



SOCIAL PLANNING
COUNCIL
OF
METROPOLITAN
TORONTO

a review of
trends in the
social develop-
ment of new
suburban
communities in
Metropolitan
Toronto

Metro's Suburbs in Transition



**Part I:
Evolution
and Overview**

Background report / April 1979



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BACKGROUND REPORT

METRO'S SUBURBS IN TRANSITION

PART ONE: EVOLUTION AND OVERVIEW

A review of trends in the social development of new suburban communities in Metropolitan Toronto.

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April 1979

Price: \$10.00



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL PUBLICATIONS OF RELATED INTEREST

I PROCEEDINGS OF THE JUNE SEMINAR HELD BY THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF PLANNERS (TORONTO REGION) AND EIGHT SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCILS ON SOCIAL OBJECTIVES AND URBAN PLANNING

This publication includes papers and summaries of workshops at the Seminar, which was the fifth in the urban seminar series of the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, held in June, 1978.

It deals with trends and patterns, such as shifting demographic patterns and changing family lifestyles, and developments in human service planning. Environmental fit and the social implications of land use patterns are examined, and three viewpoints on municipal social policy development are included. The workshops cover case histories such as LeBreton Flats and Saint John, neighbourhood planning, and the role of social impact assessment.

The lunchtime address by Claude Bennett, Minister of Housing for the Province of Ontario, and the keynote speech by Alan O'Brien, former mayor of Halifax are reproduced.

January 1979

Price: \$7.00

II POLICY STATEMENTS

Response to the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Toronto

Detailed responses are given to many of the Commission's recommendations, including human service coordination, family benefits, social services, education, health, housing, the electoral system, and boundaries.

The Social Planning Council supports the thrust of the recommendations which would give Metro Council a leadership role in planning and coordinating the provision of social services, health and other human service programs. The Social Planning Council sees Metro's role as reviewing needs and conditions in the community, and in formulating priorities for how nearly two billion dollars a year for social programs could best be spent. Collaboration with the strong network of voluntary associations and local governments is seen as a reason for and an essential part of this role.

However, the Social Planning Council would only support this new role for Metro if Ontario does not impose additional financial responsibility on Metro's property tax base as a part of such an arrangement.

October 1977

Price: \$1.50

Response to Metroplan: Concepts & Objectives

While analysis and opinions on specific land use policies are not included, the overall policy direction and political context for the plan are dealt with.

The Social Planning Council comments on the uncertainties created by the reports of both the Planning Act Review Committee and the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Toronto and questions the future role of Metro and the form its Official Plan should take. Reference is made to the uncertainty around municipal compliance with Metro's planning policies. The inter-related nature of any planning for Metro and the surrounding regional municipalities is also considered.

Comments are made on the various assumptions on which Metroplan is based. This includes growth, employment, new technologies, and social change.

The Social Planning Council reiterates its position that the implications for social planning and development must be considered simultaneously with any land use and transportation planning.

November 1977

Price: \$1.50

Response to the Planning Act Review Committee

The Social Planning Council supports the direction of the recommendations put forward by Eli Comay's committee.

Concern is expressed, however, at the staging of major reforms, which would place a considerable burden upon the planning systems and upon the responsiveness of the local electoral and political system. The Social Planning Council does support the notion that provincial involvement should be limited to instances where the provincial interest was already defined by prior guidelines and regulations. The time necessary for issuing such guidelines is seen as presenting something of a problem.

The clear disagreement that the Social Planning Council has with the recommendations relates to the content of Official Plans. The Social Planning Council feels strongly that social development and social planning must be an integral part of the planning process.

October 1977

Price: \$1.50

III AIMING AT THE EIGHTIES POLICY & PROGRAM PRINCIPLES FOR THE
SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO

Urban Development

The six principles are based on the contention that urban development should include both social and land use planning objectives, and that it should seek to integrate the two; land use is considered as a tool with which to achieve social objectives. The pattern of human settlement and the structure of its organization should, therefore, be designed so that the advantages of the whole are available to its constituent parts, in a manner which is equitable and just.

The principles refer to the political structure of Metro Toronto, and to the use of non-renewable resources, the encouragement of diverse neighbourhoods, the integration of special population groups, the preservation of historic and distinctive features, access to amenities, and to the regional planning interests of Metro Toronto.

June 1978

Price: \$1.00

Human Services Development

Nine principles for the development of human services are discussed. The concept underlying these principles is that human services are a social benefit, accruing to society as a whole, and reflect the commitment of the larger community to protect and enhance the human development of all its members.

The principles reflect the need for equity, inclusion and participation, prevention, coordination, pluralistic provision, and provincial interdependence.

June 1978

Price: \$1.00



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1.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

During the past twenty-five years, important changes have taken place in the social development of Metropolitan Toronto. This has been a period of sustained population growth accompanied by extensive and varied forms of physical development. The framework of local government was significantly restructured in the fifties through the introduction of metropolitan government. This change formalized, and in turn helped shape, the transformation of Toronto from a city with peripheral settlements into an urban region with a number of consolidated and expanded municipalities. Some of these new municipalities now exceed the physical size of the City. Their individual and/or combined populations have politically overshadowed the traditional concentrations in the City.

While the unique identity of the City remains, even as it has undergone significant transformation, the scale of the City's dominance of Metro has been modified. The City has become one area in a diverse yet increasingly integrated Toronto urban region which now stretches over the political boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto.

The constituent areas of the Toronto urban region include:

- (a) the central urban area consisting of the City of Toronto, and earlier peripheral settlements which were linked to the City through the development out from the centre of street railways and reproduce in large measure the compact urban form of the City. In the post-World War Two period these areas have exhibited stable population patterns even in the face of diverse change and turnover. In the seventies these areas are experiencing pronounced levels of population decline.
- (b) the post-war rapid growth suburbs of Metropolitan Toronto, which followed the contours of regional automobile corridors, but did not reproduce the compact urban forms of the centre. In their early period of development rapid growth suburbs did not exhibit the social and cultural diversity of the centre. With some exceptions, rapid growth patterns had modified by 1971; this has been accompanied by the introduction of central area diversity into post-war suburbs, a trend which has continued and increased in the seventies.

