

Social Actor Engagement in Municipal Decision-Making for Parks, Planning, and Civil Society in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada 1960-2010: Institutional Intersections

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Abstract

Edmonton, Alberta, has a unique approach to public spaces that sees conjoined creation and development sharing of public spaces for the collective benefit of the community and stakeholders; this approach began 100 years ago. Green or open spaces, natural areas, the river valley, City of Edmonton and community recreation facilities, and public education facilities share common sites in a system of public spaces, hereafter called a “park system.”

Rather than narrowly focus on government entities and technical processes this dissertation posits that parks decision-making occurs more broadly through dialogue and perspectives of social actors engaging with one another and how they impact each other’s perspectives, positions and decisions over time. This dissertation identifies and examines the interplay and relationships between the land use planning processes and community engaged park development, programming and maintenance activities and processes in Edmonton, using Strategic Relational Institutional and Historical Institutional perspectives. Categories of social actors involved in both institutions include elected officials, senior and frontline administrators, community nongovernmental organizations, school boards, community residents, developers, landowners, and consultants. Each of these actors has different levels of power and agency within administrative processes and within institutions themselves. This dissertation is an exploration of how land use and parks decision-making occurred over time.

The Greenview and Blue Quill park spaces were identified in area plans -- park systems were approved in the early 1970s based on pre-existing legislation, strategic plans, policies, legal agreements, park master plans, and practices. Those previously approved documents effectively preconfigured the park systems and the specific site, configuration, location, and program in the land use planning institution. The land use planning institution turned farm land, wet lands, and treed areas into urban landscapes (i.e., residential, commercial, institutional, roadways, etc.), including generous allocations for park sites and land for schools. Once the sites were acquired, the community, administrators, and elected officials jointly constructed, programmed and maintained park lands through a series of construction funding agreements that built on and enhanced historical shared programming approaches. This work was also facilitated by policy initiatives that identified the community and community nongovernmental organizations as both partners in development and integral to local community decision-making of all kinds. Often termed animation of park lands, the first wave of co-produced development occurred by the end of the 1980s. Since that time, the parks were in continuous public use, until 2006 and 2009 when each site was reduced in size to accommodate housing.

My tenure as a parks planner began in 1985 and continued until 2014. I was functionally engaged in the parks institution for about half of the case study period and engaged with mentors whose tenure went back another fifteen years. The opportunity to combine a practitioner lens with theoretical constructs to analyze events provides a number of contributions to theory and practice. This dissertation describes the planning process and institutional decision-making over an extended period of time specific to a park and park system (institutions and civil society); the system context had not been previously studied. The analyses identifies land-use planning social actors’ and park institutional social actors’ intersections (i.e., institutional planes) that recognize different social actors and different temporal considerations. The mobilizing characteristic of legislation, policies, and funding agreements to privilege and shape institutions is also illuminated. This dissertation provides

nuance discussion of park discursal practices, understandings, and realities that has not previously been explored. Finally, this dissertation reveals the unique characteristic of park lands infrastructure funded through substantial contributions by community social actors. Park infrastructure should be seen as a category of municipal infrastructure facilitated by legislation and municipal funding practices that is unique unlike any other form of municipal infrastructure. This unique characterization of park lands should lead to a broader discussion of equity and fairness in planning processes related to park lands.

Preface

This dissertation provides an opportunity to document the thoughts and experiences of a long-time parks planner. For 29 years, I straddled both the land use planning function and the parks service delivery function; both were functions of municipal government in Alberta. I often felt like I acted as a translator—explaining land use planning to recreationists and community representatives, while simultaneously explaining the needs of community residents and groups to land use planners, land management planners, and finance officials.

A practitioner's knowledge base built up over time is lost when a practitioner retires. With that in mind, this dissertation includes many notes to explain the nuances of practice. The appendices contain information that documents statements made, but they also are intended to show the dilemmas, often termed administrative discretion, faced by practitioners in interpreting and applying policy. It is my hope that both scholarly research and practice can learn from this personal journey of mine.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my soul mate, my wife Carolynne, who has supported me throughout my life and in this academic journey. I am forever indebted to you and love you forever. I am also incredibly indebted to my daughter Amanda (i.e., the rough copy) and my son Ryan (mini-bigger me), who have encouraged me throughout this journey. You inspire and centre me every day! Finally, I would also like to dedicate this to my late brother Don. Priebo, you will be with me on graduation day even though you cannot be physically present. You were a great brother and I will miss you forever. Save a place at that card table for me!

Acknowledgement

I cannot begin to thank my academic advisors enough who have helped me along the way. My advisor, Dr. Elizabeth Halpenny, has been incredibly patient and supportive as I transitioned back to academia. Dr. PearlAnn Reichwein was an amazing support and source of history and leisure research. Dr. Bob Summers provided the planner eyes I needed in writing this dissertation. Dr. Jay Scheer provided a much needed institutional perspective to guide my study. Dr. Sorensens comments were immensely helpful. Thank you all.

I would also like for thank for their support my office lab peers, especially Dr. Shintaro Kono, Jinging Guo, and Dr. Farhad Moghimehfar and his wife Monir, as well as my career colleagues Rob Marchak, Gabriele Barry, Dave Howell, Peter Millar, Leslie Sparrow, Roland Labbe, Debi Anderson, Linda Yee, Jim Mackie, Jill Bradford-Green, and Bryce Card.

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Abbreviations

APPI – *Alberta Professional Planners Institute*, affiliated with CIP
ARPs – Area Redevelopment Plans (e.g., Oliver)
ASPs – Area Structure Plans
CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis
CIP – *Canadian Institute of Planners*
City – City of Edmonton (geographical area)
COE – *City of Edmonton* (organization)
CRCs – Community Recreation Coordinators
CT – Critical theory
ECS – *Edmonton Catholic Services*
EFCL – *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues*
EPSB – *Edmonton Public School Board*
FOIP – Freedom of Information Process requests
GoA – *Government of Alberta* (provincial government)
HI – Historical Institutionalism
MDPs – Municipal Development Plans
MDRs – Medium-density residential development
NASPs – Neighbourhood Area Structure Plans (a type of area plan)
NPDP – *Neighbourhood Park Development Program* (funding program)
NSPs – Neighbourhood Structure Plans (a type of area plan)
OPs – Outline Plans (a type of area plan)
PDA – Political Discourse Analysis
Province – Geographical area defined by political boundaries
SCDB – Servicing Concept Design Brief (a type of area plan)
SRI – Strategic Relational Institutional theory
JUA – *Joint Use Agreement*
LUB – *Land Use Bylaw*
UPMP – *2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan*
The “Ways” – Strategic Plans (*Way We Live, Way We Green, Way We Grow, Way We Move, Way We Finance*)
YMCA – Young Men’s Christian Association
YWCA – Young Women’s Christian Association

Formatting – CMOS Based Notes-Bibliography

1. Notes-Bibliography was used in order to allow the author to comment on the sources or provide additional practitioner perspective on the data uncovered.
2. Interview citations. The data sources are anonymized to protect the sources, but their real names are available in the data records for the study. Standard notes-bibliography CMOS formatting suggests that interview references should have the following format: interviewee, role, interviewer, date. The following citation format will be employed: anonymous interviewee name, position, interviewer, date. In addition, these references will occasionally be included parenthetically within the text as opposed to being presented as a footnote.
3. Planning document names. Non-specific geographical bylaw names are capitalized (NSPs, OPs, MDPs, SCDBs, LUBs) consistent with common Alberta planning nomenclature. The

abbreviations are all types of “area” planning documents. When bylaw documents are approved specific to a geographic area (i.e., *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, *Mill Woods Development Concept*), those documents include the name of the geographical area, and the entire document name is italicized. Other specific council-approved documents such as *2006-2016 UPMP*, the *JUA*, and the *NPDP* are also italicized as guiding documents.

4. Italics are used for organizations (i.e., *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues*)
5. My approach to citation was to consistently include references in the notes section to either indicate a specific source or a page within a source.
6. Institutional theoretical perspectives are capitalized and given short forms; Social Relational Institutionalism or SRI, Historical Institutionalism or HI).
7. Canadian spelling of words was adopted throughout.
8. The *COE* staff are collectively referred to as the “administration”.
9. Some references are used in multiple chapters. When a repeat reference is used, a full reference description is provided the first time it is used in the footnotes for each new chapter.
10. In the appendices, I used single line spacing where possible in an effort to reduce document printing volumes.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background—Where It All Began

In 2006, Mayor Stephen Mandel and Edmonton’s City Council declared the City was in the midst of an affordable housing crisis (i.e., defined as rising housing prices)¹ and needed to act immediately to repurpose park lands. Doing so would help the community by ensuring the availability of a diversity of housing choices to increase development densities and take advantage of underutilized infrastructure. Subsequent media reports characterized the change this way:

This is a program we want to make it clear is about First Time Homebuyer housing," Mayor Stephen Mandel said Thursday. "This is not about social housing, subsidized housing or short-term rental housing or someone trying to get on their feet." "We're talking about First Time home-buyers, Edmontonians with good jobs and decent incomes who are being held back because of the surge in housing prices," Mandel said.²

Shortly after, residents of Greenview and Blue Quill neighbourhoods discovered in local newspapers that City Council decided by a vote of eleven to two³ to surplus and sell one hectare (ha) portions of publicly owned neighbourhood park lands in each neighbourhood for residential development, plus eighteen other park parcels across the city, in the “surplus

¹ Housing affordability is typically defined as a percentage of income devoted to housing costs; anything costing above 30% of one’s rent, mortgage, taxes, and utilities is considered unaffordable. The Canada-wide average since 1985 is 42%; Calgary is at 41%, the Greater Toronto Area is at 51%, and Vancouver is at 59.6%. In the 2006 to 2008 period, the Edmonton rate had risen to between 35-40%, but it has since declined. In 2018, those same centres were experiencing rates of 43.9%, 75.9%, and 88.4%, respectively, compared to Edmonton’s 28.4% as defined by the Royal Bank of Canada.

² O’Donnell, Sarah. “Condos to Be Built on Vacant School Sites.” *Edmonton Journal*, November 24, 2006

³ City of Edmonton Council, *Bylaw 14440*, report 2006PDP496, *Bylaw 14441*, report 2006PDP497, and *Bylaw 14442*, Report 2006PDP498, December 12, 2006.

schools initiative.” The controversial park lands repurposing process disengaged the community from the public rezoning approval process. That disengagement of the public was inconsistent with legislation, plans, policies, processes, and practices, in favour of expedited rezoning and supporting area plan amendment approval process for affordable housing (i.e., non-market rate housing). A councillor who was in the council minority opposing the action was concerned.

That argument (for use of surplus school sites) was never articulated to the public in a clear, transparent fashion. When we have lots of spaces, lots of surplus land all over the city, why surplus school sites?”⁴

A follow-up process repurposed another nineteen sites in 2009, this time for seniors’ housing, albeit with more public engagement.⁵ A second site in Blue Quill was included in that grouping of sites. Yet some social actors who were engaged in, and those who were disengaged from, the process were concerned if not alarmed—legislation, policy, and practices were unilaterally changed or waived by change-motivated social actors. Frustration and politics boiled over as referenced by another oppositional councillor.

So now (2009 sites) they try to do on these surplus school sites all sorts of these other societal outcomes that were not initially intended with the original program (First Time Homebuyers), which was supposed to be affordable housing. To build greater community consensus now they’re throwing everything and the kitchen sink in and at it because they are getting so much resistance.”⁶

⁴ Syd (Elected Official), interviewed by Robert Priebe, November 23, 2017.

⁵ City of Edmonton, City Council, October 15/16, 2012, *Bylaw 16019* and report 2012SCP346, *Bylaw 16253*, report 2012SCO939, approved October 16, 2012. These bylaws dealt with 8 of the 2009 sites. The remaining are being redeveloped over time with seniors housing, each proceeding on their own timelines as market opportunities arise.

⁶ Frank (Elected Official), interviewed by Robert Priebe, December 16, 2017.

As a longtime *City of Edmonton (COE)* park planner who is a registered professional planner in the Province of Alberta, I was not surprised by the controversial, if not negative, community reaction to the unilateral approach adopted by elected officials. By the mid-2000s, I had worked with elected officials, administrators, and the community for 29 years using a collective approach to school and park site development. My work in several functions and in increasing levels of responsibility had touched multiple neighbourhoods and involved development including playgrounds, tree planting, plazas, sports fields, and recreation facilities, not to mention river valley trail and bridge development. The vast majority of this work was done either cost shared with the community or cost shared with other partners on behalf of the community. This was not a new phenomenon. In the first half of the 20th century, community participation in leisure services delivery was common, if not sometimes bumpy. An example would be the Gyro Club that participated in the provision of recreational amenities (Ochoa 2013), but experienced resistance from the administration.

As a young planner, my practitioner mentors (e.g., Bryce Card, Jill Bradford-Green) had made me very aware of legal agreements, like the *Joint Use Agreement (JUA)* and policies and practices that defined the community and community leagues as integral to decision-making of all kinds on park lands. The *Neighbourhood Park Development Program (NPDP)* aided communities to build park amenities faster than the *COE* could ever do on their own. I grew to understand and appreciate the economic, ecological, and social value of park spaces (Harnik and Crompton 2014), as well as the substantial funding and volunteer resources provided by community social actors.⁷ The *COE* documented the value of its park

⁷ Volunteer support provided by the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues was estimated in 1962 to cost the equivalent of a 50% tax levy increase for parks if those resources were not available (Kuban 2004).

infrastructure, confirming in a different way the benefits of parks. The replacement value of parks and recreational facilities exceeded \$2B in 2006,⁸ exceeding \$2.5B today, excluding community-funded facilities such as community leagues. The 2006 and 2009 decisions seemed dramatically out of step with past practices, and I wanted to understand both the roots of the past and the potential implications of this seemingly new approach.

This dissertation seeks to understand how urban land use change processes and parks services delivery are connected, using practitioner and research lenses, as well as the perspectives of social actors. It seeks to describe what happens after the land use change processes create a park and park system with and for the community and the implications of that subsequent process. Also desired was a way to help social actors understand the social context of contemporary land use planning decisions on park planning and operations in Edmonton from a historical context. There is a strong nexus between the two; each “process” impacts the other.

It is important to clarify park lands terminology early in this dissertation. There are multiple terms that can refer to parks, public spaces, and public realm. Some conceptualizations exclude land for bricks and mortar facilities such as arenas, pools, schools, etc. Some conceptualizations include public land more broadly to include park lands, school lands, public utility lots, and roadways. Some conceptualizations are narrower (Stanley, Stark, Johnston and Smith 2012). Park lands in this dissertation is defined to include land acquired for indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation purposes, greenways, bricks and mortar facilities (i.e., schools, recreation centres), and land for preservation of ecological heritages (e.g.,

⁸ COE. *Edmonton City Council's Infrastructure Strategy*. 2006, 3.

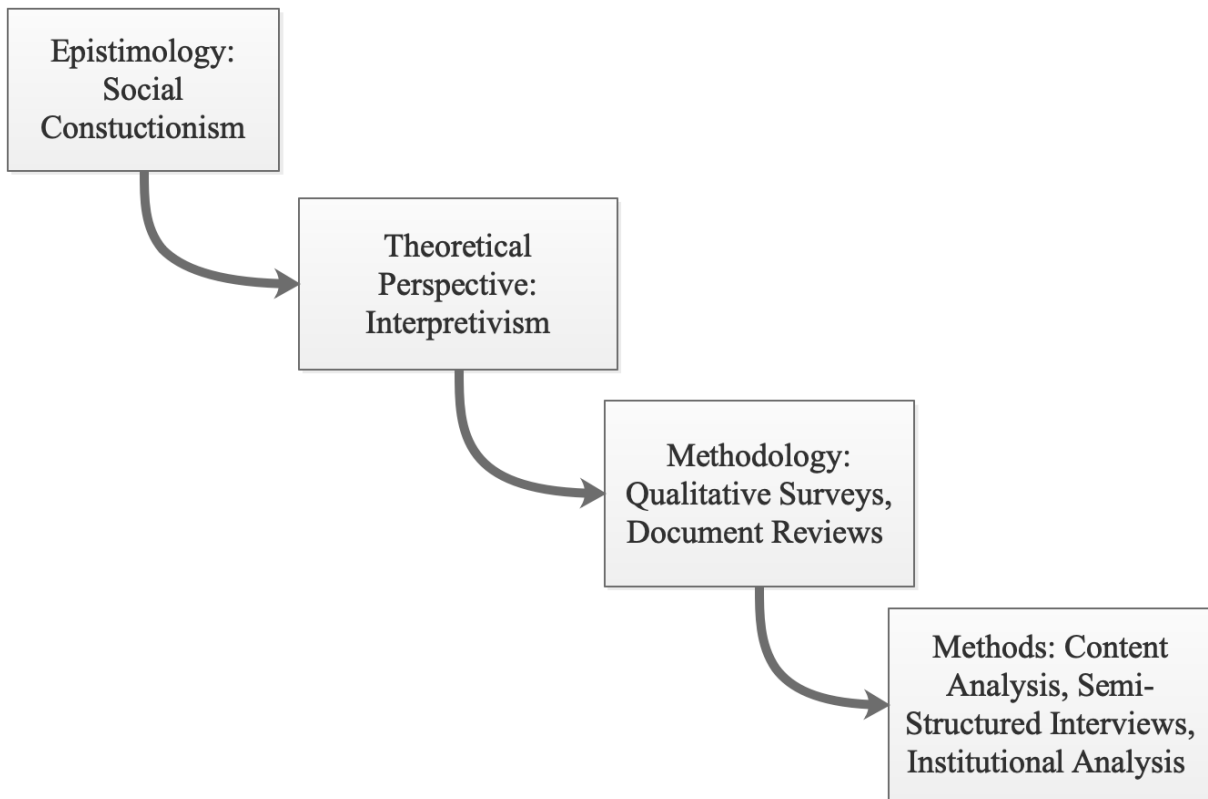
natural areas, tree stands, wet lands). This land (for greenspaces or facilities) is acquired using municipal reserve entitlements provided by the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* of Alberta and consistent with the COE approved *Joint Use Agreement (JUA)* and the *Parks Bylaw 2202*. It does not include public utility lots or roadways. There are references to river valley lands at some points in the dissertation. These lands are typically acquired as environmental reserve land and termed park lands, but river valley park lands are not the subject of this inquiry.

1.2 Methodological Coherence Framework

The approach adopted for this dissertation has four key elements; these are illustrated in Figure 1-1 and described briefly in the sections below. The structure adopted is an interpretation of Crotty (1998)⁹, and includes epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods and materials.

Figure 1-1: Methodological Coherence

⁹ Michael Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage. 1998.
1-9



1.2.1 Epistemology

Epistemology speaks to the theory of knowledge, sometimes referred to colloquially as “how we know what we know.” Social constructionism was chosen as human beings have the capacity to construct reality.¹⁰ Social constructionism is used where the focus includes the collective generation and transmission of meaning.¹¹ Meaning is a product of social interaction. Meaning is not an inherent property of utterances or texts. In order to have meaning, texts need to be contextualized. Meaning is a fragile and contested construction of

¹⁰ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods, 3rd ed.*, (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2002), 96.

¹¹ Crotty, 58.

discourse participants.¹² In the context of this dissertation, utterances such as legislation, policy, and processes are nuanced and understood differently by different social actors with inherently unequal levels of knowledge, power, and agency.

1.2.2 Theoretical Perspective

A theoretical perspective is a philosophical stance informing the methodology to provide a context for the process, and grounding its logic and criteria.¹³ Three example theoretical perspectives are symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and interpretivism. Interpretivism was chosen for this dissertation. Crotty (1998) defined the interpretivist approach in the following manner “...(analysts) looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world.”¹⁴ Interpretivism seeks to create “understanding” rather than “explain” human and social reality, or establish causality; the latter is often found in positivist approaches.

1.2.3 Methodology

Methodology defined by Crotty (1998) is the strategy, plan of action, process, or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods, linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes.¹⁵ In this case, the focus of the dissertation was to identify and understand how land use planning and park decisions were made in land use change processes over the

¹² Johannes Angermuller, Dominique Maingueneau, and Ruth Wodak, *The Discourse Studies Reader: Main Currents in Theory and Analysis*, (Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Publishing Company), 362.

¹³ Crotty, 3.

¹⁴ Crotty, 67.

¹⁵ Crotty, 3.

1960 to 2010 period in dialectical exchanges between social actors. The intent was to identify and understand the roles of social actors in decision-making, how their actions impacted the other, how the roles evolved over time (1960-2010), and what triggered changes.

To that end, it was necessary to identify or document the decisions that were made, particularly those that identified or facilitated the creation of space (e.g., legislation, bylaws, area plans, council reports, policies, legal agreements, master plans, land titles), as well as documents that facilitated place creation (e.g., amenity construction, programming, practices, funding programs) and maintenance of park lands. Documentary evidence was collected beginning in the 1950s that preconfigured space and place creation in Blue Quill and Greenview. Air photographic information for the development time period of Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhoods were collected to identify approximate construction time periods of park amenity construction. These were government-produced documents.

In terms of the public discourse about parks and planning intersections, locally produced park-related research projects, particularly by University of Alberta graduates, were collected that provided an historical source of the issues and discourses between the community, elected officials, and administrators. Second, media reports were collected.

This information was augmented by interviews with social actors engaged in this document preparation or implementation. Particular attention was paid to locate and analyze recondite underlying documents that helped frame and contextualize the interface between and within urban planning and park processes and the social actors within them.¹⁶

¹⁶ Underlying document examples are the *JUA* between the *COE* and school boards and the *Tripartite Lease Agreements* between the *COE*, the *EFCL*, and local community leagues. Unlike municipal development plans or park master plans that are relatively easily located, these agreements are not listed in an easy format to find and interpret.

1.2.4 Methods and Materials

Methods are defined by Crotty (1998) as the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyze data to address the research questions.¹⁷ This dissertation used a multi-pronged approach: case study, historical and contemporary document analysis, social actor face-to-face semi-structured interviews, collection of economic data, and ground-truthing using historic air photographic research and site visits. This amalgam of data was synthesized using the perspectives of a long-time parks planning practitioner, with all of the inherent biases and perspectives while simultaneously undertaking a deep dive into political, planning, and economic theories and trends.

1.3 Case Study

1.3.1 Case Study Defined

Case study was selected as a primary method. It is used when exploring a descriptive or explanatory question, in a real-world context, where the case is bounded and where the contextual conditions are blurred (Yin 2014).¹⁸ Case study methodology is a bounded study of a real-world situation. It is useful for looking at a specific case from various perspectives to understand the complexity and particularity of a case to develop a comprehensive understanding of it. Case study methodology can be used to study, among other things, groups, partnerships, specific events, institutions, programs, policies, relationships, projects, processes, procedures, and decisions.¹⁹ Boundaries for the case are identified to limit the

¹⁷ Crotty,3.

¹⁸ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th Edition. (Washington: Sage, 2014).

¹⁹ Sigrun Kristin Jonasdottir, Carri Hand, Laura Misener and Jan Polgar, “Applying Case Study Methodology to Occupational Science Research,” *Journal of Occupational Science* 25 no. 3, (2018): 394, doi:10.1080/14427591.2018.1480409, 394.

research scope and can be temporal, spatial, or use other concrete delineations.²⁰ Case study can be used to study “how” and “why” questions, as well as questions around “what.”²¹

The bounded entity was the planning processes: both land use planning and park planning institutions. The three case study sites represent planning processes that impact public use and enjoyment of the public realm, where elected officials may be conflicted in their roles as initiators and adjudicators, where multiple social actors are engaged with different levels of knowledge and power, and where legislation, policy, and practices can be interpreted differently by social actors.

In this dissertation, the primary interest is in “how” social actors were engaged in land use and park planning processes and decisions, and what that can mean for planning practitioners and leisure scholars. A case study approach was used, selecting Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhoods’ space and place creation activities over the 1960-2010 period. For the rest of this dissertation, I refer to the two sites together as the Edmonton case study.

1.3.2 Case Study Sites

Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhoods were analyzed. Each are residential neighbourhoods that were planned in the early 1970s, acquired in the urban land use planning institution, and funded, developed, and programmed with and for the community in the parks institution. These two sites represent typical examples of space and place creation between social actors facilitated by legislation, bylaws, area plans, funding arrangements, etc. The park lands base in each neighbourhood was subsequently reduced by elected officials in area

²⁰ Yin, 4.

²¹ Jonasdottir et al, 394.

planning processes in 2006 and 2009 through selective engagement with social actors and opportunities made available in provincial legislation.

On the following pages (Table 1-1) is an historical data table that includes key neighbourhood development milestones and characteristics. The table represents a collection of data from the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and *Mill Woods Development Concepts* (area plans), air photo interpretation, site visits, land titles, and *COE* civic census data. This data table is the base information for data analyses that occurred in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Table 1-1: Neighbourhood Case Study Data

Measure	Blue Quill	Greenview
Area Plan and Name (approval date)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaskitayo Outline Plan (1971) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mill Woods Development Concept (1973)
Planned Area Plan Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12,750²² (1971) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9,000²³ (1973)
2016 Actual Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,617 (Blue Quill only)²⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,643 (Greenview only)²⁵
2005 Actual Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8,558 (2005), including 4,539 in the Blue Quill neighbourhood²⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,806 (2005) including 3,016 in Greenview²⁷
Row Housing Units ²⁸ (2005 municipal census)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 607,²⁹ including 324 owner occupied units and 283 rentals, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 513 in Area 8, including 101 owned and 86 rented, or 18% of

²² COE, “Plans in Effect,”

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/urban_planning_and_design/plans-in-effect.aspx. *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, 45. Population projection includes Blue Quill, Blue Quill Estates and Sweetgrass neighbourhoods. Sub-area population areas not provided.

²³ COE, “Plan in Effect,”

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/urban_planning_and_design/plans-in-effect.aspx *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 34. Projected population includes Greenview and Hillview neighbourhoods. Sub-area population areas not provided.

²⁴ COE, “2016 Municipal Census Results,” Blue Quill Neighbourhood,

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/facts_figures/municipal-census-results.aspx

²⁵ COE, “2016 Municipal Census Results,” Greenview Neighbourhood, Greenview,

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/facts_figures/municipal-census-results.aspx. Greenview de-populated between 2005 and 2016 despite adding approximately 100 people in the pilot project site. Blue Quill populations increased, yet no additional housing was yet available to the community on the surplus parkland sites.

²⁶ The actual 2005 populations in the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* area called “Blue Quill” included 4,539 in Blue Quill, 1,314 in Blue Quill Estates, and 2,705 in Sweetgrass.

²⁷ The actual population in the *Mill Woods Development Concept* is called Area 8, and includes Greenview and Hillview neighbourhoods.

²⁸ MDR (multiple density housing) was used as a surrogate for the same type of housing proposed for first time homebuyers and seniors housing.

²⁹ COE, “*A Community Profile Blue Quill*,” <https://www.edmonton.ca/>, municipal census, 62.

Measure	Blue Quill	Greenview
	and 160 (44/116) in Blue Quill Nhbhd or 8.4% of the housing stock, 16.4% in Blue Quill Estates and 34.7% in Sweet Grass	the housing stock in Greenview, ³⁰ and 326 units in Hillview, including 158 owned and 168 rented equaling 24.5% of the housing stock
Average Income (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55,543, Blue Quill Nhbhd. only³¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74,893 Greenview Nhbhd. only³²
Residential Development Timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of residential construction completed by 1985 (Blue Quill only)³³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 97% of residential construction completed by 1985; 100% by 1990³⁴
Park lands Site Size (original park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13.1 ha, includes greenspace, land for community-funded facilities, and land for 3 provincially funded school sites, no natural area parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10.7 ha, includes COE-funded greenspace, land for community funded facilities, land for two provincially funded schools, no natural areas parks
Park lands Assembly ³⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late 70s, early 80s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late 70s, early 80s
Amenities / Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Greenspace</u>: 10 bookable soccer/football fields, 1 baseball field plus 1 training station plus 2 playgrounds, cost shared with the community • <u>Community 100% funded facilities</u>: community hall, outdoor ice rink, 3 tennis courts, 1 tennis half court (training), 2 basketball courts, sliding hill, unstructured space and parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Greenspace</u>: 5 bookable soccer/football fields, 2 baseball fields plus 2 training stations, 1 playground, community hall, unstructured space, outdoor ice rink, tree planting plus community events • <u>Community 100% funded facilities</u>: Greenview facility was the original home of the <i>Woodvale Community League</i> • <u>School facility</u>: Each would have a gymnasium, classrooms

³⁰ COE, "A Community Profile Greenview," COE, <https://www.edmonton.ca/>, 2005 municipal census data, 62.

³¹ COE, "A Community Profile Blue Quill," 2005 municipal census data, 73.

³² COE, "A Community Profile Greenview," 2005 federal census data, 73.

³³ COE, "A Community Profile Blue Quill," 2001 federal census data, 58.

³⁴ COE, "A Community Profile Greenview," 2001 federal census data, 58.

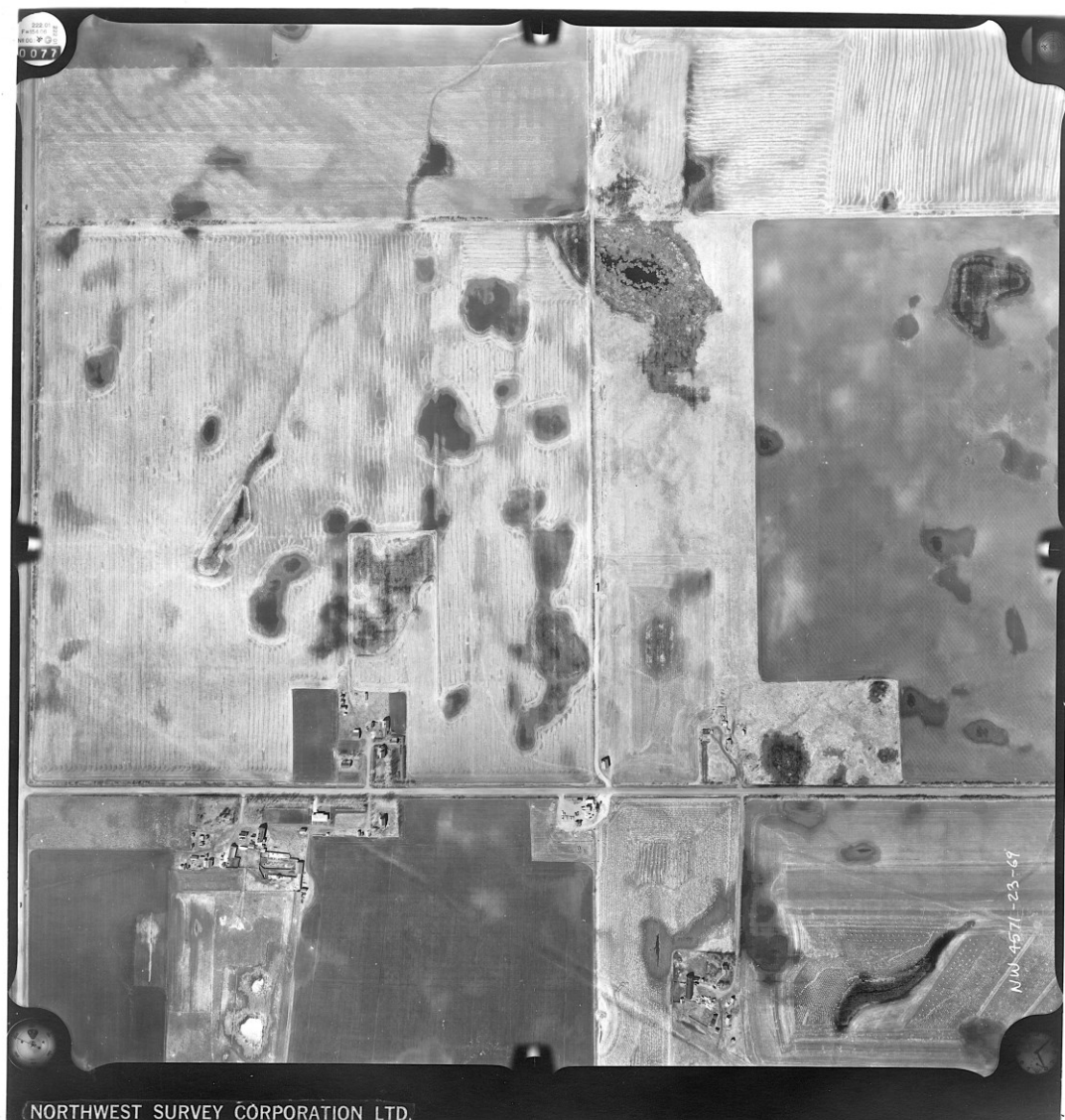
³⁵ Identified by review of land titles.

Measure	Blue Quill	Greenview
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>School facility</u>: Each would have a gymnasium, classrooms and parking lots available for community use at night, weekends, and in the summer, as per the <i>JUA</i> between the school boards and the <i>COE</i> 	and parking lots available for community use at night, weekends and in the summer, as per the <i>JUA</i> between the school boards and the <i>COE</i>
Schools / Educational Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Teresa Catholic Elementary, Kindergarten to Grade 6, French, English, and Spanish programs, constructed in the early 1980s • Two other schools not funded by the <i>GoA</i> • Schools each serve multiple neighbourhoods in SW Edmonton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenview Public Elementary School: Kindergarten to Grade 6 includes dual-stream English and French immersion program, 400+ students, constructed in the 1980s • Schools each serve multiple neighbourhoods in SE Edmonton
Community League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Blue Quill Community League</i>, which serves Blue Quill, Blue Quill Estates, Sweet Grass neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Woodvale Community League</i>, which serves multiple neighbourhoods
Park Sites Rezoned (Repurposed) (1ha per site)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two sites: northeast and southeast corner of site, one in each of 2006 and 2009 were combined into a larger combined into northeast corner of site. The combined sites will be used for market-valued First Time Homebuyers and seniors housing programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One site: southwest corner, 2006. The site produced 43 market value row housing units targeted to dual-income professional couples and families
Public Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 site: no • 2009 site: yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 site: no
Area Plan Amendment Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006 site and 2009 site were approved in 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006
Housing Constructed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under construction beginning in 2017 – incomplete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008

Figure 1-2 is an air photograph of the Blue Quill Area prior to development in 1971. The area was largely agricultural fields. The photograph is the area approximating the Blue

Quill school and park site. The darker areas are low-lying areas. There is a rural grid road network and sporadic farm housing and operations.

Figure 1-2: Blue Quill Area (1973)



Source: COE Air Photograph, Volume 23, Frame #69, 1973, COE Archives

The Blue Quill neighbourhood was included in the 1971 approval of the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*. Blue Quill residents enjoyed a geographically centrally located park site that

included sports fields, sliding hills, tree and shrub planting, park signs, a community hall facility, parking, playgrounds, and plazas, as well as multiple school sites: Blue Quill had three planned schools. The 2016 civic census lists the Blue Quill population as 4,619.³⁶ Low-density single-family home residential development is common, but Blue Quill also included multi-family low rise (<5 floors) rental apartment development.

Blue Quill is bounded by 23 Avenue on the south, 111 Street on the east, 119 Street on the west, and the pipeline right of way on the north. St. Therese Catholic Elementary School is resident in the southern part of the west side of the site. The Blue Quill Community League is immediately east and shares parking by agreement. It should also be noted that Blue Quill Community League had previously experienced a loss of a surplus school site to residential development in a residential area immediately west of Blue Quill (i.e., Blue Quill Estates), an area that was part of the *Blue Quill Community League*.

Figure 1-3 shows the area as developed in the most recent air photograph available online. The neighbourhood boundary is shown as a dashed line. Urban landscape development totally surrounds the Blue Quill neighbourhood. The boxed area to the east is the site of the Century Park redevelopment located in the Ermineskin neighbourhood. The area with a dashed circular area to the west is the location of the Blue Quill Estates surplus school site previously redeveloped for housing. The Blue Quill School and Park site is located in the approximate north central part of the neighbourhood.

³⁶ COE, “2016 Municipal Census Results,” Blue Quill Neighbourhood.

Figure 1-3: Blue Quill Neighbourhood and Area (2018)



Source: Google Maps 2018, Accessed November 15, 2018

Next, a closer view of the Blue Quill school and park site is provided in Figure 1-4. This air photo was taken as the construction of the combined housing site was occurring in the northeast corner of the site that was formerly used for sports fields. The St. Theresa school site is located on the south-central part of the park site, with the community league facilities immediately to the east. The utility right of way located on the north boundary of the site is clearer in this picture. It was developed with a trail and landscaping that connected Blue Quill to other neighbourhoods. The housing complex adjacent to the park is rental housing providing mid- to lower-income residential options.

Figure 1-4: Blue Quill School and Park Site (2018)



Source: City of Edmonton 2018, Online, Accessed November 15, 2018

Figure 1-5 is an air photograph taken in 1973 of the Greenview area. The area was predominately agricultural fields. The area (on the next page) includes a grid rural road pattern with sporadic residential areas. Low-lying areas shown in the photograph are darker in colour and may have been permanent or temporary wetlands.

Figure 1-5: Greenview Area (1973)



Source: COE Air Photograph, Volume 22, Frame #119, 1973, COE Archives

Greenview residents had a geographically centrally located park site that included sports fields, sliding hills, tree and shrub planting, park signs, a community hall facility, parking, playgrounds, and plazas, as well as two school sites. The 2016 civic census lists

Greenview’s population as 3,687.³⁷ Low-density single-family home residential development is common. The Greenview neighbourhood was included in the approval of the *Mill Woods Development Concept Plan* in 1973. Both neighbourhoods were built out by 1990, Blue Quill by 1985.

Figures 1-6 (2007) and 1-7 (2017) on the following pages are air photographs of the Greenview neighbourhood and the school and park sites. Greenview neighbourhood is physically bounded by 38 Avenue to the south, Mill Woods Golf Course and Mill Creek Ravine to the north, 66 Street to the west, and 50 Street to the east. Greenview was entirely single detached housing prior to 2007.

Figure 1-6: Greenview Neighbourhood



Source Google Maps, 2018, Accessed November 15, 2018

³⁷ COE, “2016 Municipal Census Results,” Greenview Neighbourhood

Figure 1-7: Greenview School and Park Site



Source: City of Edmonton, 2018, online, Air Photograph, Accessed November 15, 2018

1.4 Data Collection

1.4.1 Document Sources and Collections

Published textual data collection in the form of documents such as legislation, general or municipal development plans, bylaws, legal agreements, strategic plans, policies, park master plans, funding agreements, and council meeting minutes were collected either online or in the form of hard copies that the primary author had previously acquired while working as a

practitioner, or located in the *COE* Archives when originally approved documents were required. Each source was in the public domain and is discussed in detail.³⁸

Planning legislation (e.g., *Municipal Government Act or MGA*) is available on the *Government of Alberta* (or *GoA*) website. general plans (GPs), or in the current vernacular, municipal development plans (MDPs), are required by the *GoA* and are high-level policy documents that provide broad direction for both the urban form and strategic policy direction, including for parks and natural areas. These documents have been revised on a somewhat regular basis since 1961. Municipal development plans are approved as bylaws by Edmonton's City Council. All planning and development of all kinds, including for parks, must support and be based on the broad direction of the GP or MDP. These types of plans are initiated by administrators and/or elected officials and include extensive public engagement, such as a public hearing prior to approval. The GP/MDPs are city-wide plans.

There are four key bylaws that relate specifically to these case study sites. The *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, is the area plan that was adopted as a bylaw by City Council in 1971 after a public hearing. It locates and describes the parks system for the entire area plan and includes the Blue Quill neighbourhood and Blue Quill school and park site.³⁹ The *Mill Woods Development Concept* was adopted by City Council as a bylaw in 1971 and describes the park system for the entire area plan and includes the Greenview school and park site.

³⁸ Care has been taken to describe how to acquire these documents for two reasons. First, it may provide other researchers an understanding of how to locate these documents for other studies. Second, the summary identifies the inherent complexity of both the hierarchy of documents and the challenge for those not familiar with planning jargon.

³⁹ Refer to the glossary for definitions of area plans, outline plans, area structure plans, and neighbourhood structure plans. For the purposes of this study, an area plan is synonymous with an outline plan.

The area plans specifically locate the school and park sites on a map and identify the approximate land mass and program (e.g., schools, sports fields) for each one. These plans are amended to remain current to the needs of the day. Current state COE bylaws, such as the *Municipal Development Plan*, the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, and the *Mill Woods Development Concept*, are available on line but the original versions are not; hard copies of the original area plans were found in the *COE Archives* for comparison purposes. Older versions of municipal development plans were found on the internet, but not through the *COE* website.

The third bylaw of note is the *COE's* overall *LUB*. This bylaw provides yet another level of detail for all types of proposed land uses including parks that defines site-specific requirements. It is, in effect, an implementing bylaw of the GPs/MDPs and area plans. The fourth bylaw of consequence to this analysis is the *Bylaw 2202 Parks Bylaw* (or *Parks Bylaw*), which is a broad-based document that drives all activities (i.e., planning, construction, maintenance, animation) of the parks functions no matter where they are administratively managed within the *COE*. The *Parks Bylaw* includes the definition of park lands.

Council reports are available online, including older copies that are archived. These represent documented public decision-making. Each municipality has its own formats and standards. Supporting material for these reports are stored off-site and can be retrieved with a few days' notice from the Office of the City Clerk. Online records include the minutes, decisions, council reports, documents, and any materials provided by state or non-state actors. Most council reports are available for public review unless they are "in-camera" reports that are kept confidential, including any recommendations made within them. The vast majority of council reports are prepared by the administration. In rare occasions, council reports are prepared by elected officials.

Municipalities are not obligated by the *MGA* to provide a complete description of issues, concerns, policy impacts, or alternatives in council reports. Council reports are not very accessible, hard to locate, written in legalese and in different formats. For example, as of the time of writing, in Edmonton, to find council meeting records, you have to find the *COE* website, click the “City Government” tab, click the “Council and Council Meeting Minutes” tab, know which committee or council meeting type you are seeking, click the “Agendas and Minutes” tab for that committee, know the date of the meeting, and then click on that tab. The next step is to find the item listed on the agenda for that day and click on the item to find the council report. For items that are before 2017 (as of January 2019), you need to click on an archive tab, look for the year, and repeat the process. Online records go back to 1995. There is no suggestion as to how to find records before 1995, although there is an email address available to contact the Office of the City Clerk through which, presumably, older records could be found. Having said that, finding access to public records from 24 years earlier is quite remarkable, provided you know what to look for. By and large, the *COE* does a good job of record retention and retrieval.

COE strategic plans (e.g., the Ways Series) are available online. The most current municipal development plan, *The Way Ahead*, was on the *COE* website, along with the *COE*'s other strategic documents (e.g., *The Way We Grow*, *The Way We Move*, *The Way We Live*, *The Way We Green*, *The Way We Finance*). These documents were essentially a new addition to city discourses in the 2000s.

COE policies available online are listed either by name alphabetically or by number. Superseded policies have been removed. Policies guide principled administrative and implementation directions approved by City Council. Four policies are particularly important

with respect to the issues of co-production of parks in this study: (a) *Policy C109 – Joint Use of School and Parks* (1980); (b) *Policy C110 – City Community League Relations* (1980); (c) *Policy – C187 Agreements with Non-Profit Organizations for the Cooperative Operation of Recreation Facilities* (1981); and, (d) *Surplus School Criteria – Guidelines for Determining Adequacy of Neighbourhood Park Land* (1994). Item (d) is a council-endorsed practice that is important to this dissertation because it required a quantitative and qualitative recreation needs assessment developed with the community prior to determining the surplus status of school and park sites.

There are two legal agreements negotiated with partners to guide implementation activities of the COE administration that impact park lands. The *Joint Use Agreement* (or *JUA*) between three local publicly funded school boards (Public, Catholic, Francophone)⁴⁰ and the COE shares the planning, design, and construction of school and park sites for the collective benefit of the community. The *Tri-Partite Agreement* is between the COE, the *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL)*, and *JUA* partners to develop and program school and park sites with individual community leagues. It is within the lease agreements that community leagues construct and operate community halls, outdoor ice skating rinks, batting cages, and tennis courts within their lease areas primarily at their cost.

There are three funding programs to share park development costs and operations. The *Neighbourhood Park Development Program (NPDP)* shares playground, plaza, lighting, and walkway costs, with individual community leagues. *Partners in Parks*⁴¹ is a program where

⁴⁰ The original *JUA* did not include the Francophone Board.

⁴¹ As a practitioner, I was involved in working with community and administrative social actors implementing *NPDP*, the *JUA*, *Partners in Parks*, and I was the project lead on the development of the *2006-2016 UPMP*.

individuals and groups can fund the development and maintenance of park lands unique to the site or the group. There is a *Community Facility Partnerships* Grant to help support community league repairs and expansions. On an annual basis, community leagues receive an annual operating subsidy. All of the above represent examples of initiatives or agreements to develop, redevelop, program, and maintain indoor and outdoor park lands facilities with a range of community and state partners.

The *2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan (UPMP)* is available online; older park master plans' versions were available in the library or I had personal copies. Park master plans are documents that provide specific direction for the types of parks and park systems envisioned, as well as for their programming and operational direction. Integral to each park master plan, the first concept of a park hierarchy or typology was identified in 1912. In 1955, there was a master-plan-like document entitled *Report on the Active and Passive Recreation Park and Open Space Facilities*. There have been multiple park system plans approved by Edmonton's City Council over the study time period: 1970, 1979, 1985, and 2006. These documents were used by park administrators to craft the park systems in each area plan since the 1970s. They also provide insights as to how the *COE* and community will work together in terms of development, programming, and maintenance.

Finally, the *COE Archives* had hard copy versions of air photographs dating back to the early 1920s; those representative of the early 1970s were digitized and included in this dissertation. Air photograph information to track park development rates is also available online dating back to 2007.

1.4.2 Social Actor Semi-Structured Interviews

Social actors were identified based on my knowledge and experience inherent to having participated in a parks planning process over 29+ years and from my engagement in the surplus school initiative. Purposeful maximum variation and saturation sampling techniques were used for semi-structured interviews with participants directly engaged in the planning processes (Bloomberg and Volpe 2008; Mayan 2009).⁴² Interviews were conducted in the fall of 2016 and winter of 2017.

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 27 participants consisting of elected officials, senior administrators, frontline administrators, community nongovernmental organizations (or NGOs), community members, and a provincial legislation planner.

Questions asked of participants included the following: What were participant experiences? Who did they talk to? When? What information was shared with each? What did they hear?

The materials were examined to understand (a) the discursive practices, including discursive silences and their impact on knowledge; (b) the power relationships in those discursive practices; (c) the impact of the discursive practices from different angles or perspectives (those of senior administrators, planners, elected officials, developers, and community); and, (d) if those discourses were connected or disconnected, consistent or inconsistent, to legislation, plans, processes, or practices. An ethics application for the entire study including interviews was reviewed and approved by the University of Alberta ethics review board in 2016. Interviews were conducted at the location and time convenient for participants. A

⁴² Maria J. Mayan, *Essentials of Qualitative Inquiry*, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press. 2009, 64-67; Linda Dale Bloomberg and Marie Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A Roadmap From Beginning to End*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. 2008, 191.

research summary was provided, and they were asked to sign off on the use of the interview for academic purposes and they complied. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and reviewed for accuracy. Participants could also withdraw comments made at their discretion. Participants have been emailed twice with their transcripts. I made a small number of revisions based on the participants' comments on the transcripts. The number of interviews was less important than the diversity of perspectives. I looked for areas of concurrence and discrepant information. A complete roster of participants is summarized in Table 1-2.

Table 1-2: Semi-Structured Interview Participants

Fictitious name	Role	Interview date		Fictitious name	Role	Interview date
Mike	Community Rep. from Greenview	Sept. 10, 2016		Garth	School Board Planner	Nov. 22, 2016
Steve	Community Rep. from Greenview	Sept. 15, 2016		Gerri	School Board Planner	Nov. 22, 2016
John	Community Recreation Coordinator	Sept. 15, 2016		Devin	Home Builder	Nov. 25, 2016
Meg	Community Recreation (retired)	Sept. 26, 2016		Makela	Comm. Rep from Blue Quill	Nov. 25, 2016
Nathan	Provincial MGA Legislation Planner	Sept. 27, 2016		Barry	Community Rep from Blue Quill	Nov. 30, 2016
Eve	Community Non-Gov't Organization	Oct. 11, 2016		Lloyd	Community Rep from Blue Quill	Nov. 30, 2016
Cindy	Land Use File Planner	Oct. 23, 2016		Hal	Community Rep from Housing NGO	Dec. 2, 2016
Rick	Parks Planner (retired)	Oct. 27, 2016		Frank	Elected Official	Dec. 20, 2016
Leah	Community Recreation Coordinator	Nov. 8, 2016		Farley	Elected Official	Dec. 21, 2016

Fictitious name	Role	Interview date		Fictitious name	Role	Interview date
Phil	Land Management Planner, Corp Properties	Nov. 11, 2016		Bevan	Elected Official	Feb. 23, 2017
Ian	Elected Official for Greenview	Nov. 13, 2016		Marcel	Senior Administrator	Feb. 2017
Stan	Parks Planner	Nov. 16, 2016		Syd	Elected Official	Feb. 24, 2017
Mason	Planning Consultant	Nov. 18, 2016		Don	Senior Administrator	March 2, 2017
				Neil	Senior Administrator	March 24, 2017

1.5 Data Analysis

1.5.1 Institutionalism as an Analytical Tool

Theoretical frames are analytical tools that both provide clarity and shape the analysis (Bird 2008).⁴³

Theoretical frameworks are not benign. Their purpose is not simply to help guide empirical research; they will, in many respects, dictate the types of conclusions drawn from the collected data. They serve a descriptive, analytical and normative function in any written piece. In public policy and for those interested in examining the state and its relationship with society, different theoretical frameworks ultimately make normative claims on the ability - and desirability - of the state to solve collective action problems effectively.⁴⁴

⁴³ Malcolm G Bird, "The Rise of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario and the Demise of the Alberta Liquor Control Board: Why such Divergent Outcomes?" NR43886, Carleton University (Canada), 2008.

⁴⁴ Bird, 42.

Institutional theory was chosen as a means to understand how social actors were engaged in land use and parks decision-making. For this dissertation, I adopt the definition of institutional theory by Healey (1999):⁴⁵

The term refers to the embedding of specific practices in a wider context of social relations that cut across the landscape of formal organizations, and to the active processes by which individual actors in social contexts construct their ways of thinking and acting. It does not refer to the formal structures or procedures of public institutions as in the traditional public administration review. An institution, therefore, is not understood as an organization as such, but as an established way^[SEP]of addressing certain social issues, for example, in the relationships through which what we understand as family are^[SEP]produced and reproduced, or, on a more micro-scale, the ways in which people go about community organizing activities.⁴⁶

Four primary characteristics of institutional theory contribution to planning theory was identified by Healey (2005)⁴⁷ that allow a broader understanding of decision-making. First, institutional analyses emphasize the social context that shape individual action. Second, these social contexts are not defined or captured by an account of formal organizations. Third, the focus of the initiative is not the *quality* of the decision, but rather the interactions through which a decision emerges. Fourth, the institutional context constitution of action promotes or constrains the potential for social change, including material and cultural change.

There are two streams of institutional theories: old and new institutionalism. Old institutionalism is based on political theory and on the formal institutions of public administration with a more apparent structural perspective, and it tends to be more descriptive

⁴⁵ Patsey Healey, "Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 19 (1999): 111-121.

⁴⁶ Healey, "Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places," 112-113.

⁴⁷ Patsey Healey "On the Project of Institutional Transformation in the Planning Field. Commentary on the Contributions." *Planning Theory* 4, no. 3 (2005): 302-303. doi: 10.1177/1473095205058498

in nature. New institutionalism is instead focussed on how social and political, if not cultural, institutions are created, how they matter, and how they evolve over time.⁴⁸ The roles of all types of social actors are more prominent in terms of how they engage in decision-making. There are four types of neo-institutional theories: rationale actor institutionalism, social institutionalism, Historical Institutionalism,⁴⁹ and recently, and discursive institutionalism.⁵⁰ This dissertation uses two theoretical frames; sociological and historical.

A sociological institutionalist perspective, with its origins in organizational theory in sociology argues that institutions are “not just formal rules, procedures or norms, but the symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that provide the ‘frames^[SEP] of meaning’ guiding human action.”⁵¹ An SRI “perspective” argues that changes to institutions occur through shared understandings that shape action. Social actors engaged in process influence one another, and the institutions themselves evolve as a result. Institutions tend to change slowly as broader cultural systems and knowledge of them evolve incrementally. Socio-cultural realities provide conditions that shape understandings of power and agency. Sociological institutionalism is less focussed on overt political power and more focussed on systemic and hegemonic political power (Sorensen 2017).⁵² A particular form of sociological

⁴⁸ Andre Sorensen, “New Institutionalism and Planning Theory,” from: *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory* ed. Michael Gunder, Ali Madnipour and Vanessa Watson, 23 August 2017, 251. Abingdon: Routledge. doi: 10.4324/9781315696072.ch20.

⁴⁹ Sorensen (2017), 253.

⁵⁰ Dubi Kanengisser, “How Ideas Change and How they Change Institutions: a Memetic Theoretical Framework,” Paper presented at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., August 28-31, 2014.

⁵¹ Peter A. Hall and R. C. R. Taylor. “Political science and the three new institutionalisms.” *Political Studies* 44, no. 5 (1996): 947.

⁵² Sorenson (2017), 253.

institutionalism, Social Relational Institutionalism perspective (Van den Broeck 2011)⁵³ has been adopted for this analysis and is defined more fully in Chapter 3 to describe how parks and land use institutionalization occurred in the 1960-2010 period. Chapter 4 also used SRI to explore a specific institutionalization event that occurred in 2006 and 2009.

A Historical Institutional perspective (HI) with its roots in political science and historical social science is focussed on formal and informal rules and practices embedded in the administrative structure or political economy (Sorenson 2018).⁵⁴ Rules tend to act as shape-forming or distributional instruments that regulate social and political processes. HI allows an analysis and description of structural elements (e.g., legislation), directive elements (e.g., strategies, plans, policies), and mobilizing elements (e.g., funding programs) within broader economic, social, cultural and political setting. Institutions change through what is called punctuated equilibriums or critical junctures. Institutions emerge through political conflicts that shape power and agency of participants. Power itself is central to the formation of institutions and institutional change, and those forces act to reproduce their own perspectives (Sorensen 2017).⁵⁵ Sorensen's concept of Historical Institutionalism applied to

⁵³ Pieter Van den Broeck, "Analyzing Social Innovation through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach." In *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for Change*, 52-78 by Stijn Oosterlynck, Jef Van den Broeck, Louis Albrechts, Frank Moulaert and Ann Verhetsel, 2011. New York; Routledge.

⁵⁴ Andre Sorensen, "Institutions and Urban Space: Land, Infrastructure, and Governance in the Production of Urban Property." *Planning Theory & Practice* 19, no. 1, 2018: 21-38. doi: 10.1080/14649357.2017.1408136.

⁵⁵ Sorensen (2017), 253.

the production of urban space is defined in more detail in Sorensen (2018).⁵⁶ HI was used in Chapter 5.

Linking the two analytical approaches, the SRI perspective resonated with my practitioner experience working with community social actors in park animation activities (i.e., development, programming, maintenance) that co-produced landscapes with the City over time. HI resonated with my practitioner experience working with rules and structures (i.e., strategic plans, area plans, and policies) that were managed or manipulated by political forces to achieve outcomes. This dual analytical lens provide an opportunity to: (a) differentiate between two functional types of urban planning (i.e., land use planning and parks planning); (b) connect land use planning and parks planning; (c) connect parks and planning theory to parks and planning practice; and, (d) describe the underlying tensions inherent in seeking to simultaneously accommodate socially valued metrics and outcomes with market driven planning processes metrics and outcomes, both of which are defined in *GoA* planning legislation (i.e., *MGA*).

1.5.2 Synthesis

With respect to planning process information, data discovery was focussed on participant descriptions and timing of the process, relationships to legislation, relationship to ownership, how social actors are engaged, and transparency in the process. Data discovery also included specific direction, if any, with respect to disposition of public lands. It is within these planning processes where parks are identified, created, and surplussed.

There are multiple challenges in undertaking this analysis. There is no single depository of existing and historical documents. Nor is there clearly understood nomenclature

⁵⁶ Sorensen (2018), 21-38.

for the documents themselves (e.g., outline plans, area plans, and development concepts). There is a relative priority between produced documents but is known primarily by elected officials and administrators. There are limited mechanisms to mediate priorities between competing directives or needs. Interpretation of documents is subjective based on the social actor background, education and experience.

Interpreting these documents are challenging as they are written in legalese or planning jargon and with a specific purpose or philosophy of the day. The documents are embedded with different levels of discretion for social actors, they have a minimal hierarchical framework with no obvious way to mediate between competing objectives and outcomes. The same text can be interpreted differently by social actors based on their knowledge and experience with the documents. There is no accessible central depository of documents and no specific idea of how they are *collectively* implemented. The venues of contestation occur at public meetings, public hearings, and in boardrooms, often representing symptoms of complexity and, most often, confusion. Finally, the usefulness of council reports as tools of knowledge creation and dissemination, the public facing expression of City Council actions, can also be limited by: (a) the lack of requirement in the *GoA* planning legislation to identify alternatives perspectives or options that were considered by the Administration or elected officials; (b) compliance with policy; or, (c) agreement or disagreement of the community.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ The City Manager decides if alternative perspectives are shared on Council reports. The City Manager is one of two employees or report directly to City Council. All other city employees ultimately report to the City Manager through a hierarchical administrative structure.

Data analysis varied by chapter depending on the theory or analytical tools embraced and is described more fully in each one. However, each study had the following guardrails that comprised the data analysis. First, the documentary data (e.g., legislation, area plans, park master plans, bylaws, legal agreements) were initially reviewed to foreground the interview data. Second, social actors interviewed were broadly defined and included actors who would provide a lens from all sides of the processes (i.e., elected officials, community members, senior and frontline administrators, developers). Third, the interviews looked at how social actors were engaged in parks and planning processes. Fourth, the analysis essentially connected the documentary data (e.g., legislation, plans) with the interview data. This required a significant amount of back and forth between sources. Fifth, and finally, the analysis sought to find and reflect on literature that had either similar or discrepant outcomes elsewhere, in similar and dissimilar legislative settings and in similar and dissimilar social settings. Detailed data collection is summarized in the appendices. The analysis took advantage of my practitioner experiences and latent and re-emerging academic research skills, with a healthy dose of self-reflection to interrogate my biases, described in more detail in the next section.

Through what I would loosely describe as a form of coding, over time the textual data of all kinds, including government-produced documents, air photograph interpretation, public discourses, and interviews with social actors, began to coalesce into temporal themes that reflected alignment between economic and political trends with evolving roles between social actors that impacted both how space- (land use planning) and place- (animation, programming, maintenance) creation processes occurred on parkland throughout the 1960 to 2010 period.

1.6 Data Rigor and Validity

The quality and veracity of qualitative inquiry is largely dependent on the reflexivity of the researcher, which enhances validity and extends knowledge creation. Jootun, McGhee, and Marland (2009)⁵⁸ define reflexivity in the following way:

The continuous process of reflection by the researcher on his or her values, preconceptions, behaviour or presence and those of the participants, which can affect the interpretation of responses. This involves researchers recognizing that they are part of the social world under study.⁵⁹

Past experiences and knowledge would influence my research design, operationalization, and writing, which has benefits and built-in biases, along with my reemerging academic research skills. Through the process, the research approach developed underlying guardrails. I have a strong social justice perspective that was fundamental to my philosophical grounding, which in part led me to return to academia. As I became more cognizant of my biases, I expanded the review of the literature and looked for alternative explanations of data to inform my interpretations. This is an ongoing tension in my work that is both useful and arduous.

I cannot say there was a single “aha” moment per se that led to the findings and the conclusions. It was an iterative process, starting with my thesis proposal and ultimately through the composition of the document. This meant writing, rewriting, and rewriting again, in pieces and as a whole simultaneously. That process included keeping a research journal of my thoughts and frustrations. The dissertation writing required routinely revisiting my data sources to check interpretations. In some cases, it was necessary to look at original documentation (e.g., area plans) to see if the documents had changed from those that were

⁵⁸ Dev Jootun, Gerry McGhree, and Glen R. Marland, “Reflexivity: Promoting Rigour in Qualitative Research,” *Nursing Standard* 23, no. 23 (2009): 42-26.

⁵⁹ Jootun, McGhree, and Marland, 42.

originally approved. Each piece built on the other, and it was a back-and-forth process through to the end as each piece was crafted. It was this process that made the entire dissertation preparation a reflective piece from start to finish.

Deggs and Fernandez (2018)⁶⁰ identified purposeful reflection questions doctoral students should use when conducting their research: research setting and access, examining norms and cultures, positionality of the research subjects, and positionality of the observer.⁶¹ In terms of the research setting, I first came with some built-in biases that were personal and professional. I entered the research setting with the thought that changes to the park lands surplus process of the 2000s was fundamentally flawed based on a general notion of collaboration with the community that the revised process violated. But to be fair, those notions were more feeling based than data based. In my proposal defense, my advisors saw that flaw and recommended the use of a theoretical framework to analyze processes. Second, it soon became apparent that entering the research setting was easier than it would be for non-practitioner scholars because it was easy to locate documents and process participants, and the ability to do so was a benefit. Interestingly, all the participants were incredibly open to my questions and queries, even if some did not agree with my practitioner perspectives that they had gleaned from our previous work together. Upon commencement of the interview process, it was assumed that state actor participants would react to interview in a guarded manner. In fact, the opposite proved to be true.

⁶⁰ David Deggs and Frank Hernandez, "Enhancing the Value of Qualitative Field Notes Through Purposeful Reflection," *The Qualitative Report* 23, no. 10 (2018): 2552-2560, Retrieved from <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol23/iss10/18>.

⁶¹ Deggs and Hernandez, 2552.

The culture and norms of the research setting were established essentially through legislation, policy, and knowledge creation and dissemination designed by political and administrative actors. This left the community potentially in a position of reduced power and agency, but not entirely. The community can and has influenced processes and development of school and park lands. It is here where the SRI perspective was helpful to understand outcomes.

The positionality of research subjects was front and centre in the research. In selecting participants, the following criteria was used: functional (e.g., parks, housing, land use), positional (e.g., frontline staff vs. senior managers), and type of actor categories (e.g., community, government) of participants, all based on participation in land use planning or parks institutions. Interviews proceeded from the outside to the inside, and from frontline staff to senior managers and politicians. This was done for two reasons: first, I was concerned that senior managers may direct staff to limit interactions with me and I wanted to avoid that potential; second, I wanted to understand what frontline experiences were before reaching up higher in organizations or groups to help me confirm or query those higher up in the political and administrative power structure. There was a remarkable concurrence in data and no effort to hide politically generated actions. It should be noted here that the names of the survey participants were anonymized to protect their identities; however, in citations throughout where I draw from their thoughts, I have noted their “role” (i.e., elected official) in order to reflect their positionality.

With respect to the primary researcher’s positionality, an opening monologue to the interviews stated that the study was seeking to understand how councils make land use decisions for equally valid programs and outcomes (e.g., parks or housing) and to explore how

they experienced the initiative process. Only after completing interviews were some of my own personal perspectives shared, but only if prompted. Participants had the opportunity to withdraw comments before the transcripts were used. Only two participants requested changes which were accommodated. Hiding a researcher's positionality was not intended, nor possible, nor even desirable. A practitioner's vantage point was uniquely positioned to understand participant perspectives based on knowledge of documents and process norms. Within that, the interviews probed positions, but I as the interviewer did not argue with interviewee's perspectives per se.

As the research products evolved, I began reaching out to research participants to share my preliminary findings. This was not as helpful as I thought it might be, in part because I was sharing information in an academic format. In retrospect, this was an example of seeking to bridge practice and legislative process and academic theories and analysis. I found that one individual I checked in with prodded me to think more deeply about the role of path dependency, and I tweaked my research accordingly. I was not looking for concurrence with my findings, just feedback. Interestingly, my queries revealed a lack of knowledge from government social actors in some areas, which surprised me; I then realized I had the benefit of chatting with multiple social actors to which they had no access. I chatted informally with both the people I had interviewed and the people that were part of the process but who had not been interviewed. That process continued right up to my defense.

1.7 Practice Underpinnings and Observations

My professional life was preceded by my initial academic studies that led me to receive an undergraduate degree in geography and urban and environmental studies (B.A.) from Brock

University (1975-1979) and a master's degree in urban and regional planning (M.Pl.) from Queen's University (1979-1981, convocated 1985).

I began my professional career in 1982 and spent 32 years as a professional planner, including 29 years employed in parks and open space planning (e.g., passive and active spaces, natural area, schools and river valley plus roadways and storm pond soft landscaping). Activities or tasks I led, coordinated, or participated in, with examples provided, included park site identification in area plans (e.g., *Riverview Area Structure Plan*), site design (Alex Decoteau Park), park construction and construction approvals, maintenance, programming, redevelopment of existing park lands (e.g., Jackie Parker Park Dog Off Leash), purchase of park lands (e.g., river valley lands), disposition/sale of park lands (Belvedere surplus schools site), capital and operating budgets (2014-2018), and bricks and mortar facility construction or reconstruction (e.g., Overlanders Soccer Centre, Telus Field, Commonwealth Stadium Recreation Centre), in addition to policy and major park systems plan development and implementation (e.g., the *Area Strategy* in 1992, the *River Valley Alliance Plan of Action* in 2005, the *COE's 2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan* in 2006, and *Strathcona County's Environment and Open Space Plan* in 2009).

Social actors engaged in the above activities included community leagues, communities of interest (e.g., ice users, dog off-leash community, sports council, disabled community, etc.), park users, developers, consultants, elected officials, and internal staff at all levels (e.g., frontline staff to senior managers) and functions (e.g., transportation, drainage). I also spent three years of my misspent professional youth as a transportation planner. Twenty-nine of the 32 years of my employment were with the *COE* and three years were with Strathcona County, both in Alberta.

With respect to surplus schools initiative, I coordinated and composed the *COE* parks planning response to the 2009 surplus school site internal analysis and had previously worked with communities using the original policy structure that included community engagement with the Belvedere St. William school site surplus and the Overlander neighbourhood surplus school site. The Belvedere site was purchased by the *COE* and retained as greenspace. The Overlander site was retained and later redeveloped for a four-field indoor soccer centre. I retired at the end of 2013 and began graduate studies in January 2014.

