THE EDMONTON COMMUNITY LEAGUES:
A Study in Community Organization for Recreation

by

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ABSTRACT

This study traces the development of community recreation in Edmonton from the time of the initiation of the community leagues to the present, and concludes with an evaluation of their present and possible future status. It is particularly pertinent because of the long history of community recreation in Edmonton and because the Edmonton Recreation Commission is probably the strongest public recreation agency in western Canada.

The growth of the community league movement and of the Federation of Community Leagues are traced. The establishment of the Edmonton Recreation Commission, the resulting conflict with the Federation, and emerging relationship are discussed. From the study of Edmonton and its agencies serving the recreation needs of the people, the next logical step in organization for recreation in the city is indicated. The suggestions made for the future are based on accepted principles of professional community organization but the application of these principles is predicated on a clear interpretation of past and existing relationships between community agencies.

One principle peculiarly applicable in Edmonton is that whenever possible the public recreation programme should be operated through only one organization in each community. Because of the varied nature of recreation an organization with a broad objective is best suited to this function but at the same time the functions of other agencies must be clearly defined to avoid duplication of effort. The suggested community reorganization for recreation in Edmonton is an example of co-ordinating recreation agencies within a city and redefining their areas of concern. The problem is not peculiar to Edmonton, and the suggested reorganization is not necessarily applicable elsewhere. There are, however, methods and principles indicated that should be generally applicable to similar situations.

Primary source material has been used wherever possible including newspaper articles, minutes of community league meetings, the constitution of the Federation of Community Leagues, personal interviews and personal experiences. In addition reference has been made to leading professional authorities in the field of community organization for recreation, and to pamphlets and booklets issued by national and international agencies in the field.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the very fine co-operation shown me by the officials of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. In particular, I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. H. P. Brown who made available much material from his personal files which was invaluable in recording the birth of the community league movement in Edmonton.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF EDMONTON

The history of the City of Edmonton is inextricably bound up with the development of Western Canada's vast heritage of natural resources, and to that extent differs little from the history of other western Canadian cities. It was the fur trade which first sent the white man across the prairies into the vast northern area of which Edmonton is now the commercial centre; but later, agriculture, minerals, timber and oil each drew new quotas of adventurous people to the district from all parts of the world. The history of the development of the natural resources of the central Alberta district could well serve as the history of the city of Edmonton.

Spread across the North Saskatchewan River at a point approximately 200 miles east of the Rocky Mountains, Edmonton is strategically located athwart one of Canada's first great transportation arteries. Fort Edmonton was established at the site of the present city by the Hudson Bay Company in 1794. It was the principal trading centre for the territory now known as Alberta. From Fort Edmonton the windings of the North Saskatchewan River could be followed east and west for hundreds of miles. Overland trails lead both south to the Blackfoot country and north to the Athabasca River and the rich fur bearing territory of the Cree and Yellowknife tribes. Fort Edmonton was the collection and distribution centre for all this
area and the Indians made regular visits to the fort to exchange their furs for the supplies, tools and novelties of the traders. Thus, holding the key position for the commerce of nearly one quarter of the area of Canada, rich in minerals, timber, water power, grazing and farm lands, and oil, Fort Edmonton was from the start destined to become a great city.

Following the merger of the Hudson Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821 Fort Edmonton grew rapidly until in 1904, the year the city was incorporated, the population was approximately 4,000. By this time a new industry, agriculture, which was to become the dominant factor in the city's economy was challenging the fur trade as the most important feature of the economy of the city and district. With the development of agriculture and the realization of the wonderful fertility of the soil came the settlers to work the land.

The farmers first settled near the city and gradually spread out through the district as settlers continued to come into the area. The trappers, dependent as they were on a vast undeveloped and sparsely settled hinterland, were gradually forced from the city. This did not, however, affect the basic economy of Edmonton. The city has always been and still is a trading centre for the central and Northern Alberta district. True, the clientele changes but the nature of its commerce does not. Edmonton merchants and traders have supplied the trappers, the farmers, the miners, the loggers and more recently the oil drillers. The development of each natural resource has brought
new business to the city and has not meant the loss of previ-
ously acquired business.

Because of the variety of primary industry and great
resources awaiting development the growth of Edmonton from the
time of incorporation has been rapid and steady. During the
years prior to the First World War, both the Dominion Government
and the Canadian Railway Companies sponsored ambitious immi-
gration schemes that offered the prospective Canadians large
land grants as an inducement to settle the prairie region.
Whereas in 1901 the population of the whole province of Alberta
was just over 73,000, by 1911 it had increased to 374,300,¹ and
by 1916 was just short of the half million mark. In 1905
Edmonton was made the capital of the province, and by 1911 its
population reached 24,900 and was 42,000 by 1916. In 1912
Edmonton and the rival city of Strathcona on the south bank of
the North Saskatchewan River amalgamated under the name of the
former which accounts to a great extent for the large increase
recorded between 1911 and 1916.

An important factor affecting population growth in the
whole of western Canada was the development of extensive
railroad facilities. Because of its strategic location and
already established trade channels, Edmonton became an important
link in the transcontinental railroad network. As early as
1891 a branch line from Calgary pushed northward to Strathcona
and in 1905 the Canadian Northern Railway Company constructed a
line from Winnipeg to Edmonton, thus giving the new city direct

¹ Eighth Census of Canada 1941 - Vo. 1 - pp. 899
Kings Printer - Ottawa - 1946
access to the industrial east and also affording a direct line of communication for prospective European immigrants. In 1910, the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway from Winnipeg via Saskatoon reached Edmonton and pushed on to Prince Rupert thus linking Edmonton with Pacific Coast ports.

The completion of each mile of new railway in Western Canada meant the opening up of a new area of rich farmlands. The completion of each new railway into Edmonton brought an increase in both rural and urban population and a resulting increase in commerce.

The cultural background and social outlook of the citizens of Edmonton were at the start typical of a new Canadian city. The early explorers were mostly Anglo-Saxons in the employ of the Hudson Bay Company. They were either accompanied by or closely followed by the French Canadian and half-breed trappers and the British traders. These early pioneers intermarried quite freely with the natives, with the result that a large half-breed population developed. Few of these early settlers actually settled, however, for with the development of farming the traders and trappers moved farther north in pursuit of furs. Nevertheless some of the traders when they left the employ of the Hudson Bay Company did settle on small holdings close to Fort Edmonton. These were the pioneer farmers of the district. This was British stock taking root in the new land and to this day, despite the large influx of European settlers Edmonton city has remained predominantly British in make-up.
During the first decade of this century when western Canada was opened to immigration thousands of settlers flocked to the Edmonton district. The newcomers, although mostly British, came from many lands and spoke many different languages and dialects. Assimilation was out of the question as the new comers outnumbered the incumbent residents. What did take place was an adjustment of old ideas and cultures to a new environment. The settlers were on the whole an adventurous and ambitious group and the majority managed the necessary adjustments without difficulty.

The following figures showing the time of arrival and the place of origin of the larger groups of settlers in Edmonton give a general picture of the make-up of the city's population: ¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>British</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1901</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901 - 1910</td>
<td>5128</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>1705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911 - 1920</td>
<td>7124</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1811</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table does not account for the number of settlers from the older parts of Canada. While these settlers were predominantly of Anglo-Saxon stock, there were also an appreciable number of French Canadian settlers. The Dominion census of 1901 showed 4,511 persons of French extraction in Alberta whereas this number had increased to 20,600 by 1911 and was 30,913 by 1921. It is not possible to determine how many of these settled in Edmonton but even if only 1 per cent

¹ Census of the Prairie Provinces 1936
Vol. 1 - pp. 1016 - 1017 - Ottawa - 1938
had settled there it would make an appreciable group.

In any event, Edmonton was from the start a predominantly British city with large American and European minority groups. The Americans, although hardly a racial minority, were definitely a national minority. They quickly established themselves, however, because they had not the adjustment problems to meet that had the European and the British settlers. They were largely the overflow of American settlers in the mid-western United States and had pushed northward with the retreating frontier. They were people in search of a pioneer country and found their best adjustment in a frontier society. They brought with them the experience and ideas gained in their own country in establishing new settlements and industries and a "New World" culture. In this respect the Americans had much in common with the settlers from Canada.

For the British settlers, adjustment was relatively easy; they were in an English speaking country and British traditions had been carried to the far west from the first days of discovery by explorers and traders of the fur companies. The social norms of the new city did not, however, conform to those of Great Britain and some adjustment was necessary. In fitting themselves to the new pattern of life the Britishers used their own culture as a frame of reference and in so doing had an appreciable effect in strengthening the existing British mores and in modifying those of other national groups.

The European settlers had the most difficult
adjustment to make. Many avoided most of the problems of adjust­
ment by settling in groups with members of their own race, thus making their situation similar to that of the British settlers, i.e. a mere physical adjustment, the fitting in of their national culture to a new environment. The tendency to settle in national groups was discouraged by the immigration authorities but with little success. This situation was not so noticeable however, in the urban centres of the province where a smaller percentage of the Europeans settled and a larger percentage of English speaking people settled. Such was the case in Edmonton where the Europeans found it very difficult to withdraw into themselves and as a result assimilation has been very good.

Within the city the social and recreational interests have from the start been predominantly based on the British-American pattern. From the days of the fur traders dancing and horse racing have been the main recreational interests of Edmontonians. The European immigrants found little difficulty fitting themselves into this very restricted recreational programme. They were for the most part of peasant stock, and had in the past found their recreation in the folk music and dances of the old country. The western dances with their informality and variety of simple steps were common meeting ground for all the new citizens of Edmonton. These dances were not staged merely for the young adults of the community but were rather for every member of the family, young and old. As a
result, in Edmonton, recreation and family fun have gone hand in hand down through the years.

Of course, many of the foreign-born citizens did seek to avoid the necessity of making too many adjustments by withdrawing into national groups and therein continuing insofar as was possible the social life of the old world. For these groups there was very little assimilation in the first generation immigrants. They usually spoke the language of their mother country, worked with and married their countrymen and contained their social and recreational life within their national group. Their children, however, attended schools where they learned to speak English and where they came in contact with all racial groups, and their assimilation proceeded with a bare recognition of the process, except possibly some conflict in the home where the new world and the old world ideas came into direct and intimate conflict.

