation.

The explanation of the condition of the Mount Pleasant area being studied for rehabilitation is that it is a relatively small area of approximately thirty-seven blocks surrounded by incompatible uses and lacking in community

services.⁷ There is industrial encroachment on the north, the west and the east side, and a high degree of commercial activity on the west and south sides. The effects of both types of land use are reinforced by heavily travelled traffic arteries on the north, the west and the south. During the day the streets are largely utilized for parking purposes in conjunction with the nearby incompatible uses. Community facilities for this area are basically an obsolete elementary school and an unused playground. The school is separated from the area by one of the most heavily travelled arteries of the city which the school-children are required to cross. The playground is at the bottom of a hill near the industrial area and 61.4 per cent of the area's families do not use it.⁸ A lack of physical facilities such as adequate street lighting constitute secondary causes of blight in this area.

The above factors suggest how the Mount Pleasant study section has become as blighted as it is. These same factors plus its present zoning are capable of keeping it from again becoming a first class single family residential area. The multiple family zoning has not caused the area's

⁷Paraphrase from Mr. Tom Jenkinson, Senior Redevelopment Planner for the City of Vancouver, in a special University of B.C. lecture and subsequent discussion, Vancouver, March 21, 1966. Permission to quote secured.

⁸Community Chest, op. cit., p. 71.

decline but now makes it extremely improbable that any property owner would forego the economic advantages of selling out to a higher intensity land use, by rehabilitating their single family dwellings.

The building condition survey in the eight census tracts substantiates the assumption that income of an area's residents is a better index of building condition than age. The average family income of the eight census tracts chosen for analysis are indicated in Figure 2, page 34, and show that despite the relatively small absolute difference in average family income of census tract thirteen this relative level of income is markedly below the highly consistent minimum for single family areas in Vancouver.

Conclusions. The striking inferiority of building condition within tract thirteen combined with this relatively low average income suggests a high significance for income as the major cause of blight in single family residential areas. The case study as a whole verifies that the single family residential section of Vancouver is comprised of areas of general homogeneity in level of personal income and that it is also comprised of areas of general homogeneity of building condition. It indicates that the areas of higher income correspond quite well with the areas of better building condition and the areas of lower income correspond with areas of poorer building condition.

The study supports the proposal that below a certain income one way in which owner occupants begin to finance the cost of shelter is by avoiding the costs of building maintenance. In Vancouver this appears to start in economically homogeneous areas in which average family income is approximately \$5,000. As stated by Mr. Tom Jenkinson, "The level of building condition in single family residential areas is normally a function of income and to a lesser extent, attitudes."⁹

The case study however is very inconclusive concerning the hypothesized causal relation between tenancy and blight of single family residential areas. The survey of census material on the city wide distribution of tenancy, building age and average family income resulted in a rather low correlation between tenancy and average family income which was used as an index of building condition. This bare relation between tenancy and building condition was however, substantiated in the building condition survey. As suggested by Table III, page 40, tenancy increases as average family income decreases. The sample is too small though to draw any conclusions as to whether this is a direct relationship.

The significant point about the case study results is that although the relationship between tenancy and

⁹Mr. Tom Jenkinson, op. cit., permission to quote secured.

building condition is established it is not necessarily a causal relation. It is very possible that this relation is spurious in that both could be caused by a third factor rather than tenancy being a causal factor of building condition.

CHAPTER III

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TENANCY FOR REHABILITATION-CONSERVATION EFFORTS

In this chapter a general assessment is made of the relative causal importance of tenancy as a factor in the generation of blight, and it is fitted within the framework of an adopted general theory describing the blighting process. Since tenancy is interwoven with a fabric of related causes of blight it is difficult to analyse its effects as an independent variable. As such, the analysis of tenancy necessitates a more comprehensive approach including mention of remedial actions for causes of blight as a whole.

I. THE CAUSAL IMPORTANCE OF TENANCY IN THE BLIGHTING PROCESS

The adopted causal theory of blight. This paper adopts a theory of basic and secondary causes of blight, which as described in Chapter I is herein considered to be a physical condition. This theory is suggested by a review of the literature and is reinforced by the results of the Vancouver case study. The focus of concern in the process of physical deterioration is, of course, the identification of owners' reasons for lack of maintenance, repair or re-

placement of single family dwellings which otherwise naturally deteriorate with age. The explicit assumption, affirmed by Sherman Maisel,¹ is made that owners rather than tenants are responsible for all but minor maintenance of single family dwellings. In fact, this responsibility as determined in a rental agreement may be partially the tenant's, but the economic effect will likely be no different. Millspaugh and Breckenfeld are among the many who indicated that the economic burden of maintenance and improvement will be borne by the occupants.²

The relation of geographic areas of the community containing the residences of persons of similar income levels with areas of a certain quality of dwelling maintenance was indicated by the Vancouver case study and appears to be the normal urban phenomenon. This relation is the key to understanding the causes of blight. Although it cannot be proven conclusively from the results of the case study, it appears that single family dwelling maintenance decreases relatively evenly with income until a certain average family income level slightly under \$5,000 is reached below which maintenance falls off much more rapidly. This phenomenon is applicable to both owner and

¹Sherman J. Maisel, Financing Real Estate (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1965), p. 295.

