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RICE UNIVERSITY

LOCAL DOMAINS: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND THE INTERESTS OF CITIES

by

DAVID LEVER

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF ARCHITECTURE

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE

[Signatures]

Richard Ingersoll, Professor
Architecture

Harold Hyman, Professor
History

Robert Stein, Professor
Political Science

Houston, Texas

April, 1995
ABSTRACT

Local Domains: Neighborhood Planning and The Interests of Cities

by

David Lever

Neighborhood planning involves American cities in a conflict of virtually irreconcilable imperatives. Cities are both political bodies and corporate entities, of which land is the primary asset. By satisfying residents' demands for stability and protection, cities may inhibit the investment which supports their financial integrity. Since satisfaction of these dual imperatives requires the city to treat its land as both domicile and as commodity, the discipline of local land use planning is placed in an inherently ambiguous position.

Neighborhood planning programs in thirty American central cities were examined. Four structural features were held to influence program effectiveness: plan standing, the relation of the neighborhood plan to city-building instruments like zoning; group requirements, the formalization of community group powers and responsibilities; plan authorization, the level of authority granted an adopted neighborhood plan; and planning process, the formalization of planning procedures. An eight-part taxonomy was developed to describe the programs, and the eight program types were examined against prominent social and economic indicators and against state enabling legislation.

While about half the sample cities tie their plans to city-building instruments, only a minority grant their plans the full force of law. Well-defined programs are related to growing city populations and moderately declining owner occupancy, however, cities with the most rapid population growth deny their plans the full force of law. Where states
mandate that their cities have comprehensive plans and citizen participation procedures, cities often have well-defined neighborhood planning programs.

The evidence suggests that as residents become increasingly demanding under the pressures of urban growth, well-defined neighborhood planning programs are granted as concessions by unwilling city governments, sometimes under compulsion from state legislation. Neighborhood groups and neighborhood plans invested with substantial weight in city-building decisions run counter to the financial interests of the city. This inherent antagonism, which is related to the historic dependency of the specialized residential neighborhood, can be resolved only by giving the central city neighborhood a productive function within the metropolitan ecology. This radical economic agenda points beyond current neighborhood planning methodology.
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Two individuals guided the beginning of this work who sadly cannot see its conclusion. Dean Paul Kennon welcomed me to Rice University in 1989 and gave me broad support in pursuing a difficult subject. He barely had time to lay out a new direction for the School of Architecture before his death in early 1990. O. Jack Mitchell shared generously with me his broad experience in urban design and planning, and gave me fine counsel in the arena of Houston planning. His death in 1992 deprived Rice, and Houston, of a keen champion in the struggle to make a fine city.

I am especially grateful to Dean Alan Balfour for tutelage, inspiration, and encouragement. He pointed me toward sources that I might otherwise have missed, and through his research on Berlin provided a fine example of imagination and scholarship combined. Professor Anderson Todd, who gave me my first introduction to Rice, saw the project in its completion. Eduardo Robles was a constant friend during my years at Rice and after, bringing his skillful insights and design talents to our community planning projects.

I cannot begin to thank all the planners and community leaders across the United States who made the effort to describe their neighborhood planning work, provide me with contacts, and take an interest in my research. With enough time, their names would appear liberally throughout this text as crucial sources of information and insight. For now, I can only express my thanks for their attention, and hope that this research will in some way provide them with support and aid in their difficult tasks. To Belinda Orling go special thanks for her informed and astute comments as I approached the final draft.
The Rice University Center for the Study of Institutions and Values provided a generous grant to study the relation of state enabling legislation and community organization and planning. This grant and the encouragement of Professor Richard Stoll made it possible to complete an essential area of the research.

Finally, I must thank the three people who lived with this project, and its author, during the years of its gestation: Valerie, whose patience went beyond the call of duty; Michael, who napped on my shoulder as this research began; and Emily, who still sometimes naps there as it comes to an end.
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PREFACE

This paper was developed under the inspiration of Alexis de Tocqueville and a visit to Portland, Oregon, in the summer of 1990. Exploring the terrain and culture of that fine city of water and roses, I was struck by the appropriateness of de Tocqueville's remark that "municipal institutions constitute the strength of free nations. Town meetings are to liberty what primary schools are to science; they bring it within the people's reach, they teach men how to use and how to enjoy it" (de Tocqueville 63). Portland, as my visit confirmed, has a long tradition of citizen involvement in municipal planning, as well as an exceptionally thorough comprehensive and neighborhood planning program. The results of Portland's early and continued planning efforts are evident: a downtown that compresses a full range of urban features into a comprehensively small and well-defined area, neighborhoods which tend to bear the marks of individual character, the reservation of generous areas for public use, and a citizenry that appears to participate in city-building as a public right and a public obligation. De Tocqueville suggests that localism of the type found in Portland, in which individuals make many decisions for themselves and bear the consequences of their decisions, is essential to liberty, since it not only keeps alive at the local level the institutions that maintain democracy, it also cultivates in citizens the peculiar manners and virtues which a democratic regime requires.

Represented by the neighborhood of a few thousand residents, the principle of localism persists as a physical and social reality within the enormous modern American metropolis. It persists as well in the rhetoric and ideals of urban America, finding its place in the speeches of municipal politicians, in the theory of contemporary city planning,
and in the goal statements of civic associations. Evidently, and despite modern factors of mobility and urban size that militate against it, the neighborhood principle has a viable and permanent relation to the life that Americans envision for themselves. It answers to the call for local control of local matters, a principle expressed well by Theodore Sedgwick in 1857:

American freedom is based on the idea of local action, localized power, local sovereignty, and has received its best development from the intelligence and energy of the people, fostered to the highest degree by a system which seeks...to strip the central authority of influence, and to distribute its functions among local agents and bodies.\(^1\)

The local unit has a practical significance as well, for in the face of the physical complexity and vast scale of the metropolis, the possibility of decentralizing some responsibilities for city planning and service delivery to the local level has become increasingly attractive. The local unit, it is claimed, is better able to address its problems with efficiency and appropriate action than can a central administration; and by allowing residents to exercise direct control over many of the matters that affect them directly, it can engage their loyalties and concerns in a way that will bring them to full citizenship.

I asked myself whether the democratic principle of localized control of local matters can apply to the enormous modern city as well as to the small town of de Tocqueville’s time, and whether this principle will lead to a visible difference in the form of the city. Will the physical fabric of a city where local decision-making is an intrinsic part of the municipal planning process come visibly to demonstrate this principle? Will the spatial fabric of such a city be clearly distinguishable from that of cities built through a centralized decision
process? And will it be possible to identify this new city form (if it exists or can exist) as the genuinely American form of the modern city?

These broad questions have led me to consider the institutions which play their part in building American cities, and in particular the institutions which influence the development of the most localized of urban domains, the neighborhood. The institutions of local government embody both practical concerns of policy and administration as well as ideas about the constitution of the best regime, the just regime, the most democratic regime. In America, city building is largely the effect of private decisions, minimally coordinated by public agency. Innumerable private efforts join to a background of mundane public infrastructure and a foreground of prominent public and private facilities to generate the fabric of the typical American city. Laws, policies, rules, and resources provide the constraints and opportunities within which private decisions are made. By a circuituous route, these public institutions influence the private decisions which in turn play the major role in shaping the visible, public form of the city.

This study is concerned with the influence of one particular type of municipal institution, the neighborhood planning program, on the processes of city-building. As the elements of the city where the private lives of individuals are given their fullest expression and where public facilities are likely to be least visible, neighborhoods are the modest but essential backdrops to the prominent public life of the city. City planning as a comprehensive discipline depends in part on the institutions which help or hinder the realization of neighborhood quality. Among these institutions, neighborhood planning as a formal function of municipal government is likely to play a significant role.
Neighborhood planning represents an attempt to decentralize the planning function which, as a legacy of the Progressive Era, had been for a long time a centralized activity of the city. It is both a reaction against the faults of centralized planning - lack of specific information and distance from the concerns of residents, a prejudice in favor of developmental and downtown projects, excessive generality - and a reassertion of faith in the validity of localized democratic practices. As the planning literature in this study shows, this latter figures prominently among the rationales that cities give when they establish their neighborhood planning programs.

If neighborhood planning proves to be an effective form of decentralized decision-making, then one would expect its influence on the physical form of the city to become apparent over time. One expects to find, for example, that the local neighborhood will acquire a distinctive character which reflects local custom and preference; that it becomes more precisely defined in relation both to stable public and institutional districts and to volatile commercial areas; and that the increased participation and efficacy of neighborhood residents in the decisions which shape land use gives the city as a whole a more distinctively community, as opposed to developmental, quality.

There are immense barriers to the realization of the democratic city form which is postulated in these remarks. American cities are both political entities which must answer to the demands of residents, and corporate entities which must balance growing social needs against deepening fiscal constraints. This double role imposes on city governments a conflicting set of imperatives where economic growth comes into conflict with the conservative territorial interests of residents,
who are also the political constituents of elected city officials. The experience of San Diego and Los Angeles, discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, shows that this conflict of imperatives has in some instances proven to be irreconcilable. The antagonism is not only political but psychological as well, since it reveals the fact that in a free market economy land is regarded both as commodity and as domicile, two functions which require different policies and different approaches to planning. Neighborhood planning experiences the full brunt of this conflict.

While the conflict of values mentioned here is the deepest inhibition against decentralized planning, it faces other obstacles as well. Restricted under state law in their capacities to raise revenues, hampered by the absence of jurisdictional and fiscal coordination within metropolitan regions which are immensely varied, cities must contend with economic and demographic forces which lie far outside their limited control. Neighborhood planning, some writers contend, can do no more than mitigate some of the effects of these forces, not alter them fundamentally. Where neighborhood residents attempt to bypass ineffectual city government by correcting conditions which seem amenable to local action, they frequently confront the difficulties which are inherent to voluntary forms of collective action: differences of interest, the problem of sustaining volunteer action over long periods, lack of resources, lack of training and experience in dealing with city-building matters. Overcoming these hurdles, cities must still confront the question as to what extent the neighborhood, particularly the inner-city neighborhood which faces persistent disinvestment and population decline, remains a viable unit of social and physical organization under late twentieth century conditions of mobility and communication. If it
is not viable, then a planning program which attempts to correct the
deficiencies of central-city neighborhoods is a futile misallocation of
effort.

Since policy is at the heart of this consideration - What structure
of neighborhood planning, if any, is most effective in achieving a city
environment of high quality? - one would like to have clear evidence that
certain policies are effective, others are not. But neighborhoods are
not the dramatic parts of the city; once established they are often slow
to show change, and then only in the details of physical design and in
the gradual effects produced by improved housekeeping. If neighborhood
planning is something of an experiment in city building, the time frame
in which it will show its effectiveness is likely to be quite long. At
this date the oldest citywide program in the United States, in New York
City, has been operating for barely three decades. Programs in Phoenix,
Raleigh, and Boston are less than a decade old. Given the time frame, a
single research study cannot hope to see the overall results of this
planning strategy. And municipal policy, caught as it is in the conflict
between opposing political demands, may not be durable enough to see the
experiment through to a conclusive result.

This research study accepts that these limitations are inherent to
the subject matter. While the ultimate objective of the research is to
decipher the physical form of the American city, the immediate
consideration is the neighborhood planning program itself: its structure,
the conditions under which it operates, its problems, and to the extent
possible within the limitations stated above, its effects. Above all,
the study is concerned with the value of neighborhood planning itself:
does it represent a genuine attempt to redistribute the power over city-
building decisions, or is it established primarily as a defense of middle-class property values? If a city’s program does speak of reapportionment of power, is this only a concession to satisfy the political imperative that city officials face, or is it a genuine enlistment of residents into the city-building process? And does neighborhood planning, even if well-intentioned and well-structured, go far enough in addressing the condition of America’s inner city neighborhoods? Study of the literature of some thirty cities provides clues to these questions.

The neighborhood as a social and physical place has retained its importance despite factors which have tended to diminish the importance of place generally in daily life. These factors include the mobility of individuals within the metropolitan region, the increasing proportion of households which are transient, and the opening of vast communication networks which have rendered obsolete for many people the traditional commercial and social advantages of concentrated residential settlements. Nevertheless, the small, relatively autonomous, and secure residential community still holds practical and symbolic significance for many Americans. This research attempts to elaborate the role that municipal governments are playing, and might play, in aiding the preservation of these communities through their neighborhood planning programs. It seeks to find the place for the democratic neighborhood principle in modern urban America: the conditions for realizing a social and physical ideal that resides near the core of American identity.
Notes


2. Events as different as the Mt. Laurel decisions in New Jersey and Houston's recent zoning controversy show the persistent appeal of localism.
INTRODUCTION

For several decades, writers have recognized that the institutional form of American local government poorly serves the reality of contemporary metropolitan problems. On the one hand, problems that affect entire metropolitan regions—traffic, flooding, crime, housing—have increased as modern transportation and communication technologies weld the widely dispersed cities of the metropolitan region into a single social and economic unit, and as the scale of industry and construction have become so large that no district within the region can hope to isolate itself from the negative effects of its neighbors. Yet institutional tools with the capacity to deal authoritatively with regional problems rarely exist. Regional planning, which has a theoretical groundwork more than a century old,\(^1\) has achieved such tentative approval in the United States that only a handful of states—Hawaii, Florida, Vermont, California, and Oregon—have enacted statewide plans and guidelines with legal force over local or state land use regulations (Callies 293). Only a few urbanized areas have metropolitan-wide instruments of planning which are both comprehensive in scope and authoritative in their effect on the sub-metropolitan jurisdictions which they purport to guide.\(^2\) Between the level of the city or county and the level of the state or region, the American federated structure of government provides few resources for adequately addressing the range of problems which press upon metropolitan areas with increasing urgency (Needleman and Needleman 30, League of Women Voters 3ff).

At the other end of the scale, city-wide planning is often too crude and too generalized to deal with the tremendous variety of conditions that are found within municipal boundaries. In their desire
to place municipal planning on a rational and professional footing, reformers in the early decades of the 20th century centralized the control of planning at the same time that they instituted structural changes in city government which were aimed at reducing the influence of local power bases. Their reforms did in many cases succeed in reducing municipal corruption, but unwittingly the reformers also closed off the informal channels of communication and accountability by which citizens at the level of the neighborhood had made their particular needs known to a remote city government (Baroni 181, Fainstein 390). The absence of institutional channels has particularly affected those communities which are relatively inarticulate, those which lack the material resources and effective leadership to mobilize political pressure in order to address their physical and social problems. The institutional isolation of central city neighborhoods has been accompanied by symptoms of physical isolation: deteriorating streets and infrastructure, inadequate housing, lack of recreation facilities and parks, poor control over traffic, all speaking for the fact that areas which lack both political voice and a reason to attract the interest of private development are likely to receive little attention as the city distributes its already scant resources. Citywide disparities in income and resources contribute to a downward spiral in the condition of inner city neighborhoods, in which deterioration leads to neglect and neglect leads to further deterioration. Physical decline is almost invariably accompanied by the symptoms of social disorganization:

Neighborhoods bonded by a sense of community, of sharing and caring, are lost, along with jobs, business revenues, and property taxes, denying local jurisdictions funds needed to care for disadvantaged residents and to provide services other citizens expect and deserve.
In areas where they serve as buffer zones protecting more affluent communities from urban blight, middle-class residents flee to what they think are safe harbors distant from the disease, leaving in their wake neighborhoods manipulated by speculators. Home owners in the old neighborhoods, meanwhile, are frightened into selling their homes at deflated prices - and even less fortunate persons purchasing them at inflated prices often have to default; in a few short years they become unfit for human habitation.

In many cities and close suburbs the presence of endangered neighborhoods fosters a climate of despair causing industry, retail businesses, lending institutions, and home owners who may be far from the afflicted areas to leave because the community has no future.

For all the preceding reasons, public and private reclamation programs in the pipeline or under consideration are put in grave jeopardy, often making certain that funds for housing, education, health, and other vital needs will be wasted, poorly utilized, or only serve as temporary solutions to deep-seated problems. (Baroni 187)

The larger demographic problem to which Baroni refers, the flight of business and middle-class property owners away from the central city, engenders a downward spiral in which the disparities in the social and physical condition of central city neighborhoods increases over time. In this situation, there are few of the institutional correctives at the national level which in other areas of American social life, noticeably the civil liberties of minorities, have contributed to improvements for the disadvantaged sections of the population. Correctives of this kind might include laws ensuring that services and capital improvement funds are equitably distributed in every neighborhood of the city, and enforcement of existing regulations that require financial institutions to reinvest in the communities in which they are located.

Neighborhood planning programs are proposed as just such a corrective at the local level. Although the rationales for establishing a neighborhood planning program as a recognized activity of municipal government, and the theoretical justifications for such decentralized planning, are broad and varied, they resolve into a single essential
claim: that decentralized planning will increase the opportunity of city residents to have a voice in those decisions which shape their physical environment. Neighborhood planning programs articulate the principle of localism within the contemporary city. These programs assert that on grounds of both equity and rational efficiency the localized community is best suited to decide for itself in many matters that affect its own physical and social welfare. This principle is both very old and still hotly contentious. De Tocqueville recognized the breadth of its appeal when he said that

in the United States the county and the township are always based upon the same principle: namely, that everyone is the best judge of what concerns himself alone, and the most proper person to supply his own wants. (de Tocqueville 84)

De Tocqueville here applies to the smallest jurisdiction the same principle of enlightened self-interest that, applied to the individual, forms the basis of liberal economic theory. As an element of American ideology the principle of local self-management was used to justify the constitutionality of zoning as a legitimate activity of local government. The principle has been supported in a number of court decisions regarding housing and education, and its influence is felt in federal initiatives such as the 1974 Community Development Block Grant program and the 1990 HOME housing program, in both of which the decision about how to use federal monies is left largely with the municipalities which receive the funds (Steinbach 24).

But localism is by no means an unalloyed good. A number of writers have noted that the principle of localism has also exacerbated the class and racial inequities already present in American society (Briffault Introduction, Davis 188-196). By creating jurisdictional as well as
physical boundaries between communities, localism has allowed some communities to avoid the full weight of their metropolitan responsibilities by excluding the housing needed by poorer residents and the land uses that provide them with jobs. Localism has thwarted attempts to bring the fiscal structure of metropolitan regions into alignment with the reality that they function as integrated economic units.\(^3\) The principle of localized control over local issues has been used not only to reawaken local democracy, but to ensure that property values and an exclusive way of life will not be adulterated by residents who are poor or culturally at odds with the majority of homeowners in the area.

The issue of local control has particular meaning for a discussion on the value of neighborhood planning. Neighborhood planning implies that to a greater or lesser extent the local community will participate in, perhaps even have significant control over, the land use decisions which concern its territory. Neighborhood planning presumes at the outset that the neighborhood actually exists as a recognizable unit, that it is a proper unit for some aspects of territorial planning, and that the results of this type of areal planning will be beneficial to the city as a whole. In typical descriptions of neighborhood planning programs, these assumptions are either implicit, or are stated without debate or justification, as being self-evident. Yet the assumptions are neither self-evident nor non-controversial.

Upon examination, the notion of the "neighborhood" is found to belong to that class of ideas which are used constantly in everyday speech, which have a concrete reality in people's behavior and speech, and yet which escape precise definition. As Chapter 2 will show, there
are multiple definitions of "neighborhood" in current use, and theory has arrived at no single consensus about the meaning of the word. The inability to define a neighborhood by any broadly accepted standard is more than a matter of theoretical curiosity. An essential and highly political aspect of all planning is the definition of planning area boundaries, since these determine the extent of the benefits and the costs which will emerge if the planning venture is at all effective. For many levels of physical planning, the extent of the planning area is readily suggested by natural boundaries such as watercourses, by large-scale artificial features such as expressways, or by long-established jurisdictional lines. While such features also influence many city neighborhoods, in the majority of cases the borders of the neighborhood are non-existent, vague, or at best debatable. Neighborhood centers are often apparent; the edges are not. The size of the neighborhood is also a matter of debate. To judge by common usage, a neighborhood can range from a single block to a district which cuts across several major thoroughfares or significant watercourses. This fact is represented in the sample of "neighborhood" plans which are studied in this report: they range from a fourteen-block area in Fort Worth, Texas, to a district of four square miles in San Diego, California.\(^4\)

The "natural" boundary of the neighborhood depends not only on the physical extent of one's concept but also on who is being considered as the neighborhood inhabitant. Clearly, the "neighborhood" has a different meaning for a parent tending several small children than it does for a teenager ranging the world on a skateboard, or for an adult whose daily scope of movement may embrace enormous stretches of the metropolitan region. Inhabitants of the same block can have entirely different
conceptions of what their neighborhood is, a fact which must be accounted for in planning practice. Technological innovations in the last century have caused the practical and symbolic meaning of the neighborhood to change for large sections of the population, and it may still be undergoing further change. The enormously increased range of personal mobility and communication that is permitted by the automobile and other devices has reduced the significance of the residential locale as a site for many individuals' economic, social, cultural, and political activities. For others, particularly for those who are relatively immobile, the neighborhood retains much of the meaning it had in the 19th century as a localized site for domestic, commercial, and employment affiliations. The symbolic content of the neighborhood, an important aspect of any effective program of neighborhood planning, will accordingly vary for residents of the same area.

The difficulty of defining the neighborhood is linked to the ambiguity of using it as a unit of planning: either it cannot be defined with accuracy, creating a technical problem for planning, or it can, creating a political problem for the city as a whole. In the history of American cities, the neighborhood group has tended overwhelmingly to behave as a protective unit, for which the primary goals are the exclusion of undesirable people and land uses and the preservation or enhancement of property values (Hunter 1983 13, Fischer 73ff, Davis 188-196). Even communities which began with an agenda of social change, like the radical Back-of-the-Yards organization in Chicago, evolved over time into exclusionary, protective associations of property owners (Fisher 56). Some writers have suggested that this conservative and self-protective tendency is inevitable in any program based on territorial
definition as long as significant inequities exist in the status of residents: the relatively well-to-do will defend themselves against those whom they perceive to be relatively less well off, including the poor who are not part of the neighborhood but place demands on its property taxes to pay for social services and policing (Fainstein and Martin 464). From this perspective citywide obligations, such as providing a balance of housing types to meet the needs of different income classes, are not merely ignored by the exclusionary neighborhood, but often treated with hostile opposition.

Consequently, there has frequently been conflict between the interests of the neighborhood and the obligations of municipal government. To the extent that a neighborhood planning program succeeds in increasing the participation of the neighborhood in important land-use decisions, it may only reinforce the neighborhood's parochial lack of regard for citywide or regional effects. If it provides the means for neighborhoods which were previously inarticulate to participate in decision-making, it may also bring to the surface the fact that the interests of neighborhoods of different economic class are truly irreconcilable at the grass-roots level, and can only be resolved within institutions or by officials who have a citywide responsibility and accountability. An excess of grass-roots power can under some circumstances result in municipal paralysis, as has been amply demonstrated in cities with strong ward-based city council representation, such as Dallas and Philadelphia. This is particularly true where the social and cultural disparities between neighborhoods are extreme. Recognition of exactly such a possibility for paralysis was partly responsible for the movement away from ward-based politics toward
at-large representation in the municipal reform movement of the early 20th century (Schiesl, Judd 88, 91). The irreconcilable and often cyclic nature of the conflict is illustrated in the cases of San Diego and Los Angeles, to be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

An equally troubling consideration is whether planning at the neighborhood level can affect more than the surface conditions of the community. Undoubtedly good neighborhood planning programs have led to improved streets, new recreation facilities, salvaged structures and businesses, and better maintenance of neighborhoods. But in the face of larger trends – the on-going flight of the middle-class of all races and ethnicities to the suburbs, the parallel decentralization of manufacturing and services, the increasing concentration of a minority "underclass" in the central cities, and persistent deficiencies in city finances – one must seriously consider whether neighborhood planning can be anything more than "moving deck chairs on the Titanic," as one community planner mordantly expressed it (Needleman and Needleman 308). Neighborhood planning in central cities is invariably concerned with either the preservation of neighborhoods or their rejuvenation. Yet an important line of thinking contends that neither prevention of decay nor rejuvenation are possible unless the overall economic function of the central city is sound. Given the overwhelming tendency toward decentralization of employment and residence that has occurred in American metropolitan areas since the mid-nineteenth century, it might appear that only a dramatic change in the economic function of central city neighborhoods will support property ownership and new businesses on the scale which is necessary for revitalization. Although such a major shift in the economic role of the central city does not appear to be
imminent, it provides the point of departure for a radical re-assessment of existing programs of economic development, and of neighborhood planning programs which purport to have a transformative power over the condition of neighborhoods (S. Perry).

In the intense competition that now exists among American cities to attract the most desirable city residents, that is, the property-owning taxpayers and businesses who can support city programs, the quality of neighborhoods plays an important role. Since many firms and institutions in America's increasingly service-based economy are no longer tied to specific sites by the physical requirements of manufacturing and processing, the quality of local schools, recreation, and amenities takes a larger place in their locational decisions. In the mid 1980's, for example, the American Heart Association chose to locate in Atlanta rather than Houston because of the quality of the Georgia city's school system. Nevertheless, traditional developmental factors, especially the condition of the infrastructure and large features such as airports and industrial parks, retain at least as much weight in these locational decisions as the quality of neighborhoods. Since these aspects of city development often pose direct threats to neighborhood integrity through the heavy traffic and incongruities of physical scale which they bring with them, it is clear that cities face great difficulties in trying to balance the twin poles of neighborhood quality and commercial development. Land, a limited commodity which can only rarely and with great difficulty be expanded, is attractive to residence and development for the same reasons: accessibility, amenity, views.

In the difficult process of allocating scarce resources to satisfy a variety of demanding pressures, cities may find that neighborhood
planning is a two-edged sword that must be handled with considerable caution. While effective neighborhood planning undoubtedly has some benefits in making a city more attractive and in answering the demand of citizens for greater participation in land-use decisions, it may also become a vehicle by which citizens at the grass-roots level are able to voice and carry out their protests against large development projects, both those proposed by the public sector (freeways, airports, sewage treatment plants) and those of private developers. Exactly such a protest was waged by a community group in Washington, D.C., successfully blocking a major proposal on a prominent site. City government may find itself caught in a dilemma of conflicting imperatives: while it may well desire to encourage the type of community group actions which salvaged such apparently hopeless areas as the Victorian District of Savannah and "Banana Kelly" in the Bronx (Gratz Chapters 2, 4, 5), at the same time it may dread arousing the citizen demands which are a necessary concomitant of increased citizen ability and leadership. Although citizen protest movements have often begun spontaneously, a neighborhood planning program becomes a formal means for encouraging a citizen activism which, if it truly satisfies residents' typical demands for neighborhood stability and protection, can also dampen the interest of private developers in carrying out schemes which may be of great benefit to the city. The city's need to satisfy two equally strong but conflicting sets of demands may explain some of the curious findings in this research about how cities choose to structure their neighborhood planning programs. Specifically, it may explain why some programs, which go to considerable lengths to formally enlist citizens in the planning process, fail at the same time to grant neighborhood plans the full status in law which they
require in order to be effective instruments of city change. It may explain why well-defined neighborhood planning programs, those in which a recognized group is actively involved in developing plans which have genuine weight in city-building decisions, are not found in the fastest growing cities, but do tend to be found in cities which have lost a moderate number of their home owners. And it may explain also why it appears that once cities begin a neighborhood planning program that fully incorporates the citizen group in city-building, they find it difficult to stop at half-measures.

To the extent that the conflict of interests between neighborhood and development can be resolved, there are still a number of issues specific to planning itself which affect the success of neighborhood planning. Perhaps because it is a relatively new discipline in which both goals and methodology are in considerable flux, planning occupies an uncertain position in the activities of city government. The relation between the comprehensive plan of the city (when there is one) and the day-to-day actions of the operating agencies, as well as the relation between the plan and the land-use designations of the zoning map, are often unclear. From the planner's perspective, the plan ought to be the rational and long-term guide to the city's growth, and decisions about capital projects and developments on specific parcels should only be made with reference to the plan (So 60, 74). Zoning, in particular, ought to be a tool for implementing the goals and objectives of the plan. While the notion of the plan as general guide to the city's development is given widespread recognition in the planning documents of municipalities, the realities of professional planning practice, of statute, and of legal decision point to the fact that the comprehensive plan is most often
treated as a merely advisory document. A quote from the statutes of Arizona illustrates a legal position which is typical of the majority of the states which are involved in this study: the state says that "All zoning regulations...shall be consistent with the adopted general and specific plans of the municipality" but goes on to say that "A municipality is not required to adopt a general plan prior to the adoption of a zoning ordinance". The value of a comprehensive plan does go beyond its direct links to regulation and to the implementation of projects and programs; it may be useful, for example, as a public device for developing consensus. However, the fact that the connection between plan and implementation is so often tenous also breeds a suspicion among many people that comprehensive planning is a waste of valuable time and resources, and that efforts should be directed instead to accomplishing specific projects. The failure of comprehensive planning to legitimize itself fully as a worthwhile activity of city government reflects on neighborhood planning as well. At the neighborhood level, the uncertainties may have significant political implications, since in raising neighborhood expectations that improvements to pressing local problems are possible and imminent, the planning process may well increase the average citizen's mistrust of city government if these improvements fail to materialize.

Under scrutiny, neighborhood planning is found to have the potential to be a controversial and uncertain addition to city planning activities. Neighborhood planning is one aspect of a larger issue, the decentralization of areal planning, and this in turn forms an aspect of a question which is central to democratic governance itself, the extent and the method by which all government functions can be decentralized in
order to satisfy the practical and ideological demands of localism. The apparently innocuous proposal that citizens should be involved in the decisions which shape their own environment uncovers a broad range of issues which must be addressed if neighborhood planning is to be equitable and effective.

Purpose and Design of the Study

The purpose of this study is threefold: to establish the theoretical and historical context within which neighborhood planning occurs (Parts I and II), to examine structural aspects of contemporary neighborhood planning programs and relate them to salient conditions in the environments of the study cities (Part III), and to speculate about a direction for neighborhood planning which may be fruitful for further study (Conclusion). The interest throughout is with the neighborhoods of America's central cities, those neighborhoods of every economic class which have been most affected by disinvestment and social disorganization. While the interesting question is always the effectiveness of planning policy, that question lies beyond the scope of the present study; rather, the research here creates a conceptual framework by which neighborhood planning effectiveness can be approached.

Chapter 1 places the central city neighborhood in the context of the larger metropolitan ecology in order to decipher the changes that have occurred in its economic, social, cultural, and political status. The current status of many central city neighborhoods can only be understood as an effect of secular changes in populations, transportation, and business practice that dramatically altered the relation of the central city to the larger region. This perspective
provides a basis for criticism of neighborhood planning programs which address the problem of the central city neighborhood without attending to the neighborhood’s role as an element of the metropolis. Chapter 2 then explores the current functions of the neighborhood. Having lost much of the meaning it had for nineteenth and early twentieth century residents, the neighborhood nevertheless retains functional importance for specific population groups and still carries some psychological meaning for most people. Moreover, its potential as a political subdivision of the city with some powers of independent decision has been addressed repeatedly in theory and in planning practice.

The value of neighborhood planning is part of larger debate on the problem of local government decentralization, a subject discussed in Chapter 3. The benefits of local decentralization — increased citizen participation in public affairs, improved responsiveness to local problems, improved coordination of services — weigh in against its most prominent liability, the possibility of reinforcing and institutionalizing the parochial attitudes that tend to characterize small territorial units. Thus administrative decentralization, a largely technical restructuring of service delivery mechanisms, needs to be distinguished from political decentralization, under which local groups of citizens attain some measure of real power to make decisions. The benefits and liabilities of decentralized government are exaggerated in the case of neighborhood planning, discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 examines the inadequacy of the centralized planning which is a legacy of the Progressive Reform era, and describes the theoretical advantages of decentralized planning: redirection of the city’s attention to the concerns of neighborhoods, refinement of the planner’s
information, immediacy of response, sharing of the burdens of planning and implementation with residents, and increasing the knowledge and capabilities of citizens. Chapter 5, however, discusses the inherent vulnerability of all forms of comprehensive planning, a vulnerability born from planning's conflict with the vested city interests represented by investors, elected officials, and the operating departments of city government. Elected officials in particular are caught between two imperatives, the need to satisfy resident demands and the need to support the city's finances through encouragement to investors. In the realm of planning, this conflict of imperatives expresses itself in two views of what land is and how it ought to be treated: on the one hand it is a domicile which ought to maintain values of stability and permanence, on the other it is a commodity which needs to flexibly change to accommodate new economic demands and conditions.

The conflict of imperatives described here induces an instability in neighborhood planning which is well illustrated by the story of San Diego. The instability places conflicting and even irreconcilable demands on the community planner and points to the limitations of using the neighborhood as a unit for planning. The history of American efforts to engage the neighborhood in planning is described in Chapter 6, which gives particular emphasis to the neighborhood unit principle of Clarence Perry, the moment in American neighborhood planning when social intent, public policy, and physical design were brought together in a single planning venture. This discussion leads to the current position of neighborhood planning in the national and municipal arenas, and provides a context for the specific research of the dissertation.
Chapter 7 examines the neighborhood planning programs of thirty American cities under four principle structural characteristics: the relation of the neighborhood plan to other instruments of city-building, the status of the community planning organization, the level of authorization that is granted to the adopted plan, and the planning process itself. This review by topic provides the framework for a detailed examination of program structures, carried out in Chapters 8 and 9. In Chapter 8, a simple eight-part taxonomy is developed to characterize every neighborhood planning program in the sample. Chapter 9 explains the findings that emerge from application of this conceptual tool; it examines the internal relations of the four main structural components, and then the various program types are examined against the economic and social conditions of the cities that host them, the motivations stated for initiating the programs, and the legal environment created by state enabling legislation. This section attempts to determine the circumstances under which programs of various types are developed, and with what intent. The Conclusion summarizes the findings and points to the larger implications of the research: the findings reinforce the theoretical view that neighborhood planning is a sensitive barometer of the conflicting imperatives that emerge from the dual nature of American cities, as corporate entities and as political bodies.

Finally, the Conclusion points to an area of research that has direct implications for the effectiveness of neighborhood planning, the possibility that the conflict of imperatives described above can be partially resolved by bringing the neighborhoods of central cities into alignment with the economic demands of our times. The proposal is radical, for in suggesting that the neighborhood should become a
productive element of the metropolitan economy it flies in the face of one hundred and fifty years of decentralization, national policy, and a cultural preference that has allocated to the neighborhood a purely residential role. Such a radical assessment is needed if central city neighborhoods are to gain a vital economic role which will reverse their traditional dependency on, and vulnerability to, the fluctuations of a regional economy.

Notes

1. Scottish biologist Patrick Geddes, an evolutionary scientist interested in the associative and integrative rather than competitive aspects of nature, saw cities as extensions of the natural world (a viewpoint expressed in the title of his major work, Cities in Evolution). For Geddes, there could be no understanding of the city without knowledge of the urban settlement's place in the agriculture and history of the region. His thinking was supported by the earlier work of a school of French geographers, including Le Play. Himself a designer of several cities in India and Palestine, Geddes influenced the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), which proposed a reconfiguration of the population pattern of the state of New York through a form of state-wide zoning. RPAA's radical proposition for decentralization was passed over in favor of a more conventional proposal by the Russell Sage Foundation. Except for a handful of very large regional planning efforts like the Tennessee Valley Administration's plans for hydroelectric development, regional planning in America has been stymied by the fragmentation of state and local authority, by indifference to planning in general, and by a lack of understanding on the part of the public and government of the necessity for the effort.

2. Instruments which are comprehensive but not authoritative include Councils of Governments (COG's); those which are authoritative but not comprehensive include special purpose districts and districts which embrace a limited range of functions, for example Portland, Oregon's METRO government.

3. The problem is illustrated by the inability of Washington, D.C., which supports a federal labor force that largely lives in the Maryland and Virginia suburbs, to impose a commuter tax on its daily guests. The federal workers and a host of others who commute daily into the city require services which far outweigh their financial contribution in terms of sales tax, parking fines, etc. A commuter tax would undoubtedly drive many businesses out of the District into the adjacent suburbs, but it is at the moment the most forceful tool for redistribution that has been proposed. More effective redistribution would depend on a level of financial cooperation between Maryland, Virginia, and the District which would countermand the intense competition that characterizes their relations at the present. Washington is exceptional in its dependence on the federal government, in its lack of industrial base, and in the fact that it has no state government to fall back on for financial support or
oversight; but the problem described here is not atypical for the position that central cities occupy within American metropolitan regions.

4. See Glenwood Triangle Targeted Area Plan, Fort Worth, Texas, and Mission Valley Community Plan, San Diego, California

5. Stephen Klinesberg lecture at Rice University School of Architecture, November, 1989

6. Arlington, Virginia has until recently maintained a careful balance between commercial growth corridors and restricted residential neighborhoods. Recently this balance has been threatened by incursions of commercial uses that bring problems and hazards into the residential areas, for example a large lumber yard and its associated parking.


8. In Houston in July 1992 Lois O'Conner, assistant to City Councilmember John Goodner, reflected a general position when she claimed that the city's standard operating procedures, without benefit of a comprehensive plan, were adequate to take care of the city's problems.
PART I: THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE CITY

CHAPTER 1. THE EVOLUTION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE ECOLOGY OF THE MODERN METROPOLIS

The value of neighborhood planning in general, as well as the way that it is structured and its objectives, are determined by its subject matter, the neighborhood. Neighborhoods are never autonomous districts, but are tied to the larger urban context in every respect: economically, socially, culturally, politically, and administratively. Sociologist Ernest Burgess of the University of Chicago stated in the 1920's that in the study of the growth of the city it is found that the life of any neighborhood is determined, in the long run, not altogether by the forces within itself, but even more by the total course of city life. To think of the neighborhood or the community in isolation from the rest of the city is to disregard the biggest fact about the neighborhood. (Quoted at Hunter 1983 5)

As the very function and nature of cities has changed dramatically since the beginning of the industrial era, so also has the function and nature of neighborhoods in general. Interpretations vary, however, as to the principal causes of these changes: whether at one extreme they betray an inescapable process of city transformation, or whether at the other they are the results of historical circumstances, cultural biases, or governmental policy, all of which might be corrected. While a full exposition of these changes lies outside the purposes of this paper, the importance of the subject to the main topic of this research requires a brief review of the theory of city development.

Three broad models have been developed to explain the ecology of cities. The term "ecology" itself is borrowed from the biological sciences: while only a few writers (Geddes, Park) have attempted to draw literal connections between biological organisms or ecosystems and the
complex structure of the modern city, the term has nevertheless received broad acceptance for its suggestion that the different functions of the city are deeply interconnected and reveal patterns which are regular and to some extent predictable. Urban ecology is understood to be a broader perspective than urban geography, which addresses the characteristic location of functions, because it is concerned with the expression of social patterns in space; and it is broader than urban economics because in some of its forms it incorporates the psychological and symbolic dimensions of urban dwelling.

The first of the three models, the classical ecological paradigm, treats the processes of city formation as a universally observable function of economic activity, so that neither historical accident nor symbolism deeply affect the pattern of urban spatial formation. The second model, the historical ecological paradigm, expands the first model by recognizing the importance of historic event in the development of urban form. The third model, called the symbolic ecological paradigm, accounts for the psychological attachments and symbolic meanings which bind residents to an area and which often override the forces that might, under a purely economic view, lead them to locate elsewhere.

The Classical Ecological Paradigm

The classical ecological perspective, developed initially by Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, R.D. McKenzie and others at the University of Chicago in the 1920s, views city growth as a natural process which proceeds independently of technological, political, and historical accident (Peterson 6). The science of urban ecology, in this view, should follow the model established by plant ecology. R.D. McKenzie wrote
[w]hile there is not the intimate connection between the different stages in a human succession that is found between the stages in a plant succession, nevertheless there is an economic continuity which makes the cycles in a human succession quite as pronounced and as inevitable as those in the plant succession. (McKenzie 181)

In their attempt to make the analogy between city growth and natural ecology complete, these urbanists postulated that like an organism the city is integral and interconnected, that it has a life-span, that it has a metabolism, and that it is ultimately subject to laws as mathematically rigorous as those which govern the physical sciences (Park 5-13). The inhabitants of the city have preferred habitats, and as they congregate they create natural areas characterized by features of class, race, occupation, and use of structures. This a-historical view of the city was based on an understanding that "the map of the city might undergo changes, but the ecological processes that generated them would be relatively stable" (Hunter B 193).

The automatic, organic process by which city growth takes place was described in the Invasion-Succession model developed by Park and Burgess, also called the "solar" thesis (Peterson 3, Bartelt etal 164). In this theory, pressure from the commercial center results in a pattern of concentric rings of homogeneous land use and economic activity (Fig. 1). The invasion phase of the sequence occurs as land uses or populations, under pressure from the expanding central core of the city, encroach upon previously stable peripheral areas. The new land uses and populations bring with them competition for land and conflict between social groups. When one particular land use or population achieves dominance in the area, the succession phase of the sequence is completed. Since the pressure for expansion comes exclusively from the center of the urban settlement, it is evident that competition will be most intense at the
center and decrease toward the periphery, accompanied by decreases in economic activity, population density, and land values (McKenzie 180ff).

Fig. 1 Solar Diagram of Urban Form and Growth
The Invasion-Succession process creates an urban pattern that is characteristic and predictable. Zorbaugh says

...all American cities exhibit certain typical processes in their growth. To begin with, they segregate into broad zones as they expand radially from the center - a 'loop,' or central business district, a zone of transition between business and resident; an invasion by business and light manufacturing, involving physical deterioration and social disorganization; a zone of working men's homes, cut through by rooming-house districts along focal lines of transportation; a zone of apartments and 'restricted' districts of single family dwelling; and farther out, beyond city limits, a commuters' zone of suburban areas. Ideally, this gross segregation may be represented by a series of concentric circles, and such tends to be the actual fact where there are no complicating geographical factors. (Zorbaugh 221)

The city form which emerges from the invasion-succession process is a dynamic pattern in which change is continuous but at the same time inevitable and predictable. In this view, the impersonal economic forces that shape the city have a permanent durability, while the specific niches of land use and population which result are in a continual process of change. Relative stability of land use and population is possible, but it is only temporary. Individual decisions, preferences, or tastes count for little, and the political subdivision of the region is understood as arbitrary, derivative, and of minor importance compared to the organic reality of the ecological process (Hunter 1987 194). Elihu Root supported this view in a 1922 speech:

A city is a growth. It is not the result of political decrees or control. You may draw all the lines you please between counties and states; a city is a growth responding to forces not at all political, quite disregarding political lines. It is a growth like that of a crystal responding to forces inherent in the atoms that make it up. (Quoted at Zorbaugh 221)

Later refinements on the classical ecological theory paid some attention to natural topography and household preferences (Hoyt, 1939), refined the concentric ring model into a sector model based on radial
lines of transportation (Hoyt), and introduced cultural sentiments and values as factors that affect urban form (Firey 1939) (Bartelt et al 167). None of these modifications, however, altered the fundamental proposition that there exists an underlying and automatic process of city growth which is founded in economic competition. In the 1950’s and 1960’s urban economists gave the solar thesis mathematical precision in the monocentric model of city development, in which land values and population density are carefully related to the cost of transportation (Peterson 6, Mills and Hamilton 96-122).

In the classical ecological perspective, neighborhoods are viewed as residual phenomena:

What happened in individual communities, solar theorists claimed, was only a gravitational response by residents to the broader economic and social forces occurring in places far removed from the neighborhood. (Peterson 6)

Since economic forces are held to be the principal determinants of neighborhood location and form (as of other functional sectors of the city), the main differentiation between neighborhoods occurs along lines of economic class, and only secondarily along lines of occupation, race, or ethnicity (Bartelt 166, McKenzie 180, Park 8). And since taste and belief were discounted in this reductivist model, the symbolic and emotional dimensions of neighborhood attachment were not given particular weight either (Bartelt et al 167). The model therefore could not account for certain apparent anomalies of city form: the persistence, for example, of working class neighborhoods in the face of central city expansion, or the pockets of premiere residential housing which in the many American cities can be found within transitional or even blighted areas. An example of the former is the domain of the South East Community Organization (SECO) on the north side of Baltimore’s Inner
Harbor, an ethnic working class neighborhood which successfully resisted highway construction and urban renewal; an example of the latter also comes from the Baltimore area, the Davidsonville community in the city's deteriorated western sector. The model also could not account for urban blight: since it assumes a constant competition for space driven by the expansion of the central business district, it cannot explain why concentrations of abandoned or derelict structures can persist, even in metropolitan regions where the overall prosperity is sound (Bartelt etal 175).

The classical ecological model was criticized on other grounds as well: that its reliance on automatic organic processes failed to take account of significant historical developments and personalities; that its emphasis on the central business district as the source of growth led to a monocentric view of the city, a pattern flatly contradicted by the growth of cities with multi-centered employment and residential patterns like New York (Bartelt etal 168); and that it did not recognize the durability of structures as an important determinant of city form because it assumed that land uses and populations could respond quickly to population or commercial pressures. The character of land was considered to be highly elastic in its response to economic pressures; topography and the durability of built structures were of secondary importance relative to the overwhelming influence of growth pressures from the center. For the classical ecological theorists, the only factors of real significance in determining city form were the economic vitality of the central business district and the distance of land from this center of economic activity.
The Historical Ecological Paradigm

These criticisms formed the basis for an alternative view of city growth, the historical ecological paradigm, in which developments in the technology of transportation and production, the movement of peoples, and the relation of the city to the larger regional economy were given emphasis in the shaping of city form. The model sought "to identify the factors which account for particular spatial configurations during specific historical periods" (Bartelt 170). As in the classical ecological model, economic activity is the most important determinant of spatial structure, but historical developments now count heavily. It was found, for example, that neighborhoods are not as transient as the classical model suggested they ought to be, rather their status in a developing urban economy is determined to a great extent by their historical location. The pattern of residential settlement is determined in this view not only by the location of primary economic activity (and hence of jobs), but also by the costs and speed of transportation and by the availability of housing, all factors that have specific historic characteristics (Bartelt et al 171, 174). Changes in the functions of the neighborhood over time can only be understood within the larger context of city change. What follows is a greatly compressed outline of the history of the urban neighborhood as it is understood within the historical ecological perspective.

The Neighborhood in the Pre-industrial City

The neighborhood of the pre-industrial city was a locus not only for residence but for manufacturing, retail warehouses, and offices as well (Lynch 25). With overland transportation slow and uncertain, the costs
of moving goods by horse-drawn vehicles were so high that it was essential for productive activities and residence to be located within easy reach of the principal transportation connections of the city.¹ The premiere residential location was likely to be near the water’s edge, with homes located in the same area, often in the same building, as the warehouses and banking structures which provided the household livelihood. Both prestige and quality of residence declined as one approached the periphery of the settlement: a map of Boston from 1722 shows that the copper works, the powder house, and a number of farms ringed the western and northern peripheries of the small peninsula on which the city sat, areas which also served the housing needs of transients (Fig. 2). Because land use at the center of the city was highly intermixed, and because the domestic needs of the wealthy had to be met by servants who lived in the home or very near to it, different economic classes lived in close proximity to one another, reflecting in the spatial pattern of the city their mutual dependence. This physical pattern is still evident in the mix of houses of different sizes and levels of pretension that one finds in neighborhoods which have been relatively well preserved, for example the area bordering Brattle Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and along St. Charles Street in New Orleans; one block back from the avenue of grand mansions, one still finds the small and close-packed cottages which were used by the servants of the great households.

A good deal of productive activity in the pre-industrial city took place within the home itself, with the family being one of the primary units of production in the general economy. The physical dimensions of the town were necessarily small, since most workers had to rely on their
The TOWN of BOSTON in New England by John Bonner 1722

Fig. 2 Map of Boston, 1722
feet to move them on a daily basis between their homes and their jobs at the port and its related facilities; a typical town might be only two miles in radius. The city's population was also small, reflecting the fact that food supplies to support the non-agricultural city residents were limited by the growing capacity and accessibility of the immediate agricultural hinterland (Jacobs 1985 55).

The Industrial Era

Industrialization and particularly the development of steam technology precipitated the most significant change in urban culture since the first founding of cities (Jackson 20). In the shift from economies based principally on agriculture and manual production to economies based on machine production, cities no longer served only as places for the exchange for goods, but became themselves the principal sites for the creation of goods. Industrial production required large cities for its activities: centralized access to transportation connections, the concentration of processing in large plants, and the presence of enormous pools of available workers, all contrived to make the dense, centralized urban pattern which is still evident in older industrial cities. The tremendous increases in urban populations and in the number of large cities in the nineteenth century have been well documented. In the latter half of the eighteenth century less than 22 million people out of a total world population of 900 million resided in settlements larger than 20,000, and in 1800 there were only 44 cities with populations larger than 100,000 residents; by 1900 the number of city dwellers had risen to 147 million (out of 1,600 million world population) and the number of cities larger than 100,000 had increased to 270 or more
(Lampard 55). Although improvements in medicine, health conditions, and nutrition brought about a general surge in world population through increases in the rate of live births and reduction in the overall death rate, the increase of city population is attributed mainly to net migration from the countryside rather than to natural increases in world population.

Individual cities showed enormous increases in population. New York grew from a population of 33,100 in 1790 to 2,515,000 in 1890, a 76-fold increase, and Chicago was transformed from a village of 4,500 in 1840 to a metropolis of 1,100,000 in only 50 years, a staggering 244-fold increase (Jackson 27, Judd 17). Large cities like Rome and Babylon had existed before, but what is significant about industrial urbanization in the nineteenth century is the degree of urbanization, that is, the tendency of the entire population to be concentrated in urban places. Worldwide, the urban share of the population increased from less than 2.4 percent of total population at the end of the eighteenth century to about 9.2 percent in 1900 and 25 percent by 1960. In the industrializing countries, this increase was far more dramatic. In Great Britain, the most highly industrialized country of the nineteenth century, half of the population was living in cities by the 1830’s and concurrently the share of the working population engaged in agricultural work fell precipitously from about a third in 1800 to only 8.7 percent in 1901 (Lampard 60). In the United States, the changes came later: in 1790, 5 percent of the population lived in cities, compared to some 35 percent in 1890.

Urbanization is coincident with industrialization and can be explained as one of its effects: technology reduced the demand for labor in agriculture at the same time that it increased the demand for labor in
manufactures, which were concentrated in city locations. City jobs meant wealth: evidence shows that real incomes were higher in cities than in the countryside, and the lure of opportunity was all that was needed to bring people to the city (Lampard). The large market represented by increased city populations gave further impetus to improving the efficiency and scale of agricultural production, which in turn permitted larger city populations to develop. Thus the scale and function of cities as elements of worldwide economy changed dramatically between the middle of the eighteenth century and the end of the nineteenth.

In pre-industrial cities, the materials which were used in manufacturing had come largely from local sources and the markets toward which finished goods were directed were also local. With the transportation and communication innovations of the industrial period, both the scale and the geographic domain of industry expanded enormously (Van Vliet 264). Steam power allowed manufactures to locate at any point to which coal could be transported, freeing them from dependence on the relatively scarce sites along streams which had offered adequate power to mills and factories driven by water (Mumford 1961 455). Since manufacturing required sites at points of access to regional transportation, the preferred locations for industrial activities were near the railheads and harbors, precisely where the best residential sections had been located in the pre-industrial city. Intensive competition between different economic sectors for advantageous sites began, with the result that the city was forced to grow both upwards through taller buildings and outward by territorial expansion. In Boston, the competition was so intense that the city government became involved in large clearances to make room for industry, and the original
peninsula of 800 acres was more than doubled by landfill extensions into the surrounding waters (Lynch 28).

The rapid changes in the location of industry in the nineteenth century had profound effects on the city's neighborhoods. The rise of manufacturing centers built on steam power occurred concurrently with the development, for the first time, of exclusively residential neighborhoods of every quality (Bartelt et al. 173). As cities became magnets for men and women seeking work, laborers were housed in huge tracts of high density, inexpensive housing surrounding the factories. The squalor, misery, and sheer visual ugliness of these worker's areas is vividly described in this passage from Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*:

They were on a street which seemed to run on forever, mile after mile - thirty-four of them, if they had known it - and each side of it one uninterrupted row of wretched little two-story frame buildings. Down every side street they could see, it was the same - never a hill and never a hollow, but always the same endless vista of ugly and dirty little wooden buildings. Here and there would be a bridge crossing a filthy creek, with hard-baked mud shores and dingy sheds and docks along it; here and there would be a railroad crossing, with a tangle of switches, and locomotives puffing, and rattling freight cars filing by; here and there would be a great factory, a dingy building with innumerable windows in it, and immense volumes of smoke pouring from the chimneys, darkening the air above and making filthy the earth beneath. But after each of these interruptions, the desolate procession would begin again - the procession of dreary little buildings (Sinclair 24)

These extensive areas of worker's housing have often persisted, as in Baltimore's Pigtown neighborhood, built to house the men who worked in the foundries and yards of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad on the western edge of the city. While in many cases the immigrants occupied cheaper older housing near the city centers, in others huge tracts of new housing were built for them. The mix of different economic functions and classes which had prevailed in the pre-industrial city gave way in industrial
cities to spatial segregation of classes and specialization of economic functions on a territorial basis. Since class standing was often closely associated with ethnicity, spatial segregation along ethnic lines also occurred, producing "Little Italies," "Little Polands," and Chinatowns.

The same transportation technologies which allowed manufactures to congregate near the city center, and brought with them immense areas of worker's housing, also permitted increasing numbers of urban residents to flee from these sites of noise, smoke, congestion, and human misery. The non-manufacturing business district retained its importance as a financial and shopping center, but in many cases lost a large share of its residential function. Steam technology allowed those who could afford the high fares to escape the city altogether for an entirely new form of settlement, the residential railroad suburb surrounded by open countryside. Llewellyn Park designed by Alexander Jackson Davis in New Jersey in 1856, Riverside designed by Frederick Law Olmsted outside of Chicago in 1868, were elegant attempts to join the convenience of the city with the pastoral values of town life (Dal Co 159, 167, Jackson 76-81). Later, the widespread use of electric streetcars reduced the cost of fares so significantly that escape became possible for people of very average means (Mieszkowski and Mills 2). Large residential subdivisions were created by speculative builders, who often reaped a double profit by owning the electric trolley lines which carried residents to their suburban homes. The degree to which residence consequently became separated from the workplace is illustrated by two maps of Philadelphia, one from 1829 and the other from 1862, which plot the relation between home and office for a sample of merchants in the two years (Figs. 2, 3).
The journey-to-work of Philadelphia merchants, 1829. Forty-two persons of a sample size of eighty-six commuted and were plotted.


Fig. 3 Journey-to-work of Philadelphia merchants, 1829
**Figure A-3.** The journey-to-work of fifty-six randomly selected Philadelphia lumber, china, glass, cotton, dry goods, and iron merchants. Seven men lived and worked at the same address, and eight could not be plotted.


**Fig. 4** Journey-to-work of Philadelphia merchants, 1862
The average journey to work for these individuals increased from walking distance in 1829 to a commuter ride in 1862 (Jackson 313, 314).3

With the large economic transformations described above, significant changes also took place in the social, cultural, and political functions of neighborhoods. In the realm of social activity, the individual’s affiliations tended to both expand in some respects and contract in others. On the one hand, the local community declined in significance as the primary site for social intercourse as allegiances became attached to citywide, regional, or even national organizations like labor unions (Van Vliet 265). On the other hand, the home became increasingly important as a site for social interaction and as a retreat from the emotional and sensory assault of the public world. This trend was more accentuated among the well-to-do than among the poor, and can be partly attributed to the fact that homes were simply becoming more comfortable. Plumbing, electricity, and humble devices like insect screens were of immeasurable importance in making the home more attractive than the street, the cafe, or the saloon as a place in which to spend the leisure hours (Jackson 48, 124-128, Teaford 221). These technological improvements coincided with a powerful cultural movement, the elevation of the feminine side of family life to a near-reverential status. In popular literature and advertising the home was conceived as the peaceful retreat where the industrialist, under the tender ministrations of his wife, could be restored to civility after his brutal daily labors in the social-Darwinian battlefield of commerce (Jackson 48).4

The trend toward increased privacy and self-sufficiency within the home contributed to the areal specialization of the city, because at
least for the wealthy, the neighborhood as a support to the home was expected to be free from the tumult of commerce and the forced association of mixed social and ethnic groups. Areas of workers housing became specialized by default, since they were often built precisely to house this class of the population. Along with the ethnic and class segregation already noted, this territorial specialization tended to produce a cellular urban pattern. Each separate residential district with a radius of three miles or less had its own set of markets, cafes, shops, institutions, and employments (Van Vliet 266). Intercourse between the classes was now vastly reduced, and the social distance between classes was augmented by the differences of language and custom which characterized different sectors of the city. Social order, previously enforced through the differences in dress, manner, and speech which marked the classes, was now enforced by literal physical distance or, as social conditions deteriorated in the economic crises of the 1870’s and 1880’s, by the police (Van Vliet 266).

Industrialism brought with it demands for new types of buildings like warehouses, factories, depots, and office buildings on an unprecedented scale. Not only did industrialism require that the new structures be durable, it also provided the constructive means and materials by which their durability could be assured. City building in pre-industrial society had been incremental, experimental, and except for the most remarkable public buildings and public works, very small in scale. With industrialism came private building projects of a scale and concentration previously unknown. Huge tracts of workers tenement housing were constructed in industrial cities in the mid-nineteenth century (Benevolo 40, 215-218, Mumford 1961 433); factories became mile-
square complexes of machines driven by belts from a single central power plant (Mumford 456, Sinclair 31); and the shaping of the city itself took place on an unprecedented scale in works such as Baron Haussmann's restructuring of Paris from 1853 to 1869. Although at the beginning of the twentieth century a number of Haussmann-like projects were undertaken in America under the influence of the Columbia Exposition of 1893 and the City Beautiful planning movement it inspired, in general American cities remained obedient in their physical structure to the simple and eminently practical gridiron street plan. American cities, like their British counterparts, were dominated by a system of private land ownership that would remain resistant to such wholesale reworkings until the federal government entered the field with the urban renewal programs of the mid-twentieth century.\(^5\) However, enormous public works were undertaken to make the cities healthier and more efficient; among the more notable are New York's Croton waterworks (1830's-1880's), the Brooklyn Bridge (1869-1883), and the reversal of the Chicago River (Teaford 223, 233).

The consequence of these two developments, the increased durability of ordinary structures and the expanded scale of urban building operations, was to fix the spatial distribution of functions in the city, including its neighborhoods, with a permanence which affected all subsequent transformations in population and land use. A district like Boston's South End, built originally in the 1850's as a townhouse neighborhood for the well-to-do, was transformed into a working-class ghetto in the early twentieth century, and back into a middle-class enclave in the 1970's and 1980's (Lynch 32); the fact that it remained at every stage primarily a residential district is accounted for partly by the great costs that would be involved in removing its four and five
story brick structures to clear the land for industrial or large-scale commercial uses. These costs of demolition tend to outweigh almost any reasonable commercial value that the land might attain because of its location, and drastically inhibit the rapid transformations of built capital that the classical ecological paradigm predicts (Mills and Hamilton 136-139). Because of its durability, older housing was often not replaced by new housing or other building types; the result was that a large stock of dilapidated and therefore less expensive housing remained available for the waves of American migrants and foreign immigrants who continued to arrive in America’s cities. As industry and trade decentralized, the location of this affordable housing created a misalignment between the employment needs of the immigrants and the jobs which were suited to their skills.

With the increase in scale and durability of urban structures, the incremental approach to city-building that prevailed in pre-industrial cities was no longer physically safe, nor was it consonant with the new economies of construction or productive activity. Planning, "the simultaneous comprehension and conceptual organization" of urban spaces and systems, became a necessity, and its introduction coincided with the increased control exerted by centralized bureaucracies in every aspect of city life (Van Vliet 261, 268). Regulations were introduced initially in New York in 1867 to ensure minimal standards of health and safety in crowded workers’ tenements, and then expanded rapidly to cover building construction, subdivision layout, and the individual characteristics of buildings such as their height, bulk, setback, and use. The fluid and highly intermixed land composition of the pre-industrial city gave way under regulation to enclaves of relatively uniform land use, thus
encoding in law the spatial segregation and separation which were driven by class, economic, and demographic trends. The neighborhood specialized as a purely residential enclave, with almost no admixture of significant economic activity to provide jobs or services, became the standard throughout America.

As the role of the city neighborhood as an economic and social unit altered, its political role also changed. The American city in general declined in autonomy in the period that spans from the colonial era to the late 19th century. From its status as an independent corporation with vested rights, the city gradually came to be seen in the eyes of the law as a mere creature, delegate, and agent of the state (Briffault 6ff, Hartog 223, Frug 1062ff). This general movement has been variously interpreted. Several writers see it as an attempt to subjugate the feared and despised immigrant population of the cities to more virtuous patrician influences (Teaford, Frug). Others view it as a recognition that the city could only obtain the capacity to carry out its modern tasks of management and building if it were granted the plenary powers available to an agent of the state, a transformation which required that the protections and the limitations which were imposed on a private corporation had to be removed (Hartog 80, 195). Under either interpretation, however, the typical ward system of 19th century American cities was recognized as a deterrent to efficient, modern management. The increasingly politicized ward was the mainstay of the political machines: specific locales had allegiances to individual bosses or parties, with the consequence that city politics often was little more than a contest to divert patronage jobs, improvements, and funds to individual neighborhoods (Judd 57, Teaford 174-187, Van Vliet 269).
Those who had a citywide perspective and sense of obligation, which were necessary for a balanced distribution of resources among the different functions of the city, were in many cases not powerful enough to prevail against the dominance of ward-based politics (Teaford). In other cases, the new generation of professional city administrators, engineers, and health and education specialists combined with the interests of patrician business leaders to impose reforms and a city-wide perspective (Schieszl). The political autonomy of individual neighborhoods, the difficulty of achieving city-wide consensus on planning and improvements, was reinforced by the single-member district system under which no elected official except the mayor was accountable to the population of the city as a whole. Under weak-mayor forms of government, where the city council rather than the mayor is responsible for appointing department heads (and thus for carrying out city policy as well as for formulating it), the result of the single member district system was likely to be municipal fragmentation. In contemporary Philadelphia, the single-member system combines with a weak-mayor form of government to effectively curtail comprehensive planning on a city-wide basis.

While the political machines did promote corruption and massive inefficiencies in city-building, they also provided an important benefit to the neighborhoods, namely a channel by which individuals could appeal to the political process for benefits or for redress of their problems. The relation of the resident to the ward boss was often direct, personal, and long-standing, and consisted of an exchange of favors on the part of the boss for reliable performance at the ballot box by the resident. The limitation of this system was precisely that it
functioned largely on behalf of individuals and not collectives. The old politics provided divisible benefits - jobs, contracts, and assorted favors - but failed to provide indivisible rewards necessary to check massive housing speculation, the construction of freeways, and urban renewal schemes (Baroni 180).

The benefits which derive from comprehensive, coordinated areal planning were among the indivisible benefits that the machine failed to provide.

To summarize, the industrial city was characterized by spatial segregation and specialization of functions, by a vastly increased scale of building enterprise, by increasing control from central bureaucracies at the same time that neighborhoods achieved relative political independence through the ward system. Decentralization, first of the residential population and then of commerce and industry, began in the 1830s and continued with increasing intensity to the end of the century and beyond, abetted by a continuous series of transportation improvements which lowered the cost of commuting and allowed the workplace and the home to be increasingly separated (Mieszkowski and Mill 1993).

The neighborhood, which had once been the scene of a complex mix of populations and different economic functions, emerged from the 19th century industrial transformation as a specialized and homogeneous residential enclave. As the century progressed the purely residential neighborhood, physically separated from the strife and commotion of the industrial city, became accessible to a broad range of income levels. The purity of the neighborhood as a residential domain, the exclusion from it of most productive economic activities, made it attractive to the 19th century city dweller, who on the one hand confronted city conditions which were almost inhuman in their foulness, and on the other was inspired by romanticized visions of the solitary cottage quietly harbored in a green, fruitful, and peaceful natural environment (Jackson 57ff,
Rowe 218ff). Commuting was the key which allowed the residential ideal and the reality of the workplace to be joined together in actual life. To maintain this balance, the neighborhood had to specialize as a residential enclave, and herein can be found both its attractiveness and the source of its vulnerability. The aging of the housing stock in central city neighborhoods, the movement of jobs and services to the outlying areas, even changes in fashions and tastes in housing styles and living arrangements, conspired to pull entire sections of the population out of the city's residential neighborhoods and toward the periphery of the city. Left behind were large areas of older housing stock which provided homes for waves of new settlers from overseas and from America's rural areas (Norton, Peterson, Gans). In the specialization of the neighborhood and its consequent vulnerability in the face of change lies the origin of the conditions which the neighborhood planning programs in this study address.

The Post-industrial Era
The industrial era has been characterized as "the substitution of mechanical operations for manual activities in the production process". By contrast, the post-industrial era is described by the same author as the "change from the production and consumption of goods to services" (Van Vliet 262, 270). The most significant aspect of this change in economic activity is the extraordinary mobility which capital has attained. In the industrial era, capital was fixed in the form of machinery and structures, and labor tended to follow capital development in great migrations of population; in the post-industrial era capital is highly mobile, always seeking to find less expensive sources of labor,
land and materials to increase the profits of production (Van Vliet 274). Under current conditions, for example, it is less expensive to export materials and parts to Mexican maquiladoras for assembly than to import Mexican labor into the United States for this purpose. Goods transport cheaply, whereas transported human beings require a large array of social services and physical facilities to support them, and contain the seeds of ethnic and racial tensions which may disturb the social order of the economy which depends on them. Within metropolitan regions, the mobility of capital has permitted the decentralization of industry to accelerate to such an extent that two-thirds of manufacturing now takes place in the suburbs, where land, labor, transportation, and the incidental costs imposed by local regulation tend to be cheaper than they are in the central cities (Jackson 183, 184, 266, 267). To a lesser degree, a concurrent decentralization of services and of retail activity has also taken place. Similar factors have led to the decentralization of manufacturing at a national scale as productive activities have left the traditional manufacturing belt in the Northern and Midwestern states in favor of the South and the Southwest. The rapid increase in capital mobility has depended crucially on developments in high-speed, inexpensive transportation and communication: container shipments by truck and train combine the flexibility of road transport with the economies of scale of the rails; overnight delivery of small items permits firms to respond rapidly to unique and innovative demands; and the virtually instantaneous transmittal of information and decisions means that the executive and administrative functions of a business can be widely separated from its productive activities without any loss of efficiency.
The mobility of manufacturing can be explained as a logical outcome of a capitalist economy: once cheap transportation was available, marginal labor or transport advantages associated with the location of manufacturing activity could generate substantial profits in the mass-production of consumer goods. However, while few barriers remain to the mobility of machinery, raw materials, and finished goods, the structures in which manufacturing activity takes place are far more resistant to fluid movement and change. The fixed nature of built facilities presents a paradox to capitalist production:

*Capital is confronted by the dilemma of requiring a fixed location in order to generate a return and simultaneously requiring liquidity in order to expand that return.* (Bartelt 179)

Since profitability in a capitalist economy depends on expansion of production and incessant innovation, those land-based factors which are most important in generating profits, namely the production site and the distribution networks, become inadequate precisely if they are successful (Bartelt 181):

*As one area matures as an investment location, it generates the liquidity necessary to develop other locations. These locations, in turn...become increasingly competitive.* (Bartelt 179)

In order to increase the profitability of land and return it to competition with other sites, one possibility is to change the configuration and intensity of activity of the production site itself through horizontal or vertical expansion. However, in most inner city sites the costs of making these changes far outweigh the costs of constructing new buildings, roads and railroad connections on cheaper land in the periphery of the metropolitan area. Not least among the hurdles to rapid conversion of central city industrial sites are the
regulatory and taxing burdens which hard-pressed city governments impose on businesses. The physical character of manufacturing sites in central cities are also resistant to the new methods of production: 19th century industrial structures were often built vertically in order to enlist gravity in the service of moving goods through the production process, while contemporary production depends on large, flat floor plates in order to allow for the horizontal movement of goods in assembly lines. Ample sites unconstrained by previous structures are available in the raw-land industrial parks and the undeveloped agricultural tracts of the city periphery. Modern manufacturing also requires extensive areas for efficiently handling the movement of trucks, facilities which rarely exist in the older industrial sites. Thus fine and solid mill buildings in Baltimore, Portsmouth (New Hampshire), and Lowell (Massachusetts) have found new life as apartments, offices, boutiques, craft shops, and festival marketplaces, but not as sites for large-scale manufacturing.

The historical movement of middle-class families to the peripheral areas of American cities, beginning with the railroad suburbs of the mid-nineteenth century and increasing with the electric trolley suburbs of the late nineteenth century, was accelerated and broadened by technological innovations and by national policy in the period after World War II. From its early days as a luxury device for the very wealthy, the automobile was transformed by the 1930s into a household necessity that was increasingly affordable to large numbers of American families. Innovations in the materials and design of road systems made driving easier, safer, and a source of recreation for the leisure hours. Federal policies from as early as 1916 had given the states strong incentives to improve their urban and rural road systems, and the
Interstate Highway Act of 1956 made the federal government the principal builder of the interstate highway system (Bond 6, Jackson 167). The ostensible purpose of the Act was to aid defense by facilitating the movement of troops and materiel and to decentralize vital industries in order to protect them against aerial bombardment. The Act had the incidental effect, however, of opening the outlying areas of cities to residential and commercial development. Consequently, the Act was supported by a powerful lobby of parties which could benefit from peripheral development, including rural property owners, automobile manufacturers and retailers, providers of highway construction materials, home-builders associations, labor unions, petroleum and rubber companies, and real estate organizations (Jackson 248). Meanwhile, equivalent support was not given to rapid transit, which would provide advantages to central city businesses and residents. The national bias toward automobile transportation at the expense of public transit did not reflect a rational evaluation of the benefits and costs of each or of the relation of each to national purposes, but came about because the automobile aligned with a persistent tendency toward decentralization and with the interests of a powerful congeries of national organizations.

Concurrently, the federal government provided the financial means for potential homeowners to acquire the single-family home which previously had been affordable only to a relatively small proportion of households. In 1934, as a New Deal measure to give momentum to the home construction industry, the National Housing Act established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Not itself a lending agency, the FHA provided mortgage insurance to lenders. The effect on the practices of lending institutions was dramatic: with the reduction of risk made
possible by federal insurance, these institutions could lower down
payment requirements from 30% or more of purchase price to only 10% and
could extend loan repayment periods to 25 or 30 years. FHA policies in
many cases made it less expensive to buy a home than to rent one (Jackson
206). The policies overwhelmingly favored single-family suburban homes:
in St. Louis between 1935 and 1939, some 91% of all FHA-insured loans
were made to suburban home buyers. The program contained several biases
against inner-city home ownership. Although a percentage of FHA
insurance funds were set aside in the legislation for the rehabilitation
of existing housing, which would tend to be the older housing in the
central cities, in practice almost the entirety of the funds were
dedicated to insuring the construction of new homes in the suburbs. In
contrast to the liberal terms of home-ownership loans, loans dedicated to
home repairs were small and required short repayment periods. At the
same time, the guidelines published by the agency to aid lenders in their
choice of clients were explicitly biased against the racial minorities
which tended to live in the older housing of the central cities.
Although the FHA changed its racial policies in 1950, in practice it
continued its pattern of providing insurance to middle-class suburban
areas. Between 1934 and 1960, the suburban counties around Washington,
D.C. received seven times as much mortgage insurance as did the District
itself (Jackson 211, 213).

The pattern became endemic to the lending practices of American
banks, with the result that the decline of America’s central cities was
greatly accelerated. Although the causes of central city decline are
complex, the absence of credit insurance for home acquisition and repair
loans has been a significant factor; the FHA definition of what
constituted risky and therefore uninsurable areas of the city turned into self-fulfilling prophecies as urban homeowners, unable to find buyers for their properties, were forced into reducing maintenance and eventually abandoning their properties (Jackson 213). Reinforced by tax policies which allow home-owners to deduct mortgage interest and property taxes from their total taxable income, but provide no such deductions for renters, FHA policies deliberately reinforced the movement to the suburbs (Jackson 293). The implications were profound for American society and the form of American cities: between 1946 and 1957, 97% of all new units constructed in the United States were detached single family suburban homes. Not only did the suburbs grow in absolute population in the years 1950 to 1960, but what is more important, the proportion of metropolitan residents who lived in the suburbs also increased dramatically (Rowe 4). According to the 1980 Census, more than 40% of the American population lived in suburban locations; in 1990, that figure had increased to more than 50%.

The consequence for the central city neighborhood of the rapid mobility of capital, which has been predominantly an outward movement of businesses and property owners, has been overwhelming. From the perspective of production activity, a neighborhood is simply a commodity which must be sold to a consumer group. When market conditions change - when jobs move elsewhere, when a transportation innovation makes a new location profitable, when tastes or fashion dictate a change - a neighborhood will simply be abandoned as a site for new construction or even for the maintenance of its existing structures. This is precisely what has happened to many inner-city neighborhoods, particularly in the older cities of the Industrial Belt. In some cases, it has meant the
wreckage and abandonment of communities that depended for their lifeblood on a nearby industry. When central city neighborhoods have not been abandoned outright by economic activity, they still tend to suffer from the movement of people and goods to the metropolitan periphery, as property taxes increase and the quality of services decline in the face of mounting demands from dependent populations.

While the role of inner-city neighborhoods in manufacturing has changed dramatically as the general economy of America has shifted from an industrial to a service basis, the social, cultural and political trends initiated under industrialism have largely continued, in exaggerated form. Although there are great variations in the way that different social classes and ethnic groups think of their neighborhoods, in general the neighborhood's role as a site for social interaction has declined rapidly for those large sections of the population which now have mobility (Keller 7, 53). Local institutions have also declined in importance as national and even international organizations have become more important in the lives of individuals: the insurance company, the computer network club, the catalog retail service which offers convenience, reliability, uniformity, and low cost. Small stores oriented toward a local clientelle, which served an important institutional function as meeting places and sources of information (Jacobs 1961), have found it difficult to compete with the economies of scale in purchasing, construction, marketing, and overhead that are enjoyed by national chain stores. Even those older shopping areas which have come back to life as retail districts, like Annapolis' Main Street, sport the same branches of national chains which are found in the suburban shopping malls. Although physical settings like downtown
Annapolis may remain unique, the character of local retail areas has tended to become moulded into variations of a nationwide standard, consequently reducing local attachments to the district.

Essential elements of the ecology of neighborhoods have been altered by the scale of operations which take place in the postindustrial world. As they relate to the individual, many large-scale organizations like automobile associations are in effect a-spatial, since the individual requires only a telephone, a modem, or a television to gain access to them. Increasingly, forms of communication replace forms of transportation in allowing people to gain access to the larger world. The home as a kind of information and entertainment node has become a primary site where many individuals make contact with the world. For these individuals, the neighborhood around the home serves a largely instrumental rather than a social function: it must offer security, comfort, and accessibility, and it must accord visually and environmentally with the tastes of the residents. But it need offer few of those social contacts which would have been essential in a world in which one's range of choice was limited by the absence of rapid, affordable transportation or communication. Such was the world of foot transport, horse-drawn carriages, and even the early automobile, where one's concerns were not only with the general social class and habits of one's neighbors, but with their names, their family connections, and their social connections; for neighbors under such circumstances were an inescapable and determining part of one's environment. Modern transportation allows neighbors, and the neighborhood, to be treated far more as a background feature to life than was possible in the nineteenth or early twentieth century.
Privatization of many functions that were previously public has been accompanied by demographic changes which reinforce the isolation of the private home: decrease of household size, a consequence of the breakup of nuclear families, of reduced fertility, and of an increase in the divorce rate; reduced dwelling densities, an effect of the increased incomes which have given more households access to single-family detached homes; the social complexity of American cities, which in undermining the cultural homogeneity of many neighborhoods has also increased fears of social contact; the growth of home businesses, which remove individuals from daily contact with the commercial and institutional areas of the city; and the intense mobility of American households, which tends to reduce their attachment to a locale and also creates inhibitions against forming social connections which may have to be quickly broken (Van Vliet 275).

These trends, while significant, are not universal. For small children, for the elderly, and for the poor who can afford neither transportation nor access to the information network, the neighborhood retains its importance as a primary site for daily interaction (Van Vliet 275, Keller 72). At the same time that they still depend on the neighborhood for many functions of daily life, these groups also have the least voice in determining what amenities and services the neighborhood will offer, consequently they may find a nearly complete absence of those facilities which are most necessary for them: playgrounds, day-care centers, even benches and enclosures at bus stops. These inadequacies are exacerbated by the rapid transformations in neighborhood population which are one of the effects of extreme capital mobility. As industries leave a district or a metropolitan region, entirely new population groups
may flood into areas. When the price of oil fell precipitously in 1986, for example, Houston lost some 200,000 oil-related jobs. As a consequence, many apartment complexes were vacated which had been built for a mobile managerial class with relatively high incomes, and as rents were lowered the units became inhabited by lower-income Hispanic and Asian families. These populations are far more dependent on foot transportation and on localized recreation and social facilities than were their predecessors, for whom the neighborhood served as a bedroom community to support their city-wide social and business activities. For the new population, the dispersal of shopping facilities, the paucity of recreation spaces, the wide traffic corridors, and in many cases the absence of sidewalks in some neighborhoods creates daily inconveniences if not genuine hazards. In Gulfton in southwest Houston, social tensions have been exacerbated as young people seek out parking areas and empty lots for their noisy and sometimes violent get-togethers. Medical facilities are in short supply for a population that has few private resources to handle its problems, and for whom public transport to available public facilities is extraordinarily difficult. The problems of the area are compounded by the fact that the political background of many of the new residents, particularly those who come from Central America, places them outside of the normal channels by which the residents of a neighborhood can make their needs known to decision-makers (Myers 120, 121).

As many aspects of daily life - goods, services, entertainment - have taken on national and even international dimensions, the distinctiveness of individual neighborhoods has been reduced. The phenomenon is particularly apparent in new communities: from coast to
coast one finds subdivisions of single-family homes, townhouses, and garden apartments which are distinguishable from one another only by the regional cast of their landscaping and by details applied to the exterior; in many instances even the details are missing. Massing, siting, road layout, and unit floor plans come from a catalog of types which are literally communicated across the county by electronic devices. The ancient relation between locality and built form has been radically severed. The result, at least in the new residential and commercial sections of cities, is a vast monotony lacking the marks of a historical tradition which relates building, landscape, and neighborhood form to the customs and tastes of a long-established population. By contrast, older neighborhoods in the central cities have the advantage of a structural fabric built at a time when local customs in dwelling design, constructive methods, and street configuration did count for a great deal. Baltimore’s row houses are distinctly different in scale and detail from those of Boston’s Back Bay, built roughly in the same era; both are characteristically different from San Francisco’s typical housing type of the period, the Victorian detached house.

Where these vestiges of regional styles still exist, they have helped to inspire a reaction to the uniform culture which dominates the newer neighborhoods of America. The reaction takes a number of forms: small-scale, low-rise building is promoted instead of the enormous residential slabs of the International Style; renovation and rehabilitation of older structures is encouraged to increase the housing stock through preservation rather than clearance and rebuilding of historic districts; concern for special population groups has surfaced, especially those which do not have access to the transportation and
communication devices which are now essential to participation in the culture of many cities; and there is a widespread recognition that the neighborhood can be an effective agent for change where larger political units are too cumbersome. Flexible design and building regulations are promoted to adapt general standards to particular local conditions, for example the Phoenix and Raleigh neighborhood planning ordinances (Chapter 7), and under the rubric of "empowerment" there is a new demand for citizen participation in government and planning. In the realm of politics and administration, the renewed call for localism is expressed in the shift of responsibilities from the federal level to the states and the cities in a number of programs (e.g. Community Development Block Grants and HOME), and from government to private corporations (e.g. AMTRAK). The neighborhood planning programs which are studied in this report are also a demonstration of the renewed call for localism in many areas of American cultural life. These developments speak for the fact that a neighborhood is more than an "amenity" which the residential consumer purchases as part of a "package" of housing goods (as the language of real estate economics puts it). The neighborhood is also an important extension of the home and carries with it the meanings associated with domesticity as well as practical value. This realm of meanings points to the third important model of urban formation, the symbolic ecological paradigm.
The Symbolic Ecology of the Neighborhood

As powerful as the historical ecological paradigm has been in explaining the form of American cities through technological innovation and economic transformation, it fails to account for one of the most significant factors which has shaped the city, race. In order to take race into account, it is necessary to look beyond the functions of city districts to the meaning these districts have for those who inhabit them (Bartelt 167, referring to Firey 1945). Symbolic ecology, a relatively new development in urban theory, points to the formative symbolic interactions that take place between the locale and other communities and institutions, and which run parallel to the interconnected web of ecological forces which shape the function, the population, and the form of the community (Hunter 1987 200). While classical ecology and historical ecology tend to see community identity as an after-effect of larger economic and social forces, symbolic ecology recognizes that "symbolic labels, boundaries, and evaluations ...[are]...based in part upon the ecological realities of the local communities," but "these symbolic constructions may also impact upon the ecological composition and interactions that a local community has with the external world". The heightened symbolism of community identity which is achieved through such actions as establishing boundaries, finding a name for the locale, or founding a community organization, can itself be an important impetus toward undertaking communal projects, establishing a long-range planning process, or mobilizing residents for political action.
Community identification increases the attachments which people have to their residence and provides a motivation for involvement in community affairs which goes beyond concern about the fate of one’s individual home. Place identifications redound to the stature and identity of the community resident, and may strongly support the individual’s reasons for moving into the area or remaining in it despite its apparent liabilities. In spite of the standardization of places which was mentioned earlier, many neighborhood names still carry with them connotations of a way of life as well as a physical setting: "The Village" in New York City still signifies a life of artistic excitement, "Roland Park" in Baltimore suggests discrete wealth and relaxed good taste, "Adams-Morgan" in Washington, D.C. implies enlightened racial integration and cultural pluralism. It is this elusive quality of place identification that the new subdivisions attempt to capture through their names, which invariably refer to a naturalistic romantic landscape or to quaint European precedents (often in complete defiance of the visual evidence available to any visitor).

In the perspective of symbolic interaction, community identity is at least as much a function of how the outside world conceives of the community as it is of how the community conceives of itself (Hunter 1987 203). External agents - foundations, agencies, elected officials - may have a strong interest in helping a community to achieve a level of self-identification sufficient to permit it to act as a well-defined and effective political entity. As the discussion in Chapter 5 will show, however, a community with a well-developed sense of its goals and its powers can also represent a threat to the interests of a city’s political
officers. Community identification reinforces the tendency toward community autonomy, that aspect of localism which historically has led to the incorporation of separate municipalities throughout American metropolitan regions with the purpose of guarding property rights and maintaining a definite standard of life (Briffault 5, 349 nt 25, 364, Davis 165-169). The prestige and status that attach to living in certain neighborhoods are here intertwined with the determination to protect the value of a large property investment, with fears about personal safety, and with concerns about protecting children from what are deemed to be improper influences (Hunter 1983 15). The strong incentives which the Federal Housing Administration gave to builders of single-family suburban homes aligned with the traditional American longing for, and glorification of, the separate home in a pastoral setting. This tradition, which suggested permanence and deep attachments to the land and the local community, vied with another American tradition, which encouraged the individual’s restless search for wealth and fulfillment. The automobile and the affordable suburban home seemed to offer a complete solution to the paradox: ordinary people, not just the rich, could now combine the opportunities of the city and the ideal of the pastoral domicile into a single vision of the good life. The automobile also became a status symbol and an intimate component of a culture which devoted enormous imagination and resources to mobility. Interconnected images of family, automobile and the single-family suburban home were reinforced by advertising (Bond).

With real incomes rising after World War II, Americans were aided in their search for the ideal home by innovations within the building
industry. Setting a precedent which would be followed in every part of America, the Levitts of New York initiated a vast building program in 1946 on a 4000 acre site in Hempstead, Long Island. At its peak, the operation produced thirty finished homes a day in a building process that was the residential counterpart to the automotive assembly line. In combination with the favorable terms of ownership made possible through FHA policies, and the even more lenient acquisition terms offered to returning soldiers through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (the GI Bill) of 1944, the inexpensive Levittown construction techniques made home ownership widely accessible (Jackson 204, 241).

The constellation of motivations which contributed to population decentralization and more especially to community identification has had several interrelated effects for central-city residential neighborhoods: the intensive concentration of black people in the inner city neighborhoods of many American cities, the rapid racial transition of inner-city neighborhood populations, and the closing of suburban communities to racial and ethnic minorities. The flight of the white middle and working classes to the suburbs was paralleled by another movement, the migration of black Americans to the cities of the North and Midwest. Innovations in agricultural technology, particularly the introduction of the mechanical cotton picker after World War II, displaced thousands of workers from the fields of the South (Lemann 47-51). The growth of northern manufactures created a great demand for pools of readily available low-skill labor. The first wave of black migration, 1910 to 1930, was driven by discontent with conditions in the rural South and by the lure of employment opportunities in the North (Judd 231). The second wave began during World War II, and was fueled by
the enormous increase in wartime production. A critical factor that sustained the migration after the war was the federal minimum wage act: for southern farmers, passage of the act meant that the last incentive for favoring field labor over mechanization was destroyed (Lemann). Fleeing the overt and sometimes violent discrimination of the South, attracted by exaggerated visions of prosperity in the North, black families moved by the thousands. In both migrations, they quickly discovered that discrimination was not a southern prerogative.14

With respect to neighborhood change, the most important effect of these migrations was the concentration of blacks into the older sections of the central cities. The explanation most often given for the creation of the black inner-city ghettos points to a purely economic rationale: housing in the older districts is inferior, and therefore less expensive, than housing in new areas of the city. Older housing is more deteriorated and has fewer amenities than newer housing, and with the exception of the finest homes, most older houses were built to a far lower standard of construction than recent housing.15 As incomes rise and families attain middle-class status, they seek larger and better housing, which in older cities is generally to be found in quantities in the newer districts at the periphery. In this view, the search for new and better housing is the fundamental motive which drives urban decentralization; easy mobility and easy financing provide the means for satisfying the housing impulse. As people move outward, large numbers of vacancies are left behind in the inner city. Where the incidence of vacancies is exceptionally high, the process of property abandonment begins. In many cases, however, property owners find that their properties can still be marginally profitable if they are let out to low-
income families at high rates of occupancy. Blacks moving into cities in the North as well as in the South are among the lowest income groups in the city, and so according to this theory they naturally tend to concentrate in the older, inner-city neighborhoods. 16

This pure economic explanation, called the "filtering" theory on the notion that housing filters down to successively lower-income groups over time, does not address race as a specific cause in urban segregation. It assumes that black groups migrating to the cities are similar to earlier immigrant groups from eastern and southern Europe, which also settled initially in large concentrations in the older parts of the seaboard cities. These earlier groups, however, dispersed to a great extent by the second and third generations into middle-class areas, and in the process they became assimilated to prevailing American middle-class values (Gans 22, 53). A similar process is now underway among the most recent arrivals from overseas, the refugee populations from Southeast Asia. By contrast, black populations have tended to stay in the central cities. The prominent assimilation of many black families and individuals into the broader society, largely as a result of the civil rights movement of the 1960's and its legislative accomplishments, does not correspond, however, to the general assimilation which occurred among previous immigrant groups. Civil rights legislation - the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its subsequent amendments, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Housing Act of 1968 - opened up educational and housing opportunities for many blacks. While discrimination in the professions, in politics, and in residential areas still exists, the visibility of blacks in these domains is vastly greater than it was in the 1950s and 1960s. Census figures show, however, that the concentration of blacks in
central city areas has increased rather than decreased, and that segregation by race within the central cities has also increased. While an argument can be made that segregation by race and income level is partly a matter of personal choice, the segregation of blacks into America's inner cities is correlated with so many indicators of intense social disorganization as to suggest that it is associated with, if not driven by, overt and hidden forms of racial discrimination that have tended to block the assimilation of these groups to the norms and institutions that are open to the rest of society. Among these indicators are low income and high unemployment, high crime rates, high infant mortality rates, low levels of educational attainment, and exceptionally high levels of out-of-wedlock births, teenage pregnancy, and households headed by single women.

