

THE PLEASANT HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD

SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

Exploring the Local Area Planning Process and Its Impacts on Resident's
Perceptions of Quality of Life: The Case of the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood in
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

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Abstract

This thesis evaluates the Local Area Plan (LAP) process as a community development strategy for improving quality of life in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Pleasant Hill represents a low SES, inner city core neighbourhood that was targeted for the LAP in 2000 because of concerns over safety, physical deterioration and the loss of local amenities such as accessible transportation and recreation networks. Local Area Planning utilizes public participation to inform structural modification and resource distribution within the neighbourhood. To evaluate this process, this thesis examines to what extent residents' perceptions of quality of life have changed since defining the LAP for Pleasant Hill. Using data from two quantitative and qualitative cross-sectional data sets (2001, 2004) collected in conjunction with the ongoing Quality of Life (QoL) study being conducted by the University of Saskatchewan's Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR), the diverse social, economic, health and environmental factors affecting quality of life are examined over time. Sixteen face-to-face interviews were also conducted in the summer of 2006 to understand the perspectives of stakeholders, including residents and the professional planners who worked on the LAP, regarding their involvement with the LAP process as well as its outcomes on quality of life in Pleasant Hill. Results show that there has been a positive change in perception of quality of life with regard to specific variables between 2001 and 2004, especially in relation to safety, homeownership, social programs and social cohesion. The perceptions from 2006 show these variables intensifying with heightened positive quality of life results with a continued emphasis on the perception of safety, opportunities for homeownership as well as strong feelings of progress, of pride and of investment in Pleasant Hill. These results suggest that the LAP has had an overall positive impact on resident's perceptions of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood as well as neighbourhood and individual perceptions of quality of life.

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¹ This quote is taken from Susan Vreeland's 2003 novel “The Forest Lover”, a tribute to Emily Carr's work. The quote is originally from Emily Carr's journals.

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An Introduction to the Thesis

Many North American inner cities are facing growing challenges with the exodus of people and services from their ageing urban cores. With increased opportunities for suburban commercial and residential development away from downtown cores, numerous inner city neighbourhoods have lost economic and social stability (Power, 2001). The responsibility for the provision and maintenance of urban areas has shifted from the federal to the municipal level with consequences for these inner city neighbourhoods, many of which are supporting low socio-economic and vulnerable populations (Power, 2001). The municipal governments, though responsible for, are not fully equipped to provide for an equitable and sustainable quality of life for all urban residents. They often do not have the resources available to provide the social and structural supports necessary. The unfortunate result of this shift of responsibility and investment has meant that many inner city neighbourhoods are facing deterioration and the corresponding stigmatization of declining areas, with increased criminal activity, disempowerment and the loss of hope of recovering economic and social stability.

The Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan provides a case study for the exploration of an inner city neighbourhood that has experienced this social and structural deterioration. This ageing neighbourhood is supporting a growing low-socio-economic population without the necessary infrastructure and social supports. The lack of local amenities, growing criminal activity and an ageing and deteriorating housing stock has had increasingly negative outcomes for the quality of life of Pleasant Hill residents. The City of Saskatoon has intervened with an initiative being used in other neighbourhoods facing similar issues in the inner city. The Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan (LAP), a participatory planning approach for mediating and addressing the issues in the neighbourhood, was implemented in 2000 by the City of Saskatoon. This community development approach has brought together multiple stakeholders in the democratic development of a neighbourhood vision and feasible recommendations for positive change.

This thesis evaluates and explores the impact the Pleasant Hill LAP has had on the neighbourhood through the perceptions of resident's quality of life. The research question guiding this study is: to what extent has the perception of quality of life for residents in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood changed since defining the Local Area Plan? Other questions that have guided this research include:

- 1) What are the strengths and challenges of the LAP process?
- 2) What are the social and structural characteristics of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood that contribute to or detract from a positive quality of life?

3) How/did the LAP succeed in strengthening the positive and mediating the negative neighbourhood characteristics?

I. Objectives of This Study

The objectives of this study are: 1) to examine the perception of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and quality of life of the residents in the neighbourhood before the implementation of the LAP and changes that have occurred between 2001 and 2004; 2) to examine the neighbourhood perceptions of the LAP process and outcomes of neighbourhood quality of life from the perspective of stakeholders who were involved in the process, providing a firsthand account of resident's, business owners and City of Saskatoon planner's perceptions of the changes that have occurred in Pleasant Hill and the processes through which they were achieved, and; 3) to provide an outsider's perspective of the neighbourhood from the researcher's point of view through participant observation to identify visible changes and challenges in the neighbourhood.

II. The Rationale for This Study

The rationale for this study of the Local Area Plan in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood is to provide an exploration and evaluation of a comprehensive community development strategy from the perspective of the people living and working in the neighbourhood over time. The perceptions come from the people who have first hand experience in the neighbourhood as residents, as members of the Pleasant Hill Planning Group in the LAP and in a professional capacity through the perspectives of City of Saskatoon planners. These perspectives identify the challenges and assets of the neighbourhood as well as the changes that have occurred since the LAP was implemented. It is an evaluation and exploration of the process and outcomes to determine the impact the LAP has had on quality of life, how this was achieved and what needs to be done to continue the positive changes in the neighbourhood.

The importance of providing this feedback and evaluation for participatory processes is expressed throughout the participatory planning literature. The knowledge and experiences of the participants in the LAP and the impacts this process has had on the neighbourhood are a valuable resource for improving the LAP planning process as well as identifying the strategies and recommendations that have had the most significant impact on quality of life in the neighbourhood. This study fills a gap in the planning literature regarding the evaluation of neighbourhood initiatives. There are many studies which provide a theoretical exploration of the proposed benefits and challenges of participatory planning but few which provide feedback from participants. This study also provides support for comprehensive and inclusive neighbourhood level initiatives targeting inner

city neighbourhoods. It outlines the importance of improving the social and structural infrastructure in low socio-economic neighbourhoods, as combined, they have a significant impact on the perception of the neighbourhood and the quality of life of residents. This thesis also provides support for the collection and utilization of quality of life research as a way to measure the changes and the influences of the social and structural dynamics of an urban area on the people living there. This feedback provides a significant comparison over time, identifying positive and negative benchmarks and trends as well as the importance of specific neighbourhood characteristics that contribute to or detract from quality of life. Quality of life research provides useful information to all levels of government but it is especially important at the municipal level as it identifies needs that can be met through specific short and long-term interventions such as service provision and infrastructure improvement. It also provides the justification necessary in an increasingly evidence based society for the allocation of time and resources into inner city neighbourhoods in order to build sustainable and healthy urban areas whereby all residents are treated equally and have access to a positive quality of life.

A Guide Through the Thesis

This thesis can be divided into three main sections: (1) theory; (2) practice, and; (3) evaluation and exploration. Chapter 1.0 and 2.0 outline the theoretical context of participatory planning, providing a trajectory of the changing paradigms of planning and outlining the main arguments for developing more democratic and accountable approaches to community development. This section outlines the challenges of meeting the needs of urban areas and providing for an equitable and sustainable quality of life for all, especially those who are living in transitional core neighbourhoods. This section is designed to lay the foundation for Chapters 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 -- all which address the practical application of participatory planning, and specifically that taking place in Pleasant Hill. The practice of participatory planning is discussed in Chapter 2.0. Chapter 3.0 provides a contextual background of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, the Local Area Planning process, and the various other initiatives taking place within the neighbourhood. Quality of life research is discussed in Chapter 4.0.

The third section (Chapter 5.0 through to Chapter 11.0) provides the evaluation and exploration of the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan (LAP) as a participatory planning process and presents the outcomes through an in-depth analysis of quality of life. The aim in these chapters is to exemplify both the complexity of urban quality of life, as well as the importance of keystone variables that contribute most significantly to a positive quality of life, especially for low socio-economic individuals. The design of the research is then outlined in Chapter 5.0; the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood as a case study provides an

excellent example of the challenges as well as the assets of an inner city neighbourhood. Drawing from a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of changes in Chapter 6.0 and 7.0, the changes in the perception of residents' quality of life between 2001 and 2004 are presented. These chapters outline the major challenges ahead, while reviewing the assets of the neighbourhood, taken from the perception of the people living in the neighbourhood.

Chapter 8.0 explores the perception of the LAP process from the perspective of members of the Pleasant Hill Planning Group. This exploration provides an in-depth look at the challenges and successes of the process, while discussing what it meant to neighbourhood stakeholders. It provides support to the principles of participatory planning practices and stakeholder's contribution to the mediation of issues in the neighbourhood. Chapter 9.0 examines the perception of the outcomes of the Pleasant Hill LAP from the perspective of the Planning Group members. This chapter explores the perception of changes in quality of life directly. It also offers insight into: the variables that contribute most to a positive quality of life, the relationships between the social and the structural variables in the neighbourhood, as well as the areas where more work is needed from the lived experience of people in Pleasant Hill. Chapter 10.0 examines the LAP process and outcomes from the City of Saskatoon planners' perspectives to identify the nuances of both the implementation of the LAP in Pleasant Hill and the corresponding outcomes.

Chapter 11.0 explores the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood through participant observation, allowing the researcher to provide an outsider's perspective as well as further context for the reader. This chapter identifies changes that have occurred as well as insight into the way the neighbourhood is used. An overview of print documentation reveals many positive initiatives occurring in Pleasant Hill since the implementation of the LAP. Chapter 12.0 provides the final discussion, drawing together the many perspectives on the process, the outcomes and the perception of quality of life in the neighbourhood. In this chapter, I seek to unravel some of the intricacies of the neighbourhood variables necessary for a sustainable and positive quality of life in a vulnerable and changing inner city neighbourhood. This chapter also provides an exploration of the implications of the findings, pointing to the next steps necessary for the positive aspects of the process to continue bringing changes to the neighbourhood, with future research directions identified.

We will start now with Chapter 1.0, 'An Introduction to Planning' to understand the historical approach to urban planning and the development of participatory planning principles which have guided the Local Area Planning process in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in Saskatoon.

1.0 An Introduction to Planning

“A city is never a finished product. It is always changing. There is no end to the learning, development, and adaptation it requires to remain vital and responsive to the needs of its citizens” (Hallsmith, 2003, p. 127).

Cities are in a constant state of flux. These complex anthropocentric environments are challenged by the changing economic, political and social influences that occur at local and global scales. Urban planners and policy makers have been contending with the creation and maintenance of these unstable systems with mixed results (Alfasi & Portugali, 2004). Since its inception as a tool used by local and federal governments to control the economic, social and built environment, the role that planning has played has shifted with changing ideologies, political and economic transitions, and growing citizen resistance to the structure of planning and its outcomes (Docherty et al., 2001). An examination of these changes in planning processes over time reveals the challenges and complexities that exist in addressing and changing the approaches that are taken to mediate urban problems.

Though planning began in order to mediate the physical environment, it has shifted to incorporate social dynamics; the planning field as a formal institutional practice aims to “interrelate conceptions of the qualities and social dynamics of place with notions of the social processes of ‘shaping places’ through the articulation and implementation of policies” (Healey, 1997, p. 8). As John Friedman has succinctly pointed out, the profession of planning “oscillates in its emphasis between a radical, transformative intention, and a role in maintaining the way cities function and governance works” (Healey, 1997, p. 8).

In the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, like many inner city neighbourhoods in North America (Power, 2001), there has been a growing need for structural and social intervention because of growing socio-economic disparity and structural deterioration. This contextual chapter provides a review of the planning literature, exploring the historical context of urban planning as well as the new approaches that are being used for redevelopment and reinvestment. Pleasant Hill serves as the case study for this examination, through the lens of participatory planning. The development of this approach will be examined as well as the ability of this approach to meet the needs of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood through an exploration of the perception of quality of life and the neighbourhood over time.

1.1 Urban Planning: A Brief History

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) defines planning as “*the scientific, aesthetic and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities*”(Canadian Institute of Planners, 2000).

Urban planning is not a new phenomenon. Its early existence can be seen in the grid streets and elaborate temples of the Ming Dynasty (Hanchett, 2000). As a medium for government control, religious symbolization and protection from invasion and environmental threats, planning has been a rational way to enforce order on society (Knox, 1982). Modern urban planning is believed to have begun in the 1870's in Sweden and it was here that the use of zoning and other strict structural planning guidelines were developed and eventually spread to North America (Hanchett, 2000). As a profession in North America, urban planning began as a response to the mass exodus of the countryside during the Industrial Revolution and the corresponding failure of the new capitalist market to provide safe living conditions and an acceptable quality of life in cities (Knox, 1982). This shift from a rural to an urban context meant that cities had to accommodate an immense and burgeoning labour force, as the role of the city, first and foremost, was to “fulfill the imperatives of capitalism, the most important of which is the circulation and accumulation of capital” (Knox, 1982, p. 198). The dangers of the city became insidious and urban planning provided tools to modify and control development; this ensured efficiency and safety through the separation of land uses and the implementation of design strategies to improve urban standards of living (Knox, 1982; Spates & Macionis, 1982). Planning became a means to increase productivity and efficiency while accommodating the newly urban population.

Throughout history, urban planners and idealists have imposed their utopian visions on urban landscapes with the hope that a well-planned physical environment would translate into a healthy society (Bunting & Filion, 2000). The opportunity to implement grand visions has changed with timing and shifting political and economic eras. This can be seen through an examination of planning in Europe after World War II (Healey, 1997). Planners had a clean slate; they saw themselves in the capable position, “being at the forefront of a transforming effort” (Healey, 1997, p. 8). It was a time when after the destruction and loss of the War, citizens could look forward to a supportive government who would provide a new life through the rebuilding of the urban environment. This is meaningful because there are few ‘clean slates’ left.

Governments are trying to mediate urban problems which have not changed significantly for the better with technological advances, while managing new problems (Brenner & Theodore, 2005; Sandercock, 2005). Urban planners in North America cannot implement the historical grand schemes of renewal and transformation seen in European cities because government and citizens alike are not willing to sacrifice the costs of starting 'fresh' (Healey, 1997).

Planning gained a credible and patriarchal role in North American cities, whereby planners gained the role of manager and mediator of urban problems through instrumental rationality, guiding development; in the twentieth century, this role has been challenged (Docherty, Goodlad & Paddison, 2001; Cuthill, 2003; Hallsmith, 2003; McGuirk, 2001). As the current cultural, economic and political urban framework changes, planning as a tool for the mediation of urban problems has a changing role. The expectations of society have changed regarding government intervention into the physical and social climate of urban areas. These shifts have brought about changes in the urban planning process. According to Healey (1997) there have been three major modern planning traditions: 1.2.1) Economic Planning; 1.2.2) Physical Planning, and; 1.2.3) Public Administration and Policy Analysis.

1.1.1 Economic Planning

Economic planning was developed to compensate for the unequal distribution of wealth with industrial development and the failure of the market to provide for 'all'. This planning tradition was built around social welfare policies to bolster the economy through education, health and employment opportunities. Economic planning included housing programs but was less structural in nature than the industrial development that came before it (Healey, 1997). The effects of these interventions can be seen after the World War II when Canadian government involvement in housing increased. This was evident in the financial support of social welfare programs and advocacy for development incentives and mortgage funding for individuals who may not have otherwise had the opportunity (Harris, 2000). This period of greater government involvement achieved high rates of home ownership, resulting in suburban development; this, in turn created a stable tax base and new opportunities for economic development (Hanchett, 2000). These interventions had a positive effect on the working class and a new burgeoning middle class as many gained the opportunity to own property (Harris, 2000). The unanticipated consequences of this involvement included new residential development being favored for investment, causing an exodus of residents and business owners from the inner city. This resulted in abandoned and derelict housing being left behind and a loss of resources for individuals who could not afford to leave (Hanchett, 2000).

The de-investment of the inner core and the exclusion of specific economic and social groups from the newly developed suburbs left marginalized populations further disadvantaged, as resources that were once available in the inner core disappeared and residents had to travel farther to meet their basic needs (Harris, 2000). Jane Jacobs (1993, p. 277), who was a renowned urban theorist and advocate for healthy and dynamic city life described the consequences of this exodus: “the constant departures leave, of course, more than housing vacancies to be filled. They leave a community in a perpetually embryonic stage, or perpetually regressing to helpless infancy.” The failure of the welfare state to mediate economic and social issues for those in need was further compromised when free enterprise came to guide the economic and political society of North America under neoliberalism.¹

Beginning in the 1970’s and continuing onward, the capitalist ‘trickle down’ effect of the industrial era was once again expected to cushion all members of society and welfare policies were reduced (Goonewardena, 2003; McGuirk, 1994). Government involvement in planning became less of a regulation and implementation process and evolved into a facilitation role, which encouraged entrepreneurialism through private- public partnerships (Goonewardena, 2003). The implications of reduced social involvement of government agencies in urban environments can be seen on both a small and a large scale. With increasing technology and opportunities for new kinds of development in cities, economic planning had taken upon itself the responsibility to foster private-public partnerships, which are increasingly competitive in a global market (Sandercock, 2005). These relationships are believed to balance the risk of the private and public sectors in the market, but with the transfer of power from the state to the private sector, fosters a lack of democratic accountability to the public. Neoliberal policies have increased investment in new and profitable industry/development while simultaneously allowing a “chronic uninvestment in the services that low income and marginalized populations depend upon” (Brenner & Theodore, 2005, p. 104).

1.1.2 Physical Planning

The second tradition, physical planning, brought together architects, traditional utopian ideals, and regulations to organize the city into functional activity spaces to increase efficiency while planning for ‘life’ (Bunting & Filion, 2000). This tradition brought planning theory to the forefront of the discipline in the 1950’s, including the principle of hierarchy of spaces and community development (Healey, 1997). It has been criticized for overconfidence and neglect

¹ Neoliberalism defined as: “a broad structure of political beliefs founded on right wing, yet not conservative, ideas about political democracy, individual freedom and the creative potential of unfettered entrepreneurship” (MacEwan, 2001, p. 329).

of social issues such as social diversity through 'urban renewal programs', which forced the clearance of slums in North American inner cities as a way to mediate the inner city blight in the 1950's and 60's (Bunting & Fillion, 2000). This tradition moved away from the early utopian ideals to more policy oriented planning, developing rules for implementation across the discipline (Healey, 1997). Physical planning brought the tools of the profession to the table such as zoning and the reorganization of cities at the macro scale (Healey, 1997).

1.1.3 Public Administration and Policy Analysis

The third tradition, public administration and policy analysis, has built on the foundation of the planning profession to increase efficiency and effectiveness of social and economic programs. To do so, planners have adopted 'modern' planning initiatives, which utilize the available technologies to mediate and solve conflicts (Power, 2001). Urban planning has traditionally depended on a small collection of experts, who approach problems by targeting specific issues and, through the development of "Rational Comprehensive Planning" (RCP), apply strategic and scientific analysis with 'competent professional judgment' (Alexander, 2001). The approach to the city is as "a single, objective entity and target of intervention" (Beauregard, 2004, p. 629).

The use of scientific rationality to manage and predict urban problems is considered a logical and systematic approach, which implies impartiality and objective reasoning (Healey, 1997). This process has discrete stages that identify the goals and objectives of specific projects, outlining the consequences of specific decisions as well highlighting possible alternatives. Decisions are implemented with the opportunity for feedback, usually through professional channels. The amount of leeway in this process depends on the stakeholders involved but at the time of inception, the planner is the consultant and decision maker, leaving little space for public involvement (Alexander, 2001).

RCP is considered the mainstream, traditional approach, which the majority of planners use today. Objectivity is stressed as the process of information gathering and analysis is used to anticipate social and environmental impacts as well as decide specific courses of action. MacLeod (1996), states that RCP "attempts to side-step the issue of conflict by presuming a discernable public interest. This assumes that a community's various collective goals can be measured in some effective way". RCP planning attempts to 'bring the greatest good to the greatest number'. The method strives to be logical, technical and exclude subjective and emotional discussion sparked by the divergent perception of problems by the public. It attempts to separate planning from politics by ignoring the political considerations of public interest.

1.2 In Reaction to Mainstream Planning Approaches

With changing planning philosophies and perspectives, there has been a growing resistance to mainstream approaches. In the 1960's, citizen activism began to affect political and economic decisions on local and international scales as people lost trust in the planning process, there was growing confrontation and political activism as strategies for social change (Bunting & Fillion, 2000; Hutchinson & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2001). There is a large body of research documenting the evolution of social and political activism as one of the only avenues individuals and communities had to take to enact change, especially with regards to social injustices because of the imbalances created by power relationships in governance (Hutchinson & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2001; Healey, 1997). This impacted planning because the public began to demand accountability and responsibility for the consequences of urban development programs as well as social issues (Bunting & Fillion, 2000; Hutchinson & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2001). The urban renewal and slum clearance programs that were the result of rational planning were criticized for prioritizing statistics and research findings over the voiced concerns of community members who would be adversely affected by the decisions being made (MacLeod, 1996). The individuals that lose in this contested battle of interests are those who are not part of the decision making process, those that are represented by statistics (MacLeod, 1996). These criticisms highlight the exclusionary tendencies of mainstream planning.

Planning for the "greater good" may not encompass the reality of the social, political and economic forces which dominate the 'excluded' urban population. It is imperative to recognize that not all urban populations are treated equitably. This is not a new trend. People living in slums during the Industrial era, mainly the working class and immigrant populations, were blamed for their substandard living conditions; through spatial and environmental determinism, they were expected to improve their situation and become functioning and healthy members of a higher society (Knox, 1982). It was expected that if these urban residents had green space and an ordered living environment as proposed by the Garden City Movement², the issues of poverty and disease would vanish (Knox, 1982). When these planning practices did not work, practices such as slum clearance were instigated as efficient programs to remove the disorder of the inner cities (Knox, 1982).

Even today, individuals who live in poor urban areas are stigmatized and blamed for their social situation. According to Ziller (2004), the negative

² The Garden City Movement was an authoritarian urban planning approach instigated by Ebenezer Howard in England in the late 1800's, calling for reform of the physical environment with a separation of land uses for the promotion of a safe and healthy urban landscape (Barnett, 1986).

perception of low status neighbourhoods extends to the individuals living there, leading to a negative social reputation and labeling which may further compromise individual's ability to succeed. This is especially detrimental for employment as "employers often base hiring decisions on the residential addresses of applicants" (Ziller, 2004, p. 469). The "ghettoization" of the poor, whereby the residents of inner city areas in large cities are labeled 'deviant' and 'problematic', is commonplace by media and politicians in order to enact large scale redevelopment projects which may or may not take into account the culture and lifestyles of the people living there (Baeten, 2003). The issue here is that the root of social problems are very difficult to mediate through structural design. Environmental determinism and overarching planning concepts for the 'greater good' do not target the underpinning social problems (McGuirk, 2001). Cuthill (2004, p. 428) points out that "one of the key limitations of a regulatory approach to planning, which focuses on land use change, is its inability to consider impacts on local citizens and quality of life within the community." This approach to planning is not sensitive enough to address the nuances of the social conditions of neighbourhoods.

Modern urban planning is criticized for using a 'top down' approach as a way to solve specific problems, to serve specific interests and reflect specific cultural ideals (Alfasi & Portugali, 2004). In the past, the 'expert' assumptions and recommendations that were made for the "public good" were justified, as it was believed that an economically viable city with a strong capitalist mentality would allow for a 'trickle down' effect across all members of society (Goonewardena, 2003). This mentality has created greater social inequality and stigmatization of marginalized populations, such as those with low socio-economic status, as it was believed that in a capitalist society there was plenty of opportunity for success and the failure of specific individuals to improve their position in society was in fact an individual fault, not the responsibility of society (Knox, 1982).

1.2.1 Postmodern Planning Approaches

In recognizing the disempowerment and inequality of 'top-down' neoliberal policies as well as changing market forces, postmodern approaches in planning have been developed to explore "difference" and the role of power as a response to the so called 'overarching' and 'utilitarian' principles of modernism and post-industrial planning practices (MacLeod, 1996). They were developed to recognize diversity, pluralism and complexity in urban form and land use planning "with a corresponding rejection of hegemonic tendencies and tastes" (Hutton, 2004, p. 1955). Postmodern planning approaches are usually touted as social versus economic policy, as they try to address the many competing ideals and agendas that exist in the city rather than providing a 'common good' for all

(Hutton, 2004). According to Agger (1991), through postmodernism, potential power can be found everywhere, including in the poor or in the wealthy. By recognizing that planning is not a neutral process, especially when addressing social inequalities, new ways of communication, negotiation and mediation are possible (Albrechts, 2002). As a reactionary theory, postmodernism seeks to address the failures of mainstream planning by building a foundation for consensus (MacLeod, 1996; Hutchinson & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2001).

The ability of post-modern approaches to recognize and capture “difference” depends on the sensitivity in which local and individual interests are handled and in what context they are used (Umemoto, 2001; Cameron & Grant-Smith, 2005). Corbin Sies (2001, p. 320) states that “culture is undeniably a primary player in the urban development process”, but whose culture and needs are being prioritized? There are many factors in the growing complexity of the urban environment but it is well documented that there is a growing gap between the rich and poor, and the empowered and disempowered (MacLeod et al., 2003). Campell (2001, p. 83) states that “the planning system frequently creates winners and losers”; the problem here is that it is not a fair game and this position of power has translated into cycles of deprivation for those who are not given a voice (Burayidi, 2003; Squires & Kubrin, 2005). This can be amended with conscious efforts to include “voices from the borderland”, ensuring that there is strong representation that reflects the socio-economic and cultural diversity of an area (Umemoto, 2001, p. 17). It is also imperative that diversity is captured by including stakeholders “whose backgrounds and experiences differ from the mainstream” (Cameron & Grant-Smith, 2005, p. 21). This includes youth, people with disabilities and seniors as well as socio-economic and cultural groups (Cameron & Grant-Smith, 2005; Albrechts, 2002).

1.2.2 Participatory Planning

It has been said that a “resurgence of the local” is necessary, and that those who have been disempowered in the past need to have a voice (Power, 2001). The premise of the ‘expert planner’ has been called into question; professionals are no longer left to manage the city without accountability for the choices being made regarding a city’s direction (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). There has been an “immanent call for a more just and humane urban planning focus” (Heikkila, 2001, p. 261). If planning and policy is to help reduce inequality and improve quality of life for all residents in urban areas, then the practices need to be explored and adapted to each situation from the bottom up (Alfasi & Portugali, 2004; Albrechts, 2002; Cuthill, 2004; Innes, 1998; Innes & Booher, 2004; Mitchell, 2005; Burton, Goodlad & Croft, 2004; Cameron & Grant-Smith, 2005; Burby, 2003; Watts, Higgins & Kendrick, 2000; Gleeson, 2004).

1.2.3 The Positive Attributes of Participatory Planning

Participatory planning (PP) has become a way to address this paradigm shift, with the goal that people with decision-making power will take a step back from their own visions and ideologies to collaborate with community members to develop plans that work for all members of society (Watson, 2003). There has been a growing recognition of 'phenomenological' relevance, understood as the realization that knowledge and value do not have a fixed objective existence. Knowledge is actively constructed through social processes, which includes public policy and planning whereby, the values and actions are constructed by participants (Healey, 1997). This recognition in principle means that the expert techniques of planners are no different from 'practical reasoning' of the public. Different forms of knowledge and communication become part of the decision making process and all are equally valuable "from rational systematic analysis to story telling" (Healey, 1997, p. 30). This inclusion of different forms of knowledge and value systems such as local experience and intuition allows planning approaches to build on more than scientific logic and empiricism that typically guide modern planning practice building a representative and comprehensive approach that is sensitive and reflexive to functional as well as emotional facets (McGuirk, 2001; Innes, 1998; Cuthill, 2004). This is a highly contextual process which allows "learning from action not only what works but also what matters" (Albrechts, 2002, p. 332). The public has significant knowledge resources and they know what will work and what won't work (Taylor, 2000). Jane Jacobs (1993, p. 418), states "no other expertise can substitute for locality knowledge in planning, whether planning is creative, coordinating or predictive."

The translation of participant experience into policies is especially significant when the focus is on asset based community development whereby the strengths of a community can be identified and built on (Mathie & Cunningham, 2002). By acknowledging the social and physical strengths and the capacities of the area that are important to the people living there, individuals can move beyond the deficiencies in a meaningful way which can be empowering and can facilitate greater sustainable changes in a positive and productive direction (Hutchinson & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2001; Mathie & Cunningham, 2002).

The premise of PP is built on new opportunities for communication, a recognition and call for 'difference,' and a commitment to better understanding how language and process controls decisions (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). Critics of mainstream approaches argue that planning needs to be more than "knee jerk reactions to solve ad hoc problems" (Kerkin, 2003, p. 137); further, it has to move away from large-scale redevelopment schemes that assume homogeneous conditions (Hutton, 2004). The goals of planning must be long term and a redesign of the planning system must take place to manage for diversity. There

has to be a strong commitment to the democratic processes and the adoption of diverse communicative planning techniques (Kerkin, 2003). Albrechts (2002, p. 332) expresses the outcomes of “an appropriate governance culture” as a possible “catalyst for bringing out differences of opinion between participants and recognizing diversity.” This is believed to be an appropriate and effective way to empower individuals and solve complex planning challenges.

The participatory planning approach is facilitated by planners who have been described as a “critical friend” in communicative planning theory, fulfilling a role that facilitates the opportunities for sharing and participation by acting as “knowledge mediators and brokers” (McGuirk, 2001, p. 198). By drawing on their professional and expert understanding of the political procedures, the resources and networks that are already established and the local governance structures, the planner is able to provide the necessary resources to the participants and “enable a policy dialogue to develop” which is empowering for the participants as well as effective in creating representative change (McGuirk, 2001, p. 198). This role helps to mediate the power differential between the participants as the planners are responsible for “directing the process of deliberation, shaping its outcome and expertly mediating the intersection of these outcomes with the governance procedures and institutions which frame planning practice” (McGuirk, 2001, p. 198). The planner’s role as mediator and local coordinator is an asset to the process as they build the capacity of the citizens involved through building trust and networks (Albrechts, 2002).

Proponents of participatory planning argue that the growing social polarization between socio-economic, ethnic, racial and gendered groups cannot be properly addressed by theorizing difference solely in terms of economic or stereotypical cultural factors; subjectivity must be taken into account without assuming that it is pre-defined (Kerkin, 2003). According to Healey (1997), there must be a recognition that individual’s interests are socially constructed and are learned through interaction and social contexts. There must be sensitivity to diverse experiences and expectations as well as the recognition that there are power differentials, which have the “potential to oppress and dominate not merely through the distribution of resources, but through the fine-grain of taken-for-granted assumptions and practices” (Healey, 1997, p. 30). To achieve this, there needs to be consistent open and honest communication with all members of the community and decision bodies, building on Habermas’s proposed transformation of public space where rational argumentation and the ‘ideal speech situation’ “in which no affected party is excluded from discourse or inhibited by asymmetries of power or resources” prevail (Alexander, 2001, p. 313). This allows a dialogue and exchange of interests and concerns (Kerkin, 2003). It is imperative that there are representatives from many different social groups and stakeholders in the community and that there is a true commitment from the government to honour

the decisions that are made (Kerkin, 2003; Albrechts, 2002; Innes, 1998; Cuthill, 2004).

Kerkin's experience as a social planning policy consultant in Melbourne, Australia exemplifies the challenges and rewards of acknowledging difference and diversity in the St. Kilda suburb. The area has adopted communicative planning techniques to bring social groups who have long been opponents into decision-making. Forums have been set up, inviting all stakeholders to attend, including prostitutes who historically have been banned from democratic processes. Kerkin notes that there has to be a consensus and agreements between strategic and site specific planning to reduce contradictions (Kerkin, 2003). According to Watson (2003, p. 397), communicative action theory should ensure that participation is "fair, equal and empowering". It is assumed that through this process, consensus can be reached and accountability by planners and the local government is effective and responsive (Watson, 2003). There must be clear intentions, authentic dialogue and the nature of collaboration must be open. Albrechts (2002, p. 340) explains "it is not sufficient for citizens and groups to have access to structures. They have to experience that their interests and needs are being fully considered, that their views matter in policy making." The degree that citizen's input will have on policy changes must be known at the onset of the process.

According to McGuirk (2001, p. 196), it is in fact a "collaborative and reflexive process of building consensus around shared meanings and understandings which are grounded in dialogue." It is a process of making sense together, of finding meaning and direction through an open and impartial process (McGuirk, 2001). Within a consensus-seeking debate where meanings and frames of reference are different, there should be the ability to overcome these differences and potential barriers (Watson, 2003). Participatory practice is communicative, interactive and facilitates collective decisions (Alexander, 2001). It helps to facilitate and interpret needs as well as prioritize action and, through the iterative and on-going process, there is ample opportunity for reevaluation of needs and wants at different stages (Healey, Cameron, Daoudi, Graham & Mandini-Pour, 1995). The participatory process 'spreads' ownership to the members involved. This must be done to break down competitive interest and build a consensus. Ideas can be shared in a variety of ways at different stages. This approach to planning is imbedded in the context of the local environment, in social relations and through 'day to day practices' (Healey, 1997).

The process of participation in decision-making and democratic processes is believed to be educative, empowering and rewarding with positive outcomes at the individual and societal level (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). As theorized by Rousseau, there is a link between public service and the vitality of the state

(Berry, Portney & Thomson, 1993). This can be seen through citizen involvement in decision making. The opportunity for open public debate has been demonstrated to increase support of the political system and may lead to a greater ability of government to face difficult social challenges and concentrate energy and resources where they are needed most (Berry et al., 1993). This dual accountability encourages trust and satisfaction at the neighborhood and government level (Berry et al., 1993).

Jane Mansbridge, a professor of Political Leadership and Economic Values at Harvard University, has contributed to the positive outcomes of participation with evidence that participation leads to greater equity within communities (Berry et al., 1993). This is reinforced by Healey (1997, p. 5), who states that: “the communicative approach both offers a way forward in the design of governance processes for a shared-power world and takes as a normative position an ethical commitment to enabling all stakeholders have a voice.” This responsiveness breaks down barriers between the public and decision makers and “offers a way of mobilizing for change through collective efforts in transforming ways of thinking,” which recognizes a pluralistic society. The recognition of difference and mobilization of change are extremely important in our changing social, economic and political urban environments. These processes can be liberating, empowering and inspirational for communities (Hallsmith, 2003; Innes & Booher, 2004; Albrechts, 2002; Cuthill, 2004). There is a shared sense of directions, goals and understandings. Hallsmith (2003, p. 93) states that: “a shared vision, held by community leaders and communicated continually to the community is a powerful leverage point for changing or evolving a system.” This process can broaden individual’s understanding of the local community as well as build “understanding trusting relationships and commitment among stakeholders” (Cuthill, 2004, p. 430).

Participatory planning has been adapted to a growing number of European, Australian and North American cities, especially in relation to inner city revitalization at the neighborhood level (Cuthill, 2003; Docherty et al., 2001; Cuthill, 2004). The ‘neighborhood’ has increasingly been recognized as the micro and macro ‘interface’ for sustainable development and positive change through participatory activity (Hallsmith, 2003). They are ‘the landscapes of everyday life’ where social, economic and environmental interaction occurs (Hallsmith, 2003). Cities have a ‘hierarchy of neighborhoods’ (Power, 2001, p. 731), and these are becoming increasingly polarized in relation to economic and social variables with inner cities suffering acute abandonment and de-investment (Power, 2001). In order to counteract this negative trend, the areas of deterioration need to be targeted directly. This is appropriate as Broadway and Jesty (1998) found evidence of increasing divergence in deprivation levels at the inter-city and intra-city levels. Interestingly, in this study, local factors appeared

to be the major determinant of the condition of the inner city (not broader economic changes), highlighting the need to initiate programs that recognize local influences.

Neighbourhoods as bounded landscapes delineated by political and or structural and social features may or may not have high levels of social interaction and neighborhood social cohesion but participatory processes are said to increase 'social capital' and 'community capacity' (Hallsmith, 2003; Chaskin, 2001; Laverack, 2005; Kearns, 2004; Cuthill, 2004; Putnam, 2000). Social capital has been defined as measurable elements of a healthy civic society where there are high levels of trust, positive interaction with other community members, a sense of belonging, participation in public life, connections with family, friends, and neighbors, tolerance of diversity, and active community networks (Hallsmith, 2003; Innes & Booher, 2004; Cuthill, 2004; Putnam, 2000). Social capital "refers to the connections among individuals, social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). Community capacity as defined by Chaskin (2001, p. 295) "is the interaction of human capital, organizational resource, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve or maintain the well-being of a given community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organized efforts."

These two concepts have emerged as key elements in urban regeneration with the goal of increasing a community's resilience and stability as well as increasing opportunities, skills and resources within neighbourhoods and reducing negative characteristics such as crime (Kearns, 2004). There is supportive evidence that "increased social capital leads to increased productivity with respect to community's action and collaborative efforts to solve common problems" (Hallsmith, 2003, p. 46). Building community capacity has been shown to increase a neighbourhood's ability to produce certain goods and services, provide opportunities for skills enhancement, as well as connect residents to resources and opportunities within the neighbourhood (Chaskin, 2001).

These are both processes and products of participation at the neighbourhood level that are found to "strengthen decisions that affect the community, distribute benefits and burdens equitably, increase the value and vitality of human and natural systems, conserve and renew human, natural and financial resources" (Hallsmith, 2003, p. 62). Building social capital and community capacity may help to build a sense of community reflected through shared experiences, values, norms and a common vision (Chaskin, 2001). It may also build a commitment to investment, responsibility and action within the neighbourhood through greater participation in organizations or increased individual efforts. By building trust, relationships and possibly skills such as

leadership within a neighbourhood, the resulting networks and foundation for collective action is a neighbourhood resource in itself (Chaskin, 2001).

The neighborhood is a manageable unit where community interests can be explored through face to face interaction. This is integral because “personal interaction and discussion lead to trust, and trust underlies cooperation” (Berry et al., 1993, p. 11). These factors are enabling and empowering if they help to build skills, partnerships and networks within the neighbourhood and beyond it (Taylor, 2000; Hallsmith, 2003; Chaskin, 2001). The networks and relationships that are built and strengthened may offer opportunities for knowledge and skill sharing which in itself is capacity building.

1.2.4 Participatory Planning Critiques

Participatory planning has been criticized for being expensive, time consuming and idealistic in urban contexts where municipal governments are already constrained by scarce fiscal and time resources (Hallsmith, 2003). The critics of PP tend to be pragmatic but there is a growing body of literature that is more ‘apocalyptic’ in nature (Berry et al., 1993). The role of the public in civic decision-making processes has been argued to ‘dilute the power of authorities’ and reduce the role of competent experts (Berry et al., 1993). It has also been argued that the complexity of the urban environment and the diversity of people makes PP a very difficult process to manage effectively as the majority of the public does not have experience in planning or decision making processes, while professional planners and local officials are trained to do so.

The public good will always be defined differently by different groups within society (Berry et al., 1993) and just because communication is more ‘open’ does not mean that a harmonious and cooperative situation will be achieved (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Jones, 2003; Chaskin, 2001). There must be an understanding of how power dynamics work between experts and the public as well as other stakeholders in the community (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Jones, 2003). There will be biases and power relationships, even if they are not immediately apparent (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). It is also recognized that the planning field and practice is inherently “politics-laden and power-laden” where the majority of the decisions are made in an “organizational and political context in which the agendas of decision making are politically and selectively structured; and citizens cannot participate equally in decisions affecting them” (McGuirk, 2001, p. 197). There are numerous costs individuals and groups have to pay in the participation process. These are influenced by socio-demographic characteristics such as education, employment status and cultural background as well as age (Cuthill, 2004). There are constraints of time and accessibility which are highly influential, especially for the most vulnerable groups, such as individuals with

mobility challenges, minority groups and the elderly (Cuthill, 2004). There are risks and sacrifices people have to make to become involved, these include overcoming past feelings of mistrust toward government intervention and feelings of frustration caused by cultural and political barriers (Albrechts, 2002). Individuals may not have the knowledge or experience dealing with the governance structures and have to overcome barriers in language and understanding in the participation process (Albrechts, 2002). These barriers and constraints can be disempowering (Albrechts, 2002).

Hanna (2000, p. 399) warns that the participatory process may not be about involvement as much as it is about information, education, public relations or simply “getting a project through.” Many participatory planning processes have been labeled as a form of tokenism to appease individuals while getting major planning reforms approved. This unacceptable ‘placation’ is a form of control whereby the only reason for attempting to develop a more democratic approach is to gain public acceptance.

These challenges are embedded in the participatory process but they are not a reason to forfeit the possible benefits of public participation in planning. Berry et al. (1993, p. 5) stated that: “the central issue is not whether participation is good or bad—democracy requires widespread participation in some form. It is instead a question about how to balance the desire to maximize participation and popular control with the need for stability and efficiency in government.” This statement reinforces the need for the development and maintenance of conscientious and responsive opportunities for civic involvement in planning. It is also necessary to address the obstacles and the baseline conditions that are necessary to implement a PP process

1.3 A Summary of Urban Planning Practice

As demonstrated above, there is a growing trajectory of acceptance and a movement towards citizen involvement in planning practice. The scope and responsibility of urban planners is expanding to include the structural, social and environmental well-being of cities. The tools that planners have used in the past have not been sensitive enough to mediate the inequities and issues urban areas are dealing with in the twenty first century. Participatory planning is believed to fill in some of the gaps and give both planners and community members the tools to improve the quality of urban areas and the quality of life of people living there. This research provides an opportunity for the exploration and evaluation of a specific participatory planning process, the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan, demonstrating that this approach to community development is capable of improving an inner city neighbourhood, structurally and socially with positive improvements in the quality of life of residents.

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The following chapter examines examples of participatory planning in practice, expanding on the theoretical as well as the practical application of a more democratic approach to urban development and redevelopment.

2.0 Participatory Planning in Practice

Introduction

The following chapter explores participatory planning in practice, addressing the strengths as well as the challenges of inclusive, 'bottom-up' planning. There are four sections in this chapter. Section 2.1 identifies a number of initiatives that have been recognized for their positive contributions at the neighbourhood level. Section 2.2 introduces local area planning, a comprehensive approach to neighbourhood development through participatory processes. Section 2.3 provides an overview of the City of Saskatoon's approach to urban planning. Section 2.4 introduces local area planning in Saskatoon, providing an in-depth look at the theory and practice that has been developed.

2.1 Positive Examples of Participatory Planning

The possible benefits of the participatory planning process sound idealized and possibly altruistic but the principles have been put into practice with positive results in Europe and North America. An early and very successful example of participatory planning at the neighbourhood level began in the 1980's in Boston, Massachusetts. The Dudley Street Neighbourhood Initiative began as a "bottom-up plan" for revitalization which was started and directed by the neighbourhood itself and the city was invited to participate (Medoff & Skylar, 1994, p. 89). This was a comprehensive and community controlled development strategy, which began by "recognizing and reinforcing the resources within the community" (Medoff & Skylar, 1994, p. 254). This positive asset based approach led to the recognition of the Dudley Street neighbourhood and a strong push for sustainable and sensitive community development that has continued to this day.

Berry et al. (1993) explored five cities in the United States with strong neighborhood participation in planning processes; Birmingham, Dayton, Portland Oregon, St. Paul and San Antonio were examined to test if the myths and criticisms of participatory democracy in the planning context were true. These initiatives have been extremely successful over the long term and none of them have functioned at the expense of local government in time or resource costs, they have not increased political conflict or unfair demands from the public. Policy gridlock has not increased and the neighborhoods involved have not been prioritized over other areas in the city; there is, instead, a degree of empowerment and participation which has led to greater confidence in the government and higher responsiveness from government bodies (Berry et al., 1993). These examples of participatory planning initiatives have been successful not because they have homogeneous populations, ideal demographics, reform governments, or economic stimuli (Berry et al., 1993), but because they all had strong motivation,

a demand for substantive participation from citizen groups and a clear vision articulated by the neighbourhood with a commitment from government leaders. These initiatives were all citywide to begin with, meaning that municipal resources were distributed equitably and there was no “winner takes all”. These instances were not loud and demanding voices that got what they wanted because they could not be ignored; these were well-organized, systematic and practical applications of participatory planning with very positive results (Berry et al., 1993). The positive contribution of these participatory programs can be seen in the development of sustainable tools for reform as “self organizing systems exhibit the capacity to create process structures and responses that fit the time and circumstances” (Hallsmith, 2003, p. 141). There is also the capacity to develop trust and cooperation which is built through positive personal interaction and accountability of all those involved (Berry et al., 1993). These projects had what Berry et al. (1993) determined to be the ‘essence of effective civic participation’, which is ‘breadth’ and ‘depth’. Breadth is the principle that every member of the community has the opportunity to participate (access) at each stage in the decision making process. This means that there must be an open agenda, extensive and understandable information; there must be feasible alternatives and high rates of participation (Berry et al., 1993). Depth is the “extent to which citizens who choose to participate have the opportunity to determine the final policy outcomes by means of the participation process” (Berry et al., 1993, p. 55). The application of this essentially means that the citizen’s contributions are given equal rating and the final decisions and implementation of policy reflect the participant’s goals and decisions. Participation must also be meaningful for participants and allow for differences of opinions, experiences and values (Berry et al., 1993).

2.2 Local Area Planning

There are many good examples of participatory planning which have been successful because they developed a shared long term and sustainable vision, built consensus for action and concentrated on the strengths of the area (Hallsmith, 2003). Local Area Planning (LAP) is a concept that is building popularity in North America and Europe. The term is used in slightly different planning contexts. In Cork, England, Local Area Plans have been prepared for two purposes: to guide the development of specific large-scale developments with a specific time frame and, to promote development for economic, physical and social renewal (City of Cork, 2006). The City of Kilkenny in Ireland has also developed LAPs to emphasize public inclusion in planning (City of Kilkenny, 2006). Canadian examples of Local Area Planning are growing with Winnipeg, Manitoba, Calgary, Alberta and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan at the forefront. The City of Winnipeg has implemented the Building Communities Initiative in partnership with the Province of Manitoba (City of Winnipeg, 2006). This project targets the declining older neighbourhoods. It has a strong emphasis on

community involvement with the establishment of a neighbourhood advisory committee and the facilitation of a community consultation process by the City of Winnipeg Planning Department. This process is accessible to all residents and is guided by an information package available on the City of Winnipeg's website. The neighborhood plans have three goals: to create a vision of the neighborhood, to set out clear goals to achieve the vision and develop an action plan. These are implemented by residents and stakeholders with support from the local government. The Neighborhood Planning process in Winnipeg is not specifically economic, physical or social in nature and it is primarily the responsibility to the community to organize the project at the onset (City of Winnipeg, 2006).

Community Plans in Calgary, Alberta are similar to Winnipeg's Neighborhood Plans but it is a planning document that establishes a framework for the development of new suburban residential communities. The document is a set of plan objectives which includes design principles in "keeping with the City's responsibility to protect the broader public interest by promoting the design of communities that are more fiscally, socially and environmentally sustainable in the long term" (City of Calgary, 2006). It is a flexible document, which is developed through a collaborative consultation process with landowners, the municipal government and City departments (City of Calgary, 2006).

In Calgary, there is also a community based planning strategy for targeting already established areas that are facing decline, such as the Millican-Ogden neighbourhood. The planner acts in a facilitation role and, in the case of the Millican-Ogden neighbourhood process, there was also a social worker and six city staff representing various areas of interest, such as policing and transit. An office was set up in the neighbourhood to facilitate a presence and relationship with the residents. This process also involved the dispersal of a household survey to identify the issues in the neighbourhood and then a task force of residents and stakeholders was selected to address those issues (City of Calgary, 2006).

The City of Calgary stands out from other Canadian cities because the City works in conjunction with a not-for-profit umbrella organization called the Federation of Calgary Communities (FCC). The FCC provides support for the residential community associations in the City by providing the skills and resources to assist communities in urban planning and running their associations. This united association of community representatives offers support through workshops, informational resources and monthly planning updates (Federation of Canadian Communities, 2006). The workshops are part of the Partners in Planning Program (PIP), which is a training program offered in partnership with the City of Calgary Planning Department to "develop skills for effective partnerships in the planning process" (FCC, 2006). This emphasis on knowledge

sharing and capacity building encourages participation in the planning process by any residents who are interested.

2.3 Saskatoon: An In-depth Look

Saskatoon is the largest city in Saskatchewan with a population of 207,200 as of December 31, 2006 (City of Saskatoon, 2007a). This prairie City's urban planning focus has shifted from industrial to post-industrial with an increased emphasis on community development and civic participation as outlined by the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Plan (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). The commitment of the City of Saskatoon to local involvement and community planning can be seen with the City of Saskatoon website (www.city.saskatoon.sk.ca) which provides updated information on development issues as well as changes within the city. The premise of the Community Services Branch, which is responsible for Leisure, Community Development, Planning and Land Development, is on engagement and education (City of Saskatoon, 2005a). The City of Saskatoon's Corporate Strategic Plan underlines these objectives for Community Development stating the priority of "enable(ing) active community-based participation in issue and problem identification and resolution" (City of Saskatoon, 2004, p. 8).

Saskatoon has developed a number of resources which emphasize these priorities and is in the process of developing programs to facilitate a community participatory process (Kellett, Personal Communication, November 2005). The purpose of these developments has been to raise awareness and increase empowerment among the public by providing approachable and applicable information which aims to achieve a greater sense of transparency in the planning process. This is an adaptation of the previous role of residents and community associations in land use changes which had little public response to notices of land use change, no training available for understanding land use applications and little support for Community Associations to become involved. This structure does not allow for clear communication and trust between residents and the City of Saskatoon (City of Saskatoon, 2004)

The City of Saskatoon has developed the Planning Education Program (PEP), modeled after Calgary's Partnership in Planning Program. The goals of this program are "1) To reduce confusion surrounding the existing land development process and legislative framework; 2) To provide a quick reference to those interested in learning or participating in the city planning and development process; 3) To inform of opportunities to get involved, and; 4) To provide participants with the skills, knowledge and resources so they may meaningfully and effectively participate in the city planning and development process" (City of Saskatoon, 2006a).

The PEP provides a ‘Guide to City Planning and Development in Saskatoon’ which includes three booklets, outlining: 1) The roles of the city and community in planning and development; 2) Opportunities for citizens to get involved, as well as; 3) The channels through which involvement is possible and effective ways to achieve this. It is available to the public through the Internet as well as at the public libraries and planning offices (City of Saskatoon, 2006b). Workshops began in May 2007, offering free training opportunities to citizens who would like to learn more about the planning process and gain skills such as presenting proposals to City Council (City of Saskatoon, 2006a).

2.4 Local Area Planning in Saskatoon

The Local Area Planning process was created in Saskatoon in 1997 after there was expressed interest in more citizen involvement in long-term development and planning during the “Plan Saskatoon” process which began in 1995 and continued until 1998. This was a large scale, citywide public consultation process which used public opinion to define the direction of many development related issues. The emphasis was on updating the City of Saskatoon Development Plan and Zoning Bylaws. The participants in this process indicated a strong need for intervention in the core neighbourhoods. The Community Services Department of the City of Saskatoon Planning Branch initiated the Local Area Plans with funding from the Reserve for Capital Expenditures (City of Saskatoon, 2006c; City of Saskatoon, 2007). A Local Area Plan is defined by the City of Saskatoon as “ a community-based approach to developing comprehensive neighbourhood plans” (City of Saskatoon, 2006c, p. 7). Currently, there are eight Local Area Plans in Saskatoon, with four more in progress (City of Saskatoon, 2006c).