(c) rapid growth suburbs of the late sixties and seventies located in those areas of the urban region outside the political boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto. To the east, this includes areas adjacent to and north of the Metro-Oshawa axis - i.e. Ajax, Pickering, Whitby. Within York Region to the north of Metro, this includes areas such as Markham, Vaughan, and settlements adjacent to major north-south transportation routes. The western areas are within Peel and Halton and consist largely of suburban settlements stretching from Lake Ontario to the northern periphery of Highway 401. Primary growth areas include Mississauga, Brampton, Oakville, and Burlington.

Settlement patterns in the more recent rapid growth suburbs reproduce, with modifications, forms of post-war suburban development in Metropolitan Toronto.

(d) an emerging semi-rural fringe in which there are scattered settlements within and around smaller towns and villages. This form of settlement takes place around places such as Caledon, Kleinberg, King Township, and Uxbridge. Employment may not be sought within the central urban area, but within one of the

suburban zones where industrial and service jobs are increasingly located.¹ The relationship of the semi-rural fringe to suburban areas reproduces the traditional suburban-central area commuting pattern. The suburban function is increasingly blurred as urban regions expand and become more differentiated. Reduced work time at the job, as a result of trends to non-compulsory overtime, the four-day week, expanding vacation entitlements, special leaves, and early retirement, make it possible to extend the distance of residential locations from employment centres. This transition may be accompanied by the conversion of summer homes into more permanent residences.

Metropolitan Toronto contains two of the four constituent areas of the Toronto urban region. In 1976 the population of the urban region was 3.18 million with 67% of the population located within Metro. While there has been considerable confusion in predicting population growth levels for the next two decades for Metro there is consensus that areas of the Toronto urban

¹ Hans Blumenfeld, Beyond the Metropolis, Papers on Planning and Design, No. 12, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Toronto, 1977.

region outside of Metro will begin to approach the Metropolitan Toronto population level by the year 2001.²

In large measure confusion over future population growth patterns reflects the limitations of traditional urban planning perspectives. Patterns and forms of land use, housing capacity, the volume of jobs, are becoming less useful indicators in understanding what has happened and what is happening in the urban environment.

The significant downward revisions in the population projections for Metro, coming within such a short period of time, are evidence of limitations in our traditional understandings of the urbanization process in Metropolitan Toronto. Important changes have been taking place in Metro. In part these changes can be attributed to the economic instability of the seventies, but they also reflect the evolution of social development patterns the influence of which is now beginning

² The revised Metroplan projections in September 1978 foresaw a Metro population of 2.49 million in 2001, with a population of 4.88 million for the urban region; pre-1976 Metroplan projections foresaw a Metro population of 2.8 million in the year 2001, with 5.25 million in the urban region.

to be felt. Social development patterns are frequently less discernible than changes in the physical development of an urban environment. Social development patterns relate to how people live, and the influences which shape living patterns. Changes in household composition, sex roles, cultural values, age distributions, family formation take place gradually. Over time, these patterns can at first subtly, and later on substantively, transform an environment from what it physically appears to be, or how it is understood in the general community. Responsive urban planning, community services provision, and public policy can only proceed when there is a clear understanding of what is happening throughout all of Metro. This includes an understanding of social development trends and patterns.

In the late sixties and early seventies, significant changes were taking place in the physical development of the City of Toronto. These changes were part of a distinct urban trend across North America. Symbols of this change were proposed expressway developments and large-scale construction of high-rise apartments. The changes were resisted for a variety of reasons - aesthetic, ecological, and social. The ferment which resulted gave rise to a rediscovery of urban issues in the City of Toronto. Through

the emergence or renewal of resident organizations, self-help groups, and public interest coalitions, the City underwent an extensive period of review and reform. The political environment was transformed, the planning process re-shaped and re-directed, and a sense of participation came to develop at local levels of community life. In this process, the City of Toronto began to articulate its preferred forms of future development - preservation of neighbourhoods, human scale physical development, deconcentration of downtown functions into sub-centres, mixed-use and heterogeneous residential environments, and integrated neighbourhood services.

The Social Planning Council participated in this period of City re-discovery and re-definition. Participation included the operation of storefronts to provide supportive services to resident and community associations, planning assistance to community agencies, task forces, and work groups reviewing community service and housing issues, consultation and planning assistance to City and Board of Education groups reviewing social policy and community services development.

One important outgrowth of this period has been the recognition that the City is diverse, with diverse

neighbourhoods, households, and cultures. It is no longer possible to think of the City in traditionally simple images: affluent, poor, "families", singles. We now recognize that there are a variety of ages, life situations, cultural backgrounds, local histories, unique neighbourhoods which make up the City. We also recognize that people have diverse as well as common social needs in the City. Policies and programs have emerged - from both public and voluntary sources - which acknowledge the needs of the elderly, immigrants, parents, young children, tenants, non-smokers, the handicapped, women in crisis, youth and adults in need of residential services, the unemployed, the transient, discharged mental health patients, and so forth.

What may have started in the City of Toronto as a response to physical development patterns has grown to include the evolution of important social development perspectives and initiatives. This represents an important set of achievements for the City in the seventies, and provides a framework for responding and adapting to the forthcoming decade, which will inevitably be one of significant economic and social transition.

The process of review and re-direction which has taken place in the seventies has of necessity been an inward period for residents of the City. An emphasis on local and neighbourhood perspectives can blur the realities at the periphery of one's own environment. This has been most clearly evident in polarized patterns of political debate and social commentary that have emerged between the City and the suburban leaders within Metro.

Of primary concern has been a growing tendency by non-suburbanites within Metro (and elsewhere) to reduce suburban life to a set of simple images - sprawl, dominance of the automobile, excessive levels of market consumption.