Although many overt forms of racial discrimination have largely disappeared, they have left their permanent mark on the social distribution of American cities. Racial zoning, sometimes explicit but more often covert, was practiced in many American cities until it was challenged and struck down in court (Jackson 242, Judd 185-191). Racial exclusion clauses in restrictive covenants governing the transfer of title in private home sales were prevalent in many subdivisions until struck down by the Supreme Court in Shelley v. Kraemer, 1948, as "unenforceable as law and contrary to public policy" (Jackson 208). Perhaps of most importance, until 1950 the policies of the Federal Housing Administration explicitly condoned racial segregation. The FHA Underwriting Manual, containing guidelines for federally insured loans, stated that "If a neighborhood is to retain stability, it is necessary that properties shall continue to be occupied by the same social and
racial classes," and to this end recommended "suitable restrictive covenants." While not openly targeting potential black homeowners, the FHA in practice denied loans to areas which had even a miniscule presence of black families: in a 1939 map of Brooklyn, a city block was defined as black if it had a single black family in it.17 Under this policy insured loans were made available in white neighborhoods and were denied to those which were predominantly or even slightly black in the composition of their population. Since most loans were made for suburban construction, the effect was to make the suburbs inaccessible to all but a small number of blacks. At the same time, the narrowness of FHA construction standards and the agency's neglect of the rehabilitation component of its legislative mandate meant that financing was not available for repairs, expansion, and new-house construction in the central cities where blacks tended to live (Jackson 203-214).

Considering the enormous number of loans which were made under FHA guidelines, it is not surprising that patterns of racial segregation became set during these years, and persisted even after the FHA changed its regulatory guidelines in 1950s. FHA policies had become embedded by this time in the day-to-day practices of real-estate companies. Illegal practices such as redlining, racial steering, and blockbusting are said to persist largely because it is very difficult to distinguish these actions from the normal practices of the real estate industry, and difficult to prove that the results of these actions reflect discriminatory intent rather than cautious investment decisions on the part of the lending institutions. They persist as well because those who are most victimized by the practices, the racial minorities, have the smallest financial resources and the least experience with the legal
system, both of which inhibit them from undertaking legal actions to redress the situation. The disadvantaged position of potential litigants is compounded by the fact that remedy in these cases must be sought through individual actions rather than class action suits. The barriers to obtaining mortgage financing and insurance for inner city neighborhood properties reduces the mobility of blacks not only by excluding them from the suburbs, but also by making it more difficult for them to find buyers for their homes when they wish to leave the neighborhood and have the financial means to do so. The difficulty of obtaining financing for new construction and rehabilitation in inner-city neighborhoods heightens the social disparities between these areas and other parts of the city by introducing blighting conditions which in turn accelerate depopulation and disinvestment. Perhaps of greatest import in the long run, racial segregation creates a physical barrier to contact between the races which nourishes the stereotypes and myths of racism. Black inner city neighborhoods have been so isolated from mainstream culture that for several decades there has been discussion of a permanent black underclass, a culture of poverty which feeds on itself and, generation by generation, produces debilitating moral and physical effects which are increasingly difficult for individuals to escape.

Evolutionary models and "flight-from-blight" models

If the facts associated with urban decentralization and the concentration of minorities in the central cities are well known, the explanations for these phenomena are still not settled; the explanations, however, have the greatest bearing on urban policy, including neighborhood planning. Neighborhood planning as a deliberate component of a city's planning
agenda can only be justified if central-city neighborhoods are amenable to the kinds of overall improvements that planning is thought to induce. This will be impossible if these neighborhoods are doomed by larger economic forces to perpetual neglect or to be at best way-stations for the very poor. Is decentralization a natural process within the urban ecology, an outcome of city growth which may have been abetted by national highway and finance policies but which would have happened anyway in the face of rising incomes and increased mobility? The evidence that decentralization has occurred world-wide over long periods of time suggests that it has a nearly universal basis, perhaps in natural human inclinations for open space in uncrowded surroundings, perhaps in economic forces and technological innovations which make the advantages of decentralized living and employment nearly irresistible (Lampard 1987: 54, Mieszkowski and Mills 6). Under this view, the filtering of housing, and the consequent concentration of lower-income groups in central city neighborhoods, would be an inevitable and not undesirable consequence of city age. Alternatively, it can be asked whether decentralization is an effect of specific policies which in hastening the deterioration of central cities have distorted the locational decisions of individuals and businesses, and which could be corrected or at least mitigated by proper policy choices. This latter position claims that decentralization is not an inevitable outcome of city economics, but rather is directly tied to cultural biases which are reflected in policies like the Interstate Highway Act and the National Housing Act.

The first of these explanations, emphasizing the seemingly inevitable and worldwide tendency toward decentralization, has been called the natural evolutionary model of urban growth. The second
explanation is called the "flight-from-blight" argument. If decentralization can be described as a combination of "pulls" to the suburbs and "pushes" from the central city, then the natural evolutionary model places emphasis on the pulls, the "flight-from-blight" theory emphasizes the pushes. The suburban pulls would include good schools, recreation, space, and affordable single family homes; the urban pushes would include crime, congestion, the high cost of housing, perceptions about minorities, over-regulation, and fear of redistributive taxes. The two explanations are not mutually exclusive: if concerns about central-city crime, congestion, and the quality of housing push those who can do so to leave the central city for the suburbs, these families also bring with them the means to improve those aspects of the environment which they sought in the first place, and consequently they make the suburbs more desirable for those who follow. Behind are left precisely those populations which can do least to improve their environment on their own, and who increasingly concentrate in the central city because there are few affordable alternatives elsewhere.  

Although the driving impulse in this case may indeed be "evolutionary," its effect is to increase the social disparities which according to the "flight-from-blight" theory are the principal reasons for the suburban-city split.

The difference of emphasis in the two theories will affect the policies which are adopted. Under the natural evolutionary explanation, the central city neighborhood is only a way-station for populations which will eventually move to the periphery of the metropolitan region as their incomes rise. New groups are likely to move in behind the emigrants, taking advantage of the low cost of housing and the proximity of central city neighborhoods to jobs. The purely economic perspective of the
"filtering" theory of housing transition reinforces this view. Policy in this case should be directed toward improving the incomes of central city residents so that they can easily leave the way-station. Policy should also attempt to make the stopover in the way-station as decent as possible for those who are moving outward as well as for the section of the population which will inevitably be left behind. Blight under this theory might be an unavoidable aspect of the movement of peoples within the urban scene, but the extent of its negative effects can be mitigated. Services which address juvenile delinquency and other social disorders, programs of job training and job placement to improve the employment opportunities of the residents, and development of some local businesses to provide for the residents' needs should be encouraged. However, measures to stimulate extensive reinvestment by middle-class residents or the development of major commercial enterprises would be a misplaced allocation of valuable resources, since these measures would fly in the face of an outward movement of population and capital which to many observers has the appearance of a natural phenomenon. Aside from the relief of immediate social distress, inner city neighborhoods would receive no special funding for infrastructure improvements or housing rehabilitation. Where the choice has to come down to social programs versus commercial development, the clear choice must be in favor of social programs.

Implicit in this policy approach is the recognition that a certain amount of social distress is inevitable in the process of urban growth: inner-city neighborhoods will not necessarily be happy places, but they can nevertheless continue to serve their essential function within the urban economy. Implicit also is the assumption that opportunities for
escape from the inner city do indeed exist, that the general economy will expand to absorb the supply of labor available to it, and that social or ethnic barriers to assimilation into the larger society can be overcome. For those residents who cannot or will not make the transition toward the larger society, the inner city neighborhood becomes a "reservation," and the policy implications under this theory are clear: protect the rest of society from the social evils which prevail in these areas. An extreme version of this argument applies to the deteriorated central-city neighborhood the wartime notion of medical "triage," under which the most extreme cases of physical distress on the battlefield were only treated to the extent of relieving pain rather than seeking a cure (Weiler).

Under the "flight-from-blight" explanation of decentralization, the goal of policy is to correct the structural factors which are held to cause the city-suburban split, and to reduce the disparities between the two worlds. Unlike evolutionary models, "flight-from-blight" explanations tend to view blight not as an inevitable part of city growth but as the outcome of policies and practices which have distorted the normal city growth process. On the one hand, policy will seek redress at the state and national levels against discriminatory practices like redlining or the tendency of central city banks to move capital to the suburbs. Legislation such as the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977, which obligates banks to reinvest in their own communities, is an example of this kind of policy. On the other hand, policy should be directed to improving and stabilizing neighborhoods by encouraging outside investment, by increasing the purchasing power of residents, by encouraging resident home-ownership, by improving the quality of education, and by generally increasing the opportunities and incentives
for residents to stay in their neighborhood and open businesses that satisfy local or even district and citywide needs. Community development becomes subordinate to economic development in this view, although it is generally understood that the latter cannot occur in isolation from improvement in the general welfare and education level of the population. In its extreme form, this policy approach would remove the inner-city neighborhood from its dependent relation to the larger society and re-create it as a site for the production of wealth, through some form of manufacturing activity or through the provision of services. This set of policies places great value on the neighborhood as an element of a healthy city. It reflects an appreciation of the dense, diverse central city neighborhood as an essential organ of cultural growth, an idea eloquently developed by Jane Jacobs in her influential 1961 text, The Death and Life of Great American Cities. In her view, the city neighborhood is the site where information is exchanged, allegiances are formed, and interests are nurtured, in short, the complex neighborhood permits a fuller development of human personality than the homogeneous and isolated "monocultures" of the suburbs (Jacobs 114, 116, 121, 139).

The neighborhood planning programs studied in this review invariably express policies appropriate to a "flight-from-blight" explanation of central city distress. The goals statement for the Cecil B. Moore area of North Philadelphia, a neighborhood whose social distress is indicated by property abandonment, loss of population, and intensive poverty, states

The Strategic Plan has three primary goals: to reverse the area's loss of households and housing units, to increase the self-sufficiency of neighborhood residents, and to create self-sustaining mechanisms for physical development, service delivery, and community management/maintenance. (CBMB 5)
These plans speak of neighborhood "rejuvenation," and state a Jacobean vision of the future, as the following passages from two of Portland, Oregon's, Neighborhood Plans illustrate:

We must build on the strengths of our community.... One of the fundamental goals of the Buckman Neighborhood Plan must be to restore the feeling of a unified, yet diverse urban neighborhood....this vision of Buckman...is of a close-knit community where people know and care for their neighbors, and where parks and porches are filled with laughter and conversation. (BU 24)

Brooklyn spells COMMUNITY for its residents. Our vision is to preserve the character and diversity of this community with safe streets, cherished homes, comfortable gathering places and a healthy balance between businesses and residences. (BR 21)

Similar passages describe the intent of plans in Trenton, New Jersey, and the South Bronx, New York City. The vision of the rejuvenated inner-city neighborhood is expressed in the policy recommendations of the plans. These measures are designed to both increase the attachment to the neighborhood of those who already live there and to make it attractive to outsiders. The programs express the conviction that the condition of neighborhoods can be corrected or at least stabilized through adequate improvements and social programs. Although a number of the programs mention increase of income as one of the objectives of economic development, none suggest that the purpose of this increase will be to allow neighborhood residents to leave the community; rather, the intention is to make these residents loyal and permanent members of the community.

If central city neighborhoods are, as some writers declare, obsolete as a form of social and physical organization, then neighborhood planning is a futile exercise. At best, it can slow the inevitable descent of these neighborhoods and soften the pain that their residents experience. It might make inner-city "way-station" or "reservation"
neighborhoods more bearable for those residents who are forced to use them. The persistence of neighborhood planning might be explained as an error of planning judgement, a failure on the part of the profession or of those who rely on it to recognize the reality of metropolitan decentralization and how it affects the central city; or it might be explained as a purely political phenomenon, a cynical gesture of pacification extended to those residents who cannot or will not abandon the decaying core neighborhoods of the cities.

The argument for inevitable central city neighborhood obsolescence is disturbed, however, by the obvious success of some neighborhoods, some of which have revived not through the accident of fortunate location or exceptional historical building fabric but through careful planning and intensive neighborhood organization. In Washington, D.C., area residents have reclaimed lovely Meridian Hill Park from drug pushers, and while violent crime certainly persists in the district, the area around the park shows all the signs of being a vital urban situation that can support a complex mix of populations in relative harmony. In New York, a number of neighborhoods which were once home to immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, and then fell into decay as these groups moved out to the suburbs, are being revived by new waves of immigrants from South and Central America and from Asia.20

These examples indicate that the inner city neighborhood is far from obsolete, but retains a significant function in the growing, decentralizing metropolitan regions of the United States. As a site for affordable housing for new arrivals, as a concentrated locus of employment opportunities and social/cultural services, and as an environment which can combine desirable qualities of residence with
aspects of urbanity and convenience, the central city neighborhood continues to have appeal to selected groups in the United States. While many neighborhoods are staggering under the load of crime, disinvestment, and community disorganization, the examples of neighborhood revival are encouraging enough to suggest that the central city neighborhood is still vital and that therefore neighborhood planning is a worthwhile and necessary activity.

The more pressing question, however, is whether neighborhood planning as it is currently conceived goes far enough in its proposals for neighborhood revitalization. The answer to this question depends on what the neighborhood is and what it potentially might be. The first question is addressed in the following section; the second, what neighborhood planning might potentially be, is reserved for the last chapter of this study.

Notes

1. In colonial times, the cost of moving goods nine miles from a port to an inland site was equal to the cost of moving the same goods across the Atlantic Ocean.
2. In Europe, regulations tended to prohibit joint ownership of land and rail-lines.
3. The average length of journey for attorneys in New York in 1825 was .67 miles, but by 1898 it had increased to 5.1 miles (Jackson 313).
4. This pleasant vision carried within it large seeds of discontent, as several novels by Henry James (The Bostonians, The Portrait of A Lady, The Golden Bowl) and Edith Wharton (The House of Mirth) demonstrate; nor did it apply to women of working class origin, see for example Theodore Dreiser’s Sister Carrie.
5. The London fire of 1666 and the San Francisco fire of 1906 illustrate the point: in neither instance could authorities take advantage of the enforced clearances to improve the basic street pattern, because individual property owners refused to be dispossessed of or to change the shape of their original sites, even when they were offered comparable sites in exchange. Consequently, Sir Christopher Wren’s baroque reshaping of London and Daniel Burnham’s elegant conception for San Francisco were almost entirely ignored.
6. Conversation with planner in Philadelphia Planning Commission, May 1991. Apparently the single point on which Philadelphians can agree is the sanctity of the statue of William Penn that sits on top of City Hall.
A desire to maintain the visibility of this statue from many viewpoints in the city led to an innovative zoning regulation that preserves designated view corridors, one of the few instances in the United States where the passive instrument of zoning is used as a design rather than as a planning tool. Philadelphia's inability to produce a comprehensive plan has led to district plans that are among the most thorough and well-documented of any studied for this research.

7. Washington, D.C., for example, imposes an inventory tax on merchants while the suburban Maryland and Virginia municipalities do not. This tax is said to have driven a number of commercial activities, for instance car dealerships, to locate just outside the District's boundaries.

8. Upton Sinclair gives a vivid description of vertical processing in The Jungle.

9. For example, blue collar neighborhoods in Pittsburgh which were left without employment when steel industries on the Allegheny River closed. Residents in these communities do not find replacement employment in the service oriented developments which have been proposed for the former industrial sites.

10. The District of Columbia now spends approximately $50 million per month to provide social services for its dependent population (David Smith, District of Columbia Office of Economic Development, May 1994). In the face of its current fiscal crisis, social services have been among the first areas proposed for budget cuts. The implication is that social conditions in the District will deteriorate to a level even lower than they are now, giving further incentive for the city's wealthy residents to seek more favorable environments in the suburbs.


12. The author knows of an architectural firm in Dallas which provides townhouse floor plans and elevations to builders around the country by FAX and overnight mail. The builders mix and match the designs to suit local conditions of site, financing, and demand. In some cases the architects have never seen the site where their designs will be built.

13. Symbolic ecology seeks to join human ecology to symbolic interaction theory, a concept of personality development which emphasizes the individual's interactions with others, conveyed through the shared meanings of language, in building the sense of self-identity (Hunter B 200). Symbolic interaction theory was initially developed by George Herbert Mead in his 1934 text Mind, self and society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). In its extreme form, symbolic interaction theory claims that all of reality is socially constructed through symbolic interactions (Hunter B 199, 200, refering to Berger and Luckman 1966). Symbolic ecology translates this idea from the realm of the individual to that of the community.

14. Black factory hands found that they were the last hired and the first fired, that competition for jobs led to violent confrontations in the workplace, and that tensions ran high between the races in the residential and recreation areas of the city. In 1919, race riots occurred in more than twenty cities as whites attacked blacks; in Chicago, a riot which lasted for several days was set off when a black youth swam into the white area of a public beach (Judd 233).

15. Features which are today taken as standard at every level of housing include insulation, indoor plumbing facilities, and electricity. The rarity of these features in nineteenth century working class housing is attested by descriptions by Jacob Riis of tenements in New York and by Upton Sinclair of tract housing in Chicago. These features are currently regulated by building codes and enforced by building inspection, which covers foundation and structural construction as well as many finished features. Many jurisdictions also impose energy standards that affect the type and quality of fenestration and interior lighting.
16. In many instances, areas of lower income housing are simply placed on hold as property owners wait for redevelopment to increase the value of their holdings to a level where it is profitable to sell. In these circumstances, the low-rent way station can offer little of the stability which is essential to building community identity.

17. Some planners had a less generous view of FHA intentions. In 1955 Charles Abrams said "FHA adopted a racial policy that could well have been culled from the Nuremberg laws. From its inception FHA set itself up as the protector of the all white neighborhood. It sent its agents into the field to keep Negroes and other minorities from buying houses in white neighborhoods" (Jackson 214).

18. Suburban ghettos of multi-family dwellings and apartments are a phenomenon of recent decades, evident at the perimeter of cities like Washington, Baltimore, and New York. It is likely that these low-rent and subsidized quarters are partly the effect of urban renewal displacement and partly of inner-city gentrification. If cost is not the issue, it may be that the central city ghetto is still preferable to many low-income people because it offers access to better transportation. For many, there is probably also the advantage that a long-established and familiar environment has over the anonymity of the suburban projects.

19. Studies by Mills and Price (1984) and by Bradbury, Downs and Small accumulated evidence that the degree of suburbanization in a metropolitan area is directly related to the percentage of blacks who live in the inner city compared to the total black population of the metropolitan region (Mieszkowski and Mills 7, Downs 282 referring to Futures for a Declining City: Simulations for the Cleveland Area (Academic Press, 1981)). Crime, educational attainment and taxes were not significantly associated in the Mills and Price study with the degree of suburbanization of the sample cities. The findings suggest that perceptions about minority populations, rather than fear of crime or concerns about redistributive taxes, play an exceptionally large role in the locational decisions of individuals. If this is the case, then policies which increase the concentration of blacks in inner city areas (by reducing their housing and transportation opportunities in other parts of the metropolitan region) are disproportionately culpable as causes of decentralization. By the same token, policies which attack these racial perceptions by reducing the disparities that exist between minorities and the mainstream population could reverse or slow the outflow from the inner city to the periphery. These policies would address the lending patterns of banks, the disparities in educational quality and fiscal capacity between metropolitan school districts, and the housing and zoning codes which create indirect barriers to low-income families in the suburbs.

20. Roberta Brandes Gratz provides a number of other examples, including "Banana Kelly" in the South Bronx. Stewart Perry gives instances of communities in Canada and the United States that have been able to start businesses to provide for local needs and increase local income levels; a number of these are referenced in the Conclusion.
CHAPTER 2. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CONTEMPORARY NEIGHBORHOOD

An inquiry into the basis of neighborhood planning must consider the definition of what a neighborhood is and what functions it performs. The two questions are linked, because "neighborhood" describes how a physical area is used as much as it describes the physical area itself. No simple definition of such a complex and subjective idea as neighborhood could possibly exist. Neighborhoods range from exclusive and nearly pastoral settings like Baltimore's Roland Park to the complex, urbane mix of businesses, institutions, and residences found in Adams-Morgan in Washington, D.C. At the same time, the functioning neighborhood for one urban resident may be entirely different from the neighborhood that is important to another resident who lives on the same block or within the same physical boundaries; differences of age, occupation, interest, wealth, health, and cultural background will greatly influence how people use their immediate surroundings. The definition of neighborhood may also vary according to the purpose which is pursued: the neighborhood of social encounter may have different boundaries from the neighborhood of commercial use, and the useful definition of the neighborhood will depend on which aspect of local urban life is being considered. These differences of definition are of crucial importance for neighborhood planning programs, since as Albert Hunter states, "the very nature of a program may depend on what working definition of a neighborhood is established" (Hunter 1983 5).

The fact that urban districts as different as Adams-Morgan and Roland Park are both called neighborhoods indicates that they have some features or qualities in common. Four main aspects of the neighborhood stand out in the range of definitions which are presented in the
literature: nearness of place, completeness of services, social interaction, and communities of belief.\footnote{Based on these four aspects, a neighborhood may be defined as} A contiguous residential area of identifiable physical characteristics, which promotes casual, familiar acquaintance, offers services that support domestic life and create opportunities for social interaction, and in which belief in the value of the neighborhood itself is the primary basis for communal action and neighborhood identity.

Together, the four qualities which are encompassed by this definition establish the identity and the sense of community which set a neighborhood apart from other types of residential settlements.

Nearness of Place and Physical Identity

Nearness of place is implicit in the word neighborhood itself: the word in its Old English root refers to a peasant or husbandman ("bur" or "gebur") who lives nearby ("neah").\footnote{Lewis Mumford refers to this root meaning when he writes} Neighbors are simply people who live near one another. To share the same place is perhaps the most primitive of social bonds, and to be within view of one's neighbors is the simplest form of association.... (Mumford 1954 257)

The flexibility that the word "neighborhood" has in ordinary speech indicates that the notion of nearness adjusts to one's purposes: for two strangers who discover that they "live in the same neighborhood", the experience might describe any relation from "living right around the corner" to being separated by several major roads but using the same grocery store. For the casual kind of social acquaintanceship which is associated with relations of "neighboring," the limiting distance is
perhaps a few blocks and depends critically on walking distances and routes, since it is based on face-to-face encounters. By contrast, for the purposes of grocery shopping, the "neighborhood" may include large numbers of complete strangers who provide the client market for the store. This apparent inconsistency, which can easily reside in the use which a single individual makes of the word, does not reduce the word "neighborhood" to nonsense but rather indicates that a neighborhood is a set of social relations as much as it is a physical place. The social relations which involve people called neighbors are most clearly demonstrated in the small area of local affiliations, which for many people consists of the street where they live and perhaps a few adjacent blocks that are used on a regular basis.

Despite their differences in size, the neighborhood of familiar acquaintance and the neighborhood of domestic commercial activity have several qualities in common. Both are residential areas, both are oriented by functions other than residence which are essentially domestic in purpose, and both permit familiar associations to be established through regular contacts over extended periods of time. Walking is an essential aspect of the "nearness" of both, for while the grocery store may be too distant to practically permit one to walk from it with full bags of groceries, the fact that walking to it is at least conceivable and occasionally done brings it within the limits of the "neighborhood". Each of these neighborhood types also serves as a middle ground between the purely public world of business, commerce, and law, and the purely private world of the home; in this middle ground one meets people who have become familiar through repeated contact, who share a number of common concerns, but who are not friends or intimates. Mumford continues
the passage quoted above by saying of the association established through nearness that "to be real it need not be deep.... Neither friendship nor occupational affiliation is implied in the give and take of neighborhood life...." (Mumford 1954 257). In promoting an intermediate form of association, neighborhoods are an important aspect of the public realm.

The ambiguity in the definition of neighborhoods that is suggested above, however, creates a quandary for planning. On the one hand, an effective neighborhood plan requires consensus, which suggests that the neighborhood study area should be the small local domain where people know one another through face-to-face encounters. On the other hand, the plan should embrace enough people to be noticed by political decision-makers and should be comprehensive enough in its scope to matter to groups elsewhere in the city, for example investors and the municipal government; this implies that the neighborhood study area should be quite large and should be oriented by a significant function of common concern, like a grocery store, a school, or a recreation center. As the variation in neighborhood size in the planning studies used for this research indicates, there is no settled opinion in planning practice today about the proper size of a neighborhood. But for purposes other than planning, the word "neighborhood" generally denotes a small area, the domain of familiar acquaintance and daily habits oriented around walking. Of key importance is the recognition by the residents themselves that the neighborhood does indeed exist, with some agreement on boundaries and acknowledgment of distinguishing characteristics (Rivlin 2).

Not all residential areas are truly neighborhoods, although the term is loosely applied to them. In particular, the extensive townhouse and garden apartment enclaves of the suburbs, and the large districts of
mid-rise and high-rise apartments which one finds in many central cities, cannot be called neighborhoods without doing some violence to the word. "Neighborhood" implies an idea of attachment to place and permanence of population, absence of which undermines the neighborhood qualities of many suburban residential settlements. "Neighborhood" also suggests some level of intimacy, social interaction, and familiarity among its residents, qualities which are difficult to obtain in a densely populated apartment environment.

Nearness of place by itself does not create a neighborhood; some permanence of population and of functions, and some commonalities of purpose, are also essential. The new type of residential settlement which is attached to highways on the outskirts of many American cities offers convenience, safety, and pleasant apartments or homes to a highly mobile and transient population. These tend to be purely residential enclaves, usually consisting of a single housing type but occasionally including townhouses and apartments along with single-family detached dwellings. Most of the services required for daily living are dispersed along the highway, and access to them requires constant use of the automobile. Even when the physical distance between home and shopping or home and dental office is short, the speed of traffic on the highway, the huge areas of parking that must be crossed to reach the stores, the absence of sidewalks all create inhibitions against walking. Just as important, the stores themselves are shared with a highway population whose relations with the locality are purely functional. The residential world and the world of the services which it requires are alien to one another, bound together only in an instrumental relation of convenience.
These residential areas offer a limited set of semi-public functions, for example a playground, a swimming pool, or a general meeting room; there may be a church or a larger park within walking distance. Most of the larger public functions, such as the library and the high school, are beyond convenient walking distance, especially for children. In addition, a large segment of the population is transient, since these are ports of convenience for people who are in the city for a limited assignment, or are searching for a better employment or living situation, or are using the area as a base to save money for a more permanent home. Convenience is the dominant motivation for living in the area rather than any attraction to its special qualities, and convenience does not establish bonds of affection or common interest between people who happen to live near one another. As in a hotel, opportunities to meet fellow residents as neighbors are limited more by lack of shared interest or concern than by lack of opportunity. The absence of attachment to the neighborhood is promoted by the anonymity of the physical design: one area of townhomes or garden apartments is much like another, differing only in the amenities it offers and in details of the physical design. The stores which service these areas have also lost individuality, since economies of scale in purchasing, transportion, and construction favor nationwide chains and generally exclude small, locally owned establishments. To alter slightly Le Corbusier's famous dictum that the house should be a machine for living, these areas might be described accurately as instruments for living, because residents' relations to them are almost purely instrumental. Although the components necessary for a complete life are generally present, they are present in such a way that to describe them as "neighborhoods" is
inappropriate. Nearness is certainly present in these areas, but the
durability of population and the commonality of purpose which are
essential to the notion of neighborhood are almost entirely lacking.
These are residential settlements without community.

Denser, medium- to high-rise apartment districts present similar
problems for the word "neighborhood." One problem is simply the sheer
number of people who might be called potential neighbors: where a street
of single-family homes might have about five to ten homes that are within
view, a single apartment address in New York or Washington, D.C. can
easily have 150 to 300 units. The impossibility of having neighborly
relations with such a large number of people means that one is likely to
have neighborly relations with few or none. Absent also is the common
ground which is neutral and convenient, where casual relations can
develop gradually over time. The building lobby, the elevator, the
laundry room are pass-throughs, not spaces for casual leisure, but these
environments present no alternative for socializing except the apartment
itself, which is too intimate for most neighborly interests. The larger
problem associated with these highly urban settlements is the lack of a
common territorial interest. The building itself is generally the only
physical element that all the residents can say they have in common. The
use of local parks, playgrounds, libraries, and transportation stops will
vary enormously, and it is in fact the virtue of these apartment
settlements that they carry over into the sphere of private dwelling the
freedom of association for which the big city itself is so prized. Civil
anonymity and relative liberation from concern with the local
environment, two of the attractive features of these apartment areas,
tend to remove them from the realm of neighboring and neighborhood.
With these exclusions, the range of residential settlements that can be called neighborhoods is still enormous. It includes the small row houses of Baltimore, the mansions of Houston’s River Oaks, the townhouses of Boston’s Charlestown, and the shotgun houses of New Orlean’s upper St. Charles Street area. Some low-density apartment areas which have an exceptionally strong street life can also be thought of as neighborhoods. This is the quintessential neighborhood of Jane Jacob’s experience, which might include her own Chelsea in New York as well as Greenwich Village and Morningside Heights, or Columbia Road in Washington, D.C. With the great variation of social and physical composition that these neighborhoods demonstrate, they still possess the four characteristics which the definition above ascribes to the neighborhood. Characteristic of each of these neighborhoods is a level of consistency in the scale, site relations, landscaping, and overall level of preservation or quality of the individual dwellings and other structures. This consistency is more than a matter of planning aesthetics: since each of these factors has a bearing on both the cost of housing in the neighborhood and on taste, a neighborhood of relatively uniform housing is likely to hold a large number of people who are similar in age, family structure, income level, and their vision of what constitutes a good neighborhood.

**Neighborhood Services and Social Interaction**

The services which a neighborhood offers have a relation to the type and degree of social interaction which can take place in the locality. Jacobs undertook a penetrating analysis of the functions of neighborhood streets in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. In Jacob’s description of life on a Greenwich Village street in the late 1950s, the
institutions, commercial outlets, and other public functions which are used casually and by a broad section of the population also promote important qualities of neighborhood interaction (Jacobs 69). Grocery stores, neighborhood parks, the local branch of the public library serve as fertile meeting grounds for casual acquaintance because encounters in them are generally unpremeditated. There is no implication that the encounter need lead to further intimacy, while at the same time the encounter does reinforce the fact that the meeting place is part of each person's familiar terrain. These encounters are both personal and limited, exactly the middle ground of acquaintance which is associated with the word "neighbor." They suggest that there may be further encounters in the future, equally unpremeditated. They also suggest that there is a way for neighbors to contact one another if they need to. The links established through casual encounters reinforce the neighborhood as a familiar ground in which the patterns of life are well known and compatible with one's own, and they suggest that richer and more intimate relations are possible, but only if one wants them. Neighborhood relations provide some resolution to the often conflicting desires of city residents for security and anonymity. Neighborhood institutions provide the opportunity for familiar encounter but, by the very casualness with which they are used, they also provide a protection against too much intimacy. The kind of relations which are sponsored by these institutions represent an aspect of civility, that quality of relation which, as the word suggests, is especially associated with life in the city. Civility depends to some degree on the fact that people remain strangers to one another.
Through thousands of casual neighborhood encounters a network is established which can have important implications when concerted organization becomes necessary to push through an improvement or to block a development which will harm the neighborhood. Jacobs suggests that the more opportunities there are for such links to form, the safer and stronger the neighborhood society will be. Diversity of services is important since a complex structure of social interaction is built on economic diversity, and the possibility for the neighborhood to act as a political unit of some force is in turn built on the social links that are established between its residents. To the extent that the neighborhood has a complete range of services and institutions, it stands as a microcosm of the city as a whole and offers some of the richness of encounter and experience for which the city is valued, but at a scale which is more comprehensible. At the same time it does not pretend to be a village, since it is thoroughly integrated and inter-connected with the larger city.

Other types of services play a more deliberate role in neighborhood life. In contrast with institutions of casual encounter like the grocery store and the library, there is a great deal more implied in a church or synagogue service, a meeting to hear a public official, or a gathering to protest a public proposal. These events bring together people who share a purpose that goes beyond the simple fact that they live near one another and seek the same conveniences or pleasures, and while the shared purpose may not lead to friendship, it does imply that there will be a future, and a deliberate one, to the relation: the religious service in following weeks, further meetings to advance the political cause. The element of casualness is reduced even while the commonality of purpose is
reinforced. The breadth of participation is similarly reduced, since the religious service and the political meeting demand sacrifices of time and energy which are not available to everyone, and mere participation is already a statement of a particular set of beliefs. These kinds of institutions tend to be automatically selective, and their members may not be representative of the neighborhood at all. Political participation, for example, tends to call out a select and identifiable body of activists who in many cases are found to have higher levels of income and educational attainment than the average resident (Hutcheson 1984 187); a church or synagogue may regularly pull people back into a neighborhood who have not lived in it for years.3

Although institutions like churches and political associations may not be representative of the neighborhood population as a whole, nevertheless they further the qualities of a neighborhood generally. By increasing the offerings of the neighborhood they make it a richer social and physical environment. Although their members are most interested in the activities of the institution itself, they will also have some interest in what goes on in the neighborhood that supports the institution, for example the quality of the street and the immediate surroundings of the meeting place. Institutions like these reduce the parochialism of the neighborhood by increasing its public dimensions, giving it contacts with similar institutions elsewhere in the city. By augmenting the attachments between the neighborhood and the outside world, these institutions also help ensure that the neighborhood is not forgotten or overlooked by other parts of the city.

The effect that neighborhood facilities have on the social activity of the locale points to one of the principal deficiencies of the bedroom
suburb. When there are no alternatives for meeting people but the private home and the public open space, the inhibitions against forming casual acquaintances become very strong. In the grocery store, one stops to talk to a neighbor as an interruption of a larger purpose; the pause is sustained by the purpose of the visit, and the purpose sets definite limits to the encounter. The purpose is shared by both parties, since presumably very few people go to the grocery store primarily to meet people. On the street where one lives, encounters with neighbors are more frequent and have more potential to cross over into intimacy, but here habit and familiarity set the boundaries. Civility in this situation depends on the relative permanence of the population which allows the appropriate degree of intimacy to be discovered over time. Difficulties in the bedroom suburb arise because the population is transient and there is a lack of opportunity for casual encounter. Acquaintance cannot be built up through small and casual events, but has to become a deliberate proposition: either one stands awkwardly on the path between garden apartments or one invites the new acquaintance in for coffee. Failure to seize the opportunity may mean losing a potential friend, since in a transient population the opportunity may never be repeated. The intimacy which this implies, its suggestion that there will be more such meetings in the future, runs against the fact that for many of the residents the suburbs are ports of convenience. The absence of a middle ground of encounter means that there can be few gradations of intimacy, and faced with the alternative of knowing one’s neighbors too much or not at all, most North Americans will chose the latter. There is a certain quality of estrangement and impermanence to bedroom suburbs,
even those which have been established for many years, since most people
in these settlements literally remain strangers to one another.

Common Beliefs
The word "neighbor" suggests some degree of sociability; does it
necessarily also suggest commonalities of belief, of values, or of
purposes? In the design of neighborhoods and of the policies which
affect who is able or willing to live in them, this question has often
been controversial. It is over the question of beliefs and customs that
the word "neighborhood" blends into "community", with its suggestion of
more intensive interaction, shared principle, and some degree of local
autonomy from the larger society.

"Community" has found many applications: the "master-planned
community" of the suburbs has little in common with the utopian
communities of the 19th century or the communes of the 1960s.
"Community" is loosely applied to the urban neighborhood. Even in
residential areas which enjoy many of the attributes of a good
neighborhood, there is rarely a suggestion that all of the residents
should worship in the same faith, vote for the same party, or believe in
the same educational principles for their children. Except in the cases
of purely ethnic enclaves like New York's Little Italy, contemporary
urban neighborhoods are more neutral environments than the word
"community" implies. The subtle distance which is implicit in the word
"neighbor" suggests that neighbors not only respect the differences in
their beliefs, but that these beliefs do not enter into their relations
as neighbors at all (Keller). Permissible topics of common concern are
more neutral and restricted in scope. A neighbor differs from a friend
in this important respect, in that friends do decisively engage one another's beliefs.

All neighborhood residents do tend to share one feature in common, a belief in the value of the neighborhood itself. The geographic territory of the neighborhood matters to the people who live in it, an attachment which provides sufficient ground to stimulate common actions to improve or protect it. Despite the profound alterations in the functions of neighborhood which were outlined in Chapter 1, and especially the decline in its social function which is tied to widespread use of transportation and communication technologies, the neighborhood retains a level of meaning from the unalterable fact that people must live somewhere and in some form of society, however minimal. The neighborhood matters because many of its residents intend to stay in it, sometimes from choice, sometimes against their will because of family or employment constraints or because they cannot sell their properties. While forms of association which are built around common beliefs are capable of inspiring celebrations, rituals, and common purposes, attachments to modern urban neighborhoods are more likely to be passive in character: if nothing threatens the neighborhood, there is little incentive for people to extend their range of intimacy or acquaintanceship beyond the neutrality implied in the word "neighbor." It is indeed often the disamenities of the area which bring neighbors together in common purpose to form a crime-watch committee, a group to protest construction of a cellular communications tower, or an improvement association to close a street to through traffic. Precisely the lack of such inconveniences in the bedroom suburbs and the apartment districts described above, in combination with the transience of their
population, may account for their deficiency of neighborhood cohesion. As in a hotel, if one meets with inconvenience one changes one's room or calls the management; and if the inconvenience persists, one changes one's hotel.

Two other functions related to beliefs, socialization and social control, stand out as central purposes of the neighborhood. Early in this century when sociologists realized that the integrity of urban neighborhoods was threatened by new patterns of work and mobility, they also recognized that the neighborhood enjoys a role of special significance in the development of personality, in the assimilation of standards of conduct, and in the cultivation of democratic habits. The neighborhood is a small society, the smallest beyond the boundaries of the home. As it brings children regularly into contact with individuals outside the family circle, the neighborhood carries forward the education which begins in the family. For most individuals, the behavior and customs they observed in the local group set the pattern for what will be condoned in their own behavior (Tannenbaum 361). "It is on the local level that individuals encounter the culture and social systems of the larger society and are introduced into these systems and acquire appropriate attitudes and behavior patterns" (Warren and Warren 1977, 174, quoted at Rohe and Gates 62). Some coherence is therefore necessary between home and neighborhood, for "unless the response [the child] receives in the larger group is to a large measure consistent with the response he expects on the basis of his earlier experiences [in the family], radical maladjustment may occur" (Tannenbaum 360).5

Psychologists have recognized that "place-identity," an aspect of self-identity which consists of cognitions about the physical world,
plays an important part in human development throughout life, but especially in the early years (Rivlin 9). Up to the age of six, the home and the range around it serve as the first and most powerful contexts for place-identity development. If the first major developmental stage in the formation of the sense of self involves the separation of the child from the world, the next stages involve the development of a sense of identity in which the world plays a significant role. ... The formation of a sense of self and the contribution of places to that process clearly do not end in childhood. (Rivlin 10)

Rivlin here echoes an idea developed by the sociologist C. H. Cooley, who emphasized the role of face-to-face encounters within primary groups, that is among friends, family, and neighbors. For Cooley, personality was the 'product of association.' Personality was...developed within the orbit of those small groups in everyday life which gratify a person's ego but which at the same time demand his obedience to local customs and rules of behaviour. (Hancon 236)

The influence of the neighborhood on the moral education of children is paramount; Cooley wrote that "the fact that the family and neighborhood groups are ascendant in the open and plastic time of childhood makes them even now incomparably more influential than the rest" (quoted in Goldfield 224).

Many writers have considered children as "the essential denizens of the neighborhood," in Albert Hunter's phrase (Hunter 1983 15). Lewis Mumford, for example, stressed the nurturing and educational aspects of the neighborhood when he wrote

> The neighborhood is based, essentially, on the needs of families; particularly on the needs of mothers and children from the latters' infancy up to adolescence... (Mumford 1954 264).

In another place, he wrote

> A neighborhood should be an area within the scope and interest of a pre-adolescent child; such that daily life can have unity and significance for him, as representation of the large social whole; and accordingly a special effort should be made in the design of neighborhoods to incorporate in them those light industries which directly
subserve neighborhood life. There should be...examples of the industrial process which the child at school may not merely inspect and understand, but also, perhaps, take part in as an educational experience. (Mumford The Culture of Cities p. 473, quoted at Bauer 109)

As Mumford suggests, the neighborhood's role in education goes beyond teaching proper behavior to teaching about the world. The neighborhood in this view is and ought to be a microcosm of the larger world: "most of the activities that, in more specialised form, enter into the adult's world should be represented, in simpler modes, in the local community" (Mumford 1954 268). Robert Woods earlier had found a similar completeness in the neighborhood:

The neighborhood is large enough to include in essence all the problems of the city, the state, and the nation; and in a constantly increasing number of instances...all the fundamental international issues. It is large enough to present these problems in a recognizable community form...[and] to make some provision for the whole variety of extra-family interests and attachments....

On the other hand, it is small enough to be a comprehensible and manageable community unit. It is in fact the only one that is comprehensible and manageable.... The neighborhood is concretely conceivable; the city is not, and will not be except as it is organically integrated through its neighborhoods (Woods 578, 579)

In Woods's view, the neighborhood educates its residents in the institutions and manners which are appropriate to life in civil society. Jane Jacobs found a similar role for the neighborhood in teaching children about acceptable limits to behavior and about accepting responsibility for individuals who are not part of their own family. Recent evidence shows that the neighborhood has particular meaning for families with children: they are far more likely to engage in formal and informal social activities in the neighborhood than those which do not have children. For these families, the qualities of the street and the environs have an importance which they lack for more mobile groups. So important is the influence of the neighborhood on the behavior of
children that it is often a primary consideration when parents decide which neighborhood they will live in, for they are choosing to a great extent what kind of adults they want their children to become. Evidence shows, for example, that the class segregation of city neighborhoods is linked to the desire of parents' to preserve or increase the status they have attained by constraining the social interactions of their children (Hunter 1983 15).

What the neighborhood does for children it also does to a slighter degree for adults. The neighborhood has two primary behavioral functions: "to prevent anonymity from leading into anomie", and to bring adults "within the bounds of democratic social control" (Tannenbaum 365). Recent evidence points to the relation that exists between attachment to an area and both physical health and mental health; failure to develop attachments may threaten both (Rivlin 15, Rohe and Gates 61). This evidence supports an earlier contention by sociologists that the neighborhood can prevent the social malady known as anomie. The term was coined by Emile Durkheim to describe social disorganization and maladjustment (Tannebaum 358). An anomic society is characterized in Durkheim's view by weak integration within the group and by lack of cohesion between members of the collectivity. The effect of social disintegration is to isolate individuals by driving them into themselves, and at its most extreme this isolation has been described as producing delusions (Tannenbaum 364, referring to Herry and Pertzoff). The isolation is associated with deep insecurity and with extreme tension in the individual, since in the anomic society there is no opportunity for an expression of the complete personality (Tannenbaum 359). In Durkheim's studies, the degree of anomie was found to vary with the size
of the community. Using the suicide rate as a measure of social disintegration, Durkheim showed that a high incidence of the condition occurred in cities. Herey and Pertzoff claim

It is impossible to become conscious of one's responsibilities [in the big city] because the number of people is too large to be grasped as an imaginable reality by any mind. Hence the flight from reality, the characteristic of our time. (Quoted at Tannenbaum 364)

Anonymity, a quality of urban life which is valued, can quickly become anomie in the circumstances of the great city: "A physical environment that is too overpowering in its colossal dimensions can serve to dwarf the individual personality into inconsequence" (Tannenbaum 366).

The individual's identification with the local community was held to be one of the most important barriers against anomie. In America, where the anomie qualities of large cities are exacerbated by the country's emphasis on individualism, sociologists from the early decades of the century believed that only small groups like the neighborhood unit could provide "the common denominator of security" which individuals require. The neighborhood "brings the local community into relief and enables residents to see it as something apart from the rest of the city", permitting them to find within the physical neighborhood a community with which they can identify (Clarence Perry, Housing for the Machine Age 1939, p. 120, quoted at Tannenbaum 362). "[T]he neighborhood is sizable enough to provide such positive support through identification; yet it is not so large as to submerge the individual in the anonymity of a stupendous metropolitan community" (Tannenbaum 363). The support offered by the neighborhood typically consists of companionship, counselling, and practical help, which can not be provided by secondary groups such as churches and labor unions, nor by one's
economic class (as communist doctrine would have it), nor by "the world" at large (Rohe and Gates 61). As against the great city which reduces the individual to obscurity, the "neighborhood, encompassing as it does almost all aspects of life..., allows for and encourages experience of the total personality" (Tannenbaum 367). The neighborhood can serve this high function only if it contains within it the completeness of the world; Tannenbaum here echoes Mumford and Woods in their view that the neighborhood should contain employment, industries, and representations of the larger institutions of the society.

The Neighborhood as a Political Association

If the neighborhood in the classic view provides the individual with social support and with experiences which are central to the moulding of personality, and exerts influence over the individual’s behavior and beliefs, it also allows the individual to exert a reciprocal influence on the larger environment of the city. To the extent that social interaction is extensive, it also can have influence on the world outside the neighborhood. In this respect, the neighborhood extends its role as a form of social association into the political life of the city.

For some observers, particularly at the beginning of the 20th century, the neighborhood’s socializing influence was a cause for optimism, for it was seen as a quality which could enhance social and political stability. For Robert Woods, the neighborhood was an instrument for social assimilation. In the neighborhood, he said, immigrants will be trained "in our standard of living". The attachments immigrants form for their neighborhood will
constitute in themselves an underlying current of conviction which no ordinary appeal to ancient prejudice can disturb, and upon which the incentives of civic and national patriotism can begin surely to rely. (Woods 587)

In Woods' view, the objective is to prevent a kind of assimilation which is only a "foreign composite", a pattern of parochial, nationalistic loyalties where the primary attachment remains to the country or locale of origin, not to the adoptive country. Through participation in actions aimed at the resolution of local problems and issues, neighborhood residents will gain their first taste of civic life. The experience of complaining about municipal service and joining into common action is "a single complete experience and achievement of citizenship which marks the dawning of a downright civic consciousness" (Woods 588).

The neighborhood is the vital public arena to the majority of men, to nearly all women and to all children; in which every one of them is a citizen, and many of them, even among the children, are statesmen - as projecting and pushing through plans for its total welfare (Woods 579).

In fact, Woods' contention is partly borne out by recent evidence which shows that while the number of people who participate in neighborhood planning or take on roles of leadership is never very great, usually constituting less than 1% of the neighborhood population, nevertheless neighborhood activism is the first training ground for some individuals who go on to elected or appointed positions in local government (Rohe and Gates 119-121, 169).

It is the neighborhood's intermediate position as an aspect of the public realm, the fact that it joins together the concerns of private life with the larger dimensions of collective life, that permits it to have influence over education, behavior, and political development. The neighborhood can serve as a link between the everyday life of individuals and the larger institutions and forces of the society (Hunter 1983 4).
Emile Durkheim saw neighborhoods as mediating institutions with a progressive potential, which could be organized to challenge the power of the larger state (Fisher xxii). Durkheim wrote

Where the state is the only environment in which we can live communal lives, [individuals] inevitably lose contact, become detached, and thus society disintegrates. A nation can be maintained only if, between the state and the individual, there is intercalated a whole series of secondary groups near enough to the individuals to attract them strongly in their spheres of action and drag them in this way into the general torrent of social life. (Durkheim 1964, p. 28, quoted at Rohe and Gates 64)

As an entity which is, in Woods' expression, "concretely conceivable" to a degree that the city as a whole is not, the neighborhood provides scope for the passionate attachments which are the basis for political action. The immediacy of the neighborhood as a source of domestic welfare means that for many urban residents it also becomes a primary arena of protest and change (Goering 513). In America, widespread political passion has at times been aroused by issues of national import: the events leading up to the Civil War, the civil rights movement of the early 1960s, and the era of Vietnam war protests are noticeable examples. But just as the primary stated mission of American government, to encourage and protect private liberties and prosperity, is oriented by the concerns of the individual, so there is no comprehensive ideology which as a matter of daily culture binds individuals into collective thought and collective action. In the place of such an ideology are fierce attachments to private opportunity, to family, and to the domain of private life, including the home and its immediate surroundings. The local domain - the town, the village, the neighborhood - gains its meaning as the environment in which the private lives of individuals can prosper.
Alexis de Tocqueville recognized the significance that the local domain had for Americans of his time when he said:

The independence of the township was the nucleus around which the local interests, passions, rights and duties collected and clung. It gave scope to the activity of a real political life, thoroughly democratic and republican. (de Tocqueville 42)

The critical idea in de Tocqueville's remark, and the one that distinguishes the township in essence from the neighborhood, is independence. Although neighborhoods may attach to themselves the level of concern and loyalty which is described by de Tocqueville as belonging to the American township, they have almost never been conceived of as independent. If independence, the capacity to decide local issues on a local basis, is essential to the generation of political action, it must be asked whether neighborhoods can ever be a source of genuine politics as long as they are dependent entities of the city. The decentralization of governmental power to local units has been proposed repeatedly as a partial solution to metropolitan problems, and in fact the pattern of municipal incorporation in America already reflects an abiding attraction to the principle (Briffault). Given this trend, does it also make sense to decentralize government powers to the smallest unit of society, the neighborhood?

The essential political function of the neighborhood has been well described as "the definition, aggregation, and organization of demand" for the services which cities provide (Hunter 1983 13). As a political entity, the neighborhood addresses itself chiefly to the administrative rather than to the legislative aspect of city neighborhood policy, since it is in the administration of policies that the decisions are made which most directly affect the quality of life in individual neighborhoods:
which streets will be resurfaced, where storm sewers will be cleared or replaced, which parks will receive new playground equipment, which neighborhood will be asked to host a half-way house for runaway teenagers or the mentally incapacitated. How existing city resources are allocated among neighborhoods, not the existence of these resources in the first place, generally form the crux of neighborhood complaints. The allocation of resources is largely an administrative issue, since it concerns the policies and politics of the operational divisions of city government. By contrast, the existence of resources — access to local resources through property taxation and access to national resources through political influence — is a legislative concern that entails balancing the priorities of the city’s interest groups and the fiscal needs of the city.

Only in rare instances do neighborhoods exercise their political potential to address the legislative aspect of neighborhood policy directly, because they lack both the motivation and the means to do so. Neighborhood efforts of all kinds depend on collective volunteer activity, a form of public involvement that is notoriously unreliable. In contrast with the immediate physical threats which galvanize neighborhood residents into action to address an administrative wrong, the primary legislative concerns that affect neighborhoods, for example zoning or bond issues for capital improvements, are arcane and distant matters for many neighborhood residents. The issues do not appear to be sufficiently pressing to tear residents away from the daily demands of livelihood, family, and recreation. Moreover, the number of issues which will concern all the neighborhoods of a city enough to make common cause are relatively few, including changes to zoning regulations, questions
about voting apportionment and the structure of city government, and the indebtedness of the city. These are large issues and they appear infrequently in council or before the voters. The occasions that can motivate citywide neighborhood actions are few, and the motivations disappear with the resolution of the issue. When normal circumstances return, neighborhoods revert to being rivals contending for a limited municipal pot of funds.

Were neighborhoods to have the motivation to address the citywide concerns mentioned above, in most cases they would still lack the ability to assemble political demand in order to influence the city. It is precisely lower-income neighborhoods, those standing most in need of fair policies, which are in the most unfavorable position to gather support from their more well-to-do neighbors in order to influence citywide measures. The latter have little incentive to make common cause with lower-income areas: every advance in the political status of these areas means a redistribution of scarce city resources from the wealthy areas to the poor. It is only when a legislative issue affects both poor and wealthy areas equally, or affects the wealthy areas directly and incidentally also has an effect on poorer areas, that collective action can be marshalled to change city ordinances or the city charter.

While poorer neighborhoods can rarely work in isolation to change city policies or ordinances, they can influence administrative decisions through the political channels which are open to them. The votes of almost any neighborhood which has been aroused to action and protest are sufficient to matter to the elected officials who represent them, and these officials have some influence over the operational decisions of the line agencies. In most cases the influence is informal and is conveyed
by personal contact with agency chiefs or division heads; in weak-mayor cities where the administrative leaders must answer to the city council, the influence is more direct. Citizens can also appeal directly to the line agencies, knowing that the combination of unrelenting overt pressure and the implicit threat of public embarrassment are potent weapons. It is often the case that neglect of a neighborhood reflects no deliberate policy or intent on the part of a city agency, but simply the fact that overworked, understaffed agencies are constantly responding to perceived or real emergencies, and will always find a way to ignore complaints that are not brought to their attention forcefully and incessantly. Whether it comes from a poor neighborhood or an affluent one, neighborhood activism is often sufficient to bring city officials to task and force a response.

However, neither pressure nor publicity implies neighborhood independence. On the contrary, it is because the neighborhood participates in the choice of ward or city officials and falls under the legally mandated responsibility of the administrative departments that it can make demands to which the city must respond. Were the neighborhood independent in the political or financial sense, were it in effect a separate municipality, its capacity to make effective demands of the municipality that is its chief service provider would be dramatically diminished. Very few city areas as small as a neighborhood are capable of supporting by themselves the services which are required for a decent and safe life. Historically, neighborhoods have been and remain dependent on the economically productive sectors of the city which produce jobs and large amounts of tax revenues; few neighborhoods are so mixed in their functions that they contain enough of these functions to
be self-sustaining. The obstacle which most neighborhoods face is not to gain independence from city administration but to enhance their presence within city government, redressing imbalances in the city’s allocation of resources by increasing their level of citizen participation and political skill. A critical aspect of all neighborhood planning programs is therefore the role that is given to the resident and the neighborhood organization in the formulation of plans and policy recommendations. This issue is examined in detail in Chapter 7 of this study. Short of full independence, an enhanced role for the local community group can represent a form of political or administrative decentralization. The next Chapter examines the arguments for and against decentralization in general in order to provide the context for the more specific issue of decentralized areal planning, to be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

Notes

1. N. Dennis has compiled a catalog of the principal definitions of "community" (Dennis 191, 192):
   * In textbooks: "an area that contains all or most of the elements of a complete social system..."
   * MacIver: "'A community is a social unity....' 'Community is the greater common life out of which associations arise, into which associations bring order, but which associations never completely fulfill'"
   * Ogburn and Nimkoff: "'...the total organisation of social life within a limited area.'"
   * Hawley: "'the community includes the area, the population of which, however widely distributed, regularly returns to a common centre for the satisfaction of all or part of its needs.'"
   * Thomas and Zpaniecki: a common culture and autonomous social control.
   * Tonnies, Reiss, Mann: "community as involving interaction of a certain degree and quality.... [This is] the idea of community which has received most popular attention."


3. In the Riverside community of Houston, Texas, a formerly white area which underwent rapid racial transition in the late 1950's, the congregation of St. James Episcopal Church continues to be a mixture of local black people and whites who left the area many years before.
Similarly, in Houston's black Fourth Ward, the strength of the local churches depends to a great extent on black congregation members who have moved out of the deteriorating area for more stable suburban locations, but retain their ties to their church in the Fourth Ward. Keller notes that for some societies, neighboring does imply common beliefs. These tend to be relatively isolated and agrarian communities where dependence on the neighbor for support in emergencies is crucial, as opposed to the urbanized neighborhood in which residents' affiliations and dependencies reach far beyond the neighborhood's boundaries.

A significant case of this kind of maladjustment lies in the discrepancy between "decent" and "street" families in contemporary black ghettos. In street parlance, this distinction describes on the one hand households which subscribe to the behavior consistent with prevailing middle-class norms, and on the other families which adopt the violence of street gang life with its emphasis on violence and reputation. It is found that the latter, who invariably represent a minority of the neighborhood's population, have an influence through their threat of violence far out of proportion to their numbers. The influence on children is profound: children whose upbringing and temperament incline them to "decent" behavior find themselves adopting "street" behavior to protect their status and even their lives in the distinctly rougher world of sidewalk life (Anderson 82).
PART II: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

CHAPTER 3. THE PROBLEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECENTRALIZATION

The Value of Decentralization

While full political independence for the neighborhood has been advocated by only a few writers, decentralization of decision and administration have been raised repeatedly as a solution to the problems of the vast modern metropolis. Decentralized decision is based on the principle that no one is as capable of understanding local conditions and responding to them appropriately as the local citizenry. De Tocqueville recognized the importance of this principle as the basis of county and township government (de Tocqueville 84). De Tocqueville's main concern in this passage (as elsewhere in Democracy in America) is with the influence of laws and political arrangements on the manner and character of citizens. He recognizes that institutions are capable of stimulating the character of citizens or of enervating it (de Tocqueville 90). He finds as he studies the New England township that local independence develops in its citizenry the habits of political life:

The native of New England is attached to his township because it is independent and free; his co-operation in its affairs ensures his attachment to its interests; the well-being it affords him secures his affection; and its welfare is the aim of his ambition and of his future exertions. He takes a part in every occurrence in the place; he practices the art of government in the small sphere within his reach; he accustoms himself to those forms without which liberty can only advance by revolutions; he imbibes their spirit; he acquires a taste for order, comprehends the balance of powers, and collects clear practical notions on the nature of his duties and the extent of his rights. (De Tocqueville 71)

These political habits and the personal manners that support them are both the product of local independence and the necessary condition for democracy to proceed smoothly. They constitute the characteristic virtues of a democratic regime which emphasizes equality.
The idea that decentralization of decision-making will have a moral effect retains a persistent vitality, and finds expression as a goal of several of the neighborhood planning programs in this study. The literature on Dayton, Ohio's neighborhood planning program, called the Community Involvement Strategy, states that

In order to encourage a sense of control and self-determination within the community, citizens should participate directly in the shaping of governmental policies and other actions which affect their lives. The importance of this participation will increase in light of the tough governmental decisions ahead. Decisions will likely take the form of what services to cut or reduce, which services to maintain and which services to vary in different neighborhoods. While citizen participation may protract these actions, it will be crucial to identify citizen priorities in order for the changing nature of government to be accepted. ...[the] new federalism increases the importance of State and County decisions; this should be accompanied by a commensurate increase of citizen participation in those decision-making processes. (CIS 2, 3)

Omaha's literature echoes this sentiment when it states that "Assuming that people want to determine the future of their neighborhoods, it follows that a fundamental purpose of neighborhood planning is to promote self-reliance" (NPC 1).

The goal is summarized in the contemporary catch-word "empowerment", a notion of returning to the people the capacity to decide for themselves and carry into action the matters which have most influence on their lives. Decentralizing the powers of government, it is held, has the potential to increase citizen participation in government, particularly among the poor who are relatively excluded from the normal channels of political influence (Shalala 20, Farr et al 7). Participation will permit greater expression, "which will form the base of a political constituency to achieve other reforms" (Shalala 21). The result will be to overcome the alienation, despair, and even apathy that many citizens
feel about their ability to effect change in their own environment. This effect, some writers believe, will be most pronounced among the poor, especially as it transforms the self-destructive characteristics of many poor populations (Katznelson 330, quoting James).

While the most profound implication of decentralization is its potential for influencing the character, ambitions and actions of citizens, the argument for decentralization can also be carried forward on the grounds of improving the equity and effectiveness of municipal government (Farr et al 7). Powerful arguments have been marshalled against centralized city government in general and against centralized planning in particular. It is not surprising that some of the most important literature on decentralization is concerned with New York City, since New York presents the problems that most cities face, as well as problems that are unique to itself, in forms so exaggerated that to ignore them courts disaster. In 1972, a thorough critique of centralization and decentralization was offered by members of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York in Decentralizing City Government: A Practical Study of a Radical Proposal for New York City. This work forms the basis for much of the discussion in this section.

In their desire to increase the efficiency of city government and reduce local political pressures, the reformers of the early 20th century created professional bureaucracies which tended to ignore the real differences between local communities (Shalala 2, Callies). With the reduction of the power of the political parties and local organizations which advanced neighborhood interests, local participation also declined in city decisions which affected the neighborhood (Mudd 20). As a result, there developed between the neighborhood and city hall a gap
which had implications for the general direction which city government
and planning took: at the expense of the communities which were home to
the city's residents, attention was given to developing the central city
because of its potential to attract outside investment and create jobs
(Farr 93, Callies 7). With the silencing of the neighborhood voice in
the city's decisions, one of the city government's most salient
imperatives, the satisfaction of residents' demands, was also diminished
in relation to that imperative which requires a city above all to
increase its financial standing.¹ In a pluralistic political environment
it is deemed essential for all voices to have access to, and perhaps even
a presence in, the process by which decisions are made. Decentralization
of decision and administration is offered as one way in which the local
voice can command a larger presence in matters which affect the locality,
rectifying the balance between the developmental interests of the city
and its obligations to its residents. Decentralization also offers the
hope that the differences of access that various communities have to the
decision process will be corrected. A matter that may be urgent to the
locality can be submerged under larger issues when it has to be presented
as part of a citywide agenda; but when officials are assigned to a
locality and brought into direct relation with citizen demands, they
become accountable to the residents and the likelihood of an effective
response will increase.

Centralized planning and government have also been attacked on the
grounds that the subject matter of modern municipal government is too
vast and too complex for a single public entity to handle well. A
centralized administration simply does not have the information which is
necessary to make decisions which affect the individual communities: what
resources exist in the communities, what their residents desire, how they will respond to proposals or projects, what effect a program or project will have on adjacent neighborhoods (Farr et al. 93). No central bureaucracy of any size could possibly have enough staff to respond adequately to every neighborhood’s demands. It is more likely, in fact, that an enlarged central bureaucracy would only alienate the neighborhoods by interposing more levels of officials between the citizen and the decision makers (Shalala 5). Bureaucracies have been labeled as "insensitive, remote, and unaccountable," and since they frequently fail to provide the services which they are supposed to deliver, average city residents perceive themselves as completely removed from both the decision process and the benefits of city administration (Katznelson 327).

It is argued that it is inherent to the nature of a central bureaucracy, no matter how well intentioned it may be in relation to neighborhood needs, that it can never respond adequately to the particular, unique demands which neighborhoods make on it. In order to ease demands on management and achieve economies of scale, bureaucracies are inclined to standardization, with the result that they cannot respond to variegated conditions in individual communities (Farr et al. 28). Moreover, a centralized bureaucracy will always carry the full burden of the conflicting imperatives which characterize city government as a whole. In particular, its responsiveness to community demands will always be constrained by the pressure to satisfy developmental demands elsewhere in the city, which may be in direct conflict with the needs of neighborhoods. When bureaucracies do respond to neighborhoods, the attention of officials will be directed toward those which can exert
political influence, either through their wealth, their voting strength, or their direct access to the heads of departments. The response will often be biased toward neighborhoods in which the money and education of the residents gives them a disproportionate influence in city affairs (Farr et al 32). Responsiveness also suggests a willingness to innovate and to step outside the boundaries of bureaucratic rules, but initiatives by individual city employees tend to be actively discouraged by their agencies because of the delays they cause and the dominance of inflexible operational rules (Farr et al 9, 23, 24). The reported low productivity of municipal employees and their tendency to be shifted from geographic locale to locale or from one functional division to another within a department also work against developing the relationships with specific communities which would allow them to respond appropriately to their particular needs (Farr et al 25).

While the original promise of centralized city administration was to increase efficiency by bringing all decisions into a single locus of power, its actual effect in many cases has been the opposite, to increase the fragmentation of municipal decision-making. Centralized bureaucracies, where the day-to-day decisions are made which affect the delivery of services to individuals in the city, have become powerful fiefdoms which jealously guard their domains of decision and their resources (Mudd 16-19, 167). Overwhelmed with the burden of their own specialized concerns, bureaucracies are not in the business of complicating their activities by coordinating their plans and projects with those of other agencies. Nor are they in the practice of proposing that their funds or staff be reallocated to a sister department in order to meet a citywide problem. The fragmentation that results in a city the
size of New York, especially from the viewpoint of the citizen, can read as an excerpt from the theater of the absurd:

A civic leader in southern Queens phones the local police precinct asking that barricades be placed around a gaping hole in a nearby vacant lot where children play. She is told it is a Highways Department problem. The community relations officer there says the danger is the Board of Education’s responsibility, since a school used to occupy the site. The Board of Education reports that a new school has been built several blocks away and the land has reverted to the Department of Real Estate. Real Estate checks and finds that the demolition contractor for the old school was responsible for closing a sewer drain at the bottom of the hole, the contract for the job ran out six months ago, and the department does not have the equipment to deal with it. (Mudd xiii)

The intricacies of New York’s administrative fragmentation prevented it in this case from solving a simple problem which posed an obvious and immediate danger. The citizen views the situation with a dismay that easily turns into cynicism and apathy. By proliferating the number of decision-makers at the same time that direct citizen participation in local decisions is reduced, fragmentation makes it hard “to pin down who makes public decisions in metropolis. ...too many officials, too many governments, overlapping power, power too narrow to match the sprawl of a problem, power delegated away” (League of Women Voters 16).

Fragmentation undermines the direct accountability between citizen and official which supports the legitimacy and authority of democratic politics.

Fragmentation of administrative responsibility places citizens in a position of ignorance about government services and capabilities which complements the city government’s ignorance of conditions at the local level. The welter of different city agencies which are involved in regulating aspects of the same problem, for instance site development, is compounded by the presence of extra-municipal authorities who also have
jurisdiction over these problems but who appear to the average citizen to be even more remote than city officials. In New York, for example, the federal Community Action Program (CAP) and the Model Cities program were entirely separate from the city building inspection department and other city services which dealt with the same housing issues (Mudd 37). Coordination between different housing authorities and between these authorities and other public agencies is particularly important because the populations which have the greatest need for affordable housing generally also need social services to be conveniently located in the community. Since centralized housing authorities do not have to respond to the demands or the information which is presented by a localized constituency, they tend not to have incentives to ensure that the links between housing and supporting social services are adequate (Farr et al 77).

Most city residents are aware that there is at least a single elected official, the city councilmember, who can serve as a designated link between the citizen and city agencies, but there is no such link to connect the citizen to the multitude of single-purpose agencies which have authority over important land use issues. It is in fact the citizen in need of answers or decisions who often constitutes the only point of contact between the different agencies and boards who have jurisdiction over a single piece of land, and the average citizen is often unaware that some agencies even exist, much less how to contend with their complex and often contradictory requirements.² Nor do many residents understand the instruments which are available for addressing the problems. In New York, it was said that as few as 5 to 10 percent of citizens were aware of the existence of the Community Boards which were
their ostensible instruments for delivering complaints and wishes to the city's operating departments (Farr et al 30, Mudd 214). Not only did these citizens miss opportunities for correcting problems and deficiencies in their neighborhoods, but the boards often lacked a knowledgeable constituency and thus failed to exert the influence which they might have had. The results of governmental fragmentation have been regularly deplored:

Irrational land use, inefficiency, lack of economy and accountability, inequity in the distribution of resources, and inability to establish priorities have all been listed as adverse consequences.... (Shalala 19)

One effect of removing the citizen from the decision process, and of removing government officials from direct accountability to the citizen, is to reduce the citizen cooperation which is essential to the proper functioning of many city services, particularly fire protection and policing. Tax-paying residents, for example, are angry because they believe that they are being over-taxed for services that benefit others. At the same time, minority populations come to resent the intrusion into their lives of agencies which seemingly make no attempt to understand their special cultural needs (Farr et al 36, 37).

The fragmentation of service responsibilities into separate, largely independent public agencies is compounded by lack of coterminality between the various agencies' service districts, and between the service districts and the political divisions of the city (Farr et al 20). Service district boundaries are established in order to achieve the greatest efficiency and economy of scale in the delivery of the agency's particular service, so that what might be called the "natural" district, the neighborhood which identifies itself as such because of prominent boundaries, or a relatively homogeneous building
fabric, or a landmark, is often criss-crossed and subdivided by administrative and electoral lines (Fainstein and Fainstein A 77). Crown Heights in New York City was found in one study to have parts of over forty-three separate service districts in its boundaries (counting only the agencies actually represented on the service cabinet, the official organ for coordinating municipal services within New York communities) (Mudd 182). Residents who might make common cause to attack specific neighborhood problems find themselves dealing with different officials and staff within the same agency. Sometimes they must deal with several elected representatives as well. While it has been argued that subdividing the neighborhood across two or more council districts provides residents with a greater number of elected officials to whom they can appeal and reduces the temptation for elected officials to use the neighborhood organization for political purposes, this subdivision also means that each council representative has fewer voters in the neighborhood who need to be satisfied, and thus has less incentive to make a special effort on their behalf (Rohe and Gates 144). If other neighborhoods in the city lie entirely within councilmembers' districts and can therefore command a substantial number of votes to compel the attention of the elected official, a problem of equity arises. The problems caused by lack of coterminality are increased because both service districts and the districts represented by elected officials shift constantly, the former as agencies adjust to new conditions within their particular functional domain, the later in order to meet the requirements of equalized proportionment of voting strength (Farr et al 53).
The problems associated with centralized bureaucracies have two broad effects, one administrative, the other political. On the one hand fragmentation of services, poor communication between agencies, and lack of coterminality tend to make centralized bureaucracies inefficient and ineffective in the delivery of services. City government, it is claimed, does not perform its basic mission as well as it might, and administrative decentralization is offered as a solution. On the other hand, the remoteness, unresponsiveness, and lack of accountability associated with centralized city agencies tend to reduce the legitimacy of city government as a democratic political institution by rendering citizens cynical about its effectiveness and its capacity to respond to their requests and needs. Political decentralization is offered as a means to enlist citizens in the decision process by increasing the number of access points and by improving the quality of the contacts that occur between citizens and officials (Katzenelson 331).

Political and administrative decentralization are linked. Political decentralization concerns the decision process: who is involved in decisions about services, what procedures are used to make the decisions, what remedies exist for those who have been treated unfairly. Political decentralization to the neighborhood level involves members of the community in decisions about what services are to be provided and how they will be financed, and it forces local decision-makers and service providers to become accountable to the locality they serve through elections or other means of selection. Administrative decentralization, by contrast, is concerned with the way in which services are delivered, regardless of whether the decisions are made through a centralized or decentralized political structure. In a decentralized service
administration, line officials are granted some level of independent authority to allocate their resources as they see fit, without requiring approval from a central office. In the ideal situation, the independence and flexibility of the line officer is compromised only by adherence to a set of standards established by the central authority.

Administration of city services is never a purely technical issue where decisions are based only on technical information: when a line officer in the department that administers streets has to decide where to send his crews to fix potholes, he is aware that the wrong decision can open a fire-storm of criticism. To the degree that this official is directly accountable to the people served, the decision becomes more politically charged. The ideal decentralized structure brings administration and community into alignment: decisions by the community about what kinds of services they want and are willing to pay for are implemented by agencies that are directly present in, and accountable to, the community. The community in this example does not necessarily have to maintain pothole crews, but it does have considerable say over how the pothole crews supplied by the city do their work.

Programs for decentralization promise to return the control of the city to the residents at the same time that they give citizens more and better services for every tax dollar spent (Katznelson 328). Increased citizen participation also suggests that neighborhood residents will act with greater responsibility in their dealings with city government: if local residents must make decisions about which services they want to have and at the same time have to bear a greater share of the costs involved in implementing those decisions, they are more likely to bring
their demands into responsible alignment with the real needs of the area and with the real capacities of city government.

The Limitations of Political Decentralization

It has rarely been suggested that decentralization of city services is a cure for city ills that is entirely free from problems; on the contrary, a number of writers have been alive to its harmful possibilities. Decentralization in general, both administrative and political, means "increasing the number of persons, offices, and institutions that have authority to make or influence governmental decisions or administration" (Farr et al 9). This increase will multiply the points at which citizens can gain access to decision-makers, at the same time reducing the scope of interest of each official or institution to a particular geographic area. A form of municipal parochialism might result. Decentralists assume that small units of administration are more effective and responsive than large, but they also assume that the presence of numerous small units will not undermine city-wide interests or, more important from the viewpoint of justice, the interests of communities which are very small or very poor. Where each subordinate geographic unit bears responsibility both for the delivery of some city services and for obtaining the finances to support the services, it becomes to that extent independent of the city as a whole and also competes with other, similarly independent geographic units for limited city resources. If the mission of the central government as a monitor of uniform standards and as an allocator of city-wide resources is relaxed as a consequence, the disparities in the conditions of the city's different neighborhoods will only be heightened by decentralization. The disparities will
reflect the genuine differences of interest and capacity that exist between the neighborhoods of the city. While stable communities will use their independence to isolate themselves from disruptive influences, poorer communities may well use their independence to relax environmental and developmental standards in order to increase their financial standing. Both approaches will impose hardships on the city as a whole, the first mainly by reducing the quantity and distribution of affordable housing and the potential sites for difficult facilities (half-way houses, homeless shelters, waste dumps), the second by introducing the safety and environmental hazards which accompany many commercial uses. Exclusion of undesirable land uses and populations on the one hand, and reduced standards on the other, are the two poles toward which relatively autonomous city districts might drift.

Thrown onto their own resources, communities with populations which are educated and relatively well off will have greater abilities to provide for themselves from sources outside of government, as well as to influence government at all levels for their benefit. Not only are these communities capable of raising funds internally for special projects, but studies show that the rate of citizen participation in planning efforts is greater in higher income areas (Hutcheson 1984 187). Their presence in and influence over the political processes of city-building will consequently be larger than in poor areas. If these subordinate units have some control over setting and distributing their own taxes, over regulations, and over the types of services which they choose to provide — all of which are implied by the principle of political decentralization — the problem becomes little different from the classic confrontation between central cities and the separately incorporated suburban
A central feature of this confrontation is the fact that independent communities have every incentive to exit in a financial sense from the financial problems of the city or metropolitan region. Both by excluding poorer populations through regulation, and by removing themselves from the property tax structure of the city, they avoid the redistributive effects of metropolitan living (Davis 165-169). Exactly this effect was seen in southern California as a result of the famous Lakewood plan: the low-tax "Lakewood" cities attracted large numbers of homeowners while the high-tax older cities held a growing majority of renters (Davis 168).

Not only will there be a tendency for the wealthier communities to retain a greater share of their taxes, but the taxing power itself can be used as a device to exclude undesirable lower income residents. Likewise, control over building and zoning regulations affects the size and types of housing which can be built in the community and the employment opportunities it can offer. Excessively stringent building and life safety codes, and codes which apply a uniform standard to old and new structures without distinction, raise the cost of all housing but have a particularly inhibiting effect on the rehabilitation of older buildings, which are often the structures which can be most inexpensively acquired and converted to affordable housing (Farr et al 78, Clay and Hollister 215). At the same time, the city must consider the damage to life and property which might result from failing to impose such standards in a densely crowded section of older buildings. Excessively stringent environmental standards, for example those governing waste disposal, also have an exclusionary effect on employment by preventing
light industry or warehouse uses from locating in a community (Farr et al 99).

In combination, these powers can be used to ensure that the community remains primarily inhabited by residents of similar economic and social status. The indirect consequence of these powers in encoding racial and ethnic segregation is clear, since the disproportionate number of American blacks and Hispanics who occupy lower income strata makes them particularly needy of affordable housing and the unskilled or lower-skilled jobs which are offered only in manufacturing and many of the service industries; exactly the land uses which zoning is often designed to exclude from primarily residential communities. These poorer populations also require publicly assisted social services such as day care and health care, which wealthier residents tend to provide for themselves. If communities have control over the types of services which they offer, they can effectively exclude population groups like the elderly or single-parent families simply by not offering the services which they need (Farr et al 71). As desirable communities become more homogeneous by choice, less desirable communities are likely to become more homogeneous by consequence.\(^4\) The mobility that city residents require in order to pursue opportunities in housing, education, social interaction, recreational activities and employment could be reduced by the creation under decentralization of relatively autonomous neighborhoods or districts, and the result could well jeopardize the nation’s progress toward racial integration (Farr et al 39).

Homogeneous, relatively autonomous sub-city districts also raise the specter of political domination by majority groups. With decentralization, the scope of action of the city as a unified political
entity may be reduced. While avenues of remedy will certainly remain in the courts for individuals or groups who believe themselves to be discriminated against by majorities in sub-city districts, the most immediate and least expensive avenue, direct appeal to the administrative officials who make day-to-day decisions about the delivery of services, will be to some extent curtailed. The officially designated neighborhood corporation, council, board or planning group will likely have a privileged position in city hearings, and individual citizens may be asked to deliver complaints and requests through the official organ. Dissenting or unpopular voices may be effectively excluded from the decision process simply by restricting their participation in the officially designated group, or by filtering them out of the official accounts which are passed on to the city government.

The possibility that divergent positions will be silenced has been amply recognized by some of the neighborhood planning programs in this study. In Washington, D.C., for example, the Advisory Neighborhood Council (ANC) is the official organ in each neighborhood for transmitting complaints and requests from residents to the city government, and it is given special priority in respect to the weight of its comment in planning matters and its rights to notification about pending city decisions or proposals. In the literature describing the program the ANC is called, in fact, a body of local government (see Chapter 7). The authors of this program apparently recognized that the exceptional position of the ANC also gives it the power to exclude from the city’s attention requests or complaints which do not suit the majority interest, because careful scrutiny is given to the conditions under which the ANC’s announce meetings, report procedures, and admit new members. In
Portland, Oregon, the District Councils which coordinate the affairs of from six to twenty neighborhood associations are partly funded by the city government to hire staff for office and community tasks. The District Council is intended to be the link between the individual associations and the city's Office of Neighborhood Associations (ONA). As in Washington, the activities of the officially recognized neighborhood organization are subjected to scrutiny through elections and procedural requirements that govern participation and notification. Even with such protections, however, the abuses latent in decentralization can only be prevented by active oversight on the part of the city and by the existence of multiple, and possibly redundant avenues of remedy by which individual residents can bypass a neighborhood council which is not giving them fair treatment. In Portland, residents not only work through their Boards but also can appeal directly to ONA and even to the state if they believe that the Board is abusing its special position.

If the tendency among wealthier communities might be over-regulation with the covert intent of racial and class exclusion, the tendency in poor neighborhoods might well be a deficiency of regulation or excessive concessions to developers (Clay and Hollister 216). If each neighborhood in the city is obligated to support certain services or a portion of each service out of the tax monies which it can generate, then the incentive for poor neighborhoods will be to increase their tax base at all costs. They will also hope to see employment and retail sales in the neighborhood grow with overall increase of commercial activity. By reducing the regulatory hurdles that potential investors must face, poorer communities will hope to advance their competitive edge over other neighborhoods. If they have control over zoning and building codes, they
may relax standards in order to allow commercial developers to build facilities which burden the sewage and traffic capacities of the area, or to introduce heavy industries which create noise and pollution problems for surrounding communities. If they have control over liquor licensing as well as zoning, they might take a permissive attitude toward the location and operation of bars in residential neighborhoods. Through decentralization of city functions into small geographic districts, one of the crucial problems of federalism might be translated to the local level. The problem of regional disparities which escape central standards is manifested, in the national situation, by the extraordinary differences in environmental regulation and planning policy that one finds, for example, between Texas and Oregon. Similar discrepancies might become evident in cities in which political power were decentralized; given the enormous differences in health, safety, education, recreation, and amenity which already characterizes the neighborhoods of many cities, decentralization would only be aggravating the problem, not providing a means to solve it.

Both over-regulation and deficient regulation have consequences that go beyond the boundaries of the regulating jurisdictions. In the case of over-regulation, particularly as it affects the zoning of housing and land uses which generate employment, the effect is to increase the burdens experienced by less regulated jurisdictions (Farr et al 92). As regards deficient regulation, the results may well be pollution, heavy traffic congestion, noise, and other environmental effects. A school of political thought argues that the jurisdictional fragmentation which already characterizes the political landscape of most American cities only exaggerates the income and social disparities of the country
(Briffault, Hawley); similar arguments can be advanced against the fragmentation which might result from careless decentralization of city functions.

The disparities of resources of different communities under a decentralized city government could have other practical consequences as well. If they are responsible for providing their own administrative staff, poorer neighborhoods might find it difficult to offer salaries high enough to attract qualified professionals (Farr et al 41, 44). They may also find it difficult to maintain the media presence which is essential to receiving attention from the central city administration (Farr et al 37). Residents of poorer neighborhoods are less likely to be experienced in using the various avenues which are available to influence the city’s political process, and they are more likely to have difficulty raising the funds which are necessary for a community organizing effort. Lack of financial resources inhibits many of the simple actions - mailing notices of meetings, mobilizing a media campaign, undertaking a preliminary planning report - which are critical to developing support for community improvement. It can be argued that a decentralized administration which does not also provide financial resources for community organization actually increases the disadvantages they face relative to the more well-to-do communities, since it frees the neighborhoods from the redistribution of resources which normally takes place in a central administrative forum.

The disadvantages which poor neighborhoods experience in influencing city policy under a centralized administration may therefore be exaggerated under a decentralized administration. If the central administration withdraws from the allocation of resources and leaves more
of these decisions to the communities, poorer neighborhoods will have fewer bargaining chips to offer in the trade-offs of favors and support that will take place between communities. The danger that exists under centralized administration, that a poor neighborhood will be overlooked, is no less true in a decentralized system. If neighborhoods are activated and given voice within a decentralized system, there is also a danger that the political process for developing consensus on city-wide issues will deteriorate (Farr et al 38). Just as the single-member system of council representation has in some cities allowed poorer, minority communities to thwart city-wide improvements, in the same way a decentralized form of service administration might only increase the opposition to projects developed by the central administration. This would be especially true for housing and renewal projects which involve redistribution of the city’s resources and which can adversely affect particular neighborhoods (Farr et al 104). Even without active opposition, the simple fact that there would a greater number of interest groups competing for the same limited city resources might well lead to a state of municipal paralysis (Shalala 19).

Determining the appropriate size of decentralized service units may also present difficulties. Since small units are more likely to contain a homogeneous population, they reduce possibilities for internal conflict at the same time that they increase the likelihood that minority population groups, particularly the dispersed Hispanic populations, will be able to achieve representation in the areas in which they live (Farr et al 42). Moreover, the argument has been made that many small units which offer distinct sets of services and different approaches to taxation and policy will create a range of choices for city residents who
are searching for the ideal arrangement to suit their particular family and employment needs (Farr et al. 43). The argument is an extension of classic model of municipal diversity advanced by Charles Tiebout in 1956 (Tiebout 24). The model holds that the fragmentation of a metropolitan region into multitudes of small jurisdictions, each offering a unique "package" of services, carries into the geography of the city the benefits of free-market competition that accrue in the provision of other goods and services: variety of offerings, competitive pricing, high standards. Assuming that residential "consumers" have complete mobility and complete information about the benefits and detriments that each community offers, they can then chose the best combination of services and costs that suits their particular household situation and taste. This purely economic argument receives cultural support from the widespread popularity of the small administrative unit, which is held to offer a more direct form of democracy than the large municipality and is thought to encourage face-to-face encounters among people of fairly similar social and economic status (Briffault). Against this argument, however, stands the evidence that even while the small community increases the incentives for citizen participation, the absence of divergent interest groups within a small district may increase the opportunities of the majority group to dominate the agenda with its own concerns and ignore the needs of minority voices in the community (Farr et al. 434).

The small geographic district may also have difficulty developing sufficient participation to arrive at meaningful consensus. Since small districts are more likely to have a narrower range of service responsibilities than large areas, the consequence may be that many
citizens will take little interest in an administration which does not appear to embrace their particular concerns (Farr et al 58). Writers from the Association of the Bar of the City of New York argue that residents will not participate in a local governmental structure unless it has a "critical mass" of responsibilities and powers. Another author states that the unit must be "small enough to encourage increased participation and responsiveness, yet large enough to support a level of decentralized service management that would be meaningful to the residents" (Mudd 71, quoting Dahl 960). If the unit is too large, citizens will not participate because individual efforts will have little effect; if it is too small, they will not participate because the effects of participation will be trivial. Given how few citizens participate in community affairs under any circumstances, a small district may have difficulty mustering enough individuals to take care of all its volunteer staff needs, or to make a respectable showing to the city government when it presents its complaints or requests. Being both smaller and more easily ignored than larger units, these areas may only be granted responsibilities which are not controversial and consequently have little impact on the real conditions of the neighborhood; these might include powers of consultation, of recommendation, or of review of city actions, but not the power to veto actions or to place representatives on the boards which make determinations about zoning changes or building permits.\footnote{7}

The problems described above concern political decentralization, the delegation of some authority over planning and services to communities within the city. Political decentralization is admired as a possible recreation of grass-roots democracy, but its dangers include a parochialism of outlook which could threaten city-wide interests, abuse
of regulatory autonomy to either exclude necessary land uses or leniently include harmful ones, abuse of the decision-process by majority interests or strident minorities, exaggeration of neighborhoods' differing capacities to carry out improvements, and reduction of localized politics to trivialities. Some of these problems can be addressed through the structure of decentralization itself. The effects of parochial attitudes can be corrected by establishing minimal standards in the forum where all city interests in theory have standing, usually the city council. These standards would, for example, establish through zoning the obligation for communities to include multi-family housing in their domains and to ensure that at least some of this housing is affordable; or write environmental criteria which will inhibit poorly-regulated communities from too casually allowing dangerous uses to locate near schools, recreation facilities, churches, or residences. Abuse of decision power can be controlled to some extent by monitoring the group and its procedures: rules that govern the composition of an official community group, that require the group to provide evidence that democratic procedures have been followed, and that provide remedies through alternate channels for individuals who have been abused or excluded, are methods by which cities can prevent the harms presented by small, autonomous decision-making groups. The exaggeration of community disparities which might occur if neighborhoods are thrown onto their own resources can be prevented by providing minimum levels of staff, funds, technical support, and other resources from a central source; assisting poorer communities with fund-raising is within the capabilities of most city governments.
Many of these techniques are evident in the literature on neighborhood planning provided by city governments for this study, and indicate that a number of the cities in the study have given ample consideration to the problems and potential abuses of political decentralization.

