The Edmonton General Plan Citizen Participation Program

VOLUME I

JUNE - 1979

EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dear Sir:

It is with great pleasure that we submit our first report regarding the input of citizen participation to the Edmonton General Plan Review. This report documents Phase II: Exploration of Issues and Alternatives, and Phase III: Consideration of Alternatives.

We trust that this information will prove helpful to you in the preparation of the General Plan, and we look forward to your evaluation and response.

We thank the various members of the City Council and Administration who have been helpful and supportive of this effort. Above all, we thank the many citizen volunteers who participated whole-heartedly in the ambiguous and complex task of planning our future.

Respectfully,

F. Donald Sax, President.

EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL

SYNOPSIS

The Edmonton Social Planning Council was contracted to initiate a process for citizen input to the Review of Edmonton's General Plan. This provided for the involvement of citizens, over a period of time from six months before the publication of the first draft of the Plan through to the final public hearings. To date approximately 400 persons have participated in public meetings and workshops. The intent of the workshops was to give citizens a way to see the complexities and ambiguities in deciding how the city should grow; to struggle with trade-offs; to see the city as a whole instead of in parts and to communicate their values to the General Plan Review Team of what makes a city a viable place in which to live.

The workshops focused on four major questions:

- (1) Where will growth be distributed in the Edmonton Urgan Region?
- (2) What city form will be best suited to handle the growth?
- (3) What are the strategies to handle growth?
- (4) How will growth be controlled?

Choices made in these areas were supported with discussion of the values, trade-offs and uncertainties behind their decisions.

This report is a summary of the results of these workshops, and is submitted to the Planning Department for their evaluation and response as they prepare the first draft. This is, in effect, one more step in the dialogue between the City and its citizens in the planning for the future.

The results have been summarized in three ways: a summary of values people expressed in their written reports; a summary of alternative scenarios taken from their charts and the written reports; and a summary of statistics taken from their charts. These summaries indicate certain areas of general agreement as well as other areas of no apparent consensus.

There appears to be general agreement in favor of some form of decentralization of housing, employment opportunities, social, recreation and commercial services. Sub-centres, sub-cities, or diversified employment centres were most often preferred. The movement pattern for people and products is seen as necessarily combining circular routes connecting sub-centres with radial connections to the city centre.

The choice of higher densities for both the inner city and the suburbs was generally accepted with differing opinions as to how and where those higher densities should be developed. The concept of the suburban employment centre with some adjacent concentration of density also appears frequently. In many of the chosen alternatives these centres included office and commercial space and light industry. There was a desire for aesthetically pleasing combinations of low-rise and high-rise developments including the provision of human services; i.e. parks and recreation, health and welfare; and safety and security. The promotion of community identity, uniqueness and character was expressed in many of the alternatives. With regard to suburban, industrial, and residential land, the need for some expansion was generally expressed, but usually with reservation regarding the consumption of agricultural land or so-called urban sprawl.

In discussing problems of controlling and managing growth there was a strong preference for some form of regional organization to enable better co-ordination and co-operation. A modified ward system more closely related to geographic and social realities was high favored in terms of municipal control. Within the context of the municipality, it was indicated improved opportunities for citizen participation in decision making through advisory roles and limited control over some local and neighborhood issues was preferred.

It was repeatedly stated that the downtown needs to be a vital, alive cultural and social centre. A twenty-four hour place for people. Such an atmosphere is seen as being created and maintained by a downtown mix of resident families, cultures, income levels, and commercial enterprises.

The process required participants to look beyond their neighborhood to the city as a whole and state their values regarding the quality of life in Edmonton in the light of the practical realities of a growing Edmonton urban region. This report reflects these citizens' vision of their city, Edmonton, to the Year 2001.

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Refer to Volume II for Appendices.

PREFACE

A. THE PROCESS

The Edmonton Social Planning Council has been contracted to facilitate public input to the Review of the Edmonton General Plan. The intent has been to:

- a) involve citizens in considering various practical alternatives for the accommodation of future growth to the city and region,
- b) provide a method for discussion of values and trade-offs in relation to the chosen alternatives.
- c) initiate a co-operative dialogue that would bring together the concerns and vision of citizens with the professional knowledge of the planner, and
- d) involve citizens in the design, operation and monitoring of the project consistent with the terms of the contract.

This project has five components:

- a) Phase I: The Initiation of the Process,
- b) Phase II: The Exploration of Issues and Alternatives,
- c) Phase III: The Consideration of the Alternatives.
- d) Phase IV: The Evaluation of the General Plan,
- e) Phase V: The Recommendations to Public Hearings.

This report documents the citizen input from Phases I through III. Phases IV and V will be documented upon their completion after the publication of the first draft of the General Plan. This report, in effect, comprises 'front-end' input from citizens to the Planning Department. It provides the General Plan Review Team with a statement of values and concerns of citizens for consideration in the preparation of the General Plan.

In all of its Phases the project has involved a wide range of volunteers. It was managed by a volunteer Citizens' Management Team. Phase I, in February and March, 1979, included the publication by the City Planning Department of various Issue Papers, Open Houses and eight Public Information Exchanges. The intent of the Information Exchanges was to give citizens a basic understanding of the General Plan and the citizen participation process.

