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# A Hierarachy of Residential Neighborhoods Determined by Blight Conditions: The Case of Council Bluffs, Iowa

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A HIERARCHY OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

DETERMINED BY BLIGHT CONDITIONS:

THE CASE OF COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA


A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Geography and Geology

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska at Omaha


In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts


by

Joseph W. Preusser

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Objectives of Study

The purpose of this study is twofold. In the first place,
there is a relative lack of geographical research devoted to
the residential sections of cities. This is regretable since
residential land-use is predominant in most urban areas. Sec-
ondly, there has been very little study of blighted areas by
geographers. The majority of the work carried out on this
subject has been mainly the product of sociologists and land
economists.

In view of the magnified interests of local, state and
federal governments resulting from economic, environmental,
physical and social problems, it is surprising that no uni-
form method of evaluating blight has been adopted. Accord-
ing to Robert E. Dickinson, blighted areas for each city have
been largely a matter of local agreement.[1] Since evaluation
methods differ markedly from city to city, the direct use of
city statistics can hardly be expected to yield comparable
data.

The problem undertaken in this study was the development

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[1] Robert E. Dickinson, City Region and Regionalism
(London: Kegan Paul and New York: Oxford University Press,
1949), p. 96.

of a practicable method for determining a hierarchy of resi-

dential neighborhoods[1] based on blight[2] conditions, using

Council Bluffs, Iowa as a case study. If a defensible method

could be developed that was widely accepted, it could result

in a sound evaluation of residential neighborhoods and in a

means of comparing residential neighborhoods in various cities.

On the local level a defensible method for determining

a residential hierarchy using blight is essential to the con-

tinued economic, physical and social growth of a neighborhood

and/or community. Blighted conditions must be recognized and

dealt with effectively to arrest and eliminate the spiral of

deterioration. When blighted conditions are left unchallenged,

a residential neighborhood will plunge into a state of de-

terioration commonly referred to as a slum.[3]

To advance the magnitude of residential areas this study

will deviate from such standard units of comparison as the city

block and the census tract. The method utilized will use as

its unit of comparison the residential neighborhood which is

both a social community unit and a visual areal community unit.

Some apparently sound techniques will be employed and

pertinent terminology will be utilized in this case study

of the Midwestern city of Council Bluffs, Iowa. Comparisons

will be made of the various techniques in an attempt to de-

velop a defensible method of establishing a hierarchy of

residential neighborhoods determined by blight conditions.

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[1] See glossary

[2] See glossary

[3] See glossary

Review of the Literature

While a great deal of interest has been generated con-cerning ghettos and slums, a search of the literature dealing with residential blight revealed little that was pertinent to the present problem. Most geographers, sociologists, and other writers who have focused upon blighted areas, or dealt with them incidentally, have relied on housing con-ditions or on local judgment.

Local judgment is manifested in individual city stud-ies such as neighborhood development, neighborhood analysis, urban renewal and economic forecast reports. It seems that offices or urban and regional planning develop reports to meet the demands of a particular city at a given time. It is the opinion of the writer that many of these studies re-flect the desires of a community at a particular time rather than a true evaluation of the community. If a city is try-ing to recruit industry, a report of the city will be very encouraging. However, on another occasion, the same city may be seeking federal funds for urban renewal. A report in this case will categorize the city as being equal to some of the most deteriorated cities in the country.

Let us return to Council Bluffs for an example. Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff, consulting engineers of Kan-sas City, Missouri, prepared several reports for the Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Commission. One of their

reports, "Population and Economic Trends and Forecasts",[1] presents a glowing survey of the resources which Council Bluffs has to offer. Among these resources are a qualified labor force, adequate transportation facilities and proximity to product markets. During the same year, the consulting engineers developed a second report entitled "General Neighborhood Renewal Plan"[2] which described the Central Business District and the adjacent areas of the city as having improper land use, aged structures, traffic congestion, unsatisfactory housing, economic decline and social deterioration. More specifically, the area was cited as suffering from physical decay and deterioration, blight, overcrowding and pollution. The area was characterized by crime, violence, delinquency, excessive disease, unrest, dependency on welfare, poverty, illiteracy, hopelessness and enforced idleness of the poor and disadvantaged.

The reports just described would seem to indicate that individual city reports must be used with caution and are highly suspect. A study entitled "Council Bluffs Neighbor-

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[1]Population and Economic Trends and Forecasts, A report Prepared by the Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff Department of Urban and Regional Planning (Kansas City: Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, 1967) pp. 1-149.

[2]Council Bluffs, Iowa, General Neighborhood Renewal Plan, A Report Prepared by the Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff Department of Urban and Regional Planning (Kansas City: Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff Department of Urban and Regional Planning, 1967) pp.1-106.

hood Analysis"[1] developed by the department of Community Development has some merit. In this report the city is delineated into planning areas in an attempt to analyze the entire urban area from the standpoint of its component parts. The report provides descriptive information concerning the housing stock of the community, the characteristics of all residents and the adequacy of community facilities.

A thorough search of the literature revealed only one study related specifically to "blight." The other reports were written on an individual city basis and they referred to "blight" only incidentally. "A Technique for Delimiting Chicago's Blighted Areas"[2] is the only study that the writer was able to locate which concerns itself primarily with "blight" as such. The Chicago Plan Commission, under the direction of Homer Hoyt, formulated, applied, and tested a technique setting up definitive boundaries for various stages of blight.[2] Three stages of blight were expressed areally in terms of the core, the main body, and the fringe.

The technique employed in delimiting the boundaries of each of these areas was based on residential block distri-

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[1]Council Bluffs Neighborhood Analysis, A Report Prepared by the Council Bluffs Department of Community Development (Council Bluffs: Department of Community Development, 1969) pp. 1-114.

[2]R. C. Klove, "A Technique for Delimiting Chicago's Blighted Areas", Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics (Vol. 17, 1941), pp. 483-484.

bution maps of various housing characteristics such as age

and quality. Areas were delimited as slum and blighted areas

if they consisted of cohesive units of city blocks that pos-

sessed the following characteristics:

1. A majority of the residential structures had
   to be erected prior to 1895.
2. A majority of the dwelling units had to be
   "substandard." (The Chicago Land Use Sur-
   vey described "substandard" housing as "dwell-
   ing units (A) in poor condition or lacking
   heating, lighting or private bathroom facili-
   ties, or (B) containing 1.5 persons per room
   or an extra family of 2 or more persons (or
   either if not renting over $39.99)"[1]).
3. Twenty percent or more of the residential
   structures are in need of major repairs or
   are unfit for use.[2]

The term "cohesive" used in describing the units of city

blocks expresses the idea that boundaries were drawn to in-

clude all areas in which the majority of blocks conformed

to the characteristics cited above.

Assuming the Chicago Plan Commission's definition of

blighted areas based on age and quality of housing to be

correct, this writer sought out materials related to housing

conditions. This effort resulted in the review of publica-

tions and documents of the United States government and its

various agencies.

The U. S. Bureau of Census provides housing data and

classifies the housing conditions as sound, deteriorating or

_____

[1] _Ibid._, p. 484.

[2] _Ibid._

dilapidated.[1] The condition of a housing unit determined by
the enumerator was based on specified observed criteria.
The application of these criteria involved some judgment on
the part of the individual enumerator and thus a training
program for enumerators was designed to minimize the differ-
ences in judgment. The criteria used in the 1960 Census of
Population to determine housing conditions is as follows:

1. "Sound housing is defined as that which has no
   defects, or only slight defects which are norm-
   ally corrected during the course of regular
   maintenance.

2. Deteriorating housing needs more repair than
   would be provided in the course of regular
   maintenance. Such housing has one or more de-
   fects of an intermediate nature that must be
   corrected if the unit is to continue to pro-
   vide safe and adequate shelter.

3. Dilapidated housing does not provide safe and
   adequate shelter and in its present condition
   endangers the health, safety or well-being of
   the occupants. Such housing has one or more
   critical defects, or has a combination of in-
   termediate defects in sufficient number or re-
   building, or is of inadequate original construc-
   tion. Critical defects result from continued
   neglect or lack of repair, or indicate serious
   damage to the structure."[2]

A search for and review of the available literature on
blighted neighborhoods and/or blight proved fruitless. Thus,
the writer resorted to studies that are only remotely related
to blighted areas. It appears that blighted areas are connected

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[1] U. S. Bureau of the Census, United States Census of
Population; 1960 Subject Reports, Socioeconomic Status, Final
Report PC (2)-5C, (Washington: Government Printing Office,
1967) p. XVI.

[2] Ibid.

with both negative and positive aspects of economic development. Positive aspects lie in the fact that certain areas are realizing economic development, even though this growth may be at the expense of other areas. The areas which are declining rather than developing economically show the negative side of the problem. Most studies in economic development compare countries or regions within countries. However, these reports provide insight into economic indicators that may be related to blight and the possible geographic associations of the various indicators.

The following studies in economic development have implications regarding possible blight indicators. M. K. Bennett's article, "International Disparities in Consumption Levels,"[1] ranked all the nations of the world with populations exceeding ten million, according to nineteen non-monetary indices of consumption. The study ranked the countries with respect to their consumption level. It did not attempt to measure the degrees of difference. The non-monetary indicators included, among others, food, utilities, population and education. The study indicated that there is some truth to the argument that low consumption levels lead to discontent. However, the discussion of this possible cause-effect relationship carries little conviction.

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[1]M. K. Bennett, "International Disparities in Consumption Levels," American Economic Review, Vol. 41 (1951) pp. 632-649.

Brian J. L. Berry developed an inductive approach to
the regionalization of economic development.[1] The approach
uses forty-three variables assumed to be significant in the
analysis of economic development. By manipulating the var-
iables, he identifies and differentiates the underdeveloped
nations. The investigation is a multivariate discriminatory
analysis of the forty-three indices. The procedure is of a
complicated statistical nature. The forty-three indices are
subdivided into eight categories which include transportation,
energy, agricultural yields, communication, gross national
product, trade, demographic and other. The eight categories
will be considered in determining indicators of neighborhood
blight.

Joseph E. Schwartzberg of the University of Pennsylvania
made a study of various approaches in mapping economic devel-
opment in India.[2] The Schwartzberg study proved to be of par-
ticular value to the present study as there are similarities
in the two approaches.

The methods discussed in Schwartzberg's study are: (1)
the development-index approach, (2) the consensus approach

[1]B. J. L. Berry, "An Inductive Approach to the Regional-
ization of Economic Development" Essays on Geography and
Economic Development, Norton Ginsburg, ed. (Chicago: Uni-
versity of Chicago Press, 1960) pp. 78-107.

[2]Joseph W. Schwartzberg, "Three Approaches to the Map-
ping of Economic Development in India" Annals of the Associa-
tion of American Geographers, Vol. 52 (December, 1962) pp. 455-
468.

and (3) the subjective integration approach. The development index approach attempts to derive composite development scores for the several states of India. The scores are based on a combination of numerous sub-scores for individual, widely recognized indicators of economic development.

The consensus approach maps an average development rating for each of a set of given and more or less homogeneous regions. The rating is based on the opinions of a presumably qualified sample group of Indian economists and geographers.

The subjective integration approach establishes a set of regions that are determined on the basis of field experience. The field experience is combined with the subjective assessment of a wide variety of relevant data, both quantitative and qualitative. The regions are not determined by a strict quantitative formulation.

In Schwartzberg's view it is assumed that with economic growth there are many economic and social variable patterns that tend to be predictable. When considering each variable as a partial indicator of development, one can construct a combined, overall development index.[1] According to Schwartzberg, the chief statistical problem is how to combine the individual indices into a single set of real ratings.

The problem was met in the Schwartzberg study by converting such statistical data as per capita income, degree

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[1]Ibid., p. 455.

of urbanization, and density of transport network into com-
parable scores or index numbers. The scores were then com-
bined for each area by simple or weighted averaging. The
latter was assigned an inescapable subjective weighting ac-
cording to its presumed importance or diagnostic significance.[1]
Once having arrived at a set of overall scores, a choropleth
map was constructed depicting the results.

In the consensus approach, Schwartzberg conducted a sur-
vey of the opinions of two selected groups:  one group was
made up of Indian economists and the other consisted of
Indian geographers. Schwartzberg had them rank twenty re-
gions of India according to the level of economic develop-
ment. The ranking procedure was as follows:  a score of "1"
for the three most developed regions, a score of "3" for the
six regions in the modal class and a score of "2" and "4"
for the two remaining classes having four regions each. The
average scores assigned to each region of India by the geo-
graphers and economists separately and by the two groups
taken jointly were computed. The results were graphed and
presented on a choropleth map.[2]

Schwartzberg's subjective integration approach to map-
ping the levels of economic development in India attempts to
provide a realistic regionalization of the country, without

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[1]Ibid., pp. 455-456.

[2]Ibid., pp. 464-468.

regard for state boundaries. The method does not assign developmental scores to regions mapped, but it does recognize categories or stages of economic growth. The stages are defined in terms of the degree of commercialization. This approach frees the researcher from the rigid framework of administrative boundaries and, thus, the categories of regions have meaning in themselves. The method is, however, extremely subjective.

Thus completes the review of the various types of studies either directly or incidentally related to neighborhood blight. It is now necessary to define several of the pertinent terms that will be frequently used in this study.

Blight and Neighborhood

Terms which have been used entirely too loosely in the past are "blight" and "neighborhood." While geographers, planners and sociologists make frequent use of both terms, the words nevertheless remain highly elusive and vulnerable. While the geographer thinks of a neighborhood as an areal unit of the city, the planner thinks of its as a unit related to the larger whole while remaining, at the same time, a distinct entity. The sociologist considers the neighborhood in light of the social relationships among people.[1]

The student of blight and neighborhood cannot afford

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[1] Raymond E. Murphy, The American City (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1966), pp. 388-393.

the luxury of such free-wheeling terminology. He must be able to make it clear to himself and others what "blight" and "neighborhood" are, and how inclusive or exclusive his definition of them is to be.

It is not the intent of this paper to develop an extensive definition of blight and neighborhood. However, it will be necessary to declare what is meant by these terms in the context of the study. Joseph H. Ficher, a sociologist, has made a distinction between the social neighborhood and the merely spatial neighborhood. He describes the social neighborhood as a "numerically small community in which people have close contact, share similar values and beliefs, and co-operate for recognized common goals."[1] The description of a spatial neighborhood is a "small physical area in which there is relatively little group contact among them."[2] The American urban trend is away from the social neighborhood and toward the spatial neighborhood.