Administrative Decentralization

There exist two essentially different approaches to administrative decentralization, single-function decentralization on a service-by-service basis, and multi-functional decentralization on an areal basis. Single-function decentralization is represented most purely by the special service district, a public entity which administers a single specialized aspect of municipal services - education, mosquito control, subsidence, airports, flood control, and so forth - for a specific geographic area. Special districts are the most prevalent form of local American government, constituting some 41,000 out of the total of 80,000 local governments listed in 1977; of these, independent school districts are the most common form of special district (Press 104). Special districts have the great advantage of flexibility: they can be created by state legislatures to deal with a specific localized problem, they are usually less cumbersome in their decision-making than elected, legislative units of government, and their boundaries can be flexibly adjusted as the geographic extent of their functional concern changes with time. By crossing municipal boundaries at will, they help to overcome one of the principal hindrances to rational urban administration in the United States, the jurisdictional fragmentation which traditionally has defeated regional approaches to problems. Some single
or limited function units take on the role of regional planning bodies for their metropolitan areas, at least for the specific functions for which they have been created. Special districts considerably smaller than the size of a city are also prevalent, represented by historic districts, enterprise zones, and tax investment financing districts.

In the American federal system, special districts appear necessary to fill the functional gaps which are not addressed by cities, counties, and states, and they are with few exceptions the only governmental instrument capable of addressing regional issues. Nevertheless, they suffer from the problems which were discussed earlier: they are shadow governments whose real influence on the metropolitan scene is hidden from the view of the average citizen by the absence of electoral accountability, by the lack of coterminality of their boundaries, and by the lack of mechanisms for coordinating their varying requirements. However effective special districts may be as an administrative device, they do nothing to accomplish a democratic goal which in theory is equally important, the principle that the people of a locality should be represented in decisions which concern them. The fact that most special districts are concerned with a single function, one that is generally technical in nature and fairly non-controversial such as soil subsidence, does reduce the problem this kind of entity presents to democratic theory. When, however, the issue they deal with is as subjective and value-laden as the aesthetic controls in a historic district, the lack of direct accountability raises a question whether this is the best device for adjusting the multitude of conflicting interests that tend to emerge in the process of building a city.
At the other extreme of decentralization are small general purpose entities. If the district is large enough to require many services and complex enough to hold a variety of income and social groups, it becomes a virtual sub-government of the city. Because of the breadth of issues that are considered, multi-functional decentralization takes on many of the characteristics of political decentralization, even though the sub-city unit may only be concerned with improving service delivery and not with broader legislative issues such as the rights and obligations of citizens or their powers over agency decisions. Small general-purpose entities are rare, because they lack both the political weight and the broad range of functional concerns which are necessary to attract citizen participation and political support. A significant example is the East Central Citizens Organization (ECCO) of Columbus, Ohio, which originated in 1965 in a square mile district which is poor and black (Kotler 44ff). ECCO negotiated with the city to gain control over a number of public activities, including education, day care, nurseries, housing, employment, and health. The arrangements were flexible; with regard to the public library, for example, ECCO administered the facility while the city paid for its costs. ECCO was a representative body in which the officers were elected annually in open elections. Another example is found in Denver, where the state legislature authorized the city to create special districts which can provide up to sixteen separate services (League of Women Voters 66). These two examples, in the Columbus case initiated by the residents themselves and in the Denver case by the city, still represent only expanded versions of the special district with respect to the scope of activities they can undertake, not full sub-city governmental entities which have powers to address
virtually any matter that comes before them. What is important about these authorities is that they begin with the geographic district and then determine the service needs appropriate to it, rather than beginning with the service need which then sets the appropriate geographic district, as is the case with special function districts as well as with most city administrative departments.

Most proposals for municipal decentralization occupy the middle ground between the extremes represented by single-purpose districts and multi-functional governments. They recognize that the decision to decentralize city services must be made on a service-by-service basis, since many services are not suited to decentralization. In some cases, the effective technical scope of the service is too large for the sub-city approach, and in fact a metropolitan or regional approach is necessary. It would, for example, make little sense to have a neighborhood-sized flood control district, since flooding in a city neighborhood is generally caused by high density commercial or residential development which alters the volume and speed of surface run-off in watercourses many miles upstream. Flooding from these causes requires a regional approach which may involve the state government, cooperative relations between several states, or even the federal government. In other cases, there are economies of scale in the service which a small unit cannot achieve - an example is the training of law enforcement officers, which requires expensive facilities and highly trained personnel. In other cases, decentralization opens the possibility that one district might create hardships for another. Such would be the case if refuse disposal were decentralized, since different districts would have varying incentives to exclude trash and varying
powers to enforce their controls. It is not inconceivable that a single needy and politically weak district would become the trash heap for all the surrounding districts (which is much the function which Camden, New Jersey serves for the surrounding municipalities in the Philadelphia orbit). In still other cases, small units are avoided for neither technical nor economic reasons, but because of their political consequences. This is especially true of education, the most contentious and emotion-laden service which local governments provide. While decentralized control of curriculum and teacher hiring has the great attraction to parents of bringing the education of their children under their own supervision, it also raises the specter of vast inequities of educational quality as poor communities struggle to provide funds from an inadequate tax base and as local prejudices come to dominate school agendas (Briffault).

Based on these criteria, the 1972 Association of the Bar study referenced earlier included a thorough analysis of every city service to study its potential for decentralization (Farr et al 59). The Associations’s detailed findings can be generalized into conclusions about different types of services. Although a number of the Association’s conclusions are not directly relevant to the issues of physical planning which are discussed in this report, the close inter-relationship between physical facilities and social services suggests that a brief summary of their findings is appropriate.

Personal services, those which address the individual needs of city residents, include social services like welfare counseling and day care, education, health care, and housing management. Administrative decentralization in these services has the advantage of placing the
officials who make decisions about the allocation of services closer to the residents who will receive them (Farr et al 63). These services are often labor-intensive, involving direct contact between the service provider and the resident. Since service delivery in this category usually does not require expensive equipment, the Bar concluded that there are few diseconomies of scale that result from decentralization of administration. While street-level staff for these services can be granted administrative responsibility, there are advantages to retaining centralized administrative control of staff training: professional training facilities and instructors are beyond the financial reach of most sub-city districts, and more important, centralized training helps assure uniform standards of performance among personnel and uniform criteria for selecting clients. However, under the assumption that the local community is the best judge of the services that it needs, involving residents in the administration of personal services allows the community to decide on the package of personal services which are most appropriate for its particular condition (Farr et al 59, 61). Day care as a support to job training, for example, might be essential in a community with a large number of single-parent families but would be inappropriate for a population of older residents with grown children. The Bar stresses that central review of local decisions, and ultimate authority to rescind those decisions, would be mandatory to prevent communities from excluding specific population groups by choosing not to offer the personal services they need (Farr et al 71). Spillover effects, principally the migration of needy populations from district to district in search of better benefits, would be reduced if payments were equalized across districts and the districts were obligated, through linkage to
other funding programs, to spend their funds and account for them (Farr et al. 62). Both measures would require central control.

Environmental services include trash and garbage pickup, parks, and housing code enforcement. If the official in charge of each environmental service was appointed through a locally elected council, the official would be accountable to the people he or she most directly serves (Farr et al. 80). Failure to satisfy local needs could result in dismissal or termination of the contract. Assuming that funding is available, residents in this way could decide on both the amount and the quality of the environmental services they want: how many garbage pickups will be carried out each week, how often heavy trash items will be removed, what kind of recreational facilities are best suited to the area (Farr et al. 82, 84). For some types of services, for example trash removal, the defining problem is how the community can call on centrally-managed resources like heavy trucks which are beyond its own capacity to provide. For other services, for example building code enforcement, the defining problem is the potential for abuse or neglect which arises through disparities in wealth or standards between different communities. In code enforcement, the quality of the service depends on the appropriateness of the regulations to the specific situation, the training and integrity of the personnel who are hired to carry them out, and on the rigor with which regulations are enforced. Building codes must have some flexibility if they are to rationally regulate areas as different as a neighborhood of new single-family homes and a district of 19th century rowhouses.

The current trend is to apply uniform codes across wide geographic areas but to increase the flexibility of their application in order to
adjust to local conditions (Farr et al 90). Performance standards, where
the intended effect of the regulation is clearly stated while the method
of achieving the intent is left up to the owner, is now being promoted as
a flexible alternative to the older specification method, in which
precise building components were spelled out in the code. Performance
standards apply equally to building code issues and to more comprehensive
planning questions, such as the type and number of housing units which
are to be built in a community. In a decentralized administrative
structure, performance standards set by a central authority would be
interpreted by the local neighborhood or district council. The local
adaptation of the code as well as its results in built structures would
be subject to review by the central authority. Performance standards
require more training on the part of the enforcing staff because they
involve greater discretion than specification standards. They are
consequently more expensive to implement and are liable to subjective
interpretations, conditions which place poorer neighborhoods at a
disadvantage if they have to provide their own staff to review building
applications. The burden of discretion which performance standards
places on the district officer also admits the exclusionary practices
associated with excessive or unevenly applied regulation. The
participation of the central administration is essential to guarantee
that minimum standards of performance and funding are maintained in all
neighborhoods in the city, and that by the same token no community raises
its standards to such a high level that it excludes all but the
wealthiest homeowners and businesses (Farr et al 88).

Areawide services are those which respond to and affect conditions
beyond any particular jurisdiction within the metropolitan area. These
include transportation and traffic control, water quality and flooding, environmental protection, criminal justice, regulation of private businesses, and housing. In some cases, for example flooding, where residential communities experience the effects of actions taken elsewhere, only a regional authority is capable of balancing the development which tends to exacerbate the problems caused by natural conditions of terrain and soil. Local units placed in control of land development could easily augment the flooding problem if they were not obligated to take a city-wide or regional view of consequences, since each locality will look primarily to its own advantages and ignore if possible the consequences of its actions on other communities.\(^9\)

Housing is an area-wide concern which is particularly sensitive to the problems and benefits of decentralization. Like code enforcement, the quality of housing has a great impact on the composition of a neighborhood's population. Housing organized and built by central authorities has been accused of being insensitive to the benefits and harms which accrue to the locality in which it is built, and of creating ghettos by ignoring the complex range of social services which must accompany housing if it is to be successful (Farr et al 102). By defining housing needs locally rather than from a central authority, the possibility exists that the services that are necessary to support housing will also be requested or provided. By the same token, local authority to control the type and number of housing units which are built may result in the exclusion of the denser multi-family arrangements which bring housing within the means of lower-income groups. In order to promote integration and prevent stalling and delaying tactics by a local housing group opposed to multi-family housing, some authority to review
and approve locally-developed plans must be retained by the central administration (Farr et al 103). One suggestion is for cities to adopt a form of the "Lakewood" plan, under which a number of California municipalities contracted with Los Angeles County for services ranging from police patrols to libraries. If this approach were applied to housing, the city sub-district would contract with the central housing authority for a variety of housing services, ranging from construction to management to tenant placement (Farr et al 105). The community could also contract with the central authority for the social services which it believes are needed to support housing. Since the arrangement is voluntary on both sides, the locality is free to define its own housing preferences while the central administration is free to reject a proposal or impose conditions on its contract. This suggestion, however, does not cover the situation where the locality avoids its responsibility for providing affordable housing altogether, generally because of exclusionary motives. The central authority must therefore retain some power to require that a community provide a minimum of affordable housing even where it is not wanted, subject always to participation by residents of the targeted area.

The discussion above reveals two characteristics that define decentralization: that administrative decentralization can never be separated completely from political decentralization, and that the defining problem is how central standards and oversight, which are presumed to be more equitable than locally based regulations, can be applied to the locality. Decentralization of city administration raises a paradox. If decentralization of control suggests local involvement, accountability, and responsiveness, all principles dear to the American
vision of the independent community of citizen-residents, it also introduces the possibility of parochialism, exclusivity, and intolerable burdens placed on communities and on the city as a whole. The tension between the two tendencies is magnified in the case of planning, and neighborhood planning as the formalization of decentralized land-use planning has often borne the brunt of the confrontation.

Of the activities in which local governments engage, none are more emotionally volatile than education and land use regulation, the former because it deals with a matter that is charged with personal belief and affects family life directly, the latter because of its dramatic influence on the quality of the home environs and on the use of private property. Planning promises a rational and orderly pattern for city growth, but also asks for sacrifices from the city's residents: changes of land use on abutting properties, new restrictions on the use of land, public improvements which will favor one area at the expense of another, and takings under eminent domain proceedings for the public good. Land-use decisions are invariably social decisions, since businesses and institutions bring with them specific users who act in ways that are sometimes inappropriate for a residential area, and who are accompanied by external effects like noise, debris, and traffic, all of which affect property values and the quality of daily life. The pain and controversy that surround comprehensive planning, which often prevent plans from being accomplished or implemented, take on specific meaning when they enter the context of neighborhood planning. Therefore a crucial consideration is the value of neighborhood planning itself as an activity of city government, a subject which will be considered in the next chapter.
Notes

1. In the case of New York, the effect of this bias has been to reduce the interest that the outer boroughs take in the affairs of city government (Farr 34).
2. The investigation by the author in 1992 of the development potential of a single piece of property in southwest Houston involved ten separate public and semi-public organizations, including City of Houston Department of Public Works and Department of Traffic and Transportation, the Harris County and the Fort Bend County Flood Control Districts, the Fort Bend County Subsidence District, the regional transportation authority (Metro), and four separate utilities. The time and knowledge required to understand the requirements of each agency and utility are beyond the capacities of most residents. They require the services of professionals (in this case a civil engineer) who deal with the welter of information as a matter of business.
3. Washington, D.C.'s affluent 3rd Ward has recently been making efforts to secede from the District and consolidate with Montgomery County on its northern border. Although this move would no doubt be welcomed by the State of Maryland, the fact that it would require Congressional action makes it an unlikely prospect. It would be opposed by the cash-starved District government, which finds in the 3rd Ward one of the few neighborhoods in the city which contributes more in taxes than it takes back in services.
4. This effect can be measured by comparing regional percentages of minorities to local percentages. The 1980 census showed that while Los Angeles County was almost 13 percent black, 53 of its 82 cities had black populations of 1 percent or less, suggesting an inequitable distribution of this ethnic group (Davis 168).
5. The capacity of a decentralized political system to thwart improvements was well illustrated by a controversy in Dallas in 1989 over the location of a new aquarium. The Parks Department, an agency primarily black in its composition, wanted the aquarium to be located in the Zoo and opposed its location in Fair Park, where the old aquarium was located with other museums and which was administered by a largely white board. City Council, which had to make the final decision about the location of the facility, was stymied by conflict between its black and white members; there was no official with higher authority who could supersede the Council. In this controversy no one asked which location would be most advantageous for the citizens of Dallas.
6. Alan Altschuler believes that even as few as fifty to one hundred relatively distinct neighborhoods would overwhelm the average city's channels of communication (Shalala 15). By this standard, Minneapolis' 81 official neighborhoods would be barely manageable, while Houston's estimated 600 separate neighborhoods would exceed any possible boundaries of rational city management if each were given a separate voice in city affairs.
7. In one commonly used typology of citizen participation, these levels of citizen participation are referred to as "manipulation" (the community board is a rubber-stamp to legitimate city actions); "therapy" (the community is brought into the process in order to adjust its values to those of the larger society); "informing" (the community provides information but has little opportunity to comment on the outcome of decisions); "consultation" (the community can comment and offer recommendations, but with no assurance that its opinions will be taken into account); and "placation" (token representatives of the community are placed on decision-making boards) (Arnstein 218-220). There is likely to be little opposition or interest developed when such powers are withdrawn (Farr et al 44). More substantial levels of participation,
which accrue when a district is large enough to cover a broad range of issues that affect many of its residents, are described in this same typology as "partnership" (planning and decision-making responsibilities are shared with members of the community); "delegated power" (the community has a clear majority on the decision-making board, has a preponderance of responsibility for preparing a plan, or has veto power over board decisions); and "citizen control" (the community is in full control of improvement funds and therefore establishes goals, administration policy, and planning for the community) (Arnstein 221-224).

8. In Portland, Oregon, the staff members of the District Boards which provide support to varying numbers of neighborhood associations are city employees on contract to the Boards. Their contracts and performance are reviewed by the Boards on a yearly basis.

9. For services like criminal justice, the locality plays an important role in enforcing acceptable social behavior through the force of social opinion; whether it should also have a role in defining the kinds of behavior that will be acceptable is another matter, since this power could easily open the door to parochial standards which will tend to exclude and punish all those who do not conform to the prescribed norm.
CHAPTER 4. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING: RATIONALE AND BENEFITS

The justifications for neighborhood planning fall into two broad categories: Those benefits which relate specifically to the methods and purposes of planning itself, and those ancillary benefits which are held to emerge from the decentralization of government in general and planning in particular.

The Inadequacy of Centralized Planning: The Legacy of Progressive Planning

Neighborhood planning, in parallel with the movement toward neighborhood organization, represents a reaction to the centralization of city administration, politics and planning which emerged with the Progressive reforms of the period 1880 to 1920. The Progressive planning agenda gained impetus from two main developments, the City Beautiful Movement which originated with the Columbia Exposition of 1893 and formed the mainstream of American city planning doctrine and practice until World War I, and the parallel growth of a specialized and professional planning discipline (Dal Co 169, 204-221). In contrast to the aesthetic preoccupations of the City Beautiful designers, the planning professionals emphasized the social and technical aspects of the modern city. Although the differences between the two schools were often acrimonious, they were united in their allegiance to the principle of centralized planning and their suspicion of decentralized, locality-based decision making. Progressive planning in both of its manifestations was a business movement in which promoters and practitioners were concerned with the competitiveness of their cities in the national arena, their efficiency as corporate organizations, and their aesthetic appeal. With
a primary goal of bringing the city administration into line with the efficient management practices of the contemporary business world, the reformers emphasized the corporate aspect of the American municipality rather than its political nature as a democratic institution (Schiesl 9). At its most extreme, the reform effort sought to separate the influence of politics from city administration altogether by placing the latter in the hands of trained professional experts who were insulated from the necessary but unsavory pressure of responding to constituents. These experts gained a certain autonomy in any case once their services became indispensable, for example in the administration of water works or in health care (Teaford). The reformers attempted further to insulate the administrators from politics by placing the appointment of agency heads in the hands of the mayor, the executive officer who presumably had city-wide interests at heart, and by removing lower level positions from political patronage by placing them under rigorous civil service standards. The essential link between the a-political professionals who managed the city and the elected city officials who established policy and responded to constituent demands was the city manager, a new type of professional who attempted to combine the experience of a political initiate with the disinterest of a highly trained and objective technician (Schiesl 13, 171ff).

The ostensible intent of these reforms was to improve the efficiency and professionalism of city government. However, several writers have pointed to less disinterested motivations on the part of the reformers. To a great extent, local politics in the late nineteenth century city meant an ethnic politics centered on ward bosses and their manipulation of elected officials (Judd). The reforms advocated by the
Progressives on the objective grounds of efficiency were also intended to remove power from what was perceived as a mass of uneducated, impressionable and politically dangerous foreign immigrants whose votes were manipulated in the self-interest of ward bosses and political hacks. The reforms aimed to return the management of the city to the "right" sort of people, namely the older patrician families and their allies in the newly established professions of engineering, health care, and city administration (Teaford, Schiesl). In practice the goal of improving administrative efficiency was carried out in parallel with structural reforms which reduced the influence of ward-based political structures, including establishment of at-large representation on the city council and elimination of the partisan ticket on city elections. In this interpretation, Progressive reform represents not an improvement of city administration but merely a strategy for consolidating power within a class which perceived itself as disenfranchised through immigrant politics. The real intent of Progressive planning was to increase property values and provide jobs in order to quell the increasing discontent of the urban work force, and only marginally to bring rationality into the administration and form of the turn-of-the-century city (Boyer, Maniera-Elia).

The reforms were bought at a price, however, for the old ward system, with all its possibilities for abuse and corruption, did provide a channel by which ordinary citizens could voice their complaints and receive a response from the city officials who had some power to affect their lives. It is true that the benefits almost invariably affected only individuals and generally had the character of petty patronage favors, rather than the collective benefits which are associated with
planning and policy decisions. Nevertheless, elimination of the ward system left residential communities with no avenue of direct approach to city government except through the established municipal bureaucracies. The effects of the transformation from ward politics to centralized bureaucratic control are amply demonstrated in these contrasting descriptions of how each system responded when residents lost their homes to fire. In the early 1900's, Boss George W. Plunkitt of New York described his handling of a family crisis in the ward:

What tells in holdin' your grip on your district is to go right down among the poor families and help them in the different ways they need help. I've got a regular system for this. If there's a fire in Ninth, Tenth, or Eleventh Avenue, for example, any hour of the day or night, I'm usually there with some of my election district captains as soon as the fire engines. If a family is burned out, I don't ask whether they are Republicans or Democrats, and I don't refer them to the Charity Organization Society, which would investigate their case a month or two and decide they were worthy of help about the time they are dead from starvation. I just get quarters for them, buy clothes for them if their clothes were burned up, and fix them up till they get things runnin' again. It's philanthropy, but it's good politics too - mighty good politics.¹

The following excerpt (considerably shortened) from the "Standard Operating Procedures" of New York City in the 1970's shows one of the creatures of the reform movement in action:

For a family caught in a burnout, the Fire Department's battalion chief at the scene issues a written "notification of possible need for temporary or permanent shelter"...and calls his dispatcher who in turn informs the central Emergency Desk at the Department of Relocation, which reports the case to their personnel in the nearest hotel...if the fire is between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. ...If not, the fire dispatcher notifies the Red Cross, which places the family overnight and refers the case to relocation officials in the morning - assuming the family is living in a private dwelling. If the house or apartment is owned by a public agency..., the Department of Relocation has no jurisdiction. In these cases, the Department of Social Services is responsible, if the family is already on public assistance or qualifies for special emergency aid. After the family is housed, it must make an appointment at the nearest Income Maintenance (Welfare) Center for an interview to apply for a "disaster relief grant" .... (Mudd 23)
At the same time that they were seeking to make city administration into a profession free from politics, Progressive reformers were deliberately pursuing a comprehensive, business-oriented approach to urban problems which would satisfy criteria of efficiency and equity. As a primary tool for achieving the rational city, centralized planning found its justification in the proposal that management of a city's future growth was possible through disinterested professional oversight of city-building decisions. The scarce financial and staff resources of the city, said the reformers, must be distributed to the greatest benefit of the entire city. Only through centralized planning could the demands of different geographic sectors and different population groups be weighted fairly so that resources could be distributed without duplication and without the biases which result from localized political pressures. The planning commission was to be the primary instrument for carrying out this agenda. Serving as a key intermediary between citizen and city council for all matters related to building and land use, the commission was an appointed board of citizens from the upper classes, those who presumably could maintain a city-wide perspective because their wealth and prestige set them securely apart from the influences of politics (Teaford). While the commission's decisions and policy goals were to be grounded in the broad civic experience and public spirit of its members, the commission was also to rely on the technical knowledge of a variety of experts from the newly established professions of civil engineering, accounting, and above all city management (Schiesl).

The neighborhood, and particularly the immigrant neighborhood, was not represented on the planning commission, and with the decline of ward-based political representation it had lost its voice on the city
council as well. As planning became a professional activity to be carried out by experts, the value and spirit of the individual community was excluded from the formulation of plans (Rohe and Gates 55). City Beautiful planning, for example, focused on the civic centers, the transportation systems, and the business facilities of the city, paying only incidental attention to neighborhood issues such as housing or the delivery of ordinary services. Under centralized planning, the different needs and characteristics of neighborhoods, reflecting their social composition, their location in the city, and their economic base, tended to be erased as all neighborhoods were viewed as simply generalized residential areas. A single vision of what a neighborhood ought to be prevailed; it is no accident that the vision reflected the preferences and class background of the planners and administrators themselves (Rohe and Gates 53, 55).

The Emergence of a Neighborhood Perspective: The Advantages of Neighborhood Planning

Faced with the limitations of centralized planning, a counterargument in favor of decentralized planning began to emerge. By allowing the residents of the neighborhood to participate in the formulation of plans and by reducing the scope of the plan to the neighborhood itself, the neighborhood could retain its specific character, enhancing the richness and variety of complex metropolitan life (Fainstein 390, Fainstein and Fainstein 277). Comprehensive plans suffer two defects which are particularly frustrating from the perspective of the neighborhood: they emphasize the business aspects of the city and they concentrate on the long-range and the general. Since they are often defined only as a
policy guide to the physical development of the city rather than as a mandatory rule with force of law, they are too often ignored by decision-makers in the day-to-day fray over zoning variances and building approvals (Rohe and Gates 57).

Although the goals of comprehensive planning have broadened since the early decades of the century and now almost invariably include social as well as physical concerns, much comprehensive planning retains a business orientation. The business community of most cities has the resources and the incentives to participate in planning, even to the extent in some cases of taking the lead by carrying out its own studies and improvements (Rohe and Gates 65). Examples include the Greater Houston Partnership, which has been at the forefront of transportation planning for the Houston metropolitan region since 1982, and Baltimore’s Charles Center–Inner Harbor Management Corporation, which initiated and carried through the transformation of the city’s decaying Inner Harbor into one of America’s leading tourist attractions. The business community also has the financial strength to win the support of elected officials, without which no municipal plan can be easily implemented. Plans developed under business influence, as the Houston and Baltimore examples show, have tended to emphasize the aspects of the city which are naturally of greatest concern to potential investors, mainly downtown development as well as large-scale infrastructure projects such as freeways, harbors, convention centers, and airports. Reasoning that the quality of neighborhoods will be improved indirectly by the increasing incomes of the city’s residents and the improvement of the city’s overall property tax base which will follow on business-related developments, little attention is given in these comprehensive plans to the issues that
are of particular concern to neighborhoods (Rohe and Gates 51). The benign neglect implicit in the downtown perspective erupts into open hostilities when development interests actively pursue a pro-growth agenda in the face of homeowner resistance; a vivid example is provided by recent experience in southern California, described in Chapter 6.

Downtown plans are general, require large expenditures on capital improvements, and require many years for implementation. By contrast, neighborhood problems are often immediate and very specific, and residents do expect their municipal government to take the first line of action to remedy their problems. Plans which can help neighborhoods must work within short time frames and must produce results. Decentralized neighborhood planning is therefore promoted as a device which will redress the business bias of the city's planning policies at the same time that it addresses specific projects that will show visible improvement within a reasonably short time.

Centralized planning, like centralized administration in general, has also been accused of being too crude. Good planning depends on good information, and with respect to a unit as small as the neighborhood, this means information about the needs of different populations within the community, about employment requirements that can be fulfilled by intelligent land use, about desirable recreation or landscape improvements, and about social customs and habits that can only be discovered through intimate association with the community. This information is often anecdotal or emerges only out of time-consuming meetings, surveys, or interviews. Successful planning must discover opportunities which are often hidden from view: buildings or vacant lots which will soon come on the market, new investment which is quietly
establishing a beachhead in a deteriorated area, a community group which is beginning to formulate plans for a housing project or a civic facility. A central planning bureau generally has neither the staff resources nor the direct links to the neighborhood to discover such important pieces of information. Part of the problem resides in the sheer size of the contemporary city, for until the advent of powerful computer-based mapping systems, it was extremely difficult to bring the welter of information about a city’s population, land uses, natural conditions, and physical conditions into a single manageable format (Farr et al. 34). Even with this computer capability, however, the information itself may come from sources which use different measures, or the measures may change over time, or the information may be taken for different geographic units.

The information problem, however, is not simply a matter of increasing statistical capabilities or reconciling different data bases. The specific information which is most sensitive in land-use decisions is political in nature, since it concerns the preferences, desires, and dissatisfactions of the people who will be affected by the decisions. Assessing the needs of these residents is one aspect of the problem, responding to them the other. A centralized planning bureau is liable to respond only to the most visible signs of community discontent or need, those which are voiced by the most politically educated of the residents. The needs of the inarticulate, who in many cases may be unaware that the city has programs which can help them, are often not heard at all. This kind of information must come from the residents and businesses of the community itself (Fainstein 390). Unless it is discovered by accident, the information will only reach the decision-makers if channels of
communication are deliberately created to encourage citizen participation and give their needs a presence in the planning process. Establishing this level of communication is repeatedly specified as a goal of neighborhood planning processes.

Where statistical information is appropriate in the community planning process, the centralized planning agency also confronts inadequacies in its sources of information. It depends heavily on information obtained by the specialized operational agencies of the city: on the department of public works to tell it about the condition of sewers and roads, on the department of transportation to tell it about traffic conditions, on the police department to tell it about crimes and juvenile delinquency. It may have to turn to several separate jurisdictions to obtain other pieces of essential information, for example to an independent school district for information about the adequacy of recreational facilities or to the county for information about the problems associated with penal facilities. Since the jurisdictional and administrative boundaries of these various sources of information rarely coincide, the difficulties which stand in the way of obtaining coordinated, comprehensive knowledge of any single city neighborhood are enormous. For example, most city statistics on the socio-economic status of residents are taken from the federal census and follow the geographic format of census tracts, a purely statistical artifact that usually uses well-defined boundaries like major streets and watercourses. Police crime statistics, however, follow the more natural boundaries of the police beat, which is based on the actual practice of patrols in the field and follows the contours of the neighborhood. These two ways of grasping the social topography of the city rarely align, with
the result that it is extremely difficult to understand the relation between income level and educational attainment (provided from the census tract) and the incidence of violent crime among people under age 25 (a police statistic).\(^2\)

Another problem is the variety of sources that are required to assess some conditions. Cause of premature death among people under 25 is one of the most telling statistics about central city neighborhoods, because of what it reveals about health conditions and crime. But the sources required to put together a single, unified presentation of the information include hospitals, health departments, police departments, and institutions like drug rehabilitation centers that may be under county or state administration. With regard to land use planning, some of the most critical information which affects planning, for example the age, condition, and ownership of private properties, may be proprietary and available at great cost, or not at all.\(^3\) Neighborhood planning, where the emphasis from the beginning is on the comprehensive requirements of the geographic area rather than on the specialized requirements of the administrative function, is conceived as a way to bring together the disparate sources of information about a community in a format useful both to decision-makers and to the people who live in the community (Fainstein 390, Fainstein and Fainstein 1976 277).

The insufficiency of city resources justifies neighborhood planning in another important respect, as a device for increasing the volunteer contributions of citizens to the improvement and maintenance of their own community. Neighborhood planning can provide citizens with opportunities for monitoring the actions of the city government and, by creating positions that carry influence and recognition, it can increase the
incentives for citizen participation. By mobilizing residents as agents of the city's planning efforts, neighborhood planning can increase not only the information available to the city but also its access to financial and other resources. Voluntary self-initiatives and financial independence for communities become particularly important as the funding for community projects available from the federal and state governments becomes more limited. Dayton, Ohio stressed this goal in establishing its Community Involvement Strategy:

The nature and role of government are in the groundswell of major changes. Federal budget decisions point to an era where government will have less resources and provide fewer services. Local communities will be obligated to develop the means to address problems and ensure continued vitality. Cities will face the greatest challenge, losing supplementing federal monies and suffering tax base erosion. All signs suggest a time when government can do only less while other community partners and institutions need to contribute more. (CIS 1)

As the demands on city governments grow and the resources available to them from other levels of government diminish, the discrepancy between their obligations and their capacities increases. In the face of urgent and politically visible issues like control of violent crime and the repair of major pieces of public infrastructure, the routine housekeeping activities and the minor amenities improvements which are critical to neighborhood quality, but which have little glamour for the media, are likely to be overlooked. Moreover, neighborhood quality depends to a great extent on the quality of individual homes and properties, an area in which the city only has influence to the extent that these properties are affected by building, housing, zoning and health regulations. The power to compel the beautification of private property as a condition of the building permit is almost always beyond the city's control except in the exceptional historic districts. While mechanisms like low interest
loans and tax incentives exist by which cities can encourage private efforts, they cannot address the full range of household needs in any large city. Since private effort must seek other resources besides those offered by the city, one of the purposes of neighborhood planning is to organize the community to seek collective funding which might not be available to the private property owner acting alone and to augment these financial resources with the volunteer efforts of residents themselves in building parks, monitoring code violations, or patrolling the streets and playgrounds of the community.  

Neighborhood planning also finds it justification in a number of political considerations. By involving citizens in aspects of city-building decisions, a city government increases the legitimacy of its planning process. It presents itself as willing to be scrutinized by citizen monitors in important decisions, and it opens the door to demands which might impede both the financially advantageous process of land development as well as the standard operating procedures of its public agencies. Through neighborhood planning it increases the accountability of its planning and operational officials by exposing them to a regular process of contact with citizens outside of the usual arenas of zoning hearings, which are invariably focused on specific land parcels rather than on comprehensive area-wide issues, or the ballot box, where land-use issues become inextricably intertwined with other voter considerations (and which in any case are too infrequent to allow for systematic resident influence of land-use decisions) (Mudd 12, Fainstein 390, Fainstein and Fainstein 1976 277). Involving citizens at an early date in land-use planning also provides the city with a way to test reactions to its proposals or programs before it expends great resources on them;
not only does this allow the city to conserve its resources, it also permits it to avoid the embarrassment of facing sudden community opposition to a plan when it is near completion.

Most important from a political perspective, if citizens participate in a neighborhood planning process, they become accountable for the decisions which are taken. When the decision process has been open from the beginning, when deliberate efforts have been made to seek out and involve those residents who normally only appear after decisions are made, when the planning process itself is explicitly laid out in advance, then there is less room for residents to oppose decisions on procedural grounds, for example claiming that they were not notified or that the residents who were involved do not truly represent the community. Moreover, in theory the planning process provides a forum in which the divergent interests of the community can discover their common ground, if any exists. Under the knowledge that a decision must be made to meet a specific deadline, for example to receive consideration in the city’s application for federal Community Development Block Grant funds, the incentives for reconciling differences and making common cause increase greatly. Finally, involvement in the planning process breeds the compliance that comes with authorship: residents who have themselves witnessed the difficulties of achieving consensus and defining a scope of work among multiple community parties are far less inclined to take a parochial attitude toward the plan than are those who have waited for the plan to be developed before protesting its content or its procedures.

By broadening support and guaranteeing resident representation, by introducing detailed information which would be unavailable through other channels, and by making agency officials accountable to the residents of
the areas in which they are obliged to provide services, a neighborhood
planning process is held to smooth the long and difficult road that lies
between the conception of improvements and their implementation. These
benefits of neighborhood planning relate to the procedures of planning
itself, and thus to the eventual quality of the physical improvements
which are put in place through planning. But neighborhood planning is
also held to be beneficial because it supports the practice of local
decision and control which is believed to be fundamental to American
democracy. In this view, neighborhood planning increases both the
incentives for citizen participation in the affairs of government and
their means for doing so. The incentives increase because neighborhood
planning is addressed to those specific, tangible problems which affect
residents in their daily activities. Neighborhood planning holds out the
promise that residents will be able to deal directly with the powers that
can effect change in crucial areas of community life, by-passing the
frustrating, endless delays which normally occur in the bureaucratic
channels of city government (Mudd 13ff). Neighborhood planning is seen
as a way to organize individual discontents into collective pressures in
order to affect the political decision-making process.

The incentive to participate in city affairs through neighborhood
planning is fed not only by the desire to improve the residential
environment, but also by the ambition latent in many residents for some
degree of recognition in the arena of civic life. Like all volunteer
efforts, neighborhood planning provides ample opportunities for
individuals to take on specific tasks and roles. Among the rewards are
the prestige and recognition that is granted by fellow residents or by
the city government. Collective action, despite its frustrations, is
frequently gratifying: the resident finds common cause with his or her equals, addresses issues of consequence, and begins to see the response of a city government which too often has been characterized as opaque, remote and even potentially dangerous in its bureaucratic indifference to the concerns of the neighborhoods. Moreover, neighborhood planning provides an initial training in politics. Within a context that is friendlier and more forgiving than electoral politics, neighborhood planning cultivates those skills which are useful at all levels of political action: negotiation over conflicting positions, persuasion of individuals who are reluctant or stand in opposition to an action, understanding of the budget and decision process of government, to mention only a few. In many cases, those who emerge as leaders at the neighborhood level have gone on to seek elected or appointed office in city government.

Of equal benefit to the democratic process is the increase in knowledge that neighborhood planning brings to both residents and to the city government. Most citizens are genuinely unaware of the severe restrictions under which city governments operate. Conceiving of the city only as a smaller, localized version of the state or the federal government, they do not know that the state imposes limits on a city’s ability to raise funds through property taxation or debt instruments, or that a city’s scope of action may be severely restricted by its charter, by the local political process, or by lack of budget. They are not aware of the conflicting demands placed on elected municipal officials, who must respond to community, citywide, and outside interest groups, and who act within the opportunities and constraints of funding provided by the federal and state governments. Elected officials and department
officials, by the same token, stand in danger of becoming so much absorbed by their district-wide or city-wide obligations that the needs of particular localities are obscured.

Through their involvement with a planning process, residents have the opportunity to meet directly with elected officials and to hear from the operating departments. While this contact by itself may do little to resolve the problems that have led to citizen demands, it will certainly make residents more sophisticated agents within the complex and highly politicized world of city-building. The increased understanding of the processes and limits of city government may also have the effect of increasing the resident's range of sympathies; in the ideal case, it may lead to a more cooperative, less confrontational, and therefore more effective partnership between residents and city government.

Neighborhood planning has also been promoted as a device for developing a neighborhood's sense of identity. The act of planning requires the planning group, whether it consists of paid city staff or volunteer residents, to identify the neighborhood's boundaries, define its present character, enunciate a vision and goals for its future, and arrive at specific objectives and recommendations which will bring the vision to reality. Debate and discussion are required; residents step beyond the usual boundaries of social intercourse and confront issues that may divide them or join them more closely. The result may be an increase in community solidarity, and even the purely social dimension of neighborhood life may expand as neighbors meet and work together for long periods of time. In this vision, neighborhood planning plays an important role in realizing the intimate community of neighbors engaged in common efforts to improve their welfare; the nurturing social
environment which lies just beyond the family and the ideal school of
democracy mentioned by Alexis de Tocqueville.

Notes

1. Mudd 23, quoting William L. Riordan, Plunkitt of Tammany Hall (New
    York: E. P. Dutton, 1963), pp. 27-28
2. This problem was raised in two planning studies in which the author
    participated, one in the Gulfton community of southwest Houston (1992),
    the other in the Enterprise Community fund application for Washington,
3. In Houston, Stewart Title Company holds a great deal of this
    information. A proposed citywide study of the relation between land use,
    income levels, demographic conditions, and housing conditions confronted
    the difficulty of obtaining all the necessary information from a number
    of different sources. (Conversation with William Bavinger, Rice
    University School of Architecture, January 1991.)
4. In Boston’s Back Bay Historic District, a building permit
    application which would otherwise be acceptable is automatically
    rejected, forcing the applicant to appear before the Historic District
    Board in public hearing in order to obtain the approval which then
    releases the building permit.
5. Portland’s District Councils use city funds for ordinary staffing
    and operational expenses but are free to obtain funds from other sources
    in order to implement special programs. Conversation with Edna Robinson,
    June 1990.
6. Late notification about the availability of federal Community
    Development Block Grant funds combined with an early deadline to compel a
    number of community organizations in west Houston to arrive at a common
    agenda in early 1990. The schedule left no time for thorough study of
    existing conditions or a well-conceived process for reconciling
    differences; but the incentive of retaining access to the funds was
    sufficient to drive the community organizations into a marriage of
    convenience.
CHAPTER 5. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING: LIMITATIONS AND LIABILITIES

In the literature disseminated by municipal planning departments, the benefits of neighborhood planning are presented as if they are not controversial. Cities have strong motivations for creating neighborhood planning programs, and having done so, it is unlikely that a city will lay particular stress on the inherent limitations of localized planning programs or the new problems that such programs might generate. In most cases, the benefits of the program are probably promoted disingenuously, for the problems are apparent only from study of the behavior of collective organizations and the interest of cities, areas that lie outside the normal training of city planners. The problems of neighborhood planning emerge from both the subject matter of planning itself and from its procedures.

The Vulnerability of Comprehensive Planning

Neighborhood planning is a special case of the problem of local government decentralization. Every function of city government has methodological and administrative issues which are peculiar to itself, and in this sense each function presents a special case when it becomes a candidate for decentralization. But comprehensive land use planning is a special case of the decentralization problem in another sense, because it is distinguished from other functions of the municipality by its comprehensiveness and its generality. In theory, it is the activity which establishes the guidelines for, and balances the conflicting demands of, the more specialized functions which municipal government performs. The qualifier "in theory" must be emphasized: in practice the variation in the control which planners exercise over municipal
development varies enormously. Despite this qualification, the training and professional culture of the planning profession places it in an oversight role which compels planners to be cognizant of the interrelated social, economic, and environmental conditions which affect the validity of land use decisions. And since the subject matter of planning is in effect the future of the city, the discipline also must recognize and articulate the goals of the city and of the different interests which make up the city.

The mission of planning is to establish an orderly procedure for city growth. The professional discipline is based on an assumption that rational pre-vision of the city's future development is possible; indeed, in its early form at the turn of the century, the "comprehensive plan" was not too different from an architectural plan in that it specified in great detail the finished characteristics of the city. The model of planning which inspired the designers of the City Beautiful movement was Baron Haussmann's Paris, where even the slopes of the mansard roofs on the city's new boulevards were specified under the extraordinary powers granted to the Prefect of the Seine by Emperor Napoleon III (Benevolo 61ff). Experience quickly showed that in the American context, such integrated, finished urban designs could rarely be achieved (Maniera Elia 64-68). Except in situations where land was already under the control of the local, state, or federal government, urban designs which were grand and unified were threatened by the limited financial and condemnation powers possessed by municipal governments in combination with the minimal regulation which is normally imposed on private development in the American context.¹ Within the Anglo-American tradition of city building, the principle of minimally restricted freedom in land development has
proven far stronger in most situations than the desire to give a rational direction to the form and growth of the city.\textsuperscript{2} With its roots in 17th century English politics and political philosophy, freedom in the use of land was conceived as a protection for individual liberties against the potential excesses of the sovereign.\textsuperscript{3} In one observer's view, unrestrained land use remains identical with economic liberty itself (Perin). The price that is paid for this liberty, however, is that rational planning and the behavior of individuals in the free market of land development are often in direct conflict with one another:

Public planning assumes order, coordination, and traditional use of resources to maximize equity.... capitalism and democracy encourage freedom of action on the part of individuals and organized groups..., permitting a wide variety of experiments but also waste, disorder, and extreme inequity. (Needleman and Needleman 5)

If planning as a discipline has had to accommodate to the culture of unplanned American land development, it has not accepted that the planning procedure itself must be irrational. In contrast to the finished city plans developed by City Beautiful designers at the turn of the century, rationality in the contemporary context does not mean that the plan defines the ultimate condition of the city according to a preconceived vision - "end state" planning, in the jargon of the profession. Rather, rational planning provides the opportunities and constraints to guide the free market economy toward a result which is orderly, even if it cannot be entirely know in advance. Municipal planning can lay out the infrastructure and transportation systems, define building and zoning regulations, and locate those structures which are under public sector control and which help to stimulate private development in adjacent areas - "chessmen," in Jane Jacobs terminology
(Jacobs 1961 171ff). Planning can coordinate the various systems of the city in order to attain efficiency in the use of scarce city resources and avoid duplication or waste in the building process. Because their professional training gives them the ability both to visualize physical conditions and to contend with the technical issues of city-building, planners can bridge the gap of understanding that often separates the technical agents of city government from lay people (including politicians), and they can provide the visual images that will stimulate discussion about possible futures for the city.4

The broad mission outlined here places planning in a position of extreme vulnerability in relation to the more specialized functions of municipal government. In its role as overseer and coordinator of other city functions comprehensive planning has led to impressive tangible results in a number of cases – Baltimore’s Inner Harbor rejuvenation, Pittsburgh’s salvation of the Golden Triangle from floods and urban squalor, Portland’s preservation of a historic commercial district and replacement of an unnecessary freeway with an attractive and well-loved waterfront park. These striking successes depended on rare constellations of factors which are difficult to reproduce: unusually attractive geographic features, highly dedicated business communities, cooperative relations between the business group and city government, and availability of funds from the federal government. It is not an accident that the most impressive results were achieved in downtown rehabilitation, the part of the city which is most likely to attract the attention of business and political interests because of its potential to draw outside investment. Even in these cases success was never a foregone conclusion, and the credibility of comprehensive planning as an
activity which can deliver financial and social rewards was only established through its eventual achievements. Where the advantages of a Baltimore, a Pittsburgh, or a Portland do not exist, comprehensive planning must struggle to justify itself against the opposition of development interests, elected officials, the established city bureaucracies, and a general public which rarely can achieve consensus about the city’s goals.

In the typical situation, the concern of planners for rational city growth is in severe opposition to the interest which builders have in unrestrained land development. Planners and developers do not disagree that a minimum level of order is required for the city to function; they do disagree about the extent to which that order should be carried out and who it should serve. Planning looks to the effect of development on the whole, development looks to the maximum use of the individual lot; planners are concerned with the relation of the piece to the order of the whole city, developers with the benefits which city order can bring to their particular site; planners are concerned with equity in the use of city resources, developers with the sustainability of their investment within a very narrowly defined urban context. Their financial resources and close relation to the city’s fiscal well-being give development interests a political weight which city-wide interests, for example a homeowners association or an environmental group, can almost never carry. Since developmental growth is the short-term solution to a city’s demanding financial difficulties, it attracts the support of the political interests (who at the same time must attend to the preferences of the city’s voters). Where planning aligns itself with development by focusing on infrastructure improvement or by providing technical support
for commercial development, it is likely to be accepted as a legitimate activity of city government. But where planning embraces the full agenda that is inherent in the planner’s training, methods, and professional culture, which includes attention to the social and economic effects of development across a broad range of society, the planning function of government stands in danger of becoming an adversary to development. In this situation, planning runs the risk of being pushed into the margins or being eliminated altogether.

From the point of view of elected officials, comprehensive planning is treacherous ground. An adopted comprehensive plan, even one which has no legal force, is a promise and commitment to a specific approach to the city’s growth, and often to the strategies which will bring the vision to actuality. Politicians stand for the "quality of life" which is also planning’s chief rationale and mission, but politicians who survive are also keenly aware that they should not make any more promises than they need to in order to be elected. Every promise they make limits their ability to respond to future situations as they arise, and to adjust flexibly to the changing needs and preoccupations of their constituents. Moreover, since every political promise is a commitment to benefit some group or area, and often at tax-payers’ expense, it is also an implied statement that another group or area will be neglected or even harmed by promises which are carried out. The strength of the promise only increases if the plan is very specific in its recommendations for implementing the broad goals which have been articulated in the planning process, or if the plan carries a legal mandate which requires the city to adjust its land-use regulations to comply with the plan or to actually carry out the plan’s recommendations. While the improvements recommended
in a comprehensive plan are invariably expensive, the potential financial returns are often doubtful and in any case lie far in the future if they do occur - beyond the politician's term of office, so that the success will be captured by another elected official but the blame for a costly failure may well be laid at the door of the plan's early authors and supporters. Comprehensive plans are almost always concerned with long-term improvements, but an elected official's horizon is so much defined by the next election that all attention has to be focused on achieving visible improvements in a short time.\textsuperscript{6} Other than saving the city from emergency conditions caused by crime or natural disasters, those actions which are most likely to redound to the politician's glory are the ones which create jobs and lower property taxes for the average homeowner or business. These are the class of improvements which come from intensive development activity, not from development and implementation of a comprehensive plan.

But while support for a comprehensive plan is clearly dangerous for a politician, opposition to it also carries a price. Opposition suggests that the politician is complaisant about the problems of the city, that he or she is indifferent to the quality of life for average citizens and is not concerned with the inefficiencies in city-building which the plan tries to address; that the politician has no concern about the long-range condition of the city and is a friend to every narrow, selfish interest group. A comprehensive plan thus presents a politician with an irreconcilable dilemma. Since the plan can neither be supported nor opposed except at considerable political cost, the best thing from the politician's point of view is for the plan not to exist in the first
place or, where it does exist, for it to be so general and hortatory that it commits its supporters to nothing at all.

From the point of view of the city's operating agencies, a comprehensive plan may well be perceived as a diversion of energy and resources from the city's real problems. While the objectives of comprehensive planning may be realized one to thirty years in the future, the objectives of the operating departments concern urgent city problems, neglect of which may carry the threat of disease, deterioration, crime, fire, or congestion. Long-term planning is viewed by many officials as a luxury which the city can ill afford. The success of planning is also more difficult to measure than that of the operational departments. While the latter can point to reduced crime rates, increased school enrollment, declining numbers of traffic jams, or repaired potholes as definite measures of accomplishment, planning is mainly concerned with improvements which affect the general quality of life: beautification, increase in a city's recreational or cultural offerings, or stabilization of areas which are in distress. Few officials would deny that these are worthy accomplishments, but their influence in affecting measurable city conditions, particularly the financial health of the city, are often doubtful. 7

The interdisciplinary, coordinated methods that planners use to accomplish their objectives, which often includes a high regard for citizen participation in the decision process, also pose a threat to the technical methods of the established agencies. For reasons that have to do with professional training, with preservation of vulnerable budget allocations, and with the stress of confronting ever-expanding demands with continually shrinking resources, bureaucracies and bureaucrats have
a tendency to concentrate their efforts on narrow fields of action where successes can be clearly defined and the scope of action can be limited (Lipsky 18ff). Each agency tends to focus on one type of land use - transportation, housing, recreation, sewers - and is not inclined to balance multiple objectives, as planners are trained to do (Needleman and Needleman 253).

Given the skepticism or overt hostility which comprehensive planning faces from private development interests, from elected officials, from departmental officers, and from the public, it is not surprising that the city planning department often has to struggle to maintain its credibility and support. In terms of real power, that is the capacity to turn ideas into action, planning departments are often extremely weak. Originally established to provide staff support for the planning commission, which itself has only an advisory relation in most matters to the city council or mayor, most planning departments find themselves in the advisory role of a staff agency which can only offer recommendations (Needleman and Needleman 29, 48ff). Unlike the other agencies of the city, planning is not responsible for implementing its own recommendations once they are approved and budgeted by the legislative arm of the city government. Where other city agencies are granted a degree of formal control over their tasks which allows them to operate with considerable discretion and independence, planning's ill-defined formal status often means that it must gain the support of politicians by serving their needs rather than taking an independent position on city issues (Needleman and Needleman 230). Nor does the planning department have direct control over the activities of the operating departments. To accomplish its programs and build its
projects, it must rely on the voluntary cooperation of the operating departments or on the influence which elected officials can exert on the departments to carry out their directives, either by threatening to dismiss their chiefs or by withholding budget allocations (Needleman and Needleman 242). The ill-defined role of planning and the tendency of others to view it as a superfluous luxury means that its budget is also likely to be unstable.  

When viewed from the perspective of the city's paramount task of maintaining economic viability, planning is an irrational activity because it implies control and oversight where land development asks for freedom and minimal regulation (Needleman and Needleman 164, 342). The uncertain role that comprehensive planning plays in city government is often manifested in a lack of clear support and funding both for the department and for implementation of its recommended projects (Needleman and Needleman 242). The situation has led at least one observer to doubt the validity of planning itself as an enterprise:

American cities...seldom make and never carry out comprehensive plans. Plan making with us is an idle exercise, for we neither agree upon the content of a "public interest" that ought to override private ones nor permit the centralization of authority needed to carry a plan into effect if one were made. (Needleman and Needleman 4).

The experience of Baltimore, Pittsburg, and Portland casts some doubt on the universality implied in the Needleman's dictum. In these cities, the public interest was defined as commercial and downtown revitalization, and a centralization of authority did occur, although largely in the private business arena with vital support provided by the public sector. But where a rare combination of power, interest, and opportunity can lead to dramatic downtown improvements like these, the
neighborhoods of a city are rarely in such a favorable position; indeed, their interests often run counter to those of the city's power brokers. The problems associated with comprehensive planning in general, which arise from its unsettled role in city-building, are exaggerated when planning takes on the neighborhood as a subject, leading to a curiously ambiguous role for the neighborhood planning program and its staff.

A Conflict of Imperatives: The Case of San Diego

The contradiction between developer and neighborhood that is latent in comprehensive planning is amply illustrated in the history of San Diego, where the issue of "geraniums vs. smokestacks...remains the central topic on [San Diego's] political agenda" (Corso 328). In 1967, after several false starts, the city adopted a comprehensive plan that was largely promoted by a business group, the Citizen Committee of 100. The plan was a prerequisite for San Diego to receive federal funds for urban renewal, and it contained a community planning program supported by federal dollars (Corso 324, 335). Although the citizen participation aspect of this program eventually became a source of public pride, in practice the community planning movement was ignored by elected officials. The early experiment in community activism was extremely short lived. In 1968 the city council voted to end the autonomy of the planning department and place it under the city manager. Assembling the lay leaders who were involved in community planning, the council indicated that the neighborhood "experiment in democracy had gone too far": citizen groups were accused of paying too much attention to specific issues rather than to general land use matters. More important, the community planning groups were resented by developers who had to submit their proposals to
community review and possible objections (Corso 335). The community leaders counter-attacked: they accused council members of receiving campaign contributions from builders and developers, and they asserted their right to participate in government, basing their claim on federal citizen participation requirements that were tied to federal dollars (Corso 336). But as community planning lacked political support, it entered "a sort of undercover role as a secret coalition between planners employed in city hall and community people. The former leaked information and worked with the latter to formulate strategies to stop political intrusion into community planning" (Corso 336).

Further criticisms of community planning began to emerge. It was said to be ineffective, since it emphasized the production of planning documents rather than their implementation. The political representatives who supported it were accused of being more interested in the construction brought by federal funds, and the consequent contributions to their campaign war chests, than with the rejuvenation and stabilization of neighborhoods. Most seriously, community planning was accused of parochialism: "community planning became a middle-class movement that recommended the maintenance of existing communities free from developmental pressures and unwanted change" (Corso 336). Rezoning was used to exclude change. Since growth was consequently inhibited in the central city of the metropolis, an unintended consequence was that development projects which might have benefited the neighborhoods were forced to the periphery. Mass transportation improvements and downtown redevelopment, which rely on high-density development for support, were also deferred because of the opposition of the neighborhoods.
With the beginning of the 1970's, as San Diego became the second largest city in California, recognition grew that a policy of unbridled growth would lead to the vast sprawl and deterioration of lifestyle that citizens of San Diego believed characterized their rival to the north, Los Angeles. In 1971 Pete Wilson, now governor of the state, became mayor on a platform of growth control, and found himself seconded by a planning director who asserted the primacy of the citizen over the developer, by the newspapers, and by the city council. In 1973 the council moved into the spirit of the times by enacting a building moratorium on 50,000 acres and imposing stiff building restrictions on ocean front and hillside construction. Wilson in his campaign had promoted a growth management plan similar to that of Ramapo, New York, which restricted new housing to amounts and locations for which the city had the fiscal capacity to provide infrastructure. The Wilson plan also called for the development of vacant properties in existing communities rather than new low-density growth as a way to control urban sprawl. Passed with widespread city support in the mid-1970's, the controlled growth plan provoked opposition from unions and the construction industry who blamed it for causing unemployment, from the chamber of commerce which viewed it as obstructionist and antiexpansionist, and, surprisingly, from citizen planning organizations which deplored the possibility of increased development in their neighborhoods. These citizen groups came to regard controlled growth, which presumably would have been welcomed by them as a check on unrestrained development, as being inimical to their interests since the policy still gave some support to development and growth; in reality they sought a policy of no-growth. Although Wilson's growth management platform helped him to re-
election, he soon came under pressure to address the city’s problems of unemployment and rising housing costs. To increase jobs and improve the housing stock, Wilson switched to support for speculators and developers, and the late 1970’s saw a nullification of the city’s environmental review requirements and a reduction of the planning department’s authority (Corso 340, 341). The tension between "geraniums and smokestacks" represented by Wilson’s switch accelerated as the convention center, the first piece of downtown redevelopment, was defeated by referendum in 1981.

As Anthony Corso tells the story, neighborhood residents and developers were never able to strike even an uneasy truce in San Diego. The interest of neighborhood residents and the interest of developers were so thoroughly antithetical to one another, they were able to find so little common ground, that the result was a form of municipal paralysis. No stable balance was possible which might have been productive for the entire city. The varying fortunes of neighborhood planning and citizen involvement programs in San Diego from 1967 to 1975 reflected this unstable relation. Although extreme in the San Diego case, this instability is endemic to the dual character of the American city, which as both corporate organization and as a political body must have regard for sets of interest that often do not align. The contradiction between these interests helps to explain why neighborhood planning is not a policy that is universally embraced, nor one that always leads to happy results.
The Ambiguous Role of Neighborhood Planning

Neighborhood planning is one of the most direct methods by which a city can address the concerns of its resident constituency. It is a singular response to the fact that a city is a political entity. As such, neighborhood planning brings to a head the conflicts that characterize planning in general, because it attempts to articulate in an orderly fashion just those city interests which, as the San Diego story illustrates, may run counter to the financial development of the city. The viable, engaged communities which are frequently stated as a goal of neighborhood planning programs are also the communities which are likely to oppose and in some cases stop a freeway extension, a convention center placed on the edge of the neighborhood, or plans for commercial development which threaten a poor community lying in the path of development. These are the communities which will demand that funds be channelled into routine activities like street maintenance, parks and playgrounds, control of vacant lots, and the rehabilitation of deteriorated buildings, all of which aid the community enormously but rarely add to the city’s standing as a competitor for capital investment. Politically, the city in many circumstances cannot afford not to have a neighborhood planning program or some equivalent which actively satisfies the residents’ demand to be included in the decision-making process; but at the same time the city cannot afford to have a neighborhood planning program (or its equivalent) which does what it sets out to do, because in this case the program would threaten other, more pressing demands placed on the city:

From the point of view of the central administration, community activity is useful to a point.... Once the community becomes empowered past the level of advice and assistance to the agency, it begins to press for resource
allocation by the center and to present organizational 
rivals to established modes of interest group and partisan 
representation. (Fainstein and Fainstein 1976 283)

This conflict of imperatives raises one of the central concern of 
neighborhood planning: whether it can be a substantive approach to 
resolving the problems which face inner-city communities in contemporary 
urban America, or whether it is simply a way by which cities provide the 
appearance of democratic participation in city-building decisions in 
order to appease and pacify the demands of citizens.

The conflict between city interests and neighborhood interests 
places neighborhood planning in a paradoxical situation within the 
structure of city activities. In carrying out the mandate to help the 
communities, the neighborhood planner may be responsible for directly 
subverting the goals of the city. If the program succeeds in its basic 
mission, which is to increase the voice of the neighborhood in order to 
achieve stabilization and improvement at the neighborhood level, it may 
hamper the development activities which enhance the city's financial 
status and also benefit a number of city interest groups, including its 
service providers and its public employee unions. If the neighborhood 
planning program fails, however, it will be dismissed for wasting 
valuable city resources and for falsely raising residents' expectations 
about the possibility of improvement. Either way, the neighborhood 
planning program is highly vulnerable, and may be restricted or 
suppressed after a fairly short trial run (Needleman and Needleman 285, 
335).13 In its success may lie its potential undoing; if the city uses 
the program to satisfy citizen demands for attention to local problems 
and needs, it may undermine the city's equally powerful interest in 
assuring its competitive position in relation to other cities. Since
both demands must be satisfied but can rarely be satisfied simultaneously, the result is likely to be the cyclical pattern of policies and programs seen in San Diego. The neighborhood planning program will be supported initially as an answer to citizen demands, but will shortly find itself opposed by the politicians who see the danger it poses to city development, as well as by the communities which are disappointed by its failures. Unless a neighborhood planning program can point to results that help the neighborhood and at the same time improve the city's financial standing, the pattern is likely to continue.

The peculiar role that neighborhood planning plays in the city gives rise to a number of problems which are specific to this activity. The neighborhood planner is a public employee whose work is defined as the improvement of the city's communities. In that role, there is considerable confusion about whether the neighborhood planner should be restricted to technical assistance to the community or should expand his or her activity to include advocacy for the community position (Fainstein and Fainstein 1976 276). While the planner's employer, usually the city planning department, expects him to present the city's point of view, the neighborhood expects him to advocate its position before the city government (Rohe and Gates 162ff). Since many communities, especially poor ones, view the city government as obstructionist at best and as a hostile enemy at worst, the neighborhood planner has the unenviable task of convincing community members that he or she truly does represent their interests without at the same time creating an unsolvable problem for the city. Wanting above all to see change, the community looks to the official who has been designated as its official agent. Since uninitiated community members tend to see the city as a relatively
monolithic entity, community members tend to assume that the neighborhood planner is connected to all government activities and has control over how the city spends its money (Needleman and Needleman 89). Unaware of the position of planning as a mere advisory function of municipal government, the community may make demands of the neighborhood planner which in reality cannot be satisfied because the neighborhood planner has no authority over the line agencies that provide the services which the community needs. If the planner suggests that the community’s demands can be met, the eventual result will be disappointment and increased skepticism about the city government’s desire and ability to reach out to the communities. If, however, the neighborhood planner truthfully describes the limits of his or her authority, the community may respond either in disbelief or cynicism. In the first case, the community will see the neighborhood planner as one more agent of an indifferent government which has the capacity to help the community but refuses to use it; in the second, the community will deny to the planner the capacity to exercise whatever small authority he actually does possess to help the community by providing information or technical assistance. The neighborhood planner is placed in an apparently irreconcilable position:

By dissociating himself from the city...he casts doubt on his capacity to perform meaningful services. But by claiming to have influence on city policy, he indirectly assumes responsibility for all the shortcoming of those policies.... (Needleman and Needleman 92)

The community planner faces another dilemma, the fact that inner-city neighborhood problems often call for solutions which are comprehensive in scope and social in emphasis rather than narrowly related to improvements in the physical environment. Indeed, community members may expect the neighborhood planner to help them with all their
problems (Needleman and Needleman 245). But planners by training and professional tendency are concerned primarily with physical improvements; moreover, traditional professional practice has emphasized specialization and segmentation of responsibilities rather than generalized competence (Needleman and Needleman 98, 245). This specialized orientation is particularly true of older planners, while younger planners tend to receive some training in social theory, systems analysis, and urban design, and tend to embrace social issues as a component of their overall professional responsibilities (Needleman and Needleman 188, 205, 207, 244). The neighborhood planner finds himself caught in a crossfire between his client and his employer: the community he works with expects him to deliver expert service in social areas in which he has only minimal training and almost no control of service delivery, while his own department understands "planning" in a sense which excludes these social services (Needleman and Needleman 245).

The neighborhood planner faces further conflicts with his own department when he attempts to win trust by acting as a community advocate. To overcome the skepticism that community groups extend toward all city agents, the neighborhood planner must cultivate alliances with individuals within the community and demonstrate a willingness to carry its case to the city government. So deep is the mistrust of city government among some communities that the planner may have to dissociate himself actively from the government which he represents (Needleman and Needleman 122-127). Many neighborhood planners, who tend to be the younger members of the department, see advocacy not only as a necessary expedient in order to build trust but as a central component of their professional responsibilities. These planners view political aloofness
as illusory and irresponsible. Citizen participation through advocacy planning is, they believe, essential in order to correct planning's traditional bias toward the central city. Moreover, they view the planner's activity as including the highly political process of implementation as well as the more disinterested activities of research and recommendation (Needleman and Needleman 110-112, 196, 199).

Community advocacy, which implies that the advocate places the interests of the group he represents before those of other groups or of the city as a whole, runs counter to the role that central planning agencies have traditionally defined for themselves as the rational, disinterested articulators of the entire public interest (Fainstein and Fainstein 276). An important school of planning theory holds that the value of planning, as of all professional public administration, consists in the nonpolitical, disinterested expertise it can offer to the political agents who must respond to the pressures of different interests within the city (Ibid).\footnote{14} This attitude particularly characterizes the older members of the planning staff, who believe that implementation should be left solely to the political process, and that planning is a professional activity in which citizen participation, if it occurs at all, is really only a method of pacifying citizen demands (Needleman and Needleman 195, 198). Advocacy planning is frowned on by department heads; the community planner is expected to present the city's position, not that of the community. The director of the Wilmington, North Carolina planning department is reported to have stated that "Organizational action is outside the boundaries of appropriate activity for city employees. There is a fine line between information gathering and organizing which they shouldn't step over" (Rohe and Gates 163).
Thus neighborhood planners are driven into opposition with their own department by the demands of the task that is set for them, by the primary orientation of the department toward developmental activity, and by the culture and training of the planning profession itself. These planners also find themselves in conflict with the city's operational departments. The uneasy relation that the planning department as a whole has with the operational departments is exacerbated in the case of community planning. With their belief in citizen participation, with their attitude that the community must be addressed on an areal basis through comprehensive and coordinated proposals, through their reliance on qualitative rather than quantitative measures of success, through their loyalty to the residents of the community before their fellow professionals in other agencies or their own, and through their reliance on innovative techniques to address neighborhood problems, neighborhood planners run directly counter to the inveterate tendency of operational departments toward introversion, conservatism in methods, specialization, regularization of procedures, and quantification of results (Fainstein and Fainstein 1976 277, Needleman and Needleman 253-256). Rohe and Gates found that city agencies expressed greater hostility toward the neighborhood planning program in their cities than either city managers or city council members; and that among city agencies, public works and transportation were found to be the least cooperative, planning and the police to be the most cooperative (Rohe and Gates 155). If the neighborhood planning program is successful in obtaining for the communities the services or projects which they demand, the result may well be a backlash from the operating agencies which must deliver the
services, since they see the essential task of the city as placating citizens (Needleman and Needleman 285). 15

If there are inherent reasons why the neighborhood planning program is in tension with the primary mission and internal culture of its parent agency, the neighborhood planner must also face difficulties from the side of the community. "Community" is an amorphous term compounded of sentiment, organization, and place, but the planner in order to be effective must work with definite objectives. How does the planner find his or her client in the community? In a neighborhood which has the heterogeneity which characterizes many inner-city areas in the United States, there are likely to be several groups with different needs and with different visions of how the neighborhood should develop. Aside from unique ethnic neighborhoods like New York's Chinatown or Boston's Italian North End, homogeneity of population along class and racial lines characterizes only two general types of inner-city neighborhoods, those occupied by fairly affluent middle- or upper-class residents, and those occupied by poor minorities (Keller 115). The former have the least need for a municipal neighborhood planning program because they have the most capacity to take care of their own problems. The latter, however, often consist of neighborhoods that may require massive intervention on a scale larger than the city by itself can provide. In between are the neighborhoods which are appropriately designated as transitional areas, with transient populations which have very different needs and different social behaviors than the resident groups. Typically, in the inner city these consists of older white working class neighborhoods which are undergoing transition toward domination by a racial or ethnic minority,
or of minority neighborhoods which are seeing an influx of white middle-
class "urban pioneers".

The neighborhood planner finds not only that the needs of these
various groups differ, but that their perspective on planning is also
quite different. In the case of the "redeveloping" minority
neighborhood, for example, the resident population is likely to be poor,
has a low level of educational attainment, contains a high proportion of
renters, is isolated from the larger institutions of the city, and is
politically quiescent; the in-movers by contrast are reasonably well off,
have substantial education, are purchasers of properties, are
cosmopolitan in their outlook and connections, and are politically
knowledgeable. The clash of cultures at street level is often startling
and sometimes tragic. Assuming the absence of overt racial or class
tensions, the two groups still are divided by different agendas. The
resident planning group in this case is interested in preserving what
community it has and in preventing or slowing increases in property
values which will tempt homeowners to leave in order to reap windfall
profits, or force poorer homeowners and renters to leave because of
exorbitant increases in property taxes. Its objectives may be
dramatically opposed to those of individual home-owners, who see the new
situation as the chance to make the windfall of a lifetime. Although
those who want to stay are interested in improving their own personal
properties, they have neither the interest nor the capacity to carry out
the costly improvements which may be required of them if their area falls
under the scrutiny of a renewal agency.

Another conflict emerges if the attachment of older residents to
their homes blocks attempts to assemble land in tracts large enough to
attract a body of middle-class investors, resulting in piecemeal development (Wilson 247). This group is likely to see "renewal" and the planning that makes it possible as a threat to deep-seated personal and economic interests. The in-movers are often interested in the neighborhood both because it gives them the opportunity for inner-city living at an affordable price and because there is a good chance that if the neighborhood continues to redevelop they will reap a handsome profit from the sale of their renovated property. Unlike the resident population, they see an increase in property values as advantageous and have little at stake beyond a sense of outraged justice if the original community is dispersed as a result of further in-migration. These new residents will see planning in terms of collective benefits such as street improvements which will enhance their personal efforts to improve their properties.

Given the differences in outlook of the two groups, the neighborhood planner from the outset is likely to face support from the new residents and resistance from the older residents. The new residents are likely to be active in the planning process, the older group mistrustful and cynical about government to a degree that renders them uncooperative with the planner (Clay and Hollister 218). Planning is a long-term venture that requires some level of disinterest, some faith in the ultimate value of collective improvements that do not benefit oneself directly, and some skill in dealing with the complex technical, administrative and political questions that planning raises. If neighborhood planning is predicated to a greater or lesser degree on "planning with people," it assumes that there exists in the community a "willingness and a capacity to engage in a collaborative search for the
common good" (Wilson 247). This willingness may be entirely lacking among people who see planning as a threat to a way of life they know and have found affordable.

The attitude that people hold toward planning may only be part of a larger attitude toward government in general. One study found that, not surprisingly, there are significant differences of attitude toward government between different social groups (League of Women Voters 128). People in white, middle-class suburban community organizations expressed favorable attitudes toward local officials, even when the officials were unsuccessful in obtaining for them the improvements or programs they had requested. These people also expressed the belief that citizens have the obligation to fight for a voice in government if they are to be heard. By contrast, members of citizen groups in the central cities retained negative attitudes toward public officials even when the latter were successful in obtaining benefits for the residents. Their mistrust of officials was expressed as a need to constantly monitor their actions. If these findings can be extended to the attitudes of different income and class groups within the central city, then affluent, educated people will be more inclined to view government as an institution with which they have a right and an obligation to participate, and which has an obligation to help them, while the poor will be more likely to see government in its restrictive aspects.

Even if the willingness is present, people from different social and economic strata have varying capacities to participate in planning. In inner-city renewal areas, one writer has observed that

...people are more likely to have a limited time-perspective, a greater difficulty in abstracting from concrete experience, an unfamiliarity with and lack of confidence in city-wide institutions, a preoccupation with
the personal and the immediate, and few (if any) attachments to organizations of any kind, with the possible exception of churches. They can be organized only under special circumstances and for special purposes. (Wilson 245)

People in these areas are likely to have a low sense of personal efficacy and will rarely initiate action in the planning or political sphere; for them, "collective action is a way, not of defining and implementing some broad program for the benefit of all, but of giving force to individual objections by adding them together in a collective protest". So great is the difficulty of convincing inner-city residents of the value of improvement that the prospects for renewal are found to decrease in areas which have a high level of indigenous organization (Wilson 245, 247).17

In addition to these attitudinal impediments, the poor face time constraints which block civic participation: their preoccupation with daily survival sometimes requires them to hold several jobs, and in the absence of appropriate social services like day-care or after-school programs, the burdens of caring for children prevent them from contributing their time toward collective efforts.18 Moreover, many of the skills which expedite planning and political action come only with high levels of education, which are often lacking in these areas (Oliver 603).

Just as it is difficult to establish policies which work for all neighborhoods in a city, it is also difficult to establish policies which are appropriate for every group within a neighborhood (Silver 172). The differences in family structure and income level between lower-income groups and the more affluent lead them to ask for different kinds of physical improvements, programs, and financial policies for the neighborhood. It has been found, for example, that residents of higher income areas in Atlanta are most concerned with land-use and zoning
issues, while residents from lower-income areas are concerned with park improvements, recreation programs, and housing (Hutcheson 192). It may not be unwarranted to surmise that the poorer and the more well-to-do residents of mixed transition neighborhoods bring with them much the same difference of attitudes, creating a conflict of goals which the neighborhood planner must resolve. There are of course areas of common ground between the two groups: safety and security on the street, traffic control, the provision of necessary commercial services at a convenient distance from the home, and the prevention of decay in private properties.

Related to the issue of community heterogeneity is the question of representation. Two questions are likely to be of great concern to the neighborhood planner who is attempting to penetrate to the real needs of the community but who must work with a vocal and visible leadership: How similar are the leaders of the community to the average residents, and how much do the views of these leaders represent the views of the average resident? The first question is of concern if the planner attempts to extrapolate the community's needs from observation of the needs of the participants; the second, if the planner attempts to rely on the leaders' claims about the community as a basis for planning decisions. There is no question of the importance of leadership in community organization (Mayer 153). In a 1979 study in the Seattle, Washington area, the leaders of 82 neighborhood organizations were interviewed to determine their primary concerns, their views on relations with government and other parties, and the factors which make for success in neighborhood organizing (Oropesa 728ff). The researchers concluded that
there can be little doubt that leaders and staff are more important than any other resource for enhancing the success of organizations. ...‘a relatively small group of people who are able to organize and explain their views rationally can have influence out of all proportion to their numbers.’” (Oropesa 740, quoting Jim Street in The Politicians)

The poor rate of success of neighborhood organizations in poor and unstable areas was not attributable to lack of members, lack of money, or even lack of staff, but rather to the lack of white-collar workers in leadership positions (Oropesa 733, 737). Leaders must be skilled, representative, and accountable. Given their prominence and their potential for making community organizations successful, it is particularly important that the community leaders who work within the city’s neighborhood planning program speak for the community. Extreme differences in the status and attitudes of leaders and residents may distort the translation of community needs into the public decision process (Hutcheson 183). Since the neighborhood planning program tends to legitimize the leaders or organizations which are formally acknowledged by the program, the legitimacy of the program itself is undermined if there is a suspicion of favoritism or exclusion in the process. In the survey which Professors Rohe and Gates conducted of neighborhood planning programs, it was found that a noticeable number of respondents (13%) thought that dominance of one faction within the neighborhood planning process was a significant problem; only 41% of the respondents felt that their group was fairly represented (Rohe and Gates 159). Interviews in particular cities gave more insights into the problem. In St. Paul community members suggested that their leaders tend to advocate their personal concerns rather than the interests of the community (Rohe and Gates 159). Lack of responsiveness on the part of leaders was also cited in Atlanta and Cincinnati: in the Georgia city,
residents said that the elected community representatives paid little attention to the opinions of the general community in adopting positions, and in the Ohio town the complaint was that leaders were more concerned with national issues affecting neighborhoods than with local matters (Rohe and Gates 160). 19

The alienation of leaders from their constituents points to one of the persistent paradoxes of neighborhood planning: that community leaders must be of the fabric of the community and at the same time agents within a bureaucratic organization. The need to professionalize and formalize the leadership is in constant tension with the requirements of democratic participation; a locality-based movement tends, as one writer says, to "inevitably destroy the roots of those who become its leaders" (Franz and Warren 242, 243). By enlisting residents in the processes of governmental decision, neighborhood planning places them in a position to call the government to account for its actions; but to be effective in this role, leaders must preserve their fundamental allegiance to the community rather than to the government, since there is often an intrinsic conflict between the interests of the two institutions. The legitimacy of community leaders consists in, paradoxically, the fact that they are not designated as leaders but are simply fellow citizens who are more capable than most in articulating neighborhood concerns. Formalization of the role may therefore place their legitimacy in question (Goering 512). Intensive community participation, which is almost always an overt goal of neighborhood planning programs, can be self-defeating:

In the success of the [neighborhood] coalition may be the beginning of the demise of the neighborhood revolution. They may topple the traditional political alliances and change political faces but revolutions do consume their
own and today's dissidents can become tomorrow's central bureaucrats. Neighborhoods may find, to paraphrase Pogo's aphorism, that 'we have met the government and it is us.' (Callies 294, quoting C. Weaver and R. Babcock, City Zoning: The Once and Future Frontier, 1980, pp. 196-197)

Several approaches exist to the problem of determining who accurately represents the views and needs of their constituents. "Formal" representation is the term applied when constituents select their leaders directly through a nomination and voting procedure, the method which characterizes the electoral procedures for selecting legislators, judges, and administrators throughout the United States (Hutcheson 188). In community groups, such formal procedures are rarely available, due in general to the low levels of participation of residents in community affairs. In these organizations, leadership usually devolves on those who come forward to take on tasks. While a city government can have little control over the process, it will still be interested in learning if and how the selected leaders represent the constituents. "Social" or "descriptive" representation and "opinion" representation are two alternate approaches to the problem (Hutcheson 184). Opinion representation, in which the leader has the authority to speak for his or her constituents because their views on important issues coincide, is a democratic ideal. In practice it is extremely difficult to assess, because without elaborate surveys or interviews, access to the views of the constituents can often be had only through their leaders (Hutcheson 193). In the absence of sure measures of opinion representation, social representation is used as a surrogate: selecting representatives who share the visible outward characteristics of the constituents, such as race or socio-economic status, is presumed to assure congruence of opinions. Social representation can be fairly
easily determined from publicly available information about the characteristics of the community and the individuals who represent it.

Atlanta’s Neighborhood Planning Unit system, one of the oldest and most highly structured programs in the United States, has provided researchers with ample materials for the study of citizen participation in public decision making. A 1984 study addressed the relation of neighborhood planning, social representation and opinion representation. The researchers found, first, that neighborhood planning in Atlanta was characterized neither by social nor opinion representation (Hutcheson 187, 188). Participants in the planning process had higher incomes, higher levels of educational attainment, and were far likelier to be homeowners than were non-participants. (They were also far more likely to be black, to be male, and to have children, though these factors were less significant in distinguishing the participants than the first three). In upper income areas, participants were mainly distinguished from non-participants by their high levels of home ownership; in lower income areas, by socio-economic characteristics such as income and education, as well as by rates of homeownership (Hutcheson 188). The participants also differed from the average citizen in their opinions, showing a higher level of community concern generally, particularly for land use, zoning, park improvements, and police services; the general population was more concerned about health and social services (Hutcheson 188). The researchers conclude that "land use and zoning would appear to be logical primary concerns of those involved in what originated as a planning process," even in lower-income communities where health and social services would tend to dominate the concerns of residents. Participants in the planning process are also less concerned about social
services than are non-participants because "they are more likely to be aware that the city plays a minimal role in providing such services" (Hutcheson 192). The study showed, then, that between the active participants in the planning process and the typical residents there existed a considerable difference both of economic status and of concern.

Neighborhood planners must reach the community through contact with individuals and designated groups, but this discussion shows how difficult it is to determine whether prominent individuals indeed represent the community (Needleman and Needleman 69). In heterogeneous communities, the most prominent individuals or groups may not speak for everyone, particularly those who are relatively inarticulate by virtue or their age, educational background, or language barriers. Working with limited resources, the neighborhood planner may not be able to ensure that every group in the neighborhood is consulted about plans and proposals. The planner may have to accept the situation and proceed to work with one or two vocal groups in order to achieve any results at all (Needleman and Needleman 74-76). Given the excessive demands which are placed on the time of community planners under the best of circumstances, they are likely to accept the views of prominent leaders as representative of the community's position rather than deliberately to seek out diverging or hidden opinions. Indeed, community planners may selectively cultivate individuals who reinforce the positions they are interested in, and cut out of the process those who oppose it.

The price paid for not pursuing viewpoints which lie outside of the mainstream of community activity is that challenges may be raised later about the fairness of the planning process. Citizen participation which appears to be univocal may allow the planning process to proceed more
smoothly, but it is politically unwise; groups which are left out of the process are often strong enough to block changes proposed by others even when they are not strong enough to carry through changes of their own.\textsuperscript{20} On the other hand, programs which are deliberately set up to reach all groups may face another kind of problem, conflicts within the neighborhood which lead to paralysis:

Some would argue that too many opportunities can be given for public participation in the decision-making processes relating to land use and development controls. Under democratic systems of government, they would contend, public participation takes place through the ballot box, and any further pressures on the process may lead to the blighting of any property under consideration. (Garner 257)

The planning process may be immobilized if the planner attempts to work with all the differing groups on a fair and equitable basis; other avenues of public decision, such as the electoral process, then become more attractive because they require that decisions be finalized even if a number of parties are left dissatisfied. Absent a funding application deadline, there is usually little to compel a quarreling group of residents to make peace and accept the majority position; and unlike an election, where losers have the certainty that they will be able to redress their grievances at the next round, an approved plan has a finality that makes it resistant to radical alterations later on, particularly once implementation has begun. But the planner who takes the alternate route of selecting one or a few neighborhood groups to work with is likely to be accused of playing partisan politics (Needleman and Needleman 78). The planner is faced with either lessening the effectiveness of the planning process by introducing too many players or lessening its credibility by introducing too few.
The presence of controversy can be taken as a sign of neighborhood health, because it indicates that leaders are present and that the community is alive to the possibility that their leaders do not represent them accurately and fairly. A more serious condition may occur in neighborhoods which lack cohesion altogether, where transience and social disorganization have reached such a pitch that leaders are completely absent (Fainstein 389). In these cases it is extremely difficult to achieve participation in the planning process or the partnership between planners and residents which is necessary to carry out improvements (Clay and Hollister 218). These neighborhoods are prey to both the neglect of city government and to invasion by developers who find a locational advantage in the poor neighborhood, and little resistance. Here, the planner faces a compounded difficulty: lack of interest on the part of the city and the immobility of a population that lacks the capacity to articulate and act on its needs. The hopelessness of such situations defeats even the most idealistic of young planners.

The Limitation of the Neighborhood as a Unit of Planning

The difficulties of the community planner - his alienation from the city government that he serves (especially from his own department and from the operating departments on which he depends), the excessive demands placed on his time, training, and limited authority, the difficulty of establishing community trust, and the difficulty of identifying community leaders - arise because neighborhood planning is intrinsically an ambiguous activity. The planning initiative arises from the demands of citizens to be represented more fully in the process of city-building, but at the same time it may stand as an impediment to developments that
are needed for the financial health of the city. The larger question to which the planner's problems point is whether any planning methodology which focuses on the neighborhood as an isolated element of the city can be effective.

To designate the neighborhood as a unit of planning is to suggest that changes made at the level of the neighborhood will have a positive effect on the residents of the neighborhood itself and on the quality of the city as a whole. Two lines of reasoning dispute this claim. The first argues that among the elements which compose the city, the neighborhood is the passive element: its problems arise from the larger society, therefore the solutions to these problems must also come from the larger society. The second line of reasoning asserts that the neighborhood can indeed be an effective unit for certain kinds of changes and improvements, but that these changes are undesirable, since territorially based communities tend to be parochial, protectionist, and exclusionary in their orientation. The first of these questions is examined in the following pages. The second is best understood through a review of the history of neighborhood planning (Chapter 6), since it is here that progressive efforts at achieving social change through community-based actions have met with the tendency of areal organizations to pursue conservative agendas of territorial protection. These opposing movements came to explicit expression in the controversy over the neighborhood unit concept of Clarence Perry in the 1940's and 1950's.

In the historical ecological model of city development the neighborhood is treated as a residual phenomenon (see Chapter 1). In this view, the economic and technological forces which determine the character of the urban landscape have their most direct impact on the
commercial, industrial, and transportation sectors of the city rather than on residential areas. As the city's population responds to innovations in manufacturing or information distribution, demands for new kinds of structures and new locations for these structures are created. The residential sections of the city experience the aftershocks of these demands indirectly, as the changes come to influence the location of jobs and where people choose to live, which in turn affects the purchase of new housing and the maintenance of old housing. Occasionally, of course, neighborhoods experience the effects of economic change more immediately when they lie directly in the path of new commercial or industrial development. The typical problems which central city neighborhoods experience, which can be summarized as disinvestment on the one hand and the intrusion of inappropriate land uses on the other, are reflections of the movement of populations and capital from one favored area of the city to another. As capital seeks locations of greater profit, it takes with it the workers at all levels who support the services and maintain the homes which make for a viable neighborhood; and as new capital investment comes into an area of low land costs and favorable location, it brings with it land uses which may be abrasive to the character of the existing residential community. These two general phenomena often accompany one another: disinvestment reduces the value of an area to a point where it is attractive to new investment (provided that other factors like location are also favorable to the investor), and the new investment in turn reduces the value of the area for residential use.

The process described here is intrinsic to an economic structure which favors and facilitates the rapid movement of capital. The primary value of the residential neighborhood is its domestic stability. Absent
cataclysmic change in the economy of the region or the nation, the time frame in which change occurs in an established neighborhood is normally slow, being governed by the gradual accumulation of private decisions about building or rehabilitating individual homes, and augmented by periodic public efforts focused on restoring a street, a park or a sewer system to a decent condition. Change in the neighborhood is gradual, incremental, and - outside of the individual home - conservative. (The neighborhood, of course, is not the only type of city district which has an interest in stability or gradual change. Institutions for which stability is intrinsic to image, to the nature of the service they provide, or to their financial structure include the universities, the religious institutions, and bodies of government.) By contrast with the glacial rate of change in residential areas, changes within the industrial and to a lesser extent the commercial areas of a city are rapid and often complete: from the point of view of investment capital, the ideal city fabric is one that is capable of changing as often and as rapidly as the demands of production or consumption require it to. As capital mobility increases - in both the sense that it moves geographically with greater ease, and in the sense that it also moves from sector to sector more easily - the transformation of some areas of the urban landscape occurs with great rapidity. A decade is not too short a time in which to see, for example, a dilapidated downtown shopping street like F Street in Washington, D.C., turned into a canyon of mid-rise office buildings with expensive retail stores at their first level; or to see a residential area of one-story cottages in Houston transformed into the sleek office towers and hotels of Greenway Plaza. Equally rapid transformations of the urban landscape occur where there is
no history of city building to impede changes, as is often the case in purely industrial areas like Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

The different rates at which land use changes in urban sectors which serve different economic purposes has a severe impact on the neighborhood. A common example of the dissonance which these varying rates of change introduce is found where high speed, high volume traffic corridors grow at the edges of residential communities. Even those neighborhoods which are protected by zoning or private deed restrictions have no barriers against these corridors, most of which are responses to the commercial demands of a society oriented toward automobile transportation. There is, of course, a long history of heavily-trafficked commercial corridors which run adjacent to or through residential areas; examples are Boston's Charles Street in Beacon Hill or Annapolis' Main Street. In these cases, however, the scale of the commercial facilities which abut the street is similar to the scale of the nearby neighborhoods; the durability of the physical structures of the street, the narrowness of the street itself, the paucity of parking, and the additional protections which are sometimes provided by historic district regulations, prohibit the kind of heavy automobile-oriented commercial development which is far more typical of American cities now.

In contrast, the character of the newer commercial corridors is determined by the demands of the automobile for parking space and ease of movement, and by the demands of investment financing for rapid conversion of structures to take advantage of new opportunities. Three conditions result, all of which are deleterious to residential neighborhoods: the physical scale of the commercial street becomes enormous, its common civic elements are diminished to the bare minimum
required for safety and health, and the stability of the general environment is undermined by the rapid fluctuations of land use that characterize the corridor. The scale and speed of modern transportation threaten the pedestrian connections which are almost universally accepted as a necessary component of residential neighborhoods. In Alexandria, Virginia, an exit ramp from the Capital Beltway penetrates deep into a lower-income neighborhood and then changes to a high-volume, high-speed traffic couplet. The few traffic lights on the road are deliberately synchronized to prevent highway traffic from being slowed too abruptly. This large corridor, which cuts the neighborhood in two and separates a resident population from the local school, has been identified as a primary factor in the neighborhood's decline.24

Meanwhile, the typical street elements which represent the collective, public realm are reduced to the order of traffic lights, traffic signals, fire hydrants, and bus stops; and with the recent effort by many cities to inhibit the movement of homeless people, public elements like benches and drinking fountains have also become rare. Civic elements like a library or meeting hall, which would have significant presence on the road and might lend it greater meaning as an extension of the nearby neighborhood, would also impose constraints on what types of businesses could locate nearby. Civic improvements such as a landscape or signage program would also increase the cost of doing business on the street by requiring special tax assessments. These added costs and the enhanced physical infrastructure will tend to reduce the ease with which structures can be built, modified, and removed. By defining the character of the street, the improvements will also set a tone which will exclude some types of businesses that might otherwise
profit from automobile traffic, for example drive-through liquor and
grocery stores, lubrication/oil change facilities, and car washes.
Capital investment in these cases appears to profit from an amorphous,
undistinguished environment, one that stands in glaring contrast to the
neighborhoods nearby.