²M. Millspaugh and G. Breckenfeld, The Human Side of Urban Renewal (Baltimore: Fight Blight Inc., 1958), p. 266.

tenant occupied dwellings but below the average family income of \$5,000 it is much more applicable to those tenant occupied. It may be that there is a certain threshold level of income below which shelter is afforded by obtaining rented accommodation, by avoiding the costs of maintenance or accepting lower standards of housing. The case study suggests that in Vancouver this may be an average family income of about \$4,700 which restricts a large number of families, considering the average male Canadian wage earner made only \$3,625 in 1961.³ It can be safely stated that home ownership is the goal of most Canadian families as Maisel indicates is the case for American families.⁴ A.W. Cowley in addressing the Vancouver Housing Association has pointed out that once it is accepted that the goal of all good citizenship is home ownership then:

We face . . . (in 1954) the fact that the average young married couple forming a family must be in receipt of an income above the average level of wage earners if it is to be possible to maintain the mortgage payments required.⁵

Although he was describing the situation twelve years ago there is little evidence of a substantial improvement. Al-

³Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Census of Canada 1961 (Ottawa: The Bureau, 1961), p. 9-1.

⁴Maisel, loc. cit.

⁵A.W. Cowley, "Gaps in Our Housing Program," in The Vancouver Housing Association, Houses For All, a record of the Proceedings of the Housing Conference held Jan. 19-20, 1954 (Vancouver: The Association, 1954), p. 13.

though it is implied by Mr. Cowley's reasoning that home ownership permits an individual to enjoy superior quality of housing than he would have by renting, this is not necessarily the case. The important consideration here is that it is the overwhelming preference of individual families.

Even though Canada now has the highest percentage of owner occupied dwellings in the world,⁶ the importance of such economic constraint acting against achievement of such a major socially desired goal cannot help but result in some form of compromise solution. One of the most recent and highly lauded urban renewal studies, the San Fransisco CRP study, refers to ". . . the most significant barrier to [residential] improvement--that of limited financial ability. . . ." ⁷ Thus the importance of both owner and tenant income and of economic constraint as a powerful factor in the determination of building condition becomes manifest, and low income is classed here as one of the two basic causes of blight.

A conclusion which may be drawn from the observed homogeneity of levels of family income in single family residential areas is that forces of the housing market must limit a family's choice of residential area. According to

⁶Philip H. White, of the University of B.C., in a lecture (Feb. 25, 1966).

⁷Arthur I. Little Inc., CRP San Fransisco Community Renewal Program (San Fransisco, Oct., 1965), p. 9.

these forces homes in more desirable areas are generally purchased by those with higher income and the least desirable areas attract those with least income. Leo Grebler attests to the general urban process of allocation of lower income persons to declining areas:

. . . the characteristics of declining areas: neglect of maintenance and repair, emigration of users who can afford to leave, and immigration of users attracted by low rents and high vacancies, which stem from general deterioration.⁸

Some low income persons will however choose higher density rental areas which are not declining, but they are not likely to be families who constitute the predominant users of single family residential areas. It is in the characteristics of the general environment of these least desired areas that the second basic cause of blight is found. Some of these least desirable residential characteristics are: the encroachment of incompatible land uses as industry, commercial uses, and heavy traffic; or the low level of community facilities and services.

Thus two basic causes, incompatible land uses and low income of an area's occupants, frame the theory of causes of blight adopted in this paper. Certain inherent disadvantages of an area relegate it to a position of relatively low desirability in the residential market place and it becomes

⁸ Leo Grebler, Housing Market Behavior in a Declining Area (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), pp. 5-6.

inhabited by persons financially unable to afford to own or rent a well maintained single family dwelling.

The following secondary causes, of residential deterioration, of which tenancy appears to be one, grow out of and reinforce the two basic causes. They would fall more in the category of necessary causes rather than sufficient causes, and several are dependent upon the previously mentioned basic causes. The first is aged dwellings which often correlate highly with areas of deterioration but which are in fact more likely to be results of nearly incompatible uses, and the low market demand for newer more expensive housing in that area.

Another secondary cause is that of social class. The social class values of the middle and upper classes appear to be more amenable to concern for property and the postponement of immediate gratifications in the interests of long range benefits.⁹ On the other hand, lower class values seem to favor expenditures on immediate gratifications and the avoidance of longer term investments such as housing maintenance. It is also likely that a low level of building maintenance becomes a social norm of the lower class because of a real inability of members of the lower class neighbourhoods to afford it, whether they are owners or tenants. Thus, even the desire one feels to maintain his home at a

⁹Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (London: George Allan and Unwin Ltd., 1930).

high level is reduced. However, social class must be considered a secondary cause as the basis upon which social class and social class values ultimately depend is income, determined above as one of the basic determinants of building condition.