"The total number of marriages in Alberta from 1905 to 1909 was 8,652. In 77.3 per cent of these both the contracting parties were English speaking and claimed Canada, the U.K. or the U.S. as country of origin. In 4.5 per cent of the marriages one of the contracting parties was a Canadian or from another English speaking country. In 5.2 per cent neither contracting party was a Canadian nor from another English speaking country but the bride and bridegroom belonged to different nationalities. In 13 per cent of the marriages the bride and bridegroom belonged to the same non-English speaking
nationally. 1

Probably, quite as important as the racial groupings in the new city, have been the very clearly defined community boundaries and the resulting community consciousness within the city. Edmonton today sprawls over an area of over 26,500 acres and has a population of approximately 126,000 for a ratio of about five persons per acre, an amazingly low figure for a large city. The city is much like a loose confederation of a number of small communities many of which are separated from the whole by natural geographic barriers. Most important of these barriers is the mighty North Saskatchewan River, which sweeps through the city in a broad winding valley with steep one-hundred-and-fifty-foot banks three-quarters of a mile apart. Across the river the buildings of North Edmonton face those of South Edmonton, formerly Strathcona. The river is spanned by 4 bridges within the city limits.

South Edmonton has its own business district, the University of Alberta and its own subdivision. Of these Garneau, Ritchie and Soona are adjacent to the business district and to one another. Windsor Park is separated from the rest of the South Edmonton district by the extensive University Grounds, while Pleasantview on the south city limits is separated by a mile belt of practically unsettled bush land. Bonnie Doon, across a deep ravine to the east, is like a separate town and beyond that reaching to the eastern city limits and still zoned for agricultural development is the rural community of

1 Canada and its Provinces - Vol. 19 - pp 279 -
Shortt and Arthur Doughty Ed. - Toronto - Glasgow, Brook and Co, 1914
Forest Heights. Down on the river flats, segregated by the high river banks from the rest of the South Edmonton district and from one another by a deep ravine are the communities of Cloverdale and Walterdale.

On the north bank of the river the same pattern of segregated communities evolves. Adjacent to the main business district are Norwood, Central and the West End communities. Beyond the West End and separated by a ravine is the recently developed and exclusive Glenora subdivision and west of that reaching to the city limits is Jasper Place. Almost in the heart of North Edmonton is the two square miles of Hudson Bay Reserve and adjacent to it on the north is the 750 acre Municipal Airport. The city has grown around this large unsettled area. Central community is on the southern fringe of this large area and recently has been gradually reaching farther into the Hudson Bay Reserve. On the western fringe of this undeveloped area runs the main line of the Canadian National Railways, beyond which and running parallel to it is the community of Westmount. North of the airport is Calder and the C. N. R. shops. This community is at least a mile from any other community in the city and is actually more a small town unto itself. At the north east corner of the city, houses struggle out the Fort Saskatchewan Trail to the packing plants beyond which is the small community of North Edmonton. Running to the eastern boundary of the city and cut off from the downtown area by Borden Park and the Exhibition Grounds is
the Highlands community. Down on the river flats on the north side of the river are the communities of Riverdale and Rossdale cut off from one another and from the rest of the city.
CHAPTER TWO
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION TO MEET COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

It is probable that geography was the most important factor contributing to the need for some type of community organization in the various districts of Edmonton, whereas, the form that organization took was mostly influenced by history. The spread-out nature of the City with its natural geographic barriers between communities, contributed to the feeling of community by shutting off one district from another, and from the whole. Such a situation was alien to the majority of British settlers. In view of the British tradition, with its long experience in democratic government, it is small wonder that steps were taken by the citizens themselves, without direction from any branch of government, to remedy this situation. And with a background of centuries of participation in municipal government, and with the democratic habits of organization developed through generations of political freedom, the attempted solution does not appear unusual.

The first district to organize successfully in an attempt to meet the needs of its citizens was Jasper Place. In many respects, the problems faced by all of the outlying communities of the City were more apparent in this district, and fortunately, there were competent citizens within the community who were vitally concerned with those problems, and who had the necessary background and vision to give leadership to
the residents.

**Jasper Place Problems and Needs**

The Jasper Place district of Edmonton, in 1917, boasted a total population of about three hundred people scattered over an area of approximately one square mile. The great majority of the families in the district earned their livelihood in the City of Edmonton, but supplemented their income by cultivating small truck gardens. Land was plentiful, even within the city limits, and most homes had at least one quarter acre of property.

Jasper Place, when it became a part of the city in 1913, was still a semi-rural community. Public utilities, usually associated with urban living, were not available; roads, sewers, and electric lighting were lacking in most of the district, and public transportation was woefully inadequate. There was an hourly streetcar service, which just came to the edge of the district, and the last streetcar at night left downtown Edmonton at 10:30 p.m., and left Jasper Place at 11:00 p.m. With 142nd Street, the nearest boundary of the district to downtown Edmonton, more than three miles from the heart of the city, any other means of transportation was not practical for a visit to the downtown area.

Poor transportation plus a rigorous climate contributed to the relative isolation of the Jasper Place district from the rest of the city. This situation was, of course, no different than that of many rural areas in central Alberta.
The important difference was, however, that the people of this community travelled to and from the business section of Edmonton daily, in the pursuit of their livelihood. Actually, they worked in the urban city of Edmonton, and lived in rural Jasper Place. Through their work, they were constantly in contact with the social life of the city, yet, they were extremely handicapped in maintaining these social relationships in their leisure time.

Brown, in his first annual report of the Community League, given March 1918, describes the early steps in organization as follows: "It was not, however, until a little over a year ago that one or two citizens having the matter at heart convened a meeting in St. John's Church and invited Miss Jessie Montgomery, of the Department of Extension of the University of Alberta to address the residents of the district on the Social Centre or Community movement. As a result of this meeting, it was unanimously decided to organize such a movement in this district and a committee was appointed to go into details and draft a constitution and By-Laws to be presented to a further public meeting.

The committee obtained information as to the rules and regulations governing similar bodies in the States, and the proposed Constitution and By-Laws for an organization to be known as the 142nd Street District Community League was duly drawn up and presented to a public meeting held in the old Jasper Place school on March 3rd, 1917 exactly a year ago."
This constitution was adopted with a few minor alterations, and officers elected-----."1

It is significant to note that between the calling of the first meeting in the church and the arranging of the second meeting, permission was obtained to use the school building. Mr. Brown has stated that this came about through the tremendous support by the whole community of the first meeting and their unified demands made to the school authorities. It is unfortunate that there is no record to support Brown's statement of practically 100 per cent attendance of community residents at both of these early meetings.

The constitution drafted by the committee, which included Brown, Hall and Tighe, was adopted pretty much as presented with only minor changes. In the preamble the reason for organizing was stated as follows: "We, the citizens of 142nd Street District of Edmonton, do constitute ourselves a deliberative organization or community league, to hold meetings in the public school building for the open presentation and free discussion of public questions, and for such other civic, social, and recreational activities as give promise of common benefit."2

In its first year of operation, the Jasper Place Community League vigorously pressed for needed improvements in the district. The most tangible result was that the school board, pressed by the community league, razed the old school building and replaced it with a new building. The Community League was allowed to hold its regular meetings in the school building.

1 Report of the Secretary, 142nd Street District Community League 1918 - H. P. Brown
2 Constitution of 142nd Street District Community League
and plans for the new building were submitted to the Community League for comments and suggestions. A concession made to the Community League was the placing of the seats in one room on skids so that social evenings could be held during the winter months. Other improvements sought during the first year of the League's operation, were sidewalks, road graveling, a modern sewage system, and improved public transportation schedule. Some progress was made in all cases.

As taxpayers to the city, the citizens of the 142nd Street district were loud in their demands for needed public utilities, feeling they had a right to these services, and as each individual made his views public, there grew the feeling that some form of concerted action was required.

Closely related to the problem of isolation, was the need for recreation for all age groups close to home. This need was immediate, and its fulfillment would to some extent relieve the urgency of those needs related to isolation.

The most concrete problem facing the community however, and the one which proved the greatest incentive to the formation of some representative community group, was the utterly inadequate school facilities. Here the people of Jasper Place had an immediate visible problem. The brick school serving the district had been erected a few years earlier by the rural municipality, before Jasper Place was in the city. The building had been condemned in 1916, but a new one, although due, was not likely to be constructed until 1920.
Parents were refusing to send their children to school because of the danger of the building collapsing.

Thus the community was faced with several immediate needs, which could only be fulfilled through joint action. Individually the citizens recognized their needs, and were quite vocal in their demands. Now Jasper Place needed only competent leadership to organize unified community action. The district was very fortunate that men of vision were available, who were willing to devote time and effort to the service of their community.

Another project promoted during the first year of operation, was the arrangement of special meetings for the discussion of controversial public questions, and the discouragement of political meetings. Preceding an election, all candidates for office were asked to attend a Community League meeting to state their case. So successful and acceptable, was this arrangement to both the electorate and the candidates, that it is still the pattern followed in Edmonton during political campaigns.

Several projects relating to the war effort were undertaken including the raising of money for the Halifax Relief Fund, and the development of gardens in sixty vacant lots in the community with produce being turned over to the Food Controller. Funds were also raised for numerous other purposes directly related to the war effort.

Social evenings were held regularly throughout the
fall and winter months, and a successful field day was held each May 24th. A small fee was charged for social and recreational activities for the purpose of establishing a fund to purchase a new school piano. A skating rink was constructed for the young people of the community and plans were made for the formation of a dramatic club.

Summarizing the League's activities in the first annual report Mr. Brown, the Secretary states, "A retrospection of our activities during the past twelve months, leads us to doubt whether we have accomplished one half of what we could, but for an infant, our League has done very well, and we feel inclined to be satisfied. We would suggest however, that this is no time for satisfaction, but the beginning of greater things—"¹

¹ Report of the Secretary, 142nd Street District Community League 1918 - H. P. Brown.
CHAPTER THREE

SPREAD OF THE COMMUNITY LEAGUE MOVEMENT AND FEDERATION

With the success of the pioneer Community League as an example and an incentive, other leagues were soon organized in various districts, until by 1921 there were ten leagues in the city, all modeled on the pattern established at Jasper Place. It is significant to note that most of these early leagues were formed in those communities that were on the outskirts of the city; for example, Bonnie Doon, Calgary Trail, (Park Allen), Forest Heights, Highlands, King Edward Park, West Edmonton (Calder), Westmount, and Jasper Place. The other two organized leagues at this time were Riverdale and South Side (now defunct).

During this period, the rapid growth of the city was such as to require local improvements much faster than they could be financed and installed. Representatives from all districts were continually pressing demands upon the civic administrators with little regard for anything but the needs of their own particular area. In these, and many other matters, the community leagues found themselves in competition with one another. Similarly many of the leagues were sponsoring various types of sports and games, and in arranging inter-league contests it was necessary to have co-operation between leagues. Again, as in the case of the initial organization of Jasper Place League, it was the University of Alberta Extension Department which initiated action directed towards a solution of these problems. It can be assumed, however, that very active behind the scenes
was Mr. H. P. Brown, a member of both the Extension Department staff and the Jasper Place executive. In any event, on January 24th, 1921, the Director of Extension of the University of Alberta invited representatives of all interested community leagues to a meeting to discuss the formation of some central body which could speak for all of the leagues.