I had the benefit of working in a parks department planning and operational setting for 29 years, which gave me a practitioner perspective of indoor and outdoor recreational needs, ecological goods and services and school needs albeit largely in a single municipal setting with its inherent administrative and societal culture. A reflection on those needs are provided next.

My practice is best characterized as having a strong public service ethic with social justice roots. A complete separation of my experiences and the research was not desired because the practitioner lens did bring a more nuanced understanding of documents and participant reactions to them in the Edmonton setting. However, I was conscious of my biases throughout the research and writing processes, and I actively sought alternative explanations in the papers for what did transpire or what may have transpired. For example, while it could be argued that elected officials were simply impatient with existing processes, I also sought to understand what may have led them to that position. Moreover, the suite of chapter analyses chosen is also representative of my attempts to report findings fairly.

Finally, it is a fair to say that I was strongly opposed to the 2006 and 2009 adopted processes, but it is important for the reader to understand the roots of that position. I had spent

almost 29 years in functions that routinely sought out community input on park land decision-making. It was my experience that parks service delivery was not solely a municipal function; the Administration and politicians actively sought out ways to co-produce park services with the community. I had attended multiple public meetings and worked on multiple initiatives with community partners and school boards, including previous surplus school process community need assessments. Community engagement took time and effort, and had always required a high level of transparency. Park land public processes were sometimes contentious, however in most cases community actors were reasonably fair, with some exceptions.

What transpired with the surplus schools initiative was a complete reversal in public engagement practices with no discussion with the community, and measures to silence opposing viewpoints from staff who had no or limited functional parks knowledge.⁶² My personal concern was not about the outcome per se, but the process adopted that placed professional staff including myself and my staff in ethically challenged positions particularly about mischaracterizing policies and processes. There were no whistleblower protections for staff who spoke out, and doing so would be career-limiting. Generally speaking my experience was that neither senior management nor elected officials did not demonstrate a culture of support or more transparent vetting of opposing viewpoints.

My time as a practitioner largely in an operational parks department was always within a context of meeting a broad range of community need, particularly in the review and approval of area structure plans. Parks staff never occupied any sort of perceived or real

⁶² Functional parks knowledge is defined as how recreational program land uses function with and between themselves and more broadly in the neighbourhood and district areas (i.e., multiple nearby residential areas) to create safe, accessible and publicly used green space and facilities meeting the recreational, educational, social and ecological needs of the community. Functionality is dependent on and recognizes the roles played by non-state actors.

hegemonic position in determining the most appropriate sites, sizes and configuration for parks; the opposite was more common. We typically negotiated an urban landscape that recognized the needs of school boards and development interests to create housing, commercial and institutional land uses within the boundaries or rules created by legislation.

Once parks were created and co-produced by community social actors, review of park land assets for non-park uses did occur, and particularly for surplus schools. I personally was involved in two surplus school site processes and both engaged community actors with transparent information prior to determining the surplus status. As Director of Parks Planning, I was engaged in a different initiative where a military group came to the City for land for a facility to house military families when their loved ones were in Edmonton for rehabilitation. An initial site identified by *COE* land management planners was rejected by the community due to a lack of engagement in the decision-making.⁶³ Given the value writ large of the project, park land planners worked to find a site for the facility with city land management planners. It was ultimately located on previously designated park land in a community engaged process supported by the community. While never pleased to surplus park lands, my role and my perspective was to look big picture while not unduly sacrificing park lands simply because they were the only assembled land to meet a non-park program, and never without transparent public engagement. In all of the cases noted above, park land planners relied on community recreation coordinators to help craft good community processes.

My perspective was that elected officials and administrators held park lands in trust for the community. Any process to delete or remove park land from public use needed to include

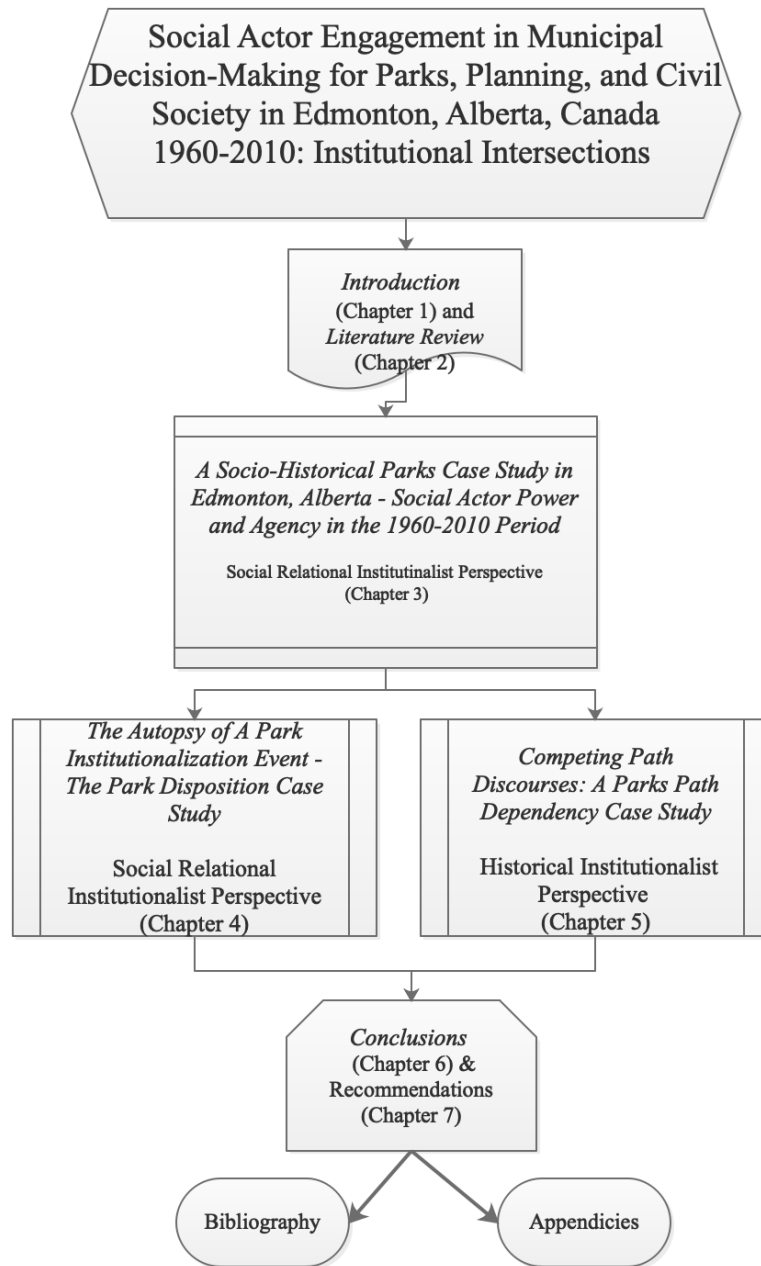
⁶³ This was the same group of land management planners who managed the surplus school site initiative.

an engaged community process. Consequently, my personal angst about the surplus school site process was not outcome-based, but process-based.

1.8 Structure of Dissertation

The introduction and literature review foreground the three (future paper) chapters. The title and abstract for each paper (Chapter 3, 4, and 5, respectively) are provided. Most importantly, each chapter builds on the other. The introduction, Chapter 1, identifies the issue under investigation and identifies a global methodology, methods, and dissertation structure. The literature review, Chapter 2, reviews the extant literature that both discusses urban planning and parks literatures and develops the research questions. Chapter 3, 4, and 5 represent the primary research contribution. Chapter 6 provides a synthesis and Chapter 7 provides recommendations and opportunities for change. The link between the introduction, literature review, and three papers is shown graphically in Figure 1-8.

Figure 1-8: Dissertation Story Board



Chapter 3: A Socio-Historical Park Case Study in Edmonton, Alberta: Social Actor Engagement and Agency in the 1960-2010 Period

Abstract

The purpose of this case study and this chapter was to understand how social actors (i.e., elected officials, administrators, landowners, developers, community leagues, community residents) engage in social processes to create and animate parks using

qualitative inquiry through the eyes of a former longtime practitioner. Two park sites were selected for analysis: the Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhood school and park sites over the 1960 to 2010 period. The analyses included review of documents (e.g., legislation, plans, policies, strategic plans, park master plans, funding programs, legal agreements, land titles, practices, etc.), air photographs, and semi-structured interviews with social actors engaged in processes. Social Relational Institutional (SRI) perspective was used to analyze decision-making processes, interfaces and relationships between social actors, and how social actors influenced one another.

This analysis identifies and examines two parallel planes of institutional activity between social actors; the land use planning institution and the parks institution, and reveals three temporal eras that represent changes in how social actors engaged in decision-making by influencing one another. The land use planning institution created park “spaces” identified in area plans and implementing documents and procedures. The park institution transforms “spaces” into “places” of community gathering, activity, and meaning by being substantial financial contributors to construction programming and maintenance. The parks institution is an outcome of provincial legislation that limits developer contribution to parks infrastructure, necessitating participation of community social actors to provide timely infrastructure. The two institutions intersect and influence one another in form (land use institution) and function (parks institution).

Chapter 4: An Autopsy of a Park Institutionalization Event: The Park Disposition Case Study

Abstract

The purpose of this chapter was to analyze, using qualitative inquiry, how change-motivated social actors in the 2000s evolved both the land use and parks planning institutions through unilateral action using mechanisms and tactics not available to all social actors, using Social Relational Institutional perspective. The 2006 and 2009 actions represent an institutionalization event. Once again, two park sites were selected for analysis; the Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhood school and park sites in Edmonton. Two one-hectare parcels were rezoned and sold on each school and park site, and a second one-hectare parcel in Blue Quill was rezoned in 2009. The analyses included review of documents (e.g., legislation, plans, policies, strategic plans, park master plans, funding programs, legal agreements, land titles, practices, etc.), air photographs, and semi-structured interviews with social actors engaged or disengaged in processes.

The analyses revealed that abrupt changes initiated by elected officials to past institutional decision-making processes and decision-making occurred unsettling other social actors. The revised process, its relationship to past approaches, and the tactics used to implement the new approach are described. Elected officials led by a strong mayor were ultimately successful in rezoning park lands and changing past institutional decision-making practices, but the process was marked by selective engagement of social actors, selective and inaccurate knowledge dissemination, policy violations, legislative process manipulation, and disagreements with and between

minority political actors, administrators, and the community. The loss of the public realm was and is not unique to Edmonton in this time period, and it aligns with the post-1980 period of the neoliberalization of government policy. The downstream impact on community social actors remains to be seen; in the parks institution, community social actors are substantial contributors to the funding, programming, and maintenance of park lands. The study will provide insights for planning practitioners dealing with park lands or public realm disposition processes to creating inclusive processes that include a broad range of social actors impacted by decision-making processes.

Chapter 5: Competing Path Discourses and their Impact on Parks Land Use Decision-Making: A Historical Institutional Analysis in Edmonton, Alberta

Abstract

The purpose of this chapter was to understand how social actors (i.e., elected officials, administrators, landowners, developers, community leagues, community residents) engage in social processes to create and animate parks using qualitative inquiry through the eyes of a former longtime practitioner, this time using a Historical Institutional perspective. Two park sites were selected for analysis: the Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhood school and park sites over the 1960-2010 period. The analyses included review of documents (e.g., legislation, plans, policies, strategic plans, park master plans, funding programs, legal agreements, land titles, practices, etc.), air photographs, and semi-structured interviews with social actors engaged in processes.

This chapter reveals how path-creating mechanisms such as legislation, bylaws, and policies created the conditions for change to redevelop raw lands (farm land, natural areas, wetlands) into urban landscapes (i.e., residential, commercial, institutional, park lands, roads, utilities). Park space is created in a Legislatively-Driven Space Creation Branch (1960-1980), followed by a Policy Driven Place Creation Branch (1980-2000), and finally the Political Agency Disposition Era (2000 - 2010). The three critical junctures were a growing economy, the creation of community engagement policies (1980), and the election of a change-motivated elected official.

The importance of this chapter lies in underscoring how legislation, policies, legal agreements, processes, and policies create the conditions for change in urban landscapes in or out of step with community social actors; they are, in fact, mobilizing mechanisms that create land use change. The chapter also refines Sorensen's notion of the infrastructure institution. The findings suggest that parks infrastructure is a unique type of urban infrastructure that relies heavily on the substantial contribution of community social actors to fund, program, and maintain unlike any other form of public infrastructure (i.e., roadways, utilities, stormwater management).

Conclusions (Chapter 6) and Recommendations (Chapter 7)

These chapters connect the dots; they summarize the findings and provide suggestions to help researchers, practitioners, and community social actors to better understand the intersections between the land use and park institutions. The intent is to not repeat the chapters per se, but to provide a summary of contributions to theory and practice in institutional decision-making, the role of legislation, and policies and funding programs as mobilizing elements that shape and influence institutional development, parks discursal practices, and parks as a unique category of municipal infrastructure.

Chapter 2: Literature Review - Blending Disciplines, Academic and Practitioner Worlds: Blenders are Noisy!

The purpose of this section is to outline scholarly research that grounds urban planning, parks, and parks service delivery in municipal settings. The intent is to locate approaches, theories, and trends relevant to this study.

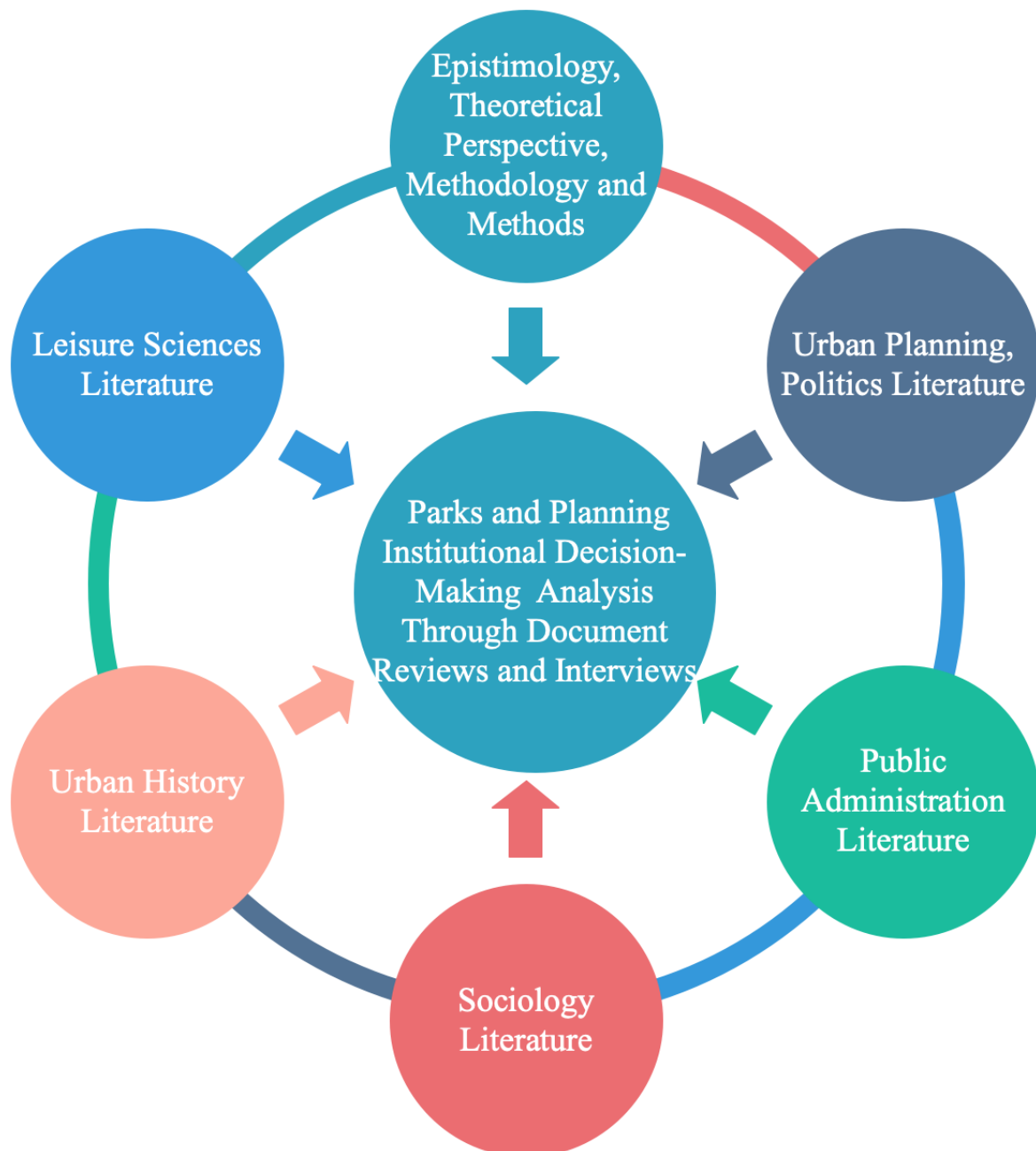
2.1 Literature Sources and Overview

Planning, parks, parks planning, and recreation service delivery require navigation of discipline and scholarly overlaps between urban planning, public administration, landscape architecture, sociology, recreation and leisure, and ecological goods and services literature, untethered to a single scholarly or practitioner home. As a practitioner, this means that decision-making is unavoidably complicated by disparate positions and opinions on strategies and outcomes due to different lenses and logics. Academically, it means that to understand the impact of land use change planning processes on parks service delivery requires an interdisciplinary analysis. This complication is reflected in the literature where you see interdisciplinary scholarly journals such as *Landscape and Planning*, *Environment and Planning A* and *Urban Studies*. These sources are contrasted with more functional journals such as *International Planning Studies*, *European Planning Studies*, *Planning Practice & Research*, *Leisure Sciences*, *Journal of the American Association of Planners*, the *Journal of Planning History*, *Urban History Review*, and others.

Given a focus on planning processes and parks, four areas of literature were the primary realms for this dissertation: urban planning, public administration, leisure parks and the commons, and sociology (Figure 2-1). Sources were selected with a focus on North American and Alberta studies or examples wherever possible, but not exclusively. More

recent journal articles were selected to reflect current thinking, but also not exclusively. Also undertaken was a thorough review of locally situated parks, recreation, and open space master's theses or doctoral dissertations in order to leverage previous local knowledge, sources, and perspectives. Urban planning literature and public administration scholarly literature overlap extensively.

Figure 2-1: Literature Review Structure



The focus in this dissertation is to understand decision-making, legislation, policy, process, and public engagement considerations that establish the structural conditions for decision-making, but do so from a perspective of social actor roles, responsibilities, opportunities, barriers, and knowledge creation and understanding. Decision-making is inherently a locally situated process involving social actors with unequal levels of power, knowledge, and understanding.

2.1.1 Spatial Planning, Urban Planning or Land Use Planning

The three terms in the title of this subsection are often used interchangeably, largely dependent on your locale. Spatial planning is a term used more often in Europe than in North America. Spatial planning also tends to be a broader term that includes larger geographical areas and includes a seemingly more explicit policy-orientated perspective. Land use and urban planning tends to be a more limiting discussion of technical and political process that addresses land allocation. The *Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP)*, the advocacy body for professional planners in Canada, states:

Planning means the scientific, aesthetic, and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities.”⁶⁴

For the purposes of this dissertation, I use the planning definition of the CIP and refer to it as “urban planning,” but I also attach to it a greater focus on policy and its impact on rational planning. Urban planning is a state-managed formal, legislative, and bureaucratic action function (Adejei-Poku 2018),⁶⁵ heavily influenced by non-state actors (Healey 1992,

⁶⁴ “About Us,” *Canadian Institute of Planners*, <http://www.cip-icu.ca/About/About-Us#>

⁶⁵ Bernard Adejei-Poku, “Rationality and Power in Land Use Planning: A Conceptual View of the Relationship,” *Planning Literature* 33, no. 1 (2018): 45-60, doi: [10.1177/0885412217723616](https://doi.org/10.1177/0885412217723616).

2015; Van den Broeck and Verachttert 2015),⁶⁶ economics (Oleson 2014),⁶⁷ power relations (Forester 1982),⁶⁸ the ethical practices of planning participants (Hendler 2001; Karaki 2017),⁶⁹ and the potential positive and negative implications of planners exercising their ethical stances (Grange 2017).⁷⁰ Power relations is a major topic of scholarly discourse in urban planning, as it can be used and accessed differentially to affect outcomes. The public interest is paramount in urban planning decisions, but there is debate on defining the meaning of the term itself and its application to planning in terms of whose interest is being served and how (Blitz 2015; Chettiparamb 2016).⁷¹

⁶⁶ Patsy Healey, "An Institutional Model of the Development Process," *Journal of Property Research* 9, no. 1 (1992): 33-44, doi: 10.1080/09599919208724049; Patsy Healey, "Planning Theory – The Good City and Its Governance," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences 2nd edition* 18 (2015): 202-207, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.74027-X>; Pieter Van den Broeck, and Kristine Verachttert. "Whose permits? The Tenacity of Permissive Development Control in Flanders." *European Planning Studies* 24, no. 2 (2015): 387-406, doi: 10.1080/09654313.2015.1045838.

⁶⁷ Kristian Olesen, "The Neoliberalisation of Strategic Spatial Planning," *Planning Theory* 13 (2014): 288-303, doi: 10.1177/1473095213499340.

⁶⁸ John Forester, "Planning in the Face of Power," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 48 (1982): 67-80, doi: 10.1080/01944368208976167.

⁶⁹ Sue Hendler, "Planning Ethics," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. (2001): 11474-11479; Tej Kumar Karaki, "What Planners Should Do to Address Unethical Political Pressure," *Planning Practice and Research* 32, no. 2 (2017): 103-119, doi: 10.1080/02697459.2017.1286891.

⁷⁰ Kristina Grange, "Planners – A silenced profession? The politicisation of planning and the need for fearless speech," *Planning Theory* 16, no. 3 (2017): 275-295, doi: [10.1080/14730952.2017.1340739](https://doi.org/10.1080/14730952.2017.1340739).

⁷¹ Mark Blitz, "Public Interest," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences 2nd edition*, Volume 19 (2015). doi: 10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.93112-X; Chettiparamb, Angelique. "Articulating 'Public Interest' through Complexity Theory." *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 34, no.7 (2016): 1884-1385. doi: 10.1177/0263774X15610580.

The urban planning process involves negotiation between multiple stakeholders leading to land use allocations that meet today's and future needs normatively based on, and consistent with, thoughtful reasoned strategic or policy direction (Healey 2015; Chettiparamb 2016; Adejei-Poku 2018). These processes are called land use change processes. Governments are tasked with the challenge of meeting multiple, sometimes competing, needs, a situation which is often described by the term values pluralism (Overeem and Verhoef 2006; Stewart 2006; Spicer 2014).⁷² Elected officials experiencing growing requests and shrinking funding must make difficult choices. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness and concern from some scholars that economic factors are privileged over social and ecological outcomes (Springer 2010; Oleson 2014; Rossi and Valano 2015).⁷³ Springer (2018) argues that the notion of good governance has been redefined by aligning business outcomes with government outcomes, and in favour of the former.⁷⁴ Preconfiguring land use decisions is underlying legislation that supports the private property regime and its inherent rights and privileges given to those that hold the land title, despite the relational complexities of urban

⁷² Patrick Overeem and Jelle Verhoef. "Value Pluralism and the Usefulness of Philosophical Theory for Public Administration," *Administration and Society* 47, no. 9 (2015): 1103-1109, doi: 10.1177/0095399715598345; Jenny Stewart, "Value Conflict and Policy Change," *Review of Policy Research* 23, no 1. (2006); Michael Spicer, "In Defense of Value Pluralism in Public Administration," *Administration and Society* 46, no. 8 (2014): 1010-1019, doi: 10.1177/0095399714550855.

⁷³ Simon Springer, "Neoliberal discursive formations: on the contours of subjectivation, good governance, and symbolic violence in post-transitional Cambodia." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (2010): 934-939, doi: 10.1068/d9708; Kristian Olesen, "The neoliberalisation of strategic spatial planning," 288-303; Ugo Rossi and Alberto Vanalo. "Urban Neoliberalism." *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences 2nd edition* 24 (2015): 846-853. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.74020-7>.

⁷⁴ Simon Springer, "Neoliberal discursive formations: on the contours of subjectivation, good governance, and symbolic violence in post-transitional Cambodia." 934-939. doi: 10.1068/d9708.

lands (Blomley 2017b; Fawaz 2017).⁷⁵ Relational complexities are defined as contestations between relational aspects of urban land based on use compared to container or traditional Euclidean conceptualizations of urban land based on ownership. This, arguably, is the source of many contestations, including the Edmonton case study.

Urban planning administration is delivered by a municipal government entity using a litany of names: planning departments, planning and development departments, sustainable development departments. Urban planning departments typically articulate a mission, a supportive structure, implementing procedures, and defined outcomes (Tustian 2001).⁷⁶ There is great diversity in structures and implementing procedures.⁷⁷

The land use change processes adopted are unique to each municipal setting based on legislation and policy. In Edmonton, applications are initiated by landowners and are reviewed for compliance with existing plans, strategic direction, and policy. Applications may be approved, refused, or approved with amendments. Higher-level plans (area plans) and zoning are reviewed and approved by elected officials. Council-approved plans include public notice and a public hearing used to gather community input on proposed changes. Other implementing types of applications (e.g., plans of subdivision, engineering drawings,

⁷⁵ Nicholas Blomley, “The Boundaries of Property: Complexity, Relationality, and Spatiality.” *Law & Society Review* 50, no. 1 (2017b): 224-255; Mona Fawaz, “Planning and the Making of a Propertied Landscape.” *Planning Theory & Practice*^[11]_{SEP} 18, no. 3 (2017): 365-384. doi: 10.1080/14649357.2016.1180423.

⁷⁶ R. E. Tustian, “Administrative Organization of Planning,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. (2001): 11469-11474.

⁷⁷ In 2019 Edmonton has urban planning functions housed in an entity named “Urban Form and Strategic Development – City Planning.”

permitting, servicing agreements) are reviewed and approved by administrators. The sequential nature of the process in Edmonton is articulated in Figure 1-1.

Figure 2-2: COE Land Use Development Process



Source: COE website

Four important clarifications should be noted. First, each of the above has a unique review process. Second, the level of detail approved in each application increases. In other words, strategic plans provide broad direction while permitting processes are very detailed. From a parks perspective, strategic plans and policies will identify the importance and type of programming to be accommodated on park lands in any neighbourhood. A parks site master plan will identify, for example, the location, number, and type of trees. Third, the further along down the implementation process, the number of applications increase dramatically. There is a small number of strategic plans and multiple area plans, and for each area plan, there are 4-6 neighbourhood structure plans, etc. Fourth, the applications are hierarchical in nature; strategic plans inform area structure plans, which drive neighbourhood structure plans, which inform plans of subdivision and zoning, which inform engineering drawings, etc.

The timing of this development process is largely dependent on market forces. In the cases of Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhoods, these multi-layered and multi-application

processes took 15 years to complete to initial (residential) build-out. Further changes will occur through area plan and zoning bylaw amendments indefinitely.

The purpose of this subsection was to ground the reader in a broad understanding of how land use change occurs in municipalities and the factors that influence decision-making.

2.1.2 Urban Planning and Parks—History and Links

Urban historians first identified public open space in Greek and Roman times as places for expressions of political opinions and perspectives, and as such, they performed a critical role in society (Stanley, Stark, Johnston and Smith 2012).⁷⁸ However, while this dissertation will focus on the 1960 to 2010 period, this section will also include social conditions that preconfigured park lands identification and operations that date back to the early 1900s, and about when Edmonton became a town in 1912.

Recent notions of urban planning began to take shape in the latter part of the 19th century. Rapid urbanization, the result of industrialization, saw unsafe and unhealthy living conditions in the form of poor housing and disease due to the lack of clean water and sewage disposal systems (Freestone 2015).⁷⁹ Two core ideas emerged at this time: first, that government could make cities more liveable and sustainable; and second, that the spatialities of social processes and the qualities of place were important elements of well-being (Healey 2015).⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Benjamin W. Stanley, Barbara L. Stark, Katrina L. Johnston, and Michael E. Smith. “Urban Open Spaces in Historical Perspective: A Trans-disciplinary Typology and Analysis,” *Urban Geography* 33, no. 8 (2012): 1089-1117, doi: 10.2747/0272-3638.33.8.1089

⁷⁹ Robert Freestone, “History of Urban Planning (West),” *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences 2nd edition*, 18 (2015); 862-868, doi: 10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.74015-3.

⁸⁰ Healey, “Planning Theory – The Good City and Its Governance,” 202-207.

The purpose of urban planning was to create livable and sustainable cities. Parks and park systems first identified in the early 1900s were integral to shaping cities as places to breathe, as the lungs of the city. Such notions emanated from the Garden City Movement in Great Britain and the City Beautiful Movement from the United States (Hodge 1985; Freestone 2015).⁸¹ Iconic landscape architects such as Fredrick Law Olmstead Sr. were engaged to create beautiful parks and park systems in New York, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, and Boston. It was thought or theorized that aesthetics would have a trickle-down effect on the social health of the community.

This macro-level synthesis of beauty and utility was expressed in the work of nineteenth-century landscape designers led by Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., who argued the societal role of beauty in securing a contented workforce, buoyant property values, and underpinning civic boosterism. Other commentators highlighted larger and rather nebulous societal goals like nationalism, citizenship, cleanliness, patriotism, good government, economic productivity, social cohesion, and the quality of life. At the heart of this ideological stance was the “moral environmentalism” decoded by Phillip Mackintosh, namely, the belief that a beautiful environment encouraged social uplift.⁸²

Ultimately, beautification or aesthetics for its own sake was seen as shallow, difficult to fund, and had to be more closely married with utility.

If civic embellishment could be accepted as the only function of parks, their development as beauty spots would be comparatively easy, being simply application of primary principles of pictorial composition. . . . The fact that parks must meet very complex demands of traffic, of wear and tear and public abuse, that they must provide for public utility, convenience and comfort, rest, recreation and enjoyment, imposes a set of conditions which the experienced designer recognizes as more exacting than those encountered in the landscape development of private property. Much as architectural design should express not only good composition but a satisfying of all

⁸¹ Gerald Hodge, “The Roots of Canadian Planning,” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 5, no. 1 (1985): 8-22; Robert Freestone, “History of Urban Planning (West),” 862-868.

⁸² Robert Freestone, “Reconciling Beauty and Utility in Early City Planning: The Contribution of John Nolen,” *Journal of Urban History* 37, no. 2 (2015): 257, doi: 10.1177/0096144210391594.

requisites of construction and use, so a park design must attain pictorial agreeableness without disregard of the *practical service* (my emphasis) which it must render.⁸³

Within that concept of “practical service,” park systems were an attempt to humanize utilitarian aspects of urban landscapes and were places of social contact (Banerjee 2007; Retzlaff 2010)⁸⁴ by providing places to meet, relax, and connect with nature. Health, hygiene, and recreational opportunities were the *raison d’être* of park lands to extend opportunities to the poor and working poor in the 20th century that had previously been reserved for the rich. Parks are antidotes to crowded and polluted urban environments compromised by noise, dust, litter, factory emissions, vandalism, crime, and other unavoidable externalities of urban life. Parks shape cities, as Jon A. Peterson, an urban history scholar, suggested:

...that parks are publicly created artifacts deliberately held open to satisfy certain functional requirements of urban life...they may be the best representation we have of spatial consciousness as a positive factor in physically shaping American cities.⁸⁵

Duempelmann (2009) also suggested that parks and park systems were both symbolically and structurally significant for a city.

...public parks were considered a signifier of social, political and cultural progress...Sutcliffe has pointed out that it was in North America that open space first emerged as a potential structural element for the entire city.⁸⁶

⁸³ Freestone, 260.

⁸⁴ Tridib Banerjee, “The Future of Public Space: Beyond Invented Streets and Reinvented Places,” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 67 (2001): 10, doi: 10.1080/01944360108976352; Rebecca C. Retzlaff, “The Illinois Forest Preserve Act of 1913 and the emergence of the metropolitan park system planning in the USA,” *Planning Perspectives* 24, no. 4 (2010): 433-455, doi: 10.1080/02665433.2010.505063.

⁸⁵ John A. Peterson, “The Evolution of Public Spaces in American Cities. Review Essay,” *Journal of Urban History Review* 12 no. 1 November (1985): 76.

⁸⁶ Sonja Duempelmann, “Creating Order With Nature: Transatlantic Transfer of Ideas in Park System Planning in Twentieth-Century Washington D.C., Chicago, Berlin and Rome,” *Planning Perspectives* 24 no. 2 April (2009): 144, doi: 10.1080/02665430902734277.

This subsection describes a linked urban planning and parks historical review. Urban planning emanated from uncontrolled or unmanaged development that created horrible living conditions; parks were, in fact, a reaction or antidote to that outcome. Parks evolved from purely aesthetic landscapes to functional park landscapes. However, the connection and relationship between urban planning processes and park planning processes are, by their nature, inexorably linked but arguably not well studied from a systems development and operational perspective.

2.1.3 Canadian Planning and Park Roots

Gerald Hodge (1985) traced the roots of Canadian planning legislation to address poor housing and unsanitary conditions. Planning legislation was invented to create more liveable cities in Canada similar to in the US, but Hodge (1985) noted that the legislative structures, were different.⁸⁷ The government-led approach in Canada to planning was based on English common law drawn from British institutions. Common law in Canada vests in the state the right to determine land use. In other words, there never was any absolute right of a citizen over the land he or she holds; he or she was, in fact, a very privileged tenant of the state.⁸⁸ This was a very different approach taken than in the United States, a country created by revolution and a break from Britain. Private property in American legislation was more sacrosanct. In the US, government was to be forgotten or minimized (Hodge, 1985).⁸⁹ This ultimately left the Canadian planning institution to be very much influenced by government.

⁸⁷ Hodge, 8. Dr. Hodge was the director of Queen's University School of Urban and Regional Planning in 1981 when I began my graduate studies.

⁸⁸ Hodge, 17.

⁸⁹ Hodge, 8.

Edmonton itself owed part of its past to the granting by the federal government of 3,000 acres of land to the Hudson's Bay Company immediately west of the Edmonton settlement.⁹⁰

University of Toronto scholars David J. Hulchanski and Michael Gordon traced Alberta planning legislation for the 1900-1984 period in terms of how legislation was created, what it controlled, and the tensions resident throughout the period.⁹¹ Alberta passed its first planning act in 1913, with significant revisions in 1929, 1963, 1977, and 2016. There were multiple revisions to legislation made, but some key themes or issues were present throughout. Initial and subsequent legislative actions were based on British, not American, precepts. Initially, planning legislation was created and supported by business elites to create low-cost safe livable housing and communities for their rapidly expanding businesses. The Canadian Manufacturers Association was afraid that unrestrained land speculation and growth would result in higher housing prices. Such an outcome would cause employees to demand higher wages of them.

Over time, there was a gradual devolution of urban planning from the *GoA* to municipalities, as well as an interest in managing growth regionally. Over the first half of the 20th century, planning control was exercised largely by unelected commissions and technocrats, who were replaced by elected officials in the 1950s and beyond. Throughout, there was a tension between control of development activities for the public interest and private property rights, typically landing on the side of the latter, not the former. Planning

⁹⁰ Hodge, 11.

⁹¹ David J. Hulchanski, "The Origins of Urban Land Use Planning in Alberta," 1900-1945, 1981, Centre for Urban and Community Land Use Studies: University of Toronto; Michael Gordon and David J. Hulchanski, "The Evolution of the Land Use Planning Process in Alberta," 1945-1884, 1985.

regulations and tools were largely focussed on control of development only insofar as protecting existing land uses or attracting more investment. Interest in planning and planning controls was tied largely to changes in real estate markets; when development was occurring rapidly, there was more interest and attention. Interest or movement towards more comprehensive policy-based planning grew over the century, although planning legislation has been largely silent on social considerations of development impacts. However, changes to the 1977 Act included changes to encourage more public engagement, which concerned some legislators with regard to how it may impact private property rights. Planning legislation has a focus on infrastructure planning.

... the Alberta planning legislation places emphasis on physical planning to accommodate growth, while such concerns such as social planning, social development and other typically “non-physical” concerns are excluded.⁹²

...land use planning and policy was essentially the coordination of public infrastructure i.e., physical services such as arterial roads, water and sewer lines, parks and the separation of uses with zoning bylaws.⁹³

The analyses provided by Hulchanski and Gordon paid little attention to school and park lands uses. They focussed largely on development control and regional governance. They frame their work as institutional analysis and focus on governmental institutions, not the broader concept of institutions. However, their findings allude to broader institutional considerations when they link changes to legislation to changes to market conditions. In effect, this means that economic institutions were the source for change. There was a growing

⁹² Hulchanski, 22.

⁹³ Gordon and Hulchanski, 4.

recognition over time that uncontrolled or unfettered planning approvals link directly to municipality financial stability.

Parks and planning grew to be integrated in its early days in Canada. I use the work of Elsie McFarland (1970)⁹⁴ to capture the history of parks in Canada, who is also cited in Hodges' article (1985).⁹⁵ The first park legislation, the *Public Parks Act*, was passed in Ontario in 1883.⁹⁶ The legislation tied park area availability to population (e.g., 100,000 people with no more than 2,000 acres of park lands). But parks were not physically available to all and had limited programming (e.g., passive spaces, gardens), similar to what happened in the United States, which gave rise to the Playground Movement (1900-1909) led by a women's group.

Within this public parks movement arose The Playground Movement (1900–1909), a reaction to municipal public parks being established during this time for aesthetic use only. Specifically, these parks were passive and serene places with many areas restricting people's access. Also, activities to be performed here were limited to walking, riding in one's carriage, botanical appreciation, and bird watching. Furthermore, these activities were typically carried out by those in the upper classes of whom these parks are located close to (McFarland 1970). As McFarland (1970) explains, demand was raising for the allocation of spaces for people of all social classes, children especially, to recreate and play.⁹⁷

Early parks were focussed on “gardens” whose superintendents were often horticulturalists, although the active pursuits of the rich were accommodated in major parks

⁹⁴ Elsie McFarland, *The Development of Public Recreation in Canada* (Toronto, ON: Parks and Recreation Association, 1970).

⁹⁵ Hodge, 11

⁹⁶ McFarland, 12

⁹⁷ George Karlis and Evan Webb. “Canadian Government Acts and Policies for Sport and Recreation: Past, Present, and Future.” *International Journal of Sport and Society*, 6 (2016): 27.

and grounds.⁹⁸ Major urban parks were established by the federal government in Toronto, Halifax (i.e., Public Garden), Montreal (i.e., Mount Royal), Hamilton, London, and Vancouver (i.e., Stanley Park) by government transfers of land, often from the military (Hodge, 1985).⁹⁹ In Toronto, parks were seen as “breathing spaces where citizens might stroll, drive, or sit to enjoy the open air.”¹⁰⁰ These three events—the first Public Parks Act in 1883, the creation of public gardens by government, and the playground movement—could be seen as examples of social actors inside and outside of government converging to create parks and park systems, as well as a some early representations of tensions created by affluent social actors influencing decision-making.

The first defined “park system plans” were proposed in Toronto, Berlin (now Kitchener), Ottawa, and Hull in the 1906-1914 period, as part of the City Beautiful Movement (Hodge, 1985).¹⁰¹ In this era, parks were seen as an opportunity to shape the urban environment.¹⁰² Interestingly, all of this park space creation activity to address urban ills predated the first Planning Act in Canada that was not passed until 1912 in a number of provinces, including Alberta.¹⁰³ The notion of forward-thinking, planned, and sequenced

⁹⁸ McFarland, 14.

⁹⁹ Hodge, 11.

¹⁰⁰ McFarland, 14.

¹⁰¹ Hodge, 11.

¹⁰² In 2010, when the COE approved the *The Way Ahead*, it was based first on the Transportation Management Plan.

¹⁰³ Hodge, 16.

development was replacing haphazard development, and parks were part of the discourse to create better and more sustainable cities.

The 19th century was characterized by Karlis and Webb (2016)¹⁰⁴ as having defined recreation as a shared responsibility between federal, provincial, and municipal levels of governments. Canada's towns and cities were growing and urbanizing. The first Canadian National Parks Association formed in 1923, adding another social actor to the parks discourse.¹⁰⁵ This was the same year that the *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues* was formed. When the Great Depression years occurred in the 1930s, governments invested in parks and recreation as job creation opportunities to reduce idleness and build strong character. It was in this period that the Edmonton Gyro Club, a men's service club imported from the United States, was engaged in playground construction for children.¹⁰⁶ This included both development and programming opportunities.¹⁰⁷ In the 1940s, municipalities were creating and passing recreation bylaws to promote recreation participation. In 1961, the federal government passed the Fitness and Amateur Sport Act to clarify roles and responsibilities of the three levels of government in sport and recreation. Artistic endeavours were taking a back seat in this time period.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Karlis and Webb, 27.

¹⁰⁵ Karlis and Webb, 27.

¹⁰⁶ Paulina Cecelia Retamales Ochoa and PearlAnn Reichwein, "A Healthy and Contented Band": The Gyro Club and Playgrounds in Edmonton Urban Reform, 1921-1944, *Sport History Review*, 45 (2014): 96-122, doi: 10.1123/shr.2014-0026.

¹⁰⁷ Karlis and Webb, 27.

¹⁰⁸ Karlis and Webb, 28.

Karlis and Webb (2016) tracked sport and leisure policy through the study period of this dissertation. The 1960s saw changes to provincial planning legislation that required the creation of General Plans, which then spawned the development of implementing sub area plans. Those implementing plans are discussed in more detail later in this section, but they included park master plans. The 1960s and 1970s saw the provinces get more engaged in park funding activities. In 1987, the federal government created the National Recreation Statement that defined recreation as a social service. The provinces agreed to pass policies, goals, and objectives in support of recreation in its conceptualization as a social service, and municipalities agreed to establish recreation authorities, make information available to the community, and regularly conduct assessments to understand recreational needs. In the early 1990s, there was a movement to enshrine a “right to leisure” notion in the federal Constitution, but ultimately it was not successful. This same time period, beginning in the early 1990s, also saw a decline in funding for recreation in the United States that continues to this day. That requirement meant municipalities looked for alternative sources of funding (e.g., user fees, philanthropy) on a more concerted basis.¹⁰⁹ The 2000s saw enhanced commitment to recreation and sport mostly in the form of policy. In 2002, the *Canadian Sport Policy* was created. In 2015, the national *Framework for Recreation* was passed by all provinces and the federal government. Tax credits were created in 2006 to encourage youth to participate in recreation activities.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Karlis and Webb, 29-30.

¹¹⁰ Karlis and Webb, 31.

This subsection focussed on planning, parks and leisure in Canada to situate local leisure and planning social actors within a broader societal setting.

2.1.4 Equity and Fairness in Urban Planning Process

In Edmonton park systems are created in land use change process. In recent years, scholarly critics of equity and fairness in planning processes have suggested that the public has limited agency in planning processes in the past three decades driven by private sector needs and political imperatives (Nelson, Babon, Barry and Keith 2008; Sager 2009; Stewart and Lithgrow 2015; Thorpe 2017).¹¹¹ Post-World War II Keynesian top-down market intervention economic policies of the 1960s and 1970s were followed by a progressively deepening institutionalization of neoliberal policies starting in the early 1980s and in three eras thereafter, described as “roll-back,” “roll-out,” and “roll-with-it” neoliberalism (Olesen 2014).¹¹² This change in approach to governance has had many nuances; it has meant that market solutions are becoming increasingly favoured, the lines between business and government blurred as did their goals and outcomes, and there was a focus on a streamlined process to enhance the pace of development (Phelan 2007).¹¹³ This change in governance has

¹¹¹ Anitra Nelson, Andrea Babon, Mike Barry and Nina Keath, “Engagement but for what kind of marriage? Community members and local planning authorities,” *Community Development Journal* 43 (2008): 57-81, doi:10.1093/cdj/bsl038; Tore Sager, “Planners’ Role: Torn Between Dialogical Ideals and Neo-liberal Realities,” *European Planning Studies* 17, no. 1 (2009): 65-84, doi: 10.1080/09654310802513948; Jenny Stewart and Shirley Lithgrow, “Problems and Prospects in Community Engagement in Urban Planning and Decision Making: Three Case Studies from the Australian Capital Territory,” *Policy Studies* 36 (2015): 18-34, doi: 10.1080/01442872.2014.981061; Amelia Thorpe, “Rethinking Participation, Rethinking Planning,” *Planning Theory and Practice* 18, no. 4 (2017): 566-582, doi: 10.1080/14649357.2017.1371788.

¹¹² Olesen, “The neo-liberalisation of strategic spatial planning,” 288-303.

¹¹³ Sean Phelan, “The discourses of neoliberal hegemony. The case of the Irish Republic,” *Critical Discourse Studies* 4 (2004): 29-48, doi: 10.1080/17405900601149459.

been shown to impact discursive practices in urban planning (Phelan 2007)¹¹⁴ and parks (Griffeths, Conner, Robertson and Phelan 2013).¹¹⁵ Changes in discursive practices can act to minimize or hide information that otherwise may provide a complete picture for decision-makers and the community for democratic deliberation.

Legislation in Alberta has been studied to understand how the public or community social actors are effectively engaged in decision-making in resource-based land use decisions. The studies revealed the public has little agency in impacting oil and gas decision-making (Macias 2010; Bowness and Hudgson 2014; Lucas and Lillies 2016).¹¹⁶ Vlavianos (2007)¹¹⁷ similarly acknowledged the concern raised by the public about their limited role in public engagement processes in oil and gas disposition processes. Vlavianos argues that individuals (e.g., surface landowners, neighbours) impacted by new uses or activities should have more say than special interest groups (e.g., oil companies, oil lobby groups).¹¹⁸ An inquiry into non-

¹¹⁴ Phelan, 42-43.

¹¹⁵ Tom Griffeths, Tim Conner, Bill Robertson, and Liam Phelan. "Is Mayfield Pool saved yet? Community Assets and Their Contingent, Discursive Foundations," *Community Development Journal* 49 (2014): 280-294, doi: 10.1093/cdj/bst039.

¹¹⁶ Rebeca Macias, "Public Participation in Energy and Natural Resources Development: A Theory and Criteria for Evaluation," *Canadian Institute for Resources Law. Occasional Paper #34*. 2010 Retrieved from <https://cirl.ca/>; Evan Bowness and Mark Hudson. "Sand in the cogs? Power and Public Participation in the Alberta Tar Sands." *Environmental Politics* 23, no. 1 (2014): 59-76, doi: 10.1080/09644016.2013.821825; Alastair Lucas, and Heather Lillies. "Opportunities for Public Participation in the Regulation of Hydraulic Fracturing Operations in Alberta," *Alberta Law Review* 54, no. 1 (2016): 185-217, Retrieved from <https://www.albertalawreview.com/>.

¹¹⁷ Nickie Vlavianos, "Public Participation and the Disposition of Oil and Gas Rights in Alberta," *Journal of Environmental Law and Practice* 17 no. 3 (2007): 233-234.

¹¹⁸ Vlavianos, 233-234.

resource-development processes, like that provided in this study, may paint a broader picture of Alberta legislation. The review of extant literature has not uncovered any legal research that includes park system assembly and disassembly engagement process at a detailed level.

This subsection discusses land use and urban planning process to explore if the processes themselves are fundamentally fair and equitable in Alberta and elsewhere. Ultimately metrics defining what is fair and equitable are subjective and specific to a legislative and administrative structure.

2.1.6 Park Lands Planning Standards and Program

The *MGA* provides the land base for schools and parks in the *GoA* at the time of this case study. Ten percent of the gross developable area of any parcel must be provided for school and park purposes upon subdivision. The “municipal reserve,” or “reserve” as it is called, must be taken in the form of land, cash, or a combination thereof. The reserve entitlement can also be transferred or deferred to another unsubdivided parcel if the land ownership is the same¹¹⁹ for land that will be later subdivided for urban purposes in those areas. This is a complex, iterative, and time-consuming process that requires every parcel subdivided in the city to have its reserve requirements addressed at the time of subdivision.¹²⁰ The “reserves” within the 10% gross developable area by parcel are provided by landowners/developers at no cost to the *COE*.

¹¹⁹ *GoA*, Municipal Government Act of Alberta, RSA 2000, CM-26, <http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/m26.pdf>.

¹²⁰ In Edmonton, park land planners in the 1960 to 2010 period made land and cash reserve disposition decisions for consideration by the subdivision officer; subdivision officers typically, but not always, followed the advice.

Identifying land for and developing a park system is complicated in Edmonton, even more so because parks are assembled on a program basis (e.g., park location, activity accommodated, size, configuration) and not on an ownership basis per se. Any reserve required beyond the 10% area of a single parcel to provide a school or parks program must be purchased at market value by the COE using reserve entitlements cash collected from subdivisions where no parks are required. Importantly, in the park case study areas, land was acquired using a program concept, meaning neighbourhood allocations may vary by program (e.g., school and park sites have more land than non-school sites) while servicing more than one neighbourhood. This process was described in the *2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan* and reflected the historical practices for the entire 1960-2010 study period. Given that some neighbourhoods in Edmonton therefore have different amounts of park lands, the answer to the question “how much is enough” is not clear. Quoting a recent article from Australia by Boulton, Dedekorkhut-Howes, and Byrne (2018),¹²¹ the authors essentially conclude in their comprehensive article that there is no universally recognized quantitative standard of park lands; program and use of space complicates the creation of a land use planning “quantitative” standard for use in planning processes.

How much greenspace does a city need? This surprisingly vexatious question, often posed by politicians, residents, professional planners and other local government greenspace stakeholders, is not simply answered.

...there is a surprising discordance in the literature, especially about how much greenspace cities need, what type it should be, whom it is for, what benefits it should provide and who should pay for its acquisition and management. Some greenspace provision criteria suggest urban greenspace needs to be safe and secure; well maintained, well designed and constructed; appropriately located; socially relevant;

¹²¹ Chris Boulton, Aysin Dedekorkut-Howes and Jason Byrne, “Factors Shaping Greenspace Provision: A Systematic Review of the Literature,” *Landscape and Urban Planning* 178 (2018): 82-101, doi: 10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.05.029.

and physically accessible.¹²².

Feldman (2018) took up the notion of what constitutes programs in her dissertation, which then has direct relevance to quantity of land. In New York at the turn of the 19th century, playgrounds were not considered the responsibility of the parks department; they did not want to cater to a special interest group (e.g., children). At that point in time, parks were seen largely as leisure places for the wealthy class and to help shape the image of the city, not to serve the functional needs of the community. Feldman's work chronicled how the range of activities on parks expanded over time; by 1960, playgrounds were fully engrained in park services delivery.¹²³ Similar patterns were seen elsewhere in the United States and Canada (McFarland 1970)¹²⁴ as programs expanded from providing aesthetic/garden passive space to active play space.

This subsection identifies issues regarding the amount and location of park lands necessary in an urban setting, the mechanisms to acquire it (i.e., the *MGA*), and evolving and growing leisure needs, exclusive of what may be other community needs (e.g., storm water management, housing, etc.). Quantitative measures mesh well with land use change processes. However, qualitative measures, such as the program, location and configuration, require community consultation and complicate or militate against using quantitative metrics alone to assess or determine community need for leisure lands.

¹²² Boulton et al, 83.

¹²³ Sarah Feldman, "A Reconsideration of the Justifying Values of Public Parkland," (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2018). ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis Global (10745974).

¹²⁴ McFarland, 7-15.

2.1.7 Parks and Park System Benefits

The benefits provided by parks and park systems have been extensively catalogued. Park landscapes sequester pollution, reduce urban heat islands, reduce storm water run-off, and connect people to nature, thus providing a full range of ecological goods and services (Chiesura 2004; Morimito 2011; Tempesta 2012).¹²⁵ Land uses surrounding parks have higher property values and generate additional tax revenues (Alberta Recreation and Parks Association 2007; Harnik and Crompton 2014).¹²⁶ Parks can increase activity levels, and they can also provide stress relief and general health and wellness benefits (Konijnendijk, Annerstedt, Neilsen and Maruthaveeren 2013; Parry, Gollab and Frans 2014).¹²⁷ Parks foster the creation of connections between individuals and groups with like interests, build social

¹²⁵ Anna Chiesura, “The role of urban parks for the sustainable city,” *Landscape and Urban Planning* 68 (2004): 129-138, doi: 10.1016/j.landurbplan.2003.08.003; Yukihiro Morimito, “Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Urban Areas for Smart Adaptation to Climate Change: Do You Kyoto?” *Landscape Ecology Engineering* 7 (2011): 9-16, doi: 10.1007/s11355-010-0140-1; Tiziano Tempesta, “Benefits and Costs of Urban Parks: A Review,” *Aestimum* 67 (2012): 127-143, doi: 10.13128/Aestimum-17943.

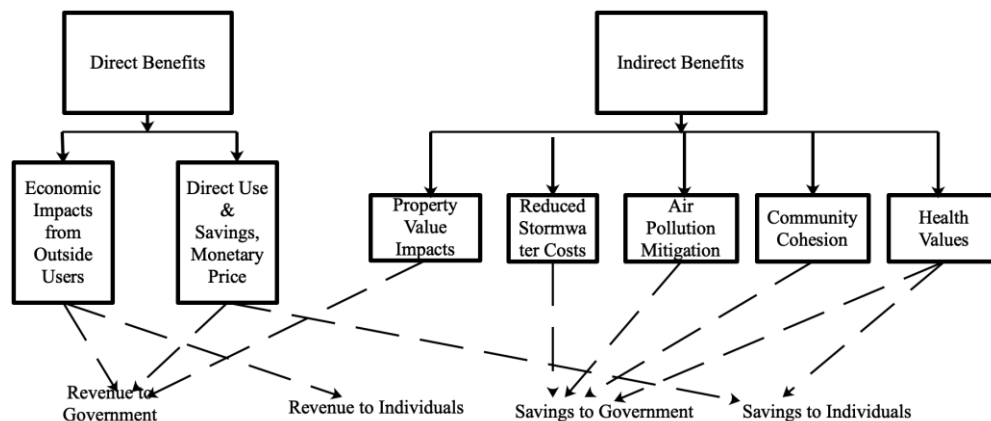
¹²⁶ Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. *Assessing the Proximate Value of Parks and Open Space to Residential Properties in Alberta*. Location: Edmonton, Alberta. 2007 Retrieved from <https://arpaonline.ca/>. I was part of the ARPA steering committee for this project; Peter Harnik and John Crompton, “Measuring the total economic value of a park system to a community,” *Managing Leisure* 19 (2014): 188-211, doi: 10.1080/13606719.2014.885713.

¹²⁷ C. C. Konijnendijk, M. Annerstedt A.B. Neilsen and S. Maruthaveeren, S. “Benefits of Urban Parks – A systematic review.” Copenhagen and Alnarp: International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration. 2013; Brian Parry, Justin Gollab and Jennifer Frans, “Benefits of Public Land Usage: An Analysis of Outdoor Recreationists,” *Managing Leisure* 19, no. 4 (2014): 231–244. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13606719.2014.885716>.

capital, community tolerance, and resiliency (Taylor, Davies, Wells, Gilbertson and Tayleur 2015),¹²⁸ and reduce crime rates (Troy, Grove and O’Neill-Dunne 2012).¹²⁹

Harnik and Crompton (2014)¹³⁰ provided a comprehensive analysis of the economic benefits of parks and park systems in the United States. This was important for two reasons: first, by the framing of the study and, second, by the data generated itself. The authors argue that in a political arena, it is important for park advocates to frame parks in both recreation benefit terms and economic terms in order to reach a level playing field with other demands for corporate funds. Using a model from the United Kingdom, the authors identified direct and indirect benefits and suggested where those benefits accrue, as shown in Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3: Economic Benefits of Parks and Park Systems



Source: Harnik and Crompton (2014), 190

¹²⁸ Peter Taylor, Larissa Davies, Peter Wells, Jan Gilbertson and William Tayleur. *A Review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport*. Project Report. Department for Culture, Media and Sport. 2015. Retrieved from <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/id/eprint/9596>.

¹²⁹ Austin Troy, J. Morgan Grove, and Jarlath O’Neill-Dunn, “The Relationship Between Tree Canopy and Crime Rates Across an Urban–Rural Gradient in the Greater Baltimore Region,” *Landscape and Urban Planning* 106 (2012): 262-270, doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2012.03.010.

¹³⁰ Harnik and Crompton, “Measuring the Total Economic Value of a Park System to a Community,” 188-211.

This subsection is provided to identify the potential negative impacts of the loss of public lands, not as a rationale against redevelopment but as a value to be considered when making park lands disposition decisions.

2.1.8 Partnerships

Partnerships in providing social, recreational, and economic benefits have been a major component in parks and recreation service delivery in North America. Two forces combined to dominate the recreation profession in the latter part of the 20th century: first, diminished public resources at a time when “demanding, expanding, and diverse” constituencies required collaborations with others and, second, a heightened awareness that pressing social concerns (e.g., juvenile delinquency, environmental degradation) could not be handled effectively by a single organization, discipline, or level of governance (Mowen and Kerstetter 2006).¹³¹

Partnerships are defined to include cooperative ventures, inter-organizational agreements, alliances, coalitions, collaborations, and workforces.¹³²

This partnership notion applies to tax-payer-funded parks departments. It is vital that parks functions have the support of elected officials and the community. Finding outside help is integral to survival, and departments often rely on other public, non-public, and private sector resources (Wollengburg, Mowatt, Ross and Renneison (2013)).¹³³ A 2004-2014 study of

¹³¹ Andrew J. Mowen and Deborah L. Kerstetter, “Introductory Comments to the Special Issue on Partnerships: Partnership Advances and Challenges Facing the Park and Recreation Profession,” *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration* 24 no.1 (2006): 2.

¹³² Mowen and Kerstetter, “Introductory Comments to the Special Issue on Partnerships: Partnership Advances and Challenges Facing the Park and Recreation Profession, 2.

¹³³ James Wollenberg, Rasul A. Mowatt, Craig M. Ross and Mick Renneisen. “Components of Partnership Agreements in Municipal Parks and Recreation,” *Managing Leisure* 18, no. 2 (2013): 135-151, 10.1080/13606719.2013.752212.

parks and recreation taxpayer funding in the United States saw a 22% decrease in funding to parks and recreation functions (Barrett, Pitas and Mowen 2017),¹³⁴ which suggests partnerships and collaboration in parks are more important than ever. However, collaborative efforts come with an administrative cost as well.

Best practices of partnerships and collaboration reveal that trust, accountability, capacity, leadership, and time are required for partnerships and collaborations to be successful. Suarez and Esparza (2017)¹³⁵ identified impacting factors to include interdependence, incentives, power and resources imbalances, conflict resolution, cultural alignment, and governance approaches. The outcomes revealed that “collaborative advantages” result from working together, representing more than individuals or groups could have produced alone. The nongovernmental sector gains empowered agency, which gives them the ability to contribute to policy reform. The paper concluded by suggesting that as non-profits grow, so does their agency, reducing the power of administrators, and generally there is more tension in the relationship between administrators and non-profit organizations.¹³⁶

This subsection reveals that the *COE* propensity to rely on partners and partner funding is not unique, and it comes with benefits and dis-benefits. The benefits provided by

¹³⁴ Austen G. Barrett, Nicolas A. Pitas and Andrew J. Mowen, “First in Our Hearts but Not in Our Pocket Books: Trends in Local Government Financing for Parks and Recreation from 2004-2014,” *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration* 35, no. 3 (2017): 1-19, <https://doi.org/10.18666/JPra-2017-V35-I3-7674>.

¹³⁵ David F. Suarez, and Nicole Esparza. “Institutional Change and Management of Public–Nonprofit Partnerships,” *American Review of Public Administration* 47, no. 6 (2017): 648-660, doi: 10.1177/0275074015619482.

¹³⁶ Suarez and Esparza, 648.

partners means more services and services provided earlier than tax funding will allow, at less or reduced taxpayer support. Empowered agency can also mean those same partners have a larger perceived stake in decision-making.

2.1.9 International Public Realm Contestations in Planning Processes

The loss of public spaces in planning processes has alarmed public realm scholars. Banerjee (2007)¹³⁷ has studied public park lands equity issues between affluent and poor areas in the United States and expressed a concern for what he describes as a “withering of the public realm” caused by conflicts at the local level between economy, equity, and environment triggered by globalization forces.¹³⁸ Antonio (2013),¹³⁹ an American sociologist speaks to the neoliberal growth imperative to the exclusion of social ends and its impact on the commons. Antonio claims that neoliberal policy regimes assume big government in the United States is the source of waste and oppression and that free enterprise is the motor of efficiency and liberty, with a subsequent loss of the commons.¹⁴⁰ Similarly, American scholar Purcell (2013)¹⁴¹ talks about changes to urban governance (i.e., neoliberalism) and its negative impact on (i.e., loss of) the commons.

¹³⁷ Banerjee, 9-24.

¹³⁸ Banerjee, 9.

¹³⁹ Robert J. Antonio, “Plundering the Commons: The Growth Imperative in Neoliberal Times,” *The Sociological Review* 61 (2013): 18-42, doi: 10.1111/1467-954X.12098

¹⁴⁰ Antonio, “Plundering the Commons: The Growth Imperative in Neoliberal Times,” 22.

¹⁴¹ Mark Purcell, “The Right to the City and the Struggle for Democracy in the Public Realm,” *Policy & Politics* 43, no. 3 (2014): 311-327, doi: 10.1332030557312X655639.

The redevelopment of Gezi Park in Taksim Square, Istanbul, was prominent internationally as government actors chose to bulldoze the park. That act was met with immediate opposition and occupation by the community over cultural connections and use (Gole 2012; Batuman 2015).¹⁴² Surveys showed opposition was in large part due to the unilateral nature of the decision exercised through authoritarian rule (Caha 2013).¹⁴³ A large-scale successful public realm preservation initiative recently occurred in Berlin in 2013 with the repurposing of Tempelhof Airport (900 ha) into a major public park through community action and a public referendum (Goldmann 2011; Rich 2013).¹⁴⁴ A case study in the Lima neighbourhood of Barcelona by Spanish scholars Calderon and Chelleri (2013)¹⁴⁵ chronicled both the loss of public space to housing development and the lack of interest on the part of planners in responding to the leisure needs identified by local residents.

New York's Central Park has been the site of many contestations. In 1961, the parks commissioner Robert Moses wrote to Huntington Hartford, heir to the A & P (grocery store)

¹⁴² Nilufer Gole, "Gezi – Anatomy of a Public Square Movement," *Insight Turkey* 15, no. 3 (2012): 7-14, Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/journal/insightturkey>; Bulent Batuman, "Everywhere Is Taksim: The Politics of Public Space from Nation-Building to Neoliberal Islamism and Beyond," *Journal of Urban History* 41, no. 5 (2015): 881-907, doi: 10.1177/0096144214566966.

¹⁴³ Omer Caha, "Gezi Park demos: Democratic protests or revolt?" *Turkish Review* 3, no. 5 (2013): 532-535, Retrieved from <https://issuu.com/turkishreview>.

¹⁴⁴ A. J. Goldmann, "Urban design: Repurposing Tempelhof," *Wall Street Journal* Retrieved from <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/885042063?accountid=14474> 2011, Aug 25; Rich, Nathaniel. 2013. "Hitler's Airport," *Atlantic Monthly*, 313(3) 44-45.

¹⁴⁵ Camillo Calderon, and Lorenzo Chelleri, "Social Processes in the Production of Public Spaces: Structuring Forces and Actors in the Renewal of a Deprived Neighbourhood in Barcelona," *Journal of Urban Design* 18, no. 3 (2013): 409-428, doi: 10.1080/13574809.2013.800449.

fortune, to solicit funds for either a marionette theatre or a ball field (Feldman 2018).¹⁴⁶ The proponent responded he had little interest in baseball but offered \$862,500 for the development of a café on what commissioners said was a “useless” corner of Central Park that “would not take up land for any useful park purpose.” Feldman noted that newspaper editorials did not agree with this conceptualization. A famous arts voice of the time disagreed with how perceived parks are to be valued.

Harmon Goldstein, President of the Municipal Art Society, was dismayed by the argument that the site was wasted because it was too steep for walks or playgrounds...Are practical usability or monetary profit our only values? Sometimes it seems so.¹⁴⁷

A five-year battle ensued that went all the way to the Supreme Court. One of the plaintiffs submitted the following argument against redevelopment.

To the extent that many of the patrons will pay to eat and drink in this sidewalk café might happen to have a view of the park, many more persons actually using the park or passing to and from nearby congested streets will be deprived of such a view.¹⁴⁸ In the end, the legal process delayed implementation and the restaurant was never

built.

Copley (2016)¹⁴⁹ analyzed the preservation of Tempelhof field in Berlin, Germany, but from an urban history context. Prior to 1900, the lands had been used for grazing of cattle and for Prussian military exercises and then were home to Berlin’s first airport in 1920. The Nazis

¹⁴⁶ Feldman, 107.

¹⁴⁷ Feldman, 145.

¹⁴⁸ Feldman, 147.

¹⁴⁹ Clare Copley, “Curating Tempelhof: Negotiating the Multiple Histories of Berlin’s ‘Symbol of Freedom,’” *Urban History* 44, no. 4 (2017): 698-717, doi:10.1017/S0963926816000869.

used the site as a prison and built a new terminal in the mid-1930s.¹⁵⁰ After unification, they decided to close the airport, which finally occurred in 2008. An animated public process, based in part on the historical roots of the site, resulted in retention of the site “as is.” The options considered for the site were predictable—creating a place for leisure as opposed to a viable investment property—but to Copley, its history was front and centre throughout.

Tempelhof field is now a 300-hectare recreation and gathering place that has morphed into a “symbol of freedom” for Berlin’s inhabitants. Despite the preservation “win,” the same economic arguments were used against preservation. There is also a local equivalent to this story, where Edmonton closed and is redeveloping its municipal airport as a residential community. Historical protection or retention as a place of leisure was rarely, if at all, mentioned publicly.¹⁵¹ It appears that city builders in New York (i.e., Central Park) and Berlin had different values and interests than Edmonton elected officials.

This subsection describes how the redevelopment of the public realm has been contested elsewhere, demonstrating that it is once again not unique to Edmonton, and public use and contestations invariably involve multiple social actors who feel they have a stake in the site.

2.1.10 Parks and Property

¹⁵⁰ In a recent visit, the airport terminal has been turned into a centre for refugee migrants. The remainder of the site were left as grassed areas and runways. The runways were used for bike riding and games.