Based on a physical concept, a residential neighborhood "is the area within which residents may all share common services, social activities and facilities required in the vicinity of the dwelling."[3] Lawrence Wolfe states that it is

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[1]Joseph H. Ficher, Sociology (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 97.

[2]Ibid.

[3]American Public Health Association, Planning The Neighborhood (Chicago: Public Administration Service), 1948, p. 1.

the place with created conditions "under which every individ-
ual shall be able to live out his life, from the womb to the
grave, to the best advantage of both himself and the commu-
nity."[1]  Furthermore, Walter Gropieus defines the neighbor-
hood unit as that limited to human stride, normal social
intercourse, and a humanized, administrative framework.[2]

Another description of a neighborhood is provided by
the Springfield, Missouri Planning Department.  The depart-
ment describes a neighborhood as a local community, in a sense,
with well-defined boundaries and with a focus for community
life.  A complete and self-contained neighborhood unit should
have sufficient population to support an elementary school
and recreation facilities centrally located.  Its develop-
ment may provide for local shopping.  The unit should be
bounded by traffic arterials and not cut by them.  Local
streets within the neighborhood should be designed to serve
the local needs of residential access and should discourage
use of the streets by through traffic.  Other principal bound-
aries may be those as delineated by industrial or commercial
areas, natural drainage areas, traffic generative capacity,
topographical barriers and other physical features.[3]

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[1]Lawrence Wolfe, The Reilly Plan (London:  Nicholson
and Watson), 1945, p. 11.

[2]Walter Gropieus, Rebuilding Our Communities (Chicago:
Paul Theobold), 1945, p. 20.

[3]Area Planning For Development, Springfield, Missouri
A Report Prepared by The Springfield Planning Department,
(Springfield:  Planning Department, 1962), p. 2.

Residential neighborhoods, in general, are spatial.
They do, however, have certain common and distinctive fea-
tures that can be recognized. Local neighborhoods are for
the most part nameless in relation to their residents. They
are usually functional areas (enterprises from a commercial
point of view) or identified as a school zone or a park area
but in essence merely nameless clusters. There is a rough
economic similarity within the residential neighborhoods
since similar rentals tend to attract persons and families
of similar income. Neighborhoods are unsuitable for areal
comparison because they vary in terms of spatial extent.

Human contacts are casual in the immediate neighbor-
hoods. The contact that does exist between neighbors tends
to be through women and children rather than through adult
men. This can be expected since women and children spend more
time in the neighborhood. People in a spatial or areal
neighborhood do not know one another well, and tend to have
opinions of, and attitudes toward, their neighbors rather
than an understanding of them.

The writer has selected the spatial or areal neighbor-
hood for use in this study. The residential neighborhood
is characterized by a centrally located elementary school
and/or neighborhood parks. It has local shops to meet the
daily needs of the residents. These shops are located on
the periphery of the neighborhood as are the through traffic
routes. The street system is internal, and the housing or

architecture is usually similar because it was constructed
at approximately the same time.

A residential neighborhood, as considered in the present
study, may be defined as an areal unit of varying size bounded
by local shops and through traffic routes, and centered around
an elementary school and/or a city park.

As with the term neighborhood, blight is used frequently
and with little definitude. Only one short definition of
blight specifically related to neighborhood conditions has
been uncovered to date by this researcher. Robert C. Klove,
a research planner for the Chicago Planning Commission, gave
this definition: "Blight, as applied to urban neighborhoods,
is a general term used to describe a condition of advanced
deterioration - physical, economic, and social."[1] Webster's
New World Dictionary defines blight as anything that destroys
or prevents growth.[2] Geographers, planners, and sociologists
have made general use of this definition to meet their per-
sonal convenience without qualifying their specific usage.

The geographer will refer to the "blighted" area when
designating a particular areal unit of a community. The plan-
ner makes frequent reference to "blighted" conditions, espe-
cially in urban renewal projects, to indicate areas of

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[1]Robert C. Klove, op. cit., p. 483.

[2]David B. Guralnik and Joseph H. Friend (eds.), Webster's
New World Dictionary of the American Language (New York:
The World Publishing Company, 1962), p. 156.

improper land use arrangements, aged structures, traffic congestion, and unsatisfactory housing conditions. The sociologist, on the other hand, uses "blight" to indicate areas of economic, moral and social decline.

The study by the Chicago Planning Commission[1] cited earlier, using Klove's definition of physical blight, also refers to housing that is either old, substandard, in need of major repairs, or unfit for use. Also frequently used in conjunction with, or in lieu of, "blight areas" is the term "slum."

Malcolm J. Proudfoot cites the Illinois Blighted Areas Redevelopment Act of 1947 which considers "slum" and "blighted areas" as synonymous. For the purposes of this act, "slum" and "blighted areas" were defined as:

> "any area of not less in aggregate than two acres located within the territorial limits of a municipality where buildings or improvements by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or layout, or any combination of these factors, are detrimental to the public safety, health, morals or welfare."[2]

In general writers seem to interchange the two terms without distinction. A slum area seems to be generally

[1] Robert C. Klove, op. cit., p. 483.

[2] Malcolm J. Proudfoot, "Public Regulation of Urban Development in the United States," Geographical Review, XLIV July, 1954, p. 417.

defined as an area of substandard houses. This definition
would preclude that the majority of the dwellings are so in-
ferior as to be detrimental to safety, health or morals. How-
ever there is no acceptable statistical definition of a slum.
If the terms are synonymous, the same implications are true
of blighted areas.

In this context blighted areas are also areas of de-
lapidated and deteriorating housing. In the opinion of this
writer the above definition has been used as a matter of con-
venience. The Census of Housing data available by blocks
make it possible and convenient to show on a map the per-
centage of housing units that are substandard in each block
as contrasted with those that are sound. If both slum and
blighted areas are to be used, there should be a clarifica-
tion of these terms. This researcher suggests that a slum
should be taken in a context similar to the Illinois Blighted
Areas Redevelopment Act of 1947. In other words, a slum
should be defined as a spatial area of some minimum size,
whether a block, an acre, several blocks or several acres
is unimportant, having the conditions cited in the Illinois
act listed earlier. To be classified as a slum, an area
should have more deteriorated conditions than advantageous
conditions; for example, the percentage of combined deterio-
rated and deteriorating houses should be greater than 50% of
the total houses.

Blight connotates deterioration, or anything that

destroys or prevents growth, but not to the extent suggested
in the definition of a slum. Blight or conditions that hin-
der neighborhood growth include economic, physical and social
deterrents. The various deterrents as indicators of blight
will be discussed later.

Thus, this suggests that blight has no minimum area and
can be found at any level from that of a single lot or dwell-
ing to that of an entire city. For the purposes of this
project blight will be defined as areas of no minimal size
having economic, physical and social conditions that destroy
and/or prevent growth.

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING

## Reasons for Selection

The city chosen for this study is Council Bluffs, Iowa,
a Midwestern City of an estimated 60,000 population. It is
located directly across the Missouri River from the metro-
polis of Omaha, Nebraska. It was selected for reasons which
were more practical than scientific. This researcher, having
completed several previous studies on the city - the "Cen-
tral Business District of Council Bluffs," "An Urban Problem
of Council Bluffs: Blight," "One Aspect of Urban Blight:
Abandoned Autos," and a recent "Apartment Study," - was aware
of the problem existing in the residential neighborhoods and
had found a considerable amount of information on the subject.

Council Bluffs was also chosen as a study area for other
pertinent reasons. Firstly, the blighted conditions in Council
Bluffs are very evident, and are depreciating the city's worth
and appearance. Secondly, Council Bluffs is a community of
such size that it lends itself to being manageable to a single
researcher in terms of temporal as well as financial consid-
erations. Furthermore Council Bluffs was chosen because it
has been neglected in past urban geographical research. Thus
it was felt, that any sound information which might result by
investigating Council Bluffs could hopefully add to existing

community knowledge, and be of use in future investigations of the city or of the metropolitan area. Lastly, Council Bluffs was selected for personal reasons. The researcher has often wondered how it acquired, in the eyes of many, the reputation of a "dirty" city. A study of Council Bluffs seemed a way to find the answer.

Although it was not the purpose of this research pursuit to delve into the historical development of Council Bluffs, it was felt that some light might be shed upon blighted neighborhoods in Council Bluffs by a review of the city's history and its geographical location.

Geographical Location

Geographically, the City of Council Bluffs is situated on the west boundary of Pottawattamie County in the southwestern part of the State of Iowa. The Missouri River forms the westerly boundary of both the City and the County, which comprise the Iowa territorial part of the Omaha-Council Bluffs Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA).

From its location on the Missouri River, the Council Bluffs-Omaha Area serves an extensive agricultural region, and the metropolitan area's influence extends in all directions. PLATE 1 shows Council Bluff's geographic location in relation to other counties in Iowa and Nebraska. PLATE 2 denotes the city's relation to the Omaha SMSA.

Much of the residential portion of the city and all of

# GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION
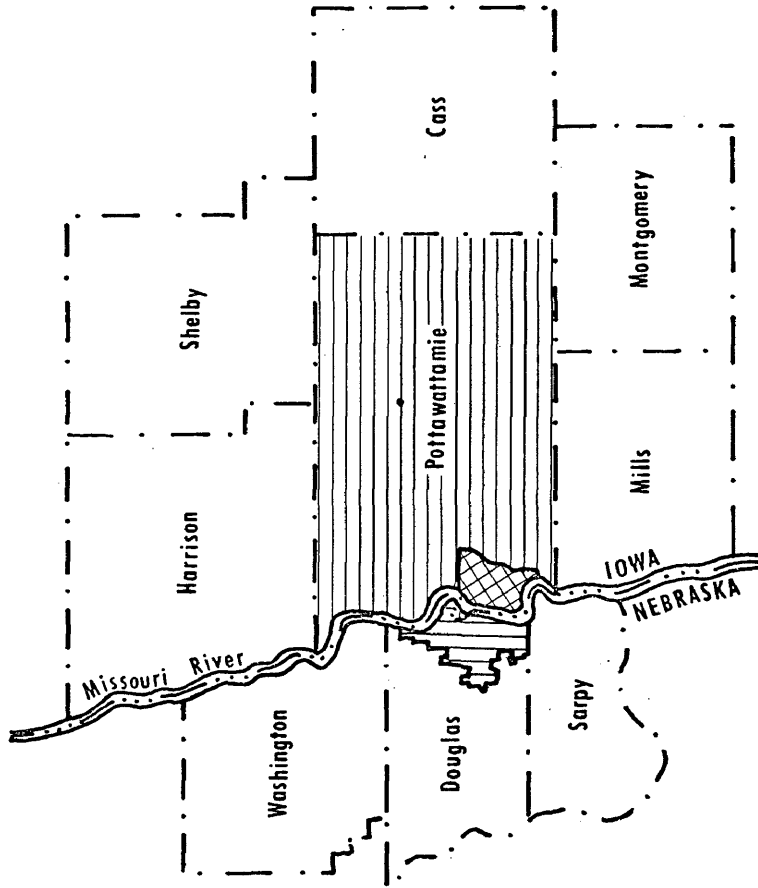
## KEY

| | |
|---|---|
| State Line | |
| County Line | |
| City Line | |
| Omaha | |
| Council Bluffs | |

Miles
0    10    20

Washington

Harrison

Shelby

Missouri River

Douglas

Pottawattamie

Cass

Sarpy

IOWA
NEBRASKA

Mills

Montgomery

N

PLATE 1

OMAHA
STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

Pottawattamie

Douglas

Sarpy

Omaha

Council Bluffs

Missouri River

IOWA
NEBRASKA

State Line
County Line
City Line

0      5      10
Miles

N

PLATE 2

J. W. Preusser 1970
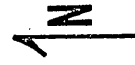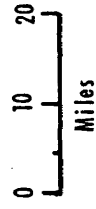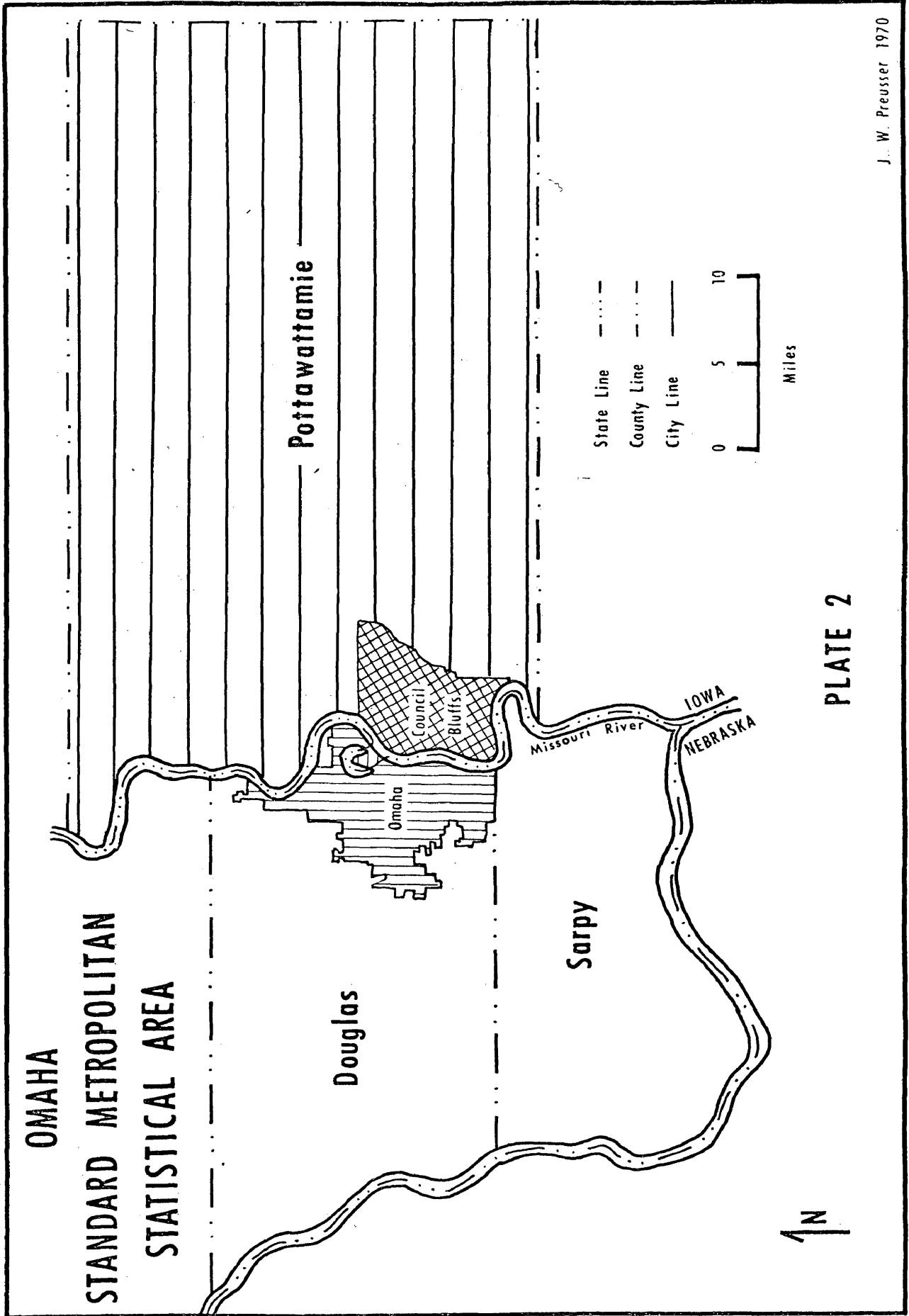
the industrial portion is located in the immediate valley
of the Missouri River. This valley is deep, flat-floored,
and sharply outlined by steep slopes and bluffs rising to a
height of 100 to 300 feet. The bluffs along the Missouri
River, and a belt one-half mile to three miles in width back
from the bluffs, are badly dissected as a result of erosion.
The surface is quite hilly and rough, with a considerable
proportion of the land too steep for cultivation.[1] The bluff
area, consisting of precipitous loess bluffs, does not lend
itself to large scale development in either commerce or in-
dustry. Geographical location and topography indicate possible
influences on neighborhood blight. This possibility will be
explored in the analysis of the data.