**Federation of the Leagues**

Professor Ottwell, a member of the faculty of the University of Alberta, presided at the meeting, and Mr. Brown was secretary. The purpose of the meeting and the function of a federation of community leagues was outlined, whereupon the following motion was unanimously passed, "In view of the growth of the community movement in the city, and the advisability of closer co-operation between the different leagues, a federation be formed."

Discussion followed on what would be the basis of federation. It was agreed that membership should be confined to community leagues in the city of Edmonton. Officers for the Federation were suggested as President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer, to be elected by the delegates from their number. Elections were held immediately, and the officers elected were instructed to bring in a draft constitution to the next meeting.

Details of the constitution were discussed at the next two meetings, and the constitution finally adopted at the fourth meeting of the Federation, held March 24th. The aims

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1 Minutes of first meeting of Federation of Community Leagues January 24th, 1921.
and objects of the organization were stated as "To facilitate the distribution of information between the units; to promote suitable programmes, and to become a clearing house for same; to take concerted action in matters of common interest and in the interest of the city as a whole, and to come to the support of individual leagues as deemed advisable, when so requested."

The constitution, on the whole, followed the accepted pattern and the complete text thereof is given in Appendix A.

The Federation as a Civic Body

With the organization of the Federation accomplished, attention was directed towards immediate problems. That the general public had confidence in this new organization to represent citizen opinion to the civic government, is evidenced by the fact that at the second meeting of the Federation a delegation appeared asking for support. The delegation consisted of representatives of the Y.W.C.A., the Boy's Work Board, and the Trades and Labour Council. They sought the support of the Federation in pressing for the appointment by the city council of a recreation supervisor for the city. Following discussion, a motion was passed to the effect that the Federation of Community Leagues fully endorse the proposal, and suggest that city council should be asked to appropriate $3500 for this purpose.

That the first delegation to appear before the Federation was also probably the most important that ever has appeared to date, apparently was not perceived by the Federation

1 Constitution of Federation of Community Leagues - 1921
members. Certainly, they did endorse the proposal and a committee was appointed to pursue the matter further. Reference to the matter is seen continually throughout the minutes of the Federation meetings for the first year and a half. References become continually less frequent however, and the whole affair finally is forgotten. Unfortunately, many delegates apparently considered other more immediate and tangible problems more pressing.

There was, however, a related problem, that of adequate play areas, with which the Federation did come to grips. Late in 1922, following agitation from individual Community Leagues, and the granting of property concessions to them, the city commissioners met with representatives of the Federation to select and allot to each Community League a block of land for development for recreational purposes. At that time, land was inexpensive, and the city owned about one half of the residential property within its boundaries. The basis on which land was allotted was that the Community Leagues were given ten year leases on the property at a cost of $1.00 per year, and to date each lease has been renewed except where the Community League has ceased to operate.

As a direct result of this action, Edmonton today has very few communities without land available for development as playgrounds or recreation centres. The few exceptions are in those districts where the community leagues were not able to function continuously. Peculiarly, none of the twenty odd areas
set aside in 1922 were developed to any extent by the community leagues, and only since the establishment of the City of Edmonton Recreation Commission in 1944 have adequately equipped and supervised playgrounds been established in most communities. Many of the community leagues, however, did show an active interest in adult recreation. These leagues constructed small halls on their properties and conducted a programme of educational films, lectures, socials, and carnivals for the education and recreation of members.

Following the initial surge of new leagues, growth of the movement slowed considerably. In 1924, there were twenty leagues, members of the Federation, but by 1930, this number had increased by only two. Progress continued slow until the immediate post-war total to thirty member leagues.
CHAPTER FOUR

OTHER COMMUNITY AGENCIES AND DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS

Many of the needs which led to the organization of community leagues and contributed to their rapid spread and growth in the 1920's were being recognized by other community agencies at about the same time, and many of these agencies were, and still are, attacking specific aspects of the problems as contrasted to the very general approach of the community leagues. Included in this category were both government and volunteer agencies on the local, provincial and dominion levels of organization. The local school boards, the Provincial Department of Education, the Home and School Association, athletic clubs, service clubs, and the private group work agencies were only a few of these groups.

At the level of municipal government, the Edmonton Public and Separate School Boards recognized that life was something more than earning a living, and were gradually working towards a broadened curriculum which would also prepare the student to take his place in society as a happy contributing citizen, with wholesome interests beyond the making of a living. Art, music, physical education, and manual arts were introduced into the school curriculum between 1925 and 1945, and drama, hobby clubs, journalism, and other recreation activities were encouraged on an extra-curricular basis. Stimulation of interest in these activities, and specific training
therein, soon came to be recognized as one of the functions of the modern school.

Very much responsible for this broadened school curriculum was the Home and School Association. At the time the community leagues were formed there were only two rather ineffective Home and School Associations operating in Edmonton. Today there are twenty very active associations, all members of a central body for the city, the Edmonton Home and School Council. The Home and School Associations are primarily concerned with the improvement of education, and constantly strive for improved facilities and a progressive curriculum to keep abreast of our continually changing society. Demands for new and more modern school buildings, inclusion of health and physical education as required courses in the school curriculum, discussion groups on adult education and on school policy, teacher-parent relationships, and community use of school facilities after school hours, are all matters which have received direct attention from various Home and School Associations or from the Edmonton Home and School Council.

At the provincial level Alberta educators have been aware of the ever increasing responsibilities of the school system. In 1944 the Dominion Government passed the National Fitness Act, providing grants up to a total of $225,000, to provinces entering into agreement with the Dominion Government for provision of a physical fitness programme. Alberta entered into such an agreement and, through the Health and
Recreation Branch of the Department of Education, carries on such a programme throughout the province. Training courses for leaders are held and the leaders then return to their own communities to conduct classes. Today, more than twenty-five such leaders are functioning in Edmonton conducting classes for forty-six groups of all ages, and embracing such activities as keep fit exercises, folk dancing, athletic coaching, gymnastics, and tumbling.

Again at the provincial level, the University of Alberta, through its Extension Department, is providing to communities, short courses, educational aids, and trained personnel for guidance in establishing local adult education programmes. Although the Extension Department is primarily concerned with the small towns and rural areas of the province, Edmonton does benefit greatly from their programme. For example, last spring a leadership training course, sponsored by the Extension Department, had an attendance of twenty-six students, twenty-two of whom were recreation workers from Edmonton. Also, extensive use is made throughout the city of the Extension Department film library, and the services of the Extension Department personnel are continually being sought by local groups.

The government agency which has probably had the greatest effect on the community leagues from the point of view of programme, is the City of Edmonton Recreation Commission, which, although formed only in December 1944, has grown so rapidly that very nearly every aspect of its programming
affects either an individual league or all the leagues in the city. The interdependence of this municipal agency and the leagues is of such importance that it is dealt with in a separate chapter.

Volunteer agencies now operating in Edmonton, which have to some extent influenced the programming of the community leagues, are the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and the co-operative voice of both the private and public agencies, the Recreation and Group Work Division of the Council of Social Agencies. The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., with their recreation facilities including gymnasiums, swimming pools and club rooms, with their trained leaders and fine record of achievement, were quick to gain public support and were able to cater to the interests of the most demanding of the city's youth. The Scouts and Guides with their policy of community centered activity groups, were able to offer their tried and proven programme to any community desiring their service. The Group Work Division of the Council of Social Agencies, only established since 1944, while not an agency actually sponsoring a programme, is a planning group for all the public and private agencies in the field of recreation and group work. As such, it has the possibility of serving all the agencies as a central planning body wherein areas of function can be generally interpreted between the agencies, with the objective of returning to the citizens of Edmonton the best possible service from both public and private agencies.
Dividing and Conquering Community Problems -

"The object of this organization shall be the development of intelligent public spirit through the holding of meetings in the school building in which there is the open presentation and free discussion of public questions, and such other activities as shall promote the welfare of this neighbourhood."¹ Such is the very general wording of the "object" of the first community league in Edmonton. Despite the broad generality of these terms, there can be no doubt that in Edmonton, in the year 1918, this was a meritorious and logical object for any organization, and one which could be worked towards without any duplication of effort on the part of the citizens who were members, and without conflicting with the interests of other groups. Indeed, this statement of the objectives of a community league was considered so practical, that it still forms the basis of the article on "object" for newly formed community leagues. For example, the constitution of the Pleasant View Community League, formed as recently as May 1948, states: "The object of this organization shall be the development of public spirit and community pride through the sponsorship and presentation of worthwhile community endeavours."²

Such a statement of purpose was very practical in 1918 when the school curriculum was limited to strictly academic subjects, when the local property owners' association was weak and ineffective, when there was no Home and School Association in most communities, when service clubs were

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¹ Constitution and By-Laws - 142nd Street District Community League - 1918
² Constitution - Pleasant View Community League - 1948
primarily luncheon clubs, when municipal, provincial and
dominion branches of government had recognized no, or very little,
responsibility in the fields of adult education, welfare, and
recreation, and when there was no Council of Social Agencies in
Edmonton. Now, however, with all these organizations function­
ing in one or more of the same or related fields as do the com­
munity leagues, it is sheer folly for the community leagues to
continue to state and pursue the same objectives as were stated
and pursued in 1918. The aims and purposes of these other
community organizations in relation to the objects of a com­
munity league bear examination.

The objective of modern education is the education of
the whole student in those matters which will best make him a
useful and contributing citizen in a democratic society. This
involves academic, social, moral, and physical education.
Further, the modern educator does not limit his conception of
student to those in regular attendance at classes, but is
anxious and willing to offer courses to young people and adults
who are not regularly enrolled. Similarly, at the other end of
the chronological scale, attention is being given the pre­
school aged youngster. In carrying out such a broad programme,
the educators are now able to make use of new educational
procedures which tremendously increase the number of indi­
viduals exposed to competent teaching. The radio brings both
formal and informal education into practically every home.
Motion pictures, film strips, and other visual education aids
are bringing knowledge to many who have been exposed to very little formal education. In addition, these new media of education are exerting a tremendous influence on the social and moral attitudes of the people.

