

# Urban Issues

Vol. 1, No. 7 & 8 (May/June, 1972)

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The Institute of Urban Studies





THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WINNIPEG**

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**URBAN ISSUES**

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The Institute of Urban Studies is an independent research arm of the University of Winnipeg. Since 1969, the IUS has been both an academic and an applied research centre, committed to examining urban development issues in a broad, non-partisan manner. The Institute examines inner city, environmental, Aboriginal and community development issues. In addition to its ongoing involvement in research, IUS brings in visiting scholars, hosts workshops, seminars and conferences, and acts in partnership with other organizations in the community to effect positive change.

## REPORT ON IUS

The Institute of Urban Studies will soon be entering its fourth year as a part of the University of Winnipeg. Continuing its operation with the support of grants from Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Provincial Department of Urban Affairs, The Winnipeg Foundation, and private business, the Institute has been active in many fields of urban investigation and action.

The total staff complement of the Institute presently includes a director, three research associates, two research assistants, one community worker, one field staff in the area of communications, one administrative assistant and two secretaries.

This third year for the Institute has been a busy one, starting with a group of Summer Opportunities for Youth projects which involved some thirty-one students. One of the largest of these projects was that of communications, particularly in the area of Community TV. As a result of the summer project, in which some 300 volunteers were trained in the operation of VTR equipment, and the Institute's work with citizens and community groups in this area, the Provincial Government funded a unique project in the fall of 1971, called "Project Unicity". During the six week period preceding the Unicity Elections in October 1971, the Project Unicity team interviewed candidates, discussed the new ideas inherent in the Unicity legislation and produced special features on various communities in Winnipeg - all of which was shown on Channel 9, a cable channel specially designated for community programming.

The Institute has continued its work in the area of inner-city redevelopment by supporting not only efforts by citizen-based organizations such as The People's Committee for a Better Neighbourhood, Inc., Kinew Housing Incorporated, and the Health Action Committee, but also by encouraging local neighbourhood institutions, such as the

St. Andrews United Church (Elgin) to redevelop its property in conjunction with the community, to provide much-needed housing and community space. The Institute has also acted as a liaison between the Self-Help Housing Group and the Winnipeg House Builders Mark VIII Project. Eric Barker, an architect and research associate with the Institute provided the design for infill housing on which this project is based.

In November, the University of Winnipeg and the Institute sponsored an Urban University Workshop in conjunction with the annual R.H.G. Bonycastle Foundation Lecture Series. Representatives of business, government, community and university attended the workshop sessions and provided the Institute and the University with ideas and suggestions on the particular role of an urban based university.

The Institute marks the completion of its third year of operation with the publication of a book entitled, "The Citizen and Neighbourhood Renewal".

In twelve papers, the work of the Institute in the formation and support of citizen-based organizations is analyzed, the various methods and techniques of community work described and the significance of this participation and planning activity assessed relevant to the challenge of urban and particularly inner city redevelopment.

At present the IUS is involved in a number of new projects, including the Space-Use Study (described elsewhere in this issue), the Urban Field Service which is an experimental work-study program funded by Opportunities for Youth. It involves 18 students and is co-ordinated by Professor John Badertscher of Religious Studies at the University of Winnipeg. These students are working directly with various community groups, while engaging in academic study related to the work. This forms a pilot program for a possible form of Opportunities for Youth funding to universities for summer credit work-study

programs next year; The People's Housing Rehabilitation and Repair, Inc. a non-profit corporation which has a staff of 25 men, is working toward a new form of industry in Urban Renewal Area No. 2; and a Consumer Project which is funded by the Federal Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and which is working on a pilot storefront consumer information and advisory service for low-income consumers. The purpose of the project will be to test the feasibility and usefulness of storefront centres to serve and protect the low-income consumer.

Reports on these and other projects will be available in the early fall of this year.

## N. D. C.

During the last few years, a new voice has been struggling to make itself heard in our urban centers. It is the voice of the people and it is struggling to make itself heard over the voices of the professionals and government officials.

The voice of the people is being funneled through citizens groups and neighbourhood organizations.

These organizations emerged to fill the institutional vacuum which exists because of the inability of the market to provide incentives for profit-seeking entrepreneurs to work toward certain social goals and the inherent limitations on the effectiveness of government agencies which are acting as substitutes for private action. Citizens are now at the stage where voicing their opinions through the vote every two or four years is not enough. They want a continuous voice, one that will be heard not only in the role of respondent but also of initiation.