The public workshop process gave citizens an objective way to think through how the city could accommodate growth and still maintain human standards and was also a means to consider what their values were and where they were willing to compromise and make trade-offs.

The workshop process was developed by a group of volunteers who modified the method known as "Aids to Strategic Choices". This provided the basis for a 'build your own city' simulation game used in the area community workshops. This game provided a practical starting point for citizens to discuss the values issues and trade-offs involved in planning the city.

They struggled with how to handle the possibility of approximately 500,000 more people moving to the Edmonton region in the next 15-20 year period: where they would live and work; how they would get around; and how they would be governed. On the second night of the workshops, the groups discussed and described their reasons and values behind the choices made. These alternatives, choices and value statements form a major part of this report.

B. THE PEOPLE

The results outlined in this report were obtained in part from eight information sessions and eight community workshops, all open to the general public in different parts of the city. In addition, a special session was requested by the Calder Community League and the Calder Action Committee (Neighborhood Improvement Plan). The total attendance at all these meetings was 425 persons, coming from all parts of the city.

To broaden the data base, special meetings are planned during May and early June with a number of ethnic and community groups. This data will be compiled and presented to the City Planning Department.

^{1 &}quot;The Analysis of Policy Options in Structure Plan Preparation" by the Institute of Operational Research - Unit of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations.

C. DATA DESCRIPTION

The data from the workshops has been recorded in the following ways:

- 1. Chapter I is a summary of values and concerns. It represents a summarization of the area workshops and is supported by quotations from the original workshop data.
- 2. Chapter II discusses the context for developing alternative scenarios and provides a brief summary of them. It describes the process by which another group of volunteers reviewed the alternative scenarios and checked them for compatibility and consistency and the results of that process. It lists the trade-offs people were willing to entertain and summarizes statistically the choices made on the alternative scenarios. It is to be noted that these statistics are a tabulation of the views expressed by the workshop participants and does not necessarily represent the views of citizens at large.
- 3. Chapter III is a report on the results of the 'I Love Edmonton' program.
- 4. Appendix A includes area workshop summaries which were prepared by a group of workshop participants, workshop leaders and project staff. It also includes the reports from the workshop groups. Only the sentence structure has been edited. Otherwise, the reports are exactly as originally written by the participants.
- 5. Appendix B provides a description of methodology behind the workshop process and supporting data for its development.
- 6. Appendix C includes all the matrices used to review the alternative scenarios, the generally preferred alternative scenarios, and the statistics.
- 7. Appendix D represents the preliminary documentation of the responses to the 'I Love Edmonton' Day questionnaires.

D. "I LOVE EDMONTON"

Created by members of the Citizen Management Committee and numerous volunteers in the city, this project provided a special opportunity for people in Edmonton to express their concerns, hopes and visions for the city. The chief purpose of the day was to get a positive input in designing a city of the future. A questionnaire, distributed to the Edmonton Public and Separate School systems and several stores and fast food outlets, formed the focal point of the day. It was also a day of celebration which included a flag raising, a declaration from the Mayor, street theatre and radio and television publicity. Chapter 4 and Appendix D in this report are devoted exclusively to the results from thousands of questionnaires filled in by students and citizens during this occasion.

E. ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

The process used in the area workshops has had an impact on the school systems in Edmonton. The workshop is currently being adapted by a sub-committee of the Edmonton 75th Anniversary Committee (School System Liaison) to be part of a package for use in all schools in the city. To date, the workshop has been successfully tested with over sixty Grade 6 students in the city.

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY OF VALUES

1. GROWTH

"The General Plan is a long range planning document which sets out the city's future growth strategy ... the General Plan in fact will affect the life of every Edmontonian in some way." (1) For the most part, citizens who participated in the Public Workshops felt that growth was inevitable and that the General Plan needed to address itself to creative and responsible ways of dealing with and controlling growth.

A. Strategy

While many participants preferred the minimum growth option, on second reflection they felt that this was probably unrealistic. Those groups that worked on a minimum option felt that 'bigger is not better'. "We chose the minimum growth option because we already have a cross section of people (nationalities), a reasonable tax base, are beginning to have a history and a reasonable quality of life. Minimum growth is easier to control and plan for. Growth brings complications and does not necessarily make a better city." (2)

Other groups suggested that the maximum option was undesirable because of the "Boom Town" consequences. "We wanted to examine the maximum alternative as one likely possibility. Not to look at it would be not to anticipate its effects if it came." (3) The majority of the participants picked the medium growth option because they felt it reflected the present trends. "We chose the medium growth option because we know the trend is established and planning for this growth on a large scale will be more realistic." (4)

B. Land Use

People were concerned that the General Plan treat land use planning and management as a priority. The underlying values expressed were the conservation of prime agricultural land, energy efficiency and responsible management in the assessment of costs and trade-offs in land expansion.

Although these values were generally expressed in a variety of ways, many contradictory statements were made regarding the economics of raw land servicing, housing costs and taxes. This is illustrated in the following statements: "We chose very moderate expansion to accommodate inevitable growth but we really don't want to take up valuable farm land. We would rather go to higher density." (5) "A compact city conserves energy." (6) "Moderate expansion would be relatively cost efficient - increase availability of housing and reduce the cost of housing." (7) "Moderate expansion reduces costs in transportation routes."