Related to, and to a large extent basing their work on the concepts of modern education, are those organizations active in the fields of recreation and welfare. Extra-curricular activities are an integral part of modern education but such activities are primarily of a recreation nature. Similarly, training for citizenship is a primary function of the school, yet the recognition of that responsibility by every citizen is, broadly speaking, one of the primary objectives of welfare organizations. A casual survey of the situation could possibly lead to the conclusion that in the fields of education, recreation, and welfare, there was some duplication of effort, but a closer scrutiny indicates that the objectives of each of these broad fields of endeavour is different although at times their methods, and more particularly the media in which they operate, may be very similar. For the educator, physical activities serve the primary objective of building physically fit citizens, through teaching the student specific physical activities designed to promote physical health. There is, of course, recognition of the relationship between physical and mental health. The recreation programme includes many physical activities for the primary reason that people enjoy them, and that for many in sedentary occupations, such activities are
relaxing. The welfare worker may use a programme of physical activities for the purpose of studying the interaction of individuals within a natural group with the objective of aiding the members of the group to make a better social adjustment.

To further complicate the picture of a modern community there are innumerable other organizations in the field, each pursuing a specific objective, usually related to the objectives of several other groups, and often using the same media. Thus, a class in handicrafts could serve many purposes. In a school, the learning of a new skill would be the objective, in a recreation agency, relaxation, fun, and the satisfaction of mixing with people of like interest would be the objective, in a social agency the objective could be therapy for social maladjustment, a Home and School group may introduce such a class for the purpose of demonstrating a curriculum need, a service club may sponsor the project "for underprivileged children", while a hospital may be using such an activity as a part of their physical therapy programme.

Although there is variety of purpose in these various groups, there is definitely an overlap in terms of the activities used to pursue the individual purposes. With so many groups, organized on a community basis, pursuing objectives which in all cases are directly related to "the welfare of the neighborhood", the community leagues today are faced with the problem of redefining their object and reconsidering their programme of activities, and the purposes of that programme.
Indicative of the situation as it has developed over the past several years is the constantly shifting programme emphasis within the individual community leagues. One of the first successful programme features of community leagues was meetings where all candidates for public office were asked to present their platforms. Attendance and interest was high at these meetings and all candidates considered them the most essential part of their campaign. During the past few years, however, attendance has been so poor that more frequently than not a meeting is attended by more speakers than listeners. The Edmonton Journal, commenting on the opening of the 1948 civic elections campaign, states, "Last year a full parade of twenty-three mayoralty, aldermanic, and public school board candidates attracted only fourteen persons to the campaign opening". This is not, of course, a local phenomenon but rather is the result of the development of radio and its use for political campaigning. People just find it easier to sit home and listen to the campaign speeches in the comfort of their living room and retain the privilege of turning off the speaker if they are not interested, or lose interest in the speeches.

Another very successful programme feature of community leagues in past years was the presentation of qualified lecturers who gave informative types of talks, usually followed by discussion groups. Today, in practically every community in the city, Home and School Associations meet regularly once a month and at practically every meeting there is a guest
speaker who discusses a topic of particular interest to a group whose purpose is the establishment of ever improving standards of education. Usually the topic could be considered under the classification of curriculum, extra-curricular activities, or adult education.

Thus, in practically every field of activity the community leagues now find themselves in competition with some other community organization which has the tremendous advantage of having its focus of attention directed towards one very specific objective. The organization of leagues and tournaments is now done by the Recreation Commission; teen age groups are organized by the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.; demands for local improvements are made by the Property Owners' Association; hockey and skating rinks are now maintained by both the city and the school boards, while teams in all organized sport are sponsored by commercial firms, athletic clubs or both.

Does the solution to this problem in community organization necessarily lie in the community leagues abandoning their generic approach to community welfare? Before an answer is proposed the relationship between the individual leagues, the Federation and the Edmonton Recreation Commission must be thoroughly understood.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE EDMONTON RECREATION COMMISSION

During the Second World War, the governments of the western allies realized the tremendous importance of recreation to the physical and mental well being of both combatants and non-combatants. There was ample proof that individual well being, promoted through wholesome recreation, paid dividends in terms of increased efficiency. Edmonton, during the war years, had plenty of opportunity to observe the faith of government in recreation as a factor in national defence, from many points of view. Within the city were numerous military establishments of both the British Commonwealth of Nations and the United States of America. Also, there were several large industrial plants engaged in war production employing thousands of workers. Never before, and it is doubtful if since, had there been such an extensive recreation programme operated in the city. To a large extent the armed services and the war industries sold recreation to Edmonton.

Early in 1944, Alderman H. D. Ailnay, who had campaigned on the basis of broader recreation opportunity for all, proposed to the city council that some form of municipal agency be created to promote and co-ordinate recreation activities in the city, particularly those involving public facilities. Private agency leaders, representatives of the Federation of
Community Leagues, prominent interested citizens, were prompted to meet informally under the sponsorship of the Council of Social Agencies and discuss the proposal. Several meetings were held with representatives of the city and Alderman Ainlay finally was able to present to city council in December 1944, By-Law 1069. This By-Law was passed by council and the City of Edmonton Recreation Commission came into being.

By-Law 1069 gave the Recreation Commission power to act in an advisory capacity to Council in relation to the "development, maintenance, extension and use" of all recreational grounds owned or controlled by the City Council including buildings and equipment, and sports and recreational activities; to co-operate with and encourage all existing organizations promoting any sport or recreation; to work in co-operation with and advise the City Commissioners on the direct administration of sports and recreational grounds within the City, including the drawing-up of timetables for the most effective use of such grounds and buildings by clubs or teams; to report and recommend to Council regarding the furnishing of adequate equipment and facilities to be distributed to recreational grounds and buildings for various types of recreational activity; to co-operate with public and private agencies, civic, social and religious organizations, so that the most beneficial and efficient use could be made of all recreation areas and facilities; and finally, to hear and consider representations from any body of citizens on any matter relating to recreation.
whether representing an existing organization or not.

The private agencies and associations in Edmonton who were most concerned with the establishment of a municipal recreation agency were anxious that they be represented on the Recreation Commission. The civic government was, however, opposed to this principle, possibly fearing the establishment of a pressure group. Pleased to see any type of organization set up, the private groups withdrew their objections. In actual practice, however, a compromise has been worked out in that insofar as is possible, of the five members appointed to the Recreation Commission by the nominating committee of city council, one is usually chosen as a representative of sports, but not as a representative of the Edmonton Athletic Council, another is chosen as a representative of the arts, although not as a representative of the Edmonton Arts Council, and a third is usually suggested by the Council of Social Agencies but does not represent that group. Unfortunately, however, no member who could be considered a representative of the Federation of Community Leagues was chosen.

Further, recreation leaders in the city felt that the powers of the Recreation Commission should extend to all city owned recreation facilities and should embrace all recreation activities receiving municipal support. Established departments and branches of the city government were, however, reluctant to give up control of revenue-bearing facilities and activities, and in order to assure passage of the By-Law, exceptions were
made of the public golf courses and swimming pools which are controlled by the Parks Department, the arena which is controlled by Edmonton Exhibition Association and boxing and wrestling which is controlled by the Edmonton Boxing and Wrestling Commission.

One of the strongest arguments used in favour of establishing the Recreation Commission was that it would cost the city very little. The Recreation Commission was to be primarily a promotional and co-ordinating body. Once, however, the operation of playgrounds was assumed and the playground system was enlarged the operating budget of the Recreation Commission increased tremendously. In 1945 the budget was $3000.00, in 1946 it was $7500.00, in 1949 it was $30,000.00 and in 1950 it is $80,000.00. Each year that the Recreation Commission presents its budget to city council the old argument that "it would not cost very much" has to be fought. Fortunately the city council must feel they are receiving full value for their money as in the past three years not one cent has been taken off the Recreation Commission estimates as submitted. It is, however, becoming more and more difficult to justify expenditures for new programmes in view of the very general and vague statement of the powers of the Recreation Commission as laid down in the By-Law.

That "the Recreation Commission shall act in an advisory capacity to City Council on all questions related to the development, maintenance, extension and use of all recreation
grounds owned by the city," is briefly what By-Law 1069 says regarding the function of the Recreation Commission. There is in Edmonton a Parks Department which was established by a resolution of council and there is no written statement of its powers as there is in the case of the Recreation Commission. It is generally assumed, however, that the Parks Department is concerned with the development, maintenance and extension of all city owned park lands. This of course includes those park areas devoted to active recreation. It would seem, then, that a very basic conflict or purposes exists between two branches of the civic government. The city council in 1944 probably had no intention of creating a Recreation Commission that would function as an operating branch of the civic government but rather, thought they were establishing a mere advisory committee. Actually the need for a public recreation authority in Edmonton was not proven until after the authority was established. In other words the Recreation Commission demonstrated a public recreation programme and sold it to the city council. This was achieved by interpreting the needs of the people in terms of recreation and programming to meet those needs.

With the passage of the By-Law in December 1944, the Recreation Commission was duly appointed and officially started functioning January 1st, 1945. Mr. Ainlay, who had sponsored the By-Law was appointed as one of the city council representatives and during the formative months of the group, he was most influential in interpreting policy in relation to the By-Law.
Mr. W. C. Richards, a man who had long been associated with athletics, was elected chairman, and has held that position ever since.

The First Years of the Recreation Commission -

During the first year of its operation, the Recreation Commission held several open meetings at which representatives of various recreation groups in the city were given an opportunity to express their specific needs and to suggest how the Recreation Commission could best work towards meeting these needs. At the start there was much confusion amongst the recreation groups of the city as to what the function of the Recreation Commission should be. For example, one group requested a certain number of baseballs, while another expressed a need for certain stage properties. The most urgent need, it appeared, from these meetings was additional play facilities for children. The Recreation Commission asked its supervisor to make a survey of the city, and to bring in a plan of development of play facilities. The chief supervisor completed his survey by October 1945. No annual report on the operations of the Recreation Commission was issued for the years 1945 to 1946. It is possible, however, to obtain a fairly accurate picture of what was accomplished during that period from material on file at the Recreation Commission office. For the most part in its second year of operation, the Recreation Commission concentrated its attention on expanding the city playground system and, in this regard, in the summer of 1946, they doubled the number of
playgrounds under supervision in the city. Fortunately, they were not faced with the expense of acquiring land for playground purposes, as due to the foresight of the civic administration a quarter century before, each community had under lease a fairly adequate piece of property for recreation use. It was necessary, however, to work out some basis of agreement whereby the Recreation Commission would use the land under the control of the individual Community Leagues.

There is no record of any written agreement between the city and the community leagues in this regard, but rather the Recreation Commission operates supervised playgrounds on community league property on the basis of a verbal understanding. The policy is, that the Recreation Commission supplies playground leadership and apparatus, and a minimum of supplies, while the community leagues are responsible for maintenance and development of the property. Proving satisfactory, this policy has been adhered to until the present, and has allowed the number of supervised and equipped playgrounds to increase steadily.