Table 2.1: Local Area Plans In Saskatoon

Existing LAPs:	In Development and Future LAPs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutherland (1999) • King George (2001) • Nutana (2001) • Caswell Hill (2001) • Warehouse District (2001) • Pleasant Hill (2002) • Airport Industrial (2003) • West Industrial (2004) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riversdale (In Progress) • City Park • Westmount • Varsity View

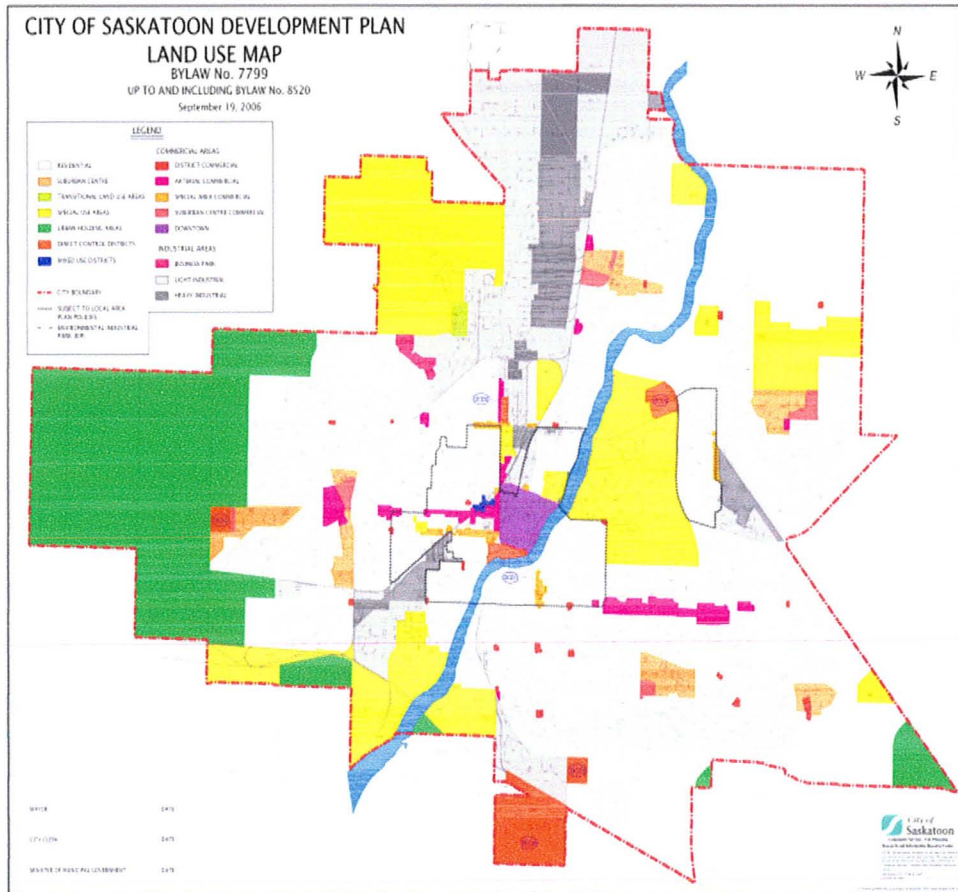
The neighbourhoods targeted by LAPs and their boundaries can be seen on the City of Saskatoon Development Plan Land Use Map (See Figure 2.1), demarked by dotted black lines. The LAPs in Saskatoon are small-scale but comprehensive initiatives which target established core neighborhoods through long-term, focused, comprehensive plans. This is an important initiative because “the Canadian Council on Social Development reported in 2001 that Saskatoon has the greatest rate of change in economic segregation of any urban center in Canada” (City of Saskatoon, 2002b, p. 1). The areas which are affected the most are the inner city neighbourhoods which are suffering from social polarization and abandonment (Power, 2001).

The objective of the LAP is to focus on demographic, land use, social, economic and development trends of the past and present, while creating “a public participation process that provides for community involvement in developing goals, setting priorities and identifying solutions” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 14). Participation is encouraged for all, including residents, property owners, business owners, community based organizations, stakeholders, and community associations. This process does not prioritize objectives (such as social or economic issues) before the community has come together. This is a break away from the mainstream approach which begins the planning process with a list of goals defined by research, usually based on economic trends (MacLeod, 1996). The LAP process mediates the problems that are recognized by the neighborhood through structural improvements that are implemented incrementally (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). The principles and objectives of the Saskatoon LAP program are to:

1. Maintain the quality, safety and viability of the area;
2. Guide and prioritize the expenditure of public funds on community improvements and infrastructure;
3. Encourage the renewal, rehabilitation or redevelopment of private and public properties;
4. Resolve situations where City policies do not accurately reflect the individual needs of an area, and;
5. Provide the basis for changes to the Development Plan and Zoning Bylaws. (City of Saskatoon, 2006d, p. 2)

The LAP process has a number of stages or phases, as defined by the City of Saskatoon (See Appendix A). The LAP process takes place over 12-18 months in the community with an annual follow up after the process has been initiated.

Figure 2.1: City of Saskatoon Development Plan Land Use Map



The planner's role is to facilitate, to present possibilities, to engage discussion and bring represented ideas to the policy makers. This role represents a strong break away from the planner acting as "expert". A new aspect of this process is participatory editing (Kellett, Personal Communication, November 2005), which takes place after the initiatives have been formalized and a consensus is reached on what solutions are to be implemented. Before the LAP goes to the policy makers and local government for approval, there is a process of participatory editing whereby the community is given the document and makes changes to ensure that the language is clear, the meanings match the appropriate frames of reference, and there is an opportunity for explicit feedback; all of the suggested edits are taken seriously into account (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

The final document includes the history of the neighbourhood, relevant statistical and community information, as well as the recommendations and major themes that are important to the community. The LAP initiative builds short and long term recommendations that are to be carried out within five to ten years, though many of the changes are implemented sooner if the funding is available. The planners that facilitate the initial process report back to the community with annual "implementation reports" which provide realistic updates on what is going to be done, priorities for actions, what cannot be done and offered alternatives (Kellett, Personal Communication, November 2005). This process is represented visually in Figure 2.2.

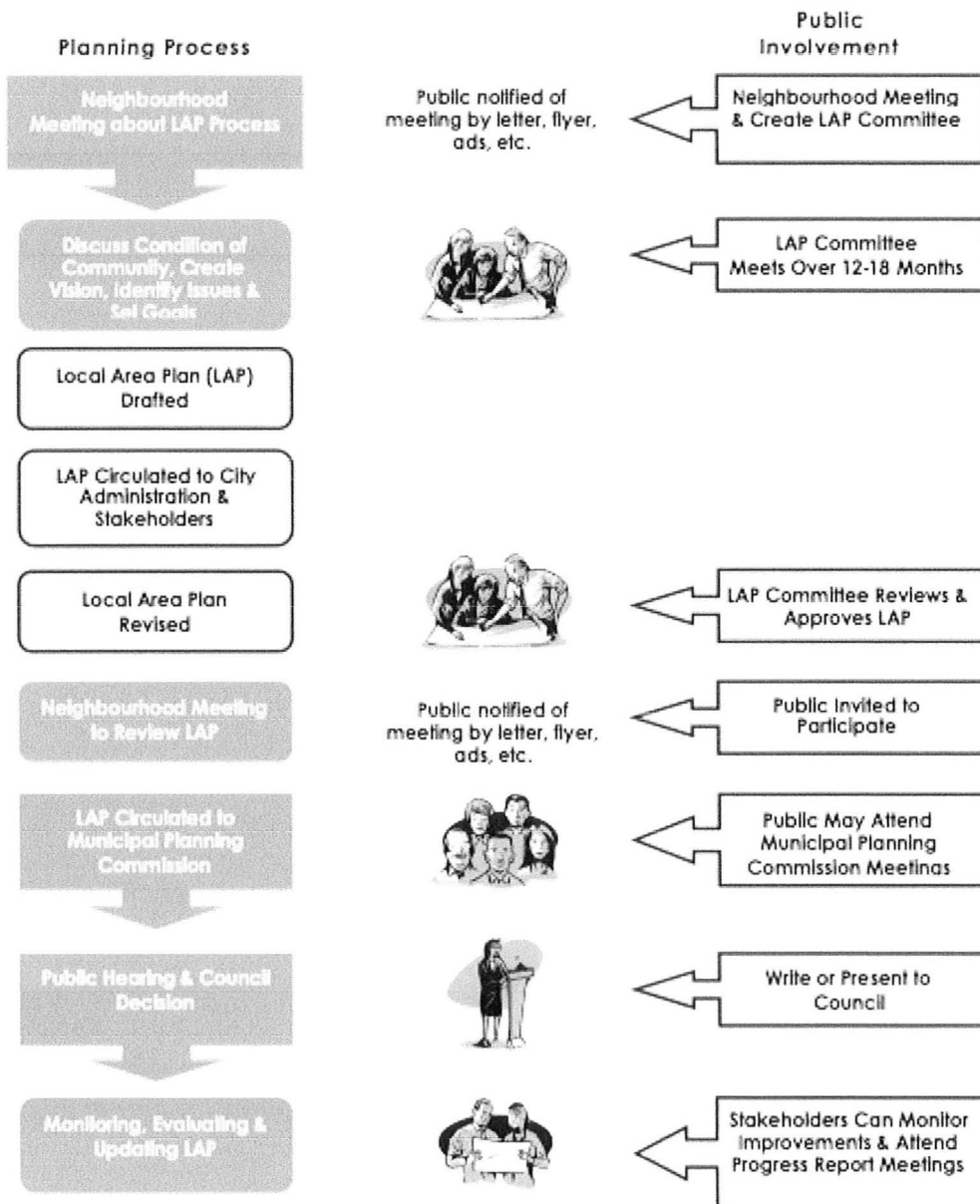
2.5 A Summary of the LAP Process in Saskatoon

The Local Area Planning process in Saskatoon is a comprehensive participatory planning approach to community development. It brings together the skills and resources of professional planners as well as community stakeholders to develop a plan that is meaningful and supportive to the neighbourhood it is targeting.

The following chapter provides the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood context through the area's unique structural and social characteristics, providing the foundation for the implementation of the Pleasant Hill LAP.

Figure 2.2: Public Involvement in a LOCAL AREA PLAN (LAP)

Public Involvement in a LOCAL AREA PLAN (LAP)



(City of Saskatoon, 2006b, p. 17)

3.0 The Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood

Introduction

The following chapter outlines the context of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. It is divided into three parts. Section 3.1 explores the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, providing first and foremost the contextual historic, demographic, structural and social characteristics of the neighbourhood. It was targeted for a LAP because, like many North American inner city neighborhoods (Power, 2001), it has been negatively affected by economic and social trends and is experiencing deterioration and de-investment (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Section 3.2 provides a comprehensive look at local area planning in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. Section 3.3 identifies initiatives that have occurred in the neighbourhood in relation to the LAP. Pleasant Hill can be seen in Figure 3.1. This map outlines the boundaries and features of the neighbourhood.

3.1 The Pleasant Hill Context

3.1.1 Neighbourhood History

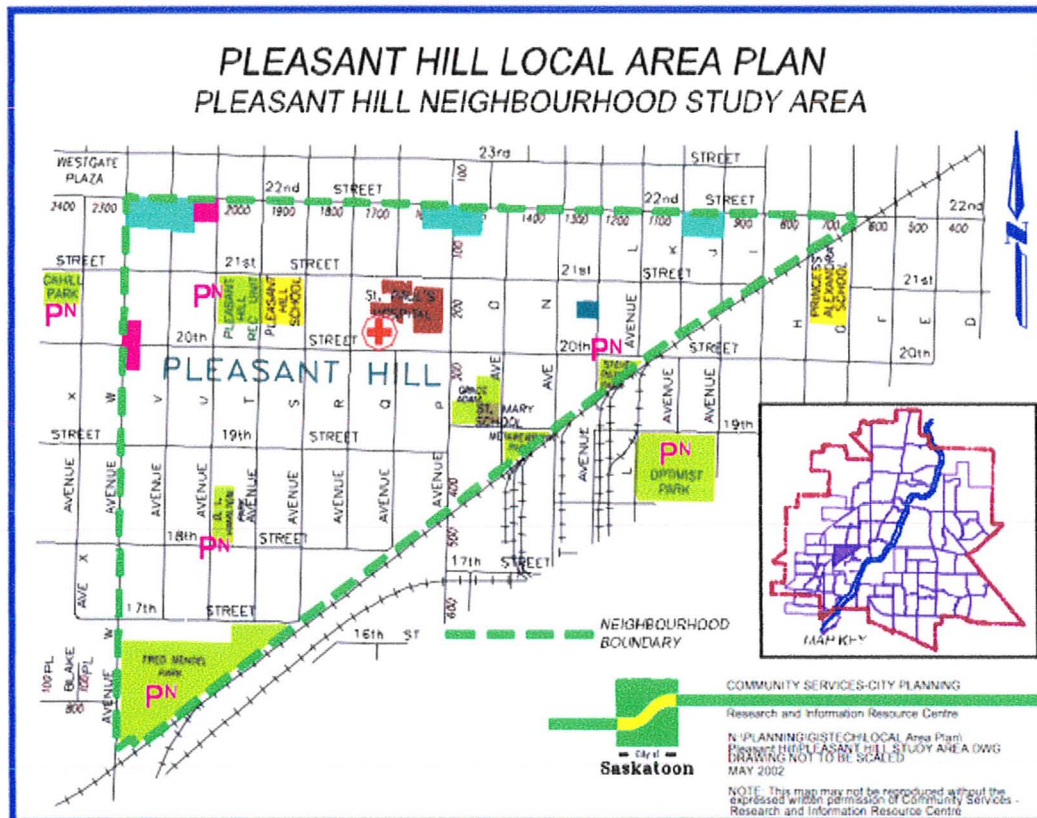
Pleasant Hill was founded in 1907 with the establishment of St. Paul's Hospital. It has been designated as a core neighbourhood because of its age and proximity to the Central Business District. Other core neighbourhoods include Caswell Hill, City Park, King George, Nutana, Riversdale, Sutherland, Varsity View and Westmount (City of Saskatoon, 2001). These older, established neighbourhoods share distinct structural features such as grid street layouts with back alleys and boulevards, a high proportion of pre-World War II housing stock as well as high density residential development (City of Saskatoon, 2001). The boundaries of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood are the Canadian Pacific Rail Line which separates Pleasant Hill from the West Industrial and Riversdale neighbourhoods, 22nd Street which is an arterial road running east to west, connecting the neighbourhood to the Central Business District and the final boundary is Avenue W which runs north and south and is the dividing line between Pleasant Hill and the Meadow Green neighbourhood. These boundaries are outlined in green (See Figure 3.1).

3.1.2 Land Use

St. Paul's hospital designated as a large rectangle on the commercial land use map (See Figure 3.2), still serves the neighbourhood and surrounding area. In addition to the hospital, two schools have been established in Pleasant Hill, St. Mary's Catholic Elementary and Junior High School and the Pleasant Hill Elementary School. Both of these schools were designated as interagency community schools to address the integration of Aboriginal children in 1981 and

1986 respectively (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). There are also three places of worship in Pleasant Hill, St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church and the Avalokitesvara Buddhist Temple.

Figure 3.1: The Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood Map

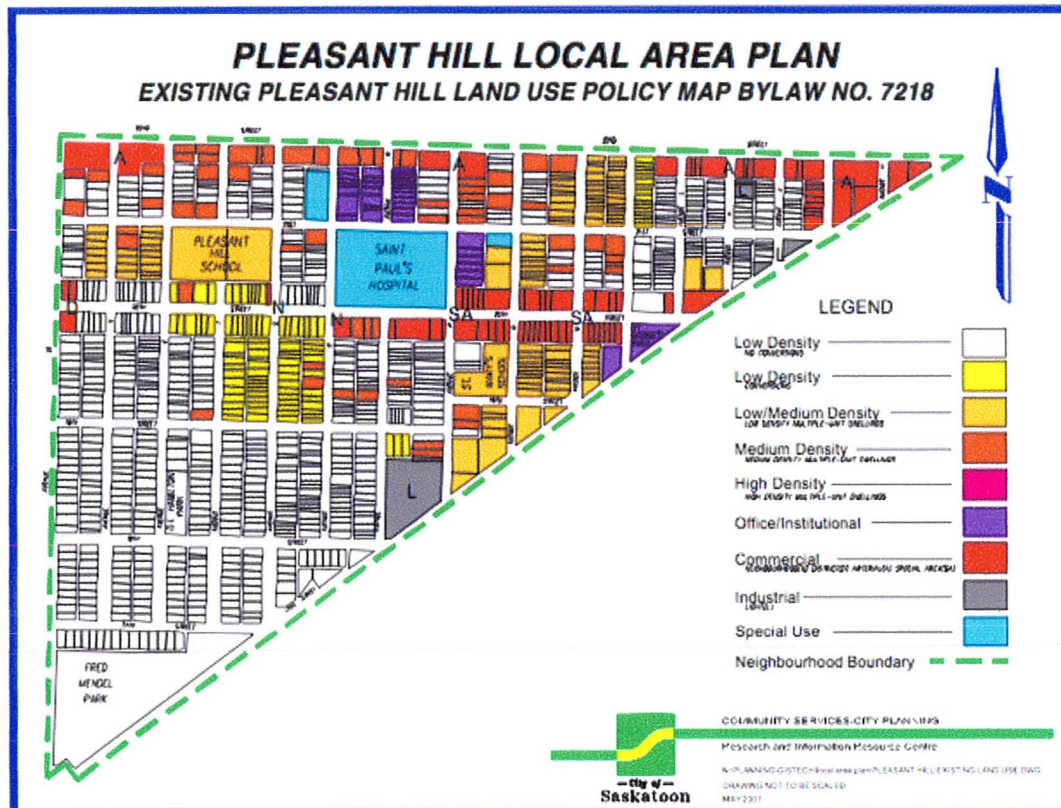


(City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 6)

3.1.2.1 Residential Land Use

The housing stock in Pleasant Hill is a mix of single, two and multiple unit dwellings. The distribution of these housing types is approximately 33% single units, 13% two units and 55% multiple unit dwellings. Pleasant Hill has the third highest density of housing in Saskatoon. Between 1993 and 2001, there was a decrease in the number of units from 2,220 to 2,202. With a rising population, this translates into an increased occurrence of more than one household sharing accommodations (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

Figure 3.2: Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan Land Use Map



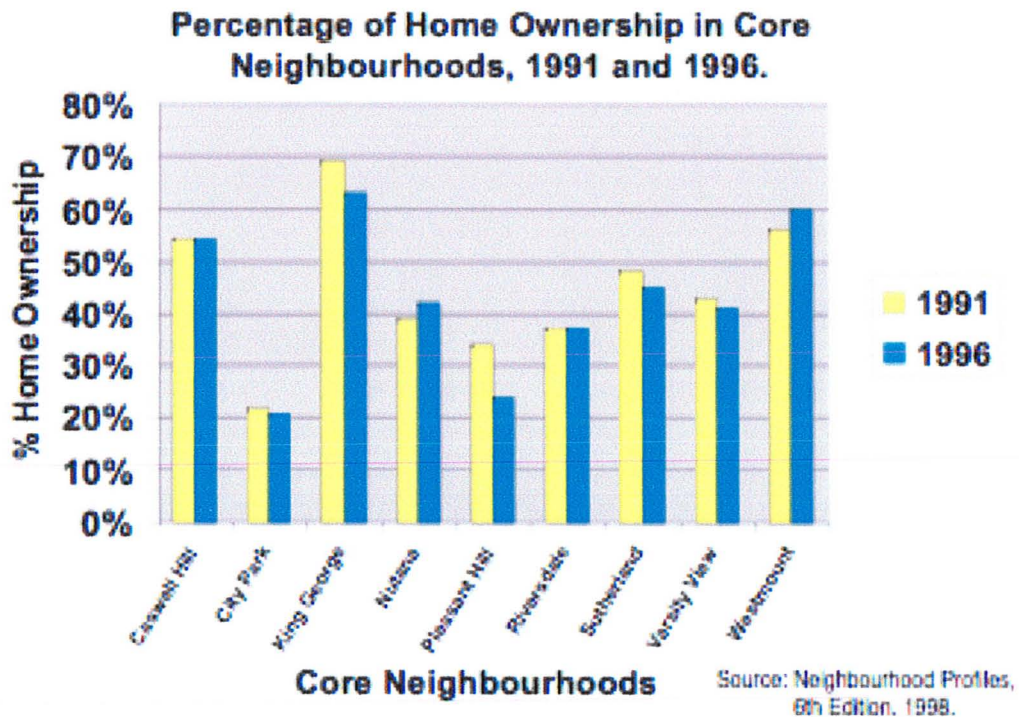
(City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 46)

The housing stock is also ageing and deteriorating, with the majority of housing built between 1946 and 1970 (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Though the quantity and quality of housing stock is declining, housing is relatively affordable in Pleasant Hill compared to other Saskatoon neighbourhoods. The average selling price of a single unit dwelling in the year 2000 was \$58,895 compared to the citywide average of \$113,000. This however does not translate into higher homeownership in the neighbourhood (See Figure 3.3).

Pleasant Hill has seen a more significant decrease in home ownership than any other neighbourhood in Saskatoon, with a decrease of ten percent between 1991 and 1996. This is believed to be a hindrance to increasing the stability of the neighbourhood, both as an area for future investment and retaining current residents (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Homeownership is strongly associated with stability versus renting which has a more mobile and transient nature. This is evident in a 2004 study conducted in Pleasant Hill comparing length of residency between renters and homeowners (See Figure 3.4). Homeowners are also more

likely to invest in their properties and may be more inclined to make improvements (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

Figure 3.3: Percentage of Home Ownership in Core Neighbourhoods, 1991 and 1996

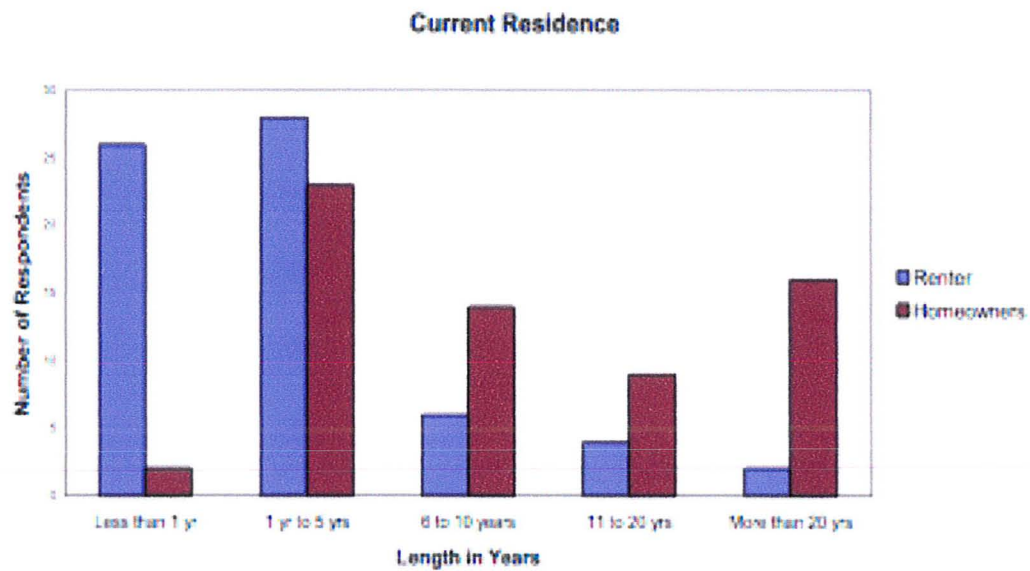


(City of Saskatoon, 2001, p. 2).

Many of the rental accommodations in the neighbourhood suffer from neglect and abandonment, as there are a high number of absentee landlords who do not live in the neighbourhood. There is concern over the deterioration of housing as well as the presence of vacant lots, which is believed to encourage vandalism and reduce investor confidence in the neighbourhood (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Pleasant Hill has the highest number of failed home inspections (See Figure 3.5). In 2004 and 2005, the neighbourhood had a failure rate of 74% of all the houses surveyed (City of Saskatoon, 2006e). There are also approximately 40 vacant lots in the neighbourhood. These lots are concentrated in the area of the neighbourhood where prostitution and the perception of crime is greater (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Pleasant Hill is located in Zone 6 which has the highest vacancy rate in Saskatoon. In 2001, the vacancy rate in this area was

10%, much higher than the falling average of 3% seen in the City as a whole (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

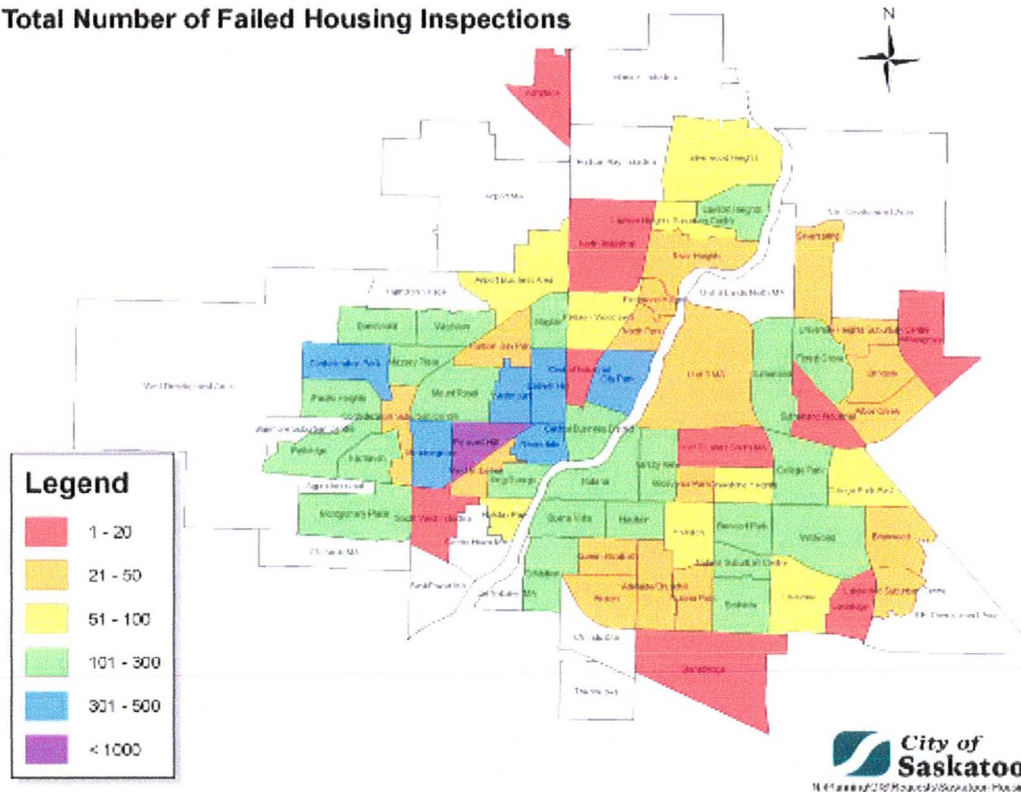
Figure 3.4: Length of Current Residence: Homeownership Versus Rentership



(Saskatchewan Institute of Technologies, 2004, p. 28)

Figure 3.5: Saskatoon Neighbourhoods by Failed Housing Inspections

Total Number of Failed Housing Inspections



(City of Saskatoon, 2006d, p. 19)

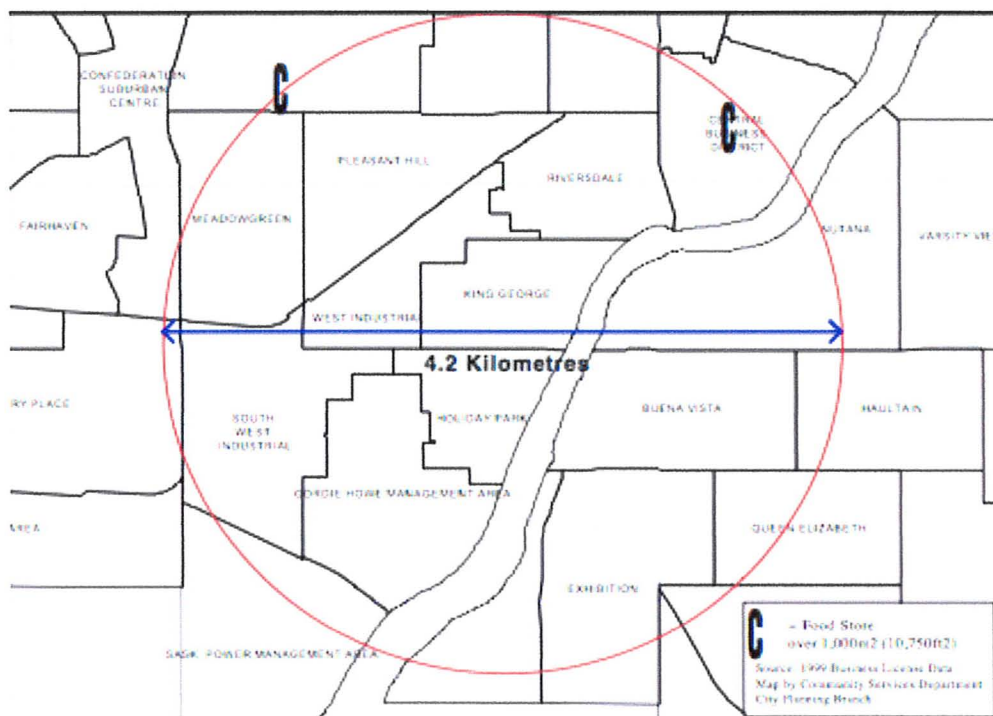
3.1.2.2 Commercial Land Use

The commercial development in Pleasant Hill is concentrated along 20th Street and an arterial commercial block on 22nd Street between Avenue W and Avenue H, shown in red on the Pleasant Hill Land Use Map (See Figure 3.2). According to the City of Saskatoon Development Plan, the area along 20th Street between the 1600 and 1100 block is classified as ‘Special Area Commercial’ which is a designation given to a collection of stores and services with “unique attributes such as location, types of use and development history” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 30). These shops and services serve the daily convenience of the residents of the neighbourhood and include among other businesses, a beauty salon, a bakery and a pharmacy. The arterial commercial area along 22nd Street includes a variety of fast food restaurants, video stores and strip malls.

According to the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan Final Report as of 2002, there were 84 businesses in the neighbourhood, though there was room for approximately 120. This implies that there was vacant commercial space and the need to attract businesses for expansion of the neighbourhood commercial base.

There is no designated Pleasant Hill community centre in the neighbourhood but the LAP outlined the importance of community facilities that are accessible and has proposed the introduction of a ‘Community Facility’ land use designation for the neighbourhood which would preserve the schools and churches in the neighbourhood as “sites for residential, educational, institutional, recreational or other community-oriented uses” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 51). Two other issues regarding commercial resources in the neighbourhood include the lack of a full grocery store within the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and the multitude of pawnshops in the neighbourhood and surrounding area (See Figure 3.6). Though there is a Giant Tiger Discount store a few blocks outside the neighbourhood on 22nd Avenue between Avenue G and Avenue F that carries some food, the lack of a formalized grocery store with a full selection of fresh produce in this neighbourhood is significant because of the low number of vehicles per resident in the neighbourhood and the cost incurred by taking public transportation or taxis to go grocery shopping is a high burden on low income individuals. The barriers of accessibility to good quality food is significant and may result in residents shopping at smaller shops which are geographically closer but have less quality products and are more expensive (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

Figure 3.6: Location of Food Stores in Central and Southwest Saskatoon



(City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 67).

There are 18 pawnshops in Saskatoon, 13 of which are in and around the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The high concentration of this type of retail shop is a concern to residents in the neighbourhood because as the Saskatoon Police Services have indicated, this type of business encourages crime because there is greater opportunity to convert stolen property into cash (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

3.1.2.3 Industrial Land Use

Pleasant Hill has five industrial parcels of land, totaling 17,453.92m² within its boundaries (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). This type of land use is a concern to the neighbourhood because of noise, heavy truck traffic and the possible future development of such sites which may be incompatible with the neighbourhood character and residential land uses.

3.1.3 Neighbourhood Safety

According to the Local Area Planning Group, “the occurrence and perception of crime in Pleasant Hill is the number one issue affecting residents in the neighbourhood” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 78). Safety became one of the major focuses of the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan, with an identification of safety goals that covered many of the social and physical aspects of the neighbourhood. These goals as defined by the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan are:

- To ensure that Pleasant Hill is a safe place to live, work and visit.
- To reduce the perception of Pleasant Hill as an unsafe neighbourhood.
- To eliminate the occurrence of prostitution in the neighbourhood.
- To foster a long term community-based, cooperative approach to neighbourhood safety and crime prevention.
- To foster an improved relationship between the Pleasant Hill community and Saskatoon Police Services.
- To recognize and coordinate the supports within the community that exist to improve overall neighbourhood well-being.
- To enhance and monitor the effectiveness of new initiatives to improve safety over time in Pleasant Hill.
- To ensure that all residents in Pleasant Hill are informed about what to do in the event of an emergency (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 78).

These goals are related to the belief that there is a growing occurrence of crimes such as vandalism, prostitution, break and entries, drug trafficking and violent crimes in Pleasant Hill. Residents feel that crime is escalating and with it is a corresponding fear and loss of trust. The problems are believed to be both structural and social in nature.

Residents believe that the deterioration of housing and neighbourhood infrastructure attract negative behavior because there is poor visibility (e.g. because of poor lighting) and unmonitored space for crimes to occur (e.g. such as vacant lots and abandoned housing). Socially, there is a fear of reporting crimes because of possible consequences from the offenders, such as retaliation. There is a belief that there is a lack of support from police and protection services. This is a negative cycle because it means that many crimes are not reported and therefore not dealt with and, as a consequence, residents feel even more unsafe and disempowered in their neighbourhood. There is also a strong belief that there is a need for better communication and cooperation between the community, organizations within the neighbourhood, and the City to make positive steps towards a safer Pleasant Hill (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

3.1.3.1 The Incidence of Crime

Comparative information for neighbourhood levels of crime indicate that Pleasant Hill has a higher incidence of all forms of crime compared to the other Saskatoon neighbourhoods. In 1997, the number of reported incidents of crime per capita in Pleasant Hill was 703 compared to the per capita ratio of 316 for Saskatoon. The incidence of reported crimes in Pleasant Hill was two to seven times greater than the other core neighbourhoods (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). There has been a 3.2 percent increase in the incidence of reported crime between 1997 and 2000, and “the most significant increase in crime occurred in assaults, business break and enter and willful damage” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 79). There was an 84 percent drop in sex trade activity between 1997 and 2000 but the reasons for this are not clear; it is suspected that it “may be due to a change in police enforcement practices, or the willingness of residents to report incidents of crime” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p.79). This decrease did not continue past 2000, as Pleasant Hill represented 55.34 % of the prostitution in Saskatoon in 2002. According to data which includes Pleasant Hill (but not the neighbourhood in isolation), there was a 71.43% increase in prostitution between 2000 and 2003 (City of Saskatoon, 2005b). Increases in attempted murder, violations causing death and armed robbery were also found, although there was a decrease in: theft over \$5,000, controlled drugs and substances, business related break and entries, and sexual assaults (City of Saskatoon, 2005b).

The Pleasant Hill neighbourhood faces additional challenges with regards to safety because of the social environment that has developed. There is a high percentage of poverty and unemployment which encourages individuals to find other forms of income, including prostitution, the sale of drugs and the sale of stolen goods (City of Saskatoon, 2005b). There are a high number of drug users in the neighbourhood which fosters violent and unpredictable behavior and there is a

strong gang presence in Pleasant Hill. In addition to this, there is discrimination and racism which makes the cycle of oppression even more difficult to break.

3.1.4 Transportation and Circulation

Pleasant Hill is bordered on the south side by the Canadian Pacific Railroad line. This corridor divides Pleasant Hill from West Industrial, which is an area that contains 10.92% of Saskatoon's heavy industry (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). There are four arterial roads. 20th Street and 22nd Street are major arterial roads which have a high capacity and are controlled by streetlights (versus traffic signs); they carry between 5,000 and 20,000 cars per day, providing quick access to the core of the city (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Avenue P and Avenue H are minor arterial roads which carry less traffic than the major arterial but still connect Pleasant Hill to the Central Business District. There is one main bus route serving the neighbourhood. This is important to the neighbourhood as the number of vehicles registered to Pleasant Hill residents is .23 vehicles per persons 18 years old and older, compared to Saskatoon which has .72 vehicles per person (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

The concerns over transportation in Pleasant Hill are centered on neighbourhood safety and accessibility. Because of the proximity of the neighbourhood to the West Industrial area, there are a high number of large transport trucks, which come into Pleasant Hill along Avenue P and Avenue W. This access has created concern over the noise, traffic speed and safety of pedestrians. Other safety issues include visibility, opportunities for speed reduction near school zones as well as the need for a pedestrian activated crosswalk along Avenue P south and 19th Street for children attending St. Mary's School. This was a high priority in the community, though in 2000, the rank of this project in terms of "Pedestrian Actuated Traffic Signal Priority" determined by the City of Saskatoon Management Section was 130th in the city (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 103).

The possibility of defining a formal pedestrian and cyclist right of way on the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway) route is also a high priority in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, as it would allow a safe and alternative route to the downtown core. There has also been an expressed need to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of bus shelters in the neighbourhood that are often vandalized. All of these concerns highlight the need for alternative forms of transportation other than the automobile.

3.1.5 Municipal Services

The main issues that are highlighted around municipal services in Pleasant Hill focus on the appearance of the neighbourhood. The deterioration of physical infrastructure such as street signs, lighting, sidewalks and roads has been highlighted as a growing concern. Residents feel strongly that the image the neighbourhood sends through its appearance has a large impact on the perception of Pleasant Hill by the City and the residents themselves. This can be related to the “Broken Window Theory” which argues, “if a window in a building is broken and left un-repaired, all the rest of the windows will soon be broken...” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 111). When residents feel that no one cares, there may be a growing sense of apathy towards deterioration, crime and an acceptance that the neighbourhood is in decline which “...creates fear within the community and attracts predators who thrive in conditions of public apathy and neglect” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 111).

The major areas of concern are four roads, which remain unpaved or in the case of ten blocks in the neighbourhood, missing sidewalks, as well as poorly maintained boulevards. There are also a number of signs and light standards that need replacement. Back lanes and the CPR right of way also need attention because of weeds and the dumping of garbage. Apart from public property, there is also a strong need for intervention on private property, including lawn maintenance and housing conditions.

3.1.6 Parks and Recreation

There are five parks in Pleasant Hill totaling 7.46 ha of land. These green spaces include baseball diamonds, play structures, park benches and in the summer, the Pleasant Hill Recreation Unit, located behind Pleasant Hill School has an operational spray pool. These sites are used throughout the year and require intervention to improve the aesthetics, accessibility and safety of these sites. According to the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan, the neighbourhood was developed before current park standards were implemented in the City of Saskatoon and therefore lacks green space (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). This has since been rectified but there is still a need for initiatives to encourage park usage for people of all ages. This includes play infrastructure, lighting, maintenance of benches and picnic tables, planting of trees and flowers as well as providing affordable and accessible recreational programs.

3.1.7 Heritage and Culture

Pleasant Hill has a rich natural and human history, which is important to the residents of the neighbourhood and the wider community. The recognition of

the structural history in the area is important for preservation as well as awareness inside the neighbourhood and in the City in general. The diversity of the residents in Pleasant Hill also adds a rich dimension to the neighbourhood and according to the Local Area Plan; it is “one of the key strengths of the community” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 136). The flip side of this is the issue of racism and discrimination which are major concerns in the neighbourhood. The need to raise awareness and understanding within the neighbourhood and across the City is apparent. People must be treated with equality and respect and differences should be celebrated.

3.1.8 Geographical Concentration of Services in Pleasant Hill

Pleasant Hill has a high concentration of social organizations which target high risk populations and aim to offer safe, accessible and affordable opportunities for people who are dealing with poverty, addictions and problems such as violence in the home (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). These include a safe house for children at risk, the Saskatoon District Health Detox Centre for drug and alcohol addiction, Berryridge Housing which offers subsidized housing based on income for families, the Larson House which is a voluntary addiction and detoxification centre, and a variety of other social organizations which offer counseling, employment and health care services (Haensel, 2005). This is a strength of the area as it means that services are geographically close to a population that may have a higher need for these services but it has also raised concern for residents in the neighbourhood because it may draw high risk and high needs populations to the neighbourhood, increasing the prevalence of people with addictions and poverty in the area (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

3.1.9 Pleasant Hill Demographics

The demographic information has been derived from a variety of sources that are based on the findings from the 1996 and 2001 Canadian census data. Much of this information appears in the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan Final Report as contextual background information as well as quantitative support for the implementation of the specific LAP recommendations. Additional information has been added from the Pleasant Hill 2003 Neighbourhood Profile, a document produced by the City of Saskatoon but this data utilizes the 2001 census as well. The information does not include the 2006 census data because it was not available at the neighbourhood level.

3.19.1 Neighbourhood Composition

The Pleasant Hill neighbourhood has a growing population, reaching the highest population recorded in 2001 at 4,415 residents (City of Saskatoon,

2003b). This is a 33 percent increase from 1991, a growth similar to newly developing neighbourhoods in Saskatoon such as Briarwood while other core neighbourhoods, such as Caswell Hill or City Park are showing declining populations (City of Saskatoon, 2003a). The increase in population occurred in all age groups except there was a 17 percent decrease in residents over the age of sixty-five. Residents between the ages of 30 to 44 make up the largest percentage of the Pleasant Hill population, showing an increase of 62 percent from 817 to 1,320 between 1991 and 2001. The number of school age children grew 71 percent from 480 to 820; comparatively the increase of school age children in Saskatoon was 9.3 percent (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

Pleasant Hill has over 2,074 Aboriginal residents, which is 40 percent of the total Pleasant Hill population, the highest proportion of Aboriginal people living in Saskatoon. This is a 132 percent increase from 1991. The neighbourhood has residents who are First Nations, Métis, Ukrainian, German, English, Russian, Chinese, Filipino and Vietnamese to name a few. The Pleasant Hill neighbourhood is considered to be the “most ethnically diverse community of all the core neighbourhoods in Saskatoon” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 23). Compared to the 1996 Ethnic Diversity Concentration Index, Saskatoon measured in at 16.00, while Pleasant Hill ethnic diversity concentration was 21.77 (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

3.1.9.2 Family Structure

Like in most Canadian cities, there are a growing number of single parent families in Saskatoon, with a 20 percent increase in one-parent families and a 3.7 percent increase in families with two parents. In Pleasant Hill there has been a 42 percent increase of one-parent families and a 4.8 percent increase of two parent families (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

3.1.9.3 Education

Education levels in Pleasant Hill are low with 42.7 percent of residents over the age of 20 with a grade 9-13 (with or without diploma) education, compared to 27.1 percent in Saskatoon. Only 12.1 percent of residents over the age of 20 in 2001 have Some University or are a University Graduate, compared to 29.9% in Saskatoon overall (City of Saskatoon, 2003b).

3.1.9.4 Employment

The employment rate of residents over the age of 15 is 36.5 percent in the 2001 census for Pleasant Hill; the unemployment rate is 25.9 percent. Comparatively, for Saskatoon in 2001, the unemployment rate was 6.2 percent (City of Saskatoon, 2003b). There has been a 37 percent decrease in employed

persons in Pleasant Hill between 1996 and 1981. Employment in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood is concentrated in the Sales and Service industry (31%), Trade and Transport industry (20%) and Processing and Manufacturing (11%), though there is a growing number of individuals working in Business and Administration, Health related occupations and Management (City of Saskatoon, 2003b).

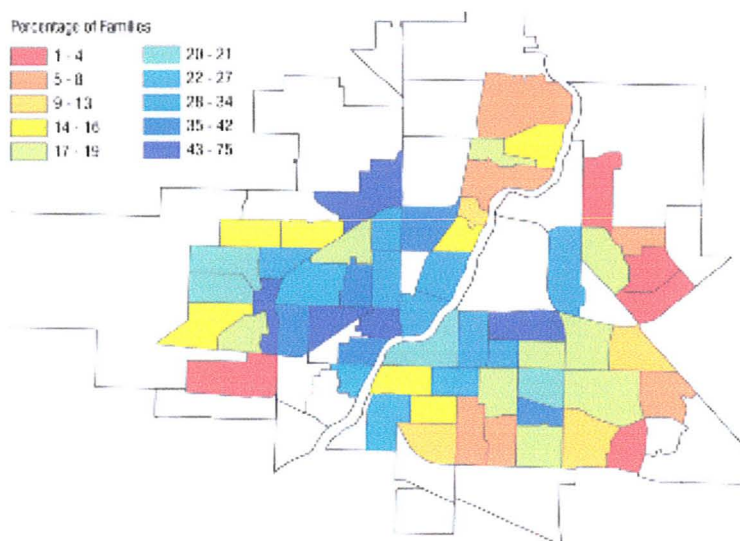
3.1.9.5 Income and Social Assistance

The average family income in 1996 in Pleasant Hill was \$21,928; a 15 percent decrease from 1991, while the average family income in Saskatoon was \$48,927 and the average family income in the core neighbourhoods was \$40,615 (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). The numbers for Pleasant Hill are extremely low. Thirty seven percent of family incomes in Pleasant Hill were reportedly between \$10,000 and \$19,999 and 21 percent were below \$10,000 (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). In the 2001 "The Health of our Community: Health Status Report" conducted by the Saskatoon District Health, 50 percent of Pleasant Hill families were reportedly classified as 'low income' which is a poverty designation made by Statistics Canada when "families or individuals spend more than 54.7 percent of their income on essentials such as food, clothing and shelter" (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 25). Figure 3.7 depicts Saskatoon, divided by neighbourhood where families below the "Low Income Cut Off" live. This cut off represents families living with the minimum amount of income needed to meet basic needs, Pleasant Hill representing 43-75% of families in 2001. In 1998, 25 percent of residents were relying on some form of social assistance in Pleasant Hill and this number has shown increasing trends (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). The 2003 Neighbourhood Profile shows a slight improvement with the average family income reported at \$26,753.

3.1.10 A Summary of the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood Context

As demonstrated by the structural, social and cultural contextual information, Pleasant Hill is facing a number of challenges. The decline of many of the socio-economic variables in the neighbourhood has affected the ability of the community to build and sustain the assets and strengths of Pleasant Hill. The following section addresses many of these issues through the exploration of the Local Area Planning process in Pleasant Hill, identifying recommendations and processes which have been put into place to mediate the negative aspects of the neighbourhood.

Figure 3.7: Families Below the Low Income Cut Off by Neighbourhood



Statistics Canada, Low Income Measurement in Canada 2004, no. 11, 75F0002MIE – 200401

(City of Saskatoon, 2005c, p. 2)

3.2 The Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan

The Pleasant Hill LAP began as an identification of the neighbourhood in context through historical, demographic and city trends. The process officially began in the neighbourhood with a public meeting hosted by the Saskatoon City Planning Branch on May 24, 2000. This meeting was an introduction to the local area planning process as well as a time to share information about Pleasant Hill such as the changing demographics, individual perspectives and economic and social trends. A forum was set up where a survey was distributed to identify the issues and values that were present in the community. This was the initial stage and the communicative process was introduced by planning facilitators. After the survey, a planning group of voluntary community representatives and stakeholders was formed (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

3.2.1 Planning Group Meetings

The Planning Group meetings in Pleasant Hill were facilitated by the City of Saskatoon planners and occurred approximately two times per month. The people who got involved with the Local Area Plan were from a variety of interest

groups involved in the neighbourhood, “including residents, business owners, developers, the community school and community associations, as well as church groups and cultural organizations” City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 16). This voluntary interest group was responsible for meeting and developing a neighbourhood vision and a set of community values that would provide a framework for the local area planning process. The community members in this process are seen as resources, creative idea generators as well as an important network. The wide range of support from community and citywide organizations can be seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Organizations Involved in the Pleasant Hill LAP

Organizations Involved in the Pleasant Hill LAP	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasant Hill Local Area Planning Group • Pleasant Hill Community Association • City Planning Branch • Community Development Branch • Environmental Compliance Branch • Transit Services Branch • Electrical Systems Branch • Saskatoon Police Services • Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services • Municipal Engineering Branch • Parking Services Section • Traffic Management Section • Traffic Signal Section • Parks Branch • Horticulture Maintenance Section • Turf Maintenance Section • Public Works Branch • Asset Preservation Section • Roadways Section • Support Services Section • Sign & Paint Shop • Corporate Information Services Branch • Land Assessments • City Clerk’s Office • Records Management • City Solicitor’s Office • Public Library Local History Room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems & Information Management Section • Secretarial Support Section • Development Services Branch • Development Review Section • Business License & Zoning Compliance Section • Land Branch • Land Development Services • Leisure Services Branch • Mayor’s Office • City Manager’s Office • Communications Branch • Councillor Ward I • Councillor Ward II • Child Hunger and Education Program • University of Saskatchewan Department of Family Medicine • Sunridge Development Corporation • Canadian Pacific Railway • Quint Development Corporation • Riversdale BID • Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority • Pleasant Hill School • Saskatoon Public School Board • St. Mary’s School • Saskatoon Catholic School Board • Action Associates • Building Standards Branch • Marketing and Publications Section

(City of Saskatoon, 2002,a p. 139)

3.2.2 *The Pleasant Hill Vision*

The Pleasant Hill Planning Group developed the following vision statement to guide the Local Area Plan and future developments in the neighbourhood:

“Pleasant Hill will be a community that celebrates a fabric of housing diversity designed and managed for family needs of personal safety, reasonable affordability, recreational activities, green space, worship facilities and desirable location. Pleasant Hill boasts vibrant cross cultural and multigenerational relationships where everyone comes together to help, share, support and encourage one another’s physical, mental, emotional and spiritual growth” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 17).

The concentration on the positive attributes of the neighbourhood is central to the vision the Planning Group members outlined for Pleasant Hill. This is reiterated in the community values which focus on the need for hope, accessibility, health and safety, responsibility, diversity and the support of families and each other. The goal for the neighbourhood is “to make Pleasant Hill a safe, healthy and vibrant place for all people to live and work.” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 7), or in the words of one resident: “to put the ‘Pleasant’ back in Pleasant Hill” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 7). The hope is that with the core values and goals of the neighbourhood in mind, there will be an increase in neighbourhood stability through structural modification and “increase awareness in the general public and civic administration about the problems concentrated in this neighbourhood” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 7).

3.2.3 *The Role of Planners*

The planners were responsible for organizing the meeting places and times as well as providing information in an understandable way, answering questions, providing additional resources, and ensuring a safe and productive meeting. This was accomplished by the introduction of ‘Ground Rules’. All participants were required to follow the general rules of: 1) Respect for other group members; 2) Honesty; 3) Allow group members to express their opinions without interruption; 4) Open-mindedness; 5) Accept other people’s right to share their opinion; 6) Commitment to work through the LAP process with the group; 7) Patience, and; 8) Stay on topic (Pleasant Hill LAP Planning Group Minutes, June 7, 2000). These rules ensured that members could feel comfortable sharing their opinions and concerns. There was also a commitment to fair and equal representation.

3.2.4 The Process

The Planning Group meetings were an opportunity for members to learn about the issues and the planning process, ask questions and set the agenda of the next meetings. A general consensus was necessary in deciding what topics would be covered and when. Members also decided if they wished to speak with City experts on topics such as transportation, fire and safety and property maintenance (Pleasant Hill LAP Planning Group Minutes, June 7, 2000). Having these experts present ensured that questions could be answered specifically by individuals who had experience dealing with the issues presented as well ensuring the feasibility of the recommendations which were developed.

The Planning Group meeting notes were recorded as in-depth minutes which were mailed out to all individuals present as well as those members of the community who were interested. At the beginning of the next meeting, there was an opportunity for clarification of the meeting notes as well as questions and concerns. Once this was completed, the major themes of the meetings were developed into recommendations with feasible solutions and actions identified by the community. In Pleasant Hill, the issues that were identified were: safety, land use, traffic, parks, perception of the community, and the accessibility of municipal services (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). These themes were then communicated to the public through the city website, neighbourhood tours, mail outs and community meetings.

3.2.5 Planning Techniques

In order to engage the community in the LAP process a number of collaborative decision making processes and information sharing exercises were introduced. These included trust building and small group exercises, brainstorming techniques, and visual presentations. All of these activities were done to foster trust and respect within the Planning Group, and encourage optimism and make the experience positive for all contributors. The meetings were held in public places in the neighbourhood such as the churches and hospitals and childcare and snacks were provided. The efforts taken to ensure a safe, positive and productive atmosphere for participation in the LAP were a top priority at each stage in the process (City of Saskatoon, 2006d).

The Pleasant Hill LAP was approved on June 24, 2002 (City of Saskatoon: LAP Implementation Meeting Notes, 2006) and the release of the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan Final Report was an eye opening experience for both residents and City officials (McNarin, 2002). The LAP Final Report signified to the public that Pleasant Hill was a “community in crisis” and that drastic and timely intervention needed to take place in order to turn it around. The report was

accepted with optimism as well as determination by City Council and residents and stakeholders in Pleasant Hill (McNarin, 2002).

3.2.6 Local Area Plan Civics Committee (LCC)

The formation of the Local Civics Committee (LCC) was one of the recommendations of the LAP. It was a new initiative that had not been used in any of the other LAPs at that time and was established because of the urgency of implementing the LAP in Pleasant Hill. It was introduced to the neighbourhood during an Open House meeting which was held in Pleasant Hill on May 14, 2003 (City of Saskatoon, 2005b). There were 150 attendees at this meeting and those who were interested were invited to join the Pleasant Hill LCC which would be a branch of the Pleasant Hill Community Association and would assist in the implementation of the recommendations of the Local Area Plan which required further community input. After the implementation process had been completed, the LCC would then become part of a new 'Community Consultation and Participation Program' in Saskatoon and would address issues in planning and development in the neighbourhood as they developed. At this stage, all neighbourhoods would have an established LCC.

The first meeting of the Local Civics Committee was held on June 24, 2003. Livia Kellett, the Local Civic Committee Coordinator with the City of Saskatoon Planning Branch, facilitated the meetings. Much like the LAP Planning Group meetings, there were guidelines for discussions and collaborative decision making to ensure people were treated respectfully and with equality (LCC Meeting Notes, June 24, 2003). There was also a strong focus on inclusion, not exclusion of individuals and groups within the neighbourhood. The committee worked hard to ensure groups who were under represented at the initial meeting were invited to join, such as the Aboriginal community and seniors. Invitations were also extended to representatives and experts on specific topics of concern, such as the Fire Department and Health Inspector. The minutes of these meetings were all shared with interested individuals and there was a review of the minutes from the prior meeting to ensure there was not information that needed to be changed or clarified. The meetings were built on questions revolving around issues such as safety, information sharing and presentations given by City of Saskatoon representatives and brainstorming possible solutions to the discussed problems.

