COMPONENT PARTS OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO URBAN STUDIES

By

JAN JENNINGS SPARKS

Bachelor of Science

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

1968

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
May, 1969

COMPONENT PARTS OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO URBAN STUDIES

Thesis Approved:

Christine J. Salmon
Thesis Adviser

Florence McKinney

Larry M Perkins

D. D. Durham
Dean of the Graduate College

PREFACE

Humanitarian and social concepts in our society have recently emphasized the need to look at the place of residence, housing, environment, and the community of the individual. With this in mind, an urban program that would provide improved living conditions and facilities for the Stillwater, Oklahoma area was sought. The Code Enforcement Program was chosen. The purpose of the study was to identify, measure, and evaluate the extent of blight and deterioration in a specifically defined area. The needs of the locality were analyzed by representatives of interdisciplinary fields in order to bring the area to code compliance for funding under the Code Enforcement Program.

The writer wishes to express sincere appreciation to her adviser, Mrs. Christine F. Salmon, Associate Professor of Housing and Interior Design, for her competent guidance and encouragement during the study. Indebtedness is acknowledged to Dr. Larry Perkins, Assistant Professor of Sociology, for his suggestions and contributions and to Dr. Florence McKinney, Professor and Head of Housing and Interior Design.

Gratitude is also given Mr. Clifford Bilyeu for his aid in the identification of code deficiencies,

Mr. W. A. Myers for his explanation of city planning procedures, Mr. Steve Ownby for landscape architecture, Mr. C. F. Salmon for his architectural recommendations, and Dr. Larkin Warner for his economic advice. The writer would like to thank Mr. Jim Gabelsberg for photographing the area, Mr. James C. Romeis for assistance and interest in processing the data, and Miss Velda Davis for typing the thesis. A special thank you is given the residents of the area for their kind and warm response.

Personal gratitude is given to my husband, Jay, for his encouragement and patience, my parents for their assistance and understanding throughout my college years, and to Jim and Dana Romeis and Kay Tully for their tolerance and friendship throughout the study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Humanitarian and social concepts in today's society have recently recognized the need to look at the place of residence, housing, environment, and the community of the individual. This concern accurately reflects the importance of the dwelling place in ones life, of the family as the basic social institution, and the fact that the majority of buildings are dwelling places.

With this in mind, an urban program that would provide improved living conditions and facilities for the Stillwater, Oklahoma, area was sought. Studies previously initiated were reviewed.

The City of Stillwater contributed materials in the form of the following: The Community Renewal Program, Ordinance Number 1189 and 1221 ("Housing Code"), Proposed Zoning Regulations for the County of Payne, Regulations for the Subdivision of Land for the City of Stillwater, and the Stillwater Comprehensive Plan. Bonny Lay's thesis, An Investigation of Attitudes Held By Male Residents of Stillwater, Oklahoma, Toward Housing Codes, 1966, was also used as a background reference. More recently, Dr. Donald Allen conducted the South Stillwater Community Survey for

the Department of Community Development, 1968.

As the program most suited to this area and its particulars, the Code Enforcement Program was selected.

> The principal purpose of the federally assisted code enforcement program is to restore the stability of neighborhoods where this can be accomplished by effective code enforcement mechanism and lends itself to such an objective without causing extensive dislocation of people and businesses, property acquisition, or demolition. In a real sense, code enforcement contributes preventive action to reverse the forces of blight before more drastic action, such as extensive rehabilitation or clearance, becomes necessary.[1]

To be eligible for assistance under a concentrated code enforcement program, the area or areas selected by the locality must meet the following requirements:

1. The area must be built up and predominantly residential in character, with residential uses distributed throughout the area.

2. Census, survey, or other data must indicate that code violations appear to exist in at least twenty per cent of the buildings in the area and that these violations are distributed throughout the area.

3. Conditions in the area must be such that the proposed program for concentrated code enforcement and the provision of the proposed public improvements will be adequate to eliminate code violations and arrest the decline of the area.[2]

After consultation with the Stillwater city planner, W. A. Myers, who concurred with the need of such a code

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[1]Local Public Agency Letter No. 345. Washington, D.C.: Housing and Home Finance Agency, Urban Renewal Administration, August 18, 1965, p. 1.

[2]Ibid., p. 3.

enforcement program, a site was selected. The Stillwater Community Renewal Program Area 16 was chosen. The area has the following qualifying factors: 78 per cent of structures are rated for rehabilitation; three environmental deficiencies are evident; there is adequate evidence of vitality; and the area conforms with the Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan. The suggested treatment for Area 16, made by the Renewal Program, is to conserve standard housing and to clear and redevelop those structures rated for clearance.[3]

Statement of the Problem

This study is being conducted to identify, measure, and evaluate the extent of blight and deterioration in a specifically defined area and to state the needs of the locality in terms of the requirements of the area in order to bring it to code compliance for funding under the Code Enforcement Program.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the code violations of housing and property within a specifically defined area.

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[3] Community Renewal Program, prepared for the Department of Commerce and Industry, State Planning Agency. Stillwater, Oklahoma: City of Stillwater, pp. 34-35.

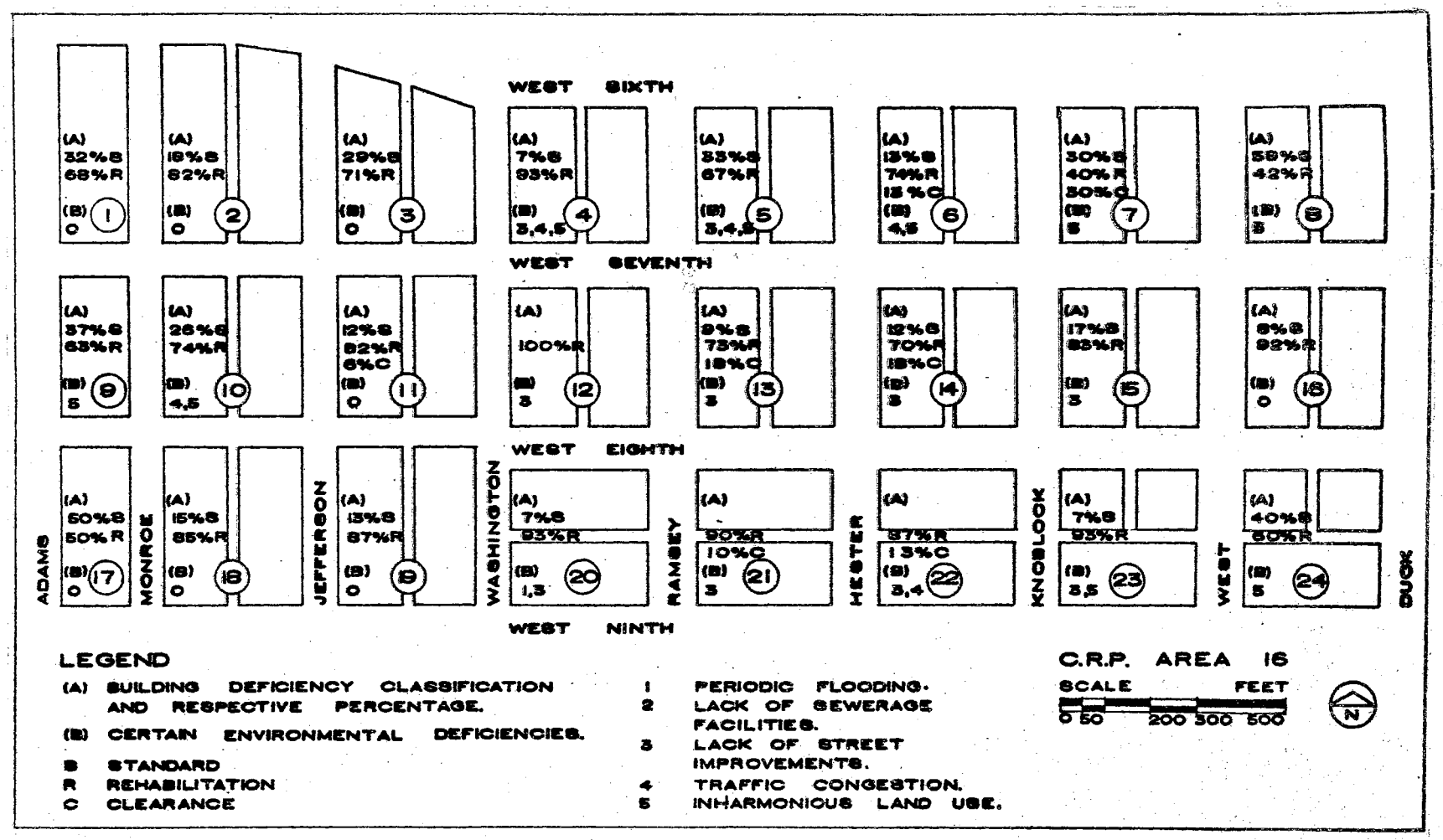

Figure 1. Building and Environmental Deficiencies

SOURCE: Community Renewal Program, Figure 37.