It is apparent that although people were not clear on the means by which these expressed values can be realized, they did begin considering trade-offs. Suggestions regarding land use planning included: "develop land within the city; set up a land bank system; relocate the Industrial airport to the International airport; and set aside land now for ring routes." (10)

C. Industrial Expansion

Citizens hoped that the General Plan would deal with the expansion and control of industrial development. While there was no consensus on whether or not the city needs more industrial land, people felt that heavy industry needed to be downwind and on the periphery of the city, thus controlling pollution. The impact of industry on the environment is a concern. It was stated that the city "could have industry integrated more if there were more strict pollution controls." (11) It is "important to leave large industries outside city limits with stringent environmental controls."

Participants dealt with the issue of the industrial tax base in several ways; for instance: "it is desirable to increase the industrial development within the city to broaden the tax base," (13) "they could be located outside existing city limits with tax

sharing arrangements." (14) "We want Sherwood Park, St. Albert, Strathcona County's Refinery Row annexed because they are predominantly dependant on Edmonton." (15)

People were concerned also with proximity to residential areas and the visual and social impact of industrial development. "As the population grows, some compatible industries could come into residential and commercial sub-centres to support employment close to where people live." (16) "Buildings should be aesthetically pleasing, well landscaped with a mixture of commercial, industrial and recreational facilities." (17)

See Appendix No. A for the following:

- (1) Edmonton General Plan A Citizen's Preview; City of Edmonton Planning, February, 1979: Page 2, (2) Ross Sheppard Group #5,
- (3) St. Paul's Group #5, (4) Northgate Lions Group #2,
- (5) Northgate Lions Group #4, (6) Meadowlark Lions Group #1,
- (7) Meadowlark Group #4, (8) St. Paul's Group #5, (9) Calder Group #1, (10) A.C.T. Group #1, (11) Millwoods from Chart,
- (12) St. Paul's Group #4, (13) Ibid, (14) Ross Sheppard #3,
- (15) Commonwealth Stadium Group #4, (16) Ross Sheppard Group #1,
- (17) Ross Sheppard Group #3.

II NEIGHBORHOOD

In the workshop process the participants were required to 'design a city' and record the values they held when making choices from various options. The majority of people chose some form of a decentralized city pattern. In this regard many values about the form and nature of 'neighborhoods' were expressed. It was hoped that the General Plan would address these neighborhood related issues.

A. <u>City Form</u>

Most people chose a decentralized (sub-cities) form of the city because they felt it would promote neighborhood integrity. In this context a neighborhood was defined as an area with a unique and identifiable character to which people could relate. These neighborhoods would contain employment, education, commercial, recreational and social facilities that would allow people to live, work, play and receive necessary social, and possibly, political services at this level. The value expressed is that this would "promote neighborhood feeling and loyalties by making areas small enough to be comprehensible and personal". (1)

Given the fact that the city will grow, people expressed concern that Edmonton not suffer the social consequences that large size brings, i.e. anonymity, loss of identity and crime. They suggested that ways be found "to allow people to work closer to their homes, decrease travel time, distribute traffic, promote district identity and accessibility of services". (2) According to citizens a decentralized city pattern seemed best suited to promote this.

They also believe that, in addition to promoting community identity, a decentralized city form would enhance the possibilities of citizen involvement in the affairs of their community. They said it would promote "greater participation, more positive attitude towards one's environment". (3) It would create community spirit and "promote safety and security by making twenty-four hour urban activities available in various locations". (4)

B. Housing Design and Controls

Citizens expectations for the General Plan are that it will lay the foundation for housing design controls. One value expressed was the need for mixed housing type rather than monotonous styles. Participants expressed the opinion that they did not "want blocks of high-rises or row after row of three storey walk-ups."

(5) Rather, we must "have better control in housing designs to make the mixing (of housing types and styles) more acceptable."

(6) It was suggested that the city provide "incentives for innovative housing designs."

The participants asked for the establishment of housing design guidelines, that would encourage energy efficient and aesthetically pleasing homes and buildings. Suggestions were made about the possibility of utilizing solar energy for heating. "The right to sunlight for all lots is a policy to be considered."

It was hoped the General Plan would "plan for attractive development of mixed forms of shelter, space the high-rises, low buildings and single family dwellings which allow for air movements and not wind tunnels. Face the dwellings in the most advantageous direction for heat conservation and pleasant living conditions. Zoning by-laws should be carefully designed and enforced to prevent over-development." (9)

C. Density

Hopefully, the General Plan can establish policies to deal with the accompodation of higher residential density without the accompanying social problems. Participants felt this could be accomplished by careful consideration about where and how higher density is developed. "It is important to consider design in developing various types of housing and increasing density to blend with present development." (10) The pattern of density reflects earlier statements about the form and function of the city. "Around new sub-city centres you could increase density giving the

possibility for living and working, shopping and entertainment in my own sub-city." (11) The merit of a pleasant, human living environment available to everyone was another value expressed. "In keeping with sub-centres concept we want to distribute the growth to more or less equalize the city residential density. Distribution of the density across the whole city rather than concentrating it in one or in a few areas would also hold the aesthetics." (12) "Scattered density - breathing space between large buildings." (13)