The neighbourhood community organization seems to be the type of organization necessary to fill the existing institutional vacuum for two reasons. First, urban redevelopment seems to work well only when the development is acceptable to the community. And, secondly the development only seems acceptable to the community when the community has an active and a major role in the planning of such a development.

Both the federal and provincial levels of government are presently reorganizing themselves in an attempt to achieve a greater democratization in the urban areas.

The governments can provide the access roads but the people themselves must provide the vehicle. But just a community organization is not enough, it must be an effective organization.

It must be a legal entity capable of meeting governmental agencies on an equal basis. It must incorporate for the people the basic rights inherent in a democracy--the right to know what is going on, the right of access to the levels of government and the right to be heard. It must also give the people their right to plan programs and make decisions for their community. It must be strong enough and powerful enough to be listened to by government and it must also involve the necessary knowledge and expertise to make the plans feasible and acceptable to those in government circles.

To be effective a community organization must be able to mobilize the skills of business, professional and academic people. It must be wide enough in scope to tackle any and all types of problems on the urban scene.

It must be able and prepared to unify planning, to become an integrated development agency letting the community bring together its physical, social and economic components.

The Neighbourhood Development Corporation seems to be the most effective way of organizing communities and of meeting the necessary criteria.

The NDC being a legal entity has access to a multiplication of sponsors for its development plans. It could draw on the financial resources of both public and private agencies and break the existing monopolies in planning and development.

The NDC can be used to enlist private resources and to encourage active involvement on the part of private business, businessmen, professional associations and universities.

Because of its multiplicity of sponsors and of advisors, the NDC would not be limited in scope. It could be concerned with housing problems--planning housing which more closely fits the needs of the community, while at the same time involving private interests, professionals and universities. It could draw on the financial resources of either the private or the public sector, or in certain cases, even on its own.

Alternatively, it could be concerned with education. It could become involved in educational system planning at both the provincial government level and at the school board level. It could influence such things as where the school should be built, what it should teach, and what kinds of school facilities should be open to the community.

An NDC in addition to responding to individual community preference by determining those preferences also engenders a sense of community with which citizens can identify and over which they can exercise meaningful influence. Decisions will be made by the people and not for the people and those people will achieve the sense of worth and dignity which comes from participation.

The neighbourhood community organization as a tool for co-ordination of government finances, specialized professionals, private interests and the wants and needs of the people can be most effective when incorporated into a Neighbourhood Development Corporation.

However the American experience with this type of Development Corporation can teach us a great deal about the planning and implementation of such a concept. Their experience has shown that the concept is viable but that the proper method of implementation is crucial. An NDC should not be created by the public sector or the private sector in the name of the people. It should rather, be created by the people slowly, one step at a time.

The first step is the formation of a viable issue-oriented community group. Then comes the formation of a non-profit limited-scope co-operation which draws into itself a number of professional skills and resources. Then comes the formation of other issue-oriented spin-off corporations which are independent from the mother corporation but which share some of the same people and resources.

Finally when the people and their advisors feel that the time is right all of these corporations and organizations can be joined (very loosely) under the umbrella of a Neighbourhood Development Corporation.

Much of this process is currently going on in urban centers across Canada. In Montreal, citizens with the help of an independent agency, the Parallel Institute have set up a citizen operated and managed factory, and a citizen housing co-operation. The citizens eventually would like to tie these organizations together under one NDC for the area.

In Winnipeg a number of steps in this process have been completed.

Kinew Housing Incorporated represents an experiment whereby one sector of society, namely members of the Indian and Metis community, utilized the mechanism of the incorporated non-profit company to accomplish that which was generally denied to the individual of Indian ancestry.

The structure of Kinew is not unlike that of any other private non-profit company in that it has a membership, an elected board of directors, and an administrative staff. In as much as it is the policy of the company to engage staff who are also of Indian ancestry, the concept of the company is perhaps unique. However, the area of innovation in the structure of the Company is the recognition of the role of a group of people not of Indian ancestry who perform a resource function on a voluntary basis.

The Company Directors, based on their experience prior to incorporation recognized the importance of many individuals with specific professional experience and other expertise not as yet developed within the Indian and Metis community. Not only did the Directors find that others were prepared to volunteer their skills in a genuine effort to assist their fellow man, but they also recognized the great potential for both themselves and their employees through learning and the gaining of experience in new fields as a result of association with resource people.