¹⁵¹ In my role as director of parks planning, I did suggest retention as a park as an option but it fell on deaf ears. The administration was focussed on creating a large-scale sustainable neighbourhood pilot project. The site does include a large central area park.

The nexus between parks and planning centres on property. A recent PhD dissertation by sociological researcher Sarah Feldman (2018)¹⁵² referenced earlier tracked how parks in New York were viewed legally and socially, with some interesting observations similar to and different from the case of Edmonton. This may be the single most interesting piece of research uncovered in preparing this dissertation, as her focus was on valuing park lands. Her work focussed on greenspaces but her definition did not include school or other facility lands. Feldman tracked park losses in New York since 1900 and showed that there had been relatively few losses of park lands but substantial losses of school lands: 97% of park sites, but only 37% of school sites, were retained.¹⁵³ Although this case study did not calculate similar numbers in this regard, school lands are more likely to be redeveloped in Edmonton. In New York, cemeteries were more likely to be moved, which has no precedent here except for Indigenous burial grounds in the river valley. She attributed the loss of school lands to state legislation that ostensibly protects greenspace and not school lands:

...New York State Law sustains the concept of park lands as categorically distinguishable from market land, through its designation as land held in trust by the state¹⁵⁴ ...requires legislative authorization to be put to use for non-park purposes.¹⁵⁵

Feldman characterizes loss of park lands as the “alienation of park lands.” The term alienation is used because it refers to the separation of something—an entitlement, right, or attribute from its holder. Therefore, the sale of park lands acts as an alienation of park lands

¹⁵² Feldman (2018).

¹⁵³ Feldman, 11.

¹⁵⁴ Feldman, 19.

¹⁵⁵ Feldman, 246.

that recognizes the separation of the public from its entitled physical estate.¹⁵⁶ Feldman's main argument is that the work of park preservationists is to preserve the ideology of parks as invaluable land (original emphasis), or land that is not exchangeable under the terms of the traditional market for real property.¹⁵⁷ Feldman's arguments are effectively describing what could be today's perspective of the oppositional forces in the surplus school site initiative decision. Arguably, the *MGA* has also deemed park lands not exchangeable under the terms of the traditional market by applying a reserve designation and requiring additional process steps before change can be made.

Theorists have wrestled with the dichotomy between euclidian versus relational properties of property with implications for ownership. The *MGA* gives the rights of ownership of park lands to government entities. The study by Van den Broeck, Abdelwahabb, Miciukiewicz, and Hillier (2013)¹⁵⁸ on a children's park in Cairo, Egypt differentiated between relational space and container space. The relational view stresses connections between social actors in the use of the space rather than an entity simply defined by uses within the property lines.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Feldman, 24.

¹⁵⁷ Feldman, 26.

¹⁵⁸ Pieter Van den Broeck, Mona Abdelwahab, Konrad Miciukiewicz, and Jean Hillier, "On Analyzing Space from a Strategic-Relational Institutional Perspective: The Cultural Parks for children in Cairo." *International Planning Studies* 18 (2013): 321-341. doi: 10.1080/13563475.2013.833727.

¹⁵⁹ Van den Broeck, Abdelwahab, Miciukiewicz, and Hillier. "On Analyzing Space from a Strategic-Relational Institutional Perspective: The Cultural Parks for children in Cairo," 324.

Nicholas Blomley looked at the rights of the poor in urban commons in the redevelopment of a Woodward's department store in Vancouver, BC. The derelict building site was being used by homeless populations who were effectively displaced when it was redeveloped. He challenged property theory and policy that discounted collective interest in urban lands he defined as the urban commons (Blomley 2008).¹⁶⁰ In a broader theoretical exploration, Blomley (2017a and b)¹⁶¹ argues that land use planning actually frames the planning and property relationship in ways that privilege some social actors over others. As such, we need to understand the difference between land use planning and the relational character of property itself.

Stein and Mironova (2018)¹⁶² revisited the notion of public versus private land. They argue that those two terms themselves are socially constructed. When the United States was created, governments effectively "privatized" land used by Native Americans. As cities began to grow rapidly, public parks were created by effectively taking land from private landowners for public use; this practice was termed the municipalization of land, meaning it was now held in public ownership. Under the influence of capitalism urban land is conditioned by long cycles of investment and disinvestment. Money moves in and out of spaces in search of growth opportunities. It is here park lands considered "public land" is threatened with

¹⁶⁰ Nicholas Blomley, "Enclosure, Common Property and the Property of the Poor," *Social and Legal Studies* 17 (2008): 311-331, doi: 10.1177/0964663908093966.

¹⁶¹ Nicholas Blomley, "Land use, planning, and the 'difficult character' of property," *Planning Theory and Practice* 18, no. 3 (2017a): 351-364, doi: 10.1080/14649357.2016.1179336; Nicholas Blomley, "The Boundaries of Property: Complexity, Relationality, and Spatiality," *Law & Society Review* 50, no. 1 (2017b): 224-255.

¹⁶² Samuel Stein and Oksana Mironova, "Public Land Revisited: Municipalization and Privatization in Newark and New York City," *International Planning Studies* (2018): 1-14, doi: 10.1080/13563475.2018.1559043.

redevelopment back to private interests. This pattern was seen here in Edmonton. Indigenous people's lands (Treaty 6 lands) were taken and transferred to private landowners who, in the 1970s, drafted plans to develop urban landscapes that included the requirement for park lands to be "dedicated" to the municipal government. In the case of the surplus school initiative, public land then is being appropriated back to private land interests.

This subsection was intended to capture the complex nature of property and property rights. Binary definitions and common assumptions about ownership and ownership rights are limited in their ability to accurately describe underlying issues that surface on public land decision-making. In the public discourse around public lands, the public has a legitimate public interest in public lands beyond entities listed on property titles and in a more fundamental way than contemplated in the *MGA*.

2.1.11 Alberta Political Institutions and Governance

Established as a province in 1905, Alberta was a growing place dominated by agrarian and oil-based economies; the former was more prominent until the discovery of oil in 1947.

Politically, the province experienced single-party majority rule for extended periods of time: the Liberals from 1905 to 1921; the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) from 1921 to 1935; the Social Credit Party from 1935 to 1971;¹⁶³ and the Progressive Conservatives from 1971 to 2015. There are different perspectives on why this happened. R.B. MacPherson argued that Alberta could be best characterized as having a quasi-party system because the populations were largely homogenous and, as such, alternate perspectives were not apparent or needed,

¹⁶³ Preston Manning, "A Dark Green Horse in Alberta", October 21, 2004.

while others (Bell 1992)¹⁶⁴ argued that it was because “the single member plurality system often does not permit a vigorous but fragmented opposition to translate its share of the popular vote into seats in the legislature.”¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless, philosophically, the UFA, Social Credit, and the Progressive Conservatives under Peter Lougheed (1971 to 1985) shared a similar approach to role of government.

All three parties (UFA, Social Credit, Progressive Conservatives) accept the need for government intervention, a welfare state, substantial public expenditures on education and economic infrastructure, economic diversification, and stricter environmental controls.”¹⁶⁶

A characterizing feature of the UFA and Social Credit parties was a commitment to the notion of private property rights, which is an enduring legacy. This commitment was not surprising given the strong entrepreneurial, limited-government spirit of farmers, which Bell (1992) argues may have planted the seeds of political change in the early 1970s.

Over the 20th century, Alberta was urbanizing. Jack Masson (1992)¹⁶⁷ summarized the delicate nature of the relationship between the *GoA* and municipal governments. The cities, particularly Edmonton and Calgary, were growing rapidly relative to the rural populations. By the time Peter Lougheed took over in 1971, he was concerned about cities generally and the

¹⁶⁴ Edward Bell, “Reconsidering Democracy In Alberta,” In Allan Tupper and Roger Gibbons. *Government and Politics in Alberta*, ed. Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta Press. 1992. 85-108.

¹⁶⁵ Bell, 103.

¹⁶⁶ Allan Tupper, Larry Pratt and Ian Urquhart, “Role of Government” In Allan Tupper and Roger Gibbons. *Government and Politics in Alberta*, ed. Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta Press, 1992, 63.

¹⁶⁷ Jack Masson, “Provincial Municipal Relations,” In Allan Tupper and Roger Gibbons. *Government and Politics in Alberta*, ed. Edmonton, Alberta: University of Alberta Press. 1992. 167-195.

impact of this phenomenon. Provincial governments here and elsewhere in Canada were the creation and under the control of provincial legislatures. Lougheed worked hard to maintain good relationships, and the legislature provided a relatively good flow of funds to support municipal operations, often with defined purpose grants to ensure municipal goals and outcomes were consistent with provincial interests and strategies. Lougheed sought to decentralize decision-making in support of municipal decision-making. The growth of administrative organizations grew rapidly in the 1966 to 1988 period.¹⁶⁸ Peter Lougheed retired and Don Getty became premier of Alberta in 1985. Getty could not maintain the same cordial relationships with municipalities, and economic factors reduced grants to them. Provincial and municipal relationships further deteriorated when Ralph Klein became Alberta premier in 1992.¹⁶⁹ Klein envisioned a much smaller role of government and cut grants to municipalities and education dramatically and in alignment with business interests.¹⁷⁰ Reduced funding for new school construction and parks construction funding became a reality.

This section has summarized how political parties influenced urban planning and governance more generally. Those influences have relevance for the provincially guided outcomes of planning processes in this time period. The *Mill Woods Development Concept* (1971) and *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* (1973) were approved in an era of government interventionist policies which begin to retreat in the 1990s and 2000s. Throughout that time,

¹⁶⁸ Masson, 168.

¹⁶⁹ Peter Lougheed, Don Getty, and Ralph Klein were all leaders of the Progressive Conservative Party who maintained majority rule in the provincial legislature, and as such, each was the premier of Alberta.

¹⁷⁰ Mark Lisac, *The Klein Years*, Edmonton, Alberta: New West Press, 1995.

the notion of private property rights was maintained, including the role of provincial government and municipal governments as land owners of public lands. New school construction flowed and the *COE* had to replace funding grants with community partner funding.

2.1.12 Edmonton Parks Discourse on Movements, Contestations, and Urban Planning

This section is particularly important because it reflects the community discourses in terms of parks and social actors. It was arguably the most interesting research because it was unexpected and confirmed much of what I heard anecdotally from my practitioner mentors. The work of these authors further defines the evolving park institution specific to Edmonton in the time period examined in this dissertation. In addition, the studies of previous eras preconfigured the park and land use planning institutions prior to the 1960-2010 period. Similarities and differences between this dissertation and those studies are noted, including how the two parks and land use institutions interfaced, augmented by my personal practice experiences included in footnotes where appropriate.

Ochoa (2013)¹⁷¹ traced the history of the playground movement of the Gyro Club, a men's community service organization, from 1922 to 1950 (referenced earlier). She examined how this community organization filled a portion of the recreational lands development void in the early part of the 20th century. The Gyro Club, formed in the early 1920s, was instrumental in providing important children's play activities at a time when the *COE* Parks Department and its functions were transferred to the *COE* Engineering Department. In

¹⁷¹ Paulina Cecelia Retamales Ochoa, "Gyro Club Playgrounds and Children's Recreation in Edmonton, Alberta: Outdoor Play, Civic Life, and Urban Reform 1922-1950" (Master of Arts Thesis, University of Alberta, 2013), ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis Global (MR95981).

essence, it was because of the lack of a public recreation program to provide important play opportunities that the Club formed to provide those services valued by the community. Her other important finding was a characterization of the contentious partnership between the Gyro Club and the *COE* as they worked together, as noted in her words:

...the relationship between the City and the Gyro Club was complex as they created together an integrated system of cooperation and shared responsibilities for public recreation, yet it was not a simple equation as tensions between public and voluntary roles emerged in the process and struggles to deliver play programs for children. The Gyro's program of holistic program and delivery impacted the policies for the provision of municipal playgrounds in Edmonton for a long duration and set the stage as the precursor of today's system.¹⁷²

A study of the history and growth of the Edmonton community league movement from a community development perspective (Lai 1973)¹⁷³ documented how community leagues in Edmonton have become integral partners in the provision of recreational services from 1917 to 1970. The first leagues were created in 1917 and were founded based on the notions of self-help and community improvement. At that time, leagues did not coordinate activities between themselves. The programs offered included contribution of clothing to servicemen through the Red Cross and promotion of local events, such as the extension of street car and water services, and they addressed the interest in municipal affairs, sports, and social and education programs.¹⁷⁴ The Crestwood Community League was the first community league in Edmonton and it met in Jasper Place School. Its first order of business was the replacement of the

¹⁷² Ochoa, "Gyro Club Playgrounds and Children's Recreation in Edmonton, Alberta: Outdoor Play, Civic Life, and Urban Reform 1922-1950", 132.

¹⁷³ Rosita Pek Fong Lai, "Community Leagues as Community Development Nuclei," (Master's Thesis, University of Alberta, 1973), ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis Global (MK17589)12.

¹⁷⁴ Lai, 12.

dilapidated school itself. Other programs up to 1921 included an annual field day, an annual fall fair, winter programs in the school, and the organization of troops of Scouts and Cubs.

Lai's master's thesis discussed the broad range of activities offered by community leagues and the strength of the *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL)* in collectively opposing government or changing government policy common throughout her study period. She felt that the recreation and sport focus should be broadened further to discuss even more social issues. Recommendations were made to realign the parks and recreation department to enhance collaboration between parks and recreation and community actors. In essence, her administrative restructuring suggestions were seeking to create greater synergy between administrative actors and the *EFCL*, which in hindsight, could be described as a means to evolve park institutional decision-making (Lai 1976).¹⁷⁵

Ron Kuban, a former executive in the *EFCL*, published a history of the organization since the first league was established in 1917.¹⁷⁶ His book provides some interesting insights into how parks were managed from an external perspective including the 1960-2004 period. The introduction of the book provided letters of support from politicians. Included was a letter from Stephen Mandel, mayor of Edmonton that extolled the values and importance of the *EFCL*. The timing of the book, published in 2005, coincided with Mayor Mandel's behind-the-scenes negotiation with the *GoA* (2004-2006) to exclude the community from the 2006 initiative review process. The following quote implies the public face of Mayor Mandel with

¹⁷⁵ Lai, 85-90.

¹⁷⁶ Ron Kuban, *Edmonton's Urban Villages. The Community League Movement*. Edmonton, Alberta. University of Alberta Press. 2005.

respect to the importance of the *EFCL* may have been at odds with his concurrent actions of the day.

The (*EFCL*) movement's accomplishments are a credit to thousands of city residents who volunteered their *time, talent and resources* (emphasis added) to ensure their community becomes a great place to call home. As such, these volunteers, their community league and the *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL)* have truly *played a pivotal role* (emphasis added) in making Edmonton, the great city it is today – a City of Champions.

... every day at community events across the City Edmontonians continue to volunteer their valuable time and skills in support of community league programs. They are *continuing a long and proud legacy of service* (emphasis added).¹⁷⁷

Going back to the late 1950s and early 1960s, *EFCL* was opposed to the adoption of the *Joint Use Agreement (JUA)* because they were not included in the Steering Committee. The organization were concerned about a loss of access to recreational lands. Despite their opposition, the *COE* forged ahead with the agreement.¹⁷⁸ By the mid-1970s, the focus of the *EFCL* was on leisure and recreation issues but began evolving into broader community issues. It resulted, in part, in the creation of *Policy C110, City/Community League Relations* in 1980 which established the *EFCL* and community leagues as a primary vehicle to understand community perspectives on recreation and urban development issues. This policy came into existence because City Council was either not involving the community in decision making or involving them too late.¹⁷⁹ When the policy was passed, the *EFCL* president of the day Clint

¹⁷⁷ Kuban, xiv-xv.

¹⁷⁸ Kuban, 108.

¹⁷⁹ Kuban, 128-130.

Budd stated to the press: By rights, we should never again get the question: “Who the hell are you and who says you speak for the people in your neighbourhood.”¹⁸⁰

In 1983, the *COE* embarked on a new funding program (*Neighbourhood Park Development Program-NPDP*) to cost share park development with the community due to a lack of municipal funds available. According to Kuban, in community and media quarters, the move was seen as a downloading of government responsibility.¹⁸¹ The parks department planning manager of the day confirmed that a lack of *COE* funds was the reason for the move. In 1983, (then) Councillor Allan Bolstad reported to the press on the creation of the *NPDP*:

Hundreds of city parks are up for adoption, and you may well be the park-parent the city is looking for... The parks and recreation department is stepping up its recruitment of citizens to help develop, manage or maintain city parks.¹⁸²

The 1980s saw the creation of a standardized lease agreement (i.e., *tri-partite lease agreement*) to provide land for the community for development of community-funded facilities. This and the *NPDP* program further engaged the community in provision of amenities in a formal financial way, and again, could reasonably be seen as a government downloading of services.

Finally, Kuban’s book chronicled the range and depth of community volunteer activities. In the 1960s, he estimated that the tax levy support to recreation would have to be increased by 50% if not for the efforts of the community. The *EFCL* was responsible for initially coordinating multiple minor sport activities that grew into activity-specific volunteer

¹⁸⁰ Kuban, 129.

¹⁸¹ Kuban, 126.

¹⁸² Kuban, 130.

organizations (e.g., minor hockey, baseball).¹⁸³ He also chronicled over time the increase in community league funding grants to leagues to support the community in offering services. In 1963, the *EFCL* made the following estimate of their financial contribution to *COE* programming.

EFCL and its 82 leagues involved 165,388 children in community sports and programs, maintain and operate over 125 ice rinks, with an estimated attendance of over one million children, organize 250 hockey teams for over 4000 players and 150 fastball and baseball teams involving 2500 children, organized a talent show involving 500 children, operate Boysdale Camp for children, fostered the promotion of friendship clubs, Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts.¹⁸⁴

The North Saskatchewan River Valley was the site of public land contestation in Edmonton. In the mid-1970s, an arterial roadway proposed by *COE* administrators through MacKinnon Ravine was successfully defeated through community opposition (Bower 2016)¹⁸⁵ that included the creation of an ephemeral organization (*Urban Reform Group of Edmonton*, or *URGE*) headed in part by university researchers. Part of the success of *URGE* was relationships forged with the administrations to influence changes in approaches.

Progress within the city on issues such as public consultation was driven in part by back-channel influence exerted by *URGE*. As (Gerry) Wright described it, the “technocrats, bureaucrats and professionals” leading *URGE* often made the case for policy innovations in ways that won support from some within the city bureaucracy. This “intentional strategic networking” meant that *URGE* was pressing its case through relationships both personal and professional, as well as through the political process.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ Kuban, 109.

¹⁸⁴ Kuban, 112-114.

¹⁸⁵ Shannon Stunden Bower, “The Affordances of MacKinnon Ravine: Fighting Freeways and Pursuing Government Reform in Edmonton, Alberta,” *Urban History Review* 44 1 no. 2, (2016): 59-72.

¹⁸⁶ Bower, 67.

In advance of public hearings, a transportation study was prepared after the initial complaints that the public was not actively engaged in arriving at the requirement for the freeway through the river valley. Once completed, the study confirmed the need for the roadway, even as individuals within the *COE* bureaucracy espoused other perspectives.¹⁸⁷ Because of the political pressure of the group and the development of working relationships within the administration, the freeway plan was shelved.¹⁸⁸

Elaine Bedford (1976)¹⁸⁹ described the historical residential development of the river valley from 1891 to 1975. She showed how the settlement pattern of the North Saskatchewan River valley generally evolved towards recreational uses, largely through political action but underlain by natural, economic, social, and technological factors. She stated that the residential use of the river valley was being challenged by the recreational development and the development of the *Capital City Recreation Park* (or *CCRP*) in river flat areas in the 1970s. The *CCRP* program purchased residential lands, including lands in the downtown river valley communities of Riverdale, Rossdale, and Cloverdale, to create a central river valley park. This issue was beginning to be contested at the time of publication of her thesis in 1976.

¹⁸⁷ Bower, 68.

¹⁸⁸ In my 29 years of service with the parks functions in the city, there were rumours that this roadway plan may yet come back at some time in the future.

¹⁸⁹ Elaine Bedford, "An Historical Geography of Settlement in the North Saskatchewan River Valley, Edmonton" (MA Thesis, University of Alberta, 1976), ProQuest Dissertations and Global Thesis (MK30613).

A master's thesis prepared by University of Alberta's Michael McGibbon (1984)¹⁹⁰ followed up that contestation over the residential development of the central river valley neighbourhoods. In his study, he looked at how a 1981 bylaw proposal was contested (*North Saskatchewan River Valley Bylaw*) that would have over time effectively removed existing residential development in the central river valley and other areas and thereby facilitated the creation of a central river valley park. A group of residential landowners in the river valley formed an organization (i.e., the *Society for the Preservation of the River Valley*, or *SPRV*) to oppose deletion of the residential uses in the river valley. This group once again had a connection to the University of Alberta. McGibbon's study was focussed on how the group formed and opposed redevelopment of the residential lands into park lands. Citizen protest in the contestation by the public was partially successful, as further land purchases were stopped. The bylaw today focuses more on protecting the river valley as a park but less so on removing existing residential development.¹⁹¹

McGibbon's thesis had some interesting findings that are worth discussing within context of initiative decision-making in this case study. A public group communication program against the COE's action was created and was instrumental in changing the bylaw

¹⁹⁰ Michael McGibbon, "Citizen Protest in the Urban Planning Process: A Case Study of the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan (MA Thesis, University of Alberta, 1984), ProQuest Dissertations and Global Thesis (ML24781).

¹⁹¹ This bylaw was challenged throughout the 1990s and 2000s. My experience was that there were multiple competing demands for river valley area development. Developers wanted residential development within the river valley and along its edges (i.e., top of bank areas) and to create storm water management facilities in the river valley. Environmental groups like the Sierra Club wanted a greater focus on environmental preservation over both development and recreational development. Community recreation groups pushed recreational agendas as well (e.g., mountain biking, trails, ski hills, boating, etc.). Private business interests have requested development as well in the river valley (i.e., Fort Edmonton Spa).

that both would remove housing and was front and centre in the 1983 election. Laurence Decore was elected as mayor and would later stop the land purchases in the central river valley area. Low-income housing in the area was used as a rationale to retain housing. The discourse was complex. The community demanded earlier participation in the bylaw than at the bylaw approval public hearing stage; this was resisted by councillors and the administration. There was not a single monolithic position of opposing residents. The public oppositional group was hampered by the nature of volunteer organizations to sustain themselves over time. Those opposing the bylaw at the public hearing were characterized as being selfish.¹⁹² The above represents potentially similar process concerns with the Edmonton parks case study.

The work of Bedford (1976) and McGibbon (1984) are an almost mirror image of the surplus school initiative. In both, political interventions were opposed by the community, and they were concerned about the social impact of the decision and poorly developed public input processes.

University of Alberta master's in geography student Charles Olson (1982)¹⁹³ sought to develop a more rational approach to urban open space planning that involved development of a monitoring system and application of planning theories to open space. He named these theories "blueprint planning," "rational comprehensive planning," "disjointed instrumentalism," "normative planning," "functional planning," and "advocacy planning" as

¹⁹² McGibbon, "Citizen Protest in the Urban Planning Process: A Case Study of the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan," 151-160.

¹⁹³ Charles J. Olson, "Towards More Rational Planning, with Reference to Monitoring and Urban Open Space," (MA Thesis, University of Alberta, 1982), 34-35, ProQuest Dissertations and Global Thesis (MK56962).

defined by Faludi (1973) and Davidoff (1965). Olson's study defined the social actors engaged in planning as elected officials, executive and management staff, government-employed technical and professional staff, landowners and developers, and finally, a group he broadly defined as the public.¹⁹⁴ His definition of the "public" is general and does not speak to communities of interest (e.g., sport groups, cultural groups, etc.) in a meaningful way. Olson's characterization, quoting a local recreation scholar, stated that historical practices of urban open space planning in Edmonton as an "ad hoc incremental process."

The reasoning behind this provision is that certain amounts of different types of open space should be provided for given numbers of the population. The most common standard used is ten acres per 1000 population.¹⁹⁵

Based on my review of park master plans and general plans, this ad hoc characterization of Edmonton did not reflect Edmonton's approach in the 1960-2010 period. Edmonton used a defined recreational and school program articulated in master plans that used the reserve dedications provided by provincial legislation. Olson does point to the notion that a parks area to population area ratio is a common starting point in his research, but says a ratio gives little attention to the location, type, and function of open space.¹⁹⁶ Olson (1982) quotes Lewis Mumford:

The surest mark of bad planning is that in the very effort to meet one kind of mass demand, the planner is tempted to set up a single standard of success, that of quantitative use, and to overlook the need for variety, and choice.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Olson 34-35.

¹⁹⁵ Olson, 37.

¹⁹⁶ Olson, 37.

¹⁹⁷ Olson, 38.

Olson argues that the area ratio approach serves the supplier (i.e., developers) rather than the user, which is especially true with the process used in Edmonton that relies on legislation to quantify its provision. Olson also raises concerns about supplier-side considerations:

...the value of open space is poorly registered in the land market because: "...open space is a public good and because not all values can be expressed in terms of dollars.¹⁹⁸

While Olson's thesis provides local insight, not all of which may reflect recent open space planning history in Edmonton, his most valuable insights were that a park area population ratio is flawed, and most importantly, that an ongoing monitoring process that includes public engagement is necessary for planners to make open space decisions. That monitoring process in Edmonton developed over time through park partnership programs (e.g., the *NPDP*). What was lacking was a corporate-initiated routinized review process that considered the needs of both the community and the *COE*.¹⁹⁹

Inner city park lands provision discourse reported in the local press occurred in the late 1990s as school boards began to consider the closure of inner city schools. The *GoA* had mandated that prior to funding new schools in suburban areas, the boards must reduce their "underutilized" inventories. Underutilized space resided largely in older areas of the city. This outcome was in part due to the flight to the suburbs accommodated through approvals of new

¹⁹⁸ Olson, 29.

¹⁹⁹ In hindsight, the parks functions, the park land planners, did manage the land asset, but there was little or no information provided from the community that the City had too much park land; in fact, the planning and operating reality was that we needed more land (11-12%), not less (as per the *UPMP*). However, what could have happened was a review of selected land holdings periodically in a more proactive fashion that may have pre-configured in a different way the eventual surplus school site initiative.

plan areas approved by elected officials. Inner city school populations declined. The inner-city sites were acquired prior to 1961, which meant the boards had paid for the sites and the sites also served as a source of greenspace in these areas as per the *JUA* after that date. To retain these sites as greenspace, the *COE* would have to purchase the lands from the *GoA*; in effect, local Edmonton taxpayers would be paying twice to acquire the same lands, or simply transferring funds from Edmonton taxpayers to the *GoA* to retain publicly owned and publicly used land.

Florence Loyie and Bill Mah, both of the *Edmonton Journal*, reported on this issue in the 1990s and early 2000s. Mah said, “The city faces a tough choice: lose scarce park lands in old neighbourhoods or make taxpayers contribute millions of dollars for land they already helped purchase.”²⁰⁰ The change of provincial funding policy raised concerns with the general manager Joyce Tustian of Community Services, who was responsible for park lands management at that time. She was concerned about the potential loss of park lands and that the *COE* may not have had the funds to buy all of these sites. The press reported Allan Bolstad, then councillor, felt the school board may be seeking to act like developers, seeking the land for sale as a revenue source.²⁰¹

Florence Loyie reported that the *Edmonton Catholic Services (ECS)* School Board planned to dispose of St. John’s and Sacred Heart schools if funding were received for a new

²⁰⁰ Bill Mah, "Older Communities Facing Loss of Scarce Parkland: School Closures Leave Future of Green Space Uncertain." *Edmonton Journal*, Oct 13, 2001. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/252874241?accountid=14474>.

²⁰¹ Mah

school on the St. Michael's site in 1999.²⁰² New school funding was received, and the St. John's school site was sold to a developer for residential development in 2016.²⁰³

The drumbeat for development on school and park sites was further heightened in 2001 when the ECS proposed to allow a chain grocery store to build on a school site in return for a \$3.2M long-term lease that the ECS board could use for its purposes.²⁰⁴ Dubbed "shopping cart high," this idea eventually did not go forward as it was blurring the notion of public use of public lands.

In 2004, councilors Anderson and Mandel asked the administration to report on the status of school sites where school development had not yet occurred. That motion included the following request for information.

A strategy for identifying surplus schools sites in partially built neighbourhoods and areas with approved plans but very little development – the intent would be to reduce the number of school sites before citizens *become convinced that the school site is essential park space* (my emphasis added).²⁰⁵

It was here that council first began staking out the surplus site disposition narrative in a public way, while simultaneously acknowledging, in a backhanded way, community

²⁰² Florence Loyie, "More Vacant School Sites Than Systems Can Possibly Use, Councillor Says: Sites are Becoming Weed-Filled Eyesores." *Edmonton Journal*, Nov 12, 1999. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/252671931?accountid=14474>.

²⁰³ In 2016, the city refused to purchase the surplus St. John's School site in Oliver; no consultation with the community occurred prior to decision-making by administrative officials. The Oliver community league was successful in getting City Council to refuse site redevelopment.

²⁰⁴ Harvey Voogd, "Sold their Souls." *Edmonton Journal*, June 26, 2001. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/252905282?accountid=14474>. Mr. Voogd was a private citizen.

²⁰⁵ *COE*, June 8, 2004 report number 2004CSS011.

attachment to these sites. It was also after this report that the surplus school site initiative discussions went underground, only to resurface publicly on November 17, 2006 with a deal to dispose not only of public land, but to dispose of public engagement and public notice to dispose of public lands.

The discussions are significant because they represent potential loss of park lands, in both suburban areas and in older parts of the city. These anticipated losses of inner-city park lands were not part of the context shared at the time of the 2006 or 2009 processes, and this exclusion of information represents a discursive silence. Adding these sites all together, there were now 50 sites and counting being surplus and sold for redevelopment and no single site or systemic analysis of the collective impact of these losses, even after the *COE* General Manager acknowledged in the press that the inner-city sites were park lands.

This Edmonton contestation section reveals frequent tension between the *COE* administrators, elected officials, and the community related to park lands acquisition, development, redevelopment, and disposition. There have been discussions about too much and too little park lands inside and outside the river valley as well as on school sites. Generally speaking, the discourse about too much park lands did not emanate from park lands administrators. Initiatives to repurpose park lands in the 2000s were politically driven. The *COE*, through elected officials and administrators, retained its legislatively defined decision-making role, but it is also fair to say that the community contested decisions and has influenced decision-making over time.

2.1.12 Planning, Place, and Parks

A common thread through both the parks and planning literature is the relationship between social actors. In planning literature, there is evidence that economic and political forces may

privilege economic actors over others. In the parks literature, park systems were created to address social ills in the community. Throughout the 1900s, community social actors were fully engaged with state actors in co-production of parks (Lai 1976; Ochoa 2012),²⁰⁶ the pace and scope of which increased over time. Patsy Healey in the UK has studied planning process and place from an institutional perspective. She argues that places are social constructs given meaning through the experience of living, working, and doing business in them through an historical accretion of value.²⁰⁷ This is very similar to what has been concluded by leisure researchers (Smale, 2006; Stewart 2006),²⁰⁸ place researchers (Manzo and Perkins 2006; Devine-Wright 2009),²⁰⁹ and sociologists (Trentelman 2009),²¹⁰ albeit from different perspectives. Healey argues that places are given value in the particular context of meaning, and that much of the tensions in place decisions are over different conceptualizations of

²⁰⁶ Lai, “Community Leagues as Community Development Nuclei”; Paulina Cecelia Retamales Ochoa, “Gyro Club Playgrounds and Children’s Recreation in Edmonton, Alberta: Outdoor Play, Civic Life, and Urban Reform 1922-1950” (Master Of Arts Thesis, University of Alberta, 2013), ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis Global (MR95981);

²⁰⁷ Healey, “Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places,” 118.

²⁰⁸ Brian Smale, “Critical Perspectives on Place in Leisure Research,” *Leisure/Loisir* 30, no. 2 (2006): 369-382, doi: 10.1080/14927713.2006.9651358; William Stewart, “Community-based place meanings for park planning,” *Leisure/Loisir* 30, no. 2 (2006): 405-416, doi: 10.1080/14927713.2006.9651361.

²⁰⁹ Lynne C. Manzo and Douglas D. Perkins, “Finding Common Ground: The Importance of Place Attachment to Community Participation and Planning,” *Journal of Planning Literature* 20, no. 4 (2006): 335-350, doi: 10.1177/0885412205286160; Patrick Devine-Wright, “Nimby and Place Attachment,” *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 19 (2009): 426–441, doi: 10.1002/casp.1004.

²¹⁰ Carla Koons Trentelman, “Place Attachment and Community Attachment: A Primer Grounded in the Lived Experience of a Community Sociologist,” *Society and Natural Resources: An International Journal* 22 (2009): 191-210, doi: 10.1080/08941920802191712.

place.²¹¹ In other words, different social actors envision different outcomes and, in effect, different places.²¹² This kind of thinking led to locating an institutional theory that would create an understanding of planning processes and illuminate the tensions specific to parks lands use decision-making process.

2.1.13 Institutions and Parks

A review of the extant literature revealed a number of studies that use an institutional or social lens in some fashion related to parks or public spaces. Building on Healey's (1999) concepts of institutions and institutionalism in planning, the intent is to capture engagements between a variety of social actors in parks and parks service delivery settings, in different scalar contexts. To reiterate, Healey's (1999) conceptualization of institutionalism, the term refers to the embedding of specific practices in a wider context of social relations that cut across the landscape of formal organizations, and to the active processes by which individual actors in social contexts construct their ways of thinking and acting.

A social institutional perspective (SRI) study on a neighbourhood park site in Cairo, Egypt (Van den Broeck, Abdelwahabb, Miciukiewicz and Hillier 2013)²¹³ is the only park specific to the application of SRI perspective. That qualitative study explored how groups were selectively engaged in processes that contributed to outcomes. A key finding was that selective engagement of non-state actors and asymmetrical power relationships shaped the

²¹¹ Healey, "Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places," 119-120.

²¹² Healey, "Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places," 119-120.

²¹³ Pieter Van den Broeck, Mona Abdelwahab, Konrad Miciukiewicz, and Jean Hillier. "On Analyzing Space from a Strategic-Relational Institutional Perspective: The Cultural Parks for children in Cairo." *International Planning Studies* 18 (2013): 321-341. doi: 10.1080/13563475.2013.833727.

outcome, which ultimately led to a contestation towards meeting local community recreational needs versus historical interpretive outcomes.

A retrospective case study of the creation of Yellowstone National Park analyzed Garret Hardin's iconic conceptualization of the "commons" (Daniels 2007).²¹⁴ The congressional act creating the national park declared Yellowstone "a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, but was a living and working landscape at the time."²¹⁵ Existing populations were eventually displaced. Daniels defines and uses the term "tragic" institutions, based on the following premises. Institutions governing the commons have a narrow vision of what is commonly shared. The commons are inertial by design and not by accident. Those with a stake in the institution invest or cooperate to increase their grip on the institution itself, which physically alters the commons, making change even more difficult. Daniels concludes that stable institutions themselves are not inherently problematic, but only become so when values change. The link between the Daniels study and this dissertation is that in both cases values (i.e., what land uses were desired and imposed) changed, and in both cases the action was unilateral and displaced social actors who had previously enjoyed engagement in processes. Importantly however, either outcome at Yellowstone could be argued as legitimate, again which links to this dissertation.

Two studies traced how activity-specific leisure social groups created the conditions for supportive government policies for park-related activities resident in parks in those settings. A Chicago, Illinois, study found that the dog owners and supporters lobbied for

²¹⁴ Brigham Daniels, "Emerging Commons and Tragic Institutions," *Environmental Law* 37, no. 3 (2007): 516-571.

²¹⁵ Daniels, 552.

changes to policy to accommodate dogs in parks, but with limited support from political leaders and limited success (Terrian 2006).²¹⁶ In Hamilton, Ontario, urban garden proponents and activists successfully worked with elected officials and administrators to create an urban gardens and agricultural policy. The Hamilton study explored how individuals and groups were engaged in policy-making and the administrative structure and its impact on outcomes, including public engagement (Jerme and Wakefield 2013).²¹⁷ The groups formed may be enduring or ephemeral. In both cases, community actors were engaged in evolving city policy and decision making.

Social movements in support of biodiversity or ecological preservation are common in planning literature, with obvious relevance to park lands. NGOs have been integral to the framing of issues in the climate change debate, which assisted in building broader alliances between civil society and state actors (Allan and Hadden 2017).²¹⁸ A quantitative study of mid-sized American cities identified connections with broader multi-city networks (i.e., institutions) and intergovernmental funds as positive factors in climate change policy-making adaptation initiatives (Kalafatis 2018).²¹⁹

²¹⁶ Elizabeth Jefferis Terrian, “How Differences in Cultural Institutions affect Social Movements and Policy Outcomes: A Study of Responses to Dog Ownership,” Conference Paper, In *Great Divides, Transgressing Boundaries*. Ed. American Sociological Association Conference. 2006, 1-26.

²¹⁷ Erika S. Jerme and Sarah Wakefield, “Growing A Just Garden: Environmental Justice and the dDevelopment of a Community Garden Policy for Hamilton, Ontario,” *Planning Theory & Practice* 14, no. 3 (2013): 295-314, doi: 10.1080/14649357.2013.812743.

²¹⁸ Jen Iris Allan and Jennifer Hadden, “Exploring the Framing Power of NGOs in Global Climate Politics,” *Environmental Politics* 26, no. 4 (2017): 600-620, doi: 10.1080/09644016.2017.1319017.

²¹⁹ Scott E. Kalafatis, “Comparing Climate Change Policy Adoption and Its Extension Across Areas of City Policymaking,” *Policy Studies Journal* 46, no. 3 (2018): 700-719, doi: 10.1111/psj.12206.

Institutional arrangements can be created to provide maintenance services. A study of three public-private development and operational partnerships at Central Park, Bryant Park, and Battery Park stimulated by local government funding challenges in New York in the 1980s analyzed alternative forms of service delivery with different social actors (Krinsky and Simonet 2016).²²⁰ The authors found that governments can draw from a repertoire of public and private, and philanthropic, corporate, and civic orientations that may emerge. However, private operational engagement in public parks tends to reinforce new public management (i.e., neoliberal governance outcomes) and privileges some actors over others and, ultimately, the choice of public opportunities. Edmonton has similar arrangements, mostly with brick-and-mortar indoor recreation facilities, as well as multiple arrangements with community organizations.²²¹

This subsection provides insight into park institutional development in three important ways: park services delivery by its nature has a diverse range of social actors, the role of actors is unique to each setting, and actor role definition can have differential process and outcome impacts, all of which have parallels or relevance to how local Edmonton park decision-making occurred both in the surplus schools initiative and more broadly in the parks service delivery in Edmonton.

²²⁰ John Krinsky and Maud Simonet, “Institutions in the Integral State: What New York City’s Parks Signal for Contemporary Urban Governance,” Conference Paper, *In Rethinking Social Movements: Can Changing the Conversation Change the World*. Ed. American Sociological Association Conference. 2016. 1-19.

²²¹ Those include agreements with Fort Edmonton Park, the Edmonton Valley Zoo, the Muttart Conservatory with special purpose boards, leisure complexes on the Kaskitayo, Castledowns, and Clareview district park sites with the YMCA, and multiple community halls with the *EFCL* and individual community leagues, including those located on Blue Quill and Greenview school and park sites. There are others as well including smaller-scale specific purpose arrangements (e.g., sports field line markings provided by minor sport groups)

2.2 Bridging Practitioner and Research Worlds in Parks and Planning Settings

To briefly revisit where this dissertation journey began in 2006, elected officials unilaterally disengaged the community from input into a park lands disposition process to build housing. On its face, development for housing in a hot housing market is not antithetical to good planning. But the disposition process adopted appeared uncharacteristic, if not ahistorical, of legislation in Alberta and past policies, practices, and process in Edmonton. Negative perceptions and reactions aside, how had social actors been engaged in similar park lands decision-making in the past, and how did it occur this time? Was there a fundamental disconnect between social actors on past and current land use planning and park services delivery processes? Or was the disconnect representative of a larger issue not well expressed?

The antecedents of today's land use planning and park services delivery processes go back over 100 years in Edmonton. A review of the extant literature revealed that park spaces are created in land use change processes as a reaction, if not an ointment, to mitigate the negative externalities of planned urban development. Parks and leisure services are now a core service of government in Alberta and North America with a long, growing, and evolving history of engagement with the community in the creation, programming, and maintenance of park lands sites. It is these latter processes that evolve park lands from spaces to places. Parks and leisure lands provide multiple individual and community benefits including social, ecological, and health and wellness services. Community social actors, through service clubs and other entities, have long been engaged in parks services delivery, and they invest heavily financially and with volunteer resources in park system delivery. Contestations over public lands have occurred here and elsewhere and provide insight into how social actors engage in

process. The nexus between the land use and park planning processes is land and assumptions regarding land ownership rights and responsibilities in process.

As Edmonton grew from a small town to the dominant urban centre in the region with a population of 900,000, our land use planning, park planning, and service delivery processes and practices evolved. Those processes and practices have engaged with a diverse range and number of social actors. Social actors include elected officials, senior and frontline administrators, economic interests (developers), landowners, individual community residents, and community nongovernmental organizations. The roles of these various actors evolved and may influence the processes themselves. Economic and political trends shape both process and social actor engagement.

This dissertation seeks to understand processes and social actor engagement in that interface between park and planning processes, later defined as institutions themselves, over the 1960 to 2010 period, using two neighbourhoods (i.e., Blue Quill and Greenview) as case study sites. That time period was chosen because legislation and legal agreements were revised or created early in this time period. Legislation and agreements then created a plethora of policy documents and practices with a variety of state and non-state actors that were transformational in how Edmonton's urban landscape and park system exist today.

One might ask: Why it is important for researchers or planners to understand the intersections between the two institutions? The replacement costs for Edmonton's parks infrastructure, including land and recreation facilities totals, was over \$2 billion in 2006 and represented 10% of the assets of the corporation as a whole. Only drainage assets (\$8.4

billion) and road rights of ways (\$6.4 billion) were larger.²²² That figure today may approximate \$2.5 billion in 2019 exclusive of new assets added since 2006. Those *COE* assets were significantly cost shared by the community through taxes or cost-sharing agreements based on a series of plans, policies, and practices that have proven to be beneficial to all social actors. Given that the park infrastructure is such a significant portion of *COE* assets, planning and management of those lands should not be taken lightly. Those assets also provide revenue benefits and savings to governments and individuals.²²³

How social actors interface with, or intersect in, land use change processes and park planning and service delivery on a system basis has not previously been studied. While the two processes have some overlapping actors, there are differences in terms of level of agency and knowledge and access to political actors and funding, in addition to differences in temporal considerations (i.e., historical roles and responsibilities).

Finally, parks infrastructure is unique in a municipal setting because it is so heavily dependent on active participation of community partners to help fund, develop, and program it, unlike other forms of municipal infrastructure.²²⁴ This suggests that further scrutiny as a category of municipal infrastructure is warranted.

²²² City of Edmonton, *Edmonton City Council's Infrastructure Strategy*, (2006): 3, <https://www.edmonton.ca/>

²²³ Harnik and Crompton, "190.

²²⁴ The land cost in new areas associated with roads and utilities is indirectly funded by new property purchasers similar to park land. However, the community is not engaged in funding roads and utilities in terms of direct development or maintenance obligations other than through property taxes. By way of an example, developers pay for local, connector and arterial roadways and the city operates them (e.g., snow removal, traffic management). The community cost shares playgrounds and builds and operates community halls, outdoor skating rinks, and volunteers run programming on park sites.

2.3 Dissertation Research Questions

This dissertation focuses on how social actors engaged in processes to create, construct, program, maintain and dispose of parks and park system elements in the 1960 to 2010 period. Social actors include elected officials, senior and frontline administrators, developers, community members, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and site volunteers/programmers. What legislation, policy, and practices have guided park and park system creation and place creation over time? How and why did the legislation, policies and practices evolve over time? What mechanisms (e.g., legislation, policy) mobilized social actor engagement, and how so? What was the importance of those mechanisms? How did each type of social actor engage and influence outcomes, and influence each other? What were the relative levels of power and agency for each type of actor, and how was the power exercised over time?

To answer these questions, the dissertation adopted two related but different institutionalist perspectives; Social Relational Institutional (SRI) perspective (Chapters 3 and 4) and a Historical Institutional (HI) perspective (Chapter 5). The intent is to analyze the park system development and operations from multiple social actor perspectives (SRI) to bring greater focus on how state and non-state actors engage to shape the land use and park planning activities. The Historical Institutional approach (HI) analyzes how the park system was developed and operated from an embedded rules and structures perspective (Chapter 5).

More broadly, this dissertation seeks to understand and articulate how urban land use change processes and park services delivery are connected, using both practitioner and researcher lenses, theoretical constructs, and perspectives from social actors. It seeks to articulate what happens after the land use change process creates a park and park system with

and for the community. I would term this the downstream effect of a land use planning process. It seeks to raise the understanding of the park institution that is physically invisible and so cognitively diffused and complex that it is unrecognizable as an entity. There is a strong nexus between the two institutions; each impacts the other. This dissertation will contribute to institutional theoretical applications in park settings, which has rarely been attempted in previous scholarship, and not in the manner undertaken herein.

The Edmonton case study may be unique, but this dissertation has its greatest value in connecting to broader issues or concerns. It may allow a researcher or a practitioner to understand parks decision-making processes on a multi-scalar basis (i.e., parks within a broader park system and vice versa). This dissertation will provide a greater insight into a subset of municipal infrastructure type not previously studied from a sociological institutional perspective. In contexts where park lands is being redeveloped or sold, the dissertation may surface the notion of a parks institution to encourage the creation of a broader consultation process. The outcomes will add to the discourse around power and agency of non-state actors in Alberta specific to the *MGA*. The dissertation provides “actual” land use change process examples requested by public administrators and planners in other papers. This dissertation will contribute to the literature on complex decision-making in planning settings. It will provide examples of the use of Social Relational Institutional (SRI) theory, and Historical Institutional (HI), and path dependency. It is also hoped that the dissertation will raise awareness of the benefits of parks and park systems in planning literature.

Chapter 3: A Socio-Historical Parks Case Study in Edmonton, Alberta - Social Actor Power and Agency in the 1960-2010 Period

3.1 Abstract

The purpose of this case study and this chapter was to understand how social actors (i.e., elected officials, administrators, landowners, developers, community leagues, community residents) engage in social processes to create and animate parks using qualitative inquiry through the eyes of a former longtime practitioner. Two park sites were selected for analysis: the Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhood school and park sites over the 1960 to 2010 period. The analyses included review of documents (e.g., legislation, plans, policies, strategic plans, park master plans, funding programs, legal agreements, land titles, practices, etc.), air photographs, and semi-structured interviews with social actors engaged in processes. Social Relational Institutional (SRI) perspective was used to analyze decision-making processes, interfaces and relationships between social actors, and how social actors influenced one another.

This analysis identifies and examines two parallel planes of institutional activity between social actors; the land use planning institution and the parks institution, and reveals three temporal eras that represent changes in how social actors engaged in decision-making by influencing one another. The land use planning institution created park “spaces” identified in area plans and implementing documents and procedures. The park institution transforms “spaces” into “places” of community gathering, activity, and meaning by being substantial financial contributors to construction programming and maintenance. The parks institution is an outcome of provincial legislation that limits developer contribution to parks infrastructure, necessitating participation of community social actors to provide timely infrastructure. The two institutions intersect and influence one another in form (land use institution) and function (parks institution).

3.2 Introduction

When you observe a park in a developed urban landscape, you see activities (e.g., field sport games, playgrounds, community gardening) often organized by community members acting as volunteers. You may see a recreation facility operated by the *COE* or a community organization. The activities and facilities available are unique to each site, as is the size, configuration, and ownership. Invisible to the naked eye are property lines, administrative structures, and funding and budgets used to support the activities. In Edmonton, each site is

part of a larger park system whose creation began much earlier; this park system concept is also relatively obscure except to administrators and elected officials. The creation of a park and a park system is complex, takes place over decades, involves multiple government-generated applications and approval processes, and engages multiple state (e.g., elected officials, administrators) and non-state actors (e.g., landowners, developers, community residents, and NGOs). It involves reviewing and approving applications often based on legislative directives, strategic plans, policies, and practices. Once a site is acquired, non-state actors cost share development, programming, and maintenance. Like a proverbial iceberg – what you see above the water (i.e., in the park) is only a visible portion of what is occurring under the water (i.e., developing, programming and maintaining the park).

The trigger for doing this research was the ahistorical action of elected officials to repurpose park lands *without* community input in Edmonton. Residents of Greenview and Blue Quill neighbourhoods discovered in local newspapers in 2006 that City Council decided by a vote of 11-2²²⁵ to surplus and sell one-hectare portions of the park lands in each neighbourhood for residential development, plus eighteen other one-hectare park parcels across the city where school buildings would no longer be built on park lands. The controversial park repurposing process used to change area plans and zoning excluded the community from the approval process, contrary to legislation, plans, policies, processes, and practices. This strategy was implemented in favour of “expedited” development of

²²⁵ City of Edmonton Council reports Bylaw 14440, Report 12006PDP496, Bylaw 14441, Report 2006PDP497, and Bylaw 14442, Report 2006PDP498 and bylaws collectively approved December 12, 2006.

“affordable” housing, defined as “more affordable”²²⁶ housing. A follow-up process repurposed another 19 sites in 2009,²²⁷ once again for housing albeit with more consultation, including a second site in Blue Quill. There was confusion and anger as well as support for the initiative expressed in the community and inside the administration. A judicial review was initiated to challenge the change in decision-making.²²⁸ The following quote represents the confusion of a community member who had previously worked with the *COE* on multiple initiatives.

I think what triggered my displeasure was the lack of any consultation that was going on. And also a break from all past practices, that all of a sudden they came out and presented this as a “fait accompli” when it hadn’t even been discussed with the community yet.”²²⁹

3.3 Chapter Research Questions

This chapter establishes a foundation for the dissertation – it illuminates the historical complexity of a community-engaged process to create, design, construct, program, and maintain a park system by exploring a case study in two neighbourhoods in Edmonton: Blue Quill and Greenview over the 1960 to 2010 period. The primary focus will be on how social

²²⁶ The city got approval to waive public hearings and public notice from the *GoA* for “affordable” housing, yet the pilot projects were sold at market value. It was not until 2015 that a portion of the sites had to be dedicated for “less than market value” pricing, which applies to the 2009 surplus sites.

²²⁷ For ease of description, the surplus school site surplussing and sales are referred to as 2006 and 2009 sites. These dates refer to the decision sequence provided by the school boards and not the site sales and redevelopments themselves, which have occurred and are occurring on individual site timelines. Greenview was redeveloped by 2008 and Blue Quill redevelopment occurred in 2017 and 2018.

²²⁸ A separate association of individuals was formed to challenge how the land was being conveyed from the city to developers and through to lot purchasers. It was later dropped when opposed by the city and developers; both organizations had deep pockets willing and able to sustain a court action.

²²⁹ Barry, (community member), interview with Robert Priebe, November 30, 2016.

groups inside and outside the *COE* worked with each other throughout the time period, and how each group influenced the other, chronicling the institutionalization of parks decision-making over the 1960 to 2010 period. The intent is to understand those past practices of engagement between social actors, how they evolved over time and to contextualize of the 2006 and 2009 decisions and reactions.

3.4 Social Relational Institutional Perspective

This section will describe SRI perspective, hereafter described as SRI, in some depth and will provide an analytical tool or framework to analyze discourse between social actors.

3.4.1 Description

A Social Relational Institutional perspective is the primary theoretical analytical frame for this chapter, a form of sociological institutional theory. Four key papers were used to provide a discussion of the SRI perspective: a theoretical exploration by Van den Broeck (2011) 2011;²³⁰ a theoretical planning institutional analysis paper by Servillo and Van den Broeck (2012);²³¹ an SRI application by Van den Broeck, Abdelwahab, Miciukiewicz and Jean Hillier (2013) to a park site in Cairo (2013);²³² and an application of SRI to planning permits in

²³⁰ Pieter Van den Broeck, "Analyzing Social Innovation Through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach," In *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for Change*, 52-78 by Stijn Oosterlynck, Jef Van den Broeck, Louis Albrechts, Frank Moulaert and Ann Verhetsel, 2011. New York; Routledge.

²³¹ Loris Antonio Servillo and Pieter Van den Broeck, "The Social Construction of Planning Systems: A Strategic-Relational Institutional Approach," *Planning Practice and Research* 27, no. 1 (2012): 41-61, doi: 10.1080/02697459.2012.661179.

²³² Pieter Van den Broeck, Mona Abdelwahab, Konrad Miciukiewicz, and Jean Hillier, "On Analyzing Space from a Strategic-Relational Institutional Perspective: The Cultural Parks for children in Cairo," *International Planning Studies* 18 (2013): 321-341, doi: 10.1080/13563475.2013.833727.

Belgium (Van den Broeck and Verachter 2016).²³³ A Social Relational Institutional (SRI) perspective, from here on described as SRI, has not been applied in a North American setting, which means this chapter offers an application with a unique legislative and policy environment. SRI offers the potential to analyze place decisions that may accommodate or speak to a social “relational” community connection inherent in place settings, in contrast with a “container” perspective based on exchange value more typical in land use planning processes. Finally, an application of SRI would provide a novel multi-scalar relational application (i.e., a park within a broader park system operation) inherent in park planning and service delivery considerations in Alberta.

Servillo and Van den Broeck(2012) hold that SRI, with its social-actor focus, situates spatial planning systems in the dialectical interaction between social actors and institutions. It goes beyond the (historical) institutional analyses of the production and the (mis)use and transformation of planning systems, focusing on how external changes are mediated through the dialectical interplay of agencies and institutions which effectively allows an identification and articulation of each spatial planning system/application.²³⁴

What is important ... is that the interaction between (individual and collective) agency and the structure of society is mediated by these social forms called institutions for which the role of history matters. They are man-made, power-imposed, history and culture patterned, following path dependency and context (place) bound... From this sociological perspective, institutional change is guided not by a technical rationality that considers institutions as means leading to certain ends, but by a social rationality based on interpretation and values.²³⁵

²³³ Pieter Van den Broeck and Kristine Verachtert, “Whose permits? The Tenacity of Permissive Development Control in Flanders,” *European Planning Studies* 24, no. 2 (2015): 387-406, doi: 10.1080/09654313.2015.1045838.

²³⁴ Servillo and Van den Broeck, 42.

²³⁵ Servillo and Van den Broeck, 45.

Planning is considered embedded in an institutional field of both actors and their practices, expressed in terms of each other— actors in terms of institutions and institutions in terms of actors. *Institutions* are defined in terms of routinized behaviours, including more or less coherent sets of formal and informal routines, rules, or sanctioning mechanisms whose actors consciously or subconsciously mobilize the institutions. *Institutionalization* essentially “fixes” certain practices and ways of doing things at a particular point in time, albeit only on a temporary basis. So rather than focus on the institutions in planning, SRI instead focuses on planning as an institutionalized practice itself subject to institutionalization guided by both technical realities (e.g., legislation, policies, studies) and a multiplicity of social rationalities (e.g., needs, knowledge availability, time).²³⁶

The SRI perspective then focuses on the ways particular individual and collective actants succeed or fail to imbue their values and interests into institutional frames; how institutional frames embody compromises between different values and interests and concomitant power relations and who dominates these compromises; how these structurally inscribed values and interests and concomitant power structures in turn inform the behaviour of different planning actants and who benefits from this.²³⁷

SRI allows comparison of spatial planning processes in four key areas. SRI moves beyond the analysis of formal planning systems and their decision-making steps. Evolving social actors and their institutions can be drivers in non-linear, path-dependent, and path-shaping institutional and agency changes. SRI allows a more nuanced understanding of the socio-political content and meaning of a planning system. The reflective-recursive dynamics of local decision-making mediating global/national and provincial social, economic, and political institutions allow for a comparison between planning systems in similar contexts or to help identify dissimilar contexts.

²³⁶ Van den Broeck, and Verachtert, “388-389.

²³⁷ Van den Broeck, and Verachtert, 389.

Servillo and Van den Broeck provided some examples to see the potential benefits of the application of SRI. They identified its use to describe the practices of individuals and groups, the pressure of grassroots organizations, the changing groups of professionals engaged in processes, the long-lasting presence of some actors in producing and reproducing frames, and the rise of a critical mass of social groups countering hegemonic actors. Applying these opportunities to the Edmonton situation, SRI may provide nuance in the description of outcomes: it may relate to a preference given to strategic projects (e.g., housing) or to administrative social actors (e.g., asymmetrical decision-making) or in the rise of spatial themes (e.g., increased density). SRI application may point to discourses not unique to Edmonton²³⁸ or disconnected discourses, and changes in socio-political settings over time. It is these latter perspectives that are of most interest to this dissertation and in this chapter specifically.

3.4.2 Analytical Tool

Van den Broeck bases his work on Bob Jessop's strategic relational approach (2001), which allows an exploration of how institutional frame may privilege (but not determine) actors, some actions, and some strategies over others (i.e., what Jessop described as strategically inscribed strategic selectivities) and the ways in which actors take into account differential privileging when choosing a course of action (i.e., structurally orientated strategic calculation). Over time, actors revisit the institutional frames reflexively, depending on structural constraints and windows of opportunities (Jessop 2001).²³⁹ Jessop and Van den

²³⁸ Servillo and Van den Broeck, 54-55. Please note all examples provided in parentheses are Edmonton examples identified by the primary author, not the articles' authors.

²³⁹ Bob Jessop, "Critical Realism and the Strategic Relational Approach," *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics* 56 (2005): 40-53.

Broeck refer to this as reflexively-recursively dialectical.²⁴⁰ In this way, institutional design is seen as not opposed to evolution, but in fact, is integral to it. For example:

“A zoning plan, changes land values, creates a relationship between spatial design and the jurisdictional-administrative complex, organizes new relationships between different actors (i.e., owners, governmental actors, users, sectoral groups, etc.) and is mobilized in struggles over land use and land values.”²⁴¹

Van den Broeck’s application of SRI theory conceptualizes planning as a social process, not as a technical exercise.

...social processes go on to interrelate the active work of individuals within social processes (level of agency) with the power of system forces, such as economic organization, political organization, social dynamics and natural forces...The state is not conceptualized as a homogenous force, but as a networked ensemble, or assemblage, which is open to changes in interactions with the micro-practices of everyday life and collective action which carries innovative governance capacity.

...An institutional analysis then examines the norms of discourse and practice, and implications of these norms for structuring how the planners see their worlds, and how they consequently seek to conciliate bottom up institutional dynamics with institutional settings and planning agendas.²⁴²

Relevant social actors and their practices on the left side (Figure 3-1) are distinguished from the institutional frame on the right side. Van den Broeck SRI application analyzes agency and institutional frames simultaneously. Typically, the actions of planning actors, strategic with respect to planning instruments and the institutional frame, are preconfigured by

²⁴⁰ The essence of the term “reflexive-recursive-dialectical” process is: you hear, think, discuss/react. Each actor is influencing the other in relation to one another, and as such, knowledge changes as it is shared over time, which may change process itself.

²⁴¹ Van den Broeck, “Analyzing Social Innovation Through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach,” 55.

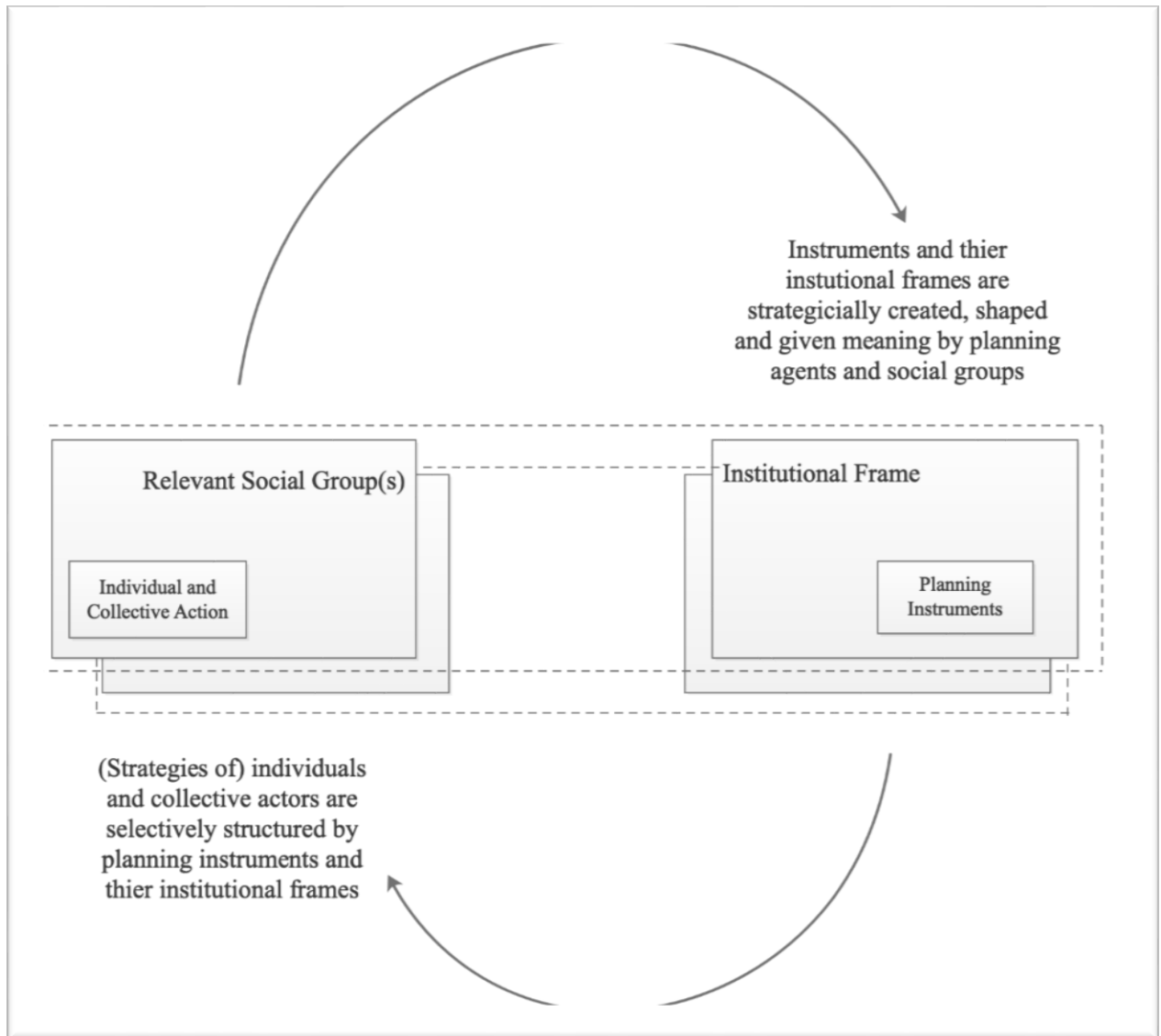
²⁴² Pieter Van den Broeck, Mona Abdelwahab, Konrad Miciukiewicz, and Jean Hillier, “On Analyzing Space from a Strategic-Relational Institutional Perspective: The Cultural Parks for children in Cairo,” 325.

these same instruments. They are also strategically selective with respect to the practices of everyday planning actors (i.e., who is invited, when, and how). The actions that occur can be analyzed as resulting from previous actors and groups who have embedded their own values in the planning processes and institutional frames, and the circle is complete as actors influence and evolve the institutional frame over time.²⁴³

The reflexive-recursive dialectical process re-occurs, moving from moment one to moment two, and beyond; the shift occurs between planning actors, social groups, and their strategic calculations (right to left on Figure 3-1) on one hand, and between the planning instruments and institutional frames on the other with their embedded selectivities.

²⁴³ Pieter Van den Broeck, "Analyzing Social Innovation Through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach," In *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for Change*, ed., Stijn Oosterlynck, Jef Van Den Broeck, Louis Albrechts, Frank Moulaert and Ann Verhetsel, 2011. New York; Routledge. 52-78.

Figure 3-1: SRI Theory Reflexive-Recursive Dialectical Relationships



Source: Van den Broeck (2013), 56

The shifts do not follow a linear pattern and have engrained power struggles, stops and starts, pauses, missed opportunities, and dead ends that are path dependent on previous actions of actors (e.g., politicians, individuals, communities, nongovernmental organizations) and institutional frames (e.g., process, policies, practices, legislation). Ultimately, what this may mean in this application is that, over time, park planning processes evolve in keeping with

changes in actors and society more broadly (Van den Broeck 2013). Importantly, this also means that there is a cumulative effect as social actors engage and evolve the parks decision-making processes that must be considered when new changes are proposed or contested.

3.5 Methodology, Methods, Materials, Analysis and Rigour

The research approach adopted is summarized in sections 1.2 (Methodological Coherence), 1.3 (Case Study and Sites), 1.4 (Data Collection), 1.5 (Data Analysis) and 1.6 (Data Rigour and Validity). The Blue Quill and Greenview case study sites examine evolving legislation, bylaws, policies, park master plans, and practices over the 1960-2010 period, and specifically, how social groups interact with one another utilizing the various documents, augmented by semi-structured interviews.

3.6 Findings

Findings are categorized into institutions defined (i.e., planning and parks), institutional eras (i.e., rational planning, coproduction of place and sustainable cities), and institutional planes and intersections. The term “institutional plane” was chosen deliberately, and defined in this context as a noun—a level of existence, consciousness, or development.²⁴⁴ In this case, it reflects a level of reality or each institution, each with their own set of rules, practices, procedures, and processes with the same and different overlapping social actors. Actors have differential access to information, knowledge of legislation, policy, practices, power and agency; all of these factors shape reactions for and against an initiative. With these differentials in place, the two institutions intersect periodically which changes the institutions themselves, and are defined by the institutional eras.

²⁴⁴ “Merriam-Webster,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/planes>

The next subsection defines the two institutions; land use planning and parks.

3.6.1 Institutions Defined

3.6.1.1 Land Use Planning Institution

The land use planning institution is defined as dialectical processes that occur over time between state and non-state actors that influence and shape land use decision-making processes. It is an institution that is shaped not only by the technical processes (i.e., the planning application review process) but also by social rationalities. Those dialectical processes shape the physical landscaped or more broadly regulates the institutionalization of urban space. The land use planning institution are triggered by market and economic forces. Decisions are guided by evolving policies, plans and legal agreements developed in advance of applications by state actors with integral engagement with the community. The outcome of theses processes are urban lands transformed from rural or country residential development, farm lands, wet lands and tree stands into residential, commercial, institutional, parks, roadways and utilities. Actors are selectively engaged in with different levels of power and agency engaging in dialogues that not only influence the form of a particular municipal landscape but also more broadly how the decision-making institutions themselves by how each react to one another. Finally, while the land use planning institution will be impacted by a complex overlay of other institutions that is the reality of local municipal government.