D. Lifestyles

Participants were asked to look at the city from the human perspective to make choices and reflect on the human values implicit in those choices. They raised choice of lifestyle as an important issue in the development of a desirable city and that the General Plan encourage a variety and choice of dwellings in the city. "An alternative to single family dwellings ought to be available in every community." (14) This is consistant with values held regarding the city form in the promotion of variety and would give a healthy mixture of age groups and income levels." (15) As mentioned in the Section III DOWNTOWN, it is hoped the General Plan will consider low-income families and recommend ways to avoid "ghettoization" and the resultant social problems. Lifestyle of residents was seen as being improved by a sense of community and it was hoped the General Plan would promote this by allowing for the preservation of neighborhoods, recycling buildings, renovation and repairing rather than replacing where feasible." (16) It was also hoped the General Plan would establish definite guidelines for re-zoning, and that it would place "restrictions on re-zoning to preserve neighborhood character, i.e. one high-rise per area or so many walk-ups, etc." (17) Leisure areas in a growing city were also noted as important; "with high density one needs more family oriented parks, picnic areas, with shape, form, trees not just playing fields." (18)

See Appendix No. A for the following:

- St. Paul's Group #1, (2) Ross Sheppard Group #3, (3)
 Calder Group #5, (4) Meadowlark Group #6, (5) Ross Sheppard
 Group #3, (6) Northgate Group #2, (7) Ross Sheppard Group
 #3, (8) St. Paul's Group #4, (9) Ross Sheppard Group #4,
- (10) Commonwealth Stadium Group #2, (11) Meadowlark Group #6,
- (12) Ross Sheppard Group #2, (13) Calder Group #5,
- (14) St. Paul's Group #2, (15) Ross Sheppard Group #3,
- (16) St. Paul's Group #1, (17) Commonwealth Stadium Group #6,
- (18) Northgate Group #4.

III DOWNTOWN

People regarded decentralization as an important means of creating unique identifiable "suburban" communities. However, they felt that the downtown was the symbolic centre of the city - the 'show place', the multifaceted heart of the whole city and needed to be a vital and alive 'people place', a place of special significance. They suggested that the General Plan should specifically respond to the downtown in four arenas: its style or 'atmosphere'; as a residential area, as a commercial area, as a 'people place'.

A. Atmosphere

An overwhelming number of participants saw the downtown as a place which reflects the mood and spirit of Edmonton, with an atmosphere of vitality and liveability on a human scale. downtown area was seen not merely as a 9 to 5 commercial district but a dynamic cultural, social and residential area as well. "We would like to see the downtown remain dynamic and interesting, able to draw people after office hours " (1) and preferred to "maintain the downtown as the overall focus of unity of the whole city." (2) As the functional centre the "city centre would have the key facilities for performances, recreation, stores and entertainment." (3) Concern was expressed about the "importance of downtown as an aesthetically pleasing place to go for the rejuvenation of people." (4) The value of the downtown as a human place was expressed as a "need for breathing space for the individuals so they won't feel as if they are living in a concrete jungle." (5)

B. People Place

Closely related to the value of the downtown as a lively, liveable place was the concern with it being a '24-hour-people-place', the desire for it to be a vital human place catering to a variety of interests.

The role of people living in the downtown was expressed as an important feature of the downtown. People felt that the General Plan should place "emphasis on development of community as a people place - integration of all income groups."

(6) At the same time the "inevitability of skid row type areas should be discouraged humanly yet accepted with some realism."

The character of the downtown is also influenced by the residents. It was suggested that we "redevelop waste land in the inner city into residential, particularly designed to accommodate certain life styles, i.e. senior citizens who require less "suburban type development,"

(8) and "preserve ethnic neighborhood diversity."

There was a "need to renovate existing buildings to keep the character (that's what we like about Quebec City)."

It was felt that the issues of creating safety and security would be handled by having "people on the streets."

C. Residential Variety

In order to succeed in making the downtown a dynamic alive area people felt that the General Plan needed to consider more residential development in the downtown area. They expressed the opinion that making the area attractive to family living would contribute to building the 'downtown community'. It was suggested that ways should be found to "encourage a fair amount of families downtown, encourage provision of two or three bedroom apartments near the downtown schools." (12) "More residential housing in the downtown area is needed to humanize it ... could be accomplished with infill housing over railroad lines and in under-utilized warehouse areas."

People also felt that it was important to avoid 'ghettoization' and the evolution of inner city slums. "By scattering density you don't ghettoize people and hold to integrity of inner city neighborhoods."

Also careful detailed planning was required to consider the needs of the transient and poorer population of the downtown and the needs of the older inner city neighborhoods

bordering the downtown. These are some comments by participants. "Medium density scattered pattern would allow for diversification of inner city residential neighborhoods, permit preservation of older neighborhoods and more green space would be possible. It would also allow for optimum use of schools, encourage family living in the inner city and the downtown would not die after 6 P.M. More people outside on the streets would discourage criminal element in the inner city." (15) "Need subsidized housing for low income families and need more help for home owners in inner city to upgrade homes." (16)

D. Commercial

The downtown as a commercial centre was another facet of this complex issue. It was suggested that the high cost of land and construction for residential building in the downtown core could be offset by "combining residential with commercial development in new buildings ... should be accompanied by good amenities such as parks and schools." (17) The downtown was seen as "becoming a highly specialized business and commercial area a showplace which encourages the establishment of headquarters of multinational corporations." (18) The participants, in some cases, felt that the General Plan should even limit the size or area of downtown commercial development to prevent it becoming a 'concrete canyon' and losing its human scale. The downtown is a complex part of the city. It plays a strong symbolic, cultural and economic role. It reflects and expresses the mood and nature of the entire city.