The level of public services is a determinant of the desirability of residential areas but as a general rule the provision of such services are determined by the municipal tax returns from the different areas even though there are sometimes special assessments for special services. Again it is dependent upon the income level of the area's residents. In areas zoned for a different land use however this zoned land use would largely determine whether municipal investment should be made in services for single family residential purposes.

Another secondary factor which exaggerates the effect of market forces is the National Housing Act policy of lending and insuring mortgage loans only on new housing. In effect this makes much new housing cheaper in the eyes of the consumer than existing housing of lower value¹⁰ thereby making the least desirable areas even less desirable to the person with sufficient income to maintain a dwelling in an adequate state of maintenance. Between 1960 and 1962 the

¹⁰D.H. Porter (chairman), Report of The Royal Commission on Banking and Finance (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1964), p. 278.

N.H.A. accounted for 1,106.6 million dollars of residential mortgage approvals for new construction whereas the conventional market accounted for approvals of residential mortgages totalling 1,090.4 million dollars.¹¹

The causal importance of tenancy. It is as a factor of secondary importance that tenancy fits into this causal theory of blight. The Vancouver case study showed the preponderance of tenant occupied dwellings to be in the lowest income category, and further that they were in the poor category of building condition. This bears out the numerous observances by urban renewal studies, but insufficient insights are provided to prove conclusively that tenancy, as a form of occupancy of single family dwellings, discourages their maintenance, repair or replacement by owners. The relation between income and tenancy is more likely to suggest tenancy is merely a result of insufficient income to purchase a dwelling. Research by Sherman Maisel verifies this relationship.¹²

The fact that within the non-single family zoned census tract thirteen, 76.7 per cent of tenant occupied dwellings were in the poor condition category is a little more indicative. It indicates an actual relation between

¹¹Ibid., p. 274.

¹²Maisel, op. cit., pp. 296-97.

single family dwelling tenancy and building condition in an area which is more than half comprised of single family dwellings of poor condition. In the other seven census tracts which are zoned for single family residential use and in which building condition is over 85 per cent in the fair or good category, over 85 per cent of the tenant occupied dwellings are also in the fair to good category. Since building maintenance is primarily the responsibility of its owner these results suggest there are two types of non-resident owners: those who are interested in a recurrent income and therefore maintenance of the property; and those characterized by the land speculator described by Peter Burns¹³ who is mainly unconcerned for the maintenance of the dwellings. The latter's properties are more likely to be in an area such as census tract thirteen where single family residential uses are basically obsolete and there is therefore no economic advantage in further such investment. This situation in Vancouver, involving the land speculator, was well described by H.B. Reusch in speaking of areas upon which industry and business are encroaching:

I am thinking of those two or three storey frame dwellings and the fading houses surrounded by mills, foundries and junk yards. This is not surprising since owners are obviously marking time, waiting for someone to recognize the value of the property for industrial uses, while supporting the speculation with whatever

¹³Peter Burns, "Substandard Housing and the Enforcement of a Minimum Standard," Habitat (July-August, 1964), p. 19.

revenue they can obtain. One day we must find a method of shortening the transition period between residential and industrial uses. With a stroke of the pen (zoning) it is decided that hence forth the rights of commerce shall prevail in an area that until that moment provided legal housing.¹⁴

Thus it may be possible to consider tenancy in these two different lights as has been recognized by Richard Ratcliff.¹⁵

One in connection with the owner interested in a recurrent income from the dwelling and therefore concerned with maintenance and the other concerned primarily with speculation in land.

This analysis of the Vancouver situation and review of literature has suggested some possible insights into the general nature of tenancy, but it still does not imply it is a causal factor in blight. It is more likely that blighting factors such as incompatible uses affect an area first, then the rental of dwellings which are being allowed to decline as a result of rational economic decisions becomes advantageous to the tenant who can afford nothing better and to the owner to whom capital gain is the major interest.

Such a viewpoint sheds a great deal of doubt on the

¹⁴H.B. Reusch, "Housing and Neighborhood Improvement," in the Vancouver Housing Association, Houses for All, a record of the Proceedings of the Housing Conference held January 19-20, 1954 (Vancouver: the Association, 1954), p. 43.

¹⁵Richard Ratcliff, Real Estate Analysis (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1961), pp. 219-225.

hypothesis that tenancy is a major cause of blight and would instead suggest that either it is not a cause of blight or that it is a result of more important blighting influences, depending on what the interests of the owners are.

II. GOALS IN THE REHABILITATION-CONSERVATION PROCESS

Before any assessment or recommendations regarding government sponsored rehabilitation-conservation programs are made it is necessary to first know what objectives these programs are trying to accomplish. Urban renewal programs as part of the planning process must follow a rational, logical methodology in order most efficiently to achieve their goals. Possibly the best and most simplified description of the planning process is the three step procedure described by Davidoff and Reiner: goal specification, means identification and implementation, in that order.¹⁶

Although the initiative for public urban renewal activities in Canada rests with the municipalities and the jurisdiction power belongs constitutionally with the provinces, the federal government has a big and legitimate interest in urban renewal. G.A.P. Carrothers states:

Let us be quite clear that the British North America Act does not exclude the national government from participating in urban renewal. . . . In fact, the

¹⁶Paul Davidoff and Thomas A. Reiner, "A Choice Theory of Planning," J.A.I.P., Vol. 38 (May, 1962), p. 106.