Simple images can arise from a sense of distance and denial - the physical distance of not being there, and as a result, relying upon a limited range of symbols to understand what is not experienced directly; the social distance when observing life styles and patterns which differ from one's own; the denial through attributing to the suburban form characteristics that are pervasive throughout the general community and the culture.

A renewed metropolitan perspective, with which to face the unique challenges of the eighties, can only emerge when all parts of Metro are understood and respected for what is common and unique within each. Political and policy differences in Metro will inevitably arise. The expectation is that differences within Metro will focus on substantive issues which relate to the daily lives of people - jobs, taxes, housing, transit, community services - rather than perpetuate the rituals of symbolic differences. Sharp differences have emerged primarily over land-use and transportation policy issues. In this debate, the newer suburbs of Metro have come to be portrayed as antagonistic to City concerns. By implication there has been the assumption that differences exist because the social and economic interests of suburban residents are homogeneous, and differ from those of City residents.

In part these perceptions are reinforced by:

(a) the political structure of Metro Council which, in the absence of direct election, reinforces a "we-they" set of perspectives based on traditional City/suburban designations. There is the implicit assumption that the important urban policy interests of Metro's residents are

primarily related to the City and suburban land-use patterns. The current structure of representation discourages the development of metropolitan and urban regional perspectives. As a result there is a policy vacuum at the centre of urban life in Metropolitan Toronto. There is no political framework for the organization and expression of common economic, social, and cultural interests that transcend the boundaries of City and suburban municipalities.³

(b) traditional concepts of urban planning, reinforced by recent Ministry of Housing policy statements, which assume that land-use development can remain distinct and separate from urban policies to promote integrated patterns of economic and social development.

(c) the slow process of community-building in newer settlements as Metro's rapid growth suburbs. As a result there are fewer local voluntary organizations and social interest groups to reflect and articulate the varied social and economic realities of the suburbs

to elected officials, and to the larger metropolitan community.

The social well-being and economic health of Metro, as well as the Toronto urban region, will depend upon the readiness and capacity of all regional areas to respond and adapt to changing conditions that have emerged in the seventies and will grow more acute in the eighties. The former Treasurer of Ontario, in the province's official response to the Robarts report, acknowledged the fact that important levels of interdependence now exists within Metro and the urban region as a whole. McKeough noted that:

"Metropolitan Toronto does function as an integrated urban area."⁴

There was further acknowledgement by Ontario of important relationships within the urban region in the proposal that a co-ordinating agency be established between Metro and adjacent regional municipalities. This special purpose body would review and identify

³ Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, Policy Statement: Response to the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Toronto; October 1977, P. 33.

⁴ W.D. McKeough, Treasurer of Ontario, White Paper: Government Statement on the Review of Local Government in the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, May 1978, P. 2, 37.

common planning priorities in urban policy areas such as transportation, assisted housing, conservation and economic development. Other urban policy areas of common interest would include specialized health care facilities, post-secondary education, residential services, immigration. While there is some question as to whether the instrument proposed - a co-ordinating agency - is the best way to proceed, the proposal represents the recognition by Ontario that some framework is required to reflect the interdependence of the urban region.

In the absence of such a framework at present, and the uncertainty over what Ontario will eventually introduce, the needs and interest of the urban region are being independently pursued through important planning initiatives by constituent regional municipalities. Peel is pursuing an integrated approach to regional planning, proposing that social development objectives be linked into land-use policy. Within Metro, there has been a similar interest in exercising integrated urban policy leadership for the future.

The goals and principles statement of Metroplan in April 1977 spoke quite clearly about the need to:

"respond effectively to changes in the economic, social, and environmental base of our community."⁵

The statement further cited the need for Metro to:

"broaden its planning capability to encompass a broader range of concerns."

In pursuit of these objectives Metroplan proposed that a human services plan be prepared for Metro to promote the co-ordinated, and where required, integrated provision of social programs. There was the call for an economic development strategy for the urban region, with Metro to undertake community employment and job creation programs.

5

Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Goals and Principles of the Metropolitan Official Plan, April 4, 1977, P. 2, 13-15.

Metropolitan Toronto has been consistently frustrated by Queen's Park and Ottawa in its attempts to provide integrated urban policy leadership in areas of critical interest to Metro residents. Jurisdictional bickering and financial issues have plagued efforts by Metro to develop an urgently needed community employment strategy for the jobless men and women of Metro. Both Peel (on October 24, 1977) and Metro (on November 30, 1977) were officially informed by the Ministry of Housing that social objectives could not be included in official urban plans. Frank Buckley, Chairman of the Metroplan Advisory Committee, noted in the introduction to the draft Metroplan of March 1978:

"Initially, it was hoped that the Draft Plan would contain policies to co-ordinate Human Services. However, the Province has advised that an Official Plan should emphasize physical aspects of planning. Nevertheless, this Committee urges Council to move forward in this very important area and to seek authority to prepare a Human Services Plan for the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Area."⁶

Provincial reticence to confer upon Metro an urban policy framework and mandate has been accompanied by the introduction of cutbacks in essential programs, the transfer of financial burdens to the property tax, and the refusal to allow Metro access to alternative revenue sources in order to provide and sustain needed services in the community.

The insensitivity of the province to the needs of Metro and other municipalities in Ontario, combined with traditional divisions within Metro between City and suburbs, have limited the capability of Metro to plan and secure its own future.

⁶ Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Draft: Plan for the Urban Structure, Metropolitan Toronto, March 1978.

1.1 Social Planning Council Interest

The capacity of local government in Metro to address a full range of urban policy issues vital to the social well being of the community has been a major concern of the Social Planning Council during the seventies. This concern has been reflected in Council work to promote an active local government role in the co-ordinated planning and provision of social programs in Metro.