See Appendix No. A for the following:

(1) Ross Sheppard Group #2, (2) St. Paul's Group #1, (3)
Commonwealth Group #5, (4) Ross Sheppard Group #5, (5) Calder
Group #2, (6) Ross Sheppard Group #5, (7) Commonwealth Group #5,
(8) Northgate Group #2, (9) Meadowlark Group #3, (10) Northgate
Group #4, (11) Ibid, (12) Northgate Group #4, (13) Ross
Sheppard Group #3, (14) Meadowlark Group #6, (15) Meadowlark
Group #5, (16) Commonwealth Group #4, (17) Ross Sheppard Group #3,
(18) Ross Sheppard Group #5.

IV TRANSPORTATION

People valued ease of movement around the city and the avoidance of traffic congestion. They wished to reduce their travel time without causing concurrent neighborhood disruption. They also indicated a desire for the control of noise, pollution and the conservation of energy. These views are categorized as public transportation, private transportation, alternative methods, and downtown emphasis.

A. Public Transportation

Participants values on transportation were consistant and complementary with their desire for the decentralization of the city. They suggested that the public transportation system would have to be sophisticated and efficient enough to make constant use of private automobiles unattractive. "Spacious parking garages at the end of LRT makes it unattractive for people from outskirts to drive private cars into the downtown - LRT served by good bus networks to residential shopping and employment centres," (1) "Four major LRT's with large expandable parkades located on ring routes with coin operated plug-ins" (2) would make public transportation more attractive and "more emphasis on public transit e.g. Dial-A-Bus." (3) To encourage the use of public transportation participants suggested promotion through "educational campaigns on public transit."

B. Private Transportation

Although participants felt that there was a need for public transportation they were also clear that the automobile is a major mode of transportation and this fact needs to be addressed. They saw decentralization as a means of redistributing the traffic load. This could be complemented by a 'ring route' system providing "equal access routes to downtown and outlying employment centres ... set up so people can quickly get to and from employment centres."

Easy entrance and departure from residential areas was important with "many access roads to an area."

Roads as an important part

of the urban geography unite or disrupt a community. One group indicated that it was "still feasible to build connecting ring routes without too much disruption to residential areas, if it were planned well in advance."

A divergence of opinion between convenience and the impact or roads on neighborhoods was illustrated by the following contrasting comments: "Make major arteries into throughways i.e. 97th Street,"

(8)

"less emphasis on the accomodation of rush hour traffic."

C. Alternative Transportation Methods

People also felt that the General Plan should deal with alternative transportation methods i.e. "promoting bicycle routes," (10) and pedestrian walkways. They hoped that freeways which facilitated cross-town traffic would also incorporate "by-passes for pedestrians." One group recommended a "better developed pedestrian systems: which might be accomplished by "centralizing communities and downtown so that people can walk." (12)

D. <u>Downtown Emphasis</u>

The values people expressed about traffic and transportation in the downtown area were consistant with the values they expressed about the role and function of the downtown (Chapter III). They saw the downtown as a place for people and therefore hoped there would be "no major roadways through the city centre." (13) They suggested that strict by-laws for the amount and type of traffic in the downtown would ease congestion in the area. "Restriction on movement of private cars in the city centre, ban on-street parking, and no cars in the city centre with less than two people would put less pressure on public and private transportation downtown." (14) Citizens valued the downtown area and felt that by controlling traffic more strictly it could be made to function more effectively. "Limit car use in inner city and discourage elsewhere and offer suitable alternative, i.e. LRT."

See Appendix No. A for the following:

(1) St. Paul's Group #3, (2) Northgate Group #4, (3) Ross
Sheppard Group #1, (4) Ibid. (5) Ross Sheppard Group #5,
(6) Ross Sheppard Group #6, (7) Meadowlark Group #4, (8) Calder
Group #3, (9) Millwoods - Working chart, (10) Commonwealth Group
#4, (11) Calder Group #1, (12 Northgate Group #2, (13) Northgate
Group #4, (14) Ross Sheppard Group #1, (15) St. Paul's Group #4.

V GROWTH CONTROL

Although participants understood that the General Plan would not specifically deal with how growth would be controlled, they felt it was an important arena of concern. Thus values were expressed in four main areas of the regional control, city control, citizens role and citizen participation structure.

A. Regional Control

Whatever form the regional organization might take, citizens felt that a higher degree of co-operation and co-ordination is essential to facilitate orderly control of expansion and equitable distribution of services and resources. "Regional planning should be better co-ordinated." Perhaps this could be accomplished with a "co-ordinating body over the region which should be more representative of the people in the region rather than government in regions" (2).