British North America Act specifically gives to the national Government powers over much of the so-called planning function at the local level. . . . Underlying the whole national program of renewal assistance is the notion that our cities are an important national investment and represent an asset which should be protected on a national basis.¹⁷

Through the agency of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (C.M.H.C.) the federal government finances over 50 per cent of the cost of urban renewal programs in Canada. Through this "power of the purse" and its legitimate interest in urban renewal it is able to influence renewal goals. The federal government has only recently (1964) effectively allowed renewal activities to be concerned with other than residential areas.

The stated renewal goals formulated at the federal level cover social, economic and physical considerations but they are often so generalized that they do not provide a guide to rational municipal policies. In fact, they seldom reveal basic social goals. All normative goals when traced to their lowest common denominator are social goals¹⁸ and they should be agreed upon. ". . . to improve working and living conditions"¹⁹ is a frequently stated goal at the

¹⁷G.A.P. Carrothers, "Prospects for Urban Renewal in Canada," Habitat (July-August, 1960), p. 4.

¹⁸Paraphrased from a special lecture by Professor G. Nez, of Kansas State University (University of B.C., Vancouver, February 7, 1966).

¹⁹Burns, op. cit., p. 20.

federal level but it is not sufficiently meaningful.

The following statements by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, probably the most authoritative body in Canada are also of this very generalized nature. Rehabilitation is defined as:

. . . public and private action to improve and repair deteriorated or substandard areas and structures not yet in need of redevelopment.²⁰

Conservation is defined as:

. . . action by a municipality to prevent the deterioration of sound neighbourhoods by the enforcement of occupancy, maintenance and zoning by-laws.²¹

Perhaps it is necessary that objectives be stated this broadly in order to allow flexibility and freedom to the municipal implementation of programs. However, Stanley Pickett, one of C.M.H.C.'s advisors on community planning suggests:

Several reasons can be advanced for the relatively slow response by municipalities (in formulating proposals for studies or projects) including lack of clarity about the conflicting objectives of urban renewal. . . .²²

This situation cannot however be predominantly laid at the

²⁰Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, "Glossary of Terms" (a reprint distributed by Mr. Maxwell Cross at the "Short Course on Urban Renewal," held May 1965 in Vancouver, B.C. at the University of B.C.), p. 1.

²¹Ibid., p. 2.

²²Stanley H. Pickett, "An Appraisal of the Urban Renewal Program in Canada," a paper read at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh, March 17 and 18, 1965.

door of federal government or C.M.H.C. Although circumscribed by federal terms of reference the initiative for and goals of rehabilitation and conservation require analysis in depth and need to be stated specifically.

City planning in the Nineteenth Century has at least two roots, social reform and civic pride.²³

As planning has grown from the school of social reform so do the aims of urban renewal still smack of the reformers' zeal rather than the objective analysis of experts. Derek Baker has suggested that social work basically follows a middle class value system and that:

. . . the definition of a 'line of normality' (to which the maladjusted person is directed) is fuzzy and in distinct, and unless a worker is aware of the class concept of normality, this 'line' will in all probability, be a middle-class one derived from the worker's own value system.²⁴

The author suggests that the objectives of the urban renewal planner are likewise subjectively framed by a middle class background. This is evidenced by the often quoted spurious correlations between slums and crime in Canada in urban renewal studies. It is analagous to the situation described by Dennis Chapman:

The concentration of the reformer on the sins of the working class led to the spurious correlation, which has for long been present in all discussions on hous-

²³Dr. H.P. Oberlander, Head of the Division of Community and Regional Planning, University of B.C., April, 1966. Permission to quote obtained.

²⁴Derek Baker, "Social Class' Differentials for Social Work Practice" (Vancouver, MSW Thesis, U.B.C.), p. 19.

ing, between slums and crime. Expressed in its popular form, housing density is seen to be correlated with the incidence of crimes of violence and with crimes against some forms of property. It is possible to show that the higher the density of housing, the greater the frequency of these crimes. But it is also possible to show that the lower the density of housing, the greater the frequency of some other kinds of offences, for example, fraudulent conversion, embezzlement, driving motor cars under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, or such behaviour as divorce or bigamy. In spite of the fact that this matter has received attention in the scientific literature, the spurious correlation is still a potent source in the mythology of housing reform. The urban social reform movement has another source already lightly touched upon. It is the projection of the standards of the professional and intellectual middle class into the programme for the rehousing of the working class. As in other aspects of social welfare the difficulty of selecting standards and of making comparisons between the desirability of one standard compared with another leads to the acceptance of the optimum as being the basic standard, and the optimum is almost always that standard which the middle-class reformer would expect for himself. . . .²⁵

G.A.P. Carrothers, an expert on Canadian urban renewal, makes the criticism that the welfare goals designated for Canadian urban renewal are merely excuses for the real objective which is the elimination of squalor in cities.²⁶ If such unrecognized squeamishness or a sense of esthetics is the motivation for renewal, and therefore for its outgrowth of rehabilitation-conservation, then it lends great weight to the argument that value formulations are not now clearly stated and that

²⁵Dennis Chapman, The Home and Social Status (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), p. 4.

