

**CITIZEN MOTIVATION FOR  
CONTROLLED GROWTH**

by

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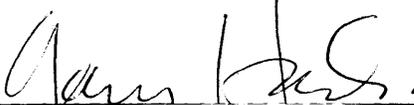
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# CITIZEN MOTIVATION FOR CONTROLLED GROWTH

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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
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the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Urban and Regional Planning

## ABSTRACT

More than a decade has passed since the citizen's sense of enthusiasm and crisis about the environmental protection movement culminated in the establishment of diverse and numerous environmental regulations. At the present time of economic recession and a so-called "housing crisis" however, the tide has now turned against government over-regulation, and the question of the adequacy of public policy design and its implementation in local land-use decision-making has become a new target of criticism. This is particularly evident in the controversy about local community growth control, because of its reliance on very restrictive environmental regulations. The question has been raised as to why - for what purposes and for whom - the society would need such policies, as they are observed in the case of the San Francisco Bay Area, California, where the practice of growth control policies by a large number of communities has allegedly reduced the significant amount of affordable housing in the region, and subsequently is said to have subsequently exacerbated social inequity in housing availability.

Among the several explanations as to why suburban residents would want to control community growth, there are theories of motivation which are most well-known. One explanation is that growth control is fiscally motivated: Suburban residents fear that more residential growth in their community would decrease property values and the level of public services, or increase local taxes. Another is that it is socially motivated: Suburban residents who are wealthy elites would want to preserve the status quo by excluding others, whose presence in the community might compromise the social privileges they enjoy. Environmental concerns, according to this theory, are just a smoke screen for such a socially undesirable motive.

This thesis attempts to present an alternative explanation of why suburban residents want to opt for controlled growth. The research adopted a case survey method and directly asked residents questions through mail-out questionnaires and interviews. The data from the survey was analyzed using a combination of simple statistical analysis techniques - contingency tables and Chi-square testing -, and in-depth observations. The result of the analyses has led the author to conclude that to most suburban residents, growth control is an act of self-defense, to protect their community's character from the threat of urbanization. In other words they are motivated by a desire to preserve a family-oriented lifestyle which a small town or a rural area is believed to best offer. The

research also found that attitudes towards community growth control cannot be attributed solely to any particular socio-economic class such as elite or high-income classes, but rather that it is wide-spread among suburban residents of various socio-economic classes.

In the course of research, however, the author confirmed that citizens and local communities supporting controlled growth do need to more clearly recognize their social responsibilities for the possible effects of their policy on other citizens (including urban residents, prospective homebuyers, residents of communities that accept growth). Moreover it became clear that there is a need to improve local growth control/management systems, especially in areas such as periodical monitoring and revisions, as well as a need to educate citizens on how to effectively control their community's environment.

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Gary Arthur Hack  
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Reiko Habe  
Cambridge, 1983.

## Preface: Purpose

This thesis began as a sceptical reaction to a lecture one afternoon four years ago at MIT given by Prof. Bernard Frieden, in which he outlined the argument of the book he was then working on, published soon after as The Environmental Protection Hustle. On the basis of his research in California, he presented a forceful case that environmental protection is primarily a concern of higher income elites, and that the environmental movement in California has been used by them as a vehicle for achieving other ends. He maintained that the widespread adoption of regulations to control growth in suburban communities - ostensibly intended to protect the environment - served in fact as a new weapon to fight an old war of social exclusionism.

The book aroused the hottest controversy in the history of California's environmental movement, seriously questioning not only the motives of growth control, but also the concept of environmental protection legislation in general. It attracted wide national attention in 1979, and was praised by some reviewers in national publications such as the Washington Post, the Inquiry, the Providence Journal and others, while also evoking angry and emphatic refutation among the San Francisco Bay Area environmental groups, public agencies that oversee implementation of environmental regulations, professionals and lay citizens who are sympathetic to the concept of environmental movement, as simple innuendo.

So far I have found that this theory of elitist exclusion as the motiva-

tion for citizens is one of the most popularly accepted views among housing advocates, economists, business sector, some minority group leaders, some politicians and many other scholars and professionals.

Although there is much other literature supporting similar theories of citizen motivation, much of it evades any explanation or presentation of empirical evidence for their allegations. Thus Frieden's book is the only one I know which attempts to seriously examine this question, with its well-researched presentation, to prove it by constructing a plausible theory, and to extend it to environmentalism in general.

Yet there was something about its theory that has ever since urged me to search for an alternative explanation.

Is the quest of California suburbanites for growth control really motivated by elitist exclusion of other population groups? Is the environmental movement merely another tactic for socio-economic segregation rather than a necessary means to protect the quality of the environment for people of all classes?

I have never been an environmentalist and feel no special connection to them, much less any moral obligation. During my professional experience in California, I had opportunities to work both directly and indirectly with developers of large-scale housing developments. I occasionally represented them in presentations of the projects at local public hearings, and generally worked to obtain government approval for the implementation of the development projects, rather than trying to stop or limit them.

Personally I see myself as one of the prospective homebuyers who would

very much like to live in California if possible, yet I never had an opportunity to buy a house during my seven-and-a-half-year stay there. I am as much concerned as the housing advocates who criticize growth control about the shortage of affordable housing in California and elsewhere, and consider the problem as one that urgently needs attention and mitigation.

Nevertheless, I found myself doubting Frieden's attempt to expose growth control and environmental protection measures as nothing more than an effort to ensure socio-economic class segregation. My immediate disbelief was partially based on my own down-to-earth, practical experience as a land planner/landscape architect in California, and perhaps partially on my own socio-economic background, which taught me to perceive, learn, and appreciate the so called 'intangible' values<sup>#1</sup> of environmental quality - the very values which Frieden and many other critics of growth control seem to imply are of 'minor' importance.

It should be noted that the purpose of this thesis is to neither deny growth control's role in reducing available housing in the Bay Area or elsewhere nor to explain away the social responsibilities of such public policy towards all people who will be affected.

Nor is it the intention of this thesis to simply correct the popular theories held by critics of growth control. Rather, the purpose of this thesis is to advocate the positive effects of growth control policy and environmental regulations in general, at a time when the economic recession strongly favours the arguments of anti-growth-control and anti-environmental forces.

Today the environmental cause is besieged on many fronts, and is particularly at odds with the current federal administration. Blaming the environmentalists for attacking the probable mismanagement of his Environmental Protection Agency, President Reagan illustrated the controversy as an act of 'environmental extremism' by those who "would not be happy until the White House looks like a bird's nest."<sup>2</sup> Attacks on environmentalism and many existing environmental regulations have eventually settled on the question of legitimacy of local growth control practices.

It is not difficult to find shortcomings and undesirable side effects in the design and implementation of growth control policies. In particular, the tendency<sup>3</sup> of growth control measures to reduce the amount of affordable housing warrants urgent efforts to correct such negative side effects.

However, we should not allow critics to overlook the sentiment of citizens and the conditions that brought about these policies, nor allow them to significantly undermine the determination to protect what so many people value, in their haste to condemn growth control regulations.

My major concerns are for a balance between development and maintenance of environmental qualities; for a realistic approach to the implementation of social equity of housing and residential location; and for the inclusion of the environmental considerations as important criteria in all land-use decision-making processes that directly or indirectly affect the quality of the environment for all citizens. Philosophically, I believe that any kind of drastic social change requires time and

patience to be truly successful, and that change must be, at least in a democratic society, supported by the masses rather than forced on anyone. In other words, I believe that a step-by-step approach is more likely than a radical and forcible approach to bring about goals such as social equity in housing opportunity.

Too often we observe that idealistic but overly radical public policies - for example, forced school integration by busing - merely increase antagonism between social groups. Instead of advocating drastic changes in social perception and behaviour based on theoretical ideals, it might be more useful to try to understand the views of those directly involved. We might then have a better chance not only to improve our own perceptions, but also to broaden other people's understanding of issues such as regional housing need, or social equity in housing opportunity, without alienating them or provoking defensive attitudes.

This thesis, therefore, is an attempt to find out more about people's views on growth control. What makes them so defensive about the changes which accompany growth in communities? Who feels most threatened, and thus defensive? Which considerations are more important to them: social homogeneity, local taxes, or environmental quality? What is it that they really want to protect from the threat of rampant growth; and why?

FOOTNOTES  
For Preface

- 1 Intangible values which are often referred to by lay persons and are recognized as such in the field of environmental design include: views - both natural scenic and man-made (architectural) - ; the opportunity to closely observe wildlife; pleasant spatial experiences; quiet or an absence of annoying noises; the presence of pleasant smells or the absence of odors; the "taste" of the air; the friendliness of people in general; a slower pace of life; less crowding and less inconvenience in sharing public facilities; the maintenance of buildings and areas around them; a sense of commitment to community affairs; a feeling of security or being safe outside one's own home; and a lifestyle that nurtures family-orientedness.
- 2 The Boston Globe, Saturday, March 12, 1983
- 3 Actually, the extent to which growth control practice is responsible for reducing the actual amount of housing is still debatable since there has not been, to this date, any study that has proved it while taking into consideration the factors of rising demand in housing in suburbs (non-urban areas), demographic changes that affect a household size, unusually high interest rates, a decrease in the availability of easy-to-develop land as a result of natural growth (rather than of artificial restrictions), among others.

## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

#### **The Controversy: Why It Is A Problem**

Since the early 1970's, in less than a decade an increasing number of California communities have adopted some means of controlling local growth. In 1975, when the city of Petaluma, the first California community to enact a growth management policy, finally received from the court<sup>#1</sup> endorsement of the policy's constitutionality, 300 of the 445 local planning agencies in California were already using growth management/control systems.<sup>#2</sup>

Widespread practice of growth control in suburban communities has inevitably resulted in many problematic side effects. Both proponents and opponents of growth control policy are essentially concerned with the impact and the benefits of uncontrolled or controlled growth in terms of: housing opportunity, local taxes, public service capacity and quality, private property rights, the economic well-being of local and regional communities, and the quality of the environment and the quality of life. As the Governor of California's Office of Planning and Research report acknowledged, the wide range of its impact makes growth control/management the most controversial issue in California today.<sup>#3</sup>

Of the ballots proposed, more passed than failed, but many did fail.<sup>#4</sup> In many cases voters were equally divided on issues. The opposition's efforts to stop growth control legislation have been as vigorous as those of its proponents, especially in lobbying and campaign contribu-

tions. The California State Office of Planning and Research, in its report on growth control initiatives found that opponents of the initiatives outspent the proponents in most cases by an average of four to one, and in some case fifty-five to one.

Just as there is confusion and disagreement among opponents and proponents of growth control policy, experts seem to have difficulties reaching an agreement among themselves about which side - pro- or anti-growth control - is to blame for some of the problems identified above. However, it seems that more assessments of the situation have been written from the opponent's perspectives. While the number of growth-controlled communities still continues to increase, they have attracted a barrage of criticism.

#### **The Allegations:**

Critics include those involved in housing industries, such as developers, builders, real estate brokers, speculative investors, large land owners with development interest, business interests, some architects and related professionals, economists, some regional public agencies, as well as so called "housing advocates", and many others. Since the effect of this widespread practice of growth control was most severely felt by the housing industry, the housing crisis, especially the crisis of affordable housing, has begun to emerge as the issue of critical concern for many. Generally speaking, however, most critics of growth control charge it with any or all of the following: 1) it causes depression of regional economy, and therefore creates unemployment; 2) it raises the cost of homebuilding, thus inflates the sale prices of hous-

ing; 3) it results in social inequity as a result of 1) and 2) - a depressed economy and inhibition of both employment and housing opportunities - for which the poor or the 'have-nots' pay the cost while the affluent or the 'haves' enjoy protection through public policy at public cost; and 4) it is motivated by anti-social prejudice and exclusionism, and thus is an unconstitutional practice of public policy.

Are these allegations fair?

I chose not to discuss the first and the second allegations the validity of which economists might better be able to determine. Although the extent to which a growth control policy actually reduces employment opportunity (especially for the poor) or available housing has yet to be accurately determined, my thesis is written with the assumption that there is some possible economic impact which is attributable to growth control practices, especially when they are aggregated by region.

In this thesis I will deal only with the last (the fourth) allegation, that of citizen motivation. Before explaining more about why I chose to research the question of motivation, I would like to briefly touch on the subject of social equity in relation to growth, since many people, including scholars and professionals, seem to have a preconceived idea that the relationship between rapid growth and social equity is one of cause and effect.

#### Allegation: Social Inequity in Regional Economics, Employment Opportunities and Housing Opportunities

Many economists holding the conventional belief that growth is an essential factor of economic health and social well-being criticize growth

control by hastily regarding the movement as advocating no-economic growth, zero-population growth or as a total objection to economic growth in general (Zeckhauser 1973, McKean 1973, Passell and Leonard 1972, and many others). In such articles the benefit of uninterrupted growth is apparently presumed: as an anti-growth control advertisement by Mobil Oil Corporation most bluntly put it, "Growth Is the Only Way America Will Ever Reduce Poverty."<sup>5</sup> Anti-growth control literature opposes controlled growth policies by reasoning that economic growth benefits the poor, since the bigger the economic pie, the larger the slices given to the poor.

This popular "trickle-down" theory of economic distribution has, however, been challenged by other economists who claim that there is no clear evidence that poverty is, or even can be eliminated by the processes of general economic growth (Anderson 1964, Heistand 1964, RAND Corporation 1971, Thompson 1973, Johnson 1973). RAND Corporation's study of the Mexican-American poor in San Jose, California found that the poor appeared not to benefit from the rapid growth of that city from 1950-1970, and that, if anything, their situation became worse.<sup>6</sup> The researchers concluded that a tight labor market and a booming economy by themselves do not benefit the minority poor (RAND 1971, Miller 1968, Johnson 1973).

Skepticism towards the "trickle-down" theory of growth, as expressed above, is also present with respect to housing availability for low- and moderate-income people, although availability is often assumed to improve with overall economic growth. In fact, by 1960, after the rapid

post-war boom of housing construction, moderate-income people had been priced out of the new housing market. Subsidies became necessary to make new housing accessible to this income group (Rubinowitz 1973). Wilbur Thompson, an economist, finds that under vigorous growth, the marginal members of the local labor force find work and the distribution of income becomes less unequal, but these minimum-wage workers face a serious housing crunch, which at least partly offsets their income gains. He explains;

"Under rapid local growth, every time a given income class passes down a few extra dwelling units (beyond the normal rate of filtering), it generally intensifies the shortfall in its own normal supply. In other words, the filtering down of used housing can be accelerated under growth pressures but only slightly, and even then only at a very sharply increasing supply price for housing."\*

The findings from the National Academy of Science study by Thomas Pettigrew (1968)\*<sup>8</sup> seem to corroborate Thompson's view. A survey of blacks in Detroit and Miami (both of which experienced high growth rates during the '60s), found that the majority of the perceived chief causes of the race riots there related directly to housing: poor housing; overcrowded living conditions; dirty neighborhoods; etc. The survey also found that rural and small-town blacks reported far greater housing improvements than urban blacks. Thus, rapid and uncontrolled growth and private market mechanism have been seen not to necessarily improve the poor's accessibility to decent housing.

The criticism against growth control here is that public policy works to deny people of low, moderate, or often even middle socio-economic classes the opportunity to move into the suburbs, while the fortunate present

residents who are mostly of higher-income, enjoy a monopoly on desirable residential environments, sometimes at public cost. Higher costs of land, fees for a variety of rights necessary to develop land, and the cost of simply going through all the required processes of permit acquisition all add up to higher housing sale prices, state critics unilaterally (Peterson 1974, Frieden 1979, Dowall 1980, Schwarts et al 1979, Elliott 1981). Since the demand for suburban housing is high, the higher costs of housing development does not mean decreased developer profit, but means instead increased cost to consumers (Gruen 1977). To whom the cost of growth control is more unfair, however, might need more careful investigations since there are others such as Downs (1981) who see the issue differently:

"It is unfair for the residents of individual suburbs to bear the costs of providing public infrastructure for large amounts of vacant land so as to hold down the long-run cost of new housing for society as a whole."\*

Critics call attention not only to the policy's tendency to increase housing prices, which inhibits people of low, moderate or middle income classes, but also to the design of the growth control system, which they allege excludes people of such economic classes. Various methods of density control (for example, the requirement of large minimum lots, and the failure of communities to provide developable land for multi-family residential or rental housing use) are attacked by many critics for their exclusionary effect on certain types of housing developments in which people of low- and moderate-incomes would presumably be likely to live. Critics also object to the use of fiscal impact analyses of proposed residential developments, on the ground that the result of such

analyses would inevitably disfavour housing for low- and moderate-income people.

Under-representation of prospective housing consumers in the local land-use decision-making process is also criticized as unfair (Gruen 1977, Frieden 1979, Dickert and Sorensen 1974). While growth control systems could have been greatly improved in terms of social equity considerations, it should be noted that representation of the interest of present residents through direct public participation opportunities in local land-use decision-making, has only recently been effectively actualized, and is still on the anvil. Some controlled-growth advocates would charge that rapid growth in the past has not, by itself, guaranteed fair representation of the interests of the disadvantaged and subsequently social equity (Johnson 1973, Thompson 1973, Finkler 1976).

However, neither scrutiny of this social inequity nor debate on whether controlled or uncontrolled growth is to blame for social inequity is within the scope of my thesis or seem to be a constructive way to solve this dilemma.

#### **The Research Question:**

Much has been written about the impact of growth control policies, mostly from the perspectives of economic impact and resultant social inequity, and especially from the aspect of housing opportunities for low, moderate, and middle-income families. As the impact of this effect became serious, criticisms of the motivation of growth control increa-

sed. Many authors assume that the motivation for the local growth control movement is based on negative social attitudes such as racial or class prejudice. Those who have attempted to make an inquiry into the question of motivation are few, and those few often lack field work.<sup>#10</sup> Because implementation of some growth control policies often produces an exclusionary effect; and because of some past examples of exclusionary or so-called 'snob' zoning practices; and perhaps because the research into the motivation for growth control by means of extensive field work is no easy task, it seems that most of the critics have made this assumption without attempting to verify it.

There are two explanations most popularly offered as motivations for growth control practices. One is the theory of the stingy suburbs' economic exclusionism: Suburban residents institute growth control measures for economic reasons. They wish to block housing developments because they would create higher taxes, or reduce public services, or lower property values. The other is the theory of elitists' social exclusionism: A quest for growth control is motivated by elitist group's wish to maintain their social privileges and status quo. Housing developments, especially those which cater to people of socio-economic classes lower than present residents, are opposed because present residents fear their privileges and monopoly on a pleasant environment might be eroded by new residents.

These two popular theories of motivation will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

The research question in this thesis is: What is the true motive of

present suburban residents in quest of community growth control?

The thesis will address, through review of relevant literature, and through questioning the credibility of the two popular theories presented above, the question of what the true motivation is for the Bay Area growth control movement.

### **Why the Question of Motivation?**

This is an important question, for various reasons. First, it is important to realize that the charge that growth control policies emphasize environmental quality just to disguise the "true motivation" of social exclusionism is a very serious one, which can fatally discredit all the intentions and efforts of supporters of the movement. It may affect courts' judgements of constitutionality of the policies, lead to abolishment of the policies, and perhaps even generally affect the implementation of other environmental regulations.

The courts' decisions on the constitutionality of local communities' growth control policies so far have been just as diverse as their interpretations of the policies' effects and intents (motives). While in general, it is known that most courts have hesitated to find certain practices unconstitutional unless the dual elements of intentional segregation and of racial discrimination have been present, federal courts have increasingly taken the effect of exclusion into consideration without requiring proof of intent or motivation (Lauber 1973)<sup>#11</sup>. There are significant differences between some states' and federal courts' interpretations of local growth control strategies, and between different states' supreme courts (Finkler 1976).

Although the question of an intention to exclude certain type of development is not always the direct point of argument in determining the constitutionality of a growth control policy, considering the wide varieties of interpretations by different courts, the judge's knowledge of socially undesirable motives can sometimes greatly affect the decision.

Moreover, often intent may be considered latent in effect. Therefore it is impossible or meaningless to make a clear distinction. Nevertheless, we have to admit that effect can exist without intent and vice versa. Thus the distinction should be made in the courts' judgements between exclusion by intent - purposeful practice - and by effect - byproducts of action - (Scott 1973, Lauber 1973)\*<sup>12</sup>.

By dealing with the concept of intent, this thesis hopes to vindicate citizens' motives for controlled growth. Perhaps more importantly, however, looking at motivation helps in understanding the people's feelings about environmental change, and allows us to test their seriousness about the protection of environment.

Why should we understand them? Whether one likes it or not, the reality is, as many of those involved in California local politics are aware, that this trend of local community growth control will not go away for a long time. In order to effectively deal with problems stemming from growth control, we must consider whether punishing the suburbanites for problems associated with growth control, without understanding their true motives, would change their attitudes. We need to understand how those policies are seen by citizens in order to effectively reform

public policies which have popular support.

Furthermore, the nation-wide trend seems to point in a similar direction, since, ironically, the past rapid growth of suburbs has resulted in a steady growth of suburban power in American politics. The Reagan administration's New Federalism, which is aimed at decentralizing governmental activities, would further institutionalize the power of suburbia over public spending and local community planning<sup>13</sup>. All these considerations thus lead us to examine the question of motivation of suburban growth policies in depth.

#### **Organization of Chapters**

The thesis consists of six chapters. The research question is posed and the hypothesis is identified above in chapter I. The second chapter summarizes the context of California's growth control practices and identifies the problems of such practices which attracted the barrage of criticism. Chapter III briefly introduces readers to two existing popular theories of motivation of local growth control. Some questions are raised for the plausibility of those theories. In Chapter IV, the method I used to test the hypothesis is explained. It illustrates the overall design, focus and scope; and the limitations of my research, as well as giving more specific information, such as brief descriptions of case study areas, survey and questionnaire design, and the response rates for each of the different surveys I conducted. More detailed descriptions of each component of the research methodology can be found in the Appendix.

The main discussion is on the question of motivation in Chapter V. A third theory of motivation - "The Logic of Defense", based on the results of my own research - is constructed and presented as an alternative explanation to the previous two theories. The last chapter, Chapter VI attempts to search for constructive questions, based on points raised during the discussion of motivation. Towards the ultimate identification of acceptable growth, or environmental change, possible policy implications of the results of my research will be suggested in relation to the housing and growth strategies chosen by the State, counties, regional agencies, California housing industries, and many professional consultants. Finally the thesis concludes with some rather broader implications of the issue and addresses some fundamental questions such as; What is a good citizen control?, as well as more specific questions on mitigation of the problems of growth control.

## FOOTNOTES

### For Chapter I

- 1 In January 1974, Judge Lloyd Burke issued a temporary restraining order, which was followed in April 1974 by an issuance of permanent injunction finding that Petaluma's growth management system violates "the right to travel." The city of Petaluma appealed to the Supreme Court in July 1974, and finally in 1975 Justice William O. Douglas found Petaluma not in violation of "the right to travel." The validity and constitutionality of Petaluma's growth management plan hence has been sustained by the court in Construction Industry Association of Sonoma v. City of Petaluma (1975) 552 F2d 897 (Petition Writ of Certiorari denied by U>S> Supreme Court, Feb.23, 1976).
- 2 California Governor's Office: Office of Planning and Research, Local Government Planning Survey, (State of California, 1976)
- 3 California Governor's Office: Office of Planning and Research, "The Growth Revolt: Aftershock of Proposition 13?" (State of California 1980)
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Mobil Oil advertisement on the New York Times, April 13, 1972
- 6 Rand Corporation. "Alternative Growth Strategies for San Jose: Initial Report of the rand Urban Policy Analysis Project". Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1971
- 7 Thompson, Wilbur. "Problems That Sprout in the Shadow of No Growth" in AIA Journal, December 1973
- 8 Pettigrew, Thomas. 1968
- 9 Downs, Anthony. Neighborhoods and Urban Development, Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute, 1981, pp.150-151.  
Downs thinks that state governments ought to help local governments provide water and sewer systems in advance.
- 10 Finkler, Earl, William Toner, Frank Popper. Urban Nongrowth: City Planning for People, NY:Praeger, 1976.
- 11 Also, Clement Shute, Deputy Attorney General of State Attorney General's Office, California, the speech given at a workshop titled: "Can We Afford Local Growth Controls?", sponsored by University of California, Davis, October 28, 1977.  
He explains the case of Mt. Laure, New Jersey:"The court apparently found ample evidence that Mt. Laurel had acted intentionally to exclude low-income people, but said that even where that is not proven, if that is the effect of a program, the program should be

invalidated". This seems to suggest that, although courts only need evidences of effect, and not that of intention, judges' perception or knowledge about the presence of exclusionary intention greatly, if not directly, affects their decision.

12 Ibid.

"I think the role of the courts in the future will be to determine whether particular growth management programs were adopted in good faith or 'bad faith.' Where there is either an exclusionary purpose or effect, the program will probably not survive".

13 Wade, Richard C. "The Suburban Roots of the New Federalism", in the New York Times Magazine, August 1, 1982. Richard Wade is Professor of urban History at the Graduate Center, City University of New York.

## Chapter II:

### Background of California Growth Control Practice

#### II-1: What is Growth Control/Management?

Growth control or growth management is a system of government intervention in community growth decision making. It attempts to regulate the pace, amount, and type of growth in each local community. Most directly it regulates the timing, scale or size, and character of the development to be allowed in certain locations. Many purposes are stated in the growth control/management system. Although each community has different pressing problems and priorities about different qualities of life, there are some common interests which many suburban communities seem to share and which are identified as the purposes of controlling growth. Protecting the quality of life, preserving or maintaining the unique character of a community, and giving citizens control over the fate of their community are the most popular themes of growth control/management systems.

There are two major forms of growth control/management: One is to directly control growth-inducing developments - either growth of population, or industry, or both - by special ordinance. The other, popularly called "defacto growth control/management", controls by revising existing zoning or development regulations, usually to more restrictive ones. Growth control/management ordinances can be enacted through different process; in California most often it takes either an initiative process

or a referendum process.

An initiative is written by citizens outside of the government and is put on a general election ballot. A referendum is a proposal written by a city council or board of supervisors and then put to the people for a vote. Growth control regulations differ from traditional zoning regulations in that traditional zoning ordinances indicate what can be built and where, but do not address the issue of when development is allowed. Also, "what" and "where" in traditional zoning ordinances usually do not specify in detail the character of each categorized use nor how development should be located within a project site. Another difference is that the growth control system's rationing of development permits granted to developers is based on an annual maximum quota.

The Residential Development Control System, a main section of Petaluma's growth control policy, explains the difference as follows: "Unlike the single purpose implementation techniques of zoning, use permits, etc., a residential development control system must be able to weigh the factors of rate, type, and location of development and evaluate them to produce an annual development which best meets the city's identified need."

Major operational components of typical growth control/management system are: 1) quotas on annual growth rate, 2) evaluation of proposals, 3) allotment of permits.

#### **1) Annual Quota System**

Quotas on annual growth rate set a limit on the annual increase of population and/or housing units indicated by either percentages or numbers.

Belmont, one of the three case communities in my research, has an annual limit of 56 new dwelling units, while Vacaville in fast-growing Solano County sets a maximum of 750 units a year. Livermore, Alameda County and St. Helena, Napa County, among others, set 2% and 3% annual growth rates respectively. Other communities such as Morgan Hill in Santa Clara County set population goals for a decade or two in the future (i.e. for the year 2000) and try to allocate the annual quota accordingly.

Although these numbers generally give an impression of extreme rigidity of regulation, many are actually rather flexible in implementation. The city of Sonoma's growth management plan limits the number of planning approvals, not the number of building permits. The construction industry therefore, has some flexibility as to when projects are actually built out. Also, as each community experiments with a new system, some are revised to whatever best fits the local conditions. For example, Petaluma initially limited development for the entire city to 500 new residential units a year, but later changed to a 6 percent annual growth rate. The result in practice was that Petaluma allowed 600 new residential units in 1980.

## **2) Evaluation of proposals**

Most growth management/control systems establish special institutions consisting of evaluation criteria and evaluation boards. An evaluation board is usually called something like the "Residential Development Evaluation Board", "Residential Design Review Board", "Citizens' Evaluation Board", or simply "Design Review Board", and so on. Communities

which do not have special boards usually delegate similar functions and authority to the Planning Commission. The board usually consists of representatives from the City Council, the Planning Commission, business and professional interests, local school districts, and the public at large.

Criteria for evaluation are specified in different degrees of detail in a General Plan, an Environmental Design Plan<sup>#1</sup> and a Housing Element. The Board or Planning Commission then evaluates each application to determine conformance to these plans.

Many communities adopt point allocation or rating systems to competitively evaluate proposals. They rate each proposal usually with regard to two general criteria: 1) public service availability, and 2) the quality of the design from the aspects of a) contribution to public welfare and amenities, and b) environmental impact.

Public services which are of great concern to local communities often include water systems, sewer systems, drainage facilities, fire protection, police protection, school systems, and traffic circulation. Concern about the quality of the design usually deals with architectural design, site planning, landscape design, ecological and geological considerations, provision of recreational space and facilities, provision of bike or foot paths or simply public access, as well as the extent to which the proposed development is contiguous to existing developed areas.

In addition, many growth management/control systems include some criterion for encouraging construction of low and moderate-income housing. A

certain percentage, usually 8 - 15% of the total quota, is set aside for such projects. Some communities such as the city of Sonoma adopted a housing strategy which is heavily weighted toward incentives<sup>#2</sup> for encouraging the production of low to moderate income housing in the Housing Element in combination with its growth management plan.

Each of several criteria is allotted a different number of credit points and a proposal is credited with these points depending on how much it satisfies each criterion. Then adding up the number of points credited, each proposal is ranked in comparison with other proposals.

### **3) Allotment of Permits:**

Based on the result of this evaluation, the board recommends a list of applicants with high-scoring proposals to the City Council. Many communities hold public hearings when either the Evaluation Board or Planning Commission makes its recommendation. Along with the score, locational balance (i.e. south vs. north parts of community) and balance in the types of residential development (i.e. single family vs. multi-family housings) are taken into consideration before the permit is finally allotted. The City Council, after publicising the results and giving all the applicants a chance to disagree, allots permits on the basis of the annual quota.

Communities in the Bay Area use a variety of measures besides growth control/management system to limit development. There is agricultural zoning which protects prime agricultural land from development and imposes large minimum lot requirements, slope-density zoning which imposes a lower density limit on hillside land, general downzoning of

residential land with similar minimum lot requirements, open space preservation laws and hillside preservation ordinances which subsequently reduce the availability of developable land for development, urban limit lines which draw boundaries for the areas where public services may be extended, refusing to extend services into outlying areas, as well as capital budgeting which limits the expansion opportunities of unincorporated areas.

Many communities which have what is commonly called "defacto growth control/management" often implement their plans through a series of revisions of General Plans. Not only does it include the measures described above, but General Plan sometimes also sets ultimate population total for a community. Voter approval is often required for change in General Plan or special zoning to affect these special planning efforts. Still, there are some communities which choose to fight growth on a project basis, which means by defeating ballot propositions or setting a moratorium on specific projects whose growth implications are very strong. (i.e. aqueducts, dams, or other growth-inducing developments).

The basic components of growth control/management system described above are modelled after Petaluma's Residential Development Control System. Since Petaluma has come into spotlight as the first Bay Area and also California community and the second in the country after Ramapo, New York, to enact a growth management policy to regulate its growth, Petaluma's plan attracted wide-spread attention. It has had a substantial impact on local planning, and greatly influenced the design of

other communities' similar plans by setting a precedent and providing many communities confronting similar growth pressures with a model case for experimenting with growth management. Below is a brief summary of the Petaluma growth management system.

#### **The Petaluma Growth Management system: A Model**

The city, with the help of consultants, after a series of studies, conferences, citizen opinion surveys, and citizen participation in numerous public hearings and meetings, first devised a development policy. Next the Environmental Design Plans were adopted in 1972, along with the implementing technique, the Residential Development Control System, which limited residential growth to approximately 500 new housing units annually for five years from 1973 to 1977.

Housing for low-income and elderly persons which is funded through state or federal funds is exempt from the Control System, as are any projects of less than 5 acres within the already developed urban core of the city and projects of no more than 4 units.

The Petaluma Plan attempts to clarify that it is not the intention of the city to stifle growth, but to guide future growth in a more orderly and logical manner. The annual limit of 500 dwelling units is derived from the City's average during the past decade, and later was changed to a growth limit of 6 percent annually rather than a fixed number of dwelling units.

The stated purpose of the Residential Development Control System is to establish control over the quality, distribution, and rate of growth of the City in the interest of:

Preserving the quality of the community;

Protecting the green open-space frame of the City;

Insuring the adequacy of the City facilities and services within acceptable allocation of City and school tax funds;

Insuring a balance of housing types and values in the City which will accommodate a variety of families including families of moderate income and older families on limited fixed incomes; and

Insuring the balanced development of the City east, north, and west of the central core.

Evaluation of proposals for development is conducted by the Residential Development Evaluation Board, which recommends the allotments using the point evaluation system. The allotments are then awarded by the City Council. The board includes a 17-member Citizens' Evaluation Board whose members are selected randomly each year from among the interested citizens.

Petaluma's growth policy was adopted in 1972, and was challenged in the federal court for the constitutionality of 'rights to travel'. In 1974, the court ruled against the city, which then won the suit by reappealing in the Court of Appeals in 1976.

It should be noted that Petaluma's experience does not represent those of all the other Bay Area suburban communities which eventually came to adopt growth management system. This is only to be expected, as there is a great variety among those communities in terms of growth pressures experienced, the kinds and degree of growth impact felt, the objectives of controlling growth, designs and methods of controlling growth, and so on.

## II-2: The State of Practice in San Francisco Bay Area

In California over 300 of the 445 local planning agencies were found to be practicing growth management/control system - either formally or defacto - in 1975. For the San Francisco Bay Area alone, the figure is nearly 50 communities, according to the same survey by the State's Office of Planning and Research. As of the end of 1981, there are 24 cities and counties in the Bay Area which formally have adopted growth control/management legislation. Since there are 96 cities and 9 counties in Bay Area, this is about a quarter of all communities. This figure will be over fifty percent, if the communities which actively limit without formal growth control policies their population growth, are included.\*<sup>3</sup> According to the California State planner, a greater concentration of communities with growth control systems is seen in the Bay Area and Northern California. And these numbers change rapidly.

As more communities try to control growth, more pressure towards growth will be placed on those without such measures, which eventually exacerbates the impact of growth in those communities. While it should be noted that many counter-measures were taken mainly by state and by some regional agencies to help housing industries, the general trend seems to be in the direction of more, rather than less, communities adopting some form of a growth control/management system.

In Dowall's study\*<sup>4</sup> on 93 Bay Area communities in 1980, he categorized them into four types - namely "built-out cities," "mature growing cities," "growth restricted," and "growth centers." He identified sixteen "growth centers" in the region that tolerated growth. In his

report Dowall also indicated that those rapidly growing communities were finding it increasingly difficult to control growth.

Nevertheless as of late 1982, I learned that at least 4 such communities have shifted their position to "growth restricted", one is seriously considering a shift, and another (which happened to be one of three case communities in my survey) very clearly seems to be moving towards a similar shift sooner or later.

Even among growth centers, economic and unemployment problems might force some poorer or politically weaker suburban communities, along with already urbanized communities, to accept some growth, but tax-generating or job-generating developments will probably be favoured by those communities over residential developments, which require high service costs.

How has this trend developed? Why have so many communities drastically altered their land use development policies? What kinds of growth pressures have they had to confront? Before getting into these questions, a little more understanding of the background of this phenomenon, the California growth experience between 1950 and 1975, may be necessary since growth pressure seems to play similar and important role in the Bay Area suburbs' behaviour.

### II-3: The California Growth Experience 1950 - 1975

Many communities in the San Francisco Bay Region have doubled or tripled their population in the past decades (either between 1950-60 or 1960-70,

depending on the area).<sup>5</sup>

Between 1950 and 1960, the Bay area population increased by nearly one million. Much of this growth was concentrated in southern Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties. Several communities, among them Hayward, Concord, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale, grew by more than 400 percent. Land development in the decade preceding 1960 set the pattern for the years to come. Growth spread out along all major transportation corridors; small towns within commuting range of employment centers became major cities in a few short years (Dowall 1980).

During the period from 1960 to 1970, the Bay Region again grew by nearly one million.<sup>6</sup> Although the average annual growth rate for the entire Bay Region in the same decade was 2.4%, 82.4% of its population growth was concentrated in 34 of the 93 communities in the Bay Region. In these communities the average growth rate was 7.2%. According to Dowall's survey of 93 Bay Region communities, most of the communities that have undertaken growth limiting policies are those which were the fast-growing communities of the 1960-70 period.

#### II-4: The Impact of Growth Pressure and Proliferation of the Environmental Movement:

As a result of the rapid growth described above, nearly fifty percent of all the developable land in the Bay area was developed by 1975. Having all the easy-to-develop flat land, developers began to approach the hills, mountains, swamps, and other ecologically sensitive areas. San Francisco Bay had been filled and reclaimed in order to provide more developable and desirable land for eager developers. Growth pressure did not stop around the proximity of two Bay Area employment centers

(San Francisco and Oakland-Berkeley), but reached out to the rural areas shortly.

This centrifugal development pattern of growth introduced rural communities to growth pressures, and to the cumulative impacts of the substantial postwar growth, particularly traffic congestion, air pollution, and dwindling open space (Dowall 1981). Over time, the rapid rate of land conversion in the region's rural areas, for example, the fruit orchards in Santa Clara County, and pressures on the vineyards of Napa and Sonoma Counties, attracted attention to the adverse affects of urban development. In many fast-growing communities, providing public services such as sewer systems, water supply systems, police or fire protection, school classrooms, etc., to every development which required such services had increasingly become difficult.

If people had not yet spoken about their feelings of deprivation and sadness at the sight of ugly, ill-located, wall-to-wall developments built on most conspicuous hillsides, then they had certainly begun to feel disturbed by the news of landslides, erosion problems, or drainage problems caused by those developments.

Sometimes natural phenomena highlighted the people's perceptions about 'already-known-but-left-unsolved' impact of development pressures such as water shortage caused by the drought in Marin County in 1975. The Marin County residents' actual experience of strictly rationed water during this period of the drought significantly reinforced and validated the skepticism about continued uncontrolled growth. Dowall reports:

"For the first time, county officials and residents were faced with the reality that their lifestyle was directly related to the local ecology, and that existing infrastructure, which had previously been thought of as elastic, could under certain circumstances be inadequate."\*

Long before the Marin County drought, many other communities in the Bay Area and all over California had taken notice of the impact of growth on their community life. Towns affected by rapid urban growth increased from a handful to several dozen. Hence growth pressure created a new awareness and mood for both citizens and government officials. The quality of life is seriously threatened by uncontrolled growth; and therefore, those citizens felt, should not be allowed to continue without first questioning its impact on the environment. The postwar growth pressures in the region led many communities to reconsider and significantly revise their general plans and zoning ordinances.

#### II-5: Citizen Involvement in Local Land-use and Environmental Decision-making:

A few years before Petaluma's growth control system was implemented, citizen involvement in local land-use decision-making had already been in practice to some degree in California and other parts of the country, mainly after the establishment of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) the following year.

CEQA contains two basic components. First, it declares a legislative policy to "develop and maintain a high-quality environment now and in the future, and take all action necessary to protect, rehabilitate, and enhance the environmental quality of the state." Second is the special procedure required prior to government approval of activities - both

public and private - having a significant effect on the environment. It requires an informational document called an EIR (environmental impact report), which is distributed to the public.

Environmental awareness, evoked and encouraged by the environmental movement in the Bay Area and California as well as in the entire country, has played a significant role in evolution of the Petaluma Plan and other growth control/management systems in California. First, major citizen involvement in environmental affairs took dramatic form in the movement called 'Save the San Francisco Bay' which led to the establishment of Bay Conservation and Development Corporation (BCDC), and eventually to that of the California Coastal Commission and its Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 for the regulation of development activities in the areas along California's coasts.