Community identity and community autonomy were stated as important values when considering this issue. "Liaison is very important between various regional components - administrative powers should remain with local areas." "We chose two level regional government in order to have avenues for further citizen input, municipal identity, co-ordination in planning, sharing resources, accountability and effectiveness." At the same time the unique role and influence of Edmonton in the region was a concern. "Development of a revenue sharing agreement between city and surrounding region. People living in the region use the city services extensively and should help pay for them." (5)

B. City Control

The overall value people expressed regarding city government was the necessity for improved dialogue between citizens and the decision makers. Ways are needed to provide "better access to information, services and decision makers." (6) Various opinions

were expressed on how to accomplish this, but generally, citizens indicated that some modification of the ward system was needed. "Each strong neighborhood centre should be represented by one alderman who lives in his ward. This would help Aldermen to know constituents and vice-versa." (7) In addition to enabling the Alderman to better represent the people, it would also allow citizens to be better informed and therefore more responsible and involved. "Alderman would represent a specific community group ... no more than 40,000 people and they must be responsive and responsible to the people they represent. Community cablevision could perhaps be used to enhance communication through talkback shows on specific issues. A particular slot of time for each representative to speak and listen directly to his constituents." (8) As another means of accomplishing this it was suggested that Aldermen be "elected 50% from wards and 50% from the city as a whole." (9)

C. <u>Citizen's Role</u>

Workshop participants believed citizens have a significant role to play in civic affairs and are a valuable resource worth tapping. "The City Council must assume ultimate responsibility in the interest of all citizens. Advisory committees can alert Council to the needs of citizens. Some measure of defined local control in the hands of smaller communities or neighborhoods would help to safeguard the quality of their environment." (10)

Another value expressed was that citizens have significant insight which can be utilized creatively rather than in a reactive process. "When it comes to questions of values or aesthetics, citizens are as much of an expert or consultant as persons designated by City Council." (11) People sought ways for effective input but were unclear how this could be accomplished. Some groups were concerned that "limited citizen control over some issues would give a feeling of effectiveness but if citizens can control some decisions one must ensure that a sufficient number of citizens

are involved in making decisions. How?" (12) Others, however, suggested that "elected committees would be responsible for decision making at the ward/district level ... to ensure accountability." (13)

D. Citizen Participation Structure

Participants argued that a well defined method and structure for effective citizen participation is needed. Several possibilities were put forward: "Community League structure used when dealing with issues like rezoning and redevelopment of neighborhoods — no decision made by Council without Community League response." (14) "Encourage citizen involvement through workshops, teaching people how to get through bureaucracy." (15) "We recommend creation of a citizen advisory site in each area where information is constantly available and reactions are constantly solicited. This would facilitate citizen input early in the decision making process." (16)

See Appendix No. A for the following:

- (1) Commonwealth Group #6, (2) Ibid, (3) St. Paul's Group #4,
- (4) Commonwealth Group # 5, (5) St. Paul's Group #1, (6) Meadow-lark Group # 2, (7) St. Paul's Group # 1, (8) Ross Sheppard Group # 4, (9) St. Paul's Group # 3, (10) St. Paul's Group # 2, (11) Common-wealth Group # 6, (12) St. Paul's Group # 1, (13) Commonwealth Group # 3, (14) A.C.T. Centre Group # 1, (15) Commonwealth Group # 2, (16) St. Paul's Group # 1.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

AND STATISTICS

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS AND STATISTICS

A. DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

The simulation game "Build Your Own City" laid out some of the major practical decision areas to accommodate growth. The very nature of the game forced participants to make choices within each of the fourteen decision areas and then struggle with trade-offs between those areas.

The participants at the community workshops worked in groups of three or four and built their 'dream' city. The main points of the context for these scenarios were:

- 1. The Edmonton Urban Area will double in population and employment in the next 15 to 20 years.
- 2. Initial decisions to be dealt with include growth distribution, growth form, overall growth strategies and growth control. These decisions with options as developed in citizen process design workshops were used as a starting point.
- 3. Four possible scenarios, one maximum, two medium, and one minimum, as developed in process design workshops, were discussed as an illustration of the process.
- 4. Small groups selected one of the three growth options, and proceeded to develop one or more alternative scenarios.
- 5. The following night the groups reviewed the scenarios they had developed and explained the reasoning behind the decisions they had made.

It is to be noted that the participants were informed that these scenarios as prepared and in summary form would be submitted to the Planning Department as input to the preparation of the draft of the General Plan. The Planning Department will evaluate this initial input from the public workshops and write a response document for use at subsequent General Plan evaluation sessions.

B. SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

Some participants and staff worked in subsequent workshops to summarize alternatives and values.

The scenarios and accompanying documents were reviewed with particular concern for those combinations of options that were considered by the participants to be mutually supportive, feasible, questionable or incompatible. These relationships were plotted on a compatibility matrix for each group, then totalled for each area, and then finally totalled for all workshops.

A 'compilation of scenarios' that are most generally preferred and consistent, four 'typical scenarios' compiled from the preferred alternatives, and seven 'preferred area alternatives' are included in this Chapter.