2. To examine and measure the extent and nature of blight and deterioration in relation to the Code Enforcement Program.
3. To suggest rehabilitation action necessary for arresting present and future deterioration.
4. To state the needs of the locality in terms of the Code Enforcement Program.

Limitations

The study is limited by a geographical factor, a specifically defined area of twenty-four blocks. After work was started in the area, several facts were found that brought about the need for an interdisciplinary team to analyze the area and its residents included in the Community Renewal Program Area 16.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature related to urban studies has increased in the past few years, and it has begun to include more research about the citizen in relation to his environment.

In many cases, measurements of physical condition have been given a dominant role in programming housing and renewal action without proper consideration of social consequences. Municipal housing actions must be programmed in relation to human needs rather than treated in purely physical and economic terms.[1]

Catherine Bauer's introductory statements to a group of housing and city planning authorities held in Cambridge in 1949 suggest the following:

> ... what we seem to need is not just another group of independent specialists, a priesthood of 'advanced social research,' to get off by themselves and try to produce 'answers' for us. ... All our immediate practical problems cut straight across many different fields of expertise: social, economic, political, technical, aesthetic, administrative, etc.[2]

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[1]Morton L. Isler, "Selecting Data for Community Renewal Programming," American Institute of Planners Journal, March 1967, p. 68.

[2]Catherine Bauer. "Social Questions in Housing and Community Planning," The Journal of Social Issues, Vol. 7 (1951), pp. 1-2.

Charles Abrams, head of Columbia University's Division of Urban Planning and Institute of Urban Environment, often quotes Socrates' remark "Fields and trees teach me nothing, but the people in a city do." In his book, Man's Struggle For Shelter, Abrams states that the city is "the market place for goods and ideas, the locus of a contractual society, the mirror for emulation, the meeting place for diversities, the center of culture."[3]

Lewis Mumford, author and architect critic, has repeatedly warned against planning operations which ignore the functional and esthetic aspects of community life.[4] Herbert Gans, author of The Urban Villagers, has emphasized the values of cultural and social homogeneity, and the sentimental relationships that may flourish in blighted areas, believing that much damage can be done by planning which does not take fully into account these sociological elements of neighborhood and community life.[5]

Urban community planning is difficult because of the complexities of city life. The variety and number of groups that may work against each other, the conflicting

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[3]Charles Abrams, Man's Struggle for Shelter in an Urbanizing World (Cambridge, 1964), p. 6.

[4]Lewis, Mumford, The City in History (New York, 1961).

[5]Herbert J. Gans, "Planning and Social Life: Friendship and Neighbor Relations in Suburban Communities," Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Vol. 27, May and August, 1961, p. 135.

interests of cultural, racial, religious, economic, or political alignments, the inertia that may add up to resistance to proposed social change, the inability of individuals to agree upon objectives and procedures are conditions that make social change difficult, sometimes impossible.[6]

In Outline of Town and City Planning, Thomas Adams discusses the necessity of the scientific approach in city planning.

> The quality of design will be of more importance than the quantity of designs prepared. Designs have to be judged not only by their artistic value, but as to whether they are based on the right social aims and on sound economic principles, and are just and practicable in their conception and application ...[7]

Paul Spreiregen, architect, speaks of the physical city as a system of activity areas, masses, and circulation systems which are constantly undergoing change. The arrangement of the physical and perceived form of the city is the objective of urban design. He warns urban designers not to underestimate the importance of man himself, with man's abilities to comprehend his surroundings.

> The physical fact of scale must also be visually apparent. When these principles are violated the results are cities without human form, cities without sympathy, cities without pride. Worse still are the effects on the spirit and human sensitivities of its people.

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[6]Noel P. Gist and Sylvia F. Fava, Urban Society, 5th ed. (New York, 1964), p. 597.

[7]Thomas Adams, Outline of Town and City Planning (New York, 1935), p. 321.

At that point the city is a failure.[8]

Site planning is another crucial aspect of the environment with an impact biologically, socially, and psychologically. Kevin Lynch, Associate Professor of City Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, believes site planning "sets limits to the things that people can do, and makes possible their doing what they otherwise could not." He sets up typical criteria against which plan alternatives can be checked: functional adequacy, optimum communication, choice, cost, health, and comfort, adaptability, and image quality.[9]

Gunner Myrdal, Professor of Economics and Director of the Institute for International Economic Studies, Stockholm, believes that urban planning's success depends on a national structure of economic and social policies. One part of this structure must be federal programs and the second part must be a whole set of federally guided attacks on the inherited patterns that now degrade American cities.[10]

Urban planning and design must be implemented through

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[8]Paul D. Spreiregen, Urban Design: Architecture of Towns and Cities (New York, 1965), p. 69.

[9]Kevin Lynch, Site Planning (Cambridge, 1962), pp. 3-8.

[10]Gunnar Myrdal, "National Planning for Healthy Cities: Two Challenges to Affluence," Planning for a Nation of Cities. Ed. Sam Bass, Jr. (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 3.

public policies. One of the primary functions of municipal government is to insure and promote the comfort and security of persons and the safety of property within its boundaries.[11] The Code Enforcement Program provides grants to cities, counties, and other municipalities for planning and administering concentrated code enforcement programs in selected local areas.[12]

Stillwater's Community Renewal Program states that strongly enforced adequate codes and ordinances are of major importance as a means of preventing the occurrence and spread of slums and blight.[13] Public codes appear to be as old as recorded history. Their purpose is to set up standards of accepted practices which provide the necessary minimum measures for safety and general welfare through safe, healthy, and livable conditions of housing and other building construction.[14]

Building and construction codes have been dealing adequately with minimum standard housing as it is built; and now, most housing codes are retroactive with

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[11]Donald Hopkins Webster, Urban Planning and Municipal Public Policy (New York, 1958), p. 293.

[12]Local Public Agency Letter No. 345 (Washington, D.C., 1965), p. 2.

[13]Community Renewal Program prepared for the Department of Commerce and Industry, State Planning Agency (Stillwater), p. 12.

[14]George Strehan, Building Code Philosophy and Principles -- Proceedings of the Forty-Third Annual Meeting of the Conference of Mayors and Other Municipal Officials of the State of New York (Lake Placid, 1952), p. 79.

enforcement action and are requiring that existing structures be adequate for housing regardless of when the housing was constructed.[15] Recently, facts from rehabilitation and conservation programs in a number of cities suggest that more thought be given to the adoption of housing codes as a means to enforce minimum standards of health, safety, and sanitation in existing dwelling units.[16]

President Johnson's 1965 "Message on the Cities" insisted on stricter enforcement of housing codes by communities receiving federal aid, thus "mounting an intensified attack on slums."[17] The administering agency for the Code Enforcement Program is the Housing and Home Finance Agency which was established over two decades ago and which assumed new programs under the Department of Housing and Urban Development, created in 1965 upon President Johnson's recommendations.[18]

To meet the Code Enforcement Program's requirements, a city must have a comprehensive system of codes. This system shall include a housing code or equivalent, zoning

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[15]Donald Hopkins Webster, Urban Planning and Municipal Public Policy (New York, 1958), p. 512.