With the encouragement of such success and newly-acquired legitimacy of concern for the quality of the living environment, not only have citizens' awareness and expectations for the quality of community environment become higher, but also, their demand for greater citizen control over growth activities which determine the character of their community have come to surface. Citizens, like planners, more aware of the costs and benefits of uncontrolled growth, no longer assume that they must passively accommodate new development. Rather they are vitally concerned with the impacts of new development on the fiscal, environmental, and social character of their community.

The San Francisco Chronicle, in its January 20, 1978 issue, reported the result of a California poll showing that the public then overwhelmingly

favoured stricter control of "urban spread"<sup>8</sup>. For many Bay Area suburban communities, especially those which experienced rapid postwar growth, the time was ripe for controlling growth when the statewide initiative Proposition 13 was enacted in 1978.

Proposition 13, which limits tax revenues from new development to only one percent of the full market value, created a fiscal squeeze for many local communities. Many communities found with the newly constricted budget that tax revenues from new development were not sufficient to cover the expenses of servicing them with needed public facilities. Thus Proposition 13 added a strong justification for controlling growth.

The California State Office of Planning Research in their 1980 report titled "The Growth Revolt: Aftershock of Proposition 13?" identified at least 32 propositions about growth control which were voted on directly by the people in California cities and counties two short years after Proposition 13 passed. The report acknowledged the trend toward greater popular acceptance of growth control than had been apparent before Proposition 13 passed, and the fact that interest in growth control has a remarkably large geographic dispersion.

#### II-6: Problems of Growth Control

The widespread practice of growth control in suburban communities has inevitably resulted in many problematic side effects. In particular, its impact on the regional housing market gained attention partially because of the noises created by those in the troubled housing industries in California. Those involved in housing industries - developers,

builders, real estate brokers, speculative investors, large land owners with development interest, business interests, some architects and related professionals, economists, so called "housing advocates", some regional public agencies and many others with vested interests in the well-being of housing industries, along with those concerned about social equity of housing opportunities - all collectively or individually criticized the trend as artificially creating inflated housing prices and market depression.

Why do they oppose the adoption of a growth control system by a community? What are the reasons for their opposition?

According to voters' pamphlets, usually titled something like "Arguments For and Against (Growth Control) Measure A," in which each community provides its voters with views of both proponents and opponents, they oppose because they think that growth control laws would: affect the economy and cause unemployment, therefore increasing welfare costs; result in the loss of affordable housing and increased prices of new homes and rents; freeze property values because land owners are unable to sell or borrow on the present properties, which is unfair to them; raise taxes and therefore discourage business ("No one said Measure A would be cheap"); increase government spending for bureaucracy to regulate the new law; increase living costs by causing inflation; force out the children of present residents ("Deny young people a future in the community"); harbor political favoritism in permit issuance; and above all, they think that it is unnecessary to have such special legislation since existing zoning laws already protect communities from poor planning and environmental disaster. Furthermore, they point out that the

specific growth rates set by such systems are completely arbitrary, and that there is no "substantial relationship between any specific growth rate and the community's public welfare to wit: transportation, schools, air quality, water supply, and public services."<sup>9</sup>

It is interesting to note that there are several arguments which are used by both the opponents and the proponents of growth control. For example, opponents argue that inflated property values are caused by housing shortage because of growth control, while proponents blame it on speculation and uncontrolled growth. Opponents claim growth control measures would raise taxes because a freeze on land will cut government revenues, while proponents think uncontrolled growth results in higher service costs to local government and in higher taxes. Opponents fear that a "no-growth" policy would force fixed-income inhabitants out because of raised housing sales price and rents, while proponents allege that growth forces such people out because in the desirable suburbs like theirs, land appreciation is already so high that the incentive for developers to develop and sell their products to higher income consumers and make more profit is much stronger than the incentive to develop moderate- or lower-income housing; similarly, landlords are tempted to convert their rentals into condominiums thereby evicting fixed income renters.

Poor planning will result in piecemeal development caused by the "too restrictive" development control measures of growth control systems, rather than creating large-scale subdivision type development. So claim the opponents, while proponents exactly feel the opposite - that uncontrolled growth and piecemeal development is the cause of poor plan-

ning; and so on.

Even the issue of quality of life can be argued in totally contrasting ways. Proponents blame uncontrolled growth for the deterioration in the quality of environment, which is a very important element in the quality of life, while opponents, although rather less persuasively, argue that the quality of life deteriorates because restricting growth allows for little or no public improvement and the new facilities which usually accompany new development. So the debate goes on endlessly.

In this chapter I have tried to present the overall context of what has been going on in the Bay Area and California in terms of local growth control practice and the resultant attitudes towards growth. The next chapter will focus its discussion specifically on the two most popular theories of growth control motivation.

FOOTNOTES

For Chapter II

- 1 This might be called by different names depending on each community.
- 2 These incentives include:
- 1) Priority processing from the planning Commission and City Council, including an exemption from the processing limitation of the growth ordinance.
  - 2) Density bonuses of up to 50%.
  - 3) Write down of capital improvement and water fund fees through the Community Development Block Grant Program amounting to almost \$1,900 per unit.
- 3 California Governor's Office: Office of Planning and research, 1975. Op. cit.
- 4 Dowall, David E. "The Suburban Squeeze: An Examination of Suburban land Conversion and Regulation in the San Francisco Bay Area", Institute for Urban and Regional Development, University of California, Berkeley, February, 1981.  
The survey was conducted in the spring of 1979.
- 5 Sources: Association of Bay Area Governments(ABAG)  
U.S. Bureau of the Census, various years.
- 6 "ABAG: San Francisco Bay Area Economic Development and the Regional Issues", Report of the Economic Development Committee of the ABAG Regional Planning Committee, October, 1979.
- 7 Dowall, David E. Op.cit.
- 8 The San Francisco Chronicle, January 20, 1978  
"The public today overwhelmingly favours stricter control of urban spread." The California Poll found in a recent survey that the public clearly considers farmland protection to have the highest priority.
- |  |       |     |
|--|-------|-----|
| Spread of cities needs to be controlled  | ----- | 71% |
| Plenty of land for both farms and people | ----- | 24% |
| No opinion                               | ----- | 5%  |
- Citizens' choice between farming and housing: Farming --- 82%  
Housing --- 11%  
No opinion 7%
- 9 "Arguments For and Against Measure A," Sample Ballot Arguments (Santa Barbara County: County Clerk, November 1979)  
Opponents of Measure A, the Santa Unez Valley Information Council, objected to the "specific growth rate" as completely arbitrary.

### CHAPTER III:

#### The Two Theories of Citizen Motivation

As we have seen in the two preceding chapters, the question of citizen motivation for growth control is at best controversial. However, two theories can be distinguished which have dominated discussion of this issue, and which are based on historical observation of local community attitudes toward zoning, tax systems, voting, and housing markets.

One of these, the "stingy suburbs" theory, attributes efforts to control growth to citizens' desire to limit public expenditure and taxes. In other words, growth control is motivated by those stingy suburbanites who do not want to pay higher taxes to accommodate new residential developments.

The second theory, that of "elitist exclusionism", bases its explanation on the desire of residents to maintain the socio-economic homogeneity of their communities. That is, growth control is motivated by wealthy elite suburbanites wanting to preserve their social status quo by excluding anyone who is below their socio-economic class.

Each of these theories enjoys a large degree of acceptance, among people who are influential in the land use decision-making process. Unfortunately, neither has received a sufficient amount of critical re-evaluation through a study of their ability to accommodate new empirical research, and of their internal consistency. Therefore I think it would be

helpful, before presenting an alternative theory, to subject the two dominant theories to careful examination.

This chapter consists of three sections. In the first two of these, I will summarize the main lines of argument and the assumptions contained in the theories of the "stingy suburbs", and the "elitist exclusionism". The last section will consider the subject from a much broader perspective, and attempt to provide a rough theoretical framework to accommodate the main conclusions drawn from my research. Here a distinction will be drawn between the subject of the present study and a number of other fundamental social problems facing American society.

### **III-1: The Theory of "Stingy Suburbs"**

One of the most commonly cited objectives of local growth control is to minimize the municipal fiscal burden due to types of development which demand the provision of various public services.

An increasing number of communities are finding that certain types of development, such as single-family housing, cost communities more than the revenues they generate. The consequence is either degradation of quality of public services or a property tax increase for all the residents in the community without any appreciable improvement in the public services they receive.

This, many critics of growth control believe, has significantly affected community attitudes toward growth, especially residential growth. The critics' interpretation, in short, is that suburban residents do not

want new housing development in their communities because they do not want to pay the higher taxes needed for servicing the new households.

The data on which such interpretations are usually based come from local government sources. For example, David Brower et al (1976)\*<sup>1</sup> found that a desire to limit development until adequate urban services could be provided was the most widely (84% of the respondents) stated objective of growth control.

Related objectives, such as reduction of urban sprawl, also ranked highly (78%). Their survey, conducted in 1974, is based on a mail questionnaire sent to 117 selected planning agencies across the United States. Similarly, Gleeson et al (1975) found as a result of a survey of 13 communities across the country that the principal motivation for the enactment of growth management policies in those communities was to hold down municipal service costs\*<sup>2</sup>.

Concerning the San Francisco Bay Area in particular, David Dowall in his telephone survey of 93 planning agencies also identifies concern for the fiscal impact of growth as one of the major motivations for growth control (Dowall 1981).

How have the fiscal implications of providing public services for new development come to concern local communities so greatly?

The impact of rapid growth first surfaced as either a degradation of existing public services or a significant rise in local property taxes or both. In some communities, the capacity of the public school system did not keep pace with the increasing number of students brought in by new residential development, resulting in double sessions, overcrowded classrooms, and less attention to individual students. In others the

problem was manifested in traffic congestion on local streets and at the ingress/egress points of major arteries.

When drought hit some communities, such as Marin County in 1975, water had to be rationed. Police acknowledged that the crime rate in some cases rose with the rapid growth in the construction of condominiums and apartments.

In the communities where efforts were made to maintain the level of services, the city's budget has inevitably risen. For example, rapid growth in the 1970's caused the city of Fremont, in Alameda County, to increase its city budget by a total of 225% in eight years.\*<sup>3</sup> Although more than half of this increase can be attributed to inflation, most of the real increase went to finance expansion in local public services. Consequently, the local property tax has gone up significantly.

Despite these rather dramatic increases in taxes, most homeowners feel that the quality of public services did not increase appreciably enough during the 1970's (Dowall 1981).

How did local communities determine that the fiscal impact was serious enough to warrant the introduction of a special policy such as a growth control policy?

Critics of growth control often underplay the importance of the role played by outside agencies in the rise of the interest in controlling growth at the local level. However, citizen concern was certainly provoked by the moratoria imposed by regional and state agencies, and the special studies were carried out by local planning departments. Public debate on the findings of these studies and the extension of such

moratoria were eventually followed by referenda or citizen initiatives on the issue of growth control.

For example, the Regional Air and Water Quality Boards put pressure on some cities, such as Livermore and Pleasanton, which were experiencing sewer capacity problems due to rapid growth, to improve their systems. In the case of Antioch, the Water Quality Control Board also imposed a moratorium for a few months so that inspection could be done. The California Coastal Commission's efforts to preserve local agricultural land has sometimes led it to oppose development projects in certain areas within the Coastal Zone, as in the case of Half Moon Bay.

Furthermore, county planners develop plans, zoning ordinances and urban-service boundaries which keep land conversion pressures in check (Dowall 1981). Sometimes a county acts to restrict further development of rapidly growing cities as did Alameda County, by designating a sphere of influence which extends right up to the city limits.

In the Bay Area region, counties such as Marin, Napa, Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara all have restrictive policies that have made their unincorporated areas difficult to develop.

At the local level, with or without such intervention from outside agencies, many communities began to take the problems of growth seriously. With the growing frustration expressed by their residents and new recognition that continuous rapid growth might not benefit them, some local communities began to undertake their own studies in order to reassess the costs and benefits of different types of growth.

The introduction of so-called cost-revenue impact analysis in many cases showed the net effect of residential development on the balance sheet of local communities to be an increase in the per capita cost of essential public services. While the impact of growth on the general quality of life has often failed to concern the pro-growth forces on city councils, the red ink in the city budget balance sheet has certainly evoked great concern, and has often encouraged municipal officials to change their stance.

Needless to say, local government planners are probably the ones who have been most influenced by the logic of cost-revenue impact analysis and the seemingly hard evidences that it provided. Many communities have used or are considering using computerised cost-benefit analysis models such as CRIS (Cost-Revenue Impact Study), developed by ABAG (the Association of Bay Area Governments)<sup>4</sup>, to evaluate the fiscal impact each new development project would create. The fiscal cost-revenue impact models supposedly predict the increased demand that new development will impose on municipal services, and the cost to the city of meeting this demand.

For example, one CRIS analysis for the city of Fairfield found that a 1,320-unit subdivision project would:<sup>5</sup>

add 4,269 persons and increase the city's population to 60,648 within 10 years;

increase enrollment in the area's Unified School District by 298 elementary students, 84 intermediate pupils, and 114 high school students;

necessitate the hiring of eight sworn police officers over 10 years and increase the police budget by \$244,982;

increase demand on the city's sewer system by 2.8 million gallons per day, increase operating costs by \$678,906, and force earlier expansion of the facility;

provide 11 miles of new streets and increase maintenance costs by \$4,402;

require the construction of a new \$500,000 fire substation and increase the annual fire protection budget by \$140,500;

provide \$1,036,240 in park development fees, increase recreation and administration costs by \$26,816, and add \$59,129 to park maintenance costs;

increase all other municipal costs by \$187,924.

The net result of this analysis was that the development would result in an \$80,000 annual operating loss for Fairfield, even after all the new fees and taxes from the subdivision were considered.

On the other hand, Gruen and Gruen and Associates, in their study of Livermore and Pleasanton, California, found that the benefits from growth would more than offset those of no-growth in terms of savings in the public service costs. However, they also stressed the fact that their conclusions applied only to Livermore and Pleasanton, and that the analysis should not be generalized to apply to other cities.\*<sup>6</sup>

The results of fiscal analysis also differ depending on for whom - developers, citizen groups, or governments - a report is made. A study done by a consulting firm for the California Builders Council, for example, found that, generally, growth pays for itself.\*<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless it also admitted that "it is entirely possible that an individual residential development could represent a financial drain to the city if the average assessed valuation per household were extremely low combined with high

service costs."

How accurate are such fiscal cost-benefit analyses of growth? Although the author of one such model, CRIS, claims that the chance of error has been kept under 2 percent, there are some who doubt the reliability of fiscal cost-revenue impact analysis in general. Pointing out several examples where the results from fiscal impact studies appeared contradictory or inconsistent, Thomas Muller(1975) asserts:

"----it is evident that fiscal analysis is far from an advanced science and that tentative conclusions reached may be true only within a limited time span."\*

Several factors have been identified by researchers to explain the wide variations in the findings from fiscal impact analyses: a) the stage of a community in the urbanization cycle and the existing capacity for capital improvements; b) the quality of public services, both existing and post-development; c) revenue structures; d) the diversity of the economic base and assessed valuations; e) variations in state and local fiscal structures for funding municipal programs; and f) growth in the urban fringe versus intensification of the urban core. (Ashley Economic Services, Inc. 1975, Muller 1975, Gruen and Gruen 1972).

Because of the doubts that have been raised as to the applicability and reliability of fiscal impact analysis models, some critics are quick to allege that the motivation of those communities where the debate focuses on fiscal impact is dubious and might rightly be called exclusionary. The findings from fiscal impact analyses, critics claim, are often used to justify the exclusion of projects that would not be likely to gene-

rate a fiscal surplus (Dowall 1981, Gruen and Gruen, and many others). Their views as to why suburban residents want to control growth thus turn more negative, as Dowall's statement below:

"As long as you own a house, you can ride the wave of housing inflation and increase your equity. The consumer's stake in growth management is financial. In addition to reaping financial gains, residents stand to keep property taxes low by restricting new development. The cost-revenue and fiscal impact trend sweeping planning agencies is indicative of the new attitudes towards growth."\*

It is true that there is an incentive stemming from the tax system of this country to restrict certain types of development which have an unfavorable fiscal consequences for most present homeowners regardless of their income level (Chapman 1981). Although the exact benefits depend largely on the local government's tax system, and on how much public budgeting depends on property tax revenues, restricting low income housing on small lots - for example, by imposing a large minimum lot requirement - would ensure that the tax base per household remains strong. It would also protect present residents from the prospect of increasing tax rates or a deterioration of public services.

In California, the role of the property tax in funding municipal operating expenses varies from city to city (Chapman 1981).

But zoning laws which restrict density levels and require large minimum lots have been in existence since long before growth control practices became widespread. In fact, the concept of efficiency in the level of local public goods and taxes has long been debated (Tiebout 1956). Tiebout's model of an efficient tax - public service system, for example, was based on several assumptions, among them the notion that

there is an optimum size for every pattern of community services, and that communities ought to attempt to achieve their optimum size.

How can we explain the fact that with the long-standing existence of this concept, with institutional incentives, and with zoning's police power, residents of present day suburbs were unable, without introducing growth control systems, to achieve what critics claim to be their true motives: social exclusion of lower socio-economic groups from their own communities for economic reasons? Might we assume that residents have other reasons, which have not necessarily been derived from the logic of economic efficiency?

Until such questions are answered, the questions below remain valid as well.

Is fiscal impact the main motive for the residents of the Bay Area suburbs to adopt a growth control policy? Or, have fiscal reasons simply strengthened the position of pro-growth controllers and gained more supporters, especially in local governments? Are the critics of growth control fair in their portrayal of suburban residents as selfish and mean people, trying to keep out others who might cost them more tax money? Who said that taxes are the most important reason to limit community growth? Is there any other reason which has critically motivated them to control growth?

Before condemning them as selfish homeowners in the stingy suburbs, we should take care that we are not confusing the feelings and attitudes of average residents with the interpretation of the situation by government

planners or officials in local governments.

Most critics of the "stingy suburbs syndrome" described above base their analysis on surveys of government planners, and not on what the ordinary residents of local suburban communities say, although both sources are very useful in understanding the overall context of growth.

Public statements purporting to give the reasons for growth control also are vulnerable to speculation that they dissemble the true motivation, and so do not correctly represent citizens' opinions.

This should not suggest, however, that most government planners lack either competence or integrity. On the contrary, I found many government planners in the Bay Area who seem to have a much more subtle and comprehensive understanding of this complex and elusive phenomenon than most critics of growth control have demonstrated.

Both critics and proponents of growth control may agree that, especially in California since the passage of Proposition 13, assessments of the fiscal impact of new growth have been used to justify the adoption of growth control policies in local communities. But this does not explain the true motives of suburban residents in attempting to control growth, which may lie elsewhere.

A discrepancy does exist between the perceptions of those planners and decision makers, and those of the residents of suburban communities. I would like to stress here the importance of recognizing this discrepancy because of its relevance to the further analysis of the motives underlying citizens' attitudes concerning growth control. We will return to

this question in Chapter V, where an attempt will be made to determine the true motives of suburban residents.

### III-2: The Theory of Elitists' Social Exclusionism

The other leading theory concerning citizens' motivation in seeking community growth control is that this is simply another form of social exclusionism by upper class citizens, and that their putative environmental concerns are just a smoke screen for such a socially undesirable motive.

For example, Bernard Frieden in The Environmental Protection Hustle (1979) challenges one of the toughest citizen groups in current American society - the environmentalists - with the charge that their role in the growth control movement, which uses environmental arguments, is essentially to provide a disguise for the real motives, such as "fears of property tax increases or anxieties about keeping their community exclusive,"<sup>10</sup> which underlie the attempt to prohibit new housing developments in suburban communities. He sees the growth control movement as an unreasonable offensive by affluent elitist citizens against the less fortunate - people in immediate need of basic housing, and prospective housing consumers in general.

Frieden is not alone in his claims concerning the "elitism" of growth control. William Tucker (1982)<sup>11</sup>, in his attempt to define American environmentalism in terms of a coherent social theory, asserts that the environmentalists who are upper middle class and upper class elites seek

to maintain their privilege by "stopping" growth. In their article, "Dissecting the Opposition to Growth"\*<sup>12</sup>, Seelig and Seelig describe anti-growthers' attitudes of "not in my backyard" and their lack of interest in regional aspects of growth, and conclude that "anti-growth sentiments are in some ways more elitist than grass-roots." Kaplan (1977)\*<sup>13</sup> observes that the economic arguments often used against development are "just a cloak for racism and exclusivity", and Harr and Iatridis (1974)\*<sup>14</sup> question whether the community's requirements for health, safety, and amenities can be achieved without generating social and racial exclusion. Lauber(1973)\*<sup>15</sup> sees growth control as another form of exclusionism designed to control the socio-economic environment, and asserts in his analysis of "motivations for exclusionary zoning" asserts:

"Beyond the frequently claimed financial motivations for exclusion of low- and moderate-cost housing in the suburbs may lie other, more fundamental motives. Racial or economic prejudice are major reasons many communities enact exclusionary zoning ordinances. Simple snobbery or a desire to preserve the character of the community may be others."\*<sup>16</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Among the many critics of growth control, there are some who are particularly concerned about its negative effect on housing opportunities for people of all socio-economic classes. Housing advocates recognize the unmet regional housing need faced by a growing number of prospective homebuyers, and consider it a social obligation of local communities to provide enough affordable housing for them. The practice of growth control by local governments seriously and adversely affects housing availability and results in social inequity, critics claim.

These allegations that social inequity is produced by the practice of growth control contain two important assumptions: 1) that the cost of controlled growth outweighs the benefits; and 2) that the benefits are enjoyed by 'the haves', or the elites, while the cost is borne by 'the have-nots', or the less fortunate.

It should be made clear that this thesis does not aim to explain the effect of growth control practices on housing prices and availability. Rather, it assumes that growth control unfortunately has resulted in some socially important and undesirable side effects, one of which is decreased overall housing availability.

However, some criticism of growth control does not stop at the conclusion that it is related to these adverse consequences by effect, but goes so far as to assert that it is guilty of them by intent. Hence the question of motivation enters into the controversy.

On what basis do the critics of growth control raise the serious charge that its proponents are motivated by social exclusionism? Detailed study of the literature on motivation has led me to identify several key assumptions that these critics seem to make in arriving at their conclusion.

#### Assumptions made by Critics of Growth Control:

In criticism such as that described above, the questions of who wants to control growth, and by whom the effects of such practices are most felt, are often addressed. The typical assumptions are that: 1) people who oppose growth are wealthy homeowners, or elites, who can afford to

choose where they want to live, and many of them are environmentalists;\*<sup>17</sup> and 2) the majority of those who are excluded by growth control are less fortunate, have lower-(than the present residents) income, are young family types and people of lower socio-economic class.\*<sup>18</sup>

Two further assumptions can be identified which relate to the goals of suburban proponents of growth control: 3) they are no-growthers, have no flexibility or sense of priority among different environmental criteria, and merely want to block every housing development; and 4) they are most interested in maintaining the status quo, rather than environmental qualities, by preventing the undesirables, or people of lower socio-economic class, from moving into their communities.

There are also some assumptions which involve the perception of values and thus greatly affect critics' interpretation of the context of this controversy. One such example is the apparent gap between the perceptions of the value of intangible environmental qualities of residents of California (both suburban and otherwise), and the critics' perceptions of these values. The critics, especially those with the perspectives similar to economist's, assume that 5) environmental concerns such as the maintenance of community character, natural amenities, a small town/rural atmosphere, low traffic volume and a quiet, slower pace of life which seem to have won the blessing and affirmative vote of great number of suburbanites in California and elsewhere, are of minor importance.\*<sup>18</sup>

Another gap is evident between the way suburban residents perceive the threat of urbanization and the way the critics see it. Growth control

advocates sometimes refer to the issue in terms of a "lifeboat ethic." While this phrase may be rather an exaggeration, the issue itself is not trivial. The threat of urbanization perceived by many suburban residents could be real.

It is not too difficult to predict the conclusion to which the above assumptions have led the critics. Provided that all of the above assumptions are correct, their charge that local growth control is motivated by upper-class exclusionism, and not by environmental concerns, seems plausible and even persuasive. However, there may be some communities and residents that fit most or all of the assumptions and hence might well be called exclusionist, the question still remains whether one can so label the majority of other suburban communities in the Bay Area, or California as a whole.

Despite the fact that most criticism of growth control regarding motives was made without any serious empirical study of resident opinions, and that the controversy is by no means clearly settled, this view that growth control is the private interest of an exclusionary elite is deep-rooted and wide-spread. The impact of such criticism on public opinion is considerable, especially when made by prominent figures in the academic, professional, and business fields. Furthermore it seriously discredits the environmental protection movement and the application of such concepts in land use planning in American communities, and elsewhere in the world.

Unless the suspicion of growth control held presently by many people who

might affect implementation of environmental regulations is dispelled, there will be continuous erosion of enforcement of all other environmental laws as well as an adverse effect on court decisions concerning local land-use and environmental disputes. This is why I feel it necessary to subject the assumptions on which the criticism of growth control is based to severe scrutiny.

It will be seen that these assumptions contain several logical contradictions and errors of fact, when I present an alternative theory of citizen motivation in Chapter V.

First however, I would like to roughly delineate the theoretical framework within which the research question has been explored. Because the control of local growth involves many other social issues which have long been the focus of public debate, there is a tendency to confound the problems specific to growth control with other land use problems and social problems in general. In discussing the growth control controversy, we cannot avoid making reference to a number of the fundamental problems of American society. Of course, the problems of growth control should ultimately be treated in a broader context that accounts for all such issues. However, it is more efficient to start combating the problems specific to growth control practice rather than waiting for general major social reform, which might take generations to occur. Thus, it is important to distinguish between problems for which growth control is specifically responsible, and those which have their source elsewhere in society in order to properly evaluate policy proposals.

### III-3: Problems Inherent in the Growth Control Dilemma:

The question of citizen motivation for controlled growth involves many issues of social values and political economy that shape the social and physical structure of America. Instead of simply attributing the negative side-effects of the widespread practice of growth control systems in California to the dubious intentions of its citizens - that is, to socially and morally undesirable antagonisms based on race and class - and concluding that the environmental movement in general is regressive, we should first seek a better understanding of the social forces that have shaped suburbanization phenomena in America, especially from the perspective of the political economy of urban affairs.

Political scientists look at the various phenomena that have accompanied suburbanization from quite different perspectives. For example, those who subscribe to the theory of so-called "bureaucratic imperialism" see in the behaviour of public bureaucracies - for example, their structural characteristics, procedural norms, and growth predilections - the source of such urban phenomena as metropolitan fragmentation (Antunes and Plumlee, 1977; Lineberry, 1977; Mladenka and Hill, 1977, 1978). Public choice theorists, on the other hand, argue that such phenomena in urban political affairs as neighborhood disaffection due to the deterioration of public services, middle class "flight" to the suburbs and, the central city fiscal crisis are the political analogues of market phenomena (Bish 1971, 1973; Ostrom 1961, 1980; Bish and Ostrom 1973). Still others, the "neo-pluralists", identify the disruptive consequences of federal government initiatives, such as urban renewal as the cause of

social problems, while scholars such as Piven and Cloward(1971) see the existence of political pressures, rather than institutional inadequacy, as a more important factor.

The economists' perspective on the issue of growth control has already been discussed in Chapter I. The various analyses which have been advanced by scholars from the fields of economics, political science, urban and rural sociology, and even urban planning have produced conclusions consistent with the two theories reviewed in earlier sections of this chapter: the theories of the stingy suburbs and of elitist exclusionism.

The point I want to make here is that a given phenomenon in urban affairs can be interpreted very differently depending on the perspective from which it is viewed. In the case at hand a distinction should be made between the incentives which citizens logically might have to opt for controlled growth, and the statements actually made by people involved in the dilemma as to why they want growth to be controlled. In other words, what citizens might be able to do in affecting public decision-making affairs is not necessarily the best indication of what they want to see realized in the community or society to which they belong.

Therefore the analysis of the citizen motivation should include a careful examination of what they feel and say, rather than relying solely on deductive reasoning within the theoretical models of the related disciplines. In overestimating citizens' capacity for collectively pursuing desirable social conditions through local government action scholars neglect the importance of the political, economic and social processes

by which class structure in the United States is generated and maintained. Furthermore they ignore a very basic parameter for evaluating the adequacy of public policies and citizen satisfaction: what people honestly feel about public decisions that affect their life in their communities.

In the following I will briefly summarize several aspects of the controversy which have often been described by critics as negative side-effects or worse, the hidden purposes of growth control. There are a number of problems inherent in the nature of this suburban "draw-bridge" dilemma, and they should be distinguished from other effects for which critics claim growth control is responsible. These are: the local community's tendency towards overregulation as a result of bureaucratic non-responsiveness; deeply embedded social inequities in the tax and regulatory systems; actual and perceived threats of urbanization to the suburban, family-oriented culture; conflicts between regional and local interests in community growth issues; Americans' over-reliance on litigation for solving any dispute; and finally, a definitional problem of private interest vs. public interest.

Metropolitan fragmentation is believed to have contributed to bureaucratic nonresponsiveness which in turn pushed local communities toward greater reliance on overregulation. In this regard, over-rationalization of the distribution of public services is viewed by many, particularly political scientists, as the result of bureaucratic expansionism. This is related to the issue of public-service control politics, which seems to have greatly influenced the evolution of the theory of stingy

suburbs discussed previously in this chapter. As Rich (1982) observed the combination of political fragmentation and class and racial clustering in U.S. metropolitan areas creates situations in which local jurisdictions can, if they want to, "specialize" in service packages that cater to, narrow bands of the class spectrum, with or without the knowledge of local officials. (See also Cox and Nartowicz 1980; Neiman 1975; Newton 1975).

Another long-standing problem in American society is a regulatory system which is said to be "fundamentally unfair in the way it distributes costs and benefits."<sup>19</sup> The present tax system, which provides a different quality of public services depending on how much property tax each community generates, fosters selfish local attitudes and discourages concern for regional problems (Johnson 1973, Muller 1975, Rich 1978, Perin 1977, Chapman 1981).

With or without a growth control system, the richer the individual residents are, the richer each community is. Hence better public services are provided, and a higher quality of environment is enjoyed. The opposite is true for the poor and for poor communities.

Similarly, it is not too difficult to understand the vicious circle of urbanization and flight to the suburbs. While one might suspect how seriously most suburbanites are concerned about the carrying capacity of the earth, the fear of encroaching urbanization seems real enough. The concern about ever-increasing crime has reached the point where it is now a major political agendum. Crime is said to have become the biggest political issue of the 1980's in California, and voters have expressed a

strong desire to tighten up criminal laws, and to retain the capital punishment law.

There are many fundamental social problems that need to be solved before we can reasonably expect citizens not to feel threatened by urbanization of their communities. With the crime rate of the nation's urbanized areas remaining high, with the sensitivity of their property's value to neighbourhood change, and with no governmental initiatives to deal with the problems stemming from poverty and social fragmentation, one must wonder if it is reasonable to expect ordinary families with limited resources not to be defensive about the future of their own homes and communities.

Under these circumstances, any expectation that suburban residents and their local governments will soon adopt a more regional perspective is rather unrealistic - or "academic" as most laypeople would probably call it. However desirable or respectable the purpose might be, the magic solution to this dilemma cannot be found solely by attacking environmentalism or by the abolition of local communities' housing and growth policies.

The political and fiscal mechanism of local governments in growth-related decision-making provide no incentive for taking account of regional needs in local decision-making. Dowall describes this dilemma as follows:

"The basic contradiction between local and regional interests is painfully apparent in the housing arena. The problem is in fact an excellent example of the so called 'prisoner's dilemma'."<sup>20</sup>

Another inherent problem which directly and indirectly complicates the situation is Americans' over-reliance on the litigation process as a solution to almost any kind of dispute. Frieden cites several examples where lawsuits related to growth control and environmental regulations have unnecessarily complicated and delayed the development process. In one such example he found that a government agency rewrote technical reports to emphasize a whole series of potential negative impacts of a development proposed, which were actually highly unlikely to happen, just because they wanted to protect themselves against possible lawsuits charging that their studies were inadequate.\*<sup>21</sup> It is important, however, in evaluating the social impact of growth control, to remember that the preoccupation with litigation is not a characteristic specific to environmental groups or to those involved in this particular controversy.

The problem of defining what constitutes the public interest, as opposed to private interest, also plays a crucial role in the debate over growth control. For some critics, especially those who are housing advocates, building as many homes as are needed to satisfy market demand is in the public interest, and controlling growth in order to protect a community's character is a matter of private interest. For people on the other side of the debate, the opposite is true: building and selling homes without considering the impact on the existing community is in the private interest of developers, builders, real estate brokers, and a limited number of homebuyers, rather than in the public interest.

A lack of recognition of the importance of intangible environmental

qualities such as community character is evident among most critics of growth control. Their perception seems to have its roots in the economist's prejudice against anything which is not readily quantifiable in terms of monetary value. This is despite the fact that homebuyers have been willing to pay extra, for intangible environmental qualities such as the presence of natural amenities, contact with wildlife, a quiet, slow pace of life, less traffic, clean air (beyond safety standards), the friendliness of a neighbourhood, and a feeling of security from crime. Most American citizens, regardless of socio-economic class, clearly attach some value to these aspects of a community.

Another assumption related to this value judgement is that the public at large does not benefit from the practice of growth control. Some critics would allege that stopping homebuilding accomplishes nothing for the improvement of public environment.\*<sup>22</sup>

Naturally the extent of the public's perceived and actual benefits from preserving certain open space rather than opening them to development will vary greatly, depending on the accessibility, attractiveness, and usefulness of the land to the public.

Many spots along the California Coast qualify as landmarks of unique and significant value worthy of public interest. And despite the fact that there are numerous places on the Coast that are already accessible to public, most of them suffer from overcrowding, especially in good weather, which keeps the State Parks and Recreation Department busy developing new public parks and more parking areas. And the people who enjoy California's scenic landscapes are not only Californians, but

people from all over the United States as well as from foreign countries. In fact one of the important sources of revenues and employment in San Francisco is tourism, which supports numerous related industries.

It is true that not all the open space protected from development actually offers the general public recreational uses. Nevertheless, we should recognize that the question of which approach to land use - environmental protection or housing development - is most often in the public interest remains quite controversial. Similarly, to suggest that the intangible environmental qualities of a place benefit only those who live in immediate proximity greatly underestimates the perceived value of these qualities to the public at large.

How can public interest best be determined?

Bultena and Rogers (1974), in their case study of a large reservoir project in Iowa, conclude that "the public interest may be contingent on the techniques used to determine this interest."<sup>23</sup> The techniques used in this case were public opinion data, together with benefit-cost ratios and endorsements by federal, state, and local government officials. This study demonstrates the importance of listening directly to the opinions of the public in order to justly determine what is in the best interests of the public.

"Public opinion data seldom are collected by resource agencies for purposes of decision making. An implicit assumption about many projects is that public sentiment can be reflected through public hearings, in political commitments, and by benefit-cost ratios. These findings suggest however, that opinion polling may produce results that conflict with conclusions drawn from other often-employed techniques used to assess the desirability of resource projects."

The fundamental limitation of the two popular theories explained earlier two sections in this chapter is that the research on which they are based includes very little empirical study of actual public opinion. Because of their doubts concerning the motives of suburban residents, critics of growth control may not be moved by the stated opinions of these citizens. Still, they must acknowledge that majority of citizens in California have found a high level of concern for environmental issues at local level, as evident in such facts: an overwhelming voters supported environmental regulations and the establishment of the California Coastal Commission, and that now in hundreds of local communities voters are expressing their concern for community character .

Perhaps the critics should themselves survey the opinions of 'the public' whose interests they claim to advocate - the opinions of housing consumers both before and after they buy homes, and of the public at large, which must bear the cost of growth control. Would they find that the majority favors less expensive housing in continuously urbanized communities with diminishing environmental amenities (if developers or real estate agents are honest enough to remind the homebuyers of this result)? Would they find that majority of homeowners prefer to pay less in taxes and compromise on the quality of life in their communities?

The goal of the research reported on here is to discover why citizens - especially, the lay residents of the three Bay Area suburban communities - feel motivated to control local growth, by directly asking them questions. In the next chapter, the research method which has been used

will be described, and in Chapter V the analyses and interpretations of the collected data will be presented.

## FOOTNOTES

### For Chapter III

- 1 Brower, David et al. Urban Growth Management Through developemnt Timing, New York:Praeger Publishers, 1976. p.108-110.
- 2 Gleeson, Michael et al. "Urban Growth Management Systems: An Evaluation of Policy Related Research", Planning Advisory Service Report Vols. 309 and 310. Chicago: American Society of Planning Officials, 1975 p.3  
Other reasons frequently cited include: the desire to maintain the existing life style, to preserve sensitive areas, to protect prime agriculture land, and to provide low- and moderate-income housing.
- 3 Dowall, David E. 1981, op. cit.
- 4 The author of CRIS is Chuck Lewis, a senior fiscal analyst for the ABAG. Since Proposition 13 passed, 30 cities from Madera to Ukiah have reportedly each spent between \$2,000 and \$6,000 to have Lewis prepare this specialized computer program.
- 5 The San Francisco Examiner, December 25, 1979
- 6 Gruen Gruen and Associates. "The Impact of Growth: An Analytical Framework and Fiscal Example". In Randall W. Scott (ed.), Management and Control of Growth, Vol 2, Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute, 1975.
- 7 Ashley Economic Services. "The Fiscal Impact of Economic Growth: The California Experience". California Builders Council, 1975.
- 8 Muller, Thomas. "Fiscal Impact: Methods and Issues". In Randall W. Scott(ed), Management and Control of Growth, Vol. 2, Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute, 1975.  
Muller examined many cases of fiscal impact analyses and discovered that different findings for the same development had sometimes been reached. He concludes that we cannot generalize fiscal impacts of development: "The identical growth pattern may cause a fiscal gain in some localities, a fiscal loss in others, and a neutral condition in still others."
- 9 Dowall, David E. 1981, op.cit.
- 10 Frieden, Bernard. The Environmental Protection Hustle. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1979.
- 11 Tucker, William. Progress and Privilege: America in the Age of Environmentalism. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1982.

- 12 Seelig, Michael and Julie Seelig. "Dissecting the Opposition to Growth". Planning, Vol 39, No 5, June, 1973.
- 13 Kaplan, Samuel. The Dream Differed: People, Politics, and Planning in Suburbia. New York: Vintage Books, 1977.
- 14 Harr, Charles M., and Demetrius S. Iatridis. "Housing and the Poor: Exclusion and the Courts". In Randall Scott (ed.), Management and Control of Growth, Vol 1, Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute, 1975.
- 15 Lauber, Daniel. "Recent Class Cases in Exclusionary Zoning". In Randall Scott (ed.), Management and Control of Growth, Vol 1, Washington, DC: The Urban Land Institute, 1975.
- 16 Lauber, Daniel. op.cit.
- 17 Frieden, Bernard. op.cit. p.8, p.10, p.76, p.136.
- 18 Most critics imply such judgements in their arguments but rarely state them as explicitly as does Frieden:

"There is almost no connection between housing and the big environmental issues of our time - use of toxic substances, nuclear radiation hazards, conservation of natural resources. The attack on homebuilding does not follow from the central concerns of the environmental movement. Instead it represents a stretching of the environmental agenda to issues that are marginal. Under these circumstances the attack on homebuilding is able to inflict damage on housing consumers without making any important improvement in the quality of the public environment." (pp.119) (Emphasis added)
- 19 Frieden, Bernard J. (1979) op.cit. p.178
- 20 Dowall, David E. (1981) op.cit.
- 21 Frieden, Bernard J. (1979) op.cit. p.100-102.
- 22 Ibid. pp.9.
- 23 Bultena, Gordon L., and David L. Rogers. "Considerations in Determining the Public Interest". In Frank Schnidman et al(eds), Management and Control of Growth, Vol. 4, 1978.