The initial role of the LCC changed in the spring of 2004 in order to make it a citywide initiative. At this stage, the LCC coordinator moved on from Pleasant Hill to a position which provided representation to all LCCs in Saskatoon. The support from the City of Saskatoon in Pleasant Hill and all other neighbourhoods would include free education and training in land use issues and

applications but no one-on-one representation, this role fell to the responsibility of the individual neighbourhoods because of limited resources. The reaction to this change in Pleasant Hill was one of frustration. When this change was presented in a LCC meeting in November 2003, the need for continued support from the City was a significant concern.

3.2.7 Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan Status Reports

In meeting with the demands of both the City of Saskatoon City Council as well as the neighbourhoods involved in Local Area Planning, ongoing status reports of the LAP recommendations are released for fiscal, administrative and accountability reasons. These reports highlight the activity regarding the recommendations as well as the funding that becomes available. This information is accessible to the general public on the City of Saskatoon website. As of the March 14, 2006 Local Area Plan Implementation Meeting, ten out of thirty four recommendations in Pleasant Hill had been completed with fourteen more in progress. A simplified breakdown of the timeline of the Pleasant Hill LAP, highlighting the year specific recommendations were completed, keeping in mind that the Pleasant Hill LAP was finalized and approved by City Council in June 2002 can be found in Appendix B.

3.2.8 The Pleasant Hill Challenges and Successes

The Pleasant Hill LAP was recognized in 2005 by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) for its unique contribution to community development by a prestigious national award for citizen engagement in sustainable community planning (City of Saskatoon, 2007b). This is just one example of the success and recognition of this LAP. Another important distinction came with a presentation at the World Urban Forum 3 (WUF 3). The title of the presentation was "Citizen-Led Integration & Coordination: Transferring the Lessons from Pleasant Hill, Saskatoon, Canada" (City of Saskatoon, 2007b).

The Pleasant Hill LAP has been unique in other ways. This is the result of a combination of factors, including timing, issues in the neighbourhood, an involved and receptive audience, as well as the cooperation of a wide range of stakeholders, including the commitment of all levels of government. The Pleasant Hill LAP was the sixth to be implemented (City of Saskatoon, 2006d). According to the City of Saskatoon planners who were involved in this process, this LAP was more comprehensive than the ones before it. The reasons for this include the development of the LAP process itself as well as the commitment of the members of the neighbourhood and city.

The first LAP report was approved in 1999 and each successive report has been able to build on the experiences and resources of the LAP coming before it (City of Saskatoon, 2007b). The Pleasant Hill LAP came at a time when the implementation process of all the LAPs was being developed (Moore & Kellett, Personal Communication, July 2006). It was also the point when the process was being “branded”. The brochures for the Pleasant Hill Final Report show the image of the LAP process with the slogan as well as the banner that appears on the front cover. All the LAPs completed previously were remodeled to show the new design. The LAP process was also defined and the methodology was set. Pleasant Hill was the first LAP that utilized facilitation techniques that have become a part of the process. These included group work, participatory editing and consensus decision-making as well as active information gathering in the neighbourhood through for example, involvement in potlucks and facility tours. Because this was a new approach to planning in the core neighbourhoods, it took time to define the directions it would take, to set up relationships within the neighbourhoods as well as with City Council and service providers (Moore & Kellett, Personal Communication, July 2006).

Pleasant Hill hosted a multitude of challenges demographically, socially and structurally. To combat the demographic challenges, the planners made a commitment to getting the best representation of the neighbourhood possible by involving people of all ages, socio-economic groups and cultures. They worked hard to get people involved by offering free child care and refreshments at all meetings as well as police representation if people felt uncomfortable at any time. Senior groups and schools were asked to participate and the meetings were held at different public locations within the neighbourhood to mediate the problems people had due to accessibility or perhaps concerns over meetings held in religious institutions. The planners even went so far as to knock on people’s doors to invite them personally to the implementation meeting in May 2003. All of these techniques were met with success as the Pleasant Hill LAP saw broad representation with very dedicated volunteers, some of whom came to every safety audit and LCC meeting which was not seen with the other LAPs. The Pleasant Hill LAP implementation meeting had the largest turn out of all the core neighbourhoods, with over 150 people in attendance.

Another area of success that the Pleasant Hill LAP saw develop was the commitment of the City and all levels of government. City Council made Pleasant Hill a priority and with the request of the neighbourhood, it was officially labeled “a community in crisis”. It was the first LAP to have all levels of government involved in the implementation of recommendations and the City became a ‘gatekeeper’ in the initiatives that would be initiated. Two planners were in attendance at all the meetings and Livia Kellett became the representative for the first Local Civics Committee, which began in Pleasant Hill. The commitment of

the City of Saskatoon planning staff as well as City Council became apparent with LAPs becoming a priority after the Pleasant Hill LAP went to City Council in January 2003. The decision to continue LAPs as well as develop educational material outlining other ways the public could get involved in the planning process was made at this time. It also became apparent that these processes would need to be monitored (Moore & Kellett, Personal Communication, July 2006).

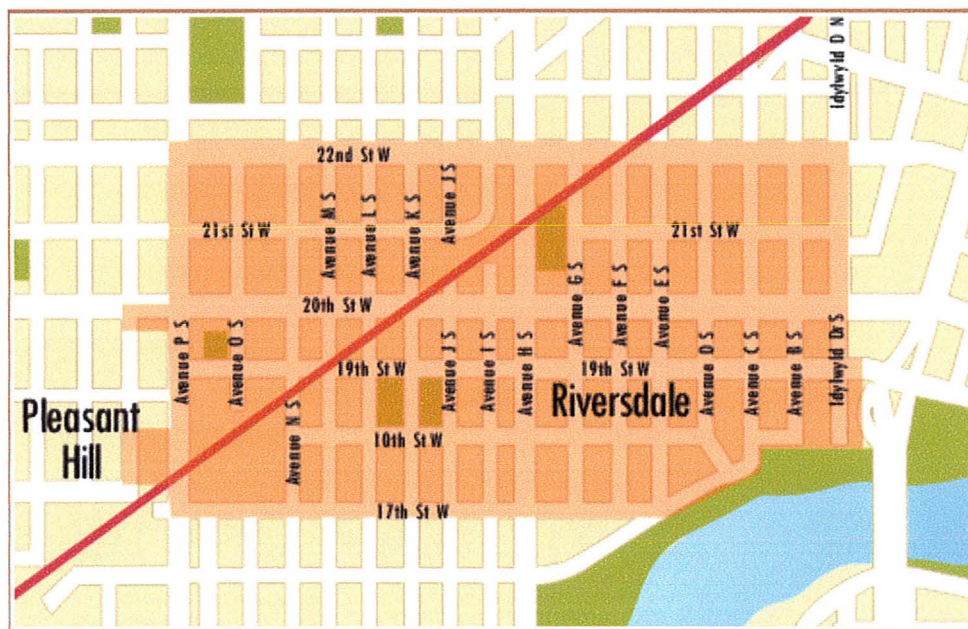
3.3 Initiatives Taking Place in Pleasant Hill

There are numerous initiatives being undertaken within Pleasant Hill. Some have occurred specifically because of the LAP as outlined in Table 2.2, others have occurred outside of the LAP process. The initiatives were informed by the LAP through the expressed needs of the neighbourhood and much of the funding for the projects/programs has been secured using the Local Area Plan to substantiate the need for increased investment (Johnson, Personal Communication, July 2006). Community organizations, as well as municipal, provincial and federal based programs, which focus on housing, poverty reduction initiatives and economic development have increased their involvement in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The collective action and planning has cumulated in a number of different approaches addressing the issues in Pleasant Hill.

3.3.1 Economic Development

The Riverdale Business Improvement District expressed the need to extend the businesses and services along 20th Street into Pleasant Hill to create a coherent flow to the area and attract residents from outside of the two neighbourhoods to the 'Riversdale Village' (See Figure 3.8). This initiative included the definition of an 'Enterprise Zone' which is an area, usually facing decline, where incentives are offered by the local or provincial government to booster economic activity (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Typically there are relaxed zoning and land use restrictions as well as economic incentives such as a reduction of taxes to allow for the establishment of businesses and services that fit into the area. The City of Saskatoon was in the process of developing this initiative at the time of the LAP (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). Since its implementation in 2002, the Enterprise Zone program has encouraged the improvement of business facades, building permit rebates and property tax abatements on residential renovations or new construction as well as other incentives to encourage improvements in Pleasant Hill housing and business stock (City of Saskatoon, 2007c).

Figure 3.8: The Village of Riversdale



(Riversdale Business Improvement District, 2007)

The development of Urban Development Agreements (UDA) in Saskatoon has had a significant influence on the redevelopment of Pleasant Hill (Western Economic Diversification Canada, 2006). These agreements are a collaboration of the federal, provincial and municipal government on issues such as inner city development. There is monetary and resource investment and information sharing across all these levels of government with the objective of strengthening the social and economic environments. They have taken place in Vancouver, Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg. In Saskatoon, the UDA was announced in May 2005 with the promise of a \$10 million investment in revitalizing Saskatoon's older neighbourhoods in sustainable and healthy ways, encouraging the growth of recreational and cultural activities and promoting a strong economic base Saskatoon (Western Economic Diversification Canada, 2006).

The UDA has helped fund Station 20 West in Pleasant Hill. This development is another example of cooperation and collaboration of organizations. The City of Saskatoon acquired the site at 1120 - 20th Street West in Pleasant Hill in December 2005. The plan for Station 20 West is a mixed-use development envisioned as a 'community enterprise centre'. It is being developed by the Station 20 West Development Corporation, a non-profit corporation

formed by Quint Development Corporation³ and CHEP Good Food Inc.⁴ The proposed Enterprise Centre will be a four story 3882 square metre building, which will include the Good Food Junction Co-op grocery store, a library, a child care centre, a cafe and affordable housing as well as public spaces such as meeting rooms, classrooms, cooking areas, and green space. Complementary institutional and office uses are also proposed with interest from the University of Saskatchewan's College of Dentistry as well as the College of Medicine. Station 20 West was not one of the specific recommendations in the Pleasant Hill LAP but it was informed by the needs of the neighbourhood and addresses many of the concerns such as the lack of affordable housing, a library and a grocery store (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). The project has been progressing with \$8,000,000 in funding put forward by the Saskatchewan Government on February 23, 2007 (Quint Development Corporation, 2007).

On February 2, 2007, another renewal project funded through the UDA was announced as a cooperative initiative between all three levels of government. This \$3,293,954 project has outlined the plan to level 29 properties between Avenue O and Avenue N on 20th Street to create low-density, medium density and high-density affordable housing as well as a new school on the land where St. Mary School is currently. This plan would also include an extension of three acres of park space in the area as well as potential retail opportunities. The concept plan for redevelopment was created with input from multiple neighbourhood stakeholders, though it has not yet been approved by City Council, it is in the review process (Coolican, 2007). This initiative is the second major project undertaken by all three levels of government in Pleasant Hill with Station 20 West being the first (Government of Canada, 2007). The development of these sites is intended to be in line with sustainable practices, providing opportunities for employment and housing for individuals already living in the area.

3.3.2 Social Services

There is a strong network of organizations working together to tackle the social issues in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. There has been wide participation of community organizations in the neighbourhood to stop issues such as poverty, homelessness and family violence. These organizations, working together, have raised support, awareness and created strategies to approach the roots of the problems in the neighbourhood.

³ Quint Development Corporation was formed in 1995 by residents in five core neighbourhoods who were concerned over the social and economic conditions of the area (Quint, 2007).

⁴ CHEP is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing sustainable, nutritional food for all. The organization provides programming, research and opportunities for education as well as access to good food sources (CHEP, 2007).

The United Way and Kiwanis Club have been very involved as well as private investors in securing funds for projects. The Rainbow Community Centre at 808 20th Street West, east of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, a “multi-cultural and multi-generational” public meeting place was created in the St. Thomas Wesley United Church building. This community centre is funded by a number of community-based organizations such as the United Way and provides activities for people of all ages in Pleasant Hill and the surroundings neighbourhoods. The services include childcare, seniors programs and a place for those in need to pick up clothing (Ledding, 2002).

3.3.3 Housing Initiatives

The City of Saskatoon and many non-profit organizations (including the Saskatoon Housing Authority, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and Affordable New Home Development Foundation) have shown a commitment to supporting a wide range of housing initiatives in Pleasant Hill, especially programs that promote home ownership opportunities (Haensel, 2005). There have been three other non-profit community organizations which stand out for their commitment to housing in Pleasant Hill: the Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. (CUMFI), Quint Development Corporation, and Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). CUMFI was founded in 1993 as a charitable, non-profit organization with a focus on providing housing supports to those at risk of homelessness. CUMFI has been involved in a number of housing opportunities for low-income residents in Pleasant Hill (CUMFI, 2006). A 2007 initiative saw an investment of \$1,755,750 for the renovation of two apartment blocks in Pleasant Hill. This was a joint venture with funding from the Government of Canada, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, and the City of Saskatoon (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007).

In 1997, Quint Development Corporation formed the Quint Housing Cooperative whereby low-income residents would have the opportunity to own their own homes. Residents would pay the affordable mortgage and bills with the opportunity to buy the house after five years of responsible tenant-ship through financial support. Quint has been responsible for the purchase and renovation of single and multiple dwelling housing in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, land which would otherwise be vacant or unsafe for occupation (Quint, 2006). The Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) was created in 2000 to “raise, direct and support long term investment in affordable housing and foster creative housing solutions” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 57). This organization works by facilitating partnerships with the public and private sector to improve the stability of families by creating opportunities for “home ownership, housing improvements, employment training, skills development and community involvement” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 58).

3.3.4 Safety

To improve safety, educate residents and understand the Pleasant Hill resident's perception of safety and risk in the neighbourhood, the City of Saskatoon implemented the concept of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). This balanced approach to crime prevention takes into account how resident's feel about their neighbourhood and helps understand the relationship between the physical and social environment, the way the neighbourhood spaces are used and ways to increase safety and reduce the perception as well as the incidence of crime. This process includes community involvement and targets the neighbourhood features at both a small and large scale. Individual spaces are evaluated as well as the use and flow of space from one area to another. This process is meant to create ownership and empowerment over shared spaces in the neighbourhood, as well as improve resident's perception of what they can do to increase safety.

CPTED uses a variety of tools to understand the perception of risk. A comprehensive safety audit was conducted in Pleasant Hill between August 28th and December 3rd 2003. The implementation of a safety audit was one of the safety recommendations in the Pleasant Hill LAP because the process offers a way for participants to identify features in the neighbourhood which "threaten their feelings of safety" (City of Saskatoon, 2005b, p. 3). It requires a group of individuals to walk around the neighbourhood with a map and catalog perceptions of specific reference points which raise concern. This process ensures that the people who use the neighbourhood are involved in finding solutions to the problems in the community. Pleasant Hill was the largest geographical area undertaken in a safety audit to identify the areas in the neighbourhood that were perceived to be unsafe (City of Saskatoon, 2005b). Over 53 city blocks were included and there were high levels of participation (City of Saskatoon, 2005b). The residents and stakeholders involved identified 18 areas of concern in the neighbourhood. The safety audit in Pleasant Hill ensured that different groups were involved at different times in the various locations in the neighbourhood. This included groups of school aged children, business and homeowners as well as seniors.

This process in Pleasant Hill uncovered a few areas of concern regarding policing. The Saskatoon Police Services have created a three level strategy focusing on "Partnering, Problem-solving and Pro-activeness" to address these concerns which involves the neighbourhood and focuses on the underlying socio-economic factors that may be leading to the higher incidence of crime (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 55). It also includes police efforts to form a better partnership with residents in Pleasant Hill via a more visible presence, police support of the reinstatement of the Safe Walk Program, and targeting areas which

are known to be the focus of crime related activities.

The Pleasant Hill Safety Audit assisted in: targeting the social and structural challenges in the neighbourhood, building trust, responsibility and safety through the modification of infrastructure and building relationships within the neighbourhood through formal and informal means. The importance of neighbourhood cohesion, positive communication and education were also defined as priorities.

The City of Saskatoon has established a “Safe Housing Initiative” to address concerns over the safety and quality of housing in Saskatoon. This was an expressed as an issue in Pleasant Hill and with the release of the 2006 Report on the State of Housing in Saskatoon, it was apparent that Pleasant Hill was in need of intervention. The report found that Pleasant Hill accounted for 12% of failed house inspections in 67 of Saskatoon’s neighbourhoods, with 75% of inspections failing. Riversdale, the next neighbourhood identified as having high numbers of failures, accounted for only 5% of failures (City of Saskatoon, 2006e). “The Safe Housing Initiative is represented by the Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services (SFPS), Community Services (City of Saskatoon), Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatoon Police Services, Department of Justice (SCAN—Safe Communities and Neighbourhoods), Department of Community Resources and Employment (DCRE), and the Saskatoon Housing Authority” (City of Saskatoon, 2006c, p. 8). The program was officially launched with a press conference on January 12, 2006. The Safe Housing Initiative enforces building standards, fire safety, and health bylaws for rental housing. Inadequate and unsafe residences must be brought up to acceptable standards or they will be closed. Properties that are suspected and/or reported to an agency as possibly being involved in or supporting criminal activity will be referred to the police (City of Saskatoon, 2006c).

The Pleasant Hill and Riversdale neighbourhoods also now have a community-based police station because of safety concerns and a need for a police presence. Located on the northeast corner of 20th St. West and Avenue D, this local community liaison and reporting office began to serve these neighbourhoods in 2002 (Saskatoon Police Service, 2005). This was an important recommendation in the Pleasant Hill Safety Audit.

3.3.5 Structural Changes

There have been numerous structural changes which have been informed by the LAP. These include a pedestrian activated light standard on Avenue P south, the paving of streets and the improvement of sidewalks in the neighbourhood as well as improvements to parks, boulevards and green spaces. Bus shelters have

also received attention through the Adopt-a Bus Shelter Program which encourages neighbourhood organizations to invest in a small part of the neighbourhood.

Zoning and by-law changes which are underway will also have an affect on the land uses in Pleasant Hill, determining what can be built and where. There are also a number of large-scale redevelopments (including Riversdale Village, Station 20 West and the redevelopment of the properties between Avenue O and Avenue N on 20th Street) which will implement structural changes in Pleasant Hill.

3.3.6 Heritage and Cultural Initiatives

The LAP has made a number of suggestions regarding the conservation of the Nurse's Residence, St. Mary's School, Pleasant Hill School and the Bosnia Club. These neighbourhood facilities are to be recommended for Municipal Heritage Designation, preserving them for posterity. A "Cultural Crescent" has also been created. This is joint initiative with the Saskatoon Business Improvement Districts of Saskatoon's three historic commercial districts: the downtown core, the Broadway neighbourhood and the Village of Riversdale. This initiative encourages an "enhanced development strategy for cultural heritage tourism" by creating a visual identity in the area which focuses on the heritage and cultural assets (City of Saskatoon, 2006f).

3.3.7 A Summary of the LAP Planning Process in Pleasant Hill

The Local Area Plan in Pleasant Hill has introduced a comprehensive participatory planning process as a strategy for the mediation of the structural and social issues in the neighbourhood. This process has been modeled by other Canadian municipal examples as well as developed experientially in Saskatoon as the LAP gained support and momentum. The LAP put in place strategies to encourage meaningful involvement, accountable and sensitive planning processes as well as the creation of innovative solutions to mediate the challenges in the neighbourhood. It has created numerous recommendations which have emphasized new areas of research, created an emphasis on collaboration and networking as well as implemented structural changes and set investment strategies into motion.

The following chapter explores the concept of quality of life and the growing need to account for and measure the variables that contribute to a healthy, safe and sustainable community.

4.0 Measuring Success

Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the tools, partnerships and approaches used for measuring quality of life (QoL). The first section provides a workable definition of QoL. The second section examines the history, development and application of QoL research. The third section explores the application of QoL research in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and the final section identifies participatory action research as a tool and a vehicle for quality of life work. This contextual information is important as it lays the foundation for the measurement of the Pleasant Hill LAP QoL outcomes.

4.1 Quality of Life: Definition

There has been a growing exploration of Quality of Life (QoL) as a field of research and an area of interest for academics as well as politicians with studies occurring in the social sciences including economics, geography, sociology, philosophy, as well as in health care research, social services, planning and education (Bowling & Brazier, 1995; Lane, 1994; Rogerson, 1995). Lane (1994, p. 220) defines it as “subjective well-being and personal growth in a healthy prosperous environment.” Quality of life is more than “adequate material well-being and the physical environment” (Lloyd and Auld, 2003, p. 341). It is an exploration of “mental, physical, role and social functioning, well-being, and perceptions of, and satisfaction with, the levels of these which have been achieved” (Bowling & Brazier, 1995, p. 1337). According to Lloyd and Auld (2003, p. 341), “any definition of QoL should reflect the dynamic relationship between contextual influences, individual perceptions and actions and actual accomplishments if it is to form the basis for operationalising any plan for the advancement of QoL.” It is a feedback system with the main goal of balancing out deficiencies and understanding the relationships between individuals and their social and physical environments. It was defined by the World Health Organization as “individual’s perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns” and “includes both positive and negative facets of life” (WHOQOL Group, 1995, p. 1405).

4.2 Quality of Life: The History, Development and Application

Prior to World War II, it was believed that a strong democratic government would provide for all citizens, it was also assumed that economic prosperity and strong individual and social morals would produce a sense of positive well being (Lane, 1994). These utilitarian ideals provided models for

both political as well as economic planning but there were huge social implications for this school of thought, including the stigmatization of the poor and a confined scope through which to view urban problems.

New understandings have emerged with the adoption of social and subjective measurements of well-being which came into view in the 1960's and 1970's as postmodern research came into practice as well as a new nationwide emphasis on social welfare programs (Rogerson, 1995). The addition of social indicators that went above and beyond the economic indicators such as GNP per capita was "thought by its advocates to capture the most important meaning of the term [well-being]." (Lane, 1994, p. 221). As the focus of QoL work has shifted away from purely economic and objective based indicators, it became apparent that these domains only uncovered part of the picture for interpretation (Lloyd and Auld, 2003).

These factors became relevant in the 1970's with the more widely accepted understanding that socio-economic inequality was not going to disappear, even with economic stability (Rogerson, 1995). The responsibility of the government and social welfare programs to provide for populations was growing but with changing economic and political trends, the resources available were shrinking, this led to the emphasis on research which acknowledged and accounted for individual differences while providing relevant information for policy reform (Rogerson, 1995). The importance of subjective measures of the interpretation of the environment, health and social wellbeing of individuals (rather than the collective) gained prominence (Rogerson, 1995). These interpretations can also include measures that incorporated subjective perspectives of factors such as safety and the use of space by individuals which captured 'perceptual and cultural indicators', which according to Lloyd & Auld (2003, p. 340) have "real implications for access, equity, and citizenship."

There has been an expansion of interest and involvement in quality of life research from the fields of social science and medicine to the development of large-scale government studies, as well as those conducted by public and private sector policy makers and planners as well as community and grass roots organizations (WHOQOL Group, 1995; Legowski, 2000; Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN), 2003; Esnard, 2003). This has been spurred by the desire to create and understand social, economic and structural benchmarks in the urban environment in order to monitor change and forecast trends, to raise awareness and educate the general public as well as inform service providers and governments concerning specific issues affecting quality of life for purposes of resource allocation and policy implementation (Legowski, 2000). By creating more 'systematic' measures of individual and community quality of life, the information can provide comparisons over space and time as well as provide a

comprehensive base line for change and evaluation (CPRN, 2003). Holden (2001) argues that the greatest asset of quality of life work is its ability to raise public awareness of the connections and relationships between urban issues and enhance participation through collaborative planning. This education builds a dialogue as well as an opportunity for community action.

According to the December 2003 edition of the Urban Nexus, a publication developed by the Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN), quality of life research has been evolving due to the need for more 'holistic policy making' linking the social, economic and structural characteristics of specific places in time. The ultimate goal of comprehensive quality of life research would be an information system which is accessible, available at different scales, which may be social (such as demographic groups) or spatial in nature from the local neighbourhood level to larger scale city and national studies (Sawicki, 2002; Esnard, 2003). There must be a balance of objective and subjective information captured quantitatively and qualitatively and contributed by both citizens and experts (CPRN, 2003; Esnard, 2003) This would lead to better governmental and organizational accountability because of the constant feedback the system helps create regarding input and output of resources and ideally would build capacity among community members and create a dialogue within the urban *mélange*. This is increasingly important, as decision-making is becoming more evidence based. The public and private sectors alike are required to provide measurable proof that programs and services are fulfilling their goals effectively and meeting the needs of those they are serving. This accountability comes at a time when there is growing distrust of the general public regarding service provision as well as growing awareness of social and environmental issues (Legowski, 2000).

Quality of life research has the potential to have strong implications for policy and project implementation; especially in planning because it offers a forward moving, problem solving approach to negotiating consensus in planning goals (Myers, 1988). According to Meyers (1988, p. 347), "the popular appeal of the quality of life concept presents an important opportunity for planners to hold the attention of broader audiences. More importantlt, protecting quality of life is a goal that citizen groups and business leaders share, and hence it affords a potential basis for negotiating consensus over specific planning goals."

There is a growing dialogue between researchers and the public and private spheres involving urban planning, social services implementation and programming and intervention into economic initiatives as well as education and awareness campaigns. There is now closer attention paid to individuals rather than the general public in addressing areas of intervention and measuring the effectiveness of these programs (Rogerson, 1995). Quality of life research has become "more than an input into policy making. Instead, it has been argued that

quality of life could be used to evaluate and predict outcomes from interventions, thus providing a measure against which resource allocation can be assessed” (Rogerson, 1995, p. 1374). This is a contested issue in some circles as the definition and measurement of quality of life is not standardized, rather it is changing and dynamic.

Quality of life research has also entered into the sphere of market competitiveness as urban areas contend for valuable investment dollars and recognition in an ever more competitive environment (Donald, 2001; Turksever & Atalik, 2006). Cities are now responsible for ‘selling’ their attributes on a global level and buyers and investors are using QoL information in their “spatial decision-making” (Turksever & Atalik, 2006, p. 165). There is now an intense and “direct inter-urban competition” and businesses as well as prospective real estate buyers hold out for the most desirable social, environmental and political climate (Myers, 1987). Being responsive to the changing local and global markets is now more important than ever as cities highlight their “location specific amenities” through interregional and inter-urban quality of life comparisons (Turksever & Atalik, 2006). These amenities include the local climate, public goods and services as well as the local governmental policies including taxation and possible fiscal incentives (Lambiri et al., 2006). Whether it is to attract new citizens and businesses through comparing one urban area’s merits to another’s challenges or to develop programs, raise public awareness and involvement to initiate change or provide longitudinal data showing changes over time, quality of life studies have implications for both

The utility and scope of Quality of Life research has grown with many on-going projects at different scales from the neighbourhood to national reporting systems (NRCAN, 2004), including the work done by the World Health Organization Quality of Life Group which has developed QoL tools which are culturally sensitive and can be applied to different setting and then compared (WHOQOL Group, 1995). On a smaller scale, the "Quality of Life Reporting System" (QOLRS) developed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities offers a way to measure and compare Canadian urban municipalities quality of life. This project began in 1999 and has grown to include 20 municipalities. It began by looking at the influence of the negative economic shifts of the 1990’s on social factors and has completed a number of reports using municipal and national data sources to explore economic and demographic shifts (FCM, 2006). The information is used to inform policy making and planning across many scales and has proved to be an important resource for community groups, municipal planning boards as well as service providers and research institutes. The City of Saskatoon is one of the municipalities studied.

Other initiatives such as the National Neighbourhood Indicators Partnership

(NNIP) in the United States focus on collaborating neighbourhood level information to inform policy making and community building with a strong emphasis on the democratization of information (NNIP, 2007). A review and analysis of twenty-one quality of life studies was conducted by the Canadian Policy Research Networks (See Table 4.1) to explore the work that was being conducted with the objective of eventually developing a set of indicators to monitor Canada's progress on quality of life issues (Legowski, 2000). The majority of these projects were lead by municipalities who developed the QoL project as a community planning dialogue with citizens, engaged in the process to develop a vision and a set of goals to move forward to improve the urban quality of life (Legowski, 2000).

4.3 Quality of Life Application: QoL Module Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

In Saskatoon, a large, long term Quality of Life project was implemented in 1999. This project, created by the Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) and the University of Saskatchewan, has a variety of major stakeholders (such as the City of Saskatoon, the Regional Intersectoral Committee on Human Services (RIC), the United Way of Saskatoon and the Saskatoon Health Region). CUISR is dedicated to researching quality of life in Saskatoon with the goal of understanding individual's perspectives of their neighbourhood and the City of Saskatoon with the aim to "advance an understanding of what helps build better, stronger, and safer communities, where all citizens have equal access to community quality of life" (CUISR, 2004, p. 1). "The envisioned outcome of this larger project is the ongoing sustainability of Saskatoon as a healthy city with an improving and a more equitably distributed quality of life" (Williams, 2001, p. 3). CUISR has a strong commitment to acting on the results from the research initiatives that have been implemented and has worked hard to engage the public through community forums and opportunities for involvement. CUISR has been committed to innovative information dissemination in the community to help develop awareness of issues regarding quality of life as well as to build relationships and collaborate with community stakeholders to bring about positive change. There is a deep commitment to understanding and strengthening neighbourhood stability and quality of life.

The Quality of Life Module "examines the processes and results of a multi-stakeholder approach to the development and use of quality of life indicators in achieving a healthy, and sustainable Saskatoon community" (Williams, 2001, p. 3). This project uses a participatory action research approach to ensure that the information collected is useable by the community stakeholders and the results are applicable, culturally sensitive, widely disseminated and useful for policy changes. The usefulness of this kind of study is apparent as the results can be evaluated over time and at different scales. It brings together a multitude of

can be evaluated over time and at different scales. It brings together a multitude of indicators and benchmarks which can be used by a variety of stakeholders to inform policy changes, including resource allocation. QoL research encompasses a wider range of variables to reduce the likelihood that policy decisions are based on misinformation or misrepresentation of specific populations. There are a variety of frameworks available for evaluation, which has been explored by the QoL Module, including the Population Health Framework (Williams, 2001). The explicit methodology of this study will be examined further in Chapter 5.0.

Table 4.1: A Categorization of Purposes and Contexts for the Sampled Projects

Surveyed projects	Purposes and contexts
Federation of Canadian Municipalities QOL Reporting System Quality of Life in Ontario Canadian Council on Social Development Personal Security Index Taking Toronto's Vital Signs Quality of Life in Jacksonville (Florida) Plan Winnipeg 2020 Vision	These are self-identified <i>quality of life/societal indicator</i> projects.
Hamilton-Wentworth Vision 2020 Sustainable Calgary Sustainable Seattle A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the United Kingdom	Adopting a <i>sustainable development approach</i> by addressing social, economic and environmental aspects, these are (community) indicator projects with indicators taken to represent quality of life.
Edmonton 2005 Alberta's Measuring Up Minnesota Milestones Oregon Shines and Oregon Benchmarks Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People Genuine Progress Index (GPI) Atlantic (Nova Scotia) Conference Board of Canada: Performance and Potential Newfoundland and Labrador Strategic Social Plan and the Community Accounts Project BC Regional Socio-economic Statistical Profiles	The projects <i>broaden accountability and information frameworks</i> by including quality of life/social indicators. Some have been designed as alternatives to the conventional measures of progress dominated by economic performance information.
Two Community Quality of Life Projects South Riverdale and Lawrence Heights of Toronto Canadian Institute for Health Information National Population Health Indicators Project	The projects identified community and regional <i>determinants of health</i> .

(Table reproduced from Legowski, 2000, p. 6)

4.4 Participatory Action Research

“Action research methodology bridges the divide between research and practice. It directly addresses the knotty problem of the persistent failure of research in the social sciences to make a difference in terms of bringing about actual improvements in practice” (Somekh, 1995, p. 340).

The exploration and evaluation of participatory planning programs such as the LAPs requires a reflexive and active methodological paradigm, which acknowledges the subjective perceptions as well as the many different roles and variables that make up both participatory processes as well as the urban environments they are shaping (Berry et. al, 1993). The evaluation must be able to account for scale and it must also acknowledge the dynamic environmental, social, economic relationships without prioritizing purely economic outcomes. Participatory action research (PAR) provides an excellent and sensitive model for exploration as it encompasses many of the theoretical positions of participatory planning. The guiding principles for this research paradigm build on the themes encountered in development studies as well as sociology, geography and health research (Nelson & Wright, 1995) which acknowledge the importance of knowledge sharing, and the practical application of the information that is discovered through this research process (O’Fallon & Deary, 2002).

According to Dickenson & Green (2001, p. 244), “the explicit aim of PAR is to foster empowerment” and build local capacity for change. Knowledge should be embedded, embodied and shared (Nelson & Wright, 1995). The aim is that “people become agents, rather than objects of research” with those involved gaining a better understanding of the issues while the process utilizes local knowledge and develops feasible change (Nelson & Wright, 1995, p. 51).

Participatory action research has been gaining prominence for its ability to encourage active, equal and meaningful partnerships with multiple stakeholders (O’Fallon & Deary, 2002). “PAR is a type of applied social research” which does not rely solely on the expert knowledge of a researcher (Whyte, 1989, p. 368). This shared involvement is encouraged at all stages in the research process, which fosters co-learning as the stakeholders are considered local experts and their contributions to the research are prioritized (O’Fallon & Deary, 2002). This partnership builds a sense of ownership and accountability for the outcomes, which is positive for both the researchers as well as community stakeholders as boundaries are broken down and the research project is driven by the community’s values and goals (O’Fallon & Dreary, 1989). The information that is gained is sensitive to the specific problems and the information is disseminated in ways that are useful to the community, rather than just the researchers. This

process builds trust between the researchers and the community as there is greater communication at all stages and the priority of PAR is to find feasible and sustainable solutions to the issues at hand. PAR is a more sustainable and sensitive approach to research when it is possible to have stakeholder involvement because it prioritizes the views and needs of the people with the issues and context being researched. It also provides connections within the community as well as the tools and skills necessary for stakeholders to take ownership over the results when the research process is over.

4.5 A Summary of Quality of Life Research

As identified in a growing body of literature, the need and utility for quality of life research is substantiated by the shifting responsibility of governments for providing an equitable and sustainable quality of life for all citizens. Ensuring there are ongoing and sensitive systems of measurement in place is an important step to building stronger, safer, healthier communities.

The following chapter provides the methodological approach to measuring changes in the quality of life of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood community members.

5.0 Research Design: Case Study

Introduction

This chapter provides the explicit methodology used in this study. A case study research approach was utilized for this study because it is an appropriate approach for studying public policy and human experiences (Stake, 1994). This approach provided the researcher with the tools and scope necessary to study social actions and social structures in context. It allowed a holistic examination of social meanings through a multitude of sources over a period of time (Kennedy & Luzar, 1999).

5.1 Study Area Selection

The unit of analysis in a case study is the case (Creswell, 1998), which in this study is the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. Context is extremely important in case study research (Creswell, 1998). According to Stake (1994, p. 440), the case should be an integrated system, “a complex entity operating within a number of contexts – physical, economic, ethical, aesthetic... and so on.” The Pleasant Hill neighbourhood offers this complexity. It is a bounded system (Stake, 1995), delineated by political as well as physical boundaries and has unique social, environmental and economic characteristics, making it an ideal setting for case study research (Creswell, 1998). This study is also bound by time, as it examines the neighbourhood between 2001 and 2006.

Pleasant Hill is an important site for social research as it exemplifies the challenges of Saskatoon’s inner city neighborhoods, as well as those seen in other North American cities (City of Saskatoon, 2002a; Power, 2001). The neighborhood has experienced negative economic, social and structural changes, affecting the perception of the neighbourhood. This raises issues of health and safety, accessibility and sustainability, thereby compromising the quality of life of people living and working in Pleasant Hill. There has been a committed effort from the City of Saskatoon and neighbourhood stakeholders to initiate positive and sustainable changes in Pleasant Hill. The support from the City of Saskatoon in encouraging a positive participation model is outlined in the core strategy of the City of Saskatoon’s Strategic Plan: “to enable active, community-based participation in issue and problem identification and resolution” (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 14).

The timing of this study is appropriate, as four years have elapsed since the Pleasant Hill LAP Final Report was released in June 2002. The implementation of the recommendations is well underway and the Planning

Group members are still connected to the process through annual LAP community meetings. It is also important to note that there is current contact information available for the Planning Group members and they are still able to recall their experiences in the process. There is also current documentation from the City of Saskatoon and Pleasant Hill Community Association, supporting the decision-making process and contributions made to the neighbourhood over time through the LAP.

Pleasant Hill is an appropriate study site because of the need to evaluate the impact of participatory community development strategies on low socio-economic neighbourhoods. It also provides an opportunity to explore the connections between place related variables and quality of life. This study provides the opportunity to connect the Quality of Life Module data to another on-going initiative. This allows a careful examination of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood through a variety of research techniques over time. The QoL data specific to Pleasant Hill has not formally been used at the neighbourhood level.

5.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to evaluate and explore the impact that the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan has had on the neighbourhood and on the perceptions of resident's quality of life. This study incorporates data from two quantitative and qualitative cross-sectional data sets (2001, 2004), collected in conjunction with the ongoing Quality of Life (QoL) study being conducted by the University of Saskatchewan's Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR). It also brings together current perceptions from key informant interviews conducted with City of Saskatoon planners and members of the Pleasant Hill Planning Group to examine the diverse social, economic, health and environmental factors affecting quality of life over time. This study connects longitudinal perceptions of quality of life data with an on-going community development process intended to improve the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood.

This study's purpose is not a theoretical evaluation of the LAP process, although the theoretical underpinnings of participatory planning do offer insight into the successes and challenges of the process and will be used herein to provide a foundation. This study seeks to evaluate and explore the practical application of the LAP process, guided by the perceptions of the process and outcomes by people who were involved. This kind of evaluation was necessary and useful because it was coming directly from the people who were involved and who have a stake in the neighbourhood. The quality of life data helps provide a comparative foundation, providing insight into the characteristics and process in the neighbourhood that hold the most significant meaning, have the greatest impact and provide the most sustainable building blocks for a positive quality of life. The

quality of life data also provides insight as to whether the LAP outcomes are making a difference to residents' opinion of the neighbourhood, overall qol, health, as well as the perception of the social and structural variables in Pleasant Hill.

This study makes a contribution to the current body of literature on urban quality of life and participatory planning. It provides an opportunity to explore a local example of participatory planning in practice, examining the factors which initiate change in urban quality of life. Recognizing that participatory planning is a time and resource intensive process, it is possible that exploring and evaluating possible strengths, barriers and challenges of the LAP may help strengthen future plans, while mediating setbacks. This study also offers an opportunity for stakeholders in the Pleasant Hill LAP process to have a voice through sharing their feedback and their personal experience and knowledge of both the LAP process and the place they are committed to.

5.3 Research Question

To what extent has the perception of quality of life for residents in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood changed since defining the Local Area Plan?

5.4 Data Collection Procedures

This research was based on the constructivist tradition, where the research is produced through an inductive process that assumes the existence and importance of multiple social realities and the creation of knowledge through interpretation by both the researcher and the reader (Charmez, 2000). This tradition depends on the researcher providing rich, thick contextual description (Charmez, 2000; Stake 1994). To achieve this and maximize trustworthiness, three principles of data collection for case study research were implemented (Kennedy & Luzar, 1999). The first principle articulates the need for multiple data sources to confirm interpretations through triangulation, which is "a process of using multiple perspectives to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation" (Stake, 1994, p. 443). A mixed method approach was utilized whereby quantitative and qualitative methods were undertaken. This approach has the benefit of compensating for the weakness of any one approach (Dixon-Woods, Agarwal, Jones & Sutton, 2004). It helps identify commonalities in different sources and may help to explain congruent or contradictory trends (Dixon-Woods et al., 2004).

Using mixed methods adds strength to a study by creating scope and depth (Dixon-Woods et al., 2004). In this case, the quantitative data sets explore a wider scope than is possible with qualitative interviews, as they are more time and

resource intensive. The qualitative interviews, though fewer, are able to go into greater depth and detail about individual's experiences and the interviewer has the opportunity to gain more insight in the perceptions which are shared. The use of mixed methods in this study may help reduce the issue of "holistic fallacy", which is when the results of a study appear to be congruent, but in fact, it is only the people interviewed who held that particular view. By widening the scope of this study, the likelihood of this is reduced (Dixon-Woods, 2004). In this study, the qualitative components may help explain why the perception of certain quality of life variables have or have not changed in the quantitative data sets, by providing conceptual confirmation in the form of similar or diverging outcomes and more in-depth information.

The second principle outlines the need for a case study database. This is a collection of all notes and documents that the researcher used for interpretation (Kennedy & Luzar, 1999). The third principle of case study research is the creation of a chain of evidence (Kennedy & Luzar, 1999). This is a record of all the decisions and notes made through the data collection and analysis. Also called an 'audit trail', this conscious recording of the research process allows a "continual evaluation of subjective responses" (Finlay, 2002, p. 532). This was carried out in a research journal during all stages of data collection and data analysis.

5.5 Study Process

The research for this study was carried out in five stages: (1) review of the available practical and theoretical literature; (2) the development of the research design; (3) analysis of the 2001/2004 quantitative data; (4) fieldwork, and; (5) qualitative data analysis of the 2001/2004 interviews from the larger CUISR Quality of Life study and 2006 key-informant data. The first stage was carried out at McMaster University from January to May 2006. The development and exploration of the research topic was done through a literature review, conducted partially before data collection to identify gaps in the academic field, to help define key terms for the purpose of this research and to identify theoretical propositions from the community development and planning literature (Kennedy & Luzar, 1999). A further exploration of the literature was conducted after the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data to follow up on themes that emerged from the data.

The second stage was the development of the case study research design. This was an ongoing process which was informed by the available research literature. It developed as the process evolved, taking into account the dynamics of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood as well as the complexity of the LAP process, ensuring that all angles were represented in this study. The third stage - the

analysis of the 2001/2004 quantitative data, was conducted before time was spent in the field, to determine if any of the findings should inform further questions or exploration. The fourth stage of the research process was conducted in the City of Saskatoon between July 17 and 28, 2006. This two-week period was spent conducting interviews, collecting formal and informal data and visiting the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood for on-site observation. The final stage was carried out at McMaster University with the analysis of the qualitative data sets and other qualitative documents (i.e. field notebook, photographs, QoL research summaries, newspaper articles, LAP Planning Group meeting notes, Pleasant Hill Community Association planning notes and City of Saskatoon documentation outlining the LAP process including brochures, Recommendation Status Reports and the Pleasant Hill LAP Final Report), and to write the thesis.

5.6 Study Assumptions

As a researcher, especially as a novice, it was important to understand guiding propositions and assumptions that may have influenced the study before data collection and analysis began (Creswell, 1998; Kennedy & Luzar, 1999). These arise from personal experience, theory, and the literature and may guide who and what will and will not be studied (Kennedy & Luzar, 1999). Being aware of my subjective role in this work through journaling and reflection on the research process helped me to define the choices I made and perhaps uncovered assumptions that would have prevented an in-depth exploration of the research (See Appendix C). I did this to increase the trustworthiness of the study (Finlay, 2002).

5.7 Quality of Life Module Methodology

The Quality of Life Research Module, which provided the data used to explore the quality of life of residents in Pleasant Hill, is a cumulative, longitudinal and citywide project. The survey and face-to-face interview data from 2001 and 2004 utilized for this research was collected in two separate iterations of the Quality of Life Module conducted by CUISR. A participatory action research approach was used to ensure the validity and applicability of the output and the use of the data in informing policy changes and programming. The final iteration of data was collected in the winter and spring of 2007, though this iteration was not used for the purposes of this study because of time constraints.

The data was available for the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood because the QoL research was conducted in 2001 across three neighbourhood types according to available 1996 census information on socio-economic indicators known to have significance for quality of life (these included: median household income, percentage of the neighbourhood population which is Aboriginal, percentage of

the labour force that is employed, percentage of households that are single-parent families, and percentage of housing that is owned) (Williams, 2002). These variables were used in a k-means cluster analysis to rank the 56 neighbourhoods in Saskatoon to determine if they were in one of three neighbourhood types: high, medium or low socio-economic status (Williams, 2002).

There were 27 neighbourhoods classified as high socio-economic status, characterized by high median income, high employment and home ownership. There were 20 classified as medium socio-economic status, showing a balance of income and homeownership, and 9 low socio-economic status with the lowest income, highest representation of Aboriginal peoples and low homeownership. Three of each neighbourhood type were targeted for data collection, based on representativeness of socio-economic status and contiguity. Pleasant Hill was one of the three low socio-economic neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods represented in the 2001 QoL study are shown in Figure 5.1. The 2004 iteration used the same sampling strategy but information from the 2001 census was used to determine the neighbourhoods and the variables chosen for the k-means cluster analysis were different. Median household income and percentage of the labour force that is employed were the variables used to identify the neighbourhoods to be sampled. In this iteration different high socio-economic neighbourhoods were chosen but the same low and middle socio-economic status neighbourhoods were measured (Williams & Kitchen, 2006). The neighbourhoods represented in the 2004 QoL study are shown in Figure 5.2.

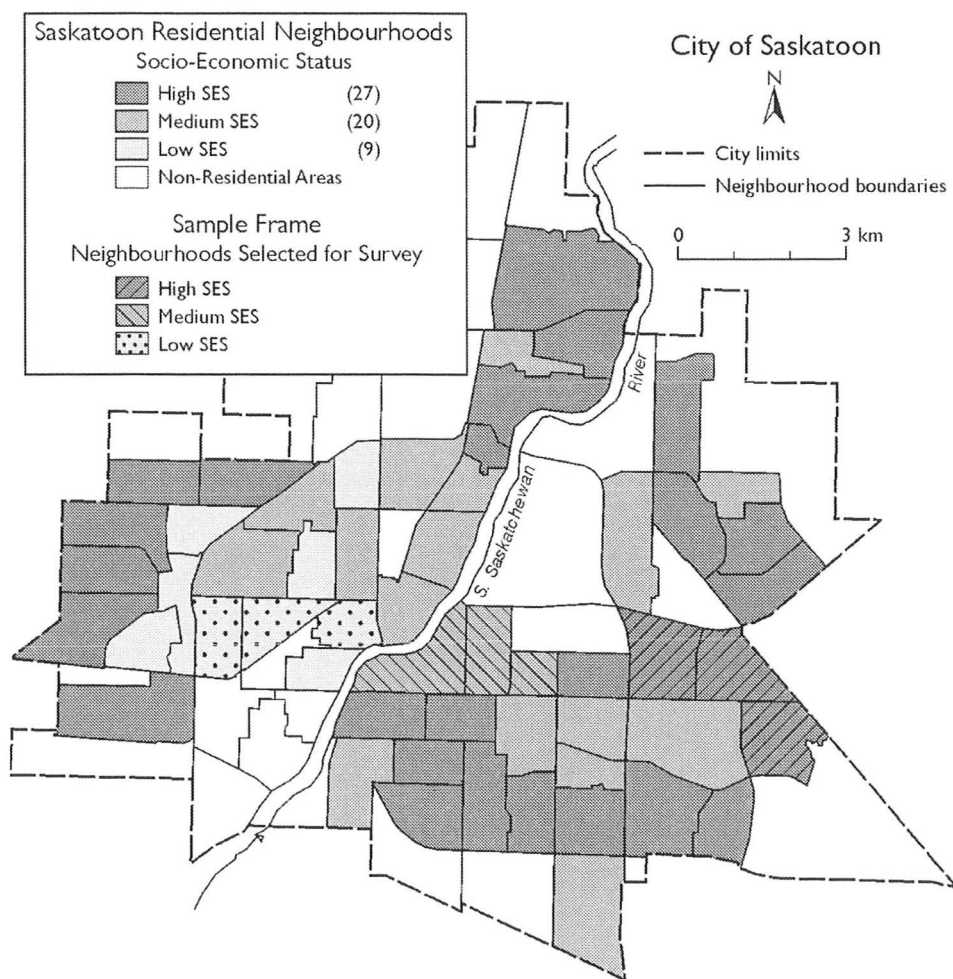
The nine neighbourhoods that were chosen to represent Saskatoon were then sampled for three phases of data collection. The first phase was a random telephone survey (See Appendix D). The second phase was nine focus groups with “community members representing specific groups whose voices or opinions have rarely, if ever, been heard on quality of life issues (including Senior Citizens, Disabled People, Children, Youth, Immigrants and Refugees, Aboriginal Peoples, Un- and Under-employed People, Single Parents, and Lower-income Earners)” (Williams, 2002, p. 5). The final stage of data collection was 90 in-depth face-to-face interviews with a sub-sample of the respondents from the individuals who participated in the telephone survey. Approximately 30 individuals in each of the three neighbourhood types were interviewed. This was done for both the 2001 and 2004 iterations and has recently been completed for the final iteration in 2007 (Williams, 2002).

5.8 Quantitative Methodology

The telephone survey asked a series of questions which respondents answered by ranking their response on a likert scale. The corresponding data was quantitative and available in an SPSS file for both 2001 and 2004. The

respondent's neighbourhoods were distinguishable by postal code. The first step in the analysis process was to identify the Pleasant Hill respondents. A comparative quantitative analysis was carried out to determine whether or not resident's perceptions had changed between 2001 and 2004. Pearson's Chi-Square (n=235) was used to test the relationship between the quality of life variables and place related variables.

Figure 5.1: Saskatoon Residential Neighbourhoods Grouped by Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics (2001)

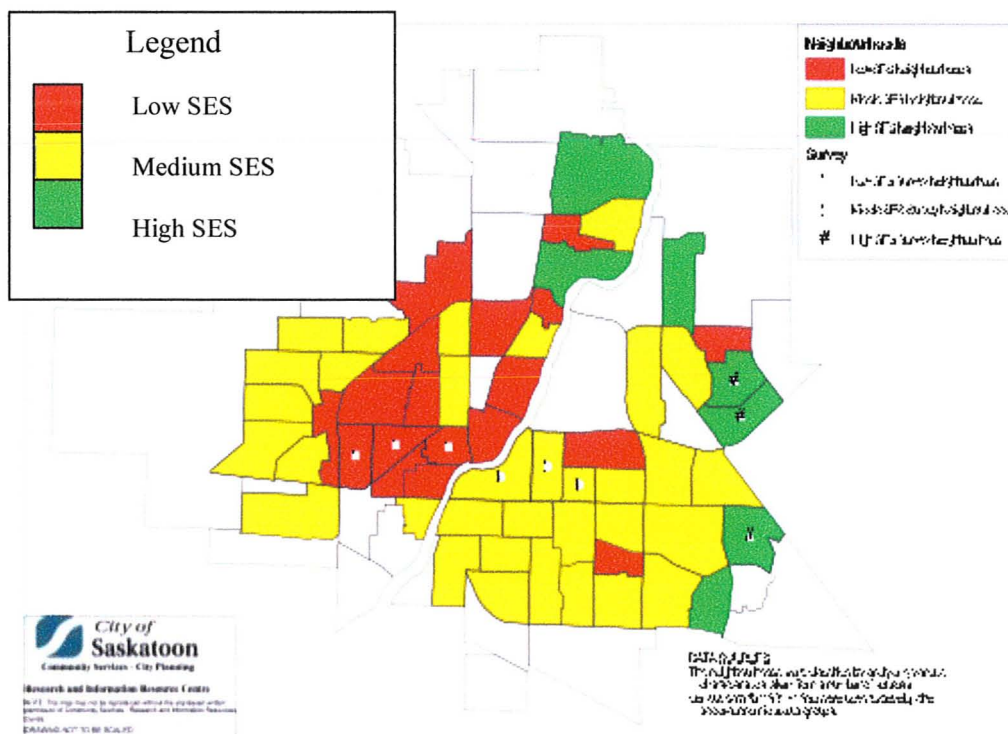


(Williams, 2001, p. 55)

5.9 Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation

Qualitative research adds an important dimension to the case study research design because of “its ability to illuminate the particulars of human experience in the context of a common phenomenon” (Ayres et al., 2003, p. 871). It allows the researcher to see beyond the initial context, to make connections to specific human experiences, identifying challenges, barriers, and personal perceptions. It is a challenging approach but the case study becomes richer because individuals’ experiences are substantiated in a larger context. It is then possible to determine the applicability of the findings beyond the research sample through generalizability, finding common and unique threads of meaning within and between individual accounts of the experience (Ayres et al., 2003).

Figure 5.2: Saskatoon Residential Neighbourhoods Grouped By Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics (2004)



(Williams & Kitchen, 2006, p. 49).

Content analysis is an appropriate qualitative research method in this study because of its growing application in the field of health and quality of life research (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The goal of content analysis is “to provide

knowledge and understanding of the phenomena under study” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). It is a flexible and subjective method of exploring and interpreting qualitative text in many forms, including open-ended survey questions, interviews, observations and print media (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). There are a growing number of studies utilizing this approach for focusing and identifying the “content or contextual meaning of the text” through careful attention to the use of language (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). It is a methodology that goes “beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely for the purpose of clarifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). This approach accommodates the goals of this study as it seeks to find the meanings and connections within the qualitative text.