[16]"Lowering the Cost of Housing," Progressive Architecture, June, 1968, p. 102.

[17]Housing A Nation. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Service, 1966, p. 62.

[18]Ibid., pp. 63-65.

regulations and building, plumbing, electrical, fire prevention, and related codes.[19] Stillwater has adopted a comprehensive system of codes, published under various titles. They include the following: Ordinance Number 1189 and 1221 ("Housing Code"),[20] Proposed Zoning Regulations of the County of Payne,[21] Regulations for the Subdivision of Land for the City of Stillwater,[22] and the National Building Code.[23]

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[19]Local Public Agency Letter No. 345. Washington, D.C.: Housing and Home Finance Agency, Urban Renewal Administration, August 18, 1965, pp. 4-5.

[20]Ordinance Number 1189 and 1221. Stillwater, Oklahoma: City of Stillwater, 1966.

[21]Proposed Zoning Regulations for the County of Payne, State of Oklahoma. Stillwater, Oklahoma: Prepared by the Business Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, 1962.

[22]Regulations for the Subdivision of Land for The City of Stillwater, County of Payne, Oklahoma. Stillwater, Oklahoma: Prepared by the Business Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, 1962.

[23]National Building Code. New York City, New York: Engineering and Safety Department, 1967 ed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Community Renewal Program Area 16 was selected for study in relation to the Code Enforcement Program for Stillwater, Oklahoma, and detailed systematic observations of the area were made. Maps were drawn of the twenty-four blocks in order that the area as a whole could be studied and seen more clearly. The first map located all existing dwellings and the direction toward which each faces the street. This original map was used as an interview guide and for street and traffic planning.

Selection of the Sample

An in-depth area was chosen in order that every resident and his dwelling could be studied and observed fully. Four blocks were selected from the heart of Area 16; these blocks consist of single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, a local commercial district, and a recreation area owned by the city. In short, these four blocks seemed to represent all types of zoning, land, and building uses in the entire area.

The four block in-depth area includes Blocks 4, 5, 12, and 13. They are composed of thirty-one single-family

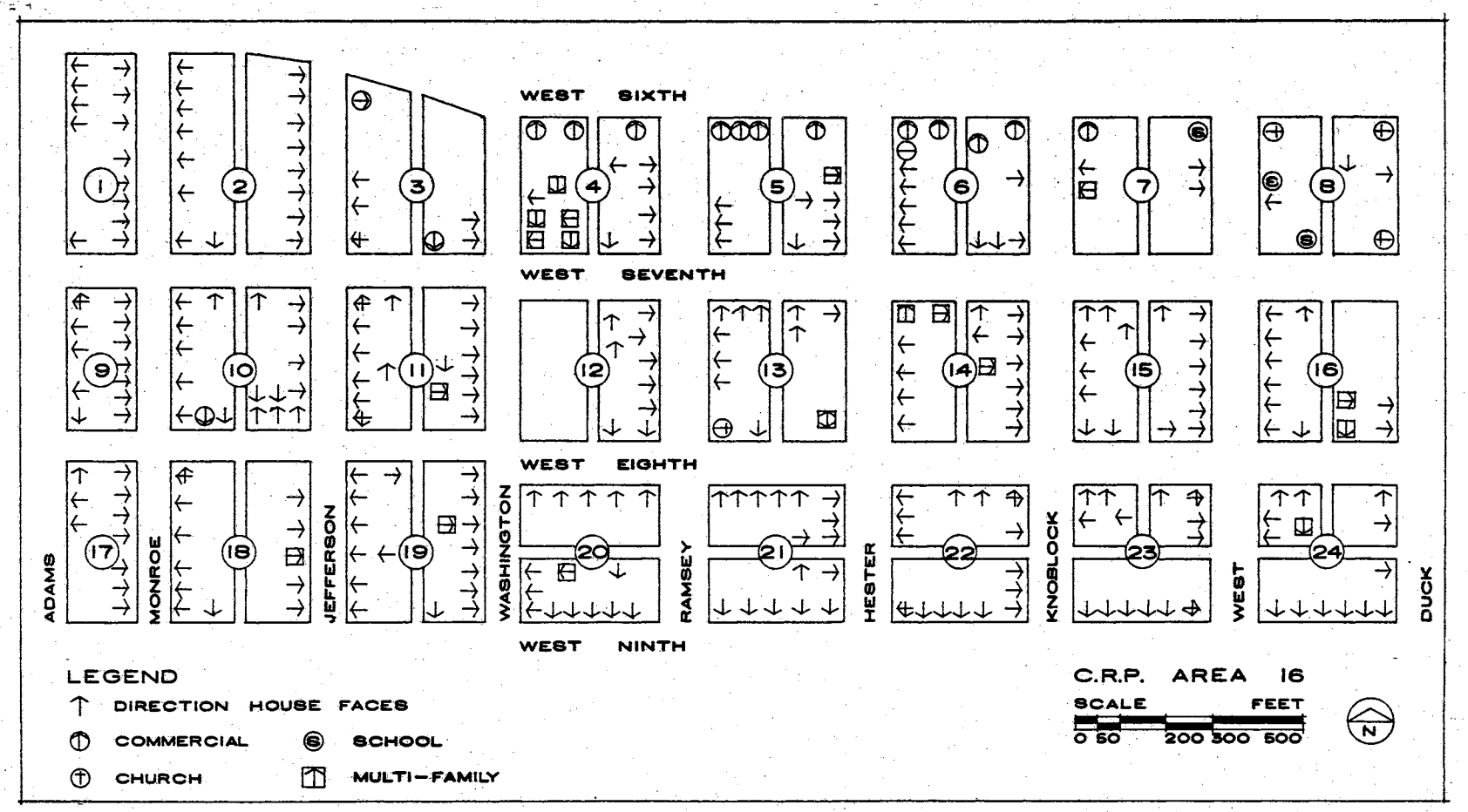

Figure 2. Existing Dwellings and Direction Each Faces the Street

dwellings, one two-family dwelling, eight multiple-family dwellings, seven local commercial establishments, one church, and one recreational area.

Collection of Data

A questionnaire for interviewing was developed for use of the entire area; every dwelling of the in-depth area was contacted. Out of the forty dwellings, twenty-nine responses were obtained by personal interview. The writer conducted a semi-structured interview with the use of a printed questionnaire and by systematic observation.

TABLE I

RESPONSES OF IN-DEPTH AREA

Block Number	Number of Dwellings	Number Contacted	No Response	Not Occupied
4	12	9	2	1
5	9	6	2	1
12	9	6	2	1
13	10	7	1	1
Total	40	29	7	4

After completion of the in-depth survey, five

additional blocks were selected randomly and residents within these blocks were interviewed with the same questionnaire. Dwellings and blocks selected were dependent more on their location and direction than upon the number of homes visited.

TABLE II

RESPONSES OF RANDOM-SAMPLE AREA

Block Number	Number of Dwellings	Number Contacted
2	16	7
10	18	9
15	16	7
21	16	7
24	14	6
Total	80	36

Development of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was composed of thirty questions, twenty-one single yes-no choices and nine open-ended questions. Questions were arranged in the following twelve parts: Home ownership, density, length of residency, and reason for living in area, occupation of respondents,

community interaction, shopping and church attendance within the area, priority of physical improvements desired by residents, degree of safety of the area, appearance of the area, recreational preferences and improvements, assets, and liabilities of the area.

The formal questionnaire was designed to cover as many of the interdisciplinary fields as possible, in order that each discipline could have written data for reference. The fields of housing, sociology, architecture, economics, landscape design, and city planning were incorporated.

The instrument was pretested by businessmen of the area. Additions and corrections incorporating their suggestions were made to the questionnaire (see Appendix).

Data Analysis

The Chi-square test was used in determining whether observed frequencies varied from hypothetical frequencies more than could be expected by chance. Frequencies, percentages, and Chi-square values were run in the Statistics Laboratory of the Sociology Department by the writer.