The Council's major background report in 1976 - In Search of a Framework - documented trends in the financing and delivery of community services in the City of Toronto. The report noted the fragmented and often inconsistent patterns of social provision where there was little active planning at the local level. The Council consulted to the City of Toronto Neighbourhood Services Work Group in its attempts to develop an integrated service plan for the City. Similar forms of consultation were provided to the City of Toronto Board of Education in the development of a parallel use policy, to promote co-ordinated planning with agencies and the community over alternative uses of vacant school classrooms. The Council viewed the

establishment of the Roberts Commission in 1974 as an important opportunity to develop an understanding and acceptance of the social policy role of local government in Metro. In recommending that Metro Council have a mandate to plan and co-ordinate human services, the Roberts Commission underscored the importance of a social policy role for local government.

Further efforts by the Council have included a review of the urban planning process. The Council developed public policy statements on the recently completed Planning Act Review (October 1977) and responded to stages of the Metroplan process (November 1977, May 1978). All three statements have called for the need to include social principles and objectives in future forms of urban planning.

In June 1978 the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, in collaboration with the Canadian Institute of Planners (Ontario Region) and the Social Planning Councils of Ajax-Pickering, Burlington, Etobicoke, Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Oakville, and Peel, convened a major seminar to promote the inclusion of social objectives in urban planning. The seminar identified that there are significant levels of support within the urban planning field and from community

agencies for an expanded range of urban policy initiatives by local government. As a result of the seminar, there is now ongoing follow-up work taking place through various cities and regions in Ontario.

The Social Planning Council's New Suburban Communities project emerged as a result of the developing interest in the state of urban policy in Metropolitan Toronto. The Council became increasingly aware that the social development picture of Metro was incomplete. Over one-half of Metro's population live in suburban municipalities. While there was significant awareness and activity around the needs of the central area, there was limited recognition of social conditions in newer suburban areas of Metro. It was too easy to equate the future well-being of Metro only with the central area and its neighbourhoods. With limited understanding of suburban conditions, important needs could be overlooked in the formulation of urban policies, the distribution of public and voluntary services, the structure of local government, and in future patterns of land-use development.

Equally important was the concern that if Metro did not understand itself, how it had grown and what it had become, traditional divisions would persist and weaken

the resolve to address important urban issues, and present strong and united positions to Ontario and Ottawa in policy areas vital to the future well-being of Metro.

The Council's New Suburban Communities project has come to include three major elements:

A. Developmental Work

This has included increasing levels of consultation and planning assistance to suburban resident groups, community and inter-agency associations, and service funders with an interest in suburban development. These activities have provided the Council with a working awareness of a range of social conditions in the suburbs. Consultation and planning assistance has been in the areas of neighbourhood development, police-community relations, child-parent support services, physical development, service funding, and social policy review. This work, it should be noted, is supplementary to the more ongoing and extensive activity of the Etobicoke Social Planning Council, the North York Inter-Agency Council, and to the emerging efforts of the Scarborough Social Planning Council.

B. Background Report

The development of a renewed metropolitan perspective required a more comprehensive framework for understanding important trends and patterns in the social development of Metro's newer suburbs. With this objective in mind, the Social Planning Council undertook the preparation of a background report. Interviewing, analysis of assessment data, and the preparation of service distributions were conducted in the spring and early summer of 1977. Active work on data analysis awaited the availability of census data in 1978.

This publication - Metro Suburbs in Transition - Part I: Evolution and Overview - is the background report of the Social Planning Council's New Suburban Communities project.

The background report is an introductory description, exploratory in nature, of changing social trends and patterns of new suburban areas in particular, and of Metro in general. It has been designed to:

(a) develop a planning framework for the analysis and understanding of social development patterns in Metro's newer suburbs;

(b) gather descriptive material to fill in the planning framework;

(c) stimulate interest and concern within the general community of the social needs of Metro's newer suburbs;

(d) identify important urban policy, planning and service provision issues of immediate and emerging interest to Metro's newer suburbs;

(e) begin to develop a network of working relationships of people with an interest and commitment to the future social well-being of Metro's newer suburbs. This network includes suburban resident groups, voluntary agencies, suburban councils and coalitions, physical and social planners in Metro and surrounding regions, public officials, urban studies specialists, and Social Planning Council members.

The background report consists of review and analysis. It does not include specific sets of policy, planning, or service recommendations at this time. The function of the background report is to introduce a set of issues and concerns into the general community

for purposes of open exchange and deliberation. It is hoped that this climate will identify policy, planning, and service themes to be picked-up by local government, public and voluntary agencies, social interest organizations, and the general community. It will enable the Social Planning Council to receive feedback and comment before framing its own recommendations for distribution to the general community.

C. Policy Report

To accompany the preparation of the background report, the Social Planning Council Board of Directors authorized the formation of a New Suburban Communities Project Committee. The purpose of the Project Committee has been to review the preparation of the background report, co-ordinate the formulation of Social Planning Council policy recommendations arising from the background report, organize follow-up seminars and workshops, and propose further developmental work by the Council in these areas.

The Project Committee is under the chairmanship of Dr. John Gandy, a suburban resident and Professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto.

Other Committee members are suburban residents, service planners, and individuals with a knowledge and interest in suburban social issues. The Committee was convened in 1977 and has met consistently since the spring of 1978. The work of the Committee has included an analysis of issues related to community service provision, preliminary discussions on the relationships between social development and land use, and a full review of the draft background report.

The major work of the Committee in 1979 will be to prepare Part II of Metro Suburbs in Transition. This will be a policy report, to be released in the summer of 1979, which will contain policy, planning, and service recommendations arising from the background report and from subsequent feedback and consultations. The policy report will include additional information and analysis developed for the new suburban community project where such information and analysis are directly related to proposed recommendations. The recommendations will address two sets of conditions:

- (a) the types of responses required for current social conditions.

(b) social and physical adaptations required in anticipation of emerging social patterns in the eighties.

Upon the release of the policy report, the Project Committee will propose to the Council's Board of Directors forms of follow-up consultation which might be undertaken and review the Council's continuing role in this area.

1.2 Information and Data Resources

Information and data resources have been designed and developed for the New Suburban Communities project. Some of these resources have been already incorporated into the Social Planning Council's developmental work. The background report draws from information and data resources developed for the project as will the subsequent policy report.

