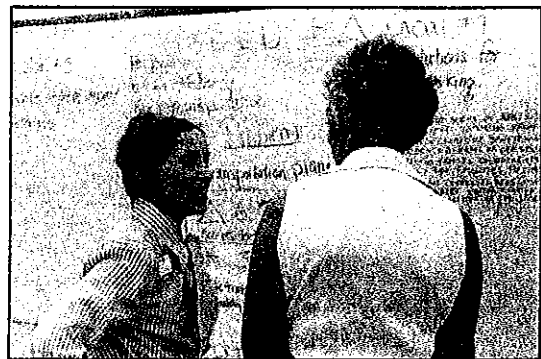
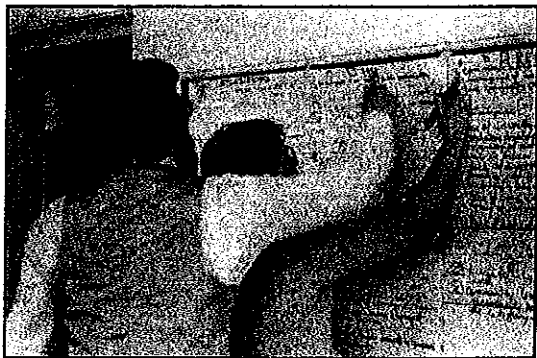


1978
OCT.

MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING CONFERENCES 1978



AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS

MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING CONFERENCES

EDMONTON, 1978

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS

Prepared by:

Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

and

Edmonton Social Planning Council.

October - 1978

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

As organizers of the Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences, the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and the Edmonton Social Planning Council recognize that this task could not possibly have been accomplished without the contribution of numerous individuals, as well as organizations. It was their generosity of time, resources, energy and skills, not to mention moral support, that enabled us to accomplish a public participation program of such magnitude in a short period of time. Therefore, we wish to acknowledge the efforts of these dedicated, outstanding citizens.

- The many community people who gave the time and made the effort to attend and participate in the Conferences.
- Those Community Representatives who took the responsibility for organizing and holding neighborhood workshops in their areas.
- Those Community Leagues who provided their facilities for training seminars.
- The Volunteers who came from a variety of backgrounds and careers to act as group leaders and recorders at the Conferences.
- The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues Board Members and Volunteers who physically helped the Conferences happen.
- The Edmonton Social Planning Council Board Members and Volunteers who assisted throughout the process.
- Edmonton Social Services staff, Edmonton Parks and Recreation staff, and Community School Co-ordinators who provided material resources, lists of resource people, as well as advice and input on organization.
- St. Edmund's school students, staff, parent volunteers and Community School Co-ordinator who took it upon themselves to prepare all the graphic materials needed for the Conferences.
- McDougall School staff and Community School Co-ordinator who provided their facilities for the Conference and gave us full co-operation and assistance.
- The Public and Separate School Boards and the University of Alberta, whose prompt assistance provided us with material resources and equipment for the Conferences.

- The volunteer task forces who followed-up and completed the task of compiling the report to City Council.
- The media who provided support and coverage during the process.
- The secretarial staff of both the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and the Edmonton Social Planning Council who spent a great deal of extra time and effort typing and collating material for Conference preparations, Conference results, and the final reports.

In turn, we sincerely thank the Mayor and City Council for the opportunity and support given to carry out such a process. As this report will illustrate, it has been a profitable experience in public participation.

The Management Team for the project consisted of:

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OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

In June of 1978, Edmonton experienced a significant advance in the participation of citizens in planning for their communities. Through two Neighborhood Planning Conferences, sponsored by Mayor C. J. (Cec.) Purves and City Council, citizen representatives from over sixty communities met to identify and discuss problems and issues relating to planning and decision-making. Their analysis extended into a series of recommendations in the topic areas of:

- Human Services;
- Traffic and Transportation;
- Security, Policing and By-law Enforcement;
- Land Use and Design;
- Citizen Participation and Decision-Making.

In addition to material from the Conferences, input and written submissions were provided by many individual neighborhoods, bringing the total involvement to 85 communities and hundreds of people.

The amount of data and number of recommendations produced by the citizens was impressive. The task was then to forge this information into a report that could be presented to, and utilized by City Council. Five task forces were established to parallel the Conference topic areas and, for three months, these groups have worked to condense the information and recommendations into a major report.

Many citizens were initially skeptical about the outcome of such a project. However, this did not deter them from gathering together in training sessions and community workshops, as well as the Mayor's Conferences, to share their problems with fellow citizens and seek workable solutions.

The enthusiasm and insight gained by the participants and the organizers has provided an important base for future co-operation between the City and its residents in the development of Edmonton communities. It does, in fact, establish a model for other cities to consider.

B. BACKGROUND

In April, 1978, the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and the Edmonton Social Planning Council were requested by Mayor Purves to carry out a citizen participation process which would culminate in city-wide Conferences for older and newer neighborhoods respectively. Many communities had been approaching City Council individually with their concerns but, because the problems and solutions in one neighborhood are often related to those of another, a collective approach to community problem solving was needed. Therefore, the intent of the Conferences was to provide the opportunity for residents of 115 communities throughout Edmonton to meet and share their views about the process and type of planning being carried out by the city. It was hoped that City Council and citizens alike would, as a result, have a broader understanding of the problems so they could be dealt with more effectively.

The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and the Edmonton Social Planning Council were funded \$10,000.00 by the City to facilitate the entire process. In turn, this was matched by the two organizations in their contribution of additional finances, materials and expertise. Both are voluntary organizations seen to complement each other in resources, skills and contacts with the communities. The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues which acted as the co-ordinator of the process is unique in that it

has a city-wide geographic base, identifiable resident groups, and meeting facilities in almost every community in Edmonton. The Edmonton Social Planning Council, also a city-wide agency, acted as a consultant throughout the process. Its role was to design and conduct the training seminars and Conferences, as well as facilitate the organizing and writing of the final report(s).

C. REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS (PROCESS)

Two reports have been prepared on the Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences. The main report, written by the citizen task forces will contain the recommendations from the Conferences. This report, written by the project's management team, examines the events leading up to and following the Conferences. In so doing, it provides a comprehensive description and evaluation of the eight identified stages of the process, including recommendations for:

- the organization of any future process of similar scale and nature, and
- the continuation of the process already set in place.

FROM CHAPTER IV, it is recommended that:

1. Pre-planning stage

- a) Each community or area elect a representative who would be responsible for being a liaison between his/her community and any future public participation processes.
- b) A committee, made up of some of these community representatives, be established by the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. This committee would be responsible for:
 - informing communities of upcoming public participation projects, and
 - co-ordinating and managing future participation processes.

2. Publicity

- a) Workshop sessions be held with the media to:
 - discuss their role in aiding citizen participation, and
 - establish informed contacts within the media who can provide positive support to such processes.
- b) With assistance from media people, specific training sessions be provided to community groups on such subjects as:
 - effective ways to inform and involve the local neighborhood, and
 - how and when to use the media.

3. Community Orientation - Training Seminars

- a) A comprehensive training program be supported and provided to community organizations to increase their ability in, and understanding of:
 - resource and leadership development
 - community organization and involvement
 - civic planning policies and procedures.

4. Community Workshops

- a) Once a year every Community League or Area Council organization provide an opportunity for residents to meet and share current concerns and opinions about their community.
- b) Resources and expertise be provided to disadvantaged communities so they can have a better opportunity to provide equal input and representation in a public participation process.

5. Design and Preparation of the Conferences

- a) Organizers ensure adequate time and preparation be given to an orientation and training program for any volunteers assuming leadership roles.
- b) A pool of volunteers provided with appropriate leadership skills and training be identified and maintained to assist in public participation at a community and/or city-wide level.

6. Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences

- a) Area workshops be considered as an intermediate step between local community workshops and city-wide conferences. They could provide the means to mentally prepare participants to understand their specific concerns in relation to the total city-wide perspective.
- b) Longer, less intense conferences be provided to allay feelings of time constraints and control.
- c) Older and newer neighborhoods be combined rather than separated for future city-wide projects, thus making more appropriate use of time.
- d) Workshops on specific issue areas, with resource expertise in attendance, be considered as follow-up to major conferences. This would allow people more time to specifically discuss problems and look at reasonable solutions.

7. Follow-up

- a) Feedback be given to the citizens by City Council as to what action, if any, they intend to take as a result of the reports.
- b) The two reports presented to City Council also be submitted to the Edmonton School Boards and the Provincial Government as information.
- c) Projects like the Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences be supported by City Council and provided in future on a yearly basis.
- d) Comprehensive training and education programs be supported so that community organizations and groups can increase their ability and understanding of:
 - resource and leadership development,
 - community organizations and involvement,
 - civic planning policies and process.

This would provide the necessary ground work needed for communities to more effectively participate in the future.

(NOTE: Same recommendation under # 3, Community Orientation and Training Seminars.)

- e) Permanent mechanism(s) be developed to ensure co-ordinated and regular communication and information flow between city officials and the citizens. Establishment of area information officers, formation of area councils, or inclusion of advisory committees in a revised ward system are some examples of what these mechanisms could be.

8. Evaluation

- a) All future participation projects that take place in Edmonton be recorded and evaluated for further learning of the practical aspects involved in public participation.

D. CONCLUSIONS

The Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences have served to illustrate the immense potential of the volunteer sector in our communities. Given the proper support, resources and training, citizens can play a vital role in the planning and decision-making process of this city. Not only can they perform the function of monitoring policy implementation but, in addition, can integrate their personal perspectives into creative ideas and alternatives for planning. This role provides the essential link in a process to assist City Council and City Administration establish more innovative and sound planning policies for the future.

The challenge is to accept participation by the public as an asset rather than a liability, thereby giving citizens the support and resources needed so they can continue to develop the involvement potential of their communities and subsequently their effectiveness in future participation processes.

I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

The development and organization of the process for the Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences was carried out by a five-person Project Management Team made up of two representatives from the Executive of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (E.F.C.L.) and three representatives from the Edmonton Social Planning Council (E.S.P.C.). The project was activated in mid-April, 1978, with eight weeks in which to mobilize 115 Edmonton communities for two major Conferences, June 6/7 and June 13/14. In addition to the time pressures, this was also the first time that these two organizations had embarked on a project together.

The process was intense, being comprised of several critical stages, each requiring a large portion of time and energy. The following describes briefly the activities involved at each stage.

1. Pre-Planning Stage

Upon approval of the project, the Management Team immediately met and worked jointly to:

- establish purpose, goals and objectives for the process, as well as a schedule of tasks to be completed,
- seek the most effective strategies considering time and other constraints,
- develop an organizational structure and working relationship suitable for the project.

2. Publicity

Because of the limited time in which to mobilize the communities, a publicity drive was crucial to the process. Citizens and community groups throughout the City has to be made aware of the purpose and details of the project as well as understand their role in the process. Tasks therefore included:

- the preparation and mailing of initial publicity-information packages to Community Leagues and other neighborhood groups,
- follow-up phone calls to Community League Presidents,
- preparation and mailing of press releases to all media,
- contact and arrangement for interviews and talk shows,
- preparation of flyers to advertise workshops to neighborhood residents,
- preparation of public notices of meetings, workshops and conferences for newspapers.

3. Orientation-Training Seminars

The orientation-training seminars were to provide community volunteers with incentive and an understanding of the skills and procedures needed to organize community workshops. A series of six, three-hour training seminars were provided in various locations throughout the City during the first two weeks of May. A special additional seminar was also offered in group leadership skills. The development and implementation of these sessions required the joint efforts of both organizations to:

- design the process and format for the seminars,
- write the information hand-outs required,
- acquire facilities and material resources,
- prepare the physical arrangements of the facilities,
- conduct the seminars.