CHAPTER IV  
Research Methodology

**Method**

The purpose of this research is to test the hypothesis that the motive of suburban residents for controlling growth is based on the logic of self-defense from encroaching urbanization. The following points of investigation were established:

Is there any relationship between the socio-economic class of residents and how they feel about the necessity of controlling community growth?

Is there any relationship between things residents are most concerned about and how they feel about the necessity of controlling community growth?

What do people mean by "maintaining (or preserving) community character"? What goal do they expect to see fulfilled by doing so?

Is there any relationship between the environmental changes (caused by growth) they perceive and how they feel about the necessity of controlling community growth?

Is the exclusion of low income or minority population groups, because of either social prejudice or financial reasons, a more important concern than the protection of environmental quality for the present residents who favour controlled growth?

A case survey method was applied mainly because of the nature of research questions, which examine the perceptions of individual suburban residents, and also because of limited financial resources for the research.

Why ask suburban residents questions? The purpose of the research was to understand the true motives behind suburban residents' quest for

growth control. Since the critics of growth control suspect something behind what is usually heard in public, it was necessary to reach individual residents directly to ascertain their opinions and their true feelings - or motivation - on this subject.

### **Survey Design**

The survey was conducted in three case communities between 1981 and 1982 in the San Francisco Bay Area, a region which contains 96 cities and towns and more than 400 unincorporated communities. Since a lack of funds limited the total number of samples, samples were selected from three case areas rather than from the whole Bay Area.

Distributing a limited number of questionnaires to a larger number of areas results in a smaller number of samples, and eventually responses, from each of those several hundred communities. Also, considering the wide variations in the characteristics of suburban communities and the commonly accepted notion that citizens' attitudes depend on where they live, it seemed appropriate to limit the number of study areas to minimize the possibility of confounding patterns of individual responses with place-related factors.

On the other hand, selecting just one representative community for all the Bay Area suburban communities would have been rather difficult and implications of the analyses and research would be much more limited. Thus from several view points, considering the significant variations among the Bay Area suburbs in terms of metropolitan locations, geographical characteristics, stages in growth, economic bases, socio-economic makeup etc., it seemed best to select more than one case area.

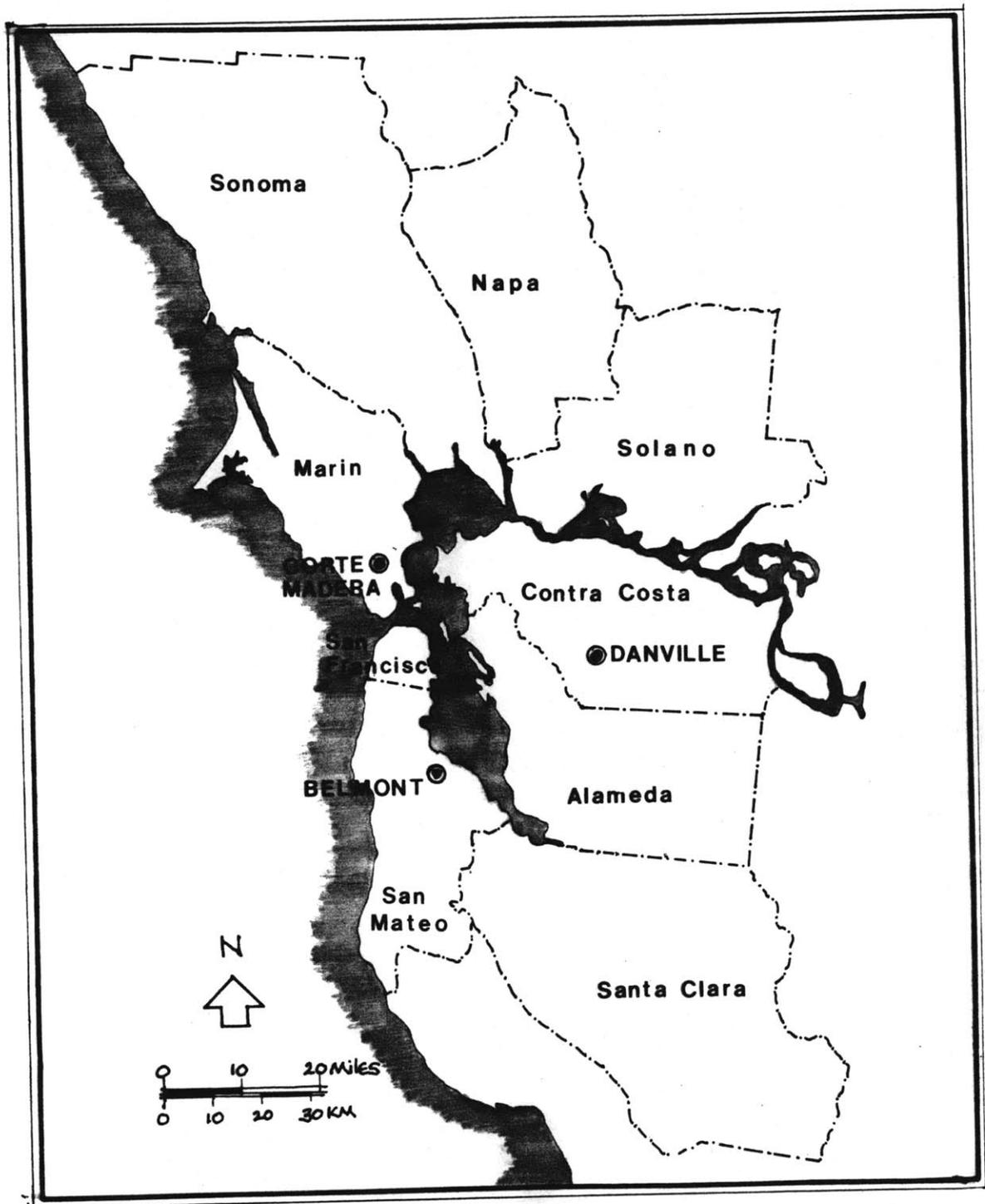
Initially, two case communities - Danville and Belmont - were selected, to represent a fast-growing community and a restricted-growth community respectively. A third one, Corte Madera, was added when a preliminary test survey indicated that some special factors might play a role in the responses of residents of Marin County\*<sup>1</sup> (See Map 1).

#### IV-1. Case Area Selection:

In order to select appropriate case areas for this research, extensive reference was made to the results of the study done by David Dowall of the University of California, Berkeley. Dowall's study of 93 Bay Area government planning agencies, conducted in 1979, inventoried local land-use policies, community land-use issues, and future development potential.

His data were collected in extensive telephone interviews with the city planning directors in those agencies. According to his analysis, the 93 communities are divided into four growth categories: built-out, mature-growing, growth-restricted, and growth centers. Definition of these categories is based on the stage of development, the growth pressures felt, the future potential for continuous growth, and general land use policy trends in each community.

Built-out cities are communities that provide little land for urban expansion because they have already developed to their borders. Bound on all sides by other cities, they are constrained from developing further. Mature-growing cities have experienced rapid growth in the past and are largely developed, but still provide opportunities for



MAP 1. LOCATION OF THREE CASE STUDY COMMUNITIES

continued residential development. Communities which still have vacant land but limit development because of land-use and environmental regulations are called growth-restricted communities. At the time of Dowall's survey, there were sixteen cities in the Bay Area region which tolerated growth, and which he called growth centers. These are the communities that provide most of the region's new housing.

Examples of communities that fall into each of these four categories will be found in Appendix A.

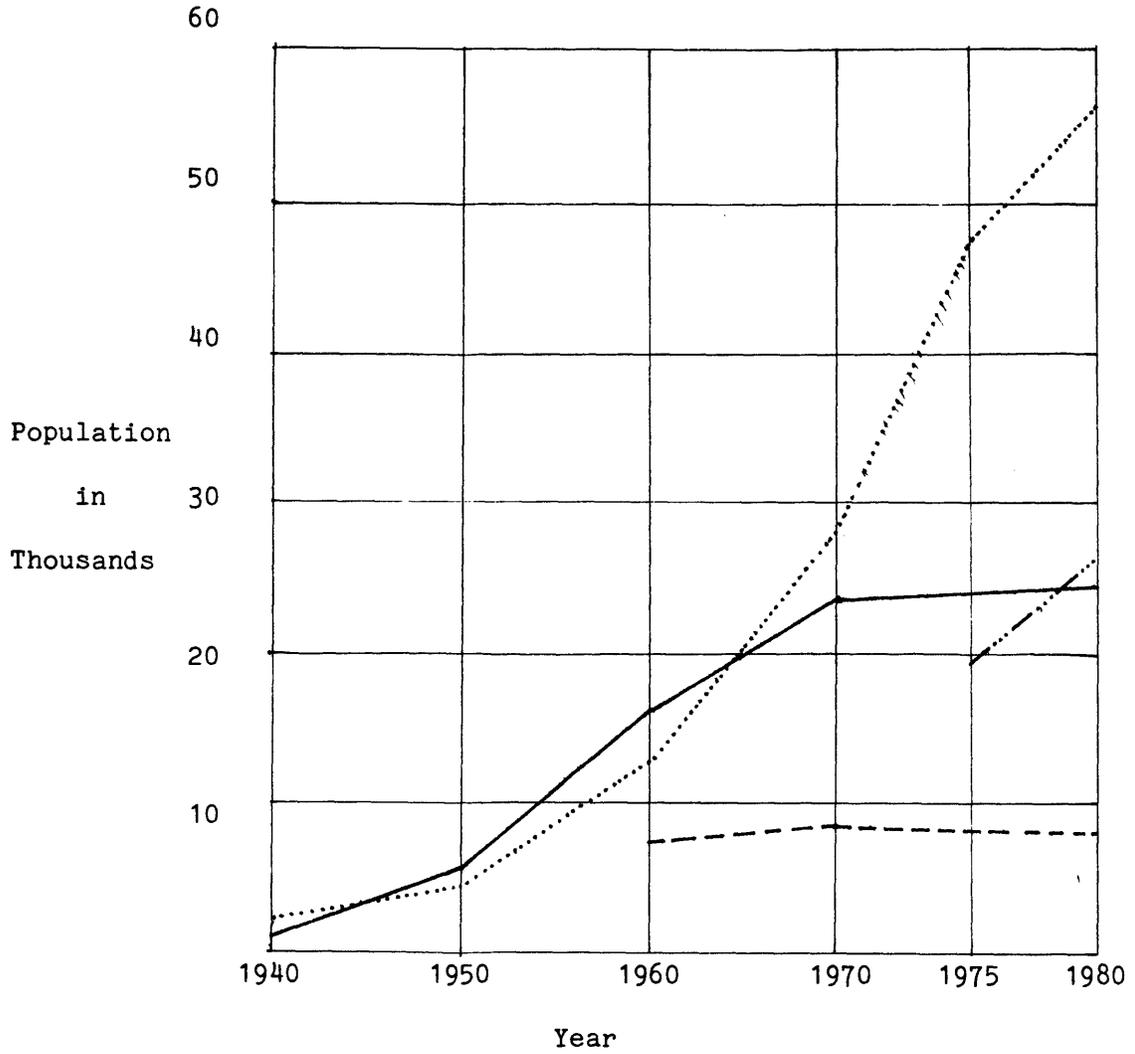
With the number of case areas to be used in my research already limited, Dowall's study facilitated the selection process. Since in communities of the built-out category, growth per se is no longer an issue, the three case communities were selected from the mature-growing, growth restricted and growth center categories.

Corte Madera, a small town of Marin County, represents a mature-growing community, while Belmont, in San Mateo County, with its growth control system, is a growth-restricted community. Danville, a rapidly-growing unincorporated suburb of Contra Costa County, is clearly one of the growth centers (see Figure 4-1: Population Growth 1940 - 1975/1980). Detailed descriptions as well as facts and figures for the basic socio-economic characteristics of these communities are found in Appendix B.

Socio-economic characteristics which are common to the three case communities are their relatively high (above the county median) income levels and the relatively large majority of whites, (about average within each of three counties) in their ethnic composition. The selection

Figure 4-1

Population Growth 1940 - 1975/1980



Belmont Population Growth —————

San Ramon Valley\*1 Population Growth ..... - - - - -

Corte Madera Population Growth - - - - -

\*1 Danville is one of the three unincorporated communities of San Ramon Valley.

of the case communities specifically aimed at a type of community similar to that usually portrayed by the critics of growth control or exclusionary zoning. At the same time an effort was made to avoid idiosyncratic cases among the Bay Area suburbs.

However, the concern for appropriate representation of suburban residents in the Bay Area communities sometimes conflicted with the wish to assure sufficient representation of respondents from diverse socioeconomic classes in each selected case community. Because most suburbs in the Bay Area are predominantly white and above average in income, selecting a small number of communities whose ethnic composition and mean income levels are close to the averages of the San Francisco Bay Area suburbs (excluding urban areas) will not guarantee sufficient representation of the communities containing minorities and/or lower income levels.

Therefore it is to be expected that due to our effort to select suburban communities of "the most average type," a majority of the residents of the three case communities, and hence a majority of their respondents to this survey, will be white and in higher-than-average income brackets.

#### IV-2: Survey Techniques and Process

**Techniques:** A mail-out questionnaire and face-to-face interviews were used to collect the major part of the data on residents' perception of environmental change accompanying community growth. The mail-out questionnaire aimed mainly at collecting data that could be subjected to quantitative analysis. The face-to-face interviews, on the other hand,

focused on collecting in-depth responses and qualitative data which could correct any possible misunderstanding of the questions by respondents or the researcher's misinterpretation of their written responses. The interviews also allowed for elaboration of feelings which could not be expressed through the questionnaire.

**Process:** Preceding the main survey of the three case communities, two preliminary surveys were conducted. The first consisted of twelve pretest interviews of non-random samples, conducted in nine different Bay Area suburbs (see Map 5 in Appendix D), mainly to help design the questionnaire and interview format for the final survey. Then one hundred questionnaire were mailed to the residents of San Rafael, Marin County, to test the workability of the questionnaire design. Seven interviews with respondents followed this mail survey. Based on the results of these surveys, both the final questionnaire and interview format were revised. More details about each of the three pretest surveys will be found in Appendix D. The main survey of the three case communities followed the process described below:

**Sampling and Process of the Main Survey:**

The survey consisted of a mail-out questionnaire and follow-up interviews. Because statistical analyses as well as qualitative observations were planned, the selection of the case areas and samples was made according to principles of random selection. An attempt was made to utilize the experience gained from the pretest surveys in improving the design and content of this version.

A total of 750 questionnaires was distributed by mail in these three

case communities. Two hundred fifty samples for each community were randomly selected from the Haines Criss Cross Directory (1981), which lists all addresses including those of citizens whose telephone numbers are unlisted and names unidentified. Each of 750 prospective respondents received, up to three mailings. Initially, the questionnaire was sent, followed by a reminder postcard urging them to return their responses as soon as possible; finally the questionnaire was mailed again with a letter making a special plea for cooperation. The rate of response rose from 10% at the first round to more than 26% by the end of the third mailing.

#### IV-3: Design of the Questionnaire:

The most important objective of the survey is to listen to what people, in this case the present residents of the three case communities, feel about community growth issues, and to interpret these feelings as accurately as possible with presently available techniques.

However, merely reaching the residents and asking questions does not automatically guarantee that their responses will be honest and not a cover-up of their true feelings, as some critics might claim. What kind of questions we ask, and how we ask them, thus become crucial issues.

Since the subject - community growth control - connotes so many different things to different people, touching rather sensitive issues such as social prejudice, even possibly evoking feelings of guilt or shame, it was judged best to avoid asking any direct questions about motives. Instead, an attempt was made to design the questionnaire and interview

in such a way that the respondents could answer and express their honest feelings about community environmental changes in general without feeling pressured to present socially acceptable reasons for their motives for advocating control of community growth. This was accomplished by using a gaming approach which will be discussed below.

The questionnaire consisted of the following components: 1) a one-page letter of introduction stating the purpose of the survey, emphasizing the point that individual residents' personal feelings and perceptions are the major interest of the research, and guaranteeing the anonymity of the respondents; 2) one short page of guidelines for answering the questions; 3) three mock development proposals which are graphically and diagrammatically illustrated on three separate sheets; 4) a four-page questionnaire ("Part I") which contains 12 research-related questions; and 5) a two-page questionnaire ("Part II") which asks another 12 questions regarding respondents' socio-economic and environmental background. (See Appendix E for a sample of the questionnaire.)

The main part of the survey, questionnaire Part I, starts off with the questions set in hypothetical gaming conditions. The purpose of gaming questions is to examine the attitudes of suburban residents towards community growth, particularly different types of new residential development.

Respondents are asked to imagine themselves as decision-makers who must evaluate three housing development proposals for the three remaining sites in their community. The guidelines give respondents four conditions on which to base their evaluation of these proposals: 1) there is

a great need for housing; 2) their community's annual quota for new development has not been filled yet; 3) the three sites illustrated are all available for residential development in their community; and 4) each of three developments can be expected to add about 300 residents to the community (see Appendix E-3).

Each of the three "proposals" was illustrated graphically and pictorially in terms of four major criteria: LAND, which shows the type of site involved (e.g. flat land, hillsides, ridgetops, etc.) and the approximate size in acreage needed to accommodate that particular development; DENSITY, which shows the designated density in both number of units per acre, and how a typical block will look with such density; HOUSING TYPE, which shows a sample drawing of the type of housing expected for each proposal (e.g. large single-family homes, multi-story cluster condominiums, and low-rise (2-story) multi-family homes); and PEOPLE, which shows sample photographs of several people, suggesting racial composition and approximate income levels, as "likely new residents" of the proposed developments (see Appendix E-2).

What do residents want to control most? What factors and attributes of residential development do they dislike or oppose most? Are they really "no-growthers" without any flexibility or sense of priority? Or do they have a sense of priority among the different environmental qualities they wish to protect? Such are the questions, never directly asked, but subtly implied in this part of the questionnaire.

In practice, Questions 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7, all of which are multiple-choice,\*<sup>11</sup> probes the above questions by asking respondents to evaluate

each of the three proposals in terms of: acceptability of the project proposed in their community (Q1); factors that affected such acceptability judgements (Q2); effects on community character (Q3); relative importance of several typical criteria used for making decisions for residential development proposals (Q6); and the ranking of three proposals in order of preference (Q7).

In addition to Question 3 (Q3), which is multiple-choice, two free descriptive questions are asked in reference to community character. The purpose of these questions is to determine what people mean by "community character." In order to avoid influencing respondents by suggestion, no example of a definition of the term is provided. Each respondent, if s/he knew what it meant, was expected to describe it in her/his own words. Question 4 (Q4) asks them to identify the characteristics of their community that they felt should be protected, and another question (Q5) asks about residential development which they considered "out-of-character." This question (Q5) attempts to help respondents clarify what they mean when they oppose a development on the ground that it adversely affects community character. Often it is easier for lay persons to pose problems or complaints than to define what they do find acceptable.

Another issue which I seek to clarify in this research is whether residents are aware of any significant change in community environmental quality, and how such perception might affect their feelings about controlling growth in their communities.

The third question of a free descriptive nature is Question 8 (Q8),

which examines the respondents' awareness of environmental change. The reason for not providing multiple-choice answers for this question is again to avoid influencing responses, as some residents may not be aware of any change at all. The intention of the question is to extract only those responses which clearly indicate significant feelings about and consciousness of environmental change.

Perceived level of control, or, in other words the respondents' sense of control, over future environmental change is examined in Question 9 (Q9). Each of the three multiple-choice answers provided represents different levels of perceived control: confidence in their community's ability to keep growth and change under control; regarding some changes as inevitable yet believing they can moderate the rate and type of change; feeling helpless and believing that the changes induced by growth are beyond their control. This question was posed on the assumption that the residents' sense of control might affect their attitudes toward growth control.

It was also expected that the level of participation by the residents in local land-use decision-making affairs might be related to their sense of control and ultimately their felt need for growth control. Question 10 (Q10) asks how often a respondent attends public meetings of this kind, and Question 11 (Q11) examines how strongly s/he feels about the necessity for growth control. Although there probably is a wide variation in how residents feel about their community's need for such policies, and thus there should be more choices in the answers to this question, only three alternatives (see Q11 in Part I of the sample questionnaire in Appendix E) were provided because of the limited total length

of the questionnaire. Nevertheless it helped to approximately categorize respondents' basic attitudes regarding community growth and how to deal with it.

The density factor is known to be commonly used as one of the reasons for opposing housing development although some critics suspect that there are other reasons behind it. Moreover, the question is important in itself, since many experts predict that density will inevitably rise in the future in order to mitigate housing shortages. There is a need to learn more about citizen perceptions of high density housing. To investigate this, Question 12 (Q12) attempts to examine the reasons why many residents favor keeping density low and oppose higher densities. It asks respondents to identify, by selecting from seven answers provided, what they consider are the negative aspects of high density development.

At the end of Part I of the questionnaire, blank space is provided for any comments on community growth issues. The comments written here often revealed much more than the responses to the more structured questions. Several such comments are quoted in Chapter V.

In order to find out whether residents' views on growth control might in some way be related to particular personal characteristics, Part II of the questionnaire was designed to collect background data on each respondent, for example: sex, age, household compositions, race, income level, tenure of residency, type and ownership of housing in which s/he resides, place of work.

In addition to these basic questions, three questions were added. One

(Q11) asks whether her/his job is related to a growth-dependent type of business such as the building industry, real estate or local commerce. A question on the type of community in which respondents spent their childhood days (Q9) is intended to examine if there is any association between their attitudes toward growth and the kind of environment - big city, medium city, suburb, rural area, etc. - from which they originally came. The last question in Part II is concerned with the respondent's social activity in a city (urban) environment and its possible relation to her/his attitudes toward growth control. The question (Q12) asks how often a respondent goes to the city (urban area) for social, not job-related, purposes.

#### IV-4: Follow-up Interviews:

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to leave their telephone numbers if they would be willing to be interviewed. Thus the selection of the interviewees was on a voluntary basis, and could not be statistically implicated. It was simply intended to enrich the contents and the interpretation of their responses.

Of 196 respondents to the mail-out questionnaire, 57 volunteered to be interviewed. However, only 36 interviews, a dozen for each of the case communities, were conducted because of limited time and resources. Most of them were taped with the interviewees' permission. Interviews were open-ended, free-style discussions on the same subject as the questionnaire, and in some cases unanswered questions were completed at the interview sessions. Interviewers brought along several topics and ques-

tions to ask, but the order and the combination of them were adjusted at each session in relation to what each interviewee was interested in talking about and also to the way in which the discussion took its course.

#### IV-5: The Planner Survey

**Purposes:** This survey was not initially anticipated but evolved during the course of carrying out the main survey described above. As I began to analyze the survey results and to construct an argument for an alternative theory of motivation, the need for a different kind of data arose.

My hypothesis was that the increasing support for growth control was not particular to elite class behavior. If my hypothesis was correct, I thought, there must be a few actual cases where communities composed predominantly of non-elite type residents, of lower or moderate-income residents, also opposed new residential development in their neighborhoods. However, most desirable American suburbs are inhabited primarily by residents of higher socio-economic classes, and the San Francisco Bay Area suburbs are among the most desirable suburbs in the country. I was still influenced by the popular notion that growth is usually welcomed by poorer neighborhoods, and in any case I thought it unlikely that I would be able to locate a significant number of relevant examples.

Nevertheless another questionnaire was sent out to 105 government planners in the Bay Area to supplement the principal data.

**Contents of Survey:** There are nine counties and 96 cities in the San

Francisco Bay Area region. The questionnaire was sent to the planning directors of all 105 local public planning agencies. There was only one mailing, and the response rate was 37%.

The geographical distribution of the communities represented in the responses and their categorization according to Dowall's scheme can be found in Table 5.2 in Chapter V.

The survey consisted of a one-page letter of introduction and issue identification, and a two-page questionnaire with 16 questions (see Appendix F). About a half of the questionnaire was concerned with possible examples of lower or moderate-income neighborhoods opposing new residential developments. Planners were asked to identify the number of such cases which took place in their jurisdictions, the types of neighborhoods involved, the type of developments opposed, the major reasons for the residents' opposition, the final decision on the cases, and special issues and concerns involved in such cases.

The second half consisted of a variety of questions asking each planner's personal opinions on several related topics. Two questions regarding citizens' motivation for growth control were posed in order to compare planners' perceptions of this issue with the claims of the two popular theories reviewed in the previous chapter, as well as with my findings based on the resident survey.

The rest of the questionnaire investigated how the Bay Area public planners are trying to solve the dilemma of housing need and community growth control. Except for five questions which were of the multiple-choice type, most of the questionnaire required free descriptive answers.

#### IV-6: Method of Data Analyses

In addition to a simple tabulation of data to determine the frequency of responses to each question in the survey, the statistical test of Chi-Square( $x^2$ ) was applied to test the hypothesis of independence between given pairs of variables. For example, the null hypothesis that respondents' feeling about the necessity of growth control in their communities is independent from who they are in terms of their income levels was tested by means of the contingency table and the Chi-Square.

The responses which are free-descriptive were summarized and categorized into several groups with similar responses. Then, only those with a high concentration of similar responses were used as variables to test if there was any association between different variables identified from the responses to other questions.

#### IV-7: Limitations of Survey

##### a) Problems with the Samplings

The most clear and significant limitation of the survey is that it is based on small samples from only three communities. Different suburbs may vary widely in terms of growth pressures experienced, availability of developable land, presence of significant natural amenities, ecological and geological stability of remaining land, the local economic base, the socio-economic composition of the population, location in relation to metropolitan employment centers, present laws and policies concerning development activities, the present state of public facilities, etc.. Moreover, residents' perceptions may be significantly affected by where

they live. The applicability of the findings from this survey should therefore be understood to be related to the conditions characteristic of the case communities.

While it was expected, and indeed intended (because this type of community has been the target of criticism), that there be a considerable degree of homogeneity among my respondents, especially in race and income levels, this homogeneity not only limits the kind of statistical analyses which can be applied, but also the possible interpretations of the results. There is also a bias in the representation of suburban residents, since the type of residents who would actually respond to the survey is a factor beyond the control of researcher.

b) Problems of questionnaire design:

By its very nature, the subject matter was not easy to represent in a questionnaire, and several respondents indicated that the questions were not always clear to them. This means that some responses, although not many, were based on a misunderstanding of the questions and thus could not be admitted as data. Despite the use of a pretest mail survey, some difficulties in the questionnaire were not detected before the final survey and so were not revised. For example, several respondents did not seem to understand how to check their choice of answers in each column, especially for Questions 1, 2, and 3.

In the pretest survey conducted in San Rafael, Marin County, the respondents did not make such mistakes and did not indicate any confusion, and it was assumed that the questions were clear enough. In some cases such mistakes were corrected at the interview sessions, but data from respon-

dents who were not interviewed could have been misinterpreted. Since there was no way of determining this, the validity of the analysis is somewhat limited. Ideally the design of the questionnaire should have been tested more thoroughly.

Another problem in designing the questionnaire is the dilemma stemming from the fact that although a questionnaire should be short enough to motivate many response returns, yet many questions must be asked before one can acquire useful data for analysis. As a result, there was a tendency in composing the questionnaire to load each question with many topics. Average residents may have found the questions difficult to answer, and thus some prospective respondents may possibly have been discouraged.

As for the follow-up interview, two basic problems limit its usefulness in gathering data. The most critical problem is the absence of trained interviewers, which followed in turn from a lack of funding.

The other problem is that the selection of interviewees is biased, since they are volunteers from the group of respondents to the mail survey. Since the interview results were not used for statistical analysis, there were no technical problems of interpretation. The bias in selection only limited the variety of uses of the interviews as data for quantitative analysis. It would have been better if the interviewees could have been randomly selected from the group of respondents to the mail survey. Still, even this method of selection cannot avoid some degree of selection bias, since in practice a researcher cannot force anyone to be interviewed unless s/he agrees. It is not impossible to minimize

such bias, but to do so would have required far more funds than were available.

In this chapter I have presented the research methodology I adopted in order to investigate for the research question: Why do suburban residents want to control community growth?

As indicated above, this investigation was carried out mainly by asking questions to suburban residents in three case communities and trying to ascertain their thoughts and feelings on the issue of community environmental change by local growth. In Chapter V, the results of my surveys and of other related studies will be analysed and synthesized into an alternative theory of citizen motivation, which constitutes my interpretation of why residents want to control growth.

## FOOTNOTES

### For Chapter IV

- 1 The pattern of responses from Corte Madera(Marin County) residents was somewhat different from those by the respondents from two other communities in that they seem to place more value on the natural, physical characteristics of their environment than on conventional social concerns such as socio-economic homogeneity of residents etc. Also the incidence of errors in interpretation of the questionnaire was somewhat lower for Corte Madera residents, suggesting perhaps that the level of education and awareness of environmental issues are higher here than in other suburban communities. Such results were not totally unexpected though. In the pretest mail survey of 100 San Rafael (Marin County) residents, no respondents made a single error in answering the questionnaire, which led me to assume, mistakenly, that the questionnaire format could be easily be followed by most suburbanites.
  
- 2 A multiple-choice question is provided with several alternative answers and therefore spares the respondent from having to answer in his/her own words. It is generally considered easier for most laypersons to answer, and the response rates for multiple-choice questions in my survey were much higher than for free-descriptive ones. For those who find no ready-made answer that represents their feelings, a blank space followed by "other" is provided for every multiple-choice question so that they can respond in their own words.

## CHAPTER V:

### The Logic of Self-Defense

Hypothesis for an Alternative Theory:

#### Introduction

The two theories of motivation for growth control reviewed above still leave many questions unanswered. I will therefore propose a third theory, formulated on the basis of my survey results, to provide a more satisfactory explanation of community attitudes towards growth control. My hypothesis is that the quest for growth control is best explained as an act of self-defense rather than one of class struggle, or tax struggle. I would not deny that in other sectors of the country residential exclusionism has been aimed at maintaining either a population of a certain socio-economic class or a favourable tax structure. However, as the analysis presented in this chapter reveals, neither class struggle nor tax struggle is the true motivation in the cases here.

The targets of analysis here are the common attitudes of average citizens in the Bay Area suburban communities, and not those of citizens in a handful of special areas which have historically existed in this country. Of course, the average citizens or residents of the Bay Area suburbs may not be average at all from a national perspective because of their generally higher median income levels, the unique environmental amenities of the region, greater exposure to the ideas of environmentalism, and the heavier pressures of growth felt by the region. Still, they represent a significant part of California's population, which, it

is estimated, will exceed 27 million by 1990.\*<sup>1</sup>

Considering the diversity of the population and the communities involved, it should be noted that there is some limitation to the general applicability of the findings of my research, which is based on the study of only three representative communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. Nevertheless, I hope that my interpretation of the residents' attitudes may at least dispel some of the myths about who those supporting growth control and why they want to control community growth.

This chapter is organized in five sections. The first section tries to determine who - that is people of which socio-economic characteristics - wants to control local community growth. The results of the resident survey I conducted in three communities in the San Francisco Bay Area I call into question the widely accepted belief that those suburbanites are wealthy elitists and so-called environmentalists.

The second section discusses in detail the concept of "community character", which was identified by my respondents as a very important concern - the most basic motivation for control. The research examines residents' perceptions of how a development proposal might affect community character, on the basis of their judgements on the acceptability of proposals in their communities. A summary of the residents' own definitions of community character will be followed by a discussion of the single most popular and pervasive element of community character, the small town or rural lifestyle (often referred to by the residents as small town or rural atmosphere or character).

The third section attempts to clarify the fear, or sense of being threatened by changes in the communities' social and physical environment,

which residents seem to feel and which seems to work as a factor in motivating growth control. Both the pace and the type of change produced by community growth will be examined in regard to the threat perceived by residents. These changes include change in the types of new residents growth brings in, and in the type of land used to accommodate growth.

The fourth section examines residents' perception of the costs incurred by unplanned growth and by controlled growth respectively.

The last section investigates the factor that seems to have provoked the actual movement: residents' distrust of the established government and the recognition of their own power as citizens to protect what they feel is important. The chapter ends with a short statement of my interpretation of what residents have been saying, and its implications for general policy design and implementation.

The material is presented and analyzed from the residents' perspective on the issue in question.

V-1: Who Wants Growth Control?

Are most people who favour growth control wealthy elitists and environmentalists, as some critics claim? Don't the poor or the middle class majority of suburbanites share some views about why communities should control growth? Has any study proved that they do not? Or is the promotion of such views simply an act of special interest groups called environmentalists or preservationists?

As described in Chapter I, the pervasiveness of growth control practices by California communities has become well-known. Although the exact figure for all communities which actually practice growth control - formally or informally (defacto) - is hard to determine, it is widely believed that there are more communities with defacto control than with formal growth-control in California.

And California as a state is by no means a homogeneous entity. It is rapidly becoming the second states (the other being Hawaii) to have a majority of the population made up of ethnic minorities. As of 1980 minorities make up slightly more than 30 percent of the population, but are expected to exceed 50 percent by 1988 or 1990.\*<sup>2</sup> A proper understanding of the widespread practice of growth control in California must take account of the peculiar diversity of the population.

In addition to the pervasiveness of growth control practices, there is another important factor which distinguishes the communities in question from the so-called exclusionary communities. It is the scale of each community as a political district that formally enacts and practices growth control policies, a scale that is much larger in terms of population than in most of the exclusive neighborhoods in California (such as Hillsborough, Ross, Orinda, Belvedere etc.). The most of the communities which, by popular vote and usually through citizen initiative processes\*<sup>3</sup>, have adopted growth control systems, have populations larger than twenty thousand, and include people of many different socio-economic classes.

Moreover, they are spread over various geographical locations throughout California. Considering the individualistic orientation of American

society in general, and the complexity of this issue involving as it does many conflicting interests even among a homogeneous population group, it is clear that the larger the scale of the "community", the more difficult it becomes to reach a consensus.

In other words, however homogeneous most of the suburbs might be, there must be something more than simple-minded racism or exclusionism of certain population groups motivating the great majority of the residents in municipal communities to seek growth control.

Do all the communities which have adopted growth control measures fit into the category of so-called "elitist communities", or into the upper strata of socio-economic groups?

Let us look more closely into this question with specific samples available from the survey I conducted. The profile of the pro-growth-control residents of the suburbs surveyed turned out to be rather average, so that these citizens do not represent an objective "elite."

The results indicate that there is no significant correlation between the residents' felt need for growth control and the following factors of their background characteristics.\*<sup>4</sup> That is to say, income levels, home-ownership, and the type of housing in which a respondent resides do not have statistically significant correlations with how s/he feels about the need for growth control in his/her community (See Table 5.1 a,c,d).

The finding that income level has no effect on residents' feelings about growth control is particularly valuable as counter-evidence to the claim that the movement for growth control is attributable to the wealthy

Table 5:1

(a) Association of Variables: Income vs. Felt Need for Growth Control

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Income group:								
below average	4	21.1	3	15.8	12	63.2	19	100.0
average <sup>4</sup>	8	20.5	10	25.6	21	53.8	39	100.0
above average	32	25.8	27	21.8	65	52.4	124	100.0
Total:	44	24.2	40	22.0	98	53.8	182	100.0

Chi square = 1.35

Degrees of freedom = 4

Significance level: The null hypothesis cannot be rejected at any reasonable level of confidence.

(b) Percentage of People with Strong Feeling for Growth Control in Each Income Group.

	X	Y	X/Y
	Number of respondents in income group	Number of respondents expressing strong need	%
Income group:			
below average	19	12	63.2
average <sup>4</sup>	39	21	53.8
above average	124	65	52.4
Total:	182	98	53.8

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."
- (4) Respondents compared their own income levels with 1978 median income of the three counties where these communities are located.

Table 5.1 (continued)

**(c) Association of Variables: Homeownership vs. Felt Need for Growth Control**

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Homeowner	32	21.8	33	22.4	82	55.8	147	100.0
Renter	12	32.4	8	21.6	17	45.9	377	100.0
Total:	44	23.9	41	22.2	99	53.8	184	100.0

Chi square = 1.95

Degrees of freedom = 2

Significance level: The null hypothesis cannot be rejected at any reasonable level of confidence.

**(d) Association of Variables: Housing Types vs. Felt Need for Growth Control**

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Single family housing	36	24.5	29	19.7	82	55.8	147	100.0
All other types <sup>4</sup>	8	21.6	12	32.4	17	45.9	37	100.0
Total:	44	23.9	41	22.3	99	53.8	184	100.0

Chi square = 2.77

Degrees of freedom = 2

Significance level: The null hypothesis cannot be rejected at any reasonable level of confidence.

1, 2, and 3. See notes 1, 2, and 3 for table 5.1a.

4. Other types of housing include: multi-family house, townhouse, apartment, condominium, and mobile home.

"elitist" segment of the population and is directed against the "under-privileged" segment. On the contrary, if there is any correlation between income levels and felt need for growth control which could be derived from the results of my survey, it is in the lower income groups that more people (63.2%) express the stronger need for growth control (see Table 5.1b).

This finding from the residents' responses seems to be in accord with the Bay Area's public planners' perception of "who" is demanding growth control.

In response to the survey of 105 Planning Departments in 9 Counties and 96 cities of Bay Area, many city planners in the public planning offices admitted that there were some cases which involved lower or moderate income neighbourhood opposing new housing developments<sup>5</sup> (see Appendix F-2). When asked if they think that a community's attempt to control residential growth is peculiar to a certain population group, namely, the so-called "elitist" class, more than ninety five percent of respondents (government planners) replied either that they "strongly disagree" or that it is "not necessarily so", with only one community replying that they "agree" (see Table 5.2).

Although it is difficult<sup>6</sup> to determine accurately the number of cases in which some residents raised opposition to a development project in any given community, one-half of the respondents (one respondent represents one community - city or county), acknowledged one or more (in some cases ten) such examples.<sup>7</sup>

For example, mobile home owners in Petaluma opposed a single-family

Table 5.2

**The Bay Area Government Planner Survey.**

Q5: Do you think that a community's attempt to control growth, particularly new residential development, is peculiar to a certain population group, the so-called "elitist" class?

Response	Number of respondents	% of total
Agree	1	2.6
Not necessarily so	23	60.5
Strongly disagree	13	34.2
No answer	1	2.6
<b>Total:</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Classification of communities  
whose planners responded to questionnaire.**

Category of community according to Dowall's classification	% of communities whose planners responded
Built out	10.5
Mature growing	28.9
Growth restricted	47.4
Growth centers	5.3
Not classified	7.9
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100.0</b>

housing project one thousand yard from their neighbourhood. Apparently moderate and lower-income groups are just as protective of their community environment as the elite.\*<sup>8</sup> In Oakland, which may be better categorized as an "urban" rather than a "suburban" community, and where the black population is 46.9% of the total, a moderate and low income Spanish-speaking and black ethnic neighbourhood opposed a project for a two and three story apartment complex of 60 units on a vacant site which was formerly the site of a neighbourhood theatre.\*<sup>9</sup> According to the Oakland city planner, the residents of the area saw this project as destroying their lower density residential environment.

The majority of public sector planners who responded to my questionnaire stated that the socio-economic class of people had little to do with the general community attitude towards growth, and several of them observed that the lower or moderate income groups sometimes registered even stronger opposition.