Information and data resources developed for the project include:

(a) a review of literature on recent urban history, with special emphasis on the origins of the post-war suburban form; a review of service and planning reports

describing Metropolitan patterns of social development from the post-war period to the present. (The bibliography developed for the project and the background report is enclosed as the final appendix of this report.)

(b) demographic analysis of social distributions within Metropolitan Toronto drawing primarily on recently released 1976 Census data, and on the data resources of the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department, whose full co-operation has been made available throughout the project. Where service data has been available, it has been incorporated with the demographic data.

(c) mapping of selective community service and resource patterns for inclusion in the forthcoming policy report.

(d) the design and completion of 108 exploratory interviews, carried out over a period of fifteen months, with 228 respondents in individual and group sessions. Of the respondents, 95 were interviewed in their role as residents, 73 were local community service workers, 42 were borough wide service providers, 18 respondents were officials or interested parties. It should be noted that a proportion of local service workers and suburban service

providers interviews were also residents of new suburban areas, although they were interviewed in their work capacities. Residents interviewed included primarily ratepayers, OHC tenants, elderly, single parents, youth, and recent immigrants. Local community service workers included a public health nurse, a school principal, a clergyman, youth and community service police officers, a Children's Aid worker, a plaza manager, persons working with the elderly, and neighbourhood service workers.

Three levels of general interviewing were carried out: (1) to obtain borough-wide perspectives from supervisory service officials, (2) to secure local area perspectives from residents and front-line service workers, (3) to identify patterns in topical planning issues through selective interviews with residents, officials and interested parties. The interviews were designed to be theme-focused, but open-ended. The purpose has been to explore a broad range of issues and concerns, rather than to examine a specific pattern or set of conditions. Interviews sought to cover all themes, but allowed respondents to focus on what was of special interest to them.

In the design of the project, there was an assumption made, in part influenced by the framework for analysis, that certain social groups in the suburbs might have special adaptation difficulties. These groups were: adolescents, mothers with young children, immigrants, elderly. Thus, the interviews were designed to include a special focus on these groups, in addition to securing general information.

Included as Appendix I are the topic sheets which formed the basis of the interviews. Interviews were conducted with individuals, or with groups. The local communities selected for resident and service worker interviews were based on the two Metro Minor Planning Districts in each suburban municipality which had either experienced the most rapid growth rate from 1971-76, or contained the most units of publicly assisted housing stock. It was assumed that these would be districts in higher states of transition and diversity.

The purpose of the interviews was to acquire respondent perceptions on relevant social trends and patterns, and to both inform and supplement the analysis of demographic data and service reports. What is of

particular interest to the project is where common trends and patterns came to be identified by respondents in different districts. It was most significant when these trends and patterns were also evident in demographic distributions. The interviews were not designed for purposes of developing community or neighbourhood profiles, nor were they intended to identify special problem areas in the suburbs. Their function has been to confirm more systematically what many community agencies and residents have been individually indicating over the years, often with limited receptivity from public officials. The interviews have also provided descriptive information on changing social conditions and needs in Metro's suburbs.

The interviews were exploratory and open-ended; the themes and issues raised therein are not capable of useful reduction to statistical or quantifiable categories. Instead, perceptions revealed and information conveyed are either integrated into the analysis of the background report or will be included in the review and analysis to accompany the subsequent policy report. Where required, some additional interviews will be conducted for the policy report.

(e) information, analysis, and perspectives drawn from the developmental work of the Social Planning Council and

from the network of working relationships developed during the preparation of the report. Included are perceptions and feedbacks from public forums, panels, and meetings with social action groups in which project staff of the Council participated.

In the design of the project, one of the first decisions required was to determine what the local unit of data distribution would be for newer suburban areas. It would have been unsatisfactory or incomplete to report information and data only by suburban municipalities. Technically there were a number of options - political units such as wards, census tracts, school divisions, suburban municipal planning districts. It should be noted that there is no accepted unit of social analysis within the planning field for examining important demographic and resource distribution patterns in Metropolitan Toronto. While census and assessment data are standard sources of demographic information, each planning and service system has tended to use its own local designations in reviewing social conditions and in formulating distribution patterns.

Eventually the choice was limited by the need for uniformity in the designation of the local units across newer suburban areas of Metro. Uniformity was significant

in order to secure and distribute data to identify common social development trends. The choice was then between the use of federal census tracts or the use of planning districts developed by the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Department. The local units chosen for the project were Metro Minor Planning Districts for the following reasons:

(a) census tracts are too small, tend to create a sense of what is exceptional rather than what constitutes a broader set of social patterns in a local area, and are less useful for purposes of general comparisons between local areas in differing suburban municipalities. Census tracts, when used above, can be misleading. Tracts adjacent to those with high distributions for particular conditions are also subject to the influences arising from these conditions, and are often included in the local unit of service response for tracts with special conditions (e.g. schools, recreation, libraries, police, etc.). Similarly, the movement of people within a local area is over physical areas larger than a census tract. Census tracts were therefore seen as less useful in designating identifiable units of local community experience for Metro's newer suburbs, and for Metro as a whole.

Enclosure 1 identifies the distribution of census tracts across Metropolitan Toronto in 1976.

(b) The population ranges (i.e. 20,000 to 100,000) and the physical scale of Metro Minor Planning Districts in suburban municipalities were, on the whole, more consistent with identifiable units of local community experience, land-use policies, and community services provision. Minor districts were judged to be sufficiently compact to identify important differences in social trends and patterns.

(c) Census and assessment data could be converted, or was sometimes available, for minor planning districts across Metro.

The second decision in the design of the project was to designate the newer suburban areas of Metro in relation to the rest of Metro. There were options in arriving at this decision as well. One might have compared minor planning districts in the suburban municipalities - Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough - with minor planning districts in the inner municipalities - City of Toronto, York, East York. This would have been misleading, since

there are areas of the suburban municipalities that have longer settlement traditions, and are not in fact newer suburbs, whose primary development took place in the post-war period. In keeping with the project objective to transcend traditional City/suburban images and provide a renewed metropolitan perspective, it is important to note that there are differences in residential development patterns within suburban municipalities.