Organization of the Interdisciplinary Fields

Detailed physical features of the in-depth area (Figure 3) were photographed and studied by the interdisciplinary team in an effort toward improvements. Data from the structured questionnaire, the four maps, and all photographs of the area were used in identifying code

Figure 3. Physical Features of the In-Depth Area

deficiency problems and suggesting solutions.

After the interviewing was completed, housing code deficiencies were identified by the Stillwater Housing Inspector, Mr. Clifford Bilyeu, who personally identified all dwelling code deficiencies on Monroe and Jefferson Streets. The remaining dwellings in the area were categorized as follows: Standard (Figure 4), Minor Repair (Figure 5), Major Repair (Figure 6), Clearance (Figure 7). Housing code deficiencies were then plotted on Figure 11 which is further explained in Chapter IV.

Stillwater City Planner, Mr. W. A. Myers studied data from the structured questionnaire and proposed possible street and traffic improvements (Figure 8) illustrated in Figure 12, Chapter IV. Mr. Myers felt that proper control of the drainage ditch (Figure 9) could not be solved by the Code Enforcement Program, but could become part of an urban renewal program in Stillwater.

Mr. F. Cuthbert Salmon, Head of the School of Architecture, Oklahoma State University, suggested that the drainage ditch could be improved and made more attractive immediately, possibly within a Capital Improvements Program. He felt the entire area would be a more pleasant place if there were more green areas, making better use of visual open space. Mr. Salmon made recommendations about the recreational lot in Block 12 (Figure 10).

Landscape architect, Mr. Steve Ownby, had just completed plans for a Creative Playground for St. Francis of

Figure 4. Example of Standard Housing

Figure 5. Example of Dwellings Needing Minor Repair in Block 13

Figure 6. Example of Dwellings Needing Major Repair in Block 4

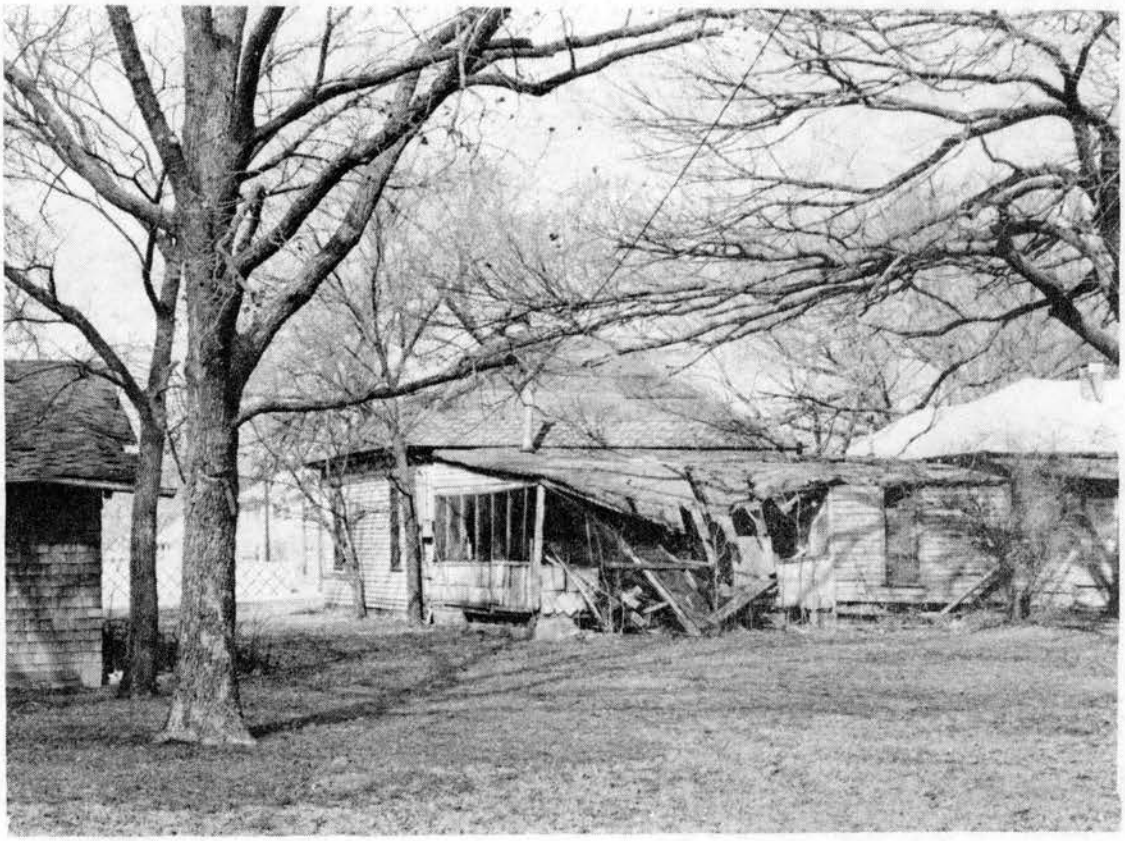

Figure 7. Example of Structure Requiring Clearance

Figure 8. Need for Street Improvements Within Area 16

Figure 9. Drainage Ditch - A Major Problem of the In-Depth Area

Figure 10. Recreational Lot in Block 12

Xavier Catholic Church. These plans are given in detail in Chapter IV. However, the church playground is designed for upper and lower elementary age children. Mr. Ownby suggested the recreational lot in Block 12 should be developed for more adult uses.

Dr. Larkin Warner, Professor of Economics at Oklahoma State University, felt that the initial questionnaire should have included more responses geared to economic analysis. When the program is iniated, he will require more data on the frequency of multiple-job home owners, the relative income level of Area 16, the degree of turnover in residency, and the economic aspirations of the residents.

Assistant Professor of Sociology, Oklahoma State University, Dr. Larry Perkins, felt the questionnaire supplies useful data to the sociologist and for citizen participation in implementing future programs.

The six representatives of the interdisciplinary fields were consulted individually; each was interviewed separately by the writer.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are presented in the following manner: Data from the structured questionnaire categorized in twelve parts, home ownership, density, length of residency and reason for living in area, occupation of residents, community interaction, shopping and church attendance, priority of physical improvements, safety, appearance, recreational preferences and improvements, assets, and liabilities, and interdisciplinary evaluations from the fields of housing, city planning, architecture, landscape design, economics, and sociology.

Data From the Structured Questionnaire

Data from the structured questionnaire was purposely separated for comparison between the in-depth and random-sample areas. However, it was hypothesized that the residents of Area 16, as a whole, had similar preferences and opinions about their area. In most cases, this was confirmed. The following data indicate similarities and differences.

1) Home Ownership

Thirty-one per cent of the in-depth area residents are home owners, while sixty-one per cent of the random-sample own their homes. In checking the difference in proportions of property ownership, there was no significant difference between the in-depth and random-sample responses using the .05 level of significance.

2) Density

The in-depth area averaged 2.45 people per home; the random-sample area averaged 2.83 people per home. The following table shows the number of children and their age differentiations.

TABLE III

NUMBER AND AGES OF CHILDREN LIVING IN AREA

	In-Depth	Random-Sample
Residents with no children	17	22
Residents with children	12	14
Average number children per home	2	3
Average age of children	9.54	10.57
Age differentiation of children:		
1 - 5 years	10	10
6 - 10 years	5	9
11 - 15 years	6	14
16 - 20 years	2	9
21 + years	1	0

3) Length of Residency and Reason for Living in Area

Interviewing respondents in both samples revealed that the length of residency ranged from one-half of a year to fifty years. However, the in-depth sample average was 8.41 years of residence in the area, while the random-sample average number of years was 5.39.