Another example of an issue-oriented corporation is the People's Committee for a Better Neighbourhood Incorporated. Their program tested the notion of "anticipatory planning" in which the Institute attempted to assist a particular community to organize itself in such a way as to encourage residents of the area to assume the initiatives in planning. An effort was made to concentrate all available resources, including a pool of voluntary expertise, in order to bring together all the relevant components considered essential to realization of immediate, limited and tangible goals. In this regard, a number of willing and capable professional business people and academics were brought together within a rather formal structure known as the Resource Team. An attempt was made to co-ordinate a multi-discipline team and define specific study programs or functions to be conducted within a sub-committee structure and under a resource group chairman. Under this approach, the capacity of individuals in the resource team to relate to and work with individuals in the community

to be served was severely restricted and very shortly the sought for mutual familiarization never happened. Those motivated by a personal desire to serve people experienced sheer frustration and left the project as the potential of the resource group to function effectively no longer appeared to be a possibility.

The Institute of Urban Studies has also been involved in a minor way and in the resource category with other groups, including a number of senior citizens who have incorporated as a non-profit company in order to provide housing for the elderly. This group of senior citizens responded to the challenge to do their own thing rather than simply waiting for others to do it. The individuals involved represented a real cross-section of the community. As a result of their experience through life, these people could not be said to be typical of the self-help group. They possessed within their age group a great range of expertise, perhaps overlooked until pointed out by the resource people assisting them in their efforts to get going. It is apparent that the Company so created by the Senior Citizens will have the Resource Group built into its directorship, membership or staff, whether that group is drawn from the senior citizen age group or from volunteer expertise in the community. The fear of employing resource people and involving them in the conduct of the company affairs does not exist in this self-help group which lacks the suspicion and prejudice towards non-members so prevalent in the more disadvantaged sectors of society.

Already spin-off effects have begun - the People's Committee have set up a separate but facility and resource sharing non-profit housing repair and rehabilitation company and are beginning to speak of hopefully setting up an umbrella NDC.

So series of NDC's could come and when they do the citizens themselves will have taken a large step in solving many of today's urban problems and in bringing the working people and the professionals closer together.



## HEALTH CARE

For the past year, the Institute has been doing some preliminary work in community health research.

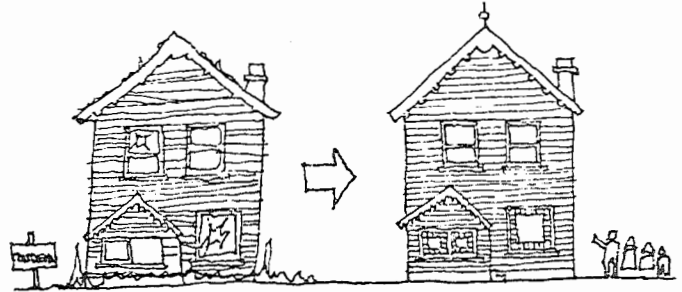
A survey team made up of community residents, worked through the fall and winter talking to people about health problems, holding community meetings and compiling data. Through exposure to community health problems and gaps in medical and social services the survey team became a self help group called the Health Action Committee. H.A.C. set itself the goal of improving health services for their community. While continuing with their program of fact finding, surveying and community meetings they made specific initiatives to improve medical services. Seeing the almost complete absence of small private doctors office's offering primary family care they met with the Manitoba Medical Association in order to arrange help in serving doctors for the inner city. They made a winter works proposal to the federal government to fund an outreach program for people with health and social problems. They have contacted the General Hospital in order to offer ideas for improving Outpatient services and to become involved in the planning of new services. Working on many levels the H.A.C. has made proposals to the City of Winnipeg to decentralize and expand its public health unit into the community, and has drafted a joint proposal with a committee of St. Andrews Church for a medical clinic for the soon to be constructed St. Andrews Community Complex.

The H.A.C. has identified the lack of an outreach service as the biggest gap in medical services and to fill this gap they have been operating an information and referral centre based in the middle of the inner city. The members of H.A.C. have been involved in an initial training program through the General Hospital and present health and social services. They are now planning a outreach service with a block organization to serve the needs of the inner city population.

The work of the H.A.C. and the Institute has shown that low income people of the inner city are not well connected to health services and have a tendency to use Outpatient Clinics instead of private doctors. And because of the mix of social and health problems that low income people feel they require specialized community service clinics

to handle their varied needs in a comprehensive way. Surveys so far show that there is great interest in such a clinic. The second major discovery is the important role for a new health worker - the neighbourhood health aide - a person from the community who with the appropriate training can play both the role of a nurse and social worker and better connect people to health and social services.

\* NEW IDEAS \*



## COMMUNITY

For many people, cable television is just a means by which they import a number of American television programs into their living rooms.