4. Community Workshops

Before people could adequately represent their neighborhoods at the Conferences, they needed to know the general feelings, concerns and recommendations of fellow residents. Community Workshops provided the opportunity to obtain this essential local input.

Workshops were organized by local community volunteers who took responsibility for organizing facilities, notifying the residents, and conducting the sessions. The E.F.C.L. and the E.S.P.C. played no role in this stage other than to observe and evaluate the proceedings of some workshops.

Thirty-five community workshops involving some forty-five neighborhoods were held between May 1st and June 2nd. Each varied in levels of attendance and success but the majority resulted in choosing representatives and preparing briefs or papers for the Conferences.

5. Design and Preparation of Conferences

As the community workshops were proceeding, the Project Management Team was spending a great deal of time preparing the Conferences scheduled for June.

It was necessary to:

- develop a format and process which would achieve the aims of the Conferences,
- acquire and arrange facilities,
- recruit and train volunteers acting as group leaders at the Conferences,
- prepare necessary hand-outs and resource materials,
- acquire food and equipment,
- recruit volunteers for food preparation, setting up of facilities and registration.

6. The Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences

The Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences provided the opportunity for residents of many communities throughout the city to come together, collectively identify problems and develop recommendations as to how these problems might be resolved.

Two Conferences were held at McDougall School. The first, on June 6th and June 7th, was for those older neighborhoods defined by the City's Older Neighborhood Study, as communities developed prior to the 1950's. The second, on June 13th and June 14th, was for the newer neighborhoods (post 1950's). The same format and process was used for both Conferences. Each continued over two evenings, from 5 - 10 p.m., providing a ten-hour working session each. The Conferences were intense and tiring for both participants and resource people.

7. Follow-up

To date, follow-up has focused on the preparation of a report to be submitted to the Mayor and City Council in the Fall of 1978. Because many citizens voiced an interest in having an active part of follow-up events, steps were taken to facilitate their involvement.

- (i) The results of both Conferences were compiled by the organizers and sent out to all participants for review.
- (ii) A post-conference meeting was held on June 27th so that conference participants could discuss follow-up and their further participation in it. Five citizen Task Forces, co-ordinated by a Steering Committee, were formed to assemble Conference results and write the main report. With the assistance of the Project Management Team, these groups have been working throughout the summer.
- (iii) Simultaneously, the E.F.C.L. and E.S.P.C. have prepared the supplementary report on the participation process which contains recommendations for further follow-up.
- (iv) Both reports are to be reviewed by citizens prior to their presentation to City Council.

8. Evaluation

Evaluation was considered an integral part of the project. Therefore the organizers designed evaluation and feedback forms for various stages of the process. This input, along with documented verbal responses, media coverage, and community submissions provided the basis for a comprehensive analysis of the process and hence this report.

This chapter has attempted to very briefly describe the major components or steps of the process. In the final chapter, each of these stages are analyzed in greater detail.

II. PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE PROCESS

During each stage of the process, the organizers documented verbal and written responses generated from the public. It is from this feedback that a fairly accurate assessment of public attitude and opinion about the project can be provided. As the majority of the feedback came from the participating communities, it is important to first describe the amount of participation that took place and who participated.

A. LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

From attendance recorded at various stages, it is estimated that over 1,000 people representing eighty-five communities in Edmonton took part at some stage in the process. For instance, records show that:

- 1) A total of 200 people representing 75 or more communities attended the training seminars.
- 2) Some 800 people attended 35 workshops encompassing 45 communities.
- 3) Approximately 87 people representing 33 communities attended the Older Neighborhoods Conference.
- 4) Approximately 72 people representing 30 communities attended the Newer Neighborhoods Conference.

It should be noted that the above numbers do not include the volunteer resource people who directly assisted the Project Management Team throughout the process.

B. PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

Not all communities participated in every step of the project. For instance, some did not attend the Conference but held a workshop and submitted a brief. Others attended the Conference but did not submit any written brief. The list on the next page contains the names of all communities which participated at some point during the process.

LIST OF PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Alberta Avenue | 29. Garneau | 57. Montrose |
| 2. Aldergrove | 30. Glenora | 58. Newton |
| 3. Allendale | 31. Glenwood | 59. North Glenora |
| 4. Argyll | 32. Gold Bar | 60. North Millbourne |
| 5. Aspen Gardens | 33. Grandview Heights | 61. Oliver |
| 6. Athlone | 34. Greenfield | 62. Parkallen |
| 7. Avonmore | 35. Groat Estates | 63. Parkdale |
| 8. Baldwin | 36. Grovenor | 64. Parkview |
| 9. Beacon Heights | 37. Hazeldean | 65. Pleasantview |
| 10. Belgravia | 38. Hermitage | 66. Prince Charles |
| 11. Bellevue | 39. Highlands | 67. Queen Mary Park |
| 12. Blue Quill | 40. High Park | 68. Rio Terrace |
| 13. Boyle Street | 41. Holyrood | 69. Riverbend |
| 14. Brookside | 42. Idylwylde | 70. Riverdale |
| 15. Caernarvon | 43. Inglewood | 71. Rosslyn |
| 16. Calder | 44. Kensington | 72. Royal Gardens |
| 17. Canora | 45. Kilkenny | 73. Scona |
| 18. Capilano | 46. King Edward Park | 74. Sherbrooke |
| 19. Central McDougall | 47. Lakewood | 75. South Clairview |
| 20. Cloverdale | 48. Lauderdale | 76. Steele Heights |
| 21. Cromdale | 49. Laurier Heights | 77. Terrace Heights |
| 22. Delton | 50. Londonderry | 78. Virginia Park |
| 23. Duggan | 51. Lorelei | 79. Warwick (Dunluce) |
| 24. Eastwood | 52. Malmo | 80. Wellington |
| 25. Erminskin | 53. Mayfield | 81. West Jasper Place |
| 26. Evansdale | 54. McCauley | 82. Westmount |
| 27. Forest Heights | 55. McKernan | 83. Westridge |
| 28. Fulton Place | 56. Meadowlark | 84. Windsor Park |
| | | 85. Woodcroft |