With the entry of the Recreation Commission into the field of playgrounds operation, the Gyro Club of Edmonton withdrew from the field and turned their assets, consisting of three fully equipped playgrounds, over to the city. Also, the Gyros' made available the amount of $7,500 for purchase of playgrounds equipment over the following five year period. This amount was the balance in the club's playground fund.
Thus assured of at least $1,500 per year for equipment, and with space for playgrounds available in most communities, the rapid expansion of playground facilities was pretty well assured in Edmonton. In 1947, eleven playgrounds were operated, and 1948, fifteen playgrounds, and four tot lots. For 1950, the Recreation Commission budgeted for twenty five equipped and supervised playgrounds, and fourteen tot lots. The ultimate goal of the Recreation Commission is a playground within one half mile of every child's home, and it is estimated that this will require approximately thirty playgrounds. In all but a few cases the land is available and the goal does not look too distant.

Important as playgrounds are, a more significant development in community recreation since the Recreation Commission entered the field is the placement of leadership in the community leagues to develop and conduct a year round recreation programme for all age groups. This is of particular significance in Edmonton, where the long winter, and the restrictions of climate, are limiting factors in the free expression of recreation interests. Following the playground season of 1946, four of the playground directors were taken on permanent staff, and were placed in community league halls to conduct a winter recreation programme. There was little overall supervision, and each director was left to work out a programme as he best saw fit. The general pattern of programmes that developed involved usually a play school type of programme
for pre school children, a simple crafts and active games
programme for six to twelve year olds, and a social recreation
programme for teen agers. Adult programme consisted of dances,
whist drives, bingos, and socials. This adult phase of recrea-
tion was, for the most part, nothing new, but had been carried
on from the early years of the community league movement.

Unfortunately the qualifications of the directors entrusted
with the conduct of these community programmes, were
limited. For the most part, they were engaged on the basis of
demonstrated interest and skills in recreation activities.
Academic training was a minor factor in the selection of leaders.
Problems of relationship with the individual leagues soon arose
and as the staff of the Recreation Commission was not trained in
the principles and methods of community organization they often
as not aggravated the problems rather than solved them.

An important obligation assumed by the Recreation
Commission was that of scheduling the use of all public recrea-
tion facilities such as baseball and softball diamonds, hockey
rinks, football fields, picnic grounds, stadiums, craft rooms,
club rooms and auditoriums. The facilities of the public and
separate school boards were excepted.

In December 1946, the chief supervisor tendered his resigna-
tion and it was accepted. His primary reason for
resigning was that he found his position of multiple responsi-
bility intolerable, particularly in view of administrative
meddling by Recreation Commission members. As an employee of
the city, the administrating officer of the Recreation Commission is responsible to the mayor and city commissioners. Through practice, however, he had also become the executive-secretary of the Recreation Commission and was attempting to carry out the instructions and recommendations of that body, often in direct opposition to the wishes of the civic administration. In addition, the chief supervisor felt obligated to entertain suggestions from the Federation of Community Leagues, as the Recreation Commission program was inextricably bound up with that of the individual leagues. Usually, any suggestion from the Federation came more in the form of a demand, and when many demands were not met a resentment grew up between the Federation and the Recreation Commission. The Federation seemed to fear, that through the Recreation Commission the city was going to take over all the community leagues. Apparently there was nobody capable of interpreting the function of the Recreation Commission in relation to the Federation and to the individual leagues.

Following the resignation of the chief supervisor no new appointment was made, but, rather the Recreation Commission, through its chairman, assumed an administrative role and carried on for over six months without a chief executive. Finally, in March 1947, the Recreation Commission advertised for a new chief supervisor. Following this an offer was received from Mr. Lionel Scott of Toronto to come to Edmonton and act as technical advisor to the Recreation Commission for a period of six months,
during which time he would organize and set up a public recreation programme suited to the particular needs of Edmonton. The offer was accepted and Mr. Scott started work in April 1947.

Unfortunately, there was some resentment in the city against bringing in an outsider and Mr. Scott met active opposition from several recreation groups. His work was further complicated by the vagueness regarding who was the chief administrative officer of the Recreation Commission, he or the chairman. Even under these difficulties, however, a successful summer programme was operated and much interpretive work was done with the Recreation Commission members and community groups. In September 1947 Mr. Scott finished his work and presented a comprehensive report on the principles of public recreation organization and administration as they applied to Edmonton. The writer, who had been negotiating with the Recreation Commission for about six months, was appointed chief supervisor, effective September 15, allowing a two week overlap before Mr. Scott left. Much of the resentment that had greeted Mr. Scott now faced the new chief supervisor, another "outsider".

At the time the writer assumed the position of chief executive of the Recreation Commission the staff consisted of four full time playground directors and a secretary. Three of the directors had applied for the position of chief supervisor and all seemed to resent their new superior. On the other hand, the Recreation Commission seemed to have no confidence in their staff and offered to discharge the lot of them and
PLATE I

Superintendent

Secretary

Director  Director  Director  Director

Figure 1.

Chart Showing Staff Organization of Recreation Commission 1947

Figure 2.

Chart Showing Staff Organization of Recreation Commission 1948
start afresh from top to bottom. Despite the administrative tumult within the Recreation Commission the work of the past few years had been well enough performed to warrant an increase in the appropriation for 1948. This allowed for considerable staff increase and made possible the promotion of the two most efficient of the original staff. Since that time the loyalty of the staff has never been questioned. Comparative charts of departmental organization in 1947 and 1948 are shown on plate 1.

A second, and more important, problem facing the Recreation Commission was that of the relationship between the Recreation Commission and the community leagues. Many Edmontonians, active in the field of recreation, find this relationship obscure and it is no wonder, as neither the Recreation Commission nor the Federation know themselves from one day to another just what their relationship is to one another, nor, what it could be or should be. Within the civic administration, one school of thought, recognize in the Federation a strong pressure group which has in the past caused them some embarrassment. This group would like to see the community league movement die out. There are, however, others who recognize that if the community leagues cease to exist, the city, through the Recreation Commission, would have to bear the full cost of maintaining the recreation facilities now controlled by the leagues.

The Federation and the Leagues Today -

The Community Leagues in Edmonton, at this time,
numbered twenty-nine. These varied from fairly representative community groups attempting to follow the objectives of the movement to restricted minority groups carrying on much on the basis of a private club. Many of the leagues were tottering on the brink of bankruptcy, while others were in sound financial condition. Facilities ranged from wholly undeveloped land, leased from the city, to developed and equipped recreation centres complete with playground, recreation building, rinks, rink houses, bowling greens, and tennis courts.

All of these leagues were members of the Federation of Community Leagues. This Federation was a very loose organization and exercised little real control over the activities and policies of the member leagues. Even within its limited scope the Federation received, at the best, half hearted support from the member leagues. In the minutes of the Federation there are several references to approximately half the member leagues being delinquent in payment of the affiliation dues, and attendance at Federation meetings seldom shows more than half the leagues represented.

Most of the work of the Federation was channelled through three active standing committees; educational, civics, and sports. The educational committee was responsible for arranging for speakers at the meetings of the member leagues, if so requested. This committee, in addition, was responsible for scheduling the Federation moving picture projector in the various community league halls. The civics committee was charged
with the responsibility of making representations to the city council or to other agencies of the city government on behalf of the Federation or of member leagues, when so requested. The sports committee was responsible for the organization and conduct of inter-community league sports. Although the work of the civics committee is largely of a non-recreation nature, all three committees are in continual contact with the Recreation Commission.

There is not, however, any necessary relationship between the programmes of the Federation and those of the individual leagues. The civics committee of the Federation will represent the leagues upon request but often as not the individual leagues will present their requests directly to the city government. While most of the leagues participate in some of the Federation sports leagues, few are represented in them all, and some are represented in none of them. Less than half the leagues are in the habit of presenting speakers at their meetings and of those that do many make their own arrangements. Similarly, less than half the leagues make use of the Federation motion picture projector, many of them lacking adequate facilities for such a programme.

The programmes of the individual leagues fall broadly into four classifications. There are those with small membership, but possessing a hall where all programme is operated on a commercial basis, with participation coming from the general public, rather than league membership. In such a league there
might be a "bingo" held two nights a week, a dance held on Saturday night, and as many of the remaining evenings in the week as possible, the hall will be rented to private groups. A second classification shows those leagues which are relatively new and do not possess a hall. Membership is usually fairly representative of the community and most programme is directed towards raising funds for the construction of a hall. Dances, socials, carnivals, and concerts, are frequently held in school, church, or lodge halls, by the leagues in this group. A third group of leagues are those who have halls and have fairly representative membership and who are trying to make their leagues and halls a real community asset. These leagues make their halls available to such community groups as Boy Scouts and Girl Guides and usually have a teen age social group organized and under the supervision of volunteers drawn from the league membership. Saturday night dances or socials for league members are regularly scheduled. The fourth classification of community leagues is those who have available the services of a full time director paid by the Recreation Commission. There were four such leagues at the beginning of 1948.

Recreation Commission - Community League Relationships

At this date, the four directors of the Recreation Commission were located in Westmount, Riverdale, Jasper Place, and King Edward Park. Excepting Westmount, where the director had been working for nearly a year, all of these community league programmes, having started operations in September
1947, represented new ventures for the Recreation Commission. All directors were placed on the basis of the following policy laid down by the Recreation Commission; "In conducting a winter programme it is necessary for the Recreation Commission to make use of facilities other than its own, and consequently a definite policy had to be worked out with the organizations controlling the facilities. The following policy was worked out over a period of three months and was deemed satisfactory for future winter programme operation under existing conditions: The Recreation Commission makes available a qualified director for a minimum of forty hours per week, to act in an advisory capacity and to stimulate and broaden the recreation programme. It is his duty to work through volunteer leads in the community and to assure that the programme is available to all the people of the community. The Recreation Commission also supplies, to a limited extent, games supplies, handicraft materials, and other equipment required for the programme. The community in turn must assure that the recreation director shall be able to use the facilities controlled by the community for the programme, and they must in addition establish an advisory body to assist the director in determining the needs of the community and in planning and carrying out the programme.

It is not the desire of the Recreation Commission to impose a preconceived programme on the communities, but rather to place a director in the community who is qualified to carry out a programme conceived by and suited to the needs of that particular community."  

1 Annual Report of Superintendent of Public Recreation for the City of Edmonton Recreation Commission; 1947 pp 13
Although predicated upon the brief experience of only three months this policy has proven workable to both the community leagues and the Recreation Commission and has worked so effectively that it is still in force today.