The location of Area 16 to public and private schools, Oklahoma State University, area shopping, downtown Stillwater, and to churches was mentioned frequently by residents in both samples. Other reasons for the selection of the area that were named by respondents were the following: homes were inexpensive to rent or buy, homes were available to rent or buy, respondents knew the landlord, or they had friends in the area. Location was compared to other reasons for selectivity of the area between in-depth and random-sample areas. A Chi-square test was applied to locality versus other reasons. There was a significant difference between in-depth and the random-sample areas. Locality is probably more important to random-sample residents than in-depth residents (χ^2 = 5.118, df = 1, p = .05).

4) Occupation

Occupational responses were classified into six categories after the raw data were gathered. These classifications were adapted from Richard Center's

Occupational Index. Professional includes physicians, dentists, professors, teachers, ministers, lawyers, and engineers; small business includes small retail dealers, contractors, owners, and managers; white-collar workers include clerks, salesmen, agents, semiprofessional workers, and technicians; skilled workers include carpenters, machinists, plumbers, masons, printers, foremen, barbers, and cooks; semiskilled workers include truck drivers, machine operators, service station attendants, and waiters; unskilled workers include garage laborers, sweepers, janitors, construction laborers, and all non-owning, non-renting farm workers.[1] Housewives, students, and the retired were also listed since they are in such large numbers within Area 16. (See Table IV.)

5) Community Interaction

The structured questionnaire asked nine questions in an effort to determine if there is community interaction within Area 16. The in-depth and random-sample areas were again separated for comparison although in Table V their majorities are approximately the same.

Thirty-seven per cent of the in-depth area said they "felt close" to the people in their area; sixty-nine per cent of the random-sample respondents expressed the same feeling of their area neighbors. A Chi-square test

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[1]Bernard Barber. Social Stratification. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1957.

TABLE IV

OCCUPATION

	In-Depth	Random-Sample
Housewife	5	15
Student	14	7
Retired	7	10
Professional	2	2
Small Business	1	7
White-Collar	4	6
Skilled Worker	3	6
Semi-Skilled Worker	6	2
Unskilled Worker	2	1
Total	44	56

TABLE V

COMMUNITY INTERACTION

	In-Depth n = 29*		Random-Sample n = 36*	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Know everyone in block	20%	80%	22%	78%
Know next-door neighbors	65%	31%	81%	16%
Know anyone across street	45%	45%	50%	36%
Have relatives in area	17%	83%	8%	92%
Closest friends in area	34%	66%	33%	67%
Have neighborhood meetings	21%	79%	36%	64%
Would like to be selective in choosing neighbors	62%	38%	61%	33%

*Non-applicable situations account for figures that do not tally to 100%.

was used to determine differences. There was a high degree of significance between the in-depth and random-sample areas. Random-sample respondents probably feel closer to the people surrounding their homes ($\chi^2 = 6.297$, df = 1, p = .05).

Area 16 is bounded by Sixth Street to the north. The street is a four-lane thoroughfare and is also the route of State Highway 51. The writer was curious to determine if Sixth Street is an invisable physical or social barrier between residents of Area 16 and the area of town north of Sixth Street. The respondents were asked if they felt similar to the people across Sixth Street.

TABLE VI

AREA 16 COMMUNITY INTERACTION WITH RESIDENTS ACROSS SIXTH STREET

	In-Depth n = 29	Random-Sample n = 36
Feel similar to those across Sixth Street	51%	30%
Did not feel similar to those across Sixth Street	13%	30%
Did not know	36%	40%

Using a Chi-square test, there was no significant

difference between the in-depth or random-sample areas ($\chi^2 = 3.79$, df = 2, p = .05). However, it appears that more of the in-depth area feels closer to the people across Sixth Street than the respondents in blocks further from Sixth Street.

6) Shopping and Church Attendance

Area 16 contains the following, C-1, local commercial district uses: one large supermarket, one local grocery store, four automobile service-stations, two quick-service stores, one help-yourself laundry, two restaurants, one retail liquor store, one photography studio, and one printing and graphic arts studio.

In-depth block respondents did ninety per cent of their shopping within Area 16. The majority of them bought groceries in the area with service-stations ranking second in use, quick-service stores third. Random-sample respondents did eighty-three per cent of their shopping within the area. They bought groceries and gas within the area, but seemed to go elsewhere for other services.

Three churches are included in Area 16. They are the First Methodist Church, Saint Francis of Xavier Catholic Church, and the Church of God. Thirty-one per cent of the in-depth respondents attended one of these churches, but only nineteen per cent of the random-sample area respondents attended churches in this area. Clearly, the majority of all respondents do not attend church in Area 16.

7) Physical Improvements

The Code Enforcement Program provides funds for street, curb, landscape, sidewalk, street light, traffic, traffic light and sign improvements. After observing Area 16, all these physical features were listed on the structured questionnaire. An existing open drainage ditch in the in-depth area was also added to the list. Respondents were asked to list in priority, the features they wanted improved or enhanced in their neighborhood.

Table VI illustrates the in-depth and random-sample responses.

Clearly, these respondents of the in-depth area felt the drainage ditch to be of first priority. The random-sample respondents mentioned a variety of physical features and were more concerned with traffic lights and signs, sidewalks, and street lights. Although pedestrian crosswalks were not included on the questionnaire, ten people of the thirty-six respondents of the random-sample area wanted them designed for Sixth Street.

8) Safety

Three questions were asked to reveal how safe the respondents felt in their area. Eighty-three per cent of the in-depth respondents and ninety-two per cent of the random-sample respondents felt safe in their area. These percentages decreased sharply when residents were asked if they felt safe to go out alone at night; fifty-two per cent

TABLE VII

PRIORITY OF PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS
OF THE IN-DEPTH AREA

Physical Improvements	Number of Respondents Requesting Priority							
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
Streets	5	7	1					
Curbs		1				1		
Landscaping			1				1	
Sidewalks	4	4	3		1			
Street Lights	1	6	2	1				
Drainage Ditch	13	3	1	1				
Traffic	1	4	4					
Traffic Lights and Signs	4	3	1					

PRIORITY OF PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS
OF THE RANDOM-SAMPLE AREA

Physical Improvements	Number of Respondents Requesting Priority							
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth
Streets	2		2					
Curbs		1						
Landscaping	1	1						
Sidewalks	6	3	1	1				
Street Lights	5	3	4	2				
Drainage Ditch	3	5	1	1				
Traffic		3	5		1			
Traffic Lights and Signs	7	2			1			

of the in-depth residents responded that they would and fifty-eight per cent of the random-sample respondents said they would go out alone at night. The final safety question asked if respondents would let their children go out alone at night. Thirty per cent of the in-depth residents who had children said they would allow them to go out alone at night; only twenty-three per cent of the random-sample felt safe about allowing their children out alone at night.

9) Appearance

Respondents were asked if it would matter to them what type of building might be built next door to their home. Seventy-two per cent of the in-depth respondents replied that it would matter. Of those who made further comments, the majority wanted no commercial establishment next to their dwelling. The random-sample respondents expressed the same desire; eighty-one per cent stated that the building next door would make a difference. This area of respondents was more concerned about traffic or noise next door to them, and preferred that their area remain all residential.

Ninety per cent of the in-depth area said the appearance of their neighborhood made a difference to them while eighty-one per cent of the random-sample respondents said appearance made a difference. They seemed more concerned about a neat, clean neighborhood. But the majority of all

respondents said the appearance made a difference to them.

10) Recreational Preferences and Improvements

The in-depth area has a city-owned recreational lot in Block 12. Currently, the lot has a few small trees, one swing set, and a slide. Respondents were shown a map of Area 16 and were asked six questions concerning this recreational lot. The researcher did not identify the area by use of a word, requiring the respondents to identify the area. The majority of respondents identified it as a park or playground.

TABLE VIII

RECREATIONAL RESPONSES

	In-Depth n = 29		Random-Sample n = 36	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Knew who owned lot	45%	55%	36%	64%
Knew people outside of Area 16 who used lot	52%	17%	39%	5%
Walk across lot to visit or to shop	38%	62%	17%	83%
Satisfied with the use of the lot	76%	24%	89%	5%

Respondents were asked how often their families used the lot; they replied to a structured form of answer, much, little, or none.