An important policy change was the 1963 *Planning Act*²⁴⁵ and its requirement for a municipal development plan. In this era, Edmonton produced General Plans in 1963, 1967, 1971, and 1980. The latter three plans were all supportive of the parks-system-based concept of local, district, and regional parks, reflecting the “systems of systems” context. This

²⁴⁵ The precursor to the *Municipal Government Act*.

“systems of systems” context is defined as the collective park system in these areas was designed based on defined programs for each level of park land, as well as defined programs resident on each site.²⁴⁶

In early 1970s, when the Blue Quill and Greenview areas were being planned, the land was active farm land, which meant there were few community residents in the area. Those that were there were likely to be displaced by development. In situations like these, the actors engage in a municipally coordinated land use planning process called an area plan development that starts with a plan application. Ultimately, the plan must be reviewed and approved by municipal elected officials with input from the community typically at public hearings.

Land use allocations and identified in area plans (i.e., *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and *Mill Woods Development Concept*)²⁴⁷ were effectively preconfigured by existing planning legislation (i.e., *Municipal Government Act of Alberta - MGA*), previously approved municipal development plans (i.e., at that time, the General Plan), park plans (i.e., the *1970-1980 Parks Master Plan*), legal agreements (i.e., the *Joint Use Agreement* or *JUA*,²⁴⁸ to co-locate parks and schools), policies (e.g., community engagement), municipally defined standardized review processes (e.g., application, internal review, agency review, public notice to all

²⁴⁶ For example, the river valley park system is the city level and regional park. District parks house major recreation centres, high schools and major sportsfields. Neighbourhood parks include elementary and junior high schools, community halls, local sportsfields, playgrounds, community gardens. This typology was defined in park master plans. Each amenity is associated with a particular activity and as such has a relational aspect to the populations who use them that extend beyond neighbourhood boundaries.

²⁴⁷ See Appendix C - Bylaws for more detailed summary of the documents.

²⁴⁸ See Appendix G1 for more information.

impacted landowners, and a public hearing). All of the above would have had a public process to develop, review, and approve direction contained therein between elected officials, landowners, individuals, non-governmental actors, development companies, and planning consultants. The area plans laid out a physical landscape that included the Greenview (11 hectares with two schools) and Blue Quill (13 hectares with three schools) park sites for more detailed implementation (i.e., zoning, plans of subdivision, engineering drawings, and servicing agreements). This latter process was effectively completed by 1985, when the neighbourhood was fully built out.²⁴⁹

The documents above arguably are a manifestation of the land use planning institution that collectively provide a mechanism to develop a land use vision. For example, school board actors had agreed with the *COE* to co-locate and jointly develop school and park sites as per the *Joint Use Agreement* originally signed in 1961. This changed the physical form of park systems identified in the *Mill Woods Development Concept* and *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and approved in 1971 and 1973, respectively. It also meant that the community social actors who use the sites would have access to both school facilities and greenspace to address their recreation needs, in addition to educational services for the students. Joint use of sites was the operating norm throughout the planning, development, programming and operating norms of these two neighbourhood. The practical import of this institution and outcome is that it provides park land spaces for a park system that is later converted to park land places in the park land institution, described next.

²⁴⁹ Amendments to area plans occur periodically. The suggestion that the plan was effectively built out by 1985 means that non-park land uses were constructed, subject to periodic further amendments. In this case, *immediately* east of Blue Quill, the Century Park development converted a former shopping centre into a multi-use residential development housing 5,000 people. Century Park residents would have access to the Blue Quill school and park site.

3.6.1.2 Parks Institution

The park institution is defined as multiple park development and operational decision-making processes that occurred over time through dialectical processes built on the technical processes of the local administration (i.e., land assembly, capital budgets, *NPDP*, park land change processes), and social rationalities (e.g., recreational need assessments, fund raising, volunteerism) in roles and rules created and enshrined in policy, legal agreements and plans to co-fund and co-produce parks development, programme, and maintain park lands. The outcomes of these multi-level and multi-scalar processes are legislatively defined park land that include schools, recreational buildings, sportsfields, playgrounds, community gardens, tennis courts, batting cages, outdoor skating rinks, etc. often programmed formally or informally by non-state actors and NGOs. Actors are selectively engaged in with different levels of power and agency engaging in dialogues that not only influence the form of a particular municipal landscape but also more broadly how the decision-making institutions themselves by how each react to one another.

While the park institution is one outcome or a sub outcome of the land use planning institution decision-making processes and settings, they are not the only two institutions at play; the park institution is embedded in an institutional field. Other institutions (e.g., other institutional decision making processes such as school delivery, utility provision) will have impacts as well. This complex overlay of multiple intersecting institutions is the reality of local municipal government.

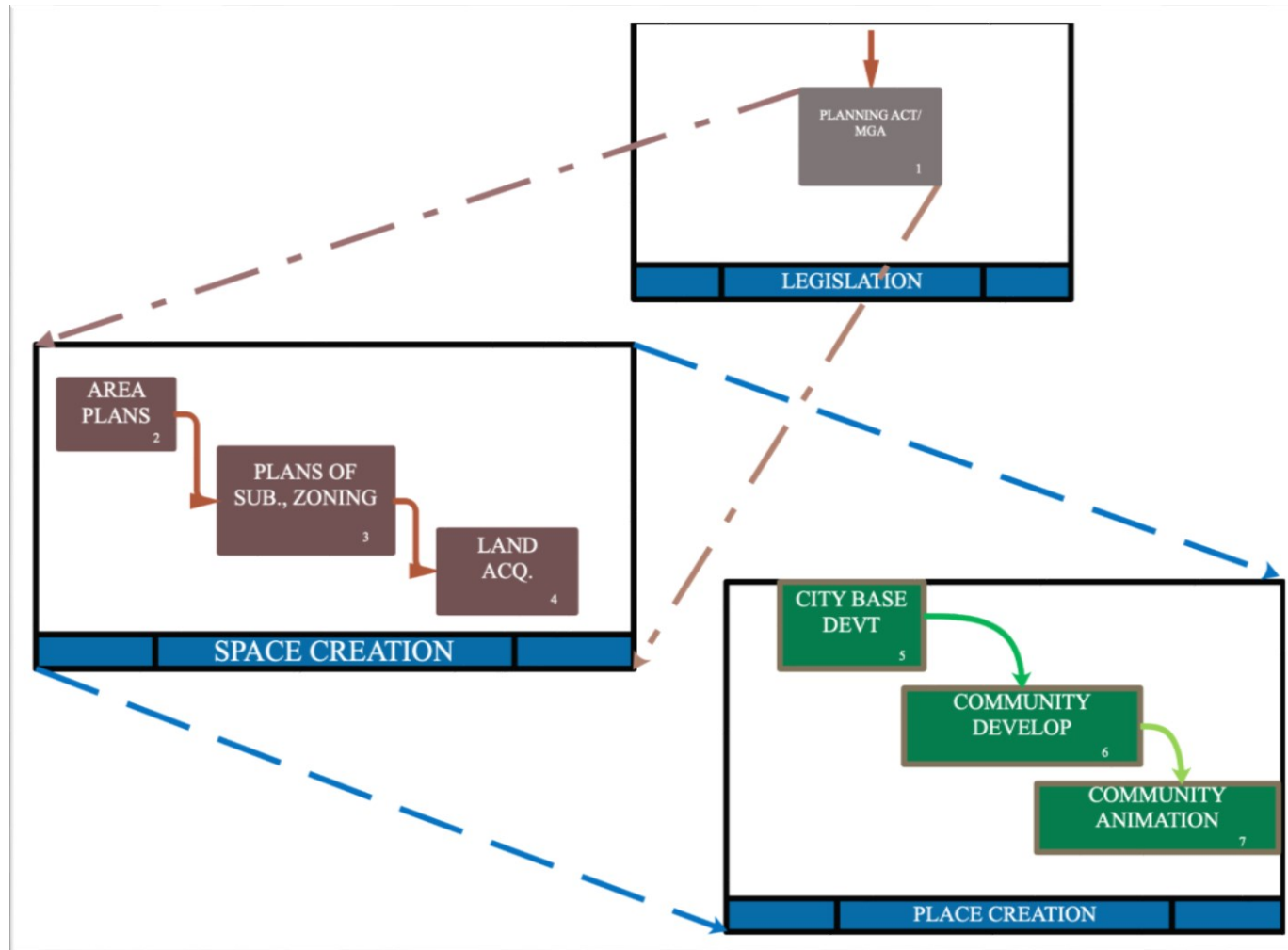
Social actors include elected officials, administrators, community leagues, individual community residents, and nongovernmental organizations, but the actors here were more site implementation orientated. In other words, these actors are engaged once (a) after park sites

are identified in the land use planning institution and (b) after the park site has been acquired and is available for development for school and park purposes. Activities supporting what is, in effect, substantially funded community implementation of area plans include site design, construction, programming, and maintenance. City Council provides base- and shared-level funding. Community leagues provide shared (e.g., playgrounds, plazas, lighting, walkways) and enhanced-level funding (e.g., community halls, tennis courts, outdoor rinks).

Programming occurs on a shared basis but is largely community provided through volunteers and special purpose organizations (e.g., soccer, baseball, hockey, etc.). Maintenance of base- or shared-level developments is the responsibility of the *COE*. Maintenance of enhanced levels is the responsibility of the community, typically through community leagues. These activities occur with greater frequency over time as the phased development occurs.

Community use and enjoyment and benefits begin to occur as soon as base-level park construction is completed. Given the long time frames, social actors change over time due to elections, promotions, residents moving in and out of communities, and other factors. A graphical form of park-related planning, development, and operations, combining both land use and planning institutions, is shown in Figure 3-2.

Figure 3-2: Park Planning, Development, and Animation



3.6.2 Institutional Eras Defined and Described

Three overlapping institutional eras, of two overlapping institutions, were identified: the City Led Rational Planning Era (1960s and 1970s); the City-Community Park Systems Co-Production Enhancement Era (1980s and 1990s); and, the City-Community Production Revision Era (2000-2010). The eras represent the way social institutional decision-making for parks-based operations evolved based on an amalgam of policy, process, practices, partnerships, and economic trends described herein.

3.6.2.1 City-Led Rational Planning Era (1960s and 1970s)

In 1960, the City of Edmonton had a population of 269,314.²⁵⁰ General Plan development were a requirement of changes to provincial planning legislation in 1963. General Plans provide a comprehensive approach to urban landscape development and lead Edmonton to plan for park systems. The notion of rational planning was based on notions that public organizations had to be able to craft clear goals and outcomes and craft policies and strategies to implement those goals.²⁵¹ This park planning era in Edmonton is best characterized as a commitment to a system of public park and school systems for the community accommodating schools, recreation facilities, sports fields, playgrounds, and plazas. Parks system planning in the 1960s was driven by a document, essentially a precursor to a parks master plan that was produced in 1955 and titled the *Report on the Active and Passive Recreation Park and Open Space Facilities*. It was a very detailed report produced by the

²⁵⁰ “Population History,”

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/facts_figures/population-history.aspx

²⁵¹ Patsy Healey, “Planning Theory-The Good City and Its Governance,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences 2nd edition* 18 (2015): 204, doi: 10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.74027-X.

“Town Planning Department” that established four levels of park lands within a broader park lands system: city, district, community, and neighbourhood. The community level essentially corresponds with today’s notions of community league boundaries. This report was the early basis of park planning in the 1960s and was mentioned in both the 1963 and 1967 General Plans.

Arguably, the most significant policy change in the sixties was the formalization of a relationship between school boards and the *COE* whereby they expanded the concept of park planning hierarchy (first introduced in 1912) with the development of the *Joint Use Agreement (JUA)* in 1961. Prior to this time, schools and parks were acquired and developed separately. As the *JUA* evolved over time, school and parks would be co-located, jointly planned, developed, and operated for the mutual benefit of the *COE*, school boards, and the broader community.²⁵² However, not all social actors were happy with this change.

The *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL)* was not in support of the *JUA* and objected to it at council in 1961. They requested that City Council include them on an administrative steering committee to raise concerns about the potential loss of recreational lands, which later became their reality; City Council refused.²⁵³ Nevertheless, the physical form (i.e., site location and shape/configuration) of future park lands was changed, which had implications on every area plan approved after 1961, including *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and *Mill Woods Development Concept*.

²⁵² See Appendix G, Park Legal Agreements, for more details.

²⁵³ Kuban, 108.

This agreement by state actors was further solidified in *Policy C109 Joint Use of Parks and Schools* (1980),²⁵⁴ which encouraged shared use of public resources and facilities for the maximum benefit of the community.²⁵⁵ The first formal parks master plan, the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, confirmed “systems of systems” within the school and park system (recreation facilities, playgrounds, sports fields) embedded within other municipal systems (e.g., residential, commercial, and supportive roadways, and utilities and drainage).²⁵⁶ The document defined recreation as a social service.²⁵⁷ A park system is best conceptualized as co-embedded “systems of systems” of school, leisure, and recreational opportunities.

The *Mill Woods Development Concept*, using the *1970-1980 Parks Master Plan*, included a section entitled “Open Space and Recreation,” which provides an articulation of the parks typology:

In accordance with the philosophy and intent of the Parks Master Plan (1970-1982) the Mill Woods Development Concept utilizes a two level system of open space in order to provide good access to park and recreational facilities for all future residents. The first level, as outlined previously, is the district park facility, servicing a population of some 40,000 to 60,000 inhabitants. These district parks are planned so that they possess convenient access both by arterial roadways and public transportation. The second level facility is the local park situated centrally within each neighbourhood unit within walking distance of each dwelling and serving approximately 5,000 residents.

²⁵⁸

²⁵⁴ See Appendix F, Park Policies, for more details.

²⁵⁵ See Appendix F, Park Policies, for more details.

²⁵⁶ See Appendix E, Park Master/Management Plans, for more details.

²⁵⁷ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 17.

²⁵⁸ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 35.

Similar statements are included in the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*. These documents are important because the land base for the park system in each area is established. It is this land base, which you might think of as space, that evolves to become a place over time.

It was in this era when the park systems in Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhoods were planned and land assembly occurred. Blue Quill received additional park land in their plan approval along with additional development density.²⁵⁹ People began to move into the two neighbourhoods in the 1970s before parks were fully developed.

The approach to engage with the community in the development of the park system was clarified in *Policy C110 City Community League Relations* (1980), which stated that elected officials agreed that community league organizations are desirable vehicles to debate and present areas of concerns to council in democratic processes.²⁶⁰ As park lands were assembled in both neighbourhoods in the late 1970s and early 1980s, parks were serviced (roads, sewer, water, gas, electric, drainage) and base-level development by the city could subsequently occur, followed later by a shared level of development with the community in the next era. As people moved in and they used their park sites, they connected with their neighbours by participating in activities.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Developers voluntarily agreed to allow the city to allocate unused roadway dedications to augment park needs. I could find no document that confirmed this, but it was common knowledge within the Administration. Alberta planning acts have allowed up to 30% of the gross developable area for roadway and utility rights of ways, and up to 10% for school and park purposes. Between 1970 and 1984, the developers of the day agreed that the city could access unused portions of the roadway and land utility dedications for park purposes.

²⁶⁰ See Appendix F, Park Policies, for more details.

²⁶¹ Acquisition and development timing confirmed through air photo interpretation.

The 1970s also saw the development of the *Capital City Recreation Park*, which sought, amongst other things, to turn the central river valley area into a park. This required the purchase of residential lands in the Cloverdale, Rosssdale, and Riverdale neighbourhoods (Bedford 1976) that was challenged by residents who were to be displaced.²⁶² The *1970-1980 Parks and Recreation Master Plan* also created the notion of top of bank “park side drive areas” to provide leisure access along river valley and ravine areas.²⁶³ This was later formalized in the “*Top of Bank Policy*”.²⁶⁴ Also in the seventies, the administration developed a plan to construct a major north-south freeway link through MacKinnon Ravine. A coordinated community opposition strategy caused elected officials to scrap the plan.²⁶⁵ The *CCRP* expansion, the top of bank parkways, the approval of the *1970-1980 Parks Master Plan*, the protection of MacKinnon Ravine, plus the approvals of the two area plans with park lands and park systems beyond today’s acquisition standards²⁶⁶ all suggest political support for the notion of expansive open space systems in the 1970s. This may now be seen as the halcyon days for parks.

²⁶² Elaine Bedford, “An Historical Geography of Settlement in the North Saskatchewan River Valley, Edmonton,” MA Thesis, University of Alberta, 1976. National Library of Canada. National Library of Canada 30613.

²⁶³ *COE, Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 1970-1980*, 31. See Appendix E, Park Master/Management Plans, for more details.

²⁶⁴ See Appendix C, City of Edmonton Plans, Bylaws, Policies Timing List, for more details.

²⁶⁵ Bower, “The Affordances of MacKinnon Ravine: Fighting Freeways and Pursuing Government Reform in Edmonton, Alberta.” See section 2.11 Edmonton Parks Discourse on Movements, Contestations, and Urban Planning for more details.

²⁶⁶ Today’s park land bases assembly standard is 10 per cent of the gross developable area of each parcel not previously subdivided.

3.6.2.2 City-Community Park Land Co-Production Enhancement Era (1980s and 1990s)

By 1980, the City of Edmonton had grown to a population of 505,773,²⁶⁷ and both Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhoods by 1985 were totally developed,²⁶⁸ with the exception of some schools. An interesting quirk as well was that the *COE* produced two high-level park policy plans in the 1980s, the *1979-1983 Parks and Recreation Department Master Plan* and the *Parks Management Plan* (1985). The latter plan remained in place until the next era.²⁶⁹ The *1979-1983 Management Plan* had a capital development plan focus identifying the cost of infrastructure improvements. The 1985 plan refocused the department's efforts into guidelines and strategies, rather than more physically orientated "master plans," recognizing the partnership/co-production role of the community in park development, programming, and operations. The 1985 plan re-confirmed the parks systems approach through information provided on park hierarchy/typology identified in the previous area plans. Another form of partnership agreement was struck in 1984²⁷⁰ that required the development industry to pay for park servicing (i.e., sewer, water, electricity, gas) who then recovered their costs from new residents through lot sales in return for the *COE* no longer taking additional transportation right of way dedication as park lands. By this time, park acquisition, development, and operations were, in effect, were a shared practice between the developers (i.e., land

²⁶⁷ "Population History,"

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/facts_figures/population-history.aspx

²⁶⁸ Build-out occurred by 1985; however, redevelopments occur periodically that sometimes require plan amendments.

²⁶⁹ See Appendix E, Park Master/Management Plans, for more details.

²⁷⁰ This agreement was known to long time park planners, but specific documentation was not available. This lack of documentation is not atypical in government.

dedications), *COE* (i.e., base-level development), and the community (shared and community amenity construction).

An interesting departure occurred from the expansive park lands notions referenced in the previous section. McGibbon (1984)²⁷¹ documented a push back on the acquisition and development of a central river valley park in Cloverdale, Rosedale and Riverdale neighbourhoods that effectively would have removed residential development from those areas. An ad hoc group of residents was successful in changing this strategy by the late 1980s.²⁷²

Blue Quill and Greenview residents moved in, park lands were developed in partnership with them (e.g., playgrounds, community halls, skating rinks), and school building sites were used by the community for unstructured greenspace. One school each was constructed in Blue Quill and Greenview by 1984. That meant that the remaining two planned schools in Blue Quill and a second planned school in Greenview were not built and were left as publicly funded and used unstructured greenspace (e.g., grassy areas), but remained designated park land.

City Council, administration, and the *EFCL* discussed and agreed to the *Surplus School Criteria - Guidelines for Determining Adequacy of Neighbourhood Parkland*²⁷³ in 1994 that required a quantitative and qualitative assessment of park lands as a pre-application phase to an area plan amendment that would consider changing park lands use to something

²⁷¹ Michael James McGibbon, "Citizen Protest in the Urban Planning Process: A Case Study of the North Saskatchewan River Valley Area Redevelopment Plan," M.A. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1984. National Library of Canada N0-315-24781-9.

²⁷² See section 2.11 for more details on Olson's findings.

²⁷³ See Appendix F, Park Policies, for more details.

else (e.g., police and fire stations, residential development). This was an important guidepost for surplus school land disposition processes.

Concurrently elected officials were having a dialogue with the *GoA* about what to do with these unbuilt sites and the “missed” development opportunity the building envelopes²⁷⁴ represented,²⁷⁵ while simultaneously participating with the community in the co-production of places. On November 12, 1999, then-Councillor Allan Bolstad, who was later the *EFCL* executive director in 2006, told the *Edmonton Journal*: “We need to put those lands to more workable uses and we need to address our process by which we continue to dedicate new school sites.” He went on to say, “We would increase the tax base without having to put out huge resources because the services are already there.”²⁷⁶ However, nothing came from those initial discussions.²⁷⁷

Plan Edmonton, the *COE*’s municipal development plan,²⁷⁸ was approved in 1997. It was a high-level strategic plan guiding all activities required by provincial legislation. There were broad priorities and strategies (e.g., well-being, and provisions of recreation, culture and the arts) to provide amenities and services for recreation and leisure, and there was also a need

²⁷⁴ Building envelopes averaged 1 ha in size and represented the land requirement to build a school building including gymnasium and parking lot for staff. Envelopes were identified at the planning stage in the site development master plans.

²⁷⁵ Ian (elected official), interview with Robert Priebe, November 13, 2016.

²⁷⁶ Florence Lovie . "More Vacant School Sites than Systems Can Possibly Use, Councillor Says: Sites are Becoming Weed-Filled Eyesores." *Edmonton Journal*, Nov 12, 1999. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/252671931?accountid=14474>.

²⁷⁷ Farley (elected official) to Robert Priebe, December 21, 2016.

²⁷⁸ Previously called General Plans

to design and implement community assessment processes to identify citizen priorities for recreation and culture.²⁷⁹ A communication strategy identified the “right to information” approach. Also included was a council priority for affordable housing which committed the COE to seeking ways to provide access for residents in need.²⁸⁰ While no direct mention was made of repurposing park land for housing lands, arguably *Plan Edmonton* did not exclude those lands to address that issue. Moreover, the existing policy and processes contemplated that possibility but only after consultation.

3.6.2.3 Park Lands City/Community Co-Production Revision Era (2000-2010)

By 1999, the City of Edmonton had grown to a population of 648,274; it later grew to 817,498 by 2012.²⁸¹ The early 2000s was a time of a booming oil-based economy and rising housing prices. In 2006 alone, housing prices rose in a single year by 51%. *Plan Edmonton*, the COE’s municipal development plan, was in place in 2006.

Early in this era, the Blue Quill Community League experienced a surplus process following the 1994 policy in a neighbourhood name Blue Quill Estates. Blue Quill Estates is a neighbourhood within the community league boundary area.²⁸² While the community league and residents desired a retention of the Blue Quill Estates surplus site, the qualitative and quantitative recreational needs assessment conducted with the community did not support the community desires. The neighbourhood requested the option to purchase the site through a

²⁷⁹ COE, *Plan Edmonton*, 42.

²⁸⁰ COE, *Plan Edmonton*, 47.

²⁸¹ COE, “Population History,” https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/facts_figures/population-history.aspx

²⁸² *Blue Quill Community League* is composed of residents of four neighbourhoods: Blue Quill, Blue Quill Estates, Skyrattler, and Sweetgrass.

local improvement levy, but the neighbourhood could not generate enough local support for the purchase. The site was subsequently redeveloped as a single-family home cul-de-sac. Community league representatives' pushback in the 2006 and 2009 site processes was in part because they wanted to follow the same process used for Blue Quill Estates.²⁸³

A series of behind-closed-doors meetings between municipal, provincial, and school board elected officials to re-purpose park lands was initiated in 2004 and led by Mayor Stephen Mandel.²⁸⁴ The *COE* financially incentivized the *GoA* and school boards to expedite the planning review process.²⁸⁵ An "in-camera" report with the innocuous title "Surplus Schools" was prepared by the mayor on November 17, 2006 and was accepted as information, in public, but without sharing the details in the report of the financial arrangement or the apparent change in policy. That in-camera report included the waiving of public notice, public meetings, and hearings for the soon-to-follow area and zoning plan amendments with the understanding that the sites would be used for more-affordable housing. An in-camera report is typically not shared with the public. A redacted version of the report has been shared after a

²⁸³ Barry and Lloyd (community representatives), to Robert Priebe, November 30, 2016.

²⁸⁴ Senior administrative officials (Don, Marcel) and elected officials (Frank, Ian, Farley, Syd) identified Mr. Mandel as the surplus schools initiator in interviews with the primary author.

²⁸⁵ The City agreed to direct 50% of the land sale proceeds to the school boards that the *JUA*; for these sites the *JUA* required a nominal transfer of \$1 per site, meaning the *COE* was forgoing land revenue sales that effectively transferring funds to support both the *GoA* and the School Boards. The *GoA* was indirectly financially incentivized because the Province had historically reduced funding level support for affordable housing; this agreement meant that 50% of the sale proceeds would be directed to a city housing program, contrary to the *MGA*, replacing what had historically been a provincial government funding role. Normally these funds would be directed to a park land reserve account that could only be used for parks.

community league representative requested the November 17 report.²⁸⁶ The 2006 rezoning occurred in an omnibus rezoning of Blue Quill and Greenview sites plus eighteen other sites that began on November 28, 2006 and was approved on December 12, 2006. The council report excluded reference to policy alliance or public engagement, an aspect that was a common reporting element in other area plan amendments on the same day.²⁸⁷

The 2006 process impaired the opportunity for individuals or groups (such as nearby residents, park users) or the umbrella community recreation organization (*EFCL*) to understand the initiative, assess its impact, understand existing policy, and support or oppose the application. As noted by one councillor:

We (Council) should have been doing (engaging) with (the) *EFCL* at the same time (as the *GoA* and school boards) and we didn't. As far as I know there was no contact made about this at all to (the) *EFCL*. I'm not aware that any members of council who were part of all this had ever talked with them in any kind of way at all. I don't think they (*EFCL*) knew hardly what was going on. Nor were they ever asked, nor were they ever sent anything about it. There had been talk for years about this land. It wasn't being used and schools were never going to be there and something should be done.²⁸⁸

The Brookview Community League did speak to City Council on November 28, 2006 to oppose the process of the plan amendment and zoning application despite not having any prior notice; they found little support from Council members.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁶ A request for an un-redacted version has been made; the *COE* has not yet responded. The community requested the council report (Lloyd, community representative, to Robert Priebe, November 30, 2016).

²⁸⁷ Such references were made in *COE* City Council Report 2006PDP474, Bylaw 14397, Cromdale Neighbourhood, Agenda Item L.1.c, November 28, 2006.

²⁸⁸ Farley (elected official), interview with Robert Priebe, December 16, 2016.

²⁸⁹ The community league provided a letter of opposition that was filed with City Council on November 28, 2006. More details will be provided in Chapter 4.

Shortly after park repurposing approvals in 2006, the *COE* moved quickly to conduct a pilot project in Greenview (and Canon Ridge) to vet the implementation approach.²⁹⁰ A *Woodvale Community League* representative from Greenview had volunteered the site without checking in with the community and was subsequently challenged in a follow-up in a heated public meeting.²⁹¹ Elected officials gave direction to fully engage with the community in the implementation to make up, to some extent, for the lack of engagement prior to approval.²⁹² In that meeting, the *COE* stated that the land was not park lands and that no need assessment was required,²⁹³ both claims were not factually correct as defined by both the *Bylaw 2202 Parks Bylaw*²⁹⁴ and the *Urban Parks Management Plan (UPMP)*. There were no housing studies, nor any analyses that linked housing needs to the specific neighbourhoods.²⁹⁵

The reaction was mixed in the Greenview community. The *COE* subsequently dropped the notion of affordable housing, contrary to their public notice waiver agreement with the *GoA*, and instead focussed on market housing for young professionals. Those that objected were opposed to the process and a fear of low-income housing. An election that occurred in 2007 saw the Greenview polling station as the only station to vote against the incumbent, who

²⁹⁰ Farley (elected official), interview.

²⁹¹ John (community recreation coordinator - CRC), interview with Robert Priebe, September 15, 2016.

²⁹² Frank (elected official), interview with Robert Priebe, December 20, 2016, and Farley, elected official, interview.

²⁹³ John (CRC), interview.

²⁹⁴ See Appendix C— Bylaws for more details.

²⁹⁵ Don (senior administrator), interview with Robert Priebe, March 1, 2017. Don commented that the land was considered “available,” which was the same interpretation of the mayor’s perception provided by Syd (elected official).

supported the initiative was re-elected.²⁹⁶ Follow-up pilot project evaluation was prepared by a local consultant for the *COE* for the Greenview pilot project. Residents in Greenview were satisfied with the post-engagement implementation process and with the project more generally,²⁹⁷ but they also were not fully aware of the background leading up to the initiative.

An additional site in Blue Quill was surplused in 2009 and followed more standard public notification, reserve removal, and public hearing processes mandated by the Municipal Government Act, but it did not include a policy-driven needs assessment. This (incremental) change, or approximate return to past approaches, was due to the backlash received around the 2006 exclusionary process. “Nothing happened (in terms of development) to those (sites) because we were still so fucked up with 2006.”²⁹⁸

When asked what was lost when the school sites were approved to be redeveloped, a community representative responded with one word: “democracy.”²⁹⁹ When asked about their connection to the site, another representative responded:

Well heavens, where will I start? This is huge. Ok. I created a Scouting room in the community league for us. The Scouts and the Brownies once a year cleaned the park up in the spring. All my kids played soccer. My kids played baseball. My kids coached and refereed. My kids worked at the community league cleaning the ice for the community league. Tobogganed there a million times, played hockey a million times. Shall I go on?³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ Ian (elected official), interview.

²⁹⁷ Pario Plan, *First Place Homeownership Program*, 2011.

²⁹⁸ Farley (elected official), interview.

²⁹⁹ Barry, (community representative), interview.

³⁰⁰ Lloyd, (community representative), interview.

The Blue Quill representatives, having understood the unwillingness of the elected officials to bend on the retention of the site, requested the development of a recreational needs assessment and consolidation of the two sites on the Blue Quill site into a single larger one to allow a rationalization of the remaining recreation functions. A sliding hill built on Blue Quill existed on one of the two parcels.³⁰¹ Similar requests inside the corporation by internal community recreation coordinators and park land planners in 2010 were ignored.³⁰² The land management planners were adamant that relocation of the parcels on site would not occur to allow the sliding hill to remain until a council intervention in 2015 accommodated the community.³⁰³

The City-Community Co-Production Revision Era included the development of a plethora of city-wide “strategic” policy directives that collectively sought to create systems of integrated plans to provide policy to guide new area development, manage existing area development, and more broadly, guide the city’s actions in creating a sustainable city and a new municipal development plan (i.e., *The Way Ahead*).

That same year, the city passed its new parks system plan, the *2006-2016 UPMP*, followed by the *River Valley Alliance Plan of Action* in 2007. *UPMP* reiterated past direction on systems planning, co-production of places, and need assessment processes prior to surplussing park lands. Also in 2006, *Policy C513 Public Involvement* was passed that defined Edmonton as a “representative” democracy with three principles: a commitment to citizen engagement, treating people with honour and respect, and making processes accessible to the

³⁰¹ Barry (community representative), interview.

³⁰² Leah (community recreation coordinator), interview with Robert Priebe November 8, 2016.

³⁰³ Bevan (elected official), interview with Robert Priebe, November 22, 2017.

general public. Concurrently with all of this work, the city was working with the community to develop a new municipal development plan (i.e., *The Way Ahead*) and supportive strategic documents (i.e., *The Way We Live*, *The Way We Grow*, *The Way We Move*, *The Way We Green*). Parks directions consistent with the 2006-2016 UPMP were contained in *The Way We Live*. The development of all of these plans included substantial engagement with the community. In practical terms, the city simultaneously formulating multiple plans and strategic documents had significant overlaps with respect to park lands and other functional areas, complicating service delivery and decision-making. While well intended, the development and implementation of these high level plans also created confusion on policy directives particularly within the community, and consultation fatigue more generally.

3.6.3 1960-2010 Institutionalization of the Parks Institution

A key outcome of this research is the description of the nature of the institutionalization of parks planning that occurred over the 1960 to 2010 period. Servillo and Van den Broeck (2012) argue that changes to the rules, roles and responsibility are fixed at a certain point in time, but change through the interaction with social actors; that change is defined as “institutionalization.” There were three definitive eras, as described above, with three critical actions that changed park planning practices with a subsequent impact on the land use planning institution.

The introduction of the *JUA*, approved in 1961, by elected officials and administrators to co-locate and jointly develop school and park sites determined the fundamental shape of the urban landscape by agreement to co-locate schools and parks and share each others facilities and lands.

In the early 1980s, the initiative by the community to take an even greater role in park site construction and programming led to a co-production of place, which extended to include the community in the discussion of park lands inventory changes in 1994 (i.e., Surplus School Site Criteria).

By the 2000s, elected officials were concerned with the timelines associated with community engagement in park lands disposition decision-making, and felt the process itself could be divisive. Moreover, some elected officials felt the land was either not park land, or the park space would better be used as an asset to facilitate low income housing development. In 2006 Edmonton City Council unilaterally repurposed 20 hectares of park land on 20 sites by acquiring a waiver from the *GoA* to entirely exclude community engagement in decision-making, contrary to both the *MGA* (without the waiver) and policy. A similar outcome was achieved for a further 19 sites in 2009 with two public meetings and an 18 hour public meeting hearing, following more traditional practices, but excluding community recreation need assessments.. Both 2006 and 2009 process were a marked departure from how community social actors were engaged in decision-making since the passage of 1994 Surplus School Site policy decision-making process. Figure 3-3 graphically articulates the three eras.

Figure 3-3: Institutionalization of Parks Planning 1960-2010 – Application Lens

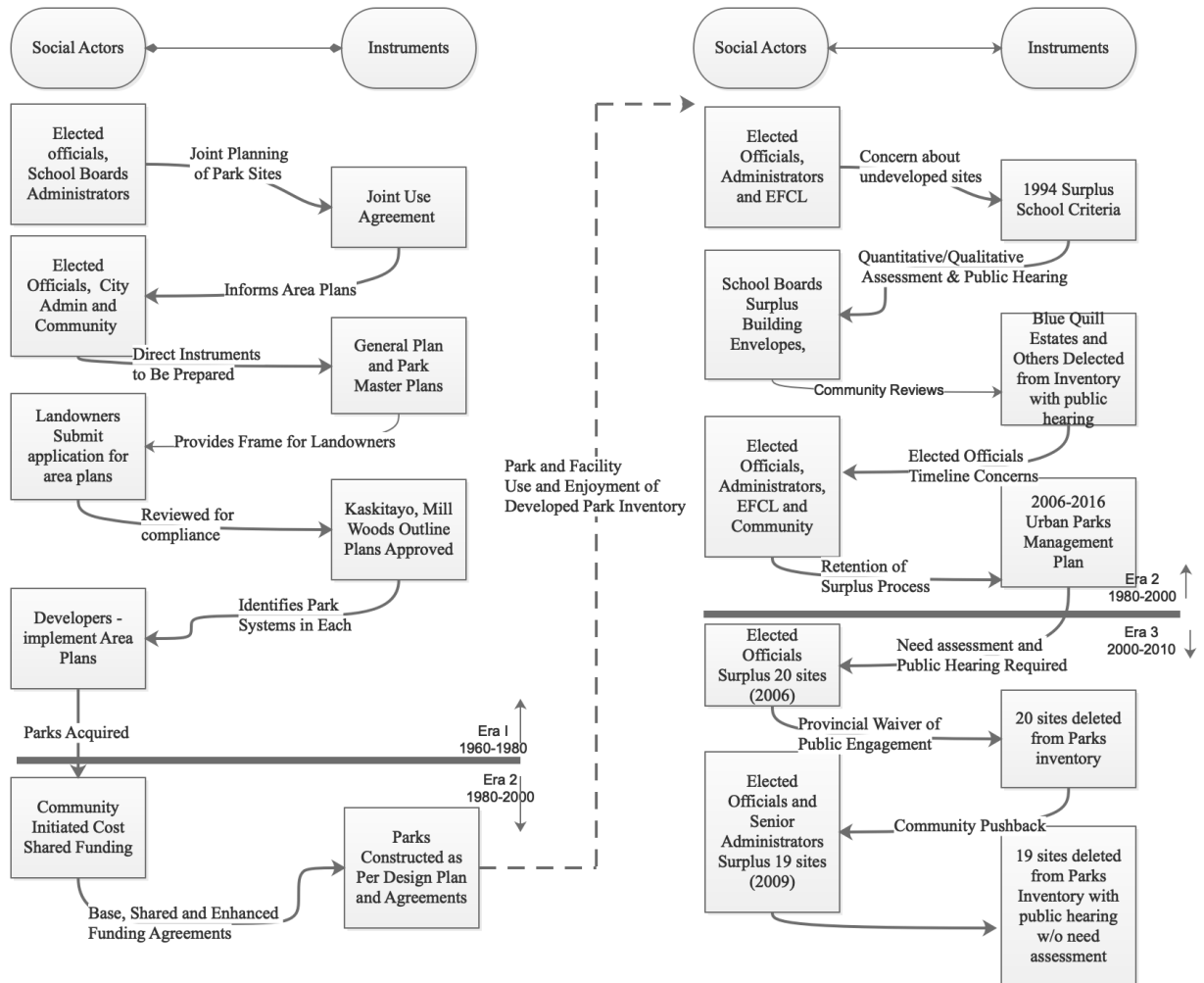
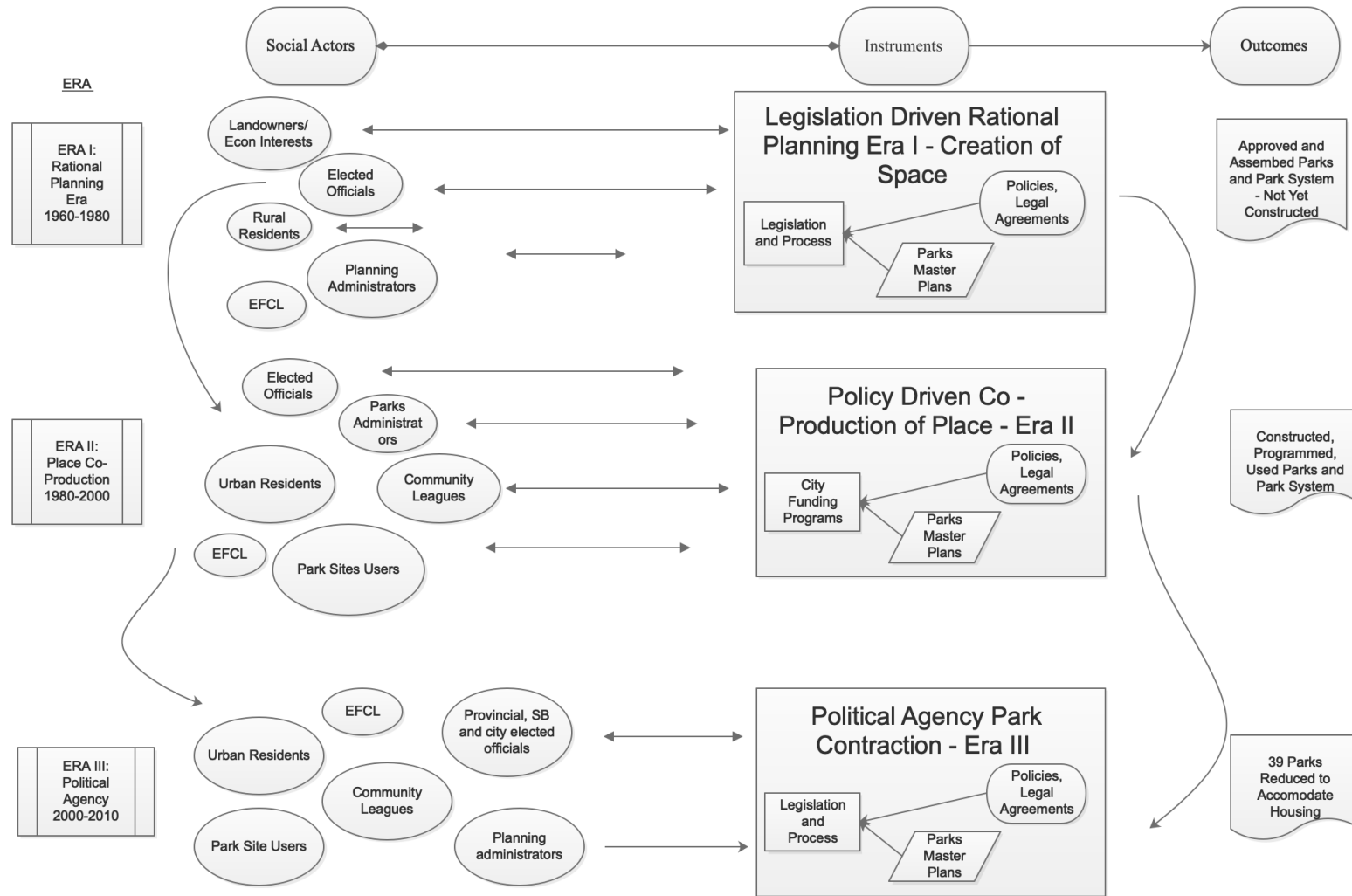


Figure 3-4 describes the institutionalization stated more broadly including social and economic factors.

Figure 3-4: Institutionalization of Parks Planning – 1960-2010 Social Actor Lens



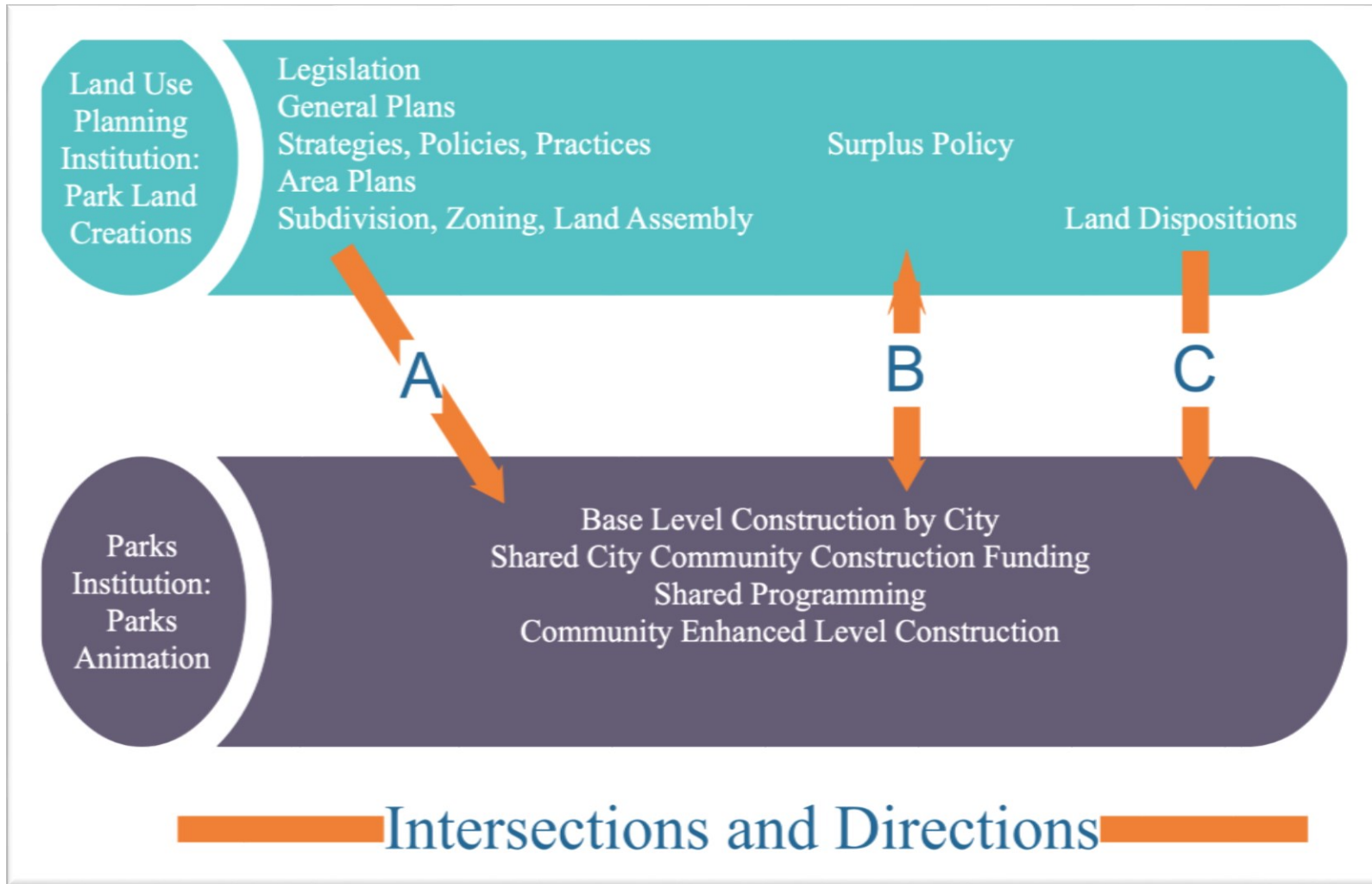
The second representation (3-4) illustrates the societal evolution of the parks institution in two important ways. On the left, you see that social actors by type (i.e., elected officials, community league) remain essentially constant throughout, but actors' influence is shown, in part, by the size of their shape and arrow showing decision-making direction connected to the era boxes on the right.

3.6.4 Institutional Planes (new)

A key contribution of this chapter and dissertation is the definition and elaboration of the land use planning and park institutions themselves, shown in Figure 3-5. Rather than describing how governments and landowners create space and program parks, there were assemblages of social actors inside and outside of government working together that identified and acquired the “space” (i.e., land use planning institution) and later created the “place” (i.e., the parks institution). The land use planning institution temporally occurs first to create the space, followed by a substantial contribution by the parks institution to create the parks landscape. The graphic shows a transfer between the two institutions.

The top horizontal bar represents the land use planning institution. This is an on-going institution not limited to case study or the case study sites. Inside the bar, you see reference to documents (e.g., General Plans, park master plans, area plans). These documents provide guidance for the approval of area plans (e.g., *Mill Woods Development Concept* in 1971 and *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* in 1973). The area plans are then implemented through plans of subdivision; property purchases, zoning bylaw amendments and engineering drawings are also shown in the top horizontal bar. The ‘A’ designated arrow is a representation of how the space creation, largely a landowner/administration dialogue, is then transferred to the parks institution for programming and animation.

Figure 3-5: Planning and Parks Institutional Plane Intersections



The school and park sites in both neighbourhoods were acquired by the late 1970s. At that point, there is an arrow (“A”) that extends down into the second horizontal bar that represents the parks institutions. Within that latter bar are activities that essentially layer site construction activities. Once basic development is funded by the city (grade, level, seed, sports fixtures, a sign), the community then can cost share greenspace development (e.g., playgrounds, lighting, plazas, lighting) through the *Neighbourhood Park Development Program*. It is common as well that when playgrounds are constructed, community members provide “sweat equity” as they volunteer to construct the equipment on site under the supervision of suppliers. Once the greenspace is constructed, the community then become integral players in programming. Volunteers run minor sport programs and hold special events (e.g., Party in the Park in Blue Quill). The next level of the development is the construction of community halls, outdoor and/or snow bank skating rinks, batting cages, and sometimes tennis courts, all on licensed lands provided to the leagues in return for their programming contribution. Community halls, for example, offer meeting spaces (e.g., Scouts, Girl Guides), special events indoor locations (e.g., wedding receptions, political meetings, craft classes), commercial kitchens, and parking that is available to groups or organizations of all kinds for a fee. Outdoor rinks or community gardens are organized by volunteers. The last level of development is school construction. This is funded entirely by the *GoA*. Beyond educational space, schools also provide access to gymnasium and classroom space for indoor activities, craft classes and the like. These layers were effectively in place by the end of the 1980s, after which point the parks infrastructure supporting the development of social capital, health and wellness, ecological and economic benefits could be realized.

In 1994, a policy was created for the community to provide input into the use and operation of the school and park sites when school construction lagged. That policy meant that when a school site was no longer needed for educational purposes, the administration, through park lands planners and community recreation coordinators, would reach out to the community to undertake a recreational need assessment. This is indicated by the 'B' arrow on Figure 3-5 going both ways, originating in the land use institution and moving into the parks institution. The arrow conceptually recognizes the notion that social actors in the parks institution will be impacted and, therefore, explicitly recognizes further discussion and study should take place with community implicitly recognizing the role and importance of the parks institutional actors. The arrow goes both ways. This site review process occurred 15 times between 1994 and 2004.

On the right side, you see yet a third arrow 'C' that reaches down from the land use planning institution representing 2006 and 2009 surplus. The reader will notice that it extends further into the park institution impacting use and enjoyment. Elected officials unilaterally changed the parks institution. The arrow is one directional: from the top down.

3.7 Discussion

In this section, other scholarly research was explored that addressed process mechanics and/or what may be underlying decision-making factors in review and approval process in both critical and other literature realms, and in North American and European settings. This was done to both locate the local findings in a broader setting as well as to understand or articulate alternative rationales or explanations for the decisions.

A study using SRI theory of a permitting system in Belgium by Pieter Van den Broeck and Kristine Verachtert (2015)³⁰⁴ took a subset of a planning and development process (i.e., permitting systems)³⁰⁵ to understand its impact on sprawl from an institutional perspective, using SRI theory. It has similarities with the Edmonton case study because it seeks to evaluate spatial planning in Belgium through an exploration of a slice of a number of interacting sub systems (e.g., structure planning, regional planning, project planning). Keynesian welfare economics created the setting for the development of sub-regional plans that then set the context for future development. The most common struggle was between social actors advocating for landowners against actors arguing for collective action in space (e.g., constraining development areas). Private landownership and associated property rights was the predominant factor along with political and economic realities, particularly in the post-1980 neoliberal time period.³⁰⁶ The combination of factors led to sprawl. Edmonton had similar societal settings whereby Keynesian market approaches established the basis for the future contestation in Blue Quill and Greenview.

Planning Process and Democracy

Zakhour and Metzger 2018a explored the relationship between the planning process and broader concepts of democracy. The Stockholm study compared and contrasted the analytical institutional frame provided by French historian Pierre Rosanvallen with the work of Dutch philosopher Noortje Marres. The paper summarized a proposed redevelopment of

³⁰⁴ Van den Broeck, and Verachtert, “Whose Permits? The Tenacity of Permissive Development Control in Flanders,” 387-406.

³⁰⁵ Building and development permits are required in Edmonton, but they occur after the area plan and zoning approvals have occurred.

³⁰⁶ Van den Broeck and Verachtert. 403.

abandoned industrial land to contextualize the outcomes from a democracy process perspective. Marres' perspective was focussed on democratic politics. Democracy is defined by public mobilizations around specific issues. Marres argued that democracy is not measured by following pre-existing democratic rules, but instead by the extent to which processes opened up or closed down the issue for wider public scrutiny.³⁰⁷ However, Rosanvallan, using an institutional approach, says that democracy is defined more so by how it addressed a series of tensions. Those tensions speak to the fundamental incompatibility of voluntarism (e.g., activism, direct action), rationalism (e.g., expressed through the bureaucracy), and liberalism (e.g., the protection of minority or individual rights). The authors argued that analyses must consider how mobilizations are both conditioned by and have implications for the evolution of institutions of really-existing democracies over time."³⁰⁸

Not available or known to the general public was a behind-the-scenes land development agreement that had been negotiated that would turn an abandoned industrial landscape into a mixed-use development anchored by a new Ikea store. Information gatekeepers (i.e., planners) were appointed. Interview participants were frustrated by a lack of information shared with the community about the land agreement. Land redevelopment negotiation process purposely excluded the community actors.³⁰⁹ One of the participants

³⁰⁷ Sherif Zakhour and Jonathon Metzger, "Placing the Action in Context: Contrasting Public-centered and Institutional Understandings of Democratic Planning Politics," *Planning Theory and Practice* 19 no. 3 (2018): 345-346, doi: 10.1080/14649357.2018.1479441.

³⁰⁸ Zakhour and Metzger, 350-351.

³⁰⁹ Developers in Alberta are not required to disclose business information such as profit margins. Moreover, business names can be replaced by numbered companies in public documents or simply listed as "private land." Consequently, when public lands are sold, the value is listed publicly but often listed by legal descriptions of a numbered company.

questioned, “If they are doing everything by the book, why is everything so secret?” There was a deep-seated sense that economic interests were privileged over democratic process. In the end, a change of government occurred, and the project delayed and ultimately cancelled when Ikea withdrew. However, participants were deeply fatigued by the end of the process, and the authors argue the participants experienced the systemic cost of an eroded faith in democratic procedures.³¹⁰

This study parallels with the Edmonton case study include tension in managing development processes within a government institutional structure, the challenge of internal processes to mediate disputes, the role of public spokespeople who acted as gatekeepers of public information to manage public discourse, the exhaustion experienced by non-state actors, the dominance of economic metrics in decision-making, and differential access to power to influence decision-making.

A case study using SRI perspective of a cultural park in Cairo, Egypt, looked at how a park redesigned some 20 years earlier met the needs of the community.³¹¹ The design was driven by an urban designer and had a significant historical cultural perspective. The design won national and international awards in the early 1990s. It excluded some social actors (i.e., children) and prioritized others (heritage NGOs), a phenomenon called “strategic selectivity” by Van den Broeck. The park manager contested the design, arguing the space would not function as a children’s park, which was one of the stated goals at the onset of the process.

³¹⁰ Zakhour and Metzger, 357.

³¹¹ Pieter Van den Broeck, Mona Abdelwahab, Konrad Miciukiewicz, and Jean Hillier, “On Analyzing Space from a Strategic-Relational Institutional Perspective: The Cultural Parks for Children in Cairo,” *International Planning Studies* 18 (2013): 321-341, doi: 10.1080/13563475.2013.833727.

The space was deemed more of a symbolic “container” space focussed on cultural history than a relational space for the community, and the park did not connect in a meaningful way with the community.³¹²

Institutional changes in Edmonton were tracked to coincide with political and economic trends identified by Kristian Oleson (2014):³¹³ roll-back neoliberalism in the 1980-2000 period and roll-out neoliberalism in the 2000s. Parks identified in the Keynesian areas (1970s) were being reconsidered for development in the 1990s (roll-back), which took place in the 2000s through expedited approval processes that excluded community actors (roll-out). This symmetry even surprised the primary researcher. Research into broader political and economic trends in Alberta over this time period identified a sustained period of an entrepreneurial focus with a social conscious that existed in 1960 to the early 1990’s (Bird 2008).

Like other Canadian provinces in the postwar period, Alberta developed a modern, Keynesian welfare state. Ernest Manning, who succeeded as leader of the Social Credit party upon Aberhart's death in 1943, set the foundations for the birth of the Alberta welfare state. Bolstered by increasing government revenue from the largescale discovery of oil and the introduction of American capital to exploit it, Manning invested in new schools, hospitals, roads and social services; by the 1950s, the Alberta government was spending more money per capita than any other province. Despite his ardent anti-socialist stance, Manning expanded the role of the state with interventionist social policies.³¹⁴

³¹² Van den Broeck, Abdelwahab, Miciukiewicz, and Hillier, 323-324.

³¹³ Olesen, “The neoliberalization of strategic spatial planning,” 288-303.

³¹⁴ Malcom G. Bird, "The Rise of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario and the Demise of the Alberta Liquor Control Board: Why such Divergent Outcomes?" NR43886, Carleton University (Canada), 2008, 150.

This approach to governance was replaced in the 1990's by a more business orientated approach to government business that was ushered by Premier Klein. Lisac (1995),³¹⁵ de Clercy (2000),³¹⁶ and Bird (2008)³¹⁷ have noted that this move was ideologically driven. De Clercy (2000) studied Alberta and Saskatchewan responses to fiscal challenges in the Klein (Alberta) and Romanow (Saskatchewan) era and argues that the Alberta premier's approach was intended to be transformational, not transactional. Lisac(1995) notes, "He clearly ran a government in partnership with business- government as a joint venture."³¹⁸ The net result was that the 1990s marked a dramatic change in approach to governance that essentially foregrounded the discourses and actions that bore fruit in the 2000s. This approach to business orientated bottom line governance in the 1990s prefigured the political environment in the 2000's. Klein's approach was designed to deliberately focus on business development and reduce expenditures and social supports that coincided with the "roll back" (i.e., in the 1990's) and "roll out" (i.e., in the 2000's) economic eras identified with Oleson.

3.8 Conclusions

This case study used a Social Relational Institutional perspective to describe how Edmonton's land use and park planning processes are an institutional fields embedded in a broader set of institutional fields both of which are impacted by external economic, political and cultural trends and activities and associated institutions. This chapter establishes a

³¹⁵ Mark Lisac, *The Klein Years*, Edmonton, Alberta: New West Press, 1995.

³¹⁶ Cristine de Clercy, "Leadership and the Strategic Manipulation of Uncertainty." Order No. NQ58121, The University of Western Ontario (Canada), 2000. 228.
<http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/304662466?accountid=14474>.

³¹⁷ Bird, 6.

³¹⁸ Lisac, *The Klein Years*, 152.

foundation for the dissertation—it explicates the complexity of an integrated city-community process to create, design, construct, program, and maintain a park system by exploring a case study in two neighbourhoods in Edmonton: Blue Quill and Greenview over the 1960-2010 period.

3.8.1 Institutions, Planes and Intersections

Two institutions were defined; the land use planning and parks institutions. The land use planning and parks planning and operational processes, each act as their own as unique institution, operate on separate planes, connect periodically. The institutions themselves evolve over time, collectively describing the institutionalization of land use and planning institutions, importantly by defining how each institution impacted the other.

Government-managed planning processes were set within a broader sociological setting of actors with varying levels of power and agency; in other words was an institutional field in other institutional fields. Social actors, in this case parks and planning actors, coalesce around issues or activities, mobilized into action by mechanisms or tools such as legislation, bylaws, legal agreements, policies, and processes that are themselves the product of coalitions to produce the mechanisms. As such, those mechanisms are subject to change. Social actors' behaviours and actions impact each other, and they react in ways that recognize other actor actions initiatives or positions, and change the institutions themselves This reflexive discursive dynamic means that land use and park planning processes have evolved over time and will continue to do so, not solely directed by elected officials and administrators defined as the institutionalization of both the parks and land use planning and the institutionalization of urban space more broadly.

3.8.2 Institutionalization

The parks and planning institutions, over time, impacted each other and changed the way each did their business. For example, the role of community social actors grew over time into funding of construction, programming, and maintenance while government actors changed the physical form of school and park sites through the *JUA* and the surplus school process reviews adopted in the 2000s. Both changes appear to be linked to economics—the city realized cost savings when community social actors moved to greater roles as funders, and the park lands provided revenue in the 2000s when park was sold to economic interests. In other words, the park institution and land use planning institutions evolved over time in response to one another, representing a local example of institutionalization and parks institutionalization as defined by Van den Broeck (2011, 2012).³¹⁹ The change in community roles also led to a greater sense of ownership by community social actors, which could explain the negative backlash received in the 2006 and 2009 processes. The change in community roles also fostered connections between community social actors and front line administrative recreation practitioners and park land planners. Those relationships that lived within the parks institution became compromised in the 2006 and 2009 processes, leaving administrative staff in compromised personal and professional ethical dilemmas and unrest for some.

3.8.3 Institutional Memory

³¹⁹ Pieter Van den Broeck, “Analyzing Social Innovation Through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach,” In *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for Change*, 52-78 by Stijn Oosterlynck, Jef Van den Broeck, Louis Albrechts, Frank Moolaert and Ann Verhetsel, 2011. New York; Routledge; Loris Antonio Servillo and Pieter Van den Broeck, “The Social Construction of Planning Systems: A Strategic-Relational Institutional Approach,” *Planning Practice and Research* 27, no. 1 (2012): 41-61, doi: 10.1080/02697459.2012.661179.

Institutional memory is defined as the stored knowledge of the organization transferred between members through interactions between them or in written documents. In this case study, institutional memory is defined and articulated in legislation (e.g., the *MGA*), policy (e.g., surplus schools), processes (i.e., public hearings), practices (e.g., recreation needs assessments), legal agreements (e.g., joint use agreement, tri-partite agreement), and funding programs (*Neighbourhood Park Development Program* or *NPDP*, Partners in Parks, Community Facility Grants, Community League Operational Grants), each with their own array of social actors. Institutional memory is also found in the memory banks of community social actors who have different levels of knowledge and expertise, and who have been engaged in both the parks and planning institutions. It is because individual actors change so often that institutional memory sources should be thoroughly researched prior to practitioners designing public engagement processes. This may address the problem of poor process identified by John Forester (2012),³²⁰ subtitled (with tongue firmly in cheek) “Why Only the Loons Show Up.”

3.8.4 Mobilizing Tools or Mechanisms

The chapter identified a complex web of overlapping, intersecting and layered accumulation of legislation, legal agreements, bylaws, policies, funding arrangements, and practices. These should be seen as tools or mechanisms to mobilize and facilitate social actor engagement that by their nature influence individual decisions (i.e., institutional change) and more broadly institutionalization of the institutions over time as each becomes embedded in the public realm and discourse. These same mechanisms or tools can also be used to demobilize one set of

³²⁰ John Forester, “Learning to Improve Practice: Lessons from Practice Stories and Practitioners’ Own Discourse Analyses (or Why Only the Loons Show Up),” *Planning Theory and Practice* 13, no. 1 (2012): 11-26, doi: 10.1080/14649357.2012.649905.

actors at the expense of another. Not all tools or mechanisms need to be created by state actors; they, in fact, can be initiated by community social actors. This outcome was similar to what was found by Van den Broeck (2011, 2012).³²¹

3.8.5 Edmonton Social Actors Defined

The Edmonton case study identified categories of social actors (i.e., elected officials, administrators, community, developers, nongovernmental organizations) that were likely similar to those of other jurisdictions, but it also identified institutions between like-minded actors regardless of their function or employment status (e.g., parks staff with community actors, developers with elected officials). These categories meshed or were consistent with another public realm redevelopment study in Barcelona (Calderon and Chelleri 2013).³²² While social actor categories in Edmonton remain relatively static over time³²³, the social actors within them change.

3.8.6 Institutional Synchronicity

Controversies arose between institutions when the activities of the institutions were out of sync or did not actively consider the implications of the other, typically emanating from initiatives of state actors. Integration between institutions is complicated by evolving groups

³²¹ Van den Broeck, “Analyzing Social Innovation Through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach,” 52-78; Servillo and Van den Broeck, “The Social Construction of Planning Systems: A Strategic-Relational Institutional Approach,” 41-61.

³²² Calderon and Chelleri, “Social Processes in the Production of Public Spaces: Structuring Forces and Actors in the Renewal of a Deprived Neighbourhood in Barcelona,” 409-428.

³²³ Throughout the study period, the government actor categories were federal, provincial, municipal, and school board elected officials and administrators; how they were structured evolved over time. Community social actors included local residents, community leagues, minor sport organizations, school parent advisory councils. This is not to suggest that some sub areas became more or less important, and more or less engaged over time.

of social actors within each that, over time, created the institutions themselves, while simultaneously evolving the institutions themselves.

Integration may also be challenged by community attachment to place when alternative land uses are desired. It is this lack of synchronicity that could encourage planners in other jurisdictions in the future to develop broader and more engaged planning processes when considering the redevelopment of the public realm. The description of planes and intersections is unique to the Edmonton case study and could be developed in other settings.

3.8.7 Parks as Unique Infrastructure

This case study reveals the unique character of parks as a category of municipal infrastructure. It (park lands) relies heavily on community social actors for construction funding, here and elsewhere, (Mowen and Kertstetter 2006)³²⁴ but also for programming and maintenance activities (Kuban 2004),³²⁵ unlike any other form of municipal infrastructure (i.e., roads, utilities). As such, it may provide an opportunity to build on the work of Sorensen (2018)³²⁶ in his description of institutions using Historical Institutional theory. Parks and recreational facilities represent a substantial portion of a municipal physical and financial inventory of assets. This situation is like many other municipal government organizations in Canada and the United States but is rarely part of the public discourse, arguably due to the exchange value

³²⁴ Andrew J. Mowen and Deborah L. Kerstetter, “Introductory Comments to the Special Issue on Partnerships: Partnership Advances and Challenges Facing the Park and Recreation Profession,” *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration* 24, no. 1 (2006): 1-6.

³²⁵ Kuban (2005).

³²⁶ Andre Sorensen, “Institutions and Urban Space: Land, Infrastructure, and Governance in the Production of Urban Property,” *Planning Theory & Practice* 19, no. 1 (2018): 21-38, doi: 10.1080/14649357.2017.1408136.

of park lands being privileged over social values (Feldman 2018)³²⁷ when park land conversion to other uses is proposed.

This study adds to the scholarly discourse of institutions because it is an analysis based in a *deliberately* planned park *system* setting, rather than a *single* park setting. A park system is typically discussed as an entity, where an additive collection of park lands is retroactively defined as a park system. While this may be colloquially true, it belies the underlying complexity of park services delivery. The park system in Edmonton since 1960 is effectively a “system of systems” that comprise a park system. Amenities are distributed across an urban landscape in deliberate ways. While every neighbourhood likely has a playground, the same is not true for whether or not it has a recreation centre, an artificial turf football field, or a school. While it is possible to analyze a park system retroactively in this “systems of systems” perspective, Edmonton’s park system network was deliberately planned and implemented in that way since 1960 and this is certainly true for both the Blue Quill and Greenview case study sites. Therefore, loss of a piece of park lands is part of a plan and discourse that had occurred in the 1970s. It is this unique setting that makes this application of SRI unique, given legislation, policy, and practices.