In Jasper Place community a well balanced programme of recreation was in operation at the start of 1948. Cooperation of the community league was excellent and the terms of the policy, as laid down by the Recreation Commission, were followed to the letter and in spirit. The recreation programme offered activities for all age groups and both sexes and ranged from athletics, to arts, and social recreation. The smallness of the hall seemed to be the only factor limiting the further expansion of programme. The community advisory group, under the guidance of the recreation director, were careful not to exclude such groups as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides from the use of the hall.

The pattern in Riverdale was very similar to that in Jasper Place excepting some variations in programme content. In King Edward Park, however, the situation was somewhat different. The King Edward Park district, on the very outskirts of the city, is still a more or less semi-rural community. The community hall is not centrally located, but is near the eastern border of the area. The people at the western end of the district did not participate to any extent in the programme. Because of the distance of many of the homes from the hall, attendance at programmes was small during the harsh winter
months. Nevertheless, a key group of community leaders worked with the director, and a fairly good programme was achieved.

In Westmount the programme was operating for the second winter season. It was in this community that most of the experimental work was done that later formed the basis of the Recreation Commission policy in regard to community recreation programmes. The picture was somewhat confused in this district as here, the Y.M.C.A. operated its only community branch. Another important factor in Westmount was the existence of a community council. This group had been formed at the instigation of the Recreation Commission to prevent overlap and duplication of service between the Community Y.M.C.A. and the Recreation Commission - Community League programmes.

"The Westmount Community Council, the co-ordinating and programming organization for this winter programme, had been an effective force for long-range planning in the Commission since its inception in 1946. The organization is composed of delegates appointed by member organizations which consist of the Westmount Community League, the Mountglen "Y", the Mountglen Home and School Association, and the St. Andrews Home and School Association. The important branch of this organization is the programme planning committee which takes a long range view of the community needs and plans programmes within the scope of the community as a whole to provide." ¹

The Recreation Commission, however, is not the only public agency operating a recreation programme in Edmonton.

¹ Ibid - Page 14
The Health and Recreation Branch of the Department of Education, operating under the National Fitness Act, provides recreation leadership throughout the province. Prior to the establishment of the Recreation Commission in Edmonton the Health and Recreation leaders operated more or less independently, being responsible to their head offices in Calgary. In 1946, however, the Health and Recreation branch asked the Recreation Commission to approve any centres operated by their leaders in Edmonton. As the programme of the Health and Recreation branch was primarily one of physical recreation there was not necessarily any duplication of effort.

During the year 1948 the Recreation Commission established closer liaison with the Health and Recreation Branch and has made effective use of their leaders in community centres thus relieving the Recreation Commission directors of the responsibility for the physical type of recreation programme. As the Recreation Commission develops, more Health and Recreation leadership will be drawn into their programme. This should eliminate the small one night independent programme now operated by many of the Health and Recreation leaders.

The most recent step of importance taken by the Recreation Commission in relation to the community leagues was sponsoring the request of Highlands league for a financial grant from the city to aid in the construction of their new hall. The Recreation Commission strongly supported the Highlands request and the city made a grant of $5,000.00 and in
so doing established a policy of grants to community leagues in regard to new buildings. This policy was based to a large extent on recommendations made by the Recreation Commission, and subsequently two more such grants have been made, and several community leagues have been given the needed stimulus to start building plans. In all cases the Recreation Commission and the city architects' department are consulted at the outset.

It will be noted, that whereas it is apparent that a close relationship is maintained between the Recreation Commission and the individual leagues, the total public programme is carried out without reference to the Federation. Indeed, in matters pertaining to recreation, the community leagues seldom make their representations to the city government through the Federation, but rather appeal directly to the Recreation Commission. This, unfortunately, has resulted in some friction between the Federation and the Recreation Commission, and on two occasions representatives of the Federation have requested that the Recreation Commission hear no delegations from the community leagues directly but only through the Federation. This of course, is impossible under By-Law 1069. The idea of looking towards the Recreation Commission for help and guidance rather than to the Federation has taken firm hold in the community leagues.
CHAPTER SIX

COMMUNITY RE ORGANIZATION FOR RECREATION: ITS POSSIBILITIES

It is estimated that 1949 saw an increase in population in Edmonton of 10,000, bringing the total to approximately 140,000. Indeed, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce claims that Edmonton is the fastest growing city in Canada. Accompanying, and as a result of this general population increase, was an increase in the number of Community Leagues by two, the re-activation of two other leagues, and an increased membership and resulting strengthening of still other leagues. At the end of 1949, there were 31 more or less active community leagues in Edmonton. There were, however, a few populous neighborhoods wherein no leagues existed and, what was worse, where there was no land available for establishment of a league.

Regardless of these few exceptions, Edmonton had in Community League property, very nearly adequate recreation space, properly distributed throughout the city. Indeed, in most cases, neighborhood areas had been dedicated to recreation use 25 years ago. It was, however, only since the establishment of the Recreation Commission that any planned development of these areas had been undertaken. It had been the thought of the leagues that they would be developed as neighborhood play centres. Some leagues had established baseball diamonds on their property, others had built tennis courts, a few had put in
bowling greens and practically all of them had built skating or hockey rinks. In no case, however, had there been any planned development prior to the work done by the Recreation Commission. Rather, community facilities developed in line with the special interests of the controlling group in the community league, and in few cases did the controlling groups champion the cause of the children. The Federation made no attempt to state objectives or to establish plans or policies under which community grounds could be developed in the best interests of the various communities. To them, the interests of the community league were of greater importance than the interests of the community, and in many cases the community league membership was less than 5% of the adult population of the community. This policy, of course, worked in a vicious circle. The Community League had little regard for the community and often had a very small membership because of this lack of recognition of community needs.

There is today a difference in the work of the leagues as compared to 1920. Many of the community leagues which started out as genuinely representative community groups have developed into small groups protecting their special interests as the direct result of static policy not geared to a constantly changing community pattern. For example, the citizens coming to Jasper Place in 1920 would join the Community League because that group was working toward better school facilities for the children of the community. In 1930, however, that same citizen,
for the same reason, would be more inclined to join the local Home and School Association. Similarly the citizen in 1920 who wished to protest the alienation of a piece of park property would do so through his community league, but in 1948, the protest would be made through the Recreation Commission. In short, the very general function which the local community leagues served in 1920, was not as effective as the more specific functions of newer agencies that had developed. The Home and School Association, was more successful in dealing with the relationship of the school to the community as its prime purpose, than was the community league in dealing with such matters as one of several purposes. The Recreation Commission, with its specific concern with community recreation, could deal more effectively with problems in that field than could the Community League which held community recreation as only one of its functions. The school, with its extra-curricular programme under trained personnel, was more able to meet the needs of the community in terms of the arts, sports, and adult education programmes, than were the community leagues. Indeed, as Edmonton developed into a city, and many of the agencies usually associated with a city developed, the very general function of the community leagues was broken down and dealt with in its specific aspects by various organizations devoted to a single purpose.

The current situation demands reconsideration of the place of the community league in the total community picture. Should the Community Leagues be dissolved? Could the city,
through the Parks Department, take over responsibility for the maintenance, care and development of community league buildings and properties? Could the city through the Recreation Commission assume responsibility for the conduct of recreation programmes in those buildings and on those properties? Could the needs of the community in regard to school matters be best served through the Home and School Association? And could many of the avocational interests of the community be met through the school's modern curriculum and extra-curricular activities? The experiences of agencies reviewed in this study should point up the answers.

**Principles and their Application**

Any text on community organization or recreation administration, any recreation executive, or any successful community recreation programme, indicate that the common denominator of success in the field of community organization for recreation is a democratic approach. The most widely used democratic approach is that of having professional leaders work with a representative community group, which acts in an advisory capacity and assists in determining the needs and resources of the community. The National Recreation Association, on the basis of their vast experience in this field state: "The more responsibility neighborhood people feel for their community centre the greater will be the success of the centre as a real neighborhood club. For this reason many cities are organizing groups or councils of neighborhood people around each centre
to act in an advisory capacity to the centre's staff, and to put at the disposal of the workers their knowledge of neighborhood conditions and of the desires and needs of the people." 1 Indeed, so important is this advisory committee or council that many authorities maintain that the first step in promoting community recreation is to obtain such a group. In a pamphlet entitled "Recreation in your Community", published by the American Legion, Department of Minnesota under the heading "How to Start", the opening sentence is as follows: "First steps in community recreation can be initiated by an individual, private groups or public body, and usually take the form of organizing a community recreation committee." 2 The Los Angeles survey group, in their very comprehensive report, made a recommendation which in brief stated: "A citizen's group is needed in each community or neighborhood". 3

There is evident agreement that a "must" in the conduct of a community recreation programme is some form of citizen's group organized around each community centre, and it would seem that Edmonton, with its already organized community leagues, has had for many years the basis of a comprehensive community recreation programme. True, many of the leagues are not truly representative of the community, but they are so in theory. Further, none of the leagues consider the promotion of recreation their only function, but all of them consider it one of their most important functions. Although there are other citizens groups in many communities who have an interest in recreation it

1 The Conduct of Community Centres - National Recreation Assoc.
2 Recreation in your Community - American Legion, Dept. of Minnesota - page 1
3 Recreation for Everybody - Sorensen - page 37. Los Angeles, 1946
is necessary, "--- to concentrate on one representative citizen's group in each community. While the communities may germinate more than one group, and the various workers may need to have relations to them, the objective should be to help develop only one strong central lay group with the overall needs of the community as its concern." 1

Mr. Scott, in his report to the City of Edmonton Recreation Commission, fully realized the principle that the community recreation programme should be developed through one community organization. He says, "The community centre is the heart, the very core of the whole community organization process. In and around the Centre with its adjacent playground, is found the focus for the whole movement. The key organization in this movement is the Community Council---" 2 Later in his report he devotes a full section to Community Councils. During his brief stay in Edmonton, an attempt was made to organize a community council in Ritchie district as had previously been done in Westmount. The attempt in Ritchie failed and incurred the wrath of the Ritchie community league. The reason for this failure was that whereas in Westmount the community league is a narrow, self perpetuating group without real community representation, in Ritchie, the community league is fairly representative and considers community recreation its primary function. In Westmount the Community Council was more or less forced upon the community league by the two Home and School Associations who recognized that the community league was not fulfilling its

1 Recreation for Everybody, pp 38 - Sorenson - Los Angeles, 1946
2 Municipal Recreation Report - Lionel Scott - Edmonton, 1947
function. In Ritchie, the move was initiated, in the face of considerable resistance, through the community league which was already doing its best to fulfill its obligations in the field of community recreation.