TABLE IX

USAGE OF RECREATIONAL LOT

Usage	In-Depth n = 29	Random-Sample n = 36
Much	7%	9%
Little	35%	29%
None	58%	62%

TABLE X

BLOCK 12 RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements	In-Depth	Random-Sample
Better upkeep	3	3
Children's playground facilities	16	21
Landscaping	8	8
Limited sports	3	12
Picnic areas	4	9
Shopping area	1	1
Swimming pool	3	0

11) Assets

The respondents of Area 16 were asked to name their area's greatest asset. Some named more than one, but the following table reveals the raw data indicating the number of times an asset was mentioned.

TABLE XI

ASSETS OF AREA 16

Asset mentioned	In-Depth	Random-Sample
General locality	1	3
Locality to churches	2	5
Locality to doctor	1	1
Locality to downtown	5	8
Locality to Oklahoma State University	9	3
Locality to public or private schools	0	5
Locality to shopping area	7	3
Nice, quiet neighborhood	6	10
Out of flood plain	1	0
People or friends in area	6	9
Rent houses available	0	2
Trees	0	2

12) Liabilities

Area respondents were also asked to name a liability or liabilities of Area 16. The following table is presented in raw data form showing the number of times a liability was mentioned.

TABLE XII

LIABILITIES OF AREA 16

Liability mentioned	In-Depth	Random-Sample
Commercial district too close	4	3
Condition of old homes	4	9
Drainage ditch	7	2
Lack of urban environment	1	0
Locality to Negro area	5	5
On-street parking	1	0
Poor lighting	0	3
Poor sidewalks	0	1
Rent property	1	2
Traffic	6	5
Unpaved streets	5	4

Interdisciplinary Evaluations

Representatives of the six interdisciplinary fields of housing, city planning, architecture, landscape architecture, economics, and sociology were asked to evaluate and make suggestions for furthering implementation of the Code Enforcement Program in Area 16.

1) Housing

Exterior housing code deficiencies were identified by direct observation of the area, rather than by data from the structured questionnaire. Mr. Clifford Bilyeu, Stillwater Housing Inspector, identified all dwelling code deficiencies on Monroe and Jefferson Streets included in Area 16. With information gained from the Housing Inspector, the remaining dwellings were categorized by use of the following four terms: Standard, Minor Repair, Major Repair, and Clearance. Figure 11 shows conditions of dwellings analyzed by use of the housing code (see Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7).

2) City Planning

Stillwater City Planner, Mr. W. A. Myers, studied data from the structured questionnaire and proposed possible street and traffic improvements. He suggested leaving Sixth and Ninth Streets open to east-west bound traffic and Monroe and Hester streets open to north-south bound traffic. Other streets within Area 16 would be partially

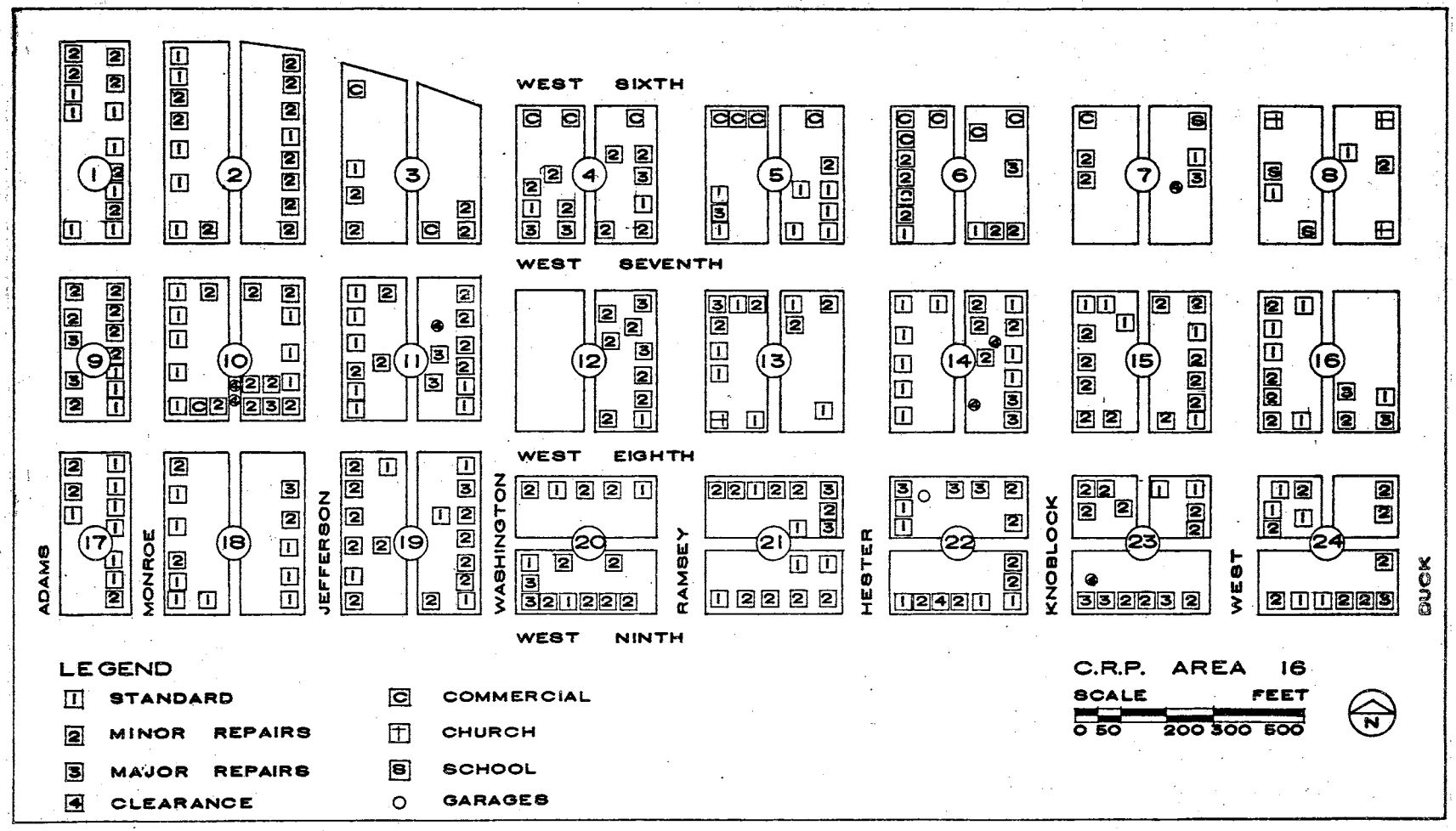

Figure 11. Housing Code Deficiencies

closed by means of one-way traffic. This method would slow traffic in neighborhood areas, allow parking on both sides of streets, and limit entrances from Sixth Street for more efficient traffic control.

Mr. Myers also stated that proper control of the drainage ditch would be below-ground or storm drainage work and, thus, could not be funded under the Code Enforcement Program. He proposed that drainage ditch improvements made by the city can be applied as credits toward urban renewal projects south and east of Area 16. The Community Renewal Program for Area 16 allocates $150,000 as an estimated project cost for storm drainage improvement. Street lighting, street improvements, and sidewalk repair would have to be investigated further and located for proper funding, although the Community Renewal Program estimated street work in Area 16 to be $84,000.[2] Figure 12 presents possible street and traffic controls.

3) Architecture

Mr. F. Cuthbert Salmon, Head of the School of Architecture, Oklahoma State University, was interested in all twelve phases of the structured questionnaire data. Ideally, the area would adapt well for rowhouses for university students and the elderly. But since

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[2]Community Renewal Program, prepared for the Department of Commerce and Industry, State Planning Agency. Stillwater, Oklahoma: City of Stillwater.