There are three distinct approaches to content analysis: conventional, directed and summative (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The most appropriate approach is dependent on the research question as well as the theoretical and substantive interests leading the study (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). For the purposes of this study, a conventional content analysis approach was utilized (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researcher chose this approach because it is generally used to describe a phenomenon; preconceived themes and categories are avoided. This approach encourages an immersion in the analysis, allowing the themes to ‘flow’ from the data, rather than being informed by existing theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Hsieh & Shannon (2005, p. 1280) state that an important advantage of this approach “is gaining direct information from study participants without imposing preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives,” allowing the participant’s experiences and perceptions to guide the research. This is an important characteristic in the context of this study because the Quality of Life Module and the LAP were developed with different mandates and, though similar themes are present regarding urban quality of life issues, the researcher did not want to introduce bias or overemphasize of one theme over another.

Conventional content analysis explores the text through the careful and systematic identification of themes and patterns through: coding; highlighting key ideas/meanings/thoughts found in the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The researcher applies labels to these key ideas (called codes) which are then organized under broader categories (called themes) which can be defined as an “idea [which] occurs repeatedly in multiple contexts” (Ayres et al., 2003, p. 872). These “meaningful clusters” of ideas reduce the data as the number of emergent themes, usually 10 to 15, captures the main messages in the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1279). This organization helps to define relationships between ideas, allowing the researcher to build explanations around patterns, and develop generalizations (Stake, 1994).

The researcher is responsible for defining the themes, categories, subcategories, and codes for the purpose and context of the study (Stake, 1994). It is imperative that in reporting these findings, there are exemplars in the form of quotes from the text, highlighting the themes and ideas (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). With this approach, the relevant theories are addressed in the discussion section of the study (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

5.10 QoL Face-to Face Interviews 2001-2004

In the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, there were eight face-to-face interviews from 2001 and eight face-to-face interviews from 2004. These interview schedules are very similar (See Appendix E and F respectively). The 2001 interview schedule has one extra question pertaining to the balance between work and family matters as well as job satisfaction. This question is number four in the interview schedule. The final questions in the interview schedules are also different. The 2001 schedule asks about the decrease in quality of life for women compared to men, while the 2004 schedule asks about the decrease in quality of life for residents in poorer neighbourhoods. The similarities of these interview schedules made the comparison of themes very straightforward.

The qualitative analysis process of this data began by assigning a number to each interview, to retain confidentiality. The researcher read through all the Pleasant Hill interviews, highlighting key ideas that emerged from the data, while taking brief notes of first impressions and common perceptions described by the respondents in the margins. After reading three or four transcripts, similar words and patterns of meaning became apparent and a coding scheme was developed, with specific codes organized under broader themes. The rest of the interviews were then read and coded by hand line by line.

A database was then developed in EXCEL for the 2001 and 2004 responses. The significant ideas that were highlighted by hand during the preliminary read through of the interviews were entered into a spreadsheet, signified by the number given to that specific respondent, the question the response was answered under, as well as the year of the interview. The codes were placed in the margins, allowing the researcher to search by code, by participant, by question or by year (See Appendix G). Two codes are presented here: Social Cohesion/Capital and Equality of Neighbourhood. This process is called reducing the data (Stake, 1994). An additional space for notes was added beside each response, allowing the researcher to record their decision making process. The spreadsheet was then reviewed case-by-case and theme by theme to understand the nature of the perceptions specific to individual's experiences, as well as the significant themes overall. This is called 'aggregation' of qualitative findings, allowing the two data

sets to be compared and contrasted to identify changes in perception (Estabrooks, Field & Morse, 1994).

5.11 *Key Informant Interviews 2006: Community Members, Planners*

5.11.1 *Ethics/ Trustworthiness*

The primary qualitative research conducted in 2006 by the researcher was approved by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board with the purpose of ensuring participants the least amount of harm while maximizing the research benefits. Richards and Schwartz (2002) have stated that issues of anxiety, exploitation, misrepresentation and inconvenience are not acceptable in research and must be accounted for. These factors can all be reduced with careful attention to: research design, accountability, participant consent, guaranteed confidentiality, and researcher reflexivity (Richards & Schwartz, 2002). There was not a major concern regarding anxiety and exploitation of participants in this study, as the information that was shared was generally of a non-personal nature. It was possible for interviewees to divulge personal as well as additional unintentional information but participants were protected through member validation at the time of the interview as well as complete confidentiality (McDonnell et al., 2000). Confidentiality was maintained by identifying participants by a numeric code and securing private information in a locked filing cabinet throughout the research process. Accountability was enforced through participant validation as well as making the research accessible after completion. Participants were notified of the opportunity to access the results of the research through the Community University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) website: <http://www.usask.ca/cuisr/>. The results will be available by September 30, 2007.

Credibility and trustworthiness of the research design was paramount and was achieved through careful planning. This was achieved through: the careful collection of detailed and information rich data until saturation was reached; the process of triangulation, by drawing upon multiple perspectives to increase rigor and trustworthiness (McDonnell et al., 2000); as well as paying close attention to the development of an audit trail (Finlay, 2002). There were no existing relationships between the investigator and participants. Financial compensation of \$25.00 was provided to the participants from the research budget for the study, to show of appreciation and reciprocity for their time and involvement (Creswell, 1998). The City of Saskatoon representatives and planners were not given financial compensation as they were interviewed during work hours. The principle investigator was the only individual who knew the identity of those who participated in the study. The benefits of participating in the interviews included an opportunity for participants to share their personal experience and knowledge

of the process and outcomes of the LAP, as well as to provide critical feedback on both the process and outcomes (Stake, 1994).

5.11.2 Interview Schedule

The key informant interview schedules were developed by the principle investigator with the objective of gaining an understanding of: how and why the participants got involved in the Pleasant Hill LAP; the perception of the process, and finally; the perception of the outcomes of the process. The outcomes refer to the social and structural changes in the neighbourhood and the perception of changes in quality of life. The questions were grouped into three categories: (1) Involvement, (2) Process, (3) Content/Outcomes and Quality of Life. Two different interview schedules were developed in order to understand the differences in perspectives between: (a) the community key informants, and (b) the City of Saskatoon professional planners (See Appendix H and I respectively). Doing this helped achieve a higher degree of detail in the subject areas the respondent's were most familiar with. The community members provided in-depth first hand experience of living in the neighbourhood, while the planners provided in-depth expert knowledge of the LAP process. Modifications were made to the interview questions during the interview process due to the fact that during the interview process, the interviewees answered a number of questions simultaneously.

5.11.3 Sampling and Recruitment

The sampling for this study was purposeful, meaning there was a deliberate choice of respondents with the goal being to maximize rich information and build a strong context (Aita & McIlvain, 1999). The sampling was further specified through intensity criterion sampling, which means that participants were selected according to their experience. They were defined as 'experts' given their experience with the Local Area Plan in Pleasant Hill and in the neighbourhood itself (Morse, 1995).

For the purposes of this study, participants were chosen through a gatekeeper. The City of Saskatoon Community Development Planning Committee was the gatekeeper, ensuring access to good informants who had: a specific level of experience; were able to reflect and articulate their experiences, and were willing to participate (Cutcliffe, 2000). Permission was obtained through the City of Saskatoon planners as they were the instigators of the LAP process and had first hand knowledge of who was involved and in what capacity as they facilitated the Pleasant Hill LAP Planning Group (Aita & McIlvain, 1999).

The gatekeepers were forwarded a Letter of Information (See Appendix J). This document was given to all of the potential respondents; it outlined the purpose of the research, the research process, as well as the opportunity to become involved. The letter also outlined the background and contact information of the researcher if participants had questions before or any time after the interview.

5.11.4 Interviews

Unstructured, open-ended interviews were conducted with sixteen individuals between July 17 and 28, 2006. This involved twelve key informants from the Planning Group - including residents, business owners, and four City of Saskatoon professional planners. These individuals had first hand experience with the process, albeit in different roles, and had a diverse range of backgrounds, values and investment in the community; this was important in developing rich, contextual information from individual's experiences (Charmez, 2000).

A semi-structured approach was used for the key-informant interviews. Semi-structured questions with prompts were used to allow a deeper exploration of possible themes that arose during the interview process (See Appendix H and I for interview schedules). The interviews lasted approximately one hour and were audio taped with the participant's consent and transcribed literally to ensure no information was lost in the interpretation process.

Participants signed a written letter of consent during the first face-to-face contact with the investigator. The interviews were conducted until 'data adequacy' (also known as saturation) was achieved, defined as the point when no more new information is obtained (Morse, 1995). The interviews were held in a variety of places, depending on where the respondent was most comfortable. Some of the interviews were held in cafes and restaurants, a few were held in respondent's houses or place of work, and one interview was held in a Quint meeting room. The interview locations were chosen by the participant to ensure they were accessible, convenient and comfortable. The interviews were booked at times that were convenient for the participants. Field notes were made during and directly after the interviews were conducted to reflect on the experience and to keep an 'audit trail' of the research process (Finlay, 2002).

5.11.5 Data Analysis

The principal investigator personally transcribed all of the interview data from the 2006 respondents using a Microsoft Word document, which was then managed and used for analysis (Miles & Weitzman, 1994) The material was coded line by line. When possible, it is best for the primary researcher to be

involved in all of these steps as it builds a connection with the data, which leads to more careful interpretation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As a novice researcher, it was appropriate for the data to be handled and analyzed by hand as computer software programs can be cumbersome, create a distance between the researcher and the data and require learning new technology (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Having thirty two interviews in total (16 key-informant and 16 from the larger QoL study), it was possible for the researcher to analyze the data without the aid of qualitative analysis computer software, allowing proximity to the data as well as detailed knowledge of the context that it was developed (Miles & Weitzman, 1994). The researcher created a database in EXCEL for easy visualization of the data, which aided in making connections and searching for themes (Miles & Weitzman, 1994).

5.12 Participant Observation

Participant Observation is defined as “research characterized by a prolonged period of intense social interaction between the researcher and the subjects, in the milieu of the latter, during which time data, in the form of field notes, are unobtrusively and systematically collected” (Bogdewic, 1999, p. 48). It is an important type of data collection in qualitative research because it gives the researcher a first hand idea of how space is used and perceived (Creswell, 2003). There were several reasons for conducting these observations in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The primary reason was to gain familiarity with the site and understand how the spaces and amenities in the neighbourhood were used and how they flowed and changed from one sub-area to the next. It was also important to determine where the boundaries of the neighbourhood were and if they were physical or social. The final reason was to determine if there were visible physical changes apparent from the planning documents. As a consequence of safety constraints due to the nature of the neighbourhood, it was difficult to spend as much time as the researcher wanted in the neighbourhood. In addition to taking pictures and writing field notes, the researcher had the opportunity to tour the neighbourhood with a resident as well as with another researcher, and travel in-between interviews throughout the neighbourhood at different times of the day. Features of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood were captured using a digital camera on a series of tours to show the areas where changes had occurred, as well as where there were concerns.

5.13 Other Methods

As notes earlier, it is important in case study research to provide rich contextual details (Charmez, 2000). To do so this study utilized a variety of techniques. A comprehensive review of documents was conducted to understand the LAP from a professional and procedural perspective. The communication

material informing the Pleasant Hill LAP process and recommendations was reviewed. These included: meeting notes from the first LAP meeting in Pleasant Hill on May 24th 2000; maps; drafts on the LAP over time; posters; flyers, and; information found on the City of Saskatoon website.

5.14 Summary

The data for the study came from both primary and secondary sources, and the researcher utilized a combination of study methods to undertake a comprehensive examination of the Pleasant Hill LAP process and the outcomes to define if there had been a change in the perception of quality of life. In summary, four major methods were used: quantitative analysis of secondary survey data using SPSS, qualitative analysis of both primary and secondary interview data using Excel and hand coding, primary on-site observation, and analysis of a number of secondary data sources.

5.15 Bringing it All Together

The integration of both qualitative and quantitative data sets, as well as observation and document collection, allow an overall picture of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, the LAP processes involved and the perceptions and changes occurring there. By first building on the themes and relationships which were uncovered in the quantitative analysis data and then integrating the interview data collected in 2001 and 2004, the residents' perceptions of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and quality of life can be compared over time. The QoL data provides a comparative frame, highlighting the specific characteristics of Pleasant Hill that contribute or detract from resident's quality of life and their perception of the neighbourhood within the context of the changes that were implemented by the LAP. The 2006 key informant interviews identify perceptions of the social, physical, economic and environmental changes over time and their relation to personal and as well as neighbourhood quality of life. The exploration of the LAP process provides the context as well as the vehicle for change.

5.16 Limitations of the Research

There are a number of study limitations that need to be brought forward. First, this research explores a series of snap shots of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, examining the perception of the neighbourhood over time from a range of perspectives. For the purposes of the LAP, which is a long-term initiative of ten to fifteen years, the time frame of this study was not substantial enough. Many of the recommendations of the LAP have yet to be implemented and will not be completed for some time. Realistically, because of the severity of many of the issues in the neighbourhood, the reality of there being measurable

change in socio-economic and neighbourhood statistics associated with quality of life -- such as crime rate (including violent crime, prostitution, drug use), high school graduation rates, and homeownership, in this time frame is minimal.

It is also important to note that the LAP is a community development strategy that focuses mainly on structural modifications in the neighbourhood; it is difficult to measure the true impact of the structural modifications on quality of life. The City of Saskatoon is working towards the development of a system of indicators to better monitor and measure these processes and outcomes.

The sample size of the QoL 2001 and 2004 face-to-face interviews was small, with only eight interviews representing the neighbourhood. This is an issue as the neighbourhood had a population of 4,415 in 2001 (City of Saskatoon, 2003b). Unfortunately, because the interviews were collected as part of a much larger study, the data available for Pleasant Hill was limited. The small sample size, however, does not overshadow the information the interviews brought to this research. Patton (2002, p. 245) states: "the validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher, than the sample size."

This study also chose to explore the LAP process and outcomes on neighbourhood quality of life from the perspective of stakeholders that were involved in the LAP process. This approach had the benefit of obtaining information from people who had the time and ability to participate in the participatory process, all of whom were homeowners. It is important to understand that those who were not involved in the process also have an important view to share and interviewing these individuals may offer rich information that may shed light into: why people did not participate; other barriers to the process, and; the perception of change, recognizing a probably lack of awareness of all the recommendations. There are a high number of individuals in the neighbourhood that are not homeowners that would have a valuable perspective on the processes and outcomes of the LAP and the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood.

The following chapter undertakes the quantitative analysis of the 2001 and 2004 QoL telephone interviews, highlighting subtle positive shifts in the quality of life of Pleasant Hill residents as well as the complexity and vulnerability of a low socioeconomic core neighbourhood.

6.0 *The Implementation of the Quality of Life Study*

Introduction

This chapter examines the quantitative analysis of the 2001 and 2004 QoL telephone surveys. It is divided into four sections: Section 6.1 examines the citywide trends in Saskatoon; Section 6.2 provides the explicit methodological approach to the analysis of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood data; Section 6.3 provides a demographic comparison of the QoL data compared to the 2001 census information to ensure the data is representative, and; Section 6.4 presents the findings of the comparison between the 2001 and 2004 Pleasant Hill data.

6.1 *Saskatoon Quality of Life Trends*

“The quality of life of the population is influenced by the place people live and not just the sort of people they are” (Dunstan et al., 2005, p. 293).

To understand the trends occurring in the City of Saskatoon compared to the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and to provide a contextual background for quality of life at a neighbourhood level, the citywide analysis comparing the 2001 and 2004 iterations of the Quality of Life survey data was examined. The findings for Saskatoon at all three socio-economic levels by the CUISR team of researchers support the importance of demographic characteristics in individual's perception of quality of life (Williams, 2001). The significant demographic characteristics include age, education and socio-economic status (individually and compared to others). Satisfaction with external structures (e.g. housing, neighbourhood and city), place related and social inclusion variables (e.g. neighbourhood friendliness, comfort participating in neighbourhood projects and feelings of safety and security) also play important roles in the perception of QoL. There are subtle shifts in the ways these variables influence perception when comparing the 2001 and 2004 iterations but both show the widening gap between the rich and the poor and the corresponding negative affects the growing disparity of lower income groups has on quality of life.

Four themes were revealed in the QoL face-to-face interviews: 1) Growing gap between the rich and the poor; 2) Social support and inclusion; 3) Social pressures, and; 4) Responsibility for change (Williams, 2001, p. 37). The growing gap between the rich and the poor is significant because there is also a growing dissatisfaction of the low SES with the individual and neighbourhood quality of life. The other individual characteristics that put individuals at greater risk are age, disability, low levels of education and single parent status. When these characteristics are found in conjunction, the effects are even more profound. The

repetition of these findings across the 2001 and 2004 analyses emphasizes the importance of providing additional support to individuals and families in the lower income brackets.

The second theme of social support and inclusion emphasizes the importance of social cohesion within the neighbourhood, including informal and formal support networks, especially regarding residents reporting lower income levels. QoL reports are higher for disadvantaged populations when there are strong levels of social cohesion. Quality and affordable housing as well as the provision of social services, informal and formal support networks and leisure activities are also positively associated with QoL even with reportedly low-income levels. According to the 2001 analysis, residents of low socio-economic status are more likely to put greater emphasis on social relationships and are more likely to participate in volunteer and social activities within the neighbourhood because of the positive contribution to neighbourhood quality of life (Williams, 2001). Social pressures as the third theme reveal the sensitivity of individuals to how others perceive themselves and their neighbourhoods. Quality of life is negatively affected if individuals feel that their situation compares poorly to others according to both income levels and if others perceive their neighbourhood as a bad place to live. The responsibility for change as the final theme reveals similarities across all neighbourhood levels regarding strategies for improving and maintaining a positive quality of life. The overall consensus is that there has to be a shared approach to quality of life initiatives and there must be a balance of personal and public initiatives, which are available to all residents.

The analysis of the 2001 and 2004 QoL Saskatoon data sets for all neighbourhood types show the importance of demographic, place related and social inclusion variables in individuals perception of quality of life, both for the respondent as well as the neighbourhoods they are a part of and the City itself. The changes over the two iterations show the importance of how perceptions shift as well as how demographics influence quality of life on a changing basis. These two iterations of the data come together to support the affects of growing disparity on quality of life of lower income groups.

6.2 The Quantitative Analysis: Changes in Pleasant Hill Between 2001 and 2004

The analysis of the Pleasant Hill quantitative data seeks to answer the research question of this work: to what extent have residents' perception of quality of life changed since defining the Local Area Plan for Pleasant Hill? This was approached through correlation analysis, using Pearson's Chi-Square. This is the most common significance test (Moore, 2003). This statistic is used to test the hypothesis of no association of columns and rows in tabular data, meaning it tests if there is a relationship or correlation (Moore, 2003). It can be used with nominal

data. To measure significance, a probability of .05 or less is commonly interpreted by social scientists as justification for rejecting the null hypothesis that the row variable is unrelated (that is, only randomly related) to the column variable (Moore, 2003).

To ensure a rigorous analysis, the Pearson's Chi-Square assumptions must be met. The data must be a random sample (Moore, 2003). In this case, the sampling is random and therefore appropriate. There must also be a significantly large sample size. There is no absolute cutoff but if the sample size is not large enough, the researcher runs a much higher rate of Type II errors. There are adequate cell sizes for both analyses. It is assumed that a common rule is 5 or more in all cells of a 2-by-2 table, and 5 or more in 80% of cells in larger tables, but no cells with zero count. When this assumption is not met, Yates' correction is applied (Moore, 2003). The observations are independent and the same observation only appears in one cell and because the data is cross-sectional, it is considered independent. The observations meet the assumption that there is a similar and known distribution. The hypothesized distribution is specified in advance, so that the number of observations that are expected to appear each cell in the table can be calculated without reference to the observed values. Normally this expected value is the cross product of the row and column marginal divided by the sample size (Moore, 2003). There is a non-directional hypothesis. Pearson's Chi-Square tests the hypothesis that two variables are related only by chance. If a significant relationship is found, this is not equivalent to establishing the researcher's hypothesis that A causes B, or that B causes A (Moore, 2003). The observations are also finite values and there is a normal distribution of deviations.

The examination of the quantitative data specific to Pleasant Hill began by sorting the 2001 and 2004 Saskatoon data by neighbourhood type. Only the low socio-economic neighbourhood cluster data was kept and this was then sorted by postal code. The information specific to the postal code area of Pleasant Hill was transferred to a new database for both the 2001 and 2004 data. This data was then formatted to include a date label for both datasets and the questions of both iterations were reviewed to ensure they were the same and the likert scales were equivalent. The value labels were condensed for all likert scales as such to ensure the measurement of difference was significant on either positive or negative ratings (See Table 6.1 below). The data was reduced to 40 variables in each data set.

Table 6.1: Quantitative Value Labels

Non-condensed Value Labels	Condensed Value Labels
1=Excellent	1=Excellent/Very Good
2=Very Good	2=Good
3= Good	3=Fair/Poor
4=Fair	21=N/A/Refused
5=Poor	
21=Refused	
22=N/A	

The variables that were used in this analysis can be grouped into four categories: (1) General Quality of Life questions; (2) Satisfaction Domains; (3) Community Quality of Life, and; (4) Demographics. They are shown in Tables 6.2a-6.2d below. The themes that the questions targeted line up closely to the recommendations the LAP developed. The variables target both overall perceptions as well as the structural and social variables of the neighbourhood context.

Table 6.2a: General Quality of Life Variables

6.2a	<i>General Quality of Life Variables:</i>
B1.1	How would you describe your overall quality of life?
B2.1	In general would you say your health is?

Table 6.2b: Satisfaction Domain Variables:

6.2b	<i>Satisfaction Domain Variables:</i>
B3.1	How do you feel about your neighbourhood?
B3.2	How do you feel about your city?
B3.3	How do you feel about your housing?
E2.2	How do you feel about your overall life satisfaction?

Table 6.2c: Community Quality of Life Variables

6.2c	<i>Community Quality of Life Variables:</i>
F1.1	How do you feel about the conditions of roads and sidewalks in your neighbourhood?
F1.2	How do you feel about the condition of housing in your neighbourhood?
F1.3	How do you feel about the condition of parks in your neighbourhood?
F1.4	How do you feel about the condition of other green spaces (Such as boulevards or medians) in your neighbourhood?
F1.5	How do you feel about the condition of public transportation in your neighbourhood?
F1.6	How do you feel about traffic conditions in your neighbourhood?
F1.7	How do you feel about the environment (such as air and water quality)?
F1.8	How do you feel about the degree of neighbourhood neatness (such as amount of litter or graffiti)?

F1.9	How do you feel about neighbourhood friendliness?
F1.10	How do you feel about safety from violent crime?
F1.11	How do you feel about safety from property crime?
F1.12	How do you feel about neighbourhood organizations (such as neighbourhood watch or neighbourhood associations)?
F1.13	How do you feel about neighbourhood shops and services?
F1.14	How do you feel about neighbourhood religious and spiritual activities?
F1.15	How do you feel about neighbourhood schools?
F1.16	How do you feel about neighbourhood health services?
F1.17	How do you feel about neighbourhood social programs?
F1.18	How do you feel about neighbourhood recreation programs and services?
F1.19	How do you feel about neighbourhood caregiver services?
F1.20	How do you feel about neighbourhood protection services?
F3.1	Over the last three years, would you say the quality of life in Saskatoon has improved?
F4.1	How much do you feel apart of your neighbourhood?
F4.2	If there were a neighbourhood project organized, such as a block party or yard sale, how comfortable would you feel about participating?
F4.3	Do you feel comfortable calling upon your neighbours?
F5.1	Have you volunteered in any organizations or associations such as school groups, church groups, community centres or ethnic associations in the last three years?
F6.1	How would you describe your feelings of safety and security in your neighbourhood for you and your family?
F7.1	Over the last three years, would you say the quality of life in your neighbourhood is?

Table 6.2d: Demographic Variables

6.2d	<i>Demographic Variables:</i>
J1.1	Age
J2.1	Gender
J3.1	Were you born in Canada? (Ethnicity)
J5.1	Immigrant status: Were you born in Canada?
J6.1	What is your marital status?
J7.1	What is the highest level of education you've completed?
J8.1	During the past year, what was your employment status?
J8.2	How many people contribute to your household income?
J9.1	What is your best estimate of your total combined household income, before taxes in the past year?
J9.2	In comparison with other people in Saskatoon, would you describe your financial situation as wealthy, comfortable, adequate, difficult, poor?
J12.1	Do you Own or Rent?

6.3 Demographic Representation

To ensure the data from the 2001 QoL study for Pleasant Hill is representative, a comparison was made to the 2001 Statistics Canada Census information. Similar data is not available for 2004 and the 2006 Census information was not available at the neighbourhood level but providing a checkpoint with the 2001 data should provide a clear indication if the data is

representative. The QoL survey contained approximately 115 responses in 2001, this number shifted according to the variable been studied as some variables had cases with missing information. The 2001 Census population of Pleasant Hill was 4,415 individuals, which means the QoL survey captured 2.6% of the population. From the information available, the QoL survey appears somewhat representative of the Pleasant Hill population. There is not data available at the neighbourhood level for comparing gender or Aboriginal status at this time.

After reviewing the data, it is apparent that the information is representative of the ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood, though the unemployment rate is substantially lower in the QoL survey as seen in Table 6.3 below:

Table 6.3: Ethnic Diversity and Unemployment Rate

Demographics	Pleasant Hill Census 2001	Pleasant Hill QoL 2001
N=	4415 (total population)	Approximately 115
Ethnic Diversity (Born in Canada)	90.27% born in Canada	90.90% born in Canada
Unemployment Rate	25.9%	16.2%

Education levels in the 2001 Census for Pleasant Hill compared to the 2001 QoL survey reveals that there are less individuals with less than a grade nine education in the QoL study as seen in Table 6.4 below. There are also less individuals with a high school education, trade certificate and a considerably less number of individuals with a university degree in the QoL survey compared to the 2001 Census, though there were more with some university.

Table 6.4: Educational Attainment

Education	Less than Grade 9	High School	Trade Certificate/ College	Some University	University +
Census	18.36%	42.17%	27.2%	6.4%	25.9%
QoL	9.56%	35.64%	24.33%	15.6%	14.7%

The age demographics in both the QoL survey and the 2001 Census show the greatest concentration of residents between the ages of 25-44. The Quality of Life study did not calculate the number of children in the neighbourhood but the age demographics do appear to be representative as this age group is largely the

population that is employed, therefore an important indicator of the economic stability of the neighbourhood.

The household income levels as seen in Table 6.5 are quite disperse; the 2001 Census does show a higher percentage of residents in the \$10,000- \$19,999 income bracket as well as the \$20,000-\$29,999 bracket, while the QoL survey has a higher number of individuals who reported at or greater than \$30,000.

Table 6.5: Household Income Level

Income	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000-\$19,999	\$20,000-\$29,999	\$30,000-\$39,999	\$40,000-\$49,999	\$50,000-\$59,999	\$60,000+
Census	16.05%	31.65%	26.14%	10.09%	4.58%	5.04%	6.42%
QoL	19.79%	19.79%	17.70%	13.54%	10.41%	6.25%	12.5%

These findings show that the QoL survey is measuring a representative spectrum of individuals, and though there are some discrepancies, it is appropriate to proceed.

6.4 Findings:

6.4.1 General Quality of Life Questions

The findings for the Pearson’s Chi-Square analysis of the 2001 and 2004 QoL survey are broken down by the general questions. The significance levels are shown in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Pearson’s Chi-Square Findings for 2001 and 2004 QoL Data
 (***) Significant to the .001 level, **Significant to the .05 level, * Significant to the .10 level)

Question:	Question #	p value	Relationship
<i>General Quality of Life Variables</i>			
Quality of life	B1.1	.347	N/A
General Health	B2.1	.033**	Negative
<i>Satisfaction Domain Variables</i>			
Neighbourhood	B3.1	.583	N/A
City	B3.2	.153	N/A
Housing	B3.3	.096*	Positive
Life satisfaction	E2.2	.000***	Positive
<i>Community Quality of Life Variables</i>			
Roads	F1.1	.201	N/A
Neighbourhood Housing	F1.2	.702	N/A

Neighbourhood Parks	F1.3	.831	N/A
Neighbourhood Green Space	F1.4	.697	N/A
Public Transport	F1.5	.780	N/A
Traffic Conditions	F1.6	.000***	Positive
Condition of Environment	F1.7	.929	N/A
Neighbourhood Neatness	F1.8	.126	N/A
Neighbourhood Friendliness	F1.9	.155	N/A
Safety from Violent Crime	F1.10	.683	N/A
Safety From Property Crime	F1.11	.825	N/A
Neighbourhood Organizations	F1.12	.153	N/A
Shops and Services in Neighbourhood	F1.13	.394	N/A
Religious Activities	F1.14	.311	N/A
Schools	F1.15	.546	N/A
Health Services	F1.16	.701	N/A
Social Programs	F1.17	.020**	Positive
Recreation Programs	F1.18	.883	N/A
Care-giver Services	F1.19	.428	N/A
Protection Services	F1.20	.263	N/A
Change in Saskatoon QoL	F3.1	.387	N/A
Feel a Part of Neighbourhood	F4.1	.238	N/A
Participation	F4.2	.009***	Positive
Comfortable Calling on Neighbours	F4.3	.029**	Negative
Feelings of Safety and Security	F6.1	.013**	Positive
Volunteer Work	F5.1	.690	N/A
Change in Neighbourhood QoL	F7.1	.441	N/A
Demographic Variables			
Age	J1.1	.012**	Positive
Gender	J2.1	.952	N/A
Born in Canada	J5.1	.086*	Negative
Marital Status	J6.1	.063*	Negative
Education	J7.1	.060*	Positive
Employment	J8.1	.003**	Negative
Individuals Contributing to HH Income	J8.2	.194	N/A
Income Category	J9.1	.045**	Positive
Comparative Financial Situation	J9.2	.041**	Positive
Do you Own or Rent	J12.1	.350	N/A

B1.1: How would you describe your overall quality of life?

As noted in Table 6.6, there were no statistically significant changes in overall quality of life between 2001 and 2004. This calculation has a two-sided significance of .347, which is higher than the acceptable $p < .05$ level. There were no cases ranking this variable as 'Fair/Poor' in either 2001 or 2004 in Pleasant

Hill. The majority of respondents (86% in 2001, 81% in 2004) choose 'Excellent/Very Good' to describe their overall quality of life.

B2.1: In general, would you say your health is...?

There was a decrease in reported general health between 2001 and 2004 with a two-sided significance of .033, which is statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. The distribution of 'Excellent/Very Good' in 2001 was over 50%, with only 18% reporting 'Fair/Poor health'. In 2004, the levels are much more equalized, with a drop in 'Excellent/Very Good' to 40% of respondents and a rise in 'Fair/Poor' ratings to 33%, which is almost double the amount of 'Fair/Poor' ratings in 2001.

6.4.2 Satisfaction Domains

B3.1: How do you feel about your neighbourhood?

The way respondents felt about their neighbourhood did not show a statistically significant change as the p value was .583, which is much higher than $p < .05$. The distribution of responses for 2001 is concentrated in the 'Somewhat Satisfied' category, with over 45% of respondents choosing this response. In 2004, the responses are again concentrated in the 'Somewhat Satisfied' category with an increase of almost 7% of respondents choosing this ranking and a slightly lower responses in all the other rankings, including 'Very Satisfied', though this relationship is not statistically significant.

B3.2: How satisfied are you with your city?

This relationship has a two-sided significance of .153, which is not statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. Individuals in 2001 were overall 'Very Satisfied' (44%) or 'Somewhat Satisfied' (48%) with their city. In 2004, this changes to 34% of individuals who are 'Very Satisfied' and 61% of individuals who are 'Somewhat Satisfied' and a decrease of 3% in the ranking of 'Very Dissatisfied'.

B3.3: How satisfied are you with your housing?

This relationship has a two-sided significance of .096, which is significant at the $P < .10$ level. There are fewer individuals (52% in 2001, 48% in 2004) who are 'Very Satisfied' with their housing but more people are 'Somewhat Satisfied' (33% in 2001, 45% in 2004) and fewer individuals who are 'Somewhat Dissatisfied' or 'Very Dissatisfied' with their housing.

E2.2: Change in Overall Life Satisfaction?

The change in overall life satisfaction shows a positive and statistically significant two-sided significance relationship with a p-value of .000. The number of individuals who feel their life satisfaction has 'Improved' rose from 8% in 2001 to 29% in 2004 and the number of people who felt it 'Stayed the Same' rose from 46% in 2001 to 50% in 2004, but the number of respondents who claimed their overall life satisfaction has 'Gotten Worse' fell from 47% in 2001 to 21% in 2004.

6.4.3 Community Quality of Life Variables

The Community Quality of Life variables include the structural and social variables. The majority of these variables did not show a significant change, either positively or negatively between the two iterations. The condition of roads and sidewalks in the neighbourhood did not show a statistically significant change between 2001 and 2004. The p-value was .201. The condition of housing in the neighbourhood did not show a significant change either, with a p-value of .701. There was no statistically significant change in the perception of the condition of parks ($p=.831$) or other green spaces ($p=.697$). The condition of public transportation ($p=.780$) nor the condition of the environment ($p=.929$) shows a statistically significant change between 2001 and 2004.

There was a positive and statistically significant change in the perception of traffic conditions between 2001 and 2004 ($P<.001$). The rankings for 'Excellent/Very Good' have risen from 12% in 2001 to 16% in 2004 and the ranking for 'Good' rose from 36% in 2001 to 57% in 2004. The rankings for 'Fair/Poor' fell from 52% to 26%. The degree of neighbourhood neatness did not show a statistically significant change ($p=.126$), nor did the perception of friendliness in the neighbourhood ($p=.155$) between 2001 and 2004. The perception from safety from violent crime does not show a significant change ($p=.683$), nor does safety from property crime ($p=.825$). The ranking of neighbourhood associations ($p=.153$), shops and services ($p=.197$), schools ($p=.311$), health services ($p=.701$), recreation programs ($p=.883$), caregiver services ($p=.428$), and protection services ($p=.263$) do not show statistically significant changes.

There is a positive and statistically significant change in the perception of social programs in the neighbourhood ($p=.020$) at the $p<.05$ level. The ranking of 'Excellent/Very Good' rose from 58% in 2001 to 76% in 2004. The ranking of 'Good' fell from 42% in 2001 to 24% in 2004, with no 'Fair/Poor' rankings. There is also a positive relationship in the perception of comfort participating in neighbourhood projects with a p-value of .009 which is statistically significant at the $p<.05$ and $p<.01$ level. The ranking of 'Very Comfortable' rose from 52% in 2001 to 58% in 2004. The ranking of 'Somewhat Comfortable' also rose from

31% in 2001 to 38% in 2004 and there was a decrease of 'Uncomfortable' responses between 2001 and 2004.

There has been a negative and statistically significant perception of comfort calling on neighbours in crisis ($p=.029$). The ranking of 'Yes' fell from 74% in 2001 to 60% in 2004. The ranking of 'No' also saw an increase, from 26% in 2001 to 40% in 2004. The descriptions of feelings of safety and security have seen a positive and statistically significant change ($p=.013$). The rank of 'Excellent' rose from 32% in 2001 to 51% in 2004. There was also a decline in 'Good' rankings from 36% in 2001 to 22% in 2004 and there were no 'Fair/Poor' responses.

There was not a statistically significant change in Saskatoon Quality of Life ($p=.387$), nor was there a change in how much respondents feel a part of their neighbourhood ($p=.238$). There was not a significant change in the number of people who volunteer in organizations ($p=.690$), nor was there a statistically significant change in neighbourhood quality of life ($p=.441$).

6.4.4 Demographics

For in-depth contextual information on the demographics of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood please see Chapter 3.0. The 2001 and 2004 demographic domains show a statistically significant change in age ($p=.012$). The largest change is within the 25-34 age category, which has risen from 19% in 2001 to 33% in 2004, and the 45-54 age category, which has changed from 12% in 2001 to 21% in 2004. There has been no statistically significant change in the gender profile ($p=.952$). The number of people who were born in Canada shows a statistically significant relationship at the $p<.10$ level ($p=.086$). The percentage of respondents from Canada fell from 91% in 2001 to 83% in 2004. The percentage of people from outside of Canada rose from 9% in 2001 to 17% in 2004, which is a significant increase, showing that Pleasant Hill is one of the Saskatoon neighbourhoods new immigrants are settling in.

Marital status shows a statistically significant change at the $p<.10$ level ($p=.063$). The percentage of 'Single/Never Married' individuals stayed the same in the 2001 and 2004 datasets. The percentage of 'Married/Common Law or Living with a Partner' fell from 46% in 2001 to 31% in 2004. The percentage of 'Separated' individuals rose from 4% in 2001 to 12% in 2004. The percentage of 'Divorced' respondents rose from 11% in 2001 to 13% in 2004. The percentage of 'Widowed' individuals also rose from 7% to 12%. The overall trend seen here is becoming a more common phenomenon in Canada in general with more individuals choosing to live as common law and divorce is becoming more

prevalent. This may mean that there are more single parent families and single income earners.

The level of education that respondents have completed shows a p-value of .060, which is significant at the $p < .10$ level. The percentage of respondents who have 'Less than Grade Nine' has increased from 10% in 2001 to 18% in 2004. The individuals with 'Some High School' fell from 15% in 2001 to 9% in 2004. The percentage of respondents with 'High School Diplomas' fell from 21% to 15%. The percentage of respondents with 'Some Trade, Technical, Community College, etc.' fell from 14% to 6%. The percentage of individuals with a 'Diploma or Certificate from Trade or Technical, Community College etc' rose from 10% to 12%. The percentage of 'Some University' rose from 16% to 27% while the percentage of 'University Graduates' fell from 13% to 10%. The number of 'University Post Grad' rose from 2% to 4%. The overall trend seen here is a decrease of 4% of individuals with a high school diploma or less education, though there was a significant increase in individuals who had less than grade nine education. There was a 5% increase in individuals with some form of post-secondary education between 2001 and 2004.

Employment status shows a significant negative relationship with a p-value of .003, which is significant at the $p < .05$ and $p < .01$ level. The percentage of people working 'Full Time' fell from 41% in 2001 to 24% in 2004. The percentage of 'Part Time' workers rose from 12% to 31%. 'Unemployed' respondents rose from 10% to 17%. The percentage of 'Retired' individuals fell from 14% to 6%, though the number of 'Retired', 'Students' and individuals 'On Leave' remained steady. The number of people that contribute to household income does not show a statistically significant relationship at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .194$). This data points to an overall trend of decreasing and changing employment in the neighbourhood. The number of people who own or rent their homes did not show a statistically significant change between 2001 and 2004 ($p = .350$), though there was a decrease in the number of respondents who rented their accommodations in 2004 (58% in 2001 compared to 51% in 2004). Home ownership rose 7% in that time.

The household income category that respondents chose shows a positive and statistically significant relationship at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .045$). The percentage of individuals who earn 'Less than \$10,000' fell from 20% in 2001 to 13% in 2004. The percentage of respondents who earned '\$10,000 to \$19,999' fell from 20% to 18%. The respondents who earned '\$20,000 to \$29,999' rose from 18% to 26%. The respondents who earned '\$30,000 to \$39,999' rose from 14% to 24%. There was also a rise in the '\$40,000 to \$49,999' category from 10% to 11%. There was a 10% decrease in the upper income category from 13% reporting incomes between '\$60,000 to \$69,999' in 2001 to 3% in 2004. The

trend seen here is positive, with a 9% decrease in the number of households earning less than \$19,999 annually and a 19% increase in 2004 income levels from the '\$20,000-\$29,999' category up to the '\$40,000 to \$49,999' category compared to 2001. This is significant because there is a growing number of the population who are in the middle-income brackets.

In the category, 'Income in comparison to others', there is a positive and statistically significant relationship at the $p < .05$ level ($p = .041$). The percentage of respondents who chose 'Wealthy' rose from 1% in 2001 to 8% in 2004. The percentage of respondents who chose 'Well-off' rose from 9% in 2001 to 18% in 2004. The number of respondents who described themselves as 'Comfortable' fell from 33% to 28%. The percentage of people who described their income as 'Adequate' fell from 30% in 2001 to 24% in 2004. The 'Difficult' response fell from 20% to 16%. The 'Poor' response also fell slightly, from 7% to 6%. This is a positive overall trend, with individuals reporting better income compared to others overall.

6.4.5 A Summary of the Quality of Life 2001 and 2004 Interviews

Overall, the findings for the Pearson's Chi-Square analysis are interesting as they show a number of positive and negative relationships between the 2001 and 2004 Quality of Life data. There were some optimistic findings but not necessarily where they were expected. The overall satisfaction variables of quality of life, respondents' feelings about their neighbourhood and areas where the LAP recommendations have been targeted have not seen positive or significant changes.

It was perhaps surprising that there was not a significant change in the overall quality of life of respondents but it should be noted that there were no fair or poor ratings for overall quality of life in either 2001 or 2004 in Pleasant Hill. Overall quality of life is an interesting variable as it is a complex satisfaction variable. It is difficult to determine what individual variables contribute most significantly to overall quality of life (Sirgy & Cornwell, 2002). For example, it is difficult to determine if individual satisfaction variables such as general health contribute most to a positive or negative perception of overall quality of life or if demographic or neighbourhood characteristics are the contributing variables.

There was a negative trend in reported general health. This variable may not respond to the social and structural changes in the neighbourhood as it may be more reflective of personal choices and life circumstance, especially income and education levels (PolicyLink, 2002). On the other hand, Raphael et al. (2006, p. 181) states that "when considering individuals, health is the presence of physical, social and personal resources that allow the achievement of personal goals. When

considering communities, health is the presence of economic, social and environmental structures that support the physical, psychological, and social well-being of community members.” Pleasant Hill has not reached this stage yet and findings from multiple studies point to disparities in health occurring in neighbourhoods that are socially and economically deprived compared to more prosperous neighbourhoods (PolicyLink, 2002, Bourne & Ley, 1993). There is a “strong socio-economic gradient in health status” (Bourne & Ley, 1993, p. 310) and it is important to understand that “neighbourhood effects on health are cumulative and happen over time” (PolicyLink, 2002, p. 7). Therefore changes in these outcomes will take considerable efforts in many areas, including education and economic opportunities.

In economically deprived areas such as Pleasant Hill, with a widening gap between the rich and poor as demonstrated by the CUISR outcomes (Williams, 2002), this is a growing challenge. The findings of the Canadian PolicyLink report on health disparities show that “community or place-based effects on health may be nonlinear and therefore difficult to measure” (PolicyLink, 2002, p. 23). In the case of Pleasant Hill, there may be a ‘tipping point’ whereby the concentration of poverty in the neighbourhood is a risk factor to health, especially when considering the safety hazards in the neighbourhood (PolicyLink, 2002). This is a ‘differential’ exposure to risks which is further compromised by unequal access to services and a healthy social and physical environment in low socio-economic neighbourhoods (Smith & Easterlow, 2005). The influence of place on health is complex and multi-dimensional with greater negative outcomes for the most vulnerable (Bourne & Ley, 1993). It should be noted that the LAP did not specifically target health initiatives, though some of the recommendations did target hazards which impacted health, such as unsafe housing.

The satisfaction with the City and the neighbourhood did not show a significant change, perhaps the responses in 2004 were more conservative than in 2001 with regards to the very positive rankings with many respondents choosing a response of ‘Somewhat Satisfied’. Interestingly, the overall life satisfaction variable, satisfaction with housing, and social inclusion variables show very positive trends, as does the income related demographics. Overall life satisfaction may be tied to new opportunities for housing, education and higher paying employment. There were positive changes in these demographics in Pleasant Hill. Housing is believed to be a major contributor to life satisfaction and overall quality of life because of the stability and pride it brings (Bourne & Ley, 1993). The Pleasant Hill LAP did target a number of housing initiatives that were meant to improve the housing stock as well as provide more opportunities for home ownership.

The neighbourhood physical characteristics categorized under the community quality of life variables do not show statistically significant changes, though the majority of the variables show a decline in the fair/poor category. The reason for this may be that the recommendations of the LAP that target these specific characteristics of the neighbourhood were not yet completed at the time of the 2004 survey. The condition of roads and sidewalks has been an area of contention because of the large costs associated with paving the unpaved roads, together with the issue of responsibility for this kind of improvement (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). The condition of housing and green spaces also take a long time to change because funding for these initiatives is not immediately available and the space concerned is a mix of public and private property. Public transportation did not show a significant change. This variable is complex because the neighbourhood cannot be looked at in isolation. Transportation, especially public transit crosses many boundaries and it is difficult to meet all of the needs of the people it serves, especially in a neighbourhood where car ownership is lower than any other area in the city (City of Saskatoon, 2002a).

The improvement in the ranking of traffic conditions between 2001 and 2004 is very interesting as the pedestrian activated light standard was one of the first changes that were implemented in the neighbourhood. This initiative was specific to Pleasant Hill and came about after concerns were raised after cars on Avenue P struck two children. A traffic study was conducted but the traffic volumes were too low to warrant consideration of this type of device (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). In 2000, a temporary pedestrian island was installed and another traffic study was conducted at Avenue P and 21st Street. The neighbourhood was still not satisfied because of the heavy trucks traveling along this route as well as the need for children to cross Avenue P to get to St. Mary's School. The pedestrian activated light standard was installed in June 2005 between 19th and 20th Street. This placement is significant because it was the first time that a device like this was not placed at an intersection. Though the installation of the light standard occurred after the QoL survey, the process was in place at the time of the interviews as well as curb extensions at the intersection of Avenue P and 21st Street.

There have been a number of other completed traffic related recommendations, such as traffic barricades in the form of boulders and trees at the end of Avenue J and K to prevent vehicles from accessing the CPR right of way, new stop signs and the enforcement of traffic restrictions and one-way streets. The modifications made to the traffic concerns in the neighbourhood have been addressed quickly and with little hesitation, especially when pedestrian safety was at risk. The variables concerning the other physical characteristics of the neighbourhood such as parks and green space are more seasonal in nature and may not have been implemented at the time of the second survey, as the LAP is a

long-term initiative. The perception of these variables may change with the possible upgrade of the CPR transportation linkage.

The changes in the perception of social conditions in Pleasant Hill are interesting as there was greater comfort in participating in neighbourhood projects in 2004 as well as a positive trend in descriptions of safety and security. These positive results may be because of changes in program implementation and increased support from social programs in Pleasant Hill encouraging resident involvement in neighbourhood projects. These include highly visible initiatives such as community safety walks, community gardening, leisure and recreation programs, boulevard and park improvements and neighbourhood clean ups. There has also been increased communication especially regarding published reports on crime incidence in the city. The commitment to neighbourhood improvement through visible structural improvements, opportunities for involvement in these projects, as well as the positive and united approach against the criminal activity occurring in Pleasant Hill may have increased resident's comfort and commitment to involvement in the neighbourhood, leading to significant positive change in the perception of participation and feelings of safety and security. These social perceptions are important as they may change the way residents feel about using the space in their neighbourhood and the way they interact with others. These changes may also be attributed to a greater degree of social capital.

Social capital is an interesting and useful outcome to explore in regard to quality of life. According to Robert Putnam (2000, p. 289), a renowned advocate for the importance of social capital in society, social capital can operate "through psychological and biological processes to improve individual's lives. Mounting evidence suggests that people whose lives are rich in social capital cope better with traumas and fight illness more effectively." He also expands on positive affects of social capital in a neighbourhood such as improved safety, friendliness and cleanliness. This occurs because people are motivated by other people's actions as demonstrated in the following quote: "people are profoundly motivated not merely by their own choices and circumstances, but also by the choices and circumstances of their neighbours" (Putnam, 2000, p. 312). The presence of strong feelings of social capital also enables networks of support and the "enforcement of positive standards for youths and offers then access to mentors, role models, educational sponsors, and job contacts outside the neighbourhood" (Putnam, 2000, p. 312). It is possible that these effects may also be influencing the social cohesion variables if there are people moving into the neighbourhood with strong social ties to each other or persons already settled in Pleasant Hill.

There was not however, a corresponding positive shift in the feelings of safety from violent or property crime or protection services. These results will take time to change as Pleasant Hill is still experiencing higher incidents of

criminal activity than many other areas in Saskatoon. There was also a negative change in comfort calling on neighbours which may be explained in part by the lack of change in feelings about criminal activity. Perhaps residents felt that social services were more appropriate avenues of support in times of need compared to the potential goodwill of neighbours.

The ranking of neighbourhood organizations, shops and services, schools, health services, recreation services and caregiver services did not show significant changes but there was a positive change in the perception of social services. The Pleasant Hill LAP recommendations placed a heavy emphasis on involving the social programs in the area to network and reduce redundancy of existing programs as well as improve communication to ensure resources were available and accessible to the people who need them. This emphasis on resource allocation and education may have helped stimulate this significant positive change in the perception of social services/programs.

The demographic trends show positive increases in the age of residents with a larger percentage in the 25-34 year old category as well as the 45-54 year old category. Age may have positively influenced the overall life satisfaction outcomes as age has been found to influence how respondents perceive this variable (Williams, 2002). These ages represent an important time in people's lives in relation to their career and life ambitions. The 25-34 year old category are becoming immersed in the work force and are often starting a family, while the 45-54 year old category are often well established in their career.

There has also been an increase in ethnic diversity between 2001 and 2004 and a decrease in the number of married respondents, both trends showing similar patterns in the 1996 and 2001 Census overall (City of Saskatoon, 2003b). Education levels show a slight increase, though there are still a large percentage of individuals in Pleasant Hill who have no post secondary education. The number of people with less than a grade nine education is decreasing which is a positive trend as education levels have been shown to have a significant impact on quality of life (Williams, 2002). Lower education levels as well as single-family status have been found to have a negative bearing on individual's perception of quality of life (Williams, 2001).

There are positive trends seen in changes in household income. There is a substantial decrease in the number of households earning less than \$19,999 annually and a significant increase in the middle-income brackets. This is significant because in 2001, over 40% of the population was earning less than the neighbourhood average of \$26,753. In 2004, over 65% of the population was earning more than \$20,000 and there was a substantial increase in individuals earning between \$30,000 and \$39,999. There was a decline in the upper income

bracket (\$60,000-69,999), but overall this is a very positive trend, which has been continuing since 1996 (City of Saskatoon, 2003b).

According to the City of Saskatoon Pleasant Hill 2003 Community Profile, the changes in household income may be explained by changes in the occupations of residents in the neighbourhood from 1996-2001. There was a large increase in management, administration and health and science fields and a decline in primary industry work as well as service oriented occupations. These trends are expected to continue as the economy continues to shift from industrial to post-industrial (City of Saskatoon, 2003b).

Higher levels of education, household income, changes in occupation and positive changes in the perception of income compared to others may be contributing to the increase in overall life satisfaction variable. This is congruent with other findings regarding life satisfaction as these variables determine an individual's personal financial freedom and stability (Parkes, Kearns & Atkinson, 2002). The 2001 and 2004 QoL findings show some positive results but Pleasant Hill has a long way to go in terms of measurable improvements. There are some improvements and this comparison shows a meaningful glimpse into the respondent's perception of quality of life variables over time.

The following chapter explores the changes in the perception of quality of life in the QoL 2001 and 2004 face-to-face interviews. It also explores important relationships between the social and structural variables in determining quality of life outcomes.

7.0 The Qualitative Analysis of the 2001 and 2004 Face-to-Face Interviews

Introduction

This chapter reviews the themes from the 2001 and 2004 face-to-face interviews. It is separated into two sections, divided by year. The two iterations revealed similar thematic categories which allow a comparison between the two years. The categories are: 1) Contributions to Quality of Life; 2) The Perception of the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood; 3) The Positive Attributes of Pleasant Hill; 4) The Negative Attributes of Pleasant Hill, and; 5) Positive Change.

The eight 2001 and eight 2004 Quality of Life interviews revealed the factors that contributed to a positive or negative perception of quality of life in relation to Saskatoon, the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and the respondents' personal quality of life. The continuity of the interview schedules across the two surveys accentuates the importance of the similarities and differences that were captured in the respondents' perceptions (See Appendix E and F). The social and structural characteristics that proved to be important were similar across the sixteen interviews and two iterations of data. The respondents highlighted the importance of safety, stability, and social and structural interventions at the neighbourhood level to improve quality of life. The importance of social cohesion was also demonstrated. There was a clear desire to renew hope and pride in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood.

7.1 2001 Quality of Life Findings

"I would like it if everybody in the neighbourhood would be satisfied with their life, everybody lived good and doesn't have problems" (P.2001#40).

An overview of the 2001 Quality of Life interviews from the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood revealed that six out of the eight respondents believed that there was an overall feeling of optimism in Saskatoon. The reasons cited included growing economic opportunities, the relatively low cost of living, and the accessibility to amenities including parks, cultural and recreational events, and shopping. One of the optimistic respondents also commented on Saskatoon maintaining the "community sense" of a small town (P.2001#65). The feelings of safety and stability of the City, as well as visible improvements to infrastructure were highlighted by five individuals. Overall, there were no specific negative characteristics listed about the City of Saskatoon, though two of the respondents were skeptical of the optimism others expressed, their feelings are explored in the following quotes:

“They [residents of Saskatoon] don’t want to admit things are not really great” (P.2001#9).

“Well, probably most of them haven’t lived in this area” (P.2001#66).