As different as the world of the neighborhood and the world of the
commercial strip are, they need each other, the strip to provide services
at a high level of convenience, the residential area to provide a part of
the market for the commercial establishments along the strip. At the
juncture between the commercial world and the nearby residential domain,
two ideals contend: the need for flexible land use as nearly unrestrained
as possible to serve the purposes of economic freedom, and the enormous
value placed on stability (or the image of stability) which is intrinsic
to the ideal of domicile. While in older cities the conflict between
these two ideals is mitigated by the durability of the historic city
fabric, in newer cities and in the new parts of old cities the conflict
presents a juxtaposition of human environments which is sometimes brutal.
The condition described here severes the neighborhood from the rest of
the city with a barrier of traffic which is almost impassable to
pedestrians. At its worst, the situation brings into the neighborhood
abrasive and even dangerous effects of noise, pollution, spill-over
parking, inappropriate behavior, and strangers. Zoning in its more
complex and sophisticated forms has attempted to buffer the residential
neighborhood by creating transitions of scale and use between it and
abutting commercial areas; the effort has often failed. 25

The type of commercial corridor described here is a city-wide or
even regional facility, the prosperity of which has an impact on the
city's financial position and the negative effects of which are usually only experienced locally; hence the conflict between ideals of commercial flexibility and domestic stability can also be understood as a political conflict between citywide interests and local concerns. Only the political power of the community which is affected by the commercial thoroughfare stands as a sure guarantee that the community's voice will be given adequate weight (Rafter 23). Neighborhood planning as a formalized program of citizen participation arises partly as an attempt by city residents to rectify the imbalance and give the local voice a weight equivalent to the serious impacts which it experiences.

This discussion of a typical contemporary urban conflict uncovers a problem which is intrinsic to neighborhoods in a free-market economy: the neighborhood is designed and built to accommodate itself to an existing pattern of commercial development, but when the pattern changes because of new demands, the neighborhood is not equipped either physically or institutionally to protect itself against the effect of the change. The changes are associated with innovations in technology which make industrial processes obsolete or introduce new ones (e.g. Pittsburgh); with national or international events which dramatically alter the social and economic composition of the community (e.g. Houston); or with marketing shifts which eliminate groceries and other services which are appropriately scaled to the requirements of residential, pedestrian-based neighborhoods (e.g. French Quarter, New Orleans). In every case, the causes of the change are general but the effects are experienced most keenly at the local level. Because of its small size and its general lack of resources and experience, the local community has the least power to correct the problem. Meanwhile the elements of the city which favor
the development because of the jobs it will bring with it or the taxes it will generate are also equipped with both the skill and the resources to carry the development through the approval process.

Those changes and improvements which the neighborhood is equipped to carry through on its own, and which might be enhanced by a typical program of neighborhood planning, are often trivial when compared to the major problems it experiences because of district-wide or regional changes (Needleman and Needleman 309). Devolution of planning power alone can give city neighborhoods very little hope that they will become the principle arbiters of their own condition (Fainstein 389). This is particularly true of the poorest neighborhoods, which are most affected by large-scale economic and structural changes but which are least equipped to resist them:

the dominant view suggests that the urban poor are prisoners, captured by their lack of resources, isolated in the deteriorating social fabric of disintegrating communities, and unable to articulate or protect their own interests. Even sympathetic city officials are unable to alter these circumstances. (Hutcheson and Prather 349)

The limitation of the neighborhood as an appropriate unit for improvement and change reveals itself as a limitation of political power, suggesting that the answer to the neighborhood's dilemma will also lie in an alteration of the existing political structure.

Neighborhood planning represents one such political adjustment. In its intention and often in its effects it aims to equalize the voice of the neighborhood with the other, more powerful voices which generally influence city-building decisions. The city faces a dilemma, however, which emerges from its dual role as political body and corporate entity: if it increases the voice of the neighborhood too much, it stands to undermine the economic advantages it offers to the commercial and
industrial investors who usually play a more important role than residents in maintaining the financial health of the city.

For the short term, the city can escape its dilemma by offering opportunities for community residents to have a voice in the decision-making process while limiting the means by which that voice can gain expression or achieve implementation. Structural features of the neighborhood planning program can permit the city to withhold the means for effective change while granting communities aspects of participation. In practice, this might mean that a neighborhood planning program will mandate a process for citizen involvement in plan formulation, review of development projects, and zoning hearings, but will fail to provide the citizen group with the funds that it requires to mobilize the political strength of the community, or deny it veto power in reviews and hearings. Absent such resources or authority, the community must work with other communities around common issues to achieve a significant political presence. A program which decentralizes some level of planning control to the community without at the same time increasing its resources or its authority may - with the best of intentions - be nothing more than a diversion from the larger economic and social issues which cause the community’s problems. At its best, such a program will mitigate the effects of regional and national trends without correcting the root causes. At its worst, such a program may serve to increase the isolation of the neighborhood by removing it from the equalization of resources which can occur in a centralized decision forum:

a politics based primarily on the mobilized community institutionally plays itself out at the level of the locality. Such a movement does not aim at, nor does it obtain, a sound institutional basis in the economy or the government at the national level. Unless these central resource-controlling powers are rendered neutral...the
movement can serve merely to throw the community back on its own resources and, in so doing, effectively contain it. This conservative result...is inherent in a politics of territory taken without sufficient regard to the political capacities of the locality. (Fainstein and Martin 464).

This line of reasoning suggests that if the problems of neighborhoods are caused by factors larger than the neighborhood, then the solutions to these problems must rely on remedies developed in a larger context. Two lines of policy suggest themselves. One holds that the neighborhoods of America's cities ought to be joined into a nation-wide coalition to alter policies that bear on localized communities. These policies will include the reinvestment obligations of financial institutions, alteration of potential revenues now lost through the tax credits applied to home ownership,\textsuperscript{26} equalization of service delivery across metropolitan regions, distribution of affordable housing obligations among metropolitan jurisdictions, emphasis on mass transit or other affordable transportation solutions to urban congestion and sprawl, and perhaps most important, equitable redistribution of the property, sales, and income tax resources of the metropolitan periphery in line with the dependence of the periphery upon the central city for its employment and cultural identity. No such national coalition currently exists.\textsuperscript{27}

The other line of policy is more radical: it suggests that since the historic role of the central city neighborhood has placed it out of alignment with the economic and social needs of the larger metropolitan ecology, a readjustment is necessary which will give these neighborhoods a valued economic role to play. This line of reasoning juxtaposes the locational and labor advantages of the central city neighborhood with the "market failures" of the free market, that is, those areas like housing,
waste disposal, re-manufacturing, and transportation that are being inadequately satisfied by the market mechanisms that do meet many other needs very adequately. A proposal to restore an economic role for the central city neighborhood is described in the Conclusion.

Within the history of American neighborhood planning, one finds an overwhelming tendency to view the neighborhood in isolation, despite a mature theory of urban economics and demographics that consistently relates the fate of the neighborhood to the larger metropolitan and national context. The disjunction between urban theory and the practice of neighborhood planning is as evident in the community unit principle of Clarence Perry as it is in the planning literature that was reviewed for this study. The following chapter examines this history of neighborhood planning (an episode in the history of American planning in general) and speculates about the reasons for its persistent myopia.

Notes

1. The 1903 Cleveland Plan of Daniel Burnham failed to be implemented as it was conceived because one of the key components, the railroad station that was to bring visitors to this grand entrance hall of the city, was relocated in a decision over which the city government had no control. This incident revealed one of the greatest weaknesses of the City Beautiful approach to city design: conceiving the city as a work of art, City Beautiful had no expedients to offer when the work could not be executed with the fullness and completeness that a work of art requires. See Manieri-Elia 64-68.

2. The outcome of the fires that devastated large portions of London in 1666 and San Francisco in 1906 illustrate the point; see Chapter 1, footnote 6.

3. The natural rights elaborated by John Locke in the Second Treatise on Government include the right to sustain the means of life: ...men, being once born, have a right to their preservation, and consequently to meat and drink and such other things as nature affords for their subsistence.... (Second Treatise, V. 25, p. 16).

His reasoning leads to the conclusion that private property is inviolable:

The chief end...of men's uniting into commonwealths, and putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property....The supreme power cannot take from
any man any part of his property without his own consent. For the preservation of property being the end of government, and that for which men enter into society, it necessarily supposes and requires that the people should have property.... (Second Treatise, XI 138, p. 79)

4. This intention lay behind a planning effort in Dallas, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and executed through the Dallas Institute for the Humanities, which envisioned urban possibilities that were thirty to fifty years into the future. The attempt in this case was to provide a forum for discussion that was free from the short-term constraints of the investment market, and could presumably take a disinterested stand on the future of the city.

5. There are exceptions: in Portland, a planner remarked that the Audubon Society can place 1500 angry voters on the steps of City Hall overnight, and has become a force with which every elected official and developer must contend. Conversation with Michael Harrison, Portland City Planning Bureau, June 1990.

6. In February 1992, newly elected Houston mayor Lanier said at a citizen's meeting that he was in his sixties, could anticipate perhaps two years in office, and had no time for long-term plans; he wanted immediate solutions to immediate problems.

7. Planning is always haunted by the question of whether the improvements might have happened in any case, without the plan.

8. Houston's Planning Department was established in 1927 by Mayor William Hogg, but its funding was not renewed by City Council after it had completed a 1929 planning study. When it was reinstated in 1940, it was given a budget of $10,000 and a staff of three. See Robert Cornish, "The History of Planning in Houston" (initial draft, August 1988), p. 6; and Feagan 157, 162.

9. Specifically, the council placed height limits on new buildings near the ocean and created land conservation zones for steep hillside areas to reduce excessive cut and fill operations. In addition the council required environmental impact procedures citywide. Corso 338

10. In the 1970's, Baltimore's South East Community Organization prevented the extension of Interstate I-95 through its community. Similar stories of community obstruction to highways come from New Orleans, Atlanta, and San Francisco.

11. Portland's Convention Center, which was eventually constructed, faced severe opposition from the Albina Community.

12. In 1990, plans to redevelop the Freedmenstown area adjacent to Houston's Central Business District with mid-rise housing and offices were paralyzed by opposition from both poor renters and middle-class homeowners.

13. The Needlemans give a vivid quote from a community planner that illustrates the point:

Two years ago, when faced with community pressure, the council believed that the way to reduce this pressure was to give the people some community planning service. This worked great for two years; it stalled the community while they worked out their plans with us. Now the two years are over and the community is saying, "OK, here's our plan. Implement it." The city is horrified. They say, "We have no money, we just had a strike, we can't do it...." Now that we aren't helping them stall anymore, we're a threat. So all community planning has been stopped. Needleman and Needleman 287.

This interpretation of why the program was ended was supported by the department's director.

14. In practice, of course, the dependency of the planning department on the good will of elected officials often means that it must prove its
relevance by solving politically difficult problems, for example by
defusing the demands of a politically active area or by achieving visible
results in an easy area in order to ensure continued funding from the
state or federal governments (Needleman and Needleman 67). The areas
selected for planning intervention are not necessarily those which stand
in greatest need of planning help.

16. The Needleman’s observations must be contrasted with the findings
of John Mudd about the response of civil servants to New York’s service
cabinet organization. Over 80 percent of civil servants who participated
in the demonstration program found that the service cabinets were useful.
A majority found that they promoted communication and cooperation between
agencies, that they helped to resolve difficulties, and that the district
managers (the salaried staff persons who act as liaison between the
service cabinet and the lay Community Board, see Chapter 7) were
effective in aiding the work of the service cabinet in the community.
Individual cabinet members spoke of improved communication with the
community, of experiencing improved attitudes toward other agencies, and
of the value of the service cabinet in filtering complaints and defusing
community anger. 70 percent of civil servants who had experience working
with the cabinet system said that they favored community participation on
an advisory basis, without community control of agency operations. See
Mudd 95, 119, 158ff, 160, 180, 188.

16. Wilson remarks that “The view which a neighborhood is likely to
take of urban renewal...is in great part a product of its class
composition....Whereas it is relatively easy to obtain consent to renewal
plans when people are thinking in terms of general goals and community-
wide benefits, it is much harder - often impossible - when people see the
same set of facts in terms of possible threats and costs” (Wilson 245ff).

17. It is not clear from Wilson’s remark whether the opposition might
not be justified in some cases. Urban renewal gained such a terrible
reputation for callous displacement of residents and destruction of
viable neighborhoods that the backlash against it led to the citizen
involvement programs of the Johnson era; see Chapter 7.

18. In the Gulfton neighborhood of southwest Houston, the author
observed that the burdens of family care combined with a general desire
among the Hispanic population to remain inconspicuous to prevent
widespread citizen participation.

19. Funding, which is normally seen as essential to effective
neighborhood mobilization, can also be a problem: in St. Paul,
neighborhood residents indicated that the funding which is granted to
recognized neighborhood groups tends to make them autonous and give them
an institutional aspect, reducing their need to respond equitably to all
voices in the neighborhood (Rohe and Gates).

20. The confrontational tactics of community organizer Saul Alinsky
fall into this category. Wilson remarks that these tactics may be
effective in winning special concessions for the community, but may also
end any plans which can lead to fundamental changes in the community
landscape. Eventually these tactics tend to exacerbate conflict and
alienate the neighborhood. Wilson 246.

21. This situation was evident in several parts of Houston in the late
1980’s. When the price of oil dropped precipitously in the mid 1980’s,
large tracts of apartments built for managerial and technical level
individuals were left vacant. The attempt by landlords to fill these
units led to intensive social problems.

22. This phenomenon is evident in Midtown Houston, an area adjacent to
the Central Business District which was once a premiere residential
address. The ruins of fine mansions are still in evidence in lots which
have been vacant, while small-scale warehousing and manufacturing
enterprises have taken hold in adjacent lots. Some older buildings are
still used for low-rental housing, and there is a smattering of owner
occupied homes in selected areas. The result is a district which lacks
clear definition as either residential or commercial, and cannot be described as mixed-use in any vital sense because the residential population is so small.

23. An example is Kirby Boulevard in Houston, a high-volume commercial corridor, where it crosses Rice Boulevard and passes immediately next to deed-restricted affluent neighborhoods.


25. Houston's recent zoning proposal, carried forward by Councilmember Jim Greenwood and the Houston Homeowners Association, attempted to institutionalize the pattern of land change described here through an innovative approach to districting and buffering. In addition to a number of conventional residential zones, the ordinance included an "O" Zone in which any and all uses were permitted (subject always to the availability of sewage rights). Between the O Zone and the residential areas was a buffering zone of restricted commercial uses. This ordinance was an attempt to give the commercial market a field of free play while still providing protections to stable residential areas of all economic levels. The ordinance and the zoning effort failed in referendum in 1993.

26. "[I]t is not sound housing policy to continue to provide substantial tax benefits to upper-income households when housing problems at the bottom of the income scale are worsening. ...the Joint Committee on Taxation has estimated that reducing the limit on qualified home mortgage debt to $300,000 would raise $1 billion in 1993 and $14.7 billion in the 1993-1997 period. Should it wish, these revenues could be rechanneled by Congress into expanding the low-income housing tax credit whose five-year cost is currently estimated at $2.4 billion." (Steinbach 11)

27. For most of its past and at present the United States has not had a national policy on neighborhoods:

...the United States has...an urban policy that stipulates that general economic growth is the most effective way of ameliorating the problems of distressed communities. Given also the aversion to planned intervention and the reliance on market forces to achieve this objective, present regional inequities are not likely to be removed. These developments have led one critic to comment that communities have disappeared from the national urban policy. (Logan, 1983, quoted in Van Vliet 283)
CHAPTER 6. THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

The history of neighborhood planning in the United States is conventionally divided into three periods: a formative stage from the 1880's to World War I, a stage dominated by the neighborhood unit concept of Clarence Perry which spans from the war to the 1960's, and a stage from the 1960's to the present characterized by an advocacy approach to planning. From its earliest days, neighborhood planning has demonstrated two conflicting agendas, reflective of the ambiguous nature of the American neighborhood itself. On the one hand the neighborhood has been planned as a vehicle for progressive reform, a structure by which income disparities and unequal access to resources, which appeared to keep some communities locked in cycles of poverty and dependency, could be redressed. Most of the neighborhood planning programs in the current study express this intention. On the other hand, and far more commonly, neighborhood planning has been used as an instrument for supporting conservative community goals by fortifying property values against the deflating influence of inappropriate land uses, and excluding residents considered alien or undesirable by the community. The history of neighborhood planning has often demonstrated a cyclical alteration between one and the other of these extremes, reflecting at the neighborhood level national events, shifts in national policy, and developments within the planning profession itself (Fisher Introduction). At every stage, there has been a close relationship between neighborhood planning and the methods, structures, and objectives of neighborhood organizations. At the same time, the focus of neighborhood planning has often swung from an emphasis on physical design to almost complete preoccupation with the social and economic aspects of the neighborhood.
The brief history which follows attempts to trace the main features of this erratic development.

**Formative Period, 1880-1920: Settlement Houses and Neighborhood Associations**

The 1880's saw the birth of two movements which were to have important implications for America's neighborhoods, the settlement house movement in England and the improvement and protective associations of the United States. These two movements capture the distance that lies between the progressive agenda of neighborhood planning on the one hand and its conservative, protective tendency on the other.

**The Settlement House Movement**

Settlement houses belonged among the advance guard of the Progressive reform movement which was to sweep through American government, administration, and planning during the 1890's and up to the first World War. The settlement movement began in England in 1884 when vicar Samuel Barnett brought students and professors from Oxford and Cambridge to live in the Whitechapel area of East London. His intent was to create a place "where twenty university men live in order to work for, to teach, and to learn of the poor" (Rohe and Gates 14, quoting Barnett 1909, p. 18). The example spread quickly: settlement houses opened in New York in 1886, in Chicago in 1898, and by 1911 there were more than four hundred of these institutions in American cities (Fisher 7).

Members of the settlement movement attempted to introduce lower-class residents, particularly immigrants, to "the finer things:"
The settlement [urges] the organization of working people in order that as much leisure and orderly life as possible may be secured to them in which to carry out the higher aims of living. (Addams 1895, p. 40; quoted in Rohe and Gates 15)

As conceived by the settlement house workers, the problem of poverty was how to advance the individual in the face of barriers created by the society at large, rather than to remove the barriers themselves. The barriers consisted of class and ethnic segregation, of excessive mobility which destroyed family and community ties, of a proliferation of special interest groups which undermined the wholeness of community attachments, and of inadequate services in poor areas (Rohe and Gates 16, 17). Accordingly, the settlement provided individuals with instruction and basic services to reduce the effect of these barriers and to allow them to move beyond the restrictions of slum life. A typical program might have classes, provide legal aid and employment assistance, and offer laundry, health care, and nutritional services. In addition, it would promote social and cultural events in order to develop friendly contacts within the neighborhood and to make the degraded conditions of the residents more bearable (Silver 163, Fisher 8). The mission was both practical and spiritual, for as Robert Woods put it, every part of society needs not only "a full supply for its fundamental human wants, but shall be constantly refreshed from the higher sources of happier and nobler life" (Woods 1923, quoted at Rohe and Gates 15).

The most fundamental goal of the settlement houses was assimilation. The settlement worker sought to reform the manners and psychology of lower-class city residents, particularly immigrants, and transform them into decent Americans by exposing them to models of middle-class culture and propriety. In the words of Jane Addams, Chicago's Hull House aimed at preserving for the immigrants "whatever of
value their past life contained and...bring[ing] them into contact with a better type of Americans" (Addams). Hull House in Chicago demonstrated the principle in action: it was prominent not only for its social program but also for its role in organizing labor and political groups to address working conditions and the poor level of services in the area (Rohe and Gates 15). In addition, it became in effect a salon where the intellectual life of Chicago was carried forward with great vigor. At Hull House the Scottish biologist and city planner Patrick Geddes presented his evolutionary concept of city development to Americans for the first time, Frank Lloyd Wright explained his early ideas on residential architecture, and the Chicago School of sociologists outlined their agenda for urban reform (Ciucci 304).

The settlement house movement brought a number of intellectual strands together within a unified and practical program. Ideals of Christian compassion and fellowship were joined to the democratic goal of creating physical and social conditions which would help individuals to realize their innate potential. The goals were to be achieved through close personal contact between the settlement workers and the residents, and through the exercise of new sociological techniques of observation and statistical analysis developed at the University of Chicago (Rohe and Gates 18, 19). Clubs of various kinds were created within the settlement houses in order to provide moral influence and a structure for organizing social and political work. Anticipating a theme that will recur throughout American neighborhood planning, the settlement house worker’s goals were based on the image of the rural village. The central-city neighborhood was conceived as the last vestige of the village still extant in the big city, one that was threatened with imminent extinction
(Goldfield 226). To the reformers, the moral and social virtues associated with village life were even more essential to the populations of great cities than they were in small towns, because the city threatened to destroy the personal, face-to-face contacts and intimate support of the village (Silver 162).¹ Like many reformers of the late 19th century, the settlement house workers shared a revulsion for the great industrial city and a desire to replace it with a structure more morally uplifting.

The ideal of recreating village life in the large city led to the one significant design initiative which emerged from the settlement house movement, the civic center or community center principle. Like a New England town green or a Southern county courthouse square, the civic center was to bring together all the public and educational facilities that influenced daily life. The Soulard Market area of St. Louis illustrates the general design intent, bringing into a single precinct a park, a neighborhood school, a branch of the public library, a police precinct, a public bath, and a model low-income housing tenement (Silver 163) (Fig. 5). The civic center was to become the focus of neighborhood life and a place where social interaction and community identity would be fostered (Fisher 18). The collocation of public, semipublic, and private buildings would promote "the mental, moral, [and] physical upbuilding of the neighborhood...." (Dwight F. Davis 1908, 1504-1555, quoted at Silver 163). The schoolhouse, the ubiquitous feature of every neighborhood, was to be the center of community life; with slight modifications, it was to be used as a civic facility both day and night (Mumford 1954 261). Under the influence of the movement schools came to be used - as they are still
Figure 1. Neighborhood center proposal for the Soulard Market area of St. Louis incorporated in the city's master plan of 1907.

Fig. 5  Soulard Market, St. Louis, 1907
used today in many communities — for purposes of voting, dispensing employment information, recreation, education, health services, and programs of "Americanization" (Fisher 14). By World War I, the civic center principle had become the accepted method for urban revitalization (Silver 163, Mumford 1954 261).

The community center was a localized counterpart to the grand civic centers which were promoted in many American cities under the influence of contemporaneous City Beautiful planning. Like the larger versions, the community centers attempted to provide unmistakable symbols of a progressive, rational, and unified civic life, and to promote vitality in the city by bringing together in one locale a number of the functions which are essential for daily life. City Beautiful planner Daniel Burnham was particularly interested in bringing the public life of the city together with its commercial activities so that each could enrich the other. In the neighborhood designs, this principle is demonstrated through the close alignment of transportation facilities with government and education buildings, through the community center, and through the ubiquitous presence of the community market among the public buildings.

The physical design approach of the civic center was paralleled by a significant experiment in neighborhood self-government, the "social unit plan" developed by Wilbur and Elsie Phillips as the Cincinnatti Social Unit Organization (CSUO) in 1917 (Fisher 21ff, Mumford 1954 261). CSUO was an early attempt to return decision-making to the smallest unit of the city, the block. The goal was to infuse society with the principle and practice of local democracy by restructuring government on nonpartisan lines, beginning with the block (Fisher 23). The organization focused on a single issue, health care. Block councils sent
representatives to a citizens council which was paralleled by an occupational council made up of health professionals. The lay group and the professional body then sent representatives to a general council which made policy decisions for the community (Goldfield 240). Starting with a child health care center, the CSUO was remarkably effective in broadening the range of medical services available to the community, so that by 1920 it had become "one of the most comprehensive, effective, and cooperative public health programs in the country" (Fisher 25). When the CSUO experiment ran into heated opposition from Cincinnatti's City Hall, which saw it as "one step away from Bolshevism..., a government within a government", it quickly died out. Nevertheless, The experiment was significant in showing, first, that neighborhood organizations could have an effect on the social conditions in their community and, second, that these effects did not have to be tied to expensive physical changes in the community or to the city's political process (Goldfield 241).

From its early emphasis on moral and civic virtues, the settlement house movement expanded to embrace labor organization and political work (Rohe and Gates 15). Several prominent settlement workers, among them Mary Follett, saw the potential within the movement for both local and state reform through political organization:

[T]he people should organize themselves into neighborhood groups to express their daily life, to bring to the surface the needs, desires, and aspirations of that life, that these needs should become the substance of politics, and that neighborhood groups should become the recognized political unit. (Follett 1918, quoted at Goldfield 229)

For Robert Woods, the settlement houses were the seed of a democratizing political movement. In his vision, the foundations would promote an undertaking which has all the characteristics of comprehensive planning, without being named as such:
The settlement foundations, gathering up...the indigenous interests of the tenement-house neighborhoods of the city, proceed to eliminate wasteful competition of effort, to bring different specialities of service up to the best standard..., to secure experts...and send them from neighborhood to neighborhood, to classify local needs that are common to all the neighborhoods and make them the basis of a presentation of ascertained facts to be acted upon by the city government or the state legislature, and to bring into the broader life of the city the average citizen of the less resourceful local sections. (Woods 590)

Woods' contemporary Jane Addams had a similarly large view, believing that in addition to their educational and social role the houses had civic obligation to connect "with the labor problems in their social and political aspects...." (Addams).

Despite such broad and generous intentions, the actual effect of the settlement houses in improving the quality of life for their clients was slight. With their emphasis on bettering the character, the citizenship, and the education of the community's residents, the houses tended deliberately to avoid problems of service delivery or the physical rehabilitation of neighborhoods (Rohe and Gates 21, Goldfield 229). Their approach to social change was accommodating and incrementalist rather than confrontational or revolutionary; in keeping with their primary goal of achieving the assimilation of their clients into American society, the houses served as mediators between the rich and the poor, between the industrialists and the workers (Fisher 7ff). Working with a faith that the existing political arrangements were satisfactory if not perfect, the settlement workers aimed to reduce tensions between the rich and poor sections of the cities and to increase the general level of social order (Rohe and Gates 22). In this respect the settlement houses were very much creatures of their times, a period when the rampant competitiveness of post Civil War laissez-faire industrialism was giving
way to large-scale, coordinated ventures, and liberal reform measures
were promoted by corporate leaders and national political figures to
induce stability and reduce class conflict (Fisher 3-7). The settlement
workers had little effect in increasing the political voice of the
neighborhoods or achieving structural changes in government or the
economy which might have permanently improved the condition of the poor.
Political activism might have jeopardized the funds on which the
settlement houses depended (Fisher 9); in any case, voter turnout in the
immigrant neighborhoods tended to be low, so that political initiatives
were not likely to receive the support they needed to affect the decision
process of local government (Rohe and Gates 21).

Since the paternalistic, philanthropic approach of the settlement
workers precluded consultation with residents, the result was often
indifference and apathy on the part of those whom the settlements were
intended to serve (Rohe and Gates 21, Fisher 7, 10). This effect was
observable even to members of the movement:

[M]ost schemes...are attempts from without, and usually
from above, in which the neighborhood itself has little or
no part and to which therefore it fails to make any
substantial response. (John Daniels 1920, quoted at Fisher
11)

Despite these limitations, the settlement house movement had
influence on later efforts at neighborhood organization and neighborhood
planning. The movement increased sentiment for public intervention into
the poor areas of cities, a sentiment which was already being expressed
in the parallel fields of housing and public hygiene (Rohe and Gates 21;
also Benevolo 44). By using their influence and standing as public
figures, the settlement workers raised the neighborhood in general into
the public eye as an element of the city which deserved attention.
Perhaps most important, the interaction of social workers, planners, and social scientists set an early model for a sophisticated planning process, which would be joined to a definite and comprehensive set of physical design principles in the work of Clarence Perry, Clarence Stein, and Henry Wright in the 1920s (Silver 164).

Neighborhood Protective and Improvement Associations

While the social unit concept of neighborhood self-government and the social center movement of neighborhood design were oriented by concern for the poorer and immigrant sections of the city, a parallel movement began among the more well-established and wealthier neighborhoods of American cities. As early as the 1880s, protective associations and improvement associations were formed in city neighborhoods (Silver 164). By 1911, when 41 Baltimore neighborhoods sent delegates to a city-wide congress, the protective associations were responding to perceived threats of inundation from immigrant and poor residents by promoting the emerging tools of zoning, including racial zoning. Through their support of zoning, the protective associations had a significant influence on American city planning. Zoning, which originated in its contemporary form in 1916 in an attempt to exclude commercial land uses from the residential neighborhoods of New York City, became emblematic of a rationalized approach to city planning which in the eyes of most state laws as well as in planning theory implied some form of comprehensive planning. Although support for comprehensive planning in the early decades of the century came from many sources, notably from planning professionals as well as the promoters of efficient government, it also received significant support from neighborhood groups interested in
preserving their exclusive residential enclaves. It is thus not an accident that the Baltimore Citywide Congress promoted the development of a city plan which carried exclusionary zoning into practice and supported the clearance and replacement of some undesirable neighborhoods. When zoning was not enough, these groups occasionally resorted to threats and physical intimation to keep undesirables out of the neighborhoods (Silver 164). The improvement associations, by contrast, were more concerned with correcting the deficiencies of the municipal bureaucracies by securing improved services for the neighborhood.

Both types of organization used political influence to gain their objectives, reintroducing the neighborhood into city politics as a significant force at a time when the political machines, the traditional arbiters of neighborhood benefits, were weakening under the siege of Progressive reform. The improvement and protection associations of the 1880-1920 period established precedents for the most prevalent type of neighborhood organization, the civic association with a distinctly territorial and protective orientation. These organizations have changed little in either policy objectives or organizational structure since their inception (Fisher 74). They sound the most profoundly conservative note of neighborhood society, one which is oriented toward solidifying property values and preserving a social structure which carries meanings of status and long familiarity. By transforming neighborhood issues into political issues and forcing city government to be more responsive to neighborhood interests, these organizations achieved what the more liberal, reforming social units and settlement houses could not (Silver 164). Although some of their proposals aligned with the goals and methods of the Progressive reform movement, especially their support for
comprehensive planning to rationalize city resources, the neighborhood associations served as a counterweight to the centralizing, professionalizing tendencies of the movement. In this sense these associations served the cause of localized democracy, but they demonstrated with unmistakable clarity one of localism's most severe liabilities. The substantive policies like zoning which the associations pursued were exclusionary, and under their influence the exclusionary impulse became a permanent component of later efforts at comprehensive planning and neighborhood planning (Silver 165). It was in the neighborhood unit concept of Clarence Perry, the most coherent and thorough articulation of a physical neighborhood principle that was available until the 1980s, that these exclusionist tendencies were given physical form and sociological justification.

Notes

2. The legitimacy of zoning as an exercise of the state's police power is supported by the claim that it anticipates and prevents nuisance actions likely to arise from inappropriate conjunctions of land use. It is justified in addition on grounds of planning rationality because it claims to allocate the proper amount of space to every type of land use in advance of the actual development process. The relation of zoning and comprehensive planning is so intimate that many states require that municipal zoning be tied to a comprehensive plan, although the interpretation of the latter term varies enormously.
The Neighborhood Unit Concept, 1920 – 1960

Clarence Perry's Argument for the Neighborhood Unit

From the 1920s until the 1960s, neighborhood planning in the United States was dominated by a single powerful approach to theory and design, the neighborhood unit concept of Clarence Perry. The influence of this idea was so potent that even after it was subjected to severe criticism and rejection in planning circles from 1961 onward, it remained the basis, in forms which often deviated wildly from Perry's intentions, for the planning of new suburban developments and many central-city urban renewal schemes throughout America. As late as 1969, a survey found that 80% of planners still relied on the neighborhood unit concept as the backbone of their planning methodology (Rohe and Gates 30). In 1990, neighborhood unit principles were evident in the plan developed by a community group in Houston, Texas, to guide the implementation of zoning in that neighborhood. So thoroughly has this idea become associated with community development in the United States that it is only in the light of alternatives recently developed in urban design theory that Perry's 1929 summary of the neighborhood unit concept appears at all questionable:

[A] neighborhood district [is] that populated area for which one elementary school should be provided. In sections where single-family-lot housing is the rule, this means an area of about 160 acres and a population of 5,000 or 6,000 people. It has school and institutional sites suitably grouped around a community center, and shopping districts at the traffic intersections in its circumference. It is bounded and walled in by arterial highways and enjoys a special street system of its own which provides direct circulation within the unit but does not invite traffic through it. The interior is restricted entirely to residential use and ideally, 10 per cent of its area, and more in apartment units, is devoted to small parks and recreational spaces. (Perry 89) (Fig. 6)
A SUMMARY OF NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT PRINCIPLES
The boundary highways invite through traffic, but the interior streets do not

Fig. 6  Clarence Perry's Neighborhood Unit Principles
The appeal of the neighborhood unit concept lay in its simplicity, its apparent alignment with the exigencies of automobile traffic, and its reinforcement of traditional family and village life. The era of neighborhood unit planning is one of the few episodes in neighborhood planning when the social intentions of planners found clear articulation in a physical design of great practical as well as aesthetic appeal. Because the design concept encapsulated so many elements of a deeply conservative image of the urban neighborhood, it raised the implicit issues which lay hidden in neighborhood planning to a level of explicit controversy and public debate which has not been matched since.

The neighborhood unit concept portrays a neighborhood separated from the confusion and almost promiscuous intermixing of the city, a small village recreated in the very heart of the city (Figs. 7 and 8). In fact the village concept was never very remote from the neighborhood unit idea: Perry’s editor Shelby Harrison states in the introduction of Perry’s essay in the Regional Plan of New York and its Environs (Vol VII; 1929) that Perry’s intent was "to discover the physical basis for the kind of face-to-face association which characterized the old village community and which the large city finds it so difficult to recreate" (Perry 23). Perry based his design on sociological principles developed by University of Chicago sociologists C. H. Horton, Robert E. Parks, Ernest Burgess and others, a school which emphasized the absolute importance of face-to-face associations within primary groups as the basis for human development and personal identity. Sociologist H. C. Cooley wrote:

> By primary groups I mean those characterized by intimate face-to-face association and cooperation. They are primary in several senses, but chiefly in that they are
Fig. 7 A Neighborhood Unit (Perry)
A SUBDIVISION FOR MIDDLE INCOME PLANNED AS A NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT.

Fig. 8 A Neighborhood Unit (Perry)
fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual. The result of intimate association, psychologically, is a certain fusion of individualities in a common whole, so that one's very self, for many purposes at least, is the common life and purpose of the group. (Cooley, Social Organization, p. 23, quoted at Perry 126)

Intimacy and familiarity, in contrast to the vast anonymity of the city, lay at the core of Perry's idea. Perry held that the physical design of the home environment can have an influence on the social behavior of its inhabitants:

Vast numbers of urban dwellers are not acquainted with people next door. When, however, residents are brought together through the use of common recreational facilities, they come to know one another and friendly relations ensue. (Perry, 1939, p. 215, quoted at Rohe and Gates 29)

The social identity of the neighborhood depends on designing for it a center and a perimeter: a "nucleus where people are somehow brought together" (Adams 69), and visible boundaries which "enable the public to see a local community as such and to recognize it as a distinct entity" (Perry 59). Well defined boundaries permit a neighborhood to be named, making it a permanent settlement in people's thoughts (Perry 60).

In Perry's view, the effects of good neighborhood design are moral and social. Indeed, family life is the general justification for many features of the neighborhood unit concept. Since the village and the rural scene are considered the ideal setting for raising children, they become the standard for evaluating and designing the urban neighborhood (Perry 23). In the words of Perry's supporter Frederick Adams, designers must attempt "to make the urban home in the city as good if not better than the farm as an environment in which to rear children" (Adams 67). The visual identity which is achieved by a community designed along neighborhood unit principles allows parents to work better for the educational interests of their children, presumably because they have
more control over the neighborhood environment which forms such a large part of the child’s experience (Perry 121). Several of the structural features of the neighborhood unit are also based on the requirements of the family, because "housing...devoted to child-rearing families is peculiarly and vitally dependent upon the resources and character of the immediate vicinity" (Perry 25). Thus the neighborhood unit provides a nearly complete range of urban facilities within walking distance of the home, and it provides recreation spaces, "the milieu in which from time immemorial the characters of the oncoming generations have been formed" (Perry 66), in a location protected from through traffic. The exclusion of through vehicular traffic is also intended to protect school-age children from crossing dangerous roads and to thereby increase their use of the neighborhood unit’s recreation facilities (Perry 27). The dependency between family life and neighborhood character is more than practical: the society of the neighborhood shapes young personalities, so much so that Perry calls on the support of psychologist Emory Bogardus, who claimed that "The parent who can choose the primary groups for his children to grow up in can forecast their future" (Bogardus, Essentials of Social Psychology p. 210, quoted at Perry 126). By the same token, the absence of adequate physical facilities and proper support from the social milieu are held to be the cause of juvenile gang activity.

Concern for the social environment extends well beyond its influence on young children. A clear physical identity, combined with a well organized neighborhood association, will allow the neighborhood to control the entry of new residents and achieve the social homogeneity which is, in Perry’s view, essential to active social interaction. A playground, for example, will be inadequate if "it must serve classes of
people who will not mix or allow their children to play together" (Perry 28). His social vision of play spaces is thus very different from that of Frederick Law Olmsted, who envisioned his Central Park in New York as a great democratic meeting place for all classes and types of human beings. The homogeneity of the neighborhood district also serves the ends of civic practice and participation, for

men tend to organize for common ends in the degree that common ends exist among them. A social development, therefore, which draws together people of similar tastes, and similar abilities to realize them, is bound to stimulate and promote voluntary organization to an unusual degree. (Perry 56)

Perry looks to the village as the ideal political arrangement, for the "whole village is an area within which public opinion can form regarding civic needs in the natural way because of the high degree of communicability among the residents" (Perry 125). The village provides the common interests which motivate political action as well as the means for establishing the intimate and frequent encounters upon which a vital political life depends; the village is "a natural political entity - a civic cell" (Perry 125). Moreover, the village has the clear identity which is granted to an area possessing distinctive borders. As the village is absorbed into the city, however, and loses its boundaries, it "passes out of the consciousness of citizens" (Perry 59). Unlike the village the typical city neighborhood usually

means something vague and indefinite. Its significance is qualitative rather than quantitative. ...A village or a city has conspicuous boundaries. ...The neighborhood...usually has no visible boundaries. Its fabric is continuous with that of the adjacent residential, business or industrial sections. Because of its formlessness it does not have a clear identity in people's consciousness. (Perry 29, 30)

Where the village is a civic cell which appeals to the loyalties of its residents because it is organically identifiable, the city is merely "a
vast accretion of business, industry and dwellings around the civic nucleus which has become diseased in the midst of a mass of politically inert tissue." Within this accretion, the primary interactions of individuals are not based on the place where they live but on profession, religion, or class. In these circumstances, social movements, "the natural means by which laws and institutions undergo gradual adaptation," are inhibited at the outset, producing the civic ineffectiveness which is, in Perry's view, characteristic of the large cities (Perry 125).

If rampant urban growth is the force which has engulfed the village and silenced its once active civic voice, then the corrective must be found in a process whereby "the village civic cell would be repeated at a rate corresponding with the expansion of the population" (Perry 125). The neighborhood unit offers the physical design for implementing such a process. The scheme brings the local community into relief and enables its residents to see it as something apart from the rest of the city, as a distinct entity which has its own peculiar qualities and needs. (Perry 120)

With its useful, interesting features, the neighborhood unit will awaken local consciousness and promote face-to-face association between residents (Perry 41). The small size of the neighborhood unit is essential to its civic mission, because only in such an environment can the voter hear discussion of the issues which concern the locality and meet at first hand the candidates for political office (Perry 124). Since commonality of attitude and manner is essential to effective civic life, a district as large as one mile square would be deficient, because "[i]t would rarely happen...that so large a group would be sufficiently homogeneous economically, culturally, and racially to make spontaneous association for local purposes practical" (Perry 55). The neighborhood
unit will reinvigorate a healthy form of direct democracy, with citizens active in those matters which affect them directly. It will provide the opportunity for civic engagement which is so lacking in the anonymity of the large city, and may perhaps help younger residents discover any latent talents they have for public careers (Perry 126). The civic influence of the neighborhood unit is carried into its design features, for example the community square which

will function as a place of local celebrations. Here, on Independence Day the flag will be raised, the Declaration of Independence be recited and the citizenry urged to patriotic deeds by eloquent orators. (Perry 1929 p. 65, quoted at Rohe and Gates 28)

Parallel to the physical integrity which is achieved through design must be an organization which, in the words of Kansas City developer J. C. Nichols (approvingly quoted by Perry),

will see that restrictions are enforced, that the property suffers no future neglect..., and will develop and maintain a neighborhood and community spirit, so important in fostering a permanent and traditional love for one’s home and neighborhood and so fundamental in creating a civic pride for one’s city and a real patriotism for one’s nation (Perry 55)

Perry’s principle urban model was Forest Hills Garden on Long Island, designed in 1911 by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. with Grosvenor Atterbury serving as architect (Perry 90) (Fig. 9). Perry attempted in his neighborhood unit concept to distill the most successful features of Forest Hills into a single plan and correct its deficiencies. He was impressed by its administrative organization, which made the Gardens Corporation into a virtual neighborhood government with control over new tenants as well as over land use and the architectural design of new structures. In Forest Hills,

Prospective purchasers were required to give references and their former status was looked into with a view to discovering whether they would make congenial members of
A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WHICH WAS MOTIVATED BY A SOCIAL, AS WELL AS A COMMERCIAL, PURPOSE

Fig. 9 Forest Hills Garden
the colony. ...the residents, as a class, were marked by rather more than the usual homogeneity as respects those characteristics which affect living cooperatively together and realizing through concerted efforts common ends. (Perry 94)

Perry found that the similarities of the residents and their use of common neighborhood facilities tended to promote acquaintanceships and organized affiliations (Perry 100).

Thus the physical features of Perry's neighborhood unit arise out of a deliberate social intention. The concept was developed primarily as a method for extending the limits of a growing city in a rational and organically sound manner into those areas which lie between the business center and the suburbs (Perry 89). In these circumstances, the features which are essential to the concept could be developed most effectively. The starting point for the design is the required catchment area for an elementary school, which determines the physical size of the unit, its density, and its social composition as a haven for traditional family life. Perry's logic was straightforward but was based on detailed research, which convinced him that from 800 to 1500 students was the ideal size for an elementary school in an urban area, with the lower figure being optimal. Perry found that at a rate of 16.72 children per 100 population, the ideal school census is generated by a community of 4800 to 9600 people (Perry 49). With an occupancy of 4.2 to 5.1 people per dwelling (the rate revealed in the 1920 Census), a student population of 800 would require a community of 1000 homes (Perry 50). When Perry selects a standard lot size of 40 by 100 feet for the single-family home, the neighborhood unit achieves a size of 153 acres minimum. Rounded off to 160 acres, this figure is bounded by a square 1/2 mile on a side, which coincides with the requirements that the walking distance to the elementary school be no more than 1/2 to 3/4 mile (Perry 45).
The 1/2 mile dimension also accords with the maximum desirable walking distance between home and neighborhood shops, and it forms a desirable street pattern for the arterial streets which bound the neighborhood unit (Perry 52). To slow traffic and provide visual interest, the interior streets were to be curvilinear and narrower than those typically found in American suburbs (Fig. 10). In order to discourage short-cuts by through traffic, the ends of interior streets were not aligned with the interior streets of adjacent neighborhood units (Perry 39, 85). The land area saved by reducing the size of streets was to be given back to the community not as an increase in individual lot size, but as common space for recreation or civic facilities (Perry 26, 41). Some of the land area saved could also be contributed by the developer to the bounding arterial streets, which were designed to be not only channels for through traffic, they are also the walls of the neighborhood cell. They make its shape and individuality visible to the public. Like fences around a house site, they show the precise domain for whose care and appearance responsibility is assumed by the occupant community. They set it off from adjacent areas which may have different qualities and different standards of residential upkeep. They stop the gradual conversions to business use which may be approaching along traversing streets. Hence, they help to preserve the neighborhood from... blight.... (Perry 104)

The neighborhood unit provides a complete roster of the civic, educational, and recreational facilities which are needed by the population Perry envisions. The unit does not attempt to recreate the city in miniature, but rather to concentrate all those features which are appropriate to a complete and satisfying local life (Mumford 1954 262). Not every type of business, for example, can be supported by the 1000 families of a neighborhood unit; arbitrarily, Perry establishes the maximum market population which can support a neighborhood store at 9,000 people, a figure which his studies showed to include laundries, hardware
A.—LEADING NOWHERE IN PARTICULAR

B.—LEADING TO PLACES WHERE PEOPLE GO

CONVENTIONAL AND NEIGHBORHOOD STREET SYSTEMS

Fig. 10  A Comparison of Street Systems
stores, and shoe and clothing outlets, but which excluded such larger stores as a bank, a typewriter supply house, or a sporting goods store (Perry 76, 79). Shopping is arranged exclusively at the perimeter of the neighborhood unit, a kind of protective buffer between the busy outside world and the delicate residential tissue within the unit. In this arrangement Perry demonstrates the balancing act that the neighborhood unit scheme represents: while it brings a complete shopping district within walking distance of every home, it also rigorously prohibits direct contact between shops and residences: "these small shops should be adjacent to, and within sight of, as few residences as possible because of their destructive effect upon residential tone" (Perry 23, 27, 76). Shops bring with them noisy and dangerous traffic (Perry 65). Particularly destructive are the areas which are changing from residential to business use, for

"There is no great disaster in the complete change of a residential district to a business use.... the harm happens when the limits of the change are unknown, and when for long periods areas remain partly business and partly residential. 'Blight' is simply the name for a state that is neither one thing nor another. (Perry 119)

Placing neighborhood shops on the periphery is not only customary, according to Perry, it also increases the exposure of the shops to through traffic and brings them into contact with the shops of adjacent neighborhood units (Perry 81). Here, zoning has a critical influence. Typically, cities zone arterial streets almost entirely for commercial use. Since in practice this provides vastly more land for commercial use than there is demand, the result is a kind of "shoestring" development where stores are interlaced with homes in an unplanned and uncoordinated manner. Such a street remains immature as a commercial district because its facilities are not concentrated, and becomes blighted as a
residential zone because of the incursions of inappropriate commercial uses (Perry 82). The alternative proposed in the neighborhood unit concept is to concentrate the land assigned to commercial uses at the intersections of the main arteries and use architectural and planting devices to buffer the commercial uses from the residential streets (Perry 82). This arrangement provides both convenience and protection for the residences. By placing a broad variety of stores within walking distance of homes, it also thwarts efforts by entrepreneurs to argue in court that the exclusionary restrictions of the purely residential areas deny a pressing public need which could be met through more relaxed regulation.

Within the residential interior of the neighborhood unit, the community center is the most important feature. Perry proposes that this facility should be located in the elementary school, the auditorium, gymnasium, library or other rooms of which could be used for the civic, cultural, and recreational activities of the neighborhood (Perry 72). Other institutions proposed within the neighborhood unit are churches, a little theater, and a fraternal hall (Perry 72, 74). Recreation space of approximately sixteen acres is needed for the 1,000 families, and this space is best divided up into smaller units so that no home is more than 1/4 mile from a playfield (Perry 64). Dispersing the playspaces also spreads the costs of upkeep and improvements, provides for local management of the parks by adjacent neighbors, and prevents concentration of traffic. The institutions and the parks are meant to be exclusively neighborhood facilities, designed for the sole use of the residents; as the same groups of people use the various facilities at different times and for different purposes, they build up the face-to-face associations which are essential to the development of community spirit.
Applications of the Neighborhood Unit Concept: The Five-Block Scheme

Although Perry's concept was formed around the village ideal of individual homes set in their own lots, he sought to strengthen the neighborhood unit concept by showing that it could be adapted to a variety of city situations. By varying the density of the unit while keeping its population size constant, Perry was able to preserve the essential idea of a self-contained and relatively homogeneous population which provides the census of children needed to support an elementary school, the literal center of the design as well as the symbolic center of the community's activities. As an instrument of city extension, the concept in its more decentralized variations was claimed to be applicable not only to the area between the business district and the suburbs but also to entirely rural situations. In denser variations, Perry showed how to apply it to a district of garden apartments (Fig. 11), to an industrialized area (Fig. 12), and to an existing area of Brooklyn which needed only minor adjustments to create a model 160 acre development (Perry 116).

Most important from the perspective of the central city, Perry also developed a neighborhood unit scheme applicable to central deteriorated areas of the largest cities. His interest was in the transition areas, those districts of factories and workers' housing which in the Chicago School's invasion-succession model are prey to the deterioration which anticipates encroachment by downtown businesses (Perry 42). In New York, Perry observed a twist on the invasion-succession model which has become more familiar in the late 20th century, a return to the city by residents seeking to avoid traffic congestion by living closer to their work in the central business district. Here, Perry believed, was an opportunity to
A METHOD OF ENDOWING A MULTIPLE-FAMILY DISTRICT WITH INTERESTING WINDOW VISTAS, GREATER STREET SAFETY, MORE LIBERAL OPEN SPACES AND A NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Fig. 11  An Apartment House Unit
Fig. 12  An Industrial Section
use the neighborhood unit principle to replan and reconstruct centrally located residential districts (Perry 107). He recognized that the idea ran counter to conventional city-building practice, particularly in its requirement that the unit be bordered by arterial streets and that there be substantial open spaces in the interior. Application of the neighborhood concept within the gridded street pattern of New York would require a consolidation of contiguous land, which Perry proposed to achieve by closing off two cross streets to traffic and carrying the other two through the project beneath raised pedestrian decks (Perry 44, 45) (Figs. 13-15). Because Perry did not believe that it is feasible to close more than two city streets, the neighborhood unit was to be limited to a five block area, or roughly 16 acres (Perry 59). The 1,000 families which occupy the unit - the one quantity which is invariable in all versions of the neighborhood unit concept - live on one tenth of the land area granted them in the classic neighborhood unit of single family homes.

Perry proposes to achieve this result, at densities far lower than are typical for the average New York residential block, by converting the dwellings of four New York blocks into a continuous dwelling 50 feet deep by an average of 135 feet high (Fig. 16) (Perry 113). With individual units only two rooms deep to ensure adequate access to sunlight and views, the apartment buildings will range in height from two stories to 33; the scheme thus combines garden style apartments and high-rise units in a single urban development, achieving units suitable for a variety of tastes and housing needs. The reduction in density in the Five-Block scheme as compared to the typical block arrangement is achieved without any sacrifice in the number of housing units available to the public,
How a Slum District Might Be Rehabilitated

Fig. 13 Five Block Apartment Development (Perry)
Fig. 14 Five Block Apartment Development (Perry)
"Tudor City"—on the edge of a Towering Sky-Scraper District—Makes It Possible for Many New York Office People to Walk to Work

Fig. 17

Fig. 15 Tudor City
The gain in open space through the combination of interior courts and the rearrangement of structural volume on four existing blocks

Fig. 16 Rearrangement of Four Conventional City Blocks
simply by using the available open space more efficiently. The consolidation of city blocks permits more than four acres of the land area to be preserved as a central court, even after deduction is made for the necessary roads and service facilities required by the city and by the developer (Perry 43, 44).

The central space, designed on several levels to accommodate streets which pass underneath, supports a number of facilities needed by the neighborhood unit. Besides the elementary school, there will be a hotel, a restaurant, a laundry, a gymnasium and other sports facilities, and of course playgrounds (Perry 110, 112). The first floor of some of the buildings will be dedicated to shops, and the closed-off streets will become covered pedestrian arcades (Perry 109). The open space is dedicated to the use of the residents, not the general public; Perry goes so far as to require that the open space be entirely surrounded by buildings on every side in order to preserve it for the enjoyment of the residents (Perry 58).

Besides the usual benefits associated with the neighborhood unit scheme — community spirit, safety for children from cars, coterminality of service areas — Perry sees a number of advantages in the Five Block scheme that are peculiar to its central-city situation. By consolidating the negligible and useless open spaces which lie in the interior of the typical city block, the neighborhood unit will increase their utility dramatically (Perry 69, 113). By internalizing recreation within the community, Perry expects that the pressures on existing public parks and playgrounds will be reduced (Perry 113). The lowered density of the unit implies that the local traffic load will be reduced, relieving the streets as well as other local facilities of some of their burden. He
expects that the improvement to a five block area will spill beyond the borders of the development in the form of increased property values and improvements. Some displacement of poorer residents will be inevitable; however, although the Five-Block scheme is intended in its experimental stage for a fairly affluent tenancy, Perry believes that the principle is adaptable to a variety of income levels (Perry 111). Displaced residents will find new and better housing in the Five Block scheme. Most important, the Five Block concept, like the other demonstrations of the neighborhood unit scheme, "creates more or less self-contained local communities, and thus brings into effect all of the social benefits inherent in that kind of environment" (Perry 113).

To carry out the Five-Block Apartment Unit idea, a combination of private finance and public power will be required. Perry is clear that all of the neighborhood unit developments are to be private ventures which will be profitable enough to attract private investors:

the neighborhood-unit scheme...must introduce no innovation that does not produce a net increase of value. From a strictly commercial standpoint it never increases cost without the promise of an overbalancing increase in income. (Perry 61)

However, the municipal and state governments must be actively involved to make the idea feasible. There are three principle reasons, Perry claims, why developers who propose to work within the neighborhood unit idea deserve public support (Perry 128). First, the neighborhood unit provides a decent living condition for those who can afford to pay for better accommodations and would appreciate them. By stabilizing the status of these classes, increases in the numbers of very poor households which are beyond the reach of housing reform would be checked. Second, the neighborhood unit provides a physical barrier against the extension
of deteriorating neighborhoods. Third, the neighborhood unit provides a model for housing reform which will by itself be useful to the improvement and stabilization of slum areas. Perry refuses, however, to promise too much; he says that the neighborhood unit scheme cannot "reach that residuum of social maladjustment which is found even in the best of community enterprises" (Perry 128). The neighborhood unit is not a salvation for the cities of America, but a tool that can be useful when applied in appropriate situations.

The public support for which Perry appeals is not financial, but is rather the devolution of powers to assemble tracts of land large enough to carry out the scheme in accordance with a comprehensive plan (Perry 123). Perry seeks legislation similar to that which awards state aid, particularly powers of condemnation, to housing schemes which are created in the interests of lower-income populations (Perry 61). These incentives to private developers must be joined to a constellation of coordinated public functions in order to create the neighborhood unit: city planning, municipal control of platting of lots and private streets, and zoning to ensure correct relations between residences, businesses and institutions (Perry 118). Zoning and the planning of the major and minor street system are the two most important structural determinants of the quality of the neighborhood unit. Perry’s argument is aimed most directly at the lawmakers of the state of New York, and only indirectly at the private builders who will create the units and the tenants who will occupy them. The thrust of Perry’s intention is expressed in a sentence which closes his essay in the Regional Planning report:

the neighborhood scheme...affords the basis upon which laws could be framed affording aid and stimulation to progressive real-estate projects.... There must be available the description of a unit of population related
to its area, sufficiently definite to be easily recognized, elastic enough to vary with density, and so organic in composition as to provide social justification for its preservation and promotion. Such a description is offered, it is believed, in the neighborhood-unit scheme. (Perry 129)

The Influence of the Neighborhood Unit Concept

The influence of Clarence Perry’s neighborhood unit concept on central city and new town planning was enormous. From the 1930s until the 1960s, and even for some years after the concept came under concerted attack from several of directions, the neighborhood unit and the physical design features it expressed formed one of the core principles of the planning profession. In 1938 an anonymous article in American City magazine stated that "The neighborhood must...be the new unit upon which effective city planning is built. Vast city plans...do not commend the effective support of the average citizen" (American City 1938 56). The social homogeneity which Perry espoused for the neighborhood, and the class stratification which was expected to be found in a city organized according to neighborhood unit principles, were taken for granted as almost equivalent to neighborhood planning itself (Bauer 107).

Perry’s concept benefited from an unusually fortunate circumstance: the public and the planning world were able to see an example of neighborhood unit planning implemented in the same year, 1929, in which the Regional Plan of New York and its Environs was published. Radburn, New Jersey, the work of architect-planners Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, stands midway in a series of city planning experiments designed to synthesize three important planning ideas: Frederick Law Olmsted’s method of separating different modes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic in Central Park (Fig. 17), Sir Ebenezer Howard’s concept of the semi-
industrialized Garden City surrounded by a belt of agricultural open space (Fig. 18), and Clarence Perry's neighborhood unit concept. To these ideas Stein and Wright added their own thoughts about clustering housing units on cul-de-sac streets to improve the efficiency of parking and recreation facilities, a house type which had two front doors in order to clearly articulate and separate the world of the automobile from that of the pedestrian, and the principle of the superblock to provide a park-like setting for the residential cluster (Fig. 19). In the manner of scientists carrying out a series of careful experiments, they had began in Sunnyside Gardens, Queens, with interior courts and houses with two fronts, but were not able in that setting to achieve the street closings that are essential to the superblock idea (Figs. 20-23). In Radburn, the de novo character of the development allowed them to lay out a street pattern which provided for the superblock, the cul-de-sac, and the grade-separation of pedestrian and vehicular paths (Figs. 24-26). Explicit reference was made to the neighborhood unit principle in the cellular structure which the designers gave to each of the residential cum greenway superblocks (Fig. 27). For financial reasons Stein and Wright were not able to provide a greenbelt at Radburn, a device that had to wait for the federally financed Greenbelt towns of the 1930's (Figs. 28-32).

Radburn was influential not only for its physical features but also for the process by which the design was developed. Tracy Augur, the planner for the federal government's enormous Tennessee Valley Authority project of the 1930s, said of Radburn that it stands out "not because it is the biggest or best or most beautiful of cities but because it is the first tangible product of a new urban science", one in which physical
Perspective sketch showing the separation of routes for vehicles, equestrians, pedestrians and outside traffic at the South End of Central Park, New York City. Greater comfort and safety is attained on all routes by the elimination of grade crossings.

Olmsted: Forty-Eight Years of Architecture

Fig. 17 Separation of Circulation in Central Park (Frederick Law Olmsted)

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GARDEN CITY

AGRICULTURAL LAND 5000 Acres POPULATION 32,000

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

CITY 1000 Acres

CHILDREN'S COTTAGE HOMES

COW PASTURES

ASYLUM FOR BLIND AND DEAF

ASYLUM FOR INDEFINITELY CONVALESCENT

LEISURE CENTRES

SCALE

N.B.

DIAGRAM ONLY.

PLAN CANNOT BE DRAWN UNTIL SITE SELECTED

GARDEN CITY AND RURAL BELT

Fig. 18 The Garden City Concept (Sir Ebenezer Howard)
Fig. 16—Theoretical study of a superblock, dated January 17, 1928. It was made by the architects at the time when the idea was being discussed by all concerned, including Mr. Emmerich. It was soon to be the basis of the Radburn Plan.

Fig. 19 Preliminary Study of Group of Residential Courts (Stein and Wright, 1928)

The first unit of Sunnyside, built in 1924

Fig. 20 First Sunnyside Unit (Stein and Wright, 1924)
General Plan of Sunnyside Gardens showing the relation of the development to the City block system of layout, the position of the rapid transit station and the site of Phipps Garden Apartments. The years in which the various stages of construction were completed are indicated.

Fig. 21 Sunnyside Gardens (Stein and Wright, 1924–1928)
Fig. 11—Children's playground in court of the first unit, built in 1924. Photo taken in August 1949
Gottscho-Schleisner, New York

Fig. 12—An inner court built in 1926. Photo taken in August, 1949
Gottscho-Schleisner, New York

Figs. 22, 23 Sunnyside Gardens (Stein and Wright, 1924-1928)
Fig. 24 Radburn (Stein and Wright, 1929)
Clarence S. Stein and Henry Wright, Architects Associated

Preliminary Study of Two Superblocks at Radburn, New Jersey

Shaded areas show the generous allowance of park and play spaces.

Fig. 25 Two Superblocks at Radburn
A Typical Street of the Radburn Plan showing separation of pedestrian and vehicular highway.

See also pages 63 and 267.

Fig. 26 Typical Radburn Street
Fig. 27  Radburn Neighborhoods
General Plan of Greenbelt prepared to show outdoor recreational facilities in housing areas. Note the location of play areas for groups of various ages.

Fig. 28  Greenbelt, Maryland
Fig. 29  Greenbelt, Maryland
Fig. 102—An aerial view of Greenbelt. In the center Eastway crosses from Ridge Road to Crescent Road. Photographed before the Defense Homes to the east of Ridge Road were built
Fairchild Aerial Surveys Inc. N.Y.C.

Fig. 103—Greenbelt. The shores and the lake are used for picnicking and play. Swimming which was popular, is not now permitted because of the lack of funds to pay guards
Library of Congress photo by Gretchen van Tassel

Figs. 30, 31  Greenbelt, Maryland
Fig. 115—Plan of the Shopping Center at Greenbelt showing the new Food Store and Youth Center

Fig. 32  Greenbelt Shopping Center
planners and social scientists established an unprecedented degree of collaboration (Birch 426, 427). Although Radburn was inaugurated only a few months before the stock market crash of 1929, and consequently was never built out in its entirety, enough of the plan was laid out to allow it to become the paradigm of community planning for many years. Used as a model in graduate planning curriculae from the 1930's on, Radburn left its mark on a generation of important new town plans: Reston (Virginia), Columbia (Maryland), and Irvine (California), to mention the most prominent examples (Birch 429). Radburn was warmly embraced by planning theorists and practitioners like Thomas Adams (The Design of Residential Areas, 1934) and Lewis Mumford (The Culture of Cities, 1938). Harland Bartholomew, perhaps America's most prominent planner in the 1930's, noted the value of Perry's Five-Block Plan at the National Conference on City Planning in 1933 (Goldfield 234), and in 1938 he extended Perry's appeal for state enabling legislation by proposing a "Neighborhood Improvement Act" which would, according to a contemporary article, "give old neighborhoods powers similar to those which new subdivisions or small suburban village governments now have" (American City 1938 56). This Act would enable cities to empower neighborhood associations to make plans which would, after proper review and adoption, become the official plan of the area involved. The neighborhood plans would be granted the full force of ordinance or resolution. Significantly, the neighborhood association was to consist only of property owners, and only an aggrieved property owner had the right to petition the court for a stay of execution of the plan; renters in this scheme had no legitimate voice (American City 1938 56, 57).
Anticipating the neighborhood planning structures of cities like Spokane, Washington, Bartholomew also recommended that the city's comprehensive plan should be made up of the neighborhood plans produced by the smaller neighborhood planning districts (Silver 168). This proposal came close to realization in the Chicago Comprehensive City Plan of 1946, which proposed that the city be divided into 59 communities with populations ranging from 45,000 to 90,000 residents, each servicing a single high school, and separated from one another by significant features like expressways, railroads, industrial belts, and waterways (American City 1946 79) (Fig. 33). This is the neighborhood unit idea writ large, the high school serving the organizing function of Perry's elementary school. The Chicago Plan also provided for these large units to be further subdivided into four to twelve neighborhoods, each served by one elementary school and each "virtually a self-contained unit providing stores and other facilities...with the exception of employment." As in Perry's concept, streets would be designed to minimize through traffic.

Radburn also received the approval of influential public authorities. Only two years after publication of the Regional Plan, President Herbert Hoover's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, dedicated to addressing America's housing policies, endorsed the neighborhood unit concept (Silver 167, Birch 435, Dal Co 249). In 1947 the Federal Housing Administration praised a number of Radburn's physical features, but reserved particular notice for its legal structure: "Restrictive covenants are essential...to provide a basis for the development of harmonious, attractive neighborhoods...." (Birch 429, 435, Isaacs 1948 16). The neighborhood unit/Radburn constellation became
This map shows the 39 communities which the Chicago Plan Commission believes will make up the city when the major phases of the Comprehensive City Plan have been realized.

Fig. 33  Chicago Comprehensive City Plan (1946)
the basis for the "Green" towns - Greenbelt (Maryland), Greenhills (Ohio), and Greenbrook (New Jersey) - which were created by the federal government in the mid-1930's primarily to stimulate the construction industry and incidentally to provide affordable housing (Figs. 34, 35). Here, the greenbelt was achieved through the reservation of large areas of forests and agricultural land at the town's perimeter. Through the use of the greenbelt, the cellular concept that Perry explicitly applied to the neighborhood is carried to the scale of the town itself. In 1937 the National Resources Committee endorsed the neighborhood unit principle in language that might have been written by Clarence Perry, recommending

...the organization of the urban area as a whole into neighborhoods and satellite communities each of which provides for a maximum of opportunity for the daily activities and needs of its inhabitants, each of which possesses a social and political coherence which can arouse and hold community loyalty and participation, inspire reasonable civic leadership, and can perform effectively its specialized function in the metropolitan region. (Quoted at Goldfield 234; also Birch 429)

The concept soon became the basis for federal housing policy. Under the effective lobbying effort of Lewis Mumford and Catherine Bauer, who along with Stein, Wright, and others had constituted the core membership of the informal but highly influential Regional Planning Association of America, a Public Works Administration project was created in Philadelphia which embodied a number of neighborhood unit principles. This plan altered the Five Block idea to the extent of introducing higher overall densities on the site along with high-rise apartment units. The project appeared to go beyond even Perry's ideas in creating a separate island of residential settlement within the city; David Goldfield writes that "the concept [was] compatible with the prevailing notion that the fragile neighborhood required fortresslike physical qualities in order to ensure its
Greenhills, Ohio. Town Plan showing 1/ Common; 2/ Shopping Center (northern half not yet built); 3/ Community School; 4/ Swimming Pool; 5/ Inner Park; 6/ Playfield; 7/ Stream; 8/ Parking Areas; 9/ Small children's Play Areas.

Fig. 34 Greenhills, Ohio
Greenbrook, New Jersey. Initial Project Plan, showing the residential blocks with interior commons and walk systems and 1/ Athletic Field; 2/ Community Building; 3/ Shops and Garage; 4/ Future Town Center; 5/ Water Tower.

Fig. 35 Greenbrook, New Jersey
preservation" (Goldfield 235). In 1943 Perry's idea of the self-contained neighborhood unit was more literally married to Le Corbusier's principle of single-purpose high rise towers in New York's Stuyvesant Town, which established "a virtual suburb within the city" on eighteen blocks of cleared slum land in an attempt to attract the middle class back to the city (Gillette, quoted at Goldfield 235). In these projects one sees the approach to inner-city redevelopment that was to characterize the federal and state urban renewal policies of the 1950's, 1960's, and early 1970's.

While Perry's neighborhood unit concept had a visible impact on the policies and planning principles of public sector developments, its influence on private developers, who were to have been the principle agents for putting the neighborhood unit idea into action, was very selective. The most influential model for private development was Levittown, New York, a development which established the typical pattern for residential suburbs across America: miles of single family homes set in fairly large lots along curving streets, requiring use of the automobile for every function of life except, perhaps, visiting with the neighbors (Figs. 36, 37). In Levittown the principle of domestic privacy was given visible reality and the communal facilities which characterized the neighborhood unit concept were almost entirely eliminated. Public recreation and meeting space was kept to a minimum. In its lack of public facilities and its dependency on the automobile it deviates rather violently from the village-like, pedestrian qualities which Perry promoted in the neighborhood unit. Most American suburbs have followed the Levittown rather than the Radburn model; in only a few exceptional cases, for example Houston's Sharpstown subdivisions developed in the
1950's, were the two ideas joined by combining the street pattern and overall scale of Levittown with the centrally located facilities of Radburn. In Sharpstown, the four quadrants of the development each had a major public feature, such as a golf course and a high school (Fig. 38) (Rowe 21).

Thus while Perry's suburban variation of the neighborhood unit had some influence over the highly visible Greenbelt towns of the 1930's and the New Towns of the 1960's, it had almost no effect on the private development which constituted the vast majority of residential building in America after World War II. Nor did the Five Block Apartment plan and its variations become a widely used tool for rehabilitating America's central cities; only in the highly altered form of urban renewal high-rise construction did some of Perry's ideas continue to leave their traces on America's cities, and in a form which Perry might well have deplored.

Emerging Criticism of the Neighborhood Unit Concept

Clarence Perry's neighborhood unit concept had, and has, the extraordinary merit of encapsulating the issues of neighborhood planning into a concrete physical proposition. The power of the idea was revealed not only in the appeal which it had for planners and government agencies but also in the strength, breadth, and durability of the criticism which it aroused. Perhaps because it articulates a vision of what the neighborhood ought to be with unmistakable clarity, the neighborhood unit concept brought to a head more controversy than any other proposal within the history of neighborhood planning. Criticism of Perry's idea began the year of its publication, 1929, and attained a serious level of public
Fig. 36  Levittown, New York (1950)

Fig. 37  Levittown under Construction (1950's)
Figure 14  Large-scale planned subdevelopment: aerial view of Sharpstown in the 1970s

Fig. 38  Sharpstown, Houston, Texas (1970's)
debate twenty years later, at the height of its acceptance by planners and agencies. The controversy deserves some attention because the issues it raised are persistent aspects of neighborhood planning itself. In particular, the neighborhood's economic and social dependence on the larger city around it, and the tendency of small, clearly defined territorial units to take on defensive parochial characteristics, were cited as evidence that the neighborhood unit concept was limited and even deleterious in its application.

The criticisms devolved into three main categories: 1) Disagreement that the village could or should serve as a model for any aspect of modern city life; 2) Doubt about the value of the neighborhood as a unit of planning, and criticisms of particular technical aspects of Perry's planning concept; and, most incisively, 3) Warnings that the neighborhood unit idea was no more than a vehicle for segregation and racial discrimination.

*The problem with the village.*

Criticisms of the neighborhood unit's reliance on the village as an ideal comprised doubts about the possibility of transplanting the village ideal in any form into the city, and doubts about the desirability of doing so (McKenzie, others: Silver 167). Planner Reginald Isaacs said that "aspirations to produce the social relationships of the unplanned countryside by utilizing the neighborhood as a planning formula in the city not only illustrate a sense of morbid sentimentality, but would result in failure" (Isaacs 1948 19). Sociologist Louis Wirth and a number of other critics cast cold water on the possibility of resurrecting the village. Wirth saw a direct conflict between the social
characteristics of the small unit and the overwhelming characteristics of the modern age:

Some believe that the hope of our social order lies in the return to the local ties of neighborhood. The trend of our civilization ...lead[s] in the opposite direction. There can be no return to the local self-contained neighborhoodly community except by giving up the technological and cultural advantages of this shifting...community life, which few would be willing to do. (Wirth, Cities and Social Life, 1933, page 179, quoted at Silver 167)

These changes, critics suggested, had not left the urban dweller an alienated sufferer yearning for community and the small scale of the village, as he is portrayed by neighborhood unit advocates. On the contrary, Isaacs held that the village ideal has little meaning for the average urban dweller, who "is not a gardener by instinct or tradition. His impulses are not pastoral, they are urban" (Isaacs 1949, in Adams 76). According to University of Wisconsin sociologist Svend Riemer, those who would recreate the village have a place in mind which never was, "a place of peaceful bliss and well-organized conformity" which they contrasted with the evil of city life (Riemer 1949, in Adams 70).  

Wirth claimed that the bonds of kinship and neighborliness, which writers like Cooley and Parks saw as so desirable, become attenuated when the members of a social group have the diversity of backgrounds which characterizes the modern city district. Bonds of solidarity in these circumstances are replaced by competitive relationships and formal means of control, including institutionalized rules and laws. As the traditional basis for social solidarity is undermined, secondary relationships begin to substitute for primary contacts, the family declines in social significance, and the neighborhood disappears (Isaacs 1948 18).  

Other writers took up the refrain. At a 1949 colloquium on
the neighborhood unit, Riemer pointed out that the disappearance of the neighborhood was a change to be welcomed, since it indicated a reduction in parochial attachments:

American citizenship is not confused any more by intermediary loyalties to small groups. ...the very aspects of urban life which are to be overcome by neighborhood planning...are the very source of...every great civilization. Cultural stagnation may well be expected where the individual is challenged to escape...into the parochial haven of neighborhood affairs. (Riemer 1949, in Adams 71)

Riemer here directly contests Robert Woods' earlier claim that the neighborhood would reduce parochial ethnic attachments and bring immigrants into a larger framework of civic attachments. Riemer and others protested that the specific urban qualities which the neighborhood unit tries to mitigate, for example isolation and overwhelming size, are inseparable from those qualities which often attracted people from the country to the city: new contacts with strangers, anonymity, and the stimulation of the great urban complex (Isaacs 1948 18; Rohe and Gates 31, quoting J. Dahir 1950). Urban size, density, and heterogeneity, all of which the neighborhood unit planners contested, are essential components of the personal freedom and the economic opportunities which are generated by the great city.

Given that even the most homogeneous ethnic districts in cities were so large that close-knit community life was practically impossible within them, it was not unreasonable to suppose that community life in more ethnically and socially mixed areas of the city would be even more attenuated (Goldfield 236, referring to Niles Carpenter). Reginald Isaacs pointed to a number of specific factors which militate against neighborhood cohesion: the mobility of urban residents, the vulnerability of urban neighborhoods to invasion by alien populations or land uses, the
dispersion of social contacts and centers of activities, and the formation of special interest groups as the primary form of association, rather than the general interest group which is constituted by the neighborhood association (Isaacs 1948 18). The neighborhood suggests a form of collective existence, but urban life has become so atomized that attempts to "'neighborhoodize' local relationships," as sociologist Gerald Breese put it, are nullified (Breese 1949, in Adams 82).6 "Neighboring," which would seem to be of the essence to the identity of any neighborhood, persists only with great difficulty and in a very weakened form in the modern urban environment (Isaacs 1948 17, 18). In Isaacs' view, neighboring was able to exist in colonial times only because people lived within pedestrian distances of one another, families were inter-connected, the population was relatively homogeneous, and people were subject to common fears and therefore a common dependency (Isaacs 1948 17). By contrast, modern means of communication and the specialization of work have removed people's interests from the neighborhood to other areas of the city, rendering it obsolete as a planning unit (Goldfield 236, refering to Jesse Steiner 1929). If these factors militating against the neighborhood unit were already present in Perry's day, the critics of 1949 said, they were even more apparent twenty years later, and especially so in the inner city (Breese 1949, in Adams 82, 87).

The Neighborhood as a Unit of Planning

While much criticism was concerned with the impossibility of transplanting the village ideal into the city, critics also asked whether the neighborhood itself was appropriate as a technical unit of planning.
Isaacs claimed that "the neighborhood unit concept...calls for the arbitrary division of the city into social and physical cells which have no basis in present or future community life...." (Isaacs 1948 22). The neighborhood unit concept implies that by means of street patterns and internal cohesion, both social and physical, the neighborhood can be made into an identifiable entity. Yet the assumptions underlying this pattern, Riemer held, are untested because "we know scarcely anything about the spatial aspects of urban institutional and personal interaction" (Riemer 1949, in Adams 72). For example, the territorial units on which urban facilities like shops and theaters depend are not necessarily the same size or coterminous, and commercial streets may for some populations be points of contact and communication rather than the barriers suggested by Clarence Perry. Consequently the all-important issue of establishing boundaries, a matter which Perry treated as susceptible to an obvious solution, is called into doubt:

Self-contained neighborhoods do not exist. The boundaries of neighborhood life vary for different activities. ...there are also varied neighborhood boundaries for members of different age groups. School areas, for instance, differ considerably from those of adult clubs...the school would not appear to be the natural focus point of a neighborhood. (Ruth Glas, quoted at Isaacs 1949 in Adams 75)

While it is not necessarily difficult to recognize the center of a neighborhood by its characteristic facilities, experience in many cities showed how difficult it is to define a neighborhood’s boundaries; urban communities tend to bleed imperceptibly into one another (Mitchell 81). As Glas suggests, the issue takes on practical significance when one tries to force the service areas for various urban services to conform to the catchment area of the elementary school. Since only some service functions are predicated on density of population (for example housing),
while others must be allocated by geographical extension (for example flood control), it is impossible to find a single formula which will work for areas of different densities (Isaacs 1949, in Adams 74). The ideal population unit, even if such a number could be agreed upon, could not simply be physically expanded or contracted at will to suit varying locations in the city.

Even the school catchment area, the heart and soul of Perry's concept, cannot have the rigidity that Perry’s street system would impose on it. School catchment areas must change as the population changes, otherwise facilities become underutilized or over-crowded; Perry’s concept assumes a population which is static in its familial characteristics, a condition which is generally unattainable under modern conditions of mobility. Where mobility is not the rule, a population which is homogeneous in respect to class and ethnicity is also likely to be somewhat homogeneous in respect to age, meaning that its school-age population of children will grow up together and then leave the neighborhood as a body, rendering the school building superfluous. Moreover, since schools frequently need to borrow resources from one another by sending children from one facility to another for special programs, it is almost inevitable that children will have to cross from neighborhood to neighborhood to satisfy their educational requirements (Mitchell 81). Despite Perry’s careful computations, Henry Churchill charged that the neighborhood unit of 1,000 families "is too large for neighboring, but about the right size for a community. It is large enough for primary political activity and for some control over municipal services" (Churchill 41).
Perry's concept, it was suggested, really satisfies the requirements of only one group in society, the middle-class family whose life is oriented around house, yard, playground, and school. It provides little support for the elderly or for single people (Rohe and Gates 31). Isaacs complained that the neighborhood unit attempted "to mold the urban family into an arbitrary and fixed pattern for its way of life and to strait-jacket our metropolitan areas to a rigid cellular concept" (Isaacs 1949, in Adams 78). The very workability of the neighborhood unit depends on so many factors, sociologists like Riemer, Breese and R. J. Hancon claimed, that far more research was needed before the concept could be defined with confidence. Hancon proposed that

one needs...knowledge of social stratification to pronounce on whether social contacts of parents are indeed bounded by, or even influenced by, the distance their children have to travel to school; or that the proximity of shops and their catchment areas plays a decisive part in delimiting the activities of the family; or that the different income groups...will...satisfy their various wants within the same locations. (Hancon 139)

Segregation and Racial Discrimination

Critics leveled their most ascerbic charges at the social and political implications of the neighborhood unit concept. They brought to bear the same charges of parochialism, isolation, and discrimination which in other contexts have been brought against the pattern of separately incorporated municipalities in metropolitan regions (Briffault). The accusations form one aspect of the continuing American debate about the value of localized units: an attraction on the one hand to the idea of the small, responsive community of immediate concern, a mistrust on the other of its potential for bigotry and exclusion. Catherine Bauer, who with Lewis Mumford had lobbied for recognition of the neighborhood
concept by the federal government (Goldfield 34), also recognized its potential danger as she attacked the "feudal idea of subdividing the city map into a series of standardized watertight compartments, each serving a single function, family type, and economic class". The isolation of Perry's ideal neighborhood, she held, was both unhealthy and politically troubling (Bauer 105, 107). "Variety of work opportunity and mobility of employment are axiomatic in our civilization," Bauer claimed, and for some people this requires that residences be intermixed with a variety of businesses, including industries which would draw on a pool of workers much larger than the individual neighborhood unit could provide. The purity of land use in Perry's scheme would discriminate against just these people. The class homogeneity of the neighborhood unit, a precondition in Perry's view for the development of community consciousness, was also attacked by Bauer as a device that limited employment opportunities for domestics who needed to live in or very near the residences in which they worked. Exclusion in this case also hurt the home environment, which had become dependent on a greater number of outside resources, including labor, than the neighborhood unit idea allows for (Bauer 107-109).

The social isolation of Perry's ideal neighborhood has political consequences, for it breeds a parochialism of attitude which is especially harmful to the children who are understood to be the neighborhood unit's most important residents and those most likely to be influenced by its social composition (Bauer 108). The independent, self-contained neighborhood which was promoted by the Chicago Comprehensive City Plan, complete with closed streets and restrictive covenants, would only reinforce political parochialism by causing people to think and act
introvertly rather than with regard for the city as a whole (Isaacs 1948 21). Even if unintended, the result could well be discriminatory, since the neighborhood "is an excellent device and framework for the organization and enforcement of covenants and deed restrictions against...inharmonious groups. Today, the fear of minority group infiltration is substituted for a common denominator of neighborhood consciousness" (Isaacs 1948 19; Isaacs' emphases). Parochialized segregation, in the eyes of many critics a quality inherent to the neighborhood itself, was doubly reinforced when the neighborhood unit principle was approved by the federal government in its urban renewal policies (Goldfield 237). The correction for this unhealthy condition, the critics held, was to subordinate the concerns of the neighborhood to the larger perspective of a city or regional plan (Silver 167, Goldfield 237).

Advocates of the neighborhood unit idea responded vigorously to the charge that the concept is intrinsically discriminatory. Charles Herrick claimed that racial and ethnic discrimination were not part of the original intent of Clarence Perry (Herrick 40). His assertion was seconded by Seymour Stillman, who emphasized that the fact that the neighborhood unit idea had been misused for purposes counter to the spirit of democracy did not make the concept itself undemocratic (Stillman 43). Lewis Mumford remained the most eloquent defender of the concept. To those like Isaacs who questioned whether the neighborhood retains any meaning in the large modern city, Mumford responded sensibly enough that the neighborhood retains some meanings even while it has lost others. The mobility of contemporary urban populations, both in the sense of daily movement and in the sense of transience of household, does
not lessen the effect of the neighborhood on domestic functions, nor reduce its "formative importance" for the development of personality (Mumford 1954 265, 266). The isolation which Perry's critics ascribe to the neighborhood unit represents a misunderstanding of the concept, since, Mumford claims, no one would attempt to locate all activities in a single neighborhood, especially not what he calls the "occasional" activities like visiting a distant friend, a holiday outing to a forest preserve, or a specialized shopping trip. The neighborhood's special mission is in supporting the domestic functions, and here the self-containment of the neighborhood unit is felt: it offers "to give the fullest advantages of housewifely and parental cooperation and result in the greatest measure of freedom, pleasure, and effectiveness in meeting the needs of family life at every stage of growth" (Mumford 1954 264, 265). Since the neighborhood is an undeniable fact of city life which "exists in an inchoate form even when it is not articulated in a plan", it might be possible through planning to shape the neighborhood into "an essential organ of an integrated city...." (Mumford 1954 269). Isolation of neighborhood units can be avoided by designing overlapping neighborhoods and by forming a continuous green core to link adjacent neighborhoods, as Clarence Stein and Henry Wright did in Radburn; and the exclusionary qualities which aroused the anger of Catherine Bauer and Reginald Isaacs can be avoided by including housing for a variety of incomes, as was done in Sunnyside Gardens where incomes ranged from $1,200 to $12,000 per year in 1929 (Mumford 1954 267).

These modifications to Perry's idea, Mumford seems to suggest, would not alter the essential core of the neighborhood unit concept. Yet it was not Mumford's intelligent correctives which influenced the
standard practice of planners and the policies of the federal government, but the original principles as enunciated by Perry in the 1920's. In those principles, isolation and exclusion are not simply the casual by-products of the neighborhood unit design, but are explicitly stated as fundamental aspects of the village society which Perry sought to recreate in the large modern city (Silver 166). Protection of residences from commercial intrusion in pure enclaves of housing, the use of arterial streets as virtual walls separating one neighborhood unit from another and containing the school children of each, the assurance of a homogeneous population through restrictive covenants, active neighborhood associations, and design controls, are all features of the neighborhood unit which are clearly stated by Perry. The fact that it was these aspects of the neighborhood unit which found their way into practice and policy, rather than the more flexible and sophisticated correctives proposed by Lewis Mumford and partly carried out by Stein and Wright, says a great deal about the extent to which discrimination in America has tended to lay hold of any convenient tool to enforce its biases in the physical as well as in the social landscape of the country.

Notes

1. The Neartown Association plan placed commercial activity on corridors that bordered residential sections of about nine to twelve blocks. Each residential section had a central recreation space, and new commercial activity was to be excluded. Existing commercial uses were to be grandfathered under the new zoning, but were to be eliminated with the sale of the property.

2. The towns were created under the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act and the National Industrial Recovery Act (Stein 101)

3. According to Jacobs, Isaacs was Director of Planning for the Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago in 1948, and in 1961 was associated with Harvard University. Jacobs 116.

4. A durable body of American literature suggests that the reality of small town life was the opposite of the idealized village notion: Thomas Wolfe's You Can't Go Home Again, Edith Wharton's Ethan Fromme, William
Faulkner's *The Hamlet* trilogy, and most devastatingly, Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street* pointed to the venality, hypocrisy, and parochial cruelty of the American village and small town. Only tentatively did these authors hint at the loyalties and affections which constitute the redeeming virtues of these settlements, virtues to which neighborhood unit advocates subscribed as the whole of village reality.


6. Breese was Secretary for the Committee on Housing Research of the Social Science Research Council, Washington, D.C.
1960's to the Present

The attack on Clarence Perry's neighborhood unit concept was not merely a strident criticism of one particular planning proposal, it was an attack on a cherished ideal of small town life which Perry attempted to embody in the heart of the growing American city. Perry's proposal is profoundly anti-urban in its spirit, for it treats the complexity, the diversity, and unplanned lack of predictability of the city as evils to be kept at a distance from decent families and especially from their children. Lewis Mumford was as troubled as Perry by the inhuman aspects of the gigantic modern city, but his vision of an "etherialized city" conceptualized a wholesale transformation of urban life through modern communications and information technology (Mumford 1961 Chapter 18). Unlike Mumford, Perry chose to accept the modern city as a necessary evil which would persist and against which the village ideal needed to be defended. Nowhere in his writings is there an appreciation for the large city as it is, such as one can find in the writings of other designers who also held to the small-town ideal, for example Frederick Law Olmsted and Ebenezer Howard.

In the 1940s and 1950s, criticism of the neighborhood unit concept had come from the planning profession and to some extent from related fields like urban sociology. The attacks were largely theoretical, since there was little accumulated experience at that time of the actual social effects of neighborhood unit planning. By the beginning of the 1960s, however, the rising tide of criticism was coming from those who were experiencing and observing the effects of the neighborhood unit as it was interpreted in the policies and practice of the federal urban renewal program. The criticism was abetted by concurrent developments in the
homeowners’ association movement, in the field of historic preservation, and in the leftist agenda which swept through American politics in the 1960’s.