C. COMMENTS ON ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

- 1. Growth Distribution. The first step in the "Build Your Own City" game was the selection of a particular growth option (Of the approximate 500,000 people coming to the region, how many would come to Edmonton?). Some participants adamantly chose one option over the others; some chose an option simply out of curiosity, and some chose an option because no one had selected it. This first choice was merely a place to begin the real struggle of how to accommodate growth within the city.
- 2. Growth Form. The preferred form of the city suggested the development of sub-centres or even sub-cities with 80% of the new commercial activity being directed away from the central business district. Correspondingly, only 10 to 25% of the population increase was suggested for the inner city areas. This form would apparently necessitate a movement pattern both radiating from the central core and circling the periphery.
- 3. Growth Strategies. With regard to the distribution of growth within the city, participants generally preferred a 'scattered' pattern of development for the inner city and some 'concentration' in the suburbs to be located around employment centres or transportation nodes. In this case, in addition to stating

working definitions to describe their understanding of the terms. These are documented in the reports in Appendix A. The inconsistencies in the development of scenarios appeared most frequently with regard to suburban density pattern, industrial land increase, and the urban developed area increase. This probably reflects the difficulty in assessing trade-offs with the limited time and information available. In general, the preference was for some form of increase of industrial land, and a moderate increase in the urban developed area.

4. Growth Control. The general preference was for some form of two-level regional structure. Participants preferred some form of modified ward system as a means of municipal control. Citizens were seen as playing an advisory role, with some control limited to particular local or neighborhood issues.

D. COMMENTS ON TRADE-OFFS

The issue of trade-offs arose as group members discussed and decided between options.

Trade-offs as used herein signifies those compromise combinations of options that reflect both the values held by the group and the necessity of creating a practical growth scenario. For instance, density had to be decided in relationship to the size of the developed urban area and the use of agricultural land.

These are some of the trade-offs people were willing to make. Most workshop groups preferred

a)	Higher density	to	extensive developed area expansion.
b) c) d) e)	Higher density Higher density with adequate parks Smaller lot size Heterogeneous housing in neighborhood	to to to	use of prime agricultural land. lower density and inadequate parks. urban sprawl. homogeneous housing in neighborhood

f)	Decentralization with accompanying bustle, noise and traffic in suburbs	to	expanding the city centre and preserving the quiet suburbs.
g)	Mix of age, income and cultures	to	class exclusiveness.
h)	Increase in industrial land for heavy industry	to	total conservation of farm land.
i)	Expansion of light industry in city with solid tax base	to	higher taxes and minimal industrial expansion in city.
j)	Pedestrian and public transit in C.B.D., inner city	to	the convenient use of private auto.
k)	Higher density and conservation of energy	to	urban sprawl.
1)	Moderate expansion of land area including some agricultural land	to	higher cost of land and housing due to shortage of land.
m)	Inconvenience of no downtown airport	to	loss of valuable inner city land.
n)	Higher taxes in order to support more low income housing in inner city	to	concentrations of low income housing on outskirts.
0)	Some distruption of existing neighborhoods to create ring routes	to	transportation system as is.

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E. SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

The tabulations of the decisions made by citizens in the "Build Your Own City" simulation game shows a correlation between the values they expressed and the alternative scenarios they created. The statistics represent the views of people who attended workshops and do not necessarily represent the opinion of citizens at large. The statistics reveal some strong preferences and some areas of wide divergence of opinion on each of the alternatives.

A majority of citizens chose a medium growth option for the future design of the city with strong preference for decentralization to some form of sub-centre. Each sub-centre would include increased residential and employment opportunities and more accessible social, recreation and political services. They also saw the combination of circular and radial routes as supportive of this decentralization. The majority of people chose a moderate density increase equally distributed across the city and a moderate expansion of city developed area.

The statistics and alternative scenarios indicated a strong preference for some form of two-level regional control, in order to enable co-ordination and co-operation between regional bodies, to control growth and share resources. Participants in the workshop chose a variety of forms of modified ward system as complementary to the decentralization, and citizens' limited control of specifically local or neighborhood issues.

One arena of diversity was in the choice of housing patterns. The statistics indicate a preference for scattered pattern while the preferred alternative and the values expressed indicated no consensus at all. There was no consensus regarding the question of industrial area expansion.

Some preferred light industry in the city - while others said all industry should be out of the city. The majority dealt with it in relationship to the whole tax base issue. Some saw annexation of Refinery Row, and others suggested tax sharing with surrounding municipalities, or other methods.

The following paragraphs are brief descriptions of the tabulated statistics as they appeared on the citizen alternative scenarios.

Regional Growth Option

66% of the participants chose medium growth option. 12% chose the minimum option and 22% chose the maximum option.

However, some of those choosing maximum did so in order to look at the most extreme possibility.

City Pattern

92% of participants chose some form of decentralization (sub-centres, sub-cities or diversified employment centres or some combination thereof); 5% chose expanded centre in combination with sub-centres; only 4% of participants chose expanded inner city.

Residential Location

48% of people felt 25% of new population should locate in the inner city; 38% preferred fewer people and 14% preferred more people locating in inner city.

Commercial Location

81% of the participants preferred 40% or less of the new commercial development to be located downtown and 62% preferred 20% commercial to locate downtown. This gives support to people's preference for decentralization.

Movement Pattern

86% of the participants chose a combination of radial routes and ring routes to deal with transportation.

Inner City Density

67% of participants selected medium density for the inner city while 23% chose 'as is' and 10% chose high density.

Inner City Pattern

79% chose a scattered residential pattern over concentrated housing density.

Suburban Density

66% chose medium density in the suburbs; 25% 'as is' and 10% high density.