"Some [of] the most vehement opposition to new residential development has been from the lower-middle income areas. This would lead one to believe that the 'elitist' theory may not hold up in all cases."  
(Martinez planner)

"Minorities [who] have achieved the 'American Dream' of a single family residences - [show] concern that higher density or condo will lead to rental units - the type of neighbourhood which they worked hard to leave."  
(Alameda County planner)

Finally it should be noted that the majority of respondents to my resident survey, who were chosen randomly for the purposes of statistical analysis, turned out to have rather low levels of political participation in their local land use decision-making processes. When asked how

often they attended public meetings on land use issues, 71.4% of the total respondents replied that they attend either "rarely", "never", or "only when the proposed development is located near my home".<sup>11</sup>

Although many of them might share the values of environmentalists, and probably they have a dormant influence on the outcome of any critical decision directly affecting the quality of their life, their self-image is far from that of the "(activist) environmentalists" in the spotlight of every local growth controversy. In other words, they are hardly the "environmentalists in action" that some critics have assumed them to be. It should be noted, however, that the definition of "environmentalists" here is limited to those who are activists in the environmental movement, and who actively participate in environmentally related affairs that are not only local but also regional or larger in scale. In other words I would not call a person who attends public hearings on local land use decision-making affairs only when his/her own neighbourhood is affected an environmentalist, even though s/he might share some of the basic values of environmentalism.

In the failure to distinguish between the suburban residents of each locality and environmental activists from nation-wide or state-wide organizations, there seems to be some confusion as to why each party might want to control local growth. It is not surprising to find that different things about community growth and subsequent environmental changes concern local residents and environmentalists who live a hundred miles away. Environmentalists whose individual interests are not at stake in a given community perceive the impact of a given development quite

differently from local residents. They might pursue some ideological goals that cater to narrow interests while local residents struggle for protecting the environment which directly and significantly affect their immediate lifestyles. Still, residents of local communities are the ones who, by voting, make such decisions. However influential and politically powerful certain well-known environmental groups might be, it is hard to believe that they could block all homebuilding in particular communities, unless they also constitute a significant part of the resident population and votes.

The findings from my survey of 196 residents in three Bay Area communities suggest that the characterization of people who demand growth control which has been popularized by critics of that movement is substantially incorrect. That is to say, in general, the suburban residents who favour, support, or demand growth control/management for their communities are not necessarily those in the "elitist" socio-economic class, nor are they environmental activists. Rather, they come from various socio-economic classes and seem to be ordinary people who are usually regarded as the silent majority rather than a vociferous group. If the behaviour or attitude of these residents is what critics label as elitism, the above analysis suggests that a measure of elitism exists in people of most socio-economic classes.

In the next four sections this aspect of the attitude of suburban residents in their quest for growth control/management will be examined.

## Why Growth Control? - The Residents' Motive -

In the previous chapter I questioned the theories that claimed that either the fiscal impact of community growth on local government or elitist exclusionism is the principal motive behind the Bay Area suburban residents' desire for growth control. The fiscal impact of community growth, especially since Proposition 13, has undeniably exacerbated the difficulties in getting new housing built, and has strengthened the position of "non-growthers" by providing them with a persuasive argument at the local political level. Citizens groups with their newly acquired political sophistication, have not neglected such an effective argument as this. It is clearly demonstrable, and its computerised quantitative evidence<sup>#12</sup> can intimidate even those tough opponents who would never be persuaded by the importance of intangible considerations such as the "quality of life.

It is true that citizens have become very sophisticated in the art of politics, and it is not surprising if one looks at the history of growth in the Bay Area and northern California, or the state of California as a whole. Over the past decade or so people have witnessed numerous "dirty tricks" and behind-the-scenes deals between developers and city councilmen; and more importantly, they have learned what all these deals actually meant in terms of the quality of their environment. They saw the change, heard about it, and directly experienced it. And then now they have learned ways to fight back.

However, they have not been sophisticated enough to avoid mixing contra-

dictory arguments, which can easily be refuted by the critics because of their inconsistencies. Too anxious to win their political game, they have tried to 'catch at any straw', often appealing to ecological issues which they do not understand well and which are of questionable relevance to their cause. Just as developers try hard to present the most persuasive arguments at public hearings, hiring teams of sophisticated professional consultants, even when the true motive for their project is simply to maximize the profit and leave, so citizen groups use, with varying degrees of success, all possible arguments that they believe might win the support of people in the community and thus the councilmen's votes.

What we should recognize here is that the arguments which may be addressed in a political forum in support of growth control or in opposition to a given development proposal do not necessarily represent the true motives of the average suburban resident.

Indeed, it is important to distinguish two separate questions: 1) What reasons do residents of suburban communities give when they ask for growth control legislation?; and 2) Why do these residents really feel that they need growth control legislation? The latter question is the more important and this is the principal question in my research.

Often these two questions are confused and it is assumed that residents' opinions can be understood by referring to what local government officials, environmental activists, or even developers think they are. Most of the articles on this second question base their analyses on such materials without distinguishing the two. In particular, vociferous

"environmentalists", who are most visible in the local political arena and who call themselves citizens' groups, are those most likely to be regarded as the representatives of average suburban residents.

There is no question but that some of the environmentalists' views have wide-spread support among those "average residents", but the great majority of suburban residents are, in fact, not environmentalists, and care should be taken not to confuse the two groups. Moreover, a distinction should be made between the motives of suburban communities and of individual residents of such communities. Many planners know better why a community might want to control growth, but the local community as an administrative entity is susceptible to much more complex and broader interests, with citizens' attitudes being only one of them, and thus the motives of a community can be quite different from those of its residents for controlling the growth of their community.

In this chapter I will analyze what the average residents, not the environmental activists or the local government planners, have been saying, and develop from this a coherent theory of their true motivation.

#### V-2: The Preservation of Community Character: A Primary Value

"All communities can grow if it is accomplished without altering the character or personality of the township. The pity is the world is so totally caught up in self for self that we destroy what it is we all hope to achieve. A real pleasant environment to live in."  
(Danville resident)

#### Acceptability of Development vs. Community Character

The results of my survey indicate that residents' attitudes towards community growth, or more directly, towards development proposals are

significantly affected by their perception of each proposal's possible impact on their community's character, which for many of them constitutes the principal reason for their decision to live in a given community.

In what way does this perception affect the actual decision-making process? For example, when people evaluate the acceptability of different types of residential development projects, it has been found that they base their judgement on how each project type would affect the present character of the community. Moreover, in response to another survey question asking them to identify the most important criteria for evaluating development proposals, respondents answered in the following manners: "minimizing alteration of the natural elements of the community" is the most important; then follows "maintaining quality of buildings to the existing standard or higher"; "appearance of development to be in keeping with the present image of the community"; "not to generate excessive traffic on local streets"; and "maintenance of the overall density of the present community" (see Table 5.4). In short, open space/natural landscape, traffic, the quality of buildings, appearances in relation to "image", and density are what suburbanites seem to be most eager to control.

How would setting such criteria affect the selection of acceptable development projects in their communities? Three hypothetical residential development proposals (see Appendix E-2a,b,c) were presented for evaluation by the respondents of their acceptability in communities<sup>14</sup>.

Development Type A is a medium-density, multi-family housing project

Table 5.4

**Importance of Development Criteria for Evaluation of Proposals**

Development Criteria	Very important (scale 5-4)		Somewhat important (scale 3)		Not important (scale 2-1)		No answer
	number	%	number	%	number	%	
Alteration of natural elements (open space, trees, wildlife etc) of community should be minimized	140	71.4	36	18.4	13	6.6	5
Quality of buildings should not be lower than standard of existing ones	122	62.2	48	24.5	18	9.4	6
Appearance of new development should be in keeping with the present image of our community	96	49.0	76	38.8	17	8.7	7
New development should not generate an excessive increase in traffic on local streets	95	48.5	79	40.3	17	8.7	4
Overall density of new development should be lower or similar to adjacent areas	73	38.0	91	46.4	25	12.8	7
Increase in the number of new residents should be kept as small as possible	55	28.1	82	41.8	52	26.5	7
New development should seek to maintain the existing socio- economic mix of residents	42	21.4	91	46.4	55	28.1	8
New development should encourage greater diversity of residents in our community	28	14.3	67	34.2	92	46.9	9
New development should not lead to an excessive increase of school-age children	27	13.8	65	33.9	95	48.5	9
Other criteria mentioned	36 respondents						

which would be located on ten acres of flat land and whose prospective residents are mainly moderate-income families with children and some racially-mixed lower-income families. Development Type B, the highest density project of the three types, consists of clustered condominiums on a seven-acre hillside lot, next to an already developed area, and its prospective residents are mainly middle- to upper-middle-income whites, with very few children. The lowest density project is Development Type C, which consists of large single-family homes for high-income white families with children, located on seventy acres on a heavily vegetated hill top (For more detail see Chapter IV).

The respondents were asked to imagine that there are three such sites considered for housing development in their communities, that each development type will bring in the same total number of new residents, and that there is a great need for housing. They were then asked to evaluate each of the development models A, B, and C, in terms of the level of acceptability<sup>15</sup> in their communities; to evaluate the project's potential affect on community character as positive, neutral, or adverse; and finally to rank the three alternatives in order of preference (see Table 5.5 a,b,c).

Results showed the ranking of Type B as the highest, Type C second, and Type A last. This does not mean that Type A is totally unacceptable however. In the simple acceptability evaluation, more than half (58.7%) still rated Type A as acceptable. The acceptability of each development proposal is closely related to people's perception of the development's potential affect on community character. Of all the respondents who

Table 5.5

**(a) Residents' Perception of How Development Types A, B and C Would Affect Community Character.**

Q.3: Do you think that this type of development would affect the present character of your community?

Effect of development on community character  
(Number of respondents)

Development Type	positive		neutral		negative	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
A	33	16.8	41	20.9	108	55.1
B	32	16.7	102	52.0	32	16.7
C	62	31.6	82	41.8	33	16.8

**(b) Ranking Development Types A, B, and C for Evaluation.**

Ranking in order of acceptability  
(Number of respondents)

Development Type	1st(most acceptable)		2nd		3rd(least acceptable)	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
A	43	21.9	39	19.9	100	51.0
B	85	43.4	68	34.7	34	17.3
C	84	42.9	48	24.5	54	27.6

**(c) Acceptability of Development Types A, B, and C.**

(Number of respondents)

Development Type	Acceptable		Unacceptable		No answer	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
A	115	58.7	71	36.2	10	5.1
B	164	83.7	20	10.2	12	6.1
C	151	77.0	29	14.8	16	8.1

felt that a development type might adversely affect community character, more respondents considered it unacceptable and fewer considered it acceptable than was expected (comparing "expected frequency" with "observed frequency" in the Chi-square Distribution table.) Likewise, whenever the respondents felt that a development type might either positively or neutrally affect community character, many fewer than the expected number of respondents considered it unacceptable (see Table 5.6 a,b,c).

These results seem to suggest that people, when they were asked to make a difficult choice among limited alternatives, tend to evaluate a development proposal according to how they perceive its potential affect on community character.

A considerable percentage of the respondents from Corte Madera, Marin County, ranked the Type C development, a low density single-family development for white high-income people, as the least favourable of the three development types presented as case models. When asked to rank the three models<sup>16</sup> of typical residential development in order of acceptability in their own communities, 44.9% of Corte Madera respondents ranked the Type C development third, i.e. the least acceptable, although the overall result of ranking by all respondents from the three case communities favoured Type C over Type A, which is a medium density multi-family development with a racially and economically mixed population.

The main reasons for the unacceptability of a Type C development, despite its popular low-density single-family residential type, were its

Table 5.6

**A) Association of Variables: Perceived Effect of Development Type A on Community Character vs. Acceptability of Type A Development.**

Acceptability of type A development <sup>1</sup>	Effect of type A development on community character <sup>2</sup>			
	negative	neutral	positive	total
Unacceptable	64	2	2	68
Acceptable	41	37	31	109
Total:	105	39	33	177

Chi square = 55.41  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.001

**B) Association of Variables: Perceived Effect of Development Type B on Community Character vs. Acceptability of Type B Development.**

Acceptability of type B development <sup>1</sup>	Effect of type B development on community character <sup>2</sup>			
	negative	neutral	positive	total
Unacceptable	18	2	0	20
Acceptable	15	96	31	142
Total:	33	98	31	162

Chi square = 68.29  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.001

- (1) Q3: Do you think that this type of development would affect the present character of your community?  
 (2) Q1: Generally speaking, do you feel that this type of development is:  
 a) welcome in your community; b) acceptable; c) acceptable subject to certain conditions; d) not acceptable/objectionable; e) threatening to your community?

Categories (a), (b), and (c) = acceptable.  
 Categories (d) and (e) = unacceptable.

Table 5.6 (continued)

**C) Association of Variables: Perceived Effect of Development Type C on Community Character vs. Acceptability of Type C Development.**

Acceptability of type C development <sup>1</sup>	Effect of type C development on community character <sup>2</sup>			
	negative	neutral	positive	total
Unacceptable	22	4	1	27
Acceptable	9	78	58	145
Total:	31	82	59	172

Chi square = 87.55  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.001

(1) Q3: Do you think that this type of development would affect the present character of your community?

(2) Q1: Generally speaking, do you feel that this type of development is:  
 a) welcome in your community; b) acceptable; c) acceptable subject to certain conditions; d) not acceptable/objectionable; e) threatening to your community?

Categories (a), (b), and (c) = acceptable.  
 Categories (d) and (e) = unacceptable.

location - on a top of the hill - and the amount of natural open space and vegetation to be destroyed in order to accomodate this type of development. One of the Corte Madera interviewees explained that Type C uses too much land, that a hilltop location is unacceptable, and that he felt the ridgelines to be the most important single element in terms of keeping the "feel" of open space. In his words, 'when the ridges go, the place feels filled.'

Although the critics of growth control mistrust the environmental concerns of suburbanites who favor growth control, there are in fact many people who truly do place a higher value on environmental factors than on socio-economic factors.

A comparison of the rankings of the development types by the respondents from the three case communities suggests that the unacceptability or unpopularity of a Type C development is greater in areas where the environmental amenity, especially the quality of the natural landscape, is greater. As described in chapter IV, there are some differences among the three case areas in terms of the natural environmental amenities each has. For example, Danville has Mt.Diablo and other mountains but has no major waterfront access or view, while Belmont and Corte Madera are both located between the ranges and the Bay, and enjoy the amenities of both hills and water. Corte Madera has more direct access to the waterfront than Belmont does since Belmont's waterfront is mainly occupied by a large reclaimed landfill.

Although this inter-case-community comparison is not statistically testable\*<sup>17</sup> with the sample distribution of my respondents and is thus un-

verifiable, the pattern of responses by the residents of these three suburban communities seems to correspond to the differences in environmental characteristics, current growth rates (see Figure 4-1 in Chapter IV), levels of citizen control on land use matters, and the types of people that each type of community seems to attract (see Appendix B for the description of each case community).

#### Definition of Community Character:

What do people mean by "community character"? Although the phrase is widely used, the word has never been clearly defined, despite its potential as an element in the solution of the crux of growth control dilemma.

My survey of suburban residents in three case communities of the Bay Area focused on the issue of community character. The majority of respondents indicated that there are characteristics of a community which they feel should be protected, and identified a variety of elements and aspects which were important<sup>18</sup> (Table 5.7). Natural landscape elements including wildlife and open space were most frequently mentioned, followed by "small town or rural atmosphere", absence of urban problems, low population density, the type of people, and the single-family type residence.

Several respondents, especially those from fast-growing Danville, cited the absence of urban features such as sidewalks, highrises, traffic congestion, overcrowding, urban sprawls, etc. as important characteristics of their community.

Table 5.7

Identification of Important Community Characteristics<sup>1</sup>

Q.4: Some residents of suburban communities in the Bay Area are concerned about maintaining "community character" and feel it is important to preserve this through legislative means such as growth control measures. Are there characteristics of your community that you feel should be protected?

Important community characteristics	Number of mentions	% total mentions	% of all respondents
Open space, natural landscape	72	30.3	36.7
Small town / rural atmosphere	36	15.1	18.4
Absence of urban problems	28	11.8	14.3
Low density	28	11.8	14.3
Type of people	20	8.4	10.2
Residential types <sup>2</sup>	18	7.6	9.2
Others	36	15.1	18.4
Total:	238	100.0	-. <sup>3</sup>

- (1) Characteristics described by respondents in their own words.
- (2) This usually means single family type housing.
- (3) The total number of respondents was 196.

It should be noted, however, that there is some disagreement among the respondents about what constitutes community character. This disagreement is especially evident among those who referred to the type of neighbors they would like to have. For example, to some respondents with a high-income or upper-middle income, the class of residents is an important element of community character they would like to see maintained, while others expressed the need for a greater variety of people. There are some respondents, although only a small percentage (2.6%), who indicate intentional exclusivity, as indeed critics have suspected. Slightly more respondents (about 5%) referred to general income levels or the socio-economic class of residents as desirable, in comments such as: "middle-class hard-working, decent people."

Yet of all the respondents who made any reference to type of housing or people, family-orientation was the aspect of community character that was most strongly emphasized. With reference to residential type, "family-orientation" usually means single-family, owner-occupied housing, and also connotes the type of people living in such housing, that is "a married couple with child(ren)." It also implies a set of social and physical environmental characteristics which permit a lifestyle considered essential for the health and comfort of those families.

We may conclude then that most residents hope to see their communities maintain the general quality of a small town/rural character, and that this implies such elements as open space, low population density, family-orientation, and low traffic and noise levels.

## Small Town/Rural Character or Lifestyle

The results of my survey indicate that, a small town/rural character (or "atmosphere" as it is often called) is the fundamental characteristic of a community which suburbanites want to protect.

And it seems that many people of all socio-economic classes who choose to live in the suburbs, or who would like to but cannot yet afford to live there, generally favour this "character" that they believe the small town or rural community to possess. The great demand for suburban homes, which creates the pressure for growth, itself indicates in large part that many prospective suburban homeowners expect those qualities to be found and sustained. Many of my respondents stated that the small town/rural character of their community is why they settled there in the first place\*<sup>19</sup> (See also Belmont resident's comment on pp.139):

"The area is losing its rural character which is what brought us here in the first place (5 years ago)." (Danville resident)

"We moved here 11 years ago when we had no shopping centers, no street lights. It was why we moved here." (Danville resident)

"I love the city for its ethnic variety, neighbourhoods and activity. But I chose to live in Marin so I could enjoy a rural beautiful, and pardon the expression, 'laid out' atmosphere. I don't want that to change." (Corte Madera resident)

Quite a few planners and researchers have also found that the more recent residents are often among those who most vehemently oppose growth. As for the San Francisco Bay Area suburbs in particular, several planning officials of the Bay Area Planning Departments who responded to my survey seem to agree with the theory of self-defense. They state that the desire of these residents, who have escaped from

urban problems into small towns or rural areas, defend their new communities - a refuge - from further urbanization is the most plausible explanation for suburbanites' desire for community growth control. One such planning director of a city in fast growing Sonoma County writes:

"In the City of Sonoma's case, people are attracted to the community due to its rural nature, its proximity to a larger urban Bay Area, its good weather and many other desirable, rural amenities. People now moving into town from the Bay Area urban cities usually do so to escape urban problems such as high crime rates, traffic congestion and air pollution. Once they become established in Sonoma, they usually vehemently oppose any additional growth that they feel will result in the urban problems from which they have moved." (Sonoma Planner)

While the question of fairness and appropriateness in the levels of environmental control still remains, the popularity of such intangible environmental qualities as a small town/rural atmosphere among suburban residents deserves serious recognition by the critics of growth control. In fact quite a few of the Bay Area planning officials who participated in the survey mentioned a need for greater recognition of the importance of such values. One of the planners aptly expresses this viewpoint:

"Regardless of economic or social class or status, people try to protect their own "piece of turf" or investment from encroachment and/or diminution in value, perceived or otherwise. They see a possible loss in the values that caused them to locate in a particular place; whether it be open space, less congestion, better schools, etc. These are all very human traits and characteristics that planners ought to expect rather than being constantly surprised by such protective attitudes."  
(Fremont planner) (Emphasis added)

Other studies on recent trends in migration reveal that the respondents in my survey are not alone in their pursuit of the small town/rural lifestyle:

A study on recent migrants to California's small towns found that a high percentage of newcomers were in professional occupations, were highly educated, and came from urban areas, and that their primary motive in moving to the small town areas of California was the "chance to pursue a rural life style, rather than economic or employment opportunities."\*19

The trend seems so widespread that Newsweek in its July 6, 1981 issue had a special article on "America's Small Town Boom". According to this report, for the first time since 1820 the census shows that rural and small-town America is growing faster than the cities - by 15.5 % or 8.4 million persons during the 1970s. This current migration trend is motivated not so much by economic concerns as was traditionally the case, but by environmental concerns, or, in other words, concern for "the quality of life." The researchers interviewed by the reporters observed that "many more of those moving to small towns or into the country have willingly ignored economics to do so - passing up both better jobs and bigger paychecks." Andrew J. Sofranko, a professor of rural sociology at the University of Illinois who is studying rural migration in the Midwest was quoted as follows:

"A lot of people are putting other concerns above jobs - quiet place, scenic, safe for children, less noise and congestion, a slower pace of life. ... Even when we exclude retirees from our surveys, the quality of life still outweighs job reasons for moving. An interesting thing is that this is such a broad-based trend - white collar and blue collar, young and old, all age and educational levels."

To many who emphasize the aspects of economic impact and social equity in their assessment of the growth control question, the desire for "small town/rural atmosphere" is viewed as a rather "minor" value. An increasing body of evidence suggests that this view is inadequate.

### V-3: Fear of Environmental Change

What aspects of growth threaten the community character that residents value so highly? One of the threats suburbanites are likely to perceive with the process of community growth is found in the actual and very real changes which are taking place in their community's daily environment. Change in both social and physical environmental qualities caused by community growth is certainly not a new phenomenon itself. Such changes have commonly been regarded as inevitable by-products of civilization, and were sometimes welcomed by residents in the past.

However as a result of more than a decade of the influence of environmentalism, suburban residents, especially those in the San Francisco Bay Area where the movement originated, have become more aware of the changing condition of the environment in their communities.

Below I will discuss the environmental changes that most affect the perceptions of my respondents, the suburban residents, toward community growth. This discussion will focus on three aspects of the question: first, the perception of change caused by rapid pace of growth; second, changes in the type of population and in the type of land subjected to development as a result of growth; and last, people's perception of urbanization as the ultimate and most threatening change in their communities.

#### 1) The Pace of Growth and Negative Change Perceived

In my survey of 196 suburban residents, a sense of loss, or the residents' perception of having lost something as a result of growth, was

the most frequently acknowledged consequence of environmental change residents are aware of. Specifically, 42.4% (39/92) of the respondents who identified negative environmental changes expressed this "sense of loss" due to community growth (Table 5.8). Ninety three percent of all references to change, or 67.2 % of all the respondents to this question (Q8), mentioned negative environmental changes, while only 7 % mentioned positive or neutral changes. Furthermore, one third of the "positive" changes included "planned and controlled growth in recent years".

Of all negative responses (i.e. of responses which referred negative types of environmental changes), 48 % were made by Danville respondents, whose community is unincorporated and has no growth control, as opposed to 27 % by Corte Madera and 25 % by Belmont respondents. Corte Madera has a defacto growth control policy, although it is not called such, while Belmont has had a very restrictive growth control ordinance since 1979. Danville still has more developable land than Corte Madera or Belmont does, and its recent growth rate has been very high. Corte Madera, where most rapid growth took place during the 1950's and 1960's, is anticipated to be 96 % built out by 1985; Belmont's hillside areas have only limited development capacity due to terrain constraints, while its level areas are already intensely developed.

Between 1975 and 1980, Danville's population increased 34.6 %, while the number of housing units increased by 48.9%.<sup>21</sup> One Danville respondent wrote:

"The number of subdivision/condos that grew up in far short - 3 year period - too fast and many vacant on some too high prices for true mix [sic]."

Table 5.8

## Perceived Environmental Changes

Q.8: We would like you to tell us something about your views on the changes that have taken place in your community environment. What kind of environmental changes have you been aware of since you moved to your present community? And how do you feel about those changes?<sup>1</sup>

Type of changes perceived	Total		Belmont		Danville		Corte Madera	
	No.	%	No.	% <sup>3</sup>	No.	% <sup>4</sup>	No.	% <sup>5</sup>
Positive change	8	5.8	2	2.6	3	6.0	3	6.1
Neutral change	13	9.5	5	13.2	1	2.0	7	14.3
Negative change	92	67.2	24	63.2	43	86.0	25	51.0
-----								
Total number of responses to Q8:	137	100.0	38	100.0	50	100.0	49	100.0
% :	100.0		27.7		36.5		35.8	
Total number of survey respondents:	196		64		63		69	
"Loss" as perceived change <sup>2</sup>	39	28.5	10	26.3	13	26.0	16	32.7
Traffic problems as negative environmental change	26	20.4	4	10.5	16	32.0	6	12.2

(1) Question No.8 is an open ended question for free descriptive responses.

(2) This includes such descriptive responses as: "less open space", "less attractive community", "loss of familyness", "less place for children", and "erased hill tops".

(3) As a percent of total number of Belmont respondents to Q8.

(4) As a percent of total number of Danville respondents to Q8.

(5) As a percent of total number of Corte Madera respondents to Q8.

Belmont in comparison had only a 4.2 % increase between 1970 and 1980, while the number of housing units increased by 27.6 %<sup>22</sup>. In Corte Madera, the population actually decreased by 200 persons over the same decade despite a small (205) increase in the number of housing units.<sup>23</sup>

The pressure of growth and the actual pace of growth, and consequently the amount and the speed of the environmental changes each community experiences, is reflected in the levels of perceived control, or in other words, the degree to which the residents of each community believe effective control to be possible.<sup>24</sup> For example, 14.3 % of Danville respondents felt that "the continued deterioration of the environment is more or less inevitable and largely beyond control" in comparison to 6.3 % of such responses in Belmont, and 3.1 % in Corte Madera (see Table 5.9). Only 15.9 % of the total Danville respondents replied that they could "keep growth and change under control, and preserve the community's essential character" as opposed to 34.8 % in Corte Madera, and 45.3 % of the same response in Belmont. Slight differences in the degree of perceived need for growth control in the three communities indicate that more Danville residents feel that their community needs growth control than do Belmont residents and Corte Madera residents.

Another noticeable difference in the response patterns of the three communities is the greater concern about the density factor among Danville residents, who gave more negative responses to the question which asked them to identify the most important aspects of community character to be preserved. Nearly a quarter of all Danville respondents

Table 5.9

**Variation in Three Case Communities: Perceived Control and Felt Need for Growth Control.**

Q.9: How do you regard the community's ability to control future environmental changes?

% of respondents in community who felt helpless about their community's ability to control future environmental change	% of respondents who expressed strong need for community growth control
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Respondents in:

Belmont	6.3	54.7
Danville	14.3	58.7
Corte Madera	3.1	42.0

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Average of three communities	7.7	51.7
------------------------------	-----	------

replied in a negative form implying the "absence" of something, almost always "urban features" such as traffic congestion, crowding, highrises, apartments, as what they would like to preserve.

The threat of change due to rapid growth perceived by suburban residents is not groundless. The history of the Bay Area growth is described in studies such as Dowall's:

"Land development in the decade preceding 1960, set the pattern for the years to come. Growth spread out along all major transportation corridors; small towns within commuting range of employment centers became major cities in a few short years"<sup>25</sup>.

## 2) Type of Change:

Another aspect of environmental change that greatly affects people's attitudes toward growth is the type, rather than the pace, of change caused by growth during the last decade or so. When asked what kind of environmental changes they have been aware of in their communities, respondents most frequently mentioned traffic-related problems such as an increase in traffic volume and congestion, and noise and dirt from traffic, followed by a loss or decrease of open space/natural landscape elements and an increase in new developments with such undesirable consequences as landslides, flooding, sewer blockage, blocked views, etc. (see Table 5.8).

The statistical analyses revealed that there is, in fact, a strong correlation between residents' felt need for growth control and whether or not they have actually experienced increased traffic problems as a significant environmental change (see Table 5.10).

Table 5.10

**Association of Variables: Felt Need for Growth Control vs. Traffic Problems as Perceived Environmental Change.**

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

Q.8: What kind of environmental changes have you been aware of? <sup>4</sup>	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Traffic-related problems or changes	2	7.1	4	14.3	22	78.6	28	100.0
All other responses including non-responses	43	26.5	39	24.1	80	49.4	162	100.0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>53.7</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Chi square = 8.59  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.025

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."
- (4) This is an open-ended question, the text of which reads as follows:  
 We would like you to tell us something about your views on the changes that have taken place in your community environment. What kind of environmental changes have you been aware of since you moved to your present community? And how do you feel about those changes?

## Change in Type of People

Another type of change which seems to affect residents' attitudes toward growth control is the type of people growth might bring in. Who is most likely to have moved into those suburbs if the market systems were left to work unrestricted? What change in the types of new residents has community growth brought in so far? What potential changes in community population, or what attributes of prospective residents, would most affect the attitude of present residents toward new residential development and growth?

The implication found in suburbanites' attitudes toward growth, especially residential development, is that growth is bringing in new residents who differ from the established population in terms of their lifestyles, which somehow threatens the traditional family-orientation of a small community and its residents. The majority of suburban residents, who are single-family homeowners themselves, often feel threatened by the "intrusion" of persons who do not share the interests of the neighbourhood, who are not family-oriented, and who are not property owners, or are owners of condominiums. These people are generally perceived as unstable, self-centered, unconcerned about community affairs or the education of children, and likely to disrupt the peace of other people's family lives through such undesirable social behaviour as late night parties, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, etc. In their own words they express this concern:

"Crime, alienation, and overcrowding have occurred as a result of rapid growth over the last 15 years. A feeling of community is

lacking with many newcomers, and therefore a sense of responsibility with the community result in more crime, alienation etc." (Corte Madera resident)

"Loss of families with children - increase in living groups with every member working and interests elsewhere." (Belmont resident)

One of the interviewees seems to have spoken for many fellow suburbanites when she stated;

"People don't want condominiums here. Condominiums mean that people who are going to be living there will be older people who will not want to be bothered with the people who grew up here, the busy people who don't want to contribute anything to the environment to rear them in a sense that they will not attend any meetings, the self-contained people ... they think of nothing. Condominium people are busy people 'wrapped up in their own world', and they tend not to have any friendships. People moving into the condos tend to be very wealthy people who can afford \$100,000.- or people retiring because they don't want to upkeep single-family homes any more. [sic]"<sup>26</sup>

How about the Low-income and/or Minority People?

How much are the average suburbanites concerned about change in the socio-economic make-up of their communities? In other words, to what extent is the socio-economic class of new residents important to the present residents of suburbs? Or are the present residents more threatened by people of incompatible lifestyles, regardless of race and income classes?

While the patterns of responses indicate the unpopularity of "low-income" housing or population group, there is not enough evidence to condemn the suburban residents in general, regardless of their socio-economic class, for deliberately attempting to exclude any particular population group.

In an attempt to examine whether people's general objection to high density development is just a disguise for their exclusionary intentions towards low-income or minority population groups, the question "What are the negative aspects of 'high density development that you feel to be most objectionable?'"<sup>27</sup> was asked. Of seven multiple choice answers, "generation of excessive traffic" (73.5%) was most frequently chosen, followed by "large scale buildings that look 'oppressive'." Less than half of the respondents indicated "increase in low-income residents" as one of the most objectionable aspects, and less than one quarter of the total respondents selected "increase in minority residents" as an objectionable aspect of such development in general (see Table 5.11).

42.9% of respondents stated that an excessive increase in low-income population was one of the objectionable results of high-density projects. Could this be interpreted as an indication that the exclusion of low-income people is an important consideration for many suburbanites? While we cannot definitely reject that hypothesis, the survey has produced some evidence that would seem to contradict it.

The results of my survey show that there is a significant correlation between the way respondents evaluated the impact of a Type A development on community character and whether the factor of "people" in a development type influenced their evaluation (see Table 5.12). In other words, a statistically significant correlation was identified between the responses which indicated the factor of "people" influenced the respondent's decision, and those where the evaluation of Type A's effect on community character was positive, rather than negative.

Table 5.11

**Perceived Impact of High Density Development.**

Q.12: What are the negative aspects of "high density" development that you feel are most objectionable?

Perceived objectionable impact of high density development	Number of respondents	% of total
a) Generates excessive traffic on local roads	144	73.5
b) Includes large scale buildings that look oppressive	129	65.8
c) An excessive increase in low income residents	84	42.9
d) Harms the prestige and good image of the community	70	35.7
e) Contributes to school overcrowding	60	30.6
f) An excessive increase of minority group residents	46	23.5
g) Attracts people with few or no children	19	9.7
h) An increase in crime	11	5.6
i) Other	28	-.-

Table 5.12

**A) Association of Variables: Perceived Effect of Development Type A on Community Character vs. Type of People as a Criterion for Evaluation.**

Type of people as a criterion in evaluating acceptability of type A development <sup>1</sup>	Effect of type A development on community character <sup>2</sup>							
	negative		neutral		positive		total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unimportant	55	54.5	36	35.6	10	9.9	101	100.0
Important	53	65.4	5	6.2	23	28.4	81	100.0
Total:	108	59.3	41	22.5	33	18.1	182	100.0

Chi square = 26.72  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.001

**B) Association of Variables: Perceived Effect of Development Type A on Community Character vs. Density as a Criterion for Evaluation.**

Density as criterion in evaluating acceptability of type A development <sup>1</sup>	Effect of type A development on community character <sup>2</sup>							
	negative		neutral		positive		total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unimportant	53	52.5	25	24.8	23	22.8	101	100.0
Important	55	67.9	16	19.8	10	12.3	81	100.0
Total:	108		41		33		182	100.0

Chi square = 5.00  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.1

(1) Q3: Do you think that this type of development would affect the present character of your community?

(2) Q2: Which do you think is (are) the most important factor(s) to take into account in deciding whether to accept or reject this type of development?

Table 5.12 (continued)

**C) Association of Variables: Perceived Effect of Development Type B on Community Character vs. Density as a Criterion for Evaluation.**

Density as criterion in evaluating acceptability of type B development <sup>1</sup>	Effect of type B development on community character <sup>2</sup>							
	negative		neutral		positive		total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unimportant	10	12.3	52	64.2	19	23.5	81	100.0
Important	23	27.1	48	56.5	14	16.5	85	100.0
Total:	33		100		33		166	100.0

Chi square = 5.94  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.05

- (1) Q3: Do you think that this type of development would affect the present character of your community?  
 (2) Q2: Which do you think is (are) the most important factor(s) to take into account in deciding whether to accept or reject this type of development?

When people are concerned about the type of prospective residents of a proposed housing development, it is not the race of these prospective residents and it is often not even their income levels which matter most, but rather their level of commitment to the community, in the form of ownership of homes, and the lifestyles which they are assumed to have. Some of the respondents added more explanation in their comments about how they feel on this issue:

"The issue is not (and seldom is) whether a family is black (let us dispense the circumlocution of 'minority group'). The issue is the behavior and, Yes, 'class' of residents of whatever race."  
(Danville residents)

"Race is not an issue to us. Maintenance of property is. Objection to low-income is based on that point. We care about order and upkeep which is usually lacking in low-income areas. If that were not so, we would welcome type A."  
(Danville residents)

It is not my intention here to refute the existing theory that the low-income population group in fact has been excluded from moving into suburbs. Admittedly, the responses of about a quarter of all respondents in my survey suggest that in one way or another the factor of the type of "people" in the design of the Type A proposal, the only one with some prospective residents of low and moderate income classes, negatively affected their perception and attitude in evaluating the three hypothetical proposals. However, one should not jump to the conclusion that the exclusion of low-income people in itself is the ultimate purpose of controlling community growth.

What I am arguing here is that suburbanites' negative perception of people of a lower socio-economic class might be based on the differences in lifestyle between people who are 'renters' and those who are home-

owners.

In fact class conflict might have more to do with the differences between renters and homeowners than those between different racial groups or income groups. As Constance Perin (1977) observes:

"A diversity of class groupings, otherwise marked by differences in income, education, and lifestyle, is reduced to the two status groups of owners and renters.

- (ommission) -

Their differences in tenure may play a more significant and symbolic part in conflict than their actual differences in income, education, and consumption habits."<sup>28</sup>

A former Secretary of Housing and Urban development, Carla A. Hills, in a speech<sup>29</sup> to the American Bar Association, addressed the psychological and cultural aspects of American homeownership:

"Those same family members as rental tenants might still classify as 'good neighbors' but other than social pressure, they have no permanent incentive to be such. It is axiomatic that when neighborhoods turn from 'owner' to 'rental' properties, evidence of neglect begins to show almost immediately. The reverse is also true. A tool to improve the urban neighborhood is to encourage a core of homeowners.

Homeownership provides a sense of identity, of roots and of security, which is the stuff from which neighborhoods are made and which protect against social alienation."

We should realize that these attitudes are not confined to the upper classes but can be found in any segment of society, and that it is necessary to inquire much further into why lower socio-economic groups, a majority of who unfortunately happen to be renters, might be the apparent victims of exclusion from suburban communities.

The complexity of the psychology of growth control is discernible in the

fact that it does not always take the pattern of an "elitist" group attacking or blocking the housing opportunities of "the undesirables" or low-income minorities, as is usually imagined. Despite the image of the excluded housing consumer that the critics often portray, it is not so difficult to find actual cases where the rich and the "haves" are the prospective residents of development projects which have drawn the opposition of the local community. For example, a very controversial project, "Blackhawk", which several Danville residents in my survey criticized as "out-of-character" and "threatening", is a super-luxurious single-family estate development whose prospective residents must be wealthy enough to afford a purchase price ranging between \$250,000 and \$1,000,000. Those who opposed the project and eventually lost are themselves upper-middle to upper-income class groups. Thus rich prospective residents can also be the victims of "exclusionism" if the development project is perceived as a threat to community character. Danville residents explain:

"Massive, exclusive, high cost Blackhawk, located on the slopes of Mt. Diablo, changing Danville from a semi income-diversified area to one with a luxurious enclave attempting to impose its standards + fears."

"It's not that you don't want new people. ----But they get in power, they don't care what happens here. We've been here, we've stuck it out and never gone on. We like it here. Why should we move on for people like that?"

Cases like those illustrated above, illustrating the wide variation in the socio-economic class of "excluded" prospective homebuyers in growth controlled communities are not idiosyncratic. Some other examples are:

Planning director of Petaluma confirmed that single family homes for higher income families were the only type of housing being built in Petaluma during the years of rapid growth preceding its ultimate enactment of growth management policy.<sup>#30</sup> Thus in this case a growth management policy, having decreased supply of higher income homes, resulted in "excluding" prospective homebuyers who are in that category.

In the San Bruno Mountain controversy, the people the new development would have brought in and by whom the existing low-income residents felt threatened were "a large number of well-off people who have no attachment to the close-knit, blue-collar neighbourhood nearby".<sup>#31</sup>

An important nation-wide demographic change which has had a significant impact on the perception of community growth by suburban residents is the shrinking average household size, which is closely related to type of new residents who have moved into the suburbs. This demographic change, analyzed from the results of 1980 U.S. Census, corresponds to similar demographic changes reported by local communities in the Bay Area and California, and corroborates the local governments' findings as follows:

In many Bay Area suburban communities the rate of increase in housing units has been greater than the rate of increase in population. Moreover, there has been an increase in the number of single-person households, and the rate of female homeownership.<sup>#32</sup>

For example, some communities in Marin County such as Larkspur and Sausalito have turned into adult-oriented, single-person oriented communities because the most new homeowners in recent

years have been upper-middle- to upper-income single persons or married couples with no children, rather than traditional family-types.\*<sup>33</sup> These new homeowners tend to live in condominiums and town houses rather than single family homes which require more maintenance.

Demographers analyzing this trend attribute it to the change in life-style of young people who marry later and start families later, and invest in homes while single as protection against inflation. It is also a result of the rising wage-earning abilities of women, and their increasing ability to obtain credit, due to a relaxation of the discrimination practiced by lending institutions.\*<sup>34</sup>

The role of speculators in affecting the type of residents of new residential projects, especially in California, is also known to be considerable. An article appearing in the Wall Street Journal in 1977 commented on this phenomenon:

Speculators also constitute a significant portion of housing consumers in California and in the Bay Area where appreciation of real estate properties is very high because of the general desirability of these places for living. These speculators' share of housing market is reported by one study to be as high as 40% of all home sales.\*<sup>35</sup>

Critics of growth control tend to portray the excluded housing consumers as young, middle-income families. But how many of the likely homebuyers would fit this image, if the market were allowed to operate freely, without growth control?