7.1.1 Contributions to Quality of Life

The 2001 respondents were satisfied with their personal quality of life to varying degrees, stating a definite “yes” in two cases. The majority of the respondents were more conservative with their responses. Their quality of life was fine in the absence of problems, with three individuals stating financial responsibilities as a major factor in determining their personal quality of life. Work obligations consumed more time and energy than respondents would ideally want, just to meet their basic needs. This struggle to find a balance between work and financial security is expressed in these quotes:

“I think it could be better. I think if anybody told me when I was thirty that I would be working at sixty, I would have laughed at them” (P.2001#9).

“It’s just average and I have to work really hard to keep it there, to keep us where we are. It’s not great” (P.2001#65).

Financial security plays an important role in quality of life and was a high priority for respondents, as was family, safety and employment. Respondents spoke about how priorities shift in different stages of life, especially regarding the need for stable employment and housing when providing for a family. When asked what the respondents would want changed for an improved quality of life, the responses were again focused on improving the stability and security of their families, safety of their City and neighbourhood, and their financial situation. This quote highlights the shift in priorities of one of the respondents:

“When I first bought [my house] I was single and that was fine. I really didn’t care. But it’s not the place where you would want to raise a family or live with a family” (P.2001#65).

7.1.2 The Perceptions of the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood

The overall perception of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood was negative in contrast to the perception of the City of Saskatoon. This was influenced by people’s negative experiences and the perception of the neighbourhood by others. Some of the respondents had a more positive spin on the negative perception and had developed coping mechanisms. There was recognition that the reputation of

Pleasant Hill was poor but the respondents who were content in the neighbourhood saw positive attributes, including friendliness in others. They believed it was a “good neighbourhood” that had problems which were not indigenous to Pleasant Hill, as they also existed elsewhere. This positive perception was relatively rare, as the respondent’s who were optimistic had not experienced firsthand any of the negative aspects in the neighbourhood - such as vandalism or home invasion, living in one of the few areas in Pleasant Hill where the majority of residents are homeowners rather than renters. The following quotes illustrate the positive perception of the neighbourhood:

“When people ask you where you live and I tell them on 20th Street they say, “Oh my God!” But it isn’t as bad as people think it is” (P.2001#69).

“There are a few bad places maybe but I think that is the same everywhere. We don’t have all that much trouble around here” (P.2001#5).

“Oh, I like it here. People say, oh you live on the Westside! But the Westside is very nice” (P.2001#5).

The negative perceptions of the neighbourhood were more prevalent with varying degrees of fear and mistrust. One of the respondents, a single male, recognized that Pleasant Hill was not considered the best neighbourhood and may in fact be the roughest in the City, but he adapted by getting two large rottweiler dogs for security purposes. He acknowledged that he would like to live in another neighbourhood but was willing to make adjustments at this stage in his life; he mentioned that he would not accept the challenges of the neighbourhood if he had a family. The other respondents mirrored this sentiment with six out of eight wishing to live in a better neighbourhood with less crime but many felt trapped and resigned because of their financial situation. There was also the general feeling that the Eastside was given more attention from the City and that the Westside was forgotten, as illustrated by the following quotes:

“...I’d want to live in a better area... some place where there is less crime, where there is peace and quiet” (P.2001#14).

“It’s actually below average where we live but it’s all we can afford...I wish we could move out of this area...and feel safer” (P.2001#65)

“Probably the Eastside would be happier than the Westside about their neighbourhoods...and it seems like we get neglected” (P.2001#65).

7.1.3 The Positive Attributes of Pleasant Hill

Though there was an overall negative perception of the neighbourhood, there were positive characteristics acknowledged by all of the respondents. One respondent who reported a positive perception of Pleasant Hill was impressed with the accessible services, transportation and parks. One respondent, living on the westside of the neighbourhood was impressed with how people cleaned up their yards and the general friendliness of their street. She felt safe, though she did not go too far from home into the rest of the neighbourhood. Similarly, five of the other respondents highlighted accessibility to transportation and services among the positive features of the neighbourhood. Affordability was another highlight for three of the respondents. One respondent mentioned new social and structural interventions as a positive characteristic, mentioning a new streetlight as well as more police patrolling the area, "they are trying to do something" (P.2001#14). Four of the respondents also highlighted friendliness of neighbours as a positive attribute, a variable of social cohesion.

7.1.4 The Negative Attributes of Pleasant Hill

Unfortunately, the negative characteristics of Pleasant Hill were pervasive in each interview. The main issues were upkeep and safety. The lesser problems included the upkeep of streets and sidewalks, parks and boulevards and the collection of garbage. These issues were believed to be an indication of the lack of responsibility, pride and commitment to positive change by the residents and a result of the negative perceptions of the neighbourhood by the City of Saskatoon. The low rates of homeownership were mentioned by many of the respondents as one of the reasons for the lack of pride in Pleasant Hill. The transient nature of the neighbourhood was believed to be an indicator that individuals may not be committed to putting anything back into the community because they did not have the time, resources or incentive to do so, as illustrated in the following quotes:

"Well there's a lot of neighbourhoods where it's just about all rental...the people don't seem to take as much pride in their lawns or their yards like they do when everybody owns their own. They seem to be more, you know, they take care of their lawns and trees and hedges but if you get into a high rent neighbourhood, well then you don't have that pride of ownership" (P.2001#5).

"Like another bad thing about this area is that there are a lot of rentals and then people just don't care. I suppose that just kind of brings the whole neighbourhood down" (P.2001#65).

“Well, it’s slowly deteriorating and that’s due to the influx of people coming in. They don’t look after the place” (P.2001#66).

The deterioration in Pleasant Hill was a source of frustration and resignation for many of the respondents. There was a sense of negative changes over time, a cycle of lack of respect for property and then a corresponding lack of improvements and investments, even simple acts of neighbourhood upkeep such as gardening. This sense of frustration and the acknowledged gradual deterioration of the neighbourhood over time was another sentiment that was shared by the majority of respondents, as expressed in these quotes:

“You know a lot of people in this area, ten years ago had beautiful gardens. You don’t see that anymore... well what’s the sense of putting it in when it just gets destroyed” (P.2001#66).

“I feel sad about this neighbourhood because I believe at one time it was probably quite a nice family oriented neighbourhood and it’s just degenerated to a point where it’s a bad neighbourhood” (P.2001#9).

“The crime rate, all the hookers in the area. I grew up in this area thirty years ago and it wasn’t like this” (P. 2001 #14).

The more serious issues of safety - including vandalism, prostitution, drugs and alcohol abuse, and home invasions, were discussed by respondents with varying degrees of frustration, fear, anger and discouragement. The respondents were upset that the crime was right out in the open and their own safety was questioned on a daily basis, as identified by these quotes:

“Okay, well in this particular neighbourhood all you have to do is look around. We have lots of prostitutes. There’s drug deals going on. There’s lots of crime” (P.2001#9).

“There are lots of homes that are rundown, like they have broken windows and the yards are not kept up and the fences are torn down in pieces... there’s a lot of garbage around too. I know I’ve seen needles lying around” (P.2001#60).

The highly visible nature of crime in the area, as well as personal experiences with break-ins and vandalism, resulted in many of the respondents taking measures to increase their own personal safety. An elderly respondent had taken matters into his own hands by installing sharp spikes in his balcony to prevent intruders from climbing up because of repeated break and enters; when he was accosted on the street, he hit his attackers with his cane. He also stopped opening

his door and stopped walking in the neighbourhood at night. Although he has stayed in the neighbourhood, many of the other elderly residents had moved away because they were scared. Other respondents made choices regarding their safety as well, such as coming home in the daylight. Beyond personal safety, there was the concern of protecting family members, which two respondents expressed:

“Because I’m working a lot of hours. Like I have to go back out tonight and I don’t like leaving [my family] here. We have an alarm but it’s not 100% safe either” (P.2001#65).

“...I am also concerned about my son. I try not to think about it but I do worry about him being kidnapped or something like that. Not only that but getting hurt by somebody else” (P.2001#60).

With these negative aspects playing out in respondent’s daily lives, there was a sense of resignation and powerlessness, with few believing it would improve in the near future. The respondents felt neglected and forgotten by the local government and police services, as illustrated in the following quotes:

“I don’t think it will improve” (P.2001#66).

“Because nothing seems to be getting done in the way of cleaning some of these bad areas up” (P.2001#9).

“Whereas if it was a different area, I think it would be treated differently” (P.2001#65).

7.1.5 Positive Change

In the face of fear and adversity, there was a glimmer of hope expressed by a few of the respondents. They saw affirming actions and positive changes entrenched in the neighbourhood. The respondents who were most optimistic were involved and invested in their community and encouraged others to get involved. The reasons for getting involved varied but included the need to keep an eye on what was going on, and the desire to meet people and contribute to the community. The reasons for not getting involved were time and financial commitments, as well as fear and resignation.

“Nobody’s going to come around and say well, come out and do this or that. You have to make an effort yourself to go out and do things” (P.2001#5).

“I don’t think it’s worthwhile and I don’t think it’s safe” (P.2001#66).

Personal responsibility and investment in the neighbourhood were explored as a contribution to quality of life. Four of the respondents voiced how maintaining their yard and property made a difference to their own quality of life as well as the contribution these improvements made to the perception of the neighbourhood, as expressed in the following quotes:

“I think that’s one of the most important things, to keep your yard up, to make it look nice. When people walk by they feel friendlier. When they walk by and there’s beer bottles all over the place and stuff like that, that’s not quite right” (P.2001#14).

“There is definitely room for improvement and I intend to do whatever it is that I can do to make it better for myself and my husband” (P.2001#9).

“I’ve painted every year. I am trying my best [upkeep of property]. I shingled this year. I try my best and that’s all I can do. But if someone drove by they probably would say that it doesn’t look very good but I think eventually it will, hopefully... every house that looks better, I guess it helps” (P.2001#65).

The respondents wished to see interventions by the City of Saskatoon, prioritizing access to services such as education, housing, health care and policing. Education was a key issue as many of the respondents believed it was the only way to truly improve the area. The respondents all acknowledged the need to solve the problems at their roots and there was an understanding of why people were drawn into a criminal lifestyle, especially the young children who were coerced into prostitution. There was no anger or blame associated with these individuals, rather the respondents wanted the individuals who were creating these dangerous conditions, such as slum landlords and gang members held accountable. The understanding and awareness of the depth of the problems is illustrated in the following quotes:

“You’ve got to start at the bottom. Like if they don’t do education, people aren’t going to be educated and then they’re going to be gangsters, you know. I think the most important thing is education. Next thing is health care” (P.2001#14).

“Yeah, exactly, and you can’t just say well move them off to some other corner of the City... something has to be done to solve the problem” (P.2001#9).

“The point is that the vicious cycle of welfare and poverty that goes on from generation to generation” (P.2001#9)

7.1.6 A Summary of the 2001 Face-to-Face Interviews

As identified by the respondents, there are numerous positive and negative attributes of individual's personal situations as well as neighbourhood features that are contributing to or detracting from a positive quality of life. Safety was the major priority in the 2001 iteration as well as the need to target the negative aspects of the neighbourhood which were overshadowing many of the positive features for the respondents.

7.2 2004 Quality of Life Interviews

The eight 2004 respondents were less optimistic about the perception of overall quality of life in Saskatoon compared to the 2001 interviews, with four reporting pessimism, though four reported positive changes in their own lives and personal feelings of optimism. The reasons for the negative shift were mainly concerned with an increase in issues surrounding safety. Two respondents commented on the increase of reported crime across the City, not just in specific areas. Three people mentioned financial stresses as a likely explanation for less optimism. The positive characteristics of Saskatoon that were mentioned included the friendliness, cleanliness and small town feel. Employment opportunities, the low cost of living, the beauty of the natural environment, accessible transportation, and recreation opportunities were also cited as positive features. There were also services and organizations that were mentioned as assets to a positive quality of life in Saskatoon. These included: the Saskatoon Health Region, the University of Saskatchewan, as well as Saskatoon Police Services, and community organizations such as Quint. Four respondents mentioned civic actions and social interventions implemented by the City of Saskatoon, which included Local Area Planning. The recognition of these changes is highlighted in the following quotes:

"I think that our City went through a time when it appeared there was all talk and no walk. There were a lot of things pending and dangling as in decisions. City Council seemed to me, dismissive. They didn't seem to be able to say this is what we think is best and this is what we will do... and when your survey was taken, it was before the new Council came on. And I think if you were to ask people now they would see a decisive City Council" (P.2004#2).

"Maybe they are getting hope from the Local Area Planning Committees that have been working with the five poor neighbourhoods, you know for changing things" (P.2004#5).

The 2004 respondents listed a number of negative characteristics about the City of Saskatoon which were not expressed in 2001. These included the higher cost of activities, slow changes with regard to traffic maintenance, and frustration over the issues of safety and criminal activity, including prostitution, vandalism and gang activity. When asked why lower income individuals evaluated their quality of life better in 2004 than 2001, the reasons were not overly supportive of the findings, though increased opportunities for employment were cited.

“Overall the feeling, I think some of it is frustration with the people that they see representing them in the City... lack of confidence in the City. I am not sure but I think that as people see crime spreading to other areas other than the poor areas, it’s hitting home a little bit more” (P.2004#4).

7.2.1 Contributions to Quality of Life

Three of the 2004 respondents believed there was a significant improvement in their personal quality of life, with home ownership, financial security and neighbourhood improvement cited as the reasons for this change. The priorities for respondents mirrored those of the 2001 survey. When asked what the respondents would want changed for an improved quality of life, the responses were again centered on family, safety and financial security. Five of the respondents spoke strongly about the need to address safety concerns and the responsibility of individuals and the local government to enact change. The actions did not have to be huge sweeping change, rather one respondent mentioned simple respect for other people’s property. One respondent spoke of “better health, neighbourhood wise or civic wide” citing positive interventions such as local area planning as an example (P.2004#5).

7.2.2 The Perceptions of the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood

Though some of the respondents were optimistic about the City of Saskatoon, this did not apply whole-heartedly to Pleasant Hill. A few respondents talked about their frustration and their changing perceptions. There was still recognition of the negative perception and stigmatization from outside of the neighbourhood. The lingering feeling of being trapped carried over from the 2001 interviews, as expressed in these quotes:

“It’s very frustrating, very frustrating because I work on the eastside of town... but it’s this side that gets talked about as being the bad part of town and the girls are scared to come over and visit me at night...The neighbourhood wasn’t like this 25 years ago. And so it’s

grown around me that ways so I'm part of it. I guess I don't see it the same way was people who aren't from the neighbourhood" (P.2004#5).

"So it's feeling trapped in this neighbourhood. I have a for sale sign on the house... I have had one person here in 2.5 months... I am over here trying to sell my house to get out to what is I think a better life for my son and a better life for myself. And I can't sell the house... I feel like I have outgrown this neighbourhood... financially, morally" (P.2004#5).

"I think I have always felt that even though I don't live in what people consider the best area of town, I have always felt safe on my own. Like you take precautions but I have always felt safe until fairly recently when crime hit our family directly. Then that changed my attitude" (P.2004#4).

7.2.3 The Positive Attributes of Pleasant Hill

Though safety was still a primary concern for individuals, the majority of the 2004 respondents saw an improvement in the quality of life in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood since 2001. This was attributed to interventions in the neighbourhood targeting the underlying social and economic problems in Pleasant Hill. The respondents saw a positive commitment to change. Six of the eight respondents noticed positive changes with the greatest emphasis on housing and safety issues, mentioning more stringent controls on rental properties, a greater police presence and lower crime statistics, as well as opportunities for home ownership.

"...it would be better for me because in 2001 the area in the City where I live in was just really awful... the quality of life is a lot better than it was then" (P.2004#7).

"They might see progress being made in housing. They might see absentee landlords have to be more responsible. And that the neighbourhood in which they live has put on a bit of positive pressure for them to become more responsible" (P.2004#2).

"I think the biggest thing is the improvement in the neighbourhood. I know in my particular block, there's a lot of crime on this block or there has been a lot of problems with drugs and prostitution in our area. But I think with the programs like Quint development and that where people are becoming homeowners, they are taking more pride in the area that they are

living...they are feeling good about themselves, that's reflected in the neighbourhood. And I think it makes a difference when you can walk down your street and the grass is cut or whatever because somebody is proud of their home. You feel better about your own life I think... Where a lot of homeowners opposed to rental properties...there's pride... so I think that's a big thing that has changes, because in the last four years there has been a lot more homeownership" (P.2004#4).

7.2.4 The Negative Attributes of Pleasant Hill

The negative qualities of the neighbourhood were very similar to the 2001 accounts. Safety was the most prominent problem cited as well as the concentration of pawnshops and the lack of a viable full service grocery store. There was still a fear for personal safety as well as a feeling of powerlessness, as illustrated by the following quotes:

"I had company come for 24 hours and two of their windows were shot out of their car. The police told me it is pretty common. I had our house broken into and I had the windows taken out of my car and I had four tires slashed" (P.2004#3).

"With my son being three and a half...I'm scared to let him go anywhere in the neighbourhood, even outside the front door because two weeks ago I found a needle in my front yard... as well as gang activity" (P.2004#5).

7.2.5 Positive Change

All of the 2004 respondents had something to say about the neighbourhood having challenges but there was a feeling that the neighbourhood was moving in the right direction, that there was noticeable progress. Two contributing factors to these positive changes have been the power of pride in the neighbourhood as well as committed involvement. There was a sense of empowerment, of gaining back a sense of control that was lost, as revealed in these quotes:

"I realize that Pleasant Hill isn't the only community in a difficult position but I think we have seen progress. There has been moves made and that has been a result of neighbourhood organizations coming together, meeting with officials that have the clout to make the moves" (P.2004#2).

"It's been an education. And you feel like you are not alone not liking what you see" (P.2004#2).

"Yeah, I think it is because people are starting to take back their neighbourhoods" (P.2004#7).

Over half of the respondents were aware of interventions that were happening in Pleasant Hill. The fact that people were paying attention and investing time and money into the neighbourhood had made a significant impact on those living in Pleasant Hill, giving the respondents hope that was grounded in action, responsiveness and investment in the neighbourhood.

"I think it's the idea that people are listening and people are out there working to improve things. We have seen in the last couple years the local area plan, the local civic security audits where people could get out and have some input and feel like they are doing something towards their community. I think that [makes] people feel better about their neighbourhood and I think in some cases prior to doing the security audits, people thought that things were worse than they were" (P.2004#4).

"And having these written up for the City to look at and actually having seen some of the recommendations and that being acted upon make you feel better about your neighbourhood too" (P.2004#4).

The respondents were immersed in making changes for themselves and in the neighbourhood as a whole, as it was recognized that involvement was not only necessary but in itself had its rewards. Much like in 2001, personal responsibility and investment in the neighbourhood were explored as a contribution to quality of life. This feeling of empowerment was actualized for many of the respondents. There was a sense of power in taking action, with the very real possibility of having small changes - such as setting an example and mentoring, contributing to large and on-going positive results, as expressed in these quotes:

"Involvement just gives you personal satisfaction that you have tried" (P.2004#2).

"It is not enough to go out and complain, you need to go out and do something about it" (P.2004#4).

"We just went to town and it took a long time for other buildings to follow suit. Um, but I wouldn't give up on them...you got to start out small because it takes time for changes to come" (P. 2004#7).

The initiative that some responsible residents in the neighbourhood have shown has made them leaders in the community. Their actions were immersed in hope as well as pride in what they believe the neighbourhood could be and it sent a positive message that slowly spread through the neighbourhood. The message was clear that many of the people living in Pleasant Hill cared about their neighbourhood and were committed to making it a better place. Even the idea that a sense of community exists in the neighbourhood was significant, as illustrated by the following quotes:

“It makes you feel like you belong and it inspires others to follow your example” (P.2004#7)

“That is what makes life here worth living, knowing people are really starting to care about their community” (P.2004#7).

“I think having friends and neighbours, that lack of isolation makes a difference... I think that can contribute a lot to your quality of life ...we worked together to build a better community” (P.2004#4).

The interventions in the neighbourhood and City that were prioritized by the 2004 respondents concentrated on providing access to services similar to those noted by respondents in 2001. Education, affordable housing, health care and policing were mentioned with education once again understood as a keystone in change, the importance of which is highlighted in the following quote:

“I think they need to increase policing for what’s happening right now. But they need to start education so that they can do less policing in the future. Because I think education is probably one of the biggest things for pride in yourself, that is what these people need” (P.2004#5).

The 2004 responses highlighted important changes in attitude as well as an awareness and involvement in an undercurrent of positive initiatives going on in the neighbourhood. Though many of the concerns that were prevalent in 2001 were still present in the 2004 responses, there was a greater sense of action, accountability, as well as hope. It is evident that the respondents were seeing positive changes. Even small improvements in the neighbourhood, such as property maintenance, made a difference. It is important to note that many of the responses highlighted the need to stop the vicious cycles of crime with interventions for increased education and stability. Home ownership was noted throughout the responses as a positive way to begin this stabilization process and improve Pleasant Hill, allowing more people to take pride and make investments

in the neighbourhood. The 2004 responses show more patience with the circumstances in the neighbourhood after seeing the implementation of numerous social initiatives and structural modifications, especially in regard to projects targeting housing and safety issues. There was a sense now that there have been projects that have been started and there was less desperation.

The 2004 responses were not a plea for help; they were a collective voice of personal and civic progress, building on a neighbourhood's experiences. These responses were a collection of negative tipping and positive turning points, with individual's experiences and perceptions providing the insight to action and change. It is pertinent to note the number of references to the Local Area Planning process as well as to areas targeted for recommendations. Though this survey was not asking specifically about civic actions, there were numerous instances where the LAP and local involvement were mentioned, both as an avenue to neighbourhood improvement and as a tool for empowerment and investment of time and energies.

7.3 A Summary of the Findings in the 2001 and 2004 Quality of Life Interviews

The 2001 and 2004 quality of life interviews show a turning point regarding the perception and experience of urban issues at both the city and neighbourhood level, especially regarding safety and the physical deterioration of Pleasant Hill. With an increase in the awareness of and implementation of interventions impacting the social and structural environment of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, there has been an important, though subtle shift in perceptions of quality of life. The core values affecting quality of life remained strong across both iterations pertaining to the City of Saskatoon, the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and the personal quality of life of respondents. This is not surprising as both iterations highlighted the importance of a stable, safe and positive economic, environmental and social landscape with accessible and affordable opportunities at the city and neighbourhood level. Both iterations highlighted the importance of safety, respect, and personal and institutional responsibility. There were common threads connecting the need for education, homeownership and pride in creating a healthy and sustainable urban experience for all. It is important to note that there was desire for neighbourhood well-being, not just personal improvements in quality of life. The respondents all felt it was important that everyone had the same access to services and opportunities,

The 2001 and 2004 interviews stand alone, telling independent stories of how individuals see their lives, their neighbourhood, and their City; together they paint a dynamic picture of change. Unfortunately, the urban issues that caused feelings of fear, frustration and resignation in 2001 were not 'fixed' by 2004. The concerns over safety, the deterioration of the neighbourhood and economic

stability were repeated in 2004 at the personal, neighbourhood and city level. Both iterations explored feelings of inequality and neglect because of the stigmatization of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. Individuals still felt it was necessary in 2004 to take personal measures of safety but there was a growing recognition of positive interventions. Some of these were mentioned in 2001, but most of the optimism regarding positive change in Pleasant Hill in 2001 was immersed in individual investments such as gardening, and the feeling of personal pride and responsibility.

Both iterations highlighted the importance of intervention from the City of Saskatoon, especially regarding housing, policing and education. The commitment of the residents in Pleasant Hill demonstrated that individual actions could make an impact, even with the depth of the issues in the neighbourhood. The 2001 interviews had an urgency regarding the need for change but the individuals who were not seeing it were trying to do the things they could do by themselves. The 2004 interviews contained recognition that changes were happening the neighbourhood through civic action and social and structural interventions, mentioning the LAP as well as Quint as a start.

The two iterations highlighted the importance of home ownership, financial security and neighbourhood improvement in maintaining a positive quality of life. The difference regarding the 2004 interviews compared to 2001 was the theme of progress. This undercurrent of 'moving in the right direction' had the affect of empowerment, of renewing optimism and hope. There was a stronger sense of involvement and pride in the actions, however small, taken in Pleasant Hill as well as a vision of where it could go if continued effort was put into homeownership, education, safety and financial stability. These key variables served as the foundation for a positive and equitable quality of life for individuals with positive and continuous affects for the neighbourhood.

The next chapter explores the perception of the Pleasant Hill LAP process from the perspective of the Planning Group members involved in the process. This chapter highlights the nuances of the process that were important to the individuals involved and the contribution it made to the neighbourhood as a community development strategy.

8.0 The LAP Process: Views From the Pleasant Hill Planning Group

“... getting people to understand that this is a community in crisis”(P.2006#9).

Introduction

This chapter explores the 2006 key informant responses from the Pleasant Hill Planning Group (n=12). These interviews were conducted in July of 2006 with residents, business owners and City representatives who identified themselves as part of the Pleasant Hill Planning Group. In total, there were twenty-three individuals involved in the Planning Group but only twelve were interviewed because data saturation was reached and the individuals who were interviewed provided good representation of many of the interests and experiences in the neighbourhood. These interviews were undertaken to understand people's involvement in and perception of the Local Area Planning process.

This chapter is broken down into four main sections. The first section explores the key informants' backgrounds to provide the context for their involvement in the Pleasant Hill LAP. The second section explores the reasons why key informants got involved in the LAP process. The third section explores the positive perceptions of the LAP process and the final section explores the negative perceptions and barriers inherent to the LAP process. The responses of the 2006 key informants, mirror and support the perceptions voiced in the 2001 and 2004 QoL interviews with regard to factors affecting QoL, the positive and negative perceptions of the neighbourhood as well as the Pleasant Hill LAP vision and recommendations.

8.1 Key informants' Backgrounds

“It means that I care about where I live more than anything. I am looking for peace and security in the area which we have chosen to live in and hopefully not being forced out of” (P.2006#1).

The twelve key informants came from diverse backgrounds, the majority being long term residents, having lived and/or worked in the neighbourhood for over ten years. One homeowner had been in Pleasant Hill for over forty-one years. The demographics represented were varied, with an almost equal balance of males (5) and females (7). A number of the key informants were parents and a few were grandparents. The age of key informants was not asked but all individuals were over eighteen years of age. Two key informants were Aboriginal. There was also representation from the Métis community. One of the key informants was physically disabled, limiting his/her mobility. Two of the key

informants have become homeowners through Quint Development Corporation. There were two business owners, as well as representation from both the Pleasant Hill Community Association and Riversdale Business Improvement District. Also included was a City of Saskatoon employee hired to conduct the Safety Audit initiated by the LAP.

The key informants were asked about how they had become involved in the Pleasant Hill LAP. Not surprisingly, the participants had a strong stake in the community, reflected in involvement for personal reasons and professional obligations. Each individual had a high degree of awareness of the problems in the neighbourhood. Three of the key informants were involved professionally as they were employed by the City of Saskatoon. Three of the key informants were already involved in the Pleasant Hill Community Association and heard about the process when it was introduced during a meeting. Two other key informants were involved in the Riversdale Improvement District for professional reasons and became involved with the Pleasant Hill LAP because of the overlapping jurisdictions (See Figure 2.4)⁵. The other key informants had heard about the process through word of mouth or letters and posters distributed by the City of Saskatoon Planning Branch, though one respondent did not get involved in the process until the LAP Final Report was distributed.

8.2 Reasons For Involvement

The main reasons for involvement in the Pleasant Hill LAP can be grouped into four key themes pertaining to the perception of the neighbourhood: 8.2.1) The Need for Positive Change: the Perception of Safety and the Deterioration of the Neighbourhood Over Time; 8.2.2) The Need to Gain Respect and Equality for Pleasant Hill: Beat Stigmatization and Build a Positive Neighbourhood Identity; 8.2.3) Build Hope, Stability and Pride in the Neighbourhood: Homeownership and Investment, and; 8.2.4) The Dream of Reinforcing and Building Social Capital and Community. All of the key informants believed it was important to be involved and to represent the neighbourhood in this process, believing that this effort was a starting point in breaking the numerous negative cycles that were overpowering Pleasant Hill.

8.2.1 The Need for Positive Change: The Perception of Safety and the Deterioration of the Neighbourhood Over Time

The perception of safety in Pleasant Hill before the LAP was strikingly

⁵ The Pleasant Hill neighbourhood from Avenue P South is included in the Riversdale Village, a commercial and residential area which has been celebrated and marketed for its history and cultural opportunities. The Riversdale Improvement District is working to improve this area through the creation of a cohesive and dynamic economic and cultural plan.

negative, with many key informants expressing fear as either a reason for involvement in the LAP or as support for intervention from the City of Saskatoon. The problems were very similar to the issues spoken about in the 2001 and 2004 QoL interviews. There was a lot of frustration and fear, with key informants commenting on the scale and severity of the issues. These issues are highlighted in the quotes below:

“We have child prostitution. I’ve been down here at four o’clock in the morning and seen little kids in diapers running out in the streets, nobody looking after them. We have drug problems, we pick up needles here all the time...”(P.2006#6).

“There are so many issues that are going on in this community... lack of education, all kinds of issues that are just not the City’s problems they are provincial and federal problems. Policing is a big issue”(P.2006#6).

One respondent was motivated to become involved because he/she was so upset after experiencing multiple home invasions; walking in twice on home intruders.

“It was because I didn’t feel safe anymore. Honestly I felt that the police were not doing their job and um, nobody was listening. We were getting a lot of gang violence. You would hear out your windows at night the gangs F-this, F-that, yelling and screaming at night. It wasn’t safe and at that time, my ex-husband had moved in to protect me. My nerves were that bad. I was really, really scared. I had to go to therapy. It was that bad” (P.2006#9).

All of the key informants spoke to some extent about the deterioration of the neighbourhood: economically, socially and structurally. The perspectives of the residents, business owners and the City of Saskatoon employees did not differ greatly, they all highlighted the need for action because the problems were growing in frequency and severity. The problems had reached a negative tipping point for the key informants, a critical point where the problems were no longer acceptable and change was necessary. This is expressed in the following quotes:

“...all of a sudden we had alcoholism and we had theft and we had things we weren’t used to and it was crazy” (P.2006#9).

“We were noticing destructive changes in our community and then heard that there was a meeting”(P.2006#4).

“Because we needed to do something here, the area had gone down in quality and safety” (P. 2006#1).

8.2.2 *The Need to Gain Respect and Equality for Pleasant Hill: Beat Stigmatization and Build a Positive Neighbourhood Identity*

The negative stigmatization of Pleasant Hill was another theme highlighted in the 2001 QoL interviews. For the key informants, it was a challenging problem because it meant changing other's perception of the neighbourhood, proving that Pleasant Hill was not as bad as people thought it was, and that it was worth fighting for and investing in. For the key informants, this stigmatization perpetuates a negative cycle of decline. People who could leave the neighbourhood did, leaving more vacancies and opportunities for landlords to take over the properties, this continued to a steady decline in homeownership and an increase in the number of rental properties. The business community suffered as keystone businesses moved out of the neighbourhood and in many cases, were not replaced. The residents began to question their ability to live in the neighbourhood safely. Through the LAP process, the key informants began to address this issue and other important issues related to it (like gaining new homeowners, new businesses and new opportunities) to increase the validity and viability of the neighbourhood in the eyes of the other residents in Saskatoon. The negative perceptions of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood from outside the neighbourhood are expressed in the following quotes:

“All of a sudden all of the drugs and stuff come in and it made everyone look down on the community and feel – don't go over to Pleasant Hill, you know you live there, you are going to get hurt and things like that” (P.2006#3).

“... but at that time, my neighbourhood was getting beat up verbally and in the press, off the street we've seen a decline in business here” (P.2006#7).

There was hope that the perception of Pleasant Hill could change if there was a real commitment to target the roots of the problems in the neighbourhood, as highlighted in the following quotes:

“The area, there is nothing wrong with the area. There are a lot of misconceptions and perceptions that are wrong. My opinion is that much the same as it is easy to kick someone when they are down, the neighbourhood itself is down and out for the count, it was very easy for the media and others in the City to jump on and say yeah, you're right there is nothing worth saving, they should bulldoze it and the problem will go away. The problem isn't going to be solved with bulldozing, it's deeper than that” (P.2006#7).

“I was happy to get involved. I wanted to see some change. I wanted to get a better home for the people in the Pleasant Hill area. I wanted them to be as important as people would be on the East side” (P.2006#3).

8.2.3 Build Hope, Stability and Pride in the Neighbourhood: Homeownership and Investment

The lack of homeownership in the neighbourhood was a problem that was voiced by the majority of the key informants, mirroring the concerns voiced in the 2001 and 2004 QoL interviews.⁶ The high volume of multi-unit housing was a major concern, influenced by the issue of transience and the influx of First Nations people into Pleasant Hill from the First Nations Reserves. The key informants recognized that the changes and deterioration were not because there was an influx of people moving into Pleasant Hill, but rather, because the necessary supports and opportunities for people moving in were not in place or were not being accessed. Homeownership was a recognized way to build stability and pride in the neighbourhood as illuminated in these quotes:

“By 2001 I was saying, “Oh my God this is a big problem.” You know what happened, I don’t blame anybody, except maybe the City a little bit because all of a sudden we had the City that had built all these poor (rental) apartments, then we had a vacancy rate, then we have all these people move in and nobody said where’s the training, where’s the help for these people” (P. 2006#9).

“I see people come in and they are just stopping by before moving back to the reserve or moving away and we are trying to keep them from being so transient. To make the community nice for them would be a good thing so that they could stay and see all these changes and maybe the kids, because the community here is a lot of Aboriginal people, I am hoping to see more of them get into the workforce and have a better education and know who they are. Because I am Aboriginal I feel that if I’ve done it, if I have made it this far in this community so can others. That’s why I bought my house here” (P.2006#3).

⁶ Most notably, there were multiple families living in single unit housing with a growing number of houses that were unhealthy and unfit for habitation growing at the same time as demand for housing was also increasing.

8.2.4 *The Dream of Reinforcing and Building Social Capital and Community*

The principle of ‘social capital’, of bringing people together and working towards similar goals, linked to the LAP process and was a motivating factor behind many of the respondent’s reasons for involvement in the LAP. It was both a precursor and an outcome of the LAP process. All of the key informants believed it was important to be involved and represent the neighbourhood in this process by contributing their ideas, time and energies. The responses were grounded in hope and a recognition that the process had to start somewhere and it could start with them individually. Many of the key informants spoke of the goal of making the neighbourhood better for everyone, as highlighted in the following quotes:

“We just needed to try and get enough people interested to turn it around” (P.2006#1).

“I am a long time resident and home owner in the area. I am a very strong believer that bad things happen but they don’t need to consume our community” (P.2006#4).

“Because I was really involved in the community at the time with the community association and my daughter was just young then and I wanted to make the world a better place (laughs), for the community, you know, you get involved” (P.2006#2).

The ways that individuals were involved in the process varied, though the majority spoke of being active and engaged; some were outspoken and passionate, and some were less vocal but modeled the behavior they wanted to see on a daily basis. This quote demonstrates this commitment:

“I’ve also been just participating in helping clean the park behind me. Just living an example, keeping my own yard clean, showing pride in my community and when we walk just for exercise we carry a plastic bag with us and we just pick up trash as we go. It’s just a way of life to be tidy... we were vigilant over some of the intrusiveness and just sat and stared at it or used binoculars or pretend cameras, just discouraged some of the stuff from our block and we really only reached a small area but everyone did a little and it has worked better that way” (P.2006#4).

Many of the key informants participated in the roles they played in the neighbourhood and wider community. Vocal and connected residents spoke about spreading the message ensuring the recognition and acknowledgement of the views expressed at the meetings, as well as those which were discussed in more

informal community settings. This ongoing participation reached outside the meetings, as seen by this quote:

“I gave voice to some of the problems, identified some of the problems and tried to find solutions ... So dialogue during the meetings, dialogue with the participants after the meetings and dialogue to the community members because a lot of people would not attend the community meetings so I would go to back yards and talk with the neighbours and say “what do you think? Where’s your idea of what we can do to solve the problems?” (P.2006#9).

Other stakeholders, including the members from the Riversdale Business Improvement District, had a responsibility to be involved in the process. This municipal corporation represented the businesses in the area and acted as a consultant between the City and the neighbourhood. The City of Saskatoon employees, including the Safety Audit Coordinator and the Community Association President were involved in the neighbourhood in professional capacities as resources, facilitators and representatives of the many different neighbourhood interests. Members from the business community were also present, providing feedback from their perspectives.

The key informants were involved because of many different reasons and obligations, all of which were important in their own right, whether it was: to make the neighbourhood a better place for their grandchildren; to run a prosperous company, or; to attract new businesses into Pleasant Hill. There was a commitment to contribute to the LAP and to the neighbourhood itself. The themes highlighted were similar to the concerns voiced in the 2001 and 2004 QoL interviews with regards to safety, deterioration and the need to build a stable foundation by reducing the stigmatization of the neighbourhood through homeownership, pride and positive interventions.

8.3 The Positive Perceptions of the LAP Process

There was an overwhelmingly positive response to many facets of the LAP process. The key informants spoke eloquently and at length about their personal involvement and their perception of participatory planning in this context. It was inspiring to listen to the passionate stances and experiences that the LAP facilitated in these active community members. It was evident in the responses that participation in the LAP planning process has built empowerment and engagement in Pleasant Hill. This was achieved through a commitment to four key components of the LAP process highlighted by the key informants: 8.3.1) Education and Awareness; 8.3.2) The LAP as a Representative and Supportive Process; 8.3.3) Neighbourhood Representation, and; 8.4.4) Building Hope, Social

Capital and Community Capacity. These positive attributes have helped engage the key informants and made the LAP a positive and productive strategy for the facilitation of change in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood.

8.3.1 Education and Awareness

“And I realize this isn’t just happening in Pleasant Hill and this isn’t just happening in Canada, it’s happening throughout the world, so this is important” (P. 2006#9).

When asked to identify the features of the LAP process that have been successful in Pleasant Hill, the power of information was a resounding and repeated response. The key informants expressed the difference it made knowing that people outside the boundaries of the neighbourhood knew of the challenges within Pleasant Hill and were reacting, without judgment, to help initiate steps toward positive change. There was an understanding that the neighbourhood was finally not alone, that people were listening. It was a step forward, away from the hopelessness that pervaded the neighbourhood. It was also a sign that there was a commitment, from more than the people living there, to making it a safe and healthy place to live and work. It was the starting point. Pleasant Hill wanted equitable treatment and respect as a neighbourhood and genuine action and support in dealing with the problems. These quotes signify the change in responsiveness that was shown through the process:

“But this is a starting point. It’s positive and the City is looking at it, starting a process. It is a beginning. It has been very positive and I think you have to realize that not all the problems are civic, some are provincial and some are federal. I am on a first name basis with the Premier. It has started the lobbying process” (P.2006#9).

“I think the biggest success was awareness, frank awareness from people in charge, including police, community, City, the province, just an awareness put a lot of people into, gave them ideas that they could implement for themselves. They could watch, just aid each other and complement each other” (P.2006#4).

The City of Saskatoon representatives were not surprised with the issues that emerged from the LAP process, but the acknowledgement of the concerns was just as important to them as to the residents, as demonstrated by these quotes:

“Well I think what becomes abundantly clear when you are looking at core communities who are maybe more challenged; the people in these communities are looking for exactly the same

things as people in other communities are looking for. They want clean streets, they want safe streets. They want amenities and it just reinforces that the needs of the community are standard through the city and province and country”(P.2006#10).

“...but one of the best parts was that at least they see that the City is trying to do something”(P.2006#12).

“I think what it does is reinforce actions on issues that everybody knows are out there”(P.2006#10).

The commitment of the LAP to be a learning experience, centered on feasible solutions, was another area of marked success. The key informants were happy about gaining practical knowledge about the planning and political processes necessary to make realistic changes in the neighbourhood, as demonstrated by this respondent’s perception:

“I am more impressed with the results of the recommendations and what the City, the planning community did achieve - at least in the short term. We don’t know what this is leading to in the long term but in the short term, there was a really, there was some decent results. I feel like the doable things, the sort of stuff that didn’t cost a lot of money that was sort of common sense but over looked including us becoming aware of what was happening, made the doable things happen. We weren’t looking for pie in the sky, we were just looking for comfortable changes, you know, that they recognized that the City came to our community and began to see how really deteriorated it was, that they brought it out from under the rug and took a look at it and that’s what this thing really did”(P.2006#4).

The accessibility of the information about fiscal and political processes made participating in the LAP more meaningful. The key informants spoke about gaining an understanding of: how long things took to change; how the decision and implementation process were shaped, as well as; how to communicate their needs effectively. Demystifying the planning process reduced frustration and built more realistic expectations, as illustrated by the following quotes:

“...but the only surprise would be the amount of time that it actually takes. You would think that it would be done in a couple of months but it is a year long process of preparation and doing meetings and consultation and having that interaction with them to the point where you finally have a draft report that you again take

out to the community. You have to give them an opportunity to have input into the draft so, the process takes a long time... that's the only thing that really surprised me but you have to take that long to do it. Don't try to rush it" (P.2006#8).

"I know there were quite a few people who were still, I guess agitated about how long it is taking but then again I know how long it takes because everything has to go through the City and that takes time. To get a tree planted or a park bench placed takes a couple of years so I know it's going to be a long process before we see much change in our community" (P.2006#3).

The LAP process also heightened awareness of specific issues in the neighbourhood. Because of the extensive research the LAP provided to all the participants, as well as opportunities to ask questions and discuss the issues that were explored, the key informants noted a fuller understanding of the efforts needed to target the root of socio-economic problems and mitigate the problems with sustainable solutions. An example of this is the identification of absentee landlords. Absentee landlords own many of the derelict properties in the neighbourhood, housing that is unfit and unhealthy for habitation. Fixing up the front lawns or facades of these derelict properties does not help the people living in them in the long term. Instead, there needs to be standards and consequences put in place to ensure responsibility is taken for people's actions. Identifying the issues and exploring them deeply can assist in finding positive and sustainable solutions while reducing the feelings of fear and frustration by helping people understand what they can do and what will be done. The key informants spoke about the importance of understanding the statistics on crime as well as the negative cycles that have been created. There was also a shared feeling of empathy. For example, the key informants did not point fingers or blame the prostitutes for the presence of the sex trade; there was a shared understanding that they are victims who are trapped in negative cycles of crime. The reinforcement of these ideas are captured in these quotes:

"We are talking of over 75% of the people living in the area are not; do not own their own properties. That's the kind of things I didn't expect but that's the kind of good information that you find out" (P.2006#8).

"Identifying the fact that there was either a hot spot or an issue. I mean for me it was learning of people who couldn't afford to buy a used lawn mower or buy gas for a lawn mower they had" (P.2006#7).

“... I kept telling them we’re not going to be safe until we clear up the drugs and pimps and prostitutes who are victims. I think the prostitutes are victims, I don’t think the drug dealers and pimps are victims but maybe they are too because they get hooked into the crime cycle” (P.2006#9).

8.3.2 The LAP as a Representative and Supportive Process

The key informants spoke of the LAP as a representative and supportive process. There was an acknowledgement that the key informants felt that the neighbourhood’s needs were being examined and prioritized. The recommendations were not lip service to what the City felt was appropriate for the neighbourhood; the neighbourhood decided what was needed. This is represented in the following quotes:

“I think what it does is prioritize the infrastructure needs on the part of residents and gives the City planners a framework in which they can start dealing with the needs of the community” (P.2006#10).

“I think getting the City to understand that this is a neighbourhood under siege, they would choose which topics to talk about but we weren’t ready to talk about garbage versus safety. We weren’t ready to discuss land use issues. We wanted to talk about the safety of children” (P.2006#9).

The key informants believed the identification of key issues and community needs was achieved in part through the strong support of the Local Area Plan planners. The key informants spoke of the guidance and facilitation role the planners played in the process, without being overpowering. There was acknowledgement of a strong leadership role, as demonstrated in these quotes:

“They were telling us as much as they could tell you without saying you have to do this...” (P.2006#11).

“I think the patience that those who were facilitators, absolutely patient and thorough and again there was something in every comment which was however maybe derogatory, they drew something positive from that so that that person was validated. I though they were very very thorough” (P.2006#4).

These significant quotes from the key informants highlight the respect the planners had for the process, the participants, and the neighbourhood itself. There was a genuine appreciation of the support the planners brought to the process,

which has helped build trust and a strong working relationship between the participants and the City. The planners made themselves available to the neighbourhood during the meetings as well as anytime afterwards. By giving the neighbourhood access to information, as well as the planner's time, the key informants felt like their opinions and participation were valuable and these positive feelings of respect reinforced trust, which was a very important part of the process.

The key informants also expressed that they felt there was positive support from the City of Saskatoon, with few perceived political barriers; they also felt that the City was actively advocating for change and respect for the neighbourhood. This was captured in the following quotes:

"You cannot ask for a more fair and open process for anyone's concerns to be heard, be it publicly, one on one with the planners through the City Hall, in terms of providing an opportunity- there is no excuse for people saying they didn't have a chance or this isn't working. Sorry, I don't buy it..."(P.2006#7).

"Well, I think one aspect, one good aspect of the process was to demonstrate to residents that the administration is working on their behalf and that is really important because it does overcome or it helps to overcome that feeling of abandonment by government. So I think that was a really important stride forward"(P.2006#12).

"I guess I expected some and I think the City surprised me that they have done as much as they have and I am quite pleased with a lot of the things they have done"(P.2006#5).

8.3.3 Neighbourhood Representation

The key informants felt there was good representation of the people in the neighbourhood. People stepped up and took ownership of the process. There was a lot of effort on the part of the people and organizations in the neighbourhood to get involved, to provide a voice, as well as support for the many different needs and perspectives in Pleasant Hill. There was also a commitment to the process, whereby the key informants spoke of how they wanted to make sure it was not just their voice being heard, but that everyone got a fair chance to speak, given that everyone's opinions and ideas were valid. They felt like the opportunity for involvement was open, accessible and encouraged because "each person needs to be heard, to be engaged" (P.2006#9). The following quote demonstrates the positive perception of Pleasant Hill representation in the LAP process:

“There was good representation...there was good representation from all the different cultures in Pleasant Hill” (P.2006#3).

The key informant representing the City of Saskatoon expressed surprise at the number of people who were dedicated to the process in Pleasant Hill:

“There are so many residents that really care about what is going on on their block and in their neighbourhood and they want to live there, they want things to go well, they want to do what they can to make things better” (P.2006#12).

The support from the planners, as well as the opportunities for individuals to participate and contribute to the process, were demonstrated and facilitated through the LAP process. The most valuable aspect of the LAP process for the key informants was the public meeting. All of the key informants that frequented the meetings had something positive to say about them. According to the participants, the meetings were opportunities for learning, for communication and for sharing ideas and generating feasible solutions as a group. There was genuine surprise at how well the meetings worked as a forum for ideas. The main aspects of the process that were believed to have the most merit were the ground rules that were set out and the straightforward way information and questions were handled. The accessibility of additional resources and information such as the presence of experts to ask and answer questions was greatly appreciated by most. The key informants also noted how effective opportunities for group work were. The interactions were highly productive and informative, generating ideas and viable solutions. These quotes exemplify the feelings of respect and appreciation for the meetings:

“At the meetings, the fact that there were ground rules spelled out at every meeting, that were reiterated, read out, that everyone understood that because it can get fairly emotional charged. There are well-intentioned people attending and passionate people who want to see things done their way. The fact that you had some parameters to operate under was smart” (P.2006#7).

“Well, I think the community meetings were important. I think that’s important because whenever they planned the meetings... every meeting they would say ‘ what would you like to talk about in the next meeting and we would say transportation’ and then in the next meeting they would have someone from transportation to be at the meeting to talk about it and I felt that was important because we were really dealing with what we were asking them to. I applaud the City for doing that. To have someone who actually

knows that they are talking about at the meeting so we can ask questions and that is exactly what they are there for and nothing else” (P.2006#5).

The key informants spoke about the positive impacts of the communication and educational techniques that were used before, during and, after the meetings. Information was available and accessible at all stages and the key informants felt like they were ‘kept in the loop’ and included during the whole process. The flyers and newsletters that were sent out by the LAP planners were appreciated as far as knowing what was going on in the neighbourhood and how the process was evolving. Many of the key informants were impressed that the minutes of all the meetings were sent out by mail to anyone that was interested. This kept the momentum of the process going and kept everyone informed. There was also an appreciation of the mixed approaches that were used to present information and generate ideas. There were visual techniques as well as opportunities for people to write down their ideas, to talk in small groups and ask questions. These techniques ensured that information was more accessible to all participants, as people learn in a variety of ways. These ideas were captured in the following quotes:

“I guess the letters of what our meetings were about. It clarified a lot when they sent each of us the minutes of what we talked about because sometimes when you are in a meeting you hear this and that and can’t recall what everyone said and then when it comes in writing you remember. That’s what I liked the best” (P.2006#3).

“I learn visually. Diagrams with colour and charts were helpful. The handouts that we could read between meetings were also good” (P.2006#9).

8.3.4 Building Hope, Social Capital and Community Capacity

The key informants spoke about having a voice and ownership over the direction of the process, of feeling involved and having responsibility for the neighbourhood. This sense of ownership and action was based on the premise that those who lived in the neighbourhood knew what was necessary to make the changes and, when given the opportunity to share their experiences and first hand knowledge, produced solutions that were more viable, meaningful and comprehensive. The voices of both individuals and the collective were important, not only in directing the outcomes but allowing everyone to feel involved and engaged, making them believe that they could make a difference. The following quotes explore the depth of involvement the process initiated and the commitment of the key informants to the LAP:

“When we could talk, when we could vent, when we could tell our own stories and ideas and have people listen. We know what will work. When we were consultants about our neighbourhood” (P.2006#9).

And I am still involved in it and honestly when I came back from Vancouver and I will admit I was still at a point where I thought it was time to leave and move on and after going to the World Urban Forum I decided to recommit to action. This is where I am happy serving” (P.2006#9).

Ownership and involvement in the LAP process also helped instill a sense of hope that the neighbourhood could change. The key informants expressed optimism in the process as well as in the outcomes of the LAP. There was recognition that the hopefulness and changes were hard won, that it was not a simple process, and that the hard work and dedication of all the people involved invoked; the positive outcomes; changes in perception. Both these things, once put in place, would keep making good things happen. These feelings of hope and empowerment were captured in the following quotes:

“I think we have actually broken the ice, we’ve shattered the old concept of ‘oh, well this is not going to go anywhere’ kind of thing”(P.2006#11).

“I think it just shows that people are capable of developing a political infrastructure that is, that didn’t exist before” (P.2006#11).

“I guess at the top of the heap it’s always money but really I think the barrier was the helpless feeling we had ourselves until people with authority and plans came on board. That was very important and when they made the doable changes that didn’t cost a lot, it empowered people who had made the suggestions”(P.2006#4).

The recommendations that came out of the LAP process were also representative of the neighbourhood’s needs and wants, as illustrated by the following quotes:

“Yes, [the finalized recommendations] were pretty much right on and they weren’t changed to any great extent by the City”(P.2006#1).

“I thought they were really great. It was what we wanted. It was what the community wanted”(P.2006#3).

The key informants spoke about the positive social affects of the LAP process with regard to building relationships between residents within the neighbourhood. By creating opportunities for communication and networking, building trust and understanding were made possible. People gained a true understanding that they were not alone, that other people were willing to work together for the good of the neighbourhood; they felt that they had created a united force against the crime and problems within Pleasant Hill. This creation of social capital and a sense of community created a positive cycle of respect and encouragement. The key informants spoke how empowering it was knowing that there were others in the neighbourhood who were fighting for the same positive changes, who were willing to back up actions and voices that were not being heard before:

“We know what still needs to be done. But the Local Area Plan has started people talking, created a network. We knew we were angry and now something is happening” (P.2006#9).

There was an acknowledgement from the City employees that the networking and relationships that the LAP helped facilitate were a positive part of the process. The relationship building and networking that occurred is believed to play a large role in capacity building, leading to greater stability and sustainability of change. Building social capital can help to build trust. This in turn can help to connect people to resources. The following quotes illustrate the bridging capabilities the LAP process achieved:

“I think what it does is empower or give residents a sense of empowerment and that is important. It also helps to create and build relationships between the communities” (P.2006#10).

“One of the other things I should mention is social cohesion. A process like that really does give a way for people of all kinds to come together, not that that happens in an ideal fashion because often times you get the same people coming all the time. But building neighbourhood cohesion or social cohesion would be the other thing that I would consider the most important” (P.2006#12).

8.4 The Negative Perceptions of the LAP Process

Though there was a lot of positive reinforcement for the LAP process by the key informants, there were also a number of relevant negative perceptions and concerns. Feelings of frustration, disengagement and loss of trust in the process were experienced by some of the key informants. These negative perceptions were captured in three themes: 8.4.1) Time and Resources; 8.4.2) Representation,

and; 8.4.3) Barriers to Change.

