CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
IN NEIGHBOURHOOD REHABILITATION

A pilot study of a sample area
(Lower Mount Pleasant)
Vancouver, British Columbia
1962

by

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Date May 7, 1962.
ABSTRACT

For a long time, the section of the city in which social welfare, city planning and housing reformers have had common ground, has been that of "the slums". Just as the more comprehensive approach of "urban renewal" has taken over from "slum clearance", so also has interest in the modern city, in the throes of growth and decay, shifted to districts where rehabilitation rather than large-scale demolition may be appropriate.

The present study is a pilot project for this kind of area. A small neighbourhood from the "limited redevelopment" section of Vancouver (Lower Mount Pleasant, to the south of False Creek) has been selected for detailed study, with special reference to (a) its physical and environmental features, (b) its resident population, and (c) the prospects of local community action, as well as the forms of aid and encouragement from appropriate agencies of government or citizen action needed to bring about effective rehabilitation. There are implications here for individual social workers, for social agencies, and for the social work profession which can only be concretely drawn on the basis of a "grass roots" survey. Ways and means of co-operation between social workers and planners is also one of the issues in this kind of study.

The method of the project was twofold: (a) A review of the rapidly growing literature on neighbourhood rehabilitation, largely American, was undertaken to abstract the broad principles for gaining and maintaining citizen participation which are emerging. (b) The pilot area was surveyed in detail. (i) All appropriate voluntary and public agencies and government departments were approached for information about the physical and social features of the area. (Maps help to define the district.) (ii) Leaders of representative community groups operating in the larger neighbourhood were interviewed to appraise needs and attitudes. (iii) A questionnaire was devised to assess the identification of the residents with the area, and the possibility of involving residents in the rehabilitation of the neighbourhood.

Perhaps the main finding of this pioneer survey is that both assets and liabilities must be realistically assessed for a successful community organization undertaking. (a) Neighbourhood rehabilitation requires (i) a broad national legislative and administrative framework, (ii) a partnership between city officials, city-wide citizen groups and residential groups at the neighbourhood level, (iii) at least a minimum staff trained in community organization to assist local neighbourhood action. (b) This particular area is not likely to initiate action by itself. (c) Current public utilities (including school, parks, streets, etc.) are of strategic importance in neighbourhood development; financing, both from new and existing sources, must be given proper consideration in the total program.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The preparation of this thesis has required assistance from many sources. Grateful acknowledgment is made of the cooperation of all those individuals, agencies and government departments which are listed in the Appendix.

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

IN NEIGHBOURHOOD REHABILITATION

A pilot study of a sample area (Lower Mount Pleasant), Vancouver, British Columbia, 1962
Chapter 1

NEIGHBOURHOOD REHABILITATION AND CITIZEN ACTION

The cities are in trouble - serious trouble. On this most writers of serious and popular books on the subject agree, but on the nature and the extent of the problems facing today's cities and the solutions to be sought, agreement is by no means as universal. The concern in North America over the decline of the central cities, the continuous spread of blight from the city core and the decay of city neighbourhoods is, of course, not new. Louis Wirth, for example, wrote as early as 1938:

"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 homeowner can be assured of stability and immunity 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."1

The city ceased to be the expression of a stable and integrated society; it became disjointed, and grew excessively without any over-all planning. Overcrowding led to the deterioration of existing dwellings and in many cases to the development of slums. Many of those families who could afford a "home in the country" left the crowded cities and, in the course of this process, the downtown mansions of the wealthy became the slums of the poor.

The trend away from the city is, of course, a very old one. Men have always tried to live removed from the central market place, and each new means of transportation has been used to increase the distance between home and the place of work. The city of the walking man and of the horse-drawn buggy was a tiny place. The city of the street car spread wider and the commuter train scattered the well-to-do far out into the country-side. People moved as technology gave them the means to move. This trend did not begin to present a problem until fairly recent times, when the proportion of people leaving cities assumed the form of a massive migration to the suburban "utopia".

In the process of this still-continuing suburbanization, the city has been losing some of its traditional strength as a unifying element of the region, and has tended to be drained of many of its competent civic leaders. ¹ Those who left the city and live and pay taxes in the suburbs, continue to draw their income from the city and benefit from cultural life offered by the central city, but without contributing to the maintenance and extension of the city's cultural facilities. The city, thus, is no longer a workable economic unit. In fact, as Louis Wirth pointed out aptly:

"The flight from the older areas has brought many of our cities to the verge of bankruptcy. The municipalities, having inherited the liabilities of those who have fled from the city and being unable to tap the assets that are piling up in the suburbs, are unable without the aid of the States and the Federal Government to maintain the minimum services of their people."²

In addition, the city taxation systems are outdated and the jurisdiction of the civic government is geographically too restricted to permit

it to be an effective governing body.

"Cities are asked to deal with problems over which they have no power. The limited jurisdiction of city governments stops at the municipal boundaries, whereas the problems of government far transcend these limits."  

Suburban development, rather than providing a solution to the overcrowding and congestion of the central city, thus has accentuated the city's problem; and, what is more, an alarming number of the suburbs themselves are already showing signs of decay. All this indicates that we cannot escape the problems posed by our central cities through a flight to the suburbs, and that the rebuilding and improving of the central cities could be "one of the most essential and exciting tasks of our time."  

Architects and planners have concerned themselves with this aspect of providing suitable housing and environment for people, but have expressed opposing views on the nature of the future city plan. In America, following the ideas and experiments of Ralph Borsodi, Frank Lloyd Wright developed his utopian community of detached dwellings in his Broadacres Plan, which attempted to bring farm values to an industrial town. His basic premise was that "a human being from the time he is born is entitled to a piece of ground with which he can identify himself by the use of it."  

The opposing view is held by Walter Gropius who considers the single family house to be contradictory to the basic trend of the city. In his opinion, responsibly-planned high-rise apartment blocks situated on wide expanses of green, with ample spaces between them, are capable

of satisfying the requirements of light, air, and elbow room, while simultaneously offering the urbanite a wealth of other advantages.

Both proposals have been criticized on a variety of grounds by numerous critics. The pitfalls of Frank Lloyd Wright's suggestion are amply demonstrated in the excessive urban sprawl of Los Angeles, which has sometimes been called "100 suburbs in search of a city"¹ whereas a whole city comprised of high-rise apartment dwellings is difficult to imagine and depressing to contemplate. This is not the place to consider the pros and cons of either scheme, for neither one provides a realistic solution to the very concrete problems of today's existing cities, although a statement of such opposing views tends to place the general problem in a broader perspective with a more conscious view to the future.

What are some of the alternatives which offer themselves in a consideration of how to deal with the problems posed by the decay and blight?

First of all, let us consider whether the condition called "urban blight" can actually be considered a problem. Before a situation can be called a social problem, it must fulfill at least three prerequisites: the condition must exist, it must be perceived, and it must possess a potential for solution. The existence of urban blight cannot be denied because of its high degree of social visibility; the large number of books, articles, and talks on urban blight may be taken to indicate that the condition is perceived as a problem; and the large expenditures on various

Urban renewal programs suggest the possibility of a solution to the condition. Urban blight, then, can be and must be viewed as a social problem.

What, then, are some of the alternatives before us? We could, of course, continue to do nothing. But has this lack of positive action been economical? Tax revenues from the blighted or deteriorating areas are low while service and welfare expenditures are excessively high; eventually the city is faced with clearance and redevelopment of such areas - a costly, publicly financed undertaking, and one which is expensive also, in terms of human involvement.

Quite often, the most favoured approach in practice has been to let areas deteriorate and eventually let the owners sell to speculative builders who erect minimum standard apartments. Vancouver's once gracious and comfortable West End illustrates this sad turn of events. A few beautiful and reportedly structurally sound buildings still remain, adding colour and character to the area and relieving a little the bad taste of a large number of the surrounding smaller apartments which are already showing the consequences of building strictly on the basis of the minimum standards required. Undoubtedly, some of the older homes could not be saved, and some of the more recently constructed high-rise apartments add to the interest of the area, but the large-scale, indiscriminate destruction of older homes and their replacement by minimum standard apartments is certainly open to question. Furthermore, most of this type of private rebuilding has been aimed at the middle and upper income groups, forcing the lower income groups to move on to other deteriorating areas which, in turn, will be torn down and rebuilt by private investors.

Perhaps the most undesirable feature of this approach to private rebuilding is that dozens of buildings have been constructed without reference to a
total neighbourhood or even a block.

Can the central areas of our large cities make a successful comeback as pleasant places in which to live? They certainly have unrealized potential, and even the most blighted areas contain a great wealth in the form of physical utilities which can be salvaged by making these areas habitable and attractive for human living. This will not happen by paying only lip service to the need for comprehensive planning. It will require planning for the larger cities and for local districts, and the neighbourhood must be revived as the working unit of such a plan. Rather than continuing with the present carousel of tearing down and building up, we must make an earnest attempt to save what we already possess and to increase the usefulness and life-expectancy of existing buildings and neighbourhoods. The home owners cannot do this alone. This undertaking requires a multi-discipline approach because we are dealing with a many-sided problem. It will require the cooperation and the enthusiasm of the citizens, the community leaders from all walks of life and interests, the professional persons concerned with urban renewal, and the politicians; and it requires a legislative and administrative framework for planning and implementing the improvement of our neighbourhoods.

In the United States, the Federal Government has now recognized that slum clearance is too slow to keep pace with spreading deterioration and has added the goal of rehabilitation and conservation of existing neighbourhoods to the urban renewal program. While none of the federal loan or grant funds can be used for the actual construction or rehabilitation of structures, the Act does provide up to two-thirds of the cost of demonstration or pilot projects which promise to add to the knowledge about
new methods and techniques of urban renewal. Furthermore, to encourage private investment in rehabilitation, the Act makes provision for special mortgage insurance in rehabilitation areas. It is not the purpose of this paper to examine the specifics of the relationship between the United States Federal Government and the local communities in urban renewal, but rather to point out that the Federal Government of the United States has made rehabilitation of neighbourhoods one of its active concerns. As yet, there is no similar provision in Canada's National Housing Act. Slum clearance programs can include certain aspects of rebuilding and planning other than housing, but the two forms of financial assistance made available by the National Housing Act directly for rehabilitation are loans to individual home owners, which depend on the initiative of the home owner. There is nothing in the National Housing Act which can be used to finance area-wide rehabilitation, and the Canadian Government has not explicitly endorsed a program of neighbourhood rehabilitation, comparable to that of the inclusion of conservation and rehabilitation in the American Housing Act.²

What Are Neighbourhoods?
The repeated references to "neighbourhood rehabilitation" as one form of urban renewal activity require some clarification of terms. What is meant by "neighbourhood rehabilitation"? And what is comprehended under the concept of "neighbourhood"? The concept of "neighbourhood"

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as a planning unit has seen considerable controversy, but for the purpose of the present discussion the neighbourhood is regarded as an area set off by natural or other boundaries (which may include arterial roads), and containing within it basic services as well as those elements making for neighbourhood cohesion, 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. There are, of course, a great variety of types of neighbourhoods. There are neighbourhoods composed of single family homes, apartment buildings, a mixture of apartments and homes, mixed residential and commercial use, mixed residential, industrial and commercial use; neighbourhoods based on the car and others upon mass transit; neighbourhoods oriented around a variety of focal points; neighbourhoods both loosely and tightly integrated with variously composed populations -- all are necessary in every metropolitan area in order to provide freedom of choice. The concept of "neighbourhood" thus can be broadly rather than narrowly defined.

Neighbourhood rehabilitation is at once a method designed to halt the deterioration of declining neighbourhoods through an active program of "repairing, remodeling, or supplementing basically sound dwellings and their environment", and a process of involving people of an area in the

1. A good discussion of this controversy can be found in McConnell, Robert Shean, An Evaluation and Analysis of the Neighborhood Unit Concept, Master of Science Thesis in Community and Regional Planning, The University of British Columbia, 1958.


3. Ibid, p.27.

planning and the execution of neighbourhood improvement.

In order to extend the improvement of the individual homes to the broader physical features of the neighbourhood, a variety of steps need to be taken, depending, of course, on the requirements of a particular neighbourhood. These include: (1) the vigorous enforcement of the housing and the zoning by-laws of the city, (2) the clearance of isolated houses too badly blighted to be economically rehabilitated, (3) the improvement of streets and street patterns, and (4) the provision of community facilities such as small shops, parks, playgrounds, and neighbourhood assembly facilities. What is sometimes forgotten is that the total program of neighbourhood improvement in one area must form part of a comprehensive city plan, if the action taken in one area is not to be accompanied by undesirable or deteriorating changes in the neighbouring districts.

It is a critical point, that the process of neighbourhood rehabilitation is not something imposed from above, or "done by the government". It must involve the active participation of the residents of the area. The importance of citizen participation was acknowledged by the Federal Government of the United States, when it made citizen participation one of the seven essential points of a "Workable Program". As a recent account sums it up,

"The Workable Program requires that the community have an adequate system of codes and ordinances, an effective administrative organization for implementing urban renewal, a factual analysis of the condition of its neighborhoods as a basis for determining the treatment required, a comprehensive plan for the development of the city, a capacity to meet the financial obligations and requirements of the program, adequate organization and plans for rehousing people displaced by governmental action including urban renewal, and evidence that the program has been prepared with citizen participation and that it has citizen support."