²⁶G.A.P. Carrothers, "An Assessment of Canadian Urban Renewal," Habitat (July-August, 1960), p. 3.

they must be clarified before means of implementation are determined.

The utility of goals is suggested by the following possible flaw in the process of Canadian urban renewal planning which may be a result of vague goals or poor analysis of the problem. As stated by Stanley Pickett:

It has been generally recognized at government (federal) level that urban renewal is not a means of solving the low-income housing problem and there has been little pressure to build for quantity alone.²⁷

If however, there is validity in the above adopted causal theory of blight in which the low income housing problem is pinpointed as precipitating blight then this may explain the major deficiency in Canadian residential renewal, ". . . its inability to aid wide areas in decline which are not so depreciated as to warrant demolition."²⁸ These wide areas would be mostly single family residential areas which in a normal city such as Vancouver constitute 70 to 80 per cent of the land area.²⁹

In a nutshell, what is suggested here is that an analysis of the causes of blight is not being clearly related to the real goals for residential renewal. As clearly put forward by municipal urban renewal studies the goals are to overcome blighted housing. Once this is done the real solution for renewal of single family residential areas

²⁷Pickett, op. cit., p. 8.

²⁸Ibid., p. 5.

²⁹White, op. cit.,

should emerge. It is suggested here that it will be means of financing housing in quantity which is a solution to the low income problem which is sustaining single family residential blight. This is the solution the San Francisco CRP study has come up with. In speaking of tools and programs to overcome residential improvement barriers they refer to such things as social services, education programs, job training programs and anti-poverty campaigns. The report states:

. . . since they (the above) are designed to increase income, and thus eliminate perhaps the most significant barrier to improvement--that of limited financial ability--they must be viewed as integral parts of a renewal program.³⁰

There is possibly great justification for criticizing the solutions which dislocate both owner occupants and tenants of blighted areas, by either demolishing dwellings or requiring rehabilitation improvements which owner-occupants often cannot afford and which thereby exacerbate the cause rather than alleviating it.

Once a straightforward set of rehabilitation-conservation goals has been framed undesirable aspects associated with blight of all residential areas and with tenancy may be meaningfully analyzed and acceptable means of overcoming them prescribed. These goals would probably be best framed at the municipal level with the agreement of federal and provincial levels of government which to-

³⁰Little, op. cit., p. 9.

gether hold financial means and legislative responsibility for renewal. For one reason or another, there appears to be a break in the progression from goals to means, within municipal renewal programs and this carries over into municipal government policies of implementation.

A rational planning approach to the implications of tenancy. The means of assessing the causal importance of tenancy must be derived from the above stressed importance of goals in combination with analysis of the facts as the basis of policy. As such, the mere establishment of a correlation between tenancy and blight is not sufficient grounds for condemning tenancy, and for the advocating of discriminatory measures to eliminate it. If as suggested by the results of this thesis it is an undesired makeshift form of family accommodation in the eyes of the tenant, but a result of blight rather than a cause then its treatment must be assessed as such. Objective analysis of its causes and effects which allows means of tackling the problem to flow from the goals would therefore probably suggest some means of tackling the income problem in the cases of low income tenancy and would likely suggest there was little need for concern in cases of upper income tenancy. A lack of such objective analysis can result in an attack on the problem based on misguided prejudices and lack of understanding.

The penalty measures suggested for blighted single family dwellings such as the single tax or housing codes may fall into this category. It is possible the measures could merely aggravate the situation of the tenant or owner-occupant without effecting a net improvement in the quality of residential areas. The non-resident owner may shift the burden of increased taxes or costs or rehabilitation to the tenant who may be forced to move and increase tenancy in another area, or the tenant may remain and shoulder what for him is an excessive financial burden.

The gist of this highly theoretical argument is that the solutions to the problems of both blight and tenancy can not be drawn from conclusions of causal relations based on such circumstantial evidence or spurious correlations. The solutions must be achieved by using a rational planning approach and it is suggested that much of the present confusion in municipal urban renewal programs can be attributed to faulty approaches.

CHAPTER IV

THE NON-CAUSAL RELATION BETWEEN TENANCY AND BLIGHT

Within the terms of reference outlined in Chapter I the thesis set out to determine the causal importance of tenancy as a blighting factor for single family residential areas and to suggest rehabilitation-conservation measures for overcoming such an influence if it exists. As Canada and the United States were determined to have sufficiently similar urban conditions they constitute the general area from which information was drawn and for which the results are applicable. The focus was on a very specific factor which was considered to have similar effects, applicable through at least these two countries.