In their analysis of the community development issue, critics of growth

control often distort their portrayals not only of the prospective new residents, but also of the suburban residents who oppose new homebuilding. These latter they characterise as established, wealthy homeowners. Moreover, as many examples indicate and as even the developers themselves admit, the most active opponents of new growth are often those who have most recently bought homes in the community.

What we should realize here is that it is misleading to identify housing consumers with static social groups such as ethnic minorities or very-low-income groups. Once individuals change their status from future housing consumers to present homeowners, they can and are likely to change their point of view on the growth control controversy. Hence the story does not seem to be as simple as many critics have implied - young families in need of housing blocked from entering the suburbs by the fortunate, affluent residents who selfishly exclude them in order to protect the status quo.

In this section, I have tried to identify why change in community population characteristics resulting from an influx of new residents is an important concern to the present residents of the suburbs, and how such change might affect their attitudes toward community growth. It should be noted, however, that this is by no means a justification for the exclusion of those new resident types considered undesirable by the present residents, whether or not they fit the image of the excluded housing consumer portrayed by the critics of growth control. Needless to say, these people constitute a significant group of citizens and are also entitled to locate in suburbs with desirable environments.

**Type of Land Attacked:**

Loss or decrease of open space/natural landscape elements was the second most frequently mentioned type of environmental change in my survey:

"Existing neighborhoods are deteriorating and new development continues to encroach on the natural environment creating more high-cost dwellings. Where can low-income people live?"  
(Corte Madera resident)

"Development similar to type B here is the form for most new development in the county. This development is eating into open space by covering hillsides and hilltops."  
(Corte Madera resident)

"The city is developing areas that provide a natural green belt and deprive residents of a sense of natural surroundings. We moved here for the natural green, country atmosphere, I'd like to keep it that way."  
(Belmont resident)

Since nearly fifty percent of all the developable land in the Bay Area had been consumed by 1975, the availability of easy-to-develop flat land has become very slight. Added to the pace of consumption of developable land is the rather unsophisticated zoning practice which until the early 1960's zoned many communities' hillside areas at the same level of intensity as flatlands.\*<sup>37</sup>

The encroachment of new developments on the hills and other environmentally sensitive areas is another example of a different type of change, which possibly resulted from the lack of easy-to-develop flat land and also, ironically, from home buyers' newly awakened "willingness to pay" for views and other environmental amenities - that is, the market demand for homes in such settings.

A vicious circle comes into being in the following circumstances. Most

undeveloped land in suburbs tends to be located on hillsides and hilltops. Although it costs developers more to build on such sites, it pays off because of the strong demand for homes in such locations. Building on hillsides and hilltops has two undesirable consequences. First, some construction has proved to be disastrous due to negligence on the part of developers to the ecological and geological sensitivity of such sites. Second, many projects, especially those of higher density, offend residents because they adversely affect the community character, of which hills and hilltops are considered to be important elements. Even when developers succeed in building on such sites the new residents, who were willing to pay for the amenity of their hillside location, are known to be the ones who most vehemently oppose the idea of further development, which would crowd their hills and mountains with more houses.

The discussion in this section and in the previous section on change in type of residents suggests two fundamental factors underlying the attitudes of residents toward development proposals. One is that citizens' perception of the impact of new development on the available land will be increasingly negative as natural open space - and particularly undeveloped hillside - decreases. The other more general observation is that this resident attitude towards local growth control might be more widely shared among people of different social classes than has been supposed, going beyond the general classification of homeowners, to prospective homeowners and renters. This latter observation takes us beyond the scope of this thesis however, and will not be further pursued here.

### 3) Urbanization as the Most Feared Consequence of Community Growth

Analyzing the residents' fear of change induced by growth led me to ultimately identify what really threatens most suburban residents: urbanization of their communities and destruction of their small town/rural lifestyle.

What in fact does urbanization mean to suburban residents? What aspects of growth do they consider threatening to the community character they value? This question (Q5; see Appendix E-1) was asked to identify those things which residents consider "out-of-character." The types of residential development considered "out-of-character" by many respondents were condominiums and apartments.

Why do people dislike apartments and condominiums? On page 128 above, I cited one interviewee's explanation of why she does not want condominiums in her community. One of the Belmont respondents wrote about apartments:

"We have areas with large apartments. Almost all burglaries + fights (take place) in these areas. High density apartment people never stay long. They do not get involved in community projects."  
(Belmont resident)

Although many of my respondents cited aesthetic and density characteristics (i.e. poor design and construction or higher density) as the determining factors for out-of-character developments, such physical factors are usually confounded with social factors, such as the type of residents or crime. The image associated with residential types such as condominiums and apartments considerably affects residents' assessment of community character compatibility, and consequently the eventual

acceptability of development projects which include them.

This seems to explain why people feel that a Type A development, a medium density multi-family housing project with moderate- and lower-income residents, would have an adverse effect on community character. Statistical analysis<sup>38</sup> was applied to see if there were any significant correlations between residents' evaluations of each type of development (A,B, and C), and their potential effect on the four major factors of "Land" (impact on natural landscape), "Density", "Housing Type", and "People"(type of people). (See Chapter IV for more explanation of the questionnaire). Residents' evaluations of how a Type A development might affect community character are found to have a significant correlation with whether or not they base their judgements on the factor of "people", the type of prospective residents designated (Table 5.12a). This means that those who felt that a Type A development would positively affect community character attribute this effect to the factor of "people" designated in the proposal.

In addition, the density factor of Type A, medium density by objective definition but high density in terms of suburbanites' perceived standards, was found to moderately<sup>39</sup> affect their evaluation of Type A's effect on community character (Table 5.12b). The density factor also seems to affect residents' evaluations of Type B, which has the highest density of the three models, and how it might affect community character. That is Type B's density factor appeared to negatively affect respondents' evaluations of Type B in terms of its effect on community character (Table 5.12c).

Hence, the analysis of the widely varying patterns of response suggests that each development type evokes different concerns for the suburbanites. The "Land" factor in a Type C development seems to concern the respondents most, while the "Density" factor is important in evaluating Type B, and both the "Density" and "People" factors are important in evaluating a Type A development (Table 5.13). The fact that Type A seems to raise concern about two major factors - "Density" and "People" - compared with one factor for the other development types, and also that these two factors are often identified with "urban problems", might partially explain why the majority of respondents ranked Type A as the least acceptable type. Of the three types, Type A is perhaps most likely to be perceived as reflective of the urban environment from which many of the present residents of suburbs have fled - whether they have actually or psychologically fled. This suggests that the things people want to control the most are the attributes of a typical urban environment.

Environmental change which was previously experienced but in another community, or which was learned of from other sources, also affects people's perception of threats to the character of their community. In the follow-up interviews, several residents mentioned that the experience of other cities had convinced them to be defensive and protective of their own community environment. In some cases the interviewees said that they had actually experienced or "witnessed" what growth had done to the quality of the environment in their previous residences, while in other cases interviewees did not have personal experience, but claimed that they "knew", which in most cases means they learned about the

Table 5.13

**Factors for Acceptability of Development Types A, B, and C.**

Q.2: Which do you think is (are) the most important factor(s) to take into account in deciding whether to accept or reject this type of development?

Factors<sup>1</sup> that affect residents' decision-making

Development Types	Land		Density		Housing types		People		Other <sup>2</sup>	
	No.	% <sup>3</sup>	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A	44	22.4	86	43.9	65	33.2	83	42.3	23	11.7
B	52	26.5	98	50.0	63	32.1	32	16.3	15	7.6
C	105	53.6 <sup>3</sup>	40	20.4	43	21.9	34	17.3	12	6.1

(1) These four factors are predetermined and graphically presented in the questionnaire.

(2) Free description of other factors not covered by the four factors provided.

(3) Indicates percentage of the total number of respondents (196).

problems of urbanization through the media.

Some respondents, who had previously lived in suburban areas of such cities as San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago and New York, before moving to their present communities, had actually observed in these areas that growth or urbanization brought higher crime rates, lower maintenance of both private and public spaces, increased tension among different (economically heterogeneous) types of residents, deteriorating school quality, increased traffic congestion, and decreased public service quality. Even for those without actual experience living in such urban areas, the words "Los Angelize" or "Sausalitolize" are often used to express their hatred of the urban problems which many large American cities seem to possess. Even the state of California itself is not exempt from such labelling by motorists from neighboring states whose bumper stickers read, "Don't Californicate Our State."<sup>40</sup>

Whether or not the information on which perception of citizens is based is accurate is not the issue here. After all, how many lay persons or non-planners would believe statistics over their actual experience or the testimony of friends and acquaintances?

#### Anti-Urbanism

It follows from the above analysis, that people negatively evaluate those environmental changes which they believe pose a considerable threat to the maintenance of lifestyles of the non-urban context, and that in order to forestall such environmental changes they resort to protective behaviour against community growth. The results of the survey show that there are statistically significant correlations between residents' felt

need for growth control and the desire to achieve the following: to control the increase of population; to minimize the impact on natural landscapes; to minimize traffic congestion; and to maintain community character, exemplified by 'rural/small town atmosphere' and open space/-natural landscapes (Table 5.14 a,b,c, 5.15 a,b).

In reference to the question of the main criteria for evaluating a development proposal, the most important concerns for suburbanites seem to have one factor in common. Except for 'quality of buildings' and to some extent, 'maintenance of the image of the present community', which may be equally attainable either in an urban or non-urban setting, all other attributes of major concern to suburbanites are specific to the non-urban context.

The term "small town/rural atmosphere (or character)" connotes two main attributes: the attractions, or positive features of a small town/rural environment, and the absence the negative, urban problems. Urban problems often cited as the negative aspects from which suburbanites have "fled" or which they would like to avoid are crime, traffic congestion, high density and general crowding, pollution, ugliness, and antagonism and alienation among residents. The presence of abundant open space/natural landscape, the absence of traffic congestion, low density, family-oriented residential as the predominant use of land, and, most explicitly, the "small town or rural atmosphere" --- all together form a strong statement of anti-urbanism. My respondents have clearly articulated this sentiment:

Table 5.14

(a) Association of Variables: Felt Need for Growth Control vs. Open Space or Natural Environmental Quality as Important Criterion.

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

Importance of criterion: open space / natural environmental quality <sup>4</sup>	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
not important	7	53.8	2	15.4	4	30.8	13	100.0
somewhat important	16	45.7	9	25.7	10	28.6	35	100.0
very important	21	15.2	32	23.2	85	63.0	138	100.0
Total:	44	23.6	43	23.1	99	53.2	186	100.0

Chi square = 23.84

Degrees of freedom = 4

Significance level = 0.001

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."
- (4) "Alteration of the natural elements (eg open space, trees, wildlife, etc) of the community should be minimized."

Table 5.14 (continued)

(b) Association of Variables: Felt Need for Growth Control vs. Traffic Factor as an Important Criterion.

Q11: See table 5.14 (a) above.

Importance of Criterion: Minimizing traffic increase <sup>4</sup>	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
not important	10	5.3	2	11.8	5	29.4	17	100.0
somewhat important	16	20.3	27	34.2	36	45.6	79	100.0
very important	18	20.0	14	15.4	59	64.8	91	100.0
Total:	44	23.5	43	23.0	100	53.5	187	100.0

Chi square = 22.38

Degrees of freedom = 4

Significance level = 0.001

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."
- (4) "A new development should not generate an excessive increase in traffic on local streets."

Table 5.14 (continued)

(c) Association of Variables: Felt Need for Growth Control vs. Traffic Factor as Objectionable Impact of High Density Development.

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

Objectionable impact of high density development: excessive traffic <sup>4</sup>	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
no response <sup>5</sup>	13	29.5	16	36.4	15	34.1	44	100.0
affirmative response	31	21.5	26	18.1	87	60.4	144	100.0
Total:	44	23.4	42	22.3	102	54.3	188	100.0

Chi square = 10.29  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.001

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."
- (4) "High density development generates excessive traffic on local roads."
- (5) Since this is a multiple choice question (Q12), respondents check only those factors which represent their feelings.

Table 5.15

(a) Association of Variables: Felt Need for Growth Control vs. Open Space / Natural Landscape as Important Community Character.

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

Q.4: Are there characteristics of your community that you feel should be protected? <sup>4</sup>	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Open space / natural landscape elements	7	9.9	12	16.9	52	73.2	71	100.0
All other responses	38	31.9	31	26.1	50	42.0	119	100.0
Total:	45	23.7	43	22.6	102	53.7	190	100.0

Chi square = 18.87  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Significance level = 0.001

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."
- (4) This is an open ended question for free descriptive response. For the full text of this question No. 4 see Appendix.

(b) Association of Variables: Felt Need for Growth Control vs.  
Small Town / Rural Atmosphere as Important Community Characteristic.

Q11: What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

Q.4: Are there characteristics of your community that you feel should be protected? <sup>4</sup>	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Small town / rural landscape	3	9.0	3	9.0	27	81.8	33	100.0
All other responses	42	26.8	40	25.5	75	47.8	157	100.0
Total:	45	23.7	43	22.6	102	53.7	190	100.0

Chi square = 12.71  
Degrees of freedom = 2  
Significance level = 0.001

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."
- (4) This is an open ended question for free descriptive response. For the full text of this question No. 4 see Appendix.

"Apartments and high-density [developments] connote 'city' that's what I don't like about. I don't like it [my community] turn into 'urban core area'." (Danville resident)

"We moved here 11 years ago when we had no shopping centers, no street lights. It was why we moved here. Now, this is gone, confusion exists, high crime, streets congested, overly commercial. The city has changed 180 degrees." (Danville resident)

The findings of other researchers corroborate the results of my survey, and suggest that this anti-urbanization sentiment is shared by people of various socio-economic classes.

A survey of 900 respondents in Houston, Dayton, and Rochester which examined how Americans choose the location of their homes found that "tomorrow's neighborhood choice of (our) 900 residents is 'not in the city'" (Coleman 1978).<sup>41</sup> The responses were analyzed according to the respondents' socio-economic classes.

Fifty one percent of the "white lower class" and forty nine percent of the "white working class" replied that the ideal environment for their homes was "away from the city", while only fifteen percent of "upper-middle and upper class white" gave similar responses. To be away from the city means, to these respondents, getting away from decrepit structures, smaller lots, "creeping blight", spreading commerce, spiraling crime rates, and racially changing neighborhoods, all of which are considered great threats to "safety" and "comfort" - both physically and socially.

The researchers suggest that the working class members who have realized their dream of having a home "out in the country" worry because "the cities are encroaching on us" - meaning that a developer has started building houses a half mile or so away.

Some of the present suburban residents may have lived in their present communities for a long time; some may have been farmers; some may have moved there following jobs; still others have fled from metropolitan environments and their urban problems. Regardless of the socio-economic group to which they belong, however, they share a common ideal of how they would like their community to be.

#### V-4: Perceived Costs of Unplanned Growth vs. Growth Control

##### Perceived Costs of Controlled Growth

The cost to the community of having growth control, as opposed to the cost of uncontrolled growth, is not apparent to most residents aside from those with major real estate/development interests.

The most serious cost of controlled growth, which slows down the pace of growth as well as restricting the location and type of growth, is its significant reduction of housing availability in each local community, and ultimately in the whole Bay Area region. As we have seen in the previous chapter, critics of growth control blame it for regional social inequity. However this consequence has not been felt by present residents. Many present residents are aware of rising housing costs but only a few of them seem to connect it with growth control practices. Therefore, this cost, however serious from the perspective of regional public interest, has been hidden.

Nevertheless, there is an indication that present residents might soon be forced to realize growth control's impact on housing prices and the availability of affordable housing. There are some residents, capable of foreseeing the future cost to members of their own families, who

express concern. As one of the higher-than-median-income Corte Madera respondents puts it;

"We could not afford today to buy the home we bought years ago, and fear my two teen aged sons will not be able to afford to live in Marin unless they amass quite a fortune."

Aside from the conflict of interest between local communities and the region with regard to housing, there is another factor that interferes with present residents' perception of the cost of growth control policies. This is their perception of the benefits of uncontrolled growth in comparison with the benefits which growth control is believed to yield.

The majority of respondents in the three case communities are commuters working outside their own communities, which can thus be categorized as 'bedroom communities'. This means that even industrial/commercial development which relieves the tax burden on homeowners may not necessarily be regarded as beneficial to a community which has attained a certain level of development; residential development, which present residents must pay to accomodate, will of course be even less welcome.

It is not easy for many suburbanites to identify any significant merit in residential growth in their communities. A small number of my respondents cited improvements on roads, greater convenience of shopping facilities and a more diverse population as positive changes that can be attributed to growth.

Who benefits from residential growth? About a quarter (24.5%) of my respondents had some kind of job connection with building industries, real estate, or local (merchandise) business interests, but statistical

analysis did not yield any significant correlation between a respondent's job connection and his/her felt need for growth control (see Table 5.16).

In Santa Barbara, an organization of downtown developers contributed some \$12,000 to the "anti-water" (anti-growth) forces because they liked the city as it was and feared suburban expansion would compete with downtown businesses.\*<sup>42</sup>

#### Compromise on Personal Freedom

Although 23 % of the total respondents felt that they had more than enough environmental regulations, only a few expressed strong opposition to any type of land use regulations on private property.\*<sup>43</sup> Still, some people are aware of the disadvantages of 'over-regulation' resulting from growth control or strict development control in their communities. For example, in some communities, the maximum number of automobile vehicles allowed to be parked on one's own driveway, the minimum off-street parking space available on one's property (regardless of the number of cars owned), the types of automobile allowed to be parked on one's driveway, the colors of paint or materials for the exterior walls of houses, or the kinds of trees and plants that may be planted in front yards are strictly regulated. In the case of large subdivision developments, the method of a private covenant is often used to add even stricter, more detailed regulations concerning the design of mail boxes, garage doors, trash receptacles.

Just because the majority of suburbanites favour controlled growth does not mean that they completely agree on the content of the regulations.

Table 5.16

**Association of Variables: Felt Need for Growth Control vs.  
Job Connection to Growth-Related Industries.**

Q11(Part I): What level of control do you think the community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities?

Q11(Part II): Is your job related to building industry, real estate, or local retailing?	Degrees of felt need for growth control							
	weak <sup>1</sup>		medium <sup>2</sup>		strong <sup>3</sup>		total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Yes	10	20.4	13	26.5	26	53.1	49	100.0
No	33	26.8	24	19.5	66	53.7	123	100.0
Total:	43	25.0	37	21.6	92	53.5	172	100.0

Chi square = 1.38

Degrees of freedom = 2

Significance level: the null hypothesis cannot be rejected at any reasonable level.

- (1) "We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns."
- (2) "Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing the 'right' city councillors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need 'growth control' measures."
- (3) "The community needs 'growth control' measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development."

One of the interviewees lamented that he could not even put a basketball net out for his children because his property was located at the corner of the street and was visible from all sides.

This sort of regulation is not limited to the control of physical objects in the residential environment but is often extended to restrict human behaviour. A man jogging with his bare chest in view, a two year-old toddler in the nude playing at the beach, or even a mother nursing her baby in her parked car can be a sensational affair and possibly lead to arrest in some communities.\*<sup>44</sup>

The irony is that by restricting others from moving in, growth control systems restrict the behaviour of those who are already in the community. And for some people 'over-regulation' is as threatening to their sense of freedom as unplanned growth is to their sense of security. To them the cost of growth control might be less freedom to manage their own living environment and lifestyle. Yet those who feel this way about growth control are either not a majority in most of the present suburban communities, or perhaps they are not organized enough to let their voices to be heard.

#### Perceived Costs of Unplanned growth

What are the costs of unplanned growth as perceived by suburban residents? There are two forms of costs that might affect residents' perceptions. One is a direct cost, most directly reflected in property tax and/or reduced public services because of a municipal budget squeeze resulting from unplanned growth. Another is an indirect cost which threatens the long term maintenance of their lifestyle.

The direct cost of unplanned growth in fiscal terms has been quantified with the use of computerised models which evaluate the cost of the service and utility infrastructure for each municipality. As discussed in Chapter III, this fiscal impact of growth has become a popular justification for controlling growth by local governments and planners, especially since the passage of Proposition 13.

The results of the survey of the Bay Area local government planners I conducted indicate that concern about the impact of growth on either public services or property values/taxes or both was identified by 43% of the respondents as important motivation for controlling local growth. Environmental activists and representatives of other interest groups who frequent public hearings came to recognize this issue as a useful argument against uncontrolled growth. However, for the majority of residents, the fiscal impact of growth still seems to be a "myth" or a matter of secondary importance in comparison with other issues connected with community growth.

My suspicion, which was evoked during the preliminary interviews and later confirmed by the results of the survey, was that most lay citizens do not know how the public service system works technically or fiscally, unless their interest in these matters has been spurred by a significant decline in the level of public services in their own area.

In the questionnaire distributed to 750 residents in the three case communities, several opportunities were provided to determine whether this factor - the increase in municipal service costs due to development

- was important to the residents.\*<sup>45</sup> The result was, as I anticipated, very few respondents made reference to this factor.

Only 12.8% of respondents mentioned either public services, property values or taxes as a matter of concern; a mere 3 % of the total respondents expressed concern over property values only. Furthermore, follow-up interviews revealed that even those who referred to the above issues sometimes did not know how public services, such as sewer systems or storm drain systems, work, let alone their cost to their communities.

Both surveys were undertaken in California a few years after the passage of Proposition 13 which limited property tax to one percent of the present market values, and which is considered to have exacerbated the fiscal impact of growth on cities and counties throughout the state. Proposition 13 in fact had a significant effect on the interpretation by students of public policy of citizen motivation for growth control. The surge of communities adopting growth control systems after mid-1978 - when Proposition 13 passed - fuelled previous speculation that citizens were motivated by fiscal concerns, seemingly confirming the "Stingy Suburbs" theory.

Confusion has arisen, I believe, from a failure to distinguish between the perceptions, and thus motivating concerns, of two distinct groups: local decision-makers/planners, and lay residents. While the impact of Proposition 13 obviously encouraged the local decision-makers and planners to control growth, it did not, as my survey results above indicated, significantly change the basic perceptions of the lay residents or their reasons for controlling growth.

Of course, as overwhelming voter support for Proposition 13 showed, the

residents of California communities do not wish to pay more taxes in order to support regional growth, although they may expect existing levels of public services to be maintained or even improved. Nevertheless it seems reasonable to assume that for most residents maintenance of the present quality of public services, and avoidance of sharp rises in tax rates are necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for the well-being of the community. There are perhaps some other factors more important than fiscal concerns, which motivate them to seek growth control.

Another cost of unplanned growth appears in a more indirect form but is nevertheless clearly perceived by suburban residents. This is the threat to the long-term maintenance of their lifestyles, and particularly the aspects of life associated with the small town/rural lifestyle.

#### The Small Town/Rural Environment as a Relic

Perceiving the threat of urbanization, suburban residents have begun to realize that continued rapid growth might eventually cost them what they value most about their community - the small town/rural lifestyle. The increasing inconvenience of further flight into areas that are still unurbanized is perceived as the cause of rapid growth, which residents see often resulting from so-called urban sprawl. In spite of the past tendency of these "urban refugee groups" to "pack up and leave", as seen in the restless history of the American West, the recent inflationary housing market and higher costs of energy resources destroy any incentives for present suburbanites to move again.

Some "pro-growthers" and growth control critics suspect that wealthy homeowners in prime suburban locations use growth control as a means to artificially ensure the appreciation of the property value of their home. This is an erroneous and very unrealistic view of the Bay Area suburbanites in general, regardless of their socio-economic status. While it is possible for a resident of a desirable suburb in the Bay Area to sell his home for a high market price (whether because of growth control or not) and make an immediate profit if he relocates to a less desirable suburb in another state, he will then be forced to compromise in terms of higher heating costs, higher taxes, fewer environmental amenities, and perhaps more urban problems.

In the case of intra-region or intra-state migration to other less controlled communities, the reality is that even if a wealthy single-family homeowner could sell his/her house at a high price, s/he would not gain much by the time s/he buys a new house in the current inflationary market; and to make matters worse, s/he would have to pay much more for transportation and other public services needed to assure a quality of environment equivalent to that they have left. Some people interviewed feared that the pressure from "outsiders" to move into their community was forcing local residents out from the area who would otherwise like to stay.

The interpretation I am suggesting here, which is based on the results of my survey, has also been advanced by other researchers on the residents of other American suburbs.

Samuel Kaplan in his book The Dream Deferred<sup>46</sup> also observes that few suburbanites are tempted to move unless they are forced to, not only because they will less likely to benefit from the sales transaction of their houses but also they recognize that they could not even afford to buy them back. The environment which they are so eager to protect is, in his words, "becoming more and more of a relic".

Indeed, not many people will be convinced that they will be able to settle in a more permanent refuge from urbanization if they are unable to fend off the threat of uncontrolled growth in their present locales. They may well fear that there will be no guarantee of effective protection in the new location and they will, forever wander through fields like the daughter of Minerva in an endless search for her lost sight.

To the majority of present suburban residents, the cost of unplanned growth outweighs cost of growth control, and the merits of unplanned growth are far less than the merits of retaining a sense of security and control of their environment.

#### V-5: Distrust of the Government and Recognition of Citizen Power

Although self-defense may be the main motive for the suburban residents of the Bay Area in general, it is certainly not the only one reason. Another motive is the desire to gain control over the fate of the community environment rather than leaving this responsibility to the established government.

Distrust of government officials, who in their past dealings with deve-

lopers and business interests have ignored the interests of the people, has encouraged citizens to take power away from such officials and into their own hands. Citizens, who once helplessly watched special interest groups destroy the quality of their community's environment by manipulating local politics, have begun to realize that they can speak up and even legitimately assume control. Many people have had enough of wheeling and dealing between officials and developers, and are demanding a change:

"I was born in Marin - and I am heartsick at the rape of the county by cavalier and greedy development. I want more control!"  
(Corte Madera Resident)

Both a lack of trust in the government and a desire for greater citizen control were expressed by the respondents to my survey. Despite the fact that no question asked or mentioned anything about their governments, quite a few respondents (24 out of 196) raised these issues in the general comment section or other blank spaces in the questionnaire sheets. The distribution of such complaints is almost equal among the three case communities.

However it is not surprising to find that in Danville, the unincorporated community experiencing rapid growth, more residents expressed both a desire to control growth and frustration at their failure to do so.

One Danville resident states;

"The inability of the area to incorporate and so control (directly) its own destiny has led to serious deterioration. The unincorporated situation and lack of substantial voice in the important area issues are primary causes. Developers fight incorporation and thrive under "county supervision" type government."

Electing the "right" city councilmen who will represent the interests of homeowners is one way to gain more control, if not a novel tactic, but for some it is not reliable enough to guarantee a satisfactory outcome. When the majority of those presently on council are not sympathetic to their needs, they know what steps to take. As one of the Belmont respondents puts it;

"In the past we had some ugly big apartments in the wrong places. Our new controlled growth ordinance should help. Our city council however is 3 - 2 pro-growth so our grassroots movement to control growth is the only answer. We got this on [the] ballot."

Another measure of citizen control, considered more effective than simply "trusting" locally elected officials to handle land use affairs correctly, is legislative regulation. Many growth control measures have been enacted through the referendum, a popular election process, not by elected officials. Although there are some people who abhor "any form of government control" over the disposal of private property, the fact that so many Bay Area and California communities have supported growth control measures suggests a general consensus represented by the following statement by a resident of Corte Madera:

"Growth control is not the same as no-growth. Settling on long term standards and regulations is more effective than leaving it up to short-term elected officials who are too easily influenced by special interest groups."

Other studies also suggest that one of the main motives for local growth control is citizens' distrust of the government's ability to protect their interests.

A report from the California Governor's Office for example, acknowledged that this popular process - referendum - itself was the signal for "distrust of established government by removing powers traditionally lodged there."<sup>47</sup>

In a survey<sup>48</sup> conducted by the Bay Area utility company, the defeat of an anti-growth control measure ("Measure A") in Stockton was also attributed to citizen's distrust of government. The analysis of "The Rise and Fall of Measure A" states:

"Many reasons have been suggested for the defeat of Measure A. The most probable, and the one most commonly heard in our interviews, was that the public reacted against the developers/city council's maneuvers to sustain northern development. Overtones of Watergate. A backlash."<sup>49</sup>

A desire for greater citizen involvement in local land use decision-making is also identified by Train (1973) as an important motive in suburbanites' desire for local growth control. He sees the movement as the public's natural reaction to the government's failure to provide a rational planning process accessible to the citizens of local communities:

"Public opposition to such development is sometimes described as emotional and unreasoning. We have seldom presented the public with any rational process for participating in the choices involved. As in the cases of uncontrolled, 'willy-nilly' community growth, these kinds of development have just happened and the public has been confronted with decisions that have already been made. If we are to avoid emotional responses, I think it necessary we develop institutions and processes that provide truly effective means for public participation and choice."

The demand for much more citizen control, Finkler and his co-authors (1976) contend, seems to be the main motive of citizens in the communities which have adopted growth control. They conclude that citizens want the right to be involved in the processes that determine the destiny of their living environ-

ment, and seem willing to live with lower economic returns to make some social equity contributions to retain this right.

Although frustration and distrust of the government is not new to residents regardless of their tenure of residency, and not reason enough in itself for them to wage a political war, the "Saving of San Francisco Bay" through citizen action which led to the enactment of a series of environmental protection measures certainly awakened their sense of control. It reaffirmed the power of ordinary citizens working together to exert control over the forces shaping their environment. The most significant legacy of the success of the San Francisco Bay conservation movement is this realization of the power of the citizen.

It is also important to recognize that those citizens participating in local land-use decision-making or supporting the enactment of laws to control Bay development activities represent not necessarily only the elites in exclusive high-income neighbourhoods, but a mixture of various socio-economic groups.

In fact even without such legislation as growth control measures, elitist citizens have long been able to exclude others when they wanted to. Zoning, which in this country is founded on the principle of protection and preservation of property values<sup>50</sup>, could serve this purpose, especially when supported by the selective policy of federal financial institutions in providing home mortgage insurance, and by private sector, real estate brokers in particular, which encouraged white suburbanites in their desires to exclude undesirable developments.<sup>51</sup> The very rich did not need growth control to protect their interests, whether it was property values or environmental qualities or

simply the status quo.

The practice of limiting growth through grass-roots political movements has become widespread as means of control which is available to a wide range of the non-elite socio-economic groups.

The newly awakened middle-class suburbanites, without enough political clout or economic power to "price out" undesirable types of development, found zoning insufficient to secure the kind of lifestyle and quality of environment they sought to maintain. Before the introduction of growth management/control legislation, which is a sort of package of varying development and land-use controls, some individual communities had resorted to such measures as design review boards and residential development standards to evaluate and regulate proposed development projects. For growth management/control policies to become so widespread and effective, a successful model was necessary. It was found in the precedent-establishing case of the Petaluma growth control policy. Belmont's growth control ordinance for example, is based on that of Petaluma, and many other communities which either have adopted or are considering the adoption of growth control legislation refer to the Petaluma model.

However, the significance of the effect that the Petaluma growth management plan has had on legislation in other suburban communities is not the design and details of the plan itself, but simply the strong message it sent to the rest of the country - that citizens can gain some control over the fate of their community's environment and thus over the quality of their living environment and lifestyles.

So what are people saying? Their message, which I would call "The Logic of Self-Defense", can be summarized in the statement below.

- The Logic of Self-Defense -

Regardless of whether we have actually fled from urban areas or have come from a rural background, we chose to live here because we like the lifestyle of the rural/small town environment. By this we mean a quiet, peaceful, slow-paced life which provides a closeness to nature, and above all a sense of being away from the urban problems which deprive us of our security and threaten our well-being.

We consider these qualities in our daily environment to be very important and to deserve our protection. The small town lifestyle increasingly seems to be a relic of a previous era and we are afraid that once we yield to the pressure of growth and move away, we may not be able to find an equivalent place to live which is affordable. Besides, why should we have to move for everyone who wants to move in? Or worse, for speculators who only want to make more money or for wealthy singles who don't care about family-oriented community affairs? We would rather defend what we've got here now.

Unplanned growth threatens us because it leads to the urbanization of our community. We see the signs of urbanization in changes in the environmental quality of our community and neighbouring communities, in places where we have lived before and in places we have heard about.

How can we maintain the character of our community which nurtures the small town/rural lifestyle that brought us here in the first place?

Trusting local government or electing sympathetic councilmen is one way, but it is not enough as they are prone to succumb to special interest groups which can exert great political pressure.

Legislation, such as growth control measures, seems to be more reliable, and with that we have more of a sense of control over the destiny of our community's environment.

Moreover, it seems that for us, the costs of not having growth control, of unplanned growth, are much more significant than the potential costs of growth control measures.

So why not strive for them?

## Conclusion

### Policy Implications:

What do the findings from my research above mean in terms of public policy design and implementation? How can public policy incorporate the concept of lifestyle protection in local land use decision-making?

It is true that residents feel the need for better control of community environmental change than existing zoning and development regulations can provide. But does that mean they want more and stricter regulation? Will more and stricter regulation achieve the goals they have set for it? My research suggests that may not.

Although some residents may realize that a proliferation of restrictive regulation does not necessarily achieve the better control, the absence of a coherent mechanism for policy design and implementation that is responsive to residents' need to safeguard the character of their comm

unity can easily lead to a reliance on more and stricter regulations. This coherent mechanism should be able to provide assurance that what the majority of residents greatly value, in this case a community character or lifestyle of their choice, will be protected from sudden and drastic change. This might also mean that predictability (to a lay person this might also mean intelligibility or consistency) in local land use decision-making should be assured. The local land use decision-making mechanism should perhaps incorporate the concept of protecting and enhancing some important, although intangible, qualities of the community environment. This would imply an explicit effort to limit traffic congestion and noise, to preserve landscapes which create a "natural" as opposed to an "urban" image, and preservation of key landmarks (for example, a ridgetop or waterfront) of a community, to maintain space which is publicly visible, and much more. Providing a framework which will allow tolerance of different lifestyles within a community may be another goal of this mechanism. Perhaps this prescribes the recognition, by planners and local decision-makers, of residents' desire for a certain homogeneity in lifestyle, which should be distinguished from homogeneity for the sake of protection of the status quo.

It is a challenge for a conventional public policy design and implementation system to determine and sort out the crucial elements of the environment which constitute the preferred lifestyle of its inhabitants from others that rather serve socially negative purposes. Although an understanding of citizen perception is undeniably important, this should not be interpreted as letting them abuse the public policy and control

on environmental change. However politically sophisticated today's suburban residents might be, they still of course need professional guidance in determining how to achieve their goals for their community while respecting the rights of other citizens.

It is clear that many communities in the Bay Area suburbs and in other parts of California intend to adopt some form of screening of future development. The question then is what kind of "screen(s)" - a metaphor for the mechanism of policy design and implementation discussed above - might be used. Since there may be no single screen that works perfectly over time, each community has to design its own and periodically revise it. Thus monitoring must also be an important element of this coherent mechanism. More citizen involvement also necessitates more efforts spent on educating them how to better control their own community environment. More detailed discussion on each strategy will be found in the next chapter.

#### **Notes for Future Researchers:**

Despite the fact there is a need for more empirical research on citizen perceptions of and attitudes towards community environmental change, few researchers have attempted dealing with this topic in depth, and there is thus a general lack of relevant literature. Much of the empirical research that does exist in this field tends to be rather superficial. This I believe is a result of the technical difficulties inherent in a survey which deals with such subtle matters as perceptions and attitudes, and of course from the difficulty of obtaining funds to support intensive field surveys of a large scale.

However this does not mean that the design of the research cannot be improved. The research I have undertaken might be improved in the following ways:

1. At least one suburban community with a large ethnic minority population should be studied, even though such a community is rather atypical in the region. If there should be any significant difference in response patterns between this and those other case communities that are "typical" suburbs comparative analysis might yield a richer interpretation of citizen motivation.

2. Design of the questionnaire can be made much easier for the layperson to answer. One dilemma I faced in designing the questionnaire was that the easier and shorter each question is, the more I must ask in order to get the information needed for the investigation of such a complex psychological issue as motivation. With the length of the questionnaire limited in order to increase the rate of return, and with the complexity of the subject I was investigating, each question was unduly loaded and unrealistically sought to extract very rich responses.

One possible alternative might be to simplify the section of gaming questions in the mail survey, and expand its content to include a greater variety of "development models" to be used in the interviews. Since in an interview one can explain orally to each respondent the rules s/he must follow, the incidence of misunderstanding should be minimized. Moreover, adding more development models would enrich the subsequent analysis. One type of development I might have included is that of a

low-density single-family development for lower- and moderate-income people. Or still better, each model might be designed to emphasize one particular factor. For example, the models might include a mixed income project with intensive screening of residents guaranteed; very expensive and attractive condominium buildings on a very visible hillside in the community; a fairly high-density low-rise cluster housing project that is well screened from direct public view and whose ingress and egress points are designed to minimize the traffic impact on the surrounding streets; and so on.

One of the weakness in the design of my gaming questionnaire was that by trying to make my models as realistic as possible, I compromised on the investigative capabilities of the questionnaire design.

In the section on the background of the respondent in Part II of the questionnaire, questions concerning educational background and affiliation with any environmental groups might be included. Multiple-choice answers for ethnic background should provide a greater variety of choices. Furthermore, instead of "black" and "white", the terms "Afro-American" and "Caucasian" should be used.

The question of childhood environmental background, which yielded disappointingly ambiguous results, might be replaced by a simpler question concerning place of previous residence.

3. Finally if sufficient funds are available, interviewee selection should be done randomly and independently of the mail survey, and trained interviewers should be employed for the task. The planner survey could be repeated three times as was done for the main survey, in order

to raise the rate of responses, and case investigations might be done of one or two of the reported cases where lower- or moderate-income neighbourhoods have opposed new residential development.

Above all I wish I had known more about the possible outcome of the surveys beforehand so that I could have better designed them. That would certainly have helped me to structure the survey in such a way as to minimize simple mistakes and avoid the collection of irrelevant data. Still I am not quite sure that too much emphasis on anticipating the outcome and structuring the responses would not undermine our purpose and limit our understanding of the complex and rich perceptions of citizens.

In the final chapter, I will discuss, in more detail, the implications of my research, both conceptual and practical, and suggest positive steps toward resolving the dilemma of how to reconcile the desire of citizens for controlled growth with the social goal of promoting housing development.

## FOOTNOTES

### For Chapter V

- 1 The estimate by the California State Department of Finance.
- 2 Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment and Earnings," Volume 26, No 3, March 1979.
- 3 The initiative process is a form of ballot proposition, which is written by citizens outside of government and put on a general election ballot.
- 4 The Chi-Square test for goodness of fit was applied to the contingency tables to see if there was any significant correlation (or independence) between variables.
- 5 See Q1 - Q4 in the sample questionnaire in Appendix F.
- 6 This difficulty seems to be caused by the fact that local government do not possess integrated data organized in terms of the nature of cases.
- 7 Since I did not specify in the questionnaire the time span during which such cases took place, these numbers should only be regarded as evidence of their occurrence.
- 8 Interview with a city planner from Petaluma.
- 9 Response of an Oakland planner to the mail survey.
- 10 The significance level of 0.10 in this case does not permit a meaningful interpretation since most values of the chi-square contribution came from column 3 or 4, row 2.
- 11 See Q10 in Part I of the questionnaire in Appendix E-1.
- 12 See pp.45, Chapter III, for a description and an example of CRIS model.
- 13 See Q6 in Part I of the questionnaire in Appendix E-1 for a complete list of the criteria provided for evaluation by the respondents.
- 14 See the diagramatic presentation of these proposals which was included in the mail survey in Appendix E-2 a,b,c.
- 15 As shown in Q1 in Part I of the questionnaire in Appendix E-1, five levels of acceptability were provided for the respondents to select from; the responses however were categorized into only two levels - acceptable or unacceptable - in order to apply statistical testing. The size of the sample was not large enough to allow more detailed categorization through application of the Chi-Square statistics.