Neighbourhood rehabilitation is thus a "people-centred" program which takes cognizance of the fact that it may be possible for a few businessmen to improve or even remake a downtown business section, but that it takes thousands of willing and enthusiastic citizens to remake a neighbourhood.

Citizen participation is, of course, not a new phenomenon, but something characteristic of North American life, both urban and rural. In countless areas, citizens have volunteered their energy and efforts to improve or combat undesirable conditions and in many instances have actually been instrumental in establishing new programs designed for community betterment. This is the familiar field known to social workers as "social action", which has its historical roots in "social reform" movements. Housing has sparked a good many citizen groups in Canada, but the number which have produced results is relatively small. In Canada's first slum clearance project in Toronto, (known as "Regent Park North"), citizen organizations played a very significant part in initiating local proposals for federal-provincial housing projects and in stimulating general acceptance of the need for public housing.¹

The kind of citizen participation with which the present study is primarily concerned is not of the above kind, but can best be described by the term "grass roots" participation in as much as it involves the participation of both owners and renters in the neighbourhood to be improved.

This form of citizen participation has two main goals: (1) the very practical and immediate goal of accomplishing a specific task; (2) the long-range goal of increasing the citizens' capacity to become involved in the solution of community problems. An American "Guide for Officials"

¹ The full story of this is told in: Rose, Albert, Regent Park, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1958.
has presented both of these as crucial to success:

"Since many resident-owners and tenants of a renewal neighborhood will remain in the area, they have a decided vested interest in participating in the planning process. In fact, it is a safe assumption that if they aren't brought into the picture in the early stage, resistance predicated on fear will almost be certain."¹

In this statement, citizen participation is viewed more as an expedient than as an objective in itself. It is, of course, true that a public agency, such as a city planning department, "is in danger of suddenly finding itself alienated from that very citizenry on which its existence depends,"² if it moves forward ignoring the citizenry. However, citizen participation is more than a means to an end. As one writer puts it, "the sound and healthy growth of our democratic society and our democratic institutions is dependent upon the individual's participation in his government."³

It should be easier to achieve this in local areas, and for local issues, than anywhere else; though in order to achieve citizen participation in a complex urban society, the organization of citizen participation will have to start at the level of neighbourhoods where the citizens live. This presupposes an activity which the residents regard as worth their time and effort. Neighbourhood rehabilitation programs of the type with which the present study is concerned, it is postulated, should provide the framework in which this form of citizen participation can flourish.

The revival of city neighbourhoods, then, is not merely an essential for planning, nor is citizen participation a mere expedient for

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³. Ibid, p.25.
success. As in the "community development" programs of the new nations of Asia and Africa, the changes in attitude are as important as the material improvements. It is necessary not only to attack the problem of inadequate housing, but to overcome the apathy of the citizens at large. The task is to involve the citizen in urban planning, and to demonstrate to him - through the effect of his participation - that he can do something to help himself.

More fundamental than any specific concrete accomplishment in neighbourhood rehabilitation, then, is the arousing of the people to a sense of their own power to achieve better standards of living through cooperative effort. Some of the factors and problems in the organization and operation of such citizen involvement will be considered in the following chapter.

The present study relates only to Vancouver. Although a relatively young city, Vancouver already suffers from scattered and surprisingly wide-spread blight in various degrees of intensity. The Planning Department of the City of Vancouver was one of the first in Canada to complete a comprehensive survey of this situation. Undertaken in 1956, it identifies the major areas of blight and classifies them according to the severity of deterioration and the nature of the planning treatment indicated. Following on the lines anticipated by the National Housing Act provisions, the study distinguishes between Comprehensive and Limited Re-development Areas. Comprehensive Redevelopment Areas are those in which deterioration has advanced to a point where slum clearance offers the most suitable solution. Limited Redevelopment Areas are those requiring "spot clearance" of the most blighted structures and rehabilitation of the other existing buildings.  

1. Vancouver Redevelopment Study, City of Vancouver Planning Department, Vancouver, 1957.
Vancouver has now embarked on its first "Comprehensive Redevelopment Project" in the old central area near Hastings and Main, which has come to be known as the Strathcona Area, after the school which is its central feature. So far, no attempt has been made at initiating a rehabilitation project in a limited redevelopment area and this thesis represents an exploratory study of the potential of one of these areas for neighbourhood rehabilitation.

**Methodology**

As a pilot project in an uncharted area, this study lays no claims to completeness of either the area of enquiry or the issues discussed. It cannot attempt to furnish a ready-made plan for neighbourhood rehabilitation, either in the project area or in other areas in Greater Vancouver. Rather, it is intended that this study should point up the important questions which arise in connection with this type of urban-renewal; it may thus be able to formulate some of the prerequisites for an undertaking of this sort.

A study of the American experience with neighbourhood rehabilitation, and specifically with the aspect of citizen participation, since this has proceeded far in some cities, was an important part of the present thesis. Letters were sent to a number of American cities and organizations requesting information on this topic. The material obtained proved fruitful for the preparation, execution and evaluation of the study of the project area. Unfortunately the scope of the material will not be adequately reflected in the discussion in Chapter 2 which will deal,

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1. The response to enquiries was encouraging and gratifying, although it is to be regretted that a number of highly recommended studies are out of print and consequently could not be obtained.
in general terms, with some of the requirements for neighbourhood rehabilitation and some of the essential organizational and operational principles. The role of the professional social worker in relation to urban planning and the process of involving citizens in this endeavor, will also be examined more in general than in specific terms.

The major portion of the thesis consists of an analysis of the Lower Mount Pleasant Area from three main perspectives: the physical features; the characteristics of its people; and the social organization of the area.

The first difficulty was encountered in determining the boundaries of the project area, known locally as Mount Pleasant. A variety of public and private agencies were consulted, but their definitions of Mount Pleasant were so divergent that they tended to confuse rather than locate precisely the boundaries of the area. This reflects, of course, the fairly wide-spread problem of indeterminate neighbourhood boundaries in the large cities generally. As a result of this confusion, an area was chosen which, while constituting only a minor part of larger Mount Pleasant, lent itself for study because of its geographic homogeneity.

This proved to be a fortunate choice, as the Planning Department of the City of Vancouver had already prepared a detailed map of the chosen area showing the kind and condition of buildings in the project area. (Figure 2, p. 146). This provided an excellent starting point for further enquiries.

A windshield survey constituted the first step in gaining some initial impression of the neighbourhood, but to become sufficiently familiar with details of the area and its "atmosphere", to get the "feel" of the area,
involved considerable walking. In this way, amount, kind and condition of the housing, and housing changes (demolition of old buildings, new apartments) were noted and the necessary adjustments were made on the detailed map of the area to bring it up to date. In the course of the extensive walking through the area, vacant lots, as well as the condition of roads, lanes, sidewalks, curb and gutter and street lighting were observed.

In addition, past and current zoning regulations, information with respect to fire hazards and traffic density patterns were obtained from the appropriate city departments. (Appendix A)

Locating historical material related to the development of the Mount Pleasant Area was no easy task, not so much because of a dearth of material, but rather because of difficulty in selecting accurate information on factors affecting the development and the decline of the area from the reminiscences of the old pioneers whose stories have been collected by the archivist of the City of Vancouver. A useful reference was provided by the 1928 report of the Town Planning Commission which outlines the earliest official zoning for the area.

In arriving at an assessment of the characteristics of the residents of the project area and their social organization, various sources were tapped. (Appendix A). The 1956 Census figures of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and the figures obtained from the 1961 Voters List of the City of Vancouver provided figures for the basic vital statistics (population size and composition).

The number of buildings as given in the Voters List did not correspond to the actual number of buildings in the area and has been
adjusted accordingly. The number of households given in the Voters List also indicated a discrepancy. To bring the total number of households closer to the actual total, the following method of correction was adopted. At least one household was assigned to every house in each block. Where the total number of households given in the Voters List exceeded the actual number of buildings, and where there was no "proper" apartment in the block, the figure as given in the Voters List was retained. Where the block did contain one or more apartments, the total number of households per block was composed of the number of houses plus the number of apartment units, which were counted, fairly accurately, in the course of the survey. The average number of persons per household is 3; (2429 persons in 835 households). The adjusted total population for the 954 households then became 2862. This must still be considered a conservative estimate because it does not reflect the probably large number of households in multiple dwellings.

The main problem encountered in gathering information from city departments and agencies, both public and private, arose from the fact that geographic areas used by one department do not coincide with the areas of any other department, and none of them correspond with the project area. In addition, a lack of effective communication between related departments, for example, the Board of Parks and Public Recreation and the City Planning Department, was noted. This made the coordination of material more difficult. A similar observation was reported in 1959 by a committee studying recreational services in Vancouver:

"There appears to be a need for more effective communication between some of the key organizations in the community in relation to the provision of recreation services. For example, when the Committee was gathering information from the City Planning Department, the School Board, and the Board of Parks..."
and Public Recreation, there seemed to be some lack of knowledge on the part of these organizations about each other's concerns and activities in the field of recreation.\(^1\)

The City Social Service Department was able to extract and prepare statistics of the number of active social assistance and pension cases in the project area. (Appendix C). Additional information with respect to "multi-problem" families was available in summary form from a Community Chest and Councils study of this problem.\(^2\) It was hoped that more accurate figures about such problems as child neglect and incidence of unmarried motherhood in the project area might be obtained from the Children's Aid Societies. This was not feasible because the geographic service areas of these agencies are so large as to make the extraction of figures for an area as small as the project area a virtual impossibility within the limited time available.

The City Police Department did not provide definite figures on police activity in the area but made a number of valuable qualitative statements.

The Community Information Service of the Community Chest and Councils assisted in locating the community organizations in the Mount Pleasant Area. Because of the general lack of formal social organization within the Mount Pleasant Area, this avenue of enquiry did not yield the hoped-for results. The existing organizations in the project area - the church, the school, and the Boys Club - provided some useful information because of their familiarity with and knowledge of the area. Contacts

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with organizations operating within the greater Mount Pleasant area, by and large, were not very fruitful for two main reasons: (1) the membership of some organizations came predominantly from outside the area so that the organizations could not legitimately be viewed as Mount Pleasant community groups, (2) the leaders of other groups did not reside in the area although a significant proportion of their membership was drawn from the project area; but the leaders apparently lacked relevant information about members of their groups.

A questionnaire, (Appendix B) was prepared for two main purposes: (1) to afford the opportunity to meet the residents of the project area; (2) to provide some guide with respect to such questions as the length of residency in the area and the residents' attitude towards and their degree of identification with the neighbourhood and the possibility of involving them actively in a program of neighbourhood rehabilitation.

Three social workers from the East Unit of the Social Service Department of the City of Vancouver were able to enlist the cooperation of 16 families and individuals on social allowance in completing the questionnaire. In addition, three interviewers called on 40 residents on a Saturday. Approximately two houses per block were selected at random. This approach for the completion of the questionnaire was chosen not merely to ensure a sufficiently large number of returns, but primarily because the face-to-face meetings with the residents and the conversations which developed in the course of filling in the form would yield more meaningful information than answers to direct questionnaire questions. The results of the 56 questionnaires are tabulated in summary form in Appendix B.
In summary, it may be stated that the search for information on this area was difficult, and that the most fruitful part of the enquiry was the meeting with the highly cooperative residents of all nationalities in the area.

One final point deserves mention. It had originally been hoped that a planning and a social work student would work on this subject concurrently, each with their own particular focus. Unfortunately, this was not possible. Throughout the study and fact-gathering period, this was a distinct disadvantage. A combined approach to the study would not only have yielded a more complete and more accurate end result, but also, and this is by far the more important point, would have constituted a practical experiment in cooperation between planner and social worker and served to clarify some of the problems, interests and functions of each in the process of urban renewal and urban planning generally.
Neighbourhood rehabilitation, which is essentially the creation of an improved environment around an existing social order, provides the greatest challenge to the idea of partnership in urban renewal. When the Federal Government of the United States included the goals of rehabilitation and conservation in the National Housing Act of 1954, it provided the broad framework for co-operation between the citizen and the local government, and set the stage for urban renewal activity of vast proportions. Many cities, notably Philadelphia, many organizations, particularly ACTION (American Council To Improve Our Neighborhoods), and many individuals have helped to create the strong interest and the atmosphere of hope necessary for the revitalizing of the city. An estimated nine hundred urban renewal projects are presently in various stages of completion.\(^1\) The present nation-wide emphasis on urban renewal has been described as "the most comprehensive and accelerated attack on slums and blight ever waged in our country."\(^2\)

The experience gained in this large-scale enterprise of rehabilitating neighbourhoods through the active involvement of their residents, has been recorded in numerous books and pamphlets. Unfortunately, it is not feasible in the present context to examine, critically and in detail, the wealth of information available. However, a critical analysis of the

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literature on neighbourhood rehabilitation must be considered an important future task, particularly in view of the fact that much of the material is written by persons intimately involved in the program presented, and is likely to emphasize the positive features and achievements. In spite of this, though, and also in spite of the tremendous variations in the approaches to citizen participation between different localities, a cursory examination of the literature does demonstrate a number of broad principles of an organizational and operational nature which appear to be applicable in most large cities undertaking neighbourhood rehabilitation as part of a comprehensive urban renewal program.