The basic causes of blight were derived from urban renewal literature and described under the categories social and economic. It was thought necessary to establish such a framework in order to determine within it the relative importance of tenancy. As planning is concerned with the making of policy recommendations, policies in respect to tenancy must be assessed in perspective and coordinated with policies related to other causes of blight.

As the study progressed, restrictions on scope and method became necessary due to limitations of such factors

as the availability of factual information and time to accurately survey social motivations related to housing conditions.

Assumptions and definitions. The scope of the study was to a minor degree circumscribed by certain qualifications. One was the specification that blight should be defined in physical terms whereas its effects are both social and economic. The relative ease of measurement of the physical condition of an area, compared to the difficulty of measuring the concomitant social and economic condition, was the major reason for this definition. It is a justifiable definition for purposes of determining blight, because as pointed out in numerous urban renewal studies, physical, social and economic blight occur simultaneously. It is not a justifiable definition for the purposes of analyzing the costs of blight nor is it a logical basis for prescribing treatment of blighted areas. Socio-economic costs and benefits must be analyzed before remedies are prescribed. These were the approaches used herein and it appears justified.

An important sociological assumption regarding human motivation was also made in Chapter I, but it was found impossible to use it within the scope of this thesis. It was the assumption that there is a universal desire for favorable recognition of one's individuality. This desire

for recognition was deemed to be reflected on a higher level of condition for owner occupied dwellings because they are a manifestation of the occupant's status.

Research methods. Chapter I was primarily a statement of the problem addressed by the thesis, and a background review of urban renewal drawn from the literature. As such its methodology is justified.

Chapter II, the Vancouver case study of tenancy, is vulnerable to two major and several minor criticisms regarding methodology. In attempting to verify the blighting influence of tenancy in the Vancouver case it has established a correlation between tenancy and physical blight but it has not gone far enough. A correlation does not establish a causal relation. In fact Chapter III indicated that the causes of blight are also the causes of tenancy, which explains their correlation.

Using similar reasons, the other major criticism is that the correlation established between areas of lower income and lower quality building condition also cannot by itself be considered a conclusive causal relation. However the blighting effect of low income is so overwhelmingly documented that it may be simply considered as reinforcing this documentation.

The use of age weights to establish the comparative average age of single Vancouver single family dwellings in

each census tract instead of absolute average age saved a small amount of time in the initial stages, but it is unclear to persons reading the thesis. The importance of communication of ideas by planners to their clientele would suggest this rank order should have been measured in average absolute age.

The three intervals scales of building condition, average family income and percentage tenancy for which the census tracts were listed in rank order (see Appendices I, II and III) were divided into three rank groupings and mapped (pages 27-30). However the ranges of these groupings were not equal but manipulated in order that correlations were graphically more obvious. In objective statistical analysis this is a very questionable practice. The accurate relationship between income and dwelling condition is however shown graphically in Figure II, page 34.

In Chapter III the general significance of tenancy was assessed within an eclectic causal theory of blight which was largely drawn from literature of urban renewal. A major weakness is that the social factors associated with tenancy in Chapter I have not been investigated. There is a paucity of information within the literature and it was found beyond the scope of the thesis to investigate them within the Vancouver case study. It would have been desirable to show the importance of pride in one's own property and neighbourhood reference groups as

they affect owner occupants, tenants and non-resident owners of single family dwellings in their attitudes towards dwelling maintenance. It is felt that the importance of low income of an area's occupants which is herein equated with low financial resources, is the overwhelming cause of blight however it is also felt that if the truth were known, social attitudes would be shown to have a much greater causal influence than is generally recognized. Extensive investigation might show that social class values as well as the above mentioned different positions of individuals in regard to single family dwelling tenure will either encourage or counteract the development of blight. It has been disproven for higher income areas and strong doubt has been shed on its general applicability.

A correlation between two factors does not prove a causal relation between them but a lack of any statistical relation indicates a causal relation is extremely unlikely. The Vancouver case study showed tenancy to be statistically unrelated to building condition in at least three higher income areas of Vancouver. In these cases the areas' 1961 average family incomes were above \$6,865.

The Vancouver case study verified the findings of numerous sources in the urban renewal literature which assert there are high levels of tenancy within blighted areas. The blighted area, census tract thirteen, has also,

as is universally found, a low level of income. Although it was not proven conclusively a logical analysis of the significance of blighting causes outlined by other sources, and which are verified by the case study, has suggested tenancy is merely a concomitant of blight rather than a cause of it. This analysis has suggested tenancy results when a family seeking a single family dwelling is able to afford only the rental or substandard dwellings. These dwellings exist in areas already declining and for which there is lowest demand in the housing market.

Validity of Hypothesis and Conclusions. The hypothesis of this study is that:

Tenant occupancy of urban single family residences (1) is a major cause of blight; and (2) requires special treatment in municipal Rehabilitation and Conservation programs.

As detailed in Chapter I tenancy is defined for the purposes of this study as a form of tenure in which occupancy is by persons other than the registered owner. Chapter I also defines blight which is herein considered a physical condition.

The degree of validity of the hypothesis has been found to rest upon two related factors. One is the income level of residents of specific areas and the other is the motivation of the non-occupant owners of single family dwellings.