Another approach would have been to develop land-use criteria - topographical features, density patterns - in designating newer suburban areas. This might have possessed some measure of usefulness in establishing basic differences in the form and scale of the physical environment in which population settlement and community development has taken place in Metro. In the absence of clearly developed or recognized criteria within the literature for technically designating the distinguishing land-use form of an area such as a minor planning district, this option was not seriously pursued. This approach would not have served to identify the history and scale of population settlement in local areas, consistent with the emphasis and interest of the New Suburban Communities project.

The decision adopted was to identify the newer suburban areas of Metro based on levels of population growth from 1951-1971. It was assumed that districts in Metro with high levels of population growth from 1951-1971 would reflect the prevalent land-use form associated with post-war suburban development. The period from 1951-1971 appeared to be a reasonable time frame in which to identify those districts in Metro that exhibited the high urban growth levels characteristic of the post-war period.

High levels of population growth, in contrast to high levels of population change, are of special concern to social planners. The large scale settlement of people into new areas requires more than the provision of physical accommodation, roads, utilities, stores, and schools. Even when these services and functions are in place, the important job for community buildings remains to be completed, if essential supports are to be available for the changing needs of people, and if social integration is to take place. The social organization of voluntary, institutional, and political life in a new settlement does not occur with the same speed that a housing development is built, adequate sewage facilities put into place, or a school opened up for instruction. The development of

social cohesion, a sense of identity, a network of voluntary and institutional resources and services capable of responding to varied social needs and patterns of local community life, can require years of time and investment even when there is a public commitment to pursue these objectives.

In contrast, established urban areas undergoing significant population changes still retain voluntary and institutional capabilities, along with developed local traditions, identities, and political experience, with which to face new social realities.

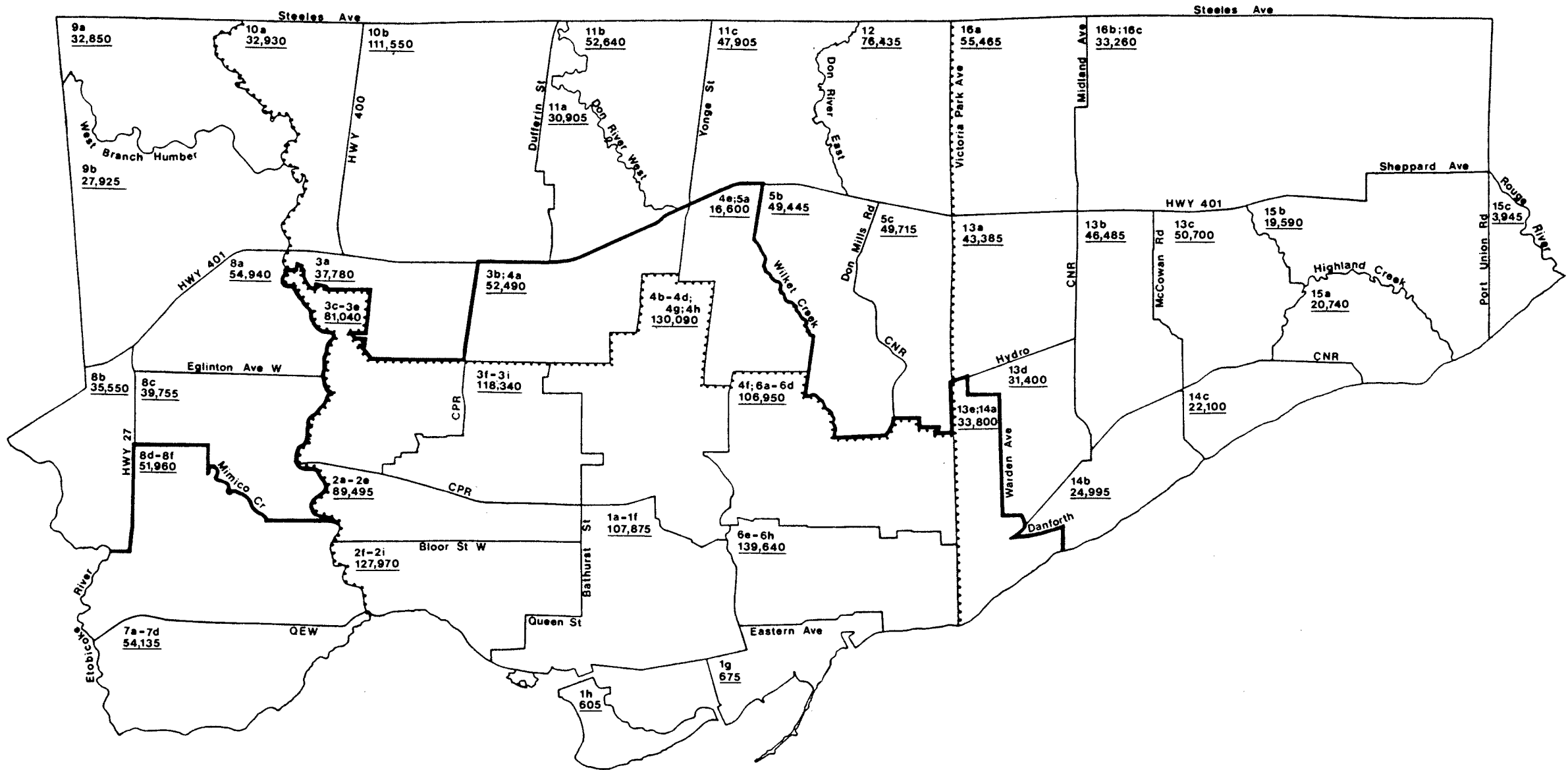
A review of social development patterns in Metro's newer suburbs, as is the purposes of the Council's project, is in large measure also an examination of how far the community building process has proceeded, and what remains to be achieved.