8.4.1 Time and Resources

There was a fair amount of frustration over the amount of time the LAP process took to achieve the goals created by the Pleasant Hill Planning Group. The key informants expressed frustration over the repetition of 'needs and wants' in the neighbourhood during the initial planning phases. Collective decision making is a complex process, especially when there are many people with divergent opinions, wants and needs. Coming to a consensus on issues is not an easy task as it requires hearing many voices and bringing together people with: different levels of education, different levels of awareness of the problems and processes in the neighbourhood, and; different levels of commitment to the process. There was also a desire to: get things done; to build momentum and motivation, and; see the changes, as captured in the following quotes:

"The challenges that I felt... We got stuck a lot on the negative parts of the community. We would get carried away voicing our concerns about the johns, the prostitution, the drugs and the slumlords. We'd get into that and couldn't seem to get out. I wanted to say that's enough already, let's keep planning here. A lot of that frustration and then people would come after maybe after a few weeks and we'd be starting to plan and they'd say did you talk about this and that was frustrating because we had already dealt with that two weeks ago"(P.2006#3).

"I went and in the first few ones seemed like we rehashed the same thing every time because new people would come in and the concerns that we talked about the week or two weeks before were brought up again and again and it took a long time to get an order going..."(P.2006#1).

There was a general consensus that the implementation process was slow and even though many of the key informants expressed an understanding that the processes at work took time and a considerable commitment of resources, there was some frustration over the implementation schedule. This frustration is illustrated in the following quotes:

"The other thing is, how long is it going to take. I mean you get the report in and for a lot of the things, it doesn't seem like they have done anything yet"(P.2006#1).

"Just that it's taking so long to implement. I know that government works very slowly but still. They were on a rush to get this done

and a rush to come up with a plan for whatever reason. And they were doing, at the time, I think three different ones for three different communities, with more plans after that. If they are not going to complete any of the plans and they just want the information, then it's really a waste of everybody's time" (P.2006#1).

There was a strong realization that the LAP Planning Group was composed of many voices, but there were a few highly committed and motivated individuals and groups that dedicated a great deal of time and energy to the process, which would have ultimately not been the same without them. These same individuals spoke about the merits of their involvement but noted that the process did require sacrifices on their part. This commitment is expressed by the following respondent's experience in the process:

"I didn't think it would take as long as it did. I don't think I would have said yes if I had known it would be a two-year commitment with committee after committee. The City was asking too much. The expectations of people were too high and sometime life has to take over. I stopped my involvement with the community association but I have started again" (P.2006#9).

One poignant concern that was highlighted by one of the key informants was the perception of a loss in the momentum of the LAP process. The disbandment of the Local Civics Committee⁷ has been a major concern as it was felt that it was a good vehicle for change. Many of the key informants expressed a sense of resignation because there has been a loss of momentum since the Planning Group meetings ended; there was a general feeling of disconnectedness and discouragement. As a result of investing so much energy and time into creating the plan, the key informants felt that there has been a detachment from the process since the LAP final report was completed. Even though there was a sense of optimism that positive changes would materialize when the recommendations were complete. These concerns are captured in the following quotes:

"...one of the things that troubles me is this lull here over this last year or two. You know, you've got the current community association who is complaining about crime and gangs and all this stuff and not feeling safe and yet some of us have really turned away from the process that we had in the past and we don't have the municipal support that we had in the past...I really think we

⁷ Please see Chapter 3.2.6 for further description of the Local Civics Committee.

need to go to another plateau, and that means another type of initiative but it would look like restoring functionality to both the community association and the Local Civics Committee and this isn't about the antithesis of tokenism”(P.2006#11).

“Why spend the money on health care and proving you can do these things to have health, genuine health, healthy participation, healthy attitudes, healthy analysis of economic issues – all these different things and then you turn around and for a year or two you just drop it? Like if you had a heart transplant, would you say, ‘oh, you can go home now’? Wouldn't there be something like post-operative care, wouldn't there be something like – now, what do we do next? And you'd see in City Hall the development of community associations with active functional civic committees and my god all of a sudden instead of having ten politicians you'd have 150 and you'd have an activity planner tying everything together. You'd have a pulse. You'd have this humming, throbbing living city”(P.2006#11).

8.4.2 Representation

There were concerns that the process was not as representative for some as it could have been. Though, overall, many of the key informants were very pleased with the LAP process, there was some discouragement over how specific recommendations were managed. These concerns were quite individualistic, highlighting issues surrounding the recommendations that have been checked off of the list or were not put on in the first place. This has compromised the trust of these individuals, as they believed the issues were important. The following quotes highlight one respondent's frustration:

“I would have written the final document in stronger terms. What they perceive to be finished is just a joke. I am upset over the emergency back up. It's really important and was just kind of put in there. It is not finished. If we don't have emergency plans, it could be a riot situation...we need forward thinking, a real action plan... “100% complete”, I don't think so. It's like it didn't matter. We saw it as something important”(P.2006#9).

There were also concerns over the representation of the neighbourhood, that there were in fact a number of barriers that were not overcome. This included the fact that the representation of specific groups was not reached. Perhaps this may be because these opportunities for involvement attract people who are comfortable with public and political processes, and are willing to get involved because they

have the skills and resources to do so. This barrier is illustrated in the following quotes:

“Not myself personally because I was involved if they wanted me to be or not because I wanted to be but I think a lot of other people who wanted to be involved or should have been involved were excluded –maybe because of just lack of communication” (P.2006#2).

“I don’t think there was broad representation in any of the three planning processes that again it goes to a specific group that is acquainted with participatory planning and that has experience working with other community based organizations and planning processes” (P.2006#10).

The other recognized barriers to participation were: timing, location of the meetings, and the difficulty of attracting all members of the neighbourhood to participate. People had other commitments to fulfill and there was a large transient population in Pleasant Hill who may not have gotten involved because they were either not in the neighbourhood when it started, or did not stay throughout the process. Homeowners and renters often have different involvement in their neighbourhoods and different levels of investment. The constraints on representation are expressed in the following quotes:

“Part of it is logistics, part of it you know, you work all day and by the time you are making supper these meetings have already started and it is not an extremely effective way of getting a broad cross section of people’s concerns. You have to have time to be able to participate and for those who are employed or who work shift work and for those not involved in community based organizations, I don’t think there was a large buy in” (P.2006#10).

“One thing that we see as a barrier is still, they weren’t able to get even though there were a number of issues out there, and because of the transient population, you still don’t get that participation that you were looking for and you have the same people at the same meetings all the time and that’s great... you have some very strong volunteers and committed individuals who want to do something but because of there’s so much change within the community, there’s no ownership and that’s one of it’s downfalls as a community. If you don’t have ownership, there’s no sense of wanting to upgrade and do things for your community” (P.2006#8).

One key informant was very concerned with how their property was represented in the LAP and with proposed changes to zoning made in the final report from 'industrial' to 'mixed use'. They did not feel they were given a fair opportunity to voice their concerns throughout the process and were unhappy with the final recommendations regarding their property. They felt that any effort on the part of the City to speak with them was tokenism and did not reflect their needs and wants, they felt that the City went forward with their own priorities. The key informant was concerned that the effort they put into the neighbourhood on a continual basis was not being recognized and they were being penalized for the City going back on decisions that had been made before the property was in their possession. They were not against the zoning changes that were on their property, but they were against how the City went back on their word. The feelings of frustration of this respondent's experience are captured in the following quotes:

"They have taken it to a mixed area, which means it can still be used for what it is being used for right now but they can turn around and put housing in here. I don't object to that but I object to the process. It doesn't allow me to put any faith in the process"(P.2006#6).

"I don't like how this process worked and I don't like how it was presented in the draft. It was biased"(P.2006#6).

"Now I am under the impression that consultation means two people talking about the same thing and usually coming to some sort of agreement, not one sided. First of all it says that in the report "upon consultation with the effected property owner". City Council already said they weren't going to change the zoning here back in 1996"(P.2006#6).

One key informant was concerned and frustrated over the process of participatory document editing, noting that the changes that were proposed were not in fact changed in the final draft. This part of the LAP process is supposed to ensure representation of the needs and wants of the neighbourhood but this respondent's experience demonstrates the challenging nature of participation in this capacity:

"Document editing was frustrating. We spent lots of time and energy on that. I spent hours on the phone only to not have the changes made, not one word. There were times when new things would pop up but we never said that, where did you get this from? We added things because they were important, only to have them not show up in the final document"(P.2006#9).

8.4.3 Barriers to Change

The negative perceptions of the LAP process were also related to the large scale of the existing problems in Pleasant Hill. There was skepticism over how the LAP would be able to mediate the current economic and social problems in the neighbourhood. There was expressed concern that the process was in fact creating unrealistic expectations for positive change. The education process involved in the LAP was meant to help mitigate this challenge but it was still voiced as a concern by one key informant and repeated by others. The following quotes illustrate in part, the complexity of the issues in the neighbourhood:

“It goes on and on and on and these are social economic problems and I don’t know how the City thinks that changing the zoning of 425 Avenue P South is going to help the social economic problems” (P.2006#6).

“...because it seems like ‘here we go, something is going to happen’ and things don’t happen or they don’t happen as fast or they don’t happen in the way the community necessarily envisions it because they can’t for various other reasons that are out of the hands of the people working there” (P.2006#12).

8.5 A Summary of the 2006 Community Key Informants’ Perception of the LAP Process

The Pleasant Hill Planning Group, made up of a diverse array of individuals, committed their time and energies to the Pleasant Hill LAP because they believed the process would help mitigate and perhaps eventually solve the problems they were experiencing in their neighbourhood. They each saw a need for change after witnessing the deterioration of the structural and social foundation of the area, including the increase in the severity of safety concerns and the depth of socio-economic vulnerability in the neighbourhood. The Planning Group was motivated by the need to gain respect for Pleasant Hill, to beat the stigmatization of the area and to change the perception of the neighbourhood from the inside out. The key informants also hoped to bring people together, work towards similar goals, build social capital, and strengthen the community. These reasons provided the strong motivation needed for the people involved. The Planning Group was made up of a strong group of committed individuals to tackle the issues they saw as important in the neighbourhood. This built a strong foundation for the process to grow on.

The perception of the process itself was overwhelmingly positive. The key informants felt strongly reinforced by the City through the representation,

commitment and facilitation role of the LAP planners as well as the recognition and actions specific to the LAP recommendations. There were genuine feelings of ownership and empowerment of the process, as well as trust and respect of the neighbourhood. Many theorists assert that “empowerment is the first step in the development of group solidarity and willingness to act around and issue” (Wakefield et al., 2006, p. 43). These feelings were nurtured through opportunities for true participation that was informed and inclusive at all stages. The individuals who were involved became aware of what had to be done, what they could do themselves, and what they could encourage others to do. The key informants saw their needs and wants being met through engagement in the process. Their voices were being heard and they felt their demands were being acted upon.

This process also engendered capacity building, as it provided opportunities for gaining access to resources, skills and new networks for communication and action. The key informants felt that the process was successful, with many gaining hope given the acknowledgement and action made specific to the issues in the neighbourhood. One of the most powerful positive parts of the process for many of the participants was knowing that the City was listening, was doing something about the problems, and recognizing that Pleasant Hill deserved the same treatment and respect as other areas in Saskatoon.

The key informants also felt empowered through the relationships that were built. There was a greater sense of social capital and a sense of community built through this process. It brought committed individuals together who felt strongly about their neighbourhood and wanted to do something about it. This ‘coming together’ made individuals feel like they were working on something much bigger than themselves. It gave them power through a larger presence and a louder voice but it also built a foundation at the neighbourhood level, bringing people together to work towards something important.

The key informants also acknowledged the challenges and barriers in the LAP process. Frustration and disengagement in the process occurred for some of the Planning Group members because of the time it took for the process to get going and for visible changes to happen. There were feelings that there was a loss of momentum. This was especially frustrating for individuals who had committed so much of their time and energy to a process only to see it dormant while the political and fiscal aspects were being dealt with. The scale of the problems in the neighbourhood was another area of concern as the LAP was meant to target the structural features in the neighbourhood and did not have the scope to target all the issues.

Overall, the key informants (n=12) in the LAP process were appreciative of

how the LAP process represented their needs and brought the people and resources together to target the concerns the neighbourhood raised. They were grateful for the respect they were given as individuals and as a community because Pleasant Hill has been labeled and treated as a place where no one cares. As one can see by the determination and commitment of the planning group members, this label is far from the truth.

The following chapter examines the changes in the perception of quality of life and the outcomes of the Pleasant Hill Lap from the perspective of the Planning Group members.

9.0 The Perception of the Pleasant Hill LAP Outcomes and Contributions to QoL

“The LAP was a catalyst” (P.2006#9).

Introduction

This chapter explores the perceptions of quality of life for the key informants (n=12). The focus of interest is on the Pleasant Hill LAP outcomes and the contributions these outcomes have made to quality of life. The respondents were asked about their perceptions of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood before and after the LAP was implemented, in terms of social and structural outcomes. The key informants were also asked about their perception of quality of life in the neighbourhood before and after the LAP, as well as their predictions for 2007. In answering these questions, seven themes were determined: 9.1) The Perception of Safety and Quality of Life; 9.2) Social Initiatives and Quality of Life; 9.3) Social Cohesion, a Sense of Community and Quality of Life; 9.4) Empowerment, Commitment, Support and Ownership; 9.5) Pride and Encouragement; 9.6) Fulfilling the Neighbourhood's Needs, Inspiring Hope and Optimism, and; 9.7) Changing Perceptions and Bringing Pleasant Hill Forward.

The overall perception of changes in the quality of life of Pleasant Hill community members was related to the key informant's personal perceptions and experiences of the neighbourhood. Overall, there was a general consensus that there have been, or will be, positive effects of the LAP on QoL, with outcomes dependent on timing, resource allocation and political will. There was skepticism however, on behalf of a few of the key informants, that the positive outcomes would equally reach all the residents of the neighbourhood.

The positive contributions the LAP has made to quality of life were connected first and foremost to changes in the perception of safety. The importance of social services and housing opportunities as positive contributions to resident's quality of life was also acknowledged as an important influence. The empowering aspects of the LAP were again talked about as an important outcome for the key informants, playing a considerable role in their personal quality of life. This included gaining a sense of hope and control over the neighbourhood and having people listen and recognize Pleasant Hill as a place worth fighting for, a deserving neighbourhood that needs to be respected. The key informants spoke about the importance of gaining a sense of social cohesion and a feeling of community, knowing that others were committed to change. All of these factors have had the ability to create positive change through individual's actions and choices, while changing the perception of the neighbourhood and thereby positively influencing perceptions of QoL.

9.1 The Perception of Safety and Quality of Life

The majority of the key informants spoke about the recommendations targeting the structural and social components of safety as the most significant contribution of the LAP to quality of life. There was a shared recognition that the LAP had indeed improved the perception of safety in the neighbourhood through a combination of factors, including: quieter and safer streets due to traffic calming devices such as the pedestrian activated light on Avenue P; better street and park lighting; visibly more police patrolling, as well as; new approaches in the neighbourhood towards absentee landlords, prostitution and gang activity. The key informants felt there was a concerted effort to tackle both the visible and hidden aspects of crime and safety, targeting the negative cycles and acknowledging where they started and how they could be monitored and stopped. These changes have had a positive influence on quality of life, changing: how residents use the neighbourhood spaces; how they respond to other people in the neighbourhood, and; how issues of safety are approached and understood. The changing perception of safety is illustrated in the following quotes:

“Yeah, major. I was scared, scared, scared, scared. I would have been gone but I couldn’t find a buyer. Maybe it was for a reason. It has changed my life. I needed to see Pleasant Hill in a different way”(P.2006#9).

“...and now she feels secure because she enjoys going for walks and we are not hassled. So that’s a better quality of life for both of us”(P.2006#1).

“You don’t see as many hookers walking around nearly as much as you used to. We were out walking last night and it was just quiet. You can almost hear a pin drop outside. That’s something that hasn’t been like for years. So that part has really helped”(P.2006#1).

“I just think that they addressed some core issues and acknowledged that we have crime and we have prostitution and we have homelessness and a mess because people don’t care, they are too poor to care, they feel too helpless in themselves to care. They are just trying to survive and I think that was acknowledged”(P.2006#5).

The perceptions of the changes that have been made in Pleasant Hill were very positive overall. When asked if the recommendations that have been implemented were more social or structural in nature, the majority of the key

informants highlighted structural changes, such as improved lighting, the clean up of vacant lots, and improved housing. It was understood that social changes take longer and were intertwined with subjective perceptions, while structural changes were more verifiable in terms of completion. Most of the key informants were hoping for more social changes but understood that they may not be achieved in the short term. They understood that the LAP is just one tool to achieve the changes that are necessary. The understanding of the time it takes for social and perceptual change to occur is expressed in the following quotes:

“So, if someone is going to say why aren’t the changes happening fast enough, I would counter that maybe the problems weren’t identified early enough” (P.2006#7).

“Social change is a tough one, very hard. It’s mostly perception. To get that kind of momentum to actually really change it, that takes a lot” (P.2006#12).

“...maybe we have identified some processes or programs that have been initiated and we’ll see some stability and I mean it has taken forty years to get where we are and it may take 20 to get out. I think we’re moving in the right direction” (P.2006#7).

There was a lot of appreciation for the aesthetic changes that have been made, contributing to: safety, cleanliness and the nicer appearance of the neighbourhood. These small steps were understood as moving the neighbourhood in a positive direction, as far as helping to change the negative stigmatization of Pleasant Hill. These steps reinforced the fact that people actually cared about what goes on there and were not willing to sit back and watch it deteriorate. These actions reinforced pride in the neighbourhood and helped to change the perception of the neighbourhood for the people living there, as well as those living in the rest of the City. These steps are believed to be at least partially responsible for attracting new families and businesses to the neighbourhood. The larger structural upgrades involving environmental remediation of contaminated sites and new zoning regulations have also helped reinforce opportunities for positive change, including economic investments. Some positive changes are highlighted in the following quotes:

“And a lot of changes took place to make the community look neater. Landlords needed to repair so that people could start a new chapter and feel proud” (P.2006#5).

“From my point of view, the first thing would be structural and the big thing that I give the city kudos for is lights in the alley, a one

way street – simple things like that that discourage and put up a deterrent but also keeping the neighbourhood tidy from their point of view, adding flowers, play parks, and enforcing some of the things with the absentee landlords” (P.2006#4).

9.2 Social Initiatives and Quality of Life

For some of the key informants, the social changes were apparent as well. One respondent had just moved into an apartment remodeled by Quint Development Corporation and many of the key informants were very happy with the social supports put into place, such as those of CUMFI and CHEP, organizations that were increasing efforts in the neighbourhood. There was also recognition that the relationships that the LAP helped form, by bringing interest groups and individuals within Pleasant Hill together, created positive changes in initiating actions and changing perceptions. One key informant talks about this in the context of law enforcement:

“Another thing that I’ve seen is the police department as they cruise around and approach people – they have patience and they are trying to be there for law and order but they are trying to be friendly and build bridges. I’ve noticed that very much, building bridges. It’s just day-to-day stuff where the attitudes and minds and thrust have just changed. And that will also never end” (P.2006#4).

The increase in the provision of social services was believed to have made a positive impact on resident’s quality of life. A number of strategies for breaking many of the negative cycles in the neighbourhood, especially with regards to poverty were highlighted and included: connecting people to education, employment and housing opportunities. There was agreement that the residents who have been able to use the social services in the neighbourhood have experienced an improvement in quality of life and will continue to benefit from the increase in services and resources that have been located in Pleasant Hill. There was also agreement that many residents will not experience these benefits for a variety of reasons, mainly due to not accessing the services, possibly because they do not know they are there. The strong network of social services was mentioned numerous times. Their contribution is expressed in the following quotes:

“There have been more services for the community between that time then before 2001. There are a lot of human resource centres that have counseling services” (P.2006#3).

“The biggest trick is connecting to services and I think until we move from studies and consultations and capacity building to action, we won’t see the quality of life improve for anybody except for those hooked into the system” (P.2006#10).

“Certainly all of our organizations... we have some wonderful organizations dealing with housing and they have absolutely improved the quality of life for those who have hooked up with houses but when we are talking about 25 or 30 or even 100 families over the last few years, that’s still a very very small percentage and we have certainly seen the quality of life for many people in the area decline” (P.2006#10).

A number of the key informants spoke about growing up on social assistance and their stories spoke of the importance of having a mentor, a person who shared their experiences and provided them with support and helped them gain access to resources, especially through opportunities for education, employment opportunities, and housing. These key resources helped them gain financial stability, independence, and an improved quality of life. They all spoke about the importance of accessible services but also the need to provide support and encouragement to those in need. One respondent’s experience is captured in the following quote:

“...what I had though was access to those resources and why I was able to get housing and have enough food and have to deal with transportation issues, all the issues that are the big show stoppers... all I needed was somebody to help me through it and I am not saying that there are not other issues such as addiction and health issues and so on but if you are relatively healthy there is absolutely no reason why you cannot find employment and eventually good employment given the opportunity. You just need a way out, somebody to mentor you” (P.2006#10).

9.3 Social Cohesion, a Sense of Community and Quality of Life

Many of the key informants felt that the support from others who were involved in the LAP process was extremely positive and empowering and contributed to an improvement in their personal quality of life. Working together with other people who cared about the neighbourhood provided emotional support, and helped generate new ideas. It also created networks and resources that otherwise may not have existed or been as accessible. It was empowering knowing that other people were committed to the process and committed to making changes happen. They felt the collective voice was louder and more

powerful than one individual's. The cooperation that was initiated via the LAP process also allowed people to share their understandings and experiences, making the LAP more sensitive to the voices being heard and the people it was representing. The feeling of community helped ground the participation in something greater than individual's needs and wants and made it more sustainable as the individuals deepened their commitments when they saw a strong force develop. This strong feeling of togetherness is demonstrated in the following quotes:

"When people work together that's when you start finding out how cooperative they want to be, how fair and honest they want to be and how smart they are, how beautiful it is to see ideas pop up and sometimes an idea is just so damn good that you know like a whole bunch of people say 'yes!' And it finally emerged"(P.2006#11).

"I see people at the meeting who you can recognize and feel that you know they're with me too on this on cleaning up the neighbourhood and that's something I feel, that they all feel the same"(P.2006#3).

Interestingly, there was general agreement that participating in the LAP was very positive and did reinforce a sense of community, but only for those who were involved. Half of the respondents stated this outright, believing that those who were most optimistic and aware of the problems and events occurring in the neighbourhood were those who participated and benefited from a greater sense of community in Pleasant Hill. This being said, there was hope that everyone in the neighbourhood would benefit from the structural improvements and social interventions. This balance is captured in the following quotes:

"The reaction to the community at large... as I said I think it empowers the people who participate and it, it's a good educational process but most people don't know they're going on and I don't think that has necessarily changed...the educational process was I think probably valuable to those that participated, but probably not to anyone else in the community"(P.2006#10).

"I am fighting for others. I am not fighting for me"(P.2006#9).

"Yes, I think it has in a way, it's for the people involved in the process who are hoping that everybody in Pleasant Hill will be able to get the benefit of it. That's what it is supposed to be for, the whole community"(P.2006#5).

9.4 Empowerment Through Commitment, Support and Ownership

The key informants spoke about feeling like they had gained control and a sense of ownership over the negative circumstances in Pleasant Hill because people were listening and they did not have to sit idly, watching their neighbourhood disintegrate. It was a positive part of the process but it was also a significant outcome. The key informants felt that they had a responsibility, a commitment to establish themselves as a force, as a voice and as a foundation for the neighbourhood. Once they did, there was hope and optimism, whereas before there was fear and hopelessness. These outcomes came out of awareness and identification of the issues and then a political commitment to initiate the changes. Each of the individuals had made a concerted effort to gain recognition for Pleasant Hill, to establish a stable and sustainable basis for change. It was a major achievement. The key informants spoke about how important the LAP Final Report was as a reference for change, as a bargaining tool and as proof of all the things the neighbourhood deserves, including recognition. The powerful feelings of optimism, hope and pride all contributed to a very positive response to the LAP for the majority of the key informants and many expressed this by claiming their neighbourhood back, as captured in the following quotes:

“I think what we’ve done is woke up a giant”(P.2006#3).

“Again just by validating and awareness and then the recommendations were listened to by the people with money and we have a lot of improvements. We are very open to talk to each other and what we are aware of and we have decided that this is our neighbourhood and we are proud of it” (P.2006#4).

“...but it was just a matter of rolling up our sleeves and saying that if this is what it is going to take and these are the solutions that have been identified in this process – you either do it or shut up. We chose to do it”(P.2006#7)

“You feel that you’ve worked for what you’ve got. This is our community”(P.2006#3).

The key informants spoke about finally feeling like Pleasant Hill was recognized as a part of Saskatoon, a neighbourhood that had captured and deserved the attention of the City. It was a place with people who cared and with the development of the LAP, there was a document supporting the needs and claims of Pleasant Hill. The genuine feelings of empowerment and a move towards equity of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in relation to other Saskatoon neighbourhoods are illustrated in the following quotes:

“One can only hope. Personally do I think it is... yes, I do think it will get better because I think that the powers that be are finally recognizing that we are an important part of this City, that this community is an important part of the City and they are finally starting to open their eyes” (P.2006#2).

“I guess it would be a combination of the LAP and just demanding the City treat this area the same as it does all the new areas in the City and care about it. We pay our taxes and we deserve the same quality of everything that they give to the east side and the north side. And as long as we keep on demanding that the City look after us, we at least won't be losing anything” (P.2006#1).

“The City overall recognized and that's a big item right there. The City of Saskatoon recognized that Pleasant Hill was a 'community in crisis' and by having that recognized you have a lot of other resources that are going to go to it” (P.2006#8).

The power of the foundation that the LAP built, as a document and as a process is acknowledged in the following quotes:

“Most definitely, absolutely. I think that has been a ray of hope. I think it has been a ray of hope in any neighbourhood that the process has been done in and I think it has been a rallying point, a point of, where people can have some faith again in what is the future of this place and it brings a lot of comfort and stability and I know that a lot of different types of people look to those plans when they are making decisions, whether it's residents, whether it's government, whether it's investors. I think it's definitely positive” (P.2006#12).

“Yeah, I felt it was good. They are doing something. They are listening. It is on paper. It is not like we are sitting back here giving up and not taking what is being brought into our community with a grain of salt. They were listening. Someone had to” (P.2006#3).

“Oh yes. The awareness and the involvement and the results because the City and our alderman and whoever and the government allotted funds and acknowledged what was necessary so it wasn't just an exercise they went through and then filed the file and we appreciate that” (P.2006#4).

9.5 *Pride and Encouragement*

“If we have any pride at all we are each going to have to pick up our socks and do our part” (P.2006#3).

There was a renewed sense of pride gained through the capacity to make positive changes as a group, as well as to provide honorable encouragement as individuals through daily life choices. The key informants had recognized the capacity of the neighbourhood before getting involved; they recognized the potential for positive change as well as the strength and perseverance of residents in Pleasant Hill. The key informants fought for the LAP because they saw a need for change, but also the capacity of the neighbourhood to be what they wanted it to be. One key informant shared her experiences and perceptions of the strengths and the many success stories in Pleasant Hill. She talked about how the neighbourhood had pulled together in multiple ways, that even though there were many disadvantaged individuals, they worked together and supported each other to survive and get by with ‘quiet dignity’, “Only in my neighbourhood... that’s my neighbourhood” (P.2006#9). She talked about seeing people reach out and share what little they have. She talked about how important it was to be a living example. She planted flowerpots on the boulevard and had a planting party for the neighbourhood kids, teaching them how to plant and care for the flowers. The first year, only a few were pulled up and she replaced them and taught the kids how to pinch the dead petals off so more would grow and the second year none were pulled out and the flowers thrived.

Her way of seeing Pleasant Hill was inspiring and she captured her sentiment in this statement, “Marigolds should be the emblem of the neighbourhood. They are pretty and are impossible to kill.... In the most economically challenged neighbourhood there are little successes everyday” (P.2006#9). She spoke about being a ‘gentle mentor’, setting an example for new people in the neighbourhood, sharing and networking to connect people to the resources they needed, smiling and treating everyone she meets with respect, “One elderly woman at a bus stop told me that it was the “first time that anyone in Pleasant Hill has smiled at me” (P.2006#9). This same individual was scared to live in Pleasant Hill four years ago but says now, “I am proud to live there” (P.2006#9). All of the key informants spoke about contributing to the neighbourhood in these ways making sure their own yards were kept up, picking up garbage and keeping a watchful eye on the streets. This renewed sense of pride had positive effects for individuals, but also reinforced stability in the neighbourhood and helped to change perceptions, as illustrated in the following quotes:

“Again it highlighted my awareness and motivated me to encourage and do what I could and to watch. We all have to watch regardless of where we are. I just think that bringing that to come together under that format helped us realize we had a voice and we had a responsibility. We don’t just have rights, we have responsibilities and that’s a forgotten art and we need to re-instill that” (P.2006#4).

“A lot of these people have been fixing up their houses and doing all kinds of renovations to their properties and that’s got to help” (P.2006#1).

“People are taking more pride in their neighbourhood” (P.2006#9).

“Yes, I do. I think it seems like before there were people that owned houses that could hardly wait to sell them and get out and now we are getting new families in” (P.2006#1).

9.6 Fulfilling the Neighbourhood’s Needs, Inspiring Hope and Optimism

When the key informants were asked if the LAP met the needs of the neighbourhood, there was a hopeful and supportive response, though a few of the respondents held cautious optimism, with time being the determinant. There was an appreciation for the direction of the LAP and the respondents felt it was a representative and comprehensive guide of what the neighbourhood needed and wanted. There was a general appreciation that the LAP was a tool and that more work was needed in order to complete the processes that had begun. The optimism and hope the document provided, as well as the guidance it offered, funneled the energies and fueled positive steps in the right direction. The LAP was not seen as an idealistic and overarching solution to the neighbourhood’s challenges; rather, many of the key informants spoke about how it set a foundation for changes to occur and that only time would tell if it would ultimately be successful. It was useful as a process and as a document for recording the needs and demands of the neighbourhood. A few of the key informants had reservations about what the LAP would actually accomplish because of the depth of the problems in Pleasant Hill. One respondent believed it was a “band-aid” (P.2006#6), as the social and economic problems of the neighbourhood could not be solved with the LAP, it was mostly a tool for City Council to say they were making an attempt at change. For others, this attempt, was what they felt was necessary. The LAP was not meant to ‘fix’ everything carte blanche, but was one “genuine” step in a series of steps that would help

stabilize Pleasant Hill by getting people “on board” (P.2006#4). These feelings are expressed in the following quotes:

“It was what we wanted. It was what the community wanted” (P.2006#3).

“It’s another tool and it’s a positive tool that we can look forward to seeing the results and use as another card in the deck” (P.2006#7).

“Yeah, it’s an ongoing thing and it still has a long way to go but as long as we keep working at it” (P.2006#1).

“Well, over time it will because our recommendations to the LAP are in writing now and it will go through and if they don’t go through we can try again. We won’t give up” (P.2006#3).

The key informants expressed cautious optimism regarding possible positive changes in quality of life in the 2007 QoL CUISR data collection. About half of the respondents were skeptical that the response would be any different than it was at the time of the interview, mainly because the implementation of the recommendations was not complete. The people who were in most need of a change in quality of life were those who were of low socio-economic status and social changes in the neighbourhood have been slow. The key informants who were hopeful about positive changes believed that momentum, even with “baby steps” (P.2006#9) would help create the results that were sought. This hope is expressed in the following quotes:

“I don’t understand what it’s going to do for the long term planning in the area. I can’t see how, when you take everything into consideration, how that is going to make a difference” (P.2006#6).

“Short answer – no. Long answer – it will and that will come in the form of home ownership, rental property identification in terms of where these places are and if there are drugs being dealt. If there are a number of families migrating there, if there are targeted landlords who may be deficient in their housing standards. We hold no mercy back for anyone who is not abiding by the laws and if there are laws in place, they need to be enforced because sometimes the City falls short on that because of resources but all we’re saying if it is identified – let’s put mechanisms in place to deal with the problem and if it means putting it in next

years budget as a line item – that's what we have to do... otherwise why are we doing this?"(P.2006#7).

9.7 Changing Perceptions and Bringing Pleasant Hill Forward

The changes in perception of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood have been significant for residents and business owners as well as the City of Saskatoon. The key informants who had wanted to leave the neighbourhood before the LAP was initiated have decided to stay and keep fighting for changes. This commitment was much like a pledge for the people who have decided to stay. There have been other more subtle signs that there were significant positive changes within Pleasant Hill, though not necessarily caused by the LAP. One respondent spoke about the positive actions he/she was seeing coming out of negative circumstances:

"I see prostitutes outside my building here and one of them has changed her life around and she is working to get her sister off the street. What does that say – well, it says she was on the street for six or seven years and now she is not... is that a good thing? Well, it wasn't at that time but now it is"(P.2006#7).

This was the decision of one individual but he/she saw hope in her attempts to affect positive change. It was not mentioned why or how the woman was able to leave prostitution but seeing the currents of change right outside his/her doorstep was meaningful. There were other stories of success, of people able to change their life around often through the support and encouragement of others, which helps to change the negative stigmatizations people have. Another success story is captured in this quote:

"We've hired people that have mental health issues, that have criminal issues – who cannot be hired because of their criminal records. We've hired them for eight dollars an hour and they've shown up at eight o'clock in the morning and worked till four for six months. One fellow has gone on to study welding and in a year or two will be making a dollar or two more than I do. So, that's one story – now the flip side of that is that he could still be in a rut of drug abuse or so on but that is one less and what you've got to do is worry about the one coming up and try and hold them off at the pass"(P.2006#7).

Changes around the perception of safety coupled with the improvement of the general appearance of the neighbourhood, and the structural changes such as environmental remediation, have helped to bolster new economic opportunities.

These have been strongly encouraged by the Riversdale Business Improvement District and the municipal Enterprise Zone program. There was energy directed into creating a 'Cultural Crescent' and eighty new businesses have opened in the area in the last two and a half years. There were new efforts going into marketing the area for business investments as well as housing opportunities for families of all economic positions. These efforts built positive change in the neighbourhood that reinforced pride, stability and commitment and are entrenched in the ideal of sustainable change through creating new sources of employment, investment and home ownership. The strengths of Pleasant Hill are being utilized and built on as expressed in the following quote:

"And the perception is changing because of the arts and because of new business and because of people really embracing their heritage and the rich history of the area" (P.2006#10).

Changing perceptions is extremely difficult and though there have been positive shifts, such as: new businesses in the area, new opportunities for home ownership and new families moving into Pleasant Hill, there are still many challenges and there is still skepticism. The key informants know what is needed to build the foundation of Pleasant Hill, in order for it to become a safe, stable and sustainable neighbourhood and are working towards that goal. They are pushing towards rebuilding the strengths of Pleasant Hill and creating a positive identity. The following quotes capture the things that need to be done, the progress that has been made and the commitment to see it unfold:

"Now the people who I was calling to say would you listen to our plan are now calling us and saying what's going on" (P.2006#7).

"We've heard there's money, we've heard there's a Federal plan. We've heard there's a cultural crescent component coming to the neighbourhood. You know – there's been a couple of announcements from the Minister – are there any opportunities to buy, not a lot, or a building or a block of buildings. They are looking at buying street frontage that would involve a city block or half acre sites which is... this is my twelfth year on the board... that was unheard of five to seven years ago. It's just the perception and sending a positive message out. You send a negative message, guess what you get back" (P.2006#7).

"... We can get more and more homeowners into the area. The quality of life will go up, the resale value of the houses and land will go up and it will be a better place to live" (P.2006#1).

“The other thing that we have to do is really encourage people to stay, that it is not a graduation to leave the ‘hood’, that it is a way to build a stronger community” (P.2006#10).

9.8 A Summary of the Pleasant Hill LAP Outcomes and Contributions to Quality of Life

For the depth and the breadth of the issues the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood has been grappling with, the key informants’ cautiously optimistic perceptions of the change in quality of life since the implementation of the LAP process is a significant achievement. There was a general agreement that there have been positive outcomes for some individuals at this time, with many of the respondents claiming an improvement to their own personal quality of life. There was also an agreement that there will be an improved quality of life for many more Pleasant Hill residents, though the scope of these results will be dependant on timing, resource allocation and political will.

The themes explored in the key informant’s perceptions once again emphasize the importance of safety, social initiatives, and housing to quality of life for Pleasant Hill residents. These three themes have been captured in the 2001 and 2004 interviews and continue to be at the forefront in terms of identifying the problems associated with creating a safe, sustainable and functional neighbourhood for all residents.

The perception of safety has been a top priority for the Pleasant Hill LAP. Many of the recommendations have components that are dedicated to improving the perception of safety and occurrence of criminal activity in the neighbourhood. A growing body of literature has identified a link between visible deterioration of physical neighbourhood features, the presence of vandalism and graffiti and the occurrence of crime (Dunstan et al., 2005). This is known as the ‘broken window’ theory and may lead to negative feelings of well-being and fear affecting the quality of life of residents (Dunstan et al., 2005). In Pleasant Hill, the presence of signs of decline and the high incidence of criminal activity was described as accepted and reinforced by a “culture of crime” by one of the residents because of the fear residents experienced in reporting criminal activity.

The key informants acknowledged changes in their own perceptions of safety, including the way they use the neighbourhood spaces which is significant because there were still a number of signs of decline as well as criminal activity occurring in the neighbourhood (Dunstan et al., 2005). The perception of safety is different from the occurrence of criminal activity, which has not shown a significant reduction at this time. The important outcome is that key informants felt safer in their neighbourhood and are acting on these feelings, where they are

'taking back' their neighbourhood. Using the spaces differently also reinforces safety because if people feel comfortable walking outside at night, there are more eyes on the street and less opportunity for undetected crime to happen; this is a deterrent for individuals who are partaking in criminal activity. As more people are out walking and using the neighbourhood spaces, more people will feel comfortable doing the same. It is a positive and affirming cycle.

There was also an appreciation of efforts to maintain and improve both public and private spaces and the contribution these improvements had to feelings of safety and positive perceptions of spaces. The importance of natural and modified features such as well-maintained properties, fences and houses has been found to contribute to positive perceptions of safety and well-being in other studies as well (Dunstan et al., 2005). They are "markers which convey a nonverbal message of control, separation from outsiders, and investment in the locale" (Dunstan, et al., 2005, p. 294). It reflects investment, pride and a sense of care.

The positive effects of an improved perception of safety may also mean more people will stay in the neighbourhood, rather than moving out to other neighbourhoods. If homeowners keep their houses and if renters perhaps decide to buy in the neighbourhood, the stability of the area improves. Homeownership creates positive cycles of investment and stability. It creates a draw for new businesses and reinforces individual responsibility for things such as property maintenance and keeping an eye out for vandalism. If people are attracted to the area, vacant lots and houses will be possibly utilized for new developments and the area will slowly shift from a deteriorating, transient neighbourhood to a more stable and safe neighbourhood. This cycle was reinforced by the community respondents' perception of renewed pride and investment in the neighbourhood through opportunities for homeownership. One of the respondents had recently moved into a new apartment through Quint Development Corp. The positive contributions to their own quality of life were overwhelmingly positive. Wakefield et al. (2006) has reported on the positive effects of homeownership on resident's perception of their community and their place in it. The recognition of the occurrence and importance of these opportunities was recognized and appreciated by the other key informants. This is significant at the individual level as "homeowners are said to enjoy higher social status and self-esteem, increased sense of control, and higher levels of life satisfaction" (Rohe & Basolo, 1997, p. 814). It is also significant for the neighbourhood as a greater numbers of homeowners can contribute to higher rates of participation in voluntary associations (Rohe & Basolo, 1997).

Another area of success that was voiced was the visibility of social and structural initiatives in the neighbourhood. These investments of time and energy

create awareness of positive changes within the neighbourhood which offer hope to the people living there. This awareness has reached beyond the boundaries of the neighbourhood. These initiatives help to create renewed interest in the neighbourhood and provide necessary services and functions. It shows that people care and are interested in making a difference, whether it is Quint providing social housing, or the City's upkeep of park space and boulevards. These actions and the corresponding interest helps to improve the perception of the area.

The key informants highlighted social initiatives in the neighbourhood as an avenue for improving quality of life, especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized. There was an understanding that social change would take time, but the interventions providing the necessary supports and opportunities for people in need would help assist them in gaining stability. This, in turn, would eventually serve to reduce crime and create a stronger, safer neighbourhood. There was an awareness among the key informants that programs that emphasize employment, education and housing opportunities help to break negative cycles of poverty. The importance of strong community leadership, through a mentorship role, was noted by a number of key informants as a tool for helping individuals access the resources they need to become independent and contributing members of the neighbourhood.

The key informants highlighted the impact that the LAP process had in creating social cohesion, feelings of empowerment and a sense of community. The participants felt empowered through a collective commitment to action. They felt that they had gained a voice for the neighbourhood.

And finally, the LAP process has introduced a sense of hope and optimism through the recognition that Pleasant Hill is a true neighbourhood with people who care what goes on there, it is a neighbourhood that has strengths and challenges that need to be acknowledged. The recognition of Pleasant Hill as a place with an identity that goes beyond its challenges is a step forward in changing the negative perception of the area.

Each of the themes that were discussed by the key informants (n=12) has contributed in some way to the feelings of optimism, hope and pride. The outcomes of the Pleasant Hill LAP have contributed to positive changes in quality of life, especially regarding feelings of safety and homeownership. The LAP has brought together a core group of determined and committed individuals who have collectively with the support of the City of Saskatoon and an array of social services, community based organizations and businesses come together and highlighted the needs and wants of the neighbourhood. For some, the LAP has been classified as a catalyst, a tool for empowerment, and a forum for change. The positive outcomes and positive perceptions cannot be ignored, as they are a

powerful sign of things to come. All of these components point to the importance of place to individuals. The process and the outcomes of the Pleasant Hill LAP illustrate the commitment that is necessary to enact positive changes through a neighbourhood based participatory process but also the possibilities that exist for positive changes that affect the quality of life of community members.

The following chapter highlights the perception of the LAP process and outcomes in Pleasant Hill from the perspective of the City of Saskatoon planners who were involved.

10.0 Key Informant Interviews: The City of Saskatoon LAP Planners

Introduction

Four City of Saskatoon planners involved in the Pleasant Hill LAP were interviewed about their perception of the Pleasant Hill LAP: the process, outcomes and impacts on the neighbourhood's quality of life. They also provided perspective on the LAP process in general. These factors were explored through a different interview schedule than the community respondents in order to identify the logistics of the process as well as to provide feedback from a professional perspective (See Appendix I). This chapter is presented in four sections. The first section explores the planner's overall perceptions of the LAP process. The second section examines the positive perceptions of the LAP process. It is divided into themes similar to the community respondents highlighted: 10.2.1) Education and Awareness; 10.2.2) LAP as a Representative and Supportive Process; 10.2.3) Representation, and; 10.2.4) Building Ownership, Social Capital and Empowerment.

The third section explores the challenges of the Pleasant Hill LAP. This section is divided into three themes: 10.3.1) Time and Resources; 10.3.2) Representation, and; 10.3.3) Barriers to Change. The final section explores the perception of outcomes and contributions to quality of life. This section is divided into four themes: 10.4.1) The Mediation of Safety Issues Through Structural Changes; 10.4.2) Social Initiatives and Quality of Life; 10.4.3) Social Capital and Empowerment, and; 10.4.4) Changing Perceptions and Bringing Pleasant Hill Forward. The planners were very forthcoming with their responses, sharing thoughts about their involvement; the evolution of the process, the commitment of the neighbourhood stakeholders and government bodies, as well as the direction the Pleasant Hill LAP was going.

10.1 The Planners' Perception of the LAP Process

The Local Area Plan, as an inclusive participation process for identifying and implementing social and structural change at the neighbourhood level, has been very successful in Pleasant Hill. The planners involved, together with the City of Saskatoon, have recognized the commitment of the neighbourhood stakeholders, as well as the innovative solutions that have been developed. The planners share perceptions that are very similar to the community members regarding the strengths and challenges of the process. The similarities that were highlighted demonstrate the common vision and stake in the process shared by both the planners and community members.

From the planners' professional and more objective stance, it is apparent that the LAP process has provided opportunities for informed and equitable participation wherein the community members have been given the skills and the opportunities to take part. An important aspect to take note of here is the genuine respectful and sensitive way the planners talk about the community members and the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. This respect and acknowledgement of the neighbourhood has helped to build trust and a working relationship with the neighbourhood. The planners saw the importance of becoming an advocate for the neighbourhood, giving the Pleasant Hill community a voice and giving them the tools for change.

The planners acknowledged the importance of education and awareness, of building relationships within and outside the neighbourhood as well as working towards a fully representative and supportive process. Importantly, even in a professional capacity, the planners saw the merit in creating opportunities for ownership, hope and empowerment as created through the LAP process. These outcomes were not achieved easily. They have taken a commitment to the people in the neighbourhood, not just improving the structural modifications. The planners also recognized the importance of recognizing for the community members, that Pleasant Hill was not alone, they were a part of the City and they deserved equal services, opportunities and attention. The planners were very aware of the role power played in the relationships that were built and what this meant in terms of providing facilitation. There was a lot of work done to change the negative perception of the neighbourhood within the City. The commitment to making the LAP a representative process was apparent. The planners were able to build and strengthen relationships within the neighbourhood and between Pleasant Hill and the City of Saskatoon, as well as facilitate innovative solutions to problems that appeared embedded in the neighbourhood. The challenge, as discovered by the planners and community members, was to find a common vision to focus energies. Once that occurred, as seen in Pleasant Hill, it was possible to move ahead.

10.2 Positive Perceptions of the LAP Process

The LAP was defined as a comprehensive planning approach and when asked what this meant, each of the planners provided a slightly different but compatible explanation. The emphasis was on creating a holistic, inclusive approach, which "looks at all aspects of the community as a system"(PL.2006#3), connecting and focusing on the structural, social, economic, environmental, cultural and political aspects of the neighbourhood. Comprehensive planning in this context involves "an inclusion of the voices of the people" (PL.2006#1) by giving the people in the neighbourhood the skills to be involved, creating opportunities for interaction and facilitating changes that are identified by the

neighbourhood residents. Participation and engagement in this process was defined by one of the planners when: “citizens have the ability for feedback on that process and to see areas where they are going to influence decisions and where decisions are outside their domain and then to be able to be actively involved in implementing and overseeing where the progress is being made”(PL.2006#3). There was also an emphasis on opportunities for participation at the beginning, middle and end of the process, making it as inclusive as possible.

10.2.1 Education and Awareness

The strengths of the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan that were identified by the City of Saskatoon planners were very similar to those identified by the key informants. These included the emphasis on the process of information sharing, education and increasing awareness. These three features were believed to be capacity building for both the planners and the people involved in the LAP as stakeholders. Information sharing builds a foundation of trust as well as equilibrium. The members of the neighbourhood were able to express their ideas, needs and wants while receiving feedback and the opportunity to gain more insight into specific issues by talking to experts in an informal, yet safe and structured environment. Sharing ideas, as well as teaching people about the planning process, helped create an even and fair setting for dialogue and discussion. The planners spoke about their role as facilitators, ensuring that a safe, supportive atmosphere was created to ensure that stakeholders felt comfortable about sharing their ideas and to ensure progress was made as the groups generated feasible solutions. The planners all spoke about the importance of the process being community based, providing information and linking resources, but not, as planners, overtaking the process or making presumptions. They were all clear that their role was not to decide what the neighbourhood needed, as illustrated in the following quote:

“The citizens are involved in learning about planning and making decisions about planning in their neighbourhood and they are actively involved. The City is not just consulting with them but there is actually the opportunity to participate in the process, to learn, to discuss, to question, to make decisions, to come together to be actively involved”(PL.2006#4).

The planners spoke about the ways the Pleasant Hill LAP has helped change communication by improving and challenging the existing networks and approaches to planning on specific issues. The LAP process as a community development strategy was still relatively new in Saskatoon with five LAPs started before Pleasant Hill, and because of this, the learning and growing that occurred

for both the Planning Group members as well as the professional planners and City Council was conducive to change. A very positive outcome of the LAP process has been the ability to connect different independent departments and projects within the City of Saskatoon, increasing the capacity of these groups and encouraging negotiation, flexibility and communication across boundaries. This increase in communication and cooperation means there was a sharing of ideas, resources, as well as the possibility for greater funding and faster implementation of specific projects. An example of this would be the negotiation for the installation of trees and sidewalks when the Transportation Department proposed a new arterial expansion of a roadway.

The LAP process in Pleasant Hill required communication, problem solving and linking resources across the departments within City Hall and in the neighbourhood. Many of the issues in the LAP were multi-disciplinary and required negotiation for funding, as well as prioritizing issues between departments and funding agencies. The planners played an extremely important role of advocate for the neighbourhood, by coordinating the implementation of the recommendations that were created by the neighbourhood and by speaking with the various organizations and departments that were responsible for those issues. It was the planners' responsibility to follow up on these processes once they were presented to the responsible departments. The planners also played the important role of consultant and advocate for the neighbourhood, coordinating change through problem solving and communication, bringing experience and resources and encouraging creative approaches such as questioning policies made in the past and finding ways to modify them to work better for the neighbourhood. The changing attitudes and approach to the core neighbourhoods is expressed in the following quote:

"I've been with the City for four years... even from when I started, there has been a huge change in how the City staff talk about the core neighbourhoods. I think that they are also more open to future recommendations in the local area plans. I don't think there will be as much resistance" (PL.2006#4).

10.2.2 The LAP as a Representative and Supportive Process

The planners believed that the Pleasant Hill LAP was a supportive and representative process. There was tremendous support from the neighbourhood as well as a strong commitment on behalf of the City of Saskatoon. As a new and growing initiative, there was only one planning representative in 1996 when the first LAP was initiated, growing to a team of four to six people as the scope of the LAP process grew. The Pleasant Hill LAP had at least two planners involved in the development of the LAP and with two more planning positions created for the

development of the Local Civics Committee and the Pleasant Hill Safety Audit process and one planner who is still responsible for the implementation of the recommendations. The process has gained “*legitimacy*” within City Hall (PL.2006#2) and has now reached eight neighbourhoods, giving people’s voice to planning. There is now an economic commitment to the process as the LAPs became part of the operating budget, versus a capitally funded initiative in 2005 (City of Saskatoon, 2005d). The LAPs have grown to accommodate the voices and problems of the neighbourhoods it has invested in, creating the Local Civic Committee as well as the Safety Audit process. The planners also spoke about the commitment to Pleasant Hill, meeting with the Community Association every two to three months instead of once a year as with most of the neighbourhoods targeted. The reasons for these meetings were ongoing initiatives, such as the development of Station 20 West and the implementation of curbside garbage collection. They spoke about knowing the neighbourhood through this process, being immersed in the neighbourhood.

10.2.3 Representation

“To see 150 people out in the core neighbourhood [at the Pleasant Hill Implementation Meeting in May 2003] was pretty overwhelming” (PL.2006#1).

The quote above shows the strong representation of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in the process. There was a committed Planning Group of neighbourhood stakeholders but above and beyond this core group, there were many opportunities for any individuals who wanted to get involved. The commitment to gaining representation of the neighbourhood was evident through the flyers, mail outs, newspaper invitations as well as the door-to-door campaigns that were used to invite interested individuals to the LAP meetings.

10.2.4 Building Ownership, Social Capital and Empowerment

The positive social aspects of the Pleasant Hill LAP that the planners identified included feelings of empowerment gained through the respect the neighbourhood was shown throughout the process, as well as the LAP document itself, which was recognized by the City of Saskatoon as an agreement and a resource that will direct future developments. Support service providers have already used the Pleasant Hill LAP as a reference to gain funding for initiatives that were outlined in the Final Report. Having equal access to the creation of the document, as well as the finalized report, shows a commitment to change from the City of Saskatoon. It was not a report that has been filed away; it has become an active document being used to lead development, as illustrated in the following quote:

“It’s almost as if giving someone a legal document and said these are your rights right here, they could use it...a policy to say why we are a priority and gives them a background”(PL.2006#1).

There was a genuine commitment by the planners to build trust, community capacity and ensure the LAP process was as collaborative and empowering as possible. There was a sense of duty as well as responsibility to the people and the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The following quotes explore the commitment and relationships the LAP has facilitated:

“I just felt that they deserved justice and so the opportunity to work with them and hear their voices and bring that back to not only the senior administration and City Council but the planners and for the planners to see that people are responding and I think that has resulted in a bit of a cultural change”(PL.2006#3).

“I think we have definitely created some relationships with people in the community in that they trust us and feel comfortable calling us or emailing us and I think within the community friendships have been made as well and people are working together as well. There are still some disagreements and infighting within the community association but I think progress has been made and people have got to know each other and are looking out for each other” (PL.2006#4)

“I think we gave hope. I think the community gave hope through the process to themselves and to others” (PL.2006#3).

10.3 The Challenges of the Pleasant Hill LAP

The challenging aspects of the LAP process that the planners highlighted deal with the logistical aspects such as the time, resources and political support needed to implement the recommendations. There were also perceived barriers to change in the LAP process. These include the depth of issues in Pleasant Hill and gaining full participatory representation of the neighbourhood in the process. The planners were all committed to Pleasant Hill, to reaching the people as well as initiating positive changes and are still committed to the neighbourhood through the implementation of recommendations, but as expected, the frustration the planners felt is not the same as the neighbourhood participants. The planners were responsible and sensitive to the political and economic decisions that directed the Pleasant Hill LAP once it was approved for implementation. They wanted the LAP to succeed in meeting the goals and visions of the neighbourhood and for

Pleasant Hill to become the place the Planning Group believes it can be, but they were also coming to the process as professionals.