The seventh point of the Workable Program specifies the kind of citizen participation to be enlisted by the city government before qualifying for federal aid in rehabilitation. It requires (1) associations of citizens residing in the neighbourhood undergoing rehabilitation, and (2) an over-all citizens advisory council with a city-wide representation. In the following we will examine two forms of neighbourhood organizations, namely, the block group and the neighbourhood council, and city-wide as well as metro-wide citizen groups which are active in rehabilitation or urban renewal generally. Because of the partnership nature of rehabilitation, the role played by the civic government cannot be separated from the consideration of the citizen groups and will be part of the discussion of these organizations.

ORGANIZATIONS AT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL

Inception of Neighbourhood Groups

The most outstanding characteristic of the inception of neighbourhood groups is the extent of the variation of approach. A few representative situations will indicate this,
In the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, the Settlement House, "recognizing the extent of blight and deterioration, decided to direct its services toward working with the neighborhood in the solution of its problems."¹ Its professional staff interviewed the families of a two-block area and enlisted the families' support and worked co-operatively with city departments. It later extended the provision of professional staff to other neighborhoods.

In Dayton, Ohio, The Dayton Foundation and the Dayton Junior League sponsored and financed the "Area Project Council", which was staffed by the Community Welfare Council of Dayton. This group was able to establish a good reputation as an effective and reliable organization, and was later approached by the City Plan Department to undertake the community organization function in East Dayton where an earlier unwise move of the City Plan Department had led to open opposition of the residents to the Department.

In Cleveland, the Department of Urban Renewal and Housing will not undertake an improvement program in an area unless the residents have asked for it. Once the city receives a request from a neighborhood for certification of that area for rehabilitation, and there is evidence of real interest and activity on the part of the resident owners², they are asked


². The exclusion of tenants in the early organizational phase does not take into account the very obvious fact that the improvement of the area requires the co-operation of both landlord and tenant.
to meet monthly and to become the leaders of the block organization. One member of the city's urban renewal staff is then assigned to the neighbourhood to assist in the development of the neighbourhood organizations. A city-sponsored Neighborhood Improvement Centre becomes the focal point of the rehabilitation program.

The Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference is probably the earliest example of a neighbourhood group which was formed for the specific purpose of reversing the process of deterioration - both physical and social - in the immediate neighbourhood. A small number of residents and a number of churches spearheaded the beginning of this enterprise and were able to enlist sufficient support (including financial support) and interest within the neighbourhood to organize the now well known "Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference". This is a genuine "grass roots" organization, composed of a series of block groups which are integrated by way of a comprehensive committee system. The main reason for the success of this neighbourhood group must be seen in the neighbourhood's unique assets:

"the lake front; a green belt of parks on eastern, western and southern boundaries; excellent transportation providing access to the center of Chicago in ten minutes; a number of fine homes and buildings; educational and cultural institutions of outstanding quality - seven colleges, universities, graduate schools and theological seminaries, including the University of Chicago; fifteen public, private and parochial schools; seven nursery schools; libraries and museums, among them the famed Museum of Science and Industry and the Oriental Institute; religious institutions of many denominations and faiths,..., three recreation centers and youth serving agencies; adequate health services; a varied and cosmopolitan population... Most of the people were in the middle and upper middle income brackets. They were largely "white collar" workers engaged in insurance, real estate, wholesale and retail trade; an unusual number were in professions (one out of five, four times the proportion for the rest of Chicago); and a small minority earned their living in factories...,It was an articulate, highly organized
community, active and effective in civic, educational, political, and social affairs. 1

It will be immediately apparent that this neighbourhood cannot be regarded as a "typical" neighbourhood in any respect, and much less so for a neighbourhood undergoing rehabilitation. Few neighbourhoods will be able to equal its physical and leadership assets. In many a neighbourhood the citizen leadership requires stimulation and development before any effective work can be undertaken by the total neighbourhood. The need for some outside assistance is recognized and acknowledged by the Urban Renewal Administration:

"In some instances it is at once apparent that professional assistance and advice are needed by the citizens to get their organization underway. They may request such help from the LPA." (Local Public Agency).2 "When this occurs, the LPA should make a qualified person available. If it does not have such a person on its staff, the LPA may employ one or it may arrange with a public or private agency to provide the services under contract... The cost of this staff assistance, whether provided by a regular employee of the LPA, by a consultant, or by another organization under contract, is an allowable project expense."3

The second point in this statement by the Urban Renewal Administration merits emphasis, namely, that the cost is an allowable project expense, i.e. the cost is shared between the city and the federal government. The significance of this financial arrangement is clearly illustrated by the example of the Wooster Square neighbourhood of New Haven, Conn., where an early attempt to improve the neighbourhood through local initiative failed, even though the residents recognized the need for improvement and


2. The LPA is the public agency charged with the responsibility of carrying out urban renewal projects within a particular community.

actually undertook, successfully, a clean-up campaign. However, they were unsuccessful in their fix-up and paint-up campaigns,

"because no one was willing to invest money in the neighborhood. They lacked faith in it. . . . At that time, the City was unable to do anything about this neighborhood. Only with the passage of the Housing Act of 1934 was the City able to go into such an area, not yet a rock-bottom slum, and help the residents improve it." 1

When the Housing Act of 1954 was passed, the Mayor of New Haven approached the Wooster Square group and, through that group, successfully involved the neighbourhood in rehabilitation.

Many more examples of how neighbourhood groups originate could, undoubtedly, be found, but for the present purpose the foregoing examples must suffice. Even though the actual number may be small, the examples nevertheless do suggest some important principles of citizen participation in neighbourhood organization.

(1) The variety of the approaches used by different cities and organizations should not be taken as an indication of indecision or confusion, but rather as a reflection of the important principle of individuality of approach. In each case, the method employed in originating new groups or furthering existing ones was tailor-made for a specific neighbourhood. Rather than prescribing a ready-made, universal approach to the establishing of neighbourhood groups, it is necessary to assess the housing and financial resources of the neighbourhood, as well as its existing social organization and leadership structure, and potential, before determining the type of approach best suited to meet the needs of the specific neighbourhood undergoing rehabilitation.

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(2) In all cases cited, with the exception of the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference which possessed a uniquely rich leadership potential and a well-developed social organization, some outside leadership was required to facilitate the organization of neighbourhood groups. This leadership came from voluntary organizations, such as a Settlement House or a Community Welfare Council, or directly from the city government.

(3) In almost all cases, the material support and cooperation of the local government is essential, because it is not feasible to expect the ordinary citizen of an area to take isolated action unless there is a reasonable degree of assurance that the environment will be changed along with the individual structure.

(4) In order to allow the local government to play a productive role in neighbourhood rehabilitation on a large scale, federal legislation promoting and participating in this aspect of urban renewal would appear to be essential.

Having examined some of the prerequisites for initiating action at the neighbourhood level, let us next turn to a consideration of the two organizational forms which citizen organization has assumed, the block group and the neighbourhood council.

The Block Group

A block group is the small working group in which each individual citizen of a block or a number of blocks can participate in the study, evaluation and solution of block problems and those transcending the narrow confines of the block. How effective a block group will be is related to how well it is organized, how well it is able to enlist maximum block participation,
how well it understands its purpose, and whether the problems it sets out to solve are appropriate for block action, and also to how it is integrated into a larger community organization for neighbourhood improvement. This is not the place to discuss details of internal organization of block groups, but rather to emphasize their importance, which is well borne out by the following statement:

"Basic to the entire program is the block organization. As a method of working with neighbors, it is the key to ultimate success in the rehabilitation of this area. Experience has shown conclusively that the greater the degree of environmental deterioration, apathy and discouragement, the more need there is for organizing at the block level."¹

**The Neighbourhood Council.**

While the block group is the instrument through which maximum participation can be enlisted, a broader organization is obviously needed to coordinate the particular block enterprises. The neighbourhood council, composed of block group representatives, supports and unifies the efforts of the block groups and assumes responsibility for the over-all neighbourhood program. Leadership within the council is provided by the block representatives who have shown their ability in the block group operation.

"Most importantly, perhaps, the Council symbolizes the organization and achievement of the neighborhood to the wider community."² Such neighbourhood councils are, essentially, action groups and as such must be distinguished from the Citizens Advisory Committee which is not action-oriented but rather advice-oriented.

In Detroit, the neighbourhood council and the block groups are linked through representative committees set up to deal with a variety of

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². Ibid, p. 5.
neighbourhood-wide problems demanding coordinated and concerted action.
One such committee is the Planning Committee. The interesting feature
to be noted in this committee is that one of its members is a person from
the staff of the office of the City Development Coordinator. A second stand­
ing committee is the Area Housing Committee which attempts to raise
neighbourhood housing standards, to improve the landlord-tenant relations­
ships, and to educate the local residents with respect to matters relating
to housing code enforcement.

One of the main functions of the neighbourhood council is the
creation, development and improvement of channels of horizontal and verti­
cal communication. The Association of Neighbourhood Councils in Newark,
N.J., may be cited as one example of horizontal communication. While each
neighbourhood council remains autonomous, it combines with other neighbour­
hood councils

"as a community council for organizational purposes, and to get
the support of all the neighborhood councils on really vital issues.
If there is an issue in one section of the City, the people from other
sections unite to support a needed change or to prevent one from
taking place."¹

In this way the effectiveness of each neighbourhood council is quite obviously
enhanced. This would be particularly true of neighbourhoods lacking the
support of the power interests, in which case strength in numbers might
prove a vital matter.

It has been stated in Chapter 1 that the neighbourhood improve­
ment plan for one neighbourhood must not result in undesirable effects on
surrounding areas. Furthermore, it was pointed out in this chapter that
outside leadership was almost inevitably necessary to initiate neighbourhood
organization for rehabilitation. It is apparent, then, that effective channels

¹. Citizen Participation in Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilita­
of communication between the group representing the neighbourhood, namely the neighbourhood council, and city-wide organizations must exist. This vertical line of communication most often relates the neighbourhood both to the local government and to the city-wide citizens organizations. In this structured relationship between the citizen and his local government, the clear-cut division of responsibility is absolutely essential:

"... we should differentiate sharply and conscientiously between those phases which are a matter of technical discretion and judgment, and those in which lay community participation, suggestions, and reactions are appropriate."

CITY-WIDE ORGANIZATION

The city-wide organization for neighbourhood rehabilitation assumes several forms, of which three can be singled out.

Local Government

The local government must be able to provide the direct financial assistance, primarily in terms of improved public facilities, and staff assistance to the neighbourhood undergoing rehabilitation. Over and over again, the importance of strong political backing of the program at the local level was stressed. In fact, some mayors of the larger American cities have made the strong support of urban renewal programs part of their election platform and have assumed significant leadership positions in relation to urban renewal.

In addition to the political backing, an efficient administrative machinery is required to coordinate the programs and the city departments involved in them. Philadelphia's success in urban renewal, for instance, has been attributed in large measure to the strategic position of the Development Coordinator.

The Business Community

A very important consideration is the enlisting of the support of the business community in the program of urban renewal. Attempts must be made to gain the support of the local, regional, as well as national businesses and the community's trade groups. How influential a role the large business corporation can play is, perhaps, best illustrated by the example of Sears Roebuck. This company views its involvement in urban renewal not merely as a political gesture, but as a sound business investment. While it is impossible to discuss, in proper detail, the place of business in urban renewal, it has been necessary to at least emphasize that it plays a very decisive part in facilitating - or hindering - urban renewal programs.

The Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee, one of the requirements of citizen participation under point seven of the Workable Program, is generally composed of leading citizens representative of the community at large. While, at the neighbourhood level, the citizen represents primarily himself, the citizen on the citizens advisory committee represents a particular community interest or community point of view. The composition of this committee is extremely important, as failure to include a particular interest may lead to unforeseeable difficulties.

The citizens advisory committee broadly fulfills two major functions. As its name implies, it acts primarily as an advisory group to local government. Secondly, it provides the local government with a convenient sounding board for proposed plans and policies.

From the point of view of the neighbourhood council, the citizens advisory council may represent a link with local government and serve as a possible source of support for action desired at the neighbourhood level.
Again, a mere sketch of this important major citizens group must suffice for the present purpose, although a more detailed examination would be most instructive.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that organization even at the city-wide level is insufficient, and the demand for a planning and action framework in which one problem can be properly related to other problems is becoming essential.

"Repeatedly it has been discovered that a constructive attempt to approach any basic problem of the metropolitan area leads from issue to issue, agency to agency, government to government, and personality to personality. The parts, although important, can be approached with maximum effectiveness only in terms of the whole. Therefore, a metropolitan citizens' council, either with official representation or close working relations with the relevant governments, emerges as the desirable framework."

There are already a number of metropolitan citizens' councils in operation, for example, the Greater Trenton Council, composed of leading citizens widely representative of the metropolitan area and non-partisan in orientation. The similarly oriented Citizens Action Commission of New Haven involves about six hundred people in its operation. It works through a number of problem-related committees, and acts, through a special committee of twenty, in an advisory capacity to the mayor.

Effective organization for urban renewal in general and neighbourhood rehabilitation in particular, requires organization at the block, neighbourhood, city and metropolitan level with adequate channels of communication between the different units.

PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION

One of the most crucial lessons to be learned from the American experience in neighbourhood rehabilitation is the importance of involving the people at the neighbourhood level in the actual planning of the improvements to be sought. If the neighbourhood organization is merely regarded as a vehicle for carrying out the program designed by the City Plan Department, the rehabilitation endeavour will ultimately fail. To improve a neighbourhood, and - most importantly - to maintain the state of improvement, requires the acceptance by the citizens of higher standards. This willingness to accept these standards can be stimulated if the people themselves have a part in the development of the standards. "If they have had a hand in the formulation of the plan for upgrading the area and if they consider the plan realistic and attainable, they can identify themselves with the plan and become enthusiastic supporters of it."¹ This is not to say that the citizens dictate the plan, but rather that they determine the goals and objectives of the neighbourhood plan, not in isolation, but with the assistance of the planners. This is one area where the careful delineation of division of responsibility is a crucial factor: However, the intimate concern and activity of the residents in the development - and not merely the execution - of a neighbourhood is not a dream but a hard reality not to be overlooked by any planning department. To indicate some of the alternatives of arriving at a joint plan, three approaches will be outlined.

Replanning a Neighbourhood

(1) In the first approach, the neighbourhood council develops its own plan for the neighbourhood and submits it to the City Plan Department for consideration. This approach was used successfully by the Germantown neighbourhood of Philadelphia. This neighbourhood was fortunate in having a city planner living in the area and interested in assisting in the development of the plan, particularly with respect to the relationship of the plan to the existing conditions and future developments in the surrounding areas.

(2) In the second approach, the planners of the City Plan Department draw up tentative plans for a particular neighbourhood for presentation to the neighbourhood council. In Detroit, where this method was employed, the proposed plans were reviewed in detail by the individual block groups and the neighbourhood councils. The reports indicate that the citizens participated helpfully in the decision-making process and that they approached the matter with an understanding of the part they could play in the development of the plan.

In New Haven, the Plan Department's proposals for the Wooster Square improvement program called for some high-rise apartment units, but the neighbourhood committee did not view this suggestion with favour and provided alternative suggestions to the Plan Department.

"The . . . Committee believed high-rise buildings were inappropriate adjacent to the green, because surrounding structures were quite low. The Committee also felt that high density might complicate the traffic problem. We were convinced that garden-type apartment houses would..."


be more suitable. The Committee also felt that public housing was inappropriate, and instead suggested cooperative projects.\footnote{1}

(3) A third method of approaching the development of a neighbourhood plan is the joint approach by planners and the neighbourhood groups, evolving one common plan which reflects the needs and the preferences of the neighbourhood and the technical skill of the planners.

In Detroit, for example,

"the Neighborhood Council was formed, and it, in turn, set up a planning subcommittee. City planners are working with the subcommittee on the development of the plan. They're actually talking, or considering, the various sites that might be considered for a playground."\footnote{2}

The most important thing to remember about these approaches to planning is that they have actually been tried out and found effective in some American neighbourhoods. In fact, if a plan is simply developed in the removed City Plan Department and then imposed on a neighbourhood, the residents, far from supporting the proposed improvements, may actually boycott them. This happened in East Dayton, where the City Planning Board publicly announced its general plans for the area.

"Many residents indicated strong resentment and hostility toward the renewal program. A very active property owners' association, with competent leadership, headed the opposition. The City had not involved residents of the area in its planning process, and most citizens first learned about proposed changes in the area from newspaper stories. Rumors were flying, and signs appeared in many windows in East Dayton announcing that inspectors could not enter without a search warrant."\footnote{3}

This opposition to the Planning Board and civic government did not disappear very quickly either. Even when city officials, some months later, attempted to discuss the proposed plans with the residents, the original opposition

\footnote{1}{Citizen Participation in Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation, ACTION Housing, Inc., Pittsburgh, September 1958, p. 8.}
\footnote{2}{Ibid, p. 13.}
\footnote{3}{Ibid, p. 18.}
outweighed the small number of non-antagonists. Several meetings between city officials and residents ended in failure, and attempts to organize block groups were equally unsuccessful. "A larger group of hostile citizens of the area would gather in front of the meeting place and voice its opposition to the program."\(^1\) Eventually, the Area Project Council, referred to earlier in this chapter, was able to overcome the opposition and involve the residents in the urban renewal program because the method of approach took the needs and desires of the community seriously.

The early involvement of the residents in the formulation of neighbourhood plans, then, is an expedient not to be overlooked by the planners. But it is more than an expedient. It represents the most effective way of inducing a change in the attitudes of the residents.

### Changing Attitudes Through Participation

The passive acceptance of deteriorating housing and outmoded and unsatisfactory neighbourhoods as unpleasant but unavoidable features of city living for large numbers of citizens, is very similar to the apathy and disbelief in the possibility of change through cooperative effort which is so prevalent in the newly-developing countries undertaking "community development" programs. There, as here, a change in attitude is deemed as important as the material achievements. This is clearly evident in the statement by the United Nations: "... changed attitudes in people are as important as the material achievements..."\(^2\) In fact, it has been pointed out that such a change in attitude often precedes the actual physical changes, as this report on the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference

\(^1\) Citizen Participation in Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation, op. cit. p. 18.

shows: "This basic change in attitude made possible the impressive list of achievements to which the residents can now point."¹

This change in attitude is not confined to the residents, but affects city officials, the business community, and all those who become involved in the process of neighbourhood improvement. Increased familiarity between people at different levels will tend to increase understanding and decrease the distance between the official and the citizen.

The approach described here does not offer quick results; rather it emphasizes the long-range view which must be adopted if the gains made are to be maintained. The city neighbourhoods deteriorated over many, many years, and it is not reasonable to assume that the neglect of decades can be overcome in months. In order to remake neighbourhoods, the citizens who are so directly involved must be familiarized with the objectives of urban renewal. Both, the organization of neighbourhood groups and their education for urban renewal, require professional staff.

The Importance of Professional Staff

In many an American city, experience has shown that, without exception, neighbourhood groups depend on the consultation, advice and direct leadership of persons professionally trained to guide voluntary group action. In Philadelphia's Germantown, for example,

"governmental agencies, community leaders, and neighbors all concur in recognition of the importance of professional staff, whose primary concern is that of developing the human resources to the point where people themselves can act constructively to affect their own destinies."²

¹. Citizen Participation in Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation, op. cit. p. 18.

Even neighbourhood groups which originated spontaneously achieved success only with the assistance of professional community organizers. Everywhere, it seems that "citizen participation can be effective only to the extent that professional staff is specifically designated for this purpose."

But who are these professional community organizers? What kinds of qualifications are important? The Urban Renewal Administration in Washington advocates that "the person or persons assigned to working with the citizens' groups should be qualified by training and experience to work with people and understand their motivations." Social workers would appear to meet these qualifications, yet, social workers are only beginning to become involved in the process of neighbourhood rehabilitation and urban planning generally. Other professions have led the way to a great extent. However, the examination of the American program for neighbourhood improvement clearly indicates that the success of a neighbourhood project rests on factors which embody a philosophy, methods of work, and skills which seem to be solidly based in social work. Within the profession of social work, the process of community organization is especially suited for neighbourhood work. However, one writer, discussing the Chicago experience, does not think too highly of social workers in urban renewal. He says:

"There is a general supposition that social workers would be best equipped for this business of community organization because theirs is the only discipline aimed in part at it; but there is little in the Chicago experience to demonstrate this. Quite the contrary of what one might expect, people with community organization training were very often somewhat less than effective. I think this


may be explained by a fundamental orientation which misses the point of organization for neighborhood conservation. The social worker-group work orientation to community organization is basically that it is a good in itself, that it is therapeutic for certain ills that . . . beset the hapless urbanite . . . . But . . . the material, physical well-being of the neighborhood itself is primary. A tangible, definable job is to be done. . . . People trained for community organization per se often tend to confuse means and ends in the program."

It has been said before, and it must be said again that the "material, physical well-being of the neighborhood" is not the primary aim of neighborhood rehabilitation. Rather, it represents the concrete evidence of a much more fundamental aim of overcoming the citizens' apathy, and of involving him in the solution of the urban problems of all kinds. This is true in "community development" in the underdeveloped countries, and this, surely, is equally true of the process of neighborhood improvement.

On the other hand, the writer's argument, that social workers trained as community organizers are frequently too concerned with the "therapeutic" aspects of a given situation, merits consideration, since this tendency among social workers certainly cannot be denied. While it is important to avoid the danger of regarding the citizens organization at the neighborhood level as a mere expedient, it is equally important to recognize that neighborhood groups do not exist for therapeutic purposes. The proper path must lie somewhere between these two extremes. Certainly the scope for social work in this process is considerable.

The Role of the Social Worker

The kind of contribution social workers can make at the neighborhood level, is well illustrated by the experience of fifteen social

workers in Detroit. Since there was no social agency in the project area, the social workers came from different parts of Detroit. Some volunteered on their own time, others were allowed time by their agencies. The social workers concentrated on two major tasks: (1) to assist in the block group formation, and (2) to help groups plan on the basis of facts. In organizing citizens at the block level, the workers were able to use their training effectively, particularly during the phase which followed upon the first enthusiasm. In this second phase, residents tended to unload all their bitter feelings about civic government, the state of municipal services, and so on. The skill of the social workers in transforming this negative energy into positive action, was considered an important contribution. While the meetings with the residents were not focused on "therapeutic ventilation," the workers' ability to recognize and acknowledge these feelings of the people rather than ignoring or minimizing them, aided in the development of the neighbourhood groups. The workers continued to act as consultants and provided education and leadership. In addition, the social workers performed liaison functions between the organizations at the neighbourhood level and the city-wide citizen groups, government departments and social agencies. Since neighbourhood rehabilitation refers not merely to the improvement of physical facilities, but to the improvement of the standard of life of the neighbourhood generally, it is essential that the program of social agencies, providing specialized individual and group services, becomes integrated into the overall planning for the area. The social workers directly involved in neighbourhood rehabilitation work can make a significant contribution to the coordination of the services required by the community.

The need for more social workers in the field of urban renewal is reflected in a recent statement by the Board of Governors of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials who voted "to ask the schools of social work to call to the attention of students and graduates the new opportunities present in urban renewal programs for community organization employment in the hope that more will take community organization training."¹

Beyond the direct work of the community organizers, social workers in general must become more knowledgeable about urban conditions and more active in guiding policies of the comprehensive city plan. Wherever necessary, social workers must promote advances in legislation for urban renewal. This is particularly necessary for social workers in Canada where no effective federal legislation for neighbourhood rehabilitation and conservation exists as yet.

All social workers can play an important part in promoting the welfare of the city as representatives of their agencies, as members of their professional organization, and last, but by no means least, as private citizens.

Chapter 3

THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LOWER MOUNT PLEASANT

The area chosen for this "pilot study" of neighbourhood rehabilitation in Vancouver is designated by the letter 'H' on the Key Map of the Vancouver Planning Department's Redevelopment Study. ¹ It is a small part of one of Vancouver's oldest residential districts, known locally as Mount Pleasant. In selecting this particular area for the study, it was borne in mind that the area once enjoyed a favourable position as a residential district. It still has topographical assets and considerable potentialities for renewal. But the encroachment of industry, ageing buildings, changes in ownership, and the existence of scattered parcels of undeveloped land have all had a blighting effect. It is a relatively compact and homogeneous area geographically, though there is little evidence of a neighbourhood or local "community"; there have been several attempts in the last few years, e.g., by the Vancouver Housing Association and the Community Planning Association of Canada, to stimulate local interest in rehabilitation of the area but, so far, all to no avail. The area (Figure 1, p.42) is one of several transitional zones bordering the ill-developed waterway of False Creek, which was put to short-sighted and heterogeneous use at an early stage in Vancouver's development. False Creek can be regarded as the heart of the surrounding and spreading decay, and has been aptly described as 'a calamity'. ²

¹. Vancouver Redevelopment Study, City of Vancouver Planning Department, Vancouver, 1957.

The project area, referred to for convenience from now on as Lower Mount Pleasant, comprises thirty-three city blocks covering 115 acres bounded on the south by Broadway, on the north by the Great Northern Way, a new, as yet uncompleted, arterial road, on the east by Glen Drive, on the west by Brunswick Street.

Topographically, the area is situated on the north-sloping promontory overlooking the original headwaters of False Creek. As the contours on Figure 3 (p.49) indicate, it was originally bounded by two creeks, the Brewery Creek on the west and China Creek on the east. The high point of the ridge of the promontory lies between Fraser and Carolina Streets on Broadway, which is some ninety feet higher than Fifth Avenue, and this, in turn, is situated on a cliff about forty feet above Great Northern Way.

Historical Notes

Mount Pleasant is one of the oldest residential districts of Vancouver, and its history probably resembles fairly closely that of other early North American pioneer neighbourhoods which grew up sporadically in a relatively short span of time around the original centres of the growing towns.

As early as 1861, a "False Creek Trail" was cut through the primeval forest from New Westminster, the capital of the Crown Colony of British Columbia, to the salt water on False Creek. This Westminster Road was later renamed Kingsway. During the 1870's and 1880's, the first settlers came from the Vancouver townsite across the waters to build the first homes south of False Creek. The area grew rapidly, and in time became a popular and desirable residential area, along with the West End. In the 1890's the growing community had developed a flourishing commercial
and social centre in the area around Main Street - Kingsway and Seventh Avenue. This area included the first school, the Mount Pleasant School, opened in 1892; and churches, a post office, a fire hall, a hotel, and a band stand. Seventh Avenue became the first through-road linking Mount Pleasant with the developing Fairview district to the west. By 1890, a Mount Pleasant streetcar line was in operation connecting the area with downtown. Mount Pleasant continued to grow and expand, and out of this community-minded and enterprising neighbourhood came a number of Vancouver’s civic leaders.