But there is more to it than that. Under a regulation by the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC), cable companies must have one channel available for local origination programs - a community channel.

The existence of an extra channel on cable, set aside strictly for community programs, gives every citizen and group in Winnipeg an opportunity to get their ideas onto television. And it makes cable television an exciting new means of communication.

Programs for transmission on cable television can be made using relatively inexpensive, lightweight, portable videotape recorders. With this equipment the whole city can be turned into a studio, and because it is easy to operate, everyone can be a cameraman. This is an important point about community programs - they are made "by" the community, rather than just "for" the community.

With the cameras in the hands of ordinary people from the community, something very different begins to happen. Rather than just reporting the process the cameras can become a part of the process.

People can show their area as they see it and express their beliefs in their own way. This is a very great change from the standard television technique in which interviewers, producers and technicians make a program about a group or an idea, from an outside point of view and with their own opinions inserted into the program.

There is no advertising on the community channel and, as a result, no pressure from the ratings to encourage large audiences by making programs which are of wide, general

## COMMUNICATION

interest only. In effect, the community channel can transmit programs which appeal to a very small audience.

A community program could be: a community committee meeting, a debate, a lecture, a musical presentation, a local sports event, a parade, a community-made documentary, an art film, a school board meeting, a talk show, or anything else that a person or group is capable of producing.

The programs do not have to be restricted to one language either. Ethnic groups could produce shows in Polish, Chinese, Ukrainian, Italian or any other language they desired.

Also, programs for cable transmission do not necessarily have to fit into established and inflexible time slots. They have the advantage of being able to be as long or as short as it is necessary to get the message across. Programs which might be of interest to large numbers of people could be shown more than once in a day or they could be shown for several days in a row.

No doubt community programming will be criticized at first as being "amateurish" or technically imperfect. It already has been. But this criticism ignores the real message behind community television - that information and involvement are more important than technical perfection and that the process is more meaningful than the product.

For Winnipeg, a community channel will be a learning experience. It should prove for many that television can be fun and that it does not have to be so structured that it fails to be interested in the people to whom it is directed.

But the existence of an open cable television channel and the existence of portable easy-to-operate equipment are

not enough in themselves - there is a need for some body to provide coordination, direction, training and equipment.

To this end of group of concerned Winnipeg citizens have come together and formed a non-profit corporation known as Winnipeg Community Communications Inc. WCCI hopes to be able to provide a strong bargaining position with the cable companies since, instead of being alone, a group can have a few hundred people behind them who share the same interests. Also they have the benefit of being able to obtain knowledge based on a wide range of experience plus access to a much wider range of equipment from many sources. Any decisions made by WCCI over distribution of equipment or viewing times for programs would not be made arbitrarily, since it must be accountable to its membership.

WCCI is a tool which people can use to ensure that community television serves their needs. It is not set up to make programs that they make. Rather it is the means through which they can obtain production materials for their programs, and the means by which they can ensure that the program they want to make is the program which appears on cable. It is necessary that such a public or community-oriented body deal with community programs if they are going to remain community programs, for community programs can provide information instead of news, people instead of personalities and process instead of product.

## SPACE and USE

### A Comparative Behavioral Study of Four Housing Projects

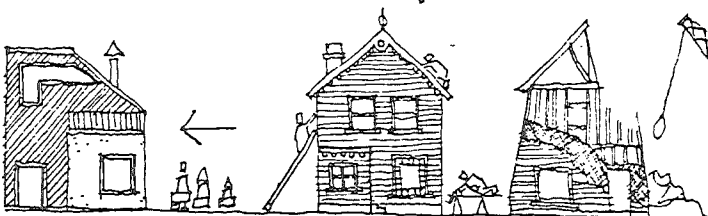
Along with the increase in urbanization, there has been a parallel increase in the development of medium and high density housing situations or more simply larger numbers of people living in closer physical proximity to one another. The constructed physical environment shapes and influences behavior. Architects, planners and designers are faced with the task of translating the complex, often poorly defined needs of present and/or future building users into a physical form, which in turn will facilitate or hinder the behavior of the inhabitants. The success or failure of the built environment is largely dependent on how accurately the designers perceive the needs of the users.

In an increasingly man-made world, it is critical to attempt to identify and describe these human requirements, if we are to create more appropriate and humane environments for living. For example, environments that minimize rather than increase visual and aural privacy have become more and more apparent.

Much of the "livability" of a dwelling unit under these conditions is affected by the orientation of the single unit to other units and the amount, type and location of the resultant spaces between units.