3.8.8 Social Relational Institutional Perspective

SRI analysis was incredibly complex. It was important to understand social actor perceptions as articulated in other local research studies, the media, and semi-structured interviews, considering their relative positionality and comparing that to legislation, bylaws, strategies, legal agreements, policies, and practices, all of which evolved over time and are written in

³²⁷ Sarah Feldman, “A Reconsideration of the Justifying Values of Public Parkland,” PhD diss., 16-17, University of Chicago, 2018. ProQuest Number 10745974.

legalese or technical language. It was also necessary to draw on my own experiences while simultaneously clarifying and understanding my own biases when interpreting textual data. Further complications occur when you consider the various realms of literature that are inherent in the park institution that I experienced firsthand as a practitioner when I was straddling planning and parks functions. I would argue that the approach in this chapter can add to future SRI analyses.

In summary, the Edmonton case study contributes to scholarly discourse on power and agency in terms of the role of state and non-state actors in decision-making, the role of policy and legislation in decision-making with non-state actors, and examples of actual planning process decision-making through the lens of a practitioner. All of this collectively helped articulate how two resident institutions in Edmonton, the land use planning institution and parks institutions changed through dialectical interactions between social actors over time, and how institutional memory is articulated not only in government documents but also in the memory banks and participation of non-state social actors.

Chapter 4: The Autopsy of a Park Institutionalization Event - The Park Disposition Case Study

4.1 Abstract

The purpose of this chapter was to use qualitative inquiry to analyze how change-motivated social actors in the 2000s evolved both the land use and parks planning institutions through unilateral action using mechanisms and tactics not available to all social actors using a Social Relational Institutional perspective. Once again, two park sites were selected for analysis: the Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhood school and park sites in Edmonton. Two one-hectare parcels were rezoned and sold on each school and park site in 2006, and a second one-hectare parcel in Blue Quill was rezoned in 2009. The analyses included review of documents (e.g., legislation, plans, policies, strategic plans, park master plans, funding programs, legal agreements, land titles, practices, etc.), air photographs, and semi-structured interviews with social actors engaged or disengaged in processes.

The analyses revealed that abrupt changes initiated by elected officials to past institutional decision-making processes and decision-making occurred unsettling other social actors. The revised process, its relationship to past approaches, and the tactics used to implement the new approach are described. Elected officials led by a strong mayor were ultimately successful in rezoning park lands and changing past institutional decision-making practices, but the process was marked by selective engagement of social actors, selective and inaccurate knowledge dissemination, policy violations, legislative process manipulation, and disagreements with and between minority political actors, administrators, and the community. The loss of the public realm was and is not unique to Edmonton in this time period, and it aligns with the post-1980 period of the neo-liberalization of government policy. The downstream impact on community social actors remains to be seen; in the parks institution, community social actors are substantial contributors to the funding, programming, and maintenance of park lands. The study will provide insights for planning practitioners dealing with park lands or public realm disposition processes to creating inclusive processes that include a broad range of social actors impacted by decision-making processes.

4.2 Introduction

This quote from a community representative expresses frustration with a land use change process that resulted in the loss of public lands.

My summary of the whole situation is that powerful people have done everything they can to suppress public consultation on these issues. I mean every step they can possibly take.³²⁸

Elected officials acted as initiators, judge, and jury in the park lands use decision-making process. This chapter is an exploration into the tactics used in “actual” public realm planning processes used to change how park lands dispositions have been historically handled. The surplus school initiative represents an actual park institutionalization event and, as such, affords an opportunity to identify tactics used to implement change. The case study is analyzed with a practitioner lens with intimate knowledge of Edmonton’s legislation, policy, process, and practice in considering redevelopment of park lands for non-park purposes. Given the conflicted roles of elected officials, the decision was analyzed using a Social Relational Institutional perspective. As noted above, some social actors engaged or disengaged in processes, raising concerns over legislative, policy, and process exceptions, information defects, and a lack of transparency. This chapter is not intended to prove or disprove the rationale for the land use decision, but rather to describe the tactics used in a politically driven land use planning decision that also represented a further evolution of the parks institution discussed in Chapter 3.

4.3 Chapter Research Questions

This chapter was predicated on the notion that the 2006 and 2009 processes were directly the result of a political decision by elected officials to redevelop parkland. This was a political act, acknowledged by multiple elected officials and senior administrators, to circumvent existing policy, plans and processes. Irrespective of physical outcomes (i.e., loss of park lands) or decision-making process outcomes (i.e., the institutionalization of parks and planning

³²⁸ Barry (community league representative), interview

decision-making institutions), it is useful to explore how a political decision was effectuated. What were the tactics used in an actual institutionalization event? Who was engaged? How so? How was power expressed? How was agency limited? How were mobilizing tools or mechanisms, such as legislation, policies, practices, etc., used? How were those same tools or mechanisms used to demobilize social action?

4.4 Social Relational Institutional Perspective

The Social Relational Institutional perspective was previously described in Chapter 3, section 3.4. It describes the perspective and how it is used as an analytical tool.

4.5 Methodology, Methods, Materials, Analysis and Rigour

The research approach adopted is summarized in sections 1.2 (Methodological Coherence), 1.3 (Case Study and Sites), 1.4 (Data Collection), 1.5 (Data Analysis) and 1.6 (Data Rigour and Validity). The Blue Quill and Greenview case study sites examine evolving legislation, bylaws, policies, park master plans, and practices over the 1960-2010 period, and specifically, how social groups interact with one another utilizing the various documents, augmented by semi-structured interviews.

4.6 Findings

The intent is to describe the argumentation used to support the surplus school initiative, and to reflect on that discourse using a Social Relational Institutional perspective. The argumentation provides a composite picture or articulation of information that could have supported the decision-making process.

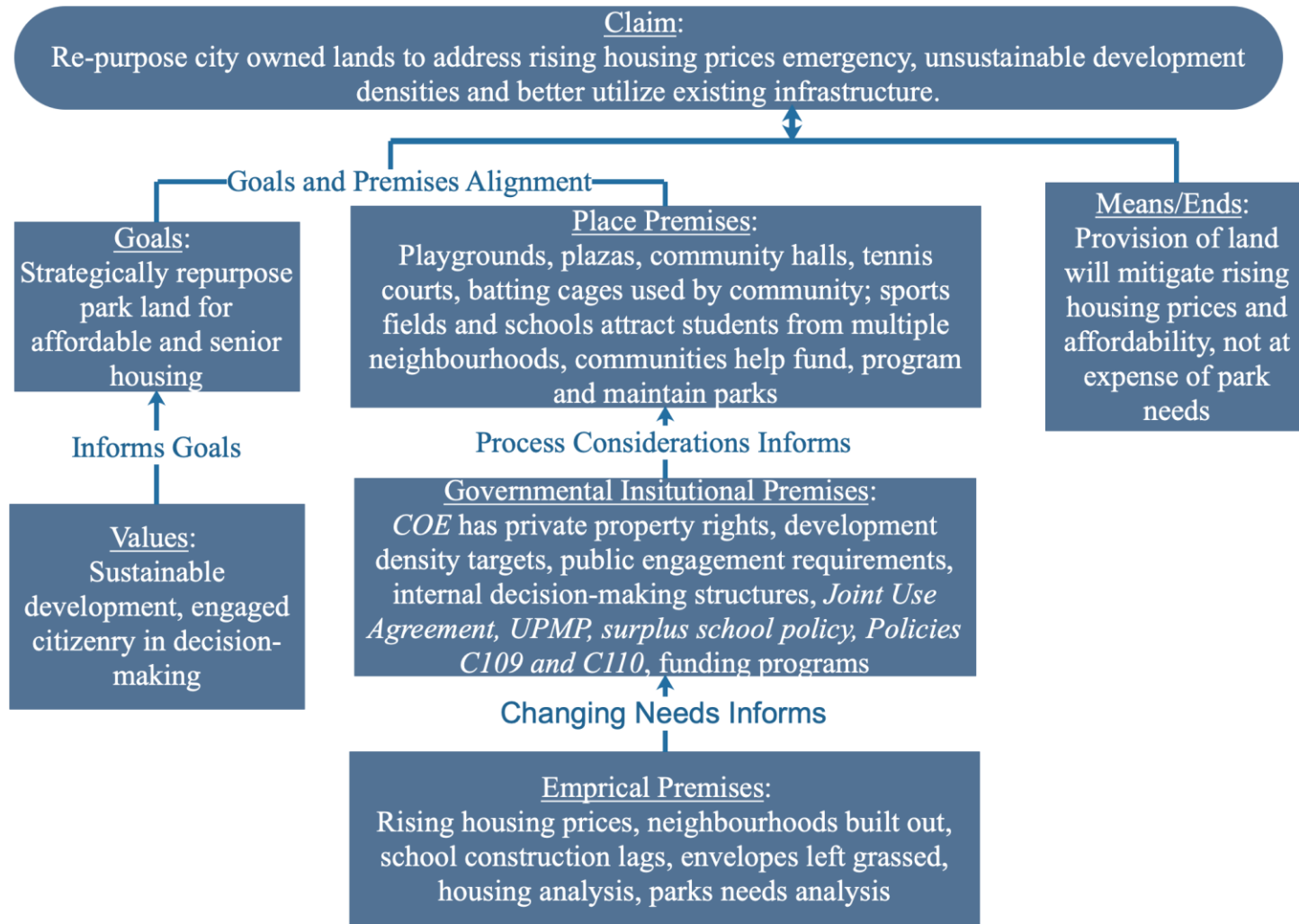
4.6.1 Composite Political Argumentation (2006 and 2009)

The composite political argumentation is described in Figure 4-1, and a detailed table of data points is provided in Appendix I. The argument includes a “claim” that is interrogated by “overall goals” and “values” and “empirical and governmental institutional premises” that then combine to support the argument, or the “means/ends.” It was crafted by the primary researcher based on a collection of statements, interviews, policy documentation, and the primary researcher’s knowledge of Edmonton processes and participation in portions of this exercise. Elected officials argued that the city has a legal mandate and role to meet a variety of systemic community needs with all of its resources at its disposal, including land resources such as park lands, held in their inventories. To that end, they deemed that “vacant” surplus school building envelopes should be repurposed, that recreational needs had been previously addressed in other parts of the site, and that city-owned land provided for housing would then mitigate the impacts of rising housing prices on lower-income populations, keep working families in the neighbourhood, address new density targets, take advantage of existing underutilized infrastructure, and generally create more sustainable forms of development. The city’s primary argument, articulated more broadly in the claim noted below, was described by a senior administrative official.

Huge investments in rec(reation) facilities, huge investments in parks and LRT, affordable housing and all of those things come together are very expensive to build and operate and maintain but are core components of a great city. And those are tough political decisions and there’s a balance in there where you are talking about trying to fund, own, and operate and maintain a park versus. a pot hole vs. a stick of grass or a rec facility. That’s a challenging thing to do and trying to meet political expectations around the tax level and keeping it down; it’s a juggling act at best.³²⁹

³²⁹ Marcel (senior administrator), interview with Robert Priebe, January, 2017.

Figure 4-1: Surplus School Discourse Summary



4.6.2 Critique of Argumentation

This analysis is a critical review of the political rhetoric used in the process to understand if the discourse was reasonable and plausible given the multiplicity of factors and issues facing municipally elected officials addressing multiple needs. The argumentation is the focus of the analysis, not the outcome per se.

The claim was analyzed based on an analysis of plans, policies, and interviews and is summarized below. A tabular analysis is provided in Appendix I, entitled Blue Quill and Greenview Detailed Data Analysis. In order for the claim to be valid, the argument must align with goals, values, empirical and institutional premises to make the claim reasonable and plausible. The argument provided herein is a composite of material derived from interviews and websites. In other words, this was not written down in a single place partly because the process itself was relatively opaque publicly until implementation began (i.e., when the pilot projects emerged) and rationals were added “along the way.” The analysis will have two components: a general pros and cons analysis demonstrating quotes that capture the discourse, followed by an analysis of the tactics used (power) and resisted (agency) by competing social actors.

The claim, and therefore the initiative, is politically plausible from a number of perspectives. From a values pluralism perspective, the reallocation of resources, in this case public park lands, to arguably a higher order or emergent problem is reasonable political action. Provincial legislation enables these decisions to be made. The city policy framework contemplates repurposing of park lands. The surplus school initiative neighbourhoods, with some exceptions, were low-density single family home-dominated areas not contributing to Capital Region Board density targets, and utility infrastructure arguably could be

underutilized. The oil-based economy was doing well and housing prices were rising. Housing affordability was a growing concern in many Canadian cities, albeit less so in Edmonton. The words of a senior administrator captured the sentiment.

So think about 2006 and think about time and place. Kids were on the street; they couldn't afford houses. The economy was booming; kids were coming out of university getting snapped up. Fort Mac is going crazy and it was a time when the cost of housing was out of the reach of most kids. Our houses were nearing and in some cases surpassing Toronto housing prices and this was a time when there was a political imperative to try and intervene and do something about that. That was at the same point in time when the surplus school site program had identified several different sites. There was a perspective at that time that we had assembled far too much land. Our park standards were out of sync with reality. We couldn't afford to maintain what we had. We didn't have reserve accounts to buy all the land that we already planned for and there was a disconnect in terms of what to do with these particular sites.

...But in the opinion of the Mayor of the time, there was an opportunity to look at repurposing the building envelope on a school and parks site for another imperative, another civic use which was not to provide affordable housing but to provide less expensive market housing for the kids in those neighbourhoods that could not ever afford to buy a home, called the First Time Home Buyers Program.³³⁰

On the other hand, there were some inconsistent counter data to the housing narrative that would mean that the political rhetoric while plausible, was inconsistent with values, goals and premises. Anecdotal information was used to justify an emerging housing crisis (i.e., rising housing prices) and not the more standard metric of housing affordability (i.e., 30 percent of income to housing ratio). This approach represents a change in practices, if not metrics. There had been no study of recreation needs to qualify the too much land perspective.³³¹ The *2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan (UPMP)*, approved five months before the 2006 surplus school initiative site decision process came to council, stated

³³⁰ Marcel (senior administrator), interview with Robert Priebe, January 2017.

³³¹ Don (senior administrator), interview with Robert Priebe, March 1, 2017.

additional parkland beyond the 10 percent reserve dedications would be desirable to meet current program standards.³³²

Access to park lands implied that privately owned lands for the same purpose may have been in short supply. Additional housing lands were continually being approved in suburban areas through new area plan approvals throughout the 2000s.³³³ There had been no review of other city land inventory,³³⁴ even lands purchased for development purposes.³³⁵ Selling park lands for housing may have been counterintuitive if population densities in the neighbourhood were planned to increase.

The city engaged in a misinformation campaign was seeking to shape the public dialogue.³³⁶ It made no sense to pass on surplus sale proceeds to housing and schools in 2006

³³² *COE, 2006-2016 Parks Management Plan, 53*

³³³ See Appendix D — Pre- and Post-Mandel Era Plan Approvals 1990-201. From 2002 to 2011 during Mandel’s term on council, area plans approved over 3,400 hectares of land for residential purposes, including over 117,000 new residential units and almost 44,000 medium density residential units, with the latter similar to surplus schools housing types. The surplus school initiative would have created approximately 1,600 units, or less than 4% of that approved, over that time period. The Mandel era saw a three-fold increase in residential land approvals compared to the previous 10 years.

³³⁴ Syd (elected official), interviewed by Robert Priebe, November 23, 2017.

³³⁵ The *COE* had staff that acted as land development facilitators. They would buy land in various areas to expedite development of other privately owned lands, as well as to generate a profit to pay down a (non-park land) financial reserve fund.

³³⁶ The *COE* argued school lands were not park land, which was not reflective of *Plan Edmonton*, the *Parks Bylaw 2202*, and *UPMP*. The *COE* argued that recreational needs had been adequately addressed in original plan approvals when counter-indicated data (*UPMP*) suggested otherwise. The *COE* argued that school lands were being held for “buildings” or other “public purposes,” while not mentioning the buildings (i.e., gymnasiums, classrooms and parking lots) were to offer public recreational programming opportunities. The *COE* did not share that they had conducted a two-year behind-the-scenes negotiation to repurpose park land without community consultation, despite policy that directed community consultation.

if park reserve sources were being overwhelmed that precluded timely park development. Existing policy and process could have achieved the same outcomes. Pilot project housing units were sold at market value.³³⁷ In short, while it was a plausible argument that providing city-owned land or housing could reduce housing prices if there was a land shortage, the lack of adherence to policies and values espousing an engaged citizenry in decision-making camouflaged by inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading knowledge dissemination is the most serious deviance from a fair political deliberation. Flawed knowledge creation and dissemination is discussed more deeply in the tactics section.

While no laws were broken, this was less of an emergent housing crisis based on data, but more of a reflection of the impatience of elected officials to redevelop park lands dating back 10 years before. Using an exchange value metric, retention of park lands could never be justified. A plausible rational political argument for housing could have been made with accurate knowledge creation and dissemination from a values pluralism perspective, but elected officials instead chose to exclude the public from the deliberation, which was contrary to policy and values espoused by the City of Edmonton (COE). Therefore, the means, defined as the tactics used, did not justify the ends. Arguably, the more interesting analysis is the way the hegemonic power and agency of elected officials was enacted and limited the agency of other social actors, described next, reflecting on the points above.

4.6.3 Managing Power and Agency

The 2006 agreement to repurpose park land was discussed and approved “in camera,” and then approved in public with no discussion.

³³⁷ Frank (elected official), interview with Robert Priebe, December 16, 2016.

Implementation of any council action, political or otherwise, requires a series of steps to affect the decision. In this case, those steps include identifying lands for development and developing data that supports the initiative or discrepant data to share in deliberation. Council reports supporting the change are required to amend existing area plan and zoning bylaws, as required as by the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. Existing policy and legislation require public input during deliberations including a public hearing where those in support or opposed can speak their perspectives. Council can then make a decision in a public setting. Once land is rezoned, it can then be sold to developers. The description of tactics is not in itself a negative, but how the tactics were employed is of greater significance and is described below.

4.6.3.1 Strong Political Leader

The role of the mayor was important from three perspectives. First, an elected official deals with multiple overlapping institutions. Second, making a political choice on what type of (competing institutional) needs to address is inherent in the role. Third, being a champion for the City is arguably the office of the Mayor's primary role. The question becomes how the Mayor used his significant power and agency to engage constituents in a democratic dialogue to vet a political position, and how did that impact the agency of others to inform the political process and decision.

The surplus school site repurposing initiative had roots back to the mid-1990s, when Mayor Bill Smith and Councillor Allan Bolstad (later executive director of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues in 2006)³³⁸ asked the *GoA* how the city could make “better

³³⁸ Allen Bolstad, the former councillor, was the *EFCL* executive director when the surplus school initiative came forward.

use” of school building envelope sites that had not or would not receive a new school.³³⁹ Yet nothing came of that initial foray.

Councillors began a process in earnest in 2004 to get access to those lands for development.³⁴⁰ In 2004, (then) councillors Stephen Mandel and Bryan Anderson initiated a council report in April 2004, later provided in June of 2004, which asked the administration about the status of school site development plans and a strategy to develop them:

A strategy for identifying surplus schools sites in partially built neighbourhoods and areas with approved plans but very little development – the intent would be to reduce the number of school sites before citizens become convinced that the school site is *essential* (emphasis added) park space.³⁴¹

This was the first documented public discourse where elected officials seemed to be differentiating or prioritizing some planned park land uses over others, even though no such legal or policy definition existed. Stephen Mandel, a former councillor and current developer, became mayor in October of 2004. Mandel began a two year negotiation between elected officials of the *GoA* and school boards. This process selectively (prioritized) engaged elected political leaders, in order to repurpose park lands with no public engagement, despite legislation and policy that said otherwise. What this effectively did was to demobilize residents and *EFCL* from engagement in the decision, thereby taking away their agency. Mr. Mandel was a strong political champion whose focus and support for redevelopment of park sites was consistent through both the 2006 and 2009 area plan and zoning bylaw amendment

³³⁹ Ian (elected official), interview with Robert Priebe, November 13, 2016.

³⁴⁰ Multiple elected officials (Ian, Syd, Frank, Farley) and administrative officials (Marcel, Don) identified Mayor Mandel as the project initiator and champion; this was identified as well by media reporting which lauded the mayor alone for the initiative.

³⁴¹ City of Edmonton, June 8, 2004, Community Services Department report 2004CSS011.

processes. Nevertheless, an aggressive champion gets only a single vote in council and must get his “ducks in a row” to make his redevelopment initiative a reality.

4.6.3.2 Facilitative Legislation

Legislation defines and drives the technical rationalities of the land use planning function and the park services function parameters are defined. The legislation requires public notice given to nearby landowners and a public hearing stage of development approvals. Arguably this would occur in order to vet legitimate outcomes and issues in a technical process to inform the political decision given, or also could be described as understanding of the social realities and appropriateness of the decision.

Provincial government planning legislation (i.e., the *MGA*) effectively gives broad discretion to elected officials to make and create policies and prioritize actions, provided they follow basic principles that include arguably basic levels³⁴² of public input.³⁴³ Municipal governments are considered owners of public lands with all the rights and benefits associated with land ownership, including the right to sell land, and could simultaneously act as both initiators and adjudicators with no provincial or external appeal mechanism with the exception of review by the courts if process was violated. This type of power is considered authoritative power.³⁴⁴

³⁴² There is a continuum of public engagement as defined by Susan Arnstein (1969) from citizen decision-making to manipulation. The approach adopted by the *GoA* would be at best consultation, or at worst informing, both degrees of tokenism. The *MGA* requires a public hearing and mandates public notice requirements but leaves it to municipalities to decide who is notified and does not mandate the timing of engagement (i.e., at the beginning, middle, or end of the process) nor information requirements in council reports.

Municipal Government Act of Alberta, RSA 2000, CM-26,
<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/m26.pdf>.

³⁴⁴ Bernard Adejei-Poku, "Rationality and Power in Land Use Planning: A Conceptual View of the Relationship," *Planning Literature* 33 no. 1 (2018): 45-60,
doi.org/10.1177/0885412217723616.

The *GoA* and the *COE* typically have had a contentious relationship when it comes to amendments or changes to the *MGA*.³⁴⁵ In 2004, the *GoA* was *not* receptive, at least initially, to expedited approval processes excluding the public. As noted earlier, it took two years to negotiate an agreement between elected officials. City Council and the school board trustees also had a sometimes-contentious relationship.³⁴⁶ Simultaneously, Edmonton councillors were working on an affordable housing initiative that included the *GoA* and suggested the *GoA* may look at that use as a reasonable rationale for expedited park lands plan amendment approval process.³⁴⁷ After two years of negotiation, the *GoA* cabinet agreed. This resulted in an order-in-council that would waive the public notice, public hearings, and access to the public appeal mechanism with the exception of formally approving the land use changes in public, but with no public notice.

The un-redacted version of Mayor Stephan Mandel's November 17th council report supporting the land use change waiving the public process stated that the *GoA* through an "order in council", agreed to the following. There would be no requirement to provide public notice of the rezoning necessary to allow residential uses of the sites. There would be no requirement to hold a public hearing for the necessary plan amendments and rezoning to allow residential uses of the sites. There would be no requirement to hold a public hearing on the removal of the reserve designations on these sites. There would be no right of appeal to the Subdivision Appeal Board for any development permit issued in accordance with the zoning bylaw as it would apply to the sites, and no requirements for the issuance of development permits. There would be no opportunity for the public to provide comment on the specifics of planned development on a site. These were extraordinary exclusions, not immediately shared with the public. The recommendations section of the attachment to the report states the following: "City Council's approval is necessary for it to proceed expeditiously. The proposal addresses the use of surplus school sites to address housing issues to the benefit of Edmontonians."³⁴⁸ The "order in council" effectively eliminated public disclosure and debate, thereby selectively

³⁴⁵ Frank (elected official), interview.

³⁴⁶ Farley (elected official), interview.

³⁴⁷ Farley (elected official), interview.

³⁴⁸ City of Edmonton, Council Report 200600M004, November 17, 2006.

determining who was and wasn't engaged in a broader discussion, limiting agency of those most impacted.

4.6.3.3 Incentivizing Partners

The *GoA* supported the waiving of public input when the mayor agreed to redirect a portion of sale proceeds of park lands to a city housing program that would support joint *GoA* and *COE* action in affordable housing. The mayor incentivized the school boards by agreeing to redirect the sale proceeds of housing land sales to the school boards.³⁴⁹ Redirection of park lands sale proceeds was contrary to legislation and practice; sale proceeds were required to be used for school and park lands. Cash reserves were required to be held by the city for school and park uses only.³⁵⁰ Incentivizing school board and provincial politicians effectively bought their silence while the agreement was being negotiated and a plausible rationale of support for the initiative once it became public. Once again, some community stakeholders were left out of the information loop limiting or eliminating opposition to the agreement.

4.6.3.4 Aligning Administrative Forces

Internal processes were changed to accommodate the initiative in both 2006 and 2009 site processes in two ways: internal process management roles and responsibilities and public messaging. Until this initiative, lands surplussed by school boards were directed to the parks function (i.e., park lands planners and community recreation coordinators) who worked with

³⁴⁹ Garth and Gerry (school board planners), interviewed by Robert Priebe November 22, 2016. The funding agreement was included in the un-redacted portion of the mayor's in-camera report 200600M004, November 17, 2006.

³⁵⁰ This redirection of funds from park reserves to housing and the boards was interesting because they also justified the sale of park land in part due to the fact that the *COE* could not afford to acquire and develop the park sites, yet they could afford to redirect future sale proceeds. This issue was revisited in 2015 when council directed that the funds of a sale be redirected to the local neighbourhood for park purposes only.

the community to undertake a quantitative and qualitative needs assessment, for each site, as per the 1994 policy. The outcome, like the Blue Quill Estates surplus site process, would then be taken to council for approval. The community recreation needs assessment process was reconfirmed in the June 2006 approval of the *2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan*. However, in the 2006 and subsequent 2009 revised process, land management functions took over the recreation needs determination that morphed ostensibly into a city-wide strategic housing rational, but without supportive housing demands analysis, no studies linking housing needs to sites, and no recreation needs assessment . The lands were simply considered “available” for redevelopment.³⁵¹ The land management planners were also designated as the public communicators of the initiative who crafted the supportive political rhetoric, once again contrary to past practice.

Park land planners and community recreation coordinators (CRCs) were both opposed to the process adopted because it was contrary to past practices that gave the community an opportunity to tell their place story.³⁵² Their concerns were voiced in internal meetings,³⁵³ but the land management planners did not reflect those concerns in any external discourse, nor did they permit any sites to be retained for park purposes. The management of staff of CRCs and park land planners escalated the issue to more senior managers, but they were told to stand down.³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ Don (senior administrator), interview and Syd (elected official), interviewed by Robert Priebe, November 23, 2017.

³⁵² Some park land planners were not supportive of surplussing any park land. A common refrain from one veteran park planner was “They ain’t making any more (parkland)!”

³⁵³ Meg (CRC), interviewed by Robert Priebe, September 26, 2016.

³⁵⁴ Meg (CRC), interview.

The city had an informal policy called “One City” that was originally intended to ensure that internal groups and individuals had the opportunity to voice and raise concerns about a land use file. When disputes were raised, the standard mechanism was to hear various perspectives and modify actions where possible.³⁵⁵ Escalation to senior managers is the ultimate place for resolution, but when that occurred in these files, no mitigating actions were taken. In all cases, internal oppositional forces sought to use standard policies and operating practices but were rebuffed by land management planners.

Internally oppositional forces were trying to either change the process or mitigate impacts on the community, but the internal power structure did not allow for changes. These decisions were essentially baked in before the process started. A land use file planner handling the plan amendment processes acknowledged that the 2009 decisions were predetermined.³⁵⁶ The underlying challenge beyond the power imbalances was the land management planners’ insistence on only using quantitative measures to assess adequacy. In both 2006³⁵⁷ and 2009,³⁵⁸ even areas with reduced amounts of park lands were deemed to have a surplus and could be sold for housing.

³⁵⁵ Don (senior manager), interview.

³⁵⁶ Cindy (land use planner), interviewed by Robert Priebe, October 23, 2016.

³⁵⁷ Unpublished memorandum authored by Rob Marchak, director of parks planning, obtained from the Blue Quill community representative. The memo stated the concern about only using quantitative measures that, upon analysis, was inconsistent with the 1994 policy. None of the sites were retained as park land.

³⁵⁸ Unpublished surplus school site disposition summary from Robert Priebe, director of Parks Planning, that requested retention of five sites. Once again, the report author flagged concerns about the lack of qualitative need assessment. None of the sites were retained as park lands.

Land management planners were appointed spokespersons for the initiative and acted as gatekeepers of information in and out of the organization. A CRC offered to develop a series of questions that the community would be asking based on past CRC experiences with surplus schools. Land management planners did not respond to the offer, despite the fact they had never been involved in past surplus school site review processes.

CRCs and park lands planners suggested the two Blue Quill sites be consolidated into a single larger site in 2010 to limit any negative recreational programming issues on the remaining lands created by two separate building envelopes.³⁵⁹ Once again, the suggestion to rationalize the site was rebuffed by land management planners, despite it being contemplated in the 2006 in-camera report. The rationalization was finally accepted in 2015 when a new councillor was elected and initiated action in support of the community.³⁶⁰ The net result of the realignment of functions was that information creation and dissemination was compromised.

4.6.3.5 Council Reporting

In 2006, the *GoA* required the city to approve the plan amendments and re-zonings in a public setting but did not require public notice to landowners. As noted earlier, Mayor Mandel prepared an “in-camera” report that detailed the agreement, was “walked on”³⁶¹ to the council

³⁵⁹ Leah (Community Recreation Coordinator-CRC), interviewed by Robert Priebe, November 8, 2016.

³⁶⁰ Bevan (elected official), interviewed by Robert Priebe, November 22, 2017.

³⁶¹ “Walking on” the in-camera report happens occasionally, but is usually frowned upon because councillors have no time to review and understand the newly introduced agenda items. However, the negotiation that resulted in this report started two years before and councillors were aware. Farley, an elected official, commented that the mayor was concerned about a change in provincial political leadership as the reason for the fast-tracked council report.

agenda (i.e., with no notice) On November 17th, reviewed “in camera,” and accepted as information in public with no public discussion.

The administration, acting on behalf of the landowner (i.e., City Council), prepared a single omnibus area plans and zoning amendment report that dealt with all 20 sites excluding a standard summary of policy alignment or public engagement. The report was reviewed by City Council on November 28th. Despite no notice being received, the Brookview Community League representatives did show up to speak at the City Council on November The community asked to speak to the in-camera report and the change in public process. By a vote of 7-4 with two absences, the community league was allowed to speak to the issue, but without seeing the in-camera report.³⁶² Mayor Mandel opposed the motion. The league representative presented their opposition and filed a report with the city clerk that stated the following:

The Brookview Community League objects to these bylaws (14440, 14441 and 14442) and resolutions at this time. We object to the rezoning of public land without public process and without opportunities for public input. We object to the amending of the neighbourhood and area structure plans without public process and without opportunities for public input.

It may be that the planned changes are the best choice for the affected neighbourhoods, but in the current absence of information on available options, we just don't know. If the plan that these bylaws support are as strong as some believe, then it will stand up to the light of public scrutiny.³⁶³

A minority of councillors opposed the first reading of the plan amendment and zoning bylaws, and upon second reading, one remained a hold out. This meant that the area plan and

³⁶² It is not clear how the league became aware of the November 28th council meeting report; however, the league resided in the ward of a councillor who opposed the surplus school initiative due to process flaws.

³⁶³ Brief filed by the Brookview Community League with the city clerk, November 28, 2006.

zoning amendments could not be approved on November 28th and had to return December 12th for a final vote based on a simple majority. In the interim, Walter Trocenko, a senior manager, sent an email to elected officials.

I agree that past and current Councils have rightly created a process whereby citizens can react to redevelopment and rezoning – and citizens should have that right. In this case, Council has agreed with a proposal (on November 17) that the administration and the Mayor’s office has been working on for months. The intent is to encourage the school boards to speed up their decision making process and identify sites that, given today’s demographics, will never have a school built. The school boards have done that – 20 sites have been selected and are the subject of today’s discussion.

The public hearing process, the legalities, and the consultation process has, in the past, taken up to two years to deal with a single site formerly declared surplus. The Mayor believed it was important to have this pilot project wrapped up before the new leaders cabinet is selected and new ministers are put in place. The Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mr. Rob Renner, who has been a part of these negotiations, steered a request for an Order in Council, through cabinet. Two weeks ago it was signed by the Lieutenant Governor. The order removed the Municipal Government Act requirement for a public hearing to be held to remove the MR designation and to rezone the land to a residential use. This effectively allows all 20 sites to be dealt with at one sitting. The intent was to eliminate the previously very lengthy process.

I agree with those who are saying the end shouldn’t justify the means. However, if Council has already passed a policy to use surplus school site to make first time home purchase more affordable,³⁶⁴ would it be fair to take citizens all the way through a public hearing process and then tell them the decision was already made.³⁶⁵

The item returned on December 12, 2006, and was approved in a 11-2 vote where twenty 1-hectare park parcels were effectively repurposed without community input.³⁶⁶ The outcome provided a land base for the development of housing.

³⁶⁴ The mayor’s November 11 in-camera council report.

³⁶⁵ Email drawn from the *Blue Quill Community League* website.

³⁶⁶ City of Edmonton, City Council bylaws and reports *Bylaw 14440*, report 2006PDP496, *Bylaw 14441*, report 2006PDP497, and *Bylaw 14442*, Report 2006PDP498, bylaws and reports collectively approved December 12, 2006.

A senior administrator had previously warned the mayor that this new approach would not be perceived well by the community.³⁶⁷ A councillor³⁶⁸ and a senior administrator³⁶⁹ stated that they were surprised by the negative reaction of the community.³⁷⁰ Given that initial reaction and agreements with the *GoA*, elected officials³⁷¹ immediately directed administrators to develop two pilot projects with extensive community input. A consultant was hired to undertake a follow-up evaluation of the success or learnings from the Greenview and Canon Ridge implementation processes.³⁷² That evaluation did not include dialogue with internal staff, nor did it share the background process.³⁷³

In 2009, as per the original 2006 surplus agreement, the school boards once again surplused more (19) sites. This time, however, public backlash caused a return to elements of the existing process (i.e., public meetings, public hearings). One councillor had noted the return to a more standard process was because “we were so fucked up with the 2006 process.”³⁷⁴ However, they still used omnibus reporting and refused to develop recreational

³⁶⁷ Marcel (senior administrator), interview.

³⁶⁸ Farley (elected official), interview.

³⁶⁹ Don (senior administrator), interview.

³⁷⁰ In the opinion of the primary author, these were both longtime public actors; the reactions were at best disingenuous. Both had previously experienced surplus school site process and decision-making at city council.

³⁷¹ Farley and Frank (elected officials), interviews.

³⁷² Canon Ridge was the second pilot site; it was not included in this dissertation. The review was focussed on how the sites were redeveloped, and not broader questions on needs, locations, timing, or public engagement. This follow up was required by the *GoA*.

³⁷³ Pario Plan, *First Time Homebuyers Program*.

³⁷⁴ Farley (elected official), interview.

needs assessments with the community. Apparently, the 1994 policy requiring assessments and 2006-2016 *UPMP* guidelines requiring recreation need assessments were null and void. There was once again an internal process to review the 2009 sites. However, the administration was not permitted to undertake a qualitative assessment of the sites with the community. A quantitative assessment was developed.³⁷⁵ The parks function requested retention of 5 of 20 sites. Three were based on area plans that had received less than 10% of the gross developable area when the area plan was approved. A fourth site, the Blue Quill site, was requested for retention given the loss of sites previously. There is no evidence that the internal request for the 2009 Blue Quill site retention was shared with the community or elected officials by the land management function. All five requested sites for retention were refused by the land management planners.

When the first public hearings were held for a number of the 2009 sites, the *COE* invited housing nongovernmental organizations who might benefit from the proposal to provide comment on the initiative.³⁷⁶ Twenty-five groups and individuals, approximately evenly split between for and against, spoke in support and opposition to the repurposing in eighteen hours of public hearings spread over two days. Those in support were largely housing organizations. Those opposed was the Blue Quill Community League, who objected to both process and outcomes. Despite split opinions in the community, council agreed to more park sites to be repurposed, although the Blue Quill site was referred back to discuss site issues.

³⁷⁵ Unpublished *COE* report prepared by the director of parks planning, 2012.

³⁷⁶ Hal (housing NGO representative), interviewed by Robert Priebe December 2, 2016. At the time of the interview, none of the sites had been designated to this organization, four years after the public hearing took place.

The Blue Quill Community asked, as a fallback position, to co-locate the 2006 and 2009 sites but were rebuffed by the administration prior to the public hearing.³⁷⁷ That issue had been raised in 2010 internally by the park lands planners and CRCs but was rebuffed by the land management group.³⁷⁸ Finally, in 2015, after further discussion with the community and the election of a new councillor, council directed the administration to co-locate the sites at Blue Quill. The end result of omnibus reporting is that knowledge dissemination and community understanding were once again compromised.

4.6.3.6 Selective, Ambiguous and Inaccurate Knowledge Creation and Dissemination

Once the land management function became the public spokespersons on surplus schools initiative, both in the implementation of the 2006 site and planning for the 2009 site, existing park policy documents and direction was effectively reinterpreted. The *COE* and elected officials stated that school lands were not park lands. This was contrary to the *Parks Bylaw* and the *2006-2016 UPMP* both of which defined school lands as park lands. The rhetoric represented a distinction without a difference.³⁷⁹ This notion has been repeated in emails between then Councillor and now Mayor Don Iveson to the Blue Quill Community League.

Firstly, as I have indicated to you on numerous occasions, we differ as to whether the surplus school site building envelope is, in fact, park space. It has been temporary park space, but was always intended in prior planning to be built upon. It is Municipal Reserve, but it was taken as MR to be built upon for public benefit. The Province (*GoA*) has since seen fit to permit certain housing within the scope of buildings with a public benefit. That these are building sites and not park space is Council's first

³⁷⁷ Barry (community representative), interview.

³⁷⁸ Leah (CRC), interview.

³⁷⁹ Land management staff may be using a more colloquial definition referring instead to the intended use as a school facility. However, what they failed to mention is that the lands were always intended for public access (i.e., to the gymnasiums, classrooms, and parking lots) for recreational purposes when the school is not operational (i.e., in the summer, on weekends, and at night).

premise for the 40 sites declared in 2006 and in 2009 and as I have indicated to you previously, I accept that premise.³⁸⁰

This statement requires more scrutiny; excerpts are analyzed herein. “It has been temporary park space, but it was always intended in prior planning to be built upon.” First, it was temporary park space until a *school* was built, and this ignores the fact that the school building would have provided public recreation functions,³⁸¹ which were now no longer planned. Replacement of one building for another was a misleading statement. He goes on to say that “It was taken as MR to be built upon for public benefit.” Until the 2006 process, the land could never be used for housing, unless a public hearing for a reserve removal occurred. The order-in-council waived that public process in 2006, and could not be appealed.

City practices would have actively discouraged from developing anything on that site until the school was built; therefore, claiming it was only temporary is disingenuous. The statement also implies that the site was awaiting development. In fact it had already been developed and used as public greenspace using public and community funding. Iveson’s statement reflects what happened with council’s action in 2006, not with what legislation, policy, and processes directed prior to the 2006 decision. His comments represent revisionist history.

Another example of insincere messaging was their statements that park lands was needed to address an affordable housing emergency based on policy direction that required a diversity of housing options, and the retention of park needs had been previously addressed

³⁸⁰ Email dated January, 2013, drawn from the *Blue Quill Community League* site.

³⁸¹ The *JUA* was created to share publicly funded facilities. School gymnasiums, classrooms, and parking lots were planned to be used by the community at night, on weekends, and in the summer by the community.

and was, therefore, not needed. A senior administrator admitted no housing studies had been undertaken to provide a base of data.³⁸² The “data” used to justify actions was rising average housing prices³⁸³ and not the more common metric used comparing housing costs with income, not to mention the fact that negotiations began as early as almost 10 years before.³⁸⁴ Most tellingly, the pilot projects were sold at market value,³⁸⁵ which was illogical if market pricing was the reason for action. Finally, the new area plans were being approved throughout the 2000s in other parts of the city; therefore, there was no shortage of land per se to create a diversity of housing options. The initiative will, however, increase development density and utilize existing infrastructure.

With respect to recreation assessments, as stated earlier, no study of parks nor parks funding was undertaken, yet a senior administrator argued the following in support of the initiative:

There was a perspective at that time that we had assembled far too much land. Our park standards were out of sync with reality. We couldn’t afford to maintain what we had. We didn’t have reserve accounts to buy all the land that we already planned for and there was a disconnect in terms of what to do with these particular sites.³⁸⁶

In addition, the *2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan*, approved by council in June 2006, five months before the November surplus site council reports, did not mention an overabundance of park lands. *UPMP* states the following:

³⁸² Don (senior administrator), interview.

³⁸³ Frank (elected official), interview.

³⁸⁴ Ian (elected official), interview.

³⁸⁵ Farley (elected official), interview.

³⁸⁶ Marcel (elected official), interview.

“The City is unable to meet program needs with 9.5%; in fact 11-12% would be needed if field and facility footprint sizes met current programming standards... Program standards do not recognize or accommodate changes to existing programs.”³⁸⁷

While the 1994 Surplus School Site Policy conceptualized reducing park lands inventories, it required a recreation needs assessment to inform decision-making that allowed the community to tell its place story. Waiving of the recreation need assessment discouraged the traditional way for the community to articulate its concerns. The “too much park lands” perspective was not grounded in data, and they waived the community process to understand that issue. In terms of the “lack of” park funding argument, the aforementioned incentivized agreement between the *GoA* and school boards redirected sale funds away from park reserve sources to city housing functions and school boards; this was illogical if park reserve sources were already stretched thin. It was even more questionable given that the joint use agreement did not require redirecting sale funds to the boards; at least the funds redirected to housing allowed the city the opportunity to reduce pressures in other parts of the corporate budget.

Finally, the November 28th omnibus council report excluded mention of policy alignment or public engagement, despite the fact that similar area plan amendments and re-zonings approved the same day included that information for each of those applications. This lack of acknowledgement represented a deliberate discursive silence on behalf of the city. It also meant that the community had no opportunity to identify, understand, or engage with the application. As such, the preparation of the council report represents an example of when some actors were effectively “selected” to participate over others.³⁸⁸ When accurate policy

³⁸⁷ *COE, 2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan*, 19.

³⁸⁸ Such references were made in City of Edmonton Council Report 2006PDP474, Bylaw 14397, Cromdale Neighbourhood, Agenda Item L.1.c, November 28, 2006.

and process knowledge is not shared, it impairs the actions of all social actors. Access to park lands planners and CRC's could have corrected some of this inauthentic rhetoric, but they were effectively cut off from any and all contact on surplus schools initiative with elected officials and the community. This subsection may in fact be the most egregious acts of the Administration and elected officials. More accurate knowledge creation could have contributed to a more robust community dialogue.

4.6.2.7 Initiative Execution

Once the plan and zoning bylaw amendments were approved, they effectively had land but no developers. Administrators did not do a broad-based proposal call to solicit developer site interest for the sites; they instead selected a small number of developers they deemed reputable and familiar with the type of housing they envisioned and selected them based on their interests.³⁸⁹ The city with the successful developers then hosted a public meeting for each of the two pilot project sites, with specific parcel locations and dimensions, which was when the project was formally introduced to the community. The community was asked to volunteer on an implementation committee. Any questions related to the process were directed to the city. Any site-specific development issues were handled by the developer. Those guardrails remained in place throughout the project implementation.³⁹⁰

The construction of Greenview housing, one of the pilot project sites, was completed by 2008 using this process, including the development of approximately 40 units. Residents in

³⁸⁹ Devin (homebuilder), interviewed by Robert Priebe, November 25, 2016.

³⁹⁰ These guardrails were critical to pilot project success. The developer stated he had reservations going in about potential community backlash and did not want to get caught in debates with the community about community needs or location. This may also explain why the administration fought so hard against co-locating sites in Blue Quill.

Greenview attended a public meeting to start the implementation process. There were mixed reviews as to how contentious the issue was to the community. A city representative, who was not opposed necessarily to the outcomes but was opposed to the process, called it negatively contentious.³⁹¹ The sitting councillor, a supporter of the initiative, felt the dialogue was spirited but not negative per se.³⁹² In the municipal election in 2007, the only voting poll site that voted against the same councillor was the Greenview poll.³⁹³ Throughout the implementation of the project, the *Woodvale Community League*, who represented the Greenview neighbourhood, kept residents apprised through their website.

The community of Blue Quill resisted the changes throughout. The community league hosted a public election forum for the 2007 election and queried the potential councillors on this and other issues. They also included information on their website about the surplus sites decision and interactions with city and elected officials, and they maintained that public record. Community representatives became engaged with the city and voiced their concerns to them about the lack of process and needs assessment. This was particularly fresh to them because they had previously been through a surplus site process on Blue Quill Estates neighbourhood, part of the Blue Quill Community League. This community was formidable because they knew policy and process specific to surplus schools land disposition processes, much more so than Greenview, who had not had that experience before. The community league spoke in opposition at the 2009 site public hearing, to no avail. They pressed the city to co-locate the two sites into a single larger one. The administration refused. Elected officials

³⁹¹ John (CRC), interviewed by Robert Priebe, September 15, 2016.

³⁹² Ian (elected official), interviewed by Robert Priebe, November 13, 2016.

³⁹³ Ian (elected official), November 13, 2016.

sent it back to the administration to discuss this issue that was ultimately directed by council in 2015.

Construction of the two Blue Quill sites (First Place Homebuyers Program and residences for aging in place seniors housing) in Blue Quill with 80-100 units immediately began in 2017, west of Meadowview Manor, an existing three-story rental facility with approximately 75 units. It had been 11 years since the first Blue Quill site was surplused and 8 years since both sites were available. The two lost sites are approximately 1 km away from a new high-rise residential community housing 5000+ in the site of a suburban shopping centre redeveloped for housing. Blue Quill was already a higher-density neighbourhood by 2000 with multiple family housing rental units.

As the issue evolved between 2006 and 2017, the community stayed in regular contact with CRCs, elected officials, and land management staff that had been tasked with repurposing park lands. Given the lack of appeal mechanism and their profound unhappiness with the decision, representatives of the league formed a stand-alone community organization formed to specifically challenge a portion of the process. The stand-alone organization was created to insulate, to the extent possible, the community league from reprisals from the city (i.e., the withdrawal of funding). The approval process element challenged was the method to convey the land to the developer, whose costs would not be charged for five years. The community organization deemed this a less-than-market-value transaction that required a separate motion from council. They were asking for a judicial review, not to stop the dispositions per se, but to require an additional motion by council. The intent was to raise greater awareness of the less-than-transparent process. This new organization, opposed in court by the combined forces of the city and developers, ran out of money to fund their action

and dropped the case. The only small win, or small act of agency, was co-locating the two surplus parcels into a single site on Blue Quill. At the end of the day, the community followed all protocols and processes available to them but met with very limited success due to the unyielding stance of elected official and land management staff. Once again, it was apparent the decisions were embedded early into the process before the community was engaged.

The import of the above tactics identified in this subsection meant that social actors were selectively engaged; those who could be counted on to either support the initiative were engaged or would remain silent. Moreover, information dissemination to those actors and the rest of the populations was at times ambiguous, incomplete or inaccurate shared by administrative actors who had little or no knowledge of past surplus schools processes, nor any interest in understanding it better. Consequently institutionalization of both the land use and park planning institution occurred without the benefit of a vetting of the arguably good outcomes. The processes and tactics used did not allow outcomes to naturally occur that had previously happened with the advent of the 1994 surplus school site policy.

4.7 Discussion

In this chapter, other scholarly research was explored that addressed process tactics and mechanics, and/or what may be underlying decision-making factors in review and approval processes in both critical and other literature realms in North American and European settings. This was done to both locate the local findings in a broader setting as well as to understand or articulate alternative rationals or explanations for the decisions.

Tuen van Dijk, a European critical discourse scholar, describes discourse manipulation as emphasizing “our” good things and emphasizing “their” bad things. His perspective is based on communicative or symbolic forms of manipulation, carried out by elected officials or

the media. His use of the term manipulation is not based solely on the use of power, but on the abuse of power. The manipulators seek to make those being manipulated believe the outcome is in their best interests. Van Dijks (2006)³⁹⁴ conceptualization of manipulation determines that those being manipulated are unable to understand the real intentions, real outcomes, or real beliefs of the interlocutors.³⁹⁵

Does the Edmonton case study rise to the level of manipulation? Arguably, yes, because of the opaque nature of the provincial public hearing waiver negotiation, the selective public messaging, the unilateral departure from policy and practices, the silence on the existing uses and “place” implications which they did not analyze, and the financial implications of the decision on the parks function. Oppositional perspectives were voiced by a community representative and an elected official:

I think what triggered my displeasure was the lack of any consultation that was going on. And also a break from all past practices, that all of a sudden they came out and presented this as a “fait de compli” when it hadn’t even been discussed with the community yet.”³⁹⁶

That argument (for use of surplus school sites) was never articulated to the public in a clear, transparent fashion. When we have lots of spaces, lots of surplus land all over the city, why surplus school sites?³⁹⁷

It could also be argued that it was not manipulation because there was a clear benefit in this decision (i.e., more affordable housing), increased densities were a goal of council, and

³⁹⁴ Tuen A. Van Dijk, “Discourse and Manipulation,” *Discourse and Society* 17, no. 3 (2006): 359-383, doi: 10.1177/ 0957926506060250.

³⁹⁵ Van Dijk, “Discourse and Manipulation,” 360-361.

³⁹⁶ Barry (community representative), interview.

³⁹⁷ Syd (elected official), interview.

legislation provided the opportunity to affect the outcomes that occurred in an expedited fashion. The following media quotations from Sarah O'Donnell and Scott McKeen, both employed by the *Edmonton Journal*, report the city perspective:

The deal breaks an impasse between the Catholic and public school boards and the city about what to do with surplus school sites, which developers were required to set aside when they first built neighbourhoods such as Blue Quill, Tawa and Dunluce. There are at least 50 unused school sites in Edmonton without any buildings on them.³⁹⁸

In this case, Mandel saw 20 vacant fields just sitting there growing grass. All were set aside for future school development, but remained vacant. The sites were largely forgotten, some for as long as 30 years. So Mandel, the former land developer thought: We've got land, let's build something on it.³⁹⁹

I stand by my earlier column where I used terms like "elitist" and "bigotry" to describe some of the opposition to Mandel's starter- homes scheme.⁴⁰⁰

The 2006 and 2009 processes occurred in what Keil (2009)⁴⁰¹ and Oleson (2014)⁴⁰² describe as a “roll-with-it neoliberalization” time period, defined as a move towards depoliticized decision-making, and generally with close alignment between business and government interests (i.e., new public management). The media quotes noted above provide some evidence of this approach as well.

³⁹⁸ Bibliography Sarah O'Donnell, "Condos to be Built on Vacant School Sites." *Edmonton Journal*, Nov 24, 2006. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/253353750?accountid=14474>.

³⁹⁹ Scott McKeen, "Mandel Gets A+ for Developing His Schoolyard Idea." *Edmonton Journal*, Nov 24, 2006. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/253397718?accountid=14474>.

⁴⁰⁰ Scott McKeen. "Twin Brooks Opposition, Alas, Still Elitist, Absurd." *Edmonton Journal*, Dec 13, 2006. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/253331066?accountid=14474>.

⁴⁰¹ Roger Keil, “The urban politics of roll-with-it neoliberalization.” *City: Analysis of Urban Trends, Culture, Theory, Policy, Action* 13 (2009): 230-245. doi: 10.1080/13604810902986848.

⁴⁰² Kristian Olesen, “The neoliberalisation of strategic spatial planning.” *Planning Theory* 13 (2014): 288-303. doi: 10.1177/1473095213499340.

At play in the Edmonton case study may ultimately be different conceptualizations of place as referenced by Healey in place-planning processes.⁴⁰³ The park lands offered for redevelopment acts as a resource to support capital development activities. Elected officials may have been prioritizing the health of the city in economic terms, on the basis that adding affordable housing or seniors “aging in place”⁴⁰⁴ housing maintains or broadens the diversity of populations, promotes a more inclusive community. So, while local communities may have been opposed due to leisure or place considerations,⁴⁰⁵ broader economic or broadly defined social housing issues could be argued as equally or more important.

Land use change process issues have been documented in other settings. Kerrie Farkas (2013)⁴⁰⁶ undertook a longitudinal analysis of City Council meetings in an American city, using grounded theory, conversation analysis, and critical discourse analysis. Farkas was responding to calls for more descriptive study of citizen participation at the local level of government (2013).⁴⁰⁷ Her analysis looked at the participation at City Council meetings, the roles of participants, the discourse practices adopted, and how actors engaged in discourse. This study was useful because it was a longitudinal analysis, it used critical discourse analysis, and it focussed on a specific element of land use planning approvals similar to Alberta (i.e.,

⁴⁰³ Patsy Healey, “Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places,” *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 19 (1999): 111-12, Retrieved from journals.sagepub.com/home/jpe.

⁴⁰⁴ The seniors housing approvals to date do not guarantee a local resident priority for housing in their neighbourhood or area, nor is there a *COE* policy that requires that to occur.

⁴⁰⁵ Lloyd (community representative), interview with Robert Priebe, November 30, 2016.

⁴⁰⁶ Kerrie R.H. Farkas, “Citizen (In) Action: The Limits of Civic Discourse in City Council Meetings,” *Critical Discourse Studies* 10 (2013): doi: 10.1080/17405904.2012.736702. 81-98.

⁴⁰⁷ Farkas, 82.

public hearings). The Edmonton case study had a narrower temporal focus (2006 and 2009 process reviews) and was focussed on a singular type of application. Farkas concluded that the value of citizen participation at public hearings in terms of contributing to decision-making was limited:

Although citizens had access to council meetings, their access was limited, unequal to that of city officials, and predetermined, inflexible, and controlled by city officials. Although citizens had the opportunity to play a role in the council meetings, their role was not equal to that of city officials and tended to be that of observer rather than active participant or participant of consequence (Nystrand et al., 2003). Although citizens could speak during the meetings, they were limited to certain kinds of discourse and were constrained by time limits; they were also not allowed to participate in any dialogic exchanges, any debate, or any deliberation on the issues raised in the meetings. Their discourse was also unequal to that of the city official discourse and was constrained and controlled by city officials. Citizens did not participate in consensus-building not only because they were not allowed to participate to any extent during the meetings, but also because consensus-building did not occur during the council meetings. As the city mayor pointed out, consensus-building occurred outside of the official council meetings.⁴⁰⁸

Similarly, Serbian researchers Hristic and Stefanovic (2013)⁴⁰⁹ argued that public hearings are not the ideal places to engage the public; instead, they recommended consultation to occur much earlier in the process.⁴¹⁰ In 2006 and 2009, elected officials chose to either eliminate public hearings (2006) or not give the community an opportunity to articulate its place story (i.e., waived the recreation need assessment) when they held the public hearings (2009) in ways they previously enjoyed. The need assessment represented an opportunity to “develop consensus outside of council chambers” referenced in the Farkas paper. In both 2006

⁴⁰⁸ Farkas, 92.

⁴⁰⁹ Natasha Danilovic Hristic and Nebjosa Stefanovic, “The Role of Public Insight into Urban Planning Process: Increasing Efficiency and Effectiveness,” *Spatium International Review* 30 (2013): 33-39, doi: 10.2298/SPAT1330033D.

⁴¹⁰ Hristic and Stefanovic, “37-38.

and 2009, state actors only brought the public into the discussion after the decision had been made to rezone the sites to housing.

A potential explanation of the contestations could include what I would term “policy paralysis.” Hall, Grant, and Habib (2017)⁴¹¹ argue that the rise of neoliberal policy environments has coincided with, or is an outcome of, the production of multiple plans. Plans and policies created with competing strategic directions are not easily prioritized, leaving practitioners who were both in support of and opposed with supportive policy. In this case study, we see support for affordable and diverse housing, retention of greenspaces in mature areas, and policies supporting community engagement in decision-making. These factors lead to both support for retaining past practices and a rising tension to create new ones.

4.8 Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter was to explore in depth a specific institutionalization event in 2006 and 2009 using a Social Relational Institutional perspective. To briefly reiterate, a Social Relational Institutional perspective assumes that land use planning is an institution within a field of institutions driven not only by technical rationalities but also by a multiple social rationalities. An institutional field is seen in terms of actors and their practices, and of institutions, expressed in terms of one another. Chapter 3 identified a land use planning institution and a parks planning institution. A Social Relational Institutional perspective then looks at how institutions express themselves in terms of actions, and actions in terms of institutions.

⁴¹¹ Nathan Hall, Jill L. Grant, and Ahsanul Habib. “Planners’ Perceptions of Why Canadian Communities Have Too Many Plans.” *Planning Practice & Research*, 32, no. 3 (2017): 243-258, doi: 10.1080/02697459.2017.1279918.

The primary contribution of this chapter is a description of the tactics and associated nuances of an “actual” institutional event. In other words, how did social actors engage with the rules and structures, interface (or not) with each other to understand broader social or cultural settings or meanings, react to the positions and perspectives of the other institutions, and how did those actions contribute to the act of institutionalization itself.

4.8.1 Planning Legislation and Institutional Decision-Making

The 2006 “order-in-council” engaged political actors and senior administrators in repurposing park lands for housing, and disengaged community social actors and front-line administrative staff (see section 4.8.4). The 2009 process followed the minimums of the *MGA* by holding a public hearing (see section 4.8.5) albeit while sharing flawed information (see 4.8.3). Planning legislation was manipulated to close down or limit opportunity for park institutional actors to engage in democratic debate, which fundamentally changed the two institutions.

In Alberta and in this case study specifically, provincial legislation allows elected officials to act as initiators and adjudicators of public land disposal decisions. They had all the rights of private landownership and the right to make land disposal decisions on behalf of the public, and they convinced 11 council colleagues to agree.

4.8.2 Public Hearings and Institutional Change

Public hearings in Alberta are the primary opportunity for community to directly speak to their elected representatives in a public democratic process. Public hearings were eliminated in 2006 and in 2009 were ineffective in the parks case study in identifying issues and developing collaborative solutions. This outcome was similar to the findings of scholars in the

United States (Farkas 2013)⁴¹² and Serbia (Hristic and Stefanovic 2013).⁴¹³ Both studies suggested more public discourse and dialogue should occur before the items arrive at City Council for a decision.

4.8.3 Knowledge Creation and Dissemination and Institutional Decision-Making

The Alberta *MGA* did not explicitly require transparent processes or accurate knowledge creation and dissemination, nor did it require early notification of park site users of potential changes. The *MGA* requires “good” planning and administration, but is not defined. The *MGA* does not require or preclude transparent process or equitable outcomes. It cannot be assumed that all community and administrative social actors wanted greater engagement or even a more transparent process. There was evidence that some community stakeholders were satisfied with the process and outcomes, more so with Greenview⁴¹⁴ than Blue Quill.⁴¹⁵ However, without adequate sharing of accurate information, the support for the initiative can never really be known.

4.8.4 Asymmetrical Decision-Making

Internal actors (i.e., CRCs, park lands planners) opposed to the process were disconnected from traditional park community social actors by administratively realigning roles in the corporation. This meant traditional policy and funding parks institutional networks were

⁴¹² Farkas, 81-98.

⁴¹³ Hristic and Stefanovic, 33-39.

⁴¹⁴ Steve (community representative), interview by Robert Priebe, September 15, 2016. The Greenview elected official did experience negative pushback in the next election cycle as noted by Ian (elected official), in an interview with Robert Priebe, November 13, 2016.

⁴¹⁵ Lloyd and Barry (community representatives), interviewed separately by Robert Priebe, November 30, 2016.

disconnected from other park institutional actors, limiting accurate knowledge dissemination regarding competing values, needs and outcomes.

4.8.5 Competing Values and Outcomes and Institutional Fields

Beyond process equity and fairness issues, elected officials and planners are faced with a real dilemma of meeting multiple and competing needs⁴¹⁶ and demands (Thatcher and Rein 2004; Lauria and Long 2017);⁴¹⁷ at any one time, decisions may be unpopular, and they may appear to be more top-down than is real. Within this environment of pluralistic decision-making is the challenge of administrative discretion and how the planner or his organization defines his role. Often planners describe their role as neutral arbiters of process,⁴¹⁸ but their roles are inherently conflicted by administrative realities and their understanding of them (Mayo and Johnson 2013).⁴¹⁹ More broadly, American scholars Sowa and Selden (2003) argue that planners could take on roles that protect the interests of minorities in process, or social justice outcomes more generally. One local planner also took the position that, generally, park lands planners did not have proprietary knowledge of the park lands function⁴²⁰ and, as such, were equally as

⁴¹⁶ Makela (community representative), interview with Robert Priebe, November 25, 2016.

⁴¹⁷ David Thatcher and Martin Rein, "Managing Value Conflicts in Public Policy," *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions* 17 (2004): 457-486; Mickey Lauria and Mellone Long. "Planning Experience and Planning Ethics," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 83, no. 2 (2017): 202-220, doi. 10.1080/01944363.2017.1286946.

⁴¹⁸ Russ (land use planner), interview with Robert Priebe, November 10, 2016, and Cindy (land use planner), interview with Robert Priebe, October 23, 2016.

⁴¹⁹ Mayo and Johnson, "A role dynamics theory of planning," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 28, no. 2 (2011): 91-103.

⁴²⁰ Russ (land use planner), interview.

qualified in assessing overall community needs in a park lands use decision-making setting.⁴²¹

This is essentially an unresolvable problem inherent in having land use planners mediating competing needs of functional entities within an organization.

In summary, key to the institutionalization event was the ability and actions of hegemonic change motivated elected officials to make unilateral changes by selectively engaging some actors over others, shortening engagement processes in the land use planning institution at the expense of the parks institution actors, hiding information, while implementing a disinformation campaign to create a crisis narrative. What this effectively did was to *not* allow the technical (rationality) process to fully comprehend and address the social reality of the decision, thereby arguably harming both institutions. Nevertheless actors within the parks institution resisted the actions through political actions and legal action, and both institutions have been institutionalized.

⁴²¹ I personally disagree with this notion, but more important is the reality that meeting pluralistic needs is challenging for all depending on your personal role and experiences.

Chapter 5: Competing Path Discourses and their Impact on Parks Land Use Decision-Making: A Historical Institutional Analysis

5.1 Abstract

The purpose of this chapter was to understand how social actors (i.e., elected officials, administrators, landowners, developers, community leagues, community residents) engage in social processes to create and animate parks using qualitative inquiry through the eyes of a former longtime practitioner, this time using a Historical Institutional perspective. Two park sites were selected for analysis: the Blue Quill and Greenview neighbourhood school and park sites over the 1960-2010 period. The analyses included review of documents (e.g., legislation, plans, policies, strategic plans, park master plans, funding programs, legal agreements, land titles, practices, etc.), air photographs, and semi-structured interviews with social actors engaged in processes.

This chapter reveals how path-creating mechanisms such as legislation, bylaws, and policies created the conditions for change to redevelop raw lands (farm land, natural areas, wetlands) into urban landscapes (i.e., residential, commercial, institutional, park lands, roads, utilities). Park space is created in a Legislatively-Driven Space Creation Branch (1960-1980), followed by a Policy Driven Place Creation Branch (1980-2000), and finally the Political Agency Disposition Era (2000 - 2010). The three critical junctures were a growing economy, the creation of community engagement policies (1980), and the election of a change-motivated elected official.

The importance of this chapter lies in underscoring how legislation, policies, legal agreements, processes, and policies create the conditions for change in urban landscapes in or out of step with community social actors; they are, in fact, mobilizing mechanisms that create land use change. The chapter also refines Sorensen's notion of the infrastructure institution. The findings suggest that parks infrastructure is a unique type of urban infrastructure that relies heavily on the substantial contribution of community social actors to fund, program, and maintain unlike any other form of public infrastructure (i.e., roadways, utilities, stormwater management).

5.2 Introduction

A community representative made the following comment on how a senior government official interacted with them in the Blue Quill neighbourhood: "We've broken every rule. Now do you want to work with us?"⁴²² From a community perspective, something had changed that was both substantive and unusual in terms of process.

⁴²² Lloyd (community representative), interview with Robert Priebe November 30, 2016

“I think what really triggered my displeasure was the lack of any type of [1] consultation into what was going on. And also a break with all past practices, that all [SEP] of the sudden they came out and presented this as a fait accompli when it hadn’t even been discussed with the community yet.”⁴²³

Oppositional administrative actors who rely on strategic direction, policy, process, and practices in working with the community reacted negatively.⁴²⁴ It begs the question: were oppositional forces more concerned about the change in practice, as opposed to the outcomes? Are there other explanations that could legitimately rationalize the process adopted or explain the reactions of community social actors? Understanding the rationale and reaction to change is important for policy makers and planners, because much-needed policy change should not be frustrated by bad process.

Process requirements are dictated by the *Municipal Government Act* (or the *MGA*). Provincial planning legislation provides elected officials with flexibility to manage the needs and priorities of local communities that are subject to change and sometimes change quickly. Yet the pace of change, and the need for change, may or may not be obvious to those most impacted. It may result in a change in the how governments work with residents, which can cause consternation. However, as we have seen, changing practices or not changing practices may also be challenging for administrators and elected officials.

The 2006 and 2009 park site contestations occurred in what Andre Sorensen (2015) would describe as a broader urban and societal institutional setting.

“Cities are dense collections of institutions...including land development and redevelopment rules, building standards, rules for financing, use and maintenance of infrastructure networks, governance and policy making structures, parking standards,

⁴²³ Barry (community representative), interview with Robert Priebe, November 30, 2016.

⁴²⁴ Meg (community recreation coordinator), interview with Robert Priebe, September 26, 2016.

tree protection, public education systems... animal bylaws, fire codes, insurance requirements, property rights, mortgage systems, street and sidewalk standards, water use and disposal regulations, garbage and waste management systems, public health rules and *many others* (emphasis added) formally codified and collectively enforced rules that have been developed as part of efforts to collectively shape, manage and add value to the shared spaces of the City.”⁴²⁵

Similar to what was discussed in Chapter 3, institutions are not formal government organizations or entities but instead represent ways or methods to make decisions between social actors engaging in process. Sorensen argues that institutions are integral to the social production of space. The change in process noted at the start of this chapter suggests an ahistorical approach to park lands disposition process, but then begs a broader question: what were the previous institutional practices, and how were they different?

5.3 Chapter Research Questions

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how social actors engaged in decision-making processes over the 1960 to 2010 period using the same data (i.e., documents, survey research) that was presented in the previous two chapters but, this time, using Historical Institutional and path dependency theory as analytical tools. Who was engaged, when and how? What information was shared? When were social actors involved? How did legislation, policies, plans and practices inform decision-making? This chapter will focus to a greater extent on documentary evidence (e.g., legislation, area plans, funding strategies) looking for path roots, path bending, and critical junctures.