## Historical Background

In 1804, the Lewis and Clark expedition passed through the
area and held meetings with local Indians. The general area
from Fort Calhoun (Nebraska) to the mouth of the Platte River
became known as "The Council Bluffs." The locality later be-
came known as "Hart's Bluff." In 1846, the Mormons arrived in
the vicinity and established a settlement named Miller's Hollow.
In 1848 it became known as Kanesville. Then, in 1853, Kanesville

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[1]A. L. Goodman, Peter Hanson, and Harold W. Reid, Soil
Survey of Pottawattamie County Iowa (Washington: Government
Printing Office, 1916), pp. 1-30.

became the incorporated city of Council Bluffs.

Railroads and railroad building have been important aspects in the growth of the city. In the early 1860's Council Bluffs was designated the eastern terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad. However, there was no bridge over the Missouri River, so it was Omaha that grew as a rail center. Later, a bridge was constructed, and Council Bluffs became an important railroad terminal. APPENDIX I contains a more detailed history of the development of the city.

## Population Characteristics

Surveying some of the more important population characteristics, it may be noted that only 1.13 percent of Council Bluffs' residents are listed as non-white. Thus, racial minorities are rare in the community. This would lead one to suspect that racial minorities would have little influence upon neighborhood blight. So far as census figures indicate, there are no other national or ethnic groups in Council Bluffs significant enough in number to warrant special attention in neighborhood blight.

Looking at labor force characteristics, it seems important that, whereas 41.20 percent of the labor force of Council Bluffs is employed in other counties within the SMSA, only 3.10 percent of those in Omaha find work outside of

their own county.[1]  More simply stated, about forty percent
of the labor force in Council Bluffs works outside of their
own county, most of them in Omaha.  This would indicate that
to a very large degree, Council Bluffs serves as a "bedroom
community" for Omaha.  This could possibly cause considerable
repercussions upon the blight within neighborhoods in Council
Bluffs, as those working outside of the community are forced
to identify occupationally with Omaha, and residentially
with Council Bluffs.  This makes it very difficult for the
"commuter" to participate very extensively in the activities
of the Omaha community, the Council Bluffs community, or his
own individual neighborhood.

It would seem natural that those people who both live
and work in Council Bluffs would be in a better position to
participate more fully in neighborhood improvement and the
erradication of blight.  This possibility will be explored
in the analysis of the data.

Another factor to consider is that of occupational class
differences.  Compared to Omaha, and using an arbitrary index,
Council Bluffs has a relatively large number of blue collar
workers.  Sixty-three percent of the male labor force in Coun-
cil Bluffs works in blue collar positions, while only fifty-
three percent in Omaha do.[2]  If it is accepted that a major

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[1]Bureau of the Census, U. S. Census of Population and
Housing:  1960 Census Tracts Final Report PHC. (1) – 112
(Washington:  U. S. Government Printing Office, 1961) p. 44.

[2]Pearson, op. cit., p. 24.

determinant of social class is occupation, and if, as Lloyd
W. Warner reports, there is a direct relationship between
social class and social participation,[1] then this could give
the minority group of white collar workers in Council Bluffs
a better foothold in the decision making processes of the
city. This could be a positive factor in neighborhood blight
control in Council Bluffs. The relationship between social
class and social participation will be explored in the analy-
sis of the data.

It is true that Council Bluffs appears to be highly de-
pendent upon Omaha as a source of employment opportunity.
However, some attention should be devoted to seeing just how
dependent, or independent, it is. Does Council Bluffs pro-
vide any of its own sources for gaining and spending income?
If so, what are these services, and how do they affect neigh-
borhood blight?

Industry, Local Government, and Transportation

Council Bluffs' two major enterprises, rail freight and
mail processing, are both based upon the railroad. Most not-
ably, Council Bluffs, is one of the largest rail centers in
the country with eight major railways serving it.[2]

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[1]Lloyd W. Warner, et. al., Democracy in Jamesville (New
York: Harper and Brothers, 1941), Chapter 16.

[2]R. L. Polk, and Company, Polk's Council Bluffs City
Directory - 1969 (Kansas City, Missouri: R. L. Polk and
Company, 1968), p. X.

This provides for activity in the city as well as for considerable revenue. Directly based upon the rail industry is the mail processing facility, which is the fourth largest in the country.[1] Another developing transportation enterprise in the city is barge shipping on the Missouri River, which functions nine months out of the year.

In addition to the transportation centered industries, which are quite important in the community (the railroads providing the largest single payroll), there are a number of small and medium size manufacturing concerns. Local manufacturing includes the manufacture of pressurized water pipes, truck bodies, furniture equipment, potato chips and packaged frozen foods, beef packing, music and educational tapes and Solid State Circuit Boards.

In 1966 a large shopping center was to have been constructed on the east side of town. The two largest national chain stores in the downtown shopping district were to pull up stakes and move to the new center. The downtown merchants and businessmen, fearing that the central business district would suffer severely if this shopping became a reality, acted quickly in defense. They investigated the possibilities of undertaking a downtown urban renewal program, in order to renovate the rather old and physically deteriorating business district. Through their

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[1]Ibid.

efforts, a local awareness of the need of some type of urban renovation has developed. In April of 1970 the Urban Renewal Director began advertising for bids to demolish selected structures within the Bluffs Center I renewal project. This project is designed to redevelop forty acres in downtown Council Bluffs by 1975. Inasmuch as much effort and money has gone into the downtown project, it is hopefully a sign that future efforts may be directed toward the eradication of blighted conditions in the city's neighborhoods.

One very important factor which is likely to affect neighborhood blight is the interest of the local government. From 1854 to 1950, Council Bluffs was governed by a simple mayor-elderman form of local government. However, in 1950, an overwhelming majority of the voters decided that the community would best be administered under the council-manager form of municipal government. A good deal of the routine and administrative type of decision making that was in the hands of elected officials was put into the hands of a professional city manager. How competent the city manager is in handling neighborhood blight is naturally of concern to the individual neighborhoods.

The city is officially governed by five councilmen selected at large, serving three year terms. The mayor is not elected by popular vote, but is elected to serve a one year term by members of the city council. The city manager is then appointed by the council to serve as the administrative

executive of the city and run the community economically
and efficiently.

In light of present developments, it seems likely that
Council Bluffs will remain keyed in the transportation in-
dustry for the time being.  In the first place, the railroad
shipping industry is still strong, and river shipping holds
great potential.  Secondly, the city has always been located
strategically with respect to highway systems, and this will
be enhanced by the completion of the interstate system.  The
city is presently situated at the junction of the following
Midwest and transcontinental highways:  U.S. 75, U.S. 6, U.S.
275, and U.S. Alternate 30.  State Highways include 92, 375,
192 and 64.  With respect to the future, construction is nearly
completed linking Council Bluffs with Interstate Highway 80
(east-west), and construction is nearing completion that will
link Council Bluffs with Interstate 29 (north-south).  Many
local observers feel this interstate junction will provide
a foundation for enormous development in the city.  That is,
if the residents are prepared to accept the challenge.

## Classification of Council Bluffs

Residents of Council Bluffs refer to their city as a
"dormitory city", a "parasite", a "satellite", a "suburb",
or simply a "city".  The city's descriptions have included
such adjectives as "dirty", "filty", "ugly", or simply "un-
clean".  In more polished language it may be said the city

is suffering from deterioration, lack of innovation, or is in need of renovation and/or restoration.

In criteria set forth by Roger L. Pearson, Council Bluffs qualifies as a Satellite city.[1] First, he points out that satellite cities generally have their origin prior to, and thus independent of, the central city. As stated earlier, Council Bluffs was thriving when Omaha was a simple log settlement. Secondly, he goes on to say that satellites are usually politically independent, and formally organized, which Council Bluffs is. The city is in a different state than Omaha and it provides its residents with an array of services.[2] Thirdly, Pearson points out that satellite cities are often located almost adjacent to the central city, typically across a bay or river, as is the case of Omaha and Council Bluffs.[3] Lastly, he cites that satellites are typically "employing area", and again Council Bluffs qualifies as forty-one percent of Council Bluffs' labor force work in Omaha.[4] It seems that in view of the criteria cited above, Council Bluffs may well be considered a "satellite" city.

The sordid conditions giving rise to the abundance of uncomplimentary adjectives used to describe Council Bluffs

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[1] Roger L. Pearson, op. cit., p. 28.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

include the following: improper land use arrangements, old

structures, traffic congestion, unsatisfactory housing con-

ditions, gradual economic decline and social deterioration.

The Urban Renewal Program cited earlier has an appropriate

study designating the blight conditions in the central por-

tion of Council Bluffs. The environmental deficiencies in

the General Neighborhood Renewal Plan (GNRP) are as follows:

(1)     Overcrowding of residential structures on the land
        is present within five of the six proposed future
        project areas. In addition to over-crowding of
        these structures, many are poorly related to the
        topographic conditions and drainage patterns.
        Commercial structures, although primarily limited
        to narrow frontages along major thoroughfares, also
        are overcrowded on the land in a consistent pattern
        throughout the G.N.R.P.

(2)     Excessive dwelling-unit densities are the rule
        rather than the exception in four of the six pro-
        posed project areas, due to the improper conversion
        of large older structures and to the inadequate
        sites utilized for newer multi-family units. The
        existing City Zoning Ordinance does not require
        sufficient amounts of open space and off-street
        parking for multi-family units.

(3)     Conversions to incompatible types of uses of older
        structures in the G.N.R.P. area has been consis-
        tent; commercial and quasi-commercial uses have
        been placed within residential structures in re-
        sidential neighborhoods. Rooming houses are simi-
        larly located in many residential neighborhoods,
        and the upper portions of many commercial buildings
        have been converted to totally inadequate living
        units.

(4)     Obsolete building types are found in every portion
        of the G.N.R.P. Excessively large older homes in-
        compatible with today's living patterns, aged com-
        mercial structures of more than one story with un-
        usable upper stories, obsolete service station
        structures, and buildings currently used for auto-
        mobile sales and repair garages are among the many
        types of totally obsolete buildings. In addition,
        hotels, office buildings, and some public buildings

are heavily obsolescent.

(5)    Detrimental land uses and conditions - primarily structures in mixed use - are very common throughout the G.N.R.P. area. As reported in (3) above, mixtures of commercial and residential uses are prevalent.

(6)    Unsafe, congested, poorly designed and otherwise deficient streets are to be found in every portion of the G.N.R.P. Narrow rights-of-way, improper alignments, incorrect superelevation, hazardous intersections, poor relation to topography, poor surfaces, poor drainage, poor overall pattern, and excessive amounts of rights-of-way are features of virtually every street within the G.N.R.P. In addition, extremely heavy amounts of through-truck and highway traffic are carried along the entire length of Broadway through the area. Provision of adequate rights-of-way for certain streets is not possible without excessive condemnation of adjacent structures, although many corrections can be made for thoroughfares and bypass streets, as well as adjustment of alignments and correction of intersection problems. Street widenings, regrading, and realignment will be necessary.

(7)    Inadequate public or community facilities in addition to streets are: lack of sufficient space for schools, shortage of open space and play areas, occasional drainage problems due to the difficult topography and storm-sewer inlet arrangements, and street lighting which does not meet contemporary lighting standards.

(8)    Other equally significant environmental deficiencies include the occasional problem caused by overflow of Indian Creek and by the excessive slopes of portions of the bluffs.[1]

The report goes on to say that all types of deficiencies are consistently found in all portions of the G.N.R.P. area.[2] Similar conditions also exist within the residential neigh-

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[1] General Neighborhood Renewal Plan, op. cit., pp. 3 and 4

[2] Ibid., p. 4.

borhoods of the city. The writer has based his opinion on
extensive field work that included the crossing and recross-
ing of every street and avenue within the city limits of
Council Bluffs. The visual observations are substantiated
by slides taken by the writer in each of the twenty-one
neighborhoods that depict various kinds of blight in Coun-
cil Bluffs. The Council Bluffs' Department of Community
Development, in its Neighborhood Analysis report states
that "none of the neighborhoods were entirely free from en-
vironmental deficiencies."[1]

Although some may take issue with this definition, there
seems to be ample evidence to suggest that Council Bluffs
is a "blighted satellite" city.

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[1]Council Bluffs Neighborhood Analysis, op. cit., p. 9.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Selection of Approach

The methods of geographical research may be divided in-
to those of observation and those of analysis.[1] Among the
methods of observation are, first, the locational determi-
nation of points on the earth's surface.[2] A second method
of observation is the field study.[3] The field study may be
applied to any of the physical, biotic or cultural elements
of the environment. It may be conducted with varying de-
grees of accuracy and in a degree of detail suited to the
immediate purpose of the study. Field studies may comprise
either qualitative description or quantitative measurement
or both. In either case distribution must be plotted with
a degree of accuracy suited to the study. A map is always
a suitable record of a field study.[4]

Methods of observation are those which yield data on
specific areal content. The methods of analysis are required

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[1] Edward A. Ackerman, Geography As A Fundamental Research Discipline (Department of Geography Research Paper, No. 53. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 10.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p. 10.

to present meaningful interpretations. Cartographic compilation is one method of analysis. Other methods are those of statistical compilation and statistical analysis.