Urban Renewal

Perry’s concept was joined in planning practice to ideas derived from the French urbanist and architect Le Corbusier, who detested the apparent chaos of the modern city even more than did Perry. Beginning in the 1920’s, Le Corbusier had proposed a design which freed vast areas of land for pedestrian use by concentrating the functions of the city into dense, tall, free-standing structures (Figs. 39, 40). In this Radiant City concept, Le Corbusier sought to create a city that would express through its form and functional disposition the character of the modern world, a world of industrialization, mass production, and high-speed transport. To free the ground plane, he separated various modes of transportation in section and in effect destroyed the street as the venerable meeting place of residence, commerce, and transport. He conceived of the superblock as the safe haven where civilized life could take place apart from the hazards and commotion of the automobile (Fig. 41).

Different as they were, Perry and Le Corbusier shared the belief that new communities could be designed out of whole cloth, a venture that required the clearance of existing communities to provide opportunity for more advanced designs. In that sense, both were anti-historical, choosing to ignore the accumulated, incremental experience of city-building represented by established communities in favor of designs that claimed a basis in rationality. Both design principles placed enormous emphasis on the physical environment, looking to it as a source not only
Fig. 39  A Contemporary City (Le Corbusier, 1922)

Fig. 40  A Contemporary City
Fig. 41. Dwellings and Block Structure in the Contemporary City
of physical well-being but also of moral and social uplift. Both the neighborhood unit principle and Le Corbusier's Radiant City principle relied on the superblock, the relatively self-contained unit that promised to provide a nearly complete array of urban amenities for its residents. Both principles imply a mistrust of the messy, incrementalist methods of city-building that a free-market land economy imposes, and both express the desire to rationalize the social life of city inhabitants through a superior physical arrangement. They differ significantly, however, in their scale and treatment of open land: except for the Five-Block Concept, the neighborhood unit implies a residential scale that idealizes the single-family detached dwelling, while Radiant City locates dwelling in vast uniform strips of medium- and high-rise flats. The neighborhood unit relies on traditional notions of urban space-making that have their roots in the town square and the relatively narrow street, both aspects of positive exterior space that are clearly articulated in the treatment of the Five-Block Concept. Radiant City, by contrast, reverses the millenial tradition of urban space making to give emphasis to the isolated building standing free in a sea of landscaped green, an approach that is explicitly scultural in the demands it makes on architectural form.

This strange marriage of the village ideal of an American planner with the machine aesthetic of a French architect came to fruition in the design and policies associated with urban renewal. The 1949 Housing Act was passed with the specific purpose of eliminating slums and building low-income housing. Using generous monies from the federal government, cities were to use their powers of condemnation to acquire lands designated as slums and sell them back to developers at reduced costs.
The projected increase in tax revenues was to compensate for the write-down of land value involved in this transaction. The goals of the program, beyond those stated explicitly in the legislation, included creation of jobs, improvement of the images of cities, and a demonstration of good government in action.

Following a model established by Pittsburgh, where enormous stretches of the downtown Golden Triangle had been rebuilt using state funds and private investment capital, cities like Philadelphia, New York and Boston applied the federal largess toward wholesale clearance and renewal (Figs. 42, 43) (Tafuri 487ff). Not by accident, these cities followed the Pittsburgh precedent in the crucial respect that attention was focused largely on areas in or adjacent to the central business district. Whereas the legislation had not been specific as to the location of the areas where funds were to be targeted, in practice it was those slums which threatened downtown integrity that garnered the interest of politicians and real-estate investors. In these locations in and adjacent to downtown central business districts, mayors like New Haven's Richard Lee were able to achieve high visibility as progressive reformers while satisfying the demands of construction and employee unions (Judd 270); meanwhile, real estate interests saw elimination of the slums which threatened the land values of their downtown investments and at the same time took advantage of the relatively low land costs of the declared slum areas. Such was the case in Boston, where the desire to remove slums which detracted from the downtown shopping district, bring in a middle-class tenancy of "quality shoppers," and generally give Boston a modern image combined with a hidden motive to break up ethnic
Urban renewal in Pittsburgh, plan of the Golden Triangle.

Urban renewal in Pittsburgh, aerial view of the Golden Triangle in 1965, with Point State Park and Gateway Center in the foreground.

Figs. 42, 43 The Pittsburgh Golden Triangle
ghettoes in an effort to force residents to assimilate to the larger culture (Gans 286, 323).

The orientation of urban renewal plans toward commercial and development interests represented almost from the beginning a distortion of the legislation's stated mission. The low-income housing intended to improve the lot of the people displaced by clearance was never given more than passing attention by the congeries of city officials and developers who put together the plans. Facing both the unpopularity of low-income housing and the lucrative prospect of high-income commercial tenancies, the local authorities which were established to manage the funds and carry out planning tended to ignore the low-income mandate. In 1954 the federal legislation was amended to allow up to ten percent of the funds to be used for commercial revitalization as opposed to low-income residential construction. In 1960 this amount was raised to thirty percent; in practice, it was possible to divert up to two-thirds of the allocation to commercial redevelopment. By the end of 1961, urban renewal had eliminated some 126,000 housing units in the designated slum areas, replacing them with only 28,000 units. In the end, only seven percent of the total construction that was started or planned with urban renewal funds consisted of low-income housing (Judd 273).

The failure to build affordable housing ran parallel to policies that were destructive to inner-city neighborhoods. The slum designation which opened the door to condemnation and clearance was itself a problem. In its report certifying the West End as a slum, the Boston Housing Authority said

...the West End is in dire need of redevelopment because (1) the land is overcrowded with buildings served by narrow streets where housing is mixed in with marginal commercial uses; (2) the majority of the dwellings in the
area are dilapidated and substandard; (3) the steadily declining population of the area suffers from high rates of such indices of bad environment as juvenile delinquency and tuberculosis; (4) the standard of school, community services, and play spaces is far below a desirable level. (Gans 311)¹

Sociologist Herbert Gans, who took up residence in the West End during the 1950's in anticipation of the area's destruction, responded to these criteria point for point. Density, he said, must not be confused with overcrowding; the high density of the West End was not a problem for the residents, and genuine problems of air and light could have been corrected by spot clearances rather than wholesale removal of the community. The mix of houses with commercial uses was not harmful, rather it provided employment for residents and the only source of livelihood for many of the shop and business owners. Regarding the condition of structures in the neighborhood, Gans said that it was true that many were substandard, but that the criteria used to criticize them reflected middle-class values and did not distinguish between harmful conditions, for example rodent infestation, and conditions which were merely inconvenient, for example rooms without closets. Nor did the criteria distinguish between items requiring repair and those calling for the elimination of entire structures. The declining population of the area, according to Gans, did not reflect a condition of urban pathology but rather the fact that family size in the West End was decreasing, so that more living space was actually made available for each household. Gans spoke of a study which cast doubt on the Housing Authority's assessment of juvenile delinquency and tuberculosis in the area. Finally, he said that the deficiencies in open space could be rectified by spot clearances, not wholesale destruction (Gans 311ff). Gans summed up the situation with this remark:
...neighborhoods come to be described as slums if they are inhabited by residents who, for a variety of reasons, indulge in overt and visible behavior considered undesirable by the majority of the community. Consequently, the planning reports that are written to justify renewal dwell as much on social as on physical criteria, and are filled with data intended to show the prevalence of antisocial or pathological behavior in the area. The implication is that the area itself causes such behavior, and should therefore be redeveloped. (Gans 308)

Gans saw in the authority's assessment of the physical conditions of the West End a reflection of the middle-class values of planning professionals, and neglect of the views and needs of the area's working class residents. The planners tended to confuse behavior which was culturally different from that which was pathological. In failing to distinguish a slum from a low-rent district the planners also failed to understand that the low-rent district serves an important function as a way-station for new immigrants. Gans found that the planners' definition of what constituted obsolescent housing was also highly subjective, for example he noted that the housing of the Georgetown area of Washington, D.C., which was at least as old as the structures of the West End, was not considered obsolescent.

Finally, Gans felt that the planners' assessment of the West End gave excessive weight to the physical environment:

...most of the social problems found in the slums cannot be traced to the area itself. ...While the neighborhood environment may 'infect' a few people previously without problems, this happens much less frequently than is commonly believed. (Gans 310)

Gans saw the planners' intentions become self-fulfilling prophecies: with the announcement of renewal plans, landlords put less effort into maintenance, the rate of vacancies increased, desirable tenants left and less desirable tenants took their place, giving landlords still further incentive to reduce maintenance. Finally the area really was on its way to becoming a slum. Yet the elimination of slums by the bulldozer could
not be the answer: it merely pushed the problem elsewhere rather than addressed the root causes of poverty and urban disinvestment.

The social costs involved in urban renewal were enormous. Viable communities that provided support, identity, and livelihood to their residents were eliminated under the designation of urban blight. The effect was particularly hard on the elderly, but it had its effect on the young as well. When he learned in 1957 that the urban renewal plans for the West End were finally going to be implemented, one young Italian said

(I wish the world would end tonight....I wish they'd tear the whole damn town down, damn scab town....I'm going to be lost without the West End. Where the hell can I go?

(Gans 289)

Residents displaced by the urban renewal bulldozer were rarely able to find replacement housing that they could afford, and only a minority ended up in low-income housing. In any case, the new housing did not offer the embracing community that they had found in older central-city neighborhoods like the West End, and many displaced residents faced the discrimination that came from being designated as slum tenants. Gans and others remarked that the residents in effect were required to pay a hidden subsidy for the destruction of their community, not only through their direct losses in business and rental properties but also through the taxes which they paid to support the planning initiative (Gans 321).

In the end, it was debased and distorted versions of both Le Corbusier's and Clarence Perry's principles that were to find alignment with the economics of land development in America. Le Corbusier's vision had been predicated on a central authority which would impose standards of uniformity to achieve a magnificent, unified city to stand with Baron Haussmann's Paris or the brilliant engineering feats of the nineteenth century. Perry, by contrast, had sought the unity and comprehensible
scale of the village. Urban renewal achieved neither. The street was
destroyed as anything other than a vehicular corridor, but without
providing the compensating greenscape which forms the poetry of the
Corbusian vision. The free-standing towers which in Le Corbusier’s idea
were to express a grandeur of geometric order were reduced in the typical
urban renewal project to a collection of poorly matched, independently
conceived slabs and towers competing with one another for the attention
of the viewer and the tenant. The residential aspect which is key to
Perry’s concept was given only a minor role in urban renewal, and
although Perry did suggest that high density was not incompatible with
the neighborhood unit idea, the isolation and disregard for common space
of the typical urban renewal tower complex were antithetical to his idea.
Perry’s rather discrete use of open recreation spaces to focus
developments which are otherwise almost entirely residential or
commercial is here transformed into the formula of open land supporting
isolated residential towers. Goldfield has said that urban renewal created

high-rise ghetto neighborhoods that resembled Perry’s
neighborhood unit plan and its governing village ideal
only in the superblock itself and in the social and racial
segregation it promoted. (Goldfield 235)

So thoroughly had these urban renewal projects departed from Perry’s
conception that the use of the word “neighborhood” must be considered a
misnomer in this application.

The Community Perspective

The attacks against urban renewal focused on both the physical design
features of the projects and, just as important, on the process by which
plans were developed. Perry, Stein, Wright, and other planners of the
1920s had achieved a significant advance in planning technique by establishing interdisciplinary teams of sociologists, economists, and physical planners to carry out projects like Radburn. Missing from this methodology (as well as from Perry's theoretical account of the neighborhood unit design process) were the residents themselves, and in the rising tide of citizen participation that characterized the 1960s, the shortcoming was seen as serious (Birch 437). The neighborhood unit process had accepted as given that the dominant mechanism for building the city was to be private investors assisted by government incentives or powers of condemnation to clear out slums and introduce new models of urban settlement. The advantages of this form of wholesale renewal were perceived as enormous, while potential detriments were not even mentioned by Perry. But with the 1962 publication of Gans' *The Urban Villagers*, recognition grew that urban renewal was crude in its appraisal of what constituted a slum and that it also generated immense human misery.

Since this meant that urban renewal plans were socially dubious as well as financially unprofitable, criticism of standard planning practice took on a decidedly political cast. Poor black neighborhoods, which experienced the brunt of urban renewal, were mobilized by the civil rights movement and by the urban disorders of the mid- and late-1960s to demand that their neighborhoods be upgraded rather than demolished (Goldfield 243, Silver 171). These localized demands in many cases became the core of a more extreme leftist project for redistributing power, which attained theoretical expression in the proposals of writers like Milton Kotler who demanded that neighborhoods be reconstituted as independent political entities. The local efforts achieved practical effect when communities opposed and in many cases halted extensions of
urban renewal (Silver 171). In Chicago around 1963, impassioned opposition was aroused to the urban renewal plans for the Woodlawn and Near West Side (Wilson 243); in Albany in 1973, a grass-roots neighborhood movement was developed to block extension of the state office complex which had removed a good deal of the residential section of the downtown (Logan and Rabrenovic 76). In a number of cities the opposition increased over time: while there had been only the most feeble resistance to the demolition of Boston's West End in 1958, by 1963 resident mobilization was sufficient to put a stop to the city's plans to raze the Charlestown district, which contained working class neighborhoods and a handsome fabric of historic buildings (Gans 281ff, Wilson 243). Similarly in Chicago, opposition to the Lake Meadows redevelopment had been weak but had increased significantly when Hyde Park-Kenwood was threatened, and had become impassioned by the time the Woodlawn and Near West Side opposition developed (Wilson 243).

While opposition to urban renewal projects tended to be localized and specific, the movement was strengthened by two concurrent developments, the nationwide growth of neighborhood preservation associations, and the general movement toward citizen involvement in public policy. Although neither of these movements was concerned with the fate of declining inner-city neighborhoods, they were united in their opposition to the federal urban renewal policies which prescribed demolition and re-building for neighborhoods instead of conservation and preservation (Goldfield 242).

After World War I, neighborhood improvement associations tended to shift their emphasis from improvements to protection. The leftist agenda represented by the CSUO in 1917, which had viewed the neighborhood as a
vehicle for transformations in the social, economic, and political structure of American urban life, was overwhelmingly supplanted throughout the 1930s and 1940s by the conservative agenda of property value defense (Fisher 76, Goldfield 242). Indeed, one of the most forceful experiments in organizing the neighborhood for political and union objectives, the Back-of-the-Yards organization established by Saul Alinsky in 1939 in Chicago, gradually took on a conservative and even racist cast as conditions in the community improved (Fisher 52ff). Typically, in this conservative trend the neighborhood association shifted its emphasis from improving neighborhood services to preventing the incursion of lower class and racial minority residents (Fisher 76). Throughout the 1930s and 1940s these associations appeared in every kind of neighborhood, but especially in the suburbs. As politically skilled entities with which any astute politician had to reckon, the associations achieved considerable influence over the processes of city-building.

Mike Davis has given a vivid account of how homeowners’ associations came to be formidable power brokers in Los Angeles. At stake was the pace of urban development in Los Angeles and its consequences for neighborhoods and for the values of home properties. Homeowners’ associations have been at the core of a "slow-growth" movement which over two decades has decisively challenged "the most powerful economic interest in California today: the land development industry" (Davis 156). One of the central objectives of this slow-growth movement in the 1980’s was the decentralization of land use decision-making to the neighborhood level (Davis 188).

Community planning in Los Angeles in the 1940’s had originated not with communities but with planners in the city and county bureaucracies,
who established community coordinating councils in some 400 neighborhoods in order to strengthen community identity and coordinate social services and charities. This low-key approach to citizen participation remained in place until 1969, when City Planning Director Calvin Hamilton revised the city's General Plan by establishing thirty-five citizen advisory committees to help make "community plans" that would be synthesized into a new master plan. Hamilton was here following the approach of the school board, which had unsuccessfully attempted to create self-defined neighborhood government units with elected boards and appointed executives. Hamilton's effort, which aimed to educate residents in planning and land law, promised to lower density by 45% by reducing excessive zoning for apartments and commerce and by assigning highrise development to "growth centers" throughout the city. Implementation of this plan change was blocked by a pro-growth majority on the city council, and in consequence large scale projects continued to be introduced and traffic congestion grew accordingly.

The failure of this effort led to a backlash among community participants which eventually was to be far more restrictive of development than the 45% reduction proposed by Hamilton. In 1978 the state legislature had ordered Los Angeles to bring its ordinances and maps into conformance with the city's General Plan, as state law required. Mayor Thomas Bradley, whose black electoral supporters had been shocked when corporate and transportation goals supplanted the dramatic measures they had expected from him on inner-city poverty and unemployment, responded to the state order by encouraging the Planning Department to malinger (Davis 128, 190). The homeowners took up the challenge, and in 1985 they won a court order stopping the city from
permitting high-rise development in excess of its General Plan, and
giving the city 120 days to bring its zoning into conformance with the
General Plan (Davis 157, 191). The result was a restructuring of
planning authority in which the heads of the Planning Department and the
Redevelopment Agency were dismissed, city council gained the power to
bargain directly with developers over density variances, and a Citizens
Advisory Committee was appointed to revise the General Plan's goals
statement.

Among the recommendations of the Committee was replacement of
Calvin Hamilton's "centers" strategy with "targetted growth areas" which
would concentrate commercial development and detour it away from middle-
class neighborhoods; and a proposal to downzone most of the commercial
land in the city. Mounting arguments that this "Proposition U" would
restrict economic opportunity and inhibit development in low-income
communities in need of jobs and development, the opposition attempted to
exempt twenty-eight areas from the ordinance's jurisdiction. The
backlash among middle-class homeowners was so furious that the measure
passed in November 1986.

The Citizens Advisory Committee also attempted to strengthen the
position of homeowners' associations in land-use decisions. Among their
recommendations was a proposal to use thirty-five community planning
boards in an advisory capacity to the Planning Commission in order to
institutionalize citizen participation. The Boards were to balance their
fifteen members between political appointees and community
representatives elected directly by the planning area. This structure,
which under the Arnstein formulation could be described as
"participation," was not sufficient to appease the anger of the Hillside
Federation, a long-established and formidable resident’s organization (Davis 171). As Davis describes in, this homeowner’s association sought full citizen control of the development process:

[T]he embittering, generation-long experience of ‘community participation’ in impotent planning exercises had erased any doubt about the need for...reform. ...the Federation rejected the ‘pygmy version of participation’ which appointed token homeowners to advisory boards top-heavy with developers and their agents. Instead they demanded completely elected community boards of local residents, meeting in townhall fashion, and invested with 'implementation power' that could only be overridden by a four-fifths majority of the city Planning Commission. (Davis 194; Davis emphases)³

These Boards would have considerable power to screen new development and regulate real estate in their territories. In the upshot the Federation asked for too much, and got less than the Citizens Advisory Committee had recommended. The entire city council, including one of the community boards’ alleged supporters, voted for appointed citizen planning boards which would be strictly subordinate to councilmembers. The council, as Davis puts it, in effect decentralized planning power to itself through the creation of puppet planning boards. Since councilmembers still had to contend, however, with homeowner anger over commercial development, in 1987 the council passed some fifty "interim control ordinances" which established temporary moratoria on minimalls, hillside development, apartment density, mobile home parks, and other developmental threats to neighborhood stability. These ordinances apparently served to appease and defuse the homeowners’ movement, which abandoned the ballot-box and city-wide planning as means to redress their perceived wrongs. As in San Diego, the ordinances had the incidental effect of increasing median home values rapidly (Davis 157).
Although Los Angeles’ homeowners associations failed ultimately to achieve the full measure of planning power which they sought, Davis’ account shows how powerfully this conservative, slow-growth agenda shaped city politics over several decades. The protective, preservationist attitude of the homeowners’ association found support at the national level in the popular historic preservation movement, which gained force after the late 1940’s in a number of Southern cities with exceptionally well preserved historic districts (including Natchez, New Orleans, Savannah, and Charleston) (Goldfield 242).

The neighborhood improvement associations and the historic preservation movement had profoundly conservative orientations, in the first case for the sake of preserving property values, in the second for preserving the physical mementoes or earlier times. These conservative movements found unlikely allies in the most radical wings of the counterculture. While conservative neighborhood organizations resisted urban renewal out of the instinct or desire for stability, leftist organizations like Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) attacked urban renewal and other federal policies from an agenda of radical change. These organizations emphasized participatory democracy and community organization as the foundation of a new democratic polity (Fisher 100); summarizing this attitude, Charles McLaurin of SNCC is quoted as saying that "the people are the true leaders. We need only to move them; to show them. Then watch and learn" (Fisher 102). In line with this spirit, community organizers within the leftist groups deliberately avoided assuming leadership roles. The results of SDS and SNCC efforts remained slight because they tended to focus on local rather than
national issues and because they failed to sink local roots in the community. Nevertheless, their cultivation of local leadership and their emphasis on citizen participation in planning decisions had a gradual effect on urban renewal policies, which under fire from aroused community groups shifted from the wholesale re-making of urban neighborhoods to their rehabilitation in collaboration with the residents (Goldfield 243). This shift was accompanied by a de-emphasis on physical design and a renewed concern for social issues.

Continuing Appraisal of the Neighborhood Unit Concept

The trends in national politics mentioned here coincided with an intensification of the critique of the neighborhood unit principle and its progeny. One of the most important criticisms was directed at Perry's assumption that physical design would lead to social change. Perry's concept is predicated on the claim that the design of streets and facilities, inasmuch as these influence where people go and with whom they associate, can reinforce desirable social tendencies and hinder the formation of negative ones. With somewhat less audacious assertion than Ebenezer Howard or Le Corbusier, but with something of the same confidence, Perry felt that physical arrangements were of primary importance in creating a beneficial social environment and in influencing the behavior of city residents. Although it is probably unfair to call Perry a "physical determinist," it is also true that in his report for The Regional Plan of New York and its Environs he gives no account of the other factors which might block or even override the beneficial effects of the neighborhood unit design; the only limitation he seems to
acknowledge in the neighborhood unit principle is that its effects probably cannot reach the most irredeemable elements of society.

By contrast, Perry's critics (including a number of planners) hotly contested the influence that neighborhood design could have on the quality of neighborhood social and moral life. As a body of sociological evidence accumulated on the relation between physical environmental factors and social behavior, it was asserted that the connection between physical design and neighborhood social interaction was slight. The social characteristics of residents, their values, mores, and attitudes, were found to be far more significant than physical design in influencing the number and quality of neighborhood interactions. While most critics were content to devalue physical planning in relation to other factors, Herbert Gans went so far as to claim that "People's lives are not significantly influenced by the physical environment" (Silver 171).5

While physical factors were undergoing a devaluation in neighborhood planning theory, a concurrent increase of attention to social factors developed under the influence of the social and behavioral sciences (Melvin Webber and others, mentioned in Birch 435). Social equity, economic efficiency, environment, and the conservation of resources became as important as the physical coherence and neighborhood identity emphasized by Perry (Richman 449-456). This shift of attention affected the goals of planning and its techniques. Students of the city recognized that the social assumptions on which the neighborhood unit had been predicated, and which it was designed to reinforce, no longer existed. Increased transience of families, altered patterns of family structure, the mobility of individuals within the urban scene, all implied that the attachment of household members to their place of
residence had declined (Richman 449). Perry’s notion of the relatively self-contained community, where residents can satisfy a large number of their needs within convenient walking distance of their homes, made little sense in light of city dwellers’ broadening spheres of interaction. More important, the fixed quality of the neighborhood unit’s boundaries, housing stock, and commercial facilities, all determined by the ideal population unit of 1,000 families or 5,000 individuals, was seen an inappropriate to a society which upheld ideals of pluralism and tolerance, and in which a multitude of household patterns and living preferences were recognized as acceptable.

Meanwhile, planning itself was undergoing changes in methodology which were to result in a more flexible and more informed approach to neighborhood planning. New analytic techniques lent to neighborhood plans a more rigorous underpinning; these included studies of resident attitudes and activity patterns, techniques for evaluating the impact of planning interventions, and cost-benefit analyses. Perhaps most important, this period saw a movement away from prescriptive solutions to performance standards, that is, from determination of what the neighborhood should be to how it should function. Perry, as Isaacs had rightly contended, had prescribed a single social solution for every situation in the city, even while his physical design recommendations were given some elasticity to respond to varying conditions of population density. Perry’s vision of a community oriented by the needs of small children and their families led to a planning solution that was specific and prescriptive. In contrast, the new approach looked to the function which a particular neighborhood performs in the city as a whole and in the lives of its residents in order to establish flexible and appropriate
planning goals (Richman 455, 456). Rather than prescribing in advance, for example, that every group of 2000 families requires one tennis court, a prescriptive approach, planners began to study the age of residents, their tastes, and their resources, in order to determine not only how many acres of recreation space were required but also what type of spaces they should be.

As Riemer and Hancon had suggested in 1949, there were many questions about the urban neighborhood and the behavior called "neighboring" which needed to be answered before anything as definite as the neighborhood unit concept could be determined. In 1967 Suzanne Keller collected the evidence then available about the social ecology of neighborhoods. She found that neither neighboring nor the neighborhood could be reduced to a single description. Neighboring, the set of activities on which the physical neighborhood depends for its vitality, is a culturally determined phenomenon that shows immense variation. Perry's uniform vision of what constitutes a good neighborhood could not absorb the range of neighborhood needs which Keller's study revealed.

The shift in the profession's attitude toward neighborhood planning can be attributed not only to political and technical developments, but also to a new appreciation for the impure modern city which the neighborhood unit concept had so thoroughly struggled to overcome. In the same year that Rachel Carson's Silent Spring challenged the self-assurance of America's industrial process, Jane Jacobs's The Death and Life of Great American Cities presented an uncompromising re-evaluation of the assumptions of planning orthodoxy. Jacobs attacked the village ideal at its root: a city neighborhood, she said, is not and can not be a village for the simple reason that a village is a general and complete
population that must address, in some manner, every dimension of human life, while a neighborhood can afford to limit itself to a specialized domestic role (Jacobs 115). The breadth of population of the village generates a degree of cross-connection within its small physical area which is impossible in the city neighborhood, for it is precisely the virtue of the city, and the reason that it attracts villagers to it, that it carries out these same functions over a greatly extended physical domain. The cross-connections of the village make its cohesiveness a daily experience for its residents, but also suggests its limitations: it does not have the financial resources, the number of residents, or the diversity of interests to create great institutions or great individuals, except in extraordinary circumstances. The city does have these resources, but at the price that one must live among strangers, a circumstance which opens both the danger of the city and potentially its greatest gift, approvingly suggested in a quote from the theologian Paul Tillich: "By its nature, the metropolis provides what otherwise could be given only by travelling; namely, the strange. Since the strange leads to questions and undermines familiar tradition, it serves to elevate reason to ultimate significance..." (Jacobs 238).

The danger presented in the city by strangers requires that a social agreement be arrived at that is different from that of the village. In the latter, the fact that people know one another by face, by family connection, and by frequent contact determines a powerful and frequently coercive milieu in which deviancy of any sort can be quickly isolated and socially proscribed - justly or not, as the horrifying destruction of a young woman's reputation in Sinclair Lewis' Main Street pointedly demonstrates. In the city, the need for social control is as
great as it is in the village. But where the village attains order at the price of revealing the individual to the common judgement of the town, the well-organized city does the same thing through its institutions, preserving the anonymity and privacy which allow individuals to acknowledge one another while not being intimate in one another’s lives. Within this arena of anonymity and privacy lies the freedom of individual choice that makes the city a fertile nursery for ideas, innovations, inventions, and culture itself.

While the formal organs of culture - government, universities, newspapers, churches - all do their part in supporting this delicate balance of freedom and restraint, none of these in Jacobs’ view are more important than the street. Therefore the core of her detailed examination of city life is an inquiry into the conditions that make for viable city streets. These conditions can be stated simply enough, although her reasoning is complex: mixing of primary uses, short blocks, a mix of buildings of different ages, and the need for concentration (Jacobs Chapters 8 through 11). The conditions have immense consequences both for the design of city neighborhoods and for the administrative and political structure of the city. They represent a rejection of almost every physical principle stated in Perry’s neighborhood unit concept, including the superblock, the purity of residential land use, and the de novo character of neighborhood unit development. The suggestion implicit in the short block, that the neighborhood should be permeable to strangers and connected to the rest of the city’s street fabric, flies directly in the face of Perry’s axiomatic assumption that a good neighborhood is socially and ethnically homogeneous and to some extent isolated from the general mixing of the city.
The Johnson Era: Community Action Program and Model Cities

By the early 1960s, a number of forces had come together to awaken a growing neighborhood movement in the United States. These included the neighborhood association and the historic preservation movements, the leftist emphasis on community participation in planning, the re-evaluation of city complexity initiated by critics like Jacobs and Gans, and the revision of the planning goals and methodologies of the planning profession itself. In the years of the Johnson administration these forces achieved official standing at the highest level of government in two federal programs aimed at central city neighborhoods, the Community Action Program of 1965 (CAP) and the Model Cities Program of 1966. Not until the inauguration of President Bill Clinton's still unproven Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program in 1993 has the federal government taken such a firm position in relation to the communities which make up America's cities. Therefore the effect of the programs and the reactions to them under the Republican administration which followed Johnson's are highly instructive as to whether, and how, the federal government ought to be involved in planning efforts at the most local level, the neighborhood.

The two community programs organized during the Johnson administration had precedents in earlier public initiatives which addressed the problem of juvenile delinquency in the central cities. In 1958 the National Institute for Mental Health formed a Mobilization for Youth Program; in 1960 the Ford Foundation initiated a Gray Areas Project, and in that same year President John F. Kennedy organized a Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime. These programs created models of central city, community-based organization and planning
which were comprehensive in scope and required the coordination of several disciplines and policy areas (Rohe and Gates 40). The programs shared two common assumptions which were to be later embodied in major federal initiatives: first, that poverty results from lack of opportunity, which comprehensive economic and physical planning can correct; and second, that the alienation of the poor from decision-making and from government was itself part of the problem, which could be corrected partly by organizing grass-roots political movements around the specific problems of small territorial units and partly by mandating the involvement of community residents in programs (Fisher 48, Rohe and Gates 39, 40). The three programs set a high value on citizen participation, and each created projects which were to be controlled and operated by the local community with funding from the national government.

These programs placed their emphasis on planning, organization, and political activity at the neighborhood level, a tendency that attained its most intensive expression in the Community Action Program (CAP) established by the 1965 Economic Opportunity Act in the federal Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) (Rohe and Gates 37). The program has been described by Robert Fisher as "the largest, most systematic neighborhood organizing project ever tried" (Fisher 92). Its stated goal was ambitious:

to effect a permanent increase in the capacity of individuals, groups and communities afflicted by poverty to deal effectively with their own problems so that they need no further assistance (Rohe and Gates 37)

Within eighteen months of enactment, OEO had established more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies (CAA) consisting of public and private non-profit agencies (Callies 290). Largely independent of control from their municipal governments, the CAA's undertook a wide variety of planning
programs, including self-help projects, social action initiatives, mobilization of local resources, and coordination of local programs (Fisher 111). Under the terms of the Act, local agencies were to strive for "maximum feasible participation of residents in the areas and members of the groups" (Baroni 177). In practice, this controversial and ambiguous requirement meant that one-third of the board members of the CAA's consisted of community residents. Later enactments strengthened the mandate for community participation by requiring that the poor be hired to work with the poor, and that residents be involved in planning and policy-making (Rohe and Gates 37). The maximum feasible participation requirement was interpreted by some staff of the OEO and by many communities to be a guarantee of community empowerment, since lack of power was understood to be one of the conditions of poverty. To these people, maximum feasible participation meant not simply citizen participation in the decision-process, but an actual transfer of decision-making power to community representatives (Arnstein 216). To others, however, including members of Congress and federal analysts, the clause meant that people outside the normal political process were to share in the benefits of the program, but not necessarily in the decision process itself.

The ambiguities of the legislative mandate were eventually resolved by Congress itself. Funded independently by the federal government with a minimum of oversight and no control whatsoever by the city government, composed of community residents and those sympathetic to them, the CAA's often took a confrontational approach in their relations to city government (Rohe and Gates 37). In a number of instances, their tactics created a deadlock in which all action was blocked. With local officials
unhappy over their loss of control over community programs, and even more over the specter of ever-increasing demands from militant neighborhood groups, the federal government had to make a choice. In the end it appeased local officials by changing certain CAP regulations. It established private agreements that CAP funds were to be cleared through city hall rather than distributed directly to the communities, and it moved its monies away from programs that gave discretion over spending to the locality and into "emphasis" programs directed at specific types of problems, with narrow criteria for application (Fisher 117, 118). With these changes, the CAA's ceased to be independent organizations capable of radical opposition to the established political structure of the municipality. Rather, they exist today under the Community Service Administration as advisory social service organizations. They direct low priority federal programs and administrate local United Way programs (Fisher 119).

The bitter controversy aroused by the CAP experiment in direct community funding led the federal government to take a far more cautious approach when it inaugurated the Model Cities program through the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966. The goal of the program was broad and inclusive: to provide grants and technical assistance to help communities of all sizes to plan, develop and carry out comprehensive city development programs. These are locally prepared programs for rebuilding or restoring entire sections and neighborhoods of slums and blighted areas by concentrated and coordinated use of all available federal aids together with local, private and government resources. (Congressional Digest, February 1967; quoted at Rohe and Gates 38)

Model Cities programs were to be concentrated on small areas and paid attention to social rehabilitation as well as to physical improvements
(Rohe and Gates 38). By 1974 when the program was terminated, 145 Model Cities projects had been funded. Unlike the CAP program, Model Cities projects were placed from the beginning under the control of city governments (Rohe and Gates 38). A City Demonstration Agency (CDA) was created in every city that received funding, but since the federal funding was disbursed by the municipal government, city governments retained final veto power over planning and programming (Arnstein 220).

Model Cities legislation attempted to downplay the neighborhood as a political entity capable of independent action (Rohe and Gates 42). The program’s requirements for citizen participation were dramatically diluted compared to those of CAP: instead of "maximum feasible participation," Model Cities used the even more ambiguous expression "widespread citizen participation," and instead of mandating resident participation on the CDA’s, the Act merely required that "citizens have clear and direct access to the decision-making process" (Arnstein 220, Rohe and Gates 39). The result was that citizen participation varied widely from city to city, with the mayors in some cities relegating citizens to purely advisory roles. A 1968 federal Housing and Urban Development evaluation discovered that many CDA’s had poor relations with their communities: residents were suspicious of the CDA’s, which tended to represent the upwardly mobile members of the community rather than the entire neighborhood. The CDA’s, the study found, did not provide residents with sufficient information about their rights, responsibilities, and options, nor the information they required in order to review CDA plans or make their own. The CDA’s did not attempt to negotiate with local residents the extent to which citizens would participate in planning, and they also failed to train residents or
provide them with technical assistance. Finally, the CDA's were accused of violating the fundamental intent of the Model Cities legislation by failing to develop comprehensive plans that addressed the reasons for urban decay rather than its symptoms (Arnstein 221). Another study by a private firm in 1969 determined that where the residents were given responsibility for generating plans, the solutions they produced were very traditional. The report stated that these residents were not given the technical resources nor the time needed to do otherwise, and their continuing participation in the implementation of projects was not considered; implementation was assumed to be the responsibility of traditional public agencies (Arnstein 221).

The courts did little to clarify the issue of citizen participation. While one federal district court held that a process of consultation was sufficient to satisfy the requirement for citizen participation (Bouchard v. Washington 1972), an appellate court in NCAWC v. Romney (1970) gave a different reading. This court held that in a case where the status of a neighborhood group had been reduced on grounds that it had initially been given too much authority, the group was entitled to an injunction against the program until it was granted "full citizen participation" in the decision about altering its status (Callies 291). In general, the courts appear to have supported a weak reading of "widespread citizen participation:" while residents displaced by Model Cities projects had the right to be informed about and to comment on plans (Powelton Civic Homeowners Association v. HUD 1968), the courts rejected the notion that a full sharing of authority was the minimum that was required to satisfy the citizen participation obligation (Shannon v. HUD 1969) (Callies 291).
The two federal programs of the 1960's had a mixed record of success and failure. Neither CAP nor Model Cities produced significant improvements in the physical condition of their targeted neighborhoods, and neither was successful in relieving the social pathologies they were intended to correct (Baroni 178, Clay and Hollister 208). Several writers on the subject agree that the primary reason for these failures was the disparity between the programs' goals and the realities of the environment in which they were implemented. The disparities took several forms. More than Model Cities, CAP projected a philosophy of local control that ran headlong against the realities of local governmental administration, which could tolerate the participation of the poor in an advisory capacity but was not willing to share authority with them (Fisher 120, Rohe and Gates 47). Thus the neighborhoods never achieved more than a minimal role in CAP and Model Cities planning, and the organization of poor communities was never accomplished effectively (Clay and Hollister 208, Fisher 116). Most important, the programs promised results which neither their limited funding resources nor inexperienced personnel could provide, and which in fact it might have been difficult to fulfill in the best of circumstances (Baroni 178). The result was that city governments were burdened with demands they could not satisfy and the client populations lost interest, as often appears to happen when programs of high visibility do not achieve tangible improvements (Baroni 178, Fainstein 385).

One of the central flaws mentioned by several sources was the categorical nature of the programs, which addressed specific issues of central city life as if they applied universally. The stringent and complex federal regulations which accompanied the programs did not
recognize the role that the local municipality had to play, nor that flexibility was required if the localities were to be effective actors in the process (Rohe and Gates 48). The programs gave little discretion to local authorities to set goals or determine the most appropriate way to disburse funds, and they approached problems with little regard for local boundaries or for the social realities of the target communities (Clay and Hollister 211).

The successes of the programs were generally incidental to their principal intention of improving conditions in central city communities. The programs affected the professional planning discipline in three important respects: they broadened its functional concerns to include social factors as well as physical conditions, they made citizen participation a standard component of planning procedures, and they brought to the attention of the planning profession the most decentralized spatial unit of the city, the neighborhood (Fainstein 385, Rohe and Gates 46). The citizen participation component of the programs had long range consequences as well. The degree to which neighborhoods acquired actual power at the bargaining table exceeded the expectations of HUD and the city governments involved, laying a groundwork for the future role of neighborhoods as important political actors with which city officials were obliged to negotiate (Rohe and Gates 32). The emphasis on neighborhood conservation rather than renewal was also strengthened by the programs, reinforcing the tendencies already set in motion by the neighborhood association and historic preservation movements (Baroni 179).

Perhaps most important was the effect that the federal programs had on individuals. Robert Fisher claims that "a sense of grass-roots
assertiveness was the central legacy of the decade" (Fisher 123). Through these programs, community residents acquired valuable skills in leadership and political bargaining. In more than a few instances, these early experiences in community activism led to governmental careers, and the noticeable increase in the number of black and Hispanic elected officials during the 1960’s and early 1970’s can be attributed in part to the opportunities that these programs provided (Fisher 119, Goldfield 243). In some cities, the program agencies established under CAP and Model Cities evolved into black political organizations (Fisher 119). The programs also had some impact on neighborhood economics: some participants gained skills that improved their employment standing, and there were cases where local entrepreneurial efforts, for example credit unions, resulted from the programs (Baroni 178, Goldfield 243).

In the wake of the federal CAP program, some cities also began to decentralize their planning programs through creation of neighborhood planning programs. Most notable was New York, which in 1970 established its Office of Neighborhood Government (ONG) (Fainstein 385, Goldfield 244, Mudd 65ff). Dayton also dates its citizen involvement programs to 1967 and the city’s selection as a Model City (CIS 1). The roots of several of the programs examined in this study can be found in the community planning initiatives of the Johnson years, the Community Action Program and Model Cities.

The Nixon Administration

The disappointing results of the federal Community Action Program and Model Cities combined with the dramatic shift in national priorities represented by the election of Richard Nixon in 1969 to produce a
paradoxical effect in neighborhood planning. While governmental involvement in community problems declined, the early 1970's saw a vigorous increase in neighborhood organizing and self-help projects, with the result that the neighborhood became established in many cities as a permanent part of the political environment. On the one hand, the ambiguities in the citizen participation guidelines of the federal programs gave encouragement to, and left room for, the development of strong neighborhood organizations (Rohe and Gates 48). On the other hand, the withdrawal of the federal government from community issues combined with a heightening of central city problems to push neighborhoods toward a populist, citizen-action approach to dealing with central city community problems (Fisher 126, Rohe and Gates 37). In New York city, block clubs were formed (Fisher 126); in Atlanta, a white citizen's group blocked the construction of a new freeway (Goldfield 244); in San Antonio a lower-income Hispanic group called COPS (Communities Organized for Public Service), organized around issues of service delivery and flood control in the barrios, became a significant force in city politics (Goldfield 245); and by 1975, ACORN, the Association for Community Organizations for Reform Now, had carried its program of organizing low and moderate income residents for national political action into twelve organizer-training centers across the United States (Fisher 138).

In reaction to the revolutionary socialist organizations of the 1960's, the new populism took a decidedly moderate cast (Fisher 131). Community organizations no longer emphasized the redistribution of power from central governments to the local level, but focused instead on negotiating with city hall for improved services (Fainstein 386). With
the exception of organizations like ACORN, community associations for the most part were concerned only with their own territory, acting as small, isolated political units (Fisher 132). In Baltimore, SECO (South-East Community Organization) became an effective advocate for a lower-income working class neighborhood. Its accomplishments included blocking a freeway extension that would have cut the neighborhood off from the Baltimore Inner Harbor channel, provision of a broad range of social services to the community, and eventual establishment of a local community development corporation. Throughout its twenty year history it has worked within the existing political and financial arrangements of the city. In Chicago, The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) shifted its orientation from radical social change to the more modest goals of community stabilization and growth, organizational competence, and development of organizations owned and directed by working-class residents (Fisher 128, 131, 145).

A number of nationwide developments gave impetus to the neighborhood movement of the 1970’s. In 1971 the Nixon administration, influenced by Edward Banfield’s thesis that the urban crisis was a myth, abolished the Office of Economic Opportunity and relocated all of the CAP programs into other agencies. By 1974 the Administration had eliminated almost all federal funding for neighborhood-based planning (Baroni 179, Rohe and Gates 37, Fainstein 386). The result was to force many working class and lower income neighborhoods, already aroused to action by the federal programs of the 1960’s, to seek private funding as a substitute. Meanwhile, neighborhood preservation had been transformed into a political force through a combination of developments: the reaction to the harsh excesses of urban renewal clearance, the failure of municipal
leaders to address community issues rather than downtown revitalization, the spreading thin of city services in rapidly expanding Southern and Southwestern cities. These factors joined with a re-appraisal of the symbolic significance of historic districts to promote vigorous efforts at saving at least the physical fabric of central-city neighborhoods (Goldfield 244). 7

But while neighborhoods were becoming more significant participants in urban politics, at the same time their role in city-building became less well defined. The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, consolidating seven categorical federal programs concerned with aspects of the physical environment - urban renewal, model cities, water and sewer facilities, public facilities, open space, and housing rehabilitation - into a single block grant structure. In line with the Republican aim of reducing federal control and increasing the responsibilities of the states and localities, cities were required to submit only minimal information on their CDBG applications and reports and were now given much greater discretion about the use of funds (Kotz 43, 44). Concurrently, the requirements for citizen participation were greatly reduced from those of CAP and Model Cities: an applicant had only to provide assurance

that...it has (A) provided citizens with adequate information concerning the amount of funds available...; (B) held public hearings to obtain the views of citizens on community development and housing needs; and (C) provided citizens an adequate opportunity to participate in the development of the application. (Callies 291)

Where CAP had envisioned a role of shared authority for the community organization, CDBG placed the community into a role of advice and
comment, and by channeling the funds through city administrations, it actively prohibited the community group from controlling the process.

CDBG had two important influences on later developments in neighborhood planning. First, because CDBG monies could only be used for physical and capital improvements rather than social programs, participating citizen groups began to adopt the same priorities (Hutcheson 1984 192). Land use planning came to dominate the formal neighborhood planning programs which a number of cities, including Atlanta, set up in the years following establishment of the CDBG programs. Second, the CDBG monies were to be disbursed for specific projects with only a small allotment to be used for planning. In consequence, city planning departments came to pay more attention to individual development proposals than to comprehensive area plans, with the planner coordinating the financial and land use packages for private investment rather than monitoring the overall health and appearance of a district (Fainstein 387). Community planners now sought to stimulate and respond more to private investment initiatives than to the demands or needs of the resident population. As a result, the inherent structural conflicts that often arose between the community planning program and the financial objectives of the city as a whole, discussed in Chapter 5, were reduced or eliminated. As advocates for developers rather than for the interests of residents, community planners were now allies to the city. Community planners no longer found themselves in the role of community advocates, a position which was awkward to sustain however much benefit it might provide to the community.

While the block grant approach reduced the formal role of the neighborhood group in the use of federal city-building dollars, it
increased the opportunities for participation by those who were willing
to make the effort. To the degree that planners and other officials
became responsive to private development interests, the necessity for
citizen participation in and monitoring of the use of CDBG funds became
more critical. Where this monitoring was lax, it has been claimed that
it was difficult "to hold city officials accountable for meeting the
national purposes of the law" (Kotz 45); but where citizen monitoring was
established, the results were sometimes impressive. In Birmingham,
Alabama, the 31 poorest neighborhoods of the city had been written off as
"without promise" by the city government, but as a result of a citizen
monitoring project, a coalition of 45 neighborhoods emerged and forced
the mayor to attend to the conditions of the poorest communities (Kotz
45). In Nashville, Tennessee, citizen monitoring led to the complete re-
design of a housing project, and in San Francisco HUD disallowed the
federal CDBG funds to be used for a luxury mixed-use development as a
consequence of citizen involvement. Without these efforts on the part of
citizens, HUD had a tendency to hear about the efficacy of the program
only from mayors and developers, exactly the parties who had most to gain
from unscrutinized disbursements from a compliant and inattentive federal
government (Kotz 46-48).

Citizen participation in the CDBG program helped to keep the
program true to its legislative goals, and also trained many residents to
be skilled participants in the highly political process of securing the
federal grants through their city governments. Where the earlier CAP
program placed residents into a confrontational relation with their
municipal governments, leading in a number of cases to a state of
paralysis in which the consensus necessary to carry out planning or
improvements could not be obtained, according to Kotz the CDBG program taught "the far more useful and enduring skill of how to influence local government". This same writer was alive to the problems inherent in citizen participation: "An informed citizenry," he states, "also can contribute to prolonged wrangles, to delays, and to far more politicized - and not necessarily better - decisions...." (Kotz 48).^8

The Carter Era

If community-governmental relations during the Johnson years were often characterized by confrontation, and during the Nixon/Ford era by increased concern with private development, the Carter administration saw a brief resurrection of the idea that the neighborhood should be a partner with the city in urban rehabilitation. When Jimmy Carter said in 1975, "If we are to save our cities we must revitalize our neighborhoods first," he implied that a broad-based resurgence of neighborhoods was to be a national goal at least as important as the encouragement of private investment (Fisher xviii). The neighborhood figured prominently among Carter's urban policy objectives, and the Administration's position was carried forward in a number of initiatives (Baroni 188, Clay and Hollister 27). The Neighborhood Self-Help Development Program became the only neighborhood proposal ever to obtain congressional appropriation (Clay and Hollister 214). In 1976 the Office of Neighborhood Voluntary Associations and Consumer Protection was organized in HUD in order to provide advocacy for and technical assistance to community organizations, to encourage public assistance to them, to coordinate intergovernmental efforts to conserve neighborhoods, and to serve as a clearinghouse for information (Baroni 188, Franz and Warren 231).
In 1979 the presidentially-appointed National Commission on Neighborhoods took the position that rehabilitation rather than rebuilding was both politically feasible and economically sensible. The recommendations of the National Commission were not implemented by Congress, but the report had the beneficial effect of generating organizations which are still used by local governments to provide management, development, and counseling services to communities (Clay and Hollister 213). The work of the Commission also gave impetus to the trend, already begun in the early 1970’s, for cities to establish agencies dedicated to neighborhood issues. Notable among them were the Portland, Oregon Office of Neighborhood Assistance (ONA).

The Carter Administration’s initiatives rehabilitated the idea that the condition of the most localized units of society must be addressed as part of a national, comprehensive urban strategy. These efforts were indirect and were not sufficient to reverse the general drift of urban policy toward private development as the preferred solution to the problems of America’s cities. The recommendations of President Carter’s Committee, it has been claimed, were "too little too late" (Clay and Hollister 214). With the defeat of Jimmy Carter in 1979 by Ronald Reagan, the subsidy of neighborhood efforts by federal grants received a major setback (Franz and Warren 231). While President Reagan embraced the rhetoric of neighborhood action and control, he dismantled such Carter initiatives as the Neighborhood Self-Help Development Program. Neighborhood organizations which had had an advocacy orientation under Carter now turned to development. Neighborhood planning also took a turn toward development and away from social issues and comprehensive planning, but with an orientation somewhat different from that of central
business district plans. While the latter have been clearly concerned with stimulating development in order to improve the fiscal base of the city, generate jobs, and increase the general commercial and industrial standing of the cities, development in central city neighborhoods since 1980 has been focused on improving the housing and residential environment of the neighborhood's inhabitants (Clay and Hollister 209, 213).

The decline of community-based planning at the national level can partly explain the emergence of municipal neighborhood planning ventures. The increase in citizen participation in the early 1970's, the enhancement of small-area electoral politics through enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, and the withdrawal of the federal government from direct program management were accompanied by a significant increase in municipal neighborhood planning programs.

**Traditional Neighborhood Development**

While cities have turned to neighborhood planning in the years since the Carter administration as a way to address localized problems, the planning and urban design professions have approached the problem of the local community from a different perspective. Recognizing the flaws in the typical decentralized residential development represented by the Levittown model, advocates of Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) have sought a paradigm for community design that looks back to a period before Perry's neighborhood unit concept. Specifically, these urbanists protest against the waste of land and the inefficiency of infrastructure that is implicit in the Levittown model, against the vast consumption of automobile fuel and time that decentralization imposes on even the
simplest functions of daily life, against the implicit bias of "monoculture" neighborhoods in favor of a single type of household, and of the spiritual emptiness of "this placeless smear called the suburbs" (Calthorpe PP iii). They seek to re-instill the qualities and values expressed in the form of traditional towns, namely personal contacts, concentration of functions within walking distance, and a mix of housing types to accommodate a broad segment of society. Their designs are meant to accommodate conditions which have rendered obsolete the assumptions of Levittown, especially the shift away from the nuclear family model and the increase of back-office employment opportunities as the American economy moves from an industrial base to a service orientation. Most important, they seek to re-establish a place for civic life within the residential neighborhood by bringing to it public facilities that will be prominent within its domain.

Many of these intentions echo those of Perry in the 1920's; but in physical form, the new neighborhoods are very different (Figs. 44-46). Where Perry sought to exclude all but local traffic from the neighborhood unit, traditional neighborhood development treats the neighborhood as a filter that is porous to the vehicular movement of adjacent areas. Where Perry adamantly proscribed commerce by placing it as a virtual wall at the perimeter of the neighborhood, the new urbanists deliberately design a mix of commerce into the neighborhood in order to provide services and fulfill localized employment and institutional functions. And where Perry was intent on achieving social and economic homogeneity within the neighborhood, the current wave of thinking seeks to address the complex composition of contemporary American life by entraining a variety of housing types, services, and employment opportunities within the
Fig. 44  Deerfield (Duany/Plater-Zyberk)

Fig. 45  Deerfield

Fig. 46  Deerfield and Surrounding Future Town
pedestrian orbit. The goals of this new movement are multiple: to reduce traffic congestion and give commuters more personal time; to provide independence of movement to groups that are excluded from the automobile, especially the very young and the elderly; to provide a full range of housing types so that "age and economic class are integrated and the bonds of an authentic community are formed;" and by including civic buildings in the community, to ensure that "democratic initiatives are encouraged and the organic evolution of the society is secured" (Boles 87).

Traditional neighborhood development uses codes and aesthetic stipulations to guide a social intent. The code developed by designers Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk is explicit in its traditionalist intention:

This ordinance is designed to ensure the development of open land along the lines of traditional neighborhoods. Its provisions adopt the urban conventions which were normal in the United States from colonial times until the 1940s.

The ordinance promotes proximity of homes, shops, and workplaces, a principle that is designed to encourage pedestrian movement and which, its promoters claim, lies beyond debate. In a development of 40 to 200 acres, the code mandates that all buildings front onto a street or park and that blocks be no more than 500 feet on a side; there are therefore no superblocks in these developments and no homes that front onto isolated pedestrian paths like those found at Radburn and Greenbelt. The code prescribes a public presence by mandating that five percent of the land be dedicated to buildings of communal use and that all lots dedicated to civic functions be adjacent to a park or a public square. The developer is obligated to build a neighborhood meeting hall once 75
percent of the lots in the development are sold, and there must be one
day care facility for every fifty dwellings. Green spaces are secured
through a requirement that fifteen percent of the development be given
over to parks or squares and that a large fifty percent be dedicated as a
greenbelt that will enclose no less than 75 percent of the development;
this area, a minimum of 200 feet across, can be used for golf courses,
farming, or recreation. Commercial activity within the community is
ensured by requiring that a minimum of five percent of the land, and a
maximum of fifty percent, be dedicated to stores and other forms of light
commercial use, with the stipulation that no less than 25 percent of the
building area of these facilities must be residence. There is some
provision for light industrial and automotive uses. Housing is a mixture
of single-family structures and rowhouses, but regulations governing lot
size and assembly exclude the extremes of housing like large apartment
blocks and extensive mansions.

Since 1980, Traditional Neighborhood Development has achieved a
number of built renderings that expose the strengths and weaknesses of
the principle. Seaside in the Florida panhandle (begun 1979) has
achieved fame and even notoriety as an expression of a code that has
generated a comprehensible, coherent town fabric through private efforts
overlaid onto a virtually baroque street pattern (Figs. 47, 48). Critics
point out, however, that Seaside tends to recreate the image of the small
town without its broad mix of social and economic types, or the
limitations which led generations of small town folk to flee to the
cities. A resort town catering to an affluent and highly mobile
population, Seaside can be seen as a worthy experiment, but its
applicability to more complex urban situations must be questioned; in
Fig. 47  Seaside, Florida (Duany/Plater-Zyberk, 1979)

Fig. 48  Seaside, Florida
particular, it makes no provision for dense, affordable housing, for mass transit, or for the vast retail and employment facilities that are mandated by modern transportation and by the economics of production, construction, and marketing. The specialization of these communities is illustrated by the Kentlands in Gaithersburg, Maryland (1988), a development designed according to Traditional Neighborhood Development principles but tied to a large shopping mall that is essential to the success of the entire development. Although many offices in the Kentlands are combined with street-level stores along traditional Main Street design principles, the dependency of the development on large-scale, highway oriented retail suggests that the village-like self-sufficiency idealized by the designers is difficult to achieve in practice. Kentlands remains a suburb of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region rather than a village in any true sense.

Seaside, Kentlands, and other Traditional Neighborhood Developments are private ventures that must appeal to the conventions of the American housing market. It is not too surprising, then, to find that the architectural expression in these settlements is very traditional and that the expressed intention of mixing income and age groups is not carried out in practice. It must be recognized, however, that these developments are early experiments in a movement which has achieved solid support in academia, in planning and government circles, and to some extent among investors.

The inherent limitations of Traditional Neighborhood Development are somewhat overcome in the Pedestrian Pocket model developed by Peter Calthorpe, which shows little interest in aesthetic codes but does deliberately incorporate high-speed, high-volume mass transit along with
Fig. 49  The Pedestrian Pocket Concept (Calthorpe)
an emphasis on a mixed palate of housing types, employment opportunities, and civic support facilities (Fig. 49). Although small at 5,000 people, the Pedestrian Pocket generates densities that go well beyond those of the village - for example, 2000 units of housing and one million square feet of office space within three blocks of a light rail station - but at a physical scale which is compatible with pedestrian needs. The incorporation of mass transit moves the Pedestrian Pocket principle into the realm of government activity and provides a regional perspective; one of the stated intentions is to provide jobs for 16,000 people within four stops on a light rail line, a target which cannot be achieved within the pedestrian pocket by itself (Boles 88).

This movement is in a high state of flux and has yet to prove that its design principles have a broad appeal either to developers or those to whom developers look, the American consumer. Traditional neighborhood development claims to offer advantages that will be immediately apparent to American households, but in fact life in these towns requires an adjustment of habit that runs directly against the grain of American culture. The prevailing form of new residential development in the United States remains the single family home in a purely residential enclave, or multi-family garden style apartments in complexes that are related to highway access. Both manifest all the personal advantages and the societal disadvantages of a way of life that depends at every turn on the automobile, and their popularity opens for question whether Americans are really interested in leaving behind their cars for what may be a more urbane but less convenient style of living. The fate of Stein and Wright’s elegant Baldwin Hills Village plan in California lends caution to attempts at radically reforming the residential paradigm (Fig. 50):
Fig. 132—Aerial view of Baldwin Hills Village showing the contrast between the development according to the Radburn idea and the typical speculative development to the north and south. Baldwin Hills are at the south (bottom) of the picture.

Fairchild Aerial Surveys Inc., Los Angeles

Fig. 50 Baldwin Hills Village (Stein and Wright)
where Baldwin Hills projects ample semi-public and public space as a compensation for multi-family attached dwelling, the suburbs more recently built to either side of it sacrifice all public space for the sake of the large-lot, isolated single family home. With a clear model of public life within sight, Americans still chose to make the private domain the essential component of the residential neighborhood.

Cultural movements are often slow to take root, and it is premature to judge whether Traditional Neighborhood Development is just a minor note of dissension in the face of rampant urban sprawl or whether it will turn into a shift of orientation that is substantial and long-lasting. The question of whether it will work, however, is subordinate to the question of whether it should work. Given all the differences with respect to physical design between the neighborhood unit concept and the traditional neighborhood development idea, in the language of the new urbanists one hears echoes of the goals of Clarence Perry: face-to-face encounter between individuals, civic involvement, relative self-sufficiency, a pedestrian scale to replace the vast automobile-based scale of the metropolis. These apparently worthy goals raise all the issues that emerged from the strident criticism that the neighborhood unit principle faced in the 1940's through 1960's: whether resurrection of the village's form and social structure is not a mere fancy that has no grounding in how people actually do live in a contemporary metropolis; whether the village should be recreated, since it was the site not only of close familiar and neighborhood ties but also of parochialism and exclusion; whether the economics of modern commercial life and residential construction permit the fine-grained texture on which these developments depend.
Most important, it must be asked whether the solutions proposed by either the discipline of urban design, represented by the "New Urbanism" of Duany, Plater-Zyberk, and Calthorpe, or by the planning profession, represented by the plans reviewed in this study, are more than topical, that is, whether they address in a fundamental way what the neighborhood is and what role it should play within the larger metropolitan economy. While both traditional neighborhood development and the pedestrian pocket principle do incorporate employment and services into their design, and in that sense alter the neighborhood from a site of pure consumption to one that mixes consumption and production, it must be questioned whether they go far enough. The traditional monoculture neighborhood adequately and often beautifully serves the needs of middle-class and affluent households that are relatively free from the locality for their employment and services needs. The neighborhood designs proposed by the New Urbanists make adjustments within the traditional pattern to provide for the needs of a population that is far more varied than that envisioned by the builders of the traditional suburbs.

What none of these propositions address, however, is the central city low-income neighborhood, that neighborhood which is crucially dependent on local services and employment but has little to offer in return. The skills and educational attainment of its population are suited to types of industrial activity that occupy vast areas that are inhospitable to residential values. These areas are often separated by many miles from the populations that work in them, or, where they are located nearby, bring into the neighborhood problems of noise, pollution, and traffic that cannot be ignored. Mere adjustments in the location and type of local stores will undoubtedly improve these neighborhoods, but
will not fundamentally alter their dependency and vulnerability in the face of larger regional forces that have left them without a viable economic role. While the new demands of a service-oriented economy may bring employment opportunities, in general the skills that the population can offer are not aligned with the requirements of information processing. To address the needs of these central-city neighborhoods, a proposition is required that reaches beyond the current thinking, as it is represented both within the planning documents studied in Chapter 7 and in the design propositions of the New Urbanism. The outlines of such a proposition are found in the Conclusion, and point to areas of economic research and endeavor that lie beyond current neighborhood planning.

Notes

3. The proposal bears resemblance to Harlan Bartholomew’s plan for community self-management, described in the previous section.
6. Cloward and Ohlin, in Delinquency and Opportunity (1963), noted the "marked discrepancies between culturally induced aspirations among lower class youth and the possibilities of achieving them by legitimate means."
7. The trend toward conservation and away from rebuilding was not solely an American phenomenon; in a single three-year period beginning in 1971, West Germany, Sweden and Great Britain joined the United States in terminating their urban renewal policies and developing programs of incentives for urban conservation (Goldfield 246). The political role of American city neighborhoods was enhanced by court decisions which in some parts of the South struck down at-large electoral arrangements as inherently discriminatory, an outcome of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Goldfield 245).
8. While the results of citizen monitoring were encouraging in some cases, it has been difficult to generalize these results. Since CDBG monies are handled by city governments, they suffer from one of the primary vices of decentralization, wide variation of standards. Baltimore, for example, has used its CDBG dollars to set up a broad array
of programs and has stretched the physical orientation of the CDBG mandate to include social and planning programs. By contrast, Houston has been so ineffective in its use of the funds that its two most visible projects, the El Mercado del Sol ethnic market and the Memorial Plaza housing development, have failed financially and have been closed down. Both Baltimore and Houston have been forced to return large sums of CDBG money because of failure to process housing applications in a timely manner.
VOLUME II

LOCAL DOMAINS: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND THE INTERESTS OF CITIES

by

DAVID LEVER
PART III: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROGRAMS IN THIRTY AMERICAN CITIES

CHAPTER 7: THE STRUCTURE OF NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROGRAMS

The Role of Neighborhood Planning

The discussion above places contemporary American neighborhood planning in a historical, policy, and design context. As communication and transportation have gained in efficiency, the neighborhood has lost many of its traditional meanings as a primary location for individuals' cultural, social, economic, and political activities. Despite these changes, however, neighborhoods retain significance as the context for most individuals' home life, and for some groups, particularly those whose mobility is restricted by age or economic status, the neighborhood is of crucial importance. Because of its ease of identification and because the scale of its problems are relatively comprehensible, the neighborhood has been promoted as a logical unit of planning, a corrective to the excessive centralization of planning authority that is one legacy of the Progressive Reform era. Yet the benefits of localized planning - sensitivity to the particular needs of communities, involvement of residents in issues that concern them in their daily lives, improvement of communication between citizen and government, sharing of the burdens of improvement with the community - have been felt by many writers to be at least balanced, if not outweighed, by its inherent difficulties and dangers. Chief among these is parochialism, the tendency of communities to use their delegated planning authority to either exclude important city functions and populations, or to embrace them with insufficient scrutiny. In these respects neighborhood planning represents a special case of a larger problem, the decentralization of government powers to the local level.
Neighborhood planning poses a dilemma for the city. It answers to the demands of a powerful political constituency, the neighborhood resident, for some measure of participation in city-building decisions, but by inhibiting the interest of developers it can undermine a city's financial capacities. This conflict arises because the American city is in reality a creature with two identities: it is a political organization which must answer to its constituents and it is at the same time a corporation that must rely heavily on property taxes for its financial health. The use to which urban land is put is often the battlefield on which the inherent tension of these two imperatives is played out. The two interest groups involved in this conflict, the neighborhood resident and the developer, have different understandings of what land is: for the first group land is seen as a domicile to which values of permanence and stability are attached, while for the second it is understood as a commodity which attains profitability to the degree to which it is easily conveyed and easily altered. The difference of attitude finds its way into the discipline which particularly deals with the use of land, namely comprehensive planning. The conflict places community planning in particular, and the community planner as an advocate for the community perspective, into a tenuous and unstable relation to the elected officials of the city, to the city's operating departments, and even to the residents who are intended to be the beneficiaries of the programs. The result is often a cyclical rise and fall in the status of neighborhood planning and community participation, as the experience of San Diego shows.

Despite these liabilities, neighborhood planning has become an entrenched part of many American city governments. Its roots lie in the
settlement houses of the 1890's, which carried out an agenda of social improvement that in some cases found expression in the physical environment. Neighborhood planning was given firm theoretical standing in the neighborhood unit principle of Perry, and despite the often stringent criticism which was aimed at Perry's concept, it has until recently had little competition in the field of community planning theory. The clarity and success of Perry's idea has not, however, found an equivalent echo in national policy: the various initiatives begun under the Johnson administration bore little real success in neighborhood improvements, although they did lead to increased community participation and helped to reverse the federal policy of community destruction through urban renewal. But under the Republican administrations that have dominated the national scene since the end of the Johnson era, the central city community as a comprehensive social and economic unit has been supplanted in the national agenda by policies that encourage individual development projects. Thrown back on their own resources, cities have responded to their residents' demands for enfranchisement in the planning process by creating the array of neighborhood planning programs which are the subject of this study.

Research Objectives

What are these neighborhood planning programs, and what general characteristics do they reveal? What relation do they have to the city-building process, and how do they incorporate the citizen into their procedures? Four aspects of neighborhood planning are particularly important in answering these questions: the standing of the plan in relation to land-use instruments like zoning, the standing of the citizen
group as a participant in the planning process, the legal authority that enforces the plan, and the formal characteristics of the planning process itself. In the section which follows, these four characteristics are studied as they appear in the neighborhood planning programs of thirty American cities. The four characteristics allow the great variety of neighborhood planning programs to be fitted into a simple schema for the purposes of classification. When studied in relation to environmental factors, to the motivations that led to formation of the programs, and to the legal environment provided by the state, clues are offered about when and why neighborhood planning programs are initiated.

Ultimately, one wants to know if the structuring of neighborhood planning programs has a bearing on effectiveness, or whether effective planning depends more critically on indigenous characteristics - leadership, the local traditions of planning, economics - which must be cultivated locally. If program structure does have a relation to effectiveness, the possibility exists that cities could literally import program characteristics that have proven effective in another city and which can be tailored to local conditions; such appears to be action taken by Raleigh, North Carolina, when it copied large sections of Phoenix, Arizona's neighborhood planning program. If, however, program effectiveness can not be traced to structure, then the characteristics of the neighborhood planning program might be viewed as a symptom of city culture rather than as one of its determinants.

The effectiveness of neighborhood planning programs is the area of future study for which the specific research in this dissertation sets the stage. This study is concerned with occurrence, the conditions under which different program types and different program characteristics will
be found. The study which must complement this one will be concerned with results, the actual effects that the different types of neighborhood planning programs have had in the physical environment. By providing a simple schema of program classification, and by relating the elements in this schema to specific conditions of municipal economy, demographics, and legislation, the current study will make it possible to determine when, and if, a program of a particular type is likely to be found in a specific urban condition. If the effectiveness of neighborhood planning programs in specific instances can be asserted with some confidence, cities will gain at least the knowledge that similar conditions have engendered similar solutions, even if it is not yet known whether those solutions are effective. This by itself may allow cities to narrow their range of policy options, to communicate more effectively with one another, and to study one another’s experience with a particular program type. If, beyond this, the effectiveness of neighborhood planning program types in specific circumstances can be asserted through future research, central cities will gain policy instruments that will aid in the struggle against decline, disinvestment, and neighborhood failure.

The Four Characteristics of Neighborhood Planning Programs: An Overview

Critical issues which concern all planning are the legal standing of the plan, that is, whether the plan is advisory or has the force of law, and the level of authority that is involved in the adoption of the plan by the city. It is in the standing of the plan and the force of its adoption that the conflict of cities expressed above, between satisfying the demands of citizens and the requirements of development, comes to a head. While a plan can be effective only to the extent that it has the
support of resident and economic interests, the legal standing of the plan is an additional factor that affects its relation to implementation: only a plan which carries the force of law plays an inescapable role in land-use decisions regarding infrastructure, new development, zoning changes, public facilities, and environmental protection. A plan with advisory status still can have influence over these land-use decisions, but only as a general guide which must at best be considered by decision-makers as they review development proposals, capital improvement program initiatives, or requests for zoning variances. In this study, plans which have a relation to implementing regulation, i.e. those that have the force of law in some sense, are called "strong" plans. While not all strong neighborhood plans are adopted by ordinance, and not all plans adopted by ordinance are strong plans, the evidence shows that there is a firm connection between these two aspects of neighborhood planning programs. This is only logical: one would expect that a plan which claims to have the force of law in its relation to implementation would be supported by the strongest legislation which a city can muster to uphold it. The relation is so clear that it is the anomalous cases which must be explained: strong plans which are adopted through resolutions or through weaker forms of municipal approval, as well as plans passed by ordinance which do not have force of law.

Neighborhood planning programs are invariably motivated by the principle that citizens should participate in the processes of government. The extent of such participation is the essential issue, and raises the question whether city governments promote citizen participation out of a genuine belief in democratic values and a need to share the burdens of planning with citizens, or whether citizen
participation is merely a way to provide the outward forms of involvement in government without altering the essential mechanisms by which city-building decisions are made. The answer is likely to vary considerably from city to city as a function of local culture and the political and economic pressures which a city experiences. One of the purposes of this study is to determine the circumstances under which different approaches to citizen participation are exercised.

The level of citizen participation which the neighborhood planning program promotes is indicated by the powers and responsibilities assigned to the neighborhood group as a partner in the development of neighborhood plans. The first set of factors, group powers, generally has to do with the extent to which the neighborhood group is involved in carrying out the research, making the proposals, and writing the text of the plan, as opposed to simply responding to a plan prepared by a city agency. The second set, group responsibilities, is concerned with the rules which govern the formation of new neighborhood planning groups and the maintenance of existing groups in good standing. While the range of possibilities is considerable, there are indications that the powers and obligations of neighborhood groups have important relations to the other structural features of the programs and to salient environmental features. These relations are discussed in Chapter 9. Cities which give full legal authority to the neighborhood plan, and at the same time authorize the community to participate in more than an advisory role, have indicated that neighborhood quality ranks with development as a goal of the city. Whether such an explicit process also has a dampening effect on potential development is a question that will greatly interest city administrators.
The legitimacy of neighborhood plans is also implicated by the processes which are used to develop them, since it is here that the issue of equity comes to the fore. How the boundaries of the planning area are established, who develops the plan, what steps are taken to insure that all parties are represented in the setting of goals and areas of study, how the general community is allowed to respond to the plan at various stages of its development, are questions of concern to both the city government and to residents. Planning in a democratic society should ideally involve all parties which are affected by the outcome of the plan, all those who must bear the costs of improvements or are likely to receive their benefits. Ideally, there is a connection between the two: parties which bear costs should also receive benefits, and those that benefit from the plan must help to support it. According to this principle, people adjacent to the planning area who experience spillover effects from its land-use decisions should have a voice in its formulation. Alternatively, parties may try to influence plans who do not have to bear any portion of the costs - parties, that is, who may encourage improvements which are more costly than are warranted or are inappropriate to the actual needs of the population. These might include, for example, investment interests which promote infrastructure improvements in order to enhance office development along principle corridors that adjoin the neighborhood. The principle of accountability demands that boundaries be drawn that reflect the geographic scope of the issue or issues which are being addressed, and that the process of planning be designed to engage all people who will be affected by the plan. While the principle is valid at every level of planning, it is extraordinarily difficult to carry out in practice, for reasons that
relate to both the subject matter of comprehensive planning and to the peculiar behavior of community organizations.

Comprehensive planning is concerned with the interrelations between a complex set of functional issues: economic development, transportation, infrastructure, housing, environment, recreation, public facilities, and social services, to name only those most often listed in planning documents. Each of these issues examined separately has its own logical geographic domain, and there is no rational necessity that the domain of one will coincide with that of the others; therefore different constituencies are involved in each functional issue. When an attempt is made to bring these different domains into the geographic scope of a single neighborhood comprehensive plan, it is almost inevitable that parties will be left out who have an interest in the outcome of the plan, and others will be included who have only marginal interest in it. The requirements of specialized planning based on functionally defined areas, and the requirements of a neighborhood plan which comprehensively addresses all the issues which affect the neighborhood, are frequently in a conflict which engages the technical limits of planning and the political interests of those who experience benefits and costs from the planning effort.

A city which establishes a neighborhood planning program is liable to the charge that it is favoring one set of neighborhood interests over another. Establishing an explicit and cautious planning process, with abundant procedural hurdles to insure that no single group can seize control of the process and that every pertinent group receives notification of planning decisions, is one way that the city can defend itself against this charge. A well-conceived planning process can also
serve a purpose related to the conflict of city interests described in Chapter 5: it can act as a brake on neighborhood initiatives by creating procedural hurdles which, if not insurmountable, are at least difficult enough to discourage frivolous opposition to development.

The four structural characteristics outlined above have complex inter-relationships, as the findings of Chapter 9 show. In the sections which follow, however, the four characteristics are studied separately, as they appear in the neighborhood planning literature of thirty American cities.
Plan Standing

Plan standing describes the relation between the plan and the implementation of its recommendations. This relation depends not only on the level of detail that the plan achieves but also on the role that the plan is granted in day-to-day city-building decisions, especially in zoning variance proceedings, design review for large tract development, and the formulation of the capital improvements program. In the body of literature reviewed for this study, four distinct levels of plan standing were found:

1) Neighborhood plans have no specified legal standing.

2) Neighborhood plans are advisory, i.e., they may be consulted as guidelines in the zoning appeals process, in the development of the capital improvements program (CIP), or in the review of private development proposals.

3) Neighborhood plans have a mandatory review status, i.e., they must be consulted by agencies, the Planning Commission, the Zoning Board of Appeals, or the City Council when land-use decisions are being made.

4) Neighborhood plans have force of law, i.e., the plans fall under one or more of the following conditions:
   a. The plan is explicitly described as having "force of law".
   b. Zoning maps must be brought into compliance with the land use directives of the neighborhood plan.
   c. Private or public sector development proposals must comply with the goals and standards of the neighborhood plan in order to be approved.
   d. Facilities and improvements stated in the neighborhood plan must enter the capital improvements program for implementation within a specified time after completion and/or adoption of the neighborhood plan.
   e. The neighborhood plan itself does not have force of law, but it is tied directly to various types of overlay districts (e.g. historic, special overlay zoning, urban renewal) which supersede the base regulations for the neighborhood.

These categories can be summarized in two broad types of plan standing: plans which have an advisory status, and those which are mandatory. Plans which are advisory are not necessarily ineffectual: if they have strong support from the community and from elected officials, and they are condoned or even welcomed by the operating departments of
the city, they can lead rapidly to improvements. However, where the plan is a mandatory part of the decision process it becomes an inescapable standard against which all land-use and infrastructure decisions must be referred. The specific recommendations of the mandatory plan, for instance for facilities construction and infrastructure rehabilitation, may be entered into the capital improvements program and in some cases may be adopted as items in the city budget. These plans may form the basis for changing the zoning of existing properties, for the future designation of unzoned land, and for granting variances. And as a standard of reference, the goals of the mandatory plan represent an official consensus which can guide decision-making in situations which are not explicitly covered in the plan.

The existence of a plan which has mandatory status can also strengthen the confidence which is essential for city-building ventures. A neighborhood plan which calls for street repairs and rehabilitation of the storm and sanitary lines on a particular block will generally also recognize that the new infrastructure capacity will permit greater residential density. For potential builders of apartments or townhomes, the knowledge that these improvements will be scheduled and budgeted as a matter of law allows them to enter the development process with confidence at an early date. From the city’s perspective, the confidence of the builders gives strength to the expectation that undergirds many city improvements and is the chief rationale for issuing bonds for improvements, namely that increased tax revenues in the long term will justify the short term expenditures and debt required to make the improvements. Developers and the city are long term partners in the development of land, and the existence of a plan that at some level is
mandatory builds confidence in each party that the other will carry out its portion of the work.

From the perspective of the citizen, a plan with some form of mandatory standing is the only plan into which it is worthwhile to invest time and effort. It is not only that a plan of this type clarifies the expectations that the citizen can have of the planning process; just as important, mandatory standing implies that the citizen has remedies. Even a plan which has only advisory status, if it carries with it the obligation that it must be at least considered as land-use decisions are made, places the burden of justification on any agency or official who permits development to take place which violates the goals of the plan or its specific requirements. This position is carefully explained in the legal interpretation offered by the Municipal Arts Society of New York City regarding that city’s official 197-a neighborhood planning process:

Legal experts...generally agree that the intent of the 1975 Charter was to establish in 197-a a review process -- with approval representing consensus on broad planning goals. An approved 197-a plan, therefore, is a document against which more specific and detailed proposals can be tested. ...passage of the plan would not necessarily compel the City to amend the zoning ordinance...because proposals prescribing action on the part of the City, such as the designation of a zoning district must be approved under Section 197-c of the Charter. ...Is 197-a, then, anything more than just a glorified review process? Can it compel the City to implement a desired proposal? There is some dispute in legal circles, but it is generally agreed that an approved 197-a plan is significant in two important respects.

First, ...the opportunity for citizens to participate in the creation of a planning strategy, the process of which is educational, and the product of which expresses the will of the community and bears the political and policy imprimatur of the City’s legislature, land use agencies, and executive. Such a plan...can be subsequently used as political leverage by the community....

Second, an approved 197-a plan does provide legal recourse in that subsequent actions by the City relating to issues identified in the plan must be justified in light of, or at least make reference to, the plan. If an action was taken that completely ignored the plan, there would be grounds for a lawsuit.
If a community...sought a full public discussion of a proposed long-term zoning program..., then review under Section 197-a would appear to be the appropriate route. But there would also need to be the understanding that either the City or the community board would be obliged to subsequently apply under 197-c to actually effect the zoning changes. (WIL 23, 24)

The meaning of this interpretation is clear: while a 197-a plan is only an advisory document, it is also a political document which expresses a community consensus arrived at through a democratic process, and therefore provides a basis for remedy when land-use decisions are in dispute.

Similarly, the literature on neighborhood planning of San Antonio, Texas, states that "Recognized neighborhood plans as a part of the San Antonio Master Plan have greater significance than other neighborhood planning activities" (NPP 14). In San Antonio this higher status is no guarantee that projects proposed by individuals will not prevail, even when they contravene the wishes of the community expressed in the plan; but the plan's status does establish it as a community standard counterpoised against the legal freedom of individuals to do with their land largely as they please. Interpreted in this way, the plan might provide a significant protection for the public interest when the issue is balancing the harm that individual property owners will experience from proposed regulation (or lack thereof) against the good that will incur to the public as a whole through the regulation. Without a plan, the public good can only be interpreted by the judge and the public counsel; but with a plan which explicitly states what the public considers its own good to be, room for interpretation is more limited. Through a plan, in effect, the public which was previously rendered inarticulate by its diffuseness is given a voice; and, according to the legal interpretation of New York's 197-a process, the mere articulation
of a desirable public condition can serve as a basis for legal remedy. The mandatory aspect of the planning can be tied in that way to a principle of fairness: every party which is affected by a land use decision must be heard if the interests of all are to equitably balanced, and the plan is a device for giving voice to that party which generally is least audible, the public. But as the following sections will show, the degree to which that voice is allowed to actively guide and control the building of the city varies enormously within the American scene.

1) Neighborhood plans have no specified legal standing.

Plans of this type demonstrate a lack of precision in their statement of purpose. The general terms with which the purposes of the neighborhood program of Oakland, California are expressed leaves the actual standing of the plan in considerable doubt:

The goal of this program is to update the City's development policy framework on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis. The neighborhood planning approach involves working with neighborhood groups, organizations, and citizens to identify specific issues, goals, and objectives appropriately responded to through the City's land use policy and regulatory processes, or perhaps, through a program of joint public/private investment. (IO 1)

Several general goals are expressed: updating the development policy by relying on small planning units, working with citizen groups, and a long-range objective of giving regulatory and developmental activity direction through the plan's recommendations. However, nothing is said about the obligation or even the likelihood that agencies will pay attention to the plan, or that an active relation will exist between the neighborhood plan and the implementing tools of city building. The neighborhood plan in
this case would appear to serve simply as a source of suggestions or ideas which it is hoped will prompt more concrete action.

This lack of definition may in fact reflect an understanding that is so definite that it does not need to be stated, namely that the plan will be tied to regulation, particularly zoning. In 1978 California passed legislation requiring all communities to bring their zoning into alignment with their comprehensive plans; however, the enforcement of this legislation was apparently left to the commitment of individual planning commissions. In the case of Los Angeles, for example, enforcement lagged for ten years after the legislation was passed, and the law was only brought to bear on zoning discrepancies when a homeowners association brought the city to task. It is not a foregone conclusion that a neighborhood plan will be tied to implementation even when the full force of the state stands behind the directive. Since nothing in Oakland's description of its neighborhood planning program suggests that any such state mandate lies behind the plan, there is room for an alternative interpretation of the Oakland statement: that the city is seeking the utility of neighborhood planning without obligating itself to the consequences of making the plans a persistent or inescapable part of the city-building process.

2) Neighborhood plans are advisory, i.e., they may be consulted as guidelines in the zoning appeals process, in the development of the capital improvements program (CIP), or in the review of private development proposals.

About half of the plans in this study are considered to be advisory documents, requiring only voluntary consideration by the Planning Commission and the City Council, the two bodies which in most cities are responsible for land use decisions. Characteristically, a plan of this
type is described as a "guide", a "framework", or a "roadmap" - a general indication of community need and preferences, which commits neither City nor private individuals to action. Unlike plans in the first category described above, however, plans in this second group explicitly limit the scope of the plan's reach. The advisory quality of the document is well described in the following passage from San Antonio's Handbook of Neighborhood Planning:

Formal recognition of the plan by the Planning Commission and City Council is the means by which both the Commission and the Council can acknowledge a plan's use and value without specific commitment to immediate action. (NPP 1)

...recognition signifies that the plan is a legitimate expression of neighborhood opinion. Thus the plan becomes a position statement for the neighborhood to use before policy-making bodies.

...recognition does not necessarily mean a city commitment to action or implementation of a plan's projects or policies. Plan recognition does not mean that the city has adopted neighborhood plan projects or policies as city projects or policies. Rather, the plan remains the neighborhood's vehicle for expression. The City Council and Planning Commission may agree in principle with a plan recommendation..., but implementation of such recommendations may not be currently feasible or legally possible.

Plan recognition does not imply that the City Council or Planning Commission has assigned priority to some of a plan's recommendations. They...may not merit such priority when compared to similar projects elsewhere in the city. It remains the task of the neighborhood to use the plan as an informational tool...for the implementation of plan recommendations. (NPP 12)

This position is also expressed in the Comprehensive Plan of Washington, D.C., of which neighborhood plans form detailed parts:

Except as specifically provided by other law, ...the District elements of the Plan are a guide intended to establish broad policies and goals while affording flexibility for future implementation and are not binding policy directives. The District elements of the Plan should not be construed as a delegation of authority to establish new programs. (CP 4)

Washington, D.C., occupies an ambiguous position in this schema of classification. On the one hand, Washington's Comprehensive Plan is described as an advisory document which does not compromise the
independence of agencies, the Planning Commission, or the City Council to make decisions as they need to. On the other hand, Washington goes further than any other city in this study in placing the officially recognized neighborhood group (the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, ANC) in a role that carries a substantive relation to city-building decisions: the comments of the neighborhood group on city plans for facilities construction and on private development proposals carry "great weight," which is explained to mean that the group must be acknowledged as the source of a recommendation by government agencies, and that each ANC issue and concern must be explicitly referenced in deliberations. Findings and conclusions must be addressed to each of the ANC's issues and concerns (AMN 1, MAN 27). Additionally, the government entity "must provide a written rationale for the decision made, including discussion of the issues raised by the Advisory Neighborhood Commission" (MAN 34). It can be questioned whether a neighborhood plan carries the same "great weight" status as ANC comments. A neighborhood plan is a statement of community intent which anticipates future action by both the local government and private land interests; in that sense it can be taken as comment before the fact, which particularly ought to carry "great weight" because it is developed in a comprehensive, deliberate manner that involves both the technical assistance of the planning department and the participation of the community. It would be surprising, therefore, if the neighborhood plans of Washington, D.C., did not in actuality carry a mandatory review status equivalent to the "great weight" mandate that accompanies ANC comments. However, for the purposes of this study the "black letter" statement on the plan's position is taken to provide the
final interpretation: Washington, D.C.'s plans are advisory, not mandatory.

In some cases, the limitations placed on the plan are even more explicit. In the Dallas 2000 Concept Plan, for example, it is stated that the city council "should adopt the Plan and follow through by

1) Developing a set of neighborhood plans in which...affected parties...can participate in determining what types of development or redevelopment are desirable....

5) Adhering to the plan unless there are substantial changes in the City's pattern of growth or economy; Updating the plan regularly, and it is critical that the City establish a record of adhering to the plan.... (CP 12)

The language suggests that adherence to the plan is not a foregone conclusion, and therefore needs to be emphasized. In one neighborhood plan in Dallas, the Greater Far North Dallas Area Land Use and Transportation Study, it is stated that

The recommendations for future land use are intended to complement the city's comprehensive plans and ordinances, not to overrule existing or future ordinances. This study will be used as a basis for recommending zoning changes within the study area, but should not limit the scope of authority of the City Plan Commission or City Council....

When thoroughfare and zoning changes are approved by the City council, the...Study map should be corrected to reflect the approved changes.... (GFN 1)

The subordinate, advisory character of the neighborhood plan is clear in this instance: the comprehensive view of the neighborhood's needs which is expressed through the plan can always be altered by the individual decisions made by the zoning board of appeals and the thoroughfare planning authority.

Similarly Spokane, which in other respects establishes a very forceful relation between its neighborhood plans and implementation, subordinates its plan to zoning when it states that

This Land Use Plan is intended to serve as a guide for the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance.... The
Land Use Plan is not a zoning ordinance and does not replace the City's Zoning Ordinance, nor is it mandatory that the zoning become precisely as shown in the Land Use Plan. The Plan shows what is currently considered desirable.... (LUP 1-4)

However, because Spokane's neighborhood plans also have a defined relation to the capital improvements program, they are considered for the purposes of this study to have strong standing.

Philadelphia's district plan for North Philadelphia states the fiscal limitation of the plan:

This Plan attempts to provide...a long-range comprehensive framework for the development of North Philadelphia. ... The Plan is not a budget nor is it meant to substitute for a detailed program and budget. Rather, it is intended to serve as a blueprint for action and as a guide to coordinate the efforts of community groups, agencies, businesses, government, and others. (NPP 142)

The Minneapolis 20-year revitalization plan, while upholding the same limitations as plans in Philadelphia and Spokane, relies on neighborhood plans to achieve a city-wide goal of revitalization and also stresses the positive aspect of an advisory document:

While the 20-Year Program retains the policy prerogatives of the elected and appointed decision-makers in each agency, it is intended to influence their budget priorities to ensure that the participating organizations will cooperate with each other in responding to identified neighborhood needs.