10.3.1 Time and Resources

There was recognition that the time needed for both developing the LAP and implementing the recommendations was longer than what the neighbourhood expected, “but I just think we haven’t done enough, quick enough...”(PL.2006#3). This challenge was a part of the process, as it took time for approval from City Council as well as time to secure capital and support from the various City departments. The planners all spoke about the loss of momentum after the LAP Final Report was finalized and implementation begun; there were no easy solutions to mediate this challenge as expressed in the following quote:

“I mean it would be great to have the plan implemented quicker than it is happening, keeps the momentum going- especially the changes that are visible in the neighbourhood” (PL.2006#4).

The planners expressed concern over how resource intensive the LAP process is in terms of man-hours and commitment from City Council. It has grown as a community development strategy and received support from all levels of government. It has become part of the budget but all parts of the LAP process require time and energy. Developing the mandate and the LAP process itself required time and hands on experience. The City is responsible for providing the information and support to the neighbourhood at the onset of the process, as well as the tools and opportunities to participate. The challenges of this type of process are illustrated in the following quote:

“It is definitely labour intensive for the government to provide these supports because for many of these people, this is the very very first time they have been involved in anything related to the government that actually asked their opinion and they have actually had influence” (PL.2006#3).

It took time to build relationships in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, to create a vision of change and to build a supportive and forward moving process which represented the needs of the neighbourhood. This required that the planners were available and accessible. It required many additional hours of time as the LAP process requires an immersion in the neighbourhood. To sustain this time, energy and the momentum of the LAP, the Local Civics Committee was developed. A full time planner helped facilitate and sustain the LCC but the resources to continue this commitment were too demanding and the LCC was disbanded, even

though the planners and people involved believed it was an integral part of the process and a significant loss.

10.3.2 Representation

There was a strong commitment to ensuring that there was representation from the many different populations in Pleasant Hill. A lot of effort was put into recruitment and the neighbourhood received information through a number of mediums, including door-to-door recruitment. Even with this concerted effort, there was a shared opinion that there was still not enough Aboriginal or youth representation. There was recognition that participating in an initiative that was implemented by the local government created barriers for some individuals because of intimidation, mistrust, and frustration. These feelings may have inhibited individuals from participating because of experiences they have had in the past, or they may have felt they did not have the skills or ability to participate. The planners acknowledged the strain and sacrifices individuals made in order to participate. Giving up their time in the evenings to participate was very difficult for those who work long hours, have children or have mobility or accessibility challenges. The barriers to participation are illustrated in the following quote:

“I think just by the very nature that it is the local government, that creates barriers for people because they are intimidated – for all the right reasons and don’t have trust for all the right reasons in the institution of government to help them and the fact that we aren’t necessarily representative of the community, we are middle class, white, privileged people and all of the people that have participated in the plan have been of that characteristic. I felt at points uncomfortable because I understood how it must seem to that community but they are open to anybody who can help but I think if we had a more representative work force in City of Saskatoon”(P.2006#4).

10.3.3 Barriers to Change

The Pleasant Hill LAP was challenging because of the depth of the issues in the neighbourhood. The planners had to find a balance between the issues the neighbourhood wanted to talk about, such as social assistance, and issues that were in the scope of the LAP and municipal government. There was a commitment made by all three levels of government in Pleasant Hill to approach the social issues, including poverty reduction, not just the manifestations of it, which normally it is not within municipal jurisdiction. This challenge is captured in the following quote:

“The City has never actually dealt with, we deal with manifestations of poverty, not poverty itself. So even knowing where to start with that sort of thing”(PL.2006#1).

Because of the depth of issues in Pleasant Hill, “the objectives are perpetual and long term”(PL.2006#2), meaning that it is difficult to see changes immediately, even after the recommendations have been implemented. There must be continual effort on the part of the City of Saskatoon, the neighbourhood and service providers to initiate and sustain positive changes in the neighbourhood, especially those dealing with crime and poverty, as these two issues create a negative cycle of deterioration.

There has been frustration expressed by the neighbourhood at the percentage of the recommendations that have been ‘completed’, either because they have not been done to the neighbourhood’s standards, or because there have not been visible changes. This was a result of political and administrative reasons, as the planners must identify to City Hall the recommendations that have been implemented to show forward progress. Although this is the case, crossing them off the list may mean that the focus is moved off of the issue, even if it would require monitoring or renewal in time. This challenge is illustrated in the following quote:

“So it a real balance of when to move off ‘ongoing’ onto ‘completed’. If we keep it open then it ensures future planners as well will deal with the issue” (PL.2006#3).

There was also concern that there still must be a full time planner and an assistant working with the core neighbourhoods that have been targeted by LAPs, ensuring that there is communication between the neighbourhoods and the City, as well as the inclusion of different interest groups. There was also a strongly held belief that in order to make a “transformation” (PL.2006#3), in order to move Pleasant Hill from its precarious situation, there must be positive communication and positive stories reaching the media. The media’s role in perpetuating the stigmatization against the core neighbourhood was a challenge that could be remedied if people saw all the good things happening in Pleasant Hill.

10.3.4 A Summary of the Planners’ Perception of the LAP Process

The theoretical underpinnings of participatory planning are seen through this process, outlined by the planners through the definitions they provided, but more importantly there is a strong connection between the theory and the practical application of this process in Pleasant Hill. The open way the planners spoke about their experiences in the neighbourhood showcase the sensitivity and true

commitment these individuals had to the process, even when working in a professional capacity. The planners recognized that Pleasant Hill has been a special case, that it has presented challenges but has presented a fertile ground for change, with the neighbourhood offering time and energy over and above what has been seen before in other LAP processes. The planners were sensitive to the issues present, including the issue of trust.

The planners expected the challenges of the Pleasant Hill LAP, as the issues of time, resources and representation were embedded in the process itself. These challenges meant that there was to be open and explicit communication at all stages in the process in order to reduce frustration within the neighbourhood. With the positive perception of the LAP process in Pleasant Hill, it was apparent that this communication was well managed, as the community members did understand the limitations of the process, including the time it took for implementation. The depth of the issues in the neighbourhood has meant that the planners have had to balance the priorities of the neighbourhood with the logistical capabilities of the City of Saskatoon. The acknowledgement of the complexity of the neighbourhood and the innovative approaches needed has meant that progress has been made, albeit slowly.

10.4 The Perception of the Pleasant Hill Outcomes and Contributions to Quality of Life

The planners' overall perception of the outcomes of the Pleasant Hill LAP fit in line with the community respondents' opinions, there being that there have been many positive changes for the neighbourhood. There are similarities around how both the community respondents and the planners talk about the initiatives, as well as their contributions to quality of life. The themes are slightly different than the community respondents' because the interview schedule that was used for the planners explored the outcomes from the objective and professional stance of the planners. The outcomes explore the completed recommendations and procedural aspects of the LAP versus the more subjective perceptions of the community respondents. It is important to note the emphasis the planners place on the social outcomes of the LAP, especially regarding social capital and empowerment. This is significant because it shows the consideration that was given to the people involved and the importance of forming strong relationships built on trust, accountability and respect.

The planners were careful to presume changes in quality of life because although they were optimistic about positive future results, the depth of the issues and the experiences of the individuals living in the neighbourhood demanded sensitivity. The planners acknowledged the structural changes that have been implemented as well as the importance of neighbourhood involvement and the

development of a voice and vision for the future of Pleasant Hill. The process helped build positive relationships and networks within the neighbourhood. The planners also spoke about the improvement of both a sense of community and quality of life for some, with the hope that the positive cycles in Pleasant Hill will continue and reach the whole neighbourhood.

10.4.1 The Mediation of Safety Issues Through Structural Changes

The planners acknowledged the importance of structural recommendations targeting issues of safety. The positive outcomes of the structural changes in the neighbourhood have included the renovation of properties (especially apartment buildings), and the clean-up of vacant and derelict properties. A partnership has been formed between the City of Saskatoon and Fire and Protective Services to allow inspections of properties known to be un-habitable because of health and safety violations. This has been a positive step towards creating more safe, stable and sustainable housing in the neighbourhood. Initiatives such as the pedestrian cross light, which was installed in the middle of the street, not at an intersection and the adopt-a bus-shelter program show how something that has not been done before in any other neighbourhood can be achieved. These two initiatives are visible and recognized successes by the planners and the Planning Group alike.

The land use recommendations in the Pleasant Hill LAP were created to ensure that safety was a number one priority, as well as ensuring compatibility of land uses and minimizing the impacts of alternate land uses (such as the West Industrial neighbourhood boundary). There was careful attention paid to sustaining the existing strengths and assets, including the facilities of the neighbourhood (such as the park spaces, Pleasant Hill Elementary School and St. Paul's Hospital), while creating opportunities for new investment.

The planners spoke of the commitment the City of Saskatoon made to the neighbourhood by investing one million dollars in the environmental remediation and clean up of the land on 20th Street between Avenue K and Avenue L, which will be made into Station 20 West. This land would otherwise be a vacant expanse with little economic viability. Station 20 West was not a recommendation in the LAP but the development of the site will be guided by the LAP and will include amenities that were asked for, such as a grocery store, a library and affordable housing. Station 20 West was a noted development because it has the potential to bring positive change to the neighbourhood through economic investment, structural improvements and providing necessary services and community supports through opportunities for housing and employment. The possibility of a recreational land linkage along the CPRN line is still under study to determine feasibility and safety, but if it is approved the linkage has the potential to be a drawing point to the neighbourhood and would provide a safe and beautiful

walkway to the downtown core.

10.4.2 Social Initiatives and Quality of Life

The positive social outcomes of the LAP were multileveled and included the facilitation and coordination of information, communication, and resources, especially through leisure and social service provision. An example of this was the initiation of a report to determine if the geographical concentration of support services in the neighbourhood was necessary or problematic. The number of drug and alcohol detoxification centres, missions and outreach facilities in the neighbourhood was a concern. It was believed to attract a high needs population and the neighbourhood was not sure if this concentration of services was: actually reflecting a need, being accessed, or if funding had come into the neighbourhood arbitrarily because of other problems. The report will help address how the issue can best be addressed through planning measures such as zoning or facilitating more networking and organization between the services.

The coordination of human service delivery was noted as a positive outcome, the need to coordinate services and efforts in the neighbourhood having been a significant recommendation of the LAP. For example, there has been a launch of a new school tracking system pilot, a new approach to ensure children were not skipping school. This system connects the school to social assistance and health care providers to see if the absences are because the children are accessing these services, or if they are not present at school for other reasons. This coordination of communication is important because it ensures that children are not missing school arbitrarily and it may help direct the necessary supports to the children and families to get them back to school.

Work has also been done with the Central Urban Métis Federation Inc (CUMFI) in securing housing opportunities as well as economic, educational, and cultural support and recognition to the growing Métis community in Pleasant Hill (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007) The LAP has highlighted Pleasant Hill as a “significant community to focus attentions on the Urban Aboriginal Strategy” (PL.2006#3). On July 8th, 2002, a new facility created to aid homeless aboriginal women and children in Saskatoon was opened. Infinity House, a supportive housing facility, became a reality through partnerships between different levels of government and CUMFI. This facility, located at 127 Avenue Q South has twelve transitional housing units as well as three emergency accommodations. It became a reality only six months after funding was secured which attests to the need as well as the political will surrounding homelessness (Government of Canada Executive Council, 2007).

10.4.3 Social Capital and Empowerment

“Social wise – it gives Pleasant Hill a voice and a stake in the planning world. Their needs are prioritized and they know that and they can use that when they want to for their benefit. They definitely have made use of the LAP saying that we need these things to happen. It has given them power that way, socially” (PL.2006#1).

The LAP has given the residents and stakeholders in the neighbourhood a voice, which has had the ability to strengthen the capacity of the neighbourhood by prioritizing their needs and wants and bringing them into the debate about how the neighbourhood develops. Through the generation of opportunities to share their experiences and knowledge of the neighbourhood, such as the Safety Audit, the stakeholders became engaged in a sharing, educative and connected web. There was validation that the neighbourhood’s needs were important. The planners spoke about the FCM award as an achievement of the commitment of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood to change, as well as recognition of the importance of engaging communities in the planning and decision making process.

In terms of building social capital and a sense of community, the planners agreed that it was an opportunity for people to meet and talk and, in some cases, build feelings of trust and a social network. But there was also a strong recognition of a sense of community that already existed in the neighbourhood. The planners were conservative with their outlook on changes in quality of life but they were also hopeful. There was a shared opinion that QoL in the neighbourhood has probably shifted positively for many individuals and would continue to do so into 2007 and beyond. Opportunities for homeownership were believed to be at the heart of this change as well as a collaborative relationship with the First Nations Government.

“I think there are going to be really good things happening” (PL.2006#4).

10.4.4 Changing Perceptions and Bringing Pleasant Hill Forward

The challenges of changing the perception of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood were voiced as a constraining factor in turning the neighbourhood around. The planners believed the negative messages of the area were perpetrated by the media and until the statistics showed sustained changes in: youth educational attainment, employment status, crime and safety issues, and home ownership, it was believed that Pleasant Hill would not see the changes it would need in the long term in order to become a healthy and sustainable place to live.

Another concern that was voiced was the possibility of displacement and gentrification. If new opportunities for economic growth and homeownership begin new cycles of change in Pleasant Hill, there is concern over the likelihood that the people in the neighbourhood, those most in need of social, economic and health support, will be forced out. This was a major concern voiced by the planners, human service providers and residents alike. The LAP was not created as a displacement tool, it was meant to create a healthy, accessible and equitable environment, providing the opportunities and the supports necessary to make Pleasant Hill a neighbourhood for all. But that means that there must be a conscious and concerted effort made to create a mixed neighbourhood.

“It’s working together to create a livable community. It’s working towards the same outcome” (PL.2006#3).

10.4.5 A Summary of the Planner’s Perception of the LAP Outcomes

The planners’ perceptions of the LAP outcomes and their contribution to the quality of life of residents living in Pleasant Hill follow in line with the neighbourhood residents’ perceptions and priorities. The planners’ perceptions highlight the structural and social outcomes and the connections that were made in the 2001 and 2004 QoL community interviews. The results of these interviews point to the importance of acknowledging the relationship between safety, housing, education, meaningful social participation, social capital and quality of life. The planners share the opinion that quality of life has improved for some, especially with regard to: the perception of safety, access to sustainable and affordable housing and social services, and; the degree of ownership and control over the direction of the neighbourhood that the LAP has brought.

The LAP implemented structural changes that have influenced how specific spaces are used. It has connected social services, businesses and the government through new networks to offer support and provide innovative solutions to neighbourhood problems. The LAP has facilitated relationships within the neighbourhood and inspired individual efforts to make the neighbourhood more livable. It has built on the neighbourhood’s assets, sustaining the existing strengths. The LAP has put in place protective development measures, protecting the heritage of the neighbourhood by ensuring the significant buildings in Pleasant Hill will be protected for posterity. The LAP has challenged traditional approaches to planning and development by bringing different groups to the table to find feasible solutions. The large-scale Station 20 West initiative is a perfect example of filling numerous needs through an innovative approach.

The LAP process created an opportunity for the challenges in Pleasant Hill to be met with new perspectives, relationships and resources. The planners’

perceptions of changes to the resident's quality of life were hopeful. There have been steps forward, though it was recognized that there is a long way to go, especially when new challenges arise with changing investment and interest in the neighbourhood.

The following chapter presents the findings from participant observations of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood as well as a review of the available print media highlighting activities in Pleasant Hill.

11.0 Participant Observation of the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood

Introduction

This chapter provides a different perspective of the neighbourhood; viewed from the researcher's point of view and through the available media. It is divided into two sections. The first section explores Pleasant Hill through participant observation. This approach enabled the researcher to understand what kind of spaces existed in the neighbourhood, how the public and private spaces were used, where the boundaries were and if there were visible structural changes from the Pleasant Hill LAP (Peace, 1996). The first section is divided into five parts: 11.1.1) First Impressions; 11.1.2) Boundaries; 11.1.3) Spaces; 11.1.4) Visible Changes, and; 11.1.5) Overall Perceptions. The second section provides a review of the print media available for the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, providing an overview of the news that is reaching people living inside the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood as well as the City of Saskatoon.

11.1 Participant Observations

When possible, features of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood were captured using a digital camera and notes were recorded in a journal. The participant observation was conducted at a variety of times during the day, including a tour by car in the evening and a number of walking tours during the morning and mid afternoon, weekdays as well as on a weekend. Other Saskatoon neighbourhoods were also toured to understand how Pleasant Hill was different and similar to other areas in the city. These included Nutana, Greystone Heights, Lakeview and Briarwoods. The neighbourhoods bordering Pleasant Hill, including West Industrial, King George, Riversdale and Westmount (located across 22nd Street) were also explored to understand how the land uses changed and how the dynamics of the neighbourhood shifted across these areas.

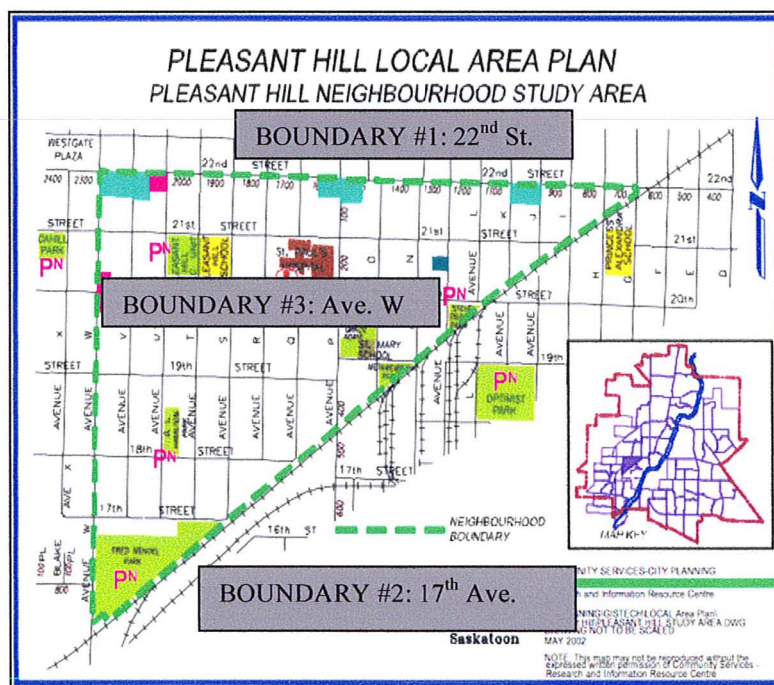
11.1.1 First Impressions

After touring other neighbourhoods in Saskatoon, the challenges that the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood has faced were very apparent. It is bounded by an industrial area and has visible evidence of crime and degradation. The housing stock was ageing and, though Pleasant Hill is a neighbourhood with established trees, historic brick buildings, and in close proximity to the core business district, there were a number of streets without sidewalks, with houses smaller than 600 square feet, with vacant lots and with deteriorating infrastructure. The King George, Riversdale and Westmount neighbourhoods are also core neighbourhoods but shared fewer of these visible signs of decline.

11.1.2 Boundaries

The boundaries of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood have very distinct uses and characteristics (See Figure 11.1). As discussed in Chapter 3.0, 22nd Street is a busy arterial commercial corridor (Image1) while 17th Street is unpaved (Image2) and separates Pleasant Hill from the West Industrial area (Image3) and a small portion of the King George and Riversdale neighbourhoods. The CPR Railway line runs along this corridor (Image4). Avenue W running north and south separates Pleasant Hill from the Meadow Green neighbourhood, a corridor known for prostitution (Image5). These boundaries are busy and are accessed by people living inside and outside Pleasant Hill, though not all of the uses are compatible with residents in the area. The traffic is fast and noisy and there are numerous large trucks on the roads at all times of the day (Image6). The West Industrial area is adjacent to Pleasant Hill, with many of the large structures visible from the residential neighbourhood (Image7). The industries in this area produce noise, dust and pollution. Residents were also concerned with specific industries creating other problems, such as the livestock feed supplier attracting insects and rodents. There are also two busy arterials running through the neighbourhood, Avenue P and 20th Street. These roads provide access to Pleasant Hill and were busy each time the neighbourhood was visited (Image8, Image9).

Figure 11.1: The Boundaries in Pleasant Hill



(City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p. 6)

11.1.3 Spaces

Pleasant Hill has a multitude of land uses and housing types, characterizing the neighbourhood with a number of unique areas with distinct activities. The field observations were conducted in the month of July. There was a lot of pedestrian activity at each time of the day the neighbourhood was visited. This was especially concentrated along 22nd Street, 20th Street and Avenue P. There were people utilizing the shops and services along these streets as well as public transportation. Speaking with people on Saskatoon Transit, there was an appreciation for the bus passing through Pleasant Hill as it went right downtown, though there was some disappointment that the bus did not run more frequently.

There were many children out in the neighbourhood enjoying informal summertime activities such as bike riding, more so than in other neighbourhoods that were visited. The Pleasant Hill Recreation Unit was the busiest park, with a number of children and caregivers enjoying the spray pool and play apparatus (Image10). St. Paul's Hospital was a busy hub of activity (Image11) but the schools were quiet because the students were on summer vacation.

Pleasant Hill has many beautiful brick buildings, including Pleasant Hill School, St. Mary's School and the Nurses' Residences beside St. Paul's Hospital (Image12, Image13). These buildings are on streets with established trees and green space and help to anchor the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, the areas around these establishments, as well as St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral, have been known trouble spots due to concentrated criminal activity in these areas. The most troubled areas in the neighbourhood are located between 20th and 22st Street. This part of Pleasant Hill has a concentration of higher density housing, mainly low-rise apartment buildings (Image14) especially on Avenue U and Avenue T, and has a mixture of residential and commercial land uses. 21st Street was the area first recognized as having a concentration of sex trade activity. There is also a higher concentration of vacant lots, especially concentrated between Avenue J through V between 19th and 20th Street. The area is also associated with higher crime, high rates of rentership and high rates of prostitution (City of Saskatoon, 2005b). The vacancy and dilapidation of buildings in this area is evident with boarded up houses (Image15) and graffiti, some of which co-exist alongside new developments (Image16, Image17). There were also high vacancy rates, apparent through numerous "For Rent" signs in the windows of vacant apartments (Image18). While visiting these streets during the day and in the evening, there were girls in the sex trade industry walking around. While walking on 22nd Street, a plastic syringe without the needle was spotted. Along many of the streets where there is high pedestrian traffic, there are no sidewalks (Image19).

The southwestern corner of the neighbourhood, south of 20th Street on the other hand, has been recognized as a stable and established corner (City of Saskatoon, 2002a). The majority of the people in this low-density area of Pleasant Hill are homeowners. This stability is visible in the maintenance of the housing, yards and boulevards. There are more gardens and the houses are in much better condition (Image20).

11.1.4 Visible Changes

Touring the neighbourhood uncovered visible changes that have been made to Pleasant Hill since 2002 which have been put into place because of the LAP. There are new signs marking the neighbourhood's connection to the Riversdale Business Improvement District. There is land awaiting development at 20th Street between Avenue K and L (Image21). There were a multitude of stop signs and traffic calming devices, meant to safeguard pedestrians as well as detour prostitution. 17th Street has been made into a one-way street to stop johns from parking on that street. The pedestrian light on Avenue P South and 19th Street was also a visible improvement (Image22, Image23), allowing children to cross the street to St. Mary's School. There were well-maintained bus shelters and flower baskets on the boulevards (Image24) as well as public art (Image25, Image26). Perhaps most significantly, there were many visible improvements to housing achieved by CUMFI and Quint (Image27, Image28). These buildings were newly renovated, offering new opportunities for housing as well as upgrading the neighbourhood.

11.1.5 Overall Perceptions

Pleasant Hill appears to be in a state of flux, with a spectrum of challenges and opportunities. There are houses under 600 square feet that appear to be in disrepair (Image29), while on another street, the small bungalows are well kept (Image30). There are boarded up and vacant commercial buildings (Image31, Image32) while construction is underway for other commercial opportunities (Image33). There are well maintained green spaces (Image34) but these areas are no necessarily safe at night. The neighbourhood has the advantage of age with established trees and wide streets but the infrastructure is also ageing and requires repairs (Image35). The neighbourhood has a solid foundation to build on but needs the investment of the City of Saskatoon as well as residents to make it a place that people are proud of, a safe and sustainable neighbourhood.

11.2 *Review of Print Media Available for the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood*

A review of the print media available through the City of Saskatoon Public Library collection that was cataloged specific to the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and Internet sources reveals confirmation of the trends described above (see Table 11.1). It is interesting to note that the first printed record included in the collection was not sourced or dated and appeared to be a flyer from a paper or a developer's notice. The advertisement states that: "Pleasant Hill easily takes its place as by far the best investment offered in this city of good real estate opportunities." It boasts of the 'healthful and beautiful location' the neighbourhood offers with the prospect of 140-200 (foot) lots available for \$40 to \$200. This advertisement for land was probably put out in the early 1900's to attract new residents. The rest of the articles are from 1991 to the spring of 2007 and tell a different story of the neighbourhood.

The articles are taken from the Saskatoon StarPhoenix, Saskatoon Sun and Government of Canada website (http://www.wd.gc.ca/default_e.asp). The early articles show rising frustration and growing concern with the direction Pleasant Hill is moving. The headings of the articles are shown here in the table below. The interesting thing to note is that, after the June 23, 2002 article that profiled the Pleasant Hill LAP "City Plots Pleasant Hill Rescue: Report Paints a Community in Crisis", there is a deep undercurrent of positive and affirmative action to solve the structural and social problems that are described in Pleasant Hill. There is also an emphasis on affirmative action taken by groups as well as a strong fight for political support and recognition of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. Clearly there exists positive change with growing momentum.

Table 11.1: Review of Print Media: Pleasant Hill 1991-2007

Date of Article and Author:	Title:	Message
Saturday April 20 th 1991, StarPhoenix: By Art Robinson, S-P City Hall Bureau Chief	“City Creating Apartment Ghetto, Planners Warn”	Negative
August 29, 1992, StarPhoenix: By James Parker	“Residents irate over growing youth violence”	Negative
June 23, 2002, StarPhoenix: By Kim McNarin	“City Plots Pleasant Hill Rescue: Report Paints a Community in Crisis” <i>* In reaction to the release of the Local Area Plan this article projects the need for change</i>	Negative with opportunity for positive action
August 2003, StarPhoenix: By James Parker	“Homeowners along stroll deserve tax credit: Fortosky- Mayor urges tougher penalties for johns”	Negative with opportunity for positive action
September 2004, StarPhoenix: by Rod Nickel	“Groups raise funds for Pleasant Hill Community Centre”	Positive Action
October 12, 2004: Government of Saskatchewan	“Rejuvenated Housing Project Opens in Saskatoon”	Positive Action
May 25, 2004, StarPhoenix: by Rod Nickel	“Old Apartment Building To Get New Lease On Life”	Positive Action
September 25, 2005, StarPhoenix: by Rod Nickel	“Refurbished apartments sign of a turnaround in Pleasant Hill: New Units among numerous projects in neighbourhood”	Positive Action
November 6, 2005, Saskatoon Sun	Affordable Rental Units open in Saskatoon”	Positive Action
April 15, 2006, StarPhoenix:	“Group Challenges Politicians for Solutions to Chronic Crime: Pleasant Hill Hotspot for Criminal Activity in City”	Positive Action
April 21, 2006, StarPhoenix: By Janet French	“Crime Infested Homes Closed: Anonymous Reporting Helps Lead Investigators of Government Backed Program”	Positive Action
March 5, 2006, StarPhoenix	“Contaminated City Lots Set for Clean up”	Positive Action
June 12, 2006, Star Phoenix: By Janani Gopal	“Community Activity Home Opens in Pleasant Hill”	Positive Action
June 20, 2006, Star Phoenix	“Pleasant Hill to Test Curb Side Garbage Collection”	Positive Action
December 15, 2006, StarPhoenix: By Lori Coolican	“Major Makeover for Pleasant Hill: Inner City Neighbourhood to Undergo Redevelopment	Positive Action
May 17, 2006, StarPhoenix: By Randy Burton	“City Shows It’s Listening in Pleasant Hill	Positive Action
February 2, 2007, Government	“Saskatoon Urban Development	Positive Action

of Canada	Agreement Funds Second Pleasant Hill Site Renewal Project”	
April 27, 2007: News Release Government of Saskatchewan	“Affordable Housing to Benefit Pleasant Hill Residents”	Positive Action
May 22, 2007, StarPhoenix: By Jeanette Stewart	“City To Pave Inner-City Streets: Pleasant Hill Residents Welcome Road Improvements”	Positive Action

12.0 Final Discussion

“This means, among other things, that [neighbourhoods] must be capable of holding their populations through choice. It means they must be safe and otherwise workable for city life. They need among other things, casual public characters, lively, well-watched, continuously used public space, easier and more natural supervision of children and normal city-cross use of their territory by people from outside it. In short, in the process of being rejoined into the city fabric, these projects need to take on the qualities of healthy city fabric themselves” (Jacobs, 1993, p. 394).

This quote, from Jane Jacobs’ book “The Death and Life of Great American Cities”, highlights the characteristics of a healthy, vibrant and sustainable neighbourhood. It brings together many of the building blocks that were part of the Pleasant Hill vision at the onset of the LAP process. Stakeholders in Pleasant Hill wished to see a vibrant, safe and productive neighbourhood to live and work within. This chapter provides a brief overview of the LAP process, as well as a discussion about the perceptions of quality of life in the neighbourhood. It will wrap up with a summary of policy implications as well as directions for future research.

12.1 A Summary of the Pleasant Hill LAP Process

The Local Area Planning process, as a new model of public participation in Saskatoon, has gained credibility, support and recognition. It began as a program with limited resources and has grown to become part of the Capital Operating Budget, prioritizing over \$25 million dollars towards municipal improvements of the City’s most challenged neighbourhoods. The Pleasant Hill LAP was the sixth LAP approved by City Council. Since the introduction of this process in the neighbourhood on May 24th, 2000, the Pleasant Hill LAP has achieved a number of successes (City of Saskatoon, 2006g). It was prioritized by City Council and gained funding from all three levels of government and will continue to act as a guide for future developments in Pleasant Hill. It won the 2005 national ‘Sustainable Community Award’ from the Federation of Canadian Communities for “demonstrating innovative approaches to Citizen Engagement in the Sustainable Community Planning Award Category” (City of Saskatoon, 2007b). To credit the process, above and beyond the positive aspects of the process and positive outcomes that have been discussed throughout this thesis, other municipalities are looking at the Pleasant Hill LAP as an exemplar of participatory planning at the neighbourhood level.

Through the exploration of: (1) the procedural documentation; (2) the Pleasant Hill LAP Planning Group's perceptions, and; (3) the City of Saskatoon planner's experiences, it is clear that the Pleasant Hill LAP met the theoretical goals of participatory and comprehensive planning. This has been achieved through a committed planning process, focused on the neighbourhood's social, physical, environmental and historical contexts, as well as the engagement and empowerment of the stakeholders involved in the process.

Empowerment and engagement were fostered through a commitment to building a solid foundation of education and awareness of the process, as well as the assets and issues in the neighbourhood. The process, as a capacity building opportunity, ensured that the information and resources necessary for meaningful participation were available and accessible to all. The process then gave stakeholders the opportunity to create a positive vision of the neighbourhood built through feasible social, structural and environmental changes. The positive outcomes for participants have been encouraged throughout the LAP process because there was an emphasis on ensuring there were benefits to all partners in an equitable and sustainable manner (Mitchell, 2005). Self-efficacy and confidence were encouraged through the acquisition of knowledge, awareness building, information sharing, cooperation and consensus building. There was also a strong appreciation by participants of the skills and resources that were acquired during the process, including political participation, awareness of policy-making processes and problem solving.

The Pleasant Hill LAP focused on inclusive engagement and open, informed communication. There was a commitment to achieving what Berry et al. (1993) define as 'breadth' and 'depth'. During the Pleasant Hill LAP process, 'breadth' was achieved by ensuring that there was access to the process at each stage in decision-making. The stakeholders were able to define the agenda and information was available and understandable. Breadth also requires that there were numerous available outcomes with feasible alternatives. 'Depth' was achieved with stakeholders having the opportunity to determine the final policy outcomes.

There was a dedicated effort to creating good representation of the neighbourhood throughout the process and a focus on building respect and trust for all individuals and groups affected by changes in the neighbourhood. The LAP recommendations were developed with the understanding that knowledge is actively constructed through social processes, and that, therefore, the values and actions that were constructed by participants were done so in ways that were meaningful to them (Healey, 1997). There was sensitivity to diverse experiences and expectations and every participant's ideas, experiences and perceptions were acknowledged. The process encouraged consensus building and focused on

establishing relationships and cooperation between individuals, organizations and even between departments within the City. This was achieved partly through defining a clear neighbourhood vision and engaging and committing individuals and organizations to working towards change; it was also facilitated by clear ground rules and trust building exercises.

There was an acute sensitivity to developing the LAP as an inclusive process that recognized the neighbourhood and the individuals' needs and capacities within Pleasant Hill. There was sensitivity to individual's comfort and ability to participate due to constraints on time, past experiences with government and barriers to participation. All individuals were treated with respect and participation was encouraged for all neighbourhood members, including vulnerable and marginalized populations. This translated into greater social capital, where individuals felt respected and empowered and were given the tools to interact with bureaucracy and direct the development of their neighbourhood. This social infrastructure was achieved through the role of the facilitator. The planners were accessible, flexible and open to the suggestions. They made sure to provide the support necessary to encourage involvement. This included providing childcare at meetings, door to door campaigns to raise awareness, and a multitude of communication and educational techniques.

Ownership of the process for the neighbourhood was achieved through strong facilitation techniques, allowing everyone to share their experiences and perceptions as well as a commitment to accountability of the process as well as the outcomes. This can be seen in part through the tracking of the status of the neighbourhood recommendations and implementation schedule. It is also important to recognize the growing commitment to change in Pleasant Hill fostered by a sense of belonging, greater participation in public life and higher levels of social interaction. The LAP process has helped to build active community networks, stronger relationships and partnerships between residents, business owners, the community association, community based organizations, and the City of Saskatoon.

Throughout the LAP process, there was a true sense of accountability and responsiveness from the City of Saskatoon, as well as community based organizations and individuals. This was facilitated through clear communication, providing access to the reasoning behind decisions that were made. There was also careful consideration throughout the process to focus on innovative and feasible short and long-term solutions which were set in a concrete proposal for change. Feelings of trust and satisfaction of the local government were gained through this process. The LAP process is built on the foundation that open communication and planning accountability will lead to a more equitable and sustainable urban environment. This critical approach brings new ideals to the

table and with it, new mechanisms for achieving openness and responsiveness, including flexibility and long-term objectives.

In reality, the targeted communities still exist in a larger, complex urban matrix of economic and political realities, which can overshadow the positive and collaborative efforts of the communities and planners. Even when planners are devoted to the facilitation process, there are still limits to the timelines and resources that can be devoted to improving an area, building the structural and social infrastructure that is needed by communities. The feelings of frustration and disengagement over time, together with the energy it took to build momentum in moving the Pleasant Hill LAP forward are examples of the challenges participatory planning brings to the table.

Local Area Planning is perhaps an idealistic process at the onset as it assumes a flexible and accommodating citizen base with a cooperative municipal government. In reality, the Pleasant Hill Planning Group and the City of Saskatoon were constantly working towards balancing the recommendations of the community with the political and economic processes and restraints that were inherent to any urban area, ensuring that the proposal for change was realistic and representative of the needs of the neighbourhood. The focus on incorporating feasible solutions which targeted social issues, even with the challenges this presents, is a clear indicator of the commitment that was made through this process to represent the neighbourhood's needs.

Making positive changes in the community is a realistic goal and the LAP process does not propose that community involvement will remedy all the problems associated with mainstream planning approaches; rather, it seeks to build a foundation for greater transparency and responsibility in planning and urban development. This has not caused an immediate reversal of the existing urban problems but it has challenged the processes, which have made Pleasant Hill a deteriorating neighborhood, working towards mediating the challenges the area presents.

12.2 Discussion of the Perceptions of Quality of Life in the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood

The Local Area Plan as a strategy for core neighbourhood community development emerged from an expressed need for making community participation in the planning process a priority of the City of Saskatoon. The LAP process in Pleasant Hill has been implemented to improve the quality of life, sustainability and equitability of the neighbourhood. This time and resource intensive process has created a neighbourhood vision. It has called attention to the dynamics of a complex and struggling neighbourhood and it has helped to allocate

present and future community, municipal, provincial and federal resources towards putting the 'pleasant' back into Pleasant Hill. The process has been criticized and it has been praised. It has brought people together and created a foundation for development, for investment and for hope. It has encouraged organizational involvement and commitment to action. But has it improved quality of life? Revisiting the research question is necessary at this time.

The question that guided this research was: to what extent have residents' perceptions of quality of life changed since defining the LAP for Pleasant Hill? This has not been a simple question to answer as there is no definitive 'yes' or 'no' agreement across the board. It has been a dialogue, a collection of perceptions over time and an exploration of diverse experiences. The quantitative and qualitative perceptions from the CUISR QoL Module research, collected in both 2001 and 2004, demonstrate important shifts, relationships and areas of concern in both individual's quality of life and perceptions of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The perceptions of key informant's and City planner's, collected in 2006, offer specific insight into the personal and neighbourhood outcomes from the perspective of the people involved in the LAP.

The telephone survey results from the 2001 and 2004 quantitative QoL survey show positive shifts in: overall life satisfaction, satisfaction with housing, perception of safety, social programs, and traffic conditions, while showing greater comfort participating in neighbourhood projects. These positive shifts in perception were small but important improvements. The demographic trends, captured via the survey, also show positive trends, with improvements in household income, education and homeownership across the two survey years. These were extremely important indicators of individual's capacities to succeed and sustain themselves and were part of building a resilient and sustainable neighbourhood. Yet there were gaps in opportunities for individual and neighbourhood improvement as well as well-being, reflected in the decline in reported general health and employment status (with a decline in full time employment and growth in part time and casual work). There were not specific improvements regarding the overall perception of Pleasant Hill, or in individual quality of life; further, the other neighbourhood and individual characteristics did not show a statistically significant change. These variables are important to note yet, the improvements that were noted are significant signs of positive processes within Pleasant Hill.

The 2001 and 2004 QoL face-to-face interviews reveal the array of relationships that exist between individual's perception of quality of life and the social and structural characteristics of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. There were strong connections made between respondent's perception of quality of life and their individual situations (e.g. financial security, employment status and

homeownership). The contribution of feelings of safety in their homes and in the neighbourhood at large was a very important component of quality of life. The aesthetic and structural features in the neighbourhood, as well as the social dynamics in Pleasant Hill, also contributed to respondent's perceptions of the neighbourhood and quality of life. The identity and perception of the neighbourhood was also an important aspect, with respondents wanting to live in a neighbourhood that people were willing to invest time and energy into creating a vibrant, safe and healthy place to live.

There were many positive changes in the neighbourhood which had a significant impact on the perception of quality of life in Pleasant Hill. In 2004, many of the issues that were raised in 2001 were still a major concern, especially with regards to safety, but there was an undercurrent of change, of progress and of hope. Almost half of the 2004 respondents felt their quality of life had improved and the majority of the respondents saw an improvement in the quality of life in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood since 2001. This was attributed to visible interventions in the neighbourhood targeting the underlying social and economic problems. Feelings of progress, a commitment to change, and a sense of accountability by the City of Saskatoon were motivating as well as vehicle for optimism, especially surrounding the issues of safety and homeownership.

The importance of personal responsibility, pride and investment in the neighbourhood was an important contributor to quality of life reflected in the 2001 and 2004 interviews. Both iterations highlighted the importance of even small improvements—such as clean parks and well-maintained houses. There was a sense that small actions on behalf of the respondents and others in the area fostered a sense of empowerment and control over the negative aspects of the neighbourhood. These feelings were bolstered in 2004 with awareness that there were investments and interventions going on in Pleasant Hill targeting the social and structural challenges in the neighbourhood.

There was a turning point in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood regarding positive changes and contributions to quality of life expressed in the 2004 interviews. There was hope and a sense that there were greater changes to come if the commitment individuals and organizations such as Quint kept up their energies, especially regarding issues such as homeownership, education, poverty reduction and safety. There were important shifts in the perception of quality of life, as well as the progress the neighbourhood has made in the eyes of the people who live there. Both of these iterations highlight the importance of safety, aesthetics as well as neighbourhood perception as contributions to their perception of quality of life. The importance of feelings of pride and empowerment gained through personal involvement, signs of progress and a sense of control over the

neighbourhood cannot be underplayed as the alternative is frustration, resignation and powerlessness.

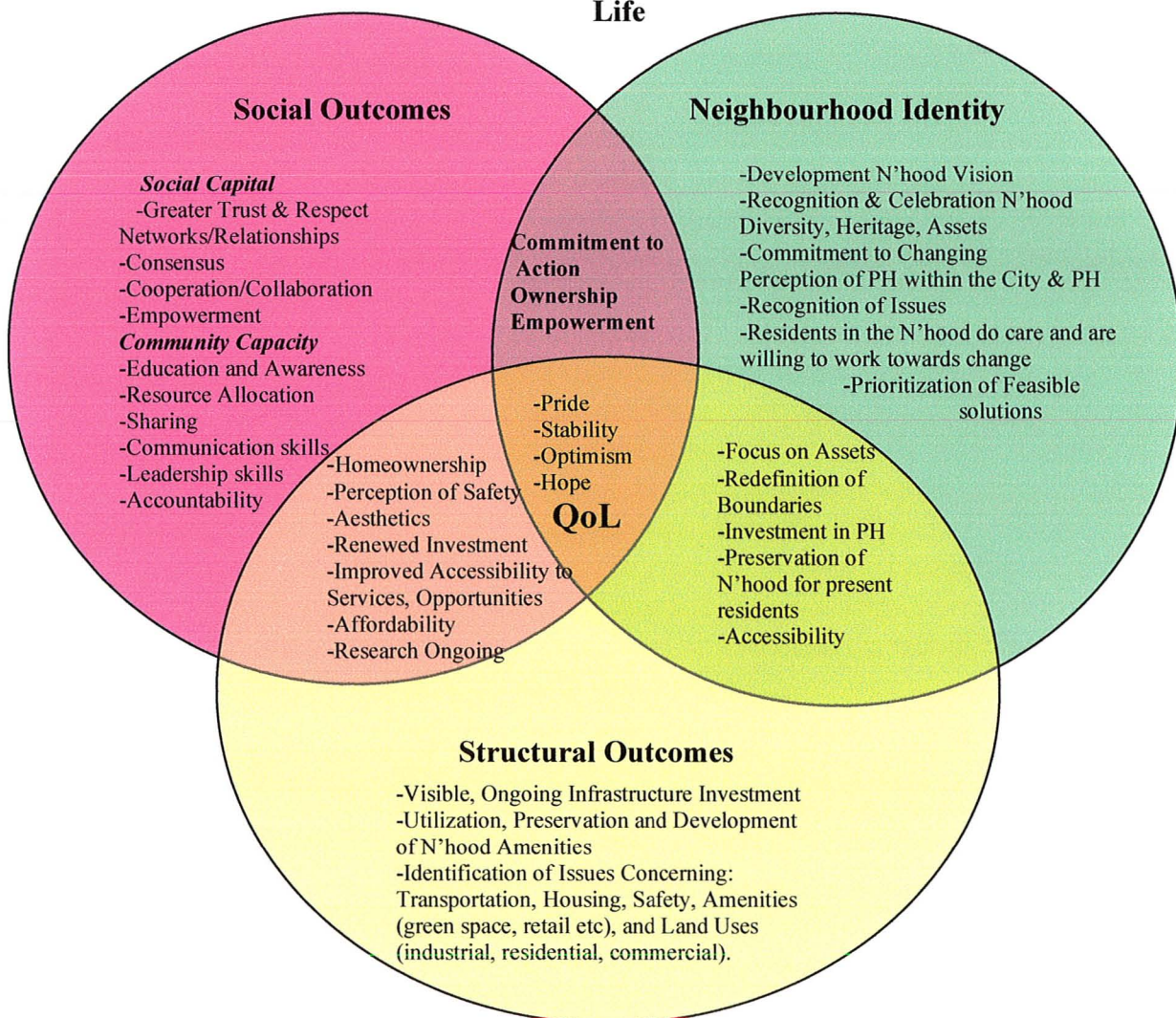
The perceptions shared in the interviews with the neighbourhood key informants and City of Saskatoon planners in 2006 revealed the perceptions of Pleasant Hill, the changes that have occurred since the implementation of the LAP, and the social and structural characteristics of the neighbourhood that contribute or detract from a positive quality of life. These outcomes mirror many of the perceptions that came out of the 2001/2004 face-to-face interviews with resident respondents. These individuals became involved in the LAP process because of a need for positive change in the neighbourhood, to stop the social and physical deterioration of the neighbourhood and to help build hope, stability and pride in the neighbourhood. There was a recognition that Pleasant Hill matters, that the people living and working in the neighbourhood do care and that it is possible to build positive cycles of change which reinforce the positive values and vision of the neighbourhood.

There has been a recognized improvement in the quality of life of the key informants as well as other individuals in the neighbourhood. These positive changes have been attributed to changes in the perception of safety, a commitment to creating more accessible social services through networking, and the creation of additional affordable housing opportunities. The positive outcomes also extend to the improvement of aesthetic and structural features of the neighbourhood, helping to create a safer and cleaner neighbourhood that Pleasant Hill residents are proud of and will work to keep it that way. There was also a strong appreciation for the commitment and accountability of the City of Saskatoon in the LAP process, and for the recognition that the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood is part of the 'fabric' of the city; it matters and is worth investing time and resources in. There have also been positive social outcomes that have contributed to a better quality of life for Pleasant Hill residents, fostered by the emphasis on developing trust and networks within the neighbourhood.

All of these outcomes have been identified as valid and significant contributors to an improved quality of life. Overall, the changing perception of safety, access to sustainable housing opportunities, and equitability of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood were the most significant outcomes and recognized building blocks for a positive quality of life. The relationships between the social outcomes (such as social capital and community capacity), the structural outcomes (such as visible improvements and investment in neighbourhood infrastructure) and changes in the identity of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood in the eyes of the residents and the City of Saskatoon can be seen represented in Figure 12.1. This ven diagram shows the individual and neighbourhood outcomes of the LAP affecting quality of life and, more importantly, shows the connections and overlap

between the macro outcomes. Not shown here is the interplay of socio-economic factors. These were not included because they were not targeted in the LAP, though they do play an important role and will continue to be a determining factor in individual's quality of life outcomes. The ven diagram represents the cycle of reinforcement that the social and the structural outcomes have on each other. These outcomes do not happen in isolation, nor are they really perceived to be separate when individuals describe the contributions of these factors to their own quality of life and the outcomes that are seen in the wider neighbourhood. The qualitative results of this study demonstrated the numerous and overlapping relationships that exist between the many different variables that were important to quality of life, as well as the many different ways they influence individuals on a day to day basis.

Figure 12.1: Individual and Neighbourhood Outcomes Affecting Quality of Life



The LAP has been a catalyst; it has created a dialogue that recognizes and supports many of the connections and relationships that exist between the many characteristics of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and it has fostered additional relationships that will help strengthen the social and structural outcomes that the LAP has recommended. This is an extremely important outcome because most interventions, especially through mainstream planning, do not recognize the interplay between the social and structural characteristics of a neighbourhood. The LAP not only acknowledged the many contributing factors, but it worked with the neighbourhood to understand which were the most significant and then developed innovative solutions to target them. The positive outcomes that have occurred since the LAP was implemented in Pleasant Hill show that it is indeed possible to change perceptions, to create positive and reinforcing cycles of both social and structural change and to build a positive foundation for the investment of time, resources and relationships for continued improvement.

12.3 Implications and Contributions

The Pleasant Hill LAP has been an excellent case study to explore the positive outcomes of a neighbourhood-level participatory planning process. The LAP was not an isolated event in Pleasant Hill; many positive initiatives have been occurring in the neighbourhood since the LAP was proposed as a community development strategy in May 2000. It is clear the Pleasant Hill LAP has been a vehicle and a foundation for many positive initiatives, and has provided a document supporting action on issues and challenges in the neighbourhood. In many ways, the Pleasant Hill LAP has put the neighbourhood back on the map, given the residents and stakeholders a voice about the future, and brought many different organizations to the table to create the political and economic tools necessary to rebuild and sustain Pleasant Hill.

There have been many positive outcomes for individual residents and the neighbourhood as a whole through this process, which will continue as a result of the completed recommendations. It is important to note that the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood will not attain the vision laid out in the LAP Final Report if there is not a continued commitment from the City of Saskatoon and the neighbourhood stakeholders to get it there. In order to meet these goals that are fundamental to a healthy, sustainable neighbourhood, there will have to be continued investment of time and resources to build the physical and social infrastructure in Pleasant Hill.

The interventions that continue to occur in the neighbourhood need to be connected to the wider cycles of activity in the City. As seen with the coordinated efforts of social service agencies, municipal services and funding agencies, collaboration brings new opportunities to light and increases the utility and feasibility of change. There must also be a continued understanding and

sensitivity towards the economic and political cycles that were controlling opportunities for employment, home ownership, education and access to social services as well as amenities for low socio-economic neighbourhoods and their residents. This is especially apparent with interventions that target marketable resources such as housing.

Unfortunately, there is a high likelihood of negative and unexpected results such as the displacement of the current population and gentrification of the neighbourhood if there is not careful planning (Bates, 2006). Saskatoon is currently seeing shifts in the housing market that it has not seen in years. In a recent article published by CBCNews.ca, Harry Janzen, the executive officer of the Saskatoon Region Association of Realtors stated "the only way to describe it would be that we're in uncharted waters" in response to the activity of the current housing market (CBCNews.ca, 2007). Housing prices in Saskatoon have jumped 44% from 2006, with average housing prices at \$233,917 (CBCNews.ca, 2007). This is double the average citywide house price and almost four times the price of the average Pleasant Hill house in 2000. It is imperative that affordable housing still remains a priority in the neighbourhood and that the neighbourhood continues to meet the needs of all residents living there.

The Pleasant Hill neighbourhood is also expected to "accommodate moderate levels of infill development over the next twenty years" (City of Saskatoon, 2002a, p.14). Because of changing land uses and zoning, the removal of dilapidated housing stock and the utilization of vacant or under-utilized properties, there are opportunities in Pleasant Hill to increase development of new residential and commercial spaces. These opportunities are important to the economic success of the City of Saskatoon as well as the viability and sustainability of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, but these developments must be guided by the principles that were developed collaboratively in the LAP. Market forces and priorities outside of the neighbourhood should not overshadow the decisions and vision the LAP has formulated for the future of Pleasant Hill.

The neighbourhood priorities and expectations have been supported by the development of innovative and feasible solutions through the LAP process, which need ongoing contact and engagement for the relationships that have been built to continue. The loss of the Local Civics Committee as a community board for further input into the implementation of the recommendations which were developed through the LAP process was an issue of contention for the LAP Planning Group. The continued shift of energies away from the neighbourhood has also elicited frustration and disengagement with the community development process. There must be an ongoing commitment by the City to foster participation through different avenues. There must also be continued monitoring and

communication of the implementation of the recommendations, as well as the successes and changes that occur in the neighbourhood over time.

The networking and the work the City of Saskatoon is doing with CUISR and the Saskatoon Regional Intersectoral Committee to create a social service access network is a positive step forward in creating accessible and equitable opportunities for individuals, families and communities (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007). The LAP in Pleasant Hill has been a catalyst but there must be a commitment by the individuals involved in the community, through agencies and organizations, to continue the positive work that is being done. There must also be a concerted effort by the media to emphasize the neighbourhood's strengths and assets in order to continue to change the negative perception of Pleasant Hill.

12.4 Future Directions in Research

This study was an exploration of the processes and outcomes of the Pleasant Hill LAP. It provided insight into the importance of specific aspects of the LAP as a tool for empowerment, capacity building and neighbourhood improvement. This research also explored the outcomes of the LAP from a number of diverse perspectives over time, identifying neighbourhood characteristics that have a positive or negative impact on the quality of life of the people that live and work there, while monitoring the changes that have occurred since the inception of the LAP. This is only the start of the development of the necessary benchmarks for neighbourhood quality of life and sustainability.

The City of Saskatoon is currently working on a "Neighbourhood Success Factors" monitoring system because there is a recognized need for the measurement of change and progress in the neighbourhoods where Local Area Planning has been implemented (Kellett, Peter & Moore, 2006). This process would help to identify the recommendations were "catalysts for change" (Kellett et al., 2006, p. 6), meaning those changes which had the most significant positive impact on the neighbourhood. This process is still in development. It will also be used to identify areas of concern in the neighbourhoods "allowing for preventative planning" (Kellett et al., 2006, p. 6). The City of Saskatoon Planning Branch has identified the "Neighbourhood Success factors" that should be monitored:

- Population growth/decline;
- Number of school age and senior populations;
- Concentration of demographic characteristics;
- Average family income;
- Employment levels;
- Owner-occupancy;

- Reported Incidence of crime; and
 - Percentage of population on social assistance.
- (Kellett et al., 2006, p. 6).