Simple forms of statistical aids have characterized geographic distribution analysis in the past. However, the recent trend has been to more complex statistical methods including model, regression, correlation variance, covariance analysis, et al.

Beyond the basic methods are the qualitative descriptions that have been used to record geography. Past geographical observations and their record have been marked by accurate description.[1] These have never been forgotten in geography, and in their accurate portrayal we have one of the prerequisites for predictability.[2] Qualitative description is essential to portrayal of the whole.[3]

As previously shown there have generally been three basic approaches utilized in analyzing observations or field studies in geographical research - the cartographic, the qualitative description, and quantitative or statistical. These three have been used both independently and in combination, with a trend having evolved in recent years favoring the use of the quantitative or statistical approach.

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[1] Ibid., p. 12.

[2] Ibid.

[3] P. F. Drucker, "The New Philosophy Comes to Life," Harper's, CCXV No. 1287 (August, 1957), pp. 36-40.

The urge for quantification has been manifested mostly in a research cluster centering upon urban, economic and transportation geography. Quantitative methods using statistical techniques have been developed as a move toward increasingly precise, logically meaningful, and intellectually discriminatory analyses of geographic phenomena. The writer feels that to make a geographical study one need not follow the modern quantitative trend.

Most of the human and urban phenomena related to neighborhood blight are non-parametric, thus yielding information or data which are far from normally distributed. The special statistical procedures needed for transformation of these data stand as a warning to all researchers who do not have a quantification background or who are not statistically orientated.

R. L. Morrill, Nisith Ranjan Kar, and Carl Sauer have given meaning to the writer's caution in attempting a quantitative approach. Morrill questions the quantitative approach in human and urban geography on three grounds – the imperfection of human decisions, the multiplicity of equally good choices, and the net effect of many small causes and countercauses that cannot be comprehended by numerical statistics.[1]

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[1] R. L. Morrill, "The Development of Spatial Distribution of Towns in Sweden," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. 50 (1963), pp. 1-14.

Kar states that extreme caution and restraint should
be taken before applying physical analog models in human and
urban activities and functions.[1] His caution is based on
the following:  (1)  It may be difficult to distinguish a
truly meaningful model which is really analogous to human
phenomena from one that is irrelevant and presumtuous.  (2)
The long process of discarding, distilling and decanting of
information and details in building a quantitative model may
make it divorced from social reality.  (3)  The multivariate
reality in the human world may not be amenable to an analo-
gous model, as there is very little scope for testing the
models by controlled conditions.[2]

Carl Ortwin Sauer states that the present hazard of
research is that the "mechanisms of investigation become so
complicated, immobile, and costly as to tie the investiga-
tor to processing centers and to require more and more tech-
nicians."[3]

As indicated, the quantitative approach seems to be the
trend of urban geography, but weaknesses in the method and
in the orientation of many geographers should generate

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[1]Nisith Ranjan Kar, "Research Frontiers In Urban
Geography An Appraisal and Critique of Recent Trends in
Quantification in Urban Geography, Urban Affairs Quarterly,
Vol. 3 (March, 1968), pp. 37-68.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Carl Ortwin Sauer, "Folkways of Social Science"
Land and Life edited by John Leighly (Berkeley:  University
of California Press, 1967), p. 380.

caution. This study will avoid the complexities of the

quantitative or statistical approach.

The cartographic method is probably the oldest form of

multivariable analysis, but rarely has it been used as a

solitary method. In the identification of housing conditions,

it has served as more of an adjunct to other methods and

techniques. However, in a study of housing conditions in

Allegheny County conducted by the Bureau of Business Re-

search of the University of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, less

than ten pages of the report were devoted to the introduc-

tion and definition of terms while some 300 pages were given

to graphs, maps, and tables.[1] A similar study of Popula-

tion and Housing Data was made of Los Angeles County, Cali-

fornia.[2]

Thus, after ruling out the quantitative method because

of the difficulty of handling and interpretation, the writer

settled upon a combination of the cartographic and descrip-

tive methods. For it was felt that this combination would

allow incorporation of the greatest range of neighborhood

blight as defined in the first chapter. The two methods

complement each other, allowing exposition of both the poten-

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[1]Ralph J. Walkins (dir.) Graphic Summary of Housing
Conditions in Allegheny County, University of Pittsburg,
Pennsylvania: Bureau of Business Research University of
Pittsburg, 1937), pp. 1-52.

[2]Earl Hanson, Los Angeles County Population And Hous-
ing Data, (Los Angeles: Burger Letter Service, 1944), pp.
1-30.

tial and the overt aspects of neighborhood blight in the city.
It was felt also that the combined method facilitates com-
parison with contemporary and future studies using the neigh-
borhood unit.

## Data Used

The data utilized in this study has a considerable range
in time. For the most part, the data was collected and the
field work conducted during a six month period from June
through December of 1969. The available reference data in-
cluded, however, ranges from 1960 through 1969. The income
levels for the neighborhoods within the city are taken from
the 1960 census data. This data is admittedly out of date;
however, it does represent the income breakdown by area com-
pared with other areas of the city. It also represents the
latest data available on a tract basis which can be correlated
into neighborhood units.

The city and county data utilized in this study had a
range of from February 1965 to November 1968. The juvenile
arrests were obtained from the Council Bluffs Police Depart-
ment records covering the period from February 1965 through
November 1968 (APPENDIX II-A). Several years, three and
three quarters years to be exact, were used in an attempt
to develop a somewhat meaningful annual average. A self-
devised formula was used to obtain the annual average ju-
venile arrest per 1,000 population for any particular

neighborhood. In the following examples, using the formula, the hypothetical neighborhood (X) used had a total of 375 juvenile arrests and an existing population of 5,500:

$$\cfrac{\cfrac{\text{Tot. Juv. Arrests}}{\text{(Feb. '65-Nov. '68}} = \genfrac{}{}{0pt}{}{\text{Tot. Ann. Ave.}}{\text{Juv. Arrest for}}}{\cfrac{\text{Tot. Existing Pop.}}{1,000} = \text{Pop. in 1,000's}} \quad \genfrac{}{}{0pt}{}{\text{Ave. Ann. Juv. Ar-}}{= \text{rests per 1,000 Pop.}}$$

Tot. Juv. Arrests (Feb. '65-Nov. '68) / 3.75 years = Tot. Ann. Ave. Juv. Arrest for Neighborhood X

Tot. Existing Pop. / 1,000 = Pop. in 1,000's

Ave. Ann. Juv. Arrests per 1,000 Pop. for (X) Neighborhood

Ex.

$$\cfrac{\cfrac{375}{3.75} = 100}{\cfrac{5,500}{1,000} = 5.5} = 18.18 \quad \genfrac{}{}{0pt}{}{\text{Ave. Ann. Juv. Ar-}}{\text{rests per 1,000 Pop.}}$$

Ave. Ann. Juv. Arrests per 1,000 Pop. for (X) Neighborhood

The above formula was used throughout the study to obtain the annual average juvenile arrests per neighborhood.

Data concerning Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), Old Age Assistance (OAA), and Soldiers Relief (SR) were obtained from the Pottowattamie County Welfare Department Records and the Pottawattamie Soldier's Relief Records, respectively (APPENDIX II). The data is based on the number of cases on file as of September 1968. The Old Age Assistance (OAA) and the Soldier's Relief (SR) cases were combined for the purposes of this study, as both are associated with people of an adult age. The information was combined and formulated into cases per 1,000 population with the aid of the following constructed formula:

OAA  +  SR
   cases        =     Tot. OAA + SR for
                   (X) Neighborhood

--------------------

Tot. Existing
  Population   =  Pop. in Thous.  =  OAA + SR cases
    1,000                         Per 1,000 Pop. for
                                       (X) Neighborhood

Ex.  Same hypothetical neighborhood (X) of 5,500 population
     but having 8 OAA cases and 3 SR cases.

$$\frac{8 + 3 = 11}{\frac{5,500}{1,000} = 5.5}$$  =  2 OAA and SR cases per 1,000
                                 Population for (X) Neighborhood

     The data on deteriorating and deteriorated houses, de-
teriorated sheds, rubble and unlicensed automobiles are from
the Council Bluffs Environmental Health Survey of 1967.[1]
The above survey proved to be valuable in the present study
as it was concerned with the environmental determinants of
communicable diseases, socioeconomic stratification and en-
vironmental deficiencies.

     Having committed himself to the use of the residential
neighborhood unit, this researcher was confronted with the
selection of neighborhoods for Council Bluffs, Iowa.


                 Selection of Neighborhoods

     In the initial stage of research, the city of Council
Bluffs was divided into twenty-one neighborhoods to provide

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[1]*Council Bluffs Environmental Health Survey.* A Report
Prepared by the Council Bluffs Department of Health (Council
Bluffs: Department of Health, 1967), pp. 1-110.

units for comparing the blighted conditions of the city.

These neighborhood units were selected on the basis of the

generalized neighborhoods developed by the Comprehensive

Regional and Urban Area Plan.[1] The neighborhoods were adopted

from the Future Land Use Map which had developed generalized

neighborhoods for the complete Urban Study Area.[2] PLATE 3

is a modified version of the Future Land Use Map showing

only the residential neighborhoods and residential neighbor-

hood reserves as developed in the Comprehensive Plan. The

neighborhoods as designed in PLATE 3 were developed on the

basis of the residential development criteria set forth by

the Council Bluffs Metropolitan Planning Commission (MAPC).

The Comprehensive Plan suggests the following criteria as

the bases to the development of residential neighborhoods:

1. Residential development should take place at densi-
   ties which encourage economic and efficient special
   relationships between structures, between public and
   private uses of land, between vehicular and pedestri-
   an circulation, and between service utility and aes-
   thetic enjoyment of the dwelling and its environment.

2. Residential densities should be designated on the
   basis of topography, the proximity to work and re-
   creation areas, the proximity to major streets and
   highways, and the availability of public facilities
   and utilities.

3. Residential development should preserve or create a
   completely integrated neighborhood unit; the neighbor-
   hood should provide space principally for residential
   use. However, recreational, religious, educational,

[1] Land Use Plan Vol. II, op. cit.

[2] Ibid., p. 130.

NORTH
SCALE

MAPC
COUNCIL BLUFFS
METROPOLITAN AREA
PLANNING COMMISSION

PLATE
3

COUNCIL BLUFFS
URBAN PLAN

LEGEND

RESIDENTIAL
NEIGHBORHOODS
NEIGHBORHOOD REMOVE

SOURCE: COUNCIL BLUFFS
NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS,
1969, P. 34.
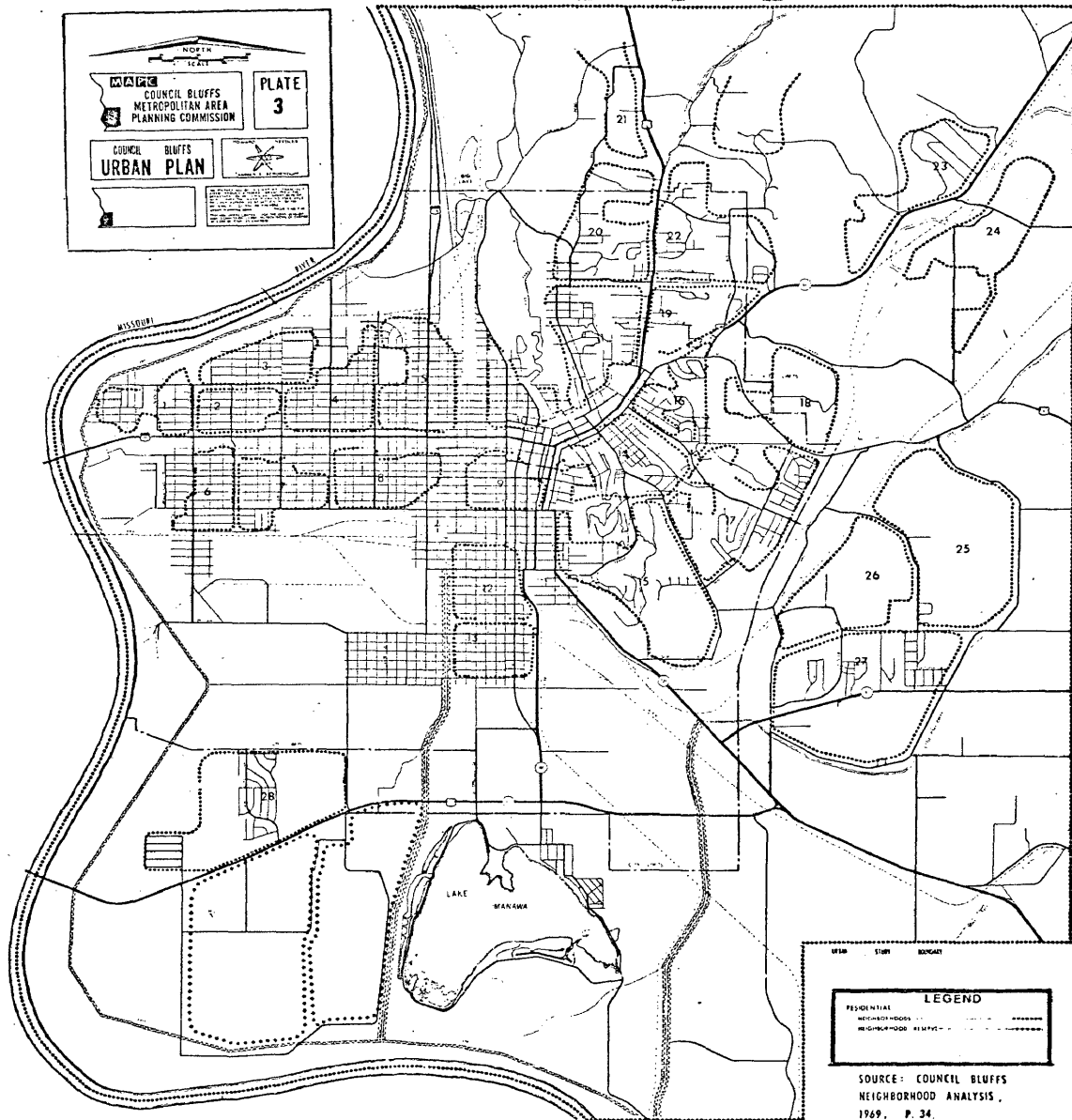
and neighborhood shopping facilities to serve the residential neighborhood should be provided. The elementary school and park should be approximately in the neighborhood center, so as to be accessible from each residential area. Uses that are incompatible with a residential area should be excluded.