5.4 Historic Institutionalism

⁴²⁵ Andre Sorensen, “Taking path dependence seriously: an Historical Institutional research agenda in planning history,” *Planning Perspectives* 30 no. 1 (2015): 20, doi: 10.1080/02665433.2013.874299.

A neoclassical institutional analytical frame is provided by Andre Sorensen's conceptualization of Historical Institutionalism, arguably best defined in his 2018 paper entitled "Institutions and Urban Space: Land, Infrastructure, and Governance in the Production of Urban Property."⁴²⁶ A second paper by the same author, "Taking Path Dependence Seriously: An Historical Institutional Research Agenda in Planning History," (2015) discusses path dependency in more depth.⁴²⁷ A third paper from 2017 was previously referenced in the theoretical perspectives section.⁴²⁸ Historical Institutional (HI) theory was chosen because it provided a complimentary analysis to SRI from a more traditional formal institutional "power" perspective based on rules and structure that has at its origins a long-term temporal focus. HI assumes that the rules and structures embedded in formal institutions can explain changes in decision-making while not excluding social and cultural factors in the broader community. It also provided an alternative lens to seek similarities and differences between the outcomes and conclusions of Chapter 3 that used SRI as an analytical tool.

Sorensen (2018) from Streek and Thelen (2005, pg. 9) adopts a definition of institutions as "collectively enforced expectations with respect to the behaviour of specific categories of actors or to the performance of certain activities." The enforced expectations are

⁴²⁶ Andre Sorensen, "Institutions and Urban Space: Land, Infrastructure, and Governance in the Production of Urban Property," *Planning Theory & Practice* 19 no. 1 (2018): 21-38, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2017.1408136>.

⁴²⁷ Andre Sorensen (2015), 17-38.

⁴²⁸ Andre Sorensen, "New Institutionalism and Planning Theory," from: *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory* ed. Michael Gunder, Ali Madnipour and Vanessa Watson, 23 August 2017. Abingdon: Routledge. Accessed 28 May 2019. <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315696072.ch20>.

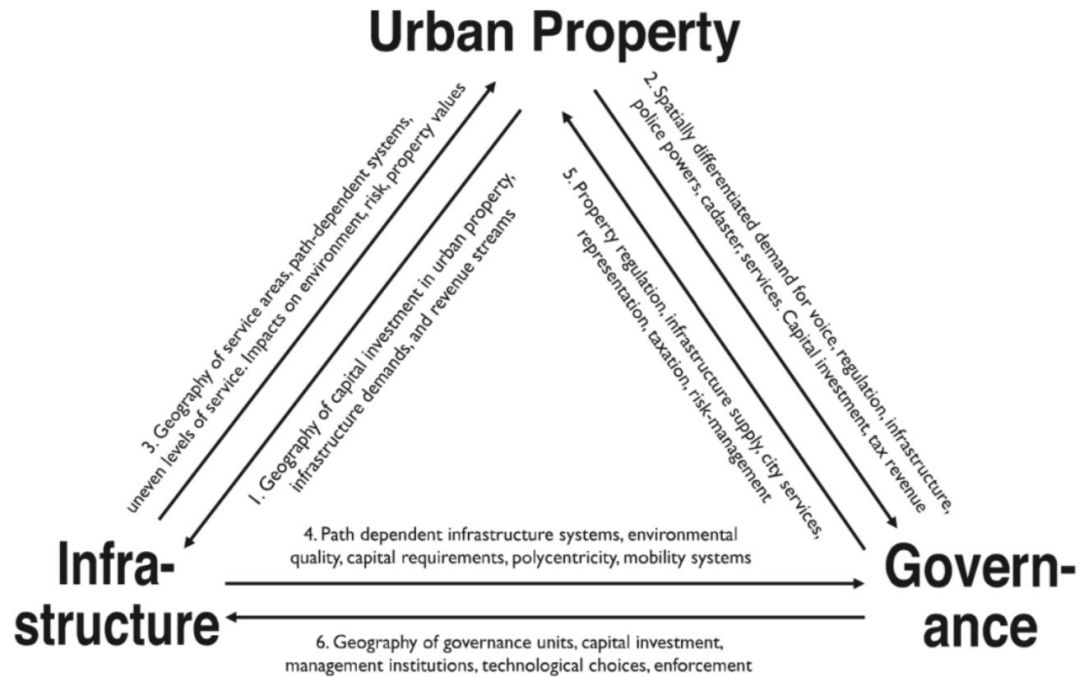
particularly important in spatial planning where laws and regulations are enforced by municipalities and the courts.

Sorensen (2018) has identified 6 core concepts of an Historical Institutional approach. First, some institutions are harder to change over time because of positive feedback loops reinforce themselves. This is often termed path dependency. Critical junctures or punctured equilibriums occur to create new pathways that are difficult to change. Second, new institutions are created at times, or critical junctures, when the existing institutions are no longer able to address outstanding issues and concerns. Change is dependent on a variety of factors including power, timing, circumstances and actor engagement. Third, institutions always redistribute resources unequally, and that unequal distribution has implications for, shape and drive power and agency of social actors. Fourth, institutions can change internally, outside of critical junctures. Fifth, institutions operate in conjunction with other institutions, and can be co-evolutionary. Sixth and finally, ideas and discourses will have a substantial impact on the institutions, and is particularly relevant in urban planning.

Sorensen (2018) identifies three types of overlapping municipal urban property institutions (Figure 5-1, following page). First, urban land and property institutions include, for example, legislation, building codes, property markets, and land use change processes. Second, infrastructure institutions are the rules and practices structuring the creation, regulation, funding, and maintenance of public infrastructure (i.e., roads, drainage facilities, utilities). Third, governance institutions are the federal and provincial laws and regulations within which municipalities operate. These three urban institutions are nuanced and useful; it is within the urban infrastructure institution that the parks institution rests, albeit somewhat

uncomfortably, given how parks are funded and programmed with community social actors unlike other forms of urban infrastructure.

Figure 5-1 Historical Institutionalism



Sorensen (2018), Pg. 31

Urban land and property institutions are shaped by the unique characteristics of landed property, which includes land and buildings. Each parcel has a unique location, size, and configuration, cannot be moved or relocated, and has unique relationships with other properties, public spaces, infrastructure, and governance systems. Each property is effectively defined or contextualized by the rules and ideas of the day and other land uses.⁴²⁹ Changes to the rules and systems can have a significant impact on property values, and there are structural

⁴²⁹ Sorensen (2018), 26.

incentives to maintain or increase property values for less to more fragmented property ownership and from less to more dense development and complex infrastructure. Capital development is, therefore, not a construction process but instead a process of urban institutionalization in which property owners have rights and expectations.⁴³⁰ The notion of path dependency does not presuppose that built environments are unchanging but instead that processes of property development have enduring consequences on how the urban form can be changed over time.⁴³¹

Urban infrastructure institutions include the creation and management of urban infrastructure networks such as water supply, sewers, utilities, and roads. This infrastructure is expensive, it effectively represents “sunk costs” because it cannot be moved, and multiple other locational choices are made based on the existence of particular infrastructures. Early choices and locations are reinforced over time. The networks themselves create a natural monopoly, preclude other options from intervening, and are further reinforced by management structures that are slow to change.⁴³²

Urban governance institutions refer to multi-level government legislation, rules, and regulations (i.e., federal, provincial and municipal), planning systems, property laws, and territorial divisions. Municipal government boundaries are fixed but can be amended (i.e., by annexation). Contingent choices made by local governments can create varied outcomes in different jurisdictions. Choices in the past constrain choices that can be made in the future,

⁴³⁰ Sorensen (2018), 27.

⁴³¹ Sorensen (2018) . 27.

⁴³² Sorensen (2018), 28-29.

particularly where budgets are involved. Quoting Sorensen, “As resources and capacities are limited, investing heavily in expressways and parks means that other possibilities such as public transit and social housing diminish.”⁴³³

5.5 Methodology, Methods, Materials, Analysis and Rigour

The research approach adopted is summarized in sections 1.2 (Methodological Coherence), 1.3 (Case Study and Sites), 1.4 (Data Collection), 1.5 (Data Analysis) and 1.6 (Data Rigour and Validity). The Blue Quill and Greenview case study sites examine evolving legislation, bylaws, policies, park master plans, and practices over the 1960-2010 period, and specifically, how social groups interact with one another utilizing the various documents, augmented by semi-structured interviews.

5.6 Findings

Planning and park processes are relatively invisible to most. Whatever neighbourhood you live in today, your apartment unit or house did not mysteriously appear in the dark of night, nor did the infrastructure to support the school and recreational activities you see in the park. As a community member, your knowledge is largely dependent on how long you have lived there, what activities you participate in, and how engaged you are in the community.

Similarly, no single elected official or administrator was engaged throughout the 1960-2010 period.

The analysis has three components which ask the following questions: what were the precursors to path change, how did those paths evolve or branch over time (i.e., path branching), and what triggered the branching or changes (i.e., critical junctures)?

⁴³³ Sorensen (2018), 29-30.

5.6.1 Starting Points – Physical and Social Path Roots

Defining a starting point for analysis in a specific location is subjective, given how cities grow and evolve over time and the arbitrary nature of temporally defining this case study. There are both physical and social starting points, but the two cannot be totally separated. Farm land in the 1960s was being acquired by economic interests (i.e., developers) for urban development, but little in the way of physical changes was occurring. Existing approved urban areas to the north were no longer adequate to support population growth. The economy was growing, and more profitable forms of land use were on the horizon. The trigger for the physical transformation of the landscape starts with a land use change planning process to approve the two area plans, both of which occurred in the early 1970s.

Socially, not unlike market forces which foregrounded development of land use plans, social assumptions and relationships did the same for the parks institution. In the late 1800s, unrestrained development was creating poor living conditions in developing urban areas. Poor sanitation and disease were some of the earliest reasons for the creation of the planning professions itself. It became common to transform urban areas physically in North America to create parks and park systems to mitigate the negative effects of urban development (e.g., beautiful cities movement, garden city movement). However, the methods of service delivery evolved over time in Alberta and elsewhere. Initially, parks had more aesthetic functions and served largely the affluent. Over time, a broader mandate for parks to provide recreation and leisure pursuits for everybody became common, with this mandate expanding to ecological heritage preservation later. However, the municipal government in Edmonton did not fully embrace their role. Service clubs like the Gyro Club and the *Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL)* stepped into the fore to support enhanced service provision, in

part following social movements from the south (i.e., the Women’s Playground Movement). These organizations spawned other community organizations (e.g., minor sports, cultural organizations) and new ones or local chapters of others were created (e.g., Sierra Club). It was in this social milieu that collaborative or conjoined approaches to recreation and leisure service delivery on public lands secreted the creation of institution that grew in these two neighbourhoods and in Edmonton more broadly.

Into this messy and largely unseen confluence between physical and social factors shaping Edmonton’s urban landscape and service delivery was a governance initiative in the late 1950s to jointly plan and operate school and park sites that was approved in 1961. The *Joint Use Agreement*, or *JUA*, required each state actor to share the other’s land and building infrastructure for the benefit of the community more broadly. However, initially the *JUA* was not supported by community social actors who asked to be included on the steering committee of the agreement. Council agreed with administrators and approved the document as a legal agreement, excluding the community representation.

5.6.2 Path Branching and Critical Junctures

There are three overlapping quasi-sequential path creation activities termed “branches,” discussed in turn: (a) Legislative Driven Space Creation—Branch ‘A,’ (b) Place Creation—Branch ‘B,’ and (c) Political Agency and Administrative Realignment—Branch ‘C.’ These branches are created by a substantive exogenous or endogenous change, which are described at the start of each new pathway.

5.6.2.1 Legislative Driven Space Creation Branch 'A'

The post-WWII period saw the Alberta and Edmonton economy growing. The Edmonton population from 1960 to 1980 grew from 269,314 to 505,773,⁴³⁴ reflecting the growth of the oil and gas industry. Farm land in the 1960s was being acquired by economic interests (i.e., developers) for urban development, but little in the way of physical changes was occurring. Existing approved urban areas to the north were no longer adequate to support population growth. More profitable forms of land use were on the horizon and formed the trigger for change, which will constitute the first critical juncture, characterized as an exogenous change. The *Mill Woods Development Concept* approved in 1971 and the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* approved in 1973 identified both the amounts and locations of school and park lands.

The general municipal plans, or using today's terminology, the municipal development plans, establish the policy framework for area plans and themselves are approved as "bylaws." Parks master plans are an implementing policy or strategic document that define the park typology including program, size, location, operational considerations, and rules of engagement in working with the community (i.e., partnerships). Legislation (i.e., *Municipal Government Act - MGA*) defined the roles and responsibilities for park systems in terms of how much park lands is available (i.e., 10% of the gross developable area), from whom (i.e., developers and landowners), for what purposes (e.g., school and recreation purposes), and who is financially responsible for funding park lands construction (i.e., not developers nor existing landowners).

⁴³⁴ "Population History, COE, https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/facts_figures/population-history.aspx

A park network is established at the area plan stage and is approved by City Council as a “bylaw.” Area plans are then further refined by subdivision plans, zoning plans, engineering drawings, and servicing agreements. In other words, parks’ locations, sizes, and programs are identified in the area plans and are refined through subsequent planning documents. City planning documents can be likened to a funnel: the most general description is at the top (i.e., general municipal plans—residential, industrial areas, major roadways) and each successive planning document (i.e., area plan zoning, plans of subdivision) provides more detail. These latter planning documents are relatively technical, have their own jargon, require some level of expertise to engage with, and are usually left to dialogues between elected officials, developers, consultants, and the administration. It is also true that the area plan and the park system identified in any area may not reflect community needs at the time of build-out, given the 30-year or more build-out rate. This is true for parks as well as other needs of the community.

The park systems and individual neighbourhood school and park sites within an area plan serves multiple neighbourhoods. Therefore, part of the recreation needs of Blue Quill and Greenview residents is contingent on school and park site park lands in other neighbourhoods. For example, minor field sport programs may occur in Blue Quill, but Blue Quill families travel to other neighbourhoods, and vice versa, to play community soccer, baseball, etc. Blue Quill high school students go to Harry Ainlay High School, which is not located in Blue Quill. St. Theresa is a French Catholic elementary school that serves the neighbourhood as well as those desiring a Catholic education and a French language training, often arriving by bus or parent cars. Schools, when built, are planned to provide gymnasiums, classrooms, and parking

for community use at night, on weekends, and in the summer as per the *JUA*, once again not limited to local residents.

A second contextual element, once again somewhat invisible, is the source of funding for school and park site acquisition. Developers are required by legislation to provide 10% of each parcel title for school and park purposes across the entire neighbourhood. Land costs are recovered by developers through subsequent lot sales. Therefore, school and park site acquisitions are paid for, indirectly, by lot purchases.

The outcome of the first critical juncture, economic development, and Branch 'A' is an assembled school and park space, but no park construction activities have occurred. The Blue Quill school and park lands base, approved in the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* in 1971, was assembled in the late 1970s. A similar pattern occurred in Mill Woods for the Greenview neighbourhood beginning in 1973. It should also be noted that this Branch A is largely resident in the land use planning institution, while the following two branches, 'B' and 'C', are largely resident in the parks institution.

5.6.2.2 Policy Driven Co-Production of Place Creation Branch 'B'

The impetus for change, or the critical juncture, was the confluence of three factors that occurred in the early 1980's; (a) a downturn in the economy and a lack of *COE* funds to construct base and shared park development; (b) the creation of policies in the early 1980's that created "institutions" in the form of policies to support greater dialogues between the *EFCL*, individual community leagues and the City; and (c) the creation of funding programs initiated by community non-governmental organizations to share park base level and shared development costs.

Prior to this juncture, the community had always been a sometimes-conflicted partner⁴³⁵ in the delivery of park services, as noted by Lai (1976), Ochoa (2013), and Kuban (2004). Service clubs, community leagues, and community umbrella organizations were active partners in funding and programming park sites. That relationship began to transform in the late 1970s when policy *C110* was negotiated passed in 1980 to clarify the roles between these social actors. An excerpt from that policy is provided next.

Each community league is a desirable vehicle for the provision of certain services which are of benefit to the residents of the neighbourhood and the City.

{ [] }
{ SEP }

The Community League is a useful mechanism for debate of area concerns and presentation of views and recommendations to Council.

{ [] }
{ SEP }

Participation in Community League activity is a desirable element in a democracy which seeks to place decision making for appropriate activities at the neighbourhood level. { [] }
{ SEP }

The Community League Structure educates and trains citizens in Governance and provides opportunities for citizens to volunteer their efforts to the Community.

{ [] }
{ SEP }

This policy was followed up by a series of new plans, legal agreements, policies, and funding programs that cemented the shared actions of the community and governmental social actors: the 1985 *Management Plan*, the *Neighbourhood Park Development Program* (or *NPDP*), *Policy C187 – Agreements with Non-Profit Organizations for the Co-Operative Operation of Recreation Facilities* (i.e., community halls), and licensing land to community organizations (i.e. *Tripartite License Agreement*). The *NPDP* saw the community cost share playgrounds, plazas, walkways, lighting, and landscaping enhancements on a 50/50 basis, in addition to their already integral role in the development of community halls and associated

⁴³⁵ Conflicted in terms of playing a role that the *COE* often tried to manage or modify, despite the fact that they were actually providing amenities and services the *COE* would not or could not provide itself.

amenities (e.g., outdoor skating rinks, tennis courts, basketball courts). The 1994 surplus school site policy engaged the community in recreation needs assessment processes prior to determining if the land was to be retained when schools' building envelopes were no longer required. These plans, policies, and funding programs were mobilizing mechanisms for community actors to become more engaged in park and park system development, volunteering, programming, and maintenance at costs far below than what was otherwise funded by the city. They were also mobilizing the notion that the community was an integral partner in service delivery. *Policy C110* was passed in 1980, but the resulting implementing actions continue to this day.

Policies, practices, and funding programs guide administrative decision-making in implementing community initiatives including park development, programming and operations, and maintenance and major capital repair. Budgets support base-level school and park site construction and the city's share of cost-shared community development and operating funds that tag staff to support community initiatives. What these and other policies, budgets, and practices have done over time is to create complementary institutions that effectively implement the plans approved in Branch 'A,' including Blue Quill and Greenview school and park sites.

In return for shared decision-making, the city saved substantial funding commitments that, prior to 1982, would have been their responsibility. Basic service delivery was provided much earlier than city funds would have enabled. These policies and practices would have engaged with multiple actors over time—different elected officials, community representatives, and administrators. However, policies come and go, sometimes replaced by

and sometimes overlapping with other policies, and Councils can ignore or override policies at their will.

This branch demonstrates two key characteristics of institutions; the land use and planning institutions co-evolved to support one another, and administrative alignment dedicated staff to support the co-production of park places.

The outcome of this branch is typically a constructed and functioning school and park site funded in part by the city (i.e., base-level amenities) and community (i.e., shared cost development of playgrounds, plazas, lighting, walkways, and 100% of the cost of community halls, skating rinks, batting cages, outdoor skating rinks). The *GoA* is responsible for new school construction. These activities represent implementation of the area plans. This is a fairly linear but phased process as city, community, and provincial school funding become available.

Park site development was completed by the early 1980s in both Blue Quill and Greenview, and there was one new school in each neighbourhood by the mid- to late 1980s. Cost-shared development of playgrounds requires creation of community fundraising and park development committees and outreach to neighbourhood residents.

5.6.2.3 Political Agency in Park Land Dispositions – Branch ‘C’

In 2001, Stephen Mandel was elected a municipal councillor, and in 2004, he was successful in the mayoral race. It was his strong role as a project champion that spearheaded the surplus school initiative.⁴³⁶ In June of 2004, councillors Mandel and Anderson queried the

⁴³⁶ Mandel's role was identified by four elected officials (Frank, Farley, Syd, Ian) and two senior administrators (Don, Marcel).

administration on surplus schools.⁴³⁷ In the fall of that year, Mandel became mayor and began negotiations with the *GoA* to redevelop surplus school sites previously discussed. It was his council report on November 17, 2006, that excluded community review of surplus schools decisions that became the defacto policy of the *COE* on surplus schools until 2015.⁴³⁸

Administratively the *COE* realigned administrative review functions to empower *COE* land inventory planners and disempower recreation coordinators and park land planners. This change had multiple effects. The land inventory planners were designated public spokesmen, were gatekeepers of public information, created and disseminated ambiguous, incomplete or inaccurate information about the process and recreational needs that could not be corrected by recreation coordinators or park land planners. In effect these latter functions were silenced, creating personal and professional ethical dilemmas.

Over the 2000s, activity at the parks includes structured and unstructured use of park amenities and facilities.. This activity includes: free use of playgrounds, plazas, picnic areas, skating rinks, special events, and community gardens; participation in field sports organized by community league volunteers, drawing park users from multiple neighbourhoods; and use of community halls for recreational programs, meeting hall rentals, etc. that were funded, operated, and maintained by community league volunteers. This use occurred year-round, and activities ebbed and flowed based on programming and events. Provincially funded schools serve multiple neighbourhoods and create a more predictable rhythm to site use based on their pre-set schedules. Access to gymnasiums and classrooms added to the planned and accessible recreational opportunities on site. Each site had its own rhythm.

⁴³⁷ *COE* council report 2004CSS011 dated June 8, 2004.

⁴³⁸ *COE* council report 2006OOM004 dated November 17, 2006.

It is important to note that property lines and building zones are invisible to users. When school building envelopes are unbuilt, residents and community leagues are warned that any use of them is considered “temporary” *until* the school is built.⁴³⁹ Residential development of both neighbourhoods began in the 1970s, pre-dating the school and park site development. As build-outs occurred, more and more people had access to and used the sites. By 1990, the neighbourhood was built out as per plans, and community leagues were in full operation, used by local and nearby neighbourhoods. People made decisions to locate in a neighbourhood in part, but certainly not solely, to have access to the schools and the park site. These two parallel planes of activities (i.e., policy revision) and growing and evolving community use by a multitude of local and non-local users were occurring simultaneously.

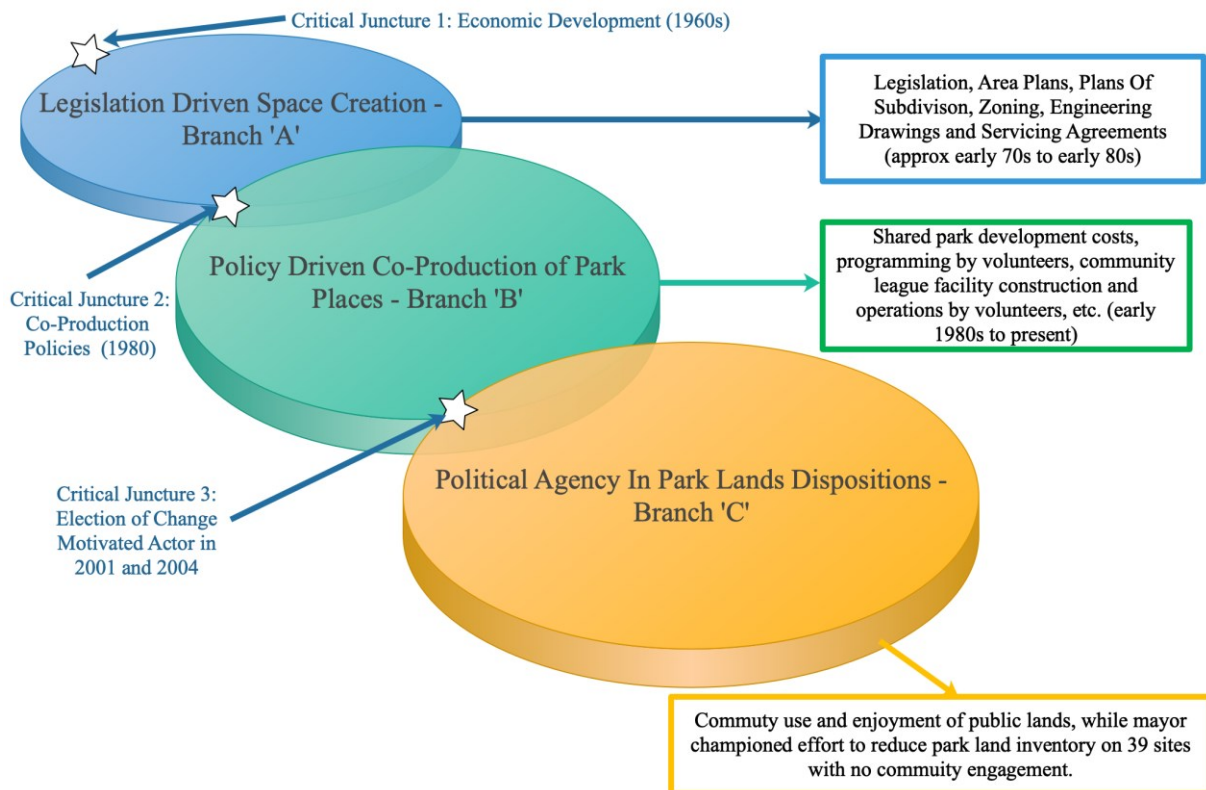
This branch demonstrates how institutions, in this case the land use planning institution, by changing land uses were in effect redistributing resources. Park land users and their institution was effectively disadvantaged by process if not outcomes, while it could also be argued that increased densities and provision of additional housing could benefit developers and the community by the outcome, if not by the process. It could be argued that an increase in the number of residents using parks would benefit the local community league. This branch also demonstrates how endogenous factors, a political champion and an internal *COE* alignment were able to effect a different outcome. Finally it is fair to say that a change in discourses and ideas, emanating from a political leader and supported by Administrative sherpas, reshaped outcomes and processes.

⁴³⁹ The future land use of the school building envelope site would be determined after a site was declared sites surplus by a school board, and recreational coordinators and park land planners undertook a quantitative and qualitative need assessment occurs as per the 1994 surplus school site policy (e.g., Blue Quill Estates).

Generally speaking, Branch ‘A’ preceded ‘B’ which preceded ‘C’; in each, there is a degree of linearity. The branches differ in terms of the type, number, and agency of social actors; with each succeeding branch, there is an increasing number of social actors, while the level of organization between them decreases. There is also an increase in the number of social actors engaged over time as the intensity of site use increases as well.

Figure 5-1 illustrates the layering of the branches (i.e., A+B+C) as well as the relative location of the critical junctures.

Figure 5-1: Historical Institutionalism Branches and Junctures



5.6 Discussion

The analysis of the Edmonton data suggests good alignment with Sorensen’s (2017) concept of Historical Institutionalism (HI). He identified three types of institutions: property,

infrastructure, and governance. The land use planning institution aligns with, or is a sub-category of, the property institution of the Sorensen property institution. The parks infrastructure aligns with, or is a sub-category of, the Sorensen infrastructure institution. It is the Sorensen governance institution that creates and mediates the other two institutions.

However, the Sorensen model essentially treats all infrastructure (e.g., parks, roads, utilities) in a similar fashion, not recognizing fundamental differences in types of infrastructure in two important ways. First, his model underplays inherent ecological benefits and opportunities provided by natural landscapes. Moreover, it could be argued that roadway transportation infrastructure has the opposite effect by promoting private vehicle use. Second, community social actors are integral to development, programming, and maintenance of parks⁴⁴⁰ and natural areas and creating gathering places that build social capital in the community as well as create tax revenues, jobs, and cost avoidance.⁴⁴¹ Transportation and utility infrastructure do not have anywhere near the same level of community contributions, but do contribute to commerce in a bigger way than parks infrastructure. The Edmonton case study provides a deeper dive into infrastructure institution types than previously found.

The path dependency – HI lens also provides an opportunity to reflect on the Edmonton case study data to find alternate ways to understand the reactions of social actors to

⁴⁴⁰ Trees are likely the only municipal infrastructure that appreciate in value beyond replacement value (e.g., a tree “whip” planted today is worth far less than a mature tree 30 years from now) financially and ecologically.

⁴⁴¹ Peter Harnik and John Crompton, “Measuring the Total Economic Value of a Park System to a Community,” *Managing Leisure* 19 (2014): 188-211, doi: 10.1080/13606719.2014.885713.

the process adopted. The discussion will look to four realms of literature: land ownership and public lands, nimbyism, place attachment, and crisis management.

Ownership of the public realm is more conflicted than seems. Legislators have given park lands special status based on social metrics. Feldman (2018)⁴⁴² argues that this is reflected in the requirement for extra public processes to re-designate park lands for other purposes. In Alberta, that means removing reserve designations listed on land titles or titles acquired using reserve sources, both requiring a public notice and a public hearing. In the Edmonton case study, municipal elected officials went to the *GoA* behind closed doors to have that requirement waived.

Henri Lefebvre and his disciples created the “right to the city” movement, which effectively challenges the notion of private property. Proponents argue that it is a call to action to reclaim the city as a co-created space, free of the constraints of capitalism and commodification that leads to the rise of spatial inequalities. Purcell (2013)⁴⁴³ argues that this movement fundamentally would change how democracy occurs. He argues that our use of the term democracy, following Hobbe’s, requires us to transfer power to entities outside of ourselves, and that entity uses its own power to rule over us. Purcell argues that, in fact, we do not have democracies but oligarchies, or rule by a few.⁴⁴⁴ Liberal democracies give the people the right to elect their representatives, but after that, the few rule essentially unchecked until

⁴⁴² Sarah Feldman, “A Reconsideration of the Justifying Values of Public Parkland,” PhD diss., 16-17, University of Chicago, 2018. ProQuest Number 10745974, 246

⁴⁴³ Mark Purcell, “The Right to the City and the Struggle for Democracy in the Public Realm,” *Policy & Politics* 43, no. 3 (2014): 311-327, doi: 10.1332030557312X655639.

⁴⁴⁴ Purcell, “The Right to the City and the Struggle for Democracy in the Public Realm, 313.

the next election. Contrary to the notion of the rule by a few, Lefebvre's right to the city concept described by Chiodelli (2013)⁴⁴⁵ is based on his notion of work ("oeuvre") and product ("produit"). The oeuvre is unique and irreplaceable and is a process of creativity and art. The "produit" is the result of repeatable and serialized actions. The "produit" does not assume social determinism or a specific outcome. Urban land uses are the result of interactions of users over time. Ultimately this leads to "use" value being privileged over market value, which of course is contrary to today's legislation, whether we deem it part of a democracy or oligarchy.

Nicholas Blomley (2017)⁴⁴⁶ makes a theoretical contribution to the characterization of property. He argues that planners generally involve themselves with anticipating the various and many land use needs and then allocating across an urban landscape. This approach results in a presumptive neutrality and functionality with respect to land ownership. Land use asks a functional spatial question: where do things belong? This sanitizes a more fundamental question: to whom do things belong? Until we know the answer to the second question, we cannot answer the first:

...if in choosing to act upon use in engaging with property, planning engages particular dimensions of property, it follows that also in so doing it elects *not* to act upon other components. In particular, land use planning does not question who owns, or how. Issues of property acquisition and distribution are bracketed. In that sense, it takes as given a prevailing distribution of property... In bracketing such questions, moreover, land use planning becomes implicated not only in reproducing a prevailing

⁴⁴⁵ Francesco Chiodelli, "Planning and Urban Citizenship: Suggestions from the Thoughts of Henri Lefebvre," *Planning Perspectives* 28 no. 3 (2013): 487-494. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2013.800717>.

⁴⁴⁶ Nicholas Blomley, "Land Use, Planning, and the 'Difficult Character of Property,'" *Planning Theory and Practice* 18 no. 3 (2017): 351-364, doi: 10.1080/14649357.2016.1179336.

hierarchy of exclusion and domination, but may also produce new forms of dispossession and displacement.⁴⁴⁷

The Edmonton case study did not find any evidence of anyone challenging the notion of ownership of the park lands. Community oppositional actors were focussed on process flaws. I would argue that the land use change process as facilitated by legislation and the city brackets off the discussion of ownership and focuses only on the best use of land.⁴⁴⁸ The net result, as Purcell suggests, is rule by a few.

One of those reactions articulated by the mayor and reflected in the press was NIMBY; local residents were acting in their own self-interest.⁴⁴⁹ A quote from then reporter (now councillor) Scott McKeen defined local residents' concerns as either elitist or NIMBY:

Townhouses are inappropriate for affluent, south-side neighbourhoods, whose residents are being unfairly called snobs and bigots by the dread, liberal media. But you know, sometimes you've got to be cruel to be kind. So I stand by my earlier column where I used terms like "elitist" and "bigotry" to describe some of the opposition to Mandel's starter homes scheme.⁴⁵⁰

NIMBY was suggested as a reason why community actors were opposed, representing a possible example of path dependency. Eranti (2017)⁴⁵¹ explored the roots of the term NIMBY in planning process from a sociological theoretical perspective. He begins his article

⁴⁴⁷ Blomley (2017), 361-362.

⁴⁴⁸ My own personal approach to park lands assumed that the community owned the land, and elected officials and administrators were property managers for them. This was not the prevailing view within the administration.

⁴⁴⁹ Scott McKeen, "Twin Brooks Opposition, Alas, Still Elitist, Absurd." *Edmonton Journal*, Dec 13, 2006. <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/253331066?accountid=14474>.

⁴⁵⁰ Mckeen, December 13, 2006.

⁴⁵¹ Veikko Eranti, "Re-visiting NIMBY: From Conflicting Interests to Conflicting Valuations," *The Sociological Review* 65, no. 2 (2017): 285-301, doi. 10.1177/0038026116675554.

with the statement “land use is always contested” and argues that all contestations are about fairness and justice. Those latter terms are defined as whose voice is heard, whose interests are being served, and how arguments are valued. McKeen’s journalistic interpretation implies or explicitly has determined that private interests are the basis of the opposition. But while that notion remains part of the discussion, Eranti argues that a more fruitful evaluation would also include conflicting modes of valuation and how situations are evaluated by actors. Three categories are defined as individual interests such as private interests, public justification or the common good, and familial affinities or emotional ties to places or objects.

Using Eranti’s frame, elected officials and administrators in the Edmonton decision are using a public justification rationale to argue for park lands redevelopment (i.e., housing emergency valued over recreation needs).⁴⁵² The claims of elitism and NIMBY reflect their perception of the communities’ apparent reliance on protecting their individual interests (i.e., reducing property taxes in the neighbourhood). However, the communities appear to be arguing from all three categories. Some land owners in Greenview were concerned about low-income housing availability in the community, and they were relieved when the city agreed to market housing.⁴⁵³ The community concern for public interest relates to their concern about opaquely negotiated process change contrary to legislation.⁴⁵⁴ The exclusion of the public from deliberation and input was also a concern raised by park lands planners and CRCs.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵² I would argue that it may be more accurate to say they are rationalizing the continued privileging of economic or business interests by expediting process.

⁴⁵³ Ian (elected official), interview.

⁴⁵⁴ Barry (community representative), interview.

⁴⁵⁵ Leah and Meg (CRCs) and Stan (park land planner), interviews.

The process effectively silenced their approved policy lens by imposing public information gatekeepers.⁴⁵⁶ The community also demonstrated an affinity for the space itself being lost,⁴⁵⁷ particularly the Blue Quill community, who also sought to co-locate the two surplus sites together so as to not disrupt the remainder of the recreational functions after repurposing occurred.⁴⁵⁸ The perceived loss of space may be rooted in a broader place attachment.

Gibson (2005)⁴⁵⁹ similarly explored NIMBY and applied it to a case of a homeless shelter in Seattle. Gibson argues that NIMBYISM is authority centred and reduces the discussion to moral issues in a binary contestation between rational civic-minded planners and irrational self-interested opponents. Gibson determined that the issue is more nuanced and considers political and ethical considerations grounded or limited by political-economic power imbalances. He concludes that labeling is unnecessary and destructive and privileges existing economic and power institutions. For fair and equitable process to occur, what is necessary is a truly contested political process that recognizes power imbalances and allows opponents and proponents to fairly argue public interest without the conversation degenerating into who best represents the public interest. Given the discussion on the preceding work of Eranti applied to the Edmonton parks case study and using Gibson's thoughts, the process employed for park lands surplussing consciously chose not to create a fair process and that quickly, and unfairly, deteriorated into discussions of elitism and NIMBYISM.

⁴⁵⁶ Leah (CRC), interview.

⁴⁵⁷ Lloyd (community representative), interview.

⁴⁵⁸ Barry (community representative), interview.

⁴⁵⁹ Timothy A. Gibson, "NIMBY and the Civic Good," *City and Community* 4 no. 4 (2005): 381-401. Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15406040>

A quote from a community representative described his personal connection to the Blue Quill school and park site as a place.

I created a Scouting room in the community league for us. The Scouts and the Brownies once a year cleaned the park up in the spring. All my kids played soccer. My kids played baseball. My kids coached and refereed. My kids worked at the community league cleaning the ice for the community league. Tobogganed there a million times, played hockey a million times⁴⁶⁰

The place literature is wide and diverse. Often, the approaches, concepts, and characterizations used differ by discipline. Halpenny (2010)⁴⁶¹ defined place in the following manner:

A place is a spatial location that is assigned meanings and values by society and individuals. Place can be tangible or intangible, and over time, its significance and meaning varies between individuals, groups, and cultures.⁴⁶²

Leisure scholars argue place meanings are situationally defined and contingent on negotiation with other people and places.⁴⁶³ Smale (2006) argues that places are subjectively defined; are imbued with meaning; are locations for social relations, bonding, and cohesion; and are socially constructed.⁴⁶⁴ Smale (2006)⁴⁶⁵ argues planning processes of all kinds, including planning for park sites, need to include processes and ways for individuals and

⁴⁶⁰ Lloyd (community representatives), interviews with Robert Priebe, November 30, 2016.

⁴⁶¹ Elizabeth A Halpenny, "Pro-environmental Behaviours and Park Visitors: The Effect of Place Attachment," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 30 (2010): 409-421. doi:10.1016/j.jenvp.2010.04.006

⁴⁶² Halpenny, 409.

⁴⁶³ Brian Smale, "Critical Perspectives on Place in Leisure Research," *Leisure/Loisir* 30 no. 2 (2006): 369-382, doi: 10.1080/14927713.2006.9651358.

⁴⁶⁴ Smale, 371.

⁴⁶⁵ Smale, 379.

groups to tell their place stories. For this dissertation, an approach that reflects urban and recreational planning is helpful, given that parks are spaces created in urban planning processes and evolve into places.

Manzo and Perkins (2006)⁴⁶⁶ authored an article entitled “Finding Common Ground: The Importance of Place Attachment to Community Participation and Planning” that seeks to connect concepts of individual and community attachment to place. They argue that individual attachment to place was not previously connected with broader socio-political urban planning processes. Community planning literature focuses on participation and empowerment, but not so much around emotional attachments to place. Emotional attachments to place can lead to efforts to improve one’s community.⁴⁶⁷ In essence, these two camps are talking past each other in urban planning processes. Manzo and Perkins argue for what they call a holistic ecological perspective on community planning and development that combines the two by examining community in their multiple domains (e.g., physical, social, political, economic) and supporting multiple levels of analysis (i.e., individual, group, city, region).⁴⁶⁸

Reflecting on the Edmonton case study, the process adopted sought to disempower community actors and consciously not recognize community or individual attachment to place. The process did not value community assets either in decision-making or contribution

⁴⁶⁶ Lynne C. Manzo and Douglas D. Perkins. “Finding Common Ground: The Importance of Place Attachment to Community Participation and Planning,” *Journal of Planning Literature* 20, no. 4 (2006): 335-350, doi: 10.1177/0885412205286160.

⁴⁶⁷ Manzo and Perkins, 335.

⁴⁶⁸ Manzo and Perkins, 344-345.

to development. They argue that while place attachment can form the basis of cooperation and community action, it can also be the source of conflict,⁴⁶⁹ which occurred in this case study.

Patrick Devine-Wright (2009)⁴⁷⁰ connected NIMBY and place attachment in a way that connects well to both Gibson and Evanti's work and this case study. His work seeks to connect psychological aspects of place with the social psychology of place representations and identity processes, which can then link to place-protective actions. He identifies five psychological stages of response to place change over time: becoming aware, interpreting, evaluating, coping, and acting. Places are social constructions and subjectively differ within various social, economic, and environmental contexts. The local setting is integral to understanding how connected one is or not to a place. Those strongly attached are more likely to participate in a place-change process, while others may not and may be ambivalent to change. Longer-term residents are more likely to be opposed than transient populations. Reactions may differ if the attachment is defined as physical or social. If the connection is more social, it is likely that those with that connection are more likely to be opponents. Scalar considerations are involved in understanding interpretations. If the outcome is more local than global, reactions will differ. For example, a climate initiative may be viewed differently than an industrial factory or a roadway change.

Devine differentiates between two dimensions of a proposed change: the decision-making process and the outcome. He states: "unjust planning procedures and negative outcomes is likely to lead to negative affect and evaluations by those individuals who feel

⁴⁶⁹ Manzo and Perkins, 340.

⁴⁷⁰ Patrick Devine-Wright, "Nimby and Place Attachment," *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 19 (2009): 426–441, doi: 10.1002/casp.1004.

strongly attached to the place.”⁴⁷¹ Developments that may detract or take away from place distinctiveness, in the near and far term, may be viewed more negatively. Initiatives that take away from place continuity may also be viewed negatively. Behavioural reactions to change, or coping activities related to place change, will range from detachment to place-protective actions that could be associated with NIMBY. Individuals may be more motivated to engage in place-protective action if they feel they have some agency to affect changes, or if there is a group of like-minded individuals available to develop and implement strategies.

Devine-Wright (2012)⁴⁷² applied the above framework to a proposed power line project in the United Kingdom. He found that project-related variables such as large power towers or pylons were viewed as socially and aesthetically offensive and would take away from the “rurality” of the area; these were the most important variables related to public opposition. Beliefs that the process itself was unjust was also strongly related to the public’s reaction. The author concludes that procedural justice is critical and that re-balancing impacts with benefit packages to those affected could have helped; however, it is too simplistic to assume that these measures would have gained public acceptance.

His five-stage model and the UK applications are useful to reflect upon for this case study. The land use change processes in 2006 or 2009 did not provide any option for local residents to understand or evaluate the issues given the time constraints and ambiguous, inaccurate, or incomplete knowledge dissemination imposed by decision-makers, generating predictable place-protective behaviours characterized by proponents as NIMBY. Legislation

⁴⁷¹ Devine-Wright, 434.

⁴⁷² Patrick Devine-Wright, “Explaining ‘NIMBY’ Objections to a Power Line: The Role of Personal, Place Attachment and Project-Related Factors,” *Environment and Behaviour* 46 no. 6 (2012): 761-781, doi: 10.1177/0013916512440435.

and policies provided little or no protection for the community. The community had little agency. Proponents were essentially deprived of an opportunity to connect with other like-minded actors by the short timelines and the omnibus reporting procedures adopted by the city. The scale of the problem may have been an opportunity for proponents if they could have shared accurate data on the housing emergency in support of the initiative as people were attuned to rising housing prices. However, connecting the outcome to the problem, as shown in Chapter 4, was on its face problematic.

This chapter revealed an example of using “crisis” narratives to change approaches or policies, intended to act as critical junctures, as reflected by a senior administrator.

I think the reason (that parks were chosen) was that in the communities it was an identified more readily available option to respond to crises.⁴⁷³

The media reported the urgency understood by Mayor Mandel.

This is a program we want to make it clear is about First Time Homebuyer housing, Mayor Stephen Mandel said Thursday. "This is not about social housing, subsidized housing or short-term rental housing or someone trying to get on their feet. " "We're talking about First Time Homebuyers, Edmontonians with good jobs and decent incomes who are being held back because of the surge in housing prices," Mandel said.⁴⁷⁴

As noted in the previous chapter, the mayor was using rising housing prices as the rationale for political action, but chose not to mention other housing data that may not have painted such a bleak picture. The rising housing prices were real, but other data was minimized or not shared. Regardless, what was the source of the crisis? Roux-Dufort (2007) argues that focusing only on crisis situations is too limiting, that the groundwork may have

⁴⁷³ Don (senior administrator), interview with Robert Priebe, March 1, 2017.

⁴⁷⁴ Sarah O'Donnell, “Condos to be built on vacant school sites.” *Edmonton Journal*, November 24, 2006.

been established for some time but there was failure to act.⁴⁷⁵ In this example, low-density development decisions made by elected officials in the 1970s set the stage for this crisis, which one could argue could have been foreseen. It could also be argued that elected officials were using the housing emergency as a false narrative intended to create a sense of urgency. Both could be true at the same time, but the redevelopment of park lands would not have to be a solution, or it could be a solution in some areas and not others.

Path breaking or changing most easily occurred through the actions of elected officials. These changes occurred both over time (i.e., community coproduction of place) and in abrupt u-turns (i.e., unilateral repurposing of park lands in 2006). Community-initiated path breaking requires longer-term discussion and negotiation to get the buy-in of administrators and elected officials. What was unfortunate was the lack of recognition of how path-breaking changes impact community actors, to the point of mischaracterizing their intentions (i.e., Nimbyism) and not recognizing the role of the community as a partner in park place co-production. When this occurred, legal action resulted, pitting community-funded partners⁴⁷⁶ with limited funds against the city, who has deep pockets and helps fund the community organizations themselves, leaving the community in a vulnerable position. The process has resulted in a residue of distrust and anger that appears to be more visceral due to its connection to both place and the previous commitments to co-production of place.

5.7 Conclusions

⁴⁷⁵ Christophe Roux-Dufort, “A passion for imperfections: Revisiting crisis management.” In C. M. Pearson, C. Roux-Dufort, and J. A. Claire (Eds.), *International Handbook of Organizational Crisis Management* (pp. 221–252). 2007 Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

⁴⁷⁶ The court action was a request by a new community organization created and funded by local community members to challenge the legal process used to dispose the land. The action was dropped when the group effectively ran out of money when the action was opposed by both the COE, who sold the land, and the developers, who had acquired the land.

An Historical Institutional (HI) approach was adopted to provide an analytical lens focussed on the “collectively enforced expectations with respect to the behaviour of specific categories of actors or to the performance of certain activities” in this case related to the land use and parks institution. The purpose of this chapter was to explore if using the Edmonton case study documents and interviews “actual” path dependency related to property, infrastructure, and governance institutions described previously by Sorensen by identifying path creation mechanisms and critical junctures that occurred over the 1960 to 2010 period. In addition it also revealed some additional consistencies with Historical Institutionalism.

5.7.1 Path Branching

The main but not exclusive path-creating tool for the governance institution is legislation (the *MGA*) that defines and gives power to municipal governments. In the land use planning institution, the most common path-creating tools are the area plans. The main parks institution path-creating tools are master plans, policies, and funding arrangements that define how social actors will engage in development, programming, and maintenance of park lands once the park site(s) have been created. A complete list of path-creating documents is included in Appendix J.

The import of the above-noted path or branch-creating documents is that they individually and collectively mobilize action within institutions. In the land use planning institution, area plans mobilize economic actors to develop plans of subdivision, zoning amendments, engineering drawings, and servicing agreements to create infrastructural space. Similarly, in the parks institution, park master plans, policies, and funding agreements act to individually and collectively mobilize community social actors to create the landscapes desired by the community to create infrastructural place. Adding more policies or plans into

these three institutions and their confusing assemblage of existing overlapping documents may be counter-productive or, at best, add more complexity. State actors should look to consolidate and simplify strategies and policies and provide clarity around how to mediate between competing documents.

5.7.2 Critical Junctures

Arguably, the single most important institutional shape or path-creating process, identified as critical junctures in this chapter, all relate to the importance of economics in some way, shape, or form, especially where change-orientated economically driven political actors are available. The underlying narrative of the first era or the first path branching of more socially derived planning outcomes has been replaced by an economics narrative; this has led to reductions in the public realm experienced in other jurisdictions. This economically focussed narrative results in what I call neo-nimbyism, whereby development-orientated elected officials view assembled open space as a problem to be solved, if not as an object of their desires.

There was also evidence that institutions can change outside of critical junctures, which effectively acted to pre-configure future changes. The recreational interests and needs of the community evolved and grew over time. Examples include interest in protecting natural landscapes, revised approaches to service delivery (i.e., educational “programs of choice”, twin versus stand-alone arenas, community gardens, larger school building footprints). In a similar way housing needs and approaches have evolved in the same time period. The City was increasingly relying on community actors supported by expanding shared park development funds, which also meant the community developed a change perspective in perceived ownership. This move towards greater ownership was a deliberate outcome of elected officials and administrators. In a similar evolutionary way over the same time period,

housing needs changed. There was a trend towards more dense and multi-use development. These competing and changing needs were largely seen as incremental in nature, but undergirded the surplus schools discourse when they occurred.

On a more micro level, there was evidence of change from both the elected officials and the community in the periods before critical junctures as shown in some of the parks public discourse dialogues that pre-configured critical junctures or institutionalizations. Elected officials in the late 1990s began questioning the *GoA* about the appropriate land use for unbuilt school sites, while not discussing the issue with *EFCL*. This was out of step with past processes and practices, nevertheless the dialogues picked up again in 2004. Second, the Administration re-aligned land management roles and responsibilities that effectively led to the 2006 process (or lack thereof) when previously institutional actors were sidelined and silenced. Third, the 2006 adopted process was not adopted in 2009 due to the pushback from the community with respect to lack of public notice and public hearings.

5.7.3 Co-Evolutionary Institutions

Finally, the changing paths of the parks and land use planning institution exhibited co-evolutionary characteristics. The community role and engagement in service delivery (i.e., funding, programming, and maintenance) was enhanced in the 1980s and beyond as the *COE* could not afford to fund the amenities at pace of development that was occurring. This also later led to an increase in the community role in decision-making in surplus school site review processes, that was accommodated in the land use change processes from 1994 to 2006. When this role was unilaterally changed in 2006, it was effectuated in both the land use change process and in the discontinuation of the surplus school review process (i.e., a forced quit).

Finally, from a theoretical perspective, the Edmonton case study provides a nuanced description of the parks institution, which is a subset of Sorensen's infrastructural institution. The parks institution is unique from other infrastructure (i.e., roadways, utilities) in two important aspects: parks are significantly funded by community social actors and people connect to their park spaces as park places. It is in this sense that this case study adds to the development of institutional theory and provides an alternate lens to assess the impact of capital development on public lands using the economic metrics described in the previous paragraph. Disrupting past approaches to parks infrastructure development and operations creates disconnects between community social actors and state actors and could lead to reduced participation from the community in the future. Disruptions of past paths and practices are not inherently problematic, but their impacts should be considered in designing processes.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

This dissertation investigated an assemblage of social actors, termed social institutions, engaged in land use and park place creation processes in the 1960 to 2010 period. The case study defined social actors, described how they engaged in park lands decision. The case study tracked how the institutions evolved and what mobilized the social institutions to act and the actions they took inside and outside administratively managed technical processes. Those community social actors and state actors had a dynamic relationship that evolved over time, each influencing the others actions. This analysis was completed using a case study approach of two neighbourhoods (Blue Quill and Greenview) using two institutional lens: strategic relational institutionalist (SRI) perspective and a Historical Institutional (HI) perspective. The research provides a practitioner-influenced scholarly lens to describe how park systems are created, managed, programmed, and maintained. The quote below speaks to the essence of this dissertation.

The term ‘spatial planning system’ (land use planning system) refers to the capacity of a system of rules, competences and practices to steer spatial dynamics and implies a specific technical dimension. However, the connection with a range of socio-cultural aspects, for example, economic development and welfare regimes, together with the complexity of society and its shared values and the interaction between public and private spheres (parks institution), make its definition less sharp and obvious. In this light, the interrelation of spatial planning systems and society becomes crucial for the analysis and comparison of spatial planning systems.⁴⁷⁷

The 1960-2010 period in Edmonton was a time of sustained urban growth. This growth necessitated the conversion of farm lands and natural landscapes into urbanized landscapes (e.g., roads, residential, commercial, and industrial) with parks, schools, and

⁴⁷⁷ Loris Antonio Servillo and Pieter Van den Broeck, “The Social Construction of Planning Systems: A Strategic-Relational Institutional Approach,” *Planning Practice and Research* 27, no. 1 (2012): 41-61, doi: 10.1080/02697459.2012.661179.

institutional uses provided supporting the new developments. Low-density automobile-orientated development dominated early in this period, with a push for higher-density development later in the time period. Public-funded school provision was the main form of elementary education provided by the public, Catholic, and later, Francophone school boards. The timing and form of development was largely contingent on economic and political cycles and realities of the day.

The public park spaces were created in the 1970s in the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and *Mill Woods Development Concept* were the primary path-creating tools or mechanisms but, in and of themselves, did not alone socially “produce” the neighbourhoods. These two plan areas benefited from the expansive park notions of the plans approved in that era expressed in park master plans and articulated in the area plans. Place-creation activities on public park lands occurred in the parks institution that began in the mid 1980’s and continues to this day. Community social actors were integral in that process in terms of construction, programming, and maintenance, as well as park lands disposition decision-making. In the 2000’s elected officials became determined to re-purpose lands held initially for school building envelopes into privately owned residential development, through an opaque process that disengaged community actors. Ultimately, what this study found was that land use and park planning processes were the products of engagement between social actors not limited to government entities, but certainly leaving those government entities in privileged positions for determining the future or fate of public park lands in Edmonton. This ultimately gave them opportunity to act in ways contrary to previously approved policy and plans.

The salient contributions of this dissertation include explorations on the following topics: institutions, society and parks, institutional planes, park discursal practices and

nuances; legislation, policy, and funding programs as mobilizing tools; a park system as a system of relational programs; and parks as infrastructure. Each will be discussed in turn, with some final thoughts on reflections on methodologies employed and final dissertation recommendations.

6.1 Institutions, Society and Parks

Land use planning should not be viewed solely as a formal government institutional process where applications are received; reviewed by administrators based on approved policies, strategies, and plans; and approved by elected officials after input from the community.

Chapter 3 and 4, using Social Relational Institutional (SRI) theory, defines decision-making in planning processes in much broader terms. Urban planning application review processes are, in fact, embedded in institutional fields. There are multiple stakeholders, inside and outside government, with unequal levels of power, who combine to make decisions at any one point in time. The key point to understand is that those participants create and share information between them and then react to that information and reform their actions over time. Van den Broeck (2011),⁴⁷⁸ Servillo and Van den Broeck (2012),⁴⁷⁹ and Jessop (2002)⁴⁸⁰ refer to this as “reflexively recursively dialectical.” In this sense, a planning process, such as a land use change process and a parks planning process, is part of the institutional field and itself is open

⁴⁷⁸ Pieter Van den Broeck, “Analyzing Social Innovation Through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach,” In *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for Change*, 52-78 by Stijn Oosterlynck, Jef Van den Broeck, Louis Albrechts, Frank Moulaert and Ann Verhetsel, 2011. New York; Routledge.

⁴⁷⁹ Servillo and Van den Broeck, 41-61.

⁴⁸⁰ Bob Jessop, “Institutional (re) turns and the Strategic Relational Approach,” *Environment and Planning A*, 33 (2001): 1213-1235, doi: 10.1068/a32813.

to institutionalization; processes can and will change over time based on the actions of social actors.

The Edmonton case study identified two parallel institutions, the land use institution and the parks institution, and tracked how each impacted the other in both physical form and substance (i.e., construction, programming, and maintenance). The “space” of parks and park systems was created in the land use institution, while the “place” was created in the parks institution. The parks institution itself was a reaction to the inability of the land use institution to physically create “places.” Land use change processes conceptualize the vision for place, but the actual creation takes place through social interactions between multiple social actors over time. This represents the very definition of institutionalism, in which the institutions themselves as entities react to each other beyond the individual and group actor reactions. The interactions were analyzed and revealed three eras closely tied to economic and political realities and trends of the day. These eras were seen to be preconfigured or grounded in previous park and planning institutions dating back as far as the turn of the 20th century.

Another important finding of the Edmonton case study was that institutional change is not limited to formal institutional actions or priorities. Once again, this is consistent with the theoretical perspectives of Van Den Broeck (2011)⁴⁸¹ and Healey (1999).⁴⁸² Community social actors did have the ability to exert their influence and enact change with their

⁴⁸¹ Pieter Van den Broeck, “Analyzing Social Innovation Through Planning Instruments: A Strategic Relational Approach,” In *Strategic Spatial Projects: Catalysts for Change*, 52-78 by Stijn Oosterlynck, Jef Van den Broeck, Louis Albrechts, Frank Moulaert and Ann Verhetsel, 2011. New York; Routledge.

⁴⁸² Patsy Healey, “Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places,” *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 19 (1999): 111-121, Retrieved from journals.sagepub.com/home/jpe.

government leaders, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, which materially changed the land use planning institution process decision-making. However, it is also fair to say that economics seemed to be the primary trigger for institutional change in the 1980s, initiated by the community, and in the 2000s, initiated by elected officials. This finding brings interesting nuance to the cliché “follow the money.”

A contribution of this case study is that it tracks the development of a park system through the experiences of two neighbourhoods over an extended period of time; this was an area empirically understudied. There are literature realms that talk about park systems as entities and their relative importance (McFarland 1970; Hodge 1985; Duempelmann 2013),⁴⁸³ but this study tracked the contemporary development of a park system. In short, it studied how these systems were created and animated. A somewhat comparable Canadian study appeared in the *Urban History Review* by William C. McKee (1979)⁴⁸⁴ that followed the acquisition of the park system in Vancouver, but with much less focus on how the spaces were designed, constructed, or programmed. This latter limitation of the McKee analysis is the import of this case study as it connects land use planning to park planning through analysis of their respective social institutions.

What the case study also provides is an opportunity to “reverse engineer” an analysis of a park or park system. In other words, you may not be aware of the history of acquisition of

⁴⁸³ Elsie McFarland, *The Development of Public Recreation in Canada*. Toronto, Canada Parks and Recreation Association. 1970; Gerald Hodge, “The Roots of Canadian Planning,” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 5, no. 1 (1985): 8-22; Sonja Duempelmann, “Creating order with nature: transatlantic transfer of ideas in park system planning in twentieth-century Washington D.C., Chicago, Berlin and Rome,” *Planning Perspectives* 24, no. 2 (April 2009): 143-173.

⁴⁸⁴ William C. McKee, “The Vancouver Park System, 1886-1929: A Product of Local Businessman.” *Urban History Review* 2, no. 1 (1979): 33-49.

the park system, but the analysis may encourage you to ask broader questions about the park program, scale, users, and social actors engaged in processes to inform decision-making. There is a substantial amount of planning literature devoted entirely to how social actors should be engaged in process.

6.2 Institutional Planes

All three chapters have described in different ways how property/land use and parks/infrastructure institutions operated in parallel universes and intersected at different points in time. A key contribution of this dissertation is the notion that 2006 and 2009 land use change processes were deliberately disconnected from the park institution despite a policy regime that would have achieved the same outcome. The governance institution identified by Sorensen (2018)⁴⁸⁵ was arguably out of sync, which resulted in an institutional collision between the property and infrastructural institutions. These two institutions' ancestral DNA go back to the turn of the 1900s when urban planning and urban parks had a shared beginning in evolutionary processes that continue today. The graphic describing the two intersections and planes was previously shown in Chapter 3, Figure 3-5. Sorensen's three-legged institutional model (i.e., governance, infrastructure, property) needs a fourth pillar: community and societal settings.

6.3 Park Discoursal Practices and Nuances

This dissertation revealed two fundamental issues with respect to how functional parks-related knowledge is created—through the words themselves and the experts/speakers disseminating

⁴⁸⁵ Andre Sorensen, "Institutions and Urban Space: Land, Infrastructure, and Governance in the Production of Urban Property." *Planning Theory & Practice* 19, no. 1 (2018): 21-38. doi: 10.1080/14649357.2017.1408136.

knowledge. Park institutional knowledge creation by its nature is very nuanced, beyond technical or legal terminology. I would argue it has roots in park and place-creation history, legislation, and practices specific to the park function. Two examples noted previously were the description of the land being surplus as school lands, not park lands, and the notion that the lands were simply acquired for public purposes. These messages were provided by non-park administrators or elected officials and both examples failed to discuss the implications of the *Joint Use Agreement* and *Municipal Government Act*; the descriptions provided were at times ambiguous, inaccurate, or incomplete. More fundamentally, the looser interpretations in 2006 and 2009 were offensive to park practitioners because it was those nuances that were the basis of decision-making. The land use planning institutional actors re-interpreted the park institutional terminology in the terms of the former institution. Empowered administrative social actors of the day created a unitary formal institutional language that was shared with the public, who then had to interpret what they heard with their own knowledge, experience, and life circumstances. Internally, that discourse is then enforced on city staff, creating ethical dilemmas for some through the appointment of public information gatekeepers.

All of this has resonance with Tuen van Dijk's (1993)⁴⁸⁶ work on critical discourse and his description of manipulation. The fact that a unitary institutional language was adopted to affect an outcome is not alone evidence of manipulation. It would rise to that level if the intent was to impose an outcome to privilege a group or entity (Van Dijk 2006),⁴⁸⁷ rather than simply to prioritize an outcome. The case study revealed that the former, imposing a desired

⁴⁸⁶ Tuen A. Van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis," *Discourse and Society* 4, no. 2 (1993): 249-283.

⁴⁸⁷ Tuen A. Van Dijk, "Discourse and Manipulation," *Discourse and Society* 17, no. 3 (2006): 359-383, doi: 10.1177/0957926506060250.

political outcome, was the goal of political actors and not the more publicly stated goal of addressing a housing imperative. This case study found that if elected officials followed their own values and premises engaging the community, they could have politically argued successfully that they were responding to the needs of a pluralistic society (Selden, Brewer and Brudny 1999; Overeem and Verheof 2015).⁴⁸⁸ Manipulation of the discourse was simply unnecessary.

6.4 Legislation, Policy and Funding Programs as Mobilizing Tools *and* Sources of Institutional Knowledge

Legislation, strategies, policies, practices, and legal agreements provide a road map for the development of an urban landscape. Once a group of landowners desire land use change, the above tools are triggered to create that urban landscape. For example, while legislation provides 10% of the gross developable area for parks, a farmer will not subdivide his land to provide a park, nor is any park lands needed at that time. He seeks to subdivide his land to derive economic profits, which is his mobilizing factor, and the provision of land for parks is part of his “cost of doing business.” Parks are a reaction to economic activity. The subdivision of land for a park was a means to an end, not the end itself. Creating more development and less park lands seems counter-intuitive unless case-specific settings are explored.

Path dependency in the land use planning institution for parks is seen in this case study in a more passive context. Development of the urban landscape follows legislation and an economic path but the *MGA* only makes accommodation for park space creation, not

⁴⁸⁸ Sally Coleman Selden, Gene A. Brewer and Jeffery L. Brudney, “Reconciling Competing Values in Public Administration: Understanding the Administrative Role Concept,” *Administration and Society* 31 (1999): 171-196. Retrieved from <http://journals.sagepub.com/>; Patrick Overeem and Jelle Verheof. “Value Pluralism and the Usefulness of Philosophical Theory for Public Administration,” *Administration and Society* 47, no. 9 (2015): 1103-1109, doi: 10.1177/0095399715598345.

development, and in this sense is considered passive. Absent of policies, funding agreements, and facilitative staff, park lands would remain dirt or grassy areas. Programming and animation of spaces requires active financial incentivization and outreach to the community to transform spaces into places with and for them. As Jane Jacobs has said, provision of land is not a guarantee of park benefit to the community—programming matters.⁴⁸⁹ This kind of activation does not happen naturally unless mobilizing animation tools such as policies and funding agreements are created. This is unlike any other form of urban infrastructure such as utilities or roadways

6.5 A “Park System” as a “System of Relational Programs”

Institutional theory allowed a description of decision-making that revealed categories and sets of social actors. Community park social actors can be further subdivided by type, each with their own group of social actors, and each may be attached to different park amenities. For example, minor sport organization volunteers who work as team managers, coaches, or other types of facilitators (e.g., jersey washers, food providers for children’s games, drivers) may have a particular connection to field sports, as might adult slow pitch users. The facilities (e.g., outdoor sports fields or indoor soccer fields) will connect those populations to those amenities. This is true for minor sports, playgrounds, community gardens, etc. All of these amenities are planned on a system basis.

What this finding points to is that, in Edmonton, a park or park systems should not be seen as an “entity” reflected by individual land title(s) but rather as a system of overlapping relational educational, recreational, ecological, and social programs whose impact boundaries

⁴⁸⁹ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Toronto, Ontario, Random House. 1961.

are not defined by property lines or neighbourhood boundaries; programs extend beyond the park and into the community writ large. This notion of parks as a social service dated back to the *1970-1980 Parks Master Plan*. In this sense, this dissertation confirms the conceptualization by Servillo and Van Den Broeck (2012)⁴⁹⁰ of parks as relational spaces rather than container spaces that is scaled up further as a park system.

A key contribution of this case study is that it tracks the development of a park system through the experiences of two neighbourhoods over an extended period of time; this was an area empirically understudied. There are literature realms that talk about park systems as entities and their relative importance (McFarland 1970; Hodge 1985; Duempelmann 2013),⁴⁹¹ but this study tracked the contemporary development of a park system. In short, it studied how these systems were created and animated. A somewhat comparable Canadian study appeared in the *Urban History Review* by William C. McKee (1979)⁴⁹² that followed the acquisition of the park system in Vancouver, but with much less focus on how the spaces were designed, constructed, or programmed. This latter limitation of the McKee analysis is the import of this case study as it connects land use planning to park planning through analysis of their respective social institutions.

⁴⁹⁰ Servillo and Van den Broeck. 41-61.

⁴⁹¹ Elsie McFarland, *The Development of Public Recreation in Canada*. Toronto, Canada Parks and Recreation Association. 1970; Gerald Hodge, "The Roots of Canadian Planning," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 5, no. 1 (1985): 8-22; Sonja Duempelmann, "Creating order with nature: transatlantic transfer of ideas in park system planning in twentieth-century Washington D.C., Chicago, Berlin and Rome," *Planning Perspectives* 24, no. 2 (April 2009): 143-173.

⁴⁹² William C. McKee, "The Vancouver Park System, 1886-1929: A Product of Local Businessman." *Urban History Review* 2, no. 1 (1979): 33-49.

What the case study also provides is an opportunity to “reverse engineer” an analysis of a park or park system. In other words, you may not be aware of the history of acquisition of the park system, but the analysis may encourage you to ask broader questions about the park program, scale, users, and social actors engaged in processes to inform decision-making. There is a substantial amount of planning literature devoted entirely to how social actors should be engaged in process.