In areas of the community where residents are in the

upper and upper-middle income groups tenant occupied homes rank predominantly in the highest level of dwelling condition. This is evidenced mainly by the Vancouver Case Study and is reinforced by sources in planning literature. As suggested by the literature the non-occupant owners of single family dwellings in these areas appear to be investing primarily in the dwelling itself. Planning literature sources also suggest that as the non-occupant owner's income in these areas is derived primarily from the rental of the dwelling he is therefore concerned with its basic maintenance. In these middle and upper middle income residential areas the hypothesis that tenancy is a major cause of blight is not substantiated and as indicated by the Vancouver Case Study, tenancy may even discourage blight by promoting a high level of dwelling maintenance. The occurrence of tenancy in these higher income areas is relatively infrequent and the deleterious effects which are so often attributed to tenancy are more often associated with low income level areas where tenancy is more frequent. In the Vancouver Case Study, tenancy at the time of the 1961 census did not exceed a 3.3 per cent frequency in areas surveyed in which the 1961 average family income was \$6,865 or more. However in the low income single family residential area where 1961 average family income was \$4,270 the frequency of tenant occupancy was almost 48 per cent. In this area 76.7 per cent of tenant occupied dwellings were

rated in the "poor" category of dwelling condition.

In middle income single family residential areas the hypothesized causal relation is invalid for the same reasons as were found for upper income areas. The middle income areas were determined to be areas of 1961 average family income levels of between approximately \$4,866 and \$5,651, the respective levels of census tracts twelve and fifty-seven. The physical condition of tenant occupied dwellings in these areas was however found to be only equivalent rather than superior to the general level of the area as a whole.

The hypothesized major causal relation between tenancy and blight, also not substantiated, was determined to be invalid for low income single family areas. In Vancouver a low income area was defined as one in which 1961 average family income was approximately \$4,270, this figure being the 1961 average family income for census tract thirteen. Unlike the upper income areas a correlation was found to exist between tenancy and blight but upon analysis it was found to be spurious. This is so because the low income residential areas are frequently areas in transition from residential to higher intensity land uses such as industrial or commercial or multi-family residential uses which are commonly allowed to expand outwards from the central areas of the city. As suggested by the literature the non-occupant owner in these areas is typically a land speculator

interested in capital gain and as such is not interested in dwelling maintenance and a long term rental income. The avoidance of maintenance and the encroaching incompatible uses allocate these transitional areas to the low income housing market.

To a minor degree, tenancy as a form of dwelling occupancy is a cause of blight in these transitional areas. Although the level of maintenance is very low for owner occupied single family dwellings as well, it can be shown statistically by reference to the Vancouver Case Study or to planning literature that the tenant occupied dwellings have a lower level of maintenance. However, the root causes as determined by this study are the blighting influence of encroaching incompatible land uses for which the area may already be zoned and the low income of its residents. Owner occupants and tenants alike constitute the "users" which Leo Grebler has shown are attracted by a low cost of housing¹ to these declining transitional areas. Neither group finds it economic to make improvements, nor do tenants demand them as the costs would fall either directly or indirectly upon themselves. Thus tenancy within blighted areas is a form of land tenure which results from the basic causes of blight, herein determined as incompatible land uses and low income. Tenancy is however

¹Leo Grebler, Housing Market Behavior in a Declining Area (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), pp. 5-6.

a secondary cause of blight and ranks as a cause only because the non-occupant owner's limited interest in a property allows him to make investment decisions based on economics alone.

Contrary to the hypothesis this study has determined tenancy does not require special treatment within Rehabilitation and Conservation programs. As tenancy has herein been shown to have only a secondary blighting influence and that this influence occurs only in low income transitional areas a proposal for "special" treatment appears misguided. The real focus of attention it appears should be upon eliminating the primary causes of blight which are the encroachment of incompatible land uses which discourage investment in present single family residential uses, and low income which sustains their use in a deteriorated condition. Not only should the focus of attention be on the basic causes of blight but because tenancy appears to be concentrated in already blighted areas it would be of little value to consider it with a Rehabilitation or Conservation program. The orientation of these programs is intended to be to areas of incipient or potential blight.

Recommendations. It is recommended that the solution to the problem of blight in low income single family residential areas should be sought in a comprehensive urban renewal program which includes the provision of low income

housing in quantity followed by renewal of existing blighted low income areas. It is in low income areas that most single family area tenancy exists and this recommendation is designed to overcome tenancy's secondary blighting effects.

As described, single family residential tenancy has been found to be concentrated in blighted areas to which low income families as well as single individuals are attracted. There is a problem which exists in improving the level of dwelling condition in these areas. If used alone, municipal renewal measures which require improvement of existing dwellings would be directly reflected in an increased cost of housing for the area's residents whether homeowners or tenants. It is thus self defeating to increase the effective cost of housing when the major reason for living in the area is the inability to afford better housing. The problem thus is how to increase, within blighted low income areas, both the standard of housing and the real income of the area's residents.