Since the start of 1948, a new policy has been in effect in the Recreation Commission which is in keeping with the principle of working primarily with only one community group, and assisting that group to become a truly representative community council, in fact, if not in name. In Edmonton the logical group to work with is the Community League. This policy appears to be supported by the findings of the Los Angeles survey group when they state as one of their recommendations that, "...the name which the community chooses to call the council or committee does not matter: They can be co-ordinating Councils, Community Councils, or anything else - providing they actually constitute a responsible group of citizen leaders working for the welfare of their community."¹

At the start of 1948, the Recreation Commission had community centre directors placed on a full time basis in four Community Leagues. One of these, Westmount, was complicated by the existence of a community council and the presence of a Y.M.C.A. community branch. There, an attempt was made to gradually strengthen the community league to the point where the "extra" group, the community council, would no longer be necessary. Several of the key lay people who made up the community council were shown that it was in the best interests of the

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¹ Recreation for Everybody - page 38 - Sorenson, Los Angeles, 1946
community if they would become active members of the community league. As a result the community league is becoming a more representative group, and is gradually accepting community recreation as its primary function. At the same time the Community Council is gradually weakening and at the present time is quite an unimportant group. The Recreation Commission realize that in deliberately attempting, although indirectly, to dissolve a community council they are taking a radical step, but they are boldly supporting the move. In regard to the community Y.M.C.A., a holding relationship has been established on the basis of division of programme responsibility. The Recreation Commission, through the Community League, is accepting responsibility for the age group up to twelve years and adult programme, while the Y.M.C.A. is working primarily with teens and specialized groups in the 9 to 12 year old bracket. The Recreation Commission does not agree that mass programming for teen agers is a legitimate function of the Y.M.C.A. but is not yet challenging this point. Further community expansion of the Y.M.C.A. in terms of facilities is, however, being discouraged. Westmount has proven itself a testing ground of public - private agency relationship and in that regard has been valuable for both public and private agencies, and for the welfare of the people of Edmonton.

In attempting to strengthen the four community leagues in which directors were working a very general pattern was followed by the Recreation Commission. The first organized programme instituted in any community in which the Recreation
Commission is working was the play school for pre-school children. Registration of the children attending the play school is kept, but also, the mothers of the children are required to register. In the conduct of the programme one volunteer mother is needed for every ten children attending, and each mother is required to serve as a volunteer in order to keep her child eligible to attend. Usually at least half of the mothers are not members of the community league so the next step is that the Recreation Commission informs the Community League that they are within their rights if they insist that all the parents of children attending community league programmes be members of the league. This is not done until the play school has been running a sufficient length of time that the parents can recognize the value of such a programme to the children. As a result very nearly one hundred per cent of the parents join the league without complaint.

In some cases this policy has caused difficulty within the community league, for not infrequently it has happened that the mothers outnumber the total league membership. Generally these parents are interested only in what the community league has to offer their children and are not interested in any other aspects of the community league programme.

To overcome this situation, The Recreation Commission director next attempts to organize the mothers into a club to prepare projects for the play school sessions and to raise finances and plan special parties for the youngsters. Through this club, an attempt is then made to interest the mothers in
some form of recreation for themselves, such as a handicraft programme or a keep-fit class.

In actual practice, this policy has been followed through as outlined in Jasper Place and Riverdale and is proceeding according to plan in other centres. It is hoped that a further step will be possible, that of having the mothers club sponsor special occasions to which they will invite their husbands and from this a broad programme for adults could develop.

It must be realized that the play school programme is only one of many programmes the Recreation Commission sponsors with the Community Leagues. It is, however, through the medium of this programme that the process of strengthening the Community Leagues seems most likely to succeed.

The Recreation Commission, through its community directors, are now actively co-operating with community leagues in promoting recreation programmes for all age groups, and both sexes. Typical programmes include play schools for pre school children; handicrafts and games programmes for the 6 to 12 year old group, games, forums and social recreation for the teens, social recreation, keep-fit classes, and handicrafts for the adults. Organized sports and athletics are not considered within the function of the Recreation Commission director at the Community League level but rather some measure of co-operation between the leagues and the Recreation Commission is achieved at the level of the Federation.

The Recreation Commission, in 1948, appointed a
supervisor of athletics who works closely with the sports committee of the Federation in arranging schedules and allotting athletic facilities for the various community league sports. In practice the supervisor of athletics of the Recreation Commission is actually the director of the inter-community league sports programme. This, however, is only part of the work of the supervisor of athletics, as much of his time is spent working with the four athletic clubs in the city and with the various athletic associations. The Edmonton Athletic Council, which brings together all groups interested in the promotion and expansion of amateur athletics, act in an advisory capacity to the Supervisor of Athletics. The Federation is represented on the Athletic Council and through that group, areas of function in the field of organized sports and athletics have been defined. The four athletic clubs are primarily concerned with sponsoring teams of boys between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one in highly competitive leagues. In all cases, their teams are affiliated with the appropriate association governing the particular sport. The Federation is concerned primarily with boys under the age of sixteen and with any boys who can not make a place on the athletic club teams. The Recreation Commission, through the Supervisor of Athletics, conducts training schools in various sports for any boy who is not playing on any organized team. Organization for athletics in Edmonton, has been tending towards this form for some years but it has only been since the formation of the Athletic Council, and more recently
the appointment of a Supervisor of Athletics, that the areas of function of the various interested bodies, have been made clear.

A New "Object" for Community Leagues -

From this background of Community Recreation in Edmonton, it seems that a clear, workable plan of community organization for recreation is indicated, with the community leagues taking their place, with a new function, but still as the most important group in the overall scheme. What has been lacking in the past is full time professional leadership to give the community recreation programme guidance, to give the innumerable voluntary workers a sense of programme stability and to interpret to the general public the value of the work being done. This professional leadership is now available from the Recreation Commission. The community recreation programme is no longer dependent upon one or two aggressive volunteers in the community, and is not so liable to suffer from a change in community league personnel. The recreation director is always present to maintain the continuity of programme and to ferret out new community volunteers and community leaders.

It is obvious that, if the community leagues were dissolved, some representative community group, to act in an advisory capacity, would immediately have to be organized by the recreation directors. Further, if the city, through the Parks Department or other departments, were to accept responsibility for the maintenance and development of community league buildings and properties, then less city funds would be
available for recreation leadership and much of the initiative which communities displayed in raising funds to build halls, would be destroyed. True, the Recreation Commission could assume responsibility for the conduct of the recreation programme in those buildings and on those properties, but the extent of the programme, and its success, is directly dependent upon the amount of support and voluntary assistance given by the community leagues.

There is no doubt that the needs of the community in regard to school matters can best be served through the Home and School Association, with its focus of attention on such matters. Some people are inclined to go further and suggest that, the modern school with its broad curriculum, extensive facilities and trained personnel, could meet the recreation needs of the community. While it is undoubtedly the function of the school to teach the students a variety of recreation skills this must be essentially a teaching situation. Provision of opportunity to practice these skills, as recreation, is not the responsibility of the schools. There is no logical reason, however, why the facilities used for the teaching situation could not be used for recreation. Both the Recreation Commission and the Community Leagues welcome every opportunity to use school facilities for recreation programmes.

Recreation is the fundamental responsibility of the Recreation Commission and at the community level this responsibility is realized through the medium of the community leagues.
The function of the community leagues today is not essentially different from that conceived by the founders of the movement but there is a small difference and it is important. During the early years of the movement, the community leagues conceived and carried out their own recreation programmes. Today the community leagues conceive the programme and carry it out, but under the guidance of trained professional leadership. The community leagues are essentially a planning and advisory group. This new function is essentially that which is usually attributed to a Community Council. "The Community Council consists of men and women living in the community and taking active part in the direction of community activities. They are not composed of an imported group of "leading citizens" nor are they professional people who have grouped together to "do good" for the under-privileged. These Community Councils are the rank and file of the neighborhood....Many of these Councils have themselves extended invitations to leading men and women....to join with them as an advisory board, in helping to plan and to co-ordinate activities in the best interests of the neighborhood and community." 1

Assuming that at the local level the community leagues can function as community councils and have a very essential role to play in community organization for recreation in the neighborhood, the question arises as to how, or through what form of organization can the efforts of the various communities be co-ordinated in the best interests of the city as a whole.

In the past co-ordination of league efforts has been the theoretical function of the Federation of Community Leagues. Unfortunately this body, from the start, has been given very little real power by the member leagues. The constitution of the Federation states that one of the objectives of the Federation is the promotion of "suitable community programmes" but there is no power given the Federation to take any action if a member league promotes unsuitable community programmes. No attempt was made to define what was and what was not a suitable programme, and there was no over-all programme planning. True, the sports committees formed athletic leagues, and the education committees sponsored lectures and films, but in each case the entire responsibility for organization rested with the individual league. As with so many organizations, the failure or success of the programme in any given league depended to a great extent upon the personnel of the executive of the league at the time. Until the establishment of the Recreation Commission, there was never any professional leadership available to provide guidance and stability to the community recreation programme. The Federation had in the past, overall direction of the programme, but had never followed through on the idea. If competent leadership personnel had been engaged by the Federation it is doubtful if the Recreation Commission, as a separate organization, would have been formed in Edmonton. It was, to a large extent, due to the lack of initiative of the Federation in regard to paid leadership that the Recreation Commission arose. In actual practice
the Recreation Commission is to a great extent no more than an advisory body to the leadership personnel serving the community leagues individually and collectively. The community leagues control the majority of the playgrounds and practically all the community centres in which the Recreation Commission conducts its programme. Under the supervision of a paid staff of recreation leaders the Recreation Commission is rapidly expanding the community recreation programme and the community leagues are becoming more and more dependent on that body, and less and less dependent on the Federation. Although not clearly recognizing the situation, the Federation feels that the Recreation Commission is threatening to supplant it, and views with suspicion and alarm any extension of the Recreation Commission programme. This situation constitutes the major problem facing community recreation in Edmonton today.

The solution to this problem, if viewed unemotionally, is quite simple. There are now two city organizations, both purporting to do essentially the same job. One is appointed by the civic administration, and the other is a Federation of the individual community leagues; one is supported by tax funds, the other is supported by voluntary donations, one has available a fairly large staff of paid recreation leaders, and the other works through volunteers. There should be in Edmonton, only one central organization responsible for the conduct of community recreation and that group is the City of Edmonton Recreation Commission. If, however, the Federation of Community Leagues
ceased to function, then the Recreation Commission would probably have to be reorganized in order to be more representative of the community leagues with which they are working.