4. Non-residential neighborhood facilities, such as churches and shopping facilities, located within a residential area but serving people from several different neighborhoods, should be located on the outer edge of the neighborhood and should be conveniently accessible to a major street.

5. The design for traffic circulation in each neighborhood should provide easy access to the individual dwelling units and neighborhood facilities. Major streets should be routed around the perimeter of the neighborhood. Local streets should be designed in a manner that will provide good access to residential units but will not be used as arterial traffic routes.

6. Pedestrian traffic should be separated from vehicular traffic. Walks should be provided to give convenient access to individual dwelling units and to connect with churches, schools, parks and other neighborhood facilities.[1]

7. PLATE 4 is a schematic illustration of neighborhood unit design principles, including the following:

    a. Children can walk to school and play areas through ribbon park strips separated from streets and the hazards of moving automobiles.

    b. The elementary school and neighborhood park and playground is located in the center of the residential area while major streets are routed along the perimeter. This enables children to travel between home and school or play areas without having to cross arteries of heavy traffic.

    c. The neighborhood shopping center is located close to the major streets. This gives good access both from within and outside of the neighborhood.

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[1] _Ibid._, pp. 14-22.

# NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT DEVELOPMENT

1 Family

1

6

5

Primary Arterial

Park and School

2

1 Family

Duplex-4 Family

Apartments

4

3

Shopping

1 Family

2

Secondary Arterial

SOURCE: Metropolitan Area
Planning Commission 1969
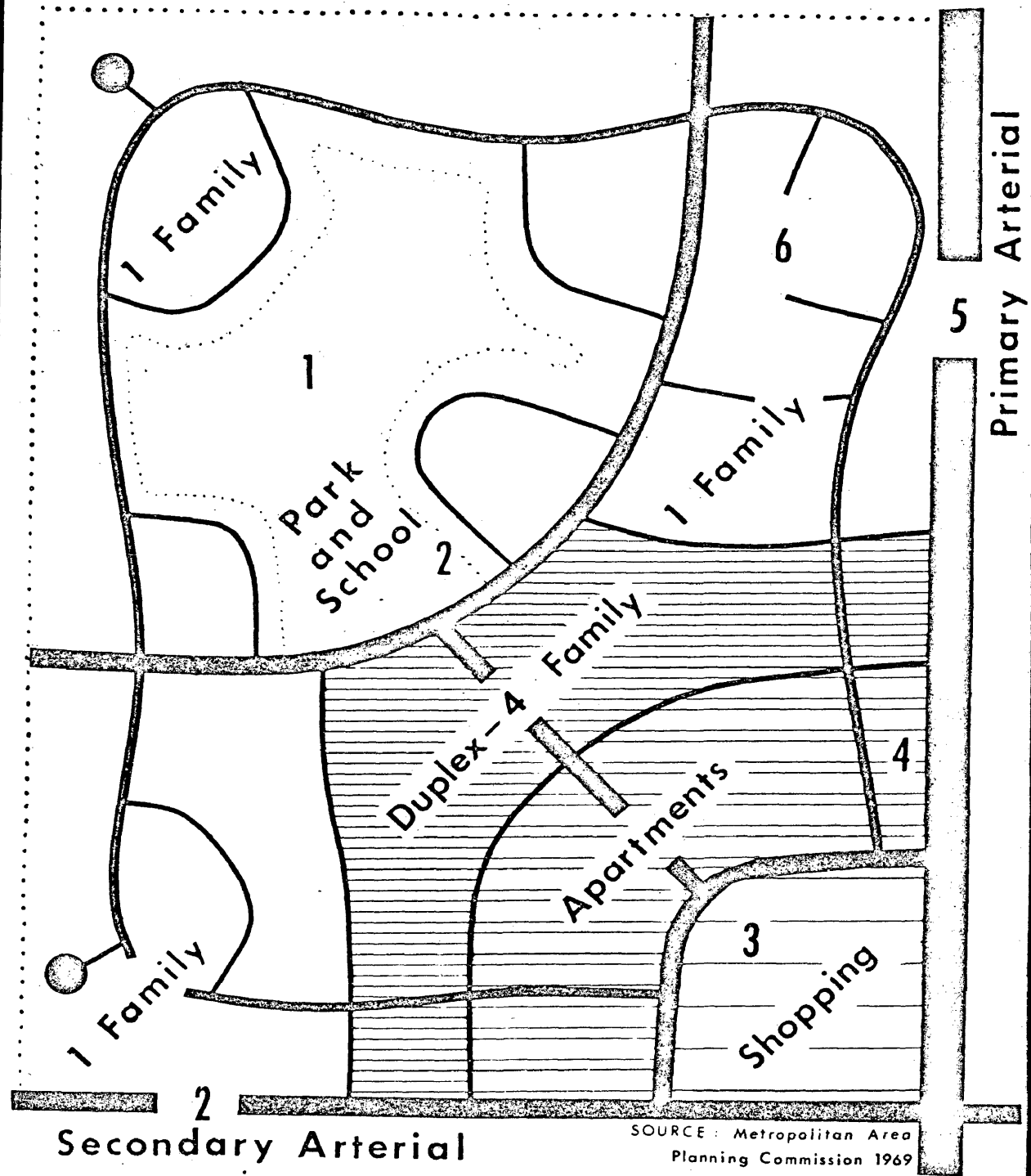
PLATE 4

Residents of other areas can reach the shopping center without traveling through the neighborhood.

d. Public buildings and apartments are located so as to form a buffer between the more intense activity of the shopping center and the quiet atmosphere of the single family residential areas.

e. Major streets are routed around the perimeter of the neighborhood.

f. Minor streets provide good access to residential units, but are planned so that they will not be used as arterial traffic routes. People traveling within the neighborhood can do so easily, while those having no business there can pass by quickly, without delay.[1]

With these principles in mind, a map of Council Bluffs provided by the Planning Department (PLATE 5 and/or MAP I, APPENDIX IV) and a base map (PLATE 6) plotting the twenty-one neighborhoods were included in this study. PLATE 7 illustrates the neighborhoods numerically and TABLE I identifies the neighborhoods used in this undertaking. The names of the neighborhoods are identical to city parks or elementary schools located within the particular neighborhood, with preference going to park names wherever possible. APPENDIX III describes the boundaries for each of the residential neighborhoods in Council Bluffs.

From the criteria presented in this Chapter, the descriptions in APPENDIX III, field study and both land and aerial photographs, it appears that the residential

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[1] Ibid., pp. 22 and 24.

# CITY OF
# COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
October 20, 1969
PLATE 5

CITY LIMITS

LAKE MANAWA
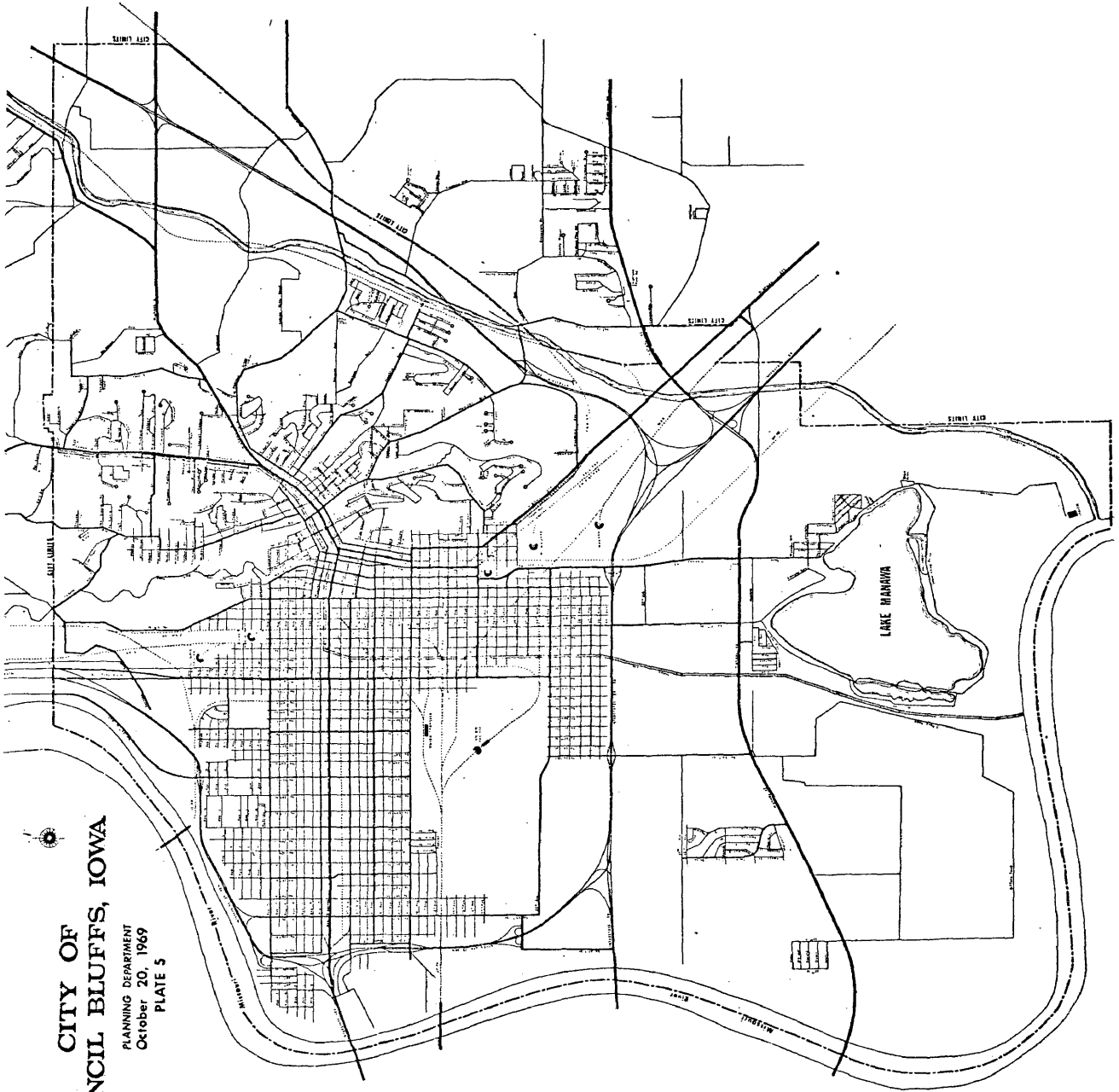
COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA
BASE MAP
PLATE 6

J. W. Preusser 1970
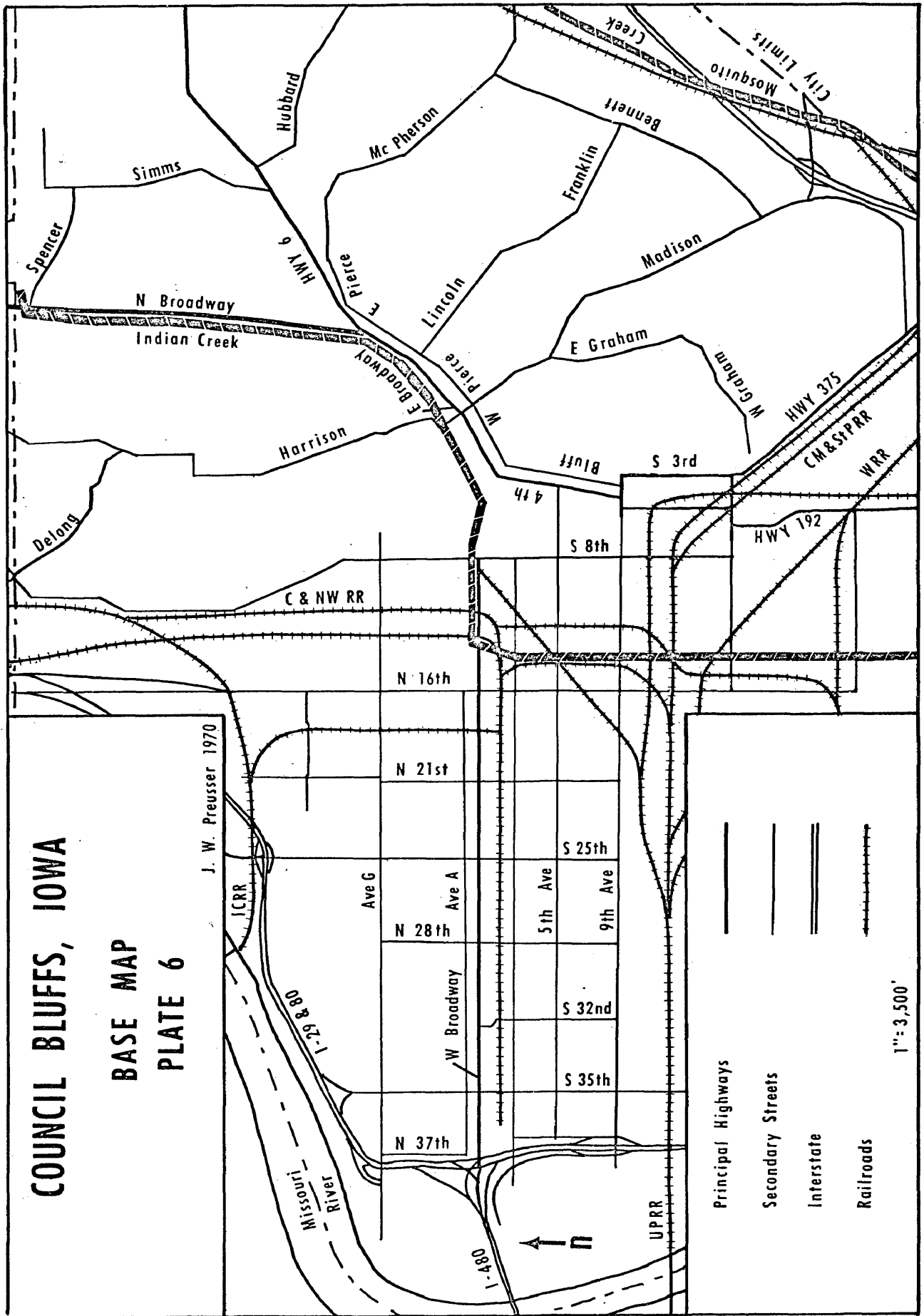
Principal Highways

Secondary Streets

Interstate

Railroads

1":3,500'