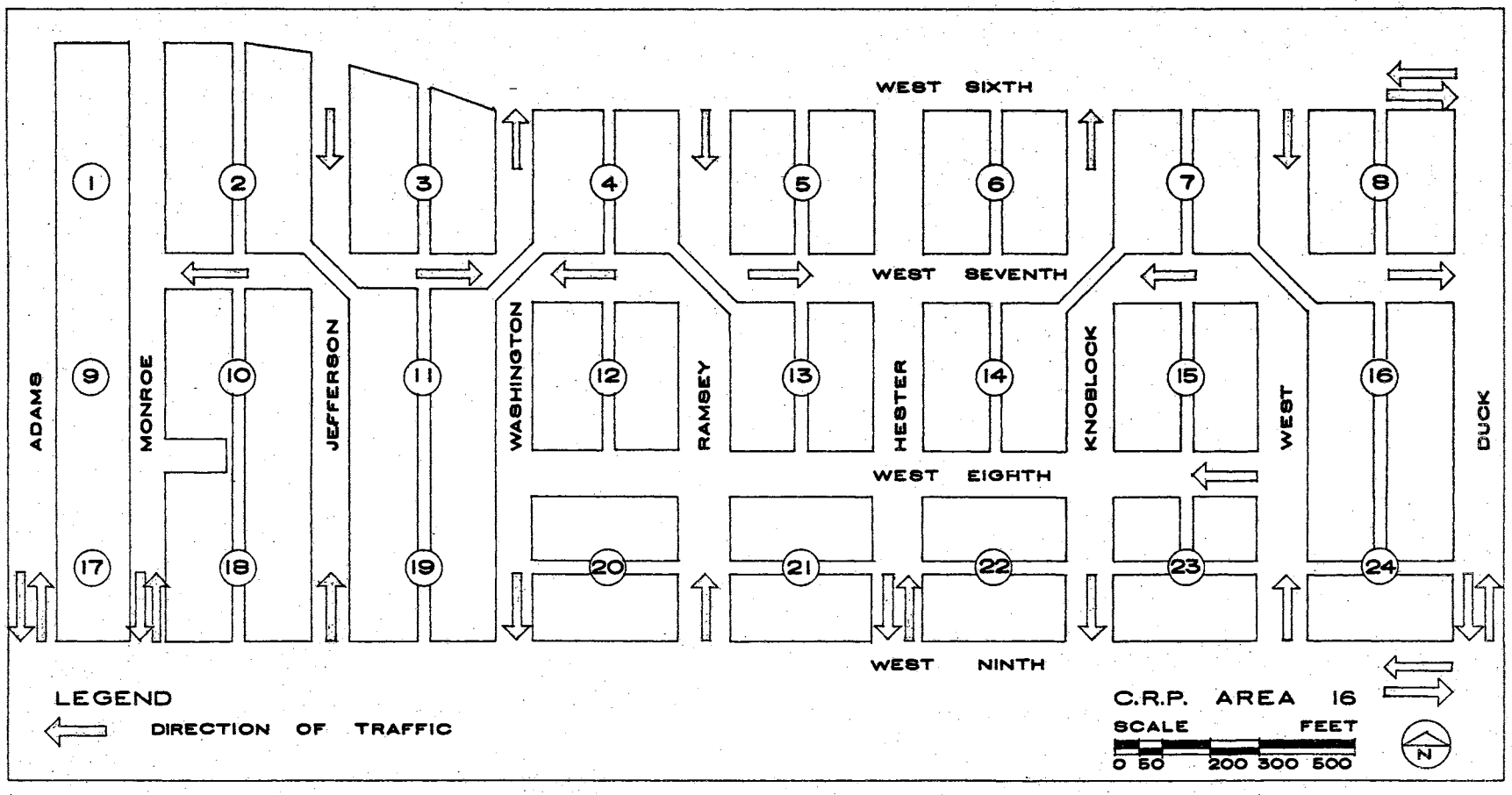

Figure 12. Proposal for Street and Traffic Control in Area 16

rehabilitation with limited clearance is stressed in the Code Enforcement Program, this ideal might not be realized as part of the program. He suggested that the drainage ditch be controlled and made more attractive until urban renewal can properly improve it.

Mr. Salmon felt the entire area would be a more pleasant place if there were more green areas, making better use of visual open space. Community-service activities could be attractively accommodated within the areas at the back of the dwellings. Where there are no homes built on the back of the lot, neighbors could develop small parks or green areas for common use.

The recreational lot in Block 12 could be utilized by a mixture of age groups; the age levels being separated by landscaping. Small children's sculptured playground equipment would create play situations that lead to imagination and discovery. Perhaps vending machines, a public clock, and picnic areas could be incorporated on the recreation lot.

4) Landscape Architecture

Landscape architect, Mr. Steve Ownby, and Steve Shriver, one of his students, had just completed plans for a Creative Playground for Saint Francis of Xavier Catholic Church. Since this play area and the church are a vital, live part of Area 16, their specifications will be explained in full.

The playground for St. Francis is designed to meet the play needs of upper and lower elementary age children. It is also required that part of the space serve double purpose as parking space for persons attending church. The area to the east of the alley was designed to meet this need and the need for a hardsurface area upon which to play structured activities as volleyball, basketball, and tetherball. A sixteen foot chain link fence borders the north side. This fence, covered with a honeysuckle vine, will serve both as a barrier to sports activities and as a visual screen from the undesirable view to the north. On the south and part of the east and west sides of the area, six foot redwood fencing is used.

The area to the west of the alley is the most intensively developed of the two areas. By the use of different levels, this area is divided so that the children of the lower elementary age group and those of the upper elementary age group each have an individual area for the major part of their play activities.

The lower elementary area occupies the southeast corner of the lot and is separated from the general turf area by a one foot change in elevation; this change is bordered by a sloping brick surface. A brick ramp is located at the east end of this area in order to encourage entry into the area at this point, thus decreasing unnecessary wear on the turf area.

Color cubes provide interesting spaces for the

children to play and objects that can be climbed. Spring boards offer a change in surface stability and allow experimentation with balance. Sewer tiles allow climbing, crawling, and encounters with partially enclosed spaces. A timber and deck structure is composed of upright twelve-by-twelve inch redwood beams which are sunk into the ground and have positioned amidst them a deck of redwood planks. The deck would be five feet high and accessible by way of the redwood timbers; they will be stairstepped in an apparently random fashion for climbing. This deck can serve as a place for a variety of play activities.

At the west end of the lower elementary area is another space surfaced with fir bark and canopied by low branches of a red cedar that is now existing on the site. This small space is separated from the rest of the area by a two foot brick wall. This is a special space, one that has a calm, quiet feeling, a concealed "hide-and-seek" atmosphere. At the north end of this space are upright timbers of various heights, for variety. Along the west and north side, the timbers are tall and positioned against one another to form a wall. This wall separates the lower elementary area from the upper elementary area.

Much of the upper elementary area is similar to the lower elementary area, but the equipment is constructed at a larger scale. Boulders offer a new variety to play equipment and are natural among the sand. Rising from the center of the upper elementary level are two brick mound

structures, one like a hill and the other like a ridge.

A turf area is another division of the lot that might be used by members of either age group. The brick surface adjacent to the turf provides a quiet area for resting, talking, or playing passive games. The turf area has benches for teachers, parents, or the children and is canopied by four large sycamores.

The three general areas, elementary age level, upper elementary age level, and the turf area are designed for an entire play environment whose parts relate to and complement one another.[3]

Since such intensive development of children's play areas will be centered at St. Francis Catholic Church, Mr. Ownby suggested that the recreational lot on Block 12 be developed into a more adult level with minimum children's equipment and more picnic spaces. Further landscaping might incorporate flower gardens that the elderly could maintain, putting greens for neighborhood golfers, or shallow quiet or gushing waters.

Landscaping under the Code Enforcement Program could be designed for all public streets and would add more green areas stressed by the architect. Landscaping would further define and enhance the blocking of through streets

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[3]Steve Shriver, "Description and Explanation of the Creative Playground for St. Francis of Xavier" (unpublished paper, Oklahoma State University [Stillwater, March, 1969]), 6 pp.

into one-way neighborhood streets suggested by the city planner.