In 1916, False Creek was filled in as far west as Main Street to meet the rising demand for industrial expansion, and to accommodate the railroad yards and terminals for both the Canadian National and Great Northern Railroads. Intruding industrial and commercial land use, mounting traffic, and increasing population created a westward movement of the more affluent among the people. Gradually, the large homes were converted to multiple dwellings and the strong community, church, school, and recreational life of the area began to lose some of its influence. This trend did not become too noticeable until after the Second World War. As late as 1946, Mr. Bert Price, President of the Mount Pleasant Branch of the Chamber of Commerce, was describing Mount Pleasant as 'the most progressive suburb in Vancouver'.

However, the post-war population increase, the unplanned and uncoordinated expansion of commercial and industrial land-use, both in and

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surrounding the area, the general availability and extensive use of the automobile, resulting in marked traffic increases and in the well known "flight to the suburbs", all added to the deterioration of the physical assets of the neighbourhood and gradually destroyed much of the former lively community concern and community spirit.

Lower Mount Pleasant covers only a small part of Greater Mount Pleasant neighbourhood. Its proximity, in the early days, to the False Creek tidal mud flats and later its exposure to the noise and soot of the railroad yards immediately below the area, appear to have prevented the area from becoming a particularly desirable residential district. From the beginning, it seems, Lower Mount Pleasant was an area for the less wealthy members of the community. As early as 1928, the area was officially zoned for three-storey multiple dwellings, while the area immediately south of it was zoned for single family homes. The north half of Fifth Avenue was zoned for heavy industry, the south side for six-storey light industry, and along Broadway from Prince Edward Street to St. Catherine Street the zoning allowed for three-storey commercial buildings. These zoning regulations have undergone only minor changes on the perimeter of the area, but industry has encroached in some instances in spite of zoning, and the uncertainty of the area's future has contributed further to its blight. Even now, as we shall see in Chapter 4, the residents in the area are by no means certain of the future planning with respect to this area. The present zoning is shown on Figure 2 (p.46).

Figure 2

CURRENT ZONING OF LOWER MOUNT PLEASANT AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

PROJECT AREA
NON-PROJECT AREA

BLOCK NUMBER

MULTIPLE DWELLING DISTRICT
TWO-FAMILY DWELLING DISTRICT

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Source
CITY OF VANCOUVER
City Planning Department
By-Law 3575, amended to date

DATE APRIL 1962
Present Land Use

At present, the Lower Mount Pleasant area is, on the whole, well built up, with only scattered parcels of undeveloped land. (For details, see Figure 3, p. 49) The largest areas of undeveloped land are found in the northern and eastern perimeter. The north half of Fifth Avenue, in particular, represents a most inefficient use of land. This can probably be attributed to the uncertainty with respect to future planning of this avenue which was originally zoned for industry.

Of particular note is the vacant land, forming the north half of block 100, because of its location within the residential zone, but we shall consider this parcel of land when discussing the recreational facilities of the area.

There are two large undeveloped blocks of land at the northeast corner of the area. One is China Creek Park, as yet undeveloped but reserved for park use; the other, immediately to the west of China Creek Park, is owned by the Great Northern Railroad, and is considered suitable for residential development.

Almost all of the buildings in this area are of residential nature, predominantly one or two family homes with a recent influx of almost a dozen new apartment buildings. No figures on the rate or percentage of conversion of one-family homes to multiple dwellings are available, although a comparison of the number of occupied buildings (497) and the total number of estimated households (954), linked with the relatively small number of apartments, would suggest that the number of multiple dwelling units in the area is large.
The housing in the area is predominantly old, built mostly before 1915, but it is generally of fair quality (Figure 3, p. 49), with only a scattering of visibly blighted structures. This is, of course, to be expected, since, by definition, a "Limited Redevelopment Area" in the Vancouver Plan is one in which 'over 50 per cent of residential structures are more than 40 years old' and which contains '10 per cent or more of housing in the Poor and Very Poor grades.' The Vancouver Redevelopment Study grading of buildings and property is as follows:

**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.

All of the homes are wood frame construction; some have recently been stuccoed, and most are two-storey homes. A surprising number of homes have been painted within the last few years and have been subjected to other minor improvement measures. These tend to exert an upgrading effect, although in a number of instances, the improved property looks rather 'out of step' with the surroundings. A considerable number of older shacks, garages, outbuildings, etc., facing the lanes between the

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1. *Vancouver Redevelopment Study*, op. cit. p. 24A
2. Ibid, p. 26
3. Ibid, p. 23
Figure 3
Detailed Map of the Area
Land Use, Building Types, and Exterior Condition

Exterior Condition of Buildings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>++++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>+++++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Undeveloped Property

Date: 1948

REFERENCES:
City of Vancouver
City Planning Department
Map: 1504-69-1
Map: 3050-1
avenues, appear to be used for living accommodation. These are indicated on the detailed map. (Figure 3, p.49)

There is one old, very large, four-storey apartment block, situated at the north-east corner of Seventh Avenue and Carolina Street, which contains no less than eighty-one suites! While it is given a rating of 'good' on the detailed map, (Figure 3, p.49) its massiveness and dark brick-veneer cover give it the appearance of a poor-grade tenement.

The six post-war apartment blocks on Eighth Avenue, varying in size from twelve to twenty-six units, are stucco buildings of two and three storeys. In addition, Vancouver's first 'limited dividend' apartment, with forty-six units (one and two-bedroom), was recently completed here and is now fully occupied.

The non-residential land use is restricted, with one or two exceptions, to the perimeter of the area, primarily in the north-western section. This is not a thriving industrial pocket; the buildings are generally of poor quality and are ill-kept. These small industrial enterprises include a metal plating and a metal products shop, a cookie warehouse, a carpet-cleaning and a dry-cleaning establishment.

The three grocery stores in the area are in fair condition and enjoy reasonably good business activity with the nearby neighbours. No drug store and no laundromat are to be found in this area.

Along Broadway, one of Vancouver's busiest arterial roads, there is considerable commercial land use. Most of the commercial enterprises are run by small operators who rent store space from absentee property-owners. These buildings are generally in fair shape, and some of the larger enterprises at the south-western end of the area are housed in
recently constructed and well-maintained long, one-storey stucco buildings.

**Roads, Lanes and Sidewalks**

Roads, lanes and sidewalks are among the worst features in the area. The roads are in poor condition, high-shouldered and largely without curb and gutter. In a number of streets, the roadway is so far below the level of the sidewalk that it is virtually impossible for some residents to drive their cars into the garage from the street. A number of blocks are without sidewalks altogether.

The streets are too narrow to cope with more than the local traffic, yet they are used heavily during the rush hours. Fraser Street has been widened and improved, but similar plans for Seventh Avenue have never been realized.

The lanes are, by and large, a depressing sight, and are in themselves pockets of spreading blight.

The streetlighting is obsolete and minimal, with one light at every intersection. One street light, at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Fraser Street - a piece of city-owned land - is in a state of serious disrepair.

The massive and ugly overhead wiring adds, here as elsewhere in the city, to the impression of squalor and blight, but it looks worse here, and mars the view to the contrastingly beautiful mountains of the North Shore.

The traffic density diagram (Figure 4, p. 52) perhaps shows most clearly the isolation of the area from the surrounding neighbourhood by traffic. Indeed, the area could be called a traffic island. During rush hours, many of the commuters use the area’s small side-streets, particularly Seventh Avenue and Fraser Street, to circumvent some of the traffic
TRAFFIC DENSITY DIAGRAM
OF LOWER MOUNT PLEASANT
AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

PROJECT AREA

NON-PROJECT AREA

NUMBER OF "RUSH-HOUR" VEHICLES'

0 TO 250
251 TO 500
501 TO 750
751 TO 1000
1001 TO 1250
1251 TO 1500
1501 & OVER

AVERAGE OF MORNING AND
AFTERNOON "RUSH-HOURS"

Source
CITY OF VANCOUVER
Engineering Department
Traffic Division
congestion of the main roads. Keeping in mind the total absence of playground facilities within the area, which tends to make the street the only play area, it is only too obvious that the considerable influx of impatient traffic at rush hours presents a serious and often dangerous situation.

**Recreational Land Use and Community Facilities**

Recreational facilities in the area are practically non-existent. The Kimount Boys Club, a Red Feather Agency providing a recreational program for boys aged 6 to 18, is the only recreational centre in the area.

A sloping piece of land, forming the north-east boundary of the area, known as China Creek Park, is considered a 'park' although it has never been developed. It has a grass surface, however, and a baseball backstop and a football goal-post. This park does not appear to be used to advantage, partly because of its location and slope, and partly because of its limited facilities. For instance, there are no benches for mothers and older persons, no trees, no play equipment for the younger children, and so on.

A more desirable playground location is represented by the vacant northern half of Block 100 which, at present, is still undeveloped. Rather than constituting an asset to this small area, it only adds to the impression of blight. The most disconcerting fact about this vacant half-block is that it has been city-owned land since 1935. This parcel of land is in a strategic location, since it is situated immediately north of the largest apartment (81 suites) in the area, and much more central to the area than China Creek Park. This half-block, in addition, also has some natural assets in the form of some beautiful old trees which literally invite park
development. Subsequent enquiries of the Vancouver Parks Board revealed, surprisingly, that the Board was not aware that the City owned this piece of land, though it is right in the centre of an area desperately in need of usable open space, for the very old and the very young in particular.

The elementary school serving the children of this area, Mount Pleasant School, is one of the oldest schools in Vancouver, if not the oldest. It is located on the south side of Broadway, between Kingsway on the west, and Prince Edward Street on the east. The traffic density of this central corner of Kingsway and Broadway (Figure 4, p. 52) suggests the undesirability of the location of the school from the point of view of the children attending, who come, almost without exception, from north of Broadway. Small children, from the age of five and up, need to cross one of the busiest arterial roads during the morning rush hour to go to school.

Although the school building is not actually in a state of disrepair, its positive features are not used to advantage. Its age and poor location, and the uncertainty as to its future, have apparently discouraged anything more than minimal repairs. The surrounding playground area, fenced off from traffic, is dusty, without pavement or lawn, and adds to the indifferent appearance.

There are two churches within the boundaries of the area: St. Michael's Anglican and The Evangelical Lutheran Church. The latter draws its membership almost exclusively from other areas of the city, and the congregation acquired the church property within the last four or five years. The building itself and the surrounding property are in fair condition, constituting neither an asset nor a liability to the neighbourhood.
St. Michael's Anglican Church is one of the oldest churches on the south side of False Creek. The church is connected with the rectory, which obliges the minister to live on the church property. The church itself and its surrounding property are well-kept. Again, most of the members of the congregation do not live in Lower Mount Pleasant.

There are no other social or institutional facilities within the area.

Summary

Lower Mount Pleasant is one of Vancouver's oldest residential districts. Although its housing is among the oldest, "it shows less evidence of blight than other areas of comparable age".¹ From the beginning, this part of Mount Pleasant has suffered from the effects of its proximity to the tidal mud flats of False Creek, and later from the encroaching industrial development, particularly to the north of the area.

The area is well built up, with only scattered parcels of undeveloped land. It is primarily residential in character, but lacks almost all of the usual neighbourhood facilities. The housing maintenance, by and large, is superior to the maintenance of public facilities. Apart from the fact that this area lacks adequate playground and usable park space, the poor state of repair of the roads, lanes and sidewalks, and the almost universal absence of curb and gutter are among the most depressing physical features of the area. Neighbourhood rehabilitation in the project area, thus, would require considerable expenditure on upgrading the existing public facilities, as well as the introduction of essential new neighbourhood amenities.

¹ Vancouver Redevelopment Study, City of Vancouver Planning Department, Vancouver, 1957, p. 24.
Chapter 4

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The Lower Mount Pleasant area is characterized by a mixed and changing population with a relatively small stable element. Broadly speaking, one can discern four main groups: (1) old-timers who moved into the area and built houses there when it was new, thriving, and close to town; (2) Canadian-born residents who lack the social and economic resources necessary to move to a more "desirable" location; (3) post-war immigrants who came to the area because of its central location and low rent, and remained because of limited budgets (partly as a result of the economic recession). The last, considerably smaller group, consists of (4) a small number of Japanese and a somewhat larger number of Chinese, some of whom moved to the area following the beginning of the clearance in the Strathcona Redevelopment Area.

Families and Households

An estimated three thousand people live in the Lower Mount Pleasant area.¹ This represents a little less than one-half of the population in census tract 13, which is bounded by Terminal Avenue on the north, Broadway on the south, Victoria Drive on the east, and Main Street on the west. It may be assumed that the Lower Mount Pleasant section is not unlike the rest of tract 13, so that the information available from the 1956 Census will reflect the population characteristics of the Lower Mount Pleasant area sufficiently well for the purpose of the pilot study.

¹ The method used to estimate the total population for the study area is provided in Chapter 1 in the discussion of the methodology.
A comparison of the number of persons residing in tract 13 in 1951 and 1956, indicates an increase of 5.6 per cent (1951 - 6,458; 1956 - 6,831). At the same time, the number of households and the number of families had decreased slightly (45 and 77 respectively). In view of the increase in the total population and the decrease in both households and families, it may be assumed that the increase occurred in the size of the households.