The Neighborhood Revitalization Program is expected to encourage the allocation of existing resources to support the specific program priorities set out by each Minneapolis neighborhood. (NRP 2)

The Neighborhood Planning Process transforms the Plan into a Revitalization Program. This is a way for the City to accept and confirm the Plan, establish a city-wide revitalization program, and to work with individual neighborhoods to devise neighborhood plans which exactly fit their specific needs.... The neighborhood planning process also provides for Delivery Systems: a procedure for refining neighborhood plans, matching them with necessary resources, and scheduling implementation. (TRP 45)

Minneapolis' neighborhood planning program is unusual in that it seeks to facilitate the voluntary cooperation of agencies from several levels of government by establishing a central Policy Board and a central
Implementation Committee (NRP 3). In this respect it is similar to New York City's District Cabinets, which bring together line officers from city agencies. The Minneapolis plan, like the New York system, does not compel public agencies to abide by neighborhood plans or even to participate in their formulation. Rather, the program is based on an expectation that if implementing agencies meet face-to-face in order to deal with their problems on a geographic rather than a functional basis, coordinated cooperation will take place spontaneously. The results of the New York experiment in neighborhood decentralization indicates that there is reason to believe that this expectation will be at least partially realized.4

In Atlanta, since neighborhood plans are established by ordinance as part of the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), the status of the CDP transfers automatically to the neighborhood plan. The CDP is described as the city's "legal guide" for growth and development (NPA 3, TOL 6). This phrase is unfortunately left undefined in the literature; but the relation between the CDP and the decisions of the city is spelled out in sufficient detail to permit an interpretation. The official guide to neighborhood planning says that "The adopted CDP is translated into financial terms by the departments responsible for the various improvements", a remark that suggests that the consideration of the CDP by the agencies is simply customary (NPA 3). William Toliver, Associate Director of the Bureau of Planning, says that "the preparation of the CDP preceeds - and is used as a guide in - the preparation and adoption of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and the yearly budget" (TOL 3). These remarks indicate that the CDP (and the neighborhood plan by inclusion in the CDP) occupies a position of substantial weight in the
city-building process. It is not completely clear, however, whether the relation between the CDP and the CIP follows from precedent or from explicit ordinance. The result, however, is the same, a close relation between the city's plan and one of its major tools for implementation.

3) Neighborhood plans have a mandatory review status, i.e., they must be consulted by agencies, the Planning Commission, the Zoning Board of Appeals, or the City Council when land-use decisions are being made.

When neighborhood plans have a mandatory review status, agencies, the planning commission, or the city council must consult the plans when land-use decisions are made. The language of Salem, Oregon, about the status of neighborhood plans indicates the explicit relation between the neighborhood plan and the city's land-use actions. In a description of "Status of the Plan," the city states that

(a) The neighborhood plan shall be the basis for any neighborhood recommendation to any city board, commission, or agency having planning responsibilities.

(b) Every city board, commission, and agency having planning responsibilities shall consider the neighborhood plan before making any decision which would affect the neighborhood.

(c) The common council shall consider the neighborhood plan before making any final decision as to the acquisition, construction, or improvement of public facilities in the neighborhood. (NS 4)

Nothing in this statement obligates the decision-making body to follow the plan; but the requirement that the plan be considered in the decision process gives it a fairly high status as an articulation of the public interest.

4) Neighborhood plans have force of law, i.e., the plans fall under one or more of the following conditions:

a. The plan is explicitly described as having "force of law"

b. Zoning maps must be brought into compliance with the land use directives of the neighborhood plan.

c. Private or public sector development proposals must comply with the goals and standards of the neighborhood plan in order to be approved.
d. Facilities and improvements stated in the neighborhood plan must enter the capital improvements program for implementation within a specified time after completion and/or adoption of the neighborhood plan.

e. The neighborhood plan itself does not have force of law, but it is tied directly to various types of overlay districts (e.g. historic, special overlay zoning, urban renewal) which supersede the base regulations for the neighborhood.

Most interesting from the perspective of this study are the neighborhood plans which can be described as having force of law. From a planner’s vision of the rational relation that ought to prevail between conceptualization and action, a plan which carries force of law under one of the classifications listed above -- zoning, review standards, capital improvements program, overlay districts -- is an effective way to carry out the ideas and democratic consensus that is claimed for a community-based plan. Planners will want to know if plans which have force of law are indeed more effective instruments of implementation than those which are only advisory, and if they are more effective, why more cities don’t grant this status to their plans.

a. The plan is explicitly described as having “force of law”

This articulation of the plan’s legal standing grants the plan the greatest possible leeway of interpretation. It implies that legal remedy exists for those who are subject to action in violation of the plan and that the plan must be carried out, but it does not explain what carrying out the plan means: whether it must be implemented in its entirety, whether it must always be considered when land use decisions are made, or whether it simply provides guidance which has more than usual weight. It is not surprising, given the wide range of interpretation that the expression can elicit, that it is used by only one city in this study (Portland, Oregon), where the supporting literature indicates that the scope of the term is strictly limited. In Oregon, state legislation
passed in 1975 mandates that only the policy element of the community plan, the general statement of planning goals and objectives, be adopted by ordinance and have force of law (PG 2). Although this language does give the community plan exceptional standing as a document that controls public and private improvements, it also removes the city from the obligation of implementing the plan in detail or of insisting that all development follow the plan in its specific recommendations. The broad intentions of the plan are given the authority and permanence of law, while specific implementing actions require further deliberation and decision before they also become law.

b. Zoning maps must be brought into compliance with the land use directives of the neighborhood plan.

Zoning is the logical and most readily accessible device for implementing a comprehensive plan. Zoning is only a passive instrument for city-building, in the sense that its effects only become apparent when interest in land development grows to the level that a building or development permit is sought. Since application for a building permit automatically triggers zoning review, its effects in controlling land use as well as building characteristics are registered by the private builder immediately. Legislation which turns the land use recommendations of a neighborhood plan into a change in the zoning maps and regulations in effect writes the plan into the future form of the city, if growth occurs in the area of consideration. Since neighborhood planning is often a response to excessive and uncontrolled growth, zoning can channel development into forms which are considered desirable by the community. This attitude is expressed in the stringent Rhode Island requirement that a municipality conform its zoning ordinance and map with its comprehensive plan within eighteen months of the
acceptance of the plan by the state. This sets the framework for one of the most significant and direct plan implementation measures, the regulation of the use of land.

...the Act requires that the municipality analyze...any inconsistencies between the current zoning ordinance and the land use element. The Act further requires that the land use element specify the process by which the zoning ordinance and map will be amended or replaced to conform to the land use element. (LCP II-12; emphasis in original)

Failure to comply with this requirement launches state review and intervention, a strong incentive for cities to comply with the regulation.

Similar legislation in California requires that zoning regulations be brought into conformance with the municipality's comprehensive plan (AL 2). As the history of Los Angeles' homeowners associations shows (see Chapter 6), cities in California have been able to avoid this obligation for long periods. The requirements of Rhode Island and California contrast sharply with the attitude expressed in a Dallas plan, mentioned earlier, which clearly subordinates the neighborhood plan to zoning changes.

Most effective is a neighborhood plan which is itself a zoning plan. Boston's Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) process conceives of neighborhood planning as a binding alteration of the underlying zoning for a two year interim period which may lead, subject to zoning board approval, to a permanent change in the zoning regulations:

At the end of the two years, the Interim Planning Permit process will expire and, either the new zoning developed during the planning process will be implemented, or the original, pre-IPOD zoning districts will be put back in force. (RPOD 2)

In the IPOD process, the interim zoning supersedes the original zoning:

Applicants for a building permit, change-in-use permit, or change-in-occupancy permit which are not exempt under the
IPOD regulations will have to receive an Interim Planning Permit from the Board of Appeal....

In order to issue an Interim Planning Permit, the Board must find that the proposed action is consistent with the land use objectives of the Interim Planning District.... (RPOD 3)

The IPOD process incidentally creates overlay districts, but its principal intent is to review and update the zoning ordinance.

Kansas City (Missouri) and Phoenix establish explicit relations between neighborhood plans and the zoning ordinance. In Kansas City, the Neighborhood Planning District (NPD) is proposed to be a zoning overlay district in which modifications to the underlying zoning are adopted by ordinance at the same time that the Neighborhood Plan is adopted (NPD 2). The Neighborhood Plan will also serve as a policy guide for the city. Phoenix establishes a similar relation between the plan and zoning in its Special Planning District (SPD) process. The Phoenix literature goes further than Kansas City in detailing the reach of the overlay zoning, which covers not only land use but also height, bulk, and setback requirements for buildings (SPD 3). It also mandates that the SPD regulations supersede the base zoning; that all building is to conform to the requirements of the specific plan; and that violations of the specific plan will be treated as violations of the Zoning Ordinance (SPD 6, ROO 26). Both programs treat the neighborhood plan as an instrument of zoning; there is, however, a significant difference between the regulations of these two cities. In Phoenix, zoning must conform to the zoning overlay which is created through the neighborhood plan; in Kansas City, the neighborhood plan can be brought into compliance with a zoning change if the city authorities find that the change is appropriate. The Kansas City ordinance apparently will leave far more discretion to city officials than the neighborhood program in Phoenix. Language in the
Kansas City proposal suggests that the neighborhood plan is intended primarily to act as a brake on development by forcing neighborhood wishes to be acknowledged by the municipal government:

Any proposed change to a zoning district that is not in compliance with the Neighborhood Plan or any other substantial deviation from the recommendations of the Neighborhood Plan may not be approved unless the City Plan Commission and City Council find that it is appropriate to amend the Neighborhood Plan to reflect the proposed change. (NPD 2)

c. Private or public sector development proposals must comply with the goals and standards of the neighborhood plan in order to be approved.

Equivalent to zoning in effect, but more difficult to enforce, are regulations which require that private and public sector development proposals must comply with the goals and standards of the neighborhood plan. Zoning enforcement is triggered automatically when the builder applies for a building or development permit; once the ordinance is written and the zoning district is drawn, enforcement requires no deviation from the standard way that most American cities have regulated land use since the 1920's. Since zoning decisions are generally ministerial, not discretionary, the permitting official needs only to consider the relation of the proposed land use or structure to an explicit description of permitted uses, bulk restrictions, and parking requirements in the regulations. A larger measure of discretionary judgment is involved in granting variances, but here too the underlying zoning provides the lay board with a detailed indication of the intended characteristics of the land in question.

By contrast, deciding whether a proposed land use aligns with the goals and policies of a neighborhood plan invariably involves a considerable amount of discretion. Goals and policies tend to be broad
in their scope and general in their effect, in keeping with their purpose as guides to development. They are not intended to have the specificity of what, in planning parlance, are called "strategies" or "actions." A typical goal statement taken from Portland, Oregon's Central City Plan says "Build a park and open space system of linked facilities that tie the Central City districts together and to the surrounding community"; a policy statement associated with this goal says "Ensure that a balance of passive and active parks and open space is provided." Words like "linked," "tie together," "balance," "passive," and "active" obviously leave a great deal of room for interpretation. If a plan like Portland's also contains as a goal that economic development is to increase in the community, the planning commission or city council may well find itself caught in a battle between community members who subscribe to one goal and developers who subscribe to another, both in the same document. Both of these goals are valid expressions of community need and not necessarily contradictory in themselves, but as it is said of the way that the devil uses Scripture, anybody can quote a community plan to win a point. Interpretation of the plan by decision-makers will depend on the political weight that each side can throw - votes on the one hand, campaign support on the other - as well as on the particular economic situation of the city, which dictates how badly it needs the development to create jobs and increase the tax base. As the Los Angeles situation showed, planners and decision-makers can broadly ignore the goals of a neighborhood plan when attractive development possibilities are being offered.
The strength of the obligation to build in conformity with the neighborhood plan varies considerably in the sample cities of this study. Providence, Rhode Island, for example, states that

once the neighborhood plan becomes part of the Providence Comprehensive Plan, all land use decisions will conform with the standards as set forth by the neighborhood plan. This means that neighborhood residents will influence, and ultimately decide, what types of land uses will be allowed in their community. (GUI 4)

In one area of Providence, a neighborhood plan creates an overlay zone which implements design review of new proposals and which has the force of law:

All existing or future commercial, mixed-use, or non-residential structures...within the Smith Hill Commercial Area shall be in compliance with the regulations as set forth in this Ordinance before July 4, 1983. Owners of subject property...shall make no exterior renovation, rehabilitation or the like...unless such renovation or rehabilitation plans and specifications have been submitted and approved by the Design Review Committee.... The Building Inspector shall issue no building permits...until plans and specifications...have been approved by the Design Review Committee. (MP Appl)

A stronger relation between the neighborhood plan and the implementation of private development schemes could not be imagined.

In Boston, in addition to the requirement that land uses conform to the interim zoning regulations of the IPOD process, there is also a mandate that they conform to the more generalized "objectives" of the Interim Planning District; these objectives cover housing, transportation, institutional encroachment, industrial development, neighborhood commercial activity, vacant lots, hazardous activities, and historic preservation (RPOD 4-11). The Boston Zoning Board of Appeal makes the determination (RPOD 3). Boston’s program subjects the private proposal to both ministerial review through zoning and to discretionary review through this statement of conformance. In Trenton as well as for
other cities in New Jersey, state law requires that redevelopment proposals be undertaken in accordance with a Redevelopment Plan for the Project Area (WAL 5). And Baltimore applies the same language to its Master Plan, requiring that all development, public or private, must conform to the Plan (WHAT 1).

In Portland, the City Council is required to consider the adopted neighborhood plan "before making any final decision as to the acquisition, construction, or improvement of public facilities in the neighborhood" (NPPa 3). This by itself does not suggest that these public building projects need to conform to the adopted plan. Stronger language, covering all development, is used in Portland’s Boise Neighborhood Plan, adopted in 1990:

The Boise Neighborhood Plan is designed to deal with current neighborhood problems and guide development over the next twenty years. The policies contained in it will be binding on new development and help determine what public improvements are made.... The plan can also be used as a guide by the Boise Neighborhood Improvement Association to determine if new development proposals and land use changes are in accordance with the neighborhood’s agreed upon vision for its future. (BO 2)

Similarly, another community plan in Portland states that

The adopted Goal, Policies and Objectives of the Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood Action Plan will serve as an official guide for decision-makers, particularly in land use review, and will also guide public deliberations and investments. (HA App 2)

In Portland, only the Goals, Policies and Objectives are considered binding on development and the public sector; according to Portland’s statutes, the specific "actions" recommended by the plan are not adopted by the City Council and are not binding. The Hosford-Abernethy plan continues, therefore, by stating that

The...Plan includes implementing actions which are not being adopted by the City Council.... They are proposed by the neighborhood as a plan for neighborhood-initiated
programs and provide a guide for these self-help, private, or city-assisted projects. With the adoption of the Goal, Policies, and Objectives of this plan, the City is not committing to the implementation of the actions or to funding projects. (HA App 2)

Each of the statements in the neighborhood plans quoted above leaves considerable room for interpretation: language such as "in conformity with", "in accordance with", or "must be considered by" means that a presiding authority must make the determination on a case-by-case basis. The vagueness of the expression suggests that it can be used with equal effect by either side in a land use dispute, the developers or the community. In contrast, New York has established a clearer legal domain for the use of neighborhood plans:

During the time between threshold review and final action on a plan, any application under 197-c or any application for a special permit must address the issue of conformity with the proposed 197-a plan. A significant burden of justification must lie with any applicant proposing actions in significant conflict with the plan. (DFT 3) Any action by a City agency relevant to the plan must be scrutinized for conformance with the plan. ...such provisions in 197-a plans as zoning map or text changes and city map changes must be routinely undertaken through 197-c as soon as possible. (DFT 4)

The city also admonishes public agencies to consider adopted plans when they develop or regulate parcels:

An adopted plan shall serve as a policy to guide subsequent actions by city agencies. The Commission shall consider pertinent adopted plans in its review of land use and zoning actions.... Agencies are urged to consider adopted 197-a plans as guidance for pertinent actions.... (RUL 1)

However, the city goes on to state that

The existence of an adopted 197-a plan shall not preclude the sponsor or any other city agency from developing other plans or taking actions not contemplated by the 197-a plan.... (RUL 1)

According to this interpretation, a 197-a plan is not an instrument of implementation; its recommendations for zoning changes or new facilities can only be implemented through the 197-c planning process (DFT 4). As
we will see shortly, the situation in New York City is controversial, with the neighborhood plans occupying an unsettled legal position.

Like New York, San Diego establishes a clear legal barrier between the neighborhood plan and the actions which implement city-building. Although the plan is adopted as an official document, it is explicitly stated that

the plan itself does not control development in the community. The recommendations of the plan must be implemented through the zoning Ordinance, the Capital Improvements Program, a Public Facilities financing Plan, monitoring of new projects, etc. The plan must identify what implementation methods are needed and must include recommendations for any new legislation which may be necessary.... (CPH d21)

At the weak end of the spectrum one finds the situation in Los Angeles where a planner states that, in addition to Specific Plans which are "in effect a miniature zone code",

[w]e have Specific Plans which may or may not require unique project permits to be issued to allow construction to go forward. And we have Specific plans that have in some instances Design Review Boards in which projects...must be reviewed by the citizen Design Review Board and a recommendation made to the Director of Planning for allowance...to go forward. (AL 3, 4)

d. Facilities and improvements stated in the neighborhood plan must enter the capital improvements program for implementation within a specified time after completion and/or adoption of the neighborhood plan.

Both zoning and design review functions exercise a passive control over city building, in the sense that they do not initiate ventures but only guide the outcome of ventures initiated elsewhere. Some plans, however, contain a more positive directive in that they obligate the city to follow through on plan recommendations. Because such language commits cities to actions in a future in which they may face severe budget shortfalls, changes in state or federal allotments, or unpredictable
shifts in the city's political climate, it is understandable that very few cities permit themselves to be bound in this way.

One of the most striking examples of a city that does follow this route is Spokane, Washington, which uses its neighborhood planning process to formulate a portion of the capital improvements program called the Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP). The city states in its program description that

The Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) is a capital improvement program generated by the policies of the Specific Plan and additional citizen participation efforts. ... The NIP is the primary neighborhood 'tool' for managing the efficient expenditure of CDBG monies and other public funds. (NPP 2)

Once CDBG neighborhoods have completed their NIPs, a relatively large amount of funds in excess of their yearly allocation are made available to implement the highest priority items identified in the NIP document. (NPP 3)

Spokane obligates itself through this language to place recommended projects "in the pipeline," as planners put it.

Providence, which is under state obligation to make its zoning maps conform to the neighborhood plan, is far more ambiguous about the implementation of specific projects:

Formal adoption will ensure implementation will occur or at the very least not [be] ignored. In addition, adoption will provide that future growth and development be in compliance with the neighborhood as well as municipal plans. (GUI 31)

It appears that Providence is willing to grant its neighborhood plans substantial authority in the passive area of zoning control, but will not take an active position with respect to funding and implementing recommended projects.

The literature on New York City reveals the conflict which a neighborhood plan generates: it is both guide and directive. While the
literature is explicit in stating that the 197-a plan is advisory in nature, it also states that

the function of plans as guides is meant to lead in most cases to positive action, not merely to be standards by which later actions arising from other sources can be evaluated -- in some cases only as a formality. As statements of policy review and approved at the highest level of city authority, they have the legal force of well-considered plans and are to be implemented. (DFT 4)

This would suggest that neighborhood plans ought to have a clear and fixed relation to the instruments of implementation, as in Spokane. This is not the case, however, since 197-a plans are also advisory documents which cannot implement city improvements on their own but require 197-c instruments for implementation. It is evident from the ambiguity of the statements that the legal status of the 197-a plan is anything but settled.

Plans which have a relation to the capital improvements program gain their authority from their direct and unambiguous connection to the funding process. By this measure, Boston has advanced beyond any other city in the country by granting the power of eminent domain to one of its neighborhood organizations. Roxbury, a poor neighborhood south of the central business district, is plagued with a large number of vacant lots under absentee ownership which have became familiar sites for illegal garbage and trash dumping and for drug activity. In addition to convincing the city of Boston that the lots were dangerous enough to warrant special constructions to block access to dumping vehicles, the neighborhood group also obtained legislation which allows it to initiate condemnation proceedings against some 15 acres of the 30 acres of vacant lots in the Dudley Street area (DLD). The condemned lots will be used to build affordable housing. Funds for compensation are being provided from
several sources, including the private Ryan Foundation. This extraordinary measure, which is being watched with interest by other cities and community groups around the United States, places the Dudley Street community group into the very forefront of the agents who effect improvements in deteriorated inner-city neighborhoods. In this sense the neighborhood plan which defines the lots for taking and spells out their future use is a direct instrument of implementation, since funds are dedicated and legal powers have been granted.

e. The neighborhood plan itself does not have force of law, but is tied directly to various types of overlay districts (e.g. historic, special overlay zoning, urban renewal) which supersede the base regulations for the neighborhood.

Finally, neighborhood plans can be considered to have force of law if they show a direct relationship to overlay districts which are regulatory. Boston’s Roxbury Neighborhood Plan, in addition to establishing a modified zoning regulation for the neighborhood, also created a number of overlay districts which restrict and guide development within specific areas of the neighborhood: Neighborhood Business Subdistricts, Neighborhood Design Districts, Neighborhood Shopping Subdistricts, Community Facilities Subdistricts, and Residential Subdistricts.

In Raleigh, North Carolina, the neighborhood plan has much the same relationship to zoning that it does in Phoenix, in fact the Raleigh neighborhood planning program was modeled on that of Phoenix. The strongest enforcement aspect of the plan is its control over zoning, but Raleigh plans differ significantly from those in Phoenix in that the Raleigh zoning must be adopted as a separate Neighborhood Conservation overlay district. In Phoenix (as well as in the Kansas City proposal)
the recommendations of the neighborhood plan upon adoption become the zoning overlay; the neighborhood plan and the zoning overlay are therefore identical. Raleigh's planning procedure is weaker than that of Phoenix since it places a distance between the formulation of a neighborhood plan and the highly controversial matter of zoning regulation. This distance allows the City Council to weigh the full impact of the proposed zoning changes, using the neighborhood plan as an intermediate instrument to determine support and clearly articulate the recommendations.

San Diego mentions planned districts and overlay zones as one of a number of implementing tools, which also include zoning, public facilities financing, capital improvements program, and new projects review. San Diego's overlay zones "may be used instead of conventional City-wide zoning or in addition to City-wide zoning" (CPH d23). Like the other tools, the overlay districts may figure among the recommendations of the neighborhood plan but must be implemented separately; thus San Diego like Raleigh ensures that actions as significant as zoning changes are not mandated by the community alone, but must be subjected to the rigorous scepticism of the council-approval process in order to become law.

The Variety of Plan Standing Options

Plan standing, the relation of the neighborhood plan to the implementing instruments of city land use policy, covers a very great range. At the weak end of the spectrum, plans are no more than a compilation of recommendations, ideas to stimulate residents and city government to action (Oakland). At the strong end, the plans carry the full legal
weight of an instrument that forces zoning compliance (Providence) or which alters the capital improvements program (Spokane). In between are plans which are essentially hortatory in their intent, since they may be voluntarily consulted by the decision bodies, or which are obligatory parts of the development review process. The different levels of standing shown here represent different understandings of what a plan is: a document providing general guidance at one extreme, a virtual blueprint for improvements (in the architectural sense) at the other. The variety of standing levels reflects on the fact that the planning discipline, unlike architecture, does not have a settled position about the relation between its instruments of conceptualization and its instruments of implementation, but it also reflects on the highly political nature of all municipal plans: they are statements of values as much as they are technical instruments, and therefore carry within them the full ambiguity of the city's conflicting imperatives.

Notes

1. Interfaith Organization for Community in Trenton, New Jersey, obtained a state grant to undertake planning. With this advisory plan developed entirely through community effort, IOC was able to compel and persuade the city planning department to take an active part in improving the neighborhoods.

2. References are to the planning documents listed in the Sources. In some cases a number of cities use very similar titles for their documents, especially "Neighborhood Planning Program." Where abbreviations are similar from city to city, the context will make clear which city is being referenced.

3. This balance is one of the goals of Oliver Wendell Holmes' famous "balancing principle" in land use adjudication (still, and despite much controversy, the guiding legal method for deciding land use disputes). At issue is the legitimate reach of the state's police power, and the crucial point where exercise of regulations that limit the use of land become takings that require compensation (Lai).

4. There is an important difference between Minneapolis' program and that of New York: In the Minnesota city, the committee is formed to achieve "strategic" solutions to problems, that is, actions that can be undertaken in a six month to one year period. In New York, the District
Service Cabinet is formed for on-going consultation between the
departments of the city government.
5. Zoning is intensely controversial primarily because it intrudes
directly and effectively into the plans of the private builder or
property owner. Zoning as a principle has been immensely popular since
its widespread introduction in the 1920's, but popularity has not
rendered it less controversial. In Houston, zoning as a concept was
approved by a unanimous City Council vote in early 1991 with the backing
from a majority of Houston's homeowners. When, however, the land use
maps were drawn and zone regulations were established (that is when the
real consequences of zoning became evident to individual property
owners), opposition emerged and the zoning ordinance was eventually
defeated in referendum.
6. The NPD was in proposal form at the time that this research was
undertaken.
7. Both examples are from "Policy 8: Parks and Open Space" of the
Recommended Central City Plan of Portland, Oregon (Portland Bureau of
into considerable detail not only about the "Actions" which are intended
to implement the goals but also about the time frame for implementation
and possible implementing agents.
The Community Group

Neighborhood planning is a political activity as much as it is a rational extension of planning methodology. Whether it is interpreted as a form of appeasement of citizen demands or as an attempt to enlist neighborhood residents in the city's task of gathering information and developing consensus for improvements, it requires some form of participation from neighborhood residents who are normally outside of the channels of city decision-making. These residents are, moreover, generally inexperienced about the technical and political intricacies of planning. The city's task is to reach these residents and engage them in a process of planning that will satisfy their demands for change while protecting the development interests of the city. At one extreme, this may lead to forms of token participation which give residents the appearance of involvement without changing the basic processes by which city-building decisions are made; such was the case in the early days of the neighborhood planning program in Los Angeles, related in Chapter 6. At the other extreme, residents might be involved closely in substantive areas such as plan development, scheduling of improvements, and budget review.

Recognition and Formalization

There is a distinction between a recognized community organization and a formalized community organization. A recognized community organization has been acknowledged by the city government as the official community organ for planning and related activities. It might be an existing organization which is granted recognition status, or it might be an organization established de novo for this purpose. A formalized
community organization, by contrast, is one for which the procedures for establishing the group, as well as the conditions for maintaining the group in good standing, are described explicitly as a public standard. Although these two characteristics are not always present in the same situation, there is a relationship between them.

A community organization which has received official recognition is privileged as the designated channel for communication between the city government and the community. Its prerogatives can be quite specific. In some cities, the recognized organization receives regular notification of pending applications for zoning variances or liquor licenses, and of proposed or funded public improvements (Salem, Oregon). The official organization may be consulted by city agencies or by the planning commission before the body takes action (Portland, Oregon). It may have standing in legal disputes with land developers (Salem, Oregon). Its comments or plans may carry special weight in city deliberations (Washington, D.C.). The community organization which receives such special consideration is clearly in an advantageous position to influence city decisions; the formal links established by statute or by departmental policy are likely to be reinforced by numerous informal links that place the leaders of the organization in a position of real power within city government, where they become recognized faces whom city officials will consult before others.

From the city's perspective, granting official recognition to a community group has certain advantages. Since there is a single designated player on the community side, this structure simplifies the administrative task of passing important information to the community. More significantly, it simplifies the city's task of responding to
community needs: complaints or demands that arrive through the official channel must be acknowledged, while the innumerable private concerns that a city agency must deal with can now be directed to the official community group (Mudd 46). The adjudication of conflicting demands, an inescapable part of community-governmental relations, can now be performed to a greater extent within the community rather than in the offices of city hall. The community is forced to speak with a single voice, thereby simplifying the administrative task of government and at the same time reducing the potential that it will have to umpire irresolvable conflicts between diverging community interests. Government officials can now deal with a single set of leaders whose importance in community affairs has been recognized, rather than trying to estimate the real influence of the large number of residents whom they meet within any informal structure that gives equal weight to all voices.

Stringent requirements for recognition, especially when they apply to groups which are undertaking planning, serve another purpose: they place a brake on the community, so that it becomes not only more difficult to organize, but also takes longer at the task. This has the advantage of inhibiting wildcat community organizations from forming which, because of vocal leadership or the nature of the issue at hand, have high visibility but shallow roots within the community. It also has the advantage, in situations where the government feels the conflict between community demands and the interests of developers, of placing sufficient checks in front of the community to dilute or at least delay the community demand.

Official recognition carries with it risks. Groups or individuals which are disenfranchised from the official group (or perceive themselves
to be disenfranchised) will complain that government is not impartial in its delegation of privileges, powers, and access to officials. At its most benign, the government may be perceived as simply not having enough knowledge of the community to understand that there are other interests than those represented by the officially recognized group; at its worst, the government may be accused of using the community organization structure to push forward its own agenda under the guise of democratic community participation. For these marginalized groups, an informal structure which allows room for back-corridor negotiations with city officials may be seen as offering a fairer field of play. Within formalization there are also possibilities for private advantage of which the players are aware: if members of an organization receive advance notice that, for example, the city intends to extend a subway line to a station near their borders, they are in a position to acquire land for future development. Advance notice of city plans which will have a negative effect on nearby land also gives the members of the organization a forewarning of downward trends in local land prices.

The effects of the privileged access and advanced notification that belong to recognized community groups are unavoidably linked to the positive aspects of community participation, since the stated intent of many neighborhood planning programs is to facilitate communication between residents and the government. It is recognized, however, that these effects must be distributed fairly, not used as a way to favor one set of interests or even one individual within the community. Formal rules imposed on the group mitigate the risks entailed in official recognition. These formal rules generally involve a minimum set of standards which are designed to ensure democratic representation in the
body of the organization, accountability in the decision process, responsiveness to the concerns of individual neighborhood residents, and frequent contact with city government. Rules requiring open, published meetings, scheduled elections for standing organizational positions, by-laws held in public record, meeting minutes, and annual reports, forestall the charge that the recognized organization does not represent the real interests of the community, operates in an undemocratic manner, or is exceptionally favored by city government over other groups in the community. Where the group is formed specifically for planning, the requirements may be even more stringent, involving in the case of Phoenix a level of petition that must be passed before the community planning group is accepted as the official voice of the community.¹

Formalizing the requirements of the community group is generally accompanied by formalizing the powers of the group. For everybody involved in the community planning arena, making responsibilities and powers explicit has the advantage of clarifying the expectations that the various players will have of one another. From the community perspective, however, this explicitness also freezes the roles in ways that may be undesirable. A number of neighborhood planning programs, for example, explicitly enjoin the recognized community group from engaging in political activity. Generally this means that the group qua group cannot campaign for or endorse a candidate as a way to ensure that its proposals will gain a hearing in council deliberations. The restriction is based on awareness that a community planning group can be a tailor-made tool for the exercise of councilmember’s ambitions, since it presents a well-established organization of residents who need the councilmember’s support in order to carry out their projects and
recommendations. But the restriction is also inhibiting in those instances where political activity is the only way by which the independent community group can replace or overrule an indifferent or even hostile city council member. The restriction will especially affect those types of demand which require political action, for example lending the group's name and stature to a grass-roots petition to impress on city officials the need to correct an infrastructure deficiency or to make a much-needed improvement.

Classifying Community Organizations

Community organization for planning can be looked at under three distinct perspectives: the degree of real power granted to the organizations, the way that the city population is structured into community organizations, and the formalized role and structure of the community organization itself. Sherry Arnstein's useful classification of citizen involvement, described in Chapter 3 (Footnote 7), addresses the first of these perspectives (Arnstein 217ff). The eight levels of participation she describes - manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power, and citizen control - indicate the power that is associated with citizen participation, but they do not describe the structure by which participation is achieved: whether community participation is sought from every neighborhood of the city, whether it is encouraged by creating new groups for planning or by using existing groups, whether the planning group is formed permanently or on an ad hoc basis. David Rafter has developed a simple classification system which addresses these structural issues in relation to the Arnstein schema. The critical issue in the Rafter typology is whether, and how, the city
formally involves the community group in the planning process, that is, how it prescribes the group's rights and obligations.

The most formalized method of community participation discussed in Rafter's schema is a city-wide system in which planning boards are established in every neighborhood in the city, and are granted specific powers and responsibilities through an act of the city legislature (Rafter 24). Examples of this approach are found in New York, Washington D.C., Portland (Oregon), Minneapolis, St. Louis, Dayton, and Atlanta. If carried out in practice as thoroughly as the programs often appear on paper, this approach represents an ideal of equity: it offers to every community equal opportunity to have a voice in the planning which affects it, and it places the city government under the obligation of reaching out to the least organized and most socially troubled neighborhoods in order to bring them into the city-wide planning process. In this sense it represents an active attempt to counterbalance the advantages that wealthier communities enjoy with respect to resources and community leadership by providing assistance to the more disadvantaged communities. This approach may stretch the resources of city government. In Minneapolis, which has 81 neighborhoods and can reasonably project a schedule of five to six years to complete a comprehensive plan, a city-wide program may be a feasible approach. Such a system would be extraordinarily difficult to implement in a city the size of Houston, with a population of 1.7 million and covering nearly 600 square miles; in order to be reduced to a reasonable number, the official planning districts would have to be so large that the designation "neighborhood" could hardly apply to them.
In a few cities which have city-wide citizen participation structures, the planning boards achieve a quasi-governmental role through their delegated powers of review, comment, and initiative (New York, Washington, D.C., Portland, Oregon). In some cities this status is reinforced by the group's staff, who are salaried employees of the city government but are hired under the authority of the community (New York, Portland); in others, there is a dedicated city agency to provide assistance to community groups. In most instances, these community boards are restricted to advising the city government on planning issues or working in partnership with city agencies in developing plans and proposals. The fact that a city makes available to all communities the opportunity to participate in planning does not mean that all communities will participate equally; in Washington, D.C., for example, there is said to be wide variation between the participation of residents in the Advisory Neighborhood Commission structure, with some highly deteriorated areas east of the Anacostia River hardly being represented at all. Other factors - the presence of indigenous leadership, the degree of social cohesion in the community, the presence of institutions like churches which can bring residents together, the educational attainment of residents - appear to be more decisive factors in generating community support than the availability of formal procedures for creating plans or participating in city-building decisions. Planning remains essentially a political process where the community's power to influence city agencies and elected officials has the greatest importance. Nevertheless, evidence shows that city-wide programs have increased citizen access to some aspects of the decision process.
Rafter's second approach to community organization establishes official planning boards in selective areas of the city. Examples include Phoenix, Raleigh, Fort Worth, and San Antonio. The assumption here is that since not all areas of the city need equal planning attention, it is more efficient to concentrate resources in specific areas than to create a potentially underutilized city-wide system. Initiation of the planning effort in the designated area may come from the community (San Antonio), from the planning agency, or from a third party such as a city council member (Dallas). The process of initiating plans may depend on characteristics of the individual communities, such as indigenous leadership or the long-standing presence of a community organization. This method suggests that neighborhood planning is a topical solution to local problems rather than an element of a comprehensive planning strategy. In light of the extremely restricted resources which cities can dedicate to neighborhood planning under the best of circumstances, the method of selected planning boards may be more realistic than the city-wide systems described above. Because it does not promise citywide solutions, this kind of program structure may raise fewer expectations and also offer fewer disappointments. However, it runs the danger of looking at the neighborhood in isolation, without tying neighborhood proposals directly to district-wide or city-wide improvements which might have a great effect on the condition of the neighborhood (e.g. transportation planning). But by giving the neighborhood an increased official voice in local affairs and the opportunity to enter the decision process in a clear and orderly manner, these programs do increase the accessibility of city government for the average citizen.
In a third approach, the city government recognizes an existing community organization as the official advisory group for planning (Rafter 24). Eugene, Oregon, offers an example of this approach. The assumption here is that a prominent community group already has created the opportunity for representative participation by residents, and has also probably already contended with the major problems and issues that exist in the community. The method involves fewer costs for the city agency than either of the two preceding methods. It frees the city from the burden of establishing guidelines for the structure of the community organizations (although it may not free the city from maintaining standards for those organizational elements which ensure fair representation, such as open meetings, public records, and proof that notification of decisions and meetings has been widely provided).

This approach does suggest that the most vocal and well-organized community groups will receive the most attention. The result may well be considerable variation in the level of participation of different communities, with some not being represented at all (Rafter 25). Since the groups which spontaneously provide a high level of participation are more likely to emerge in affluent areas than in poor neighborhoods, the method may contain a hidden bias against the areas of the city which are most in need of planning attention. Among the primary liabilities of such areas is the fact that their residents are powerless to begin to deal with their problems:

the opportunity to achieve political effectiveness by activating large numbers of people, especially lower-class citizens...necessitates a substantial command of time, manpower, publicity, organization, legitimacy, knowledgeableness, and...money. ...Those who are most needful of substantive reallocations are, by that very fact, usually farthest removed from the resources necessary to command such reallocations and least able to
make effective use of whatever limited resources they possess. (Parenti 527)

Rafter's fourth category of citizen participation organization is called "Cooperative Neighborhood Organizations" (Rafter 24). Wilmington, Delaware, offers an example in this category. Here, the relations between the planning agency and the neighborhood organization are informal, the agency providing information and assistance as it is requested. In this city, neighborhood planning is achieved on virtually a "walk-in" basis, with the department responding to requests as they are presented.3

The fundamental distinction between the four types of community organization approaches described by Rafter is the role taken by the government. In the first two, the city takes an active role in creating the opportunity for communities to establish fair, representative planning groups. The city assumes the role of arbiter and judge in deciding whether the planning group truly does provide representation for every interest in the community. The burden on the city is great, but it is a burden for which democratic governments are ideally suited in theory and often by tradition, in providing a disinterested forum in which localized demands of access and opportunity can be balanced. The third and fourth methods outlined above leave community organization to something like a free-market process: those groups or communities which exert themselves will be heard, those which do not will not participate in the process. The assumption is that access to the arena of decision-making is already so open by way of elections, the freedom of public information, and the procedural rules of city agencies, that no special effort needs to be made to equalize access for all communities. Under these views, local government is considered a sensitive enough register
of localized pressures so that if any group has the motivation to make itself heard, it can do so; when no complaints are heard, no problems are indicated, and there is no need for remedy (Parenti 522).

In Rafter's classification scheme, three of the methods involve government recognition of community groups, whether those groups are formed de novo for the purposes of planning or already exist in the community. The question of interest to planners is whether formalizing the role and structure of the recognized community group results in a more effective and more equitable neighborhood planning process. The costs of formalization are great, not only in the sense that more elaborate bureaucratic mechanisms are required to ensure fairness, but also in the sense that a formalized group has a specific role to play in city-building decisions. Does it make a difference? This question suggests that a third method of classification is necessary, one that looks at the issue of formalization in itself. The literature presented by cities for this study indicates how this typology can be structured, for aside from the cities which do not indicate any structure at all for their community organizations, three types of recognized neighborhood organization are found in this study:

1) The neighborhood group is an ad hoc body, formed with official recognition, for the purpose of carrying out or participating in the planning study (and disbanded after the study is over).

2) The neighborhood group is officially prescribed, but not necessarily for planning. "Officially prescribed" means that the procedures for establishing the group (petition, application, etc.) as well as the conditions for maintaining the group in good standing (minutes, yearly report, open meeting requirements, etc.) are spelled out in the city literature which describes the neighborhood planning program. "Not necessarily for planning" means that:
   a. Planning is only one of the activities which the group engages in for neighborhood improvement; or
   b. The group engages in improvement activities, but expressly does not engage in planning.
3) The neighborhood group is officially prescribed, specifically to undertake planning for the community or to participate with the city in such planning.

These distinct types of participation can be summarized in two simple categories: Cities which formalize the status of the neighborhood planning group, and those which do not. For the purposes of this study, the distinction has to do with the explicitness of the group requirements. The ad hoc groups described under 1) above do not carry with them explicit requirements governing membership, meetings, elections, and so forth; they appear simply to be informal groups which are pulled together for consultation during the planning period. In Toledo, the task force for the Old Fairground Neighborhood Plan is described as consisting of "residents and Baron Drawn Steel", called together to work with the planner (OF 3). In Asheville, the Montford Neighborhood Advisory Committee consists of individuals appointed by the Montford Community Club (MRP 46); no further scrutiny of these members appears to be thought necessary. In Dallas, equitable representation of community interests in developing the Ledbetter Plan was thought to be achieved by asking each organization in the community to send three representatives to join the Advisory Committee (LED 9). The assumption here appears to be that the existing organizations cover the range of all important community concerns, so there is no need to draw on the general population of Ledbetter, i.e. that population which belongs to no community organization in particular, in order to ensure fair representation.

In none of these cities are the duties and privileges of the community organization spelled out; it appears to be taken for granted that goodwill and open communication will prevail between city officials
and community members, so that the delineation of roles is not necessary. In Spokane, the names of the committees which undertake planning are defined but the process is equally informal: a Neighborhood Steering Committee, established primarily to review expenditure of federal Community Development Block Grant funds and also to serve as "a forum for a wide variety of neighborhood issues," provides names to serve on Task Forces. The Task Forces are then appointed by the Plan Commission "to focus public input and direct the preparation of a draft Plan document" (SP 2). The city carefully limits the authority of the Task Forces:

The task forces are advisory to the Commission, have no decision-making authority, and are dissolved when the planning work for the neighborhood is completed. (NPP 2)

Perhaps because the advisory status of the Task Force is so strongly emphasized, no scrutiny appears to be applied to the group's composition or procedures.

These informal arrangements contrast sharply with the strict requirements that one finds in the cities of categories 2) and 3) above. New York City, always in the forefront of neighborhood planning, explicitly specifies by Charter the areas within which the citizen Community Boards are meant to operate:

The Charter reforms of 1975 strengthened the role of community boards in three significant areas: land use, service monitoring, and budget participation. Under...ULURP [i.e., Uniform Land Use Review Procedures], boards exercise an advisory role in the review of applications and proposals for land use changes. The Charter reforms enabled community boards to monitor and coordinate local service delivery on a regular basis. Finally, community boards [participate] in the preparation of the City's capital and expense budgets. (BUD 1)

The Community Boards exercise influence over land development through initial review and assessment of the impact of changes in the City's map, amendments to the Zoning Map or adoption of special permits,
the selection of sites for capital projects, or the granting of
franchises (HNB 36, 45). Community Boards must receive an ULURP
application within five days, and each Community Board affected by the
application is obliged to send a representative to define the scope of
the Environmental Impact Statement which the applicant must perform (HNB
46, 131). Community Boards also influence capital expenditures by
identifying desirable projects in the budget process and by reviewing
their progress in reports which the Mayor is required to issue
periodically to the Community Boards and the Borough Boards (HNB 35, 56).

Regarding local services, the planning literature of New York city
states that "the Community Boards have the ultimate responsibility for
assessing and determining the service needs of their districts" (HNB 53).
The monitoring of local service delivery is performed through district
service cabinets, which on a monthly basis bring together line officers
from each of the city agencies that have jurisdiction over the territory
of the community. These offices are under obligation to consult with
residents about problems, activities, and the community needs which are
outlined in an annual needs statement (HNB 116, 137). In a move which
John Mudd identifies as the essential link between community planning and
effective implementation, the agency officials who sit on the district
service cabinets are granted some degree of authority in allocating
personnel, programs, and facilities within the district (Mudd 29, 90,
178ff, HNB 68). The City evidently agrees with Mudd, for it states that

The Cabinet can only work if the participants possess the
authority to make decisions affecting the local district
without having to speak to a higher authority first. (HNB
72)

The service districts of New York's agencies are made coterminous
with community districts to the greatest extent possible in order to
facilitate communication and coordination between officers and to encourage the participation of citizens in City government (HNB 111). The service cabinets are chaired by a District Manager who "serves at the pleasure" of the Community Board at city expense, and is charged with managing the Community Board office, informing the Board on technical and administrative matters that concern the agencies, making policy and budget recommendations to the Board, and executing its policy decisions. In addition, the District Manager serves as a regular liaison between the Community Board and city agencies, and between the Board and the community at large (HNB 64, 65).

The Community Board's role in developing the city budget is equally formalized:

The Charter mandates that the Community Boards consult with agencies on the capital and expense budget needs of the district, hold public hearings, prepare capital and expense budget priorities for the next fiscal year and react to the funding choices presented in the preliminary budget. (HNB 38)

Ancillary privileges are also spelled out: the Community Boards are consulted by agencies before they submit their departmental estimates for budgetting purposes (BUD 1); they have access to local service chiefs (BUD 3); they receive specific information about agency plans, personnel, equipment, and problems (BUD 3); they advise the agencies and the Planning Commission on area plans, zoning, variances, franchises, and other land-use matters (HNB 21, 25). Regarding variances and special permits requests, the recommendations of the Community Board are placed on file with the Board of Standards and Appeals, and the Community Board receives copies of the decisions of this city Board (HNB 144).

The New York City Charter is correspondingly explicit about the constitution of the Community Boards and its responsibilities. The
Boards are permitted to have up to 50 non-salaried members who are appointed by the Borough President, with at least half of the membership nominated by the City Council members who represent the area (HNB 21, 31, 119). Regular meetings are required and the Board is mandated to follow standard procedural rules such as submitting an annual report, filing bylaws, and keeping meeting minutes (HNB 34). Although the Board may hold private hearings and investigations, it can take action only at a meeting which is open to the public (HNB 33). New York’s Community Boards are highly structured, have explicit powers and obligations, and are tied by an official link to the agency officials who make the decisions that most affect the community.

Like New York, Washington, D.C. has gone to great lengths to create a neighborhood organizational structure which parallels the city government and intersects with it in specified ways. The city goes so far as to state that the recognized local group, the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC), is the body of local government "with the closest official ties to the people in the neighborhood" (ANC 1). This status confers on the ANC definite privileges. In the zoning process, for example, ANC's "are able to present witnesses and testimony, to cross-examine witnesses and to present findings of fact and conclusions of law" (PZD 5). ANC's participate in the Large Tract Review process, under which large scale developments which do not fall under other reviewing procedures are scrutinized (IMP 175). The ANC receives advanced notice in several arenas that affect community life: the formulation of policies and guidelines regarding licenses and permits; the budget, goals, and priorities of the City government, especially those which affect community life (GP 6, ANC 2); and proposed changes in
service delivery (MAN 26). In addition, the ANC receives mailed notice of development applications of 50,000 square feet or more (P2D 3), as well as a current list of applications for construction and demolition within its territory (MAN 27). As in New York, the ANC can hire a staff person to serve "at the pleasure of the Commission," and who is considered an employee of the City government (MAN 50, 89).

Most important is the role of the ANC in land use decisions. The comments of the ANC carry "great weight" in these deliberations:

The issues and concerns raised in the recommendations of the Commission shall be given great weight during the deliberations by the governmental agency and those issues shall be discussed in the written rationale for the governmental decision taken. 'Great weight' requires acknowledgement of the Commission as the source of the recommendations, and requires explicit reference to each ANC issue and concern as such as well as specific findings and conclusions with respect to each. (AMN 1, MAN 27)

One aspect of 'great weight' is that the governmental entity must provide a written rationale for the decision made, including discussion of the issues raised by the Advisory Neighborhood Commission. (MAN 34)

The District also takes pains to restrict the role of this quasi-governmental body to advisory status when it states that the "Great Weight" Requirement

is sometimes misunderstood to mean that the recommendations of an Advisory Neighborhood Commission must be binding on the decisions of government agencies. This is not the case. However, the requirement does establish that the views of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions must be taken into account in a serious way before a decision is made. (MAN 34)

The advisory role of the ANC has been tested in court. While the requirement that government entities must discuss the issues raised by the ANC in a written rationale has been supported in several court decisions, the courts have also clearly drawn the line at granting the ANC enforcement powers:

a Commission cannot initiate litigation. ...if ANCs were permitted to initiate or participate in litigation, they
would be exercising enforcement as opposed to advisory functions. (MAN 34)

Although Washington's ANC structure is not as elaborately intertwined with ward and city government as is the Community Board structure of New York, the federal city also requires that the official neighborhood group be accountable to its constituency and the city government. A petition signed by at least 5 percent of the registered voters of a Neighborhood Commission area is required before the Commission can be established (GP 1). Standard group requirements that are imposed on ANC's include regular meetings, filed by-laws, an annual report, a budget, rules of procedure, regularly scheduled elections, and a financial report (ANC 3, MAN 37, 38).

In Portland, Oregon, neighborhood associations are "the officially recognized channels of citizen participation" (PN 5). In 1974,

...a city ordinance mandated that citizens, through the numerous neighborhood associations throughout the city, have a voice in the decisions of local government. It is now the basic right of all Portland citizens to express their opinions and help shape decisions in areas that directly affect their lives. (PN 21)

Portland's neighborhood associations can recommend actions, policies, or comprehensive plans to the city and its agencies; assist in establishing priority needs for the neighborhood; and review and make recommendations regarding items to be included in the city budget (PN 182). The neighborhood association is recognized as the official representative of the neighborhood to city staff (PN 19). Unlike all the other cities in this study, Portland indicates that the neighborhood association may recommend "political action when needed" (PN 19); presumably this means that the association can become involved as an organization in campaigning for candidates (an activity that Washington's ANC's are strictly prohibited from undertaking).
Portland establishes collectivities of neighborhood associations, called District Coalition Boards, which contain from six to twenty neighborhoods. The city permits the structure of these umbrella groups to vary in their powers and responsibilities: the board of Neighborhoods West/Northwest essentially serves as an information conduit for its six largely independent neighborhoods, while the board of Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program has two standing committees that are actively involved in lobbying and planning and conducts several training and work programs (PN 16ff). The District Coalition Boards take on a quasi-governmental role through their power to hire and fire employees. The city mandates that each of these Boards have staff for a minimum of two positions, a coordinator and a crime prevention specialist; beyond this the Board may hire staff for specific purposes, for example legal counsel. As in Washington, D.C., the District Coalition Board staff in Portland are city employees; thus the Board is in practice a delegee of the city and assumes a semi-official status.

Beyond its general purpose of improving communication between the city and its residents, Portland’s neighborhood association structure also provides for community planning. A Neighborhood Needs Program allows the neighborhood associations to identify problems and needs and present them directly to city staff for inclusion in the city budget; it is claimed that many parks, traffic improvements and other projects are directly related to these requests (PN 134). Neighborhoods can also establish a Neighborhood Planning Committee to assist the city in identifying problems and developing analyses, goals, policies, and specific strategies (NPPC). The Committee assists the city in making recommendations to the City Planning Commission and the City Council, and
in monitoring and evaluating recommendations after they are adopted (NPPb 3). These committees can also make comprehensive plans. In an unusual step, the city signs a non-binding "contract" with the neighborhood association which outlines the responsibilities of each party in the formulation of the plan. In two examples of Portland neighborhood plans, the steering committee members were recruited from within the community (BU 29, HA 6).

Salem's neighborhood association structure gives the community group the same functions, and imposes on it the same obligations, as in Portland. Salem's program is less highly structured than that of Portland, in that no District Board forms an intermediate layer between the neighborhood association and the city; there is, however, a city-wide organization called Salem Neighborhoods, Inc. which meets to discuss issues, hear from experts, and study special concerns (SNI). Salem goes somewhat further than Portland, however, in defining the position of the neighborhood association:

Neighborhood associations have a legitimate role in city government because they are officially recognized by the City Council, have standing in land use issues, and are an integral part of citizen participation in Salem city government. (NA 15)

The official status of the neighborhood association imposes on city officials "the responsibility to consider the comments of the neighborhood association as those of an official citizen advisory body of the City" (NA 2). However, a limitation is added:

The Task Force recognizes that decisions made by the City Council, its boards and commissions, or by City staff may not be consistent with the neighborhood recommendations. Neighborhood concerns will be considered along with other citizen testimony and staff recommendations in reaching a decision. (NA 16)
The implication is that unlike the ANC in Washington, D.C., the neighborhood association in Salem is not given the explicit advantage of "great weight" in influencing city decisions.\(^5\)

In New York, Washington, Portland, and Salem (as well as in Baltimore, Dayton, Honolulu, Phoenix, and Providence), the official neighborhood organization is established for general purposes of improving the communication between government and neighborhood residents. By contrast, Boston, Atlanta, San Diego, Spokane and a number of other cities establish citizen participation organizations specifically for purposes of planning.

Atlanta’s charter states that

It is the purpose of this article to provide an opportunity for the citizenry formally to provide input into the comprehensive development plan of the city and to provide a means by which information concerning the operation of city government can be provided to the citizens of Atlanta. (ORD 1)

The Neighborhood Planning Ordinance divides the city into 24 Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU), covering all areas of the city and crossing council borders (ORD 1, MJA 1). Unlike most cities in this study, Atlanta takes the unusual step of actually defining what a neighborhood is: "a geographic area either with distinguishing characteristics or in which residents have a sense of identity and a commonality of perceived interests, or both" (NPA 1). NPUs exist specifically to help update the city’s Comprehensive Development Plan, and to review proposals for the use of federal Community Development Block Grant funds (ANPU). This formal function is supplemented by additional roles that the NPU’s play, for example they monitor service adequacy and channel citizen complaints (MJA 2). Through the NPU, the neighborhood is "legally instituted" to play a role in city planning. However, the role of the NPU is qualified:
In terms of power, the City Attorney has determined that legally the Neighborhood Planning Committees serve in an advisory capacity rather than as boards with any final decision-making authority. (NPA 2)

A planner in Atlanta states that "since the Neighborhood Planning system is city funded, it is expected to remain objective, advisory and non-political" (MJA 2).

Atlanta's city-wide NPU system represents a standing structure which is intended to assist in the annual updating of the Comprehensive Development Plan. By contrast, Minneapolis has initiated a city-wide program which will use a neighborhood workshop process to achieve a five or six year rehabilitation of the city. Every neighborhood participates: after it makes an application to hold a workshop or workshops, it is placed into the improvement schedule by a lottery process (NRP 2). All neighborhood plans developed through this process must fit within the city-wide goals which are developed by an Implementation Committee consisting of departmental heads and chief staff, and which are approved by a Policy Board which includes representatives from city council, the school, library, and park boards, the county, the state, non-profits, labor, the chamber of commerce, and neighborhoods (NRP 3, TRP 6). In effect, the neighborhood under the Minneapolis system becomes the unit of planning for the entire city, the bulk of the planning work being done by the neighborhood itself with assistance from city staff. The recommendations developed through this workshop process will be integrated into the service-delivery programs of the participating city, county, and state organizations by the Implementation Committee. Implementation follows the concentrated service delivery model, where the organizations which have jurisdiction over the neighborhood are intended to bring their resources to bear in a cooperative effort for a limited
time. Unlike the coordinated service delivery mechanism of New York, however, Minneapolis draws on county and state agencies as well as those of the city in a voluntary arrangement. Minneapolis takes the unusual step of asking the participating organizations to sign an agreement of participation. Also unlike New York, the coordination between agencies lasts formally only for the duration of the implementation process (informally, of course, it is expected that contacts developed during planning and implementation will lead to permanent improvements in communication).

Unlike Atlanta and Minneapolis, neither San Diego nor San Antonio have city-wide neighborhood planning structures, but their organizational requirements are equally explicit. San Diego spells out in substantial detail the role of the community planning committees which are formed "to advise the City Council, Planning Commission, Planning Department, the City Manager and other governmental agencies in the preparation, adoption of, implementation of or amendment to the general or community plan..." (CPH e5, 6). The local Planning Committee formulates goals and objectives for the neighborhood and develops projections and recommendations (CPH d24). Recommendations cover both future levels of development which are considered "appropriate to community needs and which fulfill the vision which the community has of itself for the future," and the specific actions which will "channel growth at appropriate levels" (CPH d24). It appears that little scrutiny is applied to the Planning Committee of the individual neighborhood, since it is not required to submit by-laws, election plans, minutes or annual reports. Each Committee, however, does send a representative to a larger organization called the Community Planners Committee, which is
established "to achieve...maximum coordination on a comprehensive or citywide basis...." The advisory status of this committee is emphasized: it participates in reviewing and recommending actions required to carry out the General Plan of the city, it reviews the General Plan, it undertakes studies and makes recommendations on city-wide issues related to the General Plan, and it advises the officially recognized neighborhood Planning Committees (CPH e22-24, e30). Unlike the neighborhood Planning Committees, this broader Community Planners Committee is subject to considerable scrutiny, including adopted rules of procedure, bylaws, officials elected for fixed terms, and regular meetings with minutes and reports of attendance (CPH e11, e30).

Like San Diego, San Antonio depends on volunteers from the community to form its Neighborhood Planning Teams, but unlike San Diego, these teams bear the entire burden of formulating the plan, conducting it through the elaborate approval process, and carrying it out. Although the plan itself is considered to be only an advisory document, the consistent involvement of the community from start to finish may confer on the community plans greater political weight than plans which are carried out primarily by the city planning department. Perhaps for this reason, San Antonio subjects the neighborhood planning committee to substantial scrutiny, reserving to the Director of Planning the authority "to approve (or disapprove) the Neighborhood Planning Team’s composition and fitness to develop a neighborhood plan in consultation with the ad hoc committee...." (the informal body of concerned citizens which initiates the planning process) (NPP 4).

Other cities follow a variety of procedures for establishing the officially recognized planning committee. The level of formalization in
these cities is far lower than in New York, Washington, or Atlanta, but the fact that each organization's name and role in the planning process is prescribed by the city government distinguishes it from the ad hoc committee represented by Dallas' Ledbetter plan. In Fort Worth, the essential criterion for participating in the Targeted Area Planning Program (TAP) appears to be simply the interest that residents show in doing so: the city advises its residents to "determine whether your group currently has officers or leaders who would like to participate in the TAP program" before forming the Steering Committee which makes application to the city for TAP planning; plans are then formulated in a "partnership" between city staff and the neighborhood groups (TAP 1). In Omaha a very informal process is used: task forces which are loosely established to carry out specific aspects of the preliminary workshops send representatives to a planning steering committee, which then meets with city officials to identify projects for inclusion in the plan (NPC 5). No scrutiny is apparently applied to the citizen volunteer group.

By contrast with Fort Worth, Omaha, and Spokane, where the neighborhood planning groups are formed by the community itself with little intervention by the city government, Raleigh, North Carolina requires that the task force that represents the community be appointed by the City Council (BRA 2). The task force consists of residents, property owners, and "resource" people (GUI 4). The determination as to what constitutes a representative membership appears to lie with the city, and it also appears that the city assumes the main responsibility for plan preparation.

Although Fort Worth, Omaha, Spokane, and Raleigh rely on officially recognized citizen groups to participate in or carry out the neighborhood
plan, none of them specify with precision the powers and obligations of the community planning group. These tend to be cities of intermediate size, between 200,000 and 450,000 residents. It may be that the informality of the citizen participation process, the lack of scrutiny to which neighborhood groups are subjected, and the tendency to be vague about the precise functions of the neighborhood planning group, are reflections of city culture in which personal acquaintance between city officials and neighborhood leaders can still substitute for the more formalized, instrumental relations which obtain in larger cities. Whether reliance on these personal relations ensures fair representation in the planning committees is a question that would deserve considerable study; if the answer is yes, it would suggest that smaller cities might do well to avoid the administrative and legal entanglements that are involved in establishing highly structured and defined neighborhood planning programs.

**Formalized Citizen Organizations**

This discussion shows that there is a large range in what constitutes an officially formalized citizen planning group. Although some of the cities discussed - Omaha, Spokane, and Fort Worth, for example - apply little scrutiny to the structure and procedures of the community planning group, the fact that community members participate in a recognized organization that has a specific role to play in the planning process can be seen as a formalization of the citizen participation process. In other cities, the rules governing the community group's organizational structure are as formalized as the powers that the group exercises in the planning process. As with plan standing, the interesting question here
is whether these various degrees of formalization make a difference: whether formalization of responsibilities and powers equalizes the playing field between communities which have different inherent capacities for planning, whether formalization clarifies roles in ways that simplify communication, whether it leads to greater and more knowledgeable citizen participation; whether, in the end, formalization of the citizen's planning role increases the democratic legitimacy of neighborhood planning and makes it a more effective instrument of city improvement.

Notes

1. Groups of all kinds may complain that the organizational standards are so stringent that they inhibit the articulation of demands. Residents may feel that the requirements for forming, maintaining, and working within a formalized community structure simply imposes one more level of procedural intricacy to a process which is already complex enough. Remark of official at Beech Corporation, Philadelphia, May 1991.
2. Portland, Oregon, has both means of assisting community groups.
3. Rafter also lists Baltimore as a city in this category, indicating that the planning department encourages the neighborhoods to make comprehensive plans and to advise the department of new developments in the community. However, the result of my own research shows that Baltimore's PAC neighborhood groups are very well defined entities, with specific powers and prerogatives in the planning process.
4. The Charter delineates those functions which are to be coterminous and those which, for reasons of scale or efficiency, may be coterminous with more than one community district or with aggregates of such districts (HNB113).
5. The active role of neighborhood associations in Salem and Portland reflects an unusual fact: all cities in Oregon are under state obligation to ensure citizen participation in the affairs of local government.
Plan Authorization

A third structural factor which in theory should bear on the success of neighborhood planning is the level of authorization which is granted to neighborhood plans. Six levels of authorization were identified among the thirty neighborhood planning programs reviewed for this study:

1) Plan is reviewed or adopted by the community (referendum, town meeting, executive committee, etc.)
2) Plan is adopted or recommended by the planning agency.
3) Plan is adopted or recommended by the planning commission.
4) Plan is adopted by the city council by resolution.
5) Plan is adopted by the city council by ordinance, or by the mayor.
6) Plan must be approved by the state.

The six levels of authority found in the sample cities are, in general, cumulative. Where a city requires that a plan be passed by the city council, it almost invariably also requires that it be passed by the community, the planning agency, and the planning commission, in that sequence. Similarly, the two exceptional cases in which the plans are approved by the State, either individually (Portland) or as part of the city’s comprehensive plan (Providence), also require the full sequence of approval by city council and lower levels before the plan arrives at the state level. Thresholds of consensus are thus achieved: the support of the community is required in order to head off unanticipated future opposition, the approval of the agency to ensure technical competency and the probable accord of the bodies which will implement the plan, the approval of the planning commission to bring to the plan a city-wide citizens’ perspective, and finally the approval of the council to grant the plan its authority. As the sphere of consensus broadens, so does the authority which the plan bears: a plan passed only by the community could
easily be dismissed as merely self-serving, but one which has undergone the scrutiny of theoretically disinterested parties like the planning commission, and weathered the criticism of parties in council which might well have opposite interests to those favored by the plan, can be said to be well founded.

From the perspective of a plan's advocates, the critical issue is whether or not the plan is enforceable: whether remedies exist if the plan is not carried out as written or if actions are performed which contravene the specific recommendations or the general intentions of the plan. Advocates will also want some assurance that the actions recommended in the plan will actually be carried out in a reasonable amount of time. Although plans adopted at any level carry some political weight, only a plan adopted as law is enforceable. Therefore the important dividing line in plan authorization lies between those plans which are adopted by advisory bodies like the planning commission or by municipal legislative bodies but only as resolutions (Items 1 through 4 above), and those plans which are adopted as ordinance by council, passed by mayoral decree, or approved by the state (Items 5 and 6).¹ In this study, the former will be called "weak" forms of authorization, the latter "strong". (In theory strong authorization would also include plans which are passed by referendum of the city's population, but this situation was not encountered among the thirty cities of the sample.)

The purpose of authorization at the higher levels of council ordinance, mayoral decree, and state approval is two-fold: to give the plan a degree of legitimacy which will further its implementation and permit remedy, and to prevent parochial bias by ensuring that the plan is reviewed in advance within the widest possible political forum. For
example, a plan approved only at the agency level would be subject to the intense limitations of staffing and time which plague all administrative agencies. Few planning agencies have the luxury of reaching out to the very poorest and most dysfunctional neighborhoods of their cities, those which need planning most, unless they are under a mandate to do so from a higher authority. Requests from the visible and vocal leadership which is often present in higher-income neighborhoods will tend to receive consideration by planning staff, while those from neighborhoods where the leadership is less experienced and has less ability to concentrate its resources, generally the poorer communities, will be relegated to inattention or inaction. Although the planning agency may have a good grasp of the technical implications that a neighborhood plan has for city-wide concerns (for example the effect that a street closing will have on the access of fire trucks), it may be less cognizant of the political implications (the opposition that the same street closing might evoke from adjacent lower-income neighborhoods who perceive in it exclusionary motivations). Therefore review by a lay body which has a city-wide sense of responsibility is crucial to achieving fairness.

State-Level Review

Most interesting are those cases in which the plan is approved by an authority higher than the city, because this situation suggests that planning itself is taken with great seriousness, and that the dangers inherent to localized planning are recognized. Planners will want to know whether such attention from state lawmakers makes neighborhood plans particularly effective. Not surprisingly, the requirement for state review is found in two states which make much of their quality of life in
promoting tourism and attracting businesses and residents, Oregon and Rhode Island. According to the comments of residents, a desire to prevent Portland, Oregon, from becoming a northern version of Los Angeles helped motivate the state legislature to pass its 1975 Statewide Planning Goals, which require comprehensive plans from every city in the state, specify the minimum content and standards of the plans, and mandate that the city satisfy requirements of citizen participation. Failure by a city to develop a plan which meets the statewide standards, or failure to develop a plan in a timely manner, allows Oregon to supersede the city’s planning perogative by imposing on it a comprehensive plan developed by the state. These goals (and others which in effect apply a limited form of zoning to every inch of Oregon territory) have withstood several assaults on the part of development and real estate interests. The Oregon legislature went even further when it established the Urban Growth Boundary for its major cities, defining the limits of urban development in order to prevent piecemeal attrition of prime agricultural land. Such intensive concern for the quality of life, reflecting the involvement of ordinary citizens in the affairs of the state, is modeled at the neighborhood level in Portland by the scrutiny which the city applies to the neighborhood planning group and the care that is taken to ensure that the neighborhood plan complies with city-wide goals (which in turn must comply with the state-wide goals). Portland goes beyond the state standard by requiring that the goals and objectives of its neighborhood plans, as well a zoning map projecting the goals and objectives, be passed by ordinance by the City Council in order to be accepted as official policy (NPPa 3, HA Appendix A 3). These plans, like the city comprehensive plan, must also be approved by a state agency, the Oregon
Department of Land Conservation and Development. However, Portland also takes care that its neighborhood plans will not lock the city and its officials into obligations which cannot realistically be met: it passes the specific strategies of neighborhood plans by resolution, treating them as desirable items which will be considered and perhaps enacted in light of future funding and political consensus.

Rhode Island, which promotes itself as "The Ocean State" in a bid to be the yachting center of the United States, also requires that its cities develop comprehensive plans which are subject to state review. The plans are adopted by ordinance at the city or town level, and become effective when the state accepts them (LCP v-1). The state imposes statutory deadlines on its cities for the submission of plans, and like Oregon, it reserves the right to prepare a plan for a municipality which fails to meet the deadline or submits a plan which is disapproved at the state level (and not corrected by the municipality) (LCP vi-2). In Providence neighborhood plans, which are incorporated into the city’s comprehensive plan, are subject to the same scrutiny at the state level "to ensure compliance with the state guide plans and the rules and regulations adopted by the state planning council" (GUI 31).

Some Problems of Interpretation

It would appear that the standing of the plan, discussed earlier, and the level of plan authorization should be practically synonymous: one would expect that a neighborhood plan which has a mandatory presence in the formulation or review of land-use decisions would have to be supported by the full authorization of the municipal government. Plans with "strong" standing would then also have "strong" authorization. The converse would
also appear to be necessary, namely that plans which are passed as ordinance, mayoral order, or with state approval would have at least the power of mandatory review, if not the authority to directly influence the zoning maps and the capital improvements program.

In fact, this is not always the case. Among the thirty cities in the sample, nine were found to have plans with standing that could be described as strong and with authorization that could also be described as strong. Six cities were found to have plans with strong standing yet adopted under weak forms of authorization; and in one city, Washington, D.C., the contrary situation was found, plans which were passed by strong authorization but which were only advisory in their standing.

These apparently anomalies need to be explained. The literature of city planning departments is often ambiguous about the question of adoption. Many cities simply say that the neighborhood plan is "adopted" by the city council, without further explanation. In general, this language should be taken to mean that the plan is adopted by resolution, not by ordinance. Adopting a plan by ordinance is a serious step for any city to take. Whether the plan stands for development or against it, compliance with the plan creates a procedural hurdle that the builder must pass in order to develop land. Given the uncertainties of future funding and the variability of neighborhood leadership, involvement, and consensus, the plan really can never be more than a projection of the community's wishes and needs taken at a particular moment. It is never a "blueprint" in the sense that this word is applied to architectural design, a precise guideline for the construction of the design and a fairly accurate rendition of how the final design will appear. Even where a plan defines with precision the program and location of desirable
facilities, implementation generally lies so far in the future that the element of uncertainty remains high. Yet for all its uncertainty, the fact that a plan is a political testament to the desires and will of the community means that it can both inhibit needed development and create expectations among residents which cannot be fulfilled, increasing the scepticism of citizens about the sincerity and powers of local government. This is true for all plans, but adopting a plan by ordinance gives it legal weight and therefore increases the risks associated with it. Given the seriousness involved in adopting a plan by ordinance, it can be assumed that if a city were to follow this course, it would say so (and like Portland would also describe the exact limits of the ordinance's scope). In the absence of such an explicit statement, it can be assumed that the neighborhood plan is passed by resolution. This assumption has been applied to most of the cases in the planning literature where the language was ambiguous to begin with and the issue not clarified by further enquiry of planners.

In Washington, D.C., a different result emerges from the ambiguity of the language. In this city, where the neighborhood plan as a part of the Comprehensive Plan is explicitly limited to an advisory function (CP 4), the City Council takes "legislative action" regarding Ward plans (the larger form of the neighborhood plan) (PZD 3). "Legislative action" is ambiguous: it may in fact only mean council resolution, but it suggests legislation and hence ordinance. It is possible that a city could pass by ordinance plans which it intends to have only advisory status: if the plan's goals, policies and recommendations were very general, having the force of ordinance behind them would not constrain developers or decision-makers and would present little risk to the elected officials
who passed the plan. It only requires in this case that the plan have a serious advisory presence in land-use decisions, not that its goals or recommendations be implemented, and this appears to be the case with Washington's neighborhood and ward plans. The ambiguity of Washington, D.C.'s plans cannot be easily resolved, but for the purposes of this study, "legislative action" is taken to mean that the Ward plan is passed by ordinance, not by resolution.

In the reverse direction are plans which appear to be authorized only by resolution but which have "strong" standing in land use decisions, that is, they have an explicit relation to one or more tools of implementation like zoning. Baltimore's extensive literature does not discuss the question of authorization, yet its plans have very strong standing: the literature states that "All plans, public or private, must conform to the City's Master Plan" and the Planning Commission must certify this conformance; this conformance can be assumed to transfer to the specific plans which are developed by city agencies (WHAT 1). Similarly, Spokane's plans are "adopted" by City Council, but in their direct relation to Neighborhood Improvement Program funding this city's neighborhood plans are among the most forceful of the sample cities. Although both cities have plans with strong standing, their failure to state that the plans are adopted as ordinance is taken to mean that the plans are passed only by resolution. This combination of strong standing with apparently weak authorization may suggest that the issue of authorization is not as crucial as it might appear from a "black letter" reading of the plan's role in city-building decisions; a plan passed only by council resolution could still carry great significance in shaping the city's use of its resources if the culture of the city, and especially
the culture prevailing within the operational agencies, supported the plan without controversy.

Similar reasoning may apply to Los Angeles and San Diego, in which plans are also "adopted", presumably by resolution, but in which neighborhood plans carry the extremely rigorous state requirement that zoning be brought into conformance with the plan within a specified time (AL 2, CPH d23). This, however, is a requirement of the state of California. The apparent discrepancy between the city and the state view of the plan may be interpreted in one of two ways: either the city passes the plan by resolution because it relies on the state through its legislation to take care of the issue of plan standing, or the state has superseded the city in granting to the plan a standing that is stronger than the city would care to grant it. Further investigation would be necessary to uncover the answer; but the story told by Mike Davis about the long resistance of the planning commission to compliance with the state mandate, against the interests of homeowners, suggests that this second interpretation is correct (see Chapter 6). If it is, it raises the interesting situation of citizens who feel that they can work through their state legislature more easily than through their city council in achieving enforceable plans. The ambiguity between plan standing and plan authorization arises in these cases because the plans are subject to two separate authorities, the city council and the state legislature.

This leaves to be explained Raleigh, North Carolina, a city in which neighborhood plans are passed by resolution and therefore, according to a planner, "do not have the weight of law" (BRA 2); the same city which directly and intimately ties its neighborhood plans to zoning overlay procedures. Neighborhood plans in other cities, for example
Dallas and Toledo, also mention zoning changes as an important element of their recommendations, but these cities clearly subordinate their neighborhood plans to the zoning process (LBJ 2, JW 2). In Raleigh, however, zoning overlay (as a device for protecting neighborhoods from inappropriate growth) is stated explicitly as a reason for establishing the neighborhood planning program. Zoning overlay is understood to be a logical, although not necessarily inevitable, outcome of neighborhood planning, and the neighborhood plan is the prerequisite for establishing the overlay district (GUI 18). While this relationship is not as strong as that in Kansas City or Phoenix, where the neighborhood plan is designed specifically to be the instrument of zoning overlay, it is a far stronger statement of the relation between zoning and neighborhood planning than obtains in Dallas and Toledo. Raleigh’s program creates the expectation that zoning will be tied to the recommendations of the neighborhood plan, while Dallas and Toledo explicitly disassociate the two instruments. For this reason, Raleigh can be said to have neighborhood plans with strong standing while those of Dallas and Toledo can be said to be weak. The strong standing of the neighborhood plan in Raleigh does not inhere to the plan itself, but to a consequence which is intended to flow from the plan, namely the Neighborhood Conservation District (GUI 2). The plan may be passed by resolution because it is not the instrument for effecting changes in the classification of neighborhood land, but is a prerequisite for making these changes.
A Doubt About Strong Forms of Plan Authorization

This discussion of plan authorization shows that there are several instances in which neighborhood plans are given the full force of law through the authorization process. Cities are understandably hesitant about taking this step: unless explicitly limited in its application, this authorization commits the city to actions in the future which may be difficult if not impossible, handing over to the community group the flexibility which elected officials need to retain in order to respond to unforeseen and novel conditions. The close relation between plan authorization and plan standing is expected; but the ambiguous cases also raise a doubt that strong plan authorization is as necessary to effective plan implementation as a legalistic interpretation would suggest. This question can only be answered by looking at the implementation record of cities with strong authorization plans versus those without this level of authorization. Although the ultimate value of strong authorization may be in doubt, the classification schema given in Chapter 8 and analyzed in Chapter 9 will show that strong forms of authorization may be virtually unavoidable once a city has committed itself to neighborhood plans with strong standing and to citizen planning organizations which have explicit rights and responsibilities in the planning process.

Notes

A RESOLUTION generally states a policy or an intent of action. It is not a binding legal restriction. Rather, it announces to the public what the council wants to happen. For instance, a resolution may be passed to announce the city’s intention to widen a street. For the
work to proceed, however, an ordinance must be passed to allow further action.
An ORDINANCE is a binding legislative act.....If a vote is taken [by the city council], it is considered binding.
The ordinance, if passed, becomes law.
The use of the word "resolution" when it is applied to municipal affairs is different from its use in the United States congressional arena, where it means the same as legislative act.
2. The nine cities are Boston, Dayton, Honolulu, New York, Phoenix, Portland, Providence, Salem, and Trenton.
3. Asheville, Los Angeles, Spokane, Baltimore, Raleigh, and San Diego
Planning Process

Planning process is crucial, since it is in the elaboration of the plan that citizen participation becomes more than rhetoric and that the potential for abuse of the plan by a determined minority or a biased majority becomes real. The organization of process is a decision about power: who participates in making the plan, and at what stage of its development and in what offices, influences the issues which are to be included and the weight the plan will eventually have as a political instrument. Explicit process can encourage fairness by opening the plan to public exposure through formal application, petition, notification, and hearing; these same methods of exposure can also make the development of a plan so burdensome that only the most determined or desperate of volunteer lay citizen groups will carry the plan through to completion.

From setting goals to implementing recommendations, every aspect of planning elicits the contending interests of the parties affected by the plan. That the planning process be open, fair, and inclusive is imperative not only from the viewpoint of equity, but also from the perspective of political reality: excluded groups can undermine years of effort when they are finally aroused to action. A formalized, explicit planning process has the advantage that it lays out in advance and publicly the requirements needed to carry out the plan. It indicates what level of consensus will be required in order to initiate a plan and to have it adopted by the city government. It explains the components of the plan, and the various tasks which must be assumed by planners, residents, and elected officials. An explicit planning process is itself a means of communication, because it clarifies the expectations that government and residents should have of one another. It instructs in the
arcania of planning technique and in the political realities that are involved in carrying wishes through to implementation. An explicit planning process also carries its dangers: false expectations may be raised that the formal procedures of the plan will, like the rules of a game, always control the arena of conflicting interests; procedural hurdles may be made so high in the interests of assuring equity that they inhibit many worthwhile community ventures; and the mere presence of extensive procedures for bringing development proposals to the attention of the neighborhood group may discourage investors.

Thus process needs to be watched carefully. A poorly structured planning process may indicate that the plan (if developed by the public sector) is a policy statement of the city government rather than a testimony to community needs, or that (if developed by the community) it is merely a statement of community needs and wishes which lacks backing by the local government. In either case, deficient process may suggest that the plan is not understood as an agreement between citizen and government about the preferred direction of the neighborhood's growth. (Lack of process may also indicate that the business of planning is done on a "friends and neighbors" basis, as in Wilmington, Delaware: no formal process is needed because the small size of the city and the close personal and collegial relations between citizen leaders and planning officials means that problems are handled like case work, as they arise and using any available means.) By contrast, planning procedures that are elaborate and intricate indicate that a city experienced with the way that plans can be abused is attempting to ensure fairness and inclusiveness; or it may indicate that the planning process is constructed as a series of hurdles to delay or even kill neighborhood-
based plans which might interfere with developmental efforts. In this latter case, one would expect to see elaborate procedural requirements appearing in cities which are experiencing extremely rapid growth, since it is here that the conflicts between developmental and neighborhood interests are felt most keenly.

Plan process cannot be discussed without also investigating the requirements for plan form and content. Among the materials provided by cities for this study, neighborhood plans range from a twelve page list of recommended projects for a neighborhood in Fort Worth to a 300 page comprehensive plan for the Mission Valley of San Diego. The Mission Valley plan for San Diego in an elaborate and complete compendium of data, policy alternatives, and specific recommendations. The format and contents of the plans in this study vary enormously, indicating not only the different ways that the plans are used by the cities in the study sample but also the fact that there is no formal set of conventions for comprehensive plans which is widely accepted. Specifying form and content has the advantage of bringing all neighborhoods, which are inevitably competing for the attention and budget dollars of city officials, under a common set of rules. It permits those evaluating a plan (the planning department, the planning commission, the city council, and in a few cases the state) to determine if the plan meets the minimum requirements needed to ensure what is called "sound planning process." New York's literature describes the three general aspects of sound planning policy - scope, citizen participation, and congruence - which must be documented in its 197-a neighborhood plans:

a. The plan demonstrates a serious attempt to identify issues, land-related in the broadest sense, affecting a community and to propose measures to deal with them. These measures must fall within the boundary of the
community district and be within the proper scope of governmental action.
b. The plan was created through an open participatory process....
c. The plan addresses any significant conflict with previous officially adopted plans.... (DFT 2)

Elaborate substantive requirements, like elaborate procedural mandates, can inhibit planning by placing it beyond the technical competency of citizen participants. New York explicitly addresses this problem when it states that

197-a standards must not be based on technical issues or formal adequacy of data or analysis which are not within the capacity of community boards. A narrow judgment of planning policy or of rigid conformance to strict methodology must not be used to bury a plan by denying it adequate evaluation. ...the standards...must be simple and general. ...a plan must not be required to be technical or complex. A plain prose text must be sufficient for the body of the plan, with appropriate maps and other material added.... Content...must not be limited to issues of zoning and land use..., but include all land-related issues.... Thus such plans must not be required to be overly comprehensive, or to be full master plans.... (DFT 1, 2)

There appears to be general agreement among the cities surveyed in this study about the elements which a plan must contain in order to be considered sound. It must define the community’s boundaries, provide a description of its main features through data, narrative, and maps, state the community’s goals and objectives, list recommended actions, and offer some explanation of how the actions will be undertaken. If a plan is understood as a document which may have large consequences for both city and community, these minimal requirements are reasonable: they indicate the information on which decisions were based, offer goals as standards against which accomplishments can be measured, and limit the scope of action of the plan by defining specific actions and, in some cases, the actors who are best suited to carry them out. The plan then stands as a record of agreement among residents and city officials about what is to be done. Inclusion of these minima not only makes the plan useful as a
source of information and a guide for neighborhood improvements, it also provides testimony about the matters that the community determined to be important at a certain point in its history. The minima allay criticisms that might arise about the plan's completeness or fairness. Given the task that the plan performs, it is not surprising that some cities also require that their neighborhood plans include descriptions of the process by which the plan was developed. This section becomes a part of the "paper trail" by which fairness and inclusiveness can be asserted against future claims of bias in the plan's development.

Many plans also include a "vision statement", a very general description of the community's future condition. As the examples given on page 71 indicate, such statements have a tendency toward vagueness; moreover, they often project a future which flies in the face of obvious economic and demographic trends. While such statements offer little in the way of substantive direction to a plan, they do provide an emotional reference that can balance the generally dry prose and clinical neatness of most planning documents. To the extent, however, that these vision statements depict highly improbable futures for struggling inner city neighborhoods, they may undermine the plan's credibility. It is characteristic of such vision statements that they project a future condition for the neighborhood which recreates the imagined harmony, balance, and small-town integration of an earlier time; thus they avoid confrontation with the changed position of neighborhoods in the contemporary ecology of the city, and their writers can be accused of failing to project a vision which might realistically reassert a vital role for the neighborhood in the larger metropolis.
Requirements governing plan procedure and plan form and content serve the purpose of bringing order to a process which is inevitably complex, drawn out, and highly charged with the potential for controversy and stalemate between conflicting neighborhood interests. Planning process attempts to bring sequence to a process which in reality almost always involves simultaneous actions on many fronts: Phoenix outlines an eleven-step process which reads as a virtual cookbook for community planning (HBK 11). Two types of planning procedure need to be distinguished, the narrow process by which the plan document is drafted and the broader process by which a plan is carried through from initiation to development to implementation. In a rough way, the first of these can be considered to be a technical issue while the second is political. In reality the drafting of the plan is also highly political, since is here that decisions are made about the scope of issues that will be considered and what information – census data, surveys, meeting records, interviews – will be used to support the planning recommendations.

Professional planning has developed a methodology for drafting comprehensive plans that appears to be widely accepted among the cities in the study, in contrast to the great variety of plan formats that are presented and the different procedures that cities specify for initiation, development and adoption of plans. The typical process for drafting the plan involves definite stages, which are summarized clearly in Omaha’s Neighborhood Planning Concept Paper:

1. Compilation of information
2. Determination of goals
3. Assessment of needs
4. Specification of objectives

5. Selection of actions

6. Implementation.

In the case of Omaha, this outline is further explained by a chart and text. The order in which these tasks are undertaken is not always the same in various cities: in Philadelphia, goals and objectives are determined before the historical background and existing conditions of the neighborhood are assessed (WPP 4). In Columbus, the outline is simplified to include only information gathering, analysis to identify problems and opportunities, and actions, and goes on to say that "The full three-phase planning approach may not always be necessary" (PD 2). Other cities follow the basic outline given above but impose additional requirements. Portland requires that a neighborhood plan meet the objectives of the district plan, which in turn must conform to the objectives of the city's comprehensive plan. Portland's Hosworth-Abernathy neighborhood accordingly included in its planning process an analysis of the proposed plan's relation to the Comprehensive Plan (HA, BO 26). Providence adds two crucial elements to the basic schema: development of alternatives, and evaluation after implementation begins. The latter requirement acknowledges what is widely recognized in planning theory, that comprehensive plans are on-going processes in which the plan itself should alter the social and economic condition of the community as improvements are completed. Toledo also requires development and evaluation of planning options (APP 8ff). And San Antonio adds to the basic list a requirement that the plan be updated regularly by the neighborhood committee which drafted it.
While the general procedures for drafting a plan are well established, the actors who undertake each part of the plan vary greatly from city to city. In San Antonio, the neighborhood team undertakes every aspect of plan preparation, receiving technical assistance from the city planning department. By contrast, in St. Louis neighborhood planning is almost entirely an affair of city government. Consultants are employed to provide initial information about the community and the city staff develops the plan; discussion is undertaken with community leaders about the neighborhood's needs, but essential decisions about plan scope and service delivery are made by the city government (GCS 2).

Unlike the methodology for drafting the plan, the processes for carrying a plan through the whole curriculum from initiation to implementation are greatly varied from city to city. This aspect of planning process has considerable import for the role the plan will play as a political instrument. In the entire process of developing the plan, the drafting of the document is only one event, bracketed at the beginning by long stages of organization and at the end by sometimes elaborate procedures for review and adoption. In some cities, this process is very straightforward. Fort Worth, for example, asks neighborhoods that are interested in planning to submit a simple application that describes existing land use, outlines problems to be solved in the neighborhood, and provides letters of support. The Planning Department ranks the applications and then works with the neighborhood to recommend solutions; the neighborhood is charged with implementation (TAP 1-3). No adoption process is mentioned. In Toledo, requests for planning assistance are directed to the city's Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization (DHNR) from neighborhood
organizations, the Planning Commission, other city agencies, or the city council (APP 6); DHNR then works with the neighborhood in question to develop the plan (DC 10, COL 17, SUM 2, 26, OF 14, SEC). Minneapolis uses a lottery to initiate neighborhood planning, but unlike Fort Worth and Toledo it requires every neighborhood in the city to participate at some point in the process. Plans are developed out of neighborhood workshops, and implementation follows the concentrated service delivery model in which agencies from city and county concentrate their resources intensively on the neighborhood for a short time after the plan is adopted (TRP 3, 33, 45). In Portland, the Neighborhood Planning Section of the Planning Bureau identifies criteria that qualify a neighborhood for a neighborhood plan, including organizational capacity, identifiable volunteers, significant land use issues, and impending public improvements (SCP 1, 2). When the neighborhood is identified, a non-binding "contract" is written between the neighborhood association and the Bureau of Planning that defines the roles and responsibilities of each party (NPPb 3, 4). Workshops are held to provide information about needs and wishes, and the plan is developed by the community. Adoption is very carefully considered in Portland, a reflection of the city's obligation to meet the state's requirements for citizen participation (PG 3ff).

These straightforward approaches to the planning process stand in contrast to the highly elaborate procedures required by New York, Phoenix, Raleigh, and Kansas City. The formal procedures developed by these cities indicate an awareness of the pitfalls of neighborhood planning, because they provide checkpoints to ensure that the plan is never developed without opportunities for the whole community to
participate or without the knowledge of the city agencies which are primarily responsible for implementing it.

For sheer complexity of procedure, New York City is at the front of the field. Organizations which intend to sponsor a neighborhood plan, which might include the local Community Board, the Department of Planning, the Planning Commission, the Mayor, the borough president, or the Borough Board, are required to notify the Department of City Planning of their intent (RUL 1, HNB 35, 127, DRP 22). When the plan is completed, the Community Board must hold a public hearing before submitting the plan to the Planning Department, which reviews the plan for form and content before passing it on to the Planning Commission (HNB 45, DRP 22, RUL 2, 4). The Commission again determines whether the plan meets standards for form and content, and if so, directs the Planning Department to distribute the plan to affected Community Boards, borough presidents, and Borough Boards, and to undertake environmental review where necessary (RUL, HNB 45, 128). After holding public hearings, these parties transmit their recommendations to the Planning Commission. The Commission reviews the plan once again in light of the responses of the affected parties, and then votes to approve it or not; if approved, it moves on to the City Council for final action.