5) Economics

Dr. Larkin Warner, Professor of Economics at Oklahoma State University, was interested in home ownership, density, occupation, and shopping attendance in Area 16. However, he felt to further implement the Code Enforcement Program, more questions should be added for economic analysis. Data should include the frequency of husband and wife both working because multiple-job owners within the home would help determine family status and job-earning ability. The degree of turn-over in residency, where the residents moved from and where they will go when they leave the area, would help establish the economic aspirations of residents.

A relative income level of the area would also help in an over-all analysis. Stillwater's median income in 1959 was $5,164. If the city's median income level had experienced about the same rate of growth as is the case for the nation as a whole, median family income would be about $7,000 today. If median family income levels were calculated for each of the individual census tracts of Stillwater, it would appear that Tract 6, which includes Area 16, exhibits a median family income that was not a great deal different than the median family income applicable for Stillwater as a whole.

6) Sociology

Assistant Professor of Sociology, Oklahoma State University, Dr. Larry Perkins, examined the data of the structured questionnaire and discussed the means by which interviews were made. He felt that the questionnaire supplied useful data for citizen participation and for implementing future programs. Interviewing, meetings, visiting, and observing area residents creates sensitiveness to human concerns that can be helpful in relating what area residents need and want. Questioning enlarges choices that people have; it is a method of developing self-help. Discussing the neighborhood brings an awareness of ones environment.

Interdisciplinary evaluations followed the completion of the structure questionnaire and systematic observations. Had all representatives of the interdisciplinary fields been contacted at an earlier phase of the study and had they been able to meet as a team prior to the completion of the instrument, the goal of a comprehensive study would be more nearly realized.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Humanitarian and social concepts in society have recently emphasized the need to look at the place of residence, housing, environment, and the community of the individual. With this in mind, an urban program that would provide improved living conditions for the Stillwater, Oklahoma, area was sought. The Code Enforcement Program was chosen.

The purpose of this study was to identify, measure, and evaluate the extent of blight and deterioration in a specifically defined area. Twenty-four blocks of the Community Renewal Program Area 16 were chosen to study in relation to the Code Enforcement Program. Four blocks of Area 16 were studied in-depth by observation and interview with a structured questionnaire. Five other blocks in Area 16 were selected randomly and dwellings within these blocks were random-sampled with the semi-structured interview. Maps of Area 16 and data from the questionnaire were evaluated by six representatives of interdisciplinary fields.

The interdisciplinary team was made up of the

following fields: Housing, city planning, architecture, landscape architecture, economics, and sociology. Representatives of each discipline were interviewed for their evaluations of and suggestions for implementing the Code Enforcement Program. Table XIII indicates what parts of the structured questionnaire each representative used in his evaluation.

The evaluations of the interdisciplinary team were also based upon the maps and photographs of the area. In addition, the area was familiar to each participant.

Conclusions and Implications

From detailed observations and analysis of the data from the several sources within this study, it is apparent that the Code Enforcement Program could be used as a tool toward total community improvement for Area 16 of the Community Renewal Program in Stillwater. Aid for financing the publicly-owned facilities of streets, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, traffic lights, and signs, street lights, and street tree planting with project Area 16 could be financed with Housing and Urban Development funds and the City of Stillwater Capitol Improvements Program. The data indicates that residents in the area feel that all these physical features need improvement.

Responses from residents in the area indicate that the people are interested in the environment in which they live. Most of the population as a whole expressed similar

TABLE XIII

INTERDISCIPLINARY MATRIX

Structured Questionnaire	Interdisciplinary Fields: 1) Housing	2) City Planning	3) Architecture	4) Landscape Architecture	5) Economics	6) Sociology
1) Home Ownership	x				x	x
2) Density	x		x	x	x	x
3) Length of Residency and Reason for Living in Area	x		x			x
4) Occupation			x		x	x
5) Community Interaction			x			x
6) Shopping and Church Attendance		x			x	x
7) Priority of Physical Improvements	x	x	x			
8) Safety		x				x
9) Appearance			x	x		
10) Recreational Preferences and Improvements		x	x	x		
11) Assets		x	x			
12) Liabilities		x	x			

preferences, objectives, and suggestions. In all other analysis, the writer observed more similarities than differences, indicating that the majority of residents would work to implement such a program in their area.

If the community participated in the Code Enforcement Program, an interdisciplinary team would be of great worth; thus, experts from each field could meet and coordinate their best efforts toward the goal of preventing slums and blight and fostering local improvement. In the programming of such a schedule for Stillwater, more lengthy and in-depth plans would have to be made. A Code Enforcement Program, with such an interdisciplinary base, could add strength to the housing, city planning, architecture, landscape architecture, economics, and sociology fields in Stillwater.

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APPENDIX

HOUSE NUMBER _____ OWN _____

BLOCK NUMBER _____ RENT _____

1. How many people live in your home at present?

   _____

2. Do you have children? If so, what are their ages?
   none _____ ages _____
3. How long have you lived in this area?

   _____
4. Why did you select this area to live?

   _____
5. What is your occupation?

   _____
6. Are other members of your household employed?
   no ____ occupation _____
7. Do you know everyone who lives in your block?
   yes _____ no _____
8. Do you know your next door neighbors?
   yes _____ no _____
9. Do you know those people who live across the street?
   yes ____ no _____ number _____
10. Do you have any relatives living in this area?
    yes ____ no ____
11. Do your closest friends live in this area?
    yes ____ no ____
12. Do you feel close to the people in this area?
    yes ____ no ____ comment _____
13. (show map) Do you feel that people in this area are similar to you? (Show area of town across Sixth Street)
    yes ____ no ____ comment _____
14. Do members of your area get together for clubs, coffee, or meetings?
    yes ____ no ____

15. Do you think your neighbors would like to be selective with who moves next door to them?
yes ____ no ____ comment _____

16. Do you do your shopping in this area?
yes ____ no ____ what? _____

17. Do you attend church in this area?
yes ____ no ____

18. If physical improvements could be made in your neighborhood, which features do you think should be taken care of first?
Please rank in order of priority to you.
_____ streets
_____ curbs
_____ landscaping
_____ sidewalks
_____ street lights
_____ open drainage ditch
_____ traffic
_____ traffic lights and signs

19. Do you feel safe in this area?
yes ____ no ____ comments _____

20. Do you feel safe to go out alone at night?
yes ____ no ____

21. Would you let your children go out alone at night?
yes ____ no ____ no children _____

22. Does it matter what type of building is built next door to your home?
yes ____ no ____ what would you allow? _____
comments _____

23. Does the appearance of your neighborhood make a difference to you?
yes ____ no ____ comment _____

24. (show map) Do you know who owns this area?
(Recreational Lot on Block 12) yes ____ no ____

Page 3

25. Does your family use this area? (Note how they identify area)
    much ____ little ____ none ____
26. Do people outside your area use this space?
    yes ____ no ____ do not know ____
27. Do you walk across this area to visit or shop?
    yes ____ no ____
28. Are you satisfied with the current use of this area?
    yes ____ no ____
29. Without cost to you, what would you do to improve it?

    _____

    _____

30. What do you feel is your area's greatest asset?

    _____

    What do you feel is your area's greatest liability?

    _____

VITA

Jan Jennings Sparks

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: COMPONENT PARTS OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO URBAN STUDIES

Major Field: Housing and Interior Design

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Canyon, Texas, March 30, 1946, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack N. Jennings. Married August 19, 1967, to J. Stanley Sparks, Jr.

Education: Graduated from Canyon High School, Canyon, Texas, in 1964; received the Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics from Oklahoma State University, with a major in Housing and Interior Design, in May, 1968; completed requirements for a Master of Science degree, with a major in Housing and Interior Design, May, 1969.

Organizations: Omicron Nu; Phi Upsilon Omicron; Housing and Interior Design Club, president, social chairman; Delta Delta Delta, panhellenic, historian.

Professional Experience: Research Assistant, 1967, Department Assistant, 1968, Housing and Interior Design Department; Retirement Housing Survey for the City of Stillwater, 1968.