TOTAL = 85 communities

Plus representation from
Edmonton Housing Authority
Tenant's Association

C. PUBLIC ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PROJECT

Generally speaking, initial public reaction towards the project could be described as primarily one of suspicion, frustration and cynicism. However, as the process progressed, this attitude changed significantly to that of enthusiasm and willingness to accept the challenge offered. Much of the negativism stemmed from a number of concerns raised by citizens who had bad experiences from previous attempts with citizen participation processes. The following will attempt to describe the major concerns expressed by the public:

1. Time Constraints

Timing of this project was the most consistently raised concern throughout the process. Two major frustrations regarding time were expressed:

- (a) It was the wrong time of year for such a project to be carried out, and
- (b) An inadequate amount of time was allowed for participants to properly accomplish the necessary tasks.

(a) Wrong Time of Year

Many Community Leagues had just held annual meetings and had made changes in the executive. New executive members were still learning procedures and were not yet equipped for the extra tasks this project required. In addition, many communities were already actively involved in other priorities: summer sports and outdoor activities. It was generally felt that, if communities had received more notice of the Conferences, better preparation could have been made and priorities could have focused on this project. The Fall season was seen as the most appropriate time of year for such a venture to be initiated.

(b) Inadequate Time

The sense of pressure because of the limited time was a predominant frustration for the participating communities. Many felt they lacked the various resources necessary to mobilize their communities within a month. Those communities which had the ability to quickly mobilize were seen to have a decided advantage for representation in the process. Because of the strong sense of urgency felt among the neighborhoods, there was also an expressed fear that quality and creativity of input might be forfeited for the sake of getting the job done quickly; hence defeating the whole purpose of the exercise.

The majority of communities, for one reason or another, thought they needed more time. An extra month was thought adequate by some communities while others expressed a desire to spread the process over a full year.

different results? Was City Council as concerned about meeting the needs as they were about gathering the information from the public? Would any action really be taken by the Mayor or Aldermen? These were just a few of the questions raised regarding City Council's role in the process.

There was a strong opinion that action by City Council as a result of the report, as well as continuation of the participation process beyond the report were both crucial. If this did not occur, many people felt they would be jaundiced to any involvement of this nature again.

(b) Report to Council

Citizens had a certain expectation that the report to Council would deal specifically with immediate issues of local neighborhoods. When it became apparent that the report would deal to a greater extent with the common problems of communities, many neighborhoods expressed fear that their specific concerns would be lost to generalities. They were somewhat reassured by the promise that their individual briefs would be included as part of the report. Understandably, however, many communities wanted to see the report before it went to Council and were pleased to find out this had already been planned.

The question of who should write and present the report to City Council was also discussed. Many felt it should be the participating communities rather than the organizers. As a result the organizers did everything possible to facilitate the involvement of participants in the writing and presentation of the main report.

Finally, citizens expressed concern to know how the report was intended to be used by the City. The fact that the Mayor and City Council had not specifically defined how they would deal with the information allowed room for further skepticism about follow-up. However, the more positive thinkers already envisaged the report as a viable tool to be used by City Council for

direct policy formulation. It could also be incorporated into the review of the General Plan presently underway by the administration. In addition, it was felt that the report should be presented to other relevant decision-making bodies, such as the School Boards and Provincial Government, for their information and possible action.

Because this chapter has focused on the concerns raised by the public, it conveys an air of negativism about the process. In order to maintain a proper perspective, it is important to note that not all communities shared these concerns to the same degree. Many neighborhoods were very excited about the process and grateful to City Council for this opportunity to participate. In many cases, even the more skeptical communities accepted the uncertainties and constraints to take an active part in the process. The effort and enthusiasm displayed by so many citizens, in spite of the obstacles, indicated that the quality of public response more than equaled the quantity of response.

III. VOLUNTEER RESOURCES FOR PROCESS

Voluntary assistance in various stages of the project was extensive and critical to its success. This chapter will illustrate the potent force of the voluntary sector which provided a credibility and quality to this citizen participation project that could otherwise not have been achieved.

A. LEVEL OF VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

1. Number of Volunteers

Besides the hundreds of citizens who gave up a great deal of their personal time to participate in workshops and Conferences, special tribute must also be given to those individuals who contributed their skills and energy to the organizational aspects of the project. About 140 community volunteers took it upon themselves to organize the thirty-five neighborhood workshops or participate in writing the follow-up report. An additional 111 volunteers were recruited to directly assist the Management Team in carrying out the overall organizational tasks. Therefore, some 251 volunteers were involved in the organization of one or more phases of this project.

2. Number of Volunteer Hours

From the records, the Management Team has been able to chart the approximate number of volunteer hours contributed during the process.

(1) Project Management Team (E.F.C.L. representatives were volunteers)

NOTE: This figure does not include hours of E.S.P.C. representatives.