City Limits

Mosquito Creek

Bennett

Franklin

Madison

Mc Pherson

Hubbard

Simms

Spencer

HWY 6

Pierce

E Pierce

Lincoln

E Graham

W Graham

HWY 375

CM&StPRR

WRR

N Broadway

Indian Creek

E Broadway

Harrison

W Pierce

Bluff

S 3rd

4 th

S 8th

HWY 192

Delong

C & NW RR

N 16th

N 21st

S 25th

ICRR

Ave G

Ave A

5th Ave

9th Ave

N 28th

S 32nd

I-29 & 80

W Broadway

S 35th

Missouri River

N 37th

UPRR

I-480

N

# COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

## Residential Neighborhoods

### PLATE 7

J. W. Preusser 1970

Missouri River

I-29 & 80

ICRR

I-480

UPRR

N 37th

N 28th

N 21st

N 16th

S 25th

S 32nd

S 35th

9th Ave

Ave A

W Broadway

S 8th

S 3rd

4th

Simms

Spencer

Hubbard

HWY 9

Broadway

Harrison

Delong

Pierce

Pierce

Lincoln

Franklin

Madison

Bennett

W Graham

HWY 375

CM&StPRR

WRR

Mosquito Creek

City Limits

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

N

TYPICAL

NEIGHBORHOOD

1":3,500'

## TABLE I

## RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS IN COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

| Number of Neighborhood | Name of Neighborhood |
|---|---|
| 1 | Ray Meyer |
| 2 | Franklin |
| 3 | Walnut Grove |
| 4 | Roberts Park |
| 5 | Roosevelt |
| 6 | Rue |
| 7 | DeForest |
| 8 | Cochran Park |
| 9 | Bayliss Park |
| 10 | Tinley |
| 11 | Prospect Park |
| 12 | Sunset Park |
| 13 | Peterson Park |
| 14 | St. Peter |
| 15 | Fairmont Park |
| 16 | Cook Park |
| 17 | Bennett Avenue |
| 18 | Memorial Park |
| 19 | Hoover |
| 20 | Lewis and Clark |
| 21 | Gunn |

neighborhoods so identified are distinguishable areal units
and proper units for geographical analysis.

## Blight Indicators

After selecting and delimiting the neighborhoods in
Council Bluffs, it was necessary to select a list of blight
indicators to be analyzed. These were chosen so as to cover
a range of physical and socio-economic ills both observable
and non-observable. Reuel H. Waldrop, in a Public Health
Service publication entitled "Community Block Survey and
Socioeconomic Stratification,"[1] listed several environmen-
tal factors that he considered to be related to communicable
diseases. These factors include land use, exterior housing
quality, water supply, human waste disposal, refuse storage,
rubble accumulations, junked cars, dilapidated sheds, vacant
lot sanitation, presence of livestock, poultry and dog pens,
poor drainage areas, and vector harborages. These factors
are directly related to blight and thus were considered when
the blight indicators were selected. TABLE II lists the
blight indicators that were evaluated in compiling the list
of indicators used in this study. The physical indicators[2]
of blight that were selected include deteriorating and deter-
iorated houses, deteriorated sheds, lots containing rubble,

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[1]Reuel H. Waldrop, "Community Block Survey and Socio-
economic Stratification" (Altanta, Georgia: National
Communicable Disease Center, 1966), pp. 1-43.

[2]See glossary

TABLE II

BLIGHT INDICATORS

| Physical Indicators | Economic and Social Indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Dilapidated Sheds | 1. Aid to Dependent Children Per 1,000 |
| 2. Dogs, Livestock and Poultry | 2. Annual Fire Calls |
| 3. Exterior Housing Quality | 3. Annual Juvenile Arrest Per 1,000 Pop. |
|    a. Deteriorating housing | |
|    b. Deteriorated housing | |
| 4. Junked or Unlicensed Automobiles | 4. Average Family Income |
| 5. Other Negative Land Uses | 5. Average School Years Completed |
|    a. Conversion of dwellings to | |
|       higher population density | |
|    b. Excessive or obstrusive signs | |
|    c. Incompatible non-residential | |
|       uses | |
|    d. Narrow or unpaved alleys | |
|    e. Strip commercialization | |
| 6. Refuse | 6. Old Age Assistance Per 1,000 Pop. |
| 7. Rubble | 7. Soldier's Relief Per 1,000 Pop. |
| 8. Vacant Lots | 8. Visiting Nurse Association Caseloads |
| |    Per 1,000 Population |

negative land use and unlicensed autos. Negative land use
in this study included the following:

1. Excessive or obstrusive signs

2. Intrusion by incompatible non-residential uses

3. Strip commercialization

4. Conversion of dwellings to higher population density

5. Narrow or unpaved alleys.[1]

Refuse and rubble were deleted from the list of physical
blight indicators as a result of field work. Refuse and rub-
ble are accurately included within several other indicators
such as deteriorating and dilapidated housing, dilapidated
sheds and vacant lots. Dogs, livestock and poultry were elimi-
nated for several reasons. Dogs are of two classes, controlled
and stray. The latter proved to be very difficult to tabu-
late. Dogs seemed to be found evenly distributed in all
neighborhoods, thus giving no indication of blight one way or
another. Livestock includes such animals as horses, goats,
cows or hogs, and poultry includes chickens, ducks, geese
and other feathered animals. These two groups denoted little
or no relationship to blight in that they are found on a space
available basis. Field work seemed to disclose that horses
were frequently found in all neighborhoods, other than the
core or central neighborhoods. Horses included pets, racing,

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[1]The five negative land uses are the same as those used
by the Council Bluffs Department of Community Development
to indicate negative neighborhood characteristics.

riding and show horses. Many other residents related that
they owned a horse but had it stabled elsewhere. There was
some implication that animals were associated with lower in-
come groups but observations revealed that many of the resi-
dents having animals were retired farmers who were unable to
disassociate themselves entirely from livestock. Several
other cases of livestock within residential neighborhoods
resulted from the expansion of a particular neighborhood until
it had surrounded a farmer, who was reluctant to move.

There is another reason why livestock and poultry are
of little significance in this study. It is that the major-
ity of the animals found within the city limits are located
in areas not included within the residential neighborhoods,
for example, industrial areas.

The socio-economic indicators of neighborhood blight[1]
include average family income, Aid to Dependent Children
(ADC) cases, juvenile arrests, Old Age Assistance (OAA) and
Soldier's Relief (SR), school years completed and Visiting
Nurse's Association caseloads (VNA). Old Age Assistance (OAA)
and Soldier's Relief (SR) are combined in this study because
both are associated with adult welfare cases.

Annual Fire Calls were deleted from the list after con-
sulting the Council Bluffs Fire Department records. The
records seem to indicate some relationship of fires with old-
er and lower income housing, but also with park areas. Several
of the wooded park areas were high in the number of fire

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[1]See glossary

calls because of fires resulting from carelessness with matches, cigarettes, and camp fires. It would be erroneous to assign these fires to the local neighborhood because of the citywide use of many of the parks, wooded or open areas. PLATE 8 is a diagram of the blight indicators or variables this study has used in determining blighted neighborhoods.

## Categories of Blight

Within a neighborhood the indicators of blight vary considerably, thus necessitating degrees of blight. The continuum of blight ranges from the least amount to the greatest. The continuum was divided into categories that indicate the degree of blight within a neighborhood and in turn the classification into which a particular neighborhood is grouped.

For the present study blight was divided into five categories: minumal blight, limited blight, blight, excessive blight and slum. The five categories of blight were determined by use of the mean of each blight indicator. The data will be presented in Chapter IV but let it suffice for the present that the blight indicators were tabulated by neighborhood. The mean occurance of each blight indicators was obtained through arithmetic computation. The mean was used by this writer to establish the five categories as follows: less than one-half the mean indicates minimal blight; one-half to the mean, inclusive, indicates limited blight; the

BLIGHT
INDICATORS

SOCIO-
ECONOMIC
INDICATORS

Old Age Assistance

Soldier's Relief

Juvenile Arrests

Average Family Income

School Years Completed

Aid to Dependent Children

Visiting Nurses Association

Cases and Caseloads

BLIGHTED NEIGHBORHOOD

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Lots Containing Rubble

Unlicensed Autos

Deteriorating and Dilapidated Houses and Sheds

Excessive Signs

Unpaved Alleys

Conversion of Dwellings

Strip Commercialization

Non-Residential Uses

Negative Land Use

J. W. Preusser 1970

PLATE 8

mean to double the mean is blight; twice the mean inclusive, to triple the mean is excessive blight; and three times the mean and beyond is a slum. As an example, the blight indicator deteriorated sheds with a mean of twenty-two deteriorated sheds per neighborhood, TABLE III, displays the formation of the five categories. This procedure was used to categorize all eleven blight indicators.[1]

TABLE III

CATEGORIES OF BLIGHT

| Categories of Blight | Deteriorated Sheds Per Neighborhood | Mean = 22 |
|---|---|---|
| Minimal Blight | 11 | $\frac{1}{2}$ Mean |
| Limited Blight | 11-22 | $\frac{1}{2}$ Mean to Mean |
| Blight | 23-43 | Mean to 2· Mean |
| Excessive Blight | 44-66 | 2· Mean to 3· Mean |
| Slum | 66 | 3· Mean |

[1] The technique used in dividing blighted neighborhood conditions into five categories of minimal blight, limited blight, blight, excessive blight and slum was developed during the summer of 1969. The above categories evolved from a paper presented in an urban seminar at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Under the supervision of Dr. Dean S. Rugg the five categories were analysed and deemed satisfactory divisions of blighted conditions within residential neighborhoods.

CHAPTER IV


PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA


Neighborhood Statistical Summary

As indicated in the introduction of this paper, the res-
idential neighborhood will be utilized as the unit of com-
parison in attempting to develop a defensible method of deter-
ming a hierarchy of blight. Analysis of the data collected
in Council Bluffs will begin with a presentation of a statis-
tical summary of neighborhood data.

The previous chapter listed, (TABLE I), and identified
the areal neighborhoods of Council Bluffs and the blight
indicators to be used in this study (PLATE 8). TABLES IV-
A, IV-B and IV-C present a neighborhood statistical summary
of the physical, socio-economic, and combined physical, and
socio-economic blight indicators.

TABLE IV-A lists the neighborhood statistical data and
the individual averages for the following socio-economic
blight indicators: average family income, average school
years completed, annual juvenile arrests per 1,000 popula-
tion, ADC cases per 1,000 population, OAA and SR cases per
1,000 population, and VNA caseloads per 1,000 population.
The neighborhood statistical summary and means for the phy-
sical blight indicators are depicted in TABLE IV-B. The
indicators listed are percent of deteriorating and

TABLE IV-A

NEIGHBORHOOD STATISTICAL SUMMARY SOCIO-ECONOMIC BLIGHT INDICATORS

| Number of Neighborhood | Name of Neighborhood | Average Family Income | Average School Years Completed | Juvenile Arrests (Annual) Per 1,000 Pop. | Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) Per 1,000 Pop. | Old Age Assistance (OAA) and Soldier's Relief (SR) Per 1,000 Population | Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Caseloads Per 1,000 Population |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ray Meyer | 5,850 | 11.5 | 12.19 | 8.31 | 4.99 | 7.76 |
| 2 | Franklin | 5,860 | 9.7 | 7.40 | 2.73 | 5.84 | 3.51 |
| 3 | Walnut G. | 5,533 | 10.7 | 5.67 | 5.67 | 4.91 | 1.13 |
| 4 | Roberts P. | 5,533 | 10.7 | 12.50 | 8.55 | 3.95 | 2.30 |
| 5 | Roosevelt | 5,533 | 10.7 | 19.82 | 13.53 | 9.26 | 4.68 |
| 6 | Rue | 5,850 | 11.1 | 6.58 | 5.26 | 1.64 | 1.97 |
| 7 | DeForest | 5,868 | 11.9 | 11.57 | 6.94 | 4.24 | 5.40 |
| 8 | Cochran P. | 5,237 | 11.9 | 23.72 | 23.42 | 13.38 | 6.08 |
| 9 | Bayliss P. | 4,967 | 9.6 | 24.61 | 33.98 | 59.38 | 16.40 |
| 10 | Tinley | 5,216 | 12.0 | 17.57 | 18.95 | 19.64 | 11.37 |
| 11 | Prospect P. | 6,500 | 12.0 | 7.04 | 5.93 | 12.98 | 7.79 |
| 12 | Sunset P. | 5,215 | 8.9 | 18.52 | 16.67 | 16.05 | 7.41 |
| 13 | Peterson P. | 5,215 | 8.9 | 13.68 | 11.48 | 5.47 | 7.66 |
| 14 | St. Peter | 6,276 | 11.3 | 9.64 | 4.69 | 7.55 | 2.87 |
| 15 | Fairmont P. | 5,633 | 11.3 | 6.57 | 2.87 | 2.46 | 3.69 |
| 16 | Cook Park | 6,276 | 12.1 | 7.60 | 2.07 | 1.38 | 9.68 |
| 17 | Bennett A. | 6,276 | 12.1 | 3.24 | 1.62 | 0.97 | 0.32 |
| 18 | Memorial P. | 6,276 | 12.4 | 0 | 0.69 | 0.70 | 0 |
| 19 | Hoover | 7,160 | 12.0 | 6.44 | 0 | 23.17 | 2.57 |
| 20 | Lewis-Clark | 6,356 | 12.0 | 4.34 | 0.39 | 0.39 | 0 |
| 21 | Gunn | 7,160 | 12.0 | 3.96 | 1.07 | 0.36 | 1.44 |
| | Average | 5,967 | 11.1 | 10.43 | 8.78 | 9.26 | 4.68 |