The proposed study will be involved with projects that may be roughly classified as medium density, Townhouse situations. The study will involve an examination of 2 public housing projects, low-income, and 2 private housing projects, medium high-income. In each project, there are similarities and differences to be compared and contrasted regarding their physical configuration. For example, in some cases there has been a conscious attempt made to create a large major grouping of units focusing on a single common open space, and in others, to create smaller "clusters" of units with a variety of smaller open space areas between units; a strong orientation of units toward a street or way from it; parking between units or around units. Each of these decisions in a specific situation has implications for the behavior of the occupants. Attention will be given to such questions as;

\* NEW IDEAS \*





- What spaces are used most? Least?
- Who uses the spaces and for what purposes?
- How often and for how long are the spaces used?
- What movement patterns exist into, out of and within the spaces?

The Objectives of the Study will be:

1. To identify behavior patterns that exist between the expressed verbal awareness of the users (positive and negative) to general and specific physical environmental factors and their objectively demonstrated behavior.

2. To identify the sources of fit or misfit between the behavior of the users and the physical environment.

a) How do people adapt to or change the physical environment to better suit their needs?

b) To compare how well/poorly the a priori design assumptions made by the designers, administrators etc., as to use and satisfaction of the built environment relate to the actual behavior patterns of the users.

3. To explore methods of gathering, and analyzing and presenting the resultant information in a form that may be readily understood and acted upon by various audiences.

4. To formulate design hypotheses based on the information gained that may have implications for the design of future projects.

5. To incorporate the design hypotheses into a projective design solution having a graphic form for inclusion in the final presentation of the study.

The methodology to be followed will consist of the following techniques;

1. Taped Personal Interviews, (Subjective Response of User to environment.)

a) open ended question.

Question: "Most people find things that they like and dislike in the buildings and surrounding area they live in". (comment.) 10-15 minutes.

b) Photographic interview.

Subjects will be shown photographs and asked to comment on them. 10-15 minutes. Total 30 minutes.

2. Photography, (Objective recording of demonstrated behavior of users as it occurs in physical setting.

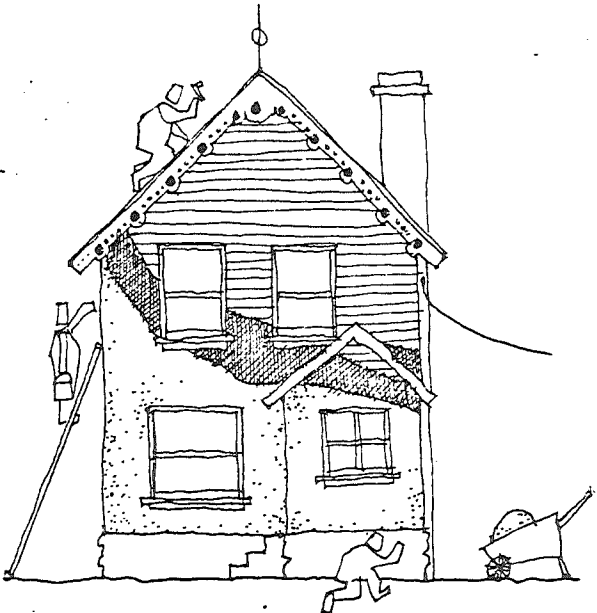
a) Photographic records will be made of specific physical factors mentioned by the subjects and of the behavior that occurs in various outdoor spaces.

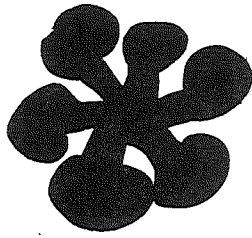
b) Photographs will be taken at specified times during the day for a total observation period of approximately 1 week per project.

3. The personal impressions and observations of the researcher will be written down for inclusion in the final interpretation of the data.

As a point of departure into a new direction of environmental research, it is believed that a) an interview method can give insight and guidance to environmental designers as to behavioral reactions of users, and b) photographic coverage using time-lapse photography can indicate where constructed environmental forms and human behavior are not attuned. Comparison and analysis of all data obtained from various sources of information can help to understand interaction patterns of behavior, relevant design variables, and may lead to the identification of issues of concern fit or misfit within an environment.

\* NEW IDEAS \*





THE CITIZEN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL

-an IUS publication dealing with the work of the IUS in the formation and support of citizen-based organizations ; the analysis of that work ; a description of the various methods and techniques used in that work; and an assessment of the significance of this planning with people activity with regards to the challenge of inner - city redevelopment.

This 200 page book will be available from the IUS during the latter part of July 1972, for the price of \$2.50. Advance orders will be accepted .

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