This elaborate and cumbersome set of procedural steps seems designed to ensure that the plan will be developed in an atmosphere of broad public awareness. Significantly, the concern appears to be with the potential political opposition to the plan, not with its technical proficiency, since there is no mention of distributing the plan to city departments for review along with the opportunities for comment provided to the Community Boards, the borough presidents, and the Borough Boards.
It is also significant that among the six neighborhood plans mentioned by the Municipal Arts Society in their brochure called The Will to Plan, only one Community Board (C.B. No. 3, the Bronx) actually followed the 197-a procedure; other groups developed plans without city help by hiring consultants (Clinton neighborhood; WIL 11, 12), by working with graduate students in planning (C.B. No. 4, Chelsea; WIL 10), or by working with private non-profit organizations (Manhattan East River Waterfront). To judge by this evidence, the 197-a plan process, which is intended by Charter to encourage "community boards to plan for their districts" (DFT 1), has not provided an attractive and accessible route for community improvement.

Equally elaborate is the procedure which Phoenix outlines for its Special Planning Districts. Where New York permits a group to initiate a 197-a plan with simple notification to the Planning Department, Phoenix requires a preliminary petition showing support from 50% of the property owners in the area (who must control at least 75% of the area's property), a public hearing, Planning Commission recommendation, and City Council approval before the Planning Department is authorized to begin its planning work (HBK 15ff). Once approval is granted to proceed, the city outlines eleven steps "designed to methodically take the neighborhood through the necessary process of preparing a well-thought out and feasible plan" (HBK 11). These eleven steps encompass the usual stages of planning methodology - identifying issues, establishing goals, developing alternative plans, outlining implementation methods - as well as steps to determine the roles of neighborhood and city participants, to receive input from residents at meetings, and to circulate the draft plan to relevant city agencies to review for compliance with existing plans.
and regulations. The plans are generally developed by Planning Department staff, although a few neighborhoods have taken the initiative to develop their own plans with the assistance of city staff (EC 2, 3, EP 1, ROO 1). Significantly, the literature states that "substantial support is required [at the neighborhood meetings, Phase V of the process]...to proceed" to the next step in the process. Since the eleven steps are presented as a sequence in which the accomplishment of one triggers the next, definite milestones are established to mark the progress of the community's planning effort. This planning methodology therefore serves both as a step-by-step "how to do" planning guide and as a sequential test of community resolve. In the final major phase of Phoenix planning, the adoption process, the plan has to undergo stringent scrutiny by the community and the city government: an extraordinary 70% of neighborhood property owners must indicate support for the plan in order for it to be presented at a public hearing, and only at this stage does the City Council take action on the plan (HBK 11ff, SPD 5).

Clearly designed to prevent a small but determined neighborhood group from imposing its will on a passive majority, or to prevent a minority of property owners from being excluded from planning by the majority, Phoenix's procedural hurdles also help the city government to conserve its resources by giving it several critical points where the planning effort can be halted if insufficient support is shown. Even if support is shown, the final decision whether to proceed with planning and whether the plan should be implemented rests with the city. Majority support for a neighborhood plan, even to the extent of 70% of property owners, still does not translate to city-wide support or city-wide benefits; therefore the council, the body which is charged with balancing
the interests of the whole city through debate and vote, has to determine if a proposed Special Planning District serves the interests of the city.

Phoenix's elaborate and difficult procedures appear designed to make the faint of heart quail. The city's form and content requirements are equally stringent: plans are required to have two major components, a plan document containing (among other things) a purpose statement, a general area description, acreage of land uses, performance & development regulations, illustrative plans and diagrams, and an implementation plan; and a development analysis presenting data "to judge the appropriateness of the plan with regard to market demands, service impacts, surrounding area impacts, and public fiscal impacts....". The minimum functional elements that the plan must include are a traffic & transportation study, natural features study, archeology and historic features, inventory and plans for utilities and public facilities, and a description of how zoning regulation will be altered (SPD 5). In contrast to New York's remark that plans should not be beyond the technical competency of average citizens, Phoenix's requirements for plan content do necessitate the technical skills, education, and experience of professional planners.

Raleigh, North Carolina has a process for amending its Comprehensive Plan almost identical to that of Phoenix (GUI 2). In fact, Raleigh borrowed liberally from Phoenix in developing its planning process, even to the extent of literally copying the language of the Phoenix Special Planning District Handbook in several instances. Like the Phoenix Special Planning District, the Raleigh neighborhood plan is designed to protect the character of older neighborhoods which are experiencing threats from intensive new development. Also like Phoenix, Raleigh on the whole experienced an extraordinary rate of growth in the
1980's. The coincidence of these factors may indicate that the extremely elaborate procedures which both cities outline for neighborhood planning are the product of the intensive conflicts that rapid growth induces: on the one hand a city government which welcomes the growth as a windfall that will, it is hoped, increase the tax base without outstripping the city's ability to support infrastructure and services; on the other hand, established residential neighborhoods which see the rapid new development as a threat to the physical and social stability of their communities, and who seek a regulatory mechanism for containing it. The elaborate procedure is an attempt to satisfy both sides of the conflict, by giving the neighborhoods a clear, step-by-step method for carrying out a plan while making sure that the opposition has opportunities to overrule the plan if it wants.

Kansas City's neighborhood planning process, like that of Phoenix and Raleigh, also gives substantial attention to the initiation process. The initiation phase has three steps, including a preliminary review with the neighborhood group, a petition to demonstrate the commitment of at least 50% of the target area's landowners, and public hearings. The development phase also has three parts: the preparation of the plan by the City Development Department, public notification and hearings, and council action (NPD 2-6). This straightforward account hides the lengthy and careful language that the city uses to describe each phase. Although simpler than the Phoenix/Raleigh model both in the way it is presented and in the actual procedures involved, the Kansas City program contains the same 50% petition requirement for initiation as the other two cities. This is undoubtedly a difficult requirement for any neighborhood group to fulfill that is contemplating planning, and represents a different level
of scrutiny than that applied in other cities. In Salem, Oregon, for example, the city government ensures adequate participation by merely requiring the community to hold a minimum of two informational meetings to present plan issues, and requires that the plan be adopted by resolution of the neighborhood association’s board and be affirmed by vote of the general membership (NS). The difference from the petition process is crucial: Salem’s neighborhood plans can proceed to Planning Commission and City Council action if the interested members of the community come forward to show support for it and the members who are in opposition do not; those who are indifferent, who are almost always the majority, cannot kill a plan by inaction. In Phoenix, Raleigh, and Kansas City, by contrast, the planning effort will be aborted at an early stage if 50% of the property owners fail to participate through indifference. The Salem model places the onus for stopping the plan on those who oppose it, so that a small, active group might well carry a plan forward to completion if it is unopposed; there are no quantifiable criteria to stop the plan once the required meetings and votes are held. The Phoenix/Raleigh/Kansas City model by contrast places the onus for carrying the plan forward on those who support it, and these cities do establish unambiguous numerical criteria for demonstrating citizen support. Since in this situation a small neighborhood group could not by itself satisfy the petition requirement, it would necessarily have to develop support from the larger community.

It is significant that among the sample of thirty cities in this study, the petition requirement is found only in three cities, all of which resemble one another in promoting neighborhood planning as a zoning overlay procedure. Even when the zoning overlay is not tied directly to
the neighborhood plan, as in Raleigh, the fact that neighborhood planning
is explicitly set up with the intent of affecting zoning makes it
particularly consequential; the caution which is suggested by the
petition requirement, and the opportunity this requirement presents for
groups to organize in opposition to the plan, is commensurate with the
importance that zoning overlay has for individual property owners and for
the development potential of the target area.
The Range of Planning Structures

Planning procedures in the sample cities cover the range from Columbus, Ohio's three-phase sequence to the elaborate eleven steps of Phoenix's SPD process. Although some aspects of planning process are fairly well settled, the variety of procedural requirements reflects on the fact that planning is both young as a discipline and always a highly charged political exercise.

Similar remarks might apply to the other three structural characteristics discussed in this Chapter. In this review, the four structural characteristics of neighborhood planning have been treated separately. When the programs are examined in their entirety, there is a great deal of unevenness in program development. A few cities give attention to all aspects of planning: Portland, Oregon, for example, has a program which gives the neighborhood plan a clear role to play in the development of private land proposals, establishes citizen organizations with definite responsibilities and powers and ties the organization to city government through a variety of measures, provides the highest level of authorization for parts of its neighborhood plans, and develops formal procedures to guide plan development. This sophisticated apparatus has withstood a number of serious challenges. At the other extreme one finds Toledo, Ohio, where none of the four characteristics are defined (and yet Toledo produces plan documents that meet all standards for sound planning practise). In between are cities like Washington, D.C., which has a long-established and highly effective citizen participation structure but no provision that ties neighborhood plans directly to implementation, and Spokane, Washington, which forcefully ties its neighborhood plans to the capital improvements program but defines the community planning group
with noticeable casualness. Clearly, different factors at the municipal, state, and perhaps even regional levels have generated the widely differing approaches to planning that one sees in these cities.

Were planning only a technical matter, there would probably be much less variation in the planning program characteristics. But since planning inevitably involves decisions about who will participate and who will be excluded, who will benefit and who will pay the costs, it is always political. The effects of any comprehensive plan, even one developed for a unit as small as the neighborhood, are broad, not only in the sense that they involve a geographic area of some extent and spill-over effects beyond the plan's boundaries, but also in the sense that allocation of scarce city resources to one area will almost always entail deprivation of these same resources from another. This breadth of effect by itself places neighborhood planning beyond the realm of the purely technical.

Neighborhood planning is not neutral; therefore it can be asked under what circumstances the four program elements described above will be put in place, and in what combinations. These become questions about the status that different cities accord the neighborhood as a shaper of urban policies, finances, and ultimately, urban form. To pursue these questions requires an examination of the social and economic environments of the sample cities, of the motivations that led to the neighborhood planning initiative, and a review of the legal environment within which the plans operate. First, however, it is necessary to simplify the great variety of planning strategies that are offered in this sample to a manageable structure, a task that is described in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 8. RESEARCH METHOD

A THIRTY-CITY CROSS SURVEY OF NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROGRAMS

Preliminary Selection and Analysis

In the spring of 1991, city planners in 54 cities were asked to respond to a brief questionnaire and to submit documents explaining the neighborhood planning programs in their cities. All of the 51 cities listed in Rohe and Gates' 1985 study, *Planning with Neighborhoods*, were included in the list; the criterion for selecting cities for the research was therefore the same as for their study, namely that the city must have an explicit and designated neighborhood planning program as part of its normal city planning functions (Rohe and Gates 208).¹ These cities are distinguished from cities which carry on the functions of neighborhood planning on a casual basis. In addition to the cities listed by Rohe and Gates, four other cities with designated programs were contacted on the recommendation of planners in the first list.² Of the 54 cities in the initial list, 33 responded to the query.

The responses to this preliminary request ranged from a brief letter in the case of New Orleans, to comprehensive documents describing every aspect of the neighborhood planning program in the case of cities like Washington, Portland, and San Diego. Many cities sent examples of neighborhood plans, and in a few cases planners took the time to answer questions at length, and to add valuable insights into the performance of neighborhood planning in their cities. Based on these responses and on initial telephone conversations, three cities were dropped from the sample either because their neighborhood planning procedures were not formalized (Wilmington, DE), or because the small-area plans they provided were not neighborhood plans (Chicago), or because they did not
provide enough information to be useful (New Orleans). After the deletions, 30 cities remained in the sample.\\(^3\)

Although the quantity of material sent by different cities varied enormously, the entire body of material submitted by each city is included in the analysis which is described below. By including all the material without any attempt to equalize the submissions of the cities, I acted under the assumption that the planners in the sample cities sent the materials which they believed to be relevant, and that the differences in materials were themselves indicative of the varying levels of accomplishment and thoroughness of the planning programs. Planners in St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri, sent me proposals for programs which were under consideration but which had not yet been initiated. These have been included in the sample, because as alternative approaches to structuring a neighborhood planning program, they may offer suggestions which will eventually prove fruitful to program effectiveness.

Since I discovered early in my research that my access to planners in the different cities varied because of their schedules and their willingness to talk at length on the telephone, I excluded the personal observations of planners from the preliminary comparative analysis, other than those in the written materials which were returned to me. Likewise, I excluded the personal observations of neighborhood participants which were gathered on visits to a number of the cities in the sample. A complete listing of all the documents used in the analysis is given in the Bibliography.

The neighborhood planning documents of the sample cities were initially analyzed under three broad headings, which are given below. Detailed questions were developed before the documents were analyzed, and
then additional questions were suggested by the documents themselves (the complete scope of this preliminary review is shown in the Appendix).

Summary of Categories

I) Standing of the Planning Process
   Ia) Standing of the Neighborhood Plan
   Ib) Standing of the Comprehensive Plan
   Ic) Standing of the Neighborhood Group
   Id) Role/Responsibilities of the Agency
   Ie) The Planning Process
       Ie-0) Existence of a Formal Process
       Ie-1) Initiation of the Planning/Proposal Process
       Ie-2) Development of the Plan/Proposal
       Ie-3) Adoption of the Plan
       Ie-4) Implementation of the Plan

II) Intent of the Program
   IIA) Origins of the Program(s)
   IIB) Motivation of the Plans/Programs
   IIC) Scope of the Neighborhood Planning Program
       IIC-1) Scope of the Planning Effort
       IIC-2) Scope of Physical Improvements
       IIC-3) Scope of Policies
       IIC-4) Scope of Social Services
       IIC-5) Other

III) Resources of the Neighborhood Planning Program
    IIIA) Funding of the City Program
    IIIB) Agency Support Dedicated to the Program
    IIIC) Support for the Community Group

Structural Characteristics of the Programs

The approximately 260 separate items examined in this preliminary review were condensed into 23 items by eliminating many and compressing others into single headings:

Variables for Thirty City Neighborhood Planning Programs

A. Neighborhood Plan and Comprehensive Plan
Standing of the neighborhood plan
City has a comprehensive plan

B. Standing of the Neighborhood Group
Neighborhood group has some level of standing
Neighborhood group responsibilities are specified
Neighborhood group powers are formally specified

C. The City Role
Degree of city responsibility (formal or not)
D. The Planning Process
Does the city specify a formal plan process?
  Formal initiation
  Development process
  Formal procedure for adoption exists

E. Authorization
Degree of authority exercised in adoption

F. Intent of the Program
Promote/guide development in neighborhoods (revitalize)
Protect against the effects of development (conserve)
Protect against speculation, displacement
Satisfy a mandate from a higher level of authority

G. Scope of the Neighborhood Planning Program
Geographic scope of the physical master plan
Comprehensive economic and social plan
Total of plan elements: basic + additional
Scope of physical improvements
Scope of policies
Scope of social services

H. Resources of the Neighborhood Planning Program
Is there a dedicated agency, division, or section?
Support is given to the community group

Out of the comprehensive outline listed above, the four characteristics discussed in Chapter 7 were selected: A) The standing of the plan, B) The status of the neighborhood group, C) The degree of authority exercised in adoption of a plan, and D) Whether or not the city specifies a formal plan process. These four attributes are distinguished from the environmental factors which are likely to have as much, or more, bearing on the effectiveness of neighborhood planning programs: the formal and informal practices of the planning agency, the traditions of leadership in the communities, the resources which both the city and the communities can direct at the planning effort, and the economic conditions which create incentives and inhibitions to neighborhood planning.

The scope of physical improvements addressed by the plan or the planning process is also an important characteristic of the program. Scope can be an indicator of the ambitions of the planners or the city government, their responsiveness to the problems of the community, or
even their experience in correlating diverse factors into a comprehensive program of improvements. However, plan scope depends on the problems and conditions which each city and each neighborhood considers important and intends to address; a small number of issues addressed in the plans may indicate no more than that the study area has relatively few problems, or that the city and the neighborhood have decided to direct their limited resources at concentrated solutions for a few issues rather than at a comprehensive range of concerns. Since a narrow scope of issues does not by itself indicate that the neighborhood planning process is unsophisticated, incomplete, or ineffective, it is a poor measure of the effectiveness of a program. Rather, effectiveness must measure the city’s capacity to solve its problems and carry out the initiatives which it has identified in the planning process. I therefore excluded scope from the initial analysis of structural characteristics.

Numerical indices were developed to describe each of the four main structural characteristics of neighborhood planning programs:

A. Standing: The legal standing of the neighborhood plans

0 Neighborhood plans are not mentioned in the literature.

1 Neighborhood plans have no specified legal standing.

2 Neighborhood plans are advisory, i.e., they may be consulted as guidelines in the zoning appeals process, in the development of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), or in the review of private development proposals.

3 Neighborhood plans have a mandatory review status, i.e., they must be consulted by agencies, the Planning Commission, or the City Council when land-use decisions are being made.

4 Neighborhood plans have force of law, i.e., the plans fall under one or more of the following conditions:
   a. Zoning maps must be brought into compliance with the land use directives of the neighborhood plan.
   b. Private or public sector development proposals must comply with the goals and standards of the neighborhood plan in order to be approved.
c. Facilities and improvements stated in the neighborhood plan must enter the Capital Improvements Program for implementation within a specified time after completion and/or adoption of the neighborhood plan.
d. The neighborhood plan itself does not have force of law, but it can lead to various types of overlay districts (e.g. historic, special overlay zoning, urban renewal) which supersede the base regulations for the neighborhood.

B. Neighborhood Group: The status of the neighborhood group in the planning process

0 The group’s status is not defined in the procedural rules of the relevant planning agency, in statute, or in other explicit ways.

1 The neighborhood group is an ad hoc body, formed with official recognition, for the purpose of carrying out or participating in the planning study (and disbanded after the study is over).

2 The neighborhood group is officially prescribed, but not necessarily for planning. "Officially prescribed" means that the procedures for establishing the group (petition, application, etc.) as well as the conditions for maintaining the group in good standing (minutes, yearly report, open meeting requirements, etc.) are spelled out in the city literature which describes the neighborhood planning program. "Not necessarily for planning" means that:
   a. Planning is only one of the activities which the group engages in for neighborhood improvement; or
   b. The group engages in improvement activities, but expressly does not engage in planning.

3 The neighborhood group is officially prescribed, specifically to undertake planning for the community or to participate with the city in such planning.

C. Authority: Level of authority granted to the neighborhood plan (indicates the highest level of adoption)

1 Plan is reviewed or adopted by the community (referendum, town meeting, executive committee, etc.)

2 Plan is adopted or recommended by the planning agency.

3 Plan is adopted or recommended by the planning commission.

4 Plan is adopted by the city council, by resolution.

5 Plan is adopted by the city council, by ordinance, or by the mayor.

6 Plan must be passed by city-wide referendum.

7 Plan must be approved by the state.
D. Process: Whether a complete formal process for initiating, developing, adopting, and implementing a neighborhood plan is specified

0 A formal process is not specified.
1 A formal process is specified.

The results of this analysis are discussed in Chapter 9. In order to check the results which were obtained from examining the literature, in September, 1992, a questionnaire was sent to the 30 planners who had been originally contacted in the sample cities. The questionnaire followed the outline given above, asking the planners to indicate their city's status in each category and to provide additional remarks if they wished. Nineteen surveys were returned. These responses were given more authority than the literature, as representing more recent information and actual practice; the results indicated that a number of the findings taken from the literature needed to be changed. These changes explain some of the apparent discrepancies between the narrative descriptions of the planning programs given in Chapter 7 and the results shown in Table 1 on page 446. In most cases, the changes resulted from ambiguities in the literature.

The planners were also asked to indicate the primary motive or motives which led to formation of the neighborhood planning program in their city. The motives are divided into five main groupings:

1. To affect the general direction of development in the neighborhoods of the city:
   1a. Promote new development (revitalization).
   1b. Protect neighborhoods from the harmful effects of development, including displacement of current residents (conservation).

2. To improve the performance of city government in general and of planning in particular:
   2a. Improve communication between citizens and government, between neighborhoods, and between public agencies.
2b. Share with neighborhood residents the burden of information-gathering, planning, and service delivery.

2c. Create a sounding-board for governmental action and policies.

2d. Increase neighborhood capacity for self-help.

2e. Achieve a more appropriate or sensitive level of planning, correct deficiencies in current city planning, or establish a model pilot program.

3. To provide a mechanism for updating or amending the district or comprehensive plan.

4. To solve a specific problem.

5. To satisfy a mandate from a higher level of government.

A Neighborhood Planning Taxonomy

Crosstab analyses were run in order to measure the correlation of the four principal descriptive factors to one another (Appendix). It was quickly found that the sub-classifications listed above for each of the four main factors were too minute for the number of observations in the sample, resulting in crosstab results which were inconclusive because of the paucity of examples. Therefore, the sub-classifications were further simplified to establish a simple eight-part typology:

Standing:

A. Strong Plan:
The plan has mandatory advisory standing (3); or
The plan has force of law (4)

B. Weak Plan:
Neighborhood plans are not mentioned (0); or
The standing of the plans is not mentioned (1); or
The neighborhood plan is advisory (2).

Group:

A. Group is prescribed:
The Group is expressly formed either for planning, or for activities other than planning, and must follow specified standards regarding formation, meetings, reports, elections, etc (2, 3).

B. Group is not prescribed:
Standing of group is not mentioned (0); or
The group is established ad hoc for purposes of planning or other functions (1).

Authority:

A. Strong Authority:
The neighborhood plan is adopted by the legislative body by ordinance (5); or
The plan is adopted by city-wide referendum; or it is adopted by the State (6, 7).

B. Weak Authority:
There are no provisions for adopting a neighborhood plan (0); or
The plan is adopted only by the community group, by the planning agency, by the planning commission, or by the municipal legislative body by resolution (1-4).

The eight-part taxonomy which results from this categorization permits a simple description of every neighborhood planning program according to three of the four principal structural characteristics which, under the premise of this research study, are held to influence the effectiveness of neighborhood planning: plan standing, group standing and authorization. The status of the fourth characteristic, planning process, is shown in the developed taxonomy by the use of italics.

8-Part Taxonomy of Neighborhood Planning Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan weak, group is not prescribed</th>
<th>Weak authority</th>
<th>Strong authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1 (BBB)</td>
<td>Type 2 (BBA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan weak, group is prescribed</td>
<td>Type 3 (BAB)</td>
<td>Type 4 (BAA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan strong, group is not prescribed</td>
<td>Type 5 (ABB)</td>
<td>Type 6 (ABA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan strong, group is prescribed</td>
<td>Type 7 (AAB)</td>
<td>Type 8 (AAA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Crosstab analyses were again developed for the four basic factors to determine, first, how the four factors interact in different program types and, second, how the program types are related to significant
environmental factors. Economic and social indicators were checked to
determine if there are general conditions under which different types of
neighborhood planning program tend to be established. Each of the four
factors was also analyzed in relation to the primary motivations for
initiating neighborhood planning which were stated in the literature and
in the planners' survey responses. Finally, the program types were
checked against the legal environment in which planning must operate
within the American federal system, namely the planning powers granted to
cities by state enabling legislation. The results of this analysis are
described in Chapter 9. These three areas of interest - economic and
social indicators, motivations, and statutes - are intended to provide
clues as to the conditions under which different kinds of programs are
instituted.

Notes

1. The fifty-one cities in the Rohe and Gates study were:
   Allentown, PA             Lincoln, NE
   Asheville, NC             Madison, WI
   Atlanta, GA               Minneapolis, MN
   Baltimore, MD             New Orleans, LA
   Boston, MA                New York, NY
   Boulder, CO               North Wilkesboro, NC
   Chicago, IL               Oakland, CA
   Cincinnati, OH            Oak Park, MI
   Columbus, OH              Omaha, NE
   Dallas, TX                Phoenix, AZ
   Dayton, OH                Pittsburgh, PA
   Denver, CO                Portland, OR
   Des Moines, IO            Providence, RI
   Detroit, MI               St. Louis, MO
   Eugene, OR                St. Paul, MN
   Flint, MI                 Salem, OR
   Fort Worth, TX            San Antonio, TX
   Fresno, CA                San Diego, CA
   Gary, IN                  Seattle, WA
   Honolulu, HI              Spokane, WA
   Houston, TX               Tacoma, WA
   Independence, MO          Toledo, OH
   Jacksonville, FL          Trenton, NJ
   Kalamazoo, MI             Washington, DC
   Kansas City, MO           Wilmington, DE
Although Houston figures in the Rohe and Gates list, it was not included in the query because with the recent passage and subsequent defeat of its first ordinance for comprehensive planning and zoning, the status of neighborhood planning is too uncertain at this date to lend itself to conclusions.

2. These cities were Los Angeles, CA, Orlando, FL, Philadelphia, PA, and Raleigh, NC.

3. The thirty cities selected for my research sample are:

- Allentown, PA
- Asheville, NC
- Atlanta, GA
- Baltimore, MD
- Boston, MA
- Columbus, OH
- Dallas, TX
- Dayton, OH
- Fort Worth, TX
- Honolulu, HI
- Kansas City, MO
- Los Angeles, CA
- Minneapolis, MN
- New York, NY
- Oakland, CA
- Omaha, NE
- Philadelphia, PA
- Phoenix, AZ
- Pittsburgh, PA
- Portland, OR
- Providence, RI
- Raleigh, NC
- Salem, OR
- San Antonio, TX
- San Diego, CA
- Spokane, WA
- St. Louis, MO
- Toledo, OH
- Trenton, NJ
- Washington, DC
CHAPTER 9. FINDINGS

Structural Characteristics of Neighborhood Planning Programs

Chapter 7 describes four structural characteristics which are held to influence the effectiveness of neighborhood plans: the standing of the plan, the requirements which govern citizen organization for planning, the authorization by which the plan is adopted, and the process by which the plan is executed. When the first three of these characteristics are assigned a value, a simple eight-part taxonomy results which gives to each city in the sample a place in the classification schema, as follows:

Table 1.

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<th>Weak Authority Type 1 (BBB)</th>
<th>Strong Authority Type 2 (BBA)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Type 4 (BAA)</td>
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<td>Type 6 (ABA)</td>
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<td>Plan strong, group is prescribed</td>
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<td>Type 8 (AAA)</td>
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<td>Salem</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Trenton</td>
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</table>
Overlaid onto the taxonomy is the planning process: the names of cities which have formalized planning procedures are indicated by italics in the matrix above.

This classification provides certain results for immediate observation. Casual observation shows that the sample of thirty cities is split almost evenly between those which have plans with strong standing and those which do not; but only a minority of the cities (11 out of 30) give their neighborhood plans strong forms of authorization when they are adopted. A majority of the cities (19 out of 30) have requirements that govern the organization of their neighborhood planning groups, and a large majority (21 out of 30) promulgate formal planning processes.

More specific conclusions also emerge from the table. First, the table shows that the sample cities are polarized at the extremes of the classification schema, that is, the largest groupings occur in the least defined category (Type 1) and in the most highly defined (Type 8); and of the intermediate or mixed categories, only Type 3 has more than three members. This finding suggests that cities may have difficulty in undertaking neighborhood planning halfway, that is, neighborhood planning is most likely to appear in one of two forms: an unstructured situation in which the plan is treated as a purely advisory document and the citizen group is informally constituted, or a highly structured condition in which the role of the plan and the powers of the neighborhood group are both well defined and have substantial force. Intermediate forms, where for example the plan has standing but lacks strong authorization and the citizen group is not well-defined, appear to be avoided. Why this should be the case is discussed in a later section of this chapter.
Interestingly, it does appear possible for cities to grant considerable status to the neighborhood organization without granting more than advisory status to the plans that are produced by the neighborhood program; this is the situation in Atlanta, Fort Worth, Minneapolis, Omaha, San Antonio, and St. Louis, the cities of Type 3.

Second, plan authorization and plan standing are clearly linked. Two-thirds of the cities in which the authorization is weak are also cities in which the plans have weak standing; by contrast, cities in which the plan authorization is strong are almost without exception cities in which the plan standing can also be described as strong. As indicated by the discussion in Chapter 7, plan standing and plan authorization are not synonymous; nevertheless, their relation is logical and intimate, and the result from the table bears this out. Among the strong plan/strong authorization cities (Types 6 and 8), all except Kansas City mandate some form of group requirements defining the powers and obligations of the neighborhood planning organization. For the least defined categories of plan types, those in which the plan standing is weak and the group is not prescribed (Types 1 and 2), there are simply no cities which have strong authorization; and when the group is defined (Types 3 and 4), only one city, Washington, D.C., gives its plans strong authorization (and this, as the earlier discussion indicates, in an ambiguous reading of the material).

This finding appears to corroborate the previous suggestion that cities which go to the length of granting their plans the full authority of city council, mayoral, or state ratification must also provide for these plans to have an effective role in city-building by tying them to zoning, plan review, or the capital improvements program, and they must
also enlist the community group as a well-defined partner in the planning process. When cities do not adopt their neighborhood plans with such strong authorization, there appears to be a much broader range of options available concerning plan standing and community organization, although there is a definite tendency for these cities to favor the weak forms of plan standing. Strong plan authorization therefore presents itself as a major threshold which distinguishes the planning programs in this study.

A third conclusion which is evident from the table is that formal planning processes occur in almost every category. It is not surprising to discover that a large majority of the cities with the stronger program types (Types 7 and 8) do have formal planning processes; but even cities which in other respects require little from their neighborhood planning programs still promote or require a formal planning process. This is the case in Columbus, Oakland, Philadelphia, and Toledo, all Type 1 cities which have formal planning processes. Most surprising is the discovery that cities in which only the neighborhood group’s powers and obligations are formalized, while other aspects of the program are left undefined (Type 3), unanimously require a formal planning process. The popularity of formal planning processes also holds when cities are examined for individual structural characteristics. For example, when all the cities which establish group requirements are examined (Types 3, 4, 7, and 8), almost three-quarters are found to also require formal planning processes, but almost exactly the same percentage is found in cities in which the group is not defined (Types 1, 2, 5, and 6). And among cities with strong forms of authorization, just under two-thirds require formal planning processes.
It would appear that the planning process is an aspect of neighborhood planning structure which is largely independent of the other three factors. This finding is important, because it suggests that formal planning process, which from the professional planner's perspective is an essential aspect of fair and sound planning, may have little relevance to the more fundamental questions of how the community group is organized, what standing is granted to the plan, and what level of authorization is required for adoption. It appears that formalized planning process is an aspect of sound planning practice which can be introduced irrespective of other conditions; that it can be regarded as a purely technical aspect of planning that has little to do with the intricate political, social, and administrative issues that were discussed in Part II. It is, in that sense, non-controversial.

The analysis above attempts only to establish the internal relations between the four main structural characteristics of neighborhood planning programs. The polarization of neighborhood planning programs into the extremes of the spectrum (represented by Type 1 and Type 8 programs) is suggestive of the conflict that cities face in establishing these programs: once neighborhood demands are satisfied by both creating neighborhood groups with well defined powers and plans that have a strong relation to implementation, it appears to be unavoidable that the plans should also carry the full force of law. What is cause and what is effect here is not told by Table 1: whether insistent community demands force city governments into granting plans a substantial and legally enforced role in city-building, or whether a decision to pass plans with strong authorization activates residents to have a greater voice in the process. Theoretically, cities have little
interest in giving more power to neighborhood groups than they need to, since such power almost always works against development freedom and therefore the city's financial advantage. If this is true, it supports the first explanation for the polarization of the chart, that citizen demands lead to the stronger forms of plan authorization. As we will see, examination of the social and economic environment of the sample cities tends to bear this interpretation out.

As expected, there is a strong correlation between plan standing - the relation of the plan to the implementing instruments of city building - and plan authorization - the level of consent and legal backing that is required for plan adoption. It is not surprising to discover that plans that are passed with strong forms of authorization with few exceptions involve well defined community group requirements, but it is unexpected to find that there are some cities in which neighborhood plans lack strong authorization but in which the community group is still well defined.

These findings point to the inter-relations that exist between the weight of the neighborhood plan and the status of the community which has brought it into being. An examination of the social, economic, and legal climate in which neighborhood planning takes place will point to clues as to how these relations between plan weight and community status develop.
Economic and Social Characteristics of the Sample Cities

Under what circumstances of municipal economics, demographics, and social trends are neighborhood planning programs of various types implemented? Nine factors were chosen for analysis in relation to the different program types:

1. Change of overall population from 1980 to 1990 (as percentage of 1980 population)\(^1\)
2. Change of owner occupied units from 1980 to 1990 (as percentage of 1980 population)\(^2\)
3. Change of minority population from 1980 to 1990\(^3\)
4. Change of Anglo population from 1980 to 1990\(^4\)
5. Change of black population from 1980 to 1990\(^5\)
6. Change of per capita income (PCI) from 1979 to 1985\(^6\)
7. Incidence of violent crimes, 1990\(^7\)
8. Incidence of property crimes, 1990\(^8\)
9. Overall population, 1990\(^9\)

The nine factors are shown in Table 2. These factors were chosen for study because they appear to be closely related to the condition of central city neighborhoods, and because they have a heavy influence on the use and development of private property. Change of population often expresses itself as inappropriate intrusions into the neighborhood in cities in which the population is growing rapidly or, where the population is declining, threats of property abandonment and undesirable changes of demographics. Declining owner occupancy is a measure of middle-class flight, and (along with business closures) provides a record of a shrinking property tax base. Change of minority population and change of Anglo population are indirect measures of shifts in social status, since poverty and dependency in the United States are far more
heavily concentrated among minorities than in the Anglo population. These shifts have large implications for the types of structures which are built, how structures are occupied, and the economic status of neighborhoods. Changing black population, while included in overall changes of minority population, bears the special dimension of race: to what extent do neighborhood planning programs reflect a defense against changes of racial composition in a city’s population, and to what extent can they be interpreted as efforts by America’s most economically depressed minority to redistribute power? Change of per capita income can, like the growth of population, suggest the types of pressures to which a city population is subjected: extremely fast growth in per capita income can prompt a surge of private property investment which by itself can be a threat to the stability of older middle- and lower-income neighborhoods and might provide the motivation for a defensive neighborhood planning program. Where the change of per capita income is very strong, as in Washington, D.C. between 1980 and 1990, there may also be indications of growing income disparities which can generate neighborhood conflicts of a particularly intense kind; under these circumstances neighborhood planning programs may arise as a means to both stabilize property values and to alleviate social tensions that emerge between different economic groups.

Both violent crime and property crime increasingly concern residents of all city neighborhoods, even those who are most affluent and most capable of isolating themselves. Are neighborhood planning programs primarily a response to crime rather than to specifically property-related threats like commercial development or abandonment? Finally, population size itself may have a bearing on what type of program is
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developed by a city: as suggested earlier, smaller cities may favor the informal "friends and neighbors" approach to planning problems, while larger cities may find it necessary to establish more formal programs which institutionalize the relations between government and citizen.

Certain important indicators were not considered in this survey, generally because they are less directly related to property issues than those in the list above and because they are already suggested by the other factors. Household size, for example, is an indicator of overcrowding and an indirect indicator of social and economic status, but it concerns primarily the size, condition, and affordability of individual housing units rather than the broad effects addressed by neighborhood planning (although housing is often an important component of neighborhood plans). Certain indicators that concern the condition of youth, for example the number of children in single-parent homes or the relative incidence of juvenile crime, can have immense effects on neighborhood stability and safety, but they are not property-related issues. These and similar problems are addressed through a variety of human service programs, many of which can of course find their place in a neighborhood plan.

Some Remarks About Method

Two remarks must be made about method. First, in what follows the descriptive figure for each characteristic, for example percentage decline of owner occupancy, is a city-wide average for the many census tracts in the city. When this figure is averaged with the figures of other cities, in effect an average of averages is being created. If the intent were to determine the general population characteristics of all
cities in each of the categories, this procedure would be illegitimate, because it gives inordinate weight to cities with small population. The intent here, however, is to understand the cities in the sample as if they were individuals, for whom the figure in question is one among a number of other characteristics which taken together measure the condition of the city. Creating an average of averages from figures like percent change of owner occupancy is equivalent to averaging the height, age, or weight of a sample of individuals.

Second, the three program types for which the sample population is one or zero - Types 2, 4, and 6 - are not included in this discussion. The paucity of representative cities in these categories precludes drawing conclusions about their social or economic characteristics.

**Rapid Population Growth and Decline of Owner Occupancy**

The two environmental conditions which correlate most clearly with program type are changes in city population and the change of owner occupancy of residential units (Charts 1 and 2). There is a striking correlation between the growth rate of the cities in the sample and the degree to which their neighborhood planning programs are well defined (in the sense that they establish plans with strong standing, define community rights and obligations, provide a high level of authorization for the plan, and generally impose a formal planning process). Cities which have adopted the weakest form of neighborhood planning (Type 1) showed an average growth rate of only 1.3% from 1980 to 1990, compared with an average growth rate of 7.4% for the cities which have the strongest form of neighborhood planning program (Type 8). Interestingly, the cities which showed the greatest overall growth over the decade, San
Note: The double line connects the average values for each Program type.
Diego at 26.8% and Raleigh at 38.4%, belong not to the most well-defined program category but to Type 7. The critical difference between the two categories is that in the first, neighborhood plans are adopted by strong forms of authority while in the second they are not. Chart 1 shows that between the weakest types of neighborhood planning and the second-to-strongest (Type 7) the average growth of city population increases smoothly, then dips suddenly at the strongest type of planning. This apparent anomaly deserves attention, because it throws light on the conflict that cities experience when they try to answer to the fundamentally conflicting imperatives that are implicit in growth planning and neighborhood planning.

Cities with the weakest form of neighborhood planning showed a markedly greater decline in owner occupancy (-6%) than did the cities with the strongest form of neighborhood planning (-3.2%) (Chart 2).11 The trend is general across all the program types: For program Types 1 to 5, the rate of decline of owner occupancy is between -6% and -7.6%; for Types 7 and 8, the rate is between -3.9% and -3.2% (or -2% for Type 8, if Phoenix is not considered).

When several of the separate structural aspects of the neighborhood planning programs are checked against these two environmental conditions, the results are equally striking.

* Plan standing: for all the cities with strong plan standing, the average growth of population from 1980 to 1990 was 9.7%; for those with weak standing, it was only 1.9% (Chart 3). For the former cities the decline of owner occupancy was -4.3% (or -3.7%, if Phoenix is dropped); for the weak stranding cities, the decline averaged -6.3% (Chart 4).
* Group requirements: For cities with group prescriptions, population increased on the average 7.5% over the decade, and owner occupancy declined by -4.6%; for those without such prescriptions, population increased by only 3.5% and owner occupancy declined by -6.4% (Chart 5 and 6).

* Plan authorization: If plan authorization is examined, the pattern of owner occupancy is the same as for group requirements (Charts 7 and 8): in those cities with strong forms of authorization, owner occupancy declined by only 3.4%, while in those with weak forms of authorization it declined by 6.3%. Population changes for these two classes of cities (strong and weak authorization) were not significantly different, on average (5.3% and 6.4%, respectively).

The findings suggest that the more well defined aspects of neighborhood planning are likely to be found in cities which have a growing population and a relatively moderate decline in home ownership. No other environmental factors are as clearly and consistently related to the degree of program definition represented by the eight-part taxonomy. There is a weak indication that the stronger plan types are associated with increasing minority populations (Chart 9). Changes of Anglo and black population have almost no relation to program type (Charts 10 and 11). Change of per capita income may have a relation to program type, but not at the extremes of the weakest and strongest programs; rather, high average per capita incomes appear to be correlated with Types 3 and 7, both of which have weak authorization combined with prescribed group requirements (Chart 12). When violent crime is considered, Type 8 cities do show a fairly large increase over Type 1 cities (Chart 13), but Type
3 cities, which are structurally closer to Type 1 cities, show a far higher incidence than either Type 1 or Type 8. The results are inconclusive about the relation between violent crime and program type. Property crime follows the same pattern, although to a less marked degree (Chart 14). And population size appears to offer no clues as to which types of program are favored by large and small cities (Chart 15).

Rapid Population Growth and the Need for Neighborhood Planning

How are these results to be explained? Well-defined forms of neighborhood planning are associated with large increases in population growth and with relatively small declines in the proportion of owner-occupied units in the city. The finding indicates that the peculiar circumstances of rapid growth bring threats which elicit neighborhood planning as a response, but only if the population which has an interest in this response is relatively intact. Although logically one would expect that an increasing population will bring with it a healthy condition of owner occupancy, this is not always the case. Phoenix, Raleigh, Asheville, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Columbus and Dallas each saw population growth in the 1980's greater than 10%, and at the same time experienced a decline in owner occupancy in excess of 5.5%. Overall, the cities in the sample which had positive population growth in the 1980's actually had a sharper average decline in owner occupancy (-5.6%) than the cities which had declining populations (-4.7% decline in owner occupancy) (Chart 16). For those cities which saw both a growth in population and a decline in owner occupancy (17 out of 30 cities), the figures indicate that the increase of population represented an increase of renter population, which is generally taken to mean that the
CHART 16.

CHANGE OF POPULATION VS. CHANGE OWNER OCCUPIED

PERCENT CHANGE

- - - Change Population  - - - % Owner Occupied
population is transient and requires more services from the city than it contributes through increase of property values or sales taxes.\textsuperscript{12}

Rapid increases in population in these circumstances are also accompanied by an important change in land use within residential areas: lots originally designated for single-family homes become desirable as sites for the more concentrated forms of housing which are appropriate to renter groups, and which are therefore more profitable to their owners than are single-family rental dwellings. In Dallas, entire streets like Gaston Avenue became apartment strips, catering to a young managerial class that was affluent, mobile, and without children. Large parking areas at the back of these apartment complexes were adjacent to the side and back yards of single family homes, creating visual and social problems for the original residents of the neighborhood. In Houston, districts of undeveloped land in suburbs like Gulfton and Westbury saw the growth of enormous apartment tracts, generating traffic and noise problems for adjacent single-family home subdivisions which were heavily owner occupied. These problems were vastly exasperated when the decline in the Houston and Dallas job markets in the mid-1980’s led apartment owners to scale down rents and reduce scrutiny of their tenants, leading to occupancy by large families and the introduction of drug activity and gunplay into the units. In these two instances, the apartment developments were concentrated so that the borders between the apartments and the single-family homes could be kept somewhat separate. In Houston’s Montrose district, however, with the intense growth of population in the 1970’s and 1980’s many isolated lots in predominately single-family home districts were filled with buildings holding as many apartment units as the land could bear; in the absence of zoning
restrictions governing height, bulk, and setback as well as density and use, this meant that the sidewall of one of these "shoehorn" units could literally come within inches of the cottage next to it. The amenity of many neighborhoods of bungalows set into separate lots was threatened by these intrusions, which often brought with them traffic and noise problems as well. Although in Houston the lack of zoning tends to exaggerate the clash between the two types of housing, the effect can be observed in almost any growing metropolitan region in the United States.

In other instances of rapid growth, the integrity of neighborhoods is eroded by commercial intrusions which, even where zoning is in effect, gradually change the character of a district. Zoning variances which on a case-by-case basis are permitted as reasonable, accumulate over time into a significant shift in land use which can threaten established residential qualities. This type of gradual shift in neighborhood character formed the rational for the zoning overlay procedures of Phoenix, Arizona and Raleigh, North Carolina, which are designed to preserve the older characteristics of the neighborhood as properties are turned to new uses.

From the perspective of the neighborhood resident, the need for neighborhood planning grows in direct relation to the growth of the city. As the threats from growth increase, so do the demands for remedy. Downzoning and zoning enforcement form one set of tools that can be used to block or at least impede rapid development, and it is appropriate that two of the cities which experienced the most rapid growth in the 1980's, Phoenix and Raleigh, found it necessary to link their neighborhood planning proposals to specialized zoning plans. Even without zoning regulations, neighborhood planning which requires that development
proposals "conform to" or "be in compliance with" the plan will slow down the development process and bring the developer's proposal under the scrutiny of the neighborhood at public hearings. Every measure which increases the formal weight of the plan and the neighborhood group in the development process provides an opportunity for community resistance and increases the costs, and therefore the disincentives, of the developer. The intensity of the response that the city makes to neighborhood demands for voice in and control over the development process can be understood as one part of the equation by which the officials of city government attempt to balance demands for stability against the pressures (and the advantages) of growth. Chart 1, which shows how neighborhood planning programs become increasingly defined as population growth intensifies, therefore can be interpreted as a graduated sequence of steps by which the city government responds to the increasingly strident demands of neighborhood residents.

The interpretation explains why the two cities in the sample which have experienced the most intensive growth, San Diego and Raleigh, have granted their neighborhood planning programs strong standing and formalized group requirements, but have denied them strong forms of plan authorization. Plan authorization is the trump card which definitively moves the neighborhood plan from the realm of an advisory document to that of an implementation instrument which has some force of law. For a city experiencing a windfall of growth, with all that that implies for shoring up its bond rating, increasing its property tax base, and making its employee and construction unions happy, the least desirable thing is to set up inhibitions of the kind represented by a strong neighborhood planning program which imposes many checks on the development process.
The elected city official's horizon is defined by the next election (which is always too close): the long-term problems that are caused by rapid growth are remote, while the benefits to political prestige that are represented by growing jobs and expanding city programs are immediate and tangible. Yet these officials also must appease constituent residents who are likely to become more involved and more knowledgeable about the development process precisely as growth proceeds, because they will feel its impacts more strongly. Type 7 neighborhood planning programs represent a classic form of appeasement, where plan standing and group definition are granted but strong plan authorization, the final factor that turns neighborhood plans into inescapable instruments of city-building, is withheld.

The situation of these cities, however, appears to be unstable. It is significant that San Diego and Raleigh share their half-way position in Type 7 with only one other city (Baltimore, a city which showed population decline for the period). By contrast, the most well defined form of neighborhood planning (Type 8) has fully nine representatives, nearly one-third of the entire sample. These figures suggest that extremely rapid growth leads to a form of partial neighborhood planning as citizen demands rise, but that there are very strong pressures that then compel a city to grant full authorization to neighborhood plans. Only a study that examines the evolution of neighborhood planning programs over time could confirm the supposition raised here, that once a program of strong plan standing and community organization is begun, it appears to be almost unavoidable for cities to institute fully authorized community plans. This study would determine under what conditions relatively modest grants of power to plans and to resident planning
groups lead to larger extensions of power, with implications for the balance between development and resident interests.

Any level of neighborhood plan is a grant of legitimacy and involvement to city residents. It is a response to their growing awareness of the city-building problem, but it is also an instrument which permits these residents to become increasingly sophisticated actors in the political arena of city-building. Machiavelli advised his prince not to extend liberties too quickly, because liberties once granted cannot be taken away from a people that has become used to them. He might have extended that remark to add that powers once granted also lead to the granting of other powers. Machiavelli's remark permits an interpretation of the Neighborhood Planning Program taxonomy presented in Table 1: In its weak forms, neighborhood planning allows for a number of variations; but in its strong forms, it tends toward a structure that places great authority in the community plan.

Cities with Declining Population

Planning in general can be understood not only as a set of defensive measures to control or impede the effects of growth, but also as a set of offensive actions designed to stimulate home ownership and appropriate commercial investment in cities which are threatened by population loss and commercial decline. Although theory would suggest that neighborhood planning would be a logical tool for city revitalization, Chart 1 shows that the well-defined forms of neighborhood planning appear less frequently in cities with declining populations than in cities which are experiencing growth. Does this result emerge because planning itself is not thought to be effective in these circumstances, or is it for a reason
that is intrinsic to the condition of decline itself? The explanation may be related to the visibility of growth as opposed to the invisibility of decline, and to the parties that each type of change affects.

Under circumstances of rapid growth, changes in land use and neighborhood demographics occur with tremendous rapidity, because the incentives of those actors who bring about the change are all aligned with quick action. These actors — developers, financial agents, builders, property owners, construction unions, and the city government itself — know that the condition of growth may not last for long, since it depends on regional advantages that can be rapidly undermined by sudden shifts in the national or even international economy. Such was the case in Boston, where the "Massachusetts Miracle" of the 1980's became a regional debacle when national defense spending declined in the later part of the decade, or in Houston when the price of oil dropped precipitously in 1984 and 1986 (Feagan). Developers also know that acquisition needs to occur very quickly in an atmosphere of growth if good land prices are to be locked in; a delay of six months in an improving land market can place a parcel out of the developer's reach or can place the proposed project beyond the realm of financial feasibility. Public notification of a developer's intentions before the land is acquired, particularly if it is a question of acquiring several contiguous parcels in order to assemble a tract, alerts the sellers to their advantage and alerts the developer's competitors to an opportunity waiting to be had; the developer above all wants to avoid a bidding war. Even if the land is acquired early, delays in themselves are costly: short term loans are expensive, and the costs of taxes and site maintenance run continuously. Construction once begun needs to proceed
as rapidly as possible if it is going to be profitable to the developer and the builder. For all these reasons, development tends to happen quickly once it begins. Growth also tends to attract more growth, as the demand for services of all kinds quickly increases following on the expansion of the primary economic activity.\textsuperscript{13} Mushromming development provides nearby neighborhood residents with unimpeachable visible evidence that things are afoot which will have a large impact on their own properties; outrage can lead to quick mobilization and consequent legislative action, of which neighborhood planning is one form.

Neighborhood decline, however, is generally slow. Chart 16 shows that for the cities in which populations were declining in the decade 1980-1990, the typical rate of decline was less than 6%; but for cities which were growing, the rate of growth averaged 13%, and for the eleven cities for which the rate of growth was greater than 10%, the average growth was an astonishing 19.75%. The figures broadly confirm what casual observation suggests: that decline of cities is far less dramatic and sudden than growth. The visible signs of these two effects will be equally gradual and rapid. The incentives of the actors who participate in urban decline align with caution, hesitation, and gradual withdrawal from a discouraging situation. In owner occupied housing, decline manifests itself as reduced property maintenance long before the housing is converted to renter units. When housing does turn to renter status, it often remains fully occupied, but by lower income tenants. Property maintenance continues to be neglected as a money saving stratagem, and careful tenant screening is reduced in an effort to keep the units fully occupied. Evacuation of unprofitable property follows, with the owner providing the minimum maintenance necessary to keep the property in
condition for resale. Abandonment, the unmistakable sign of a city district in pathological decline, is the last resort of desperation of property owners who can neither pay their taxes nor maintain their empty properties in decent condition. Abandonment is precursor to arson and the wrecker’s ball.

The rapidity of growth and the gradualness of decline lead to different responses. Rapid growth creates a sense of emergency which calls out the cooperative spirit of a neighborhood and can lead to collective action. The signs of growth, the bulldozer and the building crane, are unambiguous and their effects on traffic, noise, and property values if left unchecked can be dramatic. Decline, on the other hand, progresses in a piecemeal fashion that is often hard to detect at first: rusty gutters and peeling paint indicating homeowners’ inability to secure home improvement loans, the shift of an apartment population from young, rising managerial types to middle-income working families and then to poor families, the "renovating" building which remains boarded up for far too long. The instruments for altering the direction of growth and decline are also different: bulldozers can be stopped by literally standing in their way if all else fails, but decline is caused by the unseen and often ungraspable regional economic shifts that drive property owners out and bring lower-income residents into a neighborhood.

The actors in the growth cycle are specific characters who can be identified and attacked by specific measures, whether through a vociferous hearing before city council, a downzoning of the parcel, a moratorium imposed on building, a demand for design review with citizen participation or, in the last resort, physically blocking the site. The development actors are directly related to the site and they are actors
who have a choice: between doing something that will benefit themselves and doing nothing at all. The actors in the declining city neighborhood are by contrast often distant and frequently unassailable: the owner of a manufacturing plant who decides to relocate or close, the absentee landlord of a rental property who gradually cuts back on maintenance and reduces scrutiny of the tenants in order to keep the units filled. In some cases the owners cannot even be found, since the tenants pay rent to an agent; and if they can be found, out-of-state owners can only be brought to task for property neglect or harboring drug abuse in their properties through lengthy and expensive litigation. Moreover, these particular actors differ from their developmental counterparts in a crucial respect: all their options are bad. If they do nothing, the property continues to decline; if they put money into maintenance, they may lose their investment as general property values decline in the neighborhood; and if they pull out completely, they will lose everything in the last desperate effort to cut their loses. The decline in their property may mirror a decline in their personal fortunes, so that even if they are compelled by law to provide maintenance to their property, they may not be able to do so without substantial aid in the form of low-interest loans or tax abatement or forgiveness. The only conceivable outcome to the situation which does not involve some form of subsidized maintenance is a reversal of fortune, those rare occasions when government, developers or homeowners discover in a declining area an opportunity to meet a new regional economic need. In these circumstances, reversal of fortune can occur fairly rapidly, but then the effects are very much like those that occur when cities grow too rapidly: displacement of lower-income families, rapid increases in property
values, the intrusion of inappropriate land uses, and additional pressures placed on neighborhood integrity.

Finally, growth and decline affect different types of communities, with differing capabilities to respond to the situation. Rapid growth seeks its opportunities in two types of areas, those parts of the city which are already stable and attractive, and those in which property values are low. In the former, dense new development will take the form of luxury multi-family units - apartment blocks, townhouses, garden apartments - which do not necessarily change the social composition of the area but do affect it through traffic and the burden they place on infrastructure. With the density of residential development often comes the commercial life that supports it, and which can drive out well-loved and useful indigenous stores and services and irremediably alter the scale and character of the area. By contrast, in areas where property values are low, new development tends to come in the form of dense middle- and lower-income housing and light industry.

If the threats to neighborhood stability are somewhat similar in the two circumstances - traffic, noise, rapid and unsettling demographic shifts - the capacities of the communities to respond to change are different. Stable, well-to-do residential neighborhoods hold the educated members of the population who often are well connected with both the political apparatus that approves new development and with the developers themselves. In their ranks are planners, architects, attorneys, and others whose professions give them regular experience with land-use matters. They are politically active, and since they handle issues like health care and education through their own personal resources, their attention in the political field is often directed at
land-use issues. These city residents also possess the leisure that is requisite to pursuing long-term legislative and planning ventures. These groups are capable of mounting a formidable assault on a developer's proposal, as both city officials and the developer are well aware. In Washington, D.C., no developer of property will think of initiating a proposal in many parts of the city without assiduously courting the support of the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission; developers have observed, for example, how one powerful A.N.C. forced a significant redesign of a large commercial development in prosperous Northwest Washington. The constellation of leadership, experience, and connections which belongs to many wealthier areas is much rarer in the lower income neighborhoods that are confronting the possibility of inappropriate development within their boundaries. While the literature speaks of outstanding examples of working class neighborhoods consolidating to block development, including SECO in Baltimore and Victoria District in Savannah, more generally the social disorganization of poor neighborhoods allows development to occur without opposition.

Both of the groups which are affected by rapid development, the wealthy and the poor, may have a similar interest in neighborhood planning as a way to protect their communities, but the former are generally more capable of carrying their intention into action than the latter. Under conditions of rapid growth, however, there is a coincidence of interests between the two groups that allows both to benefit: leadership and political experience is provided by the wealthy neighborhoods while broad support, both numerical and geographic, and a populist legitimacy is provided by the poorer areas. Such an alignment was evident in Houston in 1990 when the Houston Homeowners Association,
representing the middle-class neighborhoods of the city, promoted a zoning measure which they claimed would strengthen their own deed-restricted neighborhoods while at the same time benefiting many poorer neighborhoods by restricting the location of local bars called "cantinas" and light industrial sites.

Under conditions of decline, the organization of resistance is different. Wealthier, more stable neighborhoods which are also geographically isolated, characteristics which describe classic neighborhoods like Baltimore's Roland Park or Washington's Cleveland Park, are the last to suffer from municipal decline, and the particular way they suffer is subject to localized treatment. If these neighborhoods see a general decline of city services like infrastructure maintenance, they can purchase services for themselves or can influence city decisions about where cuts are to be made; if they see adjacent areas becoming increasingly lower-income in their population and experience the spill-over effects of crime, they can institute their own policing and neighborhood watch efforts. The incomes of residents in these areas are often not as vulnerable to economic shifts as those of poorer residents, since they have savings and investments and often are involved in professions which are vital to the city or are tied to economies larger than the municipality. Abandonment is only a distant threat to these residents; they know that in the last resort they can sell their homes, even if it means taking some loss. Neighborhood planning in these circumstances might offer property owners some benefits, particularly in respect to common neighborhood improvements which require long-term collective or governmental action, like replacing
street lights or repairing streets; but the urgency is not great, since the effects of decline can be kept at bay by specific actions.

For poorer neighborhoods in declining cities, the situation is different. Decline affects them directly, since these are the areas which are most likely to be abandoned by businesses, where crime will increase rapidly with rising unemployment and decreasing police services, and where property owners will convert their facilities to rental units and will lower tenant standards in an effort to stave off abandonment. Without resources of their own to combat the situation, they must turn to the public sector, but in this they will find that they have few allies. Wealthier neighborhoods, unless they are so geographically tied to the poor neighborhoods that they are affected by the same problems, will find no common cause with them. The city government meanwhile is trying to save money and promote development, not set up new programs which will lead to additional services and projects in poor neighborhoods. City officials are well aware that the increased taxes that will be required to finance these services and programs will burden the property-owning residents and businesses of the city, giving them further reason to move to more hospitable tax environments in the suburbs. The city may, indeed, be reducing services overall but especially in those poorer neighborhoods where the residents have least political capacity to insist on their rights. Although cities are under obligation to provide services equitably in all areas, in fact one finds deteriorated streets, broken sidewalks, and accumulated trash heaps in lower-income areas far too often, and in too many cities, to be merely coincidental. Building code enforcement and infrastructure maintenance, two items neglect of which create particularly visible signs of accelerating neighborhood
decline, are among the services which are often withdrawn from lower income areas.  

The discussion above seeks structural reasons why the more well-defined neighborhood planning programs are found in cities with increasing population, but not in cities where the population is decreasing or stagnant. Different actors with different agendas combine with the difference of visibility of the two forms of change to provide ample incentive in the first circumstance for neighborhood planning, and lack of incentive and capability in the second. Yet in theory neighborhood planning is equally applicable to both circumstances. This suggests that neighborhood planning programs may need to be structured very differently in the two situations, and that in particular the role of the government relative to the community group will be different.

**Change of Owner Occupancy**

Change of owner occupancy of residents is the other factor which is identified as being closely associated with program type in this study. The strongest forms of neighborhood planning program correlate with relatively modest declines in owner occupancy, while the weaker forms of program are found in cities which show a markedly greater decline in this characteristic. Change of owner occupancy does not neatly correlate with change of population, as mentioned earlier. Generally as population growth increases, owner occupancy decreases marginally on average (Chart 16); however, with growth the fluctuation of owner occupancy from city to city increases noticeably (as measured both by observation of the chart and by the standard deviation, which doubles for the cities in which the population grew). Increasing population size appears to bring with it an
unstable situation in which owner occupancy can unpredictably remain stable, can decline rapidly, or in some instances can increase slightly.15

Owner occupiers are the ultimate defenders of a neighborhood, since for this group only does the stake in investment coincide with the stake in living. The absentee owner also has a stake in property investment but this individual can isolate himself from the daily impingement of a declining neighborhood or one which is experiencing dramatic and unsettling development. The renter, on the other hand, feels the danger and discomforts of these conditions at every turn, but is not tied to the neighborhood financially: leaving may involve an inconvenience, even an emotional or financial hardship, but not the potential loss of a very large investment. The owner occupier who sees in his neighborhood both declining property values and a declining quality of life experiences a trap with no exit: leaving means a loss which might not be recoverable, staying means danger and further decline in property value. If, however, the neighborhood is developing very rapidly, the owner occupier faces another sort of dilemma: there are opportunities for quick gain through selling an old property, but the gain may not necessarily mean access to a better home and a better way of life if property values are also rising uniformly across the entire metropolitan area.

Owner occupiers, then, form a group which has an extremely high motivation to engage in collective action to arrest either neighborhood decline or the effects of uncontrolled development. For this group, community organization and community planning constitute some of the more concentrated forms of collective action (along with participation in zoning variance and design review procedures). But a fighting army has
to have more than a cause, it also has to have troops: when home occupancy declines significantly, the leadership and the active residents are also in flight, leaving behind a disorganized neighborhood that is in danger of no longer being a community at all. Those who flee are often those who are capable of fleeing, that is members of the relatively stable middle class who have the resources to chose the kind of environment in which they want to live. These are also, as a number of studies have shown, the political leaders of community organizing initiatives, those who are capable of sustaining the long effort required to achieve neighborhood planning of substance. In the most advanced instance, the community group can be a power broker on a par with government and development interests, a status which is given formal recognition in the more highly defined forms of neighborhood planning program. But when the neighborhood group is vitiated by loss of leadership, there is no party which can oppose the city government's tendency to avoid confrontation with the problems of neighborhood decline, or which can pursue community betterment through initiatives like neighborhood planning. This explains the observed association between extreme decline in owner occupancy and the weaker forms of neighborhood planning.

At what point does the decline of owner occupancy indicate such a significant loss of community that neighborhood integrity is threatened? Perhaps the evidence of the study gives a clue: at the point when communities can no longer mobilize to ask the city for a neighborhood planning program which they believe will be effective in combatting their problems. The evidence of Chart 2 suggests that this point would occur when the decadal decline in owner occupancy increases beyond about 4%.
At less than about 1% decline in owner occupancy, neighborhoods do not experience enough of a crisis to demand strong programs; at greater than 4%, however, the loss of owner occupants is so great that the neighborhood cannot be mobilized.

This result points not only to a possible causative connection between the urban environment and the type of neighborhood planning program which a city selects, but also to a policy direction: neighborhood planning programs of the most well-defined type will not find sufficient community support under some city conditions to warrant being instituted. Emergency measures designed specifically to encourage owner occupancy are needed in these circumstances, including tax abatement and forgiveness, programs of low or zero interest construction and acquisition loans, self-help programs of construction, increase of incomes through job training, and securing the neighborhood against threats from drugs, violence, and vagrancy. These initiatives will come from government or from private institutions, not from the community, and although a neighborhood planning program may be the appropriate vehicle for articulating a comprehensive range of solutions, it will not involve at first a large citizen participation component. Elaborate citizen participation requirements in this instance may prove the undoing of the program, since there are in effect no citizens present to participate in it.

An Adversarial View of Neighborhood-City Relations

An assumption is at work in this discussion which needs to be stated here explicitly, that the neighborhood planning programs examined in this study are primarily a response to neighborhood demands rather than
measures initiated by cities. Under this assumption, neighborhood planning programs originate at the demands of citizens and are acceded to by city governments; and as the demands increase, the measures provided by city governments also will increase in substance. The picture suggests an adversarial relation between the city and its residents, in which enlightened city governments will anticipate growing resident discontent by providing a neighborhood planning program, while lethargic governments will use the programs reactively to appease a discontent which has already led to community organization. Under either scenario, the government is seen as the reluctant provider of a service which is offered only in appeasement to the demands of the adversary. The evidence of Chart 1, which shows the definition of the neighborhood planning program growing in direct relation to the rate of population growth, seems to bear this out: as the financial good fortune of cities increases, the demand for substantive remedies also increases, to which city governments are obligated to respond. This interpretation supports the earlier suggestion that once cities grant certain powers to neighborhood groups and certain levels of standing to neighborhood plans, they find it difficult to avoid granting the plans the full force of law.

This picture of city government is of course too simple: it does not allow for the possibility that genuine principles of democratic participation may motivate elected officials or that a city which is aware of the "quality of life" argument for city development might see neighborhood planning not merely as a hindrance to development activity, but as a positive good that will attract the selective development that the city wants, for example, the headquarters of national corporations rather than their production facilities. It also does not account for
the fact that the city government "is the people," as the motto above Houston's city council chambers states: that some elected officials rise from the ranks of the community and carry with them a neighborhood perspective. Only an examination of the motives that led to founding the neighborhood planning programs will shed light on whether the programs are concessions made to citizen demands, or represent instead a mutual understanding of what needs to be done to salvage city neighborhoods.
The Motivations for Establishing Neighborhood Planning Programs

The expectations which city officials and neighborhood residents have that local planning will provide a solution to their problems are revealed in the motivations which are given for the founding of these programs. The literature provided by cities must be examined with some caution: the development of a plan is a complex process that usually involves many players, and oversight of the final plan document rarely if ever involves all the players who have participated in the formulation of recommendations or the collection of materials. The expectations of neighborhood planning that are expressed in a planning document may well reflect the intention of the community, but might just as easily reflect the opinion of the residents or city staff who are charged with writing the document or even of the individual who does the final plan format and editing. Although good planning practice will allow for review and critique by the participants, plans are often produced in such haste that this monitoring function is compromised. Nothing in the literature provided for this study allows one to decide where a particular statement originates, and whether it is a significant expression of community sentiment or is introduced for some other purpose. The absence of a remark also cannot be taken as too significant. An expectation which is commonly found in this literature but which is absent in a particular case, for example that neighborhood planning will increase the capacities of residents for action and deliberation, may be so much taken for granted that the writer of the document felt there was no need to state it explicitly; or it may be that it was discussed by the drafting group but not felt to be a priority; or it may be that in the haste of final formatting it was simply overlooked.
This lack of reliability calls into question the use of a statistical approach based on the literature, particularly when the population of any one program type is so small: omission or inclusion of a single occurrence of a motivation alters the percentages dramatically. Therefore I decided to examine the motivations not in relation to planning program types, but in relation to the four separate structural characteristics described in Chapter 7. These relations were examined through crosstab analyses (Appendix). The analysis which follows therefore looks only at the broad trends that are indicated in the literature. More rigorous and detailed study, involving interviews with key players and broad surveys of participants, would be necessary before definitive conclusions about neighborhood planning motivations can be drawn.

Nevertheless, some general remarks about the motivations behind different program types can be gleaned from casual observation of Table 3. The literature indicates five broad categories of motivation at work in the founding of neighborhood planning programs:

1. To affect the general direction of development in the neighborhoods of the city:
   1a. Promote new development (revitalization).
   1b. Protect neighborhoods from the harmful effects of development, including displacement of current residents (conservation).

2. To improve the performance of city government in general and of planning in particular:
   2a. Improve communication between citizens and government, between neighborhoods, and between public agencies.
   2b. Share with neighborhood residents the burden of information-gathering, planning, and service delivery.
   2c. Create a sounding-board for governmental action and policies.
   2d. Increase neighborhood capacity for self-help.
2e. Achieve a more appropriate or sensitive level of planning, correct deficiencies in current city planning, or establish a model pilot program.

3. To provide a mechanism for updating or amending the district or comprehensive plan.

4. To solve a specific problem.

5. To satisfy a mandate from a higher level of government.

When the five categories of motivation are examined against the eight-part taxonomy developed earlier, the following pattern emerges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3: PROGRAM MOTIVATIONS</th>
<th>WEAK AUTHORITY</th>
<th>STRONG AUTHORITY</th>
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</thead>
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<td>MOTIVATION</td>
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<td>Type 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allnt' n</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1b 2a 2b 2c 2d 2e</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1a 1b 2a 2b 2d 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>1b 2b 2e 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phila.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pittsb'g</td>
<td>1a 2a 2b 2d 2e</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mninn.</td>
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<td>Spokane</td>
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<td>Trenton 1a 2a 2e</td>
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NOTES:
1. Stabilize and improve neighborhoods:
   1a. Promote/guide development in neighborhoods (revitalize)
   1b. Protect against development (conservate)
2. Generally improve government/planning:
   2a. Improve communication
   2b. Share burdens
   2c. Create a sounding board
   2d. Increase neighborhood capacity
3. Update/amend comprehensive or district plans
4. Solve a specific problem
5. Satisfy a mandate from a higher level of government
All of the planning program types have stated three types of motivation with nearly equal insistence: that the program will improve communication (2a), that it will increase the neighborhood's capacity to act for itself (2d), and that it will improve planning in general (2e). The expectation that planning will lead to revitalization also has a consistent presence in almost all the program types, indicating that even in those cities which are experiencing growth, there is a recognition that the rapid changes in land values associated with development can lead to deterioration in some neighborhoods. Most of the program types also mention conservation of neighborhoods, that is protecting good neighborhoods against the unwanted effects of development, as a motivation for establishing the programs; in fact, revitalization and conservation are mentioned together by twelve of the thirty cities in the sample, indicating that neighborhood deterioration and excessive growth pressures are understood to be concurrent phenomena in many cities.

Curiously, neighborhood conservation is not mentioned by one of the cities which have Type 3 programs, that is by cities in which the plans have weak standing and lack strong authorization but the neighborhood organization is given some level of official recognition. This group of cities does not, however, mention revitalization as the logical alternative to conservation; rather, neither motivation has a strong presence in these cities. By contrast, the motivations associated with improving government and planning have a high place among these cities. These are cities which have some of the familiar characteristics of decline: large losses of owner occupants, high property crime rates, and high violent crime rates. Is the failure to mention the conservation motivation at all, or the revitalization motivation with any consistency,
merely an accident, or is it an outcome of the economic and social position of these cities? These cities experienced, on average, the largest decline in owner occupancy (-7.6%) of any set of cities in the sample, and the set includes among its members the two Texas cities where decline of owner occupancy reached alarming proportions, Fort Worth at -13.9% and San Antonio at -11.2%. These are also the cities which had the highest average incidence of property crime (11,900 incidents per 1000 residents) and the third highest incidence of violent crime (1915 incidents per 1000 residents). As a group, these cities experienced only average growth (3.7%), although Fort Worth and San Antonio experienced very high levels of growth (16.2% and 19.1% respectively). Two of the cities experienced large declines in population - Atlanta at -7.3% and St. Louis at -12.4%. And these six cities typically saw dramatic shifts in demographics, with large declines in Anglo population in the case of Fort Worth (-13.1%), Minneapolis (-10.4%), and San Antonio (-43.2%).

This group appears to embrace two types of city, those in which population decline was substantial and was correlated with large declines in owner occupancy and modest declines in the Anglo population (Atlanta, St. Louis), and cities in which the population grew, sometimes explosively, but with a large decline in owner occupancy and an equally large decline in the Anglo population (Fort Worth, San Antonio). Growth in the latter cases also led to increases in the rate of violent and property crime. The peculiar bias of these cities toward improving government and planning, and the lack of attention to conservation and revitalization, may reflect on a stage of development in the neighborhood planning process: under conditions of either growth or decline which induce large flights of home owners, the policy decision whether to work
for revitalization or conservation lags behind a far more pressing issue, the making of viable communities in the first place. Enhancing the channels of communication between government and residents, and increasing the neighborhood's capacities for self-help, figure strongly among the motivations mentioned. Strong plans with strong authorization which would take a position on the revitalization/conservation issue are not as important in these cities as is the organization of the community itself; therefore the issues that affect the standing and effectiveness of the community, including communication and capacity, are far more heavily emphasized.

1. Improving Neighborhoods: Revitalization and Conservation

Cities which indicate that revitalization and conservation are among their reasons for establishing neighborhood planning programs tend to have plans with strong standing and strong forms of plan authorization. They also tend not to prescribe group requirements. However, cities that promote conservation have formalized planning procedures far more frequently than do those that promote revitalization.16

Although the cities which explicitly mention revitalization and conservation are fairly similar with regard to plan standing, authorization, and group requirements, they diverge significantly in their tendency to promulgate formal plan procedures.17 Formal planning procedures are significantly present in cities which promote conservation but less so in those which promote revitalization (69% and 50%, respectively) (Crosstab 4, 2A and 2B). The difference can be explained through the different time frames that are involved in the two processes: when cities seek revitalization, they want to remove barriers to
development (while still maintaining other controls, e.g. design review and zoning hearings); but when the motivation is to conserve neighborhoods, residents will seek means to delay development and subject it to as much scrutiny as possible. Elaborate planning processes impose burdens on development, particularly if the plan has more than advisory status; the planning process extends the schedule and cost of development while giving the community more points for comment and review. The cities which seek conservation do not, however, have a noticeably greater incidence of strong authority plans than cities which seek revitalization. Apparently what is significant here is the planning process itself, presumably because of the opportunities it gives for citizen influence over the building process.

2. Improve Planning

The general motivation to improve planning is expressed in the planning literature as five distinct types of motivation:

a. Improve communications between residents and municipal government, and between residents and businesses

b. Share the burdens of information gathering, planning, and service delivery between the government and the residents of neighborhoods.

c. Create a sounding board so that government can measure the effect of proposed improvements or changes to services.

d. Increase neighborhood capacity to carry out improvements on its own or undertake aspects of service delivery.

e. Increase the sensitivity of planning by making it a locally based function.
2a. Improving communications

Improving communications is mentioned so often (83% of the sample) as a reason for creating a neighborhood planning program that it can be taken as fundamental. This motivation has little relation to the standing of the plan or the degree of authorization the plan is granted. Cities which mention communication tend to have well-defined community groups, but the same time they avoid to a marked degree formalized plan processes.

Of the 25 cities which mention improving communications as a motivation, almost three-quarters (72%) have prescribed groups, while only one-fifth (20%) of cities which do not mention this motivation have prescribed groups (Crosstab 2, 2A). This is logical: community groups which have achieved a high level of standing will be concerned about monitoring their presence in city-building decisions, and the neighborhood plan is seen as a way to promote the dialogue with city government that is essential to preserving this role. By contrast, the motivation of improving communications has a negative relation to formalized planning process, since cities which mention improving communications as a motivation have a somewhat reduced tendency (68%) to have a formal plan process when compared to those which do not mention the motivation (80%) (Crosstab 4, 2A). This finding might suggest that formalized planning processes are actually viewed as an impediment to good neighborhood-government communications; the corollary would be that the really effective communication between the two parties takes place either in back corridor discussions or through the regular channels of citizen participation, for example at the ballot box or in council hearings.
2b. Sharing burdens

The motivation to share some of the burdens of government with citizens appears to reduce city interest in three of the four basic planning factors: cities which mention sharing burdens have a noticeably smaller tendency to have strong plans (41%), strong authority (24%), and prescribed groups (53%) than do cities which do not mention this motivation (69%, 54%, and 77%, respectively for the three characteristics) (Crosstab 1, 2, 3, 2B). This motivation appears to have no bearing on the tendency of a city to have a formal planning process (Crosstab 4, 2B).

If the need to share burdens is already an indication that a city is struggling to maintain itself, then having a strong plan in these circumstances is useless: the strong plan is intended to compel the city to take action, but if it has no resources to call on, compulsion is pointless. The plan in some circumstances may be less an instrument for action than it is for community mobilization. It is perhaps not an accident that there is a high correlation between the motivation to share burdens and the motivation to increase neighborhood capacity through self-help: both are devices for enlisting residents in the struggle to overcome city decline. However, logically one would expect that these tendencies would lead to establishment of a well-defined community group as a vehicle for carrying out neighborhood improvements. This does not appear to be the case.

2c. Create a sounding board

This motivation leads to the same results as sharing burdens with respect to plan standing (38% versus 59%), authorization (25% versus 41%), and
group requirements (50% versus 68%) (Crosstabs 1, 3, 2, 2C). By contrast, the desire to create a sounding board has little effect on whether or not a city institutes a formal plan process, since about three-fifths of all cities have such processes (Crosstab 4, 2C). Again, this finding may indicate that the plan is primarily an instrument for community mobilization rather than for specific action.

2d. Increase neighborhood capacity

Cities which express the desire to increase neighborhood capacity through neighborhood planning do not have plans with strong standing, and to a marked degree they do not pass their plans with strong forms of authorization.18

The finding is consistent with the two previous findings in suggesting that in some situations the primary motivation for neighborhood planning is to organize the community as a potential partner of a struggling city government rather than to compel an active city government to pay attention to neighborhood demands. Under this interpretation, the plan is a vehicle for community mobilization rather than an explicit tool for change.

2e. Improve planning

Cities which intend to use neighborhood planning to increase the sensitivity and appropriateness of planning have plans with weak standing and weak authorization, but tend to slightly favor well-defined community organizations. To a marked degree, these cities have formal planning processes.19
The emphasis on neighborhood groups, and the de-emphasis on granting the plans formal standing and authorization, may indicate that planning is viewed as an appropriate instrument for change but that there is little understanding of how forcefully planning can intersect with the city-building process; or it may indicate, as suggested by the finding for sharing burdens, improving communications, and increasing neighborhood capacity, that these cities are not yet developed enough in respect to community organization to be ready for the high levels of skilled participation that well developed planning efforts, involving strong plans and strong forms of authorization, require of residents. However, the relation between this motivation and formal planning processes is marked: 81% of the cities which mention improving planning as a motivation have formal planning processes, while only 44% of the cities which do not mention the motivation have such planning processes. This is logical: formal planning procedures can be understood as technical devices for improving the planning process, and ones which are likely to have an appeal for many parties, because of the implication that planning can be made rational, orderly, and intelligible to lay individuals. These procedures will probably be a good deal less controversial than granting the plans strong standing or letting them be adopted by the stronger forms of authorization, which move the plan from technical instruments into the realm of the political.

3. Amend or Update District and Citywide Plans

By contrast with the motivation to increase the sensitivity of the planning process by giving it a local basis, the motivation to amend or update large-area plans is essentially a technical consideration. It
reflects the fact that changing conditions at street level necessarily affect the relevance of plans. Neighborhood planning is conceived as one among a number of techniques for providing the information which can update plans. Both Spokane and Atlanta, for example, use neighborhood planning as a way to bring area-specific improvement into the capital improvements program (in Spokane) or to update the city's master plan (in Atlanta).

Cities which mention updating plans as a motivation for neighborhood planning have strong plans and pass these plans with the stronger forms of authorization, and they subscribe to formal plan processes. Compared to other cities in the sample, they do not give special status to the community planning organization.20

Evidently, cities which mention updating district or comprehensive plans as part of their motivations are often willing to give the neighborhood plan a substantive role to play in the city-building process. This may suggest that if the culture of planning in the city has advanced far enough to provide for plans which have a regular updating mechanism attached to them, they also will devolve considerable status on to the smallest level of planning, the neighborhood. Cities at this level may have come to recognize the inherent limitations of the district or the city-wide plan, and recognize that an effective neighborhood plan is actually advantageous both as a technical and as a political instrument. It is not surprising that these cities will also incline toward highly formalized planning procedures at the neighborhood level, because inclusion of the neighborhood plan at the district or city level increases the burden on the neighborhood plan to meet the standards for good planning practice that were outlined in New York's statement on
page __. The consideration here appears to be largely technical; this may explain why there is no particular emphasis placed in these cities on the community group.

4. Solve a Specific Problem

Only three cities mention solving a specific problem as a motivation for establishing a neighborhood planning program. This motivation is so little represented in the sample that no conclusions can be drawn about its relation to the four structural factors. Evidently, neighborhood planning programs are promoted either to satisfy the general demands that city residents have for participation in the city-building efforts of their governments, or to provide comprehensive solutions to their communities, or both. The failure to mention specific solutions as motivations for establishing neighborhood planning programs probably indicates that for this type of problem, the instruments that are available through the ordinary channels of government are adequate.

5. Satisfy a Mandate from a Higher Level of Government

Mandates from higher levels of government generally consist of state or federal requirements for citizen participation as a condition for receiving specific types of funds, for example the federal Community Development Block Grant monies. The motivation to satisfy such a mandate has a decisive influence in shifting plans toward the more well-defined and more highly authoritative end of the planning program spectrum.

Slightly more than one-third (37%) of the sample cities have started neighborhood planning programs wholly or in part to satisfy such a mandate. Cities which have an obligation to satisfy a mandate from a
higher level of government have a very significant tendency to have plans with strong standing when compared to cities which do not have this obligation (82%, compared to 37%). They also have a noticeably greater tendency to have prescribed group requirements (73%), and they have somewhat stronger forms of authorization (46%) than do cities without the mandate (58% and 37%, respectively). The mandate apparently has no effect whatsoever on a city's decision to create a formal planning procedure.

The interesting influence that higher level mandates appear to have on neighborhood planning programs is further explored in the next section, which examines the relation between neighborhood planning and the planning enabling legislation of the states represented in this study.
State Enabling Legislation

As the last discussion indicated, among the environmental factors which may have most influence on the effectiveness of neighborhood planning programs is the legal climate within which the program originates and operates. This section of the study is concerned with whether state enabling legislation regarding municipal planning has any relation to the structure of neighborhood planning programs. In line with the general perspective of this study, this examination of the states' legal environment strives after an overview of neighborhood planning programs across the United States rather than detailed information about the programs themselves. Specifically, it asks if any of the states in the sample authorize their cities to delegate significant powers to community groups as part of a larger effort to decentralize some of the functions of local government. The cities in the study sample are found in the following states and the District of Columbia (for the purposes of this study, the District of Columbia is treated as a city with state-like characteristics):

| Arizona | New Jersey |
| California | New York |
| District of Columbia | North Carolina |
| Georgia | Ohio |
| Hawaii | Oregon |
| Maryland | Pennsylvania |
| Massachusetts | Rhode Island |
| Minnesota | Texas |
| Missouri | Washington |
| Nebraska |  |

In a review of the planning and zoning enabling legislation for all the states involved in the study, only three states (California, Arizona, and the District of Columbia) were found to make some provision for specific or neighborhood plans within the municipal planning process. Of the three, California and Arizona require that the specific plans of
their municipalities be adopted by ordinance, and California in addition stipulates that these plans must be accorded the force of law as instruments of implementation. In addition, only the District of Columbia and Texas, which does not make any provision for specific plans, specify channels by which communities can be involved formally in land-use review and zoning processes. In the District, the elaborate system of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions is established parallel to the ward system, and the opinions and comments of the ANC5s are given "great weight" in land use deliberations (Chapter 7). In Texas, cities have the option of establishing appointed neighborhood advisory zoning councils if they wish. Beyond the advisory roles mentioned above, none of the states in the sample delegates authority or power of any kind to sub-city groups.

It appears, then, that the states in this sample have little interest in enabling or requiring cities to formally enlist sub-city groups as partners in the planning and implementation of community improvements. Mechanisms for delegating authority directly to community groups do not appear in the black-letter law of the states. Where such delegations have occurred, as when Boston's Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) was granted powers of eminent domain over some vacant properties, they have taken place through other legal avenues. In the case of the Boston group, the term "corporation" had to be interpreted in such a way as to allow DSNI to qualify as an agent of eminent domain, under legislation which normally would apply only to entrepreneurial bodies.
Neighborhood Planning Programs and State Enabling Legislation

Despite the absence of direct links between state legislation and sub-city groups, the research provided indirect evidence about the relation between state-granted planning authorities and neighborhood planning. A number of questions were developed to provide insight into this relation. Since the discussion in Chapter 7 shows that neighborhood planning has a formalized relation to comprehensive planning in cities like Atlanta and Spokane, it was hypothesized that state provisions in regard to municipal comprehensive plans would have an influence on the type of neighborhood planning program that a city will develop. Specifically, it was asked if state legislation which establishes a large domain over city comprehensive plans, in the sense that it directs cities to have comprehensive plans and sometimes tells them what the plans will contain and what they will do, is not related to the stronger and more well defined of the planning types.

To establish the relation between state legislation and neighborhood planning program types, it was asked, first, if the state requires its cities to develop comprehensive plans, and if so, if it also mandates that specific elements be present in these plans. Second, the status that the state grants to municipal comprehensive plans was examined: whether these plans are advisory documents, instruments with general force of law, or instruments which have a specific relation to zoning and land use decisions. In line with this status are requirements that the plan be adopted either by resolution or by ordinance by the city council. Third, it was asked whether the state requires that the plan be reviewed by a higher level of authority, and if so, whether this authority has only review and comment power over the plan, or can stop
its promulgation if it does not meet prescribed standards. Fourth, does
the state itself have a comprehensive plan or planning guidelines which
provide the standard against which the municipal plan can be measured?
Finally, if the state does take an interest in the municipal planning
process, does it also make provision for local specific plans? As with
the municipal comprehensive plan, it must be asked whether these plans
are advisory and by what authorization they are passed; and whether a
requirement exists for participation by neighborhood groups in the
specific planning process.

The answers to the questions outlined above were tabulated as
dichotomous variables. Where a matter is simply not addressed by the
legislation, a blank is left in the table below, while an "0" indicates
that the state in question explicitly denies or rejects the aspect of
municipal planning which the question addresses.

A. Does the state require municipalities to develop comprehensive
plans? (Not required, 0; required, 1)
    Aa. Are certain elements mandated in the comprehensive plan? (Not
        mandated, 0; mandated, 1)
    Ab. Does the state require that a municipality establish a
        planning commission or agency? (Not required, 0; required, 1)

B. Is the municipal comprehensive plan advisory, or does it have force
of law? (Advisory, 0; force of law, 1)
    Ba. Is it required that zoning, other regulations, and land use
decisions must loosely "accord" with the comprehensive plan,
or must they closely "conform" to it? (Must "accord", 0; must
"conform", 1)
    Bb. Is the municipal comprehensive plan adopted by resolution, or
    by ordinance? (By resolution, 0; by ordinance, 1)

C. Is it required that the comprehensive plan be reviewed by a higher
level of government? (Not required, 0; required, 1)
    Ca. Does the higher level of government makes advisory comments,
or does it have the power to stop the comprehensive plan or
    compel compliance with a regional or statewide standard?
(Comments are advisory, 0; can stop or compel compliance, 1)
D. Does the state have a comprehensive plan or planning guidelines? (Does not have a plan, 0; has a plan, 1)

Da. Is it required that municipal comprehensive plans must comply with the state plan or guidelines? (Not required, 0; required, 1)

E. Does the state make provision for specific plans within the municipal planning process? (Does not make provision, 0; makes provision, 1)

Ea. Are specific plans advisory, or do they have the force of law? (Advisory, 0; force of law, 1)

Eb. Are specific plans adopted by resolution, or by ordinance? (By resolution, 0; by ordinance, 1)

Ec. Does the state make provision for neighborhood groups to participate in the planning or zoning processes? (Makes no provision, 0; makes provision, 1)

The results of this inquiry are shown in Table 4.