It is recommended that a program of increased Federal-Provincial housing be employed to provide housing in quantity for low income families. It is suggested that this program provide medium density development such as row housing or maisonettes in which children are able to play and be supervised close to their home. This is in order that the development provides the child rearing advantages for

which the single family residence is usually desired. The form of the low income development must be of a higher density than the traditional single family detached dwelling in order to overcome the high cost of land. Developments similar to Vancouver's successful McLean Park are the type suggested.

It is believed that a sufficient supply of this recommended low income housing would reduce the demand for the existing deteriorated dwellings. This might have the effect that maintenance of non-occupant owned dwellings is increased in order that they compete on the housing market. Of greater importance is the fact that it would allow the enforcement of housing standards upon existing single family dwellings without the economic burden falling upon the low income tenant. The provision of housing is thus a means of increasing the real income of families which cannot afford standard quality housing.

It is recommended that the provision of this specified form of low income housing be followed by a program of redevelopment, rehabilitation and conservation. This would include redevelopment of areas, which if rehabilitated, could not provide safe and sound housing for as long as twenty years, and redevelopment of areas which could not support a viable neighbourhood either because they would be affected by proximal incompatible uses or because they would not be large enough an area to support

required neighbourhood facilities.

This second stage of the urban renewal program would include rehabilitation of dwellings when the cost of rehabilitation will not exceed the value of the dwelling following rehabilitation and when it will be serviceable for approximately twenty years or more. From the author's limited research it appears a housing code prescribing minimum standards of maintenance, and assessment criteria which do not penalize owners of property for improvements made should be integral parts of the rehabilitation program.

It is thought that this approach, of providing suitable low income housing for families particularly, followed up by enforced renewal of deteriorated existing accommodation could overcome the causes of blight and inferior quality tenant occupied dwellings in low income single family residential areas. It is in these areas that the lowest cost of housing within large North American cities is found and hence it is where most tenant families live because of economic necessity.

Further Research. It is suggested that there are three large areas with which further research regarding tenancy and blight should be concerned.

In accordance with the recommendations, means should be sought in which to shorten the transition period of urban areas from residential to higher intensity uses which are

chosen to replace them. It is suggested that a realistic assessment would require critical analysis and specific statements of urban renewal goals.

Research should be done on the subtle social attitudes and motivations in regard to housing quality. It is suggested that there are four areas in which these social attitudes would be important regarding residential single family dwellings: the attitudes of the non-resident owners versus the tenant's attitudes, social class values, ethnic values and the importance of the neighbourhood reference group.

Finally, research should be conducted into means of alleviating limited income upon which tenancy and blight depend. This may require that the scope of renewal be expanded or that means be found to coordinate welfare and urban renewal more closely.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

RANK ORDER OF PERCENTAGE TENANT OCCUPANCY BY CENSUS TRACTS
OF PREDOMINANTLY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS
VANCOUVER, B. C.*

Census Tracts	% Tenant Occupancy	Census Tracts	% Tenant Occupancy
34	0	12	8.6
40	0	29	10.2
44	0	56	10.4
53	0	24	10.6
55	0	52	11.2
9	2.1	30	11.4
45	2.2	37	11.4
11	4.0	27	11.8
47	5.6	26	12.0
28	5.7	10	13.1
57	6.6	32	14.0
39	7.0	33	15.7
46	7.1	18	16.1
42	7.2	48	18.0
20	7.8	25	21.4
54	8.0	49	59.3
19	8.1		

*Derived from Census of Canada, 1961.

APPENDIX II

RANK ORDER OF INDEXES OF AVERAGE AGE OF SINGLE FAMILY
RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS BY CENSUS TRACTS OF
PREDOMINANTLY SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS
VANCOUVER, B.C.*

Census Tracts	Age Index	Census Tracts	Age Index
49	4	45	16
25	5	18	17
44	5	39	17
56	5	28	18
57	6	37	18
34	7	52	18
46	11	55	18
47	12	20	19
10	13	19	20
12	13	9	20.5
24	13	29	22
48	13	32	22
26	14	11	23
27	14	33	23
54	14	30	25
40	15	53	25
42	15		

*Derived from Census of Canada, 1961.

APPENDIX III

RANK ORDER OF AVERAGE FAMILY WAGE AND SALARY INCOME BY
 CENSUS TRACTS OF PREDOMINANTLY SINGLE FAMILY
 RESIDENTIAL AREAS, VANCOUVER, B.C.*

Census Tract	Average Family Income	Census Tract	Average Family Income
53	\$9,756	46	\$5,236
44	9,361	33	5,181
34	8,735	47	5,082
42	7,976	24	5,048
40	7,701	26	5,043
18	7,185	10	4,991
39	6,940	28	4,987
55	6,865	27	4,980
19	6,621	25	4,936
54	6,555	48	4,921
37	6,266	12	4,866
57	5,651	52	4,866
20	5,453	9	4,836
45	5,389	32	4,785
56	5,373	29	4,776
49	5,301	30	4,719
		11	4,697

*Derived from Census of Canada, 1961.