- 16 See Q7 in Part I of the questionnaire in Appendix E-1.
- 17 Since I received only 60-70 responses from each community, too often there were not enough samples in some sections of the contingency tables to validate the statistical analyses.
- 18 See Q4 in Part I of the questionnaire in Appendix E-1.
- 19 These are the responses to Q8, which asked respondents to identify any environmental changes they had been aware of in their community.
- 20 Blakely, Edward J. and Ted K. Bradshaw. "Impact of Recent Migrants on Economic Development in Small Towns", in Michael W. Fazio and Peggy W. Prenshaw (eds.) Order and Image In the American Small Town. 1981.
- 21 Source: Contra Costa County Planning Department.
- 22 Sources: City of Belmont, General Plan (1981) and Housing Element (1981).
- 23 Source: Town of Corte Madera, Housing Element (1981).
- 24 See Q9 in Part I of the questionnaire in Appendix E-1.
- 25 Dowall, David E. (1981) op.cit.
- 26 This interview was conducted as a part of the pretest survey. The respondent lives in San Bruno, one of the neighbouring communities to Belmont, in San Mateo County.
- 27 Q12 in Part I of the questionnaire in Appendix E-1.
- 28 Perin, Constance. Everything in its Place: Social Order and Land Use in America, Princeton, N.J.:Princeton University Press, 1977. pp.79, pp.80.
- 29 Hills, Carla A. "Remarks Before The American Bar Association, August 13, 1975." Quoted by Perin (1977:p.78) op.cit.
- 30 Frank Gray, Director of Community Development, city of Petaluma, in his speech at a workshop titled "Can We Afford Local Growth Controls?" sponsored by University of California Davis. October 28, 1977.
- 31 Frieden, Bernard J. (1979) op.cit. pp.75-76.
- 32 The demographic trend was reported in the Housing Elements or General Plans of all three of the case communities, and also in the reports of their county governments.
- 33 Marin County, Housing Element: An Amendment to the Marin Countywide Plan, December 1979.

- 34 A study issued by U.S. Housing Markets, a publication of the Advance Mortgage Corp., which attempts to quantify housing demand in the 1980s. Reported in the San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle, August 2, 1981.
- 35 Immel, A. Richard. "A Bursting Bubble? Experts Predict on End to Speculative Boom in California Housing," Wall Street Journal, June 2, 1977. p. 1.  
An unprecedented growth in single-person households was found to have significantly contributed to the increase in housing demand; which created the 1970s housing boom.  
In an article concerning the results of a study on housing demand issued by U.S. Housing Markets, the San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle (Aug.2, 1981) reported: "This shift reflected an increasing perception of homeownership as inflation-beating investment rather than more shelter."
- 36 Lodi News Sentinel, March 21, 1981. A developer says people that developers "helped into new homes are now attacking developers as greedy and selfish."  
  
Newsweek, July 6, 1981. "Also typically, many long-time residents of small towns welcome their sudden growth and consequent economic boom - while newcomers try to apply the brakes and preserve the old-time touches that lured them in the first place."
- 37 Dowall, David E. (1981), op.cit.
- 38 Chi-square testing; see Chapter IV: Method of Analyses
- 39 The level of significance is 0.10 (90% confidence interval).
- 40 Weiss, Lizette. "California's Urban Strategy." Prepared for the National Academy of Public Administration, September 1980.
- 41 Coleman, Richard Patrick. "Attitudes Toward Neighbourhoods: How Americans Choose to Live." Working Paper #49, Joint Center for Urban Studies of MIT and Harvard University, March 1978.
- 42 California Governor's Office of Planning and Research. "The Growth Revolt: Aftershock of proposition 13?", Sacramento, California. August 1980.
- 43 One such example is provided by a respondent from Corte Madera, who expressed strong feelings against any kind of regulation. He sees property rights as analogous to free speech, and considers zoning as "distorting the natural growth of man." He argues that it prevents building on hillsides in spite of the fact that the flat areas are needed for agriculture.
- 44 For example, Palm Beach, Florida adopted an ordinance in 1981 which "prohibits males and females from standing, walking, riding or being conveyed on public property while shirtless, if the person is more than 150 feet from an ocean beach. Violators may be punished by up

to a \$500 fine and two months in jail." (Reported in the San Francisco Chronicle, Feb. 11, 1981 through United Press.)

In a small incorporated community on the outskirts of New York City, "the mother who let her two-year-old run naked [on a beach] soon received a deputation of scandalised ladies pointing out that infants, too, are subject to the Public Attire Ordinance forbidding bare buttocks." (Reported by Linda Blanford, The Manchester Guardian, August 16, 1981.)

45 Although I intentionally did not include the issues of public service or taxes, respondents were provided with extra space after each multiple-choice question so that they could add any other concerns not listed in the questionnaire.

46 Kaplan, Samuel. (1977) op.cit.

47 California Governor's Office of Planning and Research. (1981) op.cit.

48 Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Department of Land Development, San Francisco, California. Intra-office memorandum, unpublished.

49 John McCullough, PG&E. "The Rise and Fall of Measure A." A Supplemental Analysis for the Stockton/Lodi Growth and Development Study. September, 1980. Unpublished mimeo.

50 Babcock, Robert. (1966) op.cit. and Dowall, David E. (1981) op.cit.

51 Rubinowitz, Leonard S. "A Question of Choice: Access of the Poor and the Black to Suburban Housing". In Louis H. Masotti and Jeffrey K. Hadden (eds.), The Urbanization of the Suburbs, 1973. Rubinowitz observes that public programs and the U.S. Congress have long supported and affirmed the historical pattern of a dual housing market - one for whites and another for blacks - in the suburbs, and that "FHA mortgage insurance was available essentially on a whites-only, suburbs-only basis."

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. "Equal opportunity in Suburbia," Washington D.C. Government Printing Office, 1974.

In testimony before the United States Commission on Civil Rights, Malcolm Sherman, a broker from Maryland, conceded that "it is really not the homeowner who is making that decision to keep that neighborhood all-white for his friends and neighbours, so much [as] the real estate broker who is in business and who still considers it economic suicide to make a sale to blacks in that all-white neighborhood."

## CHAPTER VI

### Toward More Acceptable Growth

The Bay Area suburban residents' motivation for growth control, according to the results of my research, might best be explained in terms of residents' desire to defend their community's character or non-urban and family-oriented lifestyle against the threat of urbanization. My research also shows that the majority of residents who constitute the support for the citizens' movement promoting growth control, usually regarded as a "silent majority" except when voting or when their immediate environment is at stake, are, in contrast to the image portrayed by some critics of growth control, people representing a wide range of non-elite socio-economic classes.

Most of my arguments thus far have been devoted to reaching a fair and sympathetic understanding of the motives of residents who seek means to control the growth of their communities. There is a great deal of misunderstanding concerning this citizens' movement that needs to be cleared up so that constructive solutions can be achieved by means of mutual compromise on the part of both pro-control and pro-development forces. While it is clear that abolishing growth control policies and environmental regulations would not solve the problem, some fair criticisms of these policies have been raised, and they deserve to be answered.

I have shown why citizens want to control the growth of their communities, and why the implementation of a system to control development is justifiable in terms of the interests of society as a whole. Now, however, I will draw on the results of my research concerning citizens'

motivation to suggest possible solutions to the question of how the legitimate demand for growth can be met in an acceptable way.

An important element in improving growth control policies as they presently exist in suburban communities is the introduction of a greater sense of social responsibility. This implies a greater concern for the interests of citizens in other communities in the region, including those who live in urban areas.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first is devoted to the question of social responsibility, and its implications for the growth control movement and its supporters, including environmental groups. In the second section, I will discuss the kinds of trade-offs that will have to be made in striking a balance between the desires of citizens to preserve the quality of their environment and society's need for growth.

#### VI-1: Social Responsibility and Protection of the Community Environment: Challenges Facing the Growth Control Movement

In the previous chapters the issue of the intent, or motivation, of growth control has been the central theme of discussion, and I have tried to interpret what residents have to say from this point of view. I have also tried to avoid mixing the issue of the effects of growth control with that of intent, in order to achieve a clear and consistent theory of citizen motivation. However, the distinction between effect and intent in a controversy of this nature is not entirely clear. Although an effect can occur without intent and vice versa, each does affect the other, especially as over time the existence of certain un-

intended effects becomes known, and it is seen that other intended effects are not being realized.

Strictly speaking, effects that were not initially intended can be transformed into intentions, if and when such effects are either welcomed or ignored. Ignoring the well-known effects of a policy, although apparently a passive act, must still be considered intentional. Thus a community can justly be held responsible for such effects, especially in the context of a public policy debate.

Growth control has produced some negative effects, or externalities. The most serious such effect of growth control is inequity in the distribution of benefits, which in this case are environmental qualities. There are two aspects to this distribution problem: one is that of quantitative distribution, or housing availability in suburbs; and the other is that of qualitative distribution, or unequal levels of environmental quality among different communities.

To what extent growth control is in fact responsible for these negative effects needs to be determined, however, in order to convince residents who so far do not seem to accept in this connection. Many economic impact analyses have been done, and many of them seem to agree that growth control raises the price of housing about 18%;<sup>#1</sup> yet these reports fail to persuade most residents. Some of my respondents were aware of the sharp increase in housing prices, but they rarely recognized its connection to growth control practices.

Provided that significant negative effects do occur (although the author admits that this is still debatable) as a result of growth control

practices, pro-control residents and environmental groups should recognize their social responsibility to combat and compensate for these effects.

Freezing large lots of developable land without making a reasonable effort to provide needed housing in a community can be as detrimental to society as the pollution caused by some industries is to the areas affected. In other words, the actions of residents in protecting their community's character, if they go beyond the limit that can be socially accepted as reasonable self-defense, might be regarded as negatively as the damage caused by industrial pollution.

This line of reasoning is purely theoretical, however. The reality is that, unless a court decision finds that the larger interests of society must take precedence, a homeowner's rights are considered inviolate in this country. American politics is probably not yet ready to accept such arguments as the one given above.

For their part, pro-growth citizens should probably welcome the opportunity created by criticism such as Frieden's, rather than reacting defensively and brushing it aside as groundless innuendo. Perhaps Frieden's criticism has its own "not-so-hidden motive", which could well be to arouse them to a sense of social responsibility within the growth control movement, by stirring up social debate and forcing leaders of environmentalism and local residents to seriously concern themselves with broader social interests such as the problems of housing opportunities and social equity.

The existence of rights, in a civilized society, implies the existence of corresponding responsibilities as well.

One essential step for pro-control forces in recognizing their responsibility to society as a whole is to address themselves to the question of how the policy might redistribute its benefits among all citizens who can appreciate them, not only those who can afford them.

As a public policy, addressing only the problem of providing a better living environment in limited areas is not sufficient. Providing sufficient housing and improving the urban environment are goals as important as that of improving the quality of the suburban environment, and the efforts to achieve these goals should be undertaken concurrently. Since "numerous controls can have redistribution results" (Agelasto II 1973), growth control policies should not work only to exclude growth and restrict housing opportunities in the suburbs, but should be able to exercise more positive controls which would have redistributive effects as well.

Thus growth control's negative effects on housing availability and its shortcomings with respect to the equity of distribution of environmental benefits should not be brushed aside as somebody else's problem by those who favour controlled growth. Homeownership or landownership ought to be recognized as a social contract, which, like other contract, can be regarded as "temporary".

However important the concept of protecting the quality of the environment may be, we should recognize temporariness of legislation which seeks to achieve this goal and regulatory measures should maintain flexibility to be able to adjust to changing situations.

There is a movement in California to include an Environmental Bill of Rights in the constitution. Its proponents are attempting to increase legal protection and to prevent erosion of the bill's intent by pressure from special interest groups on the Legislature.\*<sup>2</sup> Although such legislation might theoretically assist in the task of redistribution of environmental benefits (by guaranteeing the constitutional right to maintain certain standards in everyone's living environment), it could also adversely affect certain segments of the population, especially the lower classes, by depriving them of possible trade-offs they might otherwise like to make.

While the sentiment of proponents is not difficult to understand, care should be taken in making such decisions: We should not compromise in maintaining the flexibility essential for balancing public costs and benefits and for continuously making improvements in public policies.

What might an appropriate citizen control system be like? What level of certainty should it guarantee its citizens, and what level of participation and power (authority) in decision-making should the system delegate to the lay citizens? Although these questions do not have easy answers, in principle there should be a value system for determining what is good for the society at large.

Kevin Lynch(1981) attempts to define the essential features of a good control system:

"Therefore, a good control system will include ways by which local control, however congruent, is constrained to maintain future vitality, manipulability, and resilience. ... In summary, a good settlement is one in which place control is certain, responsible, and congruent, both to its users (present, potential, and future) and also to the structure of the problems of the place."

It is also important and necessary for those who favour growth control to avoid the association of their movement with environmental extremism in order to maintain the credibility of environmentalism in general. If they want to remain public citizen groups rather than private clubs, dissociation from extremism is essential. Environmentalists and residents who support controlled growth are often called "green bigots" or "bird-watchers", implying that they are a group of narrow-minded nature-lovers. Opposing development solely on the basis of its impact on wildlife, for example, might result in the impression that concern for animal life takes precedence to the human need for housing, which is likely to alienate many sectors of the society.

Given the considerable diversity of this society and the consequent conflicts of interest inherent in any issue that affects a large portion of the population, a failure to strike a balance among the different interests is detrimental to realizing the shared ultimate goals of all citizens - the creation and maintenance of a high quality environment in a community.

Many things can be done to mitigate the impact of this conflict of interests if pro-control forces are willing to bring themselves to the negotiating table with a realization of their responsibility to society as a whole. (Matching efforts will of course necessary on the part of pro-growth and housing advocacy forces.) One basic step towards that realization is periodic evaluation and monitoring of growth control programs by each local community with such programs.

Increasingly, state courts are beginning to scrutinize local growth

control programs to make sure that they do not have an exclusionary effect. Communities with growth control programs thus should be prepared to defend themselves from potential lawsuits by monitoring the effects of their programs and attempting to meet regional housing needs.\*<sup>3</sup> As Robert Johnston of the University of California, Davis, stated in his speech at a workshop titled "Can We Afford Local Growth Controls?":

"Davis and Petaluma do not have any published documents discussing the effects of their programs on their intended goals of service efficiency and community identity, or on any unintended effects such as the price of housing. ... We have been disappointed as researchers, and also as citizens, that communities have not responsibly evaluated their programs to see if they need improvement, nor have they attempted to ameliorate the negative effects."

Moreover, it is more constructive for all pro-growth control citizens, including environmentalist groups, to face the challenge by making an earnest effort to answer those serious questions, and to collaborating with others to mitigate the unfortunate side-effects that a well-intentioned policy has produced.

Whether such environmental issues as the maintenance of community character are taken seriously and regarded as important and legitimate matters of public interest, or whether they remain dubious expressions of the private interest of the elites may critically depend upon how the challenges made by Frieden and many other critics of growth control are answered.

VI-2. Towards Acceptable Growth: Implications of the Research Findings  
in Reforming Growth Control Systems

It has become apparent that growth control systems need reevaluation. With the realization that growth control practices may have exacerbated regional housing crises, there is a growing demand for the consideration of methods of providing more housing in the Bay Area suburbs. How can more housing be built in places whose attraction is their small town or rural atmosphere? Is any one type of development more acceptable to present residents than others? What makes certain developments more acceptable to them?

In the following section, I will examine, in the light of the results of my research, the feasibility of several key strategies for the achievement of acceptable growth.

Before we can determine what kind of development is more or less acceptable, we need to establish that blocking all development is not the purpose of present residents, and that they are prepared to accept some housing development, depending on the timing, location, and character of the projects. If they are simply interested in looking for excuses to block every development, any efforts to revise development planning and design will be wasted.

**Are residents flexible enough to negotiate about accepting some developments?**

The results of my survey and analysis show that the residents' purpose in controlling community growth is not to block all housing development,

but rather to protect their community's character from being drastically altered, and to defend their lifestyle in a suburban community from being overtaken by the chaos of urbanization, which has happened to many communities in the past. This defensive attitude of people is neither a groundless paranoia nor is it a forbiddingly uncompromising or inflexible attitude against negotiation about possible new developments in their communities. Despite critics' claims that pro-control citizens are "no-growthers" and have no sense of priority, the results of my survey demonstrate that they are willing to accept some types of housing development, although not all.

Each of the three model development proposals used in the gaming questions (or mock evaluation) of my survey was considered acceptable by the majority of my respondents, although the percentage of affirmative responses - "acceptability" - for each of three development types varies.

As was discussed in Chapter V, the residents also indicated some sense of priority in terms of which factors they want to control. While their concern about an excessive increase in low-income residents is not negligible, it is less important to most respondents than other factors such as traffic congestion, the destruction of open space and natural landscape, and the influx of people who are less committed to community affairs and not family-oriented.

Since their perception is greatly affected by the fear of possible urbanization of their communities through rapid growth, development projects with more of the attributes that connote urbanization are those which suburban residents wish most to avoid. Still, the pattern of

response indicates that there are some ways to negotiate for more housing development in most suburbs, provided that there is developable land there.

**Are present residents concerned about prohibitive housing opportunity in the region?**

Responses to my survey indicate that many suburban residents - both homeowners and renters - are concerned about the recent lack of affordable housing in their communities. Nevertheless most of them do not connect this problem with growth control.\*<sup>4</sup> They rather propose "speculation" or "too much business" or rapid growth itself as the major cause of high housing prices.

One of the residents interviewed who felt that her community needs more lower-cost housing still believes that the interests of low- and moderate-income people are better served by growth control than by uncontrolled growth. Several respondents who support growth control expressed similar concerns in their general comments:

"My main concern is balance - weigh environmental concerns seriously and carefully, and also create affordable housing for young people, ethnic diversity, seniors. Communities need ethnic balance and age balance." (Belmont resident)

"I feel a large majority of any new development in my area should be geared to low and middle income groups. Higher income earners can afford other areas to live in either in San Francisco or farther from it." (Corte Madera resident)

One respondent interviewed said that if a choice had to be made between wildlife and people, people would have to be given priority, but only if no other option existed. She feels that there must be a compromise.

More detailed investigation is needed to find out just how flexible the suburban residents are, and to determine what strategies for designing a development proposal, and perhaps for reforming the existing institutional process, might positively affect community attitudes.

Below I discuss some of the implications of my research as to the feasibility of some of the typical housing strategies proposed by various sectors in order to mitigate the adverse effects of controlled growth.

How can growth control systems be improved to accommodate more residential development?

Many strategies have been proposed to combat the problems resulting from the wide-spread practice of growth control systems (see Appendix G). Of those proposed, most deal with some strategy for mitigating the housing crisis, that is, the lack of affordable housing.

The general direction suggested by these strategies prescribes measures such as these: the incorporation of regional housing needs into local housing policy; the mandatory inclusion of low- and moderate-income housing; increase in residential density, and the education of citizens on appropriate control measures.

### **Sharing the Regional Responsibility**

As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, there has been a lack of concern on the part of residents for regional housing needs. This is in part a result of their lack of understanding of the connection between the housing crisis and controlled growth, and also results from the inherent problem of the basic contradiction between local and

regional interests. Thus there is neither incentive nor authority to enforce implementation of policies of regional interest in local communities.

Pressed with the urgency and seriousness of the housing crisis, the State developed a strategy called Regional Fair Share Allocation.<sup>5</sup> It is a method established by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to ensure an equitable regional distribution of low-income households among the Bay Area communities, and was signed into law in the 1980 legislative session.

The specific concept of "fair share" is to have each jurisdiction within the larger community assume its fair share of providing the needed non-market rate housing.

The factors taken into consideration for setting each community's "regional responsibility" in this system include: the current percentage of low-income residents, housing market conditions, access to employment, and the ability of a community to effect a change in present conditions. The exact figure of this "fair share" for each locality is not imposed by the state, but is determined by the area's Council of Government, that is, by a council of locally elected officials.

The method is not yet found to have been totally acceptable either technically or politically to every jurisdiction, but is increasingly in use by many cities and counties in California.

Since, as my research analysis indicates, residents' distrust of the government - especially at the state and federal levels - is a major factor in the movement for growth control, this distrust must be dealt

with in any attempt to reconcile local and regional needs. As I have repeatedly stressed, resident psychology as well as local government politics should be studied in order to assure the effective implementation of regional fair share allocation systems. The education of citizens, carried out with great patience and without suspicious industrial connections, might help to mend their shattered trust in the state or federal government, and to moderate the anxiety of residents about the relationship between community growth and urbanization.

How might most communities implement the regional fair share requirement?

In the following section the key trends which are expected to greatly influence future housing strategies in California will be examined from the aspects of their acceptability to citizens, and the political feasibility of their implementation.

**a) Is an inclusionary requirement for low- and moderate-income units viable?**

The mandatory inclusion of low and moderate-income housing, popularly called inclusionary zoning is one method often used to increase the amount of non-market rate housing construction, and predates the regional fair share program. It requires the developer to set aside a certain percentage of the total number of housing units in a project as non-market rate housing. Most systems require 10 to 15 percent, and some give added credit points for projects with a larger percentage of non-market rate housing in the point evaluation of all development proposals.

Evaluations of the viability of such a system vary among local government planners. About one third of the respondents in my survey of Bay Area planning agencies found inclusionary zoning to be effective, and some, such as the planners from Santa Cruz County and City of Sonoma, reported that such measures have successfully been used to increase the production of low- and moderate-income housing in their own communities. The Marin County planning director also acknowledged the use of this means, although she admitted that it has worked only to a limited extent, because without it Marin County "would just get more high-income units."

On the other hand, about half of the responding planners view inclusionary zoning as "coercion", and feel that it is either ineffective or effective only in a minor way. The long-term effect of the inclusionary requirement is viewed by these planners with skepticism. The cost of housing in the long run is believed to increase because the costs of such housing are merely passed on to new market-rate housing, and the problem of controlling resale prices requires increased administrative red tape.

Many planners seem to agree that incentives such as a density bonus works better than forced requirements, from the aspects of local political acceptance and the psychology of both builders and residents. The city of Sonoma has a housing strategy which is heavily weighted toward incentives to encourage low-and moderate-income housing. The city finds that this approach has been successful:

"In the six months that the incentive program has been in place, the City has approved 24 low to moderate income units for development representing 55% of all units approved during that period of time. ...

It would appear, based on the City's experience to date, that not only can a growth management and Housing Element be compatible but that through them the City can meet the dual need of preserving its historic character while helping to provide affordable housing."

It seems that, despite the effectiveness of this kind of measure in some communities, psychological resistance to what many view as an intrusion on local prerogatives is an important factor which undermines its full implementation.

To many residents who were interviewed, the acceptability of lower income housing is considerably affected by whether or not it is concentrated in one area. According to one interviewee, if low-income housing is concentrated in one area there will inevitably be such problems as crime, poor maintenance, and tension between low-income residents and the rest of the community: "You can't create an instant community." He thinks that there should be a "salt and pepper" approach to low-income housing - it should be dispersed throughout the community. Another of the residents interviewed thinks that the emphasis should be on creating buildings with attractive exteriors and on exterior space design: "Save money for use on higher quality 'shell'".

The feasibility and effectiveness of the housing strategies proposed by various sectors depend to a large extent on how they are perceived by all those who are involved in the decision-making process, including local residents.

**b) Is higher density acceptable?**

The encouragement of higher density housing is a strategy proposed by many sectors including former Governor Jerry Brown and HCD (the State Department of Housing and Community Development), the building industry, realtors, public policy researchers, and scholars (see Appendix G). There are two ways of achieving higher density. One is to use it as an incentive in persuading large scale developers to set aside a certain percentage of housing for moderate- and low-income households in exchange for an increase in the overall permitted density of the project. The other is to encourage incremental development in existing residential areas. This may be achieved by encouraging the construction of mother-in-law (sometimes called granny) units and back-lot units, and of multiple family splits to existing homes, by granting air rights over parking lots for the construction of apartments, and by encouraging the mixing of residential use with commercial or other light industrial uses. Large minimum lot requirements must be downward in order to allow the implementation of such strategies.

In order to mitigate the possible impact of increasing density on decreasing developable land, some changes in housing size and style have been suggested. Future housing, many predict, will be much smaller in size, more compact in design, and built to accommodate new lifestyles; for example, two unrelated families may live in one single-family style house where they share one large living room and some other semi-public spaces, with two separate master bedrooms.

What will the acceptability of such strategies be for present residents

of the suburbs? The results of my survey indicate that high density housing is generally felt by many residents to pose a significant threat. Other studies conducted by the Bay Area Council and the public utility company<sup>6</sup> found that higher density housing continues to be opposed by local communities. However, since the perception of high density seems to depend largely on its impact on traffic volume and circulation on local streets, or the visual impact of large, closely clustered buildings, the proper design of high-density housing project may mitigate local opposition.

The perception of density by residents, my research found, is rather subjective and not necessarily directly related to the way planners calculate density level, that is, by the - number of dwelling units per acre. One resident interviewed personally defined "high-density" as something that is experienced, rather than a static quality defined by the number of units per acre. He mentioned uniformity as something which contributes to his perception of "seeming dense", and said that individuality within a development is important.

This means there are design solutions which can mitigate residents' perception of high density, and thus their fear of incipient urbanization. An integrated project design, which minimizes potentially threatening features by making use of social as well as physical measures to reduce or eliminate those problems associated with urbanization, might be relatively acceptable despite its higher-than-present density level. For example, one of the residents interviewed stated that there are ways to make high-density projects more acceptable:

"High density development, properly designed to be aesthetically attractive and with functional site plans (number & type of access points for autos, buses), sited in an area which is suitable (i.e. near "downtown" or on a site such as development type "B") is a more attractive prospect for accomodating future suburban growth than poorly designed, continuing sprawl."

Increasing overall density by means of incremental development seems to be more acceptable to present residents than new large scale development which will "take away" existing open space. Several residents interviewed suggested second unit construction and rentals as a way to increase lower-cost units, and one of the interviewees happened to be working to get approval from her city council for a plan allowing homeowners to rent out second units. Many respondents felt that there would be support from the community for this kind of incremental development.

**c) Can the exclusion of non-family lifestyles be modified to help reduce the unacceptability of certain development types?**

How can one deal with the opposition to non-single family housing types? One of the most important reasons for the reluctance to accomodate townhouses, condominiums, other multi-family houses, and apartments in the community is the fear of possible conflicts between the lifestyles of old and new residents. Often residents' opposition to higher density housing is based on their perception of non-single-family housing types as threatening their family-oriented lifestyle. As one of the respondents puts it:

"Some lifestyles are more conducive to maintaining/protecting the environment and promoting minimal impact on finite community resources, while others impact negatively on the environment and on community resources. We want a community of the former."\*

However, I expect that the change in the affordability of single family residences, which has come to limit the choice of housing types for all except the upper-income group, will probably change this perception of present residents toward non-single family housing types.

As some of the present residents interviewed in my survey are already aware, family-type residents who cannot afford single family homes have begun to move into townhouses, condominiums, and other multi-family housing types. Considering the many factors that will keep housing prices and interest rates high for the extended term of a mortgage (e.g. the 30 year life of a mortgage), the previous perception of residents in non-single-family housing as "transients" may not hold for too much longer. This shift towards a greater variety of resident types in non-single-family housing will remove the negative association of such housing types with people, such as "swinging singles" or non-family-oriented couples, whose lifestyles are considered incompatible with the values of the community.

Where are singles, childless couples and "empty nesters" to live? However unwelcome they might be in the family-oriented suburban communities, they still constitute a legitimate and significant portion of society, and should be allowed to choose their housing location.

As an alternative to moving to the suburbs, moving into revitalized neighbourhoods of the city has recently become a trend, especially among singles and childless couples. The San Francisco Examiner (June 29, 1980) reported on a study of this trend which revealed an almost uniform profile of these buyers in the 23 major cities studied. They tend to be

young professionals, mostly singles, or two-income families that are usually childless. These people are attracted to such housing because of "the enormous difference in what a housing dollar will buy in the suburbs and in a declining city neighbourhood. "According to the Examiner, these non-family type people are:

"more tolerant of racial and economic diversity than their peers and consciously want to escape from the suburban mold. Partly because of their family composition, they have fewer concerns about security and quality of schooling."\*

Yet there are some singles and non-family types who would rather live in the suburbs than in the city. One of the respondents to my survey noted that she, a renter, liked it better there than in the city because she did not have to worry about being assaulted or mugged. Improvement in the security of urban living might further attract single people like this respondent back into the city. In fact, greater efforts to upgrade the quality of the urban environment could help to take some growth pressure off suburban communities by attracting back those who came to the suburbs because of the undesirable environmental qualities of urban areas rather than a positive desire to join the family-oriented suburban life.

As for the singles and childless couples who want to live in the suburbs because of their small-town/rural atmosphere, some measure to incorporate them into family-oriented communities should be taken. Dispersing them in single-family residential areas where in-law unit construction is permitted might be one possibility; in a new project, a quota system mixing family-type and non-family-type residents might be used to select

prospective residents. Furthermore, the management of a project that houses non-family types might provide some code of resident behaviour which takes into consideration not only appropriateness within the housing complex but also acceptability within the community as a whole.

The regulation of human behaviour in public space raises the issue of the ethics of control. There is no easy answer as to the proper standard of such regulation. As discussed in Chapter V, restrictive community control inevitably limits the freedom of behaviour of the present residents in a community as well. In each community the residents must discuss this question and determine the acceptability of different kinds of public behaviour in their common environment.

**d) The Need for territorial definition and buffers**

My research seems to confirm the notion that an influx of new residents from lower socio-economic classes or of non-family or "transient" types frightens the present residents of suburbs because it is perceived as a symptom of urbanization.

A lack of appropriate territorial definition and buffers between different types of residential areas aggravates residents' perception of the threat of urbanization. In their assessment of property value, real estate firms are customarily very sensitive to any neighbourhood change, and further provokes the fear of the "worst scenario", a total "ghetto-rization" of the community. How accurate this fear is is not the issue. People do not have a sufficient sense of security if the borders of their territory can be easily eroded, which means there is no guarantee

that a slight sign of change will not lead to the total urbanization of their small town/rural communities.

An adequate combination of both institutional (or management) solutions and physical design solutions can mitigate this problem. For example, an institutional solution may involve careful screening of prospective homeowners of low- and moderate-income housing to assure that their homes will be maintained reasonably well; this solution may also utilize home mortgage and rental subsidies. Physical solutions may include: avoiding the concentration of low-income households in one area; providing sufficient buffer zones and a gradational layout of different types of housing; and larger budget allocations for the exterior design of buildings and for landscaping.

#### **Screening of Future Residents**

A now-successful subsidized housing project in Philadelphia, which opened in 1982 after 25 years of struggle, implements both a subsidized mortgage system which allows occupants to own their home, and intensive screening of applicants. Each applicant was reportedly interviewed several times by agency officials, including a visit to her/his present home to determine how good a housekeeper s/he was.\*<sup>10</sup> Also, at least half of the residents of the project are white.

Since what present residents really fear is not an individual who is poor or black, but a large group of people who do not share their sense of values, or who do not comply with community codes of behaviour, or who are not committed to the maintenance of the peaceful lifestyle of a

small town/rural community, individuals from lower socio-economic class will still be accepted as long as they avoid concentration in one area and conform with community behavior standards.

The Marin County director conceded that the inclusion of small percentages (in this case 10 to 15%) of low- or moderate-income households in neighbourhoods where the majority of residents are of higher socio-economic classes is much more acceptable to present residents in most suburban communities than a single large public housing project, even though it might be several blocks away from their own homes.

My survey found that although to most present residents of the suburbs the factor of minority residents does not in itself seem to be highly objectionable, it can nevertheless become a significant threat when confounded with the factor of low-income households.

It seems almost axiomatic that a large number of moderate-to-upper-income non-minority group residents associate an influx of low-income minority people with an increase in urban problems, notably crime. Arguing that such a perception is morally wrong or factually incorrect does not solve the problem. The problem with this perception or image association is, unfortunately, a reality, and should be dealt with accordingly.

Since most white Americans indicate that they do not want to live in neighbourhoods where they are not the majority, some argue for racial (and economic) quotas in housing in order to achieve racial integration as an alternative to total segregation of races.

The feasibility of such quota systems, particularly in moderate- and low-income housing projects, has been discussed or suggested by many (Downs 1981, Newman 1980, Schelling 1978 and 1971, Birch 1974, Freeman and Sunshine 1970, Grier and Grier 1960) as an alternative to forced integration in residential America. Forced integration is viewed by these observers as counterproductive in achieving either racial or economic integration, and as disruptive of community stability.

However, there is also a conflicting consideration for minority residents, since spatial concentration can be a political resource for promoting their interests (Abbott 1981). The recent election of Chicago's first black mayor was achieved by the high black-voter turnout in a city whose population is 40% black; and in nine out of ten American cities whose population exceeds 200,000 and whose mayor is black, 40% or more of the population is black.\*<sup>11</sup>

If the finding of my research that the lifestyle, not the race, is what matters most, holds in general, then income quotas would perhaps be sufficient to mitigate residents' feelings of conflict and fear with regard to the prospective residents of proposed new housing in their community.

#### **Buffer and Border Distinction**

Although institutional provision for territorial boundaries between different types of residential land-use often is more effective than physical solutions, the use of physical design techniques is still helpful and sometimes necessary to reinforce residents' sense of security. The popularity of the green belt and abundant landscaping

among residents is yet another expression of the need for buffers between different residential types. The perception of physical proximity can be modified by the use of buffer zones, which seems to greatly affect people's sense of security. Suttles (1972) observes:

"Spatial proximity simply cannot be avoided as it might be for some other possible basis for grouping. People literally have to be somewhere, and although they might possibly ignore racial, ethnic, or age groupings, spatial propinquity inevitably makes them vulnerable to one another."

#### **e) Educating Citizens for Control**

Educating citizens as to what constitutes good citizen control of their community would contribute to effective negotiation between parties of conflicting interests to arrive at reasonable compromises and solutions. One of the residents interviewed was well aware of this necessity and suggested that people chosen for the planning commission should be expected to "do their homework" and should be qualified. He observed that some communities make good decisions based on a balanced analysis of issues while some other communities' planning commissions act too emotionally and unprofessionally - meaning that they make poor decisions because of their failure to consider all sides of the issues.

Educating themselves to be good "place managers", as Lynch(1981) puts it, would probably be the best way for citizens to fulfill their social responsibility, in return for the right to control the environment in which they live.

" --- those who control a place should have the motives, information, and power to do it well, a commitment to the place and to the needs of other persons and creatures in it, a willingness to accept failure and to correct it."

"--- place control should devolve upon its users step by step as they build their competence to exercise that control. Training people to be place managers is a useful social task, and so is reshaping the setting in order to open up opportunities for place management. Indeed, progressive responsibility for place is an effective means of general education, both intellectual and moral."

### **Conclusion**

It seems clear that the implementation of housing strategies, which involve either coercion or incentives aiming at promoting moderate- and low-income housing through racial and economic integration, cannot be effective without a prior understanding of the complex mechanism of resident psychology.

The resident is not always logical or objective, and often lacks concern for the broader public interest. Still we should not let this discourage us from seeking his/her opinions and perceptions, trying to understand his/her problems, and even more importantly, incorporating his/her ideas into efforts for public policy improvement.

The psychological attitudes of residents toward their community environment deserve better recognition from policy makers and decision makers as well as researchers, no matter how difficult it may be to quantify or even define the elusive, intangible and even mysterious qualities that are involved.

Residents' need to maintain psychological territory (as opposed to

economic territory) within a community should be respected, and efforts to maintain the character of a community be incorporated into growth policies. Similarly, their sense of exclusion should not be hastily condemned without understanding what they really want to avoid, and why.

The concept of allowing certain levels of exclusion, or the social psychology of privacy needs, in itself is not new and is referred to by many social scientists with Frost's dictum: Good fences make good neighbours (Schwartz 1968, McGinley 1959, Suttles 1972, Sarason 1974, Kaplan 1977, Greenbie 1976).

The real question then, is not whether we should condemn the existence of all exclusionary elements, but what kind of exclusionary elements might be found in residents' attitudes toward growth control and whether they are healthy and reasonable enough to warrant protection by public policies. As Greenbie(1976) aptly puts it:

"Exclusion must be considered, then, not as an evil per se, but rather in terms of who is excluding whom, where, and from what, and above all, why?"

That was precisely the purpose of my thesis, to seek an alternative explanation of why suburban residents want to control growth.

In my search for the evidence to support my hypothesis, the logic of self-defense as the motivation of community growth control, I have been led to conclude that there is an urgent need for those who defend environmental legislation and local growth control to assume an adequate degree of social responsibility which is accompanied by the actions with redistributive effects.

More than a decade has passed since the evolution of environmentalism, and one might expect it to have reached a certain maturity wherein it addresses itself to achieving a more balanced program of social goals. As the mismanagement of funds for environmental protection and the sabotage of the National Environmental Protection Act by the Reagan administration have demonstrated, the survival of environmental policies is under constant pressure from many sectors of the society. Yet the presence of extremists as well as the environmental leadership's non-comittal attitude toward broader social concerns have unfortunately given those sectors a good opportunity for attacking the movement.

There is a great potential in this citizen's movement for improving everyone's living environment, as well as for managing limited environmental resources. This potential should not be destroyed by allowing the movement to move toward the advocacy of narrow private interests.

Despite some shortcomings and despite the incessant criticism they receive, environmental regulations on development activities have, at least from what I have witnessed through my professional practice, indeed positively affected local land use decision-making processes, developers' attitudes, and the overall quality of the community environment. In many cases, developers could make significant improvements in the location and quality of their projects without drastically increasing costs or decreasing their normal profits. They also have become much more sensitive as to how other citizens, in addition to their prospective buyer-residents, would evaluate their products.

In carrying out this research, I have conceived the hope that both sides

on the growth control controversy would in the future direct their major efforts toward solving the question of how environmental changes should be accomodated and environmental continuity maintained, rather than simply go on trying to discredit each other's policies for controlling growth or promoting housing availability in suburban communities.

Although it requires great patience from all sectors involved to arrive at viable solutions, abolishing growth control and all other environmental controls is clearly no solution at all. The destruction of what so many citizens value through careless planning (or no planning) would probably result in greater misfortune for people of all socio-economic classes in the long run than restriction of homebuilding in suburban communities has done.

It is indeed a dilemma, yet hopeful signs are found in the residents themselves:

"Citizens and government must work together to meet the needs of business, environmentalists, low income and minority groups, and senior citizens in creating carefully planned development which does not destroy the ecology or the character of the community."  
(Corte Madera resident)

## FOOTNOTES

### For Chapter VI

- 1 Estimates of the percentage which growth control adds to the cost of housing vary depending on the researcher. A Rutgers University research group concluded that excessive government regulations contribute about 20% to the cost of a typical home, while Gruen and Gruen suggest a figure anywhere between 0 - 40% depending on the strength of demand for housing in different areas. Most estimates are around 15 to 20%.
- 2 The San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle, March 23, 1980.  
To the reporter's question of "Why should people's rights to environmental quality be in the constitution? There are laws on the books providing for clean air and water and most of the other rights.", Peter Behr, the author of the bill replied:  
  
"Sure there are, but the environmental gains of the last ten years are being dismantled or diluted by amendments. For example, there is a bill to repeal California's automobile exhaust standards. There were 30 bills last year to dismantle the Coastal Act. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act has yet to be implemented because of opposition from the timber industry. The bottle bill was beaten because the manufacturers spent \$1.2 million to defeat it."
- 3 Clemente Shute, state deputy attorney general, California, in his speech at a workshop titled "Can We Afford Local Growth Controls?" sponsored by University of California, Davis, October 28, 1977.
- 4 The Sacramento Bee, Sunday, March 29, 1981.  
According to a survey by the Construction Awareness Program, a communications arm of the building industry, Californians are aware that there is a serious housing shortage but are "split on the cause". When asked for the major causes of the housing crunch, 39 percent said inflation, 29 percent blamed over-population, and only 12 percent said it was fostered by government growth controls.
- 5 Regional Fair Share Allocation Plan  
The State Department of Housing and Community Development(HCD), which is responsible for implementing the State's housing policy, has developed the concept and the formula for determination of what the fair share allocation means to each community. The formula is based on the premise that 35% of all households in the Bay Area are within the non-market rate category. Each jurisdiction is allocated its share of those households by modifying the 35% base.
- 6 Pacific Gas & Electric Company, Land Development, San Francisco, California.
- 7 A general comment in the mail survey by a Corte Madera resident.