Table 1. Comparative Size of Households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Households</th>
<th>Number of Households</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
<th>Tract 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>P.C.</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>21,957</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 3</td>
<td>91,886</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 5</td>
<td>59,381</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 9</td>
<td>17,494</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>1,286</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>192,004</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,049</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: D.B.S., 1956 Census, Census Tract Bulletin

In 1956, almost one-half the number of households comprised two or three persons, while about one-third of the households were somewhat larger. In general, the demographic similarity between tract 13 and Vancouver City was much greater than had been expected.
Table 2. Comparative Size of Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children in Family</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
<th>Tract 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>P.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>66,661</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2</td>
<td>75,026</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 4</td>
<td>25,836</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3,773</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>171,296</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: D.B.S., 1956 Census, Census Tract Bulletin

This is an area of families with few children. Almost one-half of the families do not have any children. This is probably a reflection of the substantial number of elderly couples living in the area. Of those who have children the majority have only one or two.

Table 3. Families Classified by Age of Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Children</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
<th>Tract 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>P.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 6</td>
<td>79,765</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 13</td>
<td>86,526</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 - 17</td>
<td>29,247</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 24</td>
<td>22,978</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>218,516</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2,015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: D.B.S., 1956 Census, Census Tract Bulletin

Most of the children are of pre-school and public school age, suggesting that a significant proportion of young families are residing, at least temporarily, in the area. A more detailed study would be required to determine whether the high degree of transiency, so characteristic of the population in Lower Mount Pleasant, is found predominantly in the young
families, if the planning of school and recreational services for this area is to meet the needs of the population.

Table 4. **Age Distribution of Population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Vancouver Number</th>
<th>P.C.</th>
<th>Tract 13 Number</th>
<th>P.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 4</td>
<td>67,920</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 19</td>
<td>145,502</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,310</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 64</td>
<td>371,338</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4,164</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>80,257</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>665,017</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,831</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: D.B.S., 1956 Census, Census Tract Bulletin

The population in Lower Mount Pleasant is composed largely of persons who make up the working force of the community and a much smaller number of school-aged children. The number of infants and elderly people, by comparison, is small. It is interesting to note that this age-group composition is almost identical to that prevailing in Vancouver City in general.

Table 5. **Marital Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>P.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minors (under 15)</strong></td>
<td>814</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unmarried Adults</strong></td>
<td>779</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>1,201</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15 and over)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Married</strong></td>
<td>1,732</td>
<td>1,752</td>
<td>3,484</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Widowed</strong></td>
<td>109</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Divorced</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,467</td>
<td>3,364</td>
<td>6,831</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: D.B.S., 1956 Census, Census Tract Bulletin
Since about one-half of the residents of Lower Mount Pleasant are in the "working-age" group, it is not surprising to find that almost an equal number are married. Because of the nature of the categories, which exclude separation, desertion, and common-law relationships, the census material probably does not represent a very accurate account inasmuch as it does not reflect whether or not those listed as married are actually living with their spouses. The records of the Kimount Boys Club suggest that a fairly high percentage of those living in the area are one-parent families.

**Socio-Economic Status**

No quantitative information on educational levels, occupational status, and income, was obtained. However, repeated unsolicited references of the residents to the area as "a working man's area", and spontaneous references to the job at the mill, at the garage or the shop, served to confirm that, by and large, this is a working man's area. This impression was further borne out by the occupations of the fathers of the boys attending Kimount Boys Club. No income figures of any kind were obtained, but it is clear from the types of occupations, the number of public assistance recipients, and the low rents in the area, that the income level is not high.

**Nationality**

One of the outstanding features of the Lower Mount Pleasant area is its cosmopolitan character. As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, post-war immigrants form a considerable portion of the population. They do not come from one particular country, although the majority are certainly European immigrants. While no detailed measurement of race and nationality of the householders was attempted, those persons approached in connection with the questionnaire, by and large, stated their cultural
background in the course of the ensuing conversation, and did so without hesitation. The immigrants who were interviewed came from the following countries: Portugal, Italy, Yugoslavia, Austria, Germany, Hungary and Poland. In speaking of their neighbours, both the immigrants and the Canadian-born residents mentioned the large number of persons from other countries living in their area, and commented on the fact that there was no racial tension between them. Many of the residents considered this the most desirable feature of living in this neighbourhood.

The area has a small Oriental population, predominantly Canadian-born Chinese. An interesting development is to be seen in the small but noticeable influx of Chinese from the Strathcona Comprehensive Redevelopment Area. Some of the Chinese interviewed expressed the view that they would not consider living in a public housing development, even though they preferred the East End to Mount Pleasant. While there did not appear to be much overt opposition to the increased number of Chinese, at least one person regarded this trend as undesirable and "threatening property values", even though the properties of the Chinese residents were generally in a better-than-average state of repair.

Incidence of Social Problems

A large number of families and single persons in the area are dependent upon some form of social assistance.¹ (Figure 5, p.62). The

¹ The basic information was obtained from the East Unit of the Social Service Department of the City of Vancouver. This is summarized in Appendix C and shown graphically in Figure 5. These show the distribution of cases by block according to the City Social Service Department's classification.

'A' cases are those family cases who show a multiplicity of problems combined with a potential for rehabilitation. The service rendered this group of clients is characterized by greater depth, and frequency of contact.

'B' cases are all other cases requiring social allowance.

'P' cases include recipients of Disabled Persons Allowance, Blind Persons Allowance, Old Age Assistance, and those recipients of Old Age Security who have established their need for the supplementary Provincial Allowance.
Figure 5

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE CASES ON A BLOCK BASIS

PROJECT AREA

NON-PROJECT AREA

BLOCK NUMBER 00

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS 954H

"A" CASES 22A

"B" CASES 60B

"P" CASES 90P

TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES 1727

Source
CITY OF VANCOUVER
City Social Service Department
East Unit

DATE APRIL 1962
majority of these are single persons living alone. Among the families on social assistance, a significant number are one-parent families.

A study of the distribution of multi-problem families in the Vancouver area, undertaken by the Community Chest and Councils of Greater Vancouver, places the project area in the second highest category of incidence of multi-problem families.¹

Information obtained from the Superintendent of the City Police Department, the Women's Division, and the Youth Division, shows Lower Mount Pleasant to be an "average" section from the point of view of police patrol. There is little criminal activity in the area and most of it is of a minor nature. The Women's Division is called to the area occasionally in family disputes, mental health problems, and child neglect. Unfortunately, because of the differences in planning and service units, it was not possible to approach the Children's Aid Society and the Catholic Children's Aid Society for statistics on child protection for the study area. A more comprehensive study would require a great deal of searching through social agency, Court and policy records, to establish the actual incidence of problems in the area.

Some information relating to juvenile delinquency rates was gathered from two maps (map 15 and 16) of the Community Chest Recreation Service Study² which shows the incidence of juvenile delinquency for the 1956 census tract area 13 as 2.0 to 2.9 (per 100 persons of 5 to 19 years of age) in 1955. The area immediately to the west of Lower Mount Pleasant had the highest rate of delinquency in that survey. It is of interest that juvenile

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delinquency of two persons per 100 and higher was found only around the False Creek collar (1955). In 1957 the rate had remained the same for Lower Mount Pleasant, but the problem of delinquency had spread from the central core in all directions.

Social Institutions

The younger school children of the area attend Mount Pleasant Elementary School. The number of children in attendance in 1961-1962 is 425, including kindergarten and special students in Grade 1 - 8.

Table 6. Enrollment at Mount Pleasant School, 1955-1962

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<td></td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total grades 1 - 8</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>357</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specials</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Total</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>425</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Board of School Trustees, Department of Research and Special Services, Vancouver, B. C.

Almost all these children reside in Lower Mount Pleasant. The turnover of school children in this school may be regarded as a reasonably valid index of population stability in the area. According to the school's principal, and the Research Division of the School Board, the turnover in
Mount Pleasant School is one of the highest in the city. The most recent figures available, for 1961, indicate that 238 students were transferred in and 218 were transferred out. Related to a total of 425 students, this suggests a high degree of family mobility. It is estimated that only 120 children from this area are attending secondary schools, indicating that a fairly large number of students leave school before completing grade XII.

The school population reflects the multi-national character of Lower Mount Pleasant and the generally good spirit between races and nationalities. The school is aware of the small increase in the number of Chinese families, but the children have been easily integrated. However, there are other problems. One public health nurse is required on a full-time basis for the approximately 425 children of the school.¹ Some of the children attending Mount Pleasant School are poorly clothed and not well fed. School absenteeism does not constitute a problem: it is sporadic and limited to a small group of children. A fair percentage of mothers are working (no accurate figures could be obtained) and difficulties are encountered in having essential forms, such as consents for vaccination, completed by the parents and returned to the school. Language barriers are thought to account for some of this, but a general unawareness of the relevance of these forms for the children's well-being would appear to be the more important factor.

There seems to be a general willingness on the part of the parents to cooperate, but, in reality, the contact between school and home is minimal. Attempts to establish a branch of a Parent-Teacher Association have failed, but a small Parent-Teacher Auxiliary, with a membership of only 40 persons,

¹ In general, in Vancouver, one public health nurse is responsible for approximately 1,200 school children.
apparently meets three to four times a year, but is generally inactive. This would appear to be typical of the population of this area; it lacks, almost completely, any form of formal social organization, and shows little interest in it.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church is used almost exclusively by persons who live outside the area and does not play an active part in the community life of Lower Mount Pleasant. St. Michael's Anglican Church draws about 15 to 20 per cent of its total membership from the project area. The minister of this church, who lives in the Rectory attached to the church, indicated his interest in a program designed to improve neighbourhood conditions in Lower Mount Pleasant, but expressed doubt about the feasibility of rehabilitation plans under present conditions. For instance, he estimated that the degree of transiency was about 80 per cent with only 20 per cent of the population forming a stable element; moreover, since these latter constitute mostly the older population, the proportion of long-term residents is expected to decrease. In the past, this church has made its hall available to community meetings, but has drawn very few people from Lower Mount Pleasant to such meetings.

Recreation

The only organized recreational facility in the project area is the Kimount Boys Club (395 East Sixth Avenue), which offers a variety of recreational programs for boys aged 7 to 18 years and older. This includes physical activities, team sports, hobbies, arts and craft, social programs and activities for teenagers. This club also fulfills a very useful function

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1. A detailed outline of the program offered by the Kimount Boys' Club is contained in Appendix D.
with its "Drop-In" program, particularly on Saturdays, when the lack of play space in the area is most keenly felt.

The membership composition of the Club is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>over 18 years</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>15 - 18 years</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>13 - 14 years</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>11 - 12 years</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midgets</td>
<td>7 - 10 years</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>217</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of this total of 217, only 66 boys live in Lower Mount Pleasant. The boys from the project area again reflect the diversity of national backgrounds to be found in the area; Scotland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, England, Yugoslavia, Ireland, Greece, and China. The Club also serves a large Chinese and Sikh community just outside Lower Mount Pleasant. Mr. Lucien Hebert, the director, commented on the good spirit that exists among the boys; the friendly atmosphere was certainly noticed during visits to the Boys' Club in the course of the survey.

The Director has not experienced too many problems with the boys, although ten of his new members are described as "toughies", and six boys are on probation. However, these boys do not generally pose problems either within the club or Lower Mount Pleasant.

An average of 110 boys attend the boys' club each day - indicating the need for such a resource in the area. The turnover of membership is considerable; of the 217 current members, 117 are attending for the first time this year, indicating again the high degree of mobility characteristic of this area.

The 66 boys of this area come from 51 families, of which 12, or 26 per cent, are one-parent families! The occupations of fathers of these boys confirmed, almost without exception, the earlier survey impressions
that this was an area of skilled and semi-skilled and some unskilled labourers.

The extensive use of the Kimount Boys' Club would indicate the need for a similar club for girls. Unfortunately, there are no recreational facilities in the vicinity of this neighbourhood suitable for girls, with the exception of a Girl Guide Company which meets weekly in the Hall of St. Michael's Church.

Other Community Groups

There are no specific neighbourhood or community organizations in Lower Mount Pleasant, but the small number of social organizations in the Greater Mount Pleasant area have relevance for the project area.

The Mount Pleasant Community Association has a small membership and almost all present members are elderly. A women's group and the girls' club of this association have dwindled away. The Community Association canvassed the entire Mount Pleasant area in a membership drive and encountered a depressing lack of interest in community activity. The view most frequently expressed by the residents in the course of the Community Association's survey, was that the residents wished recreation - primarily bowling and bingo. This is attributed partly to the large number of working mothers in the area and the predominantly manual labour occupations of the men who would not regard working on local improvements as a form of recreation. It was suggested by the Secretary of the Mount Pleasant Community Association that the prevalence of a materialistic orientation linked with the high degree of transiency in the area, may undermine a "community" orientation, and put great obstacles in the way of community-centred action.

1. This information was obtained from the present Secretary of the Mount Pleasant Community Association.
There is, at present, no ratepayers' association, and no local newspaper. The Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce cannot be viewed as a truly local organization as most business men in the district do not reside in Mount Pleasant. It was estimated by Mr. Bert Price, who is the M.L.A. for this area and also President of the Mount Pleasant Chamber of Commerce, that "less than 5 per cent of the members of the local Chamber of Commerce, Lions' Club, etc. reside in the area." Significantly, the local small-store operators who do live in the area do not belong to the Chamber of Commerce; they regard that organization as representing the 'vested interests' or 'big business', and do not expect local community leadership from it, neither are they prepared to provide local leadership themselves.

Identification with the Neighbourhood

The general purpose of the questionnaire was to provide data which would permit an assessment of the degree of identification of the residents with the area in which they live and their potential for becoming actively involved in a process of neighbourhood rehabilitation.