Co-ordinating Project (1 volunteer)	225 hours
Publicity (1 volunteer)	<u>100</u> hours
Total Volunteer Time	<u>325</u> hours

(2)	<u>Training Seminars</u>	
	(a) Leadership Training (3 volunteers)	37 hours
	(b) Observers (12 volunteers)	48 hours
	(c) Special Seminar (5 volunteers)	<u>17</u> hours
	Total Volunteer Time	<u>102</u> hours
(3)	<u>Community Workshops</u>	
	(a) Local Resource People (35 workshops -average of 4 people/workshop x 10 hours)	1,400 hours
	(b) E.S.P.C. Observers (10 volunteers)	<u>30</u> hours
	Total Volunteer Time	<u>1,430</u> hours
(4)	<u>Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences</u>	
	(a) Mailing: Pre-Conference (20 hours) Post Conference (16 hours)	36 hours
	(b) Group Leadership and Recorders (40 volunteers x 18 hours)	754 hours
	(c) Preparing Charts (St. Edmund's School) (5 adult volunteers x 10 hours) (40 school children x 3 hours)	50 hours 120 hours
	(d) Setting Up Facilities (E.S.P.C. x 4 volunteers) (E.F.C.L. x 2 volunteers)	10 hours 40 hours
	(e) Food Catering (E.F.C.L. x 5 volunteers)	<u>125</u> hours
	Total Volunteer Time	<u>1,135</u> hours
(5)	<u>Follow-up</u>	
	Steering Committee (5 volunteers x predicted estimate of 70 hours)	350 hours
	Five Task Forces (5 committees x average of 4 volunteers/committee x 20 hours)	<u>400</u> hours
	Total Volunteer Time Predicted	<u>750</u> hours

This represents an accounting of 3,742 hours which were contributed to the organization of the Conference project by volunteer resource people. In all likelihood, much more time was spent than that which was recorded.

B. RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers were recruited by the Project Management Team through their personal experience and contacts with those people who had the willingness

and expertise to contribute to this process. The response was positive since many saw this project as an opportunity to increase their understanding of citizen participation and gain further experience in community dynamics.

The volunteer resource people represented a variety of backgrounds and expertise. For instance, they were:

- Community School Co-ordinators
- Professional employees of the Provincial and Municipal Governments
- Professional employees of Volunteer Agencies
- Private Professional Consultants
- Academics from the University of Alberta
- Members of Volunteer Service Organizations (e.g., University Women's Club, National Council of Jewish Women)
- Members or Staff of Neighborhood Organizations (e.g., Norwood Neighborhood Association, Calder Action Committee)
- Housewife/volunteers
- Elementary and Junior High School Students.

Not only did all these volunteers prove to be extremely reliable, but they assumed their tasks with both conviction and competence.

C. ROLES OF THE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers were needed for a variety of roles within the project. It was therefore important that training and support be provided which was appropriate to the individual's skill level and the complexity of the task.

Training Seminars

Orientation was provided for volunteers to carry out two major roles during the seven Training Seminars:

- To team-lead or assist with the leadership presentation and training,
- To objectively observe the sessions for evaluation purposes.

Those who assisted in this stage were mainly Board Members and volunteers of the Edmonton Social Planning Council chosen because of their experience, skills and understanding of group dynamics and process. Some assumed both of the above roles over the two week duration.

Community Workshops

In order to have community workshops, many local volunteers assumed the role of organizing their neighborhoods. This meant they took on the tasks of planning and publicizing the workshops, as well as recruiting a chairperson and group leaders for the session.

Apart from providing whatever encouragement they could to individuals, the organizers were not directly involved in this stage of the process. However, several volunteers attended some of the neighborhood workshops as observers in order to evaluate and record the community dynamics where possible. This observation gave the Project Management Team a more accurate picture of the direction the Mayor's Conferences might take in order to achieve an optimum result.

Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences

One of the most crucial and difficult roles played by volunteers during the project was being part of the Conference Group Leadership Teams. These people were responsible for the effective functioning of the small group sessions over a lengthy period of two five-hour days. Needless to say, careful recruiting was done to choose particular individuals who had the ability and experience necessary for the task.

Volunteers were also recruited to carry out the very important role of providing the practical organization and resources for the Conferences. St. Edmund's school students, under the guidance of five adult volunteers, were responsible for preparation of the multitude of graphic working materials

needed. Other volunteers were involved in the following tasks:

- collating and mailing pre and post Conference materials to communities
- setting and cleaning up of Conference facilities
- preparation and catering of food
- registration of participants at the Conferences.

The Conferences could not have taken place without volunteers carrying out these time-consuming but necessary functions.

Follow-Up

Because the Conference participants felt that community people should be involved in the follow-up, a number of them volunteered to be responsible for preparing the major report to City Council. These volunteers are part of five task forces and a steering committee whose role it is to condense the material from the two Conferences and compile a report which represents the common views of the community participants. The Edmonton Social Planning Council and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues have been assisting the task forces with their work.

D. IMPORTANCE OF THE VOLUNTEER COMPONENT

It goes without saying that the Conferences project would not have been physically and/or economically feasible if the two organizations, Edmonton Social Planning Council and Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, had not had the ability to recruit the volunteer contributions of so many dedicated, self-determined citizens. These volunteers gave nearly 3,800 hours of their time but, more importantly, they brought with them a quality of experience and level of skill and knowledge which would be virtually impossible to equal by any other means. The fact that volunteer resource people were helping other volunteer citizens to participate provided a necessary credibility to the process and added a special atmosphere of

co-operation that could never be duplicated by paid professionals. It is hoped that City Council will recognize the many strengths and benefits of the volunteer force so it can be supported and encouraged in the future.

IV. ANALYSIS OF STAGES IN PROCESS

Up to this point a general description has been given of the process and public response to it. This chapter will critically analyze each of the eight stages or components of the process and make recommendations where appropriate.

1. PRE-PLANNING STAGE

The pre-planning stage was carried out with little difficulty. Negotiations with the Mayor had made it fairly evident what role each organization played. However, one flaw was seen at this stage of the process. There had not been enough time to include actual community representatives into the pre-planning process. Consequently, there were some feelings from the public that this project was being "laid on" from the outside. Therefore, it would be advisable in future projects to contact and obtain input from community organizations about the planning of such a venture. Communities would then be more aware, prepared and receptive to the process from the very beginning.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

In order to ensure input from communities in the pre-planning stage of similar projects in the future, it is recommended that:

1. a. Each community or area elect a representative who would be responsible for being a liaison between his/her community and any future public participation projects.
1. b. A committee, made up of some of these community representatives, be established by the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. This committee would be responsible for:
 - informing communities of upcoming public participation projects, and
 - co-ordinating and managing future participation processes.