Suburban Pattern

65% of people favored scattered housing development over concentrated.

Suburban Commercial Locations

47% of participants felt commercial development should be located at both transit nodes and diversified employment centres. 40% more felt they should be primarily at employment centres. Only 4% suggested commercial strips were desirable.

Industrial Land Expansion

The only options were 'as is' or 'increased' and the numbers show no consensus. 44% for 'as is' and 56% for 'increased'.

Developed Area Expansion (for residential)

A 60% majority of people favored moderate expansion but they often couched this in terms of slight-minimal-enough. 22% recommended extensive area expansion and 18% called for no expansion.

Regional Control

81% of the participants showed a preference for a two-level regional control with co-ordination and co-operation between city and region as the key value. 17% for multi and only 2% for a uni-government system.

City Control

67% of people preferred some form of modified ward system. Another 27% showed a preference for a metro district system which can almost be identified as another modified ward system. 4% felt we could keep the wards we have and 2% were for a central management system. This again is a strong indication of a preference to decentralize.

Citizen's Role

In this arena the numbers get a bit confusing as many groups chose a combination of roles - or all of them. By combining percentages it appears that some form of limited control is being called for by 52%; 27% advisory; 17% vote and 4% public consensus.

CHAPTER 3

"I LOVE EDMONTON" PROGRAM

"I LOVE EDMONTON" PROGRAM TUESDAY, APRIL 10th, 1979

A. INTRODUCTION

The "I Love Edmonton" Day was a day to remember for the organizers and participants whether for the chill wind, the presentation of marigolds, the official proclamation ceremony, the street theatre or for the enthusiastic response of thousands of children to the "I Love Edmonton" Questionnaire.

The chief purpose of the project was to get a positive input from a large number of citizens on planning for the future development of the city. To facilitate this purpose, a four-question open-ended questionnaire was designed. The questions were as follows:

- 1. What do you most like about living in Edmonton?
- 2. If you had the final say about how this city will change as it grows in the future, what would you change?
- 3. What do you think will be the greatest problems Edmonton faces in the next 20 years?
- 4. What do you think you can do to help Edmonton grow the way you'd like it to?

The superintendents of the two school systems gave permission for the questionnaires to be distributed to all city schools. A memo explaining the project was sent to all school principals, and at the junior and senior high level to the president of student council. One hundred thousand questionnaires were delivered to city schools; eleven thousand written responses plus over one hundred drawings were received. All schools were contacted by telephone after April 10th, to check that return of responses was understood, and to ask for comments on the exercise. Many schools allowed only children from Grade 4 up to respond in written form, but discussed the city and the four questions in the classroom. Other school staff decided to use the questionnaire as the basis for discussion in classrooms where older children are taught. It is estimated, from the principals' responses, that some sixty-five thousand students did focus attention on planning Edmonton for the future on April 10th.

To gather input from adults, four thousand questionnaires each were placed in all Safeway stores and MacDonald's restaurants. An additional one thousand were placed in government offices and City Hall. Adult responses numbered about five hundred written and twenty phone calls.

B. RESPONSES

1. Responses to Question 1: What do you like most about living in Edmonton?

There were many and varied responses to this question. The overwhelming enthusiasm was for the number and quality of recreational facilities; second was the sports and leisure-time opportunities - whether professional or amateur, active-participant or on-looker, games, movies, theatres, stores, music; third was the friendliness and helpful nature of the people. Quiet neighborhoods, nice houses, the river valley and the climate were all mentioned many times. Schools, teachers, less often and government systems only a few times.

2. Responses to Question 2: If you had the final say about how this city will change as it grows in the future, what would you change?

These answers were less precise but thought provoking: change the government to respond to the needs of the people, and to represent the people who elected them. Have less cars downtown, more practical methods of transportation to the suburbs, particularly Millwoods, Castledowns, Clareview. Clean-up run-down properties and preserve historical buildings. Have competitions for nice neighborhoods, clean parks, Christmas lighting and beautiful gardens. Build a multi-cultural centre downtown. Build a day care centre on the outskirts of the city with animals and lots of natural trees, flowers and grass, so that children who have to attend day care and live in the city learn about natural things. Change censorship regulations on movies. Have less density for buildings. Use scientists to solve problems, not create them. Work co-operatively to create an even more beautiful city. Build moving sidewalks. Provide more homes and facilities for senior citizens.

Prospects for the future look good, not only because the next generation of adults is aware and alert to problems, but because "I Love Edmonton" Day developed a potentially vital network to respond to the pleas of the young.

First, and maybe for the future, the most important prospect is the Education Liaison Committee for the 75th Anniversary Committee. Its prime objective is to celebrate the anniversary by developing for the Social Studies Program in schools curricular materials on the city - its past, present and future as well as its government and means of participation for all age groups.

Second is the collection and cataloguing of all information on Edmonton; especially its government. The City Public Relations Department has been particularly helpful in this regard.

Thirdly the General Plan simulation game is being reviewed in classrooms to see if it can be successfully adapted for student use.

Some schools are putting effort into special events to make Edmonton more beautiful - Londonderry Junior High School, for example, is painting a safety-fence surrounding a development project.

Also the Edmonton Journal is to publish some student responses in the Junior Section of the newspaper.