To provide some picture of the degree of population stability, the length of residence in the area of those interviewed was obtained. The average length of residence was found to be nine years. This figure was strongly influenced by seven old-time residents who have lived in the area from twenty to fifty years. However, the short-term residence in the area is characteristic, thirty-two of the fifty-two persons interviewed having lived in the area for less than five years.

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1. Minutes of a Meeting of Leaders of Community Groups in Mount Pleasant Sponsored by The Community Planning Association of Canada, Nov. 1959.

2. The questionnaire data are summarized in Appendix B.

3. The short term nature of residence is best indicated by the graph, Figure 6, p. 70.
Figure 6  LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN THE MOUNT PLEASANT AREA

AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME: 9 YEARS

MEDIAN: 5 YEARS

SOURCE: SURVEY
More than one-half the persons interviewed stated a preference for living in another area, if they had the means to move. This applies equally to those who own and those who rent, who are equally represented in the survey sample. That more than one-half of the home owners interviewed would rather live elsewhere is an important fact to consider and to evaluate in planning for citizen involvement in rehabilitation. It must be borne in mind that a closer analysis would be required to determine both the accuracy of the answers and the reasons underlying them. However, for a preliminary study such as this, the information suffices to point out that the desire to move away from the area is sufficiently strong, even among the home owners, to merit serious consideration. It is striking that no connection appears to exist between home ownership and the exterior condition of the home and grounds.

If more than one-half of the people of the area would prefer to live elsewhere, why do they remain here? Is nearness to work a decisive factor? Of the seven persons working in the area, five would rather live elsewhere; and eleven of the twenty-five persons working outside the area do not wish to move. On the basis of the questionnaire results, then, nearness to work would not appear to be a factor operative in keeping the people in the area.

The shopping pattern demonstrated a fairly heavy reliance on neighbourhood chain stores for groceries, drugs and notions. The most impressive feature in this respect is the extensive use made by local residents of the small "corner grocery store". This is probably attributable in no small measure to the large number of older residents for whom other shopping facilities are too far removed. Obviously, in planning for the future of this neighbourhood, this feature would need to be preserved and
probably extended to include a much greater variety of small shops.

For items involving major expenditures, namely clothes, accessories and household furnishings, residents use, almost without exception, the major downtown chain stores. Three families on social assistance stated that this category in the questionnaire was not applicable in their case because of financial inability to purchase major items.

One section of the questionnaire was devised to assess the extent to which the social lives of the residents are contained within Lower Mount Pleasant. The majority of persons interviewed have their closest friends living outside the area - irrespective of the length of residence in the area. It is of interest to point out, in this connection, that many of the residents considered this a desirable feature, saying that the people of this area, while friendly and neighbourly, placed a high value on privacy and "peace and quiet".

Because of the diversity of national groups found in the area and their difference in religious affiliations, questions about church attendance in or outside the neighbourhood, were not fruitful. While at least eleven families, and most likely more, did not attend any church regularly, many of the post-war immigrants attended churches serving particularly their own national groups - often in their own language.

It has been mentioned earlier that Lower Mount Pleasant lacks formal neighbourhood social organization, and this is underlined by the results of the personal survey. Seven persons interviewed belonged to the Parent-Teacher Auxiliary of the Mount Pleasant School, referred to earlier in this chapter, and four persons belonged to the Mount Pleasant Branch of the Canadian Legion. Thirty-four of the persons interviewed did not belong to any clubs, either inside or outside the Mount Pleasant area. Only five
belonged to outside social clubs such as the Hastings and Kitsilano Community Centre, the Y.M.C.A. and the Japanese-Canadian Club. It is clear then, that Lower Mount Pleasant as well as the larger neighbourhood of Mount Pleasant at the present time do not possess a social organization - with the exception of the Kimount Boys' Club - which could be considered as a nucleus for citizen action for a neighbourhood rehabilitation. There is no leadership structure in Lower Mount Pleasant, and the influential people of Greater Mount Pleasant do not reside in that area.

What do the residents think of the present maintenance of the area, both by the City of Vancouver and the local residents themselves?

Discounting the "satisfactory" replies as constituting basically a noncommittal attitude, the most obvious feature of the reply is the reversal of "good" and "poor" judgments between the City and the residents. The City was judged to take good care by only nine residents, but poor care by sixteen; the residents, on the other hand, were judged to take good care by fourteen and poor care by eight. Those residents who considered the City maintenance poor, by and large, lived in good homes which suffered from the lack of maintenance of roads and sidewalks. The residents who stated that other local residents took poor care of their property most often lived in a well-maintained home located in a pocket of blight. The most reliable figures are probably those referring to the 'poor' care, as those were expressed not so much in response to the questionnaire, but emerged in the course of an informal interview. These were supported by specific statements, such as: "The roads are in a dreadful mess"; "There are not even sidewalks around here"; "The City cut down all the trees to widen the street and promised to plant new trees. Of course, they never did . . . . and that was years ago";
"The City does not even look after its own property; one-half block which belongs to the City is strewn with litter and would make a nice playground if it were cleaned up." These statements by residents, most of whom are trying to maintain and improve their own property, reflect fairly objectively the specific problems of civic maintenance in the area.

What do the residents like about the area? The central location with its proximity to shopping downtown, public transportation, and schools, was most often considered the most desirable feature. Some persons (10) were at a loss to think of any good features, while others, both newcomers and oldtimers, pointed to the good neighbourhood spirit of this cosmopolitan corner of the city. Low-rental accommodation, although not often considered as the best feature, was frequently referred to as one of the reasons for living in the area. This applies also to the oldtimers, retired on a small pension and owning their homes, for whom low taxes fulfil the same purpose as low rent for the renters.

The worst features show a greater diversity: a large number of residents (14) did not wish to commit themselves on this point, while others were quite vocal in listing a great variety of complaints. (These are listed with their frequency in Appendix B.) The main complaints concerned poor maintenance of streets, lanes and sidewalks, poor street lighting, lack of playground, noise, dust and industrial encroachment.

While an attempt was made to explain the purpose of a neighborhood organization aimed at improving neighbourhood standards, both residential and public, it is doubtful whether the real meaning of such an undertaking and the work involved was understood by many of the residents. The large number of positive responses (26) must be viewed more as an expression of cooperation with the interviewer than as a definite statement
statement or indication of willingness to participate. To most of those interviewed, particularly the immigrants, the concept of citizen involvement in community affairs such as neighbourhood rehabilitation was totally foreign. One Japanese immigrant with some University education proposed the view that the considerable amount of freedom granted the individual in this country tended to counteract any attempt to organize people in groups designed for action. In Japan, he thought, the greater autocratic pressure brought to bear upon the individual had the effect of encouraging individuals to unite for group action. Some of the European immigrants, somewhat amazed at the City's indifferent maintenance of public facilities, were convinced that an association of neighbours, without the backing of wealth, would accomplish nothing against the much greater influence of realtors and real estate developers. In their view, the city government must play a more directive and guiding role in the operation of the city.

While the information gathered for the study is by no means complete, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the difficulty of creating a "community feeling" would be much greater than might have been supposed. The high degree of transiency among owners and renters alike, the concomitant lack of social organization, and the notable absence of a sense of identification with the neighbourhood present considerable obstacles to citizen involvement in neighbourhood rehabilitation.
Any consideration of the possibilities of rehabilitating a neighbourhood requires a careful and realistic assessment of both the physical and social assets and liabilities of an area. Unfortunately, the social assets and liabilities rarely receive the attention they merit. It is recognized that rehabilitation can be successful only to the degree to which the people who live in the neighbourhood to be rehabilitated are involved in the endeavour; yet, an area came to be regarded as a limited redevelopment or rehabilitation area on the basis of an assessment of the physical conditions of the housing and public facilities alone. Surely, the original assessment on which the "treatment plan" for an area is based must include a careful survey and analysis of the social characteristics of the neighbourhood in addition to an analysis of the housing conditions. This is one area where cooperation between planners and social workers could result in a more effective analysis and plan.

The physical condition of Lower Mount Pleasant has been assessed by the city authorities and the area, on the basis of certain indices of blight (age of buildings, quality of housing, existing land use), has been classified as an area suitable for rehabilitation. How feasible is rehabilitation in Lower Mount Pleasant in the light of conditions other than housing? It will be helpful, and appropriate, to assess this by means of a "balance sheet" of assets and liabilities.

Assets

Lower Mount Pleasant possesses a number of assets for rehabilitation. It is a physically well-defined, small and compact area,
strategically located near the downtown area, and on sloping land which affords a beautiful view of the North Shore and some of the central section of the city. It is unfortunate that the view is marred by the unsightly railroad yards and terminals in the foreground. However, these could easily be screened from view by a small strip of park development along Fifth Avenue. The area is close to public transportation and possesses good public utilities in the form of sewers, water mains, etc. While the area is fairly well built up, there are still many parcels of undeveloped land, some small, some large, which permit flexibility of planning for additional buildings; and, what is more important, they provide much-needed space for community assembly, recreation and education facilities, and possibly a small shopping centre if there were active plans for strengthening these neighbourhood features of the area.

The people in the community reflect the cosmopolitan characteristics of the city at large. It is decidedly an area of families with a low socio-economic status. Families with young children and teenage children live here as well as a substantial number of senior citizens and single people. There is a high degree of home-ownership in this area, although the owners do not appear to represent a stable nucleus on which a neighbourhood rehabilitation program might depend.

Paradoxically, a particular advantage for the undertaking of a rehabilitation program is the fairly widespread dissatisfaction of the residents with the existing conditions in the area. This dissatisfaction could be utilized as a starting point for mobilizing the action of the citizens.

1. According to the Voters List of the City of Vancouver, the ratio of owners to renters in this area is two to one. This is probably higher than is actually the case.
on their own behalf. However, the liabilities of the area in terms of rehabilitation are considerable.

Liabilities

On the other hand, the greatest obstacle to the rehabilitation in the area is the lack of identification of the residents with Lower Mount Pleasant. Louis Wirth's comment that the older areas of the cities 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", certainly has relevance for Lower Mount Pleasant. While Lower Mount Pleasant has almost twice as many home-owners as renters (Appendix C), it must be remembered that home-owners in this area are at least as mobile as the renters. Property values are not very high. Furthermore, the survey results indicate that owners and renters alike would prefer to live in a more "desirable" district. There is some evidence that the number of persons who actually like to live there is very small, and most of the latter group are old-timers. Some people have their roots in the area, but many regard their stay here as a "stop-over", hoping to move to a better place later. Others do not live here by choice but of necessity. In view of this, it is most unlikely that the people currently residing in Lower Mount Pleasant would initiate local action for neighbourhood improvement of their own accord. The lack of an obvious centre for "focusing" the population reinforces this.

The people of this area place a high value on privacy. While they are friendly with neighbours, they are not "chummy". Because the area lacks community associations and indigenous leadership, it is hard to find among the residents any desire for participating in community activities. The idea of cooperative effort, or of a partnership between the officials and the citizen, is foreign to many of the residents, particularly the immigrants.

While the small size of the area has its advantages for studying and planning purposes, it is probably too small to contain all those facilities which a neighbourhood requires. By some definitions, Lower Mount Pleasant cannot be called a neighbourhood at all; rather, it is a residential pocket, certainly lacking, at present, those social amenities which make for a neighbourhood: a school, a variety of churches, a social club, community assembly facilities, shopping areas, parks, playgrounds, "tot-lots" (for very young children), and so on. A planned program of neighbourhood rehabilitation could encourage the development of some of these facilities.

Not only does Lower Mount Pleasant lack social organization, but even in the once very community-minded and enterprising Greater Mount Pleasant area, social organizations which formerly existed have all but dwindled away. The influential people do not live in the area, and previous attempts by the Community Planning Association of Canada, B. C. Branch, to initiate a program of local improvement were not fruitful. In 1959, the C. P. A. C. called a meeting of "community leaders" of Mount Pleasant, and at one of these meetings (October 14, 1959) it was moved
"That a Coordinating Committee be established, representing the various organizations in Mount Pleasant, to study the bringing about of a scheme of rehabilitation, such committee to be known as The Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood Improvement Association."

The fact that this Committee was either never established or was unable to function is another indication that rehabilitation of this area cannot be left to the initiative of local residents.

From the discussion of the assets and liabilities of Lower Mount Pleasant it can safely be concluded that this residential pocket requires what might be called neighbourhood "development" rather than neighbourhood rehabilitation. This term is proposed to indicate that this area will require a great deal of outside help before it can be effectively organized for concerted community action. As American experience has also shown, a "clean-up campaign" affecting the physical properties, is not enough. On the basis of the social characteristics of this area, it would seem wholly unreasonable to expect enough initiative to come from within the area.

It is not the purpose of this study to prescribe a strategy of approach, but rather to point out some of the prerequisites for undertaking a community organization job in Lower Mount Pleasant.