2. PUBLICITY

In a very limited time period, the Management Team had to make the

public aware of the project as well as understand their role in it. Therefore, the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, through its network, undertook to:

- directly contact and inform the community leagues and other neighborhood organizations about the project,
- publicize the project to the general public through all news media,
- assist community organizations to further publicize the project to local neighborhood residents.

Following the initial press release by the Mayor, a publicity-information package with a covering letter was sent out to all Community League presidents, as well as to members of other neighborhood organizations known by the Edmonton Social Planning Council. Simultaneously, the information packages were sent to all news media in Edmonton with a press release. Follow-up phone calls and meetings were made by the E.F.C.L. President who personally contacted key people in the media. The result was written coverage by the Edmonton Journal, West Edmonton Examiner and Londonderry Coloquium. Announcements, interviews and talk shows were arranged on the CBC Morning Show, CJCA Radio, (Earl Morgan and Brian Hall), CHED Radio, CFCW, CFRN-FM (Helen Richards), CFRN-TV (Morning Magazine), ITV (Barbara Kelly Show and Alberta, This Week), and QCTV. Television news coverage was done by CBC-TV, CFRN-TV and CITV.

Bulletins advertising the community workshops were designed and produced in quantity by the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. Any community wanting to hold a workshop had only to order the number they needed, giving the name of the community and date of their workshop, and these flyers were supplied free of charge. Advice and ideas were also given by the Edmonton Social Planning Council at the training seminars on ways to notify community residents and how and who to contact for media coverage. In addition, the

Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues provided a public notice in the Edmonton Journal giving dates and times of a number of community workshops being held throughout the City.

Despite the time and energy spent on publicity, it was generally perceived as "too little, too late", especially by those trying to mobilize their local communities. Although shortage of time was certainly a factor in limiting publicity, there also appeared to be two other reasons for lack of prompt advertisement and information to the public.

(1) The media did not easily understand the essence of the project and showed the same initial cynicism as the citizens. Although news coverage improved over the duration of the project, it still did not meet the expectations of the organizers.

(2) Even with E.F.C.L. support, many neighborhoods were neither prepared nor equipped to notify local residents in the limited time given.

It was evident that a number of community organizations also lacked the knowledge and/or confidence to use the media for their local purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To ensure better publicity in future projects, it is recommended that:

2. a. Workshop sessions be held with the media to:
 - discuss their role in aiding citizen participation,
 - establish informed contacts within the media who can provide support to such processes.

2. b. With assistance from media people, specific training sessions be provided to community groups on such subjects as:
 - effective ways to inform and involve the local neighborhood,
 - how and when to use the media.

3. COMMUNITY ORIENTATION-TRAINING SEMINARS

An integral part of the project design was orientation-training seminars for community representatives. The intent was to provide people attending with a fuller understanding of the purpose and details of the Conference project as well as an understanding of the skills and procedures required to organize and hold a workshop. The Management Team hoped these sessions would provide community people with incentive and confidence to carry out their own neighborhood workshops.

Six of these seminars were designed and presented by the Edmonton Social Planning Council with the back-up of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. An additional special seminar was organized for those who felt the need for further help in the skills of group leadership. For the first six seminars, the first part of the agenda was designed to explain the purpose and details of the Conference project, as well as the role of the communities in the process. Participants were then encouraged to air their opinions, feelings and frustrations about it, a necessary step to "clear the air". The second part of the agenda dealt specifically with providing training in methods and techniques of notifying and involving the local neighborhood, seeking publicity, organizing and running a workshop. The seventh seminar dealt more specifically with the dynamics of leading and managing small group sessions in a community workshop setting.

In all seven seminars, much instruction was carried out through the use of role playing. This seemed a very effective and entertaining way of helping people understand the practical procedures of organization and leadership. Resource material was also designed specifically for these seminars. Over two hundred people representing seventy-five communities participated in these sessions.

Consistently at every seminar, many people were initially skeptical and negative towards the overall project, the seminar, and sometimes even the Management Team. However, in most cases, after the process was more fully explained and participants were allowed to air and discuss their concerns, they became much more receptive and positive during the remainder of the training session.

Evaluation by the registrants indicated that 90% of them found the training session well organized and informative. Almost two-thirds of these people had no previous experience or training in workshop organization. Yet even those with some experience found the sessions instilled more confidence about organizing community workshops. At the same time, participants indicated that more education similar to that provided in the seminars was still needed in specific areas of leadership and community organization so they could be better prepared for such projects in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

By providing a thorough training program in leadership development and community organization, citizens can be better prepared and less frustrated in future public participation processes. Therefore, it is recommended that:

3. a. A comprehensive training program be supported and provided to community organizations to increase their ability in, and understanding of:
 - resource and leadership development,
 - community organization and involvement,
 - civic planning policies and procedures.

4. COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Subsequent to the training seminars, many community volunteers organized neighborhood or area workshops to gather local opinions and concerns which would be represented at the Conferences. Thirty-five such workshops involving forty-five neighborhoods were held throughout the City.

Most were similar in nature, the primary tasks for participants being:

- to identify and discuss major concerns as well as benefits in their community,
- to provide recommendations of how concerns could best be handled,
- to select people to represent the community's views at the Conferences.

Communities who held workshops compiled the results of their session and submitted them with a list of their representatives to the Edmonton Social Planning Council prior to the Conference dates. This information assisted the organizers in determining the direction for the Conferences and the number of participants to expect.

A number of neighborhoods chose not to have these workshops. Some communities felt they had neither the time nor the resources to carry out such a task and resigned themselves to that fact. Others, however, had already been involved in workshops of this nature so it was unnecessary to repeat the exercise. Their only task was to select representatives for the Conferences.