Certain relations become apparent from the tabulations. The nine cities of Type 8, those which have the most highly defined neighborhood planning programs in the sample, are found far more frequently in states which mandate municipal comprehensive plans than in those which do not (A). A clear majority of these cities are in states which also scrutinize the substance of the comprehensive plans, in that the states dictate the minimum elements which the plans must contain (Aa). Three of the nine cities are required by their states (Oregon and Rhode Island) to give their municipal comprehensive plans the force of law (B), meaning specifically that zoning designations and other land use decisions and regulations must conform to the comprehensive plan (Bb). By contrast, in all the other states in the sample except California, the municipal comprehensive plan is established as a purely advisory document by statute, by court decision, or by both. It is significant that Oregon and Rhode Island also have state plans or guidelines to which the municipal plan must conform (D), and that they require the municipal plan to be reviewed by a higher level of government (C); only in Oregon,
### TABLE 4: STATE ENABLING LEGISLATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Type</th>
<th>Weak Authority</th>
<th>Strong Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>STATUTORY REQUIREMENT</td>
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<td>AA AB CC DD EE EE</td>
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<tr>
<td>TYPE 1</td>
<td>a b a a a a abc</td>
<td>a b a a a abc</td>
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<td>Almnt'n</td>
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<td>TYPE 2</td>
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<td>Dallas</td>
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<td>Columbus</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phila.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsb'g</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>TYPE 3</td>
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<td>Ft. Worth</td>
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<td>Minn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omaha</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Anton.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>TYPE 4</td>
<td>Washngtn</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0 1</td>
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<td>L.A.</td>
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<td>Spokane</td>
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<td>TYPE 5</td>
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<td>TYPE 6</td>
<td>Kan. City</td>
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<td>TYPE 7</td>
<td>Balt.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raleigh</td>
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<td>S. Diego</td>
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<td>New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoenix</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prov.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenton</td>
<td>0 1 0 0 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES:**

A - The state mandates that municipalities develop comprehensive plans
   (Aa) Certain elements are required in the comprehensive plan
   (Ab) A planning commission or agency is required

B - The municipal comprehensive plan is advisory, or it has force of law
   (Ba) Zoning, other regulations, and land use decisions must "accord" with the comp. plan, or must be "confo-
   (Bb) The municipal comprehensive plan is adopted by resolution, or by ordinance

C - The comprehensive plan must be reviewed by a higher level of government
   (Ca) The higher level of government makes advisory comments, or it has the power to stop the comprehensi-

D - The state a comprehensive plan or planning guidelines
   (Da) Municipal comprehensive plans must comply with the state plan or guidelines

E - The state makes provision for specific plans within the municipal planning process
   (Ea) Specific plans are advisory, or have the force of law
   (Eb) Specific plans are adopted by resolution, or by ordinance
   (Ec) The state makes provision for neighborhood groups to participate in planning or zoning
however, can the higher level actually stop the municipal plan or compel compliance with statewide guidelines (Ca).

The relation between state enabling legislation and neighborhood planning programs is developed further by examining individual structural characteristics of the programs.

Plan standing:
Of the 16 cities which have neighborhood plans with strong standing, a significant proportion (just under 50%) are in states which both require municipal comprehensive plans (A) and specify the minimum elements of the plan (Aa) (Report 4). Although the number of cities in which the comprehensive plan is required by the state to have the force of law is never very great (7 out of 30), a much higher proportion of the strong plan cities are under such a state mandate than are the cities in which the plan has weak standing (B). Put differently, strong neighborhood plan standing does seem to be associated to a significant degree with state requirements for municipal comprehensive planning.

Approximately the same proportion of strong-standing cities as weak-standing cities are under state obligation to have their municipal comprehensive plans reviewed by a higher level of authority (C). However, a significant proportion of strong-standing cities are in states which have statewide plans or planning guidelines, while none of the weak-standing cities are in states with such plans or guidelines (D). This suggests that while the influence of a state plan on neighborhood plan standing is never very large, it may provide encouragement to cities to give their neighborhood plans some weight.
It is curious that of the 14 cities which do not accord their neighborhood plans a strong level of standing, four are in states which make some provision for neighborhood groups to participate in the planning or zoning process (Ec). This may be merely an accidental effect of the sample rather than a significant finding: three of the four cities are in Texas, which does not require municipal comprehensive planning, but which does provide cities which undertake zoning with the option of establishing advisory citizen councils. None of the cities where plans have strong standing are in states which make provision for neighborhood groups to participate in planning and zoning decisions.

Group Requirements:
Cities which specify the requirements of community groups (Types 3, 4, 7, and 8) are much more likely to be found in states which require municipal comprehensive plans than are cities which do not specify such group requirements (Report 5, Column A). Similarly, cities with group requirements are found somewhat more often in states which require that municipal comprehensive plans be reviewed by a higher level of authority, which in about half the cases is the state itself (C, D). This suggests that state attention to municipal comprehensive planning may stimulate city efforts to encourage citizen participation. The city may be motivated in part by the knowledge that the representativeness and equity of citizen participation is one of the issues which will be most carefully scrutinized in higher-level review.
Plan Authorization:

Cities in which neighborhood plans are authorized by ordinance (or stronger) are far more likely to be found in states which require municipal comprehensive plans (A), and also require that these plans supersede local zoning designations (B\(\text{a} \)), than are cities in which neighborhood plans are adopted by resolution. These same strong-authorization cities are also more likely to be found in states which require review by a higher level of government than are weak-authorization cities (C), and significantly more in states where the higher level has the authority to stop the municipal plan or compel compliance (C\(\text{a} \)). What is surprising here is the number of cities which have granted strong authorization to their neighborhood plans in the absence of state enabling legislation (7 out of 10). Very few of the cities which grant strong authorization to their neighborhood plans are in states which take account of specific plans in their enabling legislation. This suggests that most of the cities which have adopted strong authorization for neighborhood plans have done so for internal political reasons, or to satisfy review by a higher level of government, not because they are specifically required to do so by the state.

Planning Process:

Cities which have adopted formal processes for the development of their neighborhood plans show a pattern very similar to that of the cities which have adopted strong forms of standing for the neighborhood plan: they are more likely to be found in states which require municipal comprehensive plans (Report 7, Column A), in which the comprehensive plan has force of law (B), and in which the state or another higher level of
government has review powers over city plans which can stop the plan or compel compliance (Ca).
Summary

The eight-part taxonomy developed in Chapter 8 permits some conclusions regarding neighborhood planning programs in the sample of thirty cities. The distribution of cities within the taxonomy indicates that while about half of them definitively link their plans to city-building instruments like zoning, only a minority appear willing to give these plans the full authorization of ordinance or mayoral order. Almost without exception, the cities which pass their plans by ordinance give them strong forms of standing, but the reverse is not true. Neighborhood planning programs are somewhat polarized between those which are very weakly defined with respect to plan standing, the community’s position in planning, and plan authorization (Type 1 cities), and those for which these structural characteristics are well defined and authoritative (Type 8 cities). In between these extremes, only one type of program has a substantial representation, Type 3 in which plans have weak standing and are passed by resolution, but the community group has well-defined powers and responsibilities. This result supports an argument that cities have difficulty in carrying out neighborhood planning by half-measures: once residents become partially enfranchised in the neighborhood planning process, there appears to be a tendency for cities to go the full distance of granting their neighborhood plans strong forms of authorization.

When the program types are examined against the economic and social backgrounds of their cities, two relations come immediately into view: program types generally become more well-defined as population growth increases, and the more well-defined types are clearly associated with cities in which the decline of owner occupied housing is modest. No
other social or economic indicators - changes in the racial or ethnic composition of the city's population, changes in per capita income, crime, overall population size - are as clearly associated with program type as are these two factors. The strength of the correlation indicates that growth brings threats that elicit neighborhood planning from residents as a protective measure, but only if the home owning population, that group which has the highest stake in neighborhood stability, is relatively intact. Once the decline of owner occupancy passes beyond about -4 percent, it appears difficult to find the leadership within the community to mobilize demands for neighborhood planning. A curiosity of the results is that those cities which had the very highest growth rate in the sample, Raleigh at 38.4% and San Diego at 26.8%, give their neighborhood plans high levels of plan standing and give their community groups a well-defined role in the planning process, but hesitate to give their neighborhood plans the full weight that comes with authorization by ordinance or mayoral order. This result may expose the tensions that high-growth cities experience most keenly, between satisfying the demands of their residents for stability and taking advantage of a windfall of development that may prove short-lived. The solution of cities like Raleigh and San Diego is a classic attempt to tread the middle ground, granting considerable voice to the neighborhood in the development process but balk ing at the full responsiveness to neighborhood demands which is implied in passing neighborhood plans by ordinance. The previous remarks about the polarization of plans between program Types 1 and 8 may indicate that Raleigh's and San Diego's attempts at appeasement will not produce a stable situation.
The motivations for initiating neighborhood planning programs divide into three rough categories, the direct desire to improve neighborhoods through planning, the ancillary desire to improve citizen-government relations or achieve a more knowledgable and effective citizen body, and the desire to improve planning in general. Cities which express the first type of motivation tend to have programs in which the plans have strong standing, are passed with strong forms of authorization, and are carried out through formalized planning procedures; but they lay less emphasis on having community groups with a well-defined role in the planning process. By contrast, cities which emphasize the ancillary benefits of planning, that is its effect in increasing citizen capabilities and improving communications, have a noticeable tendency to have plans with weak links to city-building instruments and plans that are not passed by the stronger forms of authorization. In some instances these cities favor well-defined community groups, particularly when the intent is to make planning more sensitive and appropriate to the needs of the neighborhood. Cities which express the motivation to use neighborhood planning to update or amend comprehensive plans tend to have plans with strong standing and strong forms of authorization, but do not give special emphasis to the community group.

Finally, about one third of the cities in the sample indicate that they began their neighborhood planning programs to satisfy a mandate from a higher level of authority. These cities have a noticeable tendency to have plans with strong standing and citizen planning groups with prescribed powers and responsibilities. This finding points to the influence that the legal environment of the state has on neighborhood
planning. While explicit links between state legislation and the status of neighborhood plans were not found, there is evidence of a correlation between the two arenas of public policy. Specifically, cities with the more well-defined forms of neighborhood planning are found often enough in states which require that their cities have comprehensive plans to suggest that there is a connection between the two levels of planning. In some cases, these are also states which require compliance between the municipal comprehensive plan and zoning and other land use regulations, and also states which reserve the right to review, comment on, or even stop the municipal comprehensive plan. While this evidence is very inconclusive because few states in general are involved with aspects of municipal planning beyond zoning, it nevertheless points to a possible connection between the state and neighborhood planning. Whether the connection arises because of a congruence between state and city attitudes towards the rights of citizens, or because urban residents find a refuge in the state from a city government that works against their interests, is a question that will be considered in the final chapter of this paper.

Notes

5. 1980 Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States 1990
6. County and City Databook 1988; constant 1985 dollars
10. Washington Post, 1/2/95
In this sample, Phoenix with a decline of owner occupancy of 12.9% is clearly an anomaly among the Type 8 cities; if it is dropped from the sample, the average decline in owner occupancy for Type 8 cities improves to 2%.

There are exceptions: Washington, D.C.'s upper Connecticut Avenue is a rental apartment corridor that houses a population that is almost without exception middle- and upper income in its composition. The explanation lies in Washington's peculiar character as a government city which attracts a well-to-do transient population and also supports a large population of single government workers, many of whom are retired. This observation was made by Nathaniel Levy, District of Columbia Department of Planning, Spring 1994.

A general rule of thumb that is used in planning circles is that one primary job, for example a job directly related to a corporate relocation, brings with it four ancillary jobs to provide service support.

In the case of Houston's Freedmenstown, there is evidence to indicate that the withdrawal of these services is not merely a reflection of political or fiscal reality, but indicates a deliberate intention to lower the land values and reduce the population in the area enough to make it attractive to larger scale development.

Curiously, these fluctuations in owner occupancy are associated with another phenomenon, the increasingly extreme variation that one sees in the proportion of Anglo and minority populations as population growth increases (Chart 17). The proportion of these two populations appear to mirror one another: minority growth in this sample always means decline of Anglo population, and in all but one instance the degree of minority growth gives some measure of the degree of Anglo decline. Owner occupancy does not appear to be consistently correlated with either minority growth or with Anglo decline; but just as the fluctuation of population composition increases with increasing population growth, so the fluctuation of owner occupancy also increases (see Chart 16).

The cities in which revitalization and conservation are mentioned as purposes of neighborhood planning tend to establish plans with strong standing more often that do cities which do not mention these purposes (50% and 63%, respectively, compared to 40% and 43%) (Crosstab 1, 1A and 1B). Although only 40% of the cities in the sample have strong forms of authorization for their plans, cities which mention revitalization and conservation do have strong forms of authorization more often (40% and 44%, respectively) than cities which do not mention these motivations (or express the motivation only as a general desire to improve neighborhoods) (30% and 29%, respectively) (Crosstab 3, 1A and 1B). Cities which mention revitalization and conservation have noticeably weaker tendencies (55% and 50%, respectively) to prescribe group requirements than do the cities which do not mention these motivations (80% and 79%) (Crosstab 2, 1A and 1B).

Of cities which mention revitalization, 65% have formal planning processes, while 80% of the cities which do not mention this as motive have formal planning processes. By contrast, the cities which mention conservation as a motivation, fully 81% have formal planning processes, while of those which do not mention conservation, only 57% have such planning processes.

Cities which mention this motivation have a slightly reduced tendency (50%) to have strong plans than do cities which do not mention the motivation (63%). These same cities also have a marked tendency (63%) to avoid strong forms of authorization when compared to cities which do mention it (27%). In other respects - group status and formal plan requirements - it appears to make little or no difference whether a city explicitly indicates that it wants to increase neighborhood capacity.
Cities which mention this motivation are noticeably less inclined to have strong plans (48%) and the stronger forms of plan authorization (33%) than cities which do not mention it (67% and 44%, respectively). On the other hand, these same cities are slightly more inclined to have prescribed neighborhood groups (67%, compared to 56%).

These cities show a slightly greater tendency to have strong plans (62%) and a significantly larger tendency to have formal plan processes (85%) than do cities which do not mention the motivation (47% and 59%, respectively). The motivation has very little effect on whether the city prescribes neighborhood group requirements. There is, however, a noticeable tendency for cities which mention amending or updating plans as a motivation to have strong forms of authorization for their plans (46%, compared to 29% for cities which do not mention this motivation).
CONCLUSION: NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CITIES

The Dependency and Conservatism of the Neighborhood

Neighborhoods are at once the most dependent and the most conservative elements of the modern American city. Their dependency arises from the areal specialization of land use that is a legacy of nineteenth century industrialism. In segregating the function of residence from the unsavory industrial and commercial functions of the city, nineteenth century city builders - both those working from a conscious agenda of planning and those who simply responded to market opportunities - removed from the neighborhood the employment and productive functions which had interlaced the pre-industrial neighborhood. Across the United States, the neighborhood has become specialized as a residential enclave. Since the neighborhood no longer produces wealth, having become instead almost entirely a site for the consumption of goods and services, its viability has come to hinge on the municipal and regional economy that surrounds it. In itself, the stable, built-out neighborhood offers little contribution to the metropolitan economy once the jobs created through construction are finished and the stream of revenue generated by initial house sales diminishes. For the wealthier neighborhoods, this dependency poses few problems, because there are sufficient resources within the neighborhood to address most neighborhood problems, the residents have public influence, and their livelihoods are generally tied to a larger context of industry, government, and finance. But for poorer inner-city neighborhoods, where the residents depend critically on the jobs and services provided by their immediate environment, specialization of function imposes a great vulnerability. With secular shifts in the methods and locations for the production of goods, with the rapidly
increasing mobility of capital worldwide, and with decreasing transportation costs, the American central city has had to struggle to maintain its role in the region. Many central cities face persistent losses of population and investment as jobs and capital flee to more favorable environments in the suburbs and elsewhere. The advantage of the metropolitan periphery for many types of business, its cheap land, ready transportation links, and safety, cannot be currently matched by the central city; the South offers a climate of minimal regulation and a cheap labor pool that is no longer available in the North; and as the cost of transportation declines, foreign labor markets become available for the assembly and manufacture of goods. All these factors spell threats to the central city neighborhood. Even in cities in which the overall population of the municipality itself is growing, there are still losses of population, disinvestment, and severe deterioration in the inner-city residential areas which adjoin the central business district. As this latter area becomes increasingly a node for trade and finance, the low-income neighborhoods that formerly depended on manufactures for a livelihood have been rocked by forces that lie well beyond their powers to correct.

These changes have precipitated in many neighborhoods a downward spiral which is all too hopeless. Flight of capital and jobs takes with it elements of the stable property-owning class; as the tax base declines services are strained and urban disamenities, particularly crime, increase, providing incentive for more property owners to flee. They leave behind a dependent population which cannot escape and which depends on the support services provided by the city. As the shrinking tax base is tapped to solve an enormously increasing scale of social and physical
problems, the burden falls on the remaining property owners, who in being asked to pay more and more for less and less are given further incentive to leave. When the trend toward decentralization of population, which some theorists claim is world-wide, secular, and inevitable, is augmented by historic circumstances and by cultural traits peculiar to Americans, the effect of inner city flight is magnified. Among the historic circumstances that distinguish American decentralization can be counted immigration from abroad and the migration of black people from countryside to city and from the South to the North, both of which brought waves of relatively poor people into the central cities. Among the cultural traits that have influenced American city form are racism, providing a powerful engine for the rapid transition of neighborhoods, as well as the proclivity of Americans for single-family dwellings in a semi-rural setting. These characteristics have been augmented by federal policy, which selectively favored suburban development in issuing home mortgage insurance and which built high-speed expressways that made the urban periphery accessible for rapid and large development.

Left behind, then, are the inner city neighborhoods. Not all of these neighborhoods, of course, are desolate or desperate. Some find new life as their handsome and solid historic buildings are recycled into the hands of younger people newly appreciative of the value of central city living; others retain value because their original quality and location place them beyond the vagaries of economic and cultural shifts; others fill the traditional role of affordable way-station for new groups of Asian and Latin-American immigrants; and still others receive the spill-over benefits (and problems) of adjacency to a central city commercial corridor that, fortuitously or because of planning, is blooming. Yet
while there are resurgences within central cities, the longer trend points to a general inner city decline that places huge burdens of crime, deteriorating infrastructure, increased services, and social disorganization on all city neighborhoods. That this condition inordinately affects black people and other minority groups reflects the fact that the inner city neighborhood has served for a long time as a point of arrival and a vehicle for assimilation for America's migrants and immigrant populations. At one time, the residential and productive functions of the central city worked together; currently, there is a disjuncture between the skills and needs of the population and what the central city can offer as jobs and services for these populations.

If the neighborhood is vulnerably dependent, it is also profoundly conservative. In its specialization as a residential enclave the neighborhood has elevated to the highest status the value of domesticity, that aspect of human life that demands stability, familiarity, and safety above all. The neighborhood stands counterpoised against the fluctuating commercial scene, where rapid changes in tastes, production methods, and communications lead to almost frenetic shifts in property investment. Commercial development and abandonment follow the frantic pace of capital mobility with a volatility that leaves the urban neighborhood assaulted. In this context, two profoundly different views of what land is and what it should serve oppose one another: on the one hand land is domicile, the place where the deeply symbolic rituals of daily life are given expression, on the other it is a commodity, a unit to be bought, sold, traded, and speculated in nearly as if it were wheat, oil, or diamonds. Even in an age of mobility and transition, the neighborhood stands as a counterbalance to the incessant rapid change of the commercial world.
While the urban landscape in many parts of the city has a fluidity that makes it unrecognizable from year to year, neighborhoods remain. The longing to hold onto a point of fixity in a world that builds and destroys too quickly is in alignment with other, more practical motivations, and all point toward neighborhood defense and preservation. The specific agendas of many neighborhood plans are therefore oriented as defenses against the direct effects of commercial growth or the indirect effects of commercial decline.

The threats to the neighborhood are multiple. Rapid growth brings with it pressures that threaten to replace low density residential land use with more lucrative high density commercial and residential uses. As urban land gives way to these pressures, rapid growth also brings changes in population that can jeopardize the perceived peace and quiet of the area. The effects that growth has on neighborhoods are often cataclysmic, placing facilities like offices and shopping centers on their edges and bringing with them traffic, noise, and rapidly rising property taxes. Slow growth also carries its threat, since gradual changes on a lot-by-lot basis can eventually place older structures into the position of being the oddities in the neighborhood. As the zoning map changes to keep up with these gradual changes in actual land use, the original character of the area disappears and is replaced with a tattered, disjointed pattern of land development that has no recognizable identity at all.

Decline brings threats that are less dramatic but prove to be just as devastating to neighborhood quality. The quality of neighborhoods at every economic level depends on a combination of private commitment and public obligation; absent either factor, a neighborhood deteriorates.
The two are linked, because private commitment to the care of individual properties also translates into a political voice that can persuade or coerce the public sector to take necessary action. Public sector action, on the other hand, provides some of the means that make private effort worthwhile, including equitable distribution of financing, safe and appropriate services, and the maintenance of public facilities like roads and playgrounds. Under conditions of overall city decline, both sides begin to withdraw gradually, and a slow erosion of control and quality takes hold.

Both growth and decline threaten the stability which is the leading virtue of the urban neighborhood. The mainstay of neighborhood stability is the owner occupant, the person for whom the value of the residential investment is closely related to the quality of life that the neighborhood offers. When owner occupants flee a neighborhood, whether because of incursion of land uses that are obnoxious to the enjoyment of domestic life or because of a gradual decline which cannot be halted, the result is an acceleration of change, since in most cases no other party in the neighborhood has the same stake in controlling or preventing change.

The economic dependency of the neighborhood makes it weak, and its conservatism places it in direct opposition to the growth which sustains the municipality's financial strength. Threatened by shifts which the free market brings to land use, the neighborhood finds that it does not have a consistent ally in city government, which sees in the neighborhood's needs impediments to the rapid commercial investment which brings with it high tax returns and jobs. Both the resident and the investor are essential to city health, the resident to provide the stable
population that can generate institutions of value, commercial investors to provide the jobs and property taxes that will pay for the services required by residential neighborhoods. In most cities, the interests of these two parties are profoundly and inherently at odds, because they represent the two extreme views of land, as domicile and as commodity. The two attitudes create different expectations of what planning is and what it ought to achieve. The neighborhood resident generally wants a conservative planning and land use approach that permits change to occur only slowly and under the careful scrutiny of the residents, while the commercial investor demands that land be allowed to respond to market shifts almost as quickly as sites can be cleared and new buildings can be put up. In some circumstances the two attitudes toward land can coexist for long periods. But the coexistence is inherently unstable, because precisely when the relation is successful the city becomes attractive to new investment, leading to intensive development and the undermining of neighborhood stability.

The tension between the needs of the residential neighborhood and commercial development presents a continual dilemma for city officials. On the one hand are voting constituents, who can be sources of valuable property taxes and are sometimes extremely potent as political forces. On the other are the opportunities for development, which multiply the public official’s political capital by providing a record of increased jobs, improved bond ratings, and reduced property taxes. The city must satisfy both parties, but finds in many instances that it cannot satisfy one without alienating the other.

The city’s financial interests align preponderantly with the needs of investors, against which stands only the weight that those who oppose
investment can bring into the chambers where land-use decisions are made. The inherited weakness of the central city neighborhood leaves it without an economic role that is equivalent to the gifts that the investor can bring to the bargaining table. The drama of municipal antagonism which is sketched here, in which a city government inclines to the siren song of investment while neighborhoods and their needs are shunted to the side, points toward two possible solutions, one political, the other economic.

The Political Solution: Neighborhood Planning

Neighborhoods lost their economic role in the city with the specialization of land use that attended on industrialization, and they lost their voice in the chambers of land-use decision when the political machine was swept aside by the Progressive reform movement of the early 20th century. The political solution to the neighborhood's plight therefore is to regain its voice in city-building affairs. In theory and in practice, this is a primary function of neighborhood planning. Theorists from Robert Woods to Judith Tannenbaum saw in the neighborhood a mediating institution which could formulate practical agendas for change while giving residents a taste for, and practice in, the exercise of democratic habits. In this respect neighborhood planning answers to Alexis de Tocqueville's claim that municipal institutions are the schools of democracy. It offers to the neighborhood an explicit means for effecting change within its own domain and for engaging with the larger city-building effort. It places a measure of power in the hands of community residents to control the local effects of rapid growth or gradual decline. Because neighborhood planning is a collective effort,
it presents itself as a potentially more powerful way to effect change than individual actions; because it is localized, it forces the city to pay attention to the smallest unit of the city, the neighborhood; and because it is a planning venture, it suggests rational control of the neighborhood's future. Neighborhood planning offers to compensate for the deficiencies of centralized planning through a methodology which is more informed about conditions at the local level and more responsive to the genuine needs and conditions of the residents. Indeed, in a few instances like Spokane and Atlanta, local area plans become the instruments which give particular content to the general goals formulated in the city's comprehensive plan.

Neighborhood planning is presented both as a technical tool to improve municipal planning and also as a device for strengthening democracy, since by returning control of local decisions to the community and bringing ordinary residents into the planning process, it augments the legitimacy of democratic institutions for city-building. Neighborhood planning in this sense can be seen as an ambitious and novel expansion of the routine citizen participation measures of city government which are represented, for example, by public hearings. Since neighborhood planning in theory corrects the inherent vulnerability of the neighborhood by raising it to equivalency with development interests, it is a device for alleviating the conflict of imperatives that city governments experience. In practice, one finds that highly institutionalize neighborhood planning programs like those of Portland and Washington, D.C., do in fact place the neighborhood resident in a position of frequent advice and sometimes consent over land use decisions.
A number of questions attend this idealized vision of the activated, politically potent central city neighborhood. For one thing, the viability of the neighborhood itself has come into doubt. Neighborhood planning is predicated on a simple point: that the neighborhood is a valuable component of the city. Historically, the value of the neighborhood was held to lie in its assimilative role, in the support it lent to domestic life, and above all in its effect on young children in their formative years. Faced with the erosion of the neighborhood under modern conditions of metropolitan growth and mobility, designers and theorists from the 1920's to the 1960's followed Clarence Perry in attempting to give the neighborhood a concrete physical reality to enhance its supportive, communal qualities. But doubt crept in: Keller's assessment of the neighborhood in 1967 indicated how much had been lost of traditional neighborhood value. Except for neighborhoods which were largely disfunctional and therefore isolated from the city as a whole, most neighborhoods in contemporary America had taken on the function of extended bedrooms for people whose employment, social life, political attachments, and cultural enjoyment reached across the entire metropolitan region, if not beyond. To writers in Keller's wake, the traditional neighborhood had little more than a sentimental value. Yet at the same time, the New Urbanism has attempted to isolate and protect the neighborhood as a self-contained unit.

What value remains for the neighborhood? The mobility of contemporary American society tends to give the home an instrumental status as a convenience, a package of amenities, of which the quality of the neighborhood is one aspect. Sociability and the possibility of finding a congruence of belief between neighbor and neighbor are not of
primary importance in the choice of a neighborhood for those who are mobile; safety, convenience, schools, and the potential resale value of homes tend to weigh more. Yet the neighborhood persists in the symbolic and practical life of Americans. For families raising small children, the neighborhood is essential: as children roam they require a safe environment larger than the home but smaller than the world, the intermediate realm represented by the home and its adjacent streets. For homeowners, the neighborhood may represent something more than a mere investment, since neighborhood safety depends on contact between people and some level of commitment to the long-term fate of the area. For the elderly, neighboring still provides a valuable and in some cases irreplaceable means of support. These functions are vastly reduced from the broad social, economic, political and cultural world that the nineteenth century neighborhood offered to its residents. Only the social function truly remains for most neighborhoods, and even that is greatly reduced from the persistent inter-generational contacts that prevailed in an era of limited mobility. The functions which do remain to the neighborhood, however, are essential: safety and security for every resident, an environment conducive to the growth of young children, and reinforcement of the enduring value of domesticity. These are the values of stability.

Second, history has shown that the conservative orientation of politicized neighborhoods tends to go far beyond the battle against inappropriate commercial intrusion. A neighborhood which has achieved political weight is also a neighborhood which has achieved a measure of self-identity that may incline it toward disregard for city-wide obligations and exclusion of populations which do not meet the
neighborhood's standards for behavior. In this, well-defined neighborhoods act no differently from small territorial units everywhere: they look after their own and wish to be spared all the rest. The vices of neighborhood planning are therefore the vices of decentralized government in concentrated form: parochialism, exclusion of unpopular populations and land uses, inclusion of uses that are detrimental to adjacent areas, fiscal isolation, loss of political content. When neighborhoods are cut off from centralized planning and financial management, their differences with respect to capacity and access to decision-making tend to be exaggerated.

These problems, which are both technical and political, can be corrected in theory by placing local community planning into the larger context of city planning and city oversight. Fiscal isolation can be prevented by ensuring the community planning group an adequate budget for operations and staff purposes, or in-kind planning assistance. Exclusion of unpopular land uses and inclusion of deleterious uses, the two faults toward which affluent and poorer neighborhoods swing respectively, can be controlled by subjecting all planning proposals to city-wide review through the planning commission or the city council. Measures designed to limit the parochialism of the neighborhood plan include rules that ensure that the local planning group is representative of the neighborhood; rules that monitor due process in developing the plan; measures that place the plan into congruence with the intentions and standards of the city as a whole; and review and adoption by an authority that has city-wide accountability. Isolation and parochialism, which are inherent in any planning program that focuses on a territorial unit as small as the neighborhood, can be addressed through proper structure and
oversight of the planning process. Ultimately, equity in the formulation of plans and in the distribution of their effects depends on a culture which ensures that these measures will be enforced.

Third, there is a question whether the power which devolves onto the neighborhood through neighborhood planning is only a form of appeasement which does not fundamentally alter the orientation of city government. If neighborhood planning is designed to give voice to the local community, the crucial question is, How much voice? Will residents have veto power over development decisions, particularly those which involve large tracts and thus have the greatest potential to generate finances and at the same time to create noise and traffic problems? If they receive this power, will they truly enter into a partnership with local government, recognizing that neighborhood interests must be balanced against the financial requirements of the city? Or will residents be given only tokens of participation, more or less expansive gestures of appeasement that allow them to participate in city-building, even to delay it, but not to fundamentally alter its course? Between the communities which are not even consulted when redevelopment takes place, and those which are engaged as full partners in development, there exists a broad continuum of community participation.

One measure of this continuum is the status which is granted to the neighborhood plan. The findings of Chapter 9 suggest that there is a constant tension within neighborhood planning between its role as citizen pacification and its role as a genuine city-building instrument, and that strong plan authorization appears to be the decisive threshold that separates the two. When plans cross this threshold, they become instruments of law that ought in theory to carry considerable force as
city-building instruments. Cities have considerable reluctance to treat either comprehensive or specific plans as instruments of law, because through this action they commit themselves to definite statements about a future in which financial constraints, economic opportunities, and political shifts of attitude are unknown. But cities also need plans, not only as technical documents that allow for orderly growth, but as political instruments that specify the agreements that have been achieved on general goals and standards. Plans provide some measure of security not only for neighborhood residents who are among the most conservative land users in the city, but also for developers who seek some assurance that their individual investments will be matched by equivalent commitments in public infrastructure and services. The plan document is the field on which the various players in the urban land use game play out their positions: how and by whom the plan is shaped and above all the weight that it carries in land use matters are the critical factors that concern all these parties.

The conflict between residential and developmental interests comes to a head in their varying attitudes toward the planning document. The interests of different cities vary as much as their cultures; nevertheless, it can be said with fair certainty that all American city governments have a stake in attracting development activity and at the same time in preserving their political legitimacy. From this perspective, the ideal city plan is one that establishes consensus among the city's interests about what should be done but leaves it open to future discussion as to what will be done: a plan that is hortatory, general, and not prescriptive. Investors can live with such an instrument, in fact it may help them. It leaves open the decision about
how individual parcels will be built, but does provide general indications of city intentions with respect to zoning, infrastructure and financial policy.

From the perspective of the neighborhood resident, such a general plan is not sufficient. Neighborhood concerns are immediate and specific: how through-traffic will be mitigated, how property uses that bring guns and prostitution into the neighborhood will be eliminated, how a lumberyard with huge parking requirements will be prevented from locating at the edge of the neighborhood. General, long-term statements about goals and intentions will not address these kinds of issues. From the neighborhood perspective, the best plan is one that is prescriptive about specific parcels of land and pieces of public improvement and defines the neighborhood's future with some exactness, somewhat like an architectural site plan or a campus master plan. Short of this, the next best thing is for the neighborhood to be able to use the plan to affect the course of events as they unfold, that is, to have a plan that has a mandatory presence in land-use decisions and requires the participation of the official neighborhood group. In the American context of city-building, the plans of the mandated advisory type have a reasonable chance of being enacted, plans of the precise prescriptive type, almost never.

The conflict that is expressed in these different views of planning is inherent to the nature of cities themselves. It revolves around the fact that since the American city is both a corporation and a political body, it is obligated to view land within its borders under the twin perspectives of commodity and domicile. It must, in a sense, talk out of two sides of the mouth at the same time: it must represent itself as
standing for neighborhood stability at the same time that it represents itself as a friend to developers and investors. Only in two circumstances does the city escape this conflict, where residential use and the areas attractive to development are so thoroughly separated geographically that no competition arises over individual parcels, or where the residential interest and the developmental interests of the neighborhood are in alignment.

In a few lucky instances, topography and geology set the terms of the domestic and the commercial realms. Such appears to be the case in Portland, Oregon, where the hills that circle the river plain on the south, west, and northwest pose difficult terrain for large commercial structures but are nearly ideal for laying out attractive neighborhoods. More generally, however, the separation of residence and commerce characterizes only the richest and the very poorest neighborhoods of the city, those which can afford to isolate themselves legally and physically (through restrictive covenants or literal buffers) or those which are not desirable for investment in the first place. Even in these cases, the conflict between residential interests and commercial development has consequences, because the city must throw its limited resources in one direction or another. It must build thoroughfares and convention centers or its must repair neighborhood streets; it must provide a streamlined building permit process or it must apply strong scrutiny to applications for zoning variances or building permits. In times of straightened finances the city has to attract business investment at all costs, and this means a sacrifice of attention and resources to its communities; but in times of rapid financial growth, when the availability of monetary resources is not the issue, the conflict tends to center on the direct
territorial antagonism of different land uses. The conflict is inherent to the different views of land that are held in a free-market economy: land as commodity and land as domicile bring with them different rates of change, different physical requirements, and different approaches to planning.

A fourth consideration is what neighborhood planning says about the relation between city and resident. A consistent theme of this study has been the conflict of imperatives that cities face between neighborhood and development, and how neighborhood problems are likely to be given lower status by city officials than the pressing opportunities presented by development. This suggests a fundamentally adversarial relation between city and neighborhood, yet it is obvious that the picture is too simple. City officials are themselves neighborhood residents who have to be concerned about safety and amenity, they come to their offices through neighborhood votes, and they will probably understand that good quality neighborhoods can be a draw for contemporary business investors on a level with infrastructure improvements or a favorable tax and regulatory environment.

This question comes to the foreground when the legal environment of neighborhood planning is considered: well-defined program types show an intriguing correlation with state legislation that compels cities to have comprehensive plans and imposes state oversight over the contents and procedures of the plans. Of the sixteen cities which have strong plan standing, seven are in states that require that their municipalities have comprehensive plans; of the fourteen cities with weak plans, only three are in states with similar requirements. Although a causative link cannot be asserted based on this evidence, two alternative explanations
for the observed correlations suggest themselves. First, one could contend that the neighborhood planning programs in these cities are as much a product of the general culture as they are of the specific environmental factors – population change, owner occupancy, changes of demographics, crime – which were discussed in Chapter 9. This would imply that while rapid population growth and declining owner occupancy certainly provide a stimulus for neighborhood planning, the capacity of the city to establish an effective program will depend on citizen attitudes toward planning in general, which are reflected concurrently in the laws they enact at the municipal and state levels. This explanation points to a common culture that embraces the constituents of the city and the constituents of the state, so that thorough planning initiatives at the two levels are parallel manifestations of a single set of attitudes and traditions. These attitudes will include an appreciation for the long-range benefits of rational planning, the desire to preserve the best qualities of the natural environment against uncontrolled growth, and a tradition of regard for citizen participation in the decisions of city government. The regional cast of the seven cities in question – Los Angeles, San Diego, Portland, Salem, Honolulu, Boston, and Providence – lends some weight to this argument, since all seven are found in young western states where quality of life figures high in discussions of growth, or in older eastern states which either have a long legacy of comprehensive planning or place a high emphasis on recreation. The Midwest and the South are not represented in the sample of seven cities.

There is an important conclusion that derives from the position that the neighborhood planning programs in these seven cities are primarily generated by culture rather than by environmental factors:
neighborhood planning structures are not simply mechanisms that only need
to be put in place in order to produce good neighborhoods, they are
rather indigenous phenomena which require attention and support from the
citizen body in order to be effective. This conclusion would lend
cautions to any attempt to export a neighborhood planning program that has
proven effective in one city to another without first determining whether
the transplant environment is compatible with the institution which is
brought to it.

A second explanation, however, takes a more instrumental view of
the coincidence between state legislation and well-defined neighborhood
planning programs: the programs are conceived in reaction to state
mandates regarding municipal comprehensive plans, and especially to state
mandates regarding citizen participation in planning. In the case of
Oregon, for example, statewide Planning Goals adopted in 1975 require
that every city in the state must have a comprehensive plan and that
citizen participation must be given a high priority in the planning
process. While neighborhood planning is not explicitly mentioned in
Oregon’s enabling legislation, it seems to be no accident that Portland
has one of the most thorough community planning programs in the sample of
cities, complete with an Office of Neighborhood Associations to act as a
liaison between community groups and the city’s operating departments.
Through its neighborhood plans, its requirements regarding community
groups, and its other instruments for citizen participation in budgeting
and planning, Portland’s government can show that its institutions for
neighborhood planning place it in compliance with statewide goals
regarding citizen participation. The link between neighborhood planning
and state legislation in this case is direct, via the state’s
requirements for citizen participation. But the suggestion here is that
the city of Portland, like the other cities in the group of seven, is an
unwilling participant in a process that has been imposed on it by the
citizens of the state.

Under this view, pressures like community resistance to development
impacts, increasing citizen awareness of local problems, and impatience
with negligent city government have led to state involvement in what
would seem to be a matter internal to the city, namely its comprehensive
planning process. It is significant that four out the five Type 8 cities
which are under state requirements to have municipal comprehensive plans
(Boston, Honolulu, Portland, and Providence) are also the pre-eminent
cities of their states, representing a significant percentage of the
overall state population. The history of the state’s planning
legislation might reveal whether the state requirements for municipal
comprehensive plans were not passed in response to demands from highly
mobilized urban citizen groups. Is it possible that citizen groups
approached the state in order to attain a level of involvement with
planning which they perceived was being blocked by an uncooperative city
government? In the state legislature, they may have found allies among
rural interests who would look on municipal planning as a way to inhibit
the excessive growth of cities and the consequent destruction of prime
agricultural land. The Urban Growth Boundary placed on Oregon’s cities
might be the result of just such an alliance of urban residents with
rural farmers, both bent on an agenda of preservation in the face of
rampant development.

This interpretation implies that the city government is not a
willing partner in the formulation of legislation at the state level,
rather, the legislation is established to work around a city government that has its attention and its interests focused on development, to the potential detriment of its neighborhoods. The explanation suggests that the relation between the city government and its residents is essentially adversarial in nature. If cities are caught between the imperative to satisfy the demands of their residents and the demands of investors, then only with reluctance will they concede to residents the tools like neighborhood planning which have a tendency to inhibit development. This explanation aligns with the proposition offered in Chapter 9 that citizen demands for effective planning rise in proportion to the problems caused by growth, and city governments attempt to balance this conflicting pair of imperatives by gradually granting greater powers to the community group and a higher standing to the neighborhood plan. Evidence from both the social conditions of the sample cities and from the legislative environment within which they operate point to a single interpretation of neighborhood planning: these programs represent attempts by city governments to satisfy a set of demands that may well be irreconcilable, because they involve two different and mutually antagonistic views of what land is and how it should be planned.

One of the explanations given here places emphasis on the commonalities between city government and its residents, the other stresses the antagonisms that arise from the conflicting imperatives that city governments face. Only thorough study of the particular circumstances under which each type of legislation was passed would allow a decision about these alternative explanations of state and city behavior. One would like to know, for example, whether growth pressures on city neighborhoods that led to neighborhood planning programs were
also experienced by rural interests, who then made common cause in the state legislature. One would like to have insight into the traditional relations between city and neighborhood, how these relations altered under the pressures of growth, and what role leaders from both sides had in initiating the neighborhood planning program or the state legislation. One would also be cautious about too quickly placing city officials into a purely adversarial role: as mentioned, city officials often come from the ranks of the neighborhood and bring the neighborhood perspective into council deliberations. It is possible, of course, that each explanation applies in different circumstances and at different periods of a city’s life. Within city government itself one will surely find agents who align with resident interests and others who see the city’s benefit in support for investors. So much is a mere truism; but the particular balance of forces, and the long traditions and environmental factors that have led to this balance in each city, is where evidence must be sought to explain the great variety of solutions that cities offer to the problem of neighborhood planning.

While theory and the anecdotal evidence of San Diego and Los Angeles seem to bear out the adversarial relation suggested here, one would want to know if it represents a genuine conflict of interests, or whether it is only a perception of conflict which might be altered. For example, if it could be shown conclusively that attention to neighborhood issues brings long-term advantages to a city even though it may hinder the short-term benefits brought by unbridled development, then officials and the public would have a more rational basis for considering policies that balance the political and economic needs of the city. Thorough study of those cities which have made sacrifices for the sake of
neighborhood stability and improvement will reveal whether long-term city advantages were served in the competition that all cities face in attracting and retaining appropriate investment. This evidence might do much toward altering the perceptions of both residents and city officials, and might enhance the status of neighborhood planning in general. While the advantage of elected officials lies in tangible improvements made within the time frame of the electoral cycle, a more statesmanlike perspective, looking to the eventual good of citizens and city, might be reinforced if clear evidence were made available showing the effectiveness of planning from a neighborhood perspective.

Effectiveness in the most immediate sense means the capacity of a policy or program to solve the problems that lie within its scope of action. From the neighborhood perspective, this will mean eliminating the harms that come from rapid growth or slow decline, or building the amenities and social supports that can make the neighborhood a better place to live. Effectiveness in this immediate sense can never be measured against an abstract standard, but is determined by the type of problems that the neighborhood presents and by the resources that can be brought to bear on them. Selective address to a few key problems may in many instances be more effective than a comprehensive approach that dissipates the community’s energies and leads to skepticism about the value of planning generally. Effectiveness in the direct sense will always be haunted by a large question, Would the improvements have taken place anyway in the absence of a neighborhood planning program? Effectiveness not only has to measure "hard" improvements but also the ancillary benefits that are claimed for neighborhood planning, namely increased citizen participation and accountability, improved
communication between citizen and government, distribution of some
government tasks to the neighborhood level, and general enhancement of
community identity.

Research on a case-by-case basis into the relation between plans
and the specific improvements that have taken place in urban communities
will reveal whether neighborhood planning itself is the primary agent for
change, and therefore whether communities have a reasonable advantage in
undertaking this form of collective action. More specifically, future
research will be concerned with knowing whether any of the structural
features studied in Chapters 7 through 9 have particular impacts on
effectiveness. Does a formalized relation between the plan and the
instruments of city-building lead to visible improvements, or is it
better for cities to work within traditional means like zoning, the
capital improvements program, or design review, which are less
comprehensive in scope but have a more direct relation to implementation?
Should the powers and responsibilities of the community group be
formalized, with all that this can imply with respect to raising citizen
expectations, introducing hidden biases, and increasing citizen
capabilities in ways that may countermand the financial interests of the
city? Does authorization of a plan at the level of ordinance or higher
reduce dissension and lead to an increase in resident and investor
confidence in the validity of the plan, or does it hinder the flexibility
which cities need in order to respond to new circumstances? Finally, do
formalized planning processes help residents find their way through the
immense complexities and arcane technical considerations of planning, or
is this an issue of pure methodology that should concern planners but not
the lay public? In what combinations do these elements become effective,
and under what specific circumstances of municipal growth, decline, and social change should they be applied?

Research of this kind will be involved in surveys, interviews, and studies of neighborhood change over time to assess the effects that neighborhood planning programs have made in the actual character of the neighborhood. If consistent relations between structural features and effectiveness can be established, then there is a basis for cities to borrow and copy policy from one another in order to address their community problems. The taxonomy developed in Chapter 8 could be extended to become not only a register of how neighborhood planning programs are actually applied but a method for deciding what structural features should be applied under the variety of conditions of demographic and economic change that cities experience.

Both areas of effectiveness mentioned here, the direct improvements in physical structures and social programs and the indirect benefits of citizen participation, will require that standards of effectiveness be developed in order to permit comparison between city and city. It is entirely possible that these standards will have to be developed from anecdotal evidence alone, since it is not the quantity of improvements that counts in this field, but the appropriateness of the improvement in each particular case. Standards of effectiveness are likely to be highly subjective: the neighborhood planning effort which stops a major commercial development will be effective from the perspective of the resident of an adjacent neighborhood, but may be considered a near disaster from the perspective of an elected city official. This difference of perspective is a direct effect of the ambiguous role of neighborhood planning as a policy instrument which may help the
neighborhood at the same time that it works against the financial standing of the city. Effectiveness will be subjective from another perspective as well, in that a hard-won improvement of any magnitude, for example a playground installation, will be an enormous accomplishment from the community's perspective while its overall effect in altering the neighborhood's economic and social viability may be negligible when viewed in terms of its metropolitan or regional effects. Despite these difficulties, a reasonable standard of effectiveness is mandatory if the purposes of neighborhood plans are to assessed against actual effects.

The Economic Solution: A Proposition for Central City Neighborhood Planning

The symptoms of inner-city neighborhood distress point back to a fundamental event, the altered role of the central city within the economy of region and states. Once the center of shipping and manufacture, the central city and its neighborhoods were also the center of banking, commerce, and cultural life. But the movement of capital, labor and residence to the metropolitan periphery stripped many central cities of all but a skeleton of their former functions. Perhaps because of tradition and location, central cities tend to retain the principal cultural institutions of the region; they often house the larger medical and university facilities; they are usually the main attraction in the region for tourism (though not for other forms of entertainment); and despite the incessant outward movement of business, they remain the main focus for banking, the courts and their associated services, and the stock exchange. But with the retention and even growth of these functions, the role of the central city as resident has declined: a
large number of the people who make their livelihood from and enjoy the 
main institutions of the central city do not live in the central city 
itself. As long as transportation is inexpensive and the metropolitan 
region remains jurisdictionally and fiscally fragmented, metropolitan 
residents can enjoy the benefits of the central city without suffering 
from its financial and social burdens. Transportation at present only 
shows signs of becoming less expensive, and the possibility of creating a 
larger jurisdiction which re-directs taxes back to the central city is so 
politically remote at the present moment as to be almost unthinkable.¹

If the neighborhood is truly the dependent component of the city 
fabric, then in most cases no amount of adjustment through conventional 
neighborhood planning can fundamentally alter its fate. If jobs and 
investment are leaving the central city, if its population is becoming 
increasingly dependent and imposing ever heavier tax burdens on those who 
remain, neighborhood planning can do no more than ease the pain for a 
city which has lost primacy in the metropolitan ecology. This grim 
vision is all too frequently corroborated by the statistics of decline 
for cities like Cleveland, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. 
Neighborhood planning in cities like these may in fact contribute to the 
undoing of the city, since by raising the needs of the most conservative 
part of the city to high visibility, these programs might turn away the 
capital investment which can buttress the city’s finances.

Neighborhood planning by itself will not alter the role that the 
neighborhood plays in relation to productive areas that generate jobs and 
services, nor will it save a city which is declining relative to the 
metropolis which surrounds it. Neighborhood planning only makes sense 
within a comprehensive view of the city, because only within this view
can the parochial interests of the neighborhood be balanced against city-wide obligations. This understanding seems to have motivated the neighborhood planning programs of Atlanta and Spokane, in both of which the neighborhood is used as an active source of suggestions which are then measured against the city’s overall needs and financial capabilities. But even the perspective of the municipal comprehensive plan is too narrow, since the city itself has become a relatively dependent component of a metropolitan society that may cover thousands of square miles. Regional or even statewide planning is the proper framework for addressing the neighborhood’s needs, because only within a framework of such extent can the full scope of neighborhood concerns be addressed, for example the transportation links that will carry a low-skilled, poorly educated inner city population to the manufacturing jobs which have relocated to inexpensive suburban locations.

It could be said that contemporary neighborhood planning addresses the symptoms of neighborhood decline but does not address its root causes. The overwhelming tendency of the neighborhood plans reviewed for this study is to view the neighborhood in isolation. Although sound planning practice does obligate planners at all levels to attend to larger municipal and regional issues, in practice the focus of the neighborhood document is usually limited to the neighborhood itself. While planners might know otherwise, this narrow focus is bound to lead the local resident to believe that the neighborhood’s own efforts will be enough, that there exists something like a self-sufficiency of neighborhood improvement.

The narrowness of geographic focus of the contemporary neighborhood plan is complimented by the narrowness of its typical agenda. Planning
improvements and community mobilization, both worthy goals of neighborhood planning, do not reach far enough. They do not address the fundamental questions: How can a city satisfy both its need for investment and its need to offer a decent and stable residential environment to its population; how can the city satisfy its obligations as a corporation and its obligations as a political body? Increasing the visibility of the neighborhood in the arena of land-use and planning decision does not so much resolve the conflict that cities face as make the contest fairer; it says that if the interests of different groups in the city are inherently and forever at odds with one another, at least the sides should be somewhat equalized. Out of this, it is hoped, will come a more balanced city, one which reflects the complexity of its multiple needs in its physical form.

A more visionary approach would attempt to resolve the conflict of imperatives between resident and investor by ending it. This approach would seek ways to make the modern city both corporation and political body at once, that is, a territorial unit in which residents have a large stake in the economic fate of the city and do not see the value of domesticity always threatened by commerce and industry. It would re-evaluate the role of the central city as a component of the metropolitan economy, finding for its neighborhoods a complementary relation to the function which central cities now perform in law, government, and finance. This orientation would seek a productive role for the neighborhood, a way to remove it from its historic dependency on the larger municipal and metropolitan environment and give it a valued activity which would draw to it both investment capital appropriate to its needs and the political support which it now lacks. What is sought,
then, is a genuine program of neighborhood revitalization consonant with the needs of society and the capabilities of the inner-city neighborhood.

The outward movement of businesses and people in metropolitan regions has left behind a set of conditions that conceivably provide an opportunity for inner city neighborhoods. These areas contain large assets of capital that can be captured for use. There are, for example, large tracts of former industrial land that are advantageously located near downtown business and cultural centers and near the major transportation routes that carry goods and people into the downtown. Within many inner city neighborhoods, there are vacant parcels as well as parcels with structures that are readily removed or altered. In other areas there are stable structures that can be renovated at less cost than new structures can be built. Central city neighborhoods also have large pools of readily available labor which are, however, generally undertrained for the primary jobs that an information-based, service-oriented economy provides. And surprisingly, it has been found that central city populations have large reservoirs of capital but lack investment and banking opportunities.

Poised against this set of opportunities are market failures in the larger economy. One of the most salient of these is the failure of the economy to dispose of and re-use industrial products in a manner that is safe, economical, and of benefit to society. Where disposal, re-cycling, and re-manufacture work, it is often because they are subsidized; generally they do not work, as growing mountains of garbage and trash testify. A second market failure that affects the entire economy is the lack of affordable housing. America has a surplus of luxury housing and
a growing deficiency in housing available for people in the lower income brackets.

It must be asked whether the opportunities available in central city neighborhoods, and the unmet needs of the larger economy, do not represent the terms of a viable economic equation. Most neighborhood planning programs seek adjustments within the neighborhood: increase of services for residents, stabilization of housing, more and better jobs, local amenities like parks or playgrounds. In a few cases, where the neighborhood has a particularly attractive cultural or physical feature, neighborhood planning attempts to also bring outsiders into the neighborhood. While there is no question that the retail and service needs of the residents must be met and that these needs provide opportunities for some new enterprises, local activities by themselves will not transform the neighborhood: the local market is too small to generate the increase of incomes that lasting and widespread neighborhood revitalization requires. Neither is traffic from outside the community able to sustain the necessary level of activity, even when an effort is made to develop the neighborhood as a cultural attraction. Except in the rare cases where the neighborhood’s natural or cultural attraction has a citywide appeal, outside traffic is likely to be inhibited by the perceived or real crime in the neighborhood.³ While there are examples of inner city commercial corridors which have been rejuvenated through deliberate policy or through spontaneous investment, in general such events occur only because the corridor already lies in the path of other development.⁴ For most central-city neighborhoods, however, no such locational advantage is apparent. In any case, when unplanned development of this kind occurs there is considerable danger that the
poor residents of the area will be those who benefit least from the neighborhood’s new-found prosperity, and they may indeed be harmed by it as displacement follows on rising property values.

Rather, economic development must be based on finding a productive role for the neighborhood within the larger metropolitan economy. The neighborhood itself must begin to generate goods and services which are needed by the larger city and by the region, and it must do so by relying on the unique advantages it possesses: its location, its labor pool, its capital resources, and the relatively low cost of its land. Conceiving of the inner-city neighborhood as a productive unit requires a revision of basic planning assumptions. The neighborhood will no longer be simply a residential area, but will begin to acquire the complex mix of functions which characterized many neighborhoods in pre-industrial American cities. The type and scale of economic activity, of course, will be entirely different.

In order for incomes to rise appreciably in central-city neighborhoods, industries and services must be developed which are appropriate for the special conditions of the neighborhood. All productive activities in these neighborhoods must meet certain basic criteria:

1. They must be matched to the skill and educational levels of the residents, but must also provide opportunities for residents to advance to higher levels of responsibility, skill, and income. The operations should combine a large number of positions requiring manual work with positions which call for greater technical or managerial ability.

2. It must be possible for the activities to be owned and operated for the benefit of the community.

3. The activities must require relatively small levels of initial investment, since investors inside the community are not likely to have large sums to invest, and investors from outside the community are likely to be wary of the risks imposed by the neighborhood. Moreover, they must attract either investors who are interested in
potential long-term growth at a fairly high level of current risk, or benevolent investors who are interested in profits which marginally outrun inflation. Non-profit and public sector monies are of course useful, but the aim of the venture should be to develop a non-subsidized, if perhaps only marginally profitable, enterprise which can attract private monies on its own.

4. The activities must be particularly suited to the locational advantages of inner-city neighborhoods, that is, neighborhoods located near the central business district and near major highways.

5. They must be adaptable to existing structures which were originally built for other purposes, for example row house dwellings; or, if they require new structures, they must be small enough to take advantage of the random pattern of open lots which are available in central-city neighborhoods. Since current restrictive zoning designations are likely to inhibit many kinds of commercial activities, changes in zoning must be addressed as part of the overall economic development package.

6. The activities cannot impose harms on the community, for example excessive noise, pollution, or heavy truck traffic.

7. The activities must be tied to affordable housing policies, so that success will not drive out the lower-income households that depend on the production activity for a livelihood.

Types of economic activities appropriate to central city neighborhoods

A sequence of economic development categories which meet these criteria is outlined below. The basis for the categories is the level of overhead and the start-up time that various enterprises require.

Level 1. Job training to match residents' skills with employment opportunities in the community and the society at large.

Level 2. Entrepreneurial activities which require minimal overhead, no specialized skills, a small plant, and a short start-up time, and which are oriented toward satisfying the existing needs of the neighborhood and the adjoining areas. Examples include custodial services for small offices, in-office services such as laundry pickup and delivery of meals, or the supply and care of interior plants for offices.

Level 3. Entrepreneurial activities which require substantial overhead, specialized skills, a large plant, and a longer start-up time, and which are also oriented toward satisfying the existing needs of the neighborhood and the adjoining areas. Examples include an auto rental agency, a community bank, a small printing outfit, a construction business, small appliance repairs, bookkeeping services, a taxi company, a dental clinic, or a shopping center (S. Perry 14, 17ff, 23ff, 95, 110, 115, 117).

Level 4. Long-range entrepreneurial activities that respond to new and perhaps untired market demands of the district, the city, or the metropolitan region.
Category Four: Ventures in new markets

The first three levels of activity described above fall within the conventional tools of community planning. They are illustrated, for example, by the initiatives of CBP Inc., a non-profit organization established by the Enterprise Foundation for the revitalization of Baltimore's Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood. CBP Inc. has established a Neighborhood Employment and Training Center, a Community Improvement Jobs Program, and an industry-linked training center. It promotes business activity through an Entrepreneurs' Assistance Center and through the transformation of two major streets in Sandtown-Winchester. While these activities are vital, they do not reach to the essential problem, which is the role of the neighborhood in the metropolitan economy.

It is in the development of proposals for Category Four above, the entrepreneurial activities that respond to new and untried market demands, that long-range economic benefits can accrue to the community.

By exploring market opportunities which have been overlooked by conventional investors as being either too risky or not sufficiently profitable, central city neighborhoods have the competitive advantage which comes from entering a new field of economic activity. They have specific advantages as well in inexpensive land close to the downtown business center and to transportation corridors, existing capital investment in the form of sound, older buildings, and a labor force willing to invest considerable effort into the new ventures at relatively low initial wages. It is possible that opportunities can be found in sectors which are not being adequately addressed by the conventional American economy, for example in the reprocessing of materials into
consumer goods. Corrugated boxes made out of reprocessed paper, garbage cans and other household goods made out of reprocessed plastic, are examples which might find application in the medium-sized vacant lots of many deteriorated central city neighborhoods like Baltimore's Sandtown-Winchester or Boston's Roxbury (S. Perry 98). Clearly, the aspects of these industries which cause pollution must be carried on elsewhere or else mitigated substantially if they are carried on in the neighborhood. In addition to the six criteria mentioned above which all businesses in central city neighborhoods must satisfy, entrepreneurial activities in the fourth category must meet a seventh criterion:

8. They must be services and productive activities which satisfy unmet needs in the larger society, because they are needs which are not yet profitable enough to attract the interest of private sector investors in substantial numbers.

A Program of Economic Development for Central City Neighborhoods

The following program is proposed to explore and develop opportunities that can have a substantial and long-lasting benefit for central city neighborhoods in American cities.

1. Research should be undertaken to uncover the market areas which can be profitably developed. The research will be concerned with several major questions:

* What market failures in general in the American economy point toward potential opportunities?

* What market opportunities are available in metropolitan economies?

* Of the opportunities uncovered, which are appropriate to the conditions of specific central city neighborhoods: their land, their people, their location, their capital structure?

* Which opportunities are financially feasible in the current economic climate?

* What types of venture business activities have already been profitably undertaken in American central city neighborhoods?

2. A proposal should be developed for the benefit of the community, private investors, and the public sector. The proposal will include:
* A statement of the needs which have generated the project and of the benefits which will derive from it, substantiated by the research undertaken in Phase 1.

* A report on the technical requirements of the venture

* A report on the policy aspects of the venture (e.g. zoning or regulatory changes which are required)

* A pro forma which projects costs and likely returns on investment

* A discussion of the organizational structure of the venture: ownership, management, policy decisions

3. Private investor interest and public sector support should be developed. Potential funding sources include members of the community, local banks acting to fulfill Community Reinvestment Act obligations, non-profit organizations, and outside investors who have a benevolent interest in the community and/or in developing new types of ventures.

4. Local management and operating staff should be trained.

5. Land or properties should be acquired, design and construction should be carried out, and operations should begin.

6. Documentation and evaluation should be performed at every stage.

   The ventures proposed for Category Four have a far-reaching goal: the rediscovery of a vital and necessary economic role for inner-city neighborhoods in America’s cities. In the face of market forces and national policies which have steadily eroded the status of these neighborhoods, economic activities like those proposed in Category Four attempt to remove the neighborhood from a subsidized status and give it the means to be economically and socially productive. Only such extreme ventures, tailored to the requirements of the community but reaching into new and unexplored areas of the metropolitan economy, are likely to bring about the dramatic changes which inner city neighborhood revitalization requires.

   Instead of the purely residential enclave which is the norm for American neighborhoods, a new approach would seek to bring into the central city neighborhood some of the industrial and commercial functions which are ideally suited to its location, population, and physical
condition, but which have been roundly excluded since the mid-nineteenth century by tradition and law. This proposition implies a shift of viewpoint which is fundamental. The condition of the central city neighborhood today, its deterioration, disinvestment, and loss of population, can be attributed in part to a lingering cultural view of what a neighborhood should be that is no longer commensurate with the real role that these territorial units do play, and might play, in the larger urban economy. A reassessment of the neighborhood's role from the perspectives of urban economics, public policy, and design will bring to neighborhood planning a congruence with city interests that will make it a forceful and effective instrument for the revitalization of America's inner cities: a school for democratic action in a sense even stronger than Alexis de Tocqueville might have imagined.

The Form of the American City

If neighborhood planning is an effective instrument for altering the agenda of municipal comprehensive planning, it can be expected that it will eventually alter the face of the city in visible ways. Neighborhoods in a number of cities, for example San Francisco, New Orleans, Atlanta, and Baltimore, were key agents for blocking freeway extensions which would have affected their domains. Design review in several cities has altered the specific features of large-tract development, and citizen activism in San Francisco from 1980 to 1990 changed the Mission Bay development from an extension of downtown into a virtual urban village. It is not known, however, whether these examples point to a larger pattern in which institutionalized citizen participation will generate a future form for the American city. Since
the early nineteenth century, the fabric of American cities has developed as a mosaic of monocultures in which one type of land use within a district has tended to develop at the expense of almost all others. Although genuine mixed-use districts do exist and are admired by urbanists and residents, they remain the exception to the general tendency for city districts to grow as if they had a single function. Single-purpose zoning has only reinforced a cultural tendency that arose out of the intensive problems of the nineteenth century city. Current urban thinking, represented by the Traditional Neighborhood Development movement and by groups concerned with downtown planning, attempts to revise this tendency by promoting an urban fabric that is complex in its functions and in its physical form.

The economic proposal made in the previous section, which would attempt to return to some central-city neighborhoods a productive role, also carries with it consequences for urban design. It implies that while these neighborhoods will remain predominantly residential in character, there will be intermixed in them a prominent component of industry or service-oriented facilities. In the past, such facilities were cleanly distinguished from residences by their size and by the barriers erected around them; examples include the yards in Chicago or the B&O railroad foundry in Baltimore. It was precisely to escape from such enormous disamenities that single-function residential street-car and automobile neighborhoods were established. The proposition outlined above, however, points in a different direction, toward an integration of residence and production that enhances both. Can productive activity weave through a neighborhood rather than sit apart from it, to take advantage of the pattern of random lots that are found in many central
city neighborhoods? Can this activity occupy buildings that have a scale and character congruent with the neighborhood, not so as to disguise the productive activity, but to make it a good neighbor to the homes that are always a neighborhood’s chief asset? Can the problems associated with productive activity, for example wastes, traffic, and parking, be mitigated through design to the advantage of the neighborhood? In these questions lie a field of research that will involve urban economics, policy studies, and the disciplines of planning, urban design, and architecture. Comprehension of the structure of the pre-industrial neighborhood will provide precedents which must, however, be altered to meet the requirements of twentieth and twenty-first century production. The effect of this research and of implementation programs that follow on it will be to alter the perception of what a neighborhood is and ought to be. No longer a dependent area of residential structures with a minor admixture of shops and services, the inner-city neighborhood of the future may become a site of potent economic force which will express in its physical form the vital relevance it has to the economy of the metropolitan region.

Notes

1. Jon Teaford has given an account of attempts to create metropolitan federal governments in St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland; see City and Suburb: The Political Fragmentation of Metropolitan America, 1850-1970 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979). In every case metropolitan government failed because of the impossibility of achieving consensus between central city and rural or semi-rural interests.

2. In a planning study for Washington, D.C., in which the author participated in 1994, parcels ripe for redevelopment were identified as those on which the value of improvements was less than the value of the land itself. These parcels are contrasted with situations where the value of the existing structures is greater than the value of the land, warranting renovation rather than new work. This statistical measure for preliminary analysis of an area’s redevelopment potential was suggested by Nathanial Levy of the District of Columbia Department of Planning.
3. An example is Fair Park in Dallas, which attracts enormous crowds for yearly events like the State Fair and Cotton Bowl, but has not developed any peripheral commercial activity because the neighborhoods around it are perceived to be, and are, extremely dangerous.

4. An example is the current incremental redevelopment underway on U Street in Washington DC (Washington Post, Sunday April 11, 1993).

5. Some of these suggestions come from conversation with officers at South East Community Organization (SECO) in Baltimore, May 1991.
| 1. | Bibliography | 558 |
| 2. | Neighborhood Planning Programs | 565 |
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<td>&quot;Guide to Working with Neighborhood Associations,&quot; prepared by the Community Services Section, Department of Community Development, City of Salem (revised January 1988)</td>
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<td>IF</td>
<td>&quot;Issue Focus: Urban Growth Management Committee,&quot; prepared by Community Services Section, Department of Community Development, City of Salem (October 19, 1990)</td>
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<td>RES</td>
<td>Letter from Betty L. Hart, City of Salem Community Services Administrator (March 25, 1991)</td>
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<td>&quot;Salem Neighborhoods, Inc.,&quot; leaflet prepared by Salem Neighborhoods, Inc. (no date; post 1990)</td>
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<td>SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS</td>
<td>&quot;City of San Antonio Neighborhood Planning Process: A Component of the San Antonio Master Plan,&quot; prepared by the City of San Antonio Department of Planning (adopted by City Council June 2, 1983)</td>
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<td>SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA</td>
<td>Community Planning Handbook, prepared by the City of San Diego Planning Department (Spring 1991)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPH</td>
<td>&quot;Greater North Park Community Plan,&quot; prepared by the City of San Diego Planning Department (adopted by City Council November 5, 1986)</td>
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<td>GNP</td>
<td>&quot;Mission Valley Community Plan,&quot; prepared by the City of San Diego Planning Department with assistance of the Mission Valley Unified Planning Committee (adopted by City Council June 25, 1986)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>&quot;Spokane's Neighborhood Planning Process&quot; (no author, no date; post January 1991)</td>
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</table>
SP  Letter from Steve Pilcher, Neighborhood Planner, City of Spokane Department of Planning and Building Services (March 7, 1991)

TC  "Taking Charge: How Communities Are Planning Their Futures," a special report by Ronald L. Thomas, Mary C. Means, and Margaret A. Grieve for the International City Management Association (no date)

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

OCS  "Operation Con-Serv," prepared by the St. Louis Development Corporation (no date)

TOLEDO, OHIO

APP  "1991 CDBG Application for partial funding of the Neighborhood Planning Program," submitted to (State of Ohio?) Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization by Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions (April 8, 1991)

CIP  Memorandum to Mayor and City Council of Toledo requesting initiation of a new Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Procedure, from Walter T. Edelen, Executive Director, Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions (February 21, 1991)

COL  "Colony Commercial Area," Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Neighborhood Planning Program (March 3, 1981)

DC  "Detroit-Central Neighborhood Analysis," prepared by Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Neighborhood Planning Program (August 1984)

HP  "City of Toledo Historic Preservation Ordinance," prepared by the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions (May 1980)

JW  Letter from John Widmer, Principal Planner, Neighborhood Planning Program, Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions (May 2, 1991)

LIS  Letter to local board members, funders, community development corporations, and others from LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) (December 12, 1990)

NPP  "Neighborhood Planning Program - City of Toledo," leaflet prepared by Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Neighborhood Planning Program (no date)

OC  "City of Toledo Organizational Chart," (no author, no date)

OF  "Old Fairground Neighborhood Plan," prepared by the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Neighborhood Planning Program (June 1982)

SEC  "Secor Gardens Neighborhood Analysis," prepared by the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Neighborhood Planning Program (August 1987)

SUM  "Summit Street Plan," prepared by the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Neighborhood Planning Program (January 1987)
"10 Years of Service - 1978-88," prepared by the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Neighborhood Planning Program (no date)


AC
Letter from Andrew S. Carten, Director, City of Trenton Division of Planning (May 7, 1991)

FER
"A Letter Concerning the Future Development of the Ferry/S. Broad/Cass/S. Warren Area of South Trenton" (no author, no date)

FUT
"Our Children's Future is in Your Hands," leaflet prepared by Interfaith Organization for Community (I.O.C.) (no date)

OBJ
"Objections to Redevelopment Plan", presented before the Planning Board of the City Trenton by Patrick N. Budd, Esquire, Director of the Legal Aid Society of Mercer County (no date)

HS
"Statement setting forth the basis for the investigation and public hearing to be held by the Planning Board of the City of Trenton on the proposed Redevelopment Plan by the City of Trenton for the Humboldt-Sweets Neighborhood Redevelopment Area, for the purpose of making certain determinations thereon," prepared by Jules P. Teitel, Secretary, Planning Board of the City of Trenton (no date)

IOC
Meeting minutes, Interfaith Organization for Community meeting of May 16, 1990, prepared by John M. Zvosec, AIA, Zvosec & Associates Architects, Planners, Developers

JZ

LAM
"Redevelopment Plan for Lamberton Street Redevelopment Area," prepared by City of Trenton (February 1990)

RES
"Resolution requesting the Planning Board of the City of Trenton to proceed forthwith to make an investigation and hold a public hearing to determine whether the proposed Humboldt-Sweets Redevelopment Area is a renewal area and to determine both the project area redevelopment plan's relationship to the master plan of the City of Trenton and its conformance to the general requirements of the state redevelopment agencies [sic] law including relocation" (no author, no date)

WAL
"Wall Street Redevelopment Area - Plan," prepared by the City of Trenton Department of Housing and Development (September 1988)

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

AMN
"An Amendment #1 To Bill 8-626 (committee print) 'Advisory Neighborhood Commission Act of 1990'," offered by Councilmember Nathanson (adopted by voice vote; no date)
ANC  "Advisory Neighborhood Commission Fact Sheet," prepared by the District of Columbia Office of Community Services (no date)


DAT  "Design DC: 14th Street Area Planning Project," prepared by the District of Columbia Neighborhood Design Assistance Team for the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (no date)

FS  "District of Columbia Office of Planning Fact Sheet," prepared by District of Columbia Office of Planning (no date)


3. STATE ENABLING LEGISLATION


Hawaii Revised Statutes, Vol 2, 1985 Replacement, Title 1, County Organization and Administration; Title 13, Planning and Economic Development

Massachusetts General Laws Annotated (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1979) and 1992 Cumulative Annual Pocket Part, Volume 5, Improved Method of Municipal Planning, 81A-E; Regional Planning, 40B-3


Annotated Missouri Statutes (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1989), Vol 7, 80.020 Zoning powers granted to all cities.; 89.310 - 390 Planning - All Municipalities

Revised Statutes of Nebraska, Reissue of Volume 1, 1991 (Lincoln: Revisor of Statutes, 1991), City Planning, Zoning (14-101 - 403)


New Jersey Statutes Annotated (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1991), Article 1, 40:55D-1 TO 111


Ohio Revised Code Annotated (Cincinnati: W.H. Anderson, 1991), 713.01 TO 713.33

Oregon Revised Statutes (Legislative Counsel Committee of the Legislative Assembly, 1987); Oregon Revised Statutes Annotated, 1992 Supplement Part 4 (Titles 17-23, Chapters 171-260) (Orford, NH: Butterworth Legal Publishers, 1992); 197.005 to 197.830; 227.020 to 227.215
Purdon's Pennsylvania Statutes Annotated (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1957); 1992 Supplementary Pamphlet; 10105 to 10408


Vernon's Annotated Revised Civil Statutes of the State of Texas (Kansas City, Mo: Vernon Law Book Co., 1963), 211.003 to 211.021, 371.041 to 371.043, 391.001 to 391.014; Cumulative Annual Pocket Part, 1993 (St. Paul, Minn: West Publishing Co., 1993), 1011a to 1011g

Revised Code of Washington Annotated (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1990), 35.63.020 to 36.70A.040, 43.63A.010 to 43.63A.070
APPENDICES

Research Tools:
- Preliminary Review of Program Characteristics 580
- Letter of Enquiry, September, 1992 589

Crosstab Analyses of Programs:
1. Basic Program Characteristics 591
2. Plan Standing vs. Motivations 592
3. Group Requirements vs. Motivations 593
4. Plan Authorization vs. Motivations 595
5. Planning Process vs. Motivations 597
I. STANDING OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

Ia) STANDING OF NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
Plans have no recognized standing with City
Plans have advisory or guideline role
Plans have mandatory guideline status (must be considered)
Plans become part of/amend the comprehensive plan
Plans create zoning overlay districts
Plans create other overlay districts (e.g. historic)
Plans create redevelopment (urban renewal) districts
Neighborhood plans constitute the comprehensive plan
Plans have force of law (land use decisions must conform)

Ib) STANDING OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
City has no comprehensive plan
City has a comprehensive plan
Comprehensive plan has discretionary guideline status
Comprehensive plan has mandatory guideline status
Comprehensive plan has force of law

Ic) STANDING OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP
Neighborhood group has no official standing
Neighborhood group is official ad hoc body
Neighborhood group is officially prescribed, not specifically for planning
Neighborhood group is officially prescribed, specifically for planning
Neighborhood group is formed by city
  elected
  appointed
Neighborhood group is formed by self-initiative (petitions, etc)
  holds elections
  co-optation
Neighborhood group is formed by other (e.g. non-profit)
Every area of city has a neighborhood group
Neighborhood boundaries coincide with city council districts
Neighborhood boundaries coincide with census tracts
Neighborhood boundaries coincide with service delivery area(s)

Tiers:
  1: neighborhood level
  2: district level
  3: city-wide level

Neighborhood group responsibilities
  Must register with city agency
  By-laws/election plan required
    form/content specified
  Regular meetings required
  Meeting minutes/annual report required

Neighborhood group powers (both formally specified and unspecified)
  None specified
  Liaison between neighborhood and city
  Specified as advisory body
Members sit on government decision-making boards
Recovends goals, policies and actions
Comments, recommends on CDBG
Comments, recommends on other city actions (projects, zoning)
   Comment must be noted (legal standing)
Sets/assesses service levels
Resolves conflicts
Must approve agency/city actions
Monitors agency actions, service delivery
Reviews private development proposals (including RFPs)
Can appeal agency actions
Reviews neighborhood program
Has input into comprehensive plan, other plans
Participates in budget process
   Reviews budget
   Submits requests/recommendations (including CIP)
   Must approve budget
Hires professional staff
Makes grants/contracts/loans
Eminent domain

Id) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CITY
Information/educational resource (including for business)
Notifies neighborhood of future actions (public and private)
Responds to complaints
Liaison role: monitors/communicates with other agencies
Reports on progress of actions, other issues
Reports on/evaluates progress of program
Reports on expenditures
Facilitator role: provides technical/organizational assistance
Advocacy role: assists group presentations, recommendations, legislation; seeks
   out new groups
Provides concentrated service delivery through committee
Reviews status, procedures, finances of the n'd and n'd group
Holds hearings on action
Officials meet with group, community
Officials serve on community boards
Mediates conflicts
Markets/assists with marketing private development projects

Ie) THE PLANNING PROCESS
Note: where the comprehensive plan includes the neighborhood plans (e.g. Atlanta),
   the process covers both types of plan)

Ie-0) EXISTENCE OF A FORMAL PROCESS
Does the city specify a formal process for developing plans?

Ie-1) INITIATION OF THE PROCESS
No formal initiation required:
   Neighborhood group initiates
   City agency (or another group) initiates
Formal initiation (i.e., as part of specified procedures):
   Neighborhood initiates
Neighborhood group requests of City
Petition required
Neighborhood group self-initiates
Department(s) initiates:
Based on needs assessment
Based on comprehensive plan
Based on other
Elected official initiates
Planning commission initiates
City council initiates (based on requests, other)
Lottery process

Ie-2) DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN/PROPOSAL (includes service delivery agendas)
No formal procedure for development is specified
Developed by city department
Developed by neighborhood group
Developed jointly by city and neighborhood
Developed by other (e.g. non-profit)

No established or specified neighborhood input process
Neighborhood input by advisory task force(s)/committee
Neighborhood input by recommendation
Neighborhood input by review (e.g. zoning, plans)
Neighborhood input by hearings
Neighborhood input by meetings (e.g. with agency heads)
Neighborhood input by survey/needs assessment/petition/poll/interview
Neighborhood input by workshops
Other (e.g. media, individual property owners)

City must review:
Form and content
Procedure
Developed by committee
Developed by consultants (for fee, R/UDAT, students)
Developed by workshops/meetings
No specified roles or responsibilities
Contract is written (between city and neighborhood)

Ie-3) ADOPTION OF THE PLAN
No formal procedure for adoption is specified
Formal procedure for adoption:
Plan is adopted by community, others
Plan is adopted by agency
Plan is adopted/recommended by planning/zoning commission
Plan is adopted by city council:
by resolution
by ordinance
Plan is adopted by mayor
Plan is adopted by referendum
Plan is approved by State

II) INTENT OF THE PROGRAM
IIa) ORIGINS
Citizen initiative
City initiative:
  Initiative of city official(s), agency, or commission
Council initiative:
  by resolution
  by ordinance
  by charter amendment
Professional initiative (e.g. AIA R/UDAT)
State mandate
Federal mandate (CDBG, Model Cities, etc.)
Other (e.g. non-profit)

IIb) MOTIVATION OF THE PLANS/PROGRAMS (as stated in the literature)
Stabilize and improve neighborhoods
Promote/guide development in neighborhoods (revitalization)
Protect neighborhoods against the effects of development (conservation)
Protect neighborhoods against effects of speculation, displacement
Satisfy federal CDBG requirements
Satisfy state mandate for neighborhood planning
Solve a specific problem
Satisfy principle of democratic participation/consensus
Increase neighborhood capacity for self-help/self-identification
Share burden of information-gathering, planning with communities
Share/decentralize burden of service delivery, neighborhood improvement
Improve communication/expectations between citizens, government/agencies
Improve communication between neighborhoods, and between n’ds and business
Improve intra-governmental/agency cooperation, coordination
Create a sounding board for government action, policy
Achieve more sensitive/appropriate level of planning
Update/amend community plans or specific plans
Update/amend/interpret comprehensive plan or district plan
Update/amend zoning map
Establish pilot program/projects for replication
Correct deficiency in city planning for neighborhoods

IIc) SCOPE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROGRAM
IIc-1) SCOPE OF THE PLANNING EFFORT
Physical master plan:
  For entire district
  For entire neighborhood
  For specific area in neighborhood
  For every neighborhood in the city
Comprehensive economic and social plan
Policies, regulations, standards
Data and analysis
Historic summary
Description of area (including historic structures)
General goals, vision statement
General recommendations/objectives
Policy/plan alternatives
Recommendations for specific actions
Assessment of impact and consequences
Evaluation/review/amendment procedure after completion
Financing plan/market analysis/costing
Implementation/management process
Schedule for planning and implementation

IIc-2) SCOPE OF PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS
Land use (acquisition, disposition, land trust, etc)
Housing:
  Home acquisition (all kinds of units)
  Home maintenance/repair
  Rental rehabilitation/maintenance/availability
  Construction: rehabilitation/renovation
  Construction: new
  Code enforcement
  Abandoned housing
  Special (e.g. elderly, rooming houses, affordable, homeless)
Major infrastructure (sewers, water mains, roads, etc.)
Minor infrastructure (lights, sidewalks, street furn., etc.)
Parks/open space (includes vacant lots)
Street improvements:
  Clean-up, recycling, removal of abandoned cars
  Facade uplift, signage
  Landscaping/pavement/street furniture
Capital improvements (e.g. convention center, rapid transit)
Recreation facilities, access
Cultural/civic (public) facilities
Educational facilities
Social service and health facilities
Transportation facilities and services (other than roads)
Traffic and parking
Environment (noise, litter, flooding; natural resources)
Historic preservation/adaptive reuse
Urban design (visual quality, neighborhood buffers and identity)
Public art
Other

IIc-3) SCOPE OF POLICIES
Zoning or re-zoning
Capital improvements program
Economic development:
  Through land use/location (condemnation, disposition)
  Community development/housing corporation
  Modify bank lending practice
  Attract/regulate private investors, institutions, households
  Attract/use public sector money (loans, etc)
  Attract non-profit money
  Neighborhood oriented business/revitalization
  Employment opportunities/accessibility
  Tax/code policies
  Rent control/subsidies/sale restrictions/other
  Other (e.g. urban renewal districting)
Issuance of licenses, permits
Recommend appointments to boards
Design guidelines for new development or redevelopment
Urban design/site plan review procedure
Displacement policy
Other (legislation, ordinance, etc.)

II(c-4) SCOPE OF SOCIAL SERVICES
Day-care
Education/cultural activities
Job training
Health care/prenatal care/family care/instruction
Youth diversion/training/recreation
Elderly, other special need groups activities/care
Drug counselling/rehabilitation/control
Corrections half-way houses/programs
Safety/security
Mediation of disputes
Other (e.g. stray animals)

II(c-5) OTHER
Affect age distribution of neighborhood
Neighborhood size, diversity, balance of population
Neighborhood image
Educate public about codes, housing, etc.
Increase neighborhood capacity for self-help; train leadership, provide for on-going participation
Increase neighborhood involvement in service delivery review
Improve communication between residents, commerce, institutions
Improve communication between ethnic, racial groups
Improve inter and intra governmental procedures

III) RESOURCES OF THE PLANNING PROCESS
 III(a) FUNDING OF THE CITY PROGRAM
Federal:
   CDBG
   Other
State
Municipal:
   Bonds
   General fund
   Impact fees/linkage
   User fees
   Other
Other:
   Non-profit foundation
   Major institution
Private sources

III(b) AGENCY SUPPORT DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAM
Is there a dedicated agency, division, or section?
Is there a dedicated staff?
Are staff dedicated to individual neighborhoods or districts?
   Full time?
   How many per capita?
Other resources
Explanatory document(s) for the public
Publicity, newsletter, etc
Mailings of notices, agendas, election dates, etc.
Office resources for community groups (xerox, typing, etc.)
Training of leadership
Education, technical assistance about land use issues, etc.
Special trust fund

IIIc) SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY GROUP
Federal
State
City
Non-profit (grants, other assistance)
Self-funded
Other (unions, private, insurance company, etc.)

IV) RESULTS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROGRAM
IVa) NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS ADOPTED
Have neighborhood/district plans/projects resulted from the process?
Have neighborhood plans/projects resulted, not as part of the process?
Have funds been allocated?
Have projects been completed?

IVa) PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED
Land use (acquisition, disposition, land trust, etc)
Housing:
- Home acquisition (all kinds of units)
- Home maintenance/repair
- Rental rehabilitation/maintenance/availability
- Construction: rehabilitation/renovation
- Construction: new
- Code enforcement
- Abandoned housing
  Special (e.g. elderly, rooming houses, affordable, homeless)
- Major infrastructure (sewers, water mains, roads, etc.)
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Elderly, other special need groups activities/care
Drug counselling/rehabilitation/control
Corrections half-way houses/programs
Safety/security
Mediation of disputes
Other (e.g. stray animals)

IVd) INCIDENTAL RESULTS
Affect age distribution of neighborhood
Neighborhood diversity
Neighborhood image
Neighborhood newspaper
Effective neighborhood associations established
Other planning/program efforts have begun
Other funding efforts have begun
Leadership development
Community awareness of issues
Community involvement
Community empowerment to address issues
Citizen understanding of government process, powers
Development of political effectiveness
Improved citizen/government communication, cooperation
Improvement of government programs, services
Brings up local needs otherwise neglected
Permanent community organization established
Improved citizen/developer communication, cooperation
Perception that the neighborhood had improved
Technical assistance provided to neighborhoods

IVe) PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM
Overwhelms the staff resources of the city
Staff is unprepared for new tasks
Paperwork
Inappropriate to a large metropolitan city
Citizen dissatisfaction with staff turnover, vacancies
lack of support of community groups
Excessive requirements (e.g. EIS)
Lack of consensus in the community
Lack of consensus between the community and the government
Speed of RFP and development process, slow gestation of community plans and consensus
Parochialism of community groups
Perceived special treatment of some groups
Disatisfaction with development orientation of program
Diffusion of decision-making

V) PERCEPTIONS ON THE PROGRAM
Citizens
Elected officials
Agency officials
Business/development community
Others
 Characteristics of the Neighborhood Planning Program
David Lever, Rice University School of Architecture
P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas 77251-1892
Tel: 713-527-8101 x3359
September 25, 1992

Please place a check in front of the box which best describes the neighborhood planning program in your city. If none of the available options fits your program, please write in an appropriate description. Feel free to make additional comments on the back of these pages or on additional sheets.

1. How would you describe the legal standing of the neighborhood plans:

__ Neighborhood plans have no specified legal standing.
__ Neighborhood plans are advisory, i.e., they may be consulted as guidelines in the zoning appeals process, in the development of the Capital Improvements Program, or in the review of private development proposals.
__ Neighborhood plans have a mandatory review status, i.e., they must be consulted by agencies, the Planning Commission, or the City Council when land-use decisions are being made.
__ Neighborhood plans have force of law, i.e., the plans lead to one or more of the following conditions:
  __ Zoning maps must be brought into compliance with the land use directives of the neighborhood plan.
  __ In order for private or public sector development proposals to be approved, they must comply with the goals and standards of the neighborhood plan.
  __ Facilities and improvements stated in the neighborhood plan must enter the Capital Improvements Program for implementation within a specified time after completion and/or adoption of the neighborhood plan.
__ The neighborhood plan itself does not have force of law, but it can lead to various types of overlay districts (e.g. historic, special overlay zoning, urban renewal) which supercede the base regulations for the neighborhood.
__ Other:

2. How would you describe the status of the neighborhood group in the neighborhood planning process:

__ The group's status is not defined in the procedural rules of the relevant planning agency, in statute, or in other explicit ways.
__ The neighborhood group is an ad hoc body, formed with official recognition, for the purpose of carrying out or participating in the planning study.
__ The neighborhood group is officially prescribed*, but not necessarily for planning:
  __ Planning in only one of the activities which the group engages in for neighborhood improvement.
  __ The group engages in improvement activities, but expressly does not engage in planning.
__ The neighborhood group is officially prescribed*, specifically to undertake planning for the community.
__ Other:
* Note: "Officially prescribed" means that the procedures for establishing the group (petition, application, etc.) as well as the conditions for maintaining the group in good standing (minutes, yearly report, open meeting requirements, etc.) are spelled out in the city literature which describes the neighborhood planning program.

3. What level of adoption is granted to the neighborhood plan (please indicate all levels which apply in your city):
   __. Plan is adopted by the community (referendum, town meeting, executive committee, etc.)
   __. Plan is adopted or recommended by the planning agency.
   __. Plan is adopted or recommended by the planning commission.
   __. Plan is adopted by the city council, by resolution.
   __. Plan is adopted by the city council, by ordinance.
   __. Plan is adopted by the mayor.
   __. Plan must be passed by city-wide referendum.
   __. Plan must be approved by state.
   __. Other:

4. Does your city specify a complete formal process for initiating, developing, adopting, and implementing a neighborhood plan?
   __. Yes
   __. No

5. Which would you describe as the primary motive or motives for creating the neighborhood planning program in your city:
   __. To affect the general direction of development in the neighborhoods of the city:
      __. Promote new development (revitalization).
      __. Protect neighborhoods from the harmful effects of development, including displacement of current residents (conservation).
      __. To improve the performance of city government in general and of planning in particular:
         __. Improve communication between citizens and government, between neighborhoods, and between public agencies.
         __. Share with neighborhood residents the burden of information-gathering, planning, and service delivery.
         __. Create a sounding-board for governmental action and policies.
         __. Increase neighborhood capacity for self-help.
         __. Achieve a more appropriate or sensitive level of planning, correct deficiencies in current city planning, or establish a model pilot program.
   __. To solve a specific problem.
   __. To provide a mechanism for updating or amending the district or comprehensive plan.
   __. To satisfy a mandate from a higher level of government.
   __. Other:

6. Remarks:
### CROSSTAB 1: BASIC PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS (PLAN, AUTHORITY, GROUP, PROCESS)

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### CROSSTAB 5: PROCESS VS. MOTIVATIONS

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