The Federation, over a period of more than 25 years, has managed to demonstrate to the city the importance of community recreation. Indeed, so well have they done this, that the city has accepted recreation as a public function. Having accomplished this, the Federation has not gone on to demonstrate new or further needs in the field of community recreation, but has resented the entry of the civic government into a field they consider their private reserve.

A New Recreation Commission -

Agency functions in a changing society must be flexible. True, the flexibility of public agencies is generally limited by government policy; but policy itself need not necessarily be static, it should change in the face of community needs and agency services designed to meet those needs. Fortunately flexibility has been the basis of Recreation Commission policy since the inception of that public agency.

It is the declared objective of the Recreation Commission to place a full time professional recreational leader in each of the thirty or more communities in Edmonton. This leader, or director, will be charged with the organization and conduct of the community recreation programme and will be expected to stimulate and broaden existing programme. The director will, in general, follow the pattern set in those communities
where the Recreation Commission now has leaders working. In each case, the community league or a committee thereof, will be expected to act in an advisory capacity to the director, and to assist him in determining the needs and resources of the community. All directors will be directly responsible to the Supervisor of Playgrounds and Centres who will be concerned with maintaining standards of programme, providing programme aids and facilitating the exchange of ideas between staff members. He will evaluate the work of the directors and seek to secure their full effectiveness. Further, the Supervisor of Playgrounds and Centres will organize inter-community and city wide events, in which indoor and outdoor centre groups will participate. While the directors will work co-operatively with other agencies in the neighborhood on the community level, the Supervisor will do so at the city level. It must be noted, however, that it is not the desire of the Recreation Commission to impose a pre-conceived programme on the communities, but rather it is hoped that by working through the local community league a programme conceived in the community, and carried out by the people of the community, can be achieved.

In Edmonton, athletics and sports have always functioned apart from the total community recreation programme, and it seems wise to continue this policy. The Supervisor of Athletics for the Recreation Commission is available to give assistance in the organization and promotion of sports, and works with all existing athletic groups in the city. During the past
year, he not only organized the inter-community league sports, but actually conducted the programme when the volunteer appointed by the Federation was unable to find the time necessary to do the job. There is no reason why this cannot be continued, and accepted as the policy of the Recreation Commission and the community leagues in regard to sports. The Supervisor of Athletics now has, as one of his responsibilities, the assigning of time to various teams on the public sports facilities, and the community leagues have always had to come to the Recreation Commission in this regard.

The community centre and playground activities of each community league should be under the direction of the Supervisor of Playgrounds and Centres of the Recreation Commission, and the sports programme of the community leagues should be under the direction of the Supervisor of Athletics of the Recreation Commission.

While the Recreation Commission directors will have available a community advisory group, there should also be active advisory groups working with the two Recreation Commission supervisors. The Supervisor of Athletics already works closely with the Edmonton Athletic Council which while not a strictly community league group has on it representation from the community leagues. Similarly there should be organized a group which would act in an advisory capacity to the Supervisor of Playgrounds and Centres. This group could take a form, and perform a function, similar to that of a playground council, and
would be made up of representatives from the recreation advisory
groups of the various community leagues. To follow the organ-
izing process a step further, both the Edmonton Athletic Council
and the Playground Council or Recreation Advisory Council should
have representatives on the Recreation Commission, so they will
have a voice in the over-all planning and policy making for the
city.

The great weakness of the Recreation Commission is
that, aside from the city council and the school boards, the
membership does not represent those groups who are most vitally
concerned with recreation in the city. Scott recognized this
and made several recommendations regarding the make-up of the
Recreation Commission. He recommended that in addition to
representatives of the city council and the two school boards,
there should be on the Recreation Commission representatives of
the Council of Social Agencies, Edmonton Athletic Council,
Federation of Community Leagues and Arts Council. In addition,
he recommended that four members be elected from the general
public. These recommendations were never fully discussed by
the Recreation Commission, and after a cursory reading were dis-
missed. There was, however, much merit in these proposals.

Under the present set-up, four members of the Recre-
ation Commission are representatives of some branch of civic
government and the other five are appointed by the nominating
committee of city council. This situation makes it possible
for political considerations to play a large part in determining
the personnel of the Recreation Commission. Under a set-up wherein the Recreation Commission would consist of representatives of various community organizations this danger would be minimized. There is no doubt that the Federation, if it continues to exist, should have representation on the Recreation Commission.

The number of groups which should be represented on the Recreation Commission is debatable. There should be, however, at least representation from the Federation, the Council of Social Agencies, the Edmonton Athletic Council, and the Home and School Association. In addition there might be representatives from the School Boards, the city council, and the arts council. Let us consider, for the present, only those groups with a demonstrated interest in community recreation, i.e. the Federation, Edmonton Athletic Council, Council of Social Agencies, and the Home and School Association.

It will be noted that the Federation has representatives on both the Edmonton Athletic Council and the Council of Social Agencies, and it will be recalled that the four active committees of the Federation are the civics, sports, education, and recreation. Does it now seem logical that these four functions; civics, sports, education and recreation could best be served through the Federation, the Edmonton Athletic Council, the Council of Social Agencies and the Home and School Association respectively? The Federation would be made up of representatives of the civics committees of the individual leagues; the representatives of the sports committees would be delegates
Figure 1. Existing voluntary organizations to be represented on Recreation Commission.

- Edmonton Athletic Council
- Home & School Council
- Federation of Community Leagues
- Council of Social Agencies

Figure 2. Committee organization of local community league.

- Community League
  - Sports
  - Education
  - Civics
  - Recreation

Figure 3. Staff organization and lines of authority of Recreation Commission.

- Superintendent
  - Supervisor of Athletics
  - Supervisor of Playgrounds & Centres
  - Directors in local communities
to the Edmonton Athletic Council; the representatives of the recreation committees would be delegates to the Council of Social Agencies, and the representatives of the education committee would be delegates to the Home and School Association. It is true of course, that thirty delegates from the community leagues would swamp most of these central groups, but some formula to govern representation could be worked out.

The suggested form of community organization is shown in chart form in plate II. Figure 1 shows the minimum group which would have representatives on the Recreation Commission. These four represented groups; the Edmonton Athletic Council, the Edmonton Home and School Council, the Federation of Community Leagues and the Council of Social Agencies are all existing voluntary community organizations. If any other organization came into being and was representative of an appreciable group functioning in the broad field of recreation, then that organization would logically be entitled to representation on the Recreation Commission. For example, if the various groups sponsoring musical activity in Edmonton formed a Music Council, or some such body, then that body would be eligible for representation on the Recreation Commission. There may also be added such other groups as the city council may insist be represented.

A typical community league is shown in figure 2, plate II. The four standing committees; sports, education, civics and recreation are not all found in every community
Suggested co-ordination of voluntary organizations, Recreation Commission staff and local community leagues.
league. Some leagues have less than the four standing committees while others have more. The four mentioned, however, represent the usual pattern of committee organization.

The professional staff of the Recreation Commission and the lines of authority leading up to the city council are shown in figure 3, plate II. The three elements of community organization for recreation, the voluntary representative organizations, the local community group and the professional leadership are brought together as shown in plate III, and the relationships between the components is indicated.

Under the straight-forward form of organization shown, the democratic process, so vital to community recreation, has full scope. At the administrative level the Recreation Commission, a body so constituted as to be fully representative of the recreation interests of the city, acts in an advisory capacity to the executive officer, the superintendent. The superintendent is in turn responsible to the city council, the elected representatives of the people. At the supervisory level the groups most concerned with the work of the supervisors are able to offer criticism and advice while receiving suggestions and guidance. The Supervisor of Athletics for instance depends upon the advice of the Edmonton Athletic Council in all matters pertaining to his work and to the extension of the athletic programme in the city. As the Athletic Council is composed of delegates from all sports and athletic groups in the city including representatives from the community league sports
committees, their support pretty well assures the success of any new athletic project. Similarly the Supervisor of Playgrounds and Centres works with the Recreation Division of the Council of Social Agencies. This organization includes representatives from the recreation committees of the individual community leagues as well as delegates from the private group work and recreation agencies. By working with this organization duplication of programme can be avoided and gaps in the total recreation programme can be determined. At the level of the local community, the basic level, each league has the services of a full time recreation director. Here a two-way process of guidance, criticism and advice can function. The community league is the planning and policy making group, while the recreation director serves as their administrative officer.

Today Edmonton probably has the basis for the most comprehensive community recreation programme in Canada. There is recognition of the fact that community organization for recreation is not a stable thing, but rather is a continuing process. With this recognition, the form which community recreation organization takes, is bound to be in a constant state of flux. The plan herein outlined, is only proposed as the next logical step and is not to be considered the permanent solution to the problem of community organization for recreation in Edmonton. The adoption of the recommendations made in this study seems highly probable. Edmonton has much to gain.
APPENDIX A

Constitution and By-Laws of
The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

| NAME | The name of this organization shall be "Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues". |
| AIMS and OBJECTS | To facilitate the distribution of information between the units; To promote suitable community programmes and become a clearing house for same; To take concerted action in matters of common interest, and in the interests of the city as a whole; And to come to the support of individual leagues as deemed advisable, when so requested. |
| MEMBERSHIP | The organization shall consist of the federated community leagues in the City of Edmonton, and there shall be an executive council consisting of two representatives from each league, namely the President and Secretary. |
| OFFICERS | The officers shall consist of President, Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer, elected by the delegates from among their number. |
| COMMITTEES | There shall be the following standing committees, namely, Civics, Recreation, Education, and Finance, (the officers) and the council shall have power to appoint from time to time such other committees from its own members, and delegate to them such powers as shall be deemed advisable. |
| FEES | The affiliation fee payable by each league shall be $5. per annum. |
| MEETINGS | The council shall meet at least once each quarter, and at such other times as may be deemed necessary by the officers. |
| ELECTION | All the officers shall be elected at the annual meeting to be held in the month of January and serve for a term of one year. |
| DUTIES | The President shall preside at all meetings of the Federation or Council. The Vice President shall preside at meetings in the absence of or at request of the President. The Secretary Treasurer shall keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Federation or Council in a book - the property of the Federation, carry on the correspondence of the Federation, and fulfill such |
APPENDIX A, Continued

Constitution and By-Laws of
The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

DUTIES

other secretarial duties as may be necessary. He
shall also handle the monies of the Federation,
shall keep a record of all monies received, spent,
and on hand, and report upon the state of the
treasury whenever called upon to do so.

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be added to or amended, such
changes being made by resolution at any meeting of
the council, providing notice of motion of such
changes has been given at a previous regular
meeting.
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