6.6 Parks as Unique Municipal Infrastructure

The parks infrastructure is either a unique subset of the broader institutional infrastructure category or, arguably, could be a separate category of infrastructure – community funded or social infrastructure. Inclusion in the broader category underplays the unique funding relationship municipalities have with park infrastructure. Studies have shown that there is an increasing reliance on others to fund park amenities such as playgrounds, recreation facilities, and community gardens (Mowen and Kerstetter 2006; Harnik and Crompton 2014).⁴⁹³ Not only that, but parks departments across North America rely upon volunteer resources to program or animate parks (e.g., festivals, minor sport programs, etc.). Inclusion in the broader category also does not reflect the ecological and health benefits for society of the parks infrastructure. My reading of Sorensen (2017) would suggest park infrastructure was inappropriately lumped in with roadways and gas, power, water, waste and storm sewer infrastructure which serve utilitarian and facilitative functions. Another way to think about this is that roadways and utility functions are a means to an end (i.e., to facilitate

⁴⁹³ Andrew J. Mowen and Deborah L. Kerstetter, “Introductory Comments to the Special Issue on Partnerships: Partnership Advances and Challenges Facing the Park and Recreation Profession,” *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration* 24, no. 1 (2006): 1-6; Peter Harnik Peter and John Crompton, “Measuring the Total Economic Value of a Park System to a Community,” *Managing Leisure* 19 (2014): 188-211, doi: 10.1080/13606719.2014.885713.

development), while park lands are ends in themselves (i.e., a response to development). In short, this dissertation provides a nuanced conceptualization of Sorensen's infrastructure institution.

In Alberta, throughout the study period, parks were given a unique categorization in provincial legislation. Landowners are required to provide parks to a municipality to create more livable environments generated by externalities of residential, commercial, industrial, and roadways. That gift comes in the form of municipal reserve dedications at no cost to the municipality. Once land is designated as park lands, the land title itself has a reserve or "r" designation. If used for any other purpose, the reserve designation must be removed and include a public review process (i.e., public notification, public hearing) where community members have the opportunity to speak directly to decision-makers in a public setting prior to disposition.

Similarly, special status was referenced recently by Sarah Feldman (2018)⁴⁹⁴ in her dissertation on how parks are valued. She described parks as a special category of real estate, valued with sentiment and meaning beyond the exchange value; this is the reason for their special designation. What this suggests is that, in other jurisdictions, researchers and other social actors concerned with the potential loss of the public realm need to understand both legislation and history and challenge proponents on a philosophical level. It might also be time to have a public discourse around the ownership of parks (municipality or community) and the processes used to dispose of it when necessary. This notion is supported by a quote from Blomley (2017a):

Contemporary planning's fixation with land use obscures its necessary examination of

⁴⁹⁴ Sarah Feldman, "A Reconsideration of the Justifying Values of Public Parkland," PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2018. ProQuest Number 10745974.

property. The problem with land use, he argued, is its presumptive neutrality and functionality. Land use asks a functional, spatial question: Where do things belong? To ask this, however, is to sanitize the more salient question: To whom do things belong? “Where things belong,” Krueckeberg argued, “cannot be answered justly until we know whose things we are talking about.”⁴⁹⁵

6.7 Institutional Methodological Reflections

Institutional theory was chosen as the primary theory to evaluate how park systems are created and operate within a broader institutional and societal setting. Institutional theories made sense because, upon reflection, I lived and worked in a formal institution as a practitioner whose underlying philosophical perspectives were being heavily influenced by non-state social actors. In many ways, it felt very comfortable, compatible, and something I could use to reflect upon my practitioner actions as both positive and negative. As such, it was a self-reflective tool.

An alternative approach could have been Grounded theory (GT), which is a more deductive approach that seeks to create or contribute to theories by collecting and reflecting on the data derived. My interest in this study was not focused on building theory but in understanding how something happened. My interest was in developing a more detailed description of what happened, which made GT less attractive for me to use as an approach.

One of the issues at play throughout my interpretation of data was my ability to declare whether my findings established causality or simply alignment with other factors. Causality assumes that the cause is partially responsible for the effect, and the effect is partially responsible for the cause. For example, was the creation of the *NPDP* a direct result of a worsening economy, the rise of neoliberalized government policy, the communities’

⁴⁹⁵Nicholas Blomley, “Land Use, Planning, and the ‘Difficult Character of Property,’” *Planning Theory and Practice* 18, no. 3 (2017a): 351-364. doi: 10.1080/14649357.2016.1179336.

impatience with elected officials to provide park amenities, simply happened at the same time, or possibly all four? My interpretation of the data is subjective as well, as my experiences and biases both help and hinder me, consciously or subconsciously. My findings represent more “alignment” than “causative” outcomes due to the volume of data and interpretation involved.

The development of this dissertation was a journey, rather than a destination. It felt like playing a childhood game called “Twister.” My practitioner lens allowed me to keep one foot anchored in planning and another foot in recreation and leisure planning. Still yet another appendage was anchored in academic-orientated research and a fourth in my personal, professional, and ethical perspectives and biases. At its conclusion, I needed both physical therapy and a mental break.

Finally, studying a park within a broader park system over time was a complex and massive task, but my practitioner background gave me a unique opportunity to look more holistically at a park system. PhD studies are often described as an inch wide and a mile deep. I struggled with this notion throughout this study. My reflection now is that this dissertation allows a broad framework for others to contextualize their own park system related research.

6.8 Study Limitations

Adopting relativism and social constructionism as my ontology and epistemology, respectively, allowed me to take advantage of my twenty-nine years of parks practice, but doing so also means that my outcomes could be criticized as biased. However, all researchers carry a bias with them. I used triangulation, reflexivity, and member checking to enhance the integrity of my research. On balance, my practitioner experience provided a lens I believe would be difficult to replicate for non-practitioners.

The use of institutionalism as a theory was selected to provide a framework to understand change. There are multiple types of institutionalism, each with their own nuance. Despite being considered a valuable theory, Historical Institutionalism has been criticized by some for being too focussed on government institutions (Anyebe 2018). The relationship between an administration and a policy itself is not well interrogated. However, the addition of SRI perspective allows us to think beyond government walls, and my application dealt specifically with understanding the perspectives of departments and sub-departments, as well as the perspectives within and between social actors inside and outside the walls of government (i.e., the park institution).

The policy framework was integral to the definition of the three eras identified, whereas the interviews largely spoke to the 2000s time period, Era III, with the exceptions of park lands planners and community recreation planners (or CRCs). In other words, the data was richer in this period.

An important variable in study design is the governmental institutional structures in place that manage park site identification, acquisition, construction, programming, and maintenance. This analysis is unique to parks service delivery over time in Edmonton. The structure creates unique roles and responsibilities for action with actors with or without knowledge of park institutions. I could not control for this kind of variable.

This study was focussed on social actor engagement in processes and not on planning standards per se (i.e., number of hectares per site or neighbourhood). In Edmonton, school and park sites are planned and developed based on program needs (fields, schools, playgrounds, community gardens, community halls) serving multiple neighbourhoods that together result in a quantitative and qualitative standard unique to each neighbourhood. Therefore, reliance on a

simple quantitative standard to determine surplus status reveals little about need and may make comparison between municipalities difficult, depending on their approaches to determining park lands adequacy. To draw a housing analogy, simply knowing the average cost of housing does not alone speak to housing affordability.

Chapter 7: Recommendations

As a long time practitioner the underlying problem inherent in urban and parks planning is a lack of meaningful public input into public decision-making, thereby privileging some participants over others. Public processes should be designed to open up public dialogues and discourse, not expedite decision-making.

My biases would suggest that legislation in Alberta needs to be modified to protect public lands from the whims or biases of elected officials or senior administrators. However making this suggestion, I would simply be replacing their biases with my own. I would instead recommend a broader inclusive public discourse about the role, benefits, and outcomes of public lands in municipal settings to support the creation of healthy communities. The discourse cannot or should not emanate from government organizations alone. A grassroots approach should be crafted from like-minded community individuals and groups. My research suggests that some of those who have been involved in the past were university actors (i.e., *URGE*). A coalition of university researchers and community nongovernmental organizations could be formed to begin the dialogue. A coordinated social media campaign targeting millennials would be a good starting point. The following recommendations would promote the above noted outcomes.

7.1 Parks Institutional Resources: Document and Store Parks Historical Institutional Materials Local NGO's (*Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, Edmonton and Area Land Trust, Sierra Club, Minor Sport Organizations, Edmonton Community Foundation, and others*) with the support of the *City of Edmonton (COE)* should undertake a three study to quantify

financial and qualitative quality of life contributions to Edmonton residents articulated on a multi-scalar manner (e.g., neighbourhood, district, city, region, provincially).

The above study, this dissertation and other park plans, studies, strategies, etc referred to in this dissertation should be collected and housed at the University of Alberta Library or *COE Archives* for future use and dissemination by other researchers, politicians and community actors.

7.2 Broaden Social Actor Engagement in Parks Related Discourses

Recognizing the contributions of non-state actors in parks system delivery, the inclusion of additional community social actors on the *JUA* Steering and Land Committees would ensure greater surveillance and public discourse of land practices related to school and park land inventory. It may also act as a bridge to support broader community networks and institutional decision-making. Meeting minutes should be made public. NGO participants could include the *EFCL*, *Sierra Club*, *Edmonton Community Foundation*, *Edmonton and Area Land Trust*.

Development orientated NGO's (i.e., the Urban Development Institute) have had high level access to senior administrators throughout the study period. As development partners, access is not inherently problematic, but public policy should be developed to clarify and document routinized access to senior managers and documentation of meetings should occur and be publicized. If high level meetings continue, default invitations to meetings should be expanded to include community and school boards actors.

A bylaw could be crafted that clarifies the roles of NGO's in institutional decision-making, as well as public engagement more broadly. Adoption as a bylaw would provide an opportunity to provide legal remedy to flawed processes.

7.3 Rules and Structures: Add/Create a Community Visioning Session

Given the ineffectiveness of public hearings to create a shared *COE*, developer and community vision, after the application of a land use change application, administrators, NGO's and community residents should create a public visioning session that can feed both the administrative review and later the public hearing. A recent example could be the public visioning process undertaken by Oliver Community League for the Molson's Brewery Redevelopment Process. This would be required when the existing approved plans are being amended to something substantively different than before. Adding this process step would need to be fleshed out in more detail, and require amendment to the *MGA*, as well as resources to fund community facilitators.

7.4 Rules and Structures: Enhance Council Reporting

In parks and land use planning processes and associated institutions, the *MGA* can be applied in ways to either open up or close down democratic debate. The use of "in-camera" reports, FOIP challenges, planning/legal jargon in council reports, omnibus reporting, and lack of definition on information inclusions and exclusions in council reports in the Edmonton case study effectively shut down public debate in 2006, and left the 2009 process in an untenable political place to revisit the original flawed process adopted. Review of these aspects of council reporting can be undertaken by Edmonton City Council and needs no provincial approval, however, could be followed up by changes to the *MGA* itself.

If the above recommendations, it may not be necessary to create an appeal mechanism.

7.5 Rules and Structures: Establish a Public Lands Disposition Appeal Body

The purpose of this body would be to review the *integrity* of the decision-making process in terms of the following; how was the process initiated, by whom and who helped craft the

rationale, accuracy of information created and shared and not shared, community access to professional help , and the timing of the process. Membership would not be limited to members appointed by elected officials. This body would need to be fleshed out in detail, and would require amendment to the *MGA*

7.6 Areas of Future Study

Nine areas of future research are included to both build on the work of this dissertation and explore greater integration and knowledge dissemination between planning and leisure and recreation research and practice.

7.6.1. Molson's Brewery Redevelopment Analysis Using an Institutional Lens

This study would provide an Historical Institutional analysis of the redevelopment of an industrial heritage site in Edmonton that would be compared to the analysis provided in this dissertation. This would have the effect of comparing and contrasting the outcomes described previously with another socially valued landscape in Edmonton, and potentially identify a heritage institution in Edmonton. This paper is currently under preparation.

7.6.2 Reflections: Transitioning and Translating Between Practice and Academy

Given my background in both terms of practitioner tenure and role, I felt my best contribution to the academy would be to share and translate my personal background and experiences into empirical research, and then further translate that back into practice. This dissertation attempts to do that, but this paper will be a reflection on “how” that process actually occurred that produced this dissertation. It will hopefully guide future practitioners who transition into the academy, as well those who desire to transition from the academy into practice. In more

simple terms, the hope will be to contribute to building a bridge between the two worlds in the parks world. This paper is currently under preparation.

7.6.3 Locating and Collecting Park Policies: A Western Canadian Case Study of Edmonton, Calgary Winnipeg, Vancouver

A challenge for researchers is to locate and synthesize how diverse policy statements apply in a local setting. This was a challenge in this dissertation that required detailed local knowledge not always available to researchers not well grounded in municipal government practice. This study would undertake a similar qualitative park policy discovery process for multiple municipalities in different jurisdictions in Canada to look for similarities and differences, and guidelines for future researchers to explore other types of policies in other studies. Such a study would assist researchers, practitioners and community to craft fair and equitable planning processes, and make park information more accessible. This study could be leveraged in the future into other functional areas of service delivery (i.e., transportation, utility servicing) to provide assistance to municipal governments in designing web sites and accessible data bases for use by the community.

7.6.4 An Edmonton Case Study of School and Park Public Hearings and Public Engagement in Edmonton Alberta from 2016-2019

Chapter 4 explored how an institutionalization event occurred in 2006 and 2009 that included how public hearings engaged in contributing to decision-making, as one of a number of elements of public engagement processes. The study found the public hearings were not used as a means to vet ideas and develop collaborative in part because efforts were made to discourage or eliminate public engagement and discourse before and during the public hearings. This case study will build on the work of Kerrie Farkas (2013) to analyze how public hearings were utilized to develop and vet options to develop collaborative solutions and

decisions in Edmonton in 2016 to 2019 using a different analytical lens; critical discourse analysis. The public hearings chosen will be those that involve applications on school and park sites. This study will inform future legislative action to augment greater community engagement.

7.6.5 A Case Study of Leisure and Benefits Research Education in accredited Canadian Professional Planning Programs in Winter, Spring and Fall 2020 Terms

This dissertation explored how different administrative actors each who qualified as professional planners had divergent views of valuing parks (i.e., social, economic, ecological). This may be attributed in part to different worldviews, professional views, leisure knowledge or other factors. This study would be a comparative study of Canadian Institute of Planner accredited urban planning programs to identify the availability of leisure and recreation courses and course content analysis that inform future planners of park and leisure benefits research. It will document the availability of course work, topics covered, theoretical perspectives, primary instructor qualifications and backgrounds, and the number of students instructed. The outcome of this study could be used to inform future university planning program managers and the CIP in providing a diverse range of topics to train our future planners that they will inevitably face in the field in managing applications that impact or address leisure and recreation planning.

7.6.6 SRI Comparative Analysis of Parks Institutions in Calgary, Alberta

Using the analysis provided in Chapter 3, undertake a similar analysis that may reveal the Calgary parks institution, its similarities and differences. It may point to alternative ways to create, fund and operate parks and park systems using the same legislative base for comparison to the Chapter 3 findings. This could then be further leveraged in the future into

similar analysis in other legislative jurisdictions to understand how legislation and social actors collectively create urban parks and urban park systems.

7.6.7 A Cross Infrastructure Comparison of Funding of Municipal Infrastructures

Municipalities use a variety of funding and development mechanisms and approaches in order to provide amenities that services urban growth in new plan areas. Those sources and opportunities include developers, taxpayers, user fees, philanthropic donations, community generated funds, or combination thereof. This dissertation argued that park infrastructure is unique in Edmonton given the integral role of community in all aspects of park funding, design, construction, programming and maintenance on an on-going basis. This study will seek out to flesh out how roadways water, sewer, gas, internet and electrical services are similarly (or not) funded and sourced and provided on an on-going basis. The research could be used to inform future deliberative decision-making processes in municipal government settings and identify opportunities to leverage future opportunities for collaboration, both in parks and in other infrastructural settings.

7.6.8 Relational Spaces and Land Ownership: Alternative Concepts of Land Ownership for Publicly Valued Lands

This dissertation was analyzed based on current legislatively defined strictures (i.e., the *MGA*) of private property ownership and associated rights of euclidean space (i.e., three dimensional space in this case defined by property lines) in Alberta. Some researchers have explored concepts of broader socio-geographical space (Blomley 2006, 2008, 2017a and 2017b; Van Den Broeck 2011 and 2013). The opportunity of current legislation manipulation is provided provided exclusively to change motivated hegemonic political actors to sell publicly funded, programmed and maintained park lands with little or no public engagement. This exploration

could form the basis of an effort to inform provincial legislators refine concepts of public land ownership to ensure greater protection of land ownership beyond municipal administrative entities. Such a change may act as a foil to economically motivated elected officials to quietly dispose of socially valued landscapes.

7.6.9 An Historical Institutional Analysis of School Service Delivery in Edmonton, Alberta 1960-2010

This paper will document how school service delivery approaches in Edmonton have occurred that recognized the changing face of public and private education in the Province of Alberta. Changes in school practices, such as the inclusion of programs of choice (i.e., religious, pedagogical, sport, language, etc.), as well as the push for private schools to accommodate changing community needs has implications on the location of schools, transportation of students, the size of school footprints, the design of sites and school and park planning legislation. This paper will in effect be a deeper dive into the nuances of school and park planning from an educational perspective.

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Appendices

Supplementary Information and Data Points

Appendix A — Glossary of Terms

Area Plans / Structure Plans / Outline Plans

In Edmonton, area plans have had multiple names over time including an area structure plan, an outline plan, a development concept, a servicing concept design briefs neighbourhood area structure plans (, a neighbourhood structure plans or an area redevelopment plan. The following is an excerpt of what is included in area plans.

Area Structure Plans (ASPs) lay out an area's long-term development plan. ASPs generally cover areas of at least 200 hectares, unless Council specifies a smaller area, and provides a framework for the development of several neighbourhoods. These plans identify where residential, commercial, institutional and recreational development will be located and how essential municipal services such as water, sewer systems, arterial and collector roads, schools, parks and fire protection will be provided. These plans also estimate the number of people that are expected to live in the new area and how development will be staged over time.⁴⁹⁶

In this case study, the two City of Edmonton (COE) area plans under discussion are the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*⁴⁹⁷, whose area includes Blue Quill Neighbourhood, and the *Mill Woods Development Concept*⁴⁹⁸ whose area includes the Greenview Neighbourhood. In this case, the Outline Plans combine both ASPs and NSPs in a single document, which was the plan preparation approach of the day in the early 1970s. Both documents listed on the COE

⁴⁹⁶ “Plan Amendments,” COE, 2018,
https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/urban_planning_and_design/plan-amendments.aspx

⁴⁹⁷ “*Kaskitayo Outline Plan*,” COE, 2018,
https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/plans_in_effect/Kaskitayo_OP_Consolidation.pdf

⁴⁹⁸ “*Mill Woods Development Concept*,” COE, 2018,
https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/plans_in_effect/Mill_Woods_Development_Concept_Consolidation.pdf

web site are office consolidations, which means the original approvals have been modified over time. Original copies were found at the City of Edmonton Archives.

Community or Communities of Interest

Community refers to social networks that can extend beyond geographical boundaries, whereas a neighbourhood is defined by roadway boundaries. Minor sports⁴⁹⁹, community league, and school populations represent broader communities of interest that include but extend beyond a geographical neighbourhood boundary. For example, a school attracts students inside and outside of Blue Quill or Greenview neighbourhoods. Both St. Theresa Elementary School in Blue Quill and Greenview Public School are “language” programs of choice. Students attending junior high and high schools are typically located on district park sites. As a second example, the Blue Quill minor soccer program hosts games on sports fields in Blue Quill against teams from other neighbourhoods and travels to other neighbourhoods for “away” games, as well as plays games at the Kaskitayo District Park. Minor soccer is coordinated city-wide by the Edmonton and District Soccer Association operated by a group of volunteers.

Community Recreation Coordinators (CRCs)

CRCs are professional recreation practitioners who work with communities to provide park-related information, information referrals, organizational development, programming advice and coordination, and community advocacy. Their primary role during the time period of this study was working with communities on all school- and park lands-related issues of development, redevelopment, and programming, and acting as conduits to park lands planners and maintenance staff. A CRC was assigned to a small number of specific neighbourhoods

⁴⁹⁹ See definition of minor sports later.

and community leagues, as well as to broader leisure initiatives. CRCs were typically housed in a single department.

Elected Officials

There are three kinds of elected officials referenced in this study: municipal, school board, and provincial. Elected officials are government officials who are democratically elected to hold office by votes in their community. In Edmonton, municipal elected officials are elected in a four-year cycle on a predetermined ward area basis. There are currently 12 municipal councillors elected by ward and a mayor elected from voters across the city. There are also locally elected school board officials, again, organized on a ward basis. School board elected officials designate a school board chairperson from their members. Provincial elected officials are elected on a much larger geographical area basis than municipal or school board officials and are led by the leader of the political party that holds the most elected officials.

Institutionalism

The work of Patsy Healey (1999) defines the term is as follows.

The term institutionalism refers to the embedding of specific practices in a wider context of social relations that cuts across the landscapes of formal organizations, and to the active processes in which individuals in social contexts construct their ways of thinking and acting. It does not refer to the formal structures or procedures of public institutions as in the traditional public administration review. An institution, therefore, is not understood as an organization as such, but as an established way^[11] of addressing certain social issues, for example, in the relationships through which what we understand as family are^[11] produced and reproduced, or, on a more micro-scale, the ways in which people go about community organizing activities.”⁵⁰⁰

⁵⁰⁰ Patsy Healey, “Institutional Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places,” *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 19, (1999): 112-113, Retrieved from journals.sagepub.com/home/jpe

There are two types of institutionalism theory; old and new. This dissertation uses two forms of new institutionalisms; Sociological (SI) and Historical (HI).

Within new institutionalisms, each shares the following elements (Sorensen (2017):

First, institutions are sets of formal and informal rules that shape behaviour, have developed in different societies through specific historical processes. Second, the two share different origins and change processes. Third, each defines the role of power in institution creation and change, and the role of institutions in reinforcing or subverting power imbalances.⁵⁰¹

Sociological and Historical Institutionalisms are defined in more detail in the body of the dissertation.

Joint Use Agreement (or JUA)

The *JUA* was originally signed in 1959 between the city and EPSB and ECS boards and has evolved over time. Currently there is a Joint Use Steering Committee and two sub-committees: Land and Facilities. These committees do not include community representation.

The principles section of the land agreement, dated July 3, 2009, states that the school and park sites are cooperatively managed, costs shall be equitably shared, and resources shall be used for the maximum benefit of the community.⁵⁰² Similar statements are made in the facilities agreement. In practice, the agreement designates the city financially responsible for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of school and park sites with and for the community, as well as construction of all recreation facilities with and without partners. The

⁵⁰¹ Andre Sorensen, "New Institutionalism and Planning Theory," *New Institutionalism and Planning Theory from: The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory* Routledge (2017): 251-253.

⁵⁰² "Joint Use Agreement," COE, https://www.edmonton.ca/programs_services/for_communities/joint-use-agreement.aspx

school community then has access to greenspaces (e.g., fields, passive areas, natural areas). The *GoA* funds school construction based in part on local board priorities and funding availability, and local school boards program, operate, and maintain school facilities. The community has access to gymnasiums, classrooms, and parking lots at night, on weekends, and in the summer. The city books gymnasiums spaces for the boards.

Minor Sports

Minor sports refers to organized community run sport programs such as hockey, baseball, football, soccer, figure skating, ringette. These organizations run programs for children aged approximately 5 to 18 years of age, organized into house league or community play and elite level or travelling teams.

Municipal Development Plans (MDPs)

The following description is provided on the City of Edmonton web page that essentially describes the purpose of this superior strategic and policy plan adopted as a bylaw.⁵⁰³

The *Way We Grow*, Edmonton's Municipal Development Plan (MDP), is the City's strategic growth and development plan. It directs and shapes Edmonton's urban form over a 10-year period. The MDP provides policies and guidance to chart the course for Edmonton to evolve over time into a more compact, transit oriented, and sustainable city. The plan is closely integrated with the Transportation Master Plan to achieve more coordinated decision making between land use and transportation planning. The plan also includes a regional

⁵⁰³ "*Municipal Development Plan*," COE, 2018.

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/urban_planning_and_design/municipal-development-plan-mdp.aspx

component which addresses the coordination of future land use, growth patterns and transportation systems with Edmonton's neighbouring municipalities.

Terminology with respect to MDPs has evolved over time. In 1963, 1967, 1971, and 1980, the documents were called general plans. *Plan Edmonton*, the 1997 MDP, was approved in 1997 and was effectively in place when the 2006 surplus site review was undertaken. Edmonton city council approved *The Way We Grow* was in place for the 2009 surplus site reviews. In all cases, these documents provided broad policy direction and high-level mapping showing residential, industrial, and employment areas, major roadways, and the North Saskatchewan River valley.

Municipal Government Act (MGA)

The *MGA* is the *GoA*'s superior planning legislation that delegates land use planning authority to municipal governments. The preamble describes the role of municipalities and municipal elected officials:

WHEREAS Alberta's municipalities, governed by democratically elected officials, are established by the Province (*GoA*), and are empowered to provide responsible and accountable local governance in order to create and sustain safe and viable communities;

WHEREAS Alberta's municipalities play an important role in Alberta's economic, environmental and social prosperity today and in the future;

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of working together with Alberta's municipalities in a spirit of partnership to co-operatively and collaboratively advance the interests of Albertans generally; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta recognizes that Alberta's municipalities have varying interests and capacity levels that require flexible approaches to support local, inter-municipal and regional needs.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰⁴ *Municipal Government Act of Alberta, RSA 2000, CM-26, 2018*, <http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/m26.pdf>.

Part 17, Planning and Development, contains most of the planning guidance for municipalities.

Land Use Planning

The following definition is borrowed from Adejei-Poku (2018):

...land use planning is a process, often involving negotiations among stakeholders (especially in countries with plural land tenure system), leading to land use allocation decisions and implementation to ensure that not only the present public (generation) benefit but also the unborn generation. Land use planning (LUP) tends to apply rational methods in allocating land uses but in reality, it is shrouded in power relations due to its participatory nature in contemporary practice.⁵⁰⁵

Land Use Zoning (Edmonton)

Land use zoning classifies the type of development allowed on a parcel of land. Land uses are categorized, and subsequently subcategorized, as residential, commercial, industrial, urban services, agricultural, and direction control. There are multiple zones (noted below) that can apply to a school and park site.⁵⁰⁶

US - Urban Service Zone

- This zone provides the opportunity for publicly and privately owned facilities which provide institutional or community services.

PU - Public Utility Zone

- This zone provides the opportunity for a system or utilities that are used to benefit the public, such as water, sewage disposal, electric power, heating, waste management, drainage, public transportation and telecommunications.

AP - Public Parks Zone

- This zone provides the opportunity for an area of public land for recreational uses.

⁵⁰⁵ Bernard Adejei-Poku, "Rationality and Power in Land Use Planning: A Conceptual View of the Relationship." *Planning Literature*, 33, 1 (2018): 46, doi.org/10.1177/0885412217723616

⁵⁰⁶ "Land Use Zone Summary," COE, https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/urban_planning_and_design/land-use-zones-summary.aspx

NA - Natural Areas Protection Zone

- This zone provides the opportunity for the conservation, preservation and restoration of identified natural areas, features and ecological processes.

Community Services Zones

- The four Community Services Zones (CS1, CS2, CS3 and CS4) provide for relatively low to medium density housing generally referred to as row housing on lands that have become surplus to public education needs. In addition, each Community Services Zone has a distinct range of development opportunities.

The Community Services Zone is the zoning created specifically to accommodate use of surplus school sites for housing was applied in the initial school site surplus effort as well as subsequent efforts.

Municipal Reserve Lands

Municipal reserve lands are any lands dedicated as lands for school, recreation or buffering purposes acquired either through dedication by developers or acquired using reserve funds previously acquired as cash in lieu of (land) dedications.

Municipal Reserve (MR) Designation

A reserve designation often appears on land titles for parcels acquired through dedication from developers. It can also be retroactively applied to parcels either acquired using cash-in-lieu funds or acquired using taxpayer funds. The import of a reserve designation is that it requires a reserve designation removal process by City Council that includes public hearings.

By way of example, a park site may be an aggregate of 6 land parcels acquired through the subdivision process over time based on land ownership realities, some of them identified as a numbered lot (e.g., lot 3) and some with a reserve designation (e.g., lot 2MR). Once a park site has been totally assembled and school boundaries determined, often administrators

go back and consolidate the parcels together into a smaller number of parcels with reserve designations.

Neighbourhood

This term refers to a specific geographical area defined by roadways within a larger urban centre characterized by multiple or more frequent face-to-face social interactions and networks. Neighborhood names (e.g., Blue Quill, Greenview) are often identified in area plans.

Park Repurposing

In this dissertation, I use the term “park repurposing” to represent two types of plan amendments undertaken together: amendments to the *Land Use Zoning Bylaw* and area plan amendments (*Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and *Mill Woods Design Concept*). Together these two types of amendments changed the land use of the day (i.e., park lands) to another (i.e., housing).

Park lands/School Lands

Park lands are municipal reserve lands defined in *2006-2016 UPMP*⁵⁰⁷ as anything that is used for school, recreation and park purposes and buffering between uses, including Urban Services (US), A (Metropolitan Zone), AP (Public Parks Zone, and Natural Area Protection Zone (NA) as defined by park master plans and the land use bylaw. Schools are located on lands zoned US, or A or AP that typically occurs when the park site is developed, and prior to new school construction. As such all surplus school lands are park lands. The *JUA* reinforces this notion because school facilities are planned to provide recreational opportunities at night,

⁵⁰⁷ COE. *The Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*. 2006c Retrieved from: http://www.edmonton.cahttps://www.edmonton.ca/documents/PDF/UPMP_2006-2016_Final.pdf

on weekends and in the summer. Differentiating between park lands and school lands is a distinction without a difference.

Planner

The City of Edmonton has a professional “planning officer” series of functions, leveled from lowest to highest as Planning Officer I (Planning Officer) to II (Principal Planner) under Union 52 jurisdiction.⁵⁰⁸ Senior planners, directors, and managers are part of the *Civic Employees Management Association (CEMA)*. A typical educational background for a planner would include geography, urban studies, landscape architecture, and/or ecological sciences. Local planners are often part of the *Alberta Professional Planners Institute (APPI)*, a division of the Canadian Institute of Planners. *APPI* is the professional advocacy body that accredits planning programs, sets ethical standards for planners, and manages review and certification of individual planners. *APPI* establishes values for planners that include commitments to ethical practice, public engagement, the public interest, and fair and democratic process.⁵⁰⁹ Planners can be hired in a number of functional areas. Specific to this study there were park lands planners, land management planners, and land use planners; the latter manages the land use application process.

The role of park lands planners is to participate in the identification and acquisition of park lands in area plans, work with school boards in the implementation of the *JUA*, initiate zoning of school and park sites, participate in recreation need assessment processes, and

⁵⁰⁸ “CSU Union 52 Agreement,” COE, 2018, https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/jobs/collective-agreements.aspx

⁵⁰⁹ “APPI’s Values”, Alberta Professional Planners Institute, 2018, <https://www.albertaplanners.com//>

review proposed surplussing decisions, all in concert with school boards, community recreation coordinators and the community.

Program

A program refers to the activities and associated physical improvements accommodated on park lands. For example, a physical activity program may include participation in minor sports such as football, baseball, or soccer. The physical articulation of a minor sport program to accommodate those activities would be a sports field(s), sized and configured to user standards, located on a neighbourhood or district park site with other recreational amenities. A second example would be connection to nature and our natural environment. The physical articulation of that program may be retention of an existing grove of trees (e.g., Graunke Park in Weinloss neighbourhood) or a wetland, sized and configured based on the ecological needs of the landscape, or it may be the creation of a naturalized landscape. In both sport and nature examples, programs can be structured or unstructured where users can join clubs and groups in timed events or activities or arrive for casual experiences. Program also includes passive unstructured greenspace (e.g., grassy areas) separating activity areas (e.g., buffer areas) and/or act as breathing spaces for quiet contemplation and activities such as reading, sun tanning, playing games, etc.

School Boards

School boards are provincially recognized organizations that provide educational programming from kindergarten to grade 12. They represent multiple schools in defined geographic areas. There are three publicly funded school boards in Edmonton: the *Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB)*, the *Edmonton Catholic School Board (ECS)*, and the *Regional Authority of the Greater North Central Francophone Education Region No. 2 / Conseil*

Scolaire Centre-Nord (Francophone Board). All are partners with the city in the implementation of the *Joint Use Agreement*. The *MGA* gives each access to land for school development and educational programming in area development plan processes.

There are also private schools, sometimes called charter schools, operational in Edmonton who receive partial or full public funding. *EPSB* and *ECS* include under their umbrella versions of charter schools options called programs of choice (e.g., language, religious, sports, and pedagogical choices), which are fully publicly funded. Programs of choice and charter schools can attract students from across the city to the neighbourhood setting. There are some private schools, but they do not receive partial or no public funding depending on their commitment to provincial education standards. Stand-alone charter schools not receiving public funds have no connection to the *Joint Use Agreement*. Home schooling can also occur but must be done to meet educational standards approved by the *GoA*.

Social Actors

Process participants who engage in either land use change processes or parks related place creation activities in the community are defined as social actors and agents; the latter are people who act on behalf of others (i.e., community nongovernmental organizations). There are categories of social actors—elected officials, senior administrators, frontline administrators, community residents, community nongovernmental organizations (e.g., the *EFCL*, *individual community leagues under the umbrella of EFCL*, *Sierra Club*, *Edmonton Natural History Club*), developers, landowners, consultants, school board planners, and school board trustees. Individual actors within these categories may act in concert with or in opposition to others in their categories. Community actors may be residents who live immediately adjacent to park lands, live elsewhere within the neighbourhood, or live in other

neighbourhoods but use the schools, sportsfields, playgrounds, community gardens.

Community actors may also be grouped into communities of interest (e.g., minor hockey, baseball, football, soccer, community gardens).

Surplus Schools Initiative

This initiative is characterized as the following. Land previously planned, acquired and developed as land for school and recreational purposes, is held in trust by the COE, to accommodate new school facility construction. Until a new school is constructed, the land is developed as greenspace for community use, but remains a future school site. In 2006 and 2009, omnibus or group surplussing of these parcels was initiated by elected officials (i.e., twenty and nineteen parcels respectively). The surplus school site initiative redevelops the building envelopes for non-school or non-recreational purposes. Building envelope lands would have accommodated recreational programming in a new school with gymnasiums, classrooms and a school parking lot.

Surplus School Policy (council endorsed practice)⁵¹⁰

The surplus school policy required that lands considered surplus to educational need are reviewed by the city and community for continued use as park lands or sold for non-recreational purposes. This was a colloquial reference to a council endorsed administrative practice that required the city to consult with the community through a recreational need assessment prior to a park lands disposition decision is made. That need assessment required both a qualitative and quantitative recreational need assessment. It was not a formal city council approved policy, but the administrative practices endorsed by council and *EFCL* in

⁵¹⁰ “Surplus School Criteria – Guidelines for Determining the Adequacy of Neighbourhood Parkland,” COE, 1994.

1994. This dissertation uses the term surplus site policy because “surplus school site council endorse administrative practice” is cumbersome and in practice it functioned like a policy. This policy was effectively disappeared by elected officials with the 2006 in-camera council report without disclosure to the public except only through unilateral action

Appendix B —Theoretical Frame Summary

This table below provides a summary of different forms of institutionalism, defined as collective decision-making, based largely on the work of Andre Sorensen (2017).⁵¹¹ Sociological and Historical Institutionalism were utilized in this analysis.

Appendix B: Theoretical Frame Summary

	Rational Choice Institutionalism (Sorensen 2017)	Sociological Institutionalism Sorensen (2017) – Chapter 3	Historical Institutionalism (HI) Sorensen (2017) – Chapter 5
Origins	Institutional economics, rational choice political science	Organization theory in sociology	Political science and comparative historical social science -“the formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy” ⁵¹²
Definitions of Institutions	The formal and informal “rules of the game . . . the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction” ⁵¹³	“not just formal rules, procedures or norms, but the symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates that provide the ‘frames of meaning’ guiding	“the formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the

⁵¹¹ Andre Sorensen, “New Institutionalism and Planning Theory,” from *The Routledge Handbook of Planning Theory* ed. Michael Gunder, Ali Madnipour and Vanessa Watson, 23 August 2017. Abingdon: Routledge. Accessed 28 May 2019 <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315696072.ch20>

⁵¹² Peter A. Hall and R. C. R. Taylor, “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms,” *Political Studies* 44, no. 5 (1996): 938.

⁵¹³ Sorensen, “New Institutionalism and Planning Theory,” 938.

	Rational Choice Institutionalism (Sorensen 2017)	Sociological Institutionalism Sorensen (2017) – Chapter 3	Historical Institutionalism (HI) Sorensen (2017) – Chapter 5
		human action.” ⁵¹⁴	organizational structure of the polity or political economy” ⁵¹⁵
Main Characteristics of Institutions	Coordinating effects, providing certainty, information, and credible commitment	Shared understandings that shape action, and imagination	Distributional instruments that regulate social and political processes
Models of Institutional Change	Institutions change primarily in response to market forces, as rational actors adjust behavior, groups create institutions to overcome collective action problems	Institutions change slowly, as larger cultural and cognitive systems evolve incrementally	Punctuated equilibrium models of critical junctures and developmental pathways, and recent concepts of structured processes of endogenous change
Conceptions of structure and agency	Individual actors are self-interested agents, who sometimes devise collective rules to ensure cooperation	Social and cultural contexts and shared understandings provide settings for and shape agency	Institutions generated historically through political conflicts provide settings for and shape agency
Analysis of Power	Power is not a major focus of RI, which tends to see institutions as generating mutual benefits by facilitating cooperation and overcoming collective action problems	As institutions are so broadly defined, and change slowly, SI is less focused on overt political power than HI, and pays more attention to systemic and hegemonic power	Power is central to the analysis of institution formation and change. Institutions have major distributional impacts, so actors have incentives to mobilize to shape institutions
Adopted Frame	Not explored/applied	Social Relational Institutional perspective	Historical Institutionalism and Path Dependency

⁵¹⁴ Hall and Taylor, 947.

⁵¹⁵ Hall and Taylor, 938.

Source: Sorensen (2017, 253), adapted

Relevance to this Dissertation. The analyses uses sociological and Historical Institutionalism for the primary elements of the study as well as a Marxist conceptualization for a sub-set of the planning process decision-makings. As noted by Bird (2008),⁵¹⁶ each theoretical framework provides a frame that itself guide the outcome and results. Three types of institutional analysis was used to provide a more nuanced understanding of the data.

⁵¹⁶ Malcolm G. Bird, "The Rise of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario and the Demise of the Alberta Liquor Control Board: Why such Divergent Outcomes?" Order No. NR43886, Carleton University (Canada), 2008.
<http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/docview/304666919?accountid=14474>.

Appendix C — Bylaws

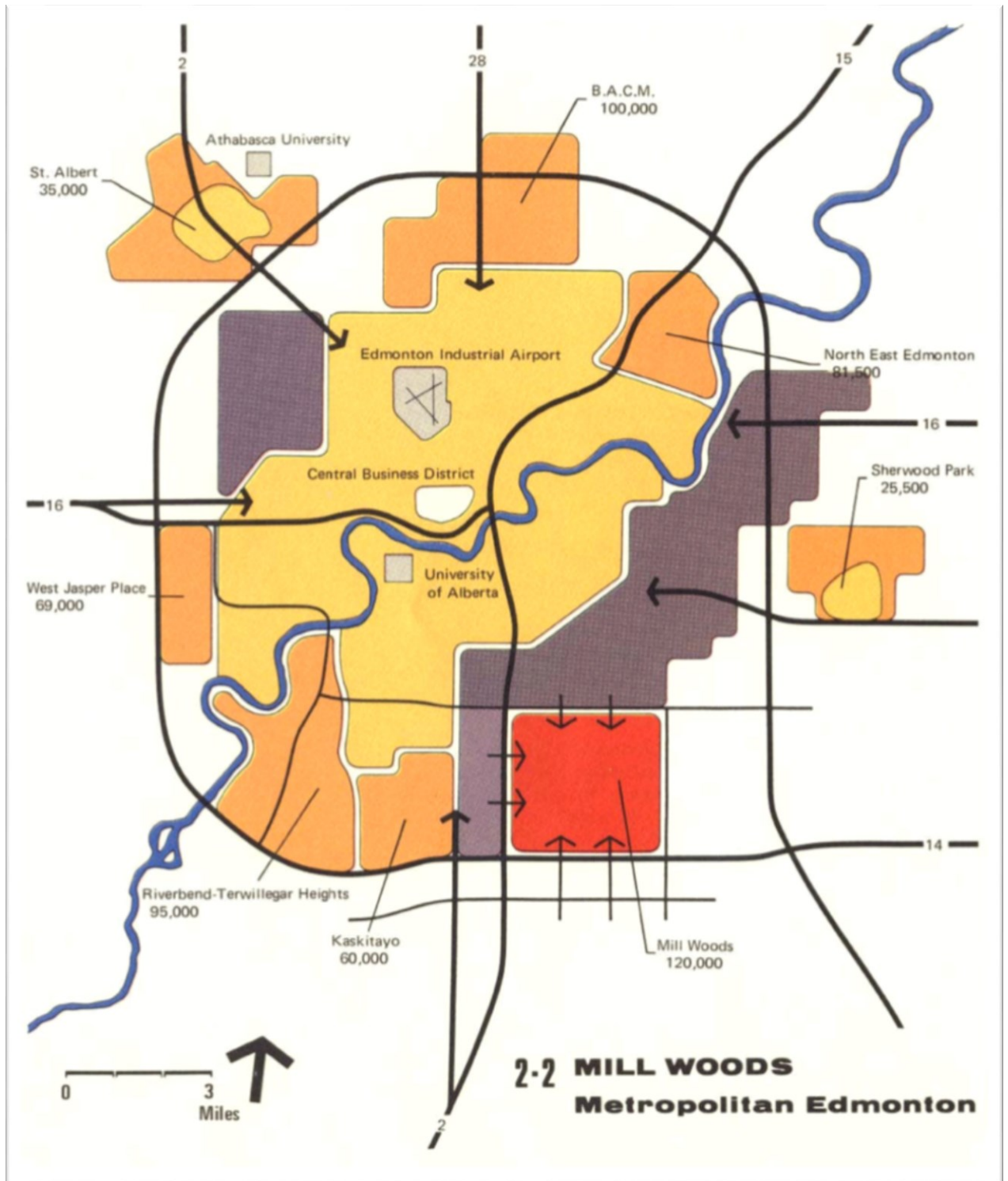
Below is a summary of key bylaws for this dissertation. Bylaws are legal documents approved by city council after public hearings. Changes to bylaws require public notice and public hearings. Key points are excerpted below.

C-1: Mill Woods Development Concept (March 1971)⁵¹⁷

This plan was the basis of the assembly of the Greenview School and Park site. This is a 64 page area plan approved as a Bylaw. This plan is unique as it covered a large area owned by the City of Edmonton assembled specifically to create a new community. Key points from plan sections are excerpted below from the original document. A map of the plan area is shown on the following page. The area shown in red is the Mill Woods area located in the south east portion of Edmonton. You will also note that the Kaskitayo area is shown immediately west separated by Queen Elizabeth Highway 2 and industrial lands.

⁵¹⁷ *Mill Woods Development Concept*, March 1971. Retrieve from: https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/plans_in_effect/Mill_Woods_Development_Concept_Consolidation.pdf

Figure C-1 Mill Woods Development Concept Map



Purpose and Philosophy: Introduction:⁵¹⁸

- To be located in the southeast sector of the City of Edmonton, Mill Woods will be a new urban community housing over 120,000 people, in its own right – a new city in a suburban environment. This project represents a first in North America, the planning of a publicly sponsored major land assembly project. In total, the Mill Woods community will contain almost 6,000 acres (2,428 hectares) of land and will have a development time span in excess of two decades.
- The ultimate goal for Mill Woods is that it will be a place for people, a community with a sense of place where the physical environment will be realized in the context of human scale. This end can be achieved by incorporating sound principles of social, economic and physical planning along with significant participation by its citizens.

Development Objectives: Social:⁵¹⁹

- Man's environment must serve both his primary or physiological requirements for survival and security, and his secondary needs for human fulfillment and satisfaction as expressed through cultural and recreational activities. The urban environment must provide a complete range of diverse experiences to meet all needs — the peace and quiet of personal privacy to the excitement and stimulation of group participation.
- There can be no contention that a physical plan in itself will solve social problems, primarily people and social institutions affect social behavior, but a plan can be conducive to the realization of social goals and objectives
- The social view stresses the community as a vast complex of social interrelationships – as an environment which meets human needs and provides individual and collective opportunity for participation. The social community differs from the physical community in that it is based upon common interests, functions and life situations transcending geographical limits or boundaries. It is within this context that physical and social planning must be co-ordinated toward the realization of a viable new urban community satisfying both physical and social objectives.

Development Objectives: Economic:⁵²⁰

- The supply of land for housing has been identified as the main contributing factor in the escalation of housing costs. The agreement quite plainly recognizes this point and the adequate and continuing supply of land is an essential objective of the City's development program. The adoption of a program will have an effect much broader than within Mill Woods alone. The short supply of land in the suburbs for housing and its high cost has contributed, in large measure, to the apartment redevelopment phenomenon in the City [SEP]

⁵¹⁸ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 2.

⁵¹⁹ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 16.

⁵²⁰ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 18-19.

- ...even with a substantial land price reduction, there will be some families which will still not be able to afford conventional housing on either a rental or a purchase basis. These would be accommodated in several different ways, one of which being under public or community housing projects. There is a commitment by the City to provide a certain proportion of land for these sites at approximately 50 per cent of land cost.

Development Concept: Goals and Objectives:⁵²¹

- Respecting the primary residential function of the new community, the concept reflects two fundamental goals: to reduce the price of housing generally through land marketing and servicing programs; and, to upgrade the quality of residential environment respecting the social, physical, and economical needs of the residents
- The plan identified seven primary development objectives, including “to maximize the open space potential within the Mill Woods community to provide a high level residential environment”

Development Concept: Open Space and Recreation:⁵²²

- In accordance with the philosophy and intent of the Parks Master Plan the Mill Woods Development Concept utilizes a two level system of open space in order to provide good access to park and recreational facilities for all future residents. The first level, as outlined previously, is the district park facility, servicing a population of some 40,000 to 60,000 inhabitants. These district parks are planned so that they possess convenient access both by arterial roadways and public transportation. The second level facility is the local park situated centrally within each neighbourhood unit within walking distance of each dwelling and serving approximately 5,000 residents. The use of parks space in combination with school facilities on both the neighbourhood and district level should be encouraged i.e., the public or separate elementary school with the neighbourhood park and the senior high schools combined with the district park.⁵²³

Development Concept: Educational Facilities⁵²⁴(pg. 38):

- This section provides direction with respect to both location and programming of school and park functions: (a) joint use and co-location of school and park sites; (b) Public schools to be located in the geographical centre of each neighborhood; (c) Catholic Schools are to serve two to three neighborhoods. Junior high schools serve three to four neighborhoods. High schools serve the entire plan area; and growing public interest for community use of schools following completion of usual day time school activities. Increased leisure time may dictate that the community at large must make best use of all available resources to meet the future needs of its citizens on a sound economic basis.

⁵²¹ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 22.

⁵²² COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 35.

⁵²³ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 35.

⁵²⁴ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 38

- Planned schools and open space account for 800 acres, or 14.3% of the land area. Residential development will include 2800 public housing units or 9.9% of housing units at below market rates (pg. 55)

SEP

Outline Plan Summary:⁵²⁵

- Planned schools and open space account for 800 acres, or 14.3% of the land area. Residential development will include 2800 public housing units or 9.9% of housing units at below market rates.

Relevance to this Dissertation. The significance of the approval of an outline plan is that it defines the school and park network at a high level. It shapes or direct the expectations of the administration, developers and the community in terms of the program and location of the school and park system network. Importantly in this document school and parks were to utilize 14.3% of the land area, which is above the current and then 10% reserve dedication as provided by the *MGA*. Residents would make investment decisions in the plan area consciously or sub-consciously with this school and park network in mind. The area plan was influenced by the 1967 *General Plan* and the 1970-1980 *Parks Master Plan*.

The *Mill Woods Development Concept* was prepared in part address a suburban development land shortage that was increasing both homeownership and rental costs while seeking to provide a high quality urban environment through its generous open space system to address social and recreational needs. It is also unique because the *Mill Woods Development Concept* contemplated public housing development, not contemplated in the surplus school site initiative, which arguably would make the 2006 and 2009 decision rationals stronger.

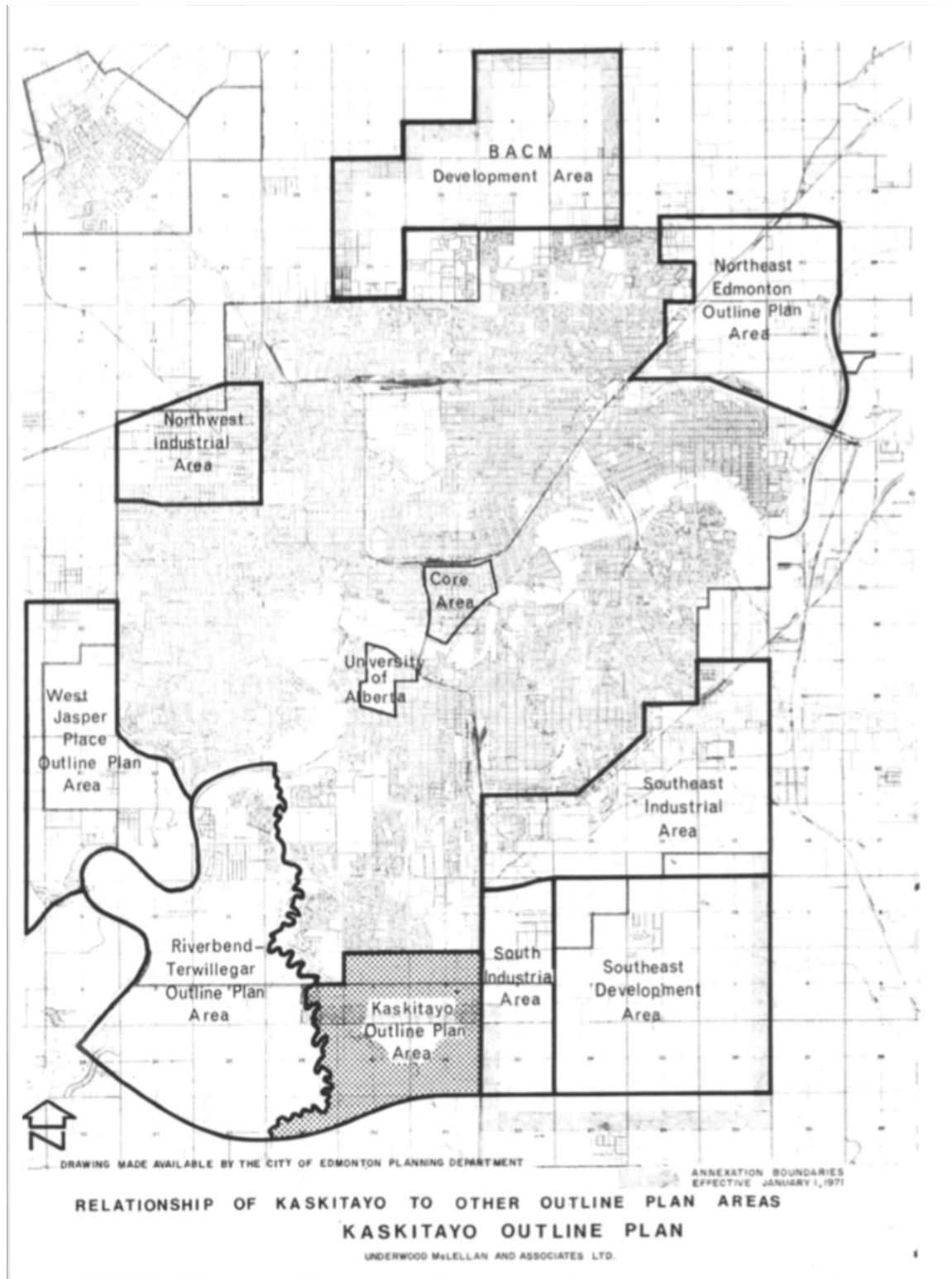
C-2: Kaskitayo Outline Plan (October 23, 1973)⁵²⁶

⁵²⁵ COE, *Mill Woods Development Concept*, 55.

⁵²⁶ COE, *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, 1-69

This is a 69 page area plan approved as a Bylaw that provided direction for all forms of development, including housing and school and park development. Key points are excerpted below from the original document. The location is shown below in the south central portion of the city. The Mill Woods Development Concept, called on this map “Southeast Development Area” is shown immediately east separated by Queen Elizabeth Highway 2 and the South Industrial lands.

Figure C-2 Kaskitayo Outline Plan Map



Introduction and Background:⁵²⁷

- Fundamentally, the Kaskitayo outline plan presents a proposal concerning how expansion should proceed in the future, recognizing objectives and generally accepted principles relating to orderly development. It forms a framework upon which detailed subdivision plans may be based and ensures that major public facilities such as schools, shopping centres and arterial roadways are located in the best possible manner and that the best living environment is created.⁵²⁸

Special Objectives - Schools and Open Space:⁵²⁹

- Provides specific guidance for land use types references the *1970-1980 Parks and Recreation Master Plan* and joint use concepts included therein.
- The policy of the joint use of school and other social and recreational facilities is becoming well established in Edmonton. The potential for joint use varies with the type of school facility. Each level of school; elementary, junior high or senior high, public or separate, is the centre of a corresponding varying catchment area and population group.
- Wherever possible school sites should be contiguous or merged to allow efficiencies in site use as well as to provide advantage in the phasing, expansion and sharing of facilities.

Development of the Outline Plan - General Order of the Plan:⁵³⁰

- Neighborhoods. The Kaskitayo area is apportioned in functionally varying units. The neighborhoods, which are the catchment areas of the public elementary schools, are centred on combined sites which contain the public elementary school and neighborhood recreation facilities.
- Communities. Junior high schools, separate elementary schools and local shopping facilities serve communities made up of two to three neighborhoods. Elementary school catchment areas are development units which, relate to larger community units that are generally bounded by the arterial road system. A total of 8 elementary school units make up the whole of Kaskitayo development area north of the Blackmud Ravine.
- District^[]_{SEP} educational, recreational, commercial and social functions which serve the whole Kaskitayo area are accommodated at the centrally located mixed-use urban village (parks).

⁵²⁷ COE, *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, 1973. 1-69. Retrieved from: https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/plans_in_effect/Kaskitayo_OP_Consolidation.pdf

⁵²⁸ COE, *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, 2.

⁵²⁹ COE, *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, 19-20.

⁵³⁰ COE, *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, 24.

Development of the Outline Plan - Open Space Objectives:⁵³¹

- The overall density proposed for Kaskitayo is 22 persons per gross acre (54.34 persons per gross hectare). Approval of development with population densities over 20 persons per acre (49.4 persons per hectare) is conditional upon the provision of open space reserves in excess of 10 percent of the gross developable area. Through efficient design of the circulation network, which can be maintained at requiring only 25 percent of the developable area, open space of up to 15 percent can be provided for areas of higher density and multiple-family housing within the maximum 40 percent dedication for residential roadways and public reserves now allowed by provincial statutes and regulations.

Relevance to this dissertations. As with the *Mill Woods Development Concept*, this outline plan identified a school and park system network that provides direction for administrators, developers and future residents; the latter two make investment decisions consciously or sub-consciously based on these plans. Unique to this plan was the dedication of additional school and park lands above 10% municipal reserve amounts but not exceeding the total 40% of public land dedications. This meant that unused roadway or utility land infrastructure dedication amounts could be redirected to augment the municipal reserve dedications as park lands. The *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* also identified the approximate locations, programs and configurations of school and park sites. It also states that the school sites serve more than just those residents in the Blue Quill Neighborhood. This Outline Plan was influenced by the *1970-1980 Parks Master Plan* and the *1967 General Plan*, outlined the school and park spaces that became the Blue Quill park site.

C-3: Parks Bylaw – 2202⁵³²

⁵³¹ COE, *Kaskitayo Outline Plan*, 39.

⁵³² COE, *Parkland Bylaw 2202, Office Consolidation*, 1-11

The original bylaw approved in 1961 and has evolved. The current version was approved in November 25, 2003, before the surplus school site initiative and has not been changed since. This bylaw defines the term parkland. Parkland means any property, whether developed or not, owned, controlled or maintained by the City that is, intended to be used by members of the public for recreation and general enjoyment, preserved as a natural area, used as a cemetery, zoned AP (Public Parks), A (Metropolitan Recreation), AN (River Valley Activity Node) or US (Urban Services), contained in the North Saskatchewan River Valley and Ravine System Protection Overlay as described in the City bylaw governing land use, designated as municipal reserve, environmental reserve or a public utility lot pursuant to the *MGA*; or, that portion of any Boulevard contiguous with, partially within, or fully within any property described above.⁵³³

Relevance to this dissertation. School building envelopes are intended to be used by members of the general public for recreation and general enjoyment, school sites are typically zoned AP or US, and parkland is designated as a municipal reserve. In short, the City's statements that differentiate between school land and park lands is a distinction without a difference from a legal perspective.

⁵³³ COE, *Parkland Bylaw 2202*, 10-11

Appendix D — Pre and Post Mandel Residential Unit Approvals 1990-2011

Below is a listing of area plans approved in the 1990 to 2011 period, followed by a brief summary of the information. Included is the name of the area plan, the land area proposed to be redeveloped for residential purposes, the total number of units approved, the number of multi-family row housing units included, and the total population anticipated. All of these plans are listed on the COE web site in a tab called “Plans in Effect”. This information provides a sense of the pace of development activity and forms of development that preceded the claim by elected officials of a housing emergency required to repurpose publicly owned and used parkland for private residential development. The area plans provide a sense of what other residential lands were being approved for the same purpose (i.e., RA5, RA6 or RA7) on surplus parkland. The data is shown on the following table.

The data suggests that there was indeed a hot housing market in the 2000s. The hot housing market was part of the rationale for redevelopment of park lands. *Annually*, approximately 3.3 new area plans were approved, including 4,382 new MDR units, which would house a total of 28,828 people. For comparison purposes, the *annual* approved plan area increases of 28,828 people in Edmonton in the 2002-2011 period approximates the *total* 2016 population of Edmonton region neighbours such as the Cities of Leduc (29,993), Fort Saskatchewan (24,149) and Spruce Grove (34,066).⁵³⁴

Relevance to this dissertation. The city repurposed park lands for residential housing in 2006 and 2009 at a time when they were simultaneously and continually approving similar forms of

⁵³⁴ <https://www.citypopulation.de/Canada-Alberta.html>, data for 2016

medium density housing units. This suggests that the “emergency” necessary to access public lands for public purposes was an ambiguous if not overstated, especially since the units were sold at market value.

Appendix D: Pre and Post Residential Land Approvals 1990-2011

Bylaw Approval Date dd-mm-yyyy⁵³⁵	NSP Name⁵³⁶	LUS Page No.⁵³⁷	Resid. Land Area	Number of Units	MDR Units and %⁵³⁸	Pop'n Added
14-03-1990	<i>Potter Greens NSP</i>		42.50	1,296	273	3,512
10-04-1991	<i>Hollick Kenyon NSP</i>		86.80	1,935	496	6,180
08-10-1991	<i>Breckenridge Greens NSP</i>		29.00	715	120	2,001
1992-2001 Pre-Mandel Years (inclusive)						
22-07-1993	<i>Haddow NSP)</i>	31	66.71	1,406	511 (36%)	4,380
14-12-1994	<i>Silver Berry NSP</i>	64	86.19	1,812	526 (29%)	5,819
08-05-1995	<i>Donsdale NSP</i>	44	39.98	798	280 (35%)	1,966
23-06-1995	<i>Hodgson NASP</i>	47	41.40	974	243 (25%)	3,253
23-06-1995	<i>Leger NSP</i>	38	47.89	1,315	467 (35%)	4,326
08-09-1995	<i>Terwillegar Town NASP</i>	67	94.43	2,695	615 (23%)	8,426

⁵³⁵ Date of initial bylaw approval

⁵³⁶ NSP approvals are listed because they are the last area plan approval step prior to approval of subdivisions. The *Kaskitayo Outline Plan and Mill Woods Development Concept* provided the same level of approval in Blue Quill and Greenview. The page number of the land use statistics page is provided to locate the table data. It should also be noted that all plans are considered office consolidations.

⁵³⁷ LUS Page. No.- NSP page number that identifies land use statistics. The data to the right is from that table.

⁵³⁸ The units included in this calculation is RA5, RA6 and RA7 or may also be termed row housing or low density non-apartment housing, depending on the plan. This total is included within the total number of units. The percentage of total units is provided in parenthesis.

Bylaw Approval Date dd-mm-yyyy⁵³⁵	NSP Name⁵³⁶	LUS Page No.⁵³⁷	Resid. Land Area	Number of Units	MDR Units and %⁵³⁸	Pop'n Added
06-11-1995	<i>Miller NASP</i>	41	40.99	1,239	429 (29%)	4,096
07-07-1997	<i>Hudson NSP</i>	30	36.79	839	291 (35%)	2,792
18-05-1998	<i>Blackmud Creek NSP</i>	45	31.28	789	154 (19%)	2,556
25-05-1998	<i>Glastonberry NSP</i>	57	92.19	2,402	948 (39%)	7,780
02-06-1998	<i>Hamptons NSP</i>	59	159.21	6,022	1,300 (10%)	13,990
26-04-1999	<i>Carlton NSP</i>	30	76.46	1,599	422 (26%)	5,432
24-09-1999	<i>Richford NASP</i>	2	34.13	695	97 (14%)	1,901
20-09-1999	<i>Summerside NSP</i>	2	203.57	6,168	1584 (25%)	15,920
18-07-2000	<i>Webber Greens NSP</i>	5	42.24	1,353	603 (45%)	3,680
06-03-2001	<i>Brintnell NSP</i>	12	70.60	2,096	536 (26%)	5,534
10-04-2001	<i>Rutherford NASP</i>	58	144.29	5,400	2,457 (46%)	12,841
01-05-2001	<i>Ellerslie NSP</i>	34	63.19	1,941	723 (37%)	6,368
26-06-2001	<i>Cameron Heights NASP</i>	52	56.99	1,365	482 (35%)	4,488
21-08-2001	<i>MacEwan NASP</i>	49	64.63	1,959	616 (31%)	6,165
1992-2001	20 plans		1,493.16	42,867	12,936 (30%)	121,713
92-01 average	2 plans per year		74.66@2 = 149.32 annually	2,143@ 2= 4,286 annually	647@2= 1,294 annually	6086@ 2 = 12,172 annually
2002-2011 Mandel Years (inclusive)						
12-03-2002*	<i>Suder Greens NSP</i>	24	56.15	3,121	500 (16%)	6,468
15-03-2002*	<i>Schonsee NSP</i>	27	70.00	2,745	1,269 (46%)	6,308
18-03-2002*	<i>Griesbach NASP</i>	37	177.40	4,706	1,031 (22%)	13,712
10-09-2003*	<i>South Terwillegar NASP</i>	2	108.41	4,516	1,761 (39%)	10,620

Bylaw Approval Date dd-mm-yyyy⁵³⁵	NSP Name⁵³⁶	LUS Page No.⁵³⁷	Resid. Land Area	Number of Units	MDR Units and %⁵³⁸	Pop'n Added
09-12-2003*	<i>Magrath NASP</i>	40	71.90	1,987	990 (50%)	6,042
24-01-2005**	<i>Cashman NSP</i>	42	4.00	360	-	540
26-04-2005**	<i>Mactaggart NSP</i>	2	57.50	2,052	1,102 (54%)	4,829
30-06-2005**	<i>Charlesworth NSP</i>	81	99.74	3,528	1,906 (54%)	8,687
28-07-2005**	<i>Ambleside NSP</i>	65	104.60	3,971	1,269 (32%)	9,377
07-12-2005**	<i>Callaghan NASP</i>	53	55.88	2,678	1,773 (35%)	5,726
24-01-2006**	<i>McConachie NSP</i>	-	140.61	5,189	2,335 (45%)	12,240
21-02-2006**	<i>Ebbers NASP</i>	33	16.60	705	401 (27%)	1,572
22-02-2006**	<i>Tamarack NASP</i>	47	105.54	3,646	854 (23%)	9,011
13-09-2006**	<i>Windermere NSP</i>	50	280.39	6,725	1963 (29%)	16,964
02-04-2007**	<i>Walker NSP</i>	56	156.46	5,468	2,261 (41%)	13,791
23-05-2007**	<i>Allard NSP</i>	10	97.39	3,617	1,281 (35%)	8,729
09-07-2007**	<i>Laurel NSP</i>	9	172.57	5,278	1535 (29%)	13,815
21-08-2007**	<i>Stewart Greens NSP</i>	28	34.04	1,295	358 (21%)	3,030
21-08-2007**	<i>Granville NSP</i>	34	60.36	1,767	618 (54%)	5,480
10-09-2007**	<i>Secord NSP</i>	51	153.90	5,712	2,668 (47%)	13,549
15-11-2007**	<i>Orchids NSP</i>	9	201.20	6,543	1,897 (29%)	16,423
14-01-2008**	<i>Trumpeter NSP</i>	45	81.16	2,975	1,239 (42%)	7,091
20-02-2008**	<i>Chappelle NASP</i>	11	239.19	8,340	3,651 (44%)	20,303
11-03-2009**	<i>Rosenthal NSP</i>	18	148.30	5,004	2,016 (40%)	12,570
28-10-2009**	<i>Albany NSP</i>	43	14.50	599	412 (69%)	1,826

Bylaw Approval Date dd-mm-yyyy⁵³⁵	NSP Name⁵³⁶	LUS Page No.⁵³⁷	Resid. Land Area	Number of Units	MDR Units and %⁵³⁸	Pop'n Added
24-01-2010**	<i>Rapperswill NSP</i>	-	47.71	1,500	452 (30%)	3,818
12-04-2010**	<i>Maple NSP</i>	20	73.98	2,616	1,111 (42%)	6,344
19-07-2010**	<i>Keswick NSP</i>	22	191.99	6,369	1,689 (35%)	15,597
23-08-2010**	<i>Starling NSP</i>	19	58.39	1,934	497 (26%)	4,900
13-09-2010**	<i>Hawks Ridge</i>	11	65.81	2,219	563 (25%)	5,452
08-11-2010**	<i>Desrochers NASP</i>	15	46.50	2,063	976 (27%)	4,737
29-08-2011**	<i>Paisley NASP</i>	19	36.67	1,305	535 (41%)	3,091
30-11-2011**	<i>Edgemont NASP</i>	14	187.63	6,698	2,926 (44%)	15,637
2002-2011	33 plans		3,416.47	117,231	43,839	288,279
Average	3.3 plans per year		103.53@ 3.3= 341.7 annually	3,552@3. 3= 11,723 annually	1,328@3 .3= 4,382 annually	8,736@3 .3= 28,828 ann.
Change	10 yrs. during Mandel period vs. 10 yrs. before		228% increase	274% increase	339% increase	237% increase

* Area plans passed during the tenure of Councillor Stephen Mandel (Nov. 2001-Nov. 2004)

**Area plans passed during the tenure of Mayor Stephen Mandel (November of 2004 Oct. 2011)

Appendix E — Park Master/Management Plan Details

A parks master plan provides a blueprint for the development and operation of a park system. Edmonton has had a history of developing multi-use parks that can serve more than one type of recreational or educational program. Data was collected from documents using the following criteria; parks related written documents, vision/goals/objective/principle statements, park typologies, acquisition standards, need assessment, parkland surplussing directions, and definitions. The *1970-1980 Parks Master Plan* was the park lands direction provided when both *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and the *Mill Woods Development Concepts* were approved. The *2006-2016 Urban Parks Management Plan* was in place when the surplus schools initiative decision-making processes occurred in 2006 and 2009. Key elements are excerpted below.