TABLE IV-B

NEIGHBORHOOD STATISTICAL SUMMARY

PHYSICAL BLIGHT INDICATORS

| Number of Neighborhood | Name of Neighborhood | Percent of Deteriorating And Deteriorated Houses | Deteriorated Sheds | Lots Containing Rubble | Unlicensed Automobiles | Negative Land Uses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ray Meyer | 32 | 55 | 114 | 75 | 0 |
| 2 | Franklin | 7 | 6 | 28 | 14 | 3 |
| 3 | Walnut Grove | 14 | 38 | 68 | 67 | 1 |
| 4 | Roberts Park | 19 | 33 | 107 | 68 | 3 |
| 5 | Roosevelt | 40 | 82 | 211 | 120 | 4 |
| 6 | Rue | 7 | 25 | 80 | 40 | 2 |
| 7 | DeForest | 19 | 25 | 112 | 38 | 2 |
| 8 | Cochran Park | 58 | 25 | 118 | 49 | 1 |
| 9 | Bayliss Park | 41 | 16 | 85 | 29 | 4 |
| 10 | Tinley | 38 | 16 | 127 | 31 | 1 |
| 11 | Prospect Park | 11 | 5 | 70 | 6 | 1 |
| 12 | Sunset Park | 33 | 62 | 94 | 50 | 1 |
| 13 | Peterson Park | 15 | 47 | 84 | 37 | 1 |
| 14 | St. Peter | 20 | 15 | 142 | 18 | 2 |
| 15 | Fairmont Park | 18 | 15 | 39 | 9 | 1 |
| 16 | Cook Park | 11 | 4 | 44 | 2 | 1 |
| 17 | Bennett Avenue | 1 | 2 | 31 | 10 | 0 |
| 18 | Memorial Park | 7 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | Hoover | 3 | 1 | 10 | 3 | 0 |
| 20 | Lewis and Clark | 3 | 1 | 31 | 12 | 0 |
| 21 | Gunn | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| | Average | 19 | 22.38 | 81.48 | 34.24 | 1.4 |

TABLE IV-C

NEIGHBORHOOD STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF PHYSICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC BLIGHT INDICATORS

| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ray Meyer | 5,850 | 11.5 | 12.19 | 8.31 | 4.99 | 7.76 | 32 | 55 | 114 | 75 | 0 |
| 2 | Franklin | 5,860 | 9.7 | 7.40 | 2.73 | 5.84 | 3.51 | 7 | 6 | 28 | 14 | 3 |
| 3 | Walnut Grove | 5,533 | 10.7 | 5.67 | 5.67 | 4.91 | 1.13 | 14 | 38 | 68 | 67 | 1 |
| 4 | Roberts Park | 5,533 | 10.7 | 12.50 | 8.55 | 3.95 | 2.30 | 19 | 33 | 107 | 68 | 3 |
| 5 | Roosevelt | 5,533 | 10.7 | 19.82 | 13.53 | 9.26 | 4.68 | 40 | 82 | 211 | 120 | 4 |
| 6 | Rue | ·5,850 | 11.1 | 6.58 | 5.26 | 1.64 | 1.97 | 7 | 25 | 80 | 40 | 2 |
| 7 | DeForest | -5,868 | 11.9 | 11.57 | 6.94 | 4.24 | 5.40 | 19 | 25 | 112 | 38 | 2 |
| 8 | Cochran Park | -5,237 | 11.9 | 23.72 | 23.42 | 13.38 | 6.08 | 58 | 25 | 118 | 49 | 1 |
| 9 | Bayliss Park | -4,967 | 9.6 | 24.61 | 33.98 | 59.38 | 16.40 | 41 | 16 | 85 | 29 | 4 |
| 10 | Tinley | 5,216 | 12.0 | 17.57 | 18.95 | 19.64 | 11.37 | 38 | 16 | 127 | 31 | 1 |
| 11 | Prospect Park | 6,500 | 12.0 | 7.04 | 5.93 | 12.98 | 7.79 | 11 | 5 | 70 | 6 | 1 |
| 12 | Sunset Park | 5,215 | 8.9 | 18.52 | 16.67 | 16.05 | 7.41 | 33 | 62 | 94 | 50 | 1 |
| 13 | Peterson Park | 5,215 | 8.9 | 13.68 | 11.48 | 5.47 | 7.66 | 15 | 47 | 84 | 37 | 1 |
| 14 | St. Peter | 6,276 | 11.3 | 9.64 | 4.69 | 7.55 | 2.87 | 20 | 15 | 142 | 18 | 2 |
| 15 | Fairmont Park | 5,633 | 11.3 | 6.57 | 2.87 | 2.46 | 3.69 | 18 | 15 | 39 | 9 | 1 |
| 16 | Cook Park | 6,276 | 12.1 | 7.60 | 2.07 | 1.38 | 9.86 | 11 | 4 | 44 | 2 | 1 |
| 17 | Bennett Avenue | 6,276 | 12.1 | 3.24 | 1.62 | 0.97 | 0.32 | 1 | 2 | 31 | 10 | 0 |
| 18 | Memorial Park | 6,276 | 12.4 | 0 | 0.69 | 0.70 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | Hoover | 7,160 | 12.0 | 6.44 | 0 | 23.17 | 2.57 | 3 | 1 | 10 | 3 | 0 |
| 20 | Lewis & Clark | 6,356 | 12.0 | 4.34 | 0.39 | 0.30 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 31 | 12 | 0 |
| 21 | Gunn | 7,160 | 12.0 | 3.96 | 1.07 | 0.36 | 1.44 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| | Average | 5,967 | 11.1 | 10.43 | 8.78 | 9.26 | 4.68 | 19 | 22.38 | 81.48 | 34.24 | 1.40 |

Sources: Page 63

deteriorated houses, deteriorated sheds, lots containing rubble, unlicensed automobiles and negative land uses. The combined physical, socio-economic summaries and averages are shown in TABLE IV-C. The sources for the statistical data are listed below.

## SOURCES FOR TABLES IV-A, B AND C

A. PLATE VII and TABLE I

B. TABLE I

C. U.S. Census of Population (1960)

D. U.S. Census of Population (1960)

E. Council Bluffs Police Department Records (Febr. 1965-Nov. 1968)

F. Pottawattamie County Welfare Department Records

G. Pottawattamie County Welfare Department Records and Pottawattamie County Soldier's Relief Records (1968)

H. Council Bluffs - Visiting Nurse Association (1968)

I. Council Bluffs Environmental Health Survey (1967)

J. Council Bluffs Environmental Health Survey (1967)

K. Council Bluffs Environmental Health Survey (1967)

L. Council Bluffs Environmental Health Survey (1967)

M. Council Bluffs Department of Community Development Records (1969)

## ABBREVIATIONS

ADC - Aid to Dependent Children

OAA - Old Age Assistance

SR - Soldier's Relief

VNA - Visiting Nurse Association

Blight Continuum

Following the presentation of the neighborhood statistical summary, the next logical step was the formulation of categories of blight within a blight continuum. The writer established four categories of blight, and a fifth category cited slum. The four categories are designated as minimal blight, limited blight, blight, and excessive blight. Within the continuum, minimal blight represents areas having the least amount of blight, limited blight as areas of rather restricted blight, blight as an area of average economic, physical and social deterioration, and excessive blight as representing an area having more than an average amount of physical and socio-economic deterioration. The slum represents an area in which the combination of blight indicators are such as to be detrimental to the safety, health, morals and welfare of its residents. The writer has arbitrarily determined that slums are areas in which the blight indicator is greater than three times the mean of a blight indicator. A slum can also be determined on a point system, to be discussed later, as an area with a rating of less than one-half the total points. An exception has been made in the housing indicator as it is the opinion of this writer that an area in which more than 50 percent of the housing is deteriorated or deteriorating should be classified slum. Also, areas in which there are more negative characteristics than positive will be classified as slum.

With the emphasis of this study on the residential
neighborhood, the categories are designated as Minimal
Blight Neighborhood (MBN), Limited Blight Neighborhood (LBN),
Blighted Neighborhood (BN), Excessively Blighted Neighbor-
hood (EBN), and Slum Neighborhood (SN). The technique used
in arriving at the five stages within the blight continuum
was based on an arbitrary scale using the mean of each blight
indicator as shown in TABLE V. Minimal blight is represented
by less than one-half the mean, limited blight by one-half
the mean to the mean, blight by the mean to twice the mean,
and excessive blight by twice the mean to three times the
mean. Slum is represented by more than three times the mean,
or by more than 50 percent of the total housing either de-
teriorated or deteriorating, or by 50 percent of the total
points designating negative conditions.

This technique was used to establish the categories of
blight for nine of the eleven blight indicators listed in
TABLE VI. The two indicators that were not computed using
this technique were average family income and average school
years completed. The technique shown in TABLE V, when applied
to income and education, resulted in unrealistic categories
that required $12,000 family income and 22.2 school years
completed to qualify a neighborhood for the minimal blight
category.

The categories for the above indicators were established
by determining the range between the highest and lowest income

TABLE V

TECHNIQUE OF DETERMINING BLIGHT CATEGORIES

| Blight Category | Criteria |
|---|---|
| Minimal Blight | $<\frac{1}{2}$ Mean |
| Limited Blight | $\frac{1}{2}$ Mean to Mean |
| Blight | Mean to 2° Mean |
| Excessive Blight | 2° Mean to 3° Mean |
| Slum | 3° Mean |
| | $<50\%$ Sound Housing |
| | 50% Negative Points |

and education levels. This difference was then divided by five, the number of categories, to determine the amount of difference between each of the five categories. For example, the highest average family income listed in TABLE IV-A is $7,160.00, and the lowest average family income is $4,967.00, giving a difference of $2,193.00. When divided by 5, the number of categories, the difference between each of the categories of blight was $438.60. The categories were then constructed by adding to or subtracting from the mean the difference computed above. The difference of $438.60 was subtracted from the mean family income of $5,967.00 to produce a BN category range of from $5,528.40 to $5,967.00. Another $438.60 was subtracted to provide a EBN category of from $5,089.80 to $5,528.39. Any income less than $5,089.80 forms the SN category. Adding $438.60 onto the mean produced the LBN category of from $5,967.01 to $6,405.60. Any income over $6,405.60

indicated the MBN category.

A similar procedure was used for average school years completed. The greatest number of school years completed of 12.4 minus the lowest of 8.9 equals 3.5. When divided by 5, the result is a .7 of a year categorical difference. The difference was then added or subtracted with regard to the mean as in the family income procedure. The completed categorical breakdown for average family income and average school years completed is shown in TABLE VI.

Following vertically down the Minimal Blight Neighborhood column in TABLE VI will yield the following characteristics for that category of blight: an average family income of greater than $6,405.60; an education level greater than 11.8 average school years completed; less than 5.2 juvenile arrests per 1,000 population; less than 4.4 Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) cases per 1,000 population; less than 4.7 Old Age Assistance (OAA) and Soldier's Relief (SR) cases per 1,000 population; and less than 2.4 Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) caseloads per 1,000 population. Physical indicators include less than 9.5 percent of the housing deteriorated or deteriorating, fewer than 11.2 deteriorated sheds per neighborhood, less than 40.7 neighborhood lots containing rubble, fewer than 17.1 unlicensed autos within a neighborhood, and less than 0.7 negative land uses per neighborhood.

A neighborhood classified as a Limited Blight Neighborhood (LBN) must have the following socio-economic

characteristics: an income range of from $5,907.01 to $6,405.60; an education level between 11.2 and 11.8 years; between 5.2 and 10.3 annual juvenile arrests per 1,000 population; 4.4 to 8.7 ADC cases; 4.7 to 9.2 OAA and SR cases; and 2.4 to 4.6 VNA caseloads per 1,000 population. The physical characteristics of a LBN include between 9.5-18.9 percent of the housing either deteriorated or deteriorating, between 11.2 and 22.3 deteriorated sheds, 40.7-81.4 lots containing rubble, 17.1-34.1 unlicensed autos and between 0.7-1.3 negative land uses within the neighborhood.

The Blighted Neighborhood (BN) has an income level ranging from $5,528.40 to $5,967.00, an education level of 10.4 to 11.1 years, 10.4-20.7 annual juvenile arrests, 8.8-17.5 ADC, 9.3-18.6 OAA and SR, and between 4.7 and 9.3 VNA caseloads per 1,000 population. Housing conditions range from 19.0 to 38.0 percent deteriorated or deteriorating, between 22.4 and 44.7 deteriorated sheds, some 81.5 to 162.9 lots containing rubble, with 34.2 and 68.3 unlicensed autos, and between 1.4 and 2.7 negative land uses.

An Excessively Blighted Neighborhood (EBN) is characterized by an income level of from $5,089.80 to $5,528.39, an education level of from 9.7 to 10.3 years, 20.8 to 41.3 annual juvenile arrests, 17.6 to 26.3 ADC, 18.7-27.8 OAA and SR, and 9.4-14.0 VNA cases per 1,000 population. An EBN has between 38.1 and 50.0 percent of the housing either deteriorated or deteriorating, 44.8-67.1 deteriorated sheds, 163.0-

TABLE VI

CATEGORIES WITHIN THE BLIGHT CONTINUUM

| Physical and Socio-Economic Blight Indicators | Ave. | MBN | LBN | BN | EBN | BN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Average Family Income | $5,967 | >$6,405.60 | $6,405.60-$5,967.01 | $5,967.00-$5,528.40 | $5,528.39-$5,089.80 | <$5,089.80 |
| Average School Years Completed | 11.10 | >11.8 | 11.8-11.2 | 11.1-10.4 | 10.3-9.7 | <9.7 |
| Annual Juvenile Arrests Per 1,000 Pop. | 10.43 | <5.2 | 5.2-10.3 | 10.4-20.7 | 20.8-41.3 | >41.3 |
| ADC Per 1,000 Population | 8.78 | <4.4 | 4.4-8.7 | 8.8-17.5 | 17.6-26.3 | >26.3 |
| OAA and SR Per 1,000 Population | 9.26 | <4.7 | 4.7-9.2 | 9.3-18.6 | 18.7-27.8 | >27.8 |
| VNA Caseloads Per 1,000 Population | 4.68 | <2.4 | 2.4-4.6 | 4.7-9.3 | 9.4-14.0 | >14.0 |
| % of Deteriorating & Deteriorated Houses | 19.00 | <9.5 | 9.5-18.9 | 19.0-38.0 | 38.1-50.0 | >50.0 |
| Deteriorated Sheds | 22.38 | <11.2 | 11.2-22.3 | 22.4-44.7 | 44.8-67.1 | >67.1 |
| Lots Containing Rubble | 81.48 | <40.7 | 40.7-81.4 | 81.5-162.9 | 163.0-244.4 | >244.4 |
| Unlicensed Autos | 34.24 | <17.1 | 17.1-34.1 | 34.2-68.3 | 68.4-102.7 | >102.7 |
| Negative Land Uses | 1.4 | <0.7 | 0.7-1.3 | 1.4-2.7 | 2.8-4.2 | >4.2 |

244.4 lots of rubble, 68.4 to 102.7 unlicensed automobiles, and 2.8-4.2 negative land uses.