- 8 A general comment in the mail survey by a Danville resident.
- 9 Robert J. Mylod, the president of Advance Mortgage Corp., which did the study of a trend of housing revitalization in 23 major cities.
- 10 The New York Times, November 27, 1982
- 11 Time, April 25, 1983

## APPENDIX

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## Dowall's Categorization of 93 Bay Area Communities

The following categorization by David Dowall(1981) is based on: stages of development; growth pressure felt; and future potential for continuous growth as well as each community's general land-use policy trend.

**Built Out Cities:** These are the communities that provide little land for urban expansion. They have developed to their borders and are constrained from developing further. Most of these cities are located close to the Bay, and have served as principal development centers during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. The land-use policies of these built-out towns stress preservation of scattered open lands and conservation of neighbourhoods. Few of the cities in this category could expand their land supply even they wished to, as most are bound on all sides by other cities. Growth per se is not a main community issue; rather the preservation of the housing stock is very important.

Among the communities in this category are: Berkeley, Alameda, Albany, Pinole (Alameda County); Portola Valley, Woodside, Atherton, Hillsborough, San Carlos, Milbrae, and Burlingame (San Mateo County); Tiburon, Sausalito, Bervedere (Marin County); Palo Alto, Los Altos, Campbell, Monte Sereno (Santa Clara County).

**Mature Growing Cities:** While largely developed, many Bay Area communities still provide opportunities for continued residential development. Many of these mature growing cities have experienced rapid development in the past decade. In some respects, citizens in these cities have the same land-use concerns as those in built-out cities. Density of development is a key issue, as are neighbourhood preservation, public service capacity, hillside preservation and fiscal stress.

Communities in this category include: Union City, Newark, San Leandro, Oakland (Alameda County); Walnut Creek, Richmond (Contra Costa County); Daly City, Foster City, Redwood City, San Bruno, South San Francisco, Brisbane, Menlo Park (San Mateo County); Larkspur, Corte Madera (Marin County); Dixon, Rio Vista (Solano County); Healdsburg, Sebastapol, and Cloverdale (Sonoma County).

**Growth Restricted:** Many Bay Area Cities have substantial vacant land, but because of land-use and environmental regulations do not afford much opportunity for residential development. Reasons for restricting growth range from agricultural preservation, and environmental protection, to service capacity overloads, and fiscal strain. Cities in the Bay Area use a variety of measures to limit development. Some use formal growth-management controls, while most use agricultural zoning, or urban limit lines, or refuse to extend services to outlying areas.

Communities in this category include: Calistoga, St. Helena, Yountville (Napa County); Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Cotati, Sonoma (Sonoma County); Vacaville, Suisin City (Solano County); Moraga, Pleasant Hill, Lafayette, Clayton (Contra Costa County); Livermore, Pleasanton (Alameda County); Mill Valley (Marin County); Belmont (San Mateo County); Both Marin County and San Mateo County would best be characterized as growth restricted.

**Growth Centers:** While development potential in most Bay Area communities is limited, there are sixteen cities in the region that tolerate growth, and these provide most of the Bay Area's new housing. Between 1975 and 1979, these sixteen cities added nearly 60,000 dwelling units, accounting for forty percent of the Bay Area's total housing production.

Communities in this category are: Pittsburg, Hercules, Martinez, Danville (Contra Costa County); Hayward, Fremont (Alameda); San Jose, Milpitas (Santa Clara County); Pacifica, Half Moon Bay (San Mateo County); Vallejo, Benicia, Fairfield (Solano County).

## The Case Communities

### Case Community 1: Belmont

#### Facts and Figures:

Pop. 24,588 (1980 US Census) -- 3.5% increase 1970-1980

Ethnic composition: 90.53% white, 1.03% black, 5.93% Asian (1980 Census)

#### Growth of Housing Units in Belmont:

1960	4,440 dwelling units (total)	
1970	7,880 dwelling units (total)	76.6% increase
1980	10,053 dwelling units (total)	27.6% increase

Housing Price: 300-400% up in 1970-1979

Major housing type: single family type - 70% of housing stock

Vacancy Rate: 2.6%

Household size: # of person/household = 2.43 persons(1980); was 3.5 persons(1970); 1970-1980:added 2,173 new residential units; 989 persons.

Residency terms:45% approximately had lived in the same house for the previous five or more years.

The city of Belmont, in San Mateo County, lies midway between San Francisco and Palo Alto, where San Francisco Bay curves westward and the coastal mountains rise abruptly to the west(See Map 2.)

Belmont covers 4.3 square miles of land with varied topography, occupying portions of both the flat Bay plain and the eastern foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Elevation ranges from sea level to 800 feet at ridges. The hillside areas are steep and wooded, and are marked by deep canyons cut by the Belmont and East Laurel Creeks.

According to the General Plan of Belmont, although the city contains a mixture of land uses, its predominant character is still suburban with almost two-thirds of its developed land in residential use and the majority of households supported by employment outside of the city. The

#### APPENDIX B-1

United States 1980 Census reported Belmont's median household income as \$28,100 after taxes, which is higher than the Bay Area median. Slightly more than ninety percent(90.5%) of the population is white, and about a third of all the city's employed residents work in managerial or other professional positions.

The average age of residents is rising, as is evidenced by declining elementary school enrollment and increasing demand for services by senior citizens groups. While this trend is evident nationally, it is especially pronounced in Belmont.

Most of the growth in Belmont took place between 1940 and 1970, with little population growth in the 1970's as the community approached full development of available land (see Figure 4-1). Between 1970 and 1980 the population increased only 3.5% while there was increase of 27.6% in new housing units during the same period.

Belmont adopted a Growth Management Program (Initiative Ordinance A) which limited the number of new dwelling units to be built to 56 per year in 1979 (See Appendix C). According to Dowall's analysis based on interviews with Bay Area planning agencies, the underlying factors for Belmont's growth control are: a) a perceived decline in the quality of life; b) the conversion of open space; and c) the rapid rate of infill development in the hills. According to Dowall, "The city is torn over the growth-no-growth issue."

In 1982, however, under the growth management system of competitive allocation, the city received only 44 applications for 56 available

dwelling units. Moreover, the allocations that were made during the previous two years were being used very slowly. Builders cite lack of money, high interest rates, and the shortage of qualified buyers as constraints.

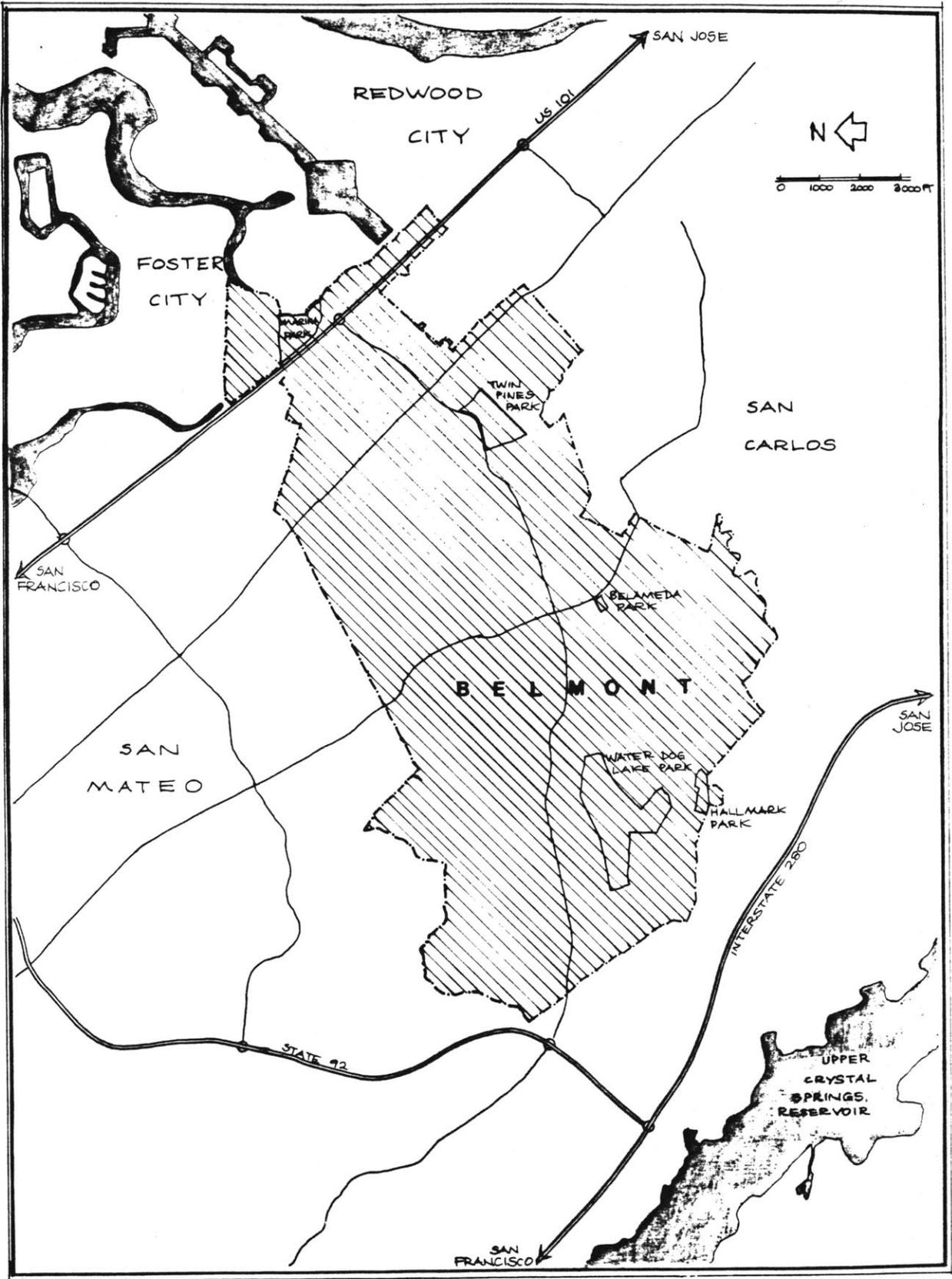
The availability of developable land is constrained by the terrain. Level areas are already intensely developed. The majority of the land still available for development is in areas with steep slopes. Also, the low carrying capacity of the streets, which are narrow and winding, exacerbate traffic problems. At four or five intersections traffic flow is reportedly approaching "unstable" conditions.

Nevertheless the residents chose "to accept some inconvenience in the form of slow traffic movement" rather than widen the roads to smooth the traffic flow, in order to preserve the scenic character of the mountain roads.

According to the Belmont Housing Element 1981, the city's housing program reflects "the attitude of the citizens that the single family residential quality of existing neighborhoods must be preserved."

Policy #3 states:

"the character, dwelling types and physical qualities of established residential areas should be maintained. Residents in established residential areas want to avoid drastic changes in their neighborhood character, to prevent intrusion of through-traffic, to protect neighborhood quality, to improve visual quality, and to prevent deterioration."



MAP 2. CASE COMMUNITY: BELMONT  
-217-

## Case Community 2: Danville

### Facts and Figures:

#### Danville, Contra Costa County

Population(1980): 26,446

Housing Units: 8,686 D.U.

Average housing sales price: \$184,762(1979)

Household Size: # of person/household = 3.15 persons

#### Growth Experience:

(1975-80) Housing units increased by 49.0%(2,854 DU) while population increased by 34.6%(6,728 people)

San Ramon Valley total: Housing units increased by 49.6%(6387 DU) while population increased by 38.3%(15,725)

#### San Ramon Valley growth:

1940	2,120	
1950	4,630	
1960	12,700	first freeway completed; 5 sq.miles
1970	28,090	5000 acres residential land; 8 sq.mi
1975	41,000	7000 acres residential land; in rural areas parcel split activity indicates a conversion trend from agricultural to residential.
1990	80,000	projected

Danville is one of the three unincorporated communities, along with Alamo and San Ramon, that constitute the San Ramon Valley Planning Area of Contra Costa County (see Map 3). The San Ramon Valley Planning Area covers approximately 112 square miles, and is somewhat separated physically from the rest of the county. The rugged ridge and foothills including Mt. Diablo State Park and Las Trampas Regional Park enclose the area on three sides - north, east, and west - and shorter ridges and hills divides the central basin into several valleys of different sizes. The San Ramon Valley opens into the Livermore-Amador basin on the south. Development has taken place along the central valley and side valleys in the northern area and is now continuing southward in the central valley and farther out in the eastern side valleys.

From its heritage as a Spanish and pioneer ranching region, the San Ramon Valley Area has become a mix of suburban residential in and near the central valley, with agricultural in the outlying hills and valleys. The predominant development pattern today is one of single family homes on large lots interspersed with orchard remnants and pasture land. Interstate 680, which runs north-south through the central valley corridor, provides access to major employment centers in Hayward, Oakland and San Francisco, and a strong commuter pattern is evident in the Planning Area.

The area's population is predominantly white. The median household income of 1979 is reported as \$34,017, which is higher than the county median.

The existing residential pattern in Danville is mainly one of higher priced owner-occupied single family homes, and the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan states: "In keeping with the general residential character of the area, the preservation and enhancement of existing single family residential areas is of paramount importance."

The San Ramon Valley area began a period of rapid growth in the 1940's (see Fig. 4-1), and has continued to double or triple its population with each succeeding decade. By 1970, the town of Danville had grown to a thriving community business center employing more than 2,000 persons. From 1970 to the present, growth has continued to be rapid. In rural areas, there has been a trend towards land conversion from agricultural to residential use. Because Danville and other communities in the San

**APPENDIX B-2**

Ramon Valley are not incorporated, they are under the supervision of Contra Costa County which, without a growth control policy, makes decisions on land-use in accord with the County General Plan.

#### Development Control:

Although Danville does not have a growth control law, its general plan (the San Ramon Valley Area General Plan) states the following objectives for land use decisions: to reinforce, promote or encourage "existing community images", the "unique character of each community," and the "rural view of life" of primary goal (pp.10,11). "An additional section on community design is included in [the General Plan], because several design concerns are evident and because of the aesthetic sensitivity of the residents" (pp.14, 16).

The following paragraphs summarise sections of the General Plan, and will provide some ideas attitudes toward planning in this community.

Development can take place in the additional land areas assigned to residential and other urban uses without destroying the suburban and rural charm which is highly valued by the residents. Nevertheless, the community is facing situations which often occur when growth is rapid, as it has been here for over a decade, and where the settlement pattern is primarily one of low density housing.

Some public facilities are presently strained to capacity because of past growth rates.

#### Community Design (pp.57-59)

Important components of community design to which many residents have a strong sense of attachment include: a sense of

intimate contact with nature; 'desired images', such as a village-like atmosphere; tree-lined rural roads (narrow, unpaved, without sidewalks, bordered by ditches; homes set well back from the road.

The prevalence of the single family detached home; town houses and multiple family units are acceptable close to shopping districts and as a transition from commercial to single family residential uses, but to be acceptable in present or future low density residential areas such housing units will be required to have an appearance very similar to single family detached homes.

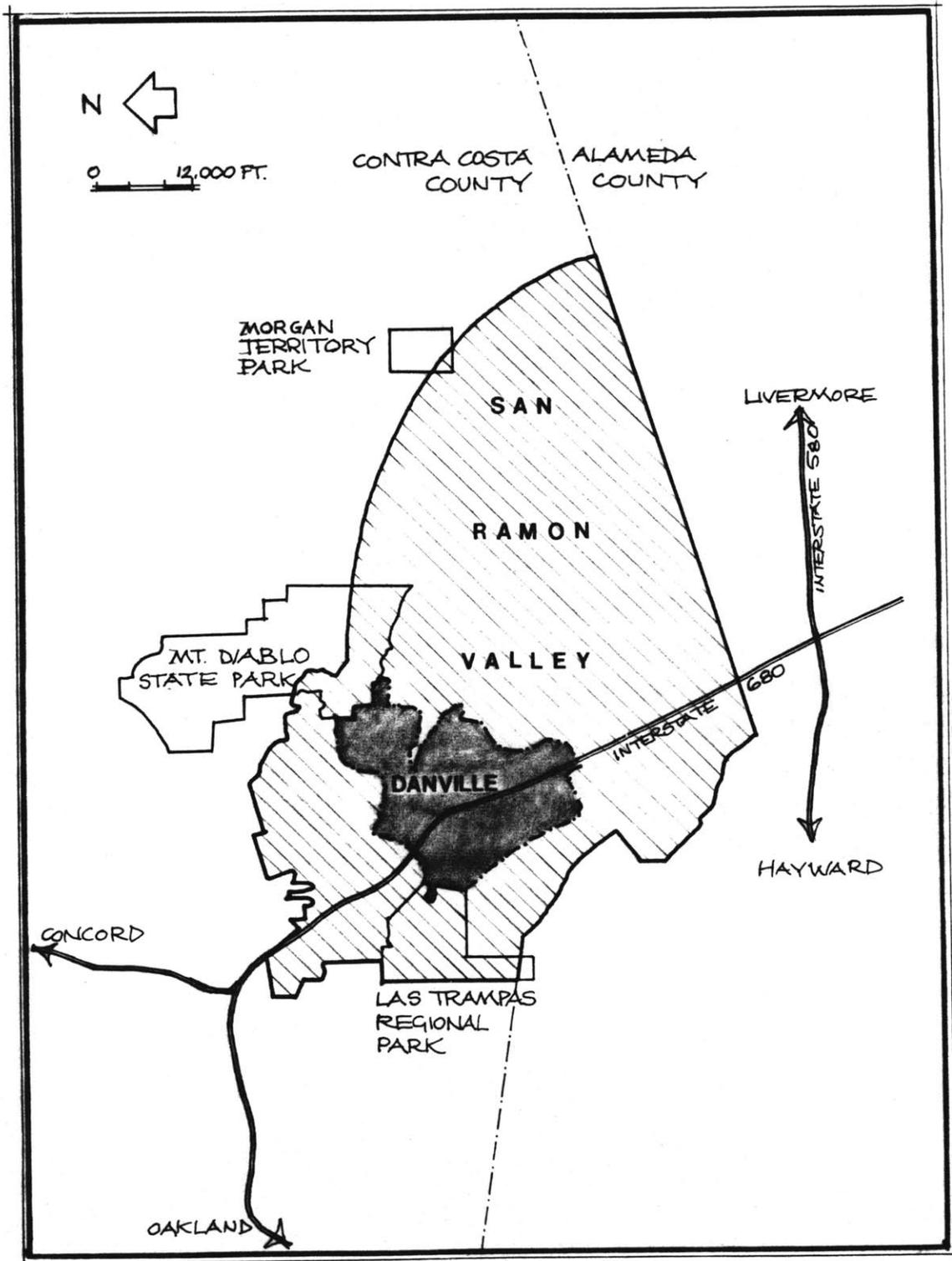
#### Schools(pp.53)

"School costs also affect an area's attractiveness. In short, school needs and comprehensive planning are very closely related. Their well-being is important to the well-being of the community."

#### Roads

For years there has been conflict between those persons who would improve portions of the road and those who would preserve its existing tree-lined character. Portions of this road have been improved to carry heavier traffic, while other sections remain narrow and rural. (This passage refers to Danville Blvd., Hartz Ave., and San Ramon Valley Blvd. which once formed the main route for through-traffic prior to completion of the freeway. It is still an important road, and connects all the major commercial areas in the Valley.)

Source: San Ramon Valley Area General Plan (1977)



MAP 3. CASE COMMUNITY: DANVILLE

### Case Community 3: Corte Madera

#### Facts and Figures:

Population: 8,264(1980), 8,464(1970)

Ethnic composition: 94.1% white, 3.7% Asian, 0.9% black. (1980 Census)  
1970 Census - 97.3% white, and less than 0.4% black.

Housing Units: 3,395 DU (small increase from 1970; single family units 2,718, multi-family units 601 DU, second units in single-family homes 76) 17 households receive rental subsidies; 677 rental units plus single family rental. Older houses are smaller.  
Almost all housing proposals since 1980 have been for condominium developments.

Household size: # of person/household = 2.46 persons (1980), 2.95 persons (1970); primarily as the result of a declining proportion of school age children in the population. An additional, less significant factor was the general lifestyle preference for smaller households.

Occupations: professional, technical or managerial = over 42%, clerical or sales = 33%, blue collar = 25%

Growth experience: 1950-60 rapid expansion; greatest growth;  
1970-80 equal to the low County-wide average  
It is estimated that the city will be 96% built out by 1985.

Corte Madera, Marin County, is located north of San Francisco across the Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge. In the east it borders a large marsh land, while the Corte Madera Creek-Canal borders it on the north, and ridges and hills encompass both the western and southern sections of the town (see Map 4) The area has significant visual amenities, as do many other Marin County communities around the Bay.

Corte Madera is a small town with a distinct neighborhood orientation. With State Highway 101 running through the town, access to the San Francisco employment and cultural center is quite convenient.

According to the 1980 US Census the median household income in Corte Madera is \$30,218, higher than the county median, although 11.3% of the

**APPENDIX B-3**

households have an income below \$10,000.

The town has experienced a decline in school-age children.

While the majority of housing is of the single family type, it is estimated that a quarter of the housing stock consists of multi-family units, and one third rental units. Virtually all new construction is of multi-family ownership units(condominiums).

Corte Madera experienced its greatest growth from 1950 to 1960, but in the next decade(1960-70) proved to be a stable community. Fifty-six percent of the homeowners had lived in their homes at least 6 years at the time of the 1970 Census, and today there are many old houses that need rehabilitation.

During the last decade(1970-80), actual population decreased by 200 to a total of 8,264 residents, according to the U.S. Census. According to the Housing Element of Corte Madera the town "will soon be almost entirely built out." Most of the remaining large parcels of land are scheduled to be developed in the near future, but have severe environmental constraints such as steep slopes, poor access over substandard roads, low water pressure, and high landslide potential. Flat sites also have severe constraints because almost all are underlain by Bay mud and are within the floodplain. Many existing houses have suffered damage due to flooding and severe structural damage due to differential settlement.

Although Corte Madera does not have a formal growth control system, it might well be regarded as a defacto growth controlled community. The

**APPENDIX B-3**

town down-zoned much vacant land in 1978, and its land use regulations are intended to preserve community character and keep density low.

The Corte Madera Board of Design and Adjustments functions as a design review board similar to those in growth controlled communities. It encourages development reflecting high architectural standards which complement the town's natural environment.

Developers in 1981 were required to fund any substantial off-site improvements needed to serve their projects. These include traffic and drainage improvements and improvements to waste water treatment facilities. The Uniform Building Code confirms to the engineering standards set by Marin County. The town also has a park land dedication ordinance.

#### Corte Madera Housing Element(1981)

Goals:"The maintenance of both high standards of quality for the natural and man-made environment for all residential developments, and a sense of community identification through the preservation of the wooded character of the Town and the natural appearance of the surrounding hillsides and ridges."

"The expansion of affordable housing opportunities." "The promotion of equal housing opportunity for all citizens". (pp. 1, 2)

Affordable rehabilitation financing should be made available to low and moderate income homeowners. Many old houses need repair(over 700 DU over 30 years old). Owners of such homes could be forced to sell their property and be displaced from the Lower Ross Valley.

**Affordable housing strategy:**

Citizen input - Citizens Housing Committee

Second unit ordinance: Liberalized Second Unit Ordinance may produce additional rental units (p.19, p.47)

Commercial zone and industrial zone may accomodate residential uses

School sites to be opened to residential uses

Encourage smaller unit size

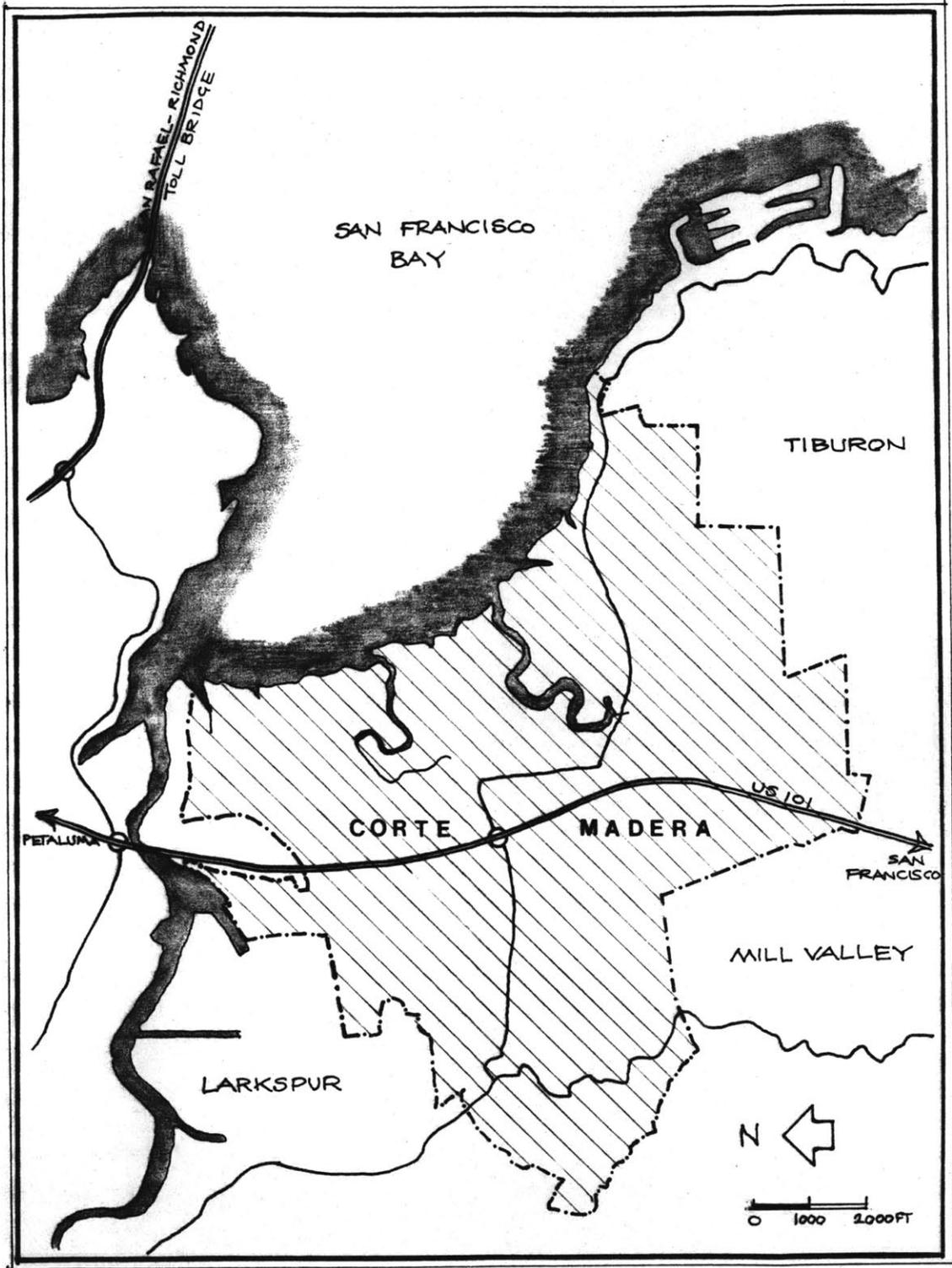
Inclusionary zoning: Inclusionary Housing Policy (p.47); in proposals including 10 or more units, 10% should be low or moderate income housing.

Density increase not effective because of severe environmental constraints (p.40). Environmental constraints of sites - steep hill(slopes over 20-50%); landslide potential.

**According to the study by Dowall(1981):**

In 1978 much vacant land was downzoned. The town is trying to preserve its character and keep density low.

Citizens are concerned about the conversion of open space, regional shopping centers, and new residential development.



MAP 4. CASE COMMUNITY: CORTE MADERA

CITY OF BELMONT  
ORDINANCE NO. 659  
INITIATIVE ORDINANCE MEASURE A  
THE CITIZENS INITIATIVE FOR ORDERLY GROWTH

An ordinance to control the issuance of building permits for new residential construction; to create a program by which permit applications will be evaluated; and to assure continual public review by the City Council.

THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF BELMONT HEREBY FIND AND DECLARE THAT IT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CITY OF BELMONT, IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND GENERAL WELFARE OF THE CITY:

A) To control the rate of new residential growth within the City by establishing an annual maximum of new dwelling units authorized by any building permit approval through 1990 at 56 units per year, thus bringing Belmont's population growth into general consonance with the city's General Plan. Exempted from this are redevelopment projects replacing units on a one for one basis. Construction of fifty six (56) new dwelling units a year will provide for a continuous supply of new housing and at the same time will enable the City to more efficiently provide adequate service levels.

B) To establish a program by which applications for building permits may be evaluated, and permits allotted, in line with established community goals.

C) To assure a semi-annual review of the General Plan, and it's implementation through this ordinance, and all other applicable ordinances, at a public hearing.

ACCORDINGLY, THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF BELMONT DO ENACT THE FOLLOWING:

SECTION 1. During each calendar year, to and including 1990, the number of new dwelling units authorized by building permit approval shall not exceed fifty six (56) units. However, redevelopment of units on a one for one basis shall not be counted or considered as dwelling units for the purposes of this ordinance. The number of building permits to be issued during calendar year 1979 for new residential dwelling units shall not exceed the greater of:

A) Fifty six dwelling units or,

B) The number of permits issued between January 1, 1979, and the effective date of this ordinance.

SECTION 2. Commencing on the effective date of this ordinance, or as soon as is practicably possible, the City Council shall establish a program by which applications for building permits shall be evaluated. The permit evaluation and allotment program shall consider, but is not limited to, the following:

A) The ability of the Belmont School District to absorb the children expected to inhabit the proposed development;

B) The ability of the Belmont Water District to meet the needs of the proposed project;

C) The ability of the Sanitary Sewer Treatment and Distribution Plant to dispose of the waste of the proposed project without system extensions or capacity increases beyond those which the developer agrees to provide;

D) The ability of the Storm Drainage System to adequately dispose of the surface runoff of the proposed development;

E) The ability of the Community to provide adequate fire protection for the proposed project;

F) The ability of the Belmont Police Department to provide adequate protection for the proposed project;

G) The contribution of open space and/or recreational facilities for public use;

H) The ability of the streets to handle the traffic of the proposed development;

I) The topography of the land in relation to slope, required excavation, and the potential for earth movement;

J) The quality of design and construction in terms of size, style, and height, and the relation of the project to the surrounding area;

K) The provision for landscaping to replace any removed during construction, and to prevent the deterioration and loss of loose topsoil.

L) Particular consideration shall be given to development which distributes growth evenly throughout the city.

SECTION 3. Commencing on the effective date of this ordinance, the City Council shall hold at least two public hearings during each calendar year to review the implementation of the General Plan through this ordinance, and all other applicable ordinances.

SECTION 4. This ordinance may be amended or repealed by a majority of voters voting at a City election.

SECTION 5. This ordinance shall become effective pursuant to Section 4013 of the California Election Code, and shall remain in full force and effect through December 31, 1990.

SECTION 6. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable. If any section of this ordinance is held to be unconstitutional, invalid, or void, the remainder of this ordinance and the application thereof to other persons and circumstances shall not be affected.

Adopted by vote of the electorate of the City of Belmont by Special Election held on July 17, 1979, as declared by Belmont City Council Resolution No. 5117 following canvass of returns at a Adjourned Meeting of the Belmont City Council on July 24, 1979.

James W. McLaughlin  
Belmont City Clerk

## **Pretest Surveys**

Before conducting the main survey - a case study of 3 communities - two separate preliminary surveys were done to test the feasibility of my survey design.

### **1. Pretest Interviews**

#### **Purposes:**

The main purposes of the pretest interviews are; 1) to familiarize me with variations in physical and social characteristics of different suburban communities in the Bay Area; 2) to test the clarity of some terms to be used in the questionnaire so that the wording will be easily understood by the lay respondents; and 3) to learn, from the way interviewees react to different kinds of questions and subjects, the level of sensitivity involved. Eleven residents in nine different suburban communities of the Bay Area were interviewed. The interviews were open-ended and spontaneous in nature rather than following the standard format of a list of questions. The topic of discussion centered around what was meant by preserving or maintaining "community character", and that feelings residents had about community environmental changes associated with growth.

#### **Sample(Interviewees) Selection:**

Eleven personal interviews of suburban residents in nine different suburbs of the San Francisco Bay Area were conducted. Since the size of the sample is very small and a statistical analysis was not intended for this pretest interview, selection of interviewees was mainly based on the following criteria; 1) geographical variations in their places of residence; 2) identity of race (white), and sex(female), and similarity in socio-economic classes(middle to upper-middle class) and occupation (preferably not those who are in the profession of architecture, planning, landscape architecture etc. but a "housewife type"); and 3) variations in the tenure of residency.

Geographical distribution of the interviewees is shown on the Map 5. The communities where the interviewees live range from the flat and spread-out(e.g. San Jose), to in-land(valley) areas surrounded by grassy hills(e.g. Danville, Dublin, Lafayette), woodsy in-land hillside(e.g. Millvalley, Saratoga), and Bayside backed by hills(e.g. Palo Alto, San Bruno), to the peninsula (e.g. Tiburon) with its spectacular view of all the major San Francisco amenities - Ocean, Bay, Golden Gate Bridge, Angel State island, Mt. Tamalpais, East Bay mountains and cityscapes, and San Francisco downtown skyline. Tenure of residency among the interviewees varies from 1 year to 30 years. About one third of the respondents have lived at their present address for less than 4 years, another one third for up to 15 years, and the rest for 20 to 30 years.

**Format of Interview and Questions Asked:** This pretest interview was intended to be as flexible and spontaneous as possible. Although I intentionally tried various ways of asking the same questions to the different interviewees, I set a few basic guidelines for the essential

content of the interviews. It was designed so that all the respondents should be given at least one question relating to each of the main points of investigation: a) personal definition of "community character"; b) perceived environmental changes in her community; c) sense of control and level of participation in local land use affairs. I prepared several different questions for each of these points, and varied the order and the combination of questions depending on how the conversation flowed. In the earlier interviews of this pretest survey, I centered my investigation on residents' definition of community character, the vocabulary they use to describe important environmental qualities in their suburban communities, and the relative importance of maintaining such qualities and the feelings residents have about environmental change resulting from growth. Later, with more knowledge of the range of environmental qualities people are commonly concerned about, I posed more specific questions, such as why higher density or type of perspective residents is such an important concern to them. The length of interview varied from 40 minutes to 70 minutes and so accordingly did the details of responses and the number of questions for each interviewee.

## 2. Pretest Mail Survey

Before the final mail-out survey was conducted in the three case communities, the feasibility of the survey design was tested on a smaller scale - one hundred samples instead of seven hundred fifty as in the final survey - in one Bay Area suburban community. This survey was intended to test whether the questions could be correctly understood by the respondents, and whether the design of the questionnaire would produce useful data for analysis, and also to determine the probable rate of response for this type of questionnaire.

Since this survey did not require statistical analysis, the area where the questionnaires were distributed was kept as compact as possible for practical reasons. The neighborhood called Lucas Valley, which occupies roughly two census tracts in northern San Rafael, Marin County, was selected as the case area mainly because the area's ethnic composition is approximately the same as that of the Marin County average, because it's income level is somewhat (about 30%) higher than County average, and partially because I am familiar with this neighborhood from previous field research experience. All the street names which fall into the two census tracts were obtained from the map overlay, and then used in to the random selection of one hundred samples from the Marin County telephone directory. Since only one attempt was made for this mail survey the rate of response was, as expected, low(11%).

**Design of Questionnaire:** The questionnaire consists of two letters of introduction, one from the author and the other from her academic adviser, a four-page questionnaire, a sheet of illustrative diagrams for each of three development models, and the stamped return envelope. The questions are grouped in two parts. Part I asks questions related to the research subject, and consists of twelve questions of which three are free-descriptive type and the rest multiple-choice questions. Part II asks for data on the respondent's background and consists of eleven

multiple-choice questions. This questionnaire format and the questions asked are almost identical to those used in the final survey, which incorporates some minor improvements. One question which was asked in the pretest survey but was eliminated later attempted to identify if there would be a shift in the order of respondents' preference for the three development models depending on how far the development was to be located from their homes.

### 3. Follow-up Interviews:

At the end of the questions in Part II of the pretest mail survey respondents were asked to put down their telephone numbers if they would be willing to respond to further questions in a personal interview. As a result seven people participated in interviews, which were taped with their permission. These interviews were used mainly to test the interview format designed for the final survey, and also to help in any necessary revision of the design of the questionnaire itself.

### **Summary Results of Pretest Survey**

#### 1. Definition of community character derived from the synthesis of the responses is as follows:

- a) Natural landscape elements / attributes : open space; topography(hills or plains); views of wildlife, bodies of water, mountains, or just "greens."
- b) Social elements : type of people(age group, education, profession, income level, etc.); school quality; cleanliness of streets (level of maintenance); lifestyle (water-oriented, ranching, family-oriented, etc.); friendliness of community.
- c) Phase in growth of community: "not heavily developed"; small size of community(small town atmosphere); rural atmosphere.
- d) Location factors : proximity to employment, cultural centers, scenic areas, convenience (shopping, banks, post office etc.)
- e) Design factors : variety of house design and types; privacy between houses; spaciousness; quality of town center; recreation facilities.
- f) Climatic factors : pleasant climate; good weather year-round.

#### 2. Perceived Environmental Changes

- a) Physical changes : more traffic; more homes; many of offices and commercials; smog; disappearance of some nice shops and demolition of nice old buildings in older downtown area.
- b) Social changes : increase in population; change in age mixture of neighbourhood; increase in tourists; increase in immigrants and refugees.