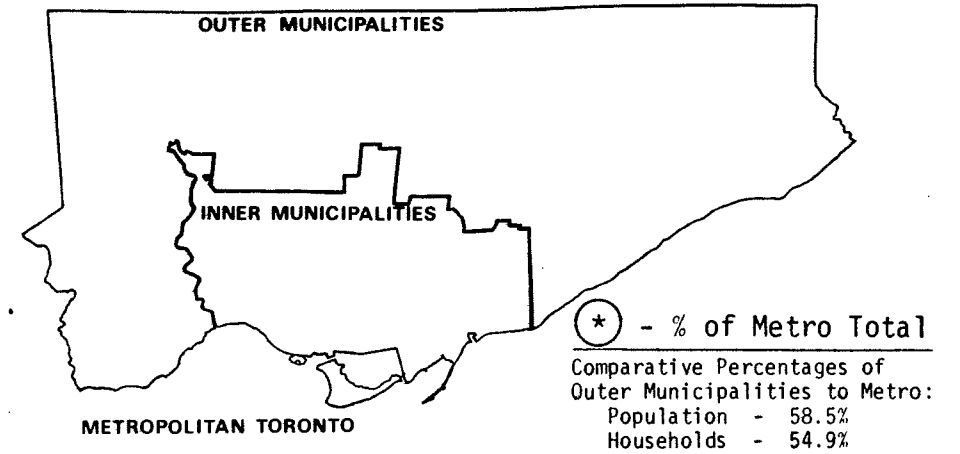
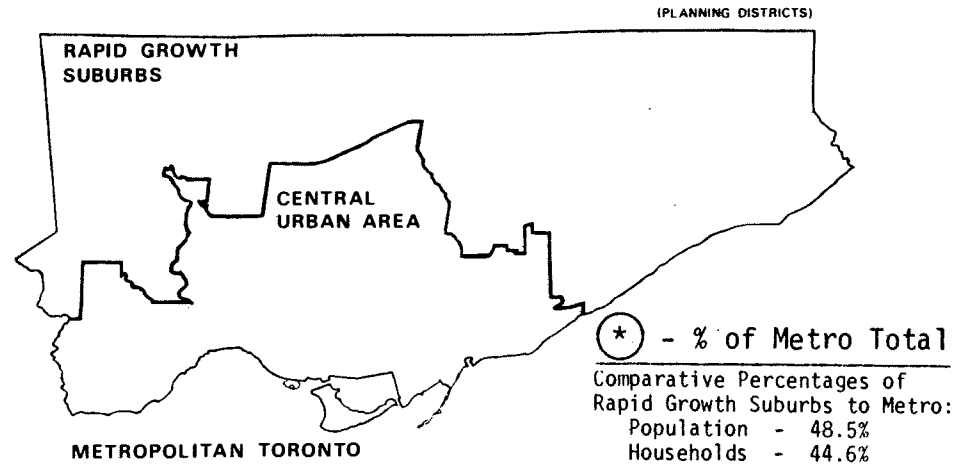
For purposes of this project the newer suburban areas of Metro have been designated as those Metro Minor Planning Districts whose population doubled in the twenty year period of 1951-1971, and where the raw growth in each district was above the average per minor planning district for this period (approx. 12,750). The only exceptions are minor planning districts 16B and 16C which do not meet these criteria, but are included as an

integrated unit since they represent one of the few residential growth areas left in Metro.

Enclosure 2 is the base map which has been produced for the project and includes 1976 census populations. The base map divides Metropolitan Toronto into the newer suburbs - designed as "rapid growth suburbs" - and the more established districts - designated as the "central urban area". The project's designation of "rapid growth suburbs" in general corresponds to Census Canada's Zone IV - "new suburbs" - for Metropolitan Toronto, with variations at the periphery. The Council's designation of the "central urban area" corresponds to Census Canada's Zones I (Central Business District), Zone II (Inner City), and Zone III (Mature suburbs), with similar peripheral variations.

Minor planning districts in the central urban area have been consolidated by sub-region or area municipality to partially standardize physical scale, as well as to enable information entries into smaller districts. The population sizes of these districts often correspond to M.P.D. (minor planning district) 10B in North York. Thus, there is less subtlety in the comparability of minor planning districts within the central urban area to each other; for purposes of this project, however, these





combinations were deemed adequate to identify broad differences in patterns across Metropolitan Toronto. The comparability of physical scale, moreover, makes base map districts somewhat useful as units for service and resource planning in response to social conditions. District 15C is included separately, representing the new eastern area annexed to Scarborough after 1971. Districts 1G and 1H were deemed to be somewhat distinct and separate from the adjacent districts, and are therefore included separately on the base map. It should be noted that where ranking is carried out for districts on base map distributions - such as noting the highest twenty percent - Districts 15C, 1G, and 1H are not included for purposes of determining the ranking. Where the distributions in districts 15G, 1G and 1H correspond to those in the districts being highlighted as a result of ranking, districts 15C, 1G and 1H are also highlighted.

A third set of decisions for the project and background report was the determination of what social information should be secured and distributed by districts onto the base map. There were technical and financial limitations in developing large numbers of distributions on the base map. Technical limitations arose from the data which was available by census tracts or already

processed into minor planning districts, and by the absence of computer facilities in processing data. Demographic data from the 1976 census has been transposed and tabulated by hand from microfiche into census tracts, then converted into minor planning districts. Service data has been similarly processed. The New Suburban Communities project has been supported through the internal resources of the Social Planning Council; consequently it has not been possible to engage additional full-time staff or commission extensive technical support services to extend the base map distributions. Information recorded on base maps reflects both what was available, and in the judgement of the project, those social trends and patterns of particular significance.

As a result, there are two ways in which data is summarized in the project and background report to identify general social development patterns within Metro. Where census data was distributed into minor planning districts, or already processed into these units, there is a summary figure which distinguishes between the "rapid growth suburbs" and the "central urban area". It is the more precise summary consistent with the operational criteria of the New Suburban Communities project.