Prerequisites

A first essential for neighbourhood development in Lower Mount Pleasant is the provision of a trained community organization worker responsible for organizing the residents. While this person might concentrate his efforts on involving the citizens in the program, he would,

at the same time, need to enlist the active support of the local business, trade and labour groups\(^1\) in the Mount Pleasant area, the relevant city-wide citizen groups, and work closely with city departments. Whether this community organizer should be provided by the City or by the Community Chest or some other source is open to debate; the most important fact is that a liaison or leadership person is essential if rehabilitation - better described as "development" - of this neighbourhood is seriously contemplated. Such a pilot project for Vancouver would necessarily have to be undertaken with the cooperation of the City of Vancouver, the Community Chest and Councils, the Vancouver Housing Association, and the B. C. Branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada. Cooperation between these local agencies would probably ensure the support of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Clearly, primary leadership for a development undertaking must come from the City. The City must demonstrate its belief that neighbourhood improvement is possible, feasible, and indeed, essential by concrete evidence such as road improvements, completion of sidewalks, provision of parks, playgrounds, the replacement of trees removed for purposes of street widening, etc.

One of the views expressed repeatedly by residents is the fear of tax increases as a result of home improvement. It is in this area of consideration of tax incentives that the City might be able to make a significant material contribution to a program of neighbourhood improvement.

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1. The whole subject of interesting trade union groups in physical and social planning would present a challenging thesis topic.
The statement of "Information for Taxpayers", prepared by the City of Vancouver, lists the types of improvement which, "if carried out, will not of itself cause an increase in assessment". The kinds of improvements not subject to tax increases are very small by comparison with those allowed by other cities such as Toronto, Detroit and others. In addition, the wording of the Vancouver statement is ambiguous, as this sentence indicates: "Other minor improvements or maintenance MAY not cause an increase in assessment". Perhaps the most surprising statement in this notice is the "warning" that "If normal maintenance has been deferred for some years, the house may deteriorate to the point where the Assessor may allow additional depreciation." In an already deteriorated area, this statement is likely to encourage poor maintenance rather than encourage good upkeep! By contrast, Toronto's brochure "Good Maintenance Does Not Raise Taxes", offers a positive approach to home maintenance. Its final statement reads: "A home is a big investment, whether you live in it yourself or are a landlord. Protect your investment. Be proud of your property and proud of your city."

In Vancouver, a clearer and more liberal home-improvement tax-exemption is required; but, in areas scheduled for limited redevelopment, actual incentives for home improvement might well be considered expedient. Here the choice would appear to be to spend a little money now rather than spending vast sums for later comprehensive redevelopment.

Alderman Halford Wilson's proposed "home-owners grant", which would exempt from civic taxation the first two thousand dollars of the assessment on owner-occupied homes, is to be commended as a possible method of exempting home improvements from taxation. In this way, home
improvements might be tax-exempt, provided that the overall improvement does not raise the assessment value of the home by more than two thousand dollars.

From the point of view of the health of some of Vancouver's deteriorating neighbourhoods, such as Lower Mount Pleasant, it is to be regretted that no representation of these areas exists in the framework of municipal government. Since aldermen tend to represent functional interests, geographic areas, particularly those of small tax revenues and lacking social organizations for local action, such as ratepayers councils etc., have little or no voice in municipal affairs. Here, the organization of the citizens of these disadvantaged areas would give the neighbourhood a voice in city management and become a political force not to be ignored.

Of all the city departments, the City Planning Department holds the most strategic position with regard to urban renewal in general and neighbourhood rehabilitation in particular, within the city's boundaries. One of its methods employed in the realization of development plans is the zoning ordinance. Lower Mount Pleasant has been zoned "RM 3", which allows for the construction of apartments of various types. In the discussions with residents, the view was frequently expressed that it would hardly be worth their while to make substantial investments in old houses when the possibilities of obtaining a good price for the property from apartment builders presented considerable incentives to sell. In view of the fact that so many residents of this area would prefer to live elsewhere, the prospect of selling to apartment builders constitutes another obstacle to citizen action for neighbourhood improvement. While it is by no means certain that large-scale apartment construction will occur in this area,
the significant fact is that residents regard this as inevitable, and this tends to discourage home improvement. Many of the residents who do not wish to move to another area are the old-timers living on small pensions who would be unable to finance the necessary alterations and improvements.

Two other aspects of the current zoning ordinance merit mention. First, the zoning does not appear to be beyond appeal. This is clearly indicated in the case of a pipe-manufacturing company which has recently been established on Brunswick Street at Seventh Avenue, much to the displeasure of many residents. Secondly, many people in the area are quite unaware of existing and planned zoning and its implication. Some thought that the area was zoned for industry, others that it was for apartments only. Few, if any, knew of the new category of "limited redevelopment". It is, indeed, unfortunate if the local residents are unaware of the plans currently in preparation by the City Planning Department on their behalf.

Education of residents about existing zoning, and better communication between the City Planning Department and those for whom plans are drawn, would seem to be a vital issue. In fact, it has been found desirable to have planners meet the people who live in rehabilitation areas. In Detroit, for example, "something very important happened when the planners met face-to-face the anxieties, apathy, and the dreams of the people their proposed plans were going to affect directly."

While the City Planning Department is the one most vitally involved in urban development, many other city departments are either

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directly or indirectly connected with the program of urban renewal. Since the scope of urban renewal is vast, a comprehensive approach is necessary. This implies the integration, or at least improved coordination, of the various departments and agencies involved. There is a particular need to integrate the capital improvement programs of such agencies as the School Board and the Parks Board into a total city plan. It must be emphasized that coordination must take into account both the expenditures and the determination of the exact localities in which these expenditures will be made. This calls for as much uniformity as possible in the assembly and distribution of relevant data as well as integrated planning units.

Such comprehensive planning and social planning should be undertaken on a concurrent basis. A close liaison between agencies responsible for long-range physical and social planning is essential. This would mean that the Community Chest and Councils would need to become more directly involved in the various aspects of urban renewal and consider their possible contributions to such programs through the provision of staff or the undertaking of research both prior to and after the completion of neighbourhood improvement attempts. Certainly, urban renewal, in general, seems to provide an unprecedented opportunity for coordination of the physical and the human side of planning.

Such comprehensive planning must transcend municipal boundaries to cover the area recognizable as metropolitan Vancouver. While it is not feasible to provide, within the context of this thesis, the arguments which might be advanced for the establishment of a metropolitan government, it cannot be sufficiently emphasized that present municipal jurisdictions are too narrow for the job of urban renewal. The jurisdiction of the city is circumscribed by the geo-political boundaries, but
the problems of today and the comprehensive planning required for
tomorrow far transcend these boundaries. In order to rehabilitate our
cities, "the extension of the administrative jurisdiction of the city to the
entire metropolitan area which in fact comprises the modern city"\footnote{Wirth, Louis, Community Life and Social Policy, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1956, page 215.} is a
necessity. This principle is now being recognized far and wide: it is
certainly applicable in the Vancouver region.

Even beyond the metropolitan region, a national legislative
and administrative framework is needed. An amendment of the National
Housing Act to include rehabilitation and conservation as legitimate aspects
of a comprehensive urban renewal plan is overdue: it would add powerfully
to the impetus and the financial assistance at the local levels.

The concluding emphasis of this study should be that social
workers can play a significant part in promoting neighbourhood improve­
ment programs and urban renewal, and in a number of ways. Welfare
agencies must become more directly and concretely involved, through the
provision of information for the social assessments of neighbourhoods
requiring one or the other form of urban renewal treatment, the provision
of staff for the organization or education of block groups or neighbourhood
councils, and possibly the revision of service areas to correspond more
closely with the planning areas of other departments. The important
contribution which could be made by the Community Chest as a central
social planning agency has already been stated. The B. C. Association of
Social Workers provides social workers as individuals and representatives
of a professional group with a channel for promoting the needed changes in
housing legislation. Of particular urgency, perhaps, is the greater emphasis on education of social work students in modern problems of urban growth and environment. This is essential both at schools of social work and the in-service training institutions.

It is true that the cities are in trouble. It is likewise true that the involvement of the ordinary citizens in the solution of the urban problems offers the greatest hope for the eventual revitalizing of the troubled cities.
Appendix A

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(1) BOOKS


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3. How a Block Club is Organised, 1961.

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National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centres, Inc.:

Urban Renewal Administration, Washington, D.C.: 


Specific City Plans:


4. Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, Block Organization: Key to a Better Neighborhood.


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5. Beecroft, Eric, Industrial Development and Urban Planning, Address by the National Director, Community Planning Association of Canada, Ontario Industrial Development Conference, p. 55 (mimeographed)
3) **ARTICLES**


4) **VANCOUVER REPORTS**


4. Community Chest and Councils of the Greater Vancouver Area:
   
   (a) *Profile for Planning*, July, 1959.
(b) Checklist Survey of Multi-problem Families in Vancouver City, March, 1961


(5) SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED IN THE SURVEY

(a) Agencies and Departments:

Planning Department of the City of Vancouver

Engineering Department of the City of Vancouver (Traffic Division)

Police Department of the City of Vancouver

Fire Department of the City of Vancouver

Social Service Department of the City of Vancouver

The Archives of the City of Vancouver

Board of Parks and Public Recreation of the City of Vancouver

Board of School Trustees of Vancouver, Department of Research and Special Services

The Community Chest and Councils of Greater Vancouver Information Centre

Metropolitan Health Unit I, Vancouver

Vancouver Girl Guides Association

Boy Scouts of Canada, Metropolitan Vancouver Region

(b) Individuals:

Mr. Basil Robinson, Associate Director of Social Planning, Community Chest and Councils of the Greater Vancouver Area.

Mr. Tom McDonald, Executive Director, Community Planning Association of Canada (B.C. Branch).

Mrs. Harry Bird, Secretary, Mount Pleasant Community Planning Association.
Mr. E. H. Vollans, Principal;
Mount Pleasant School.

The Reverend William Hillary, Rector,
St. Michael's Anglican Church.

Mr. Lucien Hebert, Director,
Kimount Boys Club.
Appendix B

SCHEDULE USED IN THE LOWER MOUNT PLEASANT NEIGHBOURHOOD SURVEY

Total returns 56
No co-operation 4
Base 52

How long have you lived in this neighbourhood?
   Average 9 years. Median 5 years.

Would you rather live in another neighbourhood?
   Yes 28 No 24

Do you own this home? 26, pay rent 26

2. Does the main wage-earner in your family work in the Mount Pleasant area? yes 7, no 25 not applicable 20.
Is the main wage earner male or female? Male 25, Female 7, not applicable 20.

3. Where do you usually shop for the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Inside neighbourhood</th>
<th>Outside neighbourhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Store</td>
<td>Chain Store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; groceries)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs &amp; notions )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes &amp; accessories)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household furnishings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Do your closest friends live in this neighbourhood? Yes 20 No 32

Do you attend church in the neighbourhood? Yes 20 No 21
Not applicable 11

To what clubs or organizations in this neighbourhood do you belong?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service Clubs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Teacher Association</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratepayers Association</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Clubs and others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Neighbourhood Clubs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimount Boys Club</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong to no clubs</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. What do you think of the way in which the City of Vancouver and the local residents take care of this neighbourhood?

The City takes good care 9
satisfactory care 27
poor care 16

The local residents take
good care 14
satisfactory care 30
poor care 8

What, in your opinion, are the worst and best features of this neighbourhood?

Best features:
Convenient for shopping and close to school and transportation, i.e. downtown 24
No good features 10
Good neighbours, helpful to newcomer, cosmopolitan 7
Clean looking, nice view 4
Low cost or low rent 3
Quiet, peaceful with privacy 3
Satisfactory 1

Worst features:
(No worst feature) 16
No complaints )
No opinion )
Poor City maintenance of roads, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, back lanes and street lighting 12
Bad looking homes, untidy yards, slum tendency 6
Noise, dust, too much traffic on roads - dangerous for children 5
No playground 5
Too industrial 3
Garbage in City-owned land 2
Lack of Medical Centre and Super Market 1
Not worth improving 1
Influx of Chinese 1
Dogs 1

Would you join a group of neighbours of this area who are interested in improving the neighbourhood?

Yes 26 ; No 24 ; Undecided 2.
## Appendix C

### Population, Home Ownership and Welfare Statistics on a Block Basis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Buildings</th>
<th>Owners Occupied</th>
<th>Welfare Cases</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey List</td>
<td>Voters List</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>27&amp;89</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
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<td>Cases</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Voters' List of the City of Vancouver
Social Service Department of the City of Vancouver
Survey
Appendix D

PROGRAM OUTLINE

KIMOUNT BOYS CLUB

| MONDAY:             | Cooking  |
|                    | Senior Gym |
|                    | Woodwork |
|                    | Art Class |
|                    | Arts and Crafts |
|                    | Soccer practice |
|                    | Games room |
|                    | TV |
|                    | General Gym |

| TUESDAY:            | Woodwork |
|                    | Model Car Building |
|                    | Model Air Building |
|                    | Cooking |
|                    | Arts and Crafts |
|                    | Rifle Club |
|                    | East Indian Youth Group |
|                    | Physical Fitness |
|                    | TV |
|                    | Gym - general games |
|                    | Games room |

| WEDNESDAY:          | Woodwork |
|                    | Air Rifle |
|                    | Ladies' Auxiliary |
|                    | Senior Gym |
|                    | Soccer practice |
|                    | Arts and Crafts |
|                    | Volley Ball |

| THURSDAY:           | Senior Ice Hockey |
|                    | Arts and Crafts |
|                    | Woodwork |
|                    | Senior Basketball |
|                    | Floor Hockey League |

| FRIDAY:             | Usually practice for week-end game. |

| FRIDAY NIGHT:       | Special Events |

| SATURDAY - MONDAY:  | Soccer - afternoon free club time. |

Source: Mr. Lucien Hebert, Director, Kimount Boys Club.