- c) Activity changes : freeway congestion; less security; more crime; more cultural activities in proximity.
- d) Institutional changes: flexibility in building code; innovation in energy-saving construction methods; inflexibility of environmental regulations (e.g. Medfly problems)
- e) Behaviour changes : problems with teen-agers (car-racing, drugs, etc.); poorer home maintenance by neighbours (caused by absentee owners)

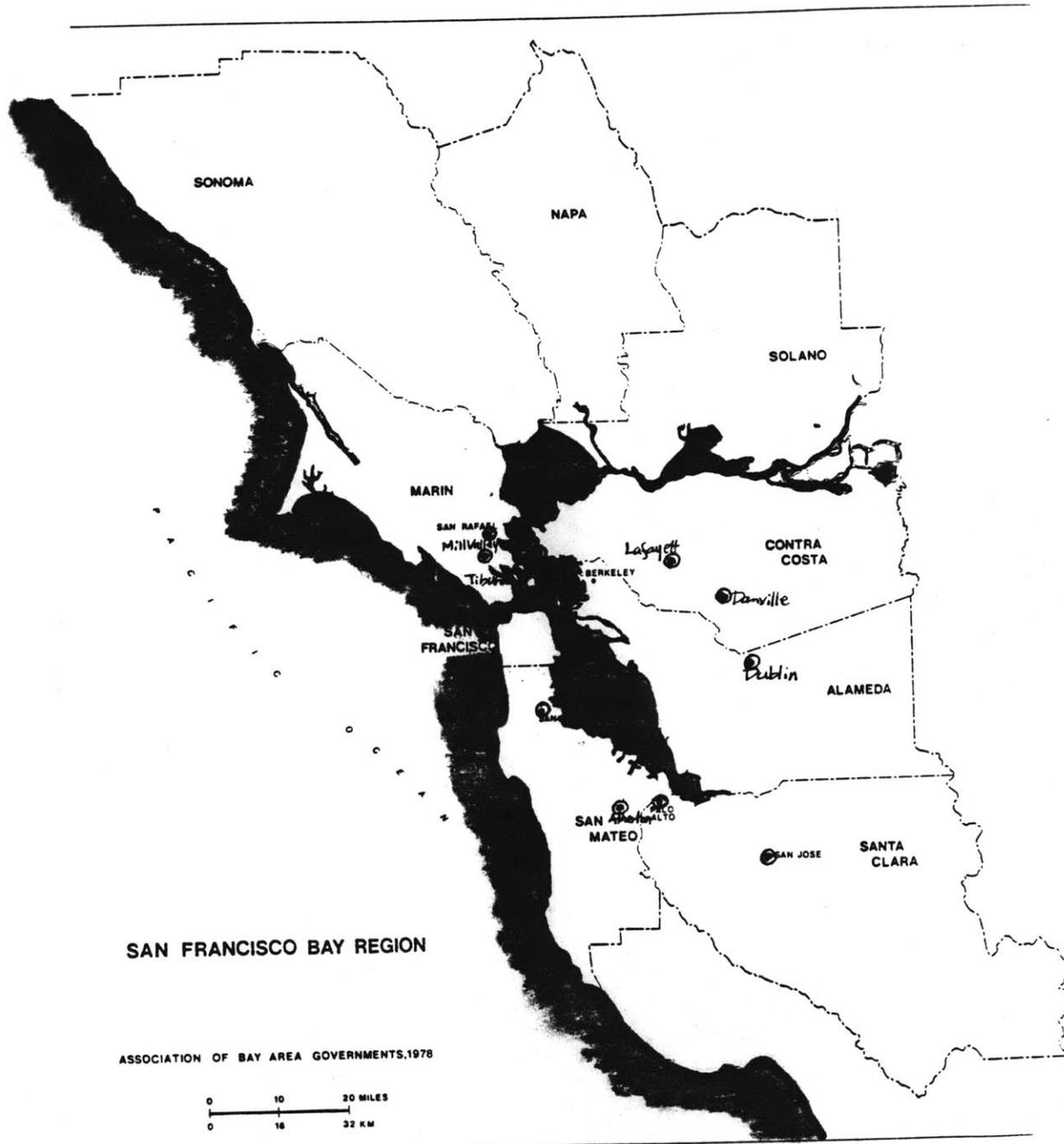
### 3. Feelings About Those Changes

- a) Fear : "People are afraid of changes but don't know what they are really afraid of"; fear for crime, "quality" of people moving in, highrises, condos, and apartments.
- b) Disapproval : "People like the way it is"; "don't like to see trees go down and buildings go up"; "have to plan outings according to traffic volume".
- c) Predictability : "Because we knew that they were going to build them .... it didn't bother us that much."
- d) Positive : "It's convenient to have nice shopping areas near by"; "I like the new mixture of different age groups in our community."

4. Perceptions of higher density housing, apartments, and low-income housing:

	High density housing	Apartments	Low-income housing
Conditional Acceptance	Quality is important (also attractiveness; siting and volume; buffers)	Size is important;	Location is important (also quality of development)
Tolerance	"We already have them somewhere in our community ...."		
	Awareness of need for housing;		Awareness of need; guilty conscience; "required by law; "government will do whatever they wish anyway";
Negative	Traffic increase; people are self-contained; less friendliness	Traffic increase; people are unstable types;	Image maintenance affected; low-income people; crime; property values go down
Positive	none	none	"Good to have a diversity of population."

MAP 5. LOCATION OF PRETEST INTERVIEWS





JOINT CENTER FOR URBAN STUDIES of MIT and Harvard University  
53 Church Street Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138 (617) 495-7908

To the residents of **Bay Area suburban communities**

Are you concerned about the **quality of environment** and the way it is **changing** in your community? That is the subject of our research, and I am writing to request your assistance.

The purpose of the research is to understand suburban **residents' perceptions and feelings** about the environmental quality of their community and environmental changes which often accompany community growth.

Today, after more than a decade or so when environmentalism received an enthusiastic support from the general public, a need for affordable housing has become a serious problem, which conflicts with many local environmental or development policies.

Critics of the widespread practice of limiting growth suggest that the regional housing crisis is the result of suburban elitists' egotism for monopolizing the high-quality environment without paying the social costs of its preservation to the rest of the society. Often "the citizen opinion" are represented by those of the vociferous groups with the special interests or the interpretation of them by the planning officials. Our particular interest lies in **your** point of view as an individual and a resident.

Why is it important for you and your community to control the quality, location and timing of community growth? How much regulation, or levels of control would give you enough "sense of control" or "sense of security" over the fate of your community environment?

The purpose of this research is to help improve community planning methods to be more **sensitive to the felt needs** of many residents of suburban communities. Needless to say, the research has no connection with any private business interest. Your responses will be kept strictly **anonymous**. I would appreciate your answering and returning the enclosed survey form to help in this study. Please answer all the questions and mail in the enclosed envelop as soon as you can. Any question may be directed to:

Joint Center for Urban Studies of MIT and Harvard University

Field Office  
2411 Russell St.  
Berkeley, Ca. 94705  
Tel:(415) 843-2368

Thank you very much for your consideration and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Very Truly yours,

---

Reiko Habe  
Study Director

 JOINT CENTER FOR URBAN STUDIES of MIT and Harvard University  
53 Church Street Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138 (617) 495-7908

Dear Corte Madera Residents:

A few weeks ago I wrote to ask your help on an important research study of residents' attitudes and reactions to environmental change. We already know what planners, government officials, as well as real estate and housing industry representatives think. But we need to know a lot more about what the residents of suburban Bay Area communities think. That's where you come in.

We chose Corte Madera as one of the three Bay Area suburban communities to be studied because they provide a contrast in community types, and we then drew a scientific sample of the residents of the three communities and **your household** happened to fall into that sample. Our sample is designed to provide a representative cross-section of these communities. That's why no one can substitute for **you**. Because we feel this research project is important and because we want everyone in our sample to have every chance to be heard, I am writing once more to make a special plea for your help. Your answers are vital to the accurate interpretation of our survey and analysis, and I look forward to your helpful participation.

If you recently mailed your completed questionnaire, let me express my sincere appreciation for your interest and cooperation. Just in case you have not yet completed yours and have misplaced the first copy, I am enclosing another questionnaire. Please take the ten or fifteen minutes needed to fill out this questionnaire and send it to us **as soon as you can**. Or if you would prefer being interviewed, please give us your phone number on the last page of the questionnaire and return it to us now.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

---

Reiko Habe  
Study Director

### QUESTIONS : PART I

? Please review all three of the illustrative summary sheets for **Development Type "A"**, **Development Type "B"**, **Development Type "C"** and answer the following questions.

1 Generally speaking do you feel that this type of development is; (please check one of a,b,c,d,e for each Development Type)

Type "A"	Type "B"	Type "C"	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) welcome in your community?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) acceptable somewhere in your community?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c) acceptable, subject to certain conditions ?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	d) not acceptable/objectionable?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	e) threatening to your community?

2 Which do you think is(are) the most important factor(s) to take into account in deciding whether to accept or reject this type of development?

Type "A"	Type "B"	Type "C"	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) LAND
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) DENSITY
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c) HOUSING TYPE
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	d) PEOPLE
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	e) Other (Please specify) _____

3 Do you think that this type of development would affect the present **character of your community**? Please check only one statement in each column that most closely resembles your own feeling about each type of development.

Type "A"	Type "B"	Type "C"	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a) This type of development will <b>not</b> affect the character of our community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b) This type of development will <b>adversely</b> affect the character of our community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c) This type of development will <b>improve</b> the character of our community.

4 Some residents of suburban communities in the Bay Area are concerned about maintaining "community character" and feel it is important to preserve this through legislative means such as growth control measures. Are there characteristics of your community that you feel should be protected? If so, please mention the most important aspects below.

5 Has there been in your community an example of residential development that you consider inappropriate or out-of-character? If so, please indicate what kind of development it is and where it is located.

6 Please rate the items in the following list, according to their importance as criteria that should be taken into account when evaluating development proposals such as those above.

5	4	3	2	1	
MOST				LEAST	
Important				Important	a) Increase in the number of new residents should be kept as small as possible.
----- ----- ----- -----					b) Quality of buildings should not be lower than the standard of the existing ones.
----- ----- ----- -----					c) A new development should encourage greater diversity of residents in our community.
----- ----- ----- -----					d) A new development should seek to maintain the existing socio-economic mix of residents.
----- ----- ----- -----					e) Overall density of a new development should be lower or similar to adjacent areas.
5	4	3	2	1	f) Alteration of the natural elements (e.g. open space, trees, wildlife, etc.) of the community should be minimized.
----- ----- ----- -----					g) Appearance of a new development should be in keeping with the present image of our community.
----- ----- ----- -----					h) A new development should not lead to an excessive increase of school-age children.
----- ----- ----- -----					i) A new development should not generate an excessive increase in traffic on local street.
5	4	3	2	1	k) Other (Please add other important criterion) _____
MOST				LEAST	
Important				Important	

7

Now please imagine that you are asked to conclude your evaluation and make a recommendation to the city council. Based on the summary description of these three proposals, please **rank them in order of acceptability**.  
(ex. 1 = most acceptable 3 = least acceptable)

- a) Development Type "A"
- b) Development Type "B"
- c) Development Type "C"

8

Now we would like you to tell us something about your views on the **changes** that might have taken place in your community environment. What kind of **environmental changes** have you been aware of since you moved to your present community? And how do you feel about those changes?

9

How do you regard the community's ability to **control** future environmental changes? Please check one.

- a) The continued deterioration of the environment is more or less inevitable and largely beyond control.
- b) Some changes are inevitable, but we should be able to influence the rate and type of change.
- c) We can keep growth and change in our community under control, and can preserve its essential character.

10

How often do you attend public meetings on land-use issues?

- a) many times     b) often     c) a few times     d) rarely     e) never
- f) only when the proposed development is located near my home.

**Continue to next pages please!**

11) What **level of control** do you think your community needs in order to monitor changes of community environmental qualities? Please check one of the following that most closely represents your view.

- a) The community needs "growth control" measures with strict regulations over the quality, location, and timing of new development.
- b) Conventional zoning, other existing regulations, or electing "right" city councilors can achieve most of our goals to protect the quality of the environment, and we do not need "growth control" measures.
- c) We have more than enough environmental regulations. The community should balance environmental objectives with other social needs and concerns.

12) What are the negative aspects of "**high density**" development that you feel most objectionable? Please check any of the following that represent your feelings.

- a) an excessive increase in low income residents.
- b) an excessive increase in minority group residents.
- c) attracts people with few or no children.
- d) includes large scale buildings that look oppressive.
- e) contributes to school overcrowding.
- f) generates excessive traffic on local roads.
- g) harms the prestige and good image of the community.
- h) other (please explain)\_\_\_\_\_

!!?) Please add any other general comments on community growth issues.

### QUESTIONS : PART II

**?** Now we would like to know something about your **background** and the **places** you have lived in. Please answer all questions by marking an **X** in the appropriate boxes.

**1** Are you ;             male, or             female?

**2** How old are you?             a) 0 - 19 years old             b) 20 - 29 years old  
    c) 30 - 45 years old             d) 46 - 59 years old  
    e) 60 years old and over

**3** What is the composition of your household? And how many people in each category? (Please write appropriate number in each box provided.)

- a) a single person(over 20 years old)
- b) married couple
- c) unmarried couple
- d) children (under 20 years old)
- e) retired person
- f) widowed person

**4** What is your race?             a) Black             b) White             c) Asian  
    d) Hispanic             e) Other

**5** Approximately what is the current annual income of your household (from all sources)?

- a) Significantly higher (more than twice as median income)
- b) Somewhat higher
- c) Average
- d) Somewhat lower
- e) Much lower (less than half of average income)

1978 Joint Tax Return(median)	
San Mateo Co.	\$ 24,750.-
Contra Costa Co.	\$ 24,841.-
Marin Co.	\$ 20,862.-

**6** How many years have you lived at your present address?

- a) less than a year             b) 1 - 3 years
- c) 4 - 9 years             d) more than 10 years

7) What kind of dwelling unit do you live in?

- a) single-family house       b) multi-family house  
 c) townhouse                       d) apartment  
 e) condominium                       f) mobile home  
 g) other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8) Do you own it or rent it?

- a) own                                       b) rent

9) What kind of community did you spend most of your childhood in?

- a) big city                                       b) medium to small size city  
 c) suburb                                       d) small town                                       e) rural area

10) Where do you work?

- a) within.....your City...                       b) San Francisco  
 c) another city in .....your...County                       d) another county  
 e) no one particular place -                       f) do not work  
travel frequently on business

11) Is your job related to; building industry, real estate, or local merchandise?

- a) Yes                                       b) No

12) How often do you go to the city(San Francisco) or other large urban areas for the purposes unrelated to your job?

- a) once a week or more                       c) once a month  
 b) a few times a month                       d) once every few months  
or less often

-----THE END-----

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Will you be willing to let yourself be **interviewed**?

We would appreciate the opportunity to interview you to understand further the issue and your environmental need.

The interview itself will take about half an hour. If you could please leave your telephone number below so that you will be contacted by telephone to arrange an appointment that is as convenient as possible.

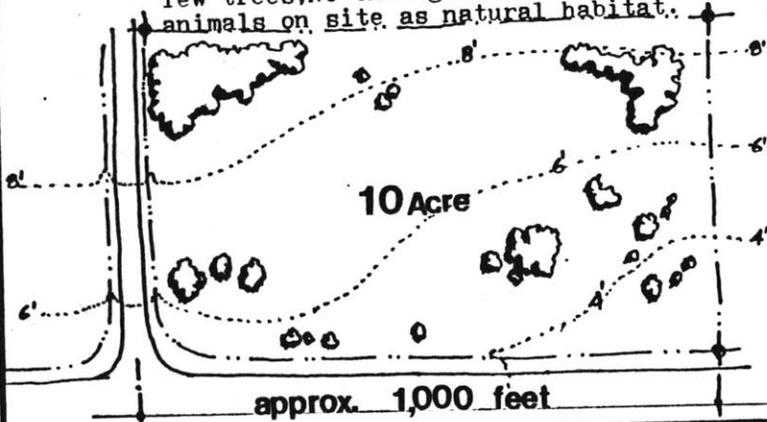
Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

# DEVELOPMENT TYPE : A

Note: This is the Illustrative Summary Sheet to be used in answering questions PART I, #1 - 7.

## LAND

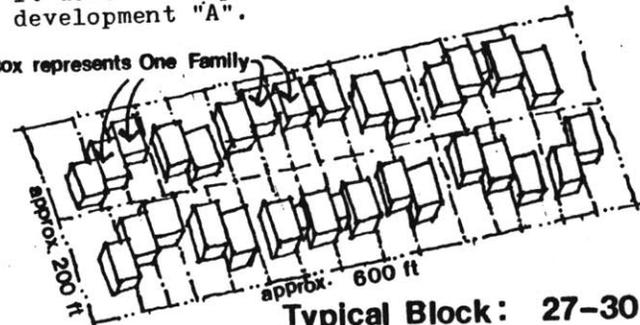
10-acre site on the relatively flat land; Sparsely vegetated with grass, shrubs and few trees; No endangered species nor other animals on site as natural habitat.



## DENSITY : 10 Dwelling Units/Acre

Note: Layout below only illustrates designated density (10 D.U./Acre) on typical block. It does not represent the layout of the development "A".

One Box represents One Family



Typical Block: 27-30 D.U.

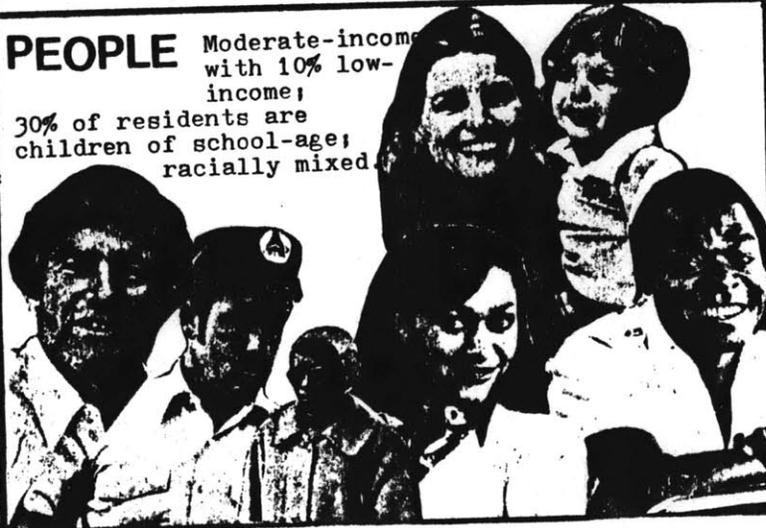
## HOUSING TYPE

Multi-family homes; 2-storey high wooden structures



## PEOPLE

Moderate-income with 10% low-income; 30% of residents are children of school-age; racially mixed.



# DEVELOPMENT TYPE : B

Note: This is the Illustrative Summary Sheet to be used in answering questions PART I, #1 - 7.

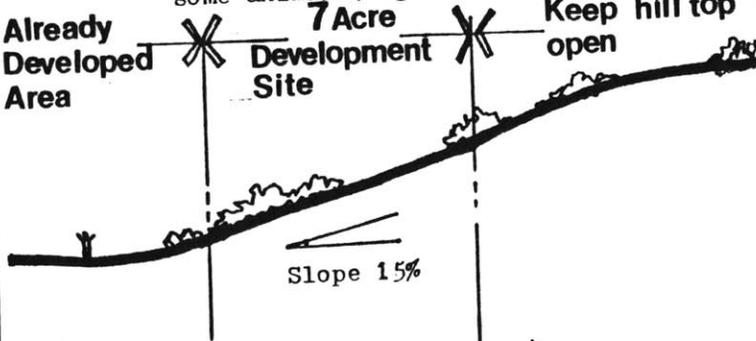
## LAND

7-acre site on the slope of a hill; Moderately vegetated with grass, shrubs, and some large/medium trees; There are some animals (e.g. birds, chipmunks).

Already Developed Area

7 Acre Development Site

Keep hill top open

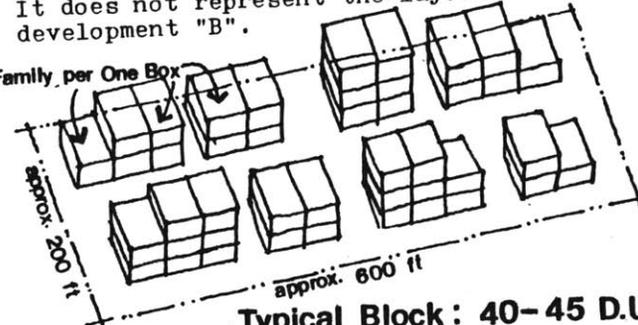


(No erosion problem)

## DENSITY : 15 Dwelling Units/Acre

Note: Layout below only illustrates designated density (15 D.U./Acre) on typical block. It does not represent the layout of the development "B".

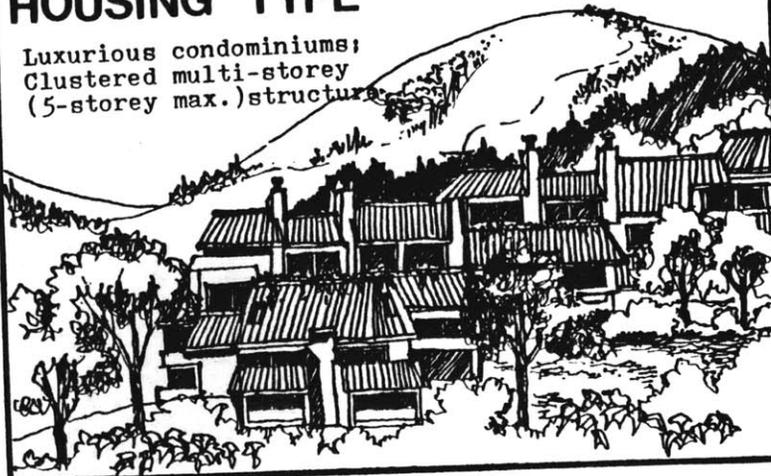
One Family per One Box



Typical Block : 40-45 D.U.

## HOUSING TYPE

Luxurious condominiums; Clustered multi-storey (5-storey max.) structures



## PEOPLE

Upper-middle /middle-income;

majority is white; very few children; mainly retired, singles or young couples



# DEVELOPMENT TYPE : C

Note: This is the Illustrative Summary Sheet to be used in answering questions PART I, #1 - 7.

## LAND

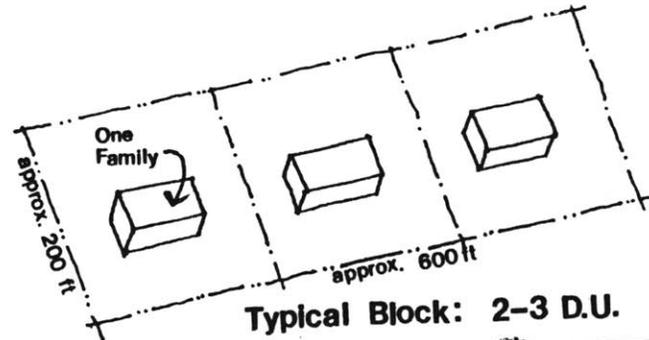
70-Acre site on the top of a hill; Heavily vegetated with grass, shrubs, and many large trees; No endangered species but there are some birds, chipmunks, snakes, rabbits, etc as natural habitat of the area.

**70 Acre**

Elevation approx. 300 feet



## DENSITY : 1-2 Dwelling Units/Acre



## HOUSING TYPE

Large single-family homes

## PEOPLE

High-income, majority is white; some school-age children.



**! Please read this before answering the questions!**

**What kind of development is acceptable in your community?**

Imagine that you are asked by the city council to **evaluate three proposals** for residential development in your community. These are shown as **Development Type "A", "B", and "C"** on the illustrative summary sheets attached.

These proposals are all fictitious and this survey bears no relation to any specific project which may be considered in your community. We are only interested in what **you**, as an individual resident, **honestly feel** about different types of environmental changes.

For the purposes of this questionnaire we would like you to make the following **assumptions**.

1. There is a great **need for housing**.
2. Your community normally accepts a limited amount of new development each year although this year's selection has not yet been made.
3. There are at least **three sites in your community**, which might be suitable for residential development. They are; a 10-acre site on flat land, a 7-acre site on a hill slope, and a 70-acre hill-top property as illustrated in the summary proposals.
4. Each of the three development, "A", "B", "C", are expected to add about **300 residents** to your community.

**NOTE: Please mail back only QUESTIONS: Part I & II (page 1 - 6)**

## Survey of the Bay Area Government Planners

Dear Sir,

This is to request your kind assistance in providing necessary information for the research I have been conducting in San Francisco Bay Area suburbs. The subject of research is growth control in the suburban communities of the Bay Area approached from the perspective of environmental psychology. Our special interest lies in the residents' perception of community environmental changes caused mainly by new residential development. The main part of survey - several hundred mail-out questionnaires to three communities - has nearly been completed. In addition, we need opinions from planners in the cities and counties of the Bay Area. Could you or one of your staff who is familiar with community attitudes toward growth in your area, kindly take the time to answer briefly the following questions?

There has been a wide-spread belief that growth control, or the opposition to new residential development in particular, is a tactic by wealthy suburban communities to prevent lower income families from moving into their neighborhoods.

- 1) Has there been, in any area of your jurisdiction, a case which involved a moderate or lower-income neighbourhood (or citizen group) opposing a new residential development proposal?
- 2) If so, how many such cases do you know of? Please describe one example case.
- 3) Your own view as a planner(not necessarily an official view) about suburban residents' psychological and behavioral reaction to community growth (caused by residential development) regardless of their socio-economic status.
- 4) Do you think that legislative measures for opening-up the suburbs would work even though there may be strong citizen opposition to it? What do you think would be the optimum solution for this growth control dilemma - a dilemma between regional housing needs and present suburban residents' desire for controlling growth?

Please use **the attached forms**, or additional sheets if you prefer, and return your answer at your earliest convenience to:

Joint Center for Urban Studies of MIT and Harvard University  
53 Church St.  
Cambridge, Ma. 02138

**ATTN:Reiko Habe**

Thank you very much for your cooperation.  
Yours sincerely,

Reiko Habe  
Study Director

5) Do you think that a community's attempt to control growth, particularly that of new residential development, is peculiar to the certain population group, the so-called "elitist" class?

.....Agree      .....Not necessarily so      .....Strongly disagree

Or, do you think that there is something more that attracts and motivates people of broader socio-economic classes to control growth in their communities? Why, in your view, do so many suburban residents favour growth control?

6) Do you think any legislative intervention by federal, state, or county government will work in order to "open-up" the growth-restricted suburbs ?

.....Yes      .....No      .....Don't Know

If so, what types of intervention might be most effective?

How effective do you think "inclusionary zoning" is for increasing affordable housing stock in the growth-restricted suburbs?

What do you think would be the optimum solution or strategy for this dilemma of growth control(or protection of environmental quality) vs housing need ?

7) Some critics of community growth control regard it as the main cause of inflation in housing prices in Bay Area suburbs. Do you agree with this view?

.....Agree      .....Not necessarily so      .....Strongly disagree

8) Critics also blame the long and complicated process for acquiring development permits as another factor in raising housing prices. Do you think that developers, when they come to the public hearings for the presentation of their proposals, are generally well-prepared to present information about their projects for evaluation by citizens?

.....Developers are generally well-prepared and give fairly comprehensive presentations to the citizens at public hearing meetings.

.....Developers are generally ill-prepared (intentionally or otherwise) for public review, which often damages their credibility in the eyes of the public and evokes negative evaluation by voters.

.....Other (please explain):

9) Any other comment on the issue:

**Area of Your Jurisdiction**

County:

City:

(If you are a City planner) Does your city have growth control ordinances or initiatives?

.....ordinance    .....initiative    .....under consideration

Median household income in 1980:

Ethnic composition of the population in 1980(% white, black,other):

-----\*\*-----

**Specific Questions**

1) Has there been, in your jurisdiction, a case which involved a lower or moderate-income neighbourhood opposing a new residential development?

.....Yes                    .....No

2) How many such cases have there been?    .....cases

3) What were the reasons for such opposition by the residents?

4) Could you take one such case and explain in more detail the context of the problem?

a) Name and socio-economic characteristics of the neighbourhood involved:

b) Type of development proposed and opposed:

c) Major reasons for opposition to the proposed development:

d) Outcome of final decision on the case:

e) Special issues/concerns involved in the case:

**Government Planner Survey:**  
County and City Planners of the San Francisco Bay Area

**Subject:** Cases of Lower or Moderate-income Neighborhood Opposing a New Residential Development

- Key:**
- 1) Name of community, and county
  - 2) Number of cases
  - 3) Reasons (general, not specific to any project) for resident opposition
  - 4-a) Socio-economic characteristics of the neighbourhood involved
  - 4-b) Type of development proposed and opposed
  - 4-c) Major reasons for opposition to the proposed development
  - 4-d) Outcome of final decision on the case
  - 4-e) Special issues/concerns involved in the case
- 

1) **Pittsburg, Contra Costa**

- 2) 2 cases.
- 3) too much density
- 4-a) blue collar, 1000 sq.ft home neighborhood - detached single family
- b) 87 unit condominium project on 4.7 acres
- c) increased density, crime, loss of privacy in rearyards
- d) approval with conditions to protect privacy
- e) project adjacent to existing 235 housing project with 100% Section 8 subsidy occupancies. Neighboring shopping center nearby completely vacant because of crime problems.

1) **Vacaville, Solano**

- 2) one case
- 3) Project proposed higher densities than existing neighbourhood. (attached single story housing in detached single family neighbourhood)
- 4-a) Callen Beared Street neighbourhood; neighbourhood is about 30 years old, blue collar working, many original residents dating back to early 1950's.
- b) Single story - zero lot line attached housing on 5,000 sq.ft. lots probably selling in the mid \$70,000's.
- c) see #3
- d) Project approved after considerable redesign by developer to lower density
- e) Traffic circulation through existing neighborhood, higher densities from existing neighborhood

1) **Novato, Marin**

- 2) no time to fill out questionnaire

1) **Pacifica, San Mateo**

- 2) approx. 10 cases
- 3) 1- want to save open space + hills; 2- Increase in traffic; 3- new development considered incompatible w/ surrounding neighborhood.
- 4-a) Shamrock Ranch - unincorporated County, Sunny Valley Condos in City; "Shamrock Ranch" has organized opposition to one particular project. It is from generally moderate income or low-income neighborhood.
  - b) 59 unit condo on vacant land adjacent to existing ranch. Ranch used for boarding dogs + cats + horses. Also cows. Agriculture planned.
  - c) 1 - Don't want development on vacant land.  
2 - Afraid of future complaints from condo owners about smell, dust, etc.. d) In court
  - e) One main group - "Friends of Pacifica" have organized several cases of opposition to new projects. "Shamrock Ranch" has organized opposition to one particular projects. Both are from generally moderate income or low income neighborhoods.

Other examples: 1) Friends of Pacifica organized out of "West Fairway Park", a coastal low + moderate income neighborhood. Their impetus was opposition to the "Moni Point" development - a proposal for 250 condos and commercial (including restaurants + convention center) on Moni Point - a highly visible vacant ridge + hill running into the ocean. Reasons for opposition were primarily environmental - value of open space, scenic qualities, endangered species, etc.. They didn't want development. Project was delayed + finally disapproved because of AB884 time limit problems. It's in court.

2) The same group is opposing condo units on a .84 acre site, also adjacent to their neighborhood. Original grounds were that a variance for a PUD was approved w/ insufficient findings. Court upheld challenge. Developer resubmitted with original R-1 zoning. Group continues to oppose because of "inconsistency of project" w/ neighborhood - new, attached housing in a neighborhood w/ older single family dwellings.

1) **Concord, Contra Costa**

- 2) 2 cases
- 3) Increased density would result in lowering value of their property, increased traffic would result from increased density, units proposed do not fit the character of the single family residences.
- 4-a) The neighborhood is all white with moderate income, perhaps some lower income but predominately moderate income families.
  - b) The proposal was a Planned Unit Development consisting of 159 residential units (80 apartments, 57 townhouses, 4 duplexes and 14 single family detached houses) on a 12 acre site.
  - c) Fear is that with increased density it will result in increased automobile traffic. In addition, there is a concern that once the unimproved dirt road which adjoins this development and which also fronts the homes where the most concern has been expressed, is improved, it will result in more traffic coming through the neighborhood.

- d) City Council overruled the appeal after the developer was agreeable to certain compromises, satisfying at least a part of the oppositions.
- e) The developer was providing low and moderate income housing through the use of a density bonus provision, with the assurance that the bonus units would be offered at a price agreed to with the City.

**1) El Cerrito, Alameda**

- 2) 3 cases in 3 years
- 3) density, traffic, design, loss of property value, opposition to subsidized housing
- 4-a) Neighborhood of approx. 500-750 pop. Predominantly white, single family dwellings, moderate income, many elderly in homes with no remaining mortgage.
  - b) 77 unit elderly housing project on an acre; Section 8 rent subsidies, 3 stories
  - c) density(77DU/acre in neighborhood of 8 DU/acre); design( 3 story bldg in neighborhood of single story dwellings); opposed to rent subsidies; perceived loss of property value
  - d) Neighborhood sued City, and won. No project.
  - e) 1- The issue in the lawsuit was whether the City could sell a parking lot(36 sp) developed with State Park grant funds. The City offered replacement parking, but the State Dept of Parks & Rec opposed relocation despite fact that State Housing Fin Agency was funding housing project. Court ruled that City could not sell parking lot without referendum.  
2- The neighborhood association was organizing a recall of 4 of 5 Council members.

**1) Richmond, Contra Costa**

- 2) ? cases
- 3) opposed any increase in density - now single family detached.
- 4-a) Iran Triangle neighborhood is opposed to anything other than single family detached - general fear of multi-family (even condos & planned unit developments ) fearing it will bring in undesirables.
  - b) multi-family condos in PUD
  - c) Fear of undesirable people moving in.
  - d) City want single family detached surrounding on old downtown area which is close to a BART station.

**1) Marin County**

- 2) 2 cases
- 3) Fear of change in community character, traffic
- 4-a) Santa Venetia - lower middle income unincorporated suburbia
  - b) Multi-family hillside development of highly innovative design. Would have been much higher average income.
  - c) Fear of change in community character, traffic, sewage disposal, and flooding problems.
  - d) Project denied - land purchased as open space by community.
  - e) Projects served as a catalyst for organizing the community.

1) **Brentwood, Contra, Costa**

- 2) several minor cases
- 3) Taking of prime ag land, impact on facilities, etc.
- 4-a) moderate
  - b) moderate income housing
  - c) Stated reason: use of prime ag land  
real reason: I have mine and now I don't want anyone else in the area.
  - d) annexation approved - development pending

1) **Gilroy, Santa Clara**

- 2) 3 -4 cases
- 3) noise, litter, visual blight
- 4-a) low - middle income (Liman- Ronan area)
  - b) apartments
  - c) noise, visual blight
  - d) pending

1) **San Leandro, Alameda**

- 2) 2-3 cases in last 6-8 years
- 3) Primarily traffic impacts, loss of previously open or low-intensity use area.
- 4-a) Washington Manor - moderate and above incomes, single family detached tract housing; blue collar - service - white collar mix.
  - b) "zero - lot line" single family detached in small lots
  - c) density, traffic, "character" of housing
  - d) approved, with density reduction (larger lots) of about 15%
  - e) Some worry that "different" type of housing would reduce value of nearby homes.

1) **Martinez, Contra Costa**

- 2) 6 cases
- 3) Property values, inconsistency w/ existing development, aesthetic concerns, privacy concerns, over crowding of neighborhood amenities (streets and parks)
- 4-a) middle income neighborhood, Holiday Highlands area
  - b) condominiums, (three story structure over covered parking)
  - c) Property values declining, loss of privacy, overcrowding of public services.
  - d) Project was approved
  - e) At Public Hearings some comments were made as to the type of resident which would occupy the new development.

1) **Alameda County**

- 2) ?
- 3) -
- 4-a) racial + economic balance - full spectrum

- 4-b) cluster, condo, S.F.R.
- c) inadequate roads, changing community appearance, speculation development
- d) approved development, lower density
- e) Minorities have achieved the "American dream" of a single family residences - concern that higher density or condo will lead to rental units - the type of neighborhood which they worked hard to leave.

**1) Albany, Alameda**

- 2) 1 case
- 3) open space(quasi-park)
- 4-a) Peralta - Nielson - moderate income
  - b) 10 unit PUD - 4 townhouses + 6 sfd
  - c) taking away neighborhood open space - area surrounded by rear yards of other houses.
  - d) approved
  - e) possible park acquisition - turned down by City Council; developer did not have deeded access to lots.

**1) Union City, Alameda**

- 2) 1 case
- 3) opposed rental and/or assisted housing
- 4-a) middle-income single family detached housing about 10 years age
  - b) Garden Apts
  - c) anti-rental - multi family development
  - d) project dropped with successful referendum against zoning
  - e) bias toward single-family home occupants

**1) Santa Cruz County**

- 2) 1 case
- 3) significant increase in density
- 4-a) Live Oak neighborhood. Low-moderate income, 95% white
  - b) 86 units Section 8 family
  - c) significant increase in density
  - d) project under construction
  - e) L/M housing was not the issue - change in neighborhood major focus

**1) Pleasanton, Alameda**

- 2) several cases
- 3) Too dense, increased traffic, and lowering of property value
- 4-a) Pleasanton Valley - middle to high income households
  - b) 50 unit apartment complex 100% federally subsidized
  - c) See #3
  - d) Planning Commission denied project
  - e) From a planner's perspective, the site was an ideal location. It was near shopping and transportation facilities. However, neighbors complained about increased traffic, poor design, and generally believed that the project was too dense. Some citizens also stressed that the complex would lower the value of property surrounding the proposed complex.

1) **Oakland, Alameda**

- 2) 4 or 5 cases
- 3) Intrusion of persons that do not have the interests of the neighborhood - persons that would be "different" from the families currently occupying the area - not nuclear family oriented, non property owners, overcrowding resulting.
- 4-a) Moderate and low income Spanish speaking and black ethnic and racial backgrounds
  - b) Two and three story apartment complex of 60 units on a vacant (formerly neighborhood theatre) site
  - c) Housing type out of scale with smaller single family houses in neighborhood.
  - d) On appeal, Planning Commission approved project with fewer units. Project never built; new interest in a owner occupied, subsidized single family house project on site.
  - e) The site is on a deteriorating strip commercial street with residential neighborhoods beyond. One of few large vacant sites capable of new apartment construction. Pressure by real estate/ developer interests for more housing opportunities in City. General Plan Policies call for projects such as the one proposed. Residents of the area see such projects as destroying their lower density residential environment.

1) **Livermore, Alameda**

- 2) 1 case
- 3) Felt project would devalue their properties
- 4-a) No name - moderate income neighborhood
  - b) Low + moderate income project
  - c) See # 3 above
  - d) Project was approved by City Council
  - e) See #3 above.

## Housing Strategies

### a) Financial Aid:

Measures to ease financial difficulties for both local governments, builders and homebuyers proposed by various sectors are:

increased state assistance in loans and insurance; creation of state insurance pool similar to FHA(Federal Housing Administration) loans; creation of state matching fund for sewerage construction; reinstatement of mortgage bond that could be issued by local authorities at lower than market interest rates; creation of new sources of mortgage money, such as the multi-billion dollar public and private pension funds; and so called "creative financing", providing innovative terms of financing mortgages for homebuyers.

State has approved financial aid plans that involve tax reform such as tax-exempt revenue bonds for housing purchase at community levels, and the one drafted by the State's HCD, "tax sharing", which requires industry tax benefits to be shared with communities where the workers will be relocated.

### b) Modification of laws:

Modification of the law is also recommended, by the State as well as the California Building Industry Association and the California Association of Realtors, in order to increase flexibility in zoning and stimulate development activities.

Proposed zoning changes include: accommodate manufactured housing - treat prefabricated units and mobile homes as housing; approve air rights over parking lots; allow construction of mother-in-law units in single-family zone; encourage residential units in mixed use development; and modification of Williamson Act to permit use of former agricultural land for needed housing expansion. A release of surplus properties held by governments for housing construction is also suggested by the realtors.

### c) Density Incentives:

Promoting higher-density development is recommended by most sectors.

A study by the California Public Policy Center recommends special "point" incentives, which combine higher-density zoning and faster permit processing without requiring any form of public subsidy. It cited Orange County as the model case where this strategy was implemented to increase low- and moderate-income housing.

d) Citizen Education:

The necessity of consumer education for smaller size of homes and innovative housing style acceptance.

Dowall recommends an educational and technical assistance program to reduce opposition to high-density and mixed-use development, which primarily would assist planning commissioners, elected officials, planning staff, and neighbourhood groups. Specifically he proposes creation of a regional housing-advocacy group to promote housing production by educating communities as to the benefit of higher-density development, and moderate the anxiety of residents by explaining how such development can be provided without disrupting the local environment.

The probability of implementation and feasibility, if implemented, of most housing strategies listed above, which have been proposed by the sectors other than local communities or resident themselves, are yet to be determined.

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