E-1: Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980

- Plan defined four major program areas: athletics and fitness, cultural, special programs and interpretative programs. It noted there was growing gap in fields, arenas and pools, increased interest in painting, sculpture, crafts, drama, music and dance, increased attention on seniors, and increased attention on natural and historic heritages.⁵³⁹
- Defines recreation as a social service. Recreation, health, education and welfare services share common ground. Recreation is a right of everyone and should be available to all regardless of financial or physical limitations. Commercial opportunities offer recreational opportunities if profitable, but only government has sufficient financial resources to provide comprehensive programs, acquire land and develop facilities.⁵⁴⁰
- Promotes joint use of school and park sites and partnerships. Described the Joint Use Agreement: “The School Boards were to make school buildings available for recreational purposes without charge, in the evenings, on weekends and on holidays. The Parks and Recreation Department would plan, develop, and maintain all school grounds. The school boards would use such park facilities as swimming pools, and arenas free of charge during the day. An objective, which has not yet been fully implemented to any extent, was that all new

⁵³⁹ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 19-20.

⁵⁴⁰ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 17.

schools would be planned for maximum community use. There is increasing demand from the community for opportunities to use school facilities. In the future, schools should be planned and designed as community education, recreation and social service centres.⁵⁴¹

- Reference community leagues as providing recreational facilities and programs. The City role is to lease lands, assist in planning and designing facilities, and provides substantial grants for constructing and operating facilities. Department should provide basic services...where leagues are not active, or encourage other organizations to provide those services.⁵⁴²
- Created a park typology of neighborhood, district City and Regional parks with associated acquisition acres per population standards.⁵⁴³
- Provided neighborhood and district concept design plates for each type.⁵⁴⁴
- Identified guidelines for distribution, size, configuration, topography, facilities. The plan did not count pocket parks as meeting recreational need; referred to them as “amenity parks.” Identified field sport activities were integral to the needs of the community, and recommended additional focus on the arts.⁵⁴⁵
- Note that: “New recreational interests are certain to arise, and in a time of rapid social change, will require new concepts in facilities and programs.”⁵⁴⁶
- Identified a formula be established by which parkland can be evaluated, and which form the basis for equitable replacement of parkland when it is required for other essential services.⁵⁴⁷
- Identified “parkside drive areas” along river valley ravine areas; identified “widths in excess of 50 feet from the top of bank to the curblin are desirable.”⁵⁴⁸

⁵⁴¹ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 23.

⁵⁴² COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 23.

⁵⁴³ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 27.

⁵⁴⁴ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 29.

⁵⁴⁵ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 28-31.

⁵⁴⁶ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 39.

⁵⁴⁷ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 40.

⁵⁴⁸ COE, *Edmonton Parks and Recreation Master Plan 1970-1980*, 31.

Relevance to this dissertation. This plan was the first true parks master. It emanated from the 1967 *General Plan*, established as a foundational principle the joint use of schools as community recreation hubs, and the role of community leagues in providing recreation services. The plan also recognized that recreational needs will change and some recreational market segments needs are growing. In terms of the amount of land, the Master Plan noted that parkland needed for other municipal services would be equitably replaced. In other words, reduction of the parkland base was not contemplated, and new parkland was identified as a need in areas not well served. Since this plan was approved, only 2 of these neighborhoods, both high priority areas, have received additional parkland (i.e., Beacon Heights and Oliver). What was also seen is that the program standard has evolved from more aesthetic perspective and benefits (1955 standard) to a greater focus on play places. This Master Plan is particularly relevant because it was the plan in place during and after the preparation of the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and *Mill Woods Concept Development* and as such states the intentions of the developers, elected officials and administrators of the day.

E-2: Urban Park Management Plan 2006-2016 (June 2006)⁵⁴⁹

This document provides a high level description of park planning and operations for the 2006-2016 period. It sought to blend a typical master plan or “cookie cutter” approach to parkland development with broad strategic directions. Key elements are excerpted below.

- Policy Statement – guides future acquisition, design, construction, maintenance, preservation and animation to meet recreational, educational, social and environmental needs of the community.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁹ COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016. 2006c*. Retrieved from: http://www.edmonton.cahttps://www.edmonton.ca/documents/PDF/UPMP_2006-2016_Final.pdf

⁵⁵⁰ COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*, 27.

- Vision – connect people to their community, year-round recreation, relaxation, ecological integrity and breathe life and sustainability into a vibrant urban environment.⁵⁵¹
- Nine Principles – Active Living, Urban Wellness, Natural Capital, Creative Urban Design, Safe Parks, Maintained Parks, Integrated Parks, Community Partners and Effective and Efficient.⁵⁵²
- Principle 8: Community Partners – build a park system with partners, provide cost-sharing⁵⁵³
- Principle 9: Efficient and Effective, a (viii) states that the City may sell parkland when it is no longer needed for parkland purposes, and make that decision working with the community, a recreational need assessment required.⁵⁵⁴
- Section 5 – Parkland Classification System: includes detailed park typology, acquisition guidelines, design guidelines, program guidelines, river valley park direction, cost share development roles and responsibilities.⁵⁵⁵
- Appendix B – Glossary of Terms – includes definition of “parkland” defined by zoning AP or US, which are both school zones⁵⁵⁶

Relevance to this dissertation. The plan providing strategic and operational direction for school and park sites was approved in June of 2006 by elected officials, five months before site council reports were presented to Council. Key elements of this plan describe both the historical and future planned partnership arrangement with the community in terms of construction and programming. The principles of the document identify the notion of an integrated school and park system which also supports natural area retention. The option to

⁵⁵¹ COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*, 27.

⁵⁵² COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*, 5-6.

⁵⁵³ COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*, 50.

⁵⁵⁴ COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*, 53.

⁵⁵⁵ COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*, 56-89

⁵⁵⁶ COE, *Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016*, 103

repurpose parkland was contemplated in this plan, but identified a community engaged process (qualitative and quantitative evaluations) to inform Council's decision; that process consideration which was unilaterally waived or violated five months later.

Appendix F — Park Related Policies

Included are officially approved Council policies, passed and repealed in public with public hearings. Data included the policy statement itself, its purpose and its relevance to this dissertation, listed chronologically. All policies are listed on the COE web site in a tab called “Policies” listed both by name and number.

F-1. Policy C109- Joint Use of School and Parks (1980)⁵⁵⁷

The purpose of this policy was to encourage joint and maximum use of public facilities for the greatest possible benefit. The policy statement is:

- The City will encourage co-operation among all community agencies to better meet the educational and recreational needs of the community and will encourage the use of public resources and facilities in the most efficient manner for the maximum benefit of the community. [SEP]

Relevance of Policy to Dissertation. This statement requires the joint planning and development of school and park sites. Included is community use of school facility gymnasiums, class rooms, and parking lots when schools are not in session in evenings, weekends and the summer. School Boards get access to City funded arenas, pools, etc. This becomes important when some proponents argued that recreational needs had been previously addressed in area plan approvals when planned recreational opportunities were being eliminated through the surplus process.

⁵⁵⁷ COE, *Policy C109 Joint Use of Parks and Schools*. 1980a.

F-2: Policy C110 - *City Community League Relations* (February 1980)⁵⁵⁸

This is the first of major policy initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s that formalized relationships between the city and community social actors; in this case the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. The policy speaks to issues beyond recreation and more broadly into governance. The purpose was to describe the relationship of *EFCL* and community leagues to the city. It included the following policy statements.

- Each community leagues is a desirable vehicle for the provision of certain services which are of benefit to the residents of the neighbourhood and the City.
- The Community League is a useful mechanism for debate of area concerns and presentation of views and recommendations to Council.
- Participation in Community League activity is a desirable element in a democracy which seeks to place decision making for appropriate activities at the neighbourhood level.
- The Community League Structure educate and trains citizens in Governance and provides opportunities for citizens to volunteer their efforts to the Community.
- The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues is the Representative and Co-ordinating body of Edmonton's Community Leagues.

Relevance of Policy to Dissertation. Community leagues throughout the study period were an integral to gathering community input on both recreational and development issues. In 2006 the elected officials unilaterally determined not to engage in the surplus schools initiative process at odds with this policy.

F-3: Policy C187/C187A *Agreements with Non-Profit Organizations for the Cooperative Operation of Recreation Facilities* (March 1981)⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁸ *COE, Policy C110 City/Community League Relations*. 1980b. Retrieved from: https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PoliciesDirectives/C110.pdf

⁵⁵⁹ *COE, Policy C187/C187A Agreements with Non-Profit Organizations for the Cooperative Operation of Recreation Facilities* (March 1981)

This was the second of two major policy initiatives in the 1980s that articulates how social actors are engaged in park system operations.

- Purpose of policy: (a) Establish a framework of principles and procedures to guide developing and ongoing partnership relationships that provide public recreation and leisure opportunities, benefit the community and enhance Community Facility Services to the citizens of Edmonton; (b) The partnership framework includes a continuum of opportunities that recognizes the complexity, uniqueness and dynamic nature of partnerships, and (c) The framework will nurture long-term collaborative relationships by supporting flexibility, defining roles and responsibilities, providing transparent assessment criteria, and by establishing a performance monitoring process to ensure ongoing positive partnerships.
- Policy Statement: The City will actively encourage and support public recreation and leisure partnership opportunities that enhance Community Facility Services and may include capital development, operations and programming.
- The City will seek out and encourage partnerships where (a) community expectations extend beyond City of Edmonton planned service levels based on City ^[L]_[SEP] Council approved Plans; (b) ^[L]_[SEP] proposals are presented to provide improved service levels; and, (c) proposals are presented to provide for innovative public recreation and leisure opportunities including specialty facilities. ^[L]_[SEP]
- Partnerships may involve third party organizations including community not-for-profit organizations, other public sector service providers and the private sector. ^[L]_[SEP] Collaborations between the City and Partners will meet community needs, protect public interests in the short and long term, provide opportunities that are open and accessible to all citizens of Edmonton, align with City strategic plans, directions and priorities, demonstrate trustworthiness, mutual respect, high standards of ethical and professional conduct; and ^[L]_[SEP] demonstrate a clear understanding of respective roles and responsibilities including cost, risk ^[L]_[SEP] and benefits.

Relevance of Policy to Dissertation: This policy speaks to how social actors work with each other on parkland, including a requirement for collaboration and partnerships. This policy was in place from the mid-1980s and remains in effect today. While surplus schools were not part of this policy per se, it speaks to the broader notion of development with and for communities.

F-4: Surplus Schools Site Criteria (April 1994)

In the 1990s it was becoming obvious that build out rates and school construction was out of sync. This left the City and *EFCL* to potentially awkward or difficult conversations about the

future of land that was intended for a school building that may never materialize. This criteria was developed in consultation with the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. It was never formally passed by city council as a policy, but the process was supported by the councillors of the day. In any disposition decision, elected officials make the disposition call. This practice ensured council could make an informed decision.

Relevance to dissertation. This speaks to how social actors, *EFCL* and Community Leagues, are engaged in surplus schools initiatives decision making. Importantly the community is consulted prior to decisions being made and include quantitative and qualitative recreational assessments. This process was followed in Blue Quill Estates neighborhood, part of the *Blue Quill Community League*; this league had recent prior experience with the policy and process before 2006.

F-5: Policy C583 Guidelines for Development of the 2009 Surplus School Sites (July 2015)⁵⁶⁰

Prior to this document, there was no policy in place that guided the redevelopment of surplus school sites to include non-market housing. This policy was passed 6 years after the sites were surplus. The policy purpose is to “establish guidelines for residential development on surplus school sites that maximize economic viability, public benefits, and connections to the communities in which the new developments are located, while remaining flexible enough to respond to local conditions and community needs”. The following guidelines to develop surplus school sites for residential uses include the following:

- Non-market housing will comprise 50% to 75% of the residential units built on surplus school sites, and the remaining residential units will be market housing.

⁵⁶⁰ *COE, Policy C583: Guidelines for Development of the 2009 Surplus School Sites*
https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PoliciesDirectives/C583.pdf

- Wherever reasonably possible, residential developments on surplus school sites will be located on the portion of the site that was originally designated for the school. Where the administration finds that economics permit and improved community outcomes can be achieved, the equivalent area may be allocated elsewhere within the adjacent greenspace with Council's approval.
- A goal of non-market housing is to ensure its long term affordability with a target of 50 years following issuance of an occupancy permit.
- Non-market housing units will not be visually distinguishable from the market units in the development. ^[1]_[SEP]
- Developments in surplus school sites will be medium density developments including row housing, medium density multiple family, or low rise apartments (currently zoned as RF5, RF6, and RA7, respectively), with not less than 40 residential units per hectare of residential development.
- None of the developments will include single detached housing.
- Developments may include ancillary uses that benefit the residential development and the wider community. ^[1]_[SEP]

Relevance to this dissertation: This reflects the original notion of the school lands being repurposed for affordable housing. However, this policy was not passed until 2015, almost nine years after the 2006 re-zonings. It also only applies to 2009 sites, not 2006 sites. The 2006 sites are sold at market value.

Appendix G — Parks Legal Agreements

Data was collected from documents using the following criteria; written documents, vision/goals/objective/principle statements, park typologies, acquisition standards, need assessment, parkland surplussing directions, and definitions. Also included is a summary of its relevance to the dissertation.

G-1: Joint Use Agreement (JUA) ⁵⁶¹

The original agreement was signed in 1959 and is now between the city and three school boards (The Board of Trustees of the Catholic School District No 7, The Board of Trustees of the Public School District No. 7, and The Board of Trustees of the Regional Authority of the Greater North Central Francophone Education Region No.2.)

The preamble states: Whereas:

- It is the responsibility of each of the Boards to develop and delivery educational programs, and to plan, construct, operate and maintain the necessary facilities for these programs
- It is the responsibility of the City to plan, develop, construct, operate and maintain park and recreational land and facilities in the City of Edmonton, and to acquire Reserve Lands for school and community needs pursuant to the Municipal Government Act
- The parties support the sharing of publicly funded lands to maximize benefit to students and citizens of the City of Edmonton
- The City and The Boards wish to reaffirm their commitment to the principles set out in section 2 (principles) of this agreement.⁵⁶²

Principles

- 2.1. Cooperative Planning. Joint Use Sites will be cooperatively planned and managed.
- 2.3. Efficiency and Planning. The resources of the four parties shall be efficiently used for the maximum benefit of the community.

⁵⁶¹ *COE, Joint Use Agreement*, Edmonton, Alberta

⁵⁶² *COE, Joint Use Agreement*, 1-2

- 2.6. Reserve Dedication. All reserve lands and reserve funds provided, dedicated or obtained before or after the Effective Date, shall be used, where appropriate, for the purpose of creating and developing Joint Use Sites and Parks and Recreation sites, pursuant to the MGA.⁵⁶³

Relevance to this dissertation. This document speaks to how the City and School Boards collectively plan, develop and manage public lands for the collective benefit of the community, including public access to school facilities (e.g., gymnasiums, classrooms, parking lots) for community use and enjoyment.

G-2: Tripartite License Agreement⁵⁶⁴

This agreement allows community leagues to sign a dollar license to develop indoor and outdoor facilities such as community halls, outdoor skating rinks, batting cages, etc. The Tripartite is an agreement between the City, the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and individual community leagues to provide land for community recreation purposes. The statements below are excerpted from a template for community league license agreements, and represent the city and community commitment to partnerships and co-production of place.

WHEREAS Community Leagues have existed in the City since 1917 and exist within virtually every Edmonton neighbourhood;

AND WHEREAS the Community Leagues of Edmonton are recognized as providing valuable recreational sports, social, community and cultural facilities, programs and voluntary leadership in recreation and culture within the various neighbourhoods of the City and thus saving the City significant expenditures for the provision of these essential facilities and services;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council of the City endorses the activities of Community Leagues, the Federation and its affiliated Area Councils and Area Recreational Councils acknowledging their essential contribution to the City;

⁵⁶³ *COE, Joint Use Agreement*, 8-9

⁵⁶⁴ *COE/EFCL*, license sample, 1-2

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council of the City has encouraged the formation of Area Councils, President's Councils and Area Recreational Councils to coordinate the activities of several Community League groups within an area of the City;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council of the City has set aside land in various neighborhoods for public use by the neighborhood and will retain the said land for general park purposes, licensing such part thereof to Community Leagues as required by them for uses consistent with their objectives;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Council of the City recognizes that Community Leagues often make financial contributions to developments on such park lands and that such developments are the property of the Community Leagues under the terms of this Agreement;

AND WHEREAS on February 12, 1980, the Municipal Council of the City passed the following resolution describing the relationship between the City and the Federation:

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

(i) to recognize that each Community League is a desirable vehicle for the provision of certain services which are of benefit to the residents of the neighbourhood and the City;

(ii) to view the Community League structure as being a useful mechanism for debate of area concerns and presentation of views and recommendations to Council;

(iii) to believe that participation in Community League activity is a desirable element in a democracy which seeks to place decision making for appropriate activities at the neighbourhood level;

(iv) to recognize the role the Community League structure plays in educating and training citizens in governance and in providing opportunities for citizens to volunteer their efforts to the community;

(v) to support the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues as the representative and coordinating body of Edmonton's Community Leagues;

and hereby directs the Administration to give consideration and support to the unique and desirable Community League structure so that the resources of the citizens and the Administration can work most productively for the benefit of the City as a whole."

AND WHEREAS the Federation wishes to recognize the autonomy of the League while respecting its own partnering, coordinating and facilitating responsibilities to the Community League movement in Edmonton and to the City of Edmonton;

AND WHEREAS the League, the Federation and the City now wish to enter into a License for the Site;⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁵ COE/EFCL, license sample, 1-2

Relevance to this dissertation. This agreement is used to provide land for community halls, tennis courts, batting cages, outdoor boarded rinks, and effectively summarizes the benefits provided by the community in terms of programs and services.

Appendix H: City/Community Shared Parks Development and Redevelopment Funding

Shared development of park lands has a long history, dating back to the Gyro Club in Edmonton. Two annual on-going funding programs supported by city council are the *Neighborhood Parks Development Program* and *Partners in Parks*. The intent of both of these programs is to routinize park redevelopments to address evolving community needs.

H-1: Neighbourhood Park Development Program (NPDP)⁵⁶⁶

This is an annual program that began in 1983 when the community expressed interest in partnering with the city to enhance the pace of development of recreational amenities. Examples of amenities include landscaping, community gardens, playgrounds, water features, benches, walking trails, amenities for seniors. The delivery of the program has evolved over the years but the core of the program has remained the same. The 2017 program manual states the following:

“The intent of NPDP is: to guide, facilitate and support the creation of great spaces and fun places for neighborhood play, wellness and learning through active partnerships with the community.”

The manual goes on to say that the program supports building healthy communities and promotes a sense of ownership by the community.

Each capital budget cycle since 1983 has seen city council allocate an envelope of funds that communities apply to share costs on a 50/50 basis based on a neighborhood recreation need assessment. Allocation amount per neighborhood have increased over time, beginning at \$50,000 in the early years of the program to 2017 was \$250,000.

⁵⁶⁶ COE, *Neighbourhood Park Development Community Manual*

In the 2012-2014 capital budget, annual program allocations to NPDP was \$4.1M annually⁵⁶⁷, plus \$350,000 for a new skate park (i.e., SECLA) in 2012.⁵⁶⁸ In 2015-2018 funding allocation for NPDP approximates \$19M, or about 7.75M annually.⁵⁶⁹ Throughout this period and before, an equal or greater share was provided by community leagues, school parent advisory councils and local neighborhood residents. Part of the community contribution also includes “sweat equity” to physically build the playground under the supervision of playground suppliers and city community project managers. Not included in the capital funding allocations is internal city staff (e.g., planners, CRCs, draftsmen, landscape architects and project managers) funded in the operational budget to facilitate the program.⁵⁷⁰

H-2: Partners in Parks

This is an annual program that began in 1985 that sees greenspaces developed to a level that could not be provided otherwise by the City through the actions of volunteers. It applies to parkland as well as other city owned lands. Volunteers sign an agreement specific to a location. The *Partners in Parks* program manual states the following):

“Our goal is to create a spirit of stewardship and civic pride within our communities. We want to create opportunities for Edmontonians to be involved in greening initiatives so they feel connected to their public greenspaces and have a positive environmental impact. Our program strives to ensure our park spaces are vibrant, healthy places for generations to come. This program will also provide you with the opportunity to develop your gardening skills, knowledge and passion and share them

⁵⁶⁷ COE, 2012-2014 Capital Budget, 60

⁵⁶⁸ COE, 2012-2014 Capital Budget, 63

⁵⁶⁹ COE, 2015-2018 Capital Budget, 67 (renewal) and 71 (growth)

⁵⁷⁰ As a community planner in the Parks and Recreation Department and later Community Services, I was involved in multiple park site redevelopments (e.g., Boyle Street, McCauley, York, Fulton Place) to provide trees, park furniture, playgrounds, and lighting. I also participated in annual NPDP workshops to discuss recreational need assessments.

with your community. Our volunteers contribute so much to our parks spaces, which wouldn't be the same without your support and dedication.”⁵⁷¹

Relevance to this dissertation. These are volunteer efforts provided by community social actors to enhance park amenities and beautify the city. The city provides access to city land.

⁵⁷¹ COE, *Partners in Parks 2018 Volunteer Manual*, 2

Appendix I — Blue Quill and Greenview Interview Detail Data Analysis

In order to understand and contextualize the 2006 and 2009 planning processes that reduced both neighbourhood school and park sites in size, a tool was needed to pull apart considerations made in making the political decisions that impacted other social actors, either directly or indirectly. Borrowed was a data summary framework provided by Fairclough and Fairclough (2013) they use to undertake Political Discourse Analysis (PDA), while still using a Social Relational Institutional perspective for the analysis. This data summary framework was useful because it sets the technical process decision-making within a broader societal setting of policies and practices previously negotiated and understood by community social actors. However, PDA was not used for analysis purposes.

The claim, the need to repurpose park lands for housing, is verified by alignment of the goals, values, and premises to achieve means/ends outcomes. The summaries below describe each element, supportive and non-supportive data, and commentary provided by social actors. The source of the commentary is included. It should be noted that some social actor commentary is repeated in different sections.

I-1: The Claim:

The City had an obligation and legal mandate granted by the Municipal Government Act to manage land resources effectively for the benefit of all Edmontonians. Unbuilt school building envelope lands were not park lands, not needed, and unaffordable to retain, while concurrently in 2006 the City was faced with an emergent affordable housing crisis. The city action to surplus school lands aligned with multiple policy objectives to increase development density and make better use of utility infrastructure.

Social Actor Commentary

- This is a program we want to make it clear is about first-time homebuyer housing," Mayor Stephen Mandel said Thursday. "This is not about social housing, subsidized housing or short-term rental housing or someone trying to get on their feet. " "We're talking about first-time home-buyers, Edmontonians with good jobs and decent incomes who are being held back because of the surge in housing prices," Mandel said (media report).⁵⁷²
- Shane Bergdahl, president of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, expects there will be some concerns for residents in the 20 neighbourhoods. Still, Bergdahl supports the idea: "We're talking just a small handful of people coming in and hopefully revitalizing some of the older neighbourhoods and putting the land to use."(media report)⁵⁷³
- The deal breaks an impasse between the Catholic and public school boards and the city about what to do with surplus schools initiative sites, which developers were required to set aside when they first built neighbourhoods such as Blue Quill, Tawa and Dunluce. There are at least 50 unused school sites in Edmonton without any buildings on them (media report).⁵⁷⁴
- There was a perspective at the time that we had assembled far too much (park) land. (Marcel, senior administrator)
- I think the reason (that parks were chosen) was that in the communities it was an identified more readily available option to respond to crises. (Don, senior administrator)
- Again, this is a good example (infill using surplus schools sites) where city-wide policy has been we need to look for opportunities, but when you get into individual communities it's a very very detailed, "This is where it hits the dirt," kind of conversation. (Don, senior administrator).
- The economy was booming. Kids were coming out of university and were being snapped up. Fort Mac (Fort MacMurray, Alberta) is going crazy and it was a time when the cost of housing was out of reach for most kids. Our houses were nearing and some cases surpassing Toronto housing prices, and this was a time when there was a political imperative to do something about that. (Marcel, senior administrative)
- So now you have, is that we have got these housing development on what was public lands allowed to develop as affordable housing through the *MGA* changes, but they are not affordable because they are privately owned and they are more expensive because they are on

⁵⁷² Sarah O'Donnell, "Condos to be built on vacant school sites." *Edmonton Journal*, November 24, 2006

⁵⁷³ Sarah O'Donnell. "Condos to be built on vacant sites". *Edmonton Journal*, November 24, 2006

⁵⁷⁴ Sarah O'Donnell, "Condos to be built on vacant school sites." *Edmonton Journal*, November 24, 2006

park lands...It's actually the opposite...you don't build affordable housing on park lands if its market housing, because the market is willing to pay more for something that borders a park."(Eve, community NGO)⁵⁷⁵

- The deal breaks an impasse between the Catholic and public school boards and the city about what to do with surplus school sites, which developers were required to set aside when they first built neighbourhoods such as Blue Quill, Tawa and Dunluce. There are at least 50 unused school sites in Edmonton without any buildings on them (media).⁵⁷⁶

- The sites were largely forgotten, some for as long as 30 years...Mandel, the former land developer thought: We've got land, let's build something on it... Not only will a majority of the greenspace remain, but some older neighbourhoods will enjoy an infusion of young families. They will join community leagues. Their kids will enroll in local schools. Ultimately, the neighbourhoods win, too." This is one of the most exciting announcements in a long time," said Mandel. (media report)⁵⁷⁷

- Mayor Stephen Mandel seeks an exemption from the Municipal Government Act so that city council can pass the Neighbourhood First-time Home Buyer Program in three readings, in two weeks, with no public consultation. With this exemption, the city circumvented the standard process of involving the community in formulating uses for surplus school sites. Clearly there is a different set of rules for city hall, as the rest of us have to follow routine rezoning procedures (community member, letter to editor)⁵⁷⁸

- Our mayor has a plan using so-called surplus land -- originally set aside for schools and greenspace -- to build affordable townhouses for first-time home buyers. The city will subsidize these homes by carrying the mortgages on the land for five years. The mayor, with the province's (*GoA*) help, alters the process so he does not have to consult the citizens, then rams his plan through council with lightning speed. When the taxpayers find out what's going on, it's already too late to mount any opposition to this poorly-thought-out proposal. To get rid of soccer fields that are in constant use to build affordable housing, when there are other sites available, is wrong. The school in the neighborhood is bursting at the seams and another

⁵⁷⁵ This has been borne out by studies in the United States by John Crompton, as well as a local study by the *Alberta Recreation and Parks Association*.

⁵⁷⁶ Sarah O'Donnell, "Condos to be built on vacant school sites." *Edmonton Journal*, November 24, 2006

⁵⁷⁷ Scott Mckeen, "Mandel gets A+ for developing his schoolyard idea." *Edmonton Journal*, November 24, 2006

⁵⁷⁸ Steve Elliot, "Elitism is not the issue" letter to the editor, *Edmonton Journal*, December 15, 2006.

school will be needed. Where will it be built? (community member, letter to editor)⁵⁷⁹

- That argument (for use of surplus school sites) was never articulated to the public in a clear, transparent fashion. When we have lots of spaces, lots of surplus land all over the city, why surplus school sites?"^[1]_{SEP}(Syd, elected official)
- In some communities, the park sites have become park sites and they are vital to the sustainability of the community because they are being utilized in different ways. That's not their (the community) fault that the city chose not to use them (build a school), but they made as much use of their community as they could, taking full opportunity of it. So at the cost of the community and their programming, if they are going to lose that, I think the city needs to reevaluate because they are not integrating anything. They are just taking away. For the sites that are vacant and the community aren't using, I think that's where involvement and integration is key. I don't think people want necessarily just to do something thrown in their communities. We are communities. We have chosen to live where we live because of our neighbors, because of our amenities, and just a lot of times its walkability, we take advantage of what our communities have to offer. But to just throw up a bunch of houses, for the sake of a bunch of houses, isn't helping anybody. To fulfill an obligation to a developer is all that is about. It's not meeting any of the needs of the community." (Makela, community resident)
- So now (2009 sites) they try to do on these surplus school sites all sorts of these other societal outcomes that were not initially intended with the original program (first time home buyers), which was supposed to be affordable housing. To build greater community consensus now they're throwing everything and the kitchen sink in and at it because they are getting so much resistance." (Frank, elected official)
- I think the sum and substance of the community good is how we deal with it in the process that we use to deal with it...we are only as good in my opinion as the we tried to accomplish as best we can to accommodate our notion of the public good. And that includes developers of course, because they have to make money and they have to have land. That's part of the public good to. (Rick, park lands planner)
- On principle we absolutely objected tremendously because this was public land. This was public land that was being privatized. I think it would have been easier to stomach if a) it would have remained, if the idea was to keep it public, but then you asked people what should go on this public land...It was definitely a process issue and it was a principle issue that it was public land. It was public land being (originally) dedicated by the developer for a public purpose...And then to turn around and give it to a different developer, to develop and make money from it, even if you were really shall we say pro business...I think people saw it as being unfair to the development industry the way it was handled." (Eve, community NGO)

I-2: Overall Goals

⁵⁷⁹ Greg Tilley, "Circumventing process" letter to the editor, *Edmonton Journal*, December 15, 2006

Strategically re-purpose underutilized municipal reserves (i.e., park lands land resources) for residential development purposes: (a) 2006 Narrative - Affordable Housing; and, (b) 2009 Narrative: Aging in Place Housing.

Data Supportive of Surplus School Initiative:

Area plans identified sustainable urban landscapes that balance the many and competing needs (social, economic, ecological, health and wellness) for urban populations based on legislation, strategic documents, policies, plans and standards of the day. The *Mill Woods Development Concept* (Greenview) was approved in 1971. The *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* (Blue Quill) was approved in 1973. It was these plans that identified the planned and projected shared development and use of school and park sites and facilities, approximate locations and configurations that were assembled by the late 1970s. Park sites were developed with community partners by the late 1980s, with the exception of school construction that lagged in both neighbourhoods. Over time needs evolved and area plans were amended through public processes. This is not an unusual or an unexpected occurrence. Landowners with the approval of elected officials have the right provided by the *MGA* to redefine urban land uses through processes that include public engagement. In this case, elected officials as park lands landowners, determined it was necessary to expedite redevelopment of park lands previously dedicated for school construction to meet an emergent housing crisis based on the knowledge and experience of elected officials. Additional people will be added to each neighbourhood and take advantage of existing underutilized utility infrastructure. The argument was that it was a political imperative to quickly create the opportunity for a more sustainable diverse neighborhood population at reduced cost to the property purchasers and park lands was underutilized; there was no time for consultation.

Data Incompatible with the Surplus School Initiative

The discussion to re-purpose park lands went back to the mid to late 1990s when elected officials sought to redevelopment park lands. In 2004 elected officials went behind closed doors to negotiate with the *GoA*. A decision to exclude community engagement was meant to expedite development timelines, which has not occurred, and was timed to avoid a change in *GoA* elected officials. Also seen was a change in program intent. The original intent was to address affordable housing crisis and has now expanded to include seniors housing.

Social Actor Commentary

- Those are tough political decisions and there's a balance in there where you are talking about trying to fund, own and operate and maintain a park vs. a pot hole vs. a stick of grass or a rec facility. That's a challenging thing to do and trying to meet political expectations around the tax level. (Marcel, senior administrator)
- And so the argument could be made equally as well that there are better places to put this than on these...he (Mayor) thought this land was free. Or maybe he thought the land was free. (Syd, elected official)
- There was a perspective at the time that we had assembled far too much (park) land. (Marcel, senior administrator).
- So now (2009) they ^{[[[}try to do on these surplus school sites all sorts of these other societal outcomes that were not initially intended with the original program (first time home buyers), which was supposed to be affordable housing. To build greater community consensus now they're throwing everything and the kitchen sink in and at it because they are getting so much resistance." (Frank, elected official)
- So now you have, is that we have got these housing development on what was public lands allowed to develop as affordable housing through the *MGA* changes, but they are not affordable because they are privately owned and they are more expensive because they are on park lands...It's actually the opposite...you don't build affordable housing on park lands if its market housing, because the market is willing to pay more for something that borders a park. (Eve, community NGO)⁵⁸⁰
- I don't believe that everybody should have a say on every project, first and foremost. The city is a job and city council job is to get the business of the city executed. I think that sometimes there is room for community involvement on issues such as First Place...but they

⁵⁸⁰ This has been borne out by studies in the United States by John Crompton, as well as a local study by the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association.

(the community) can't hold the city, and can't stop the city from progressing moving forward, and I think that got lost by some people... They (the city) have large departments and I truly recognize and respect that. But to some extent I think the bureaucracy takes over. They forget that some of the decisions have serious repercussions to the communities and quality of life within them." (Makela, community resident)

I-3: Values:

The surplus school initiative assumes pluralistic values; the development of a better city - defined as a sustainable city - interrelated systems of economic, social, environmental, cultural systems/functions, and, a sustainable urban form, and an engaged community in land use decision-making.

Data Supportive of Surplus School Initiative:

The development of a better city is based on the notion of values pluralism; meeting multiple and competing needs of a diverse population that considers economic, ecological, social and health and wellness needs. City strategic plans, policies, areas plans, park plans and practices all work towards that goal. Area plans such as the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* and the *Mill Woods Development Concept* were both approved on this basis. Municipal elected officials are given wide latitude by the *MGA* to create those environments based on local needs and priorities. The development of a better city is also predicated on the notion of an engaged citizenry in land use decision-making to create those landscapes. There was *GoA* legislation (*MGA*) and city policies that defined community engagement requirements. The existing policy framework had previously been used to repurpose parkland for other needs and included community engagement when community needs had changed, including a site within the *Blue Quill Community League* area. There was evidence that changes in regional development density targets would support more intense development in existing development areas that included in neighbourhoods with surplus school sites.

Incompatible Data

The process adopted excluded the community from discussion entirely in 2006 and limited effective input in 2009. The 2006 initiative was not based on housing or park lands studies to rationalize redevelopment. Public knowledge dissemination was absent in 2006, ambiguous, flawed or incomplete in 2009.

Social Actor Commentary

- I think what triggered my displeasure was the lack of any consultation (in 2006) that was going on. And also a break from all past practices, that all of a sudden they came out and presented this as a “fait de compli” when it hadn’t even been discussed with the community yet.” (Barry, community representative)
- That argument (for use of surplus school sites) was never articulated to the public in a clear, transparent fashion. When we have lots of spaces, lots of surplus land all over the city, why surplus school sites? [SEP] (Syd, elected official)
- I remember him (Mayor Mandel) coming back (from meetings with the *GoA*) and saying that officially any land that they (the *GoA*) would name as surplus that we could get (for non-park purposes), we would have to go through the rezoning for every one of those parcels, and saying that he thought that would take us forever to do that. (Farley, elected official).
- If we put something in place that the actual use and design of the site would be all right, rather than rezoning as such. He (Mayor Mandel) indicated that he was going to see whether he could get the Province (*GoA*) to do something to help us in that. (Farley, elected official).
- Why the rush? Mandel wanted the deal sealed before the Tory leadership race concluded. A new cabinet might not be so agreeable (media report).⁵⁸¹

I-4: Empirical Premises

Data Supportive of Surplus School Initiative:

Empirical premises in this case are assumptions that effectively follow from data or documents that provide advice or protocols to follow. Approved Area Plan Bylaws (i.e., *Kaskitayo, Mill Woods*) provide and define an urban landscape including residential,

⁵⁸¹ Scott McKeen, “Twin Brooks opposition, alas, still elitist, absurd” *Edmonton Journal*, December 13, 2006

commercial, roadways, utilities, and locate, size and configure school and park site programs based on approved legislation, general plans, strategic plans, park master plans, funding programs, processes and practices. Economics drive development and build out rates. These neighbourhoods were fully built out by 1985, and park lands was used by the community since that time. Construction of parks and recreational facilities cannot be delegated or transferred to the development industry; this means public or community funds are required to fund park site construction. Park assembly, development and school construction follows residential development and new school construction typically follows park assembly and residential development; there is often a lag between educational needs and development. One of three schools were built on Blue Quill and one of two schools were built on Greenview, both by the end of the 1980s. Housing prices in the 2000s were rising quickly and were a concern for elected officials, but had not and did not reach levels experienced in other large centres. The City argued that city was land was needed to address this issue and there had been too much parkland assembled.

Incompatible Data:

The 2006 agreement was to waive public notice and public hearings for land for affordable housing, yet pilot project sites were sold at market value despite a concern about rising housing prices. The negotiation to redevelop park for non-park purposes began 10 years earlier when housing prices were more affordable. The city continued to approve new plan areas and therefore provide opportunities for affordable housing; no land shortage existed to address housing needs. Finally, the initiative was not based on housing affordability studies and did not include any assessment of parkland.

Social Actor Commentary

- The economy was booming. Kids were coming out of university and were being snapped up. Fort Mac (Fort MacMurray, Alberta) is going crazy and it was a time when the cost of housing was out of reach for most kids. Our houses were nearing and some cases surpassing Toronto housing prices, and this was a time when there was a political imperative to do something about that. (Marcel, senior administrator).
- There was a perspective at the time that we had assembled far too much land. Our park standards were out of sync with reality. We couldn't afford to maintain what we had. We didn't have reserve accounts to buy all the land we had already planned for and there was a disconnect as to what to do with all these particular sites. (Marcel senior administrator)
- Again, this is a good example (infill using surplus schools sites) where city-wide policy has been we need to look for opportunities, but when you get into individual communities it's a very very detailed, "This is where it hits the dirt," kind of conversation. (Don, senior administrator, pers. comm., March 1, 2017).
- ...they were spread out all over the city as I recall. Not all in one area, that was the other part, geographical. He (Mayor Mandel) was very conscientious or conscious about the geographical issue for us. (Farley, elected official)
- 63 (%). 63 (%). 63(%)! (in housing prices in 2006). A five-year constable in the police force and his wife who was a teacher could not afford a house" (Frank, elected official, pers. comm., December 19, 2016). Note: The actual rise in 2006 was 51%.
- "I guess we live in a market society, right? And so if you translate the benefits into dollars, it speaks rather loudly so it easy to argue it's going to reduce our taxes, its going to help businesses, but what kind of value do you put on greenspace, right? It's not an economic metric, so it's really hard to argue for it, right? And it's really hard to argue for mental health and physical health as well. That's why we say we need greenspace for our mental and physical health so I guess community peoples should become very adept at translating what they value into a dollar figure and maybe we get somewhere right?" (Eve, community NGO)

I-5: Place Premises

Place is typically defined as a social or emotional connection to a location; a space imbued with personal meaning. In this case study facilities and amenities such as schools, playing fields, community gardens, plaza areas, community halls and passive grassy areas are used by local nearby residents, site users from outside the neighborhood to attend school, scout meetings, minor sport games as well as function as community gathering places. This connection to place is augmented in Edmonton by community organizations and residents

who help fund, construct, program and maintain facilities. Community members volunteer to coordinate minor sport programs (e.g., league formations and operations, field bookings, team managers), organize scout, guides, etc. troops, operate community halls (e.g., facility representatives on community league representatives), coordinate repairs with contractors for community halls funded by the league), operate outdoor boarded skating rinks and snow bank rinks, etc. Community residents have also indirectly paid for the land through their property purchases and contribute to the city share of cost shared capital improvements through taxes. They also fund raise for the community share from grant organizations, including the provincial government to access grants the city is not eligible for. Playground construction also typically includes actual equipment installation under the supervision of construction project managers. All of these activities effectively connect people to their parks directly or indirectly.

Data Supportive of Surplus School Initiative:

A good argument can be made that additional people in the neighbourhood will increase school populations, provide more minor sport activity populations, make greater use of no charge park amenities (e.g., playgrounds, plazas) for charge facility bookings (e.g., hall rentals), provide more volunteer resources, and potentially increase the diversity of age and culture in the neighborhood. A seniors housing complex may also allow seniors who wish to remain in the neighborhood an option to stay close to their former residence. Similarly, children raised in the neighborhood may be able to purchase a unit in the same area they grew up.

Incompatible Data:

It is arguably counter intuitive to increase populations while reducing the amount of available greenspace without a recreational need assessment. It is counter intuitive to assume that recreational program needs based on early 1970 accommodates recreational needs 35 years later, once again with no recreational need assessment. The community is unable to tell their place story. The selection of purchasers of “more affordable housing units” was based on a lottery system and not place of residence or former residence. It was too soon to determine the type of seniors housing. Consequently it was not possible to ensure access to local residents. The loss of land impacts connection to place for those who helped fund raise or construct amenities.

Social Actor Place Commentary

- Well heavens, where will I start? This is huge. Ok. I created a Scouting room in the community league for us. The Scouts and the Brownies once a year cleaned the park up in the spring. All my kids played soccer. My kids played baseball. My kids coached and refereed. My kids worked at the community league cleaning the ice for the community league. Tobogganed there a million times, played hockey a million times (Lloyd, community representative)
- You know at the time in 2006 when it first came out, there was just no time to consult: “This is an affordable housing emergency.” And it would be program designed to keep the schools open and things like that. Which you know, I just say, “Same brand, same vendor.” It’s just all poppycock because they never did do the studies that would support those actions. (Neil, community representative)
- Anybody that would be against this proposal is practicing NIMBY (Neil, community representative)
- In some communities, the park sites have become park sites and they are vital to the sustainability of the community because they are being utilized in different ways. That’s not their (the community) fault that the city chose not to use them (build a school), but they made as much use of their community as they could, taking full opportunity of it. So at the cost of the community and their programming, if they are going to lose that, I think the city needs to reevaluate because they are not integrating anything. They are just taking away. For the sites that are vacant and the community aren’t using, I think that’s where involvement and integration is key. I don’t think people want necessarily just to do something thrown in their communities. We are communities. We have chosen to live where we live because of our

neighbors, because of our amenities, and just a lot of times its walkability, we take advantage of what our communities have to offer. But to just throw up a bunch of houses, for the sake of a bunch of houses, isn't helping anybody. To fulfill an obligation to a developer is all that is about. It's not meeting any of the needs of the community." (Makela, community resident)

- If the process though, of engagement is truncated too much – whatever that too much is – sometimes you also miss out on some important stuff. So you may still have a decision to have an infill project, but if the process of engagement is really good you might find out that it's really not the best spot on the land. It's not the best orientation, there could be some modifications that with the community would have a far better outcome and people might go, "Yeah, now that we're looking at it this way, this is good." And I think that's a little bit where some of the angst has also come through the processes as well. (Bevan, elected official)
- On principle we absolutely objected tremendously because this was public land. This was public land that was being privatized. I think it would have been easier to stomach if a) it would have remained, if the idea was to keep it public, but then you asked people what should go on this public land...It was definitely a process issue and it was a principle issue that it was public land. It was public land being (originally) dedicated by the developer for a public purpose...And then to turn around and give it to a different developer, to develop and make money from it, even if you were really shall we say pro business...I think people saw it as being unfair to the development industry the way it was handled." (Eve, community NGO)

I-6: Administrative Premises

MGA gives municipal reserve lands (i.e., park lands) special status not provided to other parcels of land; prior to 2006 reserves could only be used for school and park purposes, the reserve designation is listed on title, and can only be removed by elected officials in a public process. The approval of the *JUA* since 1960 has meant that the school boards and city jointly determine land allocations and locations using the premise of joint use of sites and each other facilities. Once park lands are acquired based on approved area plans, the land is titled and held in the inventory of the *COE*. Park lands zoning is applied approved by City Council once park or school development of the site proceeds.

Once developed to base level, community recreation coordinators work with the community on an on-going basis to develop need assessments, and with other members of the administration (e.g., park lands planners, project managers) to construct cost shared development (playgrounds, plazas, lighting) and enhanced community park development (e.g.,

community halls, skating rinks, etc.). Schools have their own development timelines dictated by provincial government funding support.

In the 2006 and 2009 surplus school site redevelopment processes, elected officials acted as both initiators and approvers of the land use change. The community had no legal right to overturn a council decision.

(a) City of Edmonton owned the parcels being surplus and sold as per legislation, and therefore have all the rights of landowners as per the *MGA*.

(b) Land use change requests must be initiated by the landowner. The land use planners must process land use change requests; to do so they engage internal staff, community and others in arriving at a decision. City Council had previously approved both the *Kaskitayo Outline Plan* (1973) and the *Mill Woods Development Concept* (1971) that included the school and park sites the subject of this inquiry.

(c) Internal city government application review participants contribute to a land use file decision, but the land use planners mediate and arrive at a corporate decision. Where disagreements exist, the city has a “one city” practice to help internal actors arrive at a corporate position.

(c) MGA gives municipal reserve lands (i.e., park lands) special status not provided to other parcels of land; reserves could only be used for school and park purposes, the reserve designation is listed on title, and can only be removed by elected officials in a public process.

(d) Land use change requests must be approved by municipal councillors based on a council report format specific to each municipality. The inclusions and format are the responsibility of the City Manager. There is no appeal mechanism to council land use decisions except where GoA MGA process mandates have been violated.

(e) Increased Capital Region Board (CRB) residential density targets approved since the time of the initial approval of the *Kaskitayo* and *Mill Woods OP's*.

(f) Policies drive implementation, including providing a diverse range of housing, access and use of park sites (e.g., *JUA*, *UPMP*), but can be waived unilaterally by elected officials.

(g) Front line staff (e.g., CRC's, Planners, Operations staff) work with community to implement legislation, policies and funding programs in support of strategic direction provided by elected officials.

(h) Joint Use Agreement and Tri-Partite Agreement between City, Boards and *EFCL* promote shared site development and use.

(i) School boards request new school construction from the GoA based on population and growth trends. The GoA manages new school requests province wide.

Data Supportive of Surplus School Initiative:

The amount of park lands based primarily on legislation. There is not a universally accepted amount of greenspace. Therefore, surplussing a portion of a site might not be consequential. Both area plans had park lands dedication above 10%, which is today's acquisition standard. The *GoA* and school boards no longer needed the school building envelopes for school construction so the land appeared to be vacant. Public notice and public hearings were waived in 2006 but this occurred with the concurrence of the *GoA*. Therefore *MGA* process dictates were massaged but not violated.

Elected officials argued that there was an affordable housing emergency. Within their broad mandate provided by the *MGA*, elected officials had the right to change land uses based on local priorities that they were seemingly addressing.

Data Incompatible with the Surplus School Initiative

Public notice and public hearing were waived by the *GoA* through a two year process that included members of the administration, yet no dialogue with the community occurred despite policy direction to do so. In both 2006 and 2009, omnibus council reporting that effectively limited public discourse. Internal oppositional voices requested retention of some of the sites as recreational lands and a return to standard policy, but were silenced by the appointment of administrative gatekeepers. As the initiative rolled out, the gatekeepers used ambiguous terminology, inaccurate or incomplete knowledge dissemination to inform implementation. Despite the fact that the existing policy framework could have

accommodated the same outcomes for most if not all sites, the above extraordinary administrative efforts were made to implement the political decision.

Administrative Premises Commentary

- Compromises are made. There's never anything ideal. We have certain standards and attributes that we like to put in some of these park sites. In part sites I also include natural areas, which is a big part of the City now. That part of our assembly business. Within those plans I think the basics are the MGA allows us 10% of the land area, gross developable area, to be used for school and park purposes. We have to stay within that-or it is city requirements or policy at this point- to stay within 10% in that (area plan) area. So we do have some restrictions on what we can put together, where we can put together, how much we allocate for different functions. Those functions being the parks and recreation and school functions, greenways, tree stands, sloughs or other natural areas that have to be assembled in order to put together a system. The ASP is a general concept, although things are fairly well worked out... When you get down to the NSP you dealing with more detail, its on a smaller scale. You are looking at configuration, your looking at probably size a little bit more detail and general locations in order to make it work for the neighbourhood, make it work for the community, make sure there is a fair allocation of the space. The actual assembly of the site comes at the subdivision stage. (Stan, parkland planner)
- We're not taking away park space, we are developing on only a surplus school site and they were only temporary at any time. (Frank, elected official)
- The bigger question was, well what is this anyways because people kept calling it (Blue Quill site) a park, that's a pretty poor definition of a park. It's a soccer field three to four months of the year, little bit of baseball and the rest of the time its covered in snow and nobody uses it." (Bevan, elected official, November 22, 2017).
- Yes, it (the community) would have (public) access (to the facility/land) because the school boards and the city of Edmonton are inextricably linked into joint use agreements. We provide them with rinks and pools and fields for their programs during the day and they provide us with their buildings in the evening for community use. (Frank, elected official).
- One of the things we do well, is we try to provide space to non-profit recreation, cultural and athletic groups, part of the delivery is to our facilities the municipal facilities and the schools. We built them, the same tax dollar. Joint use allows for the school board and the city to do certain things in unison, so that the net effect would be more space that is provided for groups; music groups, cub scouts, volleyball, badminton at night, whatever the case might be. So the JUA allowed for that whereby we designed and helped assembled all those spaces. (Rick, parkland planner)

- We (school boards) introduce them (new requests for school construction funding) into our capital priorities plan that we put before our board every year...Then we wait until there is funding (from the GoA)...There is no predictability to that.” (Garth, school board planner)
- My concern was that those individual neighbourhoods did not have a chance to separate out their surplus school site from the group and say, ‘It might be ok for all of them, but in our circumstance it’s this. We are unique for the following reasons.’ They didn’t have a chance to argue it.” (Frank, elected official)
- My summary of the whole situation is that powerful people have done everything they can to suppress public consultation on these issues. I mean every step they can possibly take.” (Barry, community member)
- No no, I don’t recall (*EFCL* or community leagues) being approached at all. I really don’t. I remember dealing with the issue after the fact....Well it was a done deal. So it was a done deal so these lands were rezoned for first time homebuyers....And I know there was an uproar from the community leagues. You could appeal to your councillors (to) see if they would reverse their decision but it was a very political decision. We had no, really no good advice (for) people to reverse that decision other than swaying politicians.” (Eve, community NGO).
- I think the program is more important than the numbers. (Stan, parkland planner, November 16, 2016)
- With respect to internal roles and responsibilities and decision-making: The CRC role, which is also changing now, dramatically, the CRC unfortunately their role with respect to the communities and their role with respect to the Corporation is neutralized. I am ~~try~~ trying to think of the right word. They were not respected by AMPW at all. They were viewed as allies of the community, and not representatives of the Corporation. As such it didn’t matter what issues, those in the Administration at least in AMPW did not rely on the CRC to be able to convey the message to the community. It was not a partnership at all, and as I said the CRC was seen being more as a spokesman for the community than the city. (Phil, land management planner, pers. comm., November 11, 2016).
- If the process though, of engagement is truncated too much – whatever that too much is – sometimes you also miss out on some important stuff. So you may still have a decision to have an infill project, but if the process of engagement is really good you might find out that it’s really not the best spot on the land. It’s not the best orientation, there could be some modifications that with the community would have a far better outcome and people might go, “Yeah, now that we’re looking at it this way, this is good.” And I think that’s a little bit where some of the angst has also come through the processes as well. (Bevan, elected official)

I-7: Means/Ends Link to Goals

It is more than a plausible argument that redevelopment of park lands will densify development in already developed areas, take advantage of existing infrastructure and provide more community league participants in the receiving areas. Moreover, repurposing park lands

for market housing was not unprecedented supported by existing legislation, policy, processes and practices. However, legislation was manipulated by state actors, they violated previously espoused values (i.e., engaged citizenry), and sold units at market prices. Elected officials relied on their own experiences, biases and assessments of their political capital in decision-making as no studies supported, contextualized or qualified the housing crisis, park lands surplus perspective or locational considerations (i.e., why here on these sites).

If the political goal was to create a sustainable city while engaging the citizenry in that process, this was an epic fail. However, if the redevelopment of public land was the political goal they were successful largely because they could manipulate legislation to support their narrative. This points to the pre-carity of public lands as defined by legislation.

Appendix J: Path Creating Bylaws, Plans, Policies and Funding Agreement Summary

Path Creation Tool	Description	Impact	Implementation
A. Planning Act/Municipal Government Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation that establishes the provincial framework for all aspects of municipal operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning section allows 10% of gross developable area for parks and school purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through area structure plans, using 10% of the gda for school and park purposes
B. 1959 <i>Joint Use Agreement or the JUA</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement to co-locate school and park sites between school boards and the city, share each other's assets (land, facilities) and share development costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to identify park lands in area plans' development • Synergizes public land's use between public entities using park lands dedication • Public has access to school gymnasiums, classrooms, and parking at night; on weekends and in the summer, schools have access to parks during day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used as a basis for planning for all municipal reserve lands across the city since 1959
C. Park Plans -1970-1980 <i>Parks Master Plan</i> -1979-1983 <i>Parks Master Plan</i> - <i>Parks and Recreation Management Plan (1985)</i> -2006-2016 <i>Urban Parks Management Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines policy and park systems requirements for planning, design, and operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drives park programs identified in area and neighbourhood plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used when reviewing all area plans in the master plan period
D. 1971 <i>Kaskitayo Outline Plan (Blue Quill)</i> Note: Outline plans and area plans are the same.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines land use framework for Blue Quill neighbourhood • Creates a park system within the area plan (i.e., District Park, Neighbourhood School and Park sites) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Quill Park site with three schools are located with program identified (i.e., type of schools, size, field requirements, location, configuration) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented through plans of subdivision, zoning, engineering drawing, and servicing agreements consistent with outline plan and associated amendments

Path Creation Tool	Description	Impact	Implementation
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land assembly complete in late 1970s
<p>E. 1973 <i>Mill Woods Development Concept</i></p> <p>Development Concepts and Area Plans are the same.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines land use framework for Greenview neighbourhood • Creates a park system within the ASP (i.e., District Park, Neighbourhood School and Park sites) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenview School and Park site with two school are located on urban landscape with program identified (i.e., type of schools, size, field requirements, location, configuration) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented through plans of subdivision, zoning, engineering drawing, and servicing agreements consistent with outline plan and associated amendments • Land assembly complete in late 1970s
F. 1980 Policy C110, <i>City/EFCL Relationship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy designed to clarify the role of the Edmonton Federation of Community League (NGO) in representing the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified <i>EFCL</i> as a primary body for the city when consulting with the community in all matters including parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used for issues small and large where the city desires input from the community.
G. 1982+ <i>Neighbourhood Park Development Program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates shared funding strategy for park development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a co-production of space approach to park development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple park sites across the city funded including Blue Quill and Greenview were cost shared and funded through this program and later iterations.
H. City 1994 <i>Surplus School Policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a process to review each surplus site with communities through a quantitative and qualitative recreation need assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied to surplus school site reviews once school boards declare a site surplus to educational need prior to consideration by city council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Quill Estates and others reviewed with the community; 13 in total
I. 2006-2016 <i>Urban Parks Management Plan (June 2006)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides policy guidelines for acquisition, development, programming, maintenance of park lands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconfirmed surplus site process to undertake quantitative and qualitative recreation needs assessment prior to surplussing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used in all park decision-making

Path Creation Tool	Description	Impact	Implementation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined school lands as park lands 	
J. 2006 Omnibus Area Plan Amendment (November/December 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rezoned 20 sites as 1 ha park parcels for residential on each site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One parcel in each of Blue Quill and Greenview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -Re-zonings and surplussing occurred without recreation needs assessment or any community input • 40 unit housing built in 2008 in Greenview
K. 2009 Omnibus Area Plan Amendment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rezoned additional park lands sites for seniors housing without recreation need assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -One additional parcel in Blue Quill • -Re-zonings and surplussing occurred without recreation needs assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No recreation needs assessment • Blue Quill rezoned in 2015, development under construction in 2018, twelve years after initial rezoning.

Appendix K — 2006 Surplus Parkland Sites Summary - First Time Homebuyers Program (FTHB) Sites

The table below summarized relevant data for each site that was approved for FTHB sites organized by housing construction development timeline. The intent of this appendix is to identify the site, review and development status of each of the 20 sites approved without community input in 2006

ASP Approval Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Neighb. Area Plan Approv. Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Building Envelope/ Total Site Areas	Council Reports (17-11-2006 and (28-11-2006)	First Time Homebuyer Program COE Web Page	April 1, 2006 Admin. Memo	Additional Data
Pilot Project Sites (2)						
<i>Mill Woods OP</i> (??-03-1971)	Greenview (part of <i>MW OP</i>)	1.40 ha/ 10.67 ha	Included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Adequate before but not after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB, junior high • The site was adequate prior to disposition; after disposition would be below standard • Housing constructed by 2008 (pilot site) • 2005 pop'n = 3,016 • 2016 pop'n = 2,643
<i>Hermitage General OP</i> (11-05-1970)	Canon Ridge (part of <i>Hermitage OP</i>)	1.20 ha/ 5.37 ha	Included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB site • Housing construction completed by 2008 (pilot site) • 2005 pop'n = 1,130 • 2016 pop'n 2,147 •

ASP Approval Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Neighb. Area Plan Approv. Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Building Envelope/ Total Site Areas	Council Reports (17-11-2006 and (28-11-2006)	First Time Homebuyer Program COE Web Page	April 1, 2006 Admin. Memo	Additional Data
Sites Started or Completed (9)						
<i>Castledowns Outline Plan</i> (06-10-1971)	Caernarvon (part of <i>Castledowns OP</i>)	1.4 ha / 7.12 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB, 7-9 site (junior high) • April 1, 2005 memo-quant. assess. deemed “adequate” • Housing site constructed by 2012 • 2005 pop’n = 4,394 • 2016 pop’n = 4,339
<i>Mill Woods OP</i> (??-03-1971)	Tawa (part of <i>MW OP</i>)	0.80 ha / 7.90 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB, elementary • Housing construction complete by 2015 • 2005 pop’n = 1,804 • 2016 pop’n = 2,032
<i>Kaskitayo OP</i> (23-10-1973)	Bearspaw (part of <i>Kaskitayo OP</i>)	1.2 ha / 5.48 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-6 EPSB site; • April 1, 2005 memo-quant. assess. deemed “adequate” • Construction complete in approx. 2016
<i>Clareview Outline Plan</i> (18-05-1972)	<i>Kernohan NSP</i> (not included on COE Web)	1.20 ha / 4.73 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB, Elementary, K-6 • Housing construction complete by 2016

ASP Approval Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Neighb. Area Plan Approv. Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Building Envelope/ Total Site Areas	Council Reports (17-11-2006 and (28-11-2006)	First Time Homebuyer Program COE Web Page	April 1, 2006 Admin. Memo	Additional Data
<i>The Meadows ASP</i> (21-01-2004)	<i>Larkspur NSP</i> (08-12-1987)	1.60 ha/ 12.23 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB, elementary to junior high • Housing construction completed by 2017 • Larkspur was added to the Meadows ASP in 2004.
<i>Terwillegar Heights SCDB</i> (14-09-1992)	<i>Haddow NASP</i> (22-07-1993)	0.80 ha 8.92 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB, elementary • Housing Construction complete by 2018
<i>Kaskitayo OP</i> (23-10-1973)	Blue Quill (part of <i>Kaskitayo OP</i>)	1.2ha / 15.58 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7-9 EPSB School • April 1, 2005 memo-quant. assess. deemed "adequate" • 2018 housing sites (2) nearing completion
<i>Riverbend ASP</i> (12-09-1979)	<i>Bulyea Hts NSP</i> (11-02-1986)	0.8 ha/ 11.61 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB • 81.06 ha's, 1,152 units (112 MDR's-not including SS) • Housing site under construction in 2018
<i>Clareview Outline Plan</i> (18-05-1972)	<i>Kirkness NSP</i> (12-10-1978)	1.4 ha/ 14.78 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB Junior High • Housing site under construction in 2019

ASP Approval Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Neighb. Area Plan Approv. Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Building Envelope/ Total Site Areas	Council Reports (17-11-2006 and (28-11-2006)	First Time Homebuyer Program COE Web Page	April 1, 2006 Admin. Memo	Additional Data
			2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report			
No Construction Activity – 10 sites in 9 Neighbourhoods						
<i>Edmonton North ASP (15-08-1979)</i>	<i>Belle Rive NSP (23-02-1982)</i>	1.4 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed in April 1, 2006 memo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB site, elementary junior high on Belle River District Park • 66.14 ha's, 1,250 units (103 MDR's-not including SS), 4,208 pop'n • No evidence of housing construction
<i>Kaskitayo OP (23-10-1973)</i>	<i>Skyrattler (part of Kaskitayo OP)</i>	1.2 ha/ 7.34/ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB Elementary, K-6 • No evidence of housing construction but site may be relocated
<i>Castledowns Outline Plan (06-10-1971)</i>	<i>Dunluce (part of Castledowns Outline Plan)</i>	1.2 ha/ 5.66 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB, elementary • No evidence of housing construction by 2018
<i>Casselman Steele Hts (18-05-72)</i>	<i>McLeod (part of Cassel-Steele Hts)</i>	1.20 ha/ 6.02 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Not listed on COE FTHB page		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence of housing construction by 2018 • Unclear what happened to this site

ASP Approval Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Neighb. Area Plan Approv. Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Building Envelope/ Total Site Areas	Council Reports (17-11-2006 and (28-11-2006)	First Time Homebuyer Program COE Web Page	April 1, 2006 Admin. Memo	Additional Data
<i>Mill Woods OP (??-03-1971)</i>	Michaels Park (MP)	0.80 ha/ 8.99 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Only 1 MP site listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB, elementary • It could be that the administration is waiting for a proposal • No evidence of housing constructed by 2018
<i>Mill Woods OP (??-03-1971)</i>	Michaels Park (Part of <i>Mill Woods OP</i>)	1.20 ha/ 8.99 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Only 1 MP site listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPSB, elementary • No evidence of housing constructed by 2018
<i>Clareview Outline Plan (18-05-1972)</i>	Sifton Park (part of <i>Clareview Outline Plan</i>)	0.8 ha/ 7.75 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB, Elementary, K-6 • No evidence of housing constructed by 2018
<i>Twin Brooks NASP (23-02-1982)</i>	Twin Brooks (part of <i>Twin Brooks NASP</i>)	0.80 ha 9.07 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Listed on COE FTHB page	Not analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB, Elementary • No evidence of housing construction
<i>West Jasper Place Outline Plan (18-05-1972)</i>	<i>La Perle NSP (15-08-1979)</i>	0.8 ha/ 10.98 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Not on COE FTHB site	Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECSB elementary site • No evidence of housing construction

ASP Approval Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Neighb. Area Plan Approv. Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Building Envelope/ Total Site Areas	Council Reports (17-11-2006 and (28-11-2006)	First Time Homebuyer Program COE Web Page	April 1, 2006 Admin. Memo	Additional Data
<i>West Jasper Place Outline Plan (18-05-1972)</i>	<i>Dechene NSP (24-09-1979)</i>	1.2 ha/ 13.18 ha	Site included in Council Report Attach. #3 of 17-11-2006 report, and in 28-11-2006 report	Deleted due to site geotechnical concerns	Not Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site eliminated due to site geotechnical reasons

Notes:

Bldg. Env./ Total Site – For example, West Jasper Place-Dechene: the building envelope size is 1.20 ha’s and the total site size is 13.18 ha’s

Council Reports –On November 17, 2006 Mayor Mandel authored a council report reflecting the agreement with the *GoA* and the school boards that waived the public hearing process. It was approved in camera. On November 28, 2006 there was a follow-u administrative report that supported area plan and zoning bylaw amendments, but could not be approved until December 12, 2006 due to the opposition of a minority of councillors.

First Time Home Buyers (FTHB) – Sites listed on the city web page as a first time homebuyers site – included means the site is included in this list of FTHB sites.

April 1, 2006 Admin. Memo – Sites analyzed by parkland planners on quantitative adequacy measure in April 1, 2006 memorandum used to provide input into the surplussing process. Adequate = meets acquisition standards. Not adequate = does not meet acquisition standards.

Of the twenty sites identified in November of 2006 to address a housing emergency, thirteen years later two were built as pilot

projects, nine were started or completed, seven have not broken ground, one site will be relocated due to local pressure and one site

was deleted to site geotechnical concerns. For those that have been completed with adequate time for the number of residents to be counted, Greenview (-373) and Caernarvon (-55) neighbourhoods experienced decreases in population (2005-2016), while Canon Ridge (+1,017) and Tawa (+228) experienced increases in population. The developments themselves would have accounted for approximately 100 new residents (40 units @2.5 per unit) per neighbourhood. Finally it should be noted that there is no official record that was uncovered that showed a complete quantitative parkland analysis had been completed; qualitative analysis as per the 1994 surplus school site report was entirely waived by elected officials. A partial analysis was cross referenced with the city data (April 1, 2006 memo).