These indicators would be used in conjunction with data compiled by other service providers such as the Saskatoon Health Region, the Saskatoon Police Services as well as the City of Saskatoon School Boards and the data collected during the LAP processes by the City Planning Branch, including relevant demographic information collected for the LAPs and the status of the implementation of the recommendations specific to each of the LAPs (Kellett et al., 2006). This information would be collected and analyzed on an on-going basis with feedback to relevant stakeholders.

Partnerships have been formed between the City of Saskatoon and other community-focused groups in order to connect research resources and encourage collaboration on monitoring changes within neighbourhoods. The City of Saskatoon has also been working with the Saskatoon Health Region to develop a Comprehensive Community Information System (CCIS). This system would allow the sharing of information between human service organizations and could possibly help provide a basis for monitoring the LAPs in time. The Regional Intersectoral Committee (RIC) on Human Services, a team of human service providers who coordinate the funding, delivery and development of human services programming, play a very important role in the development of the CCIS as the provision of human services plays an incredibly important part in creating stable and healthy neighbourhoods. This process can build on the foundation of information, networks and initiatives that the LAP has created and encouraged.

A key challenge of this monitoring process is ensuring that the definition of the social indicators is meaningful. Citizen participation and consultation in this process will help to confirm that the variables being measured will effectively represent the neighbourhoods. Data collection and analysis are also challenging because there are few indicators that have annual measurements, as many are informed by Federal Census surveys collected by Statistics Canada every five years (Kellett et al., 2006). The City is working collaboratively with different agencies who conduct their own systems of measurement, including the Saskatoon Police Services, the Saskatoon Health Region, and Public and Catholic School Boards, but these reports are not necessarily annual and agreements must be made to ensure the data is collected consistently and is in a form that is usable for these purposes (Kellett et al., 2006).

There is a definite need to analyze and compare the 2006 Census information at the neighbourhood level to the 2001 Census information for the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. This comparison would help identify if the

population is changing and how. Understanding these trends is a significant step towards understanding how the neighbourhood is meeting the needs of the population currently, as well as what has to be accomplished in order to meet the future demands of the area. Concentrating on demographic trends such as population growth/decline, income, ethnicity and employment shifts would be revealing, as it would help identify if the population in the neighbourhood is changing, or if individual's capacities are shifting, especially in relation to education, employment and income. As discovered in the CUISR QoL results from 2001 through to 2004, there has been a discouraging trend of widening income inequality which affects those at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum most severely (Williams, 2004). Income inequality can have wide ranging consequences especially in affecting individual's abilities to access and sustain resources, such as affordable housing, good nutrition and education (Kellett et al., 2006). These numbers need to be monitored and the initiatives that have been put in place to mediate the causes and consequences of poverty need to be evaluated to ensure that they were reaching and aiding the people who need them. As revealed in this research, information identifying the changes in homeownership, social service utilization and the perception of crime and safety may point to improvements in quality of life if these positive trends continue.

Finally, it would also be informative to compare the 2007 QoL quantitative telephone surveys as well as the qualitative face-to-face interviews to identify if there were sustained positive trends in quality of life and the characteristics that contribute to or detract from these perceptions.

Appendix A: The Steps to Creating a LAP

1. **Neighbourhood Meeting:** All residents, property owners, private developers, business owners and community groups will receive an invitation to a meeting to discuss the upcoming LAP process. At that time, meeting participants will be asked to serve, as representatives of the community, on a LAP committee for 12-16 months.
2. **Forming a LAP Committee:** It is not necessary that committee members have special skills or knowledge, only that they are committed and have a keen interest in making a positive difference in their community. The LAP committee, with assistance from City staff, identifies issues affecting the community and develops strategies to address these issues.
3. **The Condition of the Community:** Initially, the LAP committee discusses the present condition of the community such as population numbers, land use, housing, economic development, traffic patterns, parks, recreation, crime, roads and tidiness. These discussions paint a picture of the community and provide the foundation for the development of the LAP.
4. **Creating a Vision:** The LAP committee envisions a positive future for their community. The creation of a neighbourhood vision creates a common base from which the community can work together to create realistic goals and strategies for successful long-term planning.
5. **Identifying Issues and Setting Goals:** Information is gathered through surveys, research, guest speakers, presentations and participant observations about their neighbourhood. Based on these findings, the LAP committee acquires an understanding of neighbourhood issues, the value placed on them by the community, the practicality of addressing them in the LAP, and the goals, which need to be set to move issues forward. This information forms the basis of the LAP.
6. **Adopting the Local Area Plan:** After the LAP committee has reviewed and approved the report, a public meeting is held for all stakeholders. At that time, the community is invited to voice their opinion about the LAP. Once a general consensus is reached in support of the LAP, the report is presented to the Municipal Planning Commission, and finally to City Council for adoption. These two latter groups should be defined in footnotes; i.e. what does the Commission do? What is its' mandate?
7. **Implementing the Strategies:** In order to successfully achieve neighbourhood goals, it is essential that all stakeholders participate in implementing the plan. The Community Association, Business Improvement District, (again, pls. define these in footnotes, as above) residents, property owners, business owners, private developers, community groups and the City will be called upon to be part of this process. The timeline for implementing the LAP depends on the nature of the neighbourhood, however, recommendations are generally acted upon within five to seven years.
8. **Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating the Plan:** All stakeholders have an opportunity to monitor the improvements in their neighbourhood. City staff will deliver a progress report to City Council and the Community Association on an annual basis or as required until all recommendations have been fulfilled.

(City of Saskatoon: City Planning Branch, 2006, p. 2)

Appendix B: Pleasant Hill Status of Recommendations Report: Dec. 5, 2006

Residential Land Use:	
100% Completed Passed September 18,2006	1.1(a) Land Use Policy Recommendation That City Council instruct the administration to amend the Pleasant Hill Land Use Policy Map, Bylaw No. 7218 to reflect the proposed changes upon consultation with affected property owners.
100% Completed Passed September 18,2006	1.1(b) Land Use Policy Recommendation That City Council instruct the administration to amend the City of Saskatoon Development Plan Land Use Map, Bylaw No. 7799 to reflect the proposed changes upon consultation with affected property owners.
20% Completed	1.2 Housing Deterioration and Abandonment Recommendation That in light of the continuing deterioration and abandonment of housing in Pleasant Hill, the Community Services Department, City Planning Branch (Housing Facilitator) prepare a discussion paper for City Council that identifies options (strategies) available to address the problem: Enterprise Zone.
25% Completed March 2004	1.3 Vacant Lots Recommendation That the Community Services Department, City Planning Branch include in the Housing Indicators Project (Capital Project #1711) a statistical measure that considers vacant lot development over time as an indicator of neighbourhood stability and reinvestment. The State of Saskatoon Housing Indicator System and Implementation Baseline Report was created March 2004.
25% Completed March 2004	1.4 Seniors' Housing Development Recommendation That the Community Services Department, City Planning Branch include in the Housing Indicators Project (Capital Project #1711) a measure that considers the demand and supply of senior's housing by neighbourhood, and that the results of this study be forwarded to the Pleasant Hill Community Association. The State of Saskatoon Housing Indicator System and Implementation Baseline Report was created March 2004. It reports the need to address special needs type housing.
50% Completed Stages: 2003-2004 2004-2005	1.5 (a) Local Area Plan Implementation That the Pleasant Hill Community Association in partnership with Community Services Department, maintain the role of the Local Area Planning group as a subcommittee of the Community Association to help coordinate the implementation of the Local Area Plan. From April 2003 to March 2004, City Council made the implementation of Pleasant Hill LAP a priority. Two Planners were hired-one to work with a subcommittee of the Community Association (Pleasant Hill Local Civics Committee) and to help coordinate the implementation of the plan and one to facilitate a safety audit report. Between April 2004 and November 2005, the LAP

	Implementation Planner coordinated the implementation of all eight Local Area Plans. In November 2005, an Implementation Planner was hired for one year to focus efforts on the Implementation of the Pleasant Hill LAP.
50% Completed	1.5 (b) Local Area Plan Implementation That the Pleasant Hill Community Association Local Area Plan Subcommittee report annually along with the City Planning Branch to City Council on the progress of the Local Area Plan recommendation implementation strategy.
100% Completed October 31, 2005	1.6 Pawn Shop Recommendation That the Community Services Department, Development Services Branch bring forward a Business Licensing Bylaw Proposal to City Council to limit the number and density of pawn shops within the Riversdale Business Improvement District, following appropriate community consultation. City Council adopted zoning amendments to distribute pawnshops through separation distancing. A pawnshop shall not be located within 160 metres of another pawnshop. This will assist in lessening the concentration of pawnshops in the community.
100% Completed September 18, 2006	1.7 204 Avenue J South Recommendation That 204 Avenue J South, zoned IL1 (Light Industrial), be rezoned to B5 (Special Area Commercial) to reflect its current use and long term potential as a commercial or residential site upon consultation with the affected property owner.
100% Completed September 18, 2006	1.8 112 and 116 Avenue K Recommendation That 112 and 116 Avenue K South, zoned IL1 (Light Industrial) be rezoned to B5 (Special Area Commercial) to encourage future commercial or residential use of the site upon consultation with the affected property owner.
100% Completed September 18, 2006	1.9 215 Avenue J South Recommendation That 215 Avenue J South, zoned IL1 (Light Industrial), be rezoned to RA (Reinvestment Area) to allow flexibility in the long term development of the site, while ensuring compatibility with the adjacent residential land use upon consultation with the affected property owner.
100% Completed September 18, 2006	1.10 425 Avenue P Recommendation That 425 Avenue P South, zoned IL1 (Light Industrial), be rezoned RA (Reinvestment Area) to allow flexibility in the long term development of the site, while ensuring compatibility with the adjacent residential land use upon consultation with the affected property owner.
Neighbourhood Safety:	
75% Completed Fall 2006	2.1 Geographical Concentration of Services Recommendation That the City Planning Branch report to City Council on the impacts of having a geographical concentration of "support services" (e.g. Larson House, Safe House, Family Circle Healing Lodge, Saskatoon District Health Detox Centre, Berryridge, etc...), in Pleasant Hill.

100% Completed October-November 2003	2.2 (a) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Recommendations That the Community Services Department and Police Services in partnership with the Pleasant Hill Community Association, and other stakeholders coordinate and facilitate a Safety Audit using the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design in Pleasant Hill.
100% Completed Approved June 27, 2005	2.2 (b) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Recommendations That the Community Services Department and Police Services in partnership with the Pleasant Hill Community Association, and other stakeholders present the Pleasant Hill Safety Audit Report to the Safer City Committee and City Council.
20% Completed February 13, 2006	2.3 Emergency Operation Plan Recommendation That the Fire and Protective Services Department facilitate the opportunity for the Pleasant Hill community to become further educated about the Emergency Operation Plan to help prepare residents with a protection strategy in the event of an emergency.
Transportation:	
80% Completed October 3, 2005	3.1 Large Truck Traffic Recommendation That the Saskatoon Police Services be requested to review the issue of excessive vehicle noise and speeding on Avenue P south, Avenue W south, 20th Street west and 22nd Street west.
100% Completed June 2005	3.2 Pedestrian Activated Light Recommendation That Infrastructure Services, Traffic Management Section in continued cooperation with the Pleasant Hill Community Association, Home and School Association and St. Mary's School give additional consideration to installing a pedestrian activated signal light at the intersection of Avenue P south and 19th Street. A report, outlining arguments for or against this measure should be forwarded to the Community Association.
70% Completed 2006 & 2007	3.3 Pedestrian Linkage Recommendation That the Infrastructure Services Department, Traffic Management Section, in consultation with the Parks Branch, prepare a report for City Council outlining the feasibility of formally allocating a portion of the Canadian Pacific Rail Right of Way for the purposes of a pedestrian and cycling linkage from Downtown into the west portion of Saskatoon. Consideration should be given to the cost, maintenance, liability and safety aspects of establishing the linkage.
100% Completed Fall 2003	3.4 Bike Plan Recommendation That the Infrastructure Services Branch, Traffic Management Section send a notification letter to the Pleasant Hill Community Association inviting them to attend future consultation meetings regarding the Bicycle Facility Network.
100% Completed Fall 2003	3.5 Barricades Recommendation That the Infrastructure Services, Transportation Branch be requested to review the potential to replace the temporary barricades on Avenue J and K perpendicular to the CPR ROW

	with permanent barricades that are more aesthetic and fit into the residential character of the area; and, that a copy of the review be forwarded to the Pleasant Hill Community Association.
100% Completed July 2003	3.6 Bus Shelter Recommendation That the Transit Services Department arrange to attend a Pleasant Hill Community Association meeting to discuss the maintenance of bus shelters, opportunities to recognize bus shelters as a valuable component of the community environment and the possibility of creating a adopt-a-shelter-program in the neighbourhood.
Infrastructure & Municipal Services:	
20% Completed Pending (Spring 2006)	4.1 Infrastructure Expenditure Recommendation That the absence of sidewalks (approximately 10 blocks), paved residential roads (approximately 4 blocks of gravel roads), and grassed boulevards (approximately 15 blocks) be reviewed by the Infrastructure Services Department as a potential reinvestment opportunity in Pleasant Hill during the Capital Budget review process for 2003.
100% Completed February 2004	4.2 Boulevard Maintenance Recommendation That the Parks Branch, Turf Maintenance Section be requested to meet with the Pleasant Hill Community Association to discuss options (strategies) to improve the appearance of boulevards in the neighbourhood.
100% Completed 2002	4.3 CPR Maintenance Recommendation That the Infrastructure Services Branch, Weed Inspection Services and Fire and Protective Services be requested to work with CPR to arrange a reasonable schedule for regular upkeep on the ROW. Priority should be given to areas where the ROW is adjacent to residential neighbourhoods such as Pleasant Hill. Following an agreement of maintenance scheduling, the Pleasant Hill Community Association should receive written correspondence indicating the maintenance schedule and future contact information.
50% Completed March 2004	4.4 Garbage Collection Recommendation That the Environmental Compliance Branch and Fire and Protective Services facilitate the opportunity to consult and provide educational materials to the Pleasant Hill Community Association regarding waste disposal and that consideration be given to implementing the community's suggestions to improve the occurrence of inappropriate and excess garbage disposal (e.g. large appliance and furniture pick-up services, placing stickers informing residents of prohibitive garbage material on disposal bins, publishing prohibitive garbage disposal list in regularly in the community newsletter and addressing concerns for additional garbage containers on a case-by-case basis, etc...).
50% Completed September 2006	4.5 Program Communication Recommendation That information communicating the programs available to

	improve solid waste disposal and maintenance of property are distributed by the City of Saskatoon, Communications Branch through notices at community events, public announcements and customer utility statements (e.g. promoting the Trash Tips Program, appropriate items for garbage disposal, guides to household hazardous products, property maintenance standards, the Safe Housing Core Initiative, neighbourhood Clean-ups
Parks and Recreation	
25% Completed Scheduled for 2009-2010	5.1 Park Upgrade Recommendation That the Community Services Department, Community Development Branch, consult further with the Community Association to determine the priorities for park development within their neighborhood.
0%	5.2 Steve Patola Park Recommendation In the event that St. George's Seniors Club no longer requires Steve Patola Park for the purposes of a senior's club and recreation facility, the City of Saskatoon should resume the operation of the site for the purposes of a neighbourhood park open to all residents.
100% Completed October 2002- February 2004	5.3 Community Gardening Recommendation That the Community Development Branch and the Parks Branch investigate the feasibility of expanding the number of gardening plots available to the community in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood for the CHEP community gardening program.
50% Completed	5.4 (a) Leisure and Recreation Programs Recommendations That the Community Services Department, Community Development Branch work with the Pleasant Hill Community Association to address the need for additional adult and family recreation programs within the neighborhood.
100% Completed 2005-2008	5.4 (b) Leisure and Recreation Programs Recommendations That the Community Services Department, Community Development Branch investigate the barriers to participation for the Pleasant Hill residents to leisure services programs and develop proposed strategies to address these barriers.
Heritage:	
100% Completed June 2003	6.1 (a) Conserving History Recommendations That the Community Services Department, Development Services Branch advise the owners of the Nurse's Residence, St. Mary's School, Pleasant Hill School and The Bosnia Club of the potential opportunities presented by the Municipal Heritage Designation and the City's Heritage Conservation Program.
100% Completed November 2003	6.1 (b) Conserving History Recommendations That the Community Services Department, Community Development Branch provide the Pleasant Hill Community Association with a contact list of community associations who have developed historical timelines in order to determine whether this would be a useful tool to identify, interpret and promote historical development in Pleasant Hill

(City of Saskatoon, 2006).

Appendix C: Researcher Propositions Guiding Research

As a geographer with specific interest in the profession of planning and community development work, it was important that I recognize the role I have as a researcher and the guiding propositions I have in this study which are informed by my past experiences and interests.

Propositions Guiding the Research:

- Involvement in a community will yield positive results, expected and unexpected
- Professional and community involvement can create a cooperative and functional plan
- There is equal opportunity for participation as well as for follow up
- Representation of community by stakeholders and residents was fair/true
- Participatory action research as well as civic participation are empowering and yield short and long-term positive results
- People care about their community... wish to contribute to making it better and seek benefits... long and short term
- There is 'hope' in the community
- There is cohesion and shared values... these may or may not be the same as in other communities
- The physical environment contributes to quality of life of residents
- The Local Area Plan is a tool for action which can work within the political and economic climate
- The conditions in the community demanded action and a different approach
- The outcomes will be measurable in the time frame as well as in the data that was collected
- The changes to the physical environment through LAP contribute to psychological and social phenomena in a measurable way
- The way residents perceive the LAP is similar to the way planners do – equal playing fields
- Participatory research leads to more equitable, responsive decisions and improved urban quality of life
- Public and private interests are important in a community
- Communities need synergy – sustainability, long term and short term attention...hope
- There may be barriers to participatory planning
- Individuals and groups may have different reasons for participating

If "Yes" to survey:

Thank you. Your Participation is very important to the University of Saskatchewan and the Star Phoenix in understanding the attitudes, behaviours, and desires of Saskatoon residents. We are using standard research techniques to insure that your anonymity is protected and your responses are kept confidential. You are free not to respond to any of the questions and free to withdraw at any time from the study. If you withdraw then data collected from you will be destroyed. If you have any further questions about your rights as a subject participating in a study of this nature, I have a few Numbers where you can talk to someone further. If you would like these numbers at any time during the survey Please let me know.

You may call the Office of Research Services at the University of Saskatchewan at (306) 966-8576. For more information on the study itself, you could contact _____ at Community-University Institute for Social Research at (306) 966-2121 or _____ at _____.

Please note that this survey has no connection to the general elections and is not supported by any of the political parties or candidates. At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview.

Personal Quality of Life

The first set of questions asks about how you feel about your personal quality of life. It includes questions about your health, your satisfaction with different aspects of your life, your happiness and your experience with stress.

Overall quality of life

B1.1	How would you describe your overall quality of life? Would you say it is...					Refused	N/A
	...excellent	...very good	...good	...fair	...or poor		
	1	2	3	4	5	21	22

Health

B2.1	Compared to other persons your age, would you describe your health, as...					Refused	N/A
	...excellent	...very good	...good	...fair	...or poor		
	1	2	3	4	5	21	22

Satisfaction domains

B3.0 How do you feel about each of the following? Please tell me if you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied.

B3.1	...your neighborhood				Refused	N/A
	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied		
	1	2	3	4	21	22

B3.2	...your city				Refused	N/A
	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied		
	1	2	3	4	21	22

B3.3 ...your housing	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.4 ...your friends	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.5 ...your relationship with your spouse or partner	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.6 ...your relationship with the rest of your family living with you	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.7 ...your leisure activities	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.8 ...your health	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.9 ...your treatment by people who work for the government, such as police or city services	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.10 ...your treatment by store owners	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.11 ...your job (or main activity)	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	21	22
B3.12 ...the balance between your job or main activity and family home life	very satisfied	somewhat satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A

1 2 3 4 21 22

B4.1 How satisfied are you with the amount of money you have to meet your own or your family's needs for food, housing and clothing?

Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	4	21	22

B4.2 Do you think your ability to provide for your family in the future will become better, stay the same, or get worse?

become better	stay the same	get worse	refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

Happiness

C1.1 Would you describe yourself as being usually:

Happy and interested in life?	Somewhat happy?	Somewhat unhappy?	Unhappy with little interest in life?	So unhappy that life is not worthwhile?	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	21	22

Stress

D1.1 How stressful would you say your life usually is?

Extremely stressful	Moderately stressful	Not stressful at all	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

Personal Evaluation

E1.0 Now I'm going to ask you some questions about how important certain things are for your personal quality of life. Please tell me if you think it is very important, moderately important, or not important.

E1.1 ...your job or main activity

Very important	Moderately important	Not important	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

...your ability to provide for yourself or your family in the future

Very important	Moderately important	Not important	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

E1.3 ...your housing

Very important	Moderately important	Not important	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

E1.4 ...your friendships	Very important	Moderately important	Not important	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	21	22

E1.5 ...your family relationships	Very important	Moderately important	Not important	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	21	22

E2.0 For you personally, have the following improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse over the past 3 years?

E2.1 ...your health	Improved	Stayed the same	Gotten worse	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	21	22

E2.2 ...your overall life satisfaction	Improved	Stayed the same	Gotten worse	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	21	22

E2.3 ...your level of stress	Improved	Stayed the same	Gotten worse	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	21	22

E2.4 ...your happiness	Improved	Stayed the same	Gotten worse	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	21	22

Community quality of life

Next I am going to read you a list of conditions and services that affect quality of life in your neighbourhood. I want you to rate each condition as either excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor.

F1.1 ...the condition of roads and sidewalks in your neighborhood.	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	5	21	22

F1.2 ...the condition of housing in your neighborhood.	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	5	21	22

F1.3 ...the condition of parks in your neighborhood	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Refused	N/A
	1	2	3	4	5	21	22

F1.4 ...the condition of other green space (such as boulevards or medians)	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.5 ...public transportation	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.6 ...traffic conditions	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.7 ...environment (such as air and water quality)	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.8 ...degree of neighborhood neatness (such as amount of litter or graffiti)	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.9 ...friendliness	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.10 ...safety from violent crime	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.11 ...safety from property crime	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.12 ...neighborhood organizations (such as neighborhood watch or neighborhood associations)	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.13 ...shops and services	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.14 ...religious and spiritual activities	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.15 ...schools	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.16 ...health services	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Refused	N/A

	1	2	3	4	5	21	22
F1.17 ...social programs (such as counseling and child protection)	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.18 ...recreation programs & services	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.19 ...care-giver services (such as childcare and homecare)	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
F1.20 ...protection services (such as police and fire)	Excellent 1	Very good 2	Good 3	Fair 4	Poor 5	Refused 21	N/A 22

F2.1 Thinking back on the list of neighbourhood conditions and services I just asked you about, please name 3 that are very important to your own quality of life.

(Instructions to surveyors: Do not read list unless asked by respondent as a reminder. Select all that apply.)

- 1** ...the condition of roads and sidewalks
- 2** ...the condition of housing
- 3** ...the condition of parks
- 4** ...the condition of other green space (such as boulevards or the medians)
- 5** ...public transportation
- 6** ...traffic conditions
- 7** ...environment (air and water quality)
- 8** ...degree of neighborhood neatness (such as amount of litter or graffiti)
- 9** ...friendliness
- 10** ...safety from violent crime
- 11** ...safety from property crime
- 12** ...neighborhood organizations (such as neighborhood watch or neighborhood associations)
- 13** ...shops and services
- 14** ...religious and spiritual activities
- 15** ...schools
- 16** ...health services
- 17** ...social programs (such as counseling and child protection)
- 18** ...recreation programs and services
- 19** ...care-giver services (such as childcare and homecare)
- 20** ...protection services (such as police and fire)
- 21** Refused
- 22** N/A

F3.1 Over the last 3 years, would you say the quality of life in Saskatoon has:

Improved	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

F4.1 How much do you feel a part of your neighborhood?

Very much a part	Somewhat a part	not very much a part	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

F4.2 If there was a neighbourhood project organized, such as a block party or yard sale, how comfortable would you feel about participating?

Very comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Un- comfortable	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

F4.3 Do you feel comfortable calling upon your neighbours for assistance or help during a crisis?

Yes	No	Refused	N/A
1	2	21	22

F5.1 Have you volunteered in any organizations or associations such as school groups, church groups, community centres or ethnic associations in the last 3 years?

Yes	No	Refused	N/A
1	2	21	22

F6.1 How would you describe your feelings of safety and security in your neighbourhood for you and your family?

Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	21	22

F7.1 Over the last 3 years, would you say the quality of life in your neighborhood is:

getting better	staying the same	becoming worse	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

Social Evaluation

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about how well governments are doing in areas that affect people's quality of life.

G1.0 Over the past 3 years, in general, how well are our governments doing in the following areas. Have they gotten better, stayed the same, or become worse:

G1.1 ...in the area of health

Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

G1.2 ...in the area of environmental protection

Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	21	22

G1.3	...education	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22
G1.4	...job training	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22
G1.5	...unemployment	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22
G1.6	...recreation	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22
G1.7	...income support (such as employment insurance, social assistance)	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22
G1.8	...housing	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22
G1.9	...support to volunteer organizations (such as United Way)	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22
G1.10	...improving the business climate	Become better	Stayed the same	Become worse	Refused	N/A
		1	2	3	21	22

Making Choices

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about how you think governments should spend our money to improve people's quality of life.

H1.1 Thinking back on the list of neighbourhood conditions and services, please choose three areas you think government spending will do the most good for the quality of life of Saskatoon people.

(Instructions to surveyors: Do not read list unless by respondent as a reminder. Select all

that apply.)

- 1 ...the condition of roads and sidewalks
- 2 ...the condition of housing
- 3 ...the condition of parks
- 4 ...the condition of other green space (such as boulevards or the medians)
- 5 ...public transportation
- 6 ...traffic conditions
- 7 ...environment (air and water quality)
- 8 ...degree of neighborhood neatness (such as amount of litter or graffiti)
- 9 ...friendliness
- 10 ...safety from violent crime
- 11 ...safety from property crime
- 12 ...neighborhood organizations (such as neighborhood watch or neighborhood associations)
- 13 ...shops and services
- 14 ...religious and spiritual activities
- 15 ...schools
- 16 ...health services
- 17 ...social programs (such as counseling and child protection)
- 18 ...recreation programs & services
- 19 ...care-giver services (such as childcare and homecare)
- 20 ...protection services (such as police and fire)
- 21 Refused
- 22 N/A

H2.1 Programs to improve people's quality of life can be funded in different ways. Which of the following 5 ways of supporting new spending on programs to improve quality of life would you choose? You can choose more than one.

(Choose all that apply.)

Enter 1 if yes, 2 if no, 3 if don't know, 9 refused for each of the following

- 1 Increase user fees
- 2 Increase personal taxes
- 3 Increase corporate taxes
- 4 Increase sales taxes
- 5 Take money from other areas of government spending
- 21 Refused
- 22 N/A

H3.1 We'd like to know which groups you think should be given priority when it comes to funding programs that improve quality of life. Could you name three?

(Do not read list. Choose all that apply.)

- 1 poor families with children
- 2 poor individuals
- 3 unemployed youth
- 4 Aboriginal/Métis/First Nations people
- 5 new immigrants and refugees
- 6 the elderly
- 7 persons with disabilities

- 8 single parents
 - 9 other
-
- 21 Refused
 - 22 N/A

Demographics

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about yourself. Please be assured again that your answers are confidential and will not be reported in any way that could be traced back to you.

Age

- J1.1 Please stop me when I come to the age category that you fit into:
- | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 18 - 24 | 25 - 34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65-74 | 75 and over |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Refused | N/A | | | | | |
| 21 | 22 | | | | | |

Sex (Do not ask.)

- J2.1
- | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Male | Female | Refused | N/A |
| 1 | 2 | 21 | 22 |

Ethnicity

- J3.1 In terms of racial origin, how would you identify yourself? Are you...
(Please refer to list of Ethnic Origins attached)

Immigrant status

- J5.1 Were you born in Canada?
- | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes | No | Refused | N/A |
| 1 | 2 | 21 | 22 |
- J5.2 (If no:) How long have you lived in Canada?
- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| Less than 1 yr. | 1 - 2 yrs. | 3 - 5 yrs. | 5 - 10 yrs. | Over 10 yrs. | Refused | N/A |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 21 | 22 |

Marital status

- J6.1 What is your marital status? (Read only if needed.)
- 1 Single/never married
 - 2 Married, common law, or living with a partner (Do not read: and does not mean separated.)
 - 3 Separated
 - 4 Divorced
 - 5 Widowed
- 21** Refused

22 N/A

Education

J7.1 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

(Surveyor: *Don't read.*)

- 1 Less than grade nine
- 2 Some high school
- 3 High school diploma
- 4 Some trade, technical or vocational school, community college, business college
- 5 Diploma or certificate from - trade, technical or vocational school, community college, business college
- 6 Some university
- 7 University graduate
- 8 University Post-graduate
- 21 Refused
- 22 N/A

Employment

J8.1 During the past 12 months, were you mainly...

(check all that apply)

- 1 working full-time
- 2 working part-time
- 3 Unemployed
- 4 Retired
- 5 homemaker/caregiver
- 6 Student
- 7 on disability leave, maternity leave, etc.
- 21 Refused
- 22 N/A

J8.2 How many people contribute to your household income?

Zero	One	Two	Three	Four or more	Refused	N/A
1	2	3	4	5	21	22

Income

J9.1 What is the best estimate of your total combined household income, before taxes, in the past year? Stop me when I come to the category that best describes your total household income: (Read the list.)

- 1 Less than \$10,000
- 2 \$10,000 to less than \$20,000
- 3 \$20,000 to less than \$30,000
- 4 \$30,000 to less than \$40,000
- 5 \$40,000 to less than \$50,000
- 6 \$50,000 to less than \$60,000
- 7 \$60,000 to less than \$70,000
- 8 \$70,000 or more
- 21 Refused
- 22 N/A

J9.2 In comparison with other people in Saskatoon, would you describe your family's financial situation as:

wealthy 1	well-off 2	comfortable 3	adequate 4	difficult 5	poor 6
Refused 21	N/A 22				

Household

J10.1 How many people live in your house?

type in number _____	Refused 21	N/A 22
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Children

J11.1 How many children under age 18 do you have living with you?

0	1	2	3	4 or more	Refused 21	N/A 22
----------	----------	----------	----------	------------------	----------------------	------------------

Home ownership

J12.1 Do you own or rent your home?

Own 1	Rent 2	Other (specify) 3 _____	Refused 21	N/A 22
-----------------	------------------	--------------------------------------	----------------------	------------------

Residency

J21.1 How long have you lived in this, or a nearby, neighborhood?

Less than 1 yr. 1	1 - 2 yrs. 2	3 - 5 yrs. 3	5 - 10 yrs. 4	over 10 yrs. 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
--------------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------	------------------

J21.2 How long have you been a full-time resident of Saskatoon?

Less than 1 yr. 1	1 - 2 yrs. 2	3 - 5 yrs. 3	5 - 10 yrs. 4	over 10 yrs. 5	Refused 21	N/A 22
--------------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------	------------------

J21.3 How many different homes have you lived in, in the last 12 months?

0	1	2	3	4 or more	Refused 21	N/A 22
----------	----------	----------	----------	------------------	----------------------	------------------

Permission for follow-up interview

K1.0 The next steps in this project are personal interviews. We will be contacting a limited number of people for these interviews. Participants will be given \$20 each in appreciation of their time. The interviews will last 1 hour at a place convenient for you.

K1.1 Are you willing to participate in a later interview?

Yes	No
1	2

K1.2 *If yes: What is the best phone number to reach you at?*

Type number in first Cell _____

K1.3 *If yes: What is the correct spelling of your name?*

Type name in first Cell _____

Although we wish we could interview everyone interested in talking to us, we will only be contacting a limited number. If you are not contacted, please accept our thanks for offering to be interviewed.

That's all the questions I have. Thank you for your time.

List of Ethnic Origins

White	Black	Korean	Filipino	Japanese	Chinese
1	2	3	4	5	6
Native	South Asian	Southeast Asian	Middle East or North African	Other	Refused
7	8	9	10	21	22

(Williams, 2002, p. 42-54)

Appendix E: QoL Face-to-Face Interview Schedule (2001 Iteration)

Participants: 8

Overall Satisfaction

1. Generally speaking, the Star Phoenix [Saskatoon Quality of Life Survey] survey showed that Saskatoon residents are optimistic about their quality of life. What do you think contributes to this overall feeling of optimism? How do you feel personally?
2. What are the important things that contribute to your quality of life?
3. What would you want changed for an improved quality of life?
4. Some of those surveyed are dissatisfied with the balance between work and family life. What do you think contributes to this? How do you feel about the balance between work and family in your life? How satisfied are you with your job? (PROBE: locus of control, degree of flexibility)
5. In comparison with other people in Saskatoon, how would you describe your financial situation? Why?

Neighbourhood

6. When compared to satisfaction with their city, survey respondents were generally less satisfied with their neighbourhood. What do you think contributes to this? How do you feel about your neighbourhood? Why?
7. What neighbourhood characteristics are important to your quality of life?
8. What neighbourhood characteristics reduce your quality of life?
9. Some survey respondents didn't feel *very much a part* of their neighbourhood. Why do you think people feel this way? How do you feel personally? (PROBE: friendliness of neighbourhood)
10. How important is feeling a part of your neighbourhood to your quality of life? Why?

Empowerment

11. What ways do you contribute to the quality of life of your neighbourhood? (PROBE: volunteering, fundraising, recycling, block parent etc.)
12. How does this make a difference to the quality of life of your neighbourhood?
13. What ways do you contribute to the quality of life of your city?
14. How do you make your concerns about your quality of life, whether personal, neighbourhood, or city, known to decision makers (i.e. politicians)? (PROBE: contribute to charitable organizations, vote etc.)

Spending

15. Where do you think governments should spend to get the greatest improvement in people's quality of life? Why?
16. Which groups do you think should receive the most benefit from government spending? Why?
17. What kind of government spending is most important to your own quality of life?
18. When it comes to government spending, most people surveyed chose increased personal taxes, but many other respondents chose implementation of user fees, such as what are paid for leisure services. What are your feelings about the most appropriate ways to fund social programs? Why?

Last Question

In the survey results, women were three times more likely than men to say their quality of life in Saskatoon had gotten worse over the past three years. Why do you think this is?

(Williams, 2003, p. 61-62)

Appendix F: QoL Face-to-Face Interview Schedule (2004 Iteration)

Participants: 8

Overall Satisfaction

19. Generally speaking, the telephone survey showed that Saskatoon residents are optimistic about their quality of life. What do you think contributes to this overall feeling of optimism? How do you feel personally?
20. What are the important things that contribute to your quality of life?
21. What would you want changed for an improved quality of life?
22. In comparison with other people in Saskatoon, how would you describe your financial situation? Why?

Neighbourhood

23. When compared to satisfaction with their city, survey respondents were generally less satisfied with their neighbourhood. What do you think contributes to this? How do you feel about your neighbourhood? Why?
24. What neighbourhood characteristics are important to your quality of life?
25. What neighbourhood characteristics reduce your quality of life?
26. Some survey respondents didn't feel *very much a part* of their neighbourhood. Why do you think people feel this way? How do you feel personally? (PROBE: friendliness of neighbourhood)
27. How important is feeling a part of your neighbourhood to your quality of life? Why?

Empowerment

28. What ways do you contribute to the quality of life of your neighbourhood? (PROBE: volunteering, fundraising, recycling, block parent etc.)
29. How does this make a difference to the quality of life of your neighbourhood?
30. What ways do you contribute to the quality of life of your city?
31. How do you make your concerns about your quality of life, whether personal, neighbourhood, or city, known to decision makers (i.e. politicians)? (PROBE: contribute to charitable organizations, vote etc.)

Spending

32. Where do you think governments should spend to get the greatest improvement in people's quality of life? Why?
33. Which groups do you think should receive the most benefit from government spending? Why?
34. What kind of government spending is most important to your own quality of life?
35. When it comes to government spending, most people surveyed chose increased personal taxes, but many other respondents chose implementation of user fees, such as what are paid for leisure services. What are your feelings about the most appropriate ways to fund social programs? Why?

Last Question

In the survey results, residents living in poorer neighbourhoods were more satisfied with their quality of life and neighbourhood in 2004 compared to 2001. Why do you think the quality of life for these residents has improved over time? Why do you think there is this improves valuation of neighbourhood satisfaction over time?

(Williams & Kitchen, 2004, p. 69)

Appendix G: Example of QoL Coding

I	Q	Response	Theme	Notes
1	2	we just needed to try and get enough people interested to turn it around	SocialCohesion/ Capital	Work together towards common good, # = power
9	3	I gave voice to some of the problems, identified some of the problems and tried to find solutions...So dialogue during the meetings, dialogue with the participants after the meetings and dialogue to the community members because a lot of people would not attend the community meetings so I would go to back yards and talk with the neighbours and say "what do you think? Where's your idea of what we can do to solve the problems?" and then aside from that we did other committees, we did a safety audit which was very important.	SocialCohesion/ Capital	Community Needs: Dialogue, exchange of ideas into the wider community, informal and formal discussion, target safety The importance of meetings
3	4	Means voicing our concerns, whether it be issues we have with the community or changes we'd like to see. And that was really good. The meetings were great and it seemed like we all came together and had the same concerns. We wanted safety, we wanted to make the community better, prettier and more welcoming. We wanted all the prostitution and drugs and all that bad stuff gone.	SocialCohesion/ Capital	Community Needs: Dialogue (Safety, aesthetics, community) The importance of meetings
3	1	I was happy to get involved. I wanted to see some change. I wanted to get a better home for the people in the Pleasant Hill area. I wanted them to be as important as people would be on the East side.	Equality of neighbourhood	Respect: same as east side
3	2	All of a sudden all of the drugs and stuff come in and it made everyone look down on the community and feel – don't go over to Pleasant Hill, you know you live there, you are going to get hurt and things like that.	Equality of neighbourhood	Stigma- safety

7	2	<p>The area, there is nothing wrong with the area. There are a lot of misconceptions and perceptions that are wrong. My opinion that much the same as it is easy to kick someone when they are down, the neighbourhood itself is down and out for the count, it was very easy for the media and others in the city to jump on and say yeah, you're right there is nothing worth saving, they should bulldoze it and the problem will go away. The problem isn't going to be solved with bulldozing, it's deeper than that.</p>	Equality of neighbourhood	Stigma - media and depth of problems, hope
7	3	<p>... but at that time, my neighbourhood was getting beat up verbally and in the press. off the street we've seen a decline in business here and we've had others here who for whatever reason won't open their doors unless through an intercom or visual inspection, that never used to be... not that it will ever go back to that way. We just need some stability in terms of people in the area, how they behave.</p>	Equality of neighbourhood	Stigma - media and depth of problems, negative change over time

Appendix H: 2006 Key Informant Interview Schedule

These questions are specifically geared toward exploring the Local Area Planning process and the impact of the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan between the spring of 2001 through to 2004 on the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood.

Community Members Involved in the Pleasant Hill LAP Planning Committee

Involvement:

1. How did you get involved with the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan?
2. Why did you get involved?
3. What has been your role?

Probe: *Can you describe how you participated in the LAP process?*

Process:

4. What does participation in the planning process mean to you? How would you define it?
5. Which forms of participatory planning were most effective in the LAP process?

Probe: *Such as document editing, community meetings?*

6. What forms of communication were the most useful?
7. Did any part of the LAP process surprise you? Why or why not?
8. Did you expect the suggested recommendations resulting from the Pleasant Hill LAP?
9. What features of the LAP process have been successful in Pleasant Hill?

Probe: *community meetings and document editing?*

- a. Have any of the processes presented challenges or barriers?
- b. How do these processes bring out the merit of the LAP process?
- c. How do these processes bring out the shortcomings of Pleasant Hill LAP process?
- d. Are the merits of the Pleasant Hill LAP process that have arisen different from those seen in the overall LAP process in Saskatoon?
- e. Are the shortcomings of the Pleasant Hill LAP process that have arisen different from those seen in the overall LAP process in Saskatoon?

Content/Outcomes:

10. What recommendations of the Pleasant Hill LAP do you feel are the most significant? Why? Have they been completed?
11. What changes to the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood have occurred because of the Local Area Plan?

Probe: *Structural changes such as improved pedestrian linkages?*

Probe: *Social changes such as increased public participation?*

12. What feedback have you received from the planners and members of the Pleasant Hill Planning Committee involved in the LAP planning process?

Probe: *community members not involved in the planning group*

Probe: *stakeholders, whether landowners, business owners or developers*

Probe: *City Officials*

13. Has the reaction to the Pleasant Hill LAP changed since the implementation in 2002? Why or why not?
14. Do you believe that the Pleasant Hill LAP has fostered a greater sense of community in the neighbourhood? Why or why not?

Probe: *For community members that were directly involved in the process?*

Probe: *For residents?*

Probe: *For other stakeholders?*

15. In your opinion, has the Pleasant Hill LAP succeeded in meeting the expressed needs of the community? Why or why not?

Quality of Life: The Quality of Life Module collected data regarding characteristics such as neighbourhood safety, accessibility to services, and social cohesion.

16. Would you expect changes in the Quality of Life of residents for the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood between 2001 and 2004? Why or why not?
17. Do you expect there to be different results in the next year (2007)? Why or why not?
18. Do you believe the LAP in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood succeeded in changing/improving the perception of quality of life of residents in the community? If so, how?
19. If there are noticeable differences in the neighbourhood, how has the implementation of LAP achieved this improvement? What other factors may have contributed?
20. Has the outcomes of the Pleasant Hill LAP impacted you as a resident? How so?
21. Has the Pleasant Hill LAP impacted you as a planning committee member? How so?

Appendix I: 2006 Professional Planner Interview Schedule

These questions are specifically geared toward exploring the Local Area Planning process and the impact of the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan between the spring of 2001 through to 2004 on the Pleasant Hill Neighbourhood.

Professional Planners involved in the Pleasant Hill LAP

Context:

1. What does comprehensive planning mean to you? How would you define it?
2. How did you get involved with the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan?
3. What has been your role? Has this changed between 2001 and 2004?

Process:

4. What processes were involved in the LAP since implementation in 2002?
 - a. Please outline the timeline of the processes as the LAP moved forward.
 - b. How were these processes initiated?
 - c. What projects took priority? Why?
 - d. What is the balance between short and long term projects?
 - e. What role does the annual meeting fulfill in the LAP process?
 - f. What has been unique to the Pleasant Hill LAP process compared to other LAPS?
Probe: *Communication, meetings, facilitation?*
5. A) What features of the LAP process have been successful in Pleasant Hill?
Probe: *Community meetings and document editing*
 - a. Have any of the processes presented challenges or barriers?
 - b. How do these processes bring out the merit of the LAP process?
 - c. How do these processes bring out the shortcomings of LAP process?
 - d. Are the merits of the Pleasant Hill LAP process that have arisen different from those seen in the overall LAP process in Saskatoon?
 - e. Are the shortcomings of the Pleasant Hill LAP process that have arisen different from those seen in the overall LAP process in Saskatoon?B) Who has represented the Pleasant Hill Community in the LAP process?
 - a. Has the representation been consistent throughout the LAP process? If not, how has it changed? How have these changes affected the process?
 - b. Has the involvement of organizational representation changed throughout the Pleasant Hill LAP? If so, how?
 - c. What has been the role of the Pleasant Hill Community Association in the LAP process?
 - d. Are there any areas of representation from the community that you feel are underrepresented such as specific demographic groups? If yes, how was this dealt with, if at all? How does this affect the process?C) What feedback have you received from Pleasant Hill LAP Planning Committee not involved in the LAP planning process?
Probe: *community members not involved in the planning group*
Probe: *stakeholders, whether as landowners, business owners or developers*
Probe: *City Officials*
6. What does participatory planning mean to you? How would you define it?
 - a. In terms of the Pleasant Hill LAP, what forms of public participation have yielded the 'best' results? How flexible were these forms?
 - b. How did public participation change the dialogue between community members and the professional planners?
 - c. What tools did you use in the public participation process?

Probe: *visual aids, facilitation techniques, etc.*

- d. How have communication tools such as the website been received?
- e. What level of awareness existed in the community about planning initiatives before the LAP? Do you believe this has changed?

Content:

7. What changes to the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood have occurred with the initial implementation of the Local Area Plan in 2002?
Probe: *Structural changes, such as an improved pedestrian linkage?*
Probe: *Social changes, such as increased public participation?*
8. From the recommendations in the Pleasant Hill LAP, which ones have been completed or are close to completion?
9. What major future developments are planned but not yet underway?
10. Has the reaction to the Pleasant Hill LAP changed since its implementation in 2002?
11. Are you seeing more involvement/participation of community members in planning activities specific to Pleasant Hill?
Probe: *In other core neighbourhoods?*
Probe: *In cross-neighbourhood initiatives?*
12. Do you believe that the Pleasant Hill LAP has fostered a greater sense of community in the neighbourhood? How so?
Probe: *For community members that were directly involved in the process? How so?*
Probe: *For residents? How so?*
Probe: *For other stakeholders? How so?*

Quality of Life:

13. Would you expect measurable differences in the resident's perception of Quality of Life for the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood between 2001 and 2004? Why or why not?
14. Do you expect there to be different results in the quality of life data that will be collected in 2007? Why or why not?
15. Do you believe the LAP in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood succeeded in changing the perception of quality of life of residents in the community? Why or why not?
16. If there are noticeable differences, how has the implementation of the LAP achieved this improvement? What other factors may have contributed?
17. In your opinion, has the Pleasant Hill LAP succeeded in meeting the expressed needs of the community? Why or why not?
18. Has the resident's perception of the neighbourhood changed? Why or why not?
19. What are the outcomes that have been recognized as successful in the Pleasant Hill LAP? How is success of LAP's measured by the planning department? By the community?
20. What do you feel contributed to this success?
Probe: *Do you feel these outcomes were social or structural in nature?*

Appendix J: Letter of Information for Pleasant Hill Key Informants

July 13, 2006

Letter of Information A Study of the Pleasant Hill Local Area Plan

Masters Student:
(Principle Investigator)

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Purpose of Study:

In this study, I want to explore the Local Area Planning (LAP) process and its outcomes through the experiences of community members of the Pleasant Hill neighborhood. I am hoping to find out the strengths and challenges of the process as well as look at how it has changed the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. I also hope to find out how the community is involved and the general perceptions that exist about the LAP through those who have been involved.

Procedures involved in the Research:

The interview will occur with the primary investigator and will take approximately one hour. To make sure all the information is recorded properly, the interview will be tape recorded and notes will be taken, both with your permission. During the interview, you will be asked questions about the LAP process. The interview will be conducted in a mutually agreed upon location.

Some possible questions that may be asked are:

22. What does participation in the planning process mean to you? How would you define it?
23. Have any of the processes presented challenges or barriers?
24. In your opinion, has the Pleasant Hill LAP succeeded in meeting the expressed needs of the community? Why or why not?

Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts:

It is possible that the discussion may get into areas that you find frustrating to talk about or that generate concern about how your comments will be heard by others. Any information that is revealed will remain confidential and there is no risk of any remedial action if participants choose to talk about experiences or perceptions that may be critical of the LAP process. Furthermore, you do not need to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable or that you do not want to answer.

Potential Benefits:

I hope that I will learn how the LAP has impacted the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood and through what processes these changes have occurred. In addition, this study will reveal the strengths and

barriers that exist in the LAP process. This could help understand how to overcome challenges in the Pleasant Hill LAP or in future LAP's

Confidentiality:

I will be treating anything that you do or say during the interview as confidential and you would be able to stop or withdraw at any time. Any quotes or references to what you have shared that might appear in the written work and presentations will have all identifying information removed. This interview would be tape recorded with your permission. Anything that I find out about you that could identify you will not be published or told to anyone else, unless I get your permission. Your privacy will be respected. The Principle Investigator is the only person who will be aware of your choice to participate or not. This information will not be shared with any organization or individual. The information obtained by me will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office and will be only available to the Principle Investigator. The information in all forms will be destroyed after the research is written up in the spring of 2007.

Participation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You will be compensated \$25.00 for participating. It is your choice to be involved or not and if you decide to participate, you can stop at any time, even after signing the consent form or part-way through the study. If you decide to stop participating, there will be no consequences to you. If you do not want to answer some of the questions you do not have to, but you can still be in the study. If you do choose to stop once the study has begun, the information you have shared will be destroyed, unless you indicate otherwise.

Information about the Study Results:

You may obtain information about the results of the study on the CUISR website found at <http://www.usask.ca/cuisr>.

Rights as a Research Subject:

If you have any questions or require more information about the study itself, please contact Erin Moriarty. If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact Erin Moriarty. This study has been reviewed and approved by the McMaster Research Ethics Board. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, you may contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Board Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
c/o Office of Research Services
Email: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

CONSENT

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Erin Moriarty, of McMaster University. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study, and to receive additional details I wanted to know about the study. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time, if I choose to do so, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

In my opinion, the person who has signed the above is agreeing to participate in this study voluntarily, and understands the nature of the study and the consequences of participation in it.

Signature of Researcher or Witness

Images of Pleasant Hill

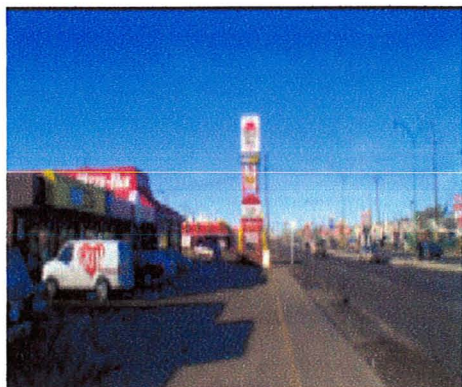


Image 1: 22nd Avenue
(Source: City of Saskatoon, 2005:30)



Image 2: Unpaved 17th Street



Image 3: View of Industry from Avenue P

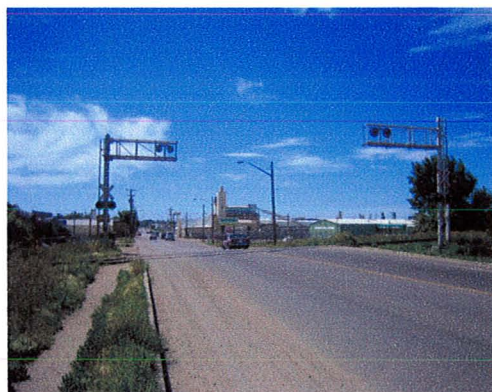


Image 4: View of the CPR Railway Crossing



Image 5: Sign Showing Opposition to Area Prostitution



Image 6: View of West Industrial



Image 7: Trucks on Avenue P



Image 8: Avenue P



Image 9: 20th Street



Image 10: Pleasant Hill Recreation Unit



Image 11: St. Paul's Hospital



Image 12: St. Mary's School



Image 13: Multi-Unit Housing



Image 14: Boarded up Houses



Image 15: Graffiti and Boarded-up House Situated Along 20th Avenue



Image 16: New Development Behind Boarded up House



Image 17: Nurse's Residence



Image 18: No Sidewalks



Image 19: Multi-Unit Housing with Vacancy Signs



Image 20: View of Well Maintained Street



Image 21: Vacant Lot for Station 20 West



Image 22: Pedestrian Activated Light Standard



Image 23: View of Pedestrian Light and Well Maintained Boulevard



Image 24: View of Flower Baskets Standard and St. Mary's School

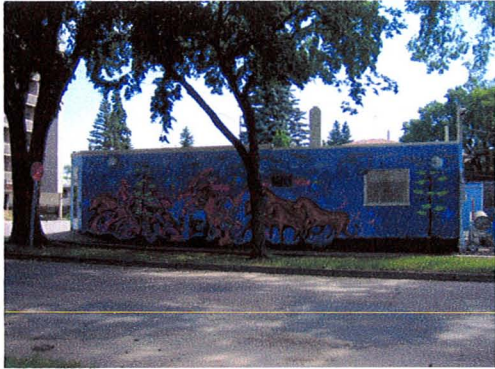


Image 25: Public Art



Image 26: Public Art on St. Mary's School



Image 27: CUMFI Housing



Image 28: Quint Housing



Image 29: Small House



Image 30: Well Kept Housing

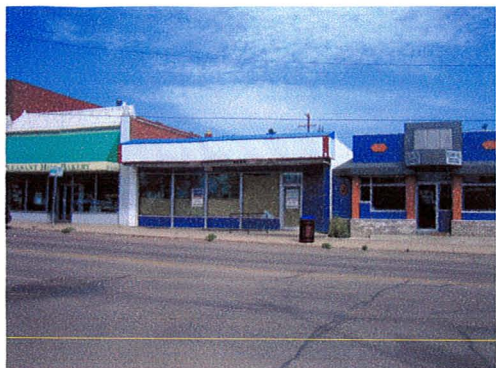


Image 31: Vacant Commercial Space



Image 32: Vacant Gas Station



Image 33: New Construction



Image 34: Green Space



Image 35: View of Overgrown Curbs

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