Feedback and observation of many of the workshops indicated they proved reasonably satisfying to most neighborhoods involved. For some, they were the first opportunity for residents of an area to get together and share concerns on planning issues. As a result, there had been new sources of volunteers identified and a strong desire from residents to continue to communicate and work together.

Other communities, however, still voiced their frustrations about having a lack of skills, resources and time which they felt contributed to inadequacies in their workshops. This feeling was further supported by letters from neighborhoods who chose not to conduct a workshop for the same reasons.

The most significant observation from the workshops was the definite disparity among neighborhoods in obtaining access to resources and skills. Some communities were more equipped with money, materials and expertise for organizing their area, while other communities had little or nothing. Consequently, it was easier for the advantaged neighborhoods to provide input and representation for the Conferences.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Gathering local neighborhood input is an essential aspect of a citizen participation process like the Conference project. However, equal opportunity for regular input should be provided for all communities. Therefore, it is recommended that:

4. a. Once a year every Community League or Area Council organization provide an opportunity for residents to meet and share current concerns and opinions about their community.
4. b. Resources and expertise be provided to disadvantaged communities so they can have a better opportunity to provide equal input and representation into a public participation process.

5. DESIGN AND PREPARATION FOR THE CONFERENCES

Although challenging, preparation for the Conferences was a time consuming and laborious process for the Management Team. A number of major tasks had to be carried out.

Facilities

Facilities had to be found that could accommodate up to a maximum of 150 participants for each of the Conferences. McDougall School became the choice not only for this reason, but because it was also in a central city location and had the bonus of a school staff who were both very receptive and co-operative.

There was also the task of setting and cleaning up of facilities each night of the Conferences. Ten working areas plus the assembly hall had to

be arranged with equipment and materials in the short time between the end of classes and the beginning of the Conference. A large number of volunteers was recruited to ensure these duties could be handled with speed and efficiency.

Conference Format and Process

A most difficult task was developing a format and process to accomplish the aims of the Conferences within the time constraints imposed. However, long hours of deliberation did create a suitable and workable design for the entire ten-hour sessions.

Recruiting and Training Group Leadership Teams

The Conference design required ten group leadership teams for each Conference. Consequently a total of forty people (20 for each) with skills and experience in small group leadership were recruited for this job. The Edmonton Social Planning Council provided a one-evening training session to these resource people which covered:

- the purpose and format of the Conference,
- the step-by-step procedure to be used by the group leaders in accomplishing their Conference tasks.

At this seminar, volunteers were paired in teams to allow them time to be acquainted and more prepared. Further "refresher" sessions were provided directly before each Conference for last minute discussion and questions.

Developing Resource Materials

A number of worksheets as well as large graphics and charts had to be designed for the Conferences and reproduced in quantity. Duplicating the large charts and graphics presented a special problem, but, with the assistance of forty students and five adult volunteers from St. Edmund's School, this mammoth task was accomplished with relative ease.

Food, Materials and Equipment

Provision of equipment, materials and food was all arranged by the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. With considerable assistance from the Public and Separate School Boards, University of Alberta, Edmonton Parks and Recreation Department and McDougall School itself, equipment like microphones, overhead projectors, mobile blackboards and flip charts were obtained free of charge for the Conferences. Most of the materials were purchased. The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues made arrangements to prepare and serve sandwiches, dessert and beverages to all the participants at the Conferences.

Thanks to the efforts of the organizations and volunteers mentioned, there were no major difficulties in the preparation for the Conferences. However, training for the Conference group leaders could have been improved. Despite the provision of a major training seminar and subsequent "refresher" session, several leaders did not feel comfortable in their role. The reason was probably three-fold:

- (1) The process designed for the Conferences was both long and fairly complex. A three-hour orientation did not provide enough time for a thorough understanding of it.
- (2) Basic training in the principles of leadership were not provided as it was assumed that all resource volunteers had a certain level of skills in that area. This assumption was in error.
- (3) Although volunteers were paired together for the purpose of mutual support and team leadership, no opportunity was provided by the organizers to practice team leadership.

Despite these difficulties, the volunteers assumed their role with a positive and determined attitude to "give it their best".

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The success of the project like the Conferences depends on the quality of leadership. Potential group leaders must be well prepared and highly skilled. Therefore, it is recommended that in similar projects:

- 5. a. Organizers ensure adequate time and preparation be given to an orientation and training program for any volunteers assuming leadership roles.
- 5. b. A pool of volunteers provided with appropriate leadership skills and training be identified and maintained to assist in public participation at a community and/or city-wide level.

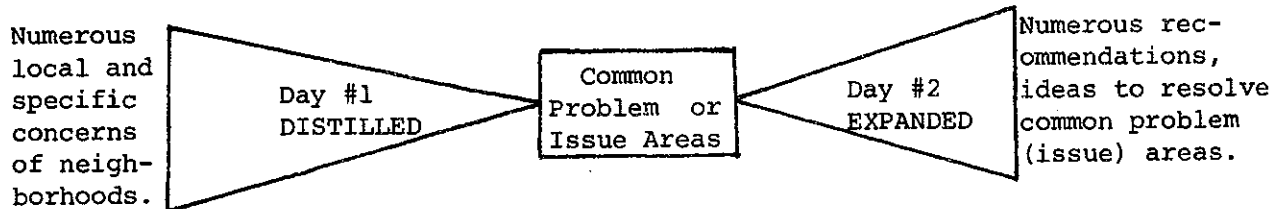
6. MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING CONFERENCES

The purpose of the Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences was to provide community participants with an opportunity to:

- a) Define what they perceived to be fundamental problems (issues) with the planning and decision-making process.
- b) Present recommendations and supporting ideas on how they felt these problems could be resolved.