The judgement was made, however, that there was important data to review and present which was not available or able to be processed into minor planning districts. This information has been summarized into the more traditional designations of "outer municipalities" - Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough - and "inner municipalities" - Toronto (City), York, and East York. Information reported in this summary form is less precise, because it includes data from non-rapid growth areas of suburban municipalities. This information is useful in completing the picture of social trends and patterns, and in supplementing base map and interview information.

Enclosure 3 introduces the two figures through which summary information is presented in the background report. Table 1 identifies the differences in population - household distributions for the two figures where "rapid growth suburbs" is designated, and where "outer municipalities" is designated.

Table 1

Population-Household Distributions of
the Two Project Summary Figures, 1976

<u>Figure Designations:</u>	<u>Percentage of Metro:</u>	
	<u>Population, 1976</u>	<u>Households, 1976</u>
Rapid growth suburbs	48.6%	44.6%
Outer municipalities	58.5%	54.9%

Where either of the summary figures are used in the report, two sets of information are reported inside the figure. Symboled data reported in both halves of the figure refer to distributions within the designated areas (i.e. - within rapid growth suburbs and central urban area, or within outer municipalities and inner municipalities). Data with an asterisk is entered only in the suburban half of the figure (i.e. - rapid growth suburbs or outer municipalities), and identifies either:

- (a) what proportion the suburban distribution is out of the total for Metropolitan Toronto;

(b) or, the ratio of the suburban distribution to the central or inner area.

The significance of the suburban distribution as a proportion of the Metropolitan Toronto total can be assessed in itself, or in relation to the proportion of Metro's population or households contained in the suburban half. Thus, where the suburban half contains 60% of a given age group, and its proportion of the population is 48.6% (as with the rapid growth suburbs), the suburban half clearly contains a high proportion of Metro's total in that distribution.

In most instances, summary figures contain certain comparative distributions for the six municipalities of Metro. The cumulative function of both the base maps and summary figures is to provide a metropolitan, municipal, and local area set of perspectives, wherever possible, with respect to significant social trends and patterns.

Since the major source of recent demographic data for the project and background report is from the 1976 census, the information contained in the background report largely reflects the state of social development in Metro

suburbs and the central area to 1976. Where integration has been sought with demographic data, service information where available, has been secured and reported for 1976. The special assessment run for the report is based on 1977 data.

Technical qualifications to the compilation and reporting of the 1976 census data include:

(a) in some minor planning districts, all in the rapid growth suburbs, one census tract with recorded populations spills over into two districts. This is the case with m.p.d. 5B and 5C (CT 268), 13A and 13E (CT 349), 13C and 15B (CT 363), 16A and 16B (CT 377). Estimations were developed for assigning portions of the tract to each district. These estimations were based on field assessments of the tract, housing patterns 1971-76, or by adjusting assessment counts. There will inevitably be some margin of error in 1976 census data reported for these individual districts, but since these are contiguous districts within the "rapid growth suburbs", the accuracy of trends and patterns across the larger designation is not affected.

(b) the hand processing of demographic data from the 1976 census, even where verification procedures have been

established, can result in some undetected transposing and tabulation errors.

It should be noted in discussing 1976 census data, that there has been disagreement as to its inclusiveness. At one point in 1977, there were three population counts for Metro: 2.12 million (Statistics Canada), 2.15 million (TEIGA), and 2.26 million (Metro). Metro is now using the Statistics Canada count, but considers the Metropolitan population figure to be an undercount in light of illegal immigrants and unrecorded transients. As a result, base map and summary figure distributions based on census data reflect legitimate but not necessarily precise distributions. What does emerge quite clearly from the data and analysis developed for this project is that the decline trend in population levels across Metro is real and deeply rooted in economic and social factors which, unless addressed, will lead to substantial decline levels. Thus precise population counts may be less significant than the structural factors determining future trends.

General qualifications to the compilation and analysis of data prepared for the project include:

(a) service and resource data is reported under the designation "DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS". This is to indicate

that it may not be complete and subject to occasional error or omission. It is reported, where appropriate, because the patterns revealed across districts identify legitimate patterns for purposes of urban policy and community service provision;

(b) time series for social development patterns are somewhat limited, with the major emphasis on tracing broad sets of themes from the mid-fifties to the mid-seventies.⁷ Specific data series, where reported, notes 1951-1971 or 1971-1976 changes. In the aged 0-4 distributions, 1961 is used as a reference period.

(c) the significant scarcity of social and service data on social development patterns in Metro which is available and can be reported in standardized form at below the municipal level. This should be a source of concern to the general community in light of almost two billion dollars a year currently spent on social programs in Metropolitan

⁷ Those interested in a more rigorous and systematic treatment of social data patterns within Metropolitan Toronto in the post-war period are referred to:

R.A. Murdie, Factorial Ecology of Metropolitan Toronto, 1951-1961, University of Chicago, 1969. Prof. Murdie has recently completed a factorial ecology analysis of Metropolitan Toronto from 1961-1971.

Toronto. There is the need to develop some common framework for urban social data development through which a more accurate sense of the social development of Metro can be monitored.

The scarcity arises because important data is not recorded (e.g. 1976 Census did not include income, ethnicity, or automobile data; public schools are irregular in their recording of social data), data is insufficiently analyzed (e.g. there is at present limited use of assessment data to monitor household patterns), there is no framework for common reporting, there are limited financial and technical resources available to service agencies to conduct social distributions of persons served, or because recorded data is not made publicly available (e.g. unemployment data from the federal government). With Statistics Canada planning to reduce data collection in the 1981 Census, this could limit social information resources even more.

In light of the technical, financial and general qualifications cited in this section, data organized for the New Suburban Communities project is more selective and limited than would have been preferred.

Some of the data may already be familiar to individuals. The more important effort in the report is the attempt to integrate the presentation of data for purposes of updating the general social development picture of Metro's newer suburbs, and Metro as a whole.