The first day of the two-day Conference process was designed to pool planning concerns specific to the represented communities and distill them into common problem areas. On the second day participants analyzed these identified issue areas and determined specific recommendations and supporting ideas for resolving these problems. This concept is more clearly demonstrated in the following illustration.

WORKING CONCEPT FOR CONFERENCES



Each day of the Conferences opened with a plenary session, which on the first day included a welcome from Mayor C. J. (Cec.) Purves. Then participants

formed smaller working groups for most of the evening.

On the first day, ten small discussion groups, each led by two trained volunteers, undertook the same tasks:

- to collectively identify all specific neighborhood concerns,
- to analyze the commonality and relationship of the concerns in terms of their cause,
- to identify the common underlying problem (issue) areas.

The groups then returned to a plenary where information was discussed and compiled for the next day's sessions.

On the second day, five major groups were formed, each focusing their discussion on one of the issue areas evolved from the previous day's deliberations: Human Services; Traffic and Transportation; Security, Policing and By-law Enforcement; Land Use and Design; Citizen Participation and Decision-Making. Each group was to:

- analyze their particular issue area,
- provide recommendations and ideas on how to begin resolving some of the problems identified.

Finally the work of each group was brought back to a closing plenary where all participated in a general review of the material.

Both conferences were considered successful. At the Older Neighborhoods Planning Conference, eighty-seven designated representatives from thirty-three communities attended. At the Newer Neighborhood Planning Conference, seventy-two citizens came from thirty communities. Participants at both sessions accomplished their tasks and collectively produced a large quantity of valuable input which can be submitted to City Council.

Impressive as the resulting information was, it was not developed without a number of difficult moments for the participants. Evaluation forms returned at the end of each Conference identify two main areas of frustration:

- 1) There was concern that specific neighborhood problems were being lost in generalities.

- 2) There was concern that participants were pressured for time and that the process did not allow for deviation.

These feelings are not surprising since a very tight and highly organized process had to be designed in order to accomplish the aims of the Conferences. However, the following recommendations indicate ways of lessening such frustration in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

6. a. Area workshops be considered as an intermediate step between local community workshops and city-wide Conferences. They could provide the means to mentally prepare participants to understand their specific concerns in relation to the total city-wide perspective.
6. b. Longer, less intense Conferences be provided to allay feelings of time constraint and control.
6. c. Older and newer neighborhoods be combined rather than separated for future city-wide projects, thus making more appropriate use of time.
6. d. Workshops on specific issue areas, with resource expertise in attendance, be considered as follow-up to major Conferences. This would allow people more time to specifically discuss problems and look at reasonable solutions.

7. FOLLOW-UP

In order to discuss concerns regarding the report for City Council and follow-up in general, a post-conference meeting for participants was organized. Representatives from over twenty-six older and newer neighborhoods attended and decided that the participants, rather than the organizers, should be compiling and preparing the report on the Conference results. Five citizen task forces were struck to condense the information from both Conferences in the five issue areas.

1. Human Services
2. Traffic and Transportation
3. Security, Policing and By-law Enforcement
4. Land Use and Design
5. Citizen Participation and Decision-Making

A Steering Committee composed of representatives from each of the five groups was organized to co-ordinate the work. The members of this Committee are:

Mr. Metro Chrapko (Chairman)
Mrs. Joyce Buchwald
Mr. Greg Lazin
Mr. Don Williams
Mr. Walter Germaniuk (replacing Mr. Wes Nelson).

Over the summer, the citizen task forces reviewed the Conference data, as well as the community briefs submitted by both older and newer neighborhoods. This was a lengthy process since most committees had trouble meeting regularly over the holiday season.

In turn, the Steering Committee met often with representatives of the Project Management Team to:

- monitor the process of the task forces,
- determine and co-ordinate the design of the report,
- establish deadlines for completion.

This Committee, in collaboration with the Edmonton Social Planning Council and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, determined that two reports should be prepared for City Council.

- (a) A main report based on the content from the Conferences and community briefs, to be prepared by the citizen task forces;
- (b) A second report which would evaluate the process used in the Conference project, to be prepared by the Edmonton Social Planning Council and the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues.

Both reports are to be presented to the citizens prior to being submitted to City Council.

The citizen task forces and Steering Committee have encountered both delays and frustrations in their attempt to write the main report for City

Council. Nevertheless, they have perservered and must be commended for the hours and quality of work they have given to produce their document.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Evaluation of the follow-up which is still in progress would be premature. However, feedback from the public and the experiences of the Project Management Team have indicated directions City Council could consider regarding immediate and longer term follow-up to this project. It is therefore recommended that:

7. a. Feedback be given to the citizens by City Council on what action, if any, they intend to take as a result of the report.
7. b. The two reports presented to City Council also be submitted to the Edmonton School Boards and the Provincial Government as information.
7. c. Projects like the Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences be supported by City Council and provided in future on a yearly basis.
7. d. Comprehensive training and education programs be supported and provided so that community organizations and groups increase their ability in and understanding of:
 - resource and leadership development,
 - community organization and involvement,
 - civic planning policies and process.

This would provide the necessary ground work needed for communities to more effectively participate in the future.

NOTE: Recommendation also under #3.,
Community Orientation and Training Seminars.

7. e. Permanent mechanism(s) be developed to ensure co-ordinated and regular communication and information flow between city officials and the citizens. Establishment of area information officers, formation of area councils, or inclusion of advisory committees in a revised ward system are some examples of what these mechanisms could be.

8. EVALUATION

Funds were not available and time did not allow the Project Management Team to seek resource people to carry out a detailed outside evaluation of

8. a. All future participation projects that take place in Edmonton be recorded and evaluated for future learning of the practical aspects involved in citizen participation.

The purpose of this chapter was not to judge the project on the basis of success or failure. Rather, it provides some insights about public involvement, and how it might be improved. The Mayor's Neighborhood Planning Conferences have helped establish a precedent for a workable citizen participation process. It has been a most positive beginning.