The last category in TABLE VI is the Slum Neighborhood (SN) which has an average family income level of less than $5,089.00 and an education level of less than 9.7 average school years completed.  An SN has over 41.3 annual juvenile arrests, over 26.3 ADC, over 27.8 OAA and SR, and over 14.0 VNA cases per 1,000 population.  Over 50 percent of the housing is deteriorated or deteriorating, with more than 67.1 deteriorated sheds, greater than 244.4 lots containing rubble, more than 102.7 unlicensed automobiles, and at least 4.3 negative land uses.

The technique used in determining the various degrees of blight was that of the writer.  It is subject to criticism because of the subjectivity used in establishing the categories within the continuum of blight.  It seems to the writer that this technique provides both an approximate and an adequate classification system for a study of the residential neighborhood, in Council Bluffs, Iowa.  However, until it is tested on other cities it remains a questionable technique.

## Housing Condition Approach

As established in the review of the literature, a major concern of blight determination in the past has been focused upon deteriorated and deteriorating housing.  This study will

proceed by examining such data in an attempt to establish
a method of determining a hierarchy of blight in Council
Bluffs, Iowa.

Using the statistical data on housing, the percent of
deteriorating and deteriorated houses, TABLE IV-B, and the
criteria for categories of blight in TABLE VI, the writer
has constructed in TABLE VII a ranking or a hierarchy of
neighborhoods based entirely on housing conditions. The
neighborhood hierarchy resulting from the deteriorated and
deteriorating housing approach lists seven neighborhoods as
Minimal Blight Neighborhoods (MBN), five as Limited Blight
Neighborhoods (LBN), six as Blighted Neighborhoods (BN), two
as Excessively Blighted Neighborhoods (EBN), and one as a
Slum Neighborhood (SN). The distribution of these neighbor-
hoods is illustrated in PLATE 9. The distribution of the
various degrees of blight will be evaluated in a later chap-
ter. Let it suffice for now that, based on housing, there
appears to be concentric zones of housing ranging from least
to most sound as we move away from the central portion of
Council Bluffs.

A hierarchy of blight based on housing conditions is a
convenient approach in that data on housing is readily avail-
ble in Census reports. Having once gathered the data, a
hierarchy is developed by inverting the rank as determined
by the percentage of deteriorated or deteriorating housing.

TABLE VII

HOUSING APPROACH TO NEIGHBORHOOD HIERARCHY

| Category of Blight | Rank | Name of Neighborhood | Number of Neighborhood | % of Deteriorated and Deteriorating Houses |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (MBN) | 1 | Bennett Avenue | 17 | 1 |
| | 2 | Gunn | 21 | 2 |
| | 3.5 | Lewis & Clark | 20 | 3 |
| | 3.5 | Hoover | 19 | 3 |
| | 6 | Memorial Park | 18 | 7 |
| | 6 | Franklin | 2 | 7 |
| | 6 | Rue | 6 | 7 |
| (LBN) | 8.5 | Cook Park | 16 | 11 |
| | 8.5 | Prospect Park | 11 | 11 |
| | 10 | Walnut Grove | 3 | 14 |
| | 11 | Peterson Park | 13 | 15 |
| | 12 | Fairmont Park | 15 | 18 |
| (BN) | 13.5 | Roberts Park | 4 | 19 |
| | 13.5 | DeForest | 7 | 19 |
| | 15 | St. Peter | 14 | 20 |
| | 16 | Ray Meyer | 1 | 32 |
| | 17 | Sunset Park | 12 | 33 |
| | 18 | Tinley | 10 | 38 |
| (EBN) | 19 | Roosevelt | 5 | 40 |
| | 20 | Bayliss | 9 | 41 |
| (SN) | 21 | Cochran Park | 8 | 58 |

# COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

## Blighted Areas   HOUSING APPROACH

### PLATE 9

J. W. Preusser 1970

1'' : 3,500'

Minimal Blight
Limited Blight
Blight
Excessive Blight
Slum

Missouri River

I-29 & 80

ICRR

Delong

Spencer

Simms

Hubbard

Bennett

Franklin

Madison

HWY 9

E Pierce

E Broadway

Lincoln

W Pierce

Harrison

W Graham

HWY 375

CM & St P RR

WRR

S 3rd

S 8th

4th

9th Ave

Ave A

N 16th

N 21st

S 25th

S 32nd

S 35th

N 28th

N 37th

W Broadway

UPRR

I-480

n

Mosquito Creek

City Limits

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17  18  19  20  21

74
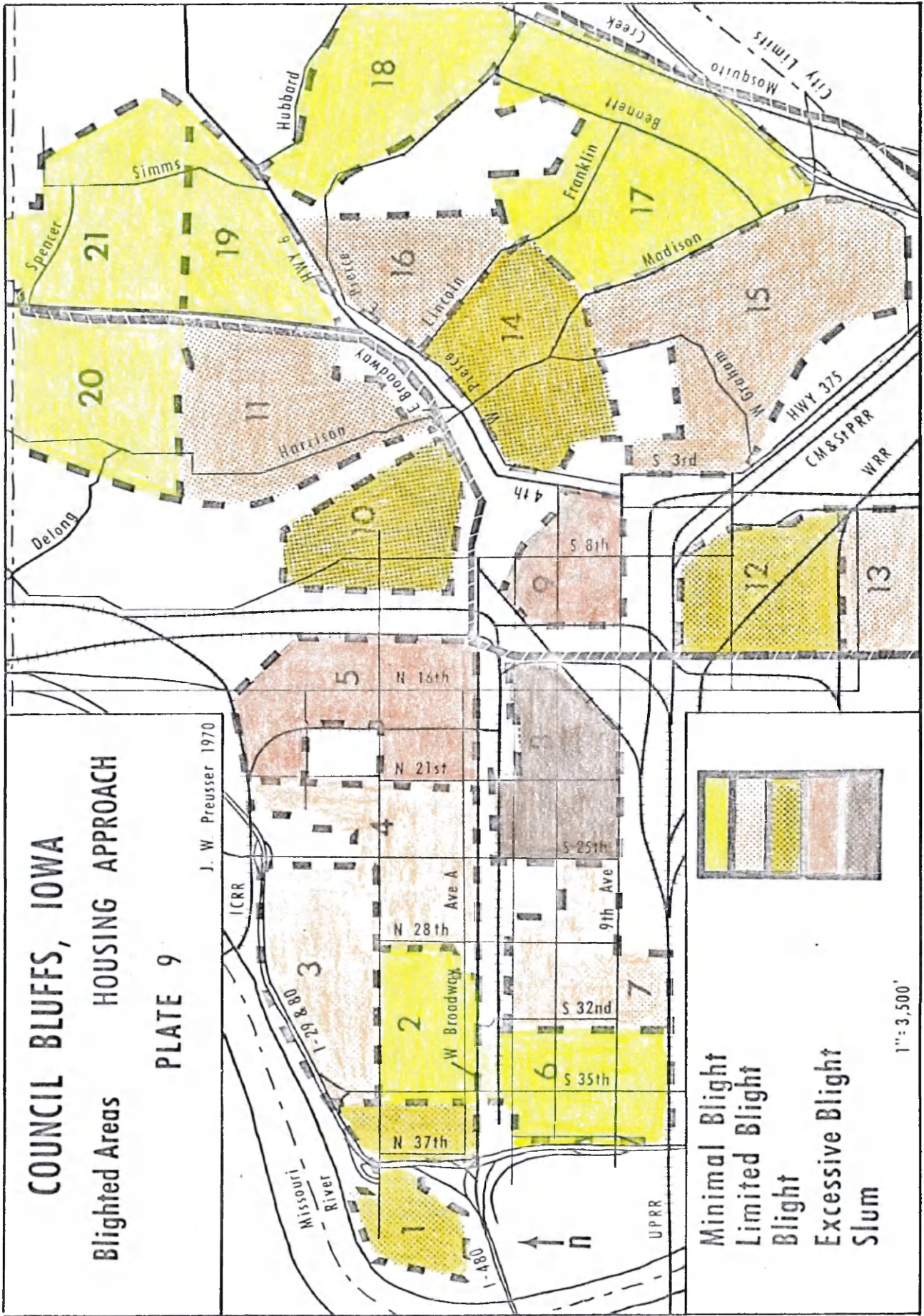
## Non-Housing Approach

There is more to blight, however, than housing conditions. A prospective home buyer places a considerable amount of emphasis on the condition of the home he intends to buy, but also evaluates the neighborhood in which the house is located.

The prospective home buyer and the home owner are concerned with the land use, and the quality of the lots within the neighborhood. They are also interested in the socio-economic status of their neighborhood or their prospective neighbors. With this in mind the writer sought to develop a ranking system in which neighborhoods could be placed into a hierarchy sensitive to physical and socio-economic conditions, similar to those listed in PLATE 8. The writer proposed three possible approaches to evaluating neighborhoods based on various indicators of blight: non-housing approach, equal-value approach, and a weighted-value approach.

The non-housing approach evaluates the physical and socio-economic conditions of a neighborhood, excluding housing conditions. The equal-value approach places a similar value on each of the eleven physical and social-economic indicators of blight. One of the eleven physical and social-economic indicators is the condition of the housing. Thus housing is not given preferential treatment. The third approach is the weighted-value approach. Here the housing conditions are weighted to the extent that housing has a value equal to

the combined total value of the other ten blight indicators.

The non-housing approach attempts to evaluate neighborhoods on criteria other than housing conditions. The ten indicators used include average family income, average school years completed, annual juvenile arrests, aid to dependent children, old age assistance, soldier's relief, visiting nurse association caseloads, deteriorated sheds, lots containing rubble, and unlicensed automobiles. Also included are such negative land uses as excessive or obstructive signs, intrusion by incompatible non-residential uses, strip commercialization, conversion of dwellings into higher population density, and narrow or unpaved alleys.

The ten physical, socio-economic indicators are listed in TABLES IV-A, B and C. All ten variables are given an equal value rating ranging from one to five as determined by the five categories of blight listed in TABLE VI. All blight indicators within the limits of the Minimal Blight Neighborhood (MBN) category have been given a value of one, while the Limited Blight Neighborhood (LBN) category have a value of two. The Blighted Neighborhood (BN) category has a value of three, Excessively Blighted Neighborhood (EBN), four, and the Slum Neighborhood (SN), a value of five.

The blight indicators are listed and valued in TABLE VIII. A total point value has been obtained for each of the 21 neighborhoods by simple addition. The various rankings in the blight categories are determined by using the same

technique as was used in TABLE VI for average family income
and average school years completed. The sum total of the
points was determined (477) and then divided by the number
of neighborhoods (21), resulting in an average of 22.7. The
average was then divided by the number of blight categories
(5) to determine the point spread between the various cate-
gories: MBN, LBN, BN, EBN, and SN. The variation of 4.5
for each category resulted in the following point differen-
tials as shown in column B of TABLE VIII. MBN has a point
value of less than 18.2, LBN a value of between 18.2 and 22.6,
BN 22.7 to 27.1, EBN 27.2 to 31.7, and a point value greater
than 31.7 signifies a SN. The categories were determined as
follows: the mean of 22.7 plus the variation of 4.5 pro-
vided a result of 27.2, and therefore a BN category of 22.7
to 27.1; the EBN began at 27.2 and ended at 31.6 (27.2 plus
4.5 equals 31.7); 31.7 or above signifies SN; LBN was deter-
mined by subtracting 4.5 from the mean of 22.7, and thus
given a category of 18.2 to 22.6; and the MBN category has a
value of less than 18.2.

The non-housing approach resulted in a neighborhood
hierarchy, TABLE VIII, consisting of eight Minimal Blight
Neighborhoods, one Limited Blight Neighborhood, six Blighted
Neighborhoods, two Excessively Blighted Neighborhoods, and
four Slum Neighborhoods. PLATE 10 illustrates the distribu-
tion of the various types of neighborhoods resulting from the
non-housing approach. The distribution pattern based on

TABLE VIII

NON-HOUSING APPROACH TO NEIGHBORHOOD HIERARCHY

| Rank | Name of Neighborhood | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | J | K | L | M | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gunn | 21 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| 3 | Bennett Avenue | 17 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| 3 | Lewis & Clark | 20 | (MBN) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| 3 | Memorial Park | 18 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| 5 | Hoover | 19 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 16 |
| 7 | Cook Park | 16 | <18.2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 |
| 7 | Fairmont Park | 15 | | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 18 |
| 7 | Prospect Park | 11 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 |
| 9 | Franklin | | (LBN) 18.2 22.6 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 21 |
| 11 | Rue | 6 | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 23 |
| 11 | Walnut Grove | 3 | (BN) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 23 |
| 11 | St. Peter | 14 | 22.7 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 23 |
| 13 | DeForest | 7 | | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 24 |
| 14.5 | Ray Meyer | 1 | | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 26 |
| 14.5 | Roberts Park | 4 | 27.1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 26 |
| 16 | Tinley | 10 | (EBN) 27.2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 29 |
| 17 | Cochran Park | 8 | 31.7 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 30 |
| 18 | Peterson Park | 13 | (SN) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 32 |
| 19 | Sunset Park | 12 | | 4 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 33 |
| 20 | Roosevelt | 5 | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 34 |
| 21 | Bayliss Park | 9 | >31.7 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 40 |

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CODE FOR TABLE VIII


A   Number of Neighborhood - PLATE 7

B   Category of Blight - TABLE VI

C   Average Family Income

D   Average School Years Completed

E   Annual Juvenile Arrests Per 1,000 Population

F   Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) Per 1,000
    Population

G   Old Age Assistance (OAA) and Soldier's Relief
    (SR) Per 1,000 Population

H   Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Caseloads
    Per 1,000 Population

J   Deteriorated Sheds

K   Lots Containing Rubble

L   Unlicensed Automobiles

M   Negative Land Uses


non-housing indicators varies somewhat from the concentric
zones of PLATE 9, based on housing. The categories of blighted
neighborhoods in PLATE 10 appear to form strip zones. The
Minimal Blight Neighborhoods (MBN) form a strip running north
and south in the eastern portion of Council Bluffs. Neigh-
borhood 14, St. Peter, a Blighted Neighborhood (BN), is the
lone exception resulting seemingly from its nearness to the
Central Business District. The only Limited Blight Neighbor-
hood is located in the western part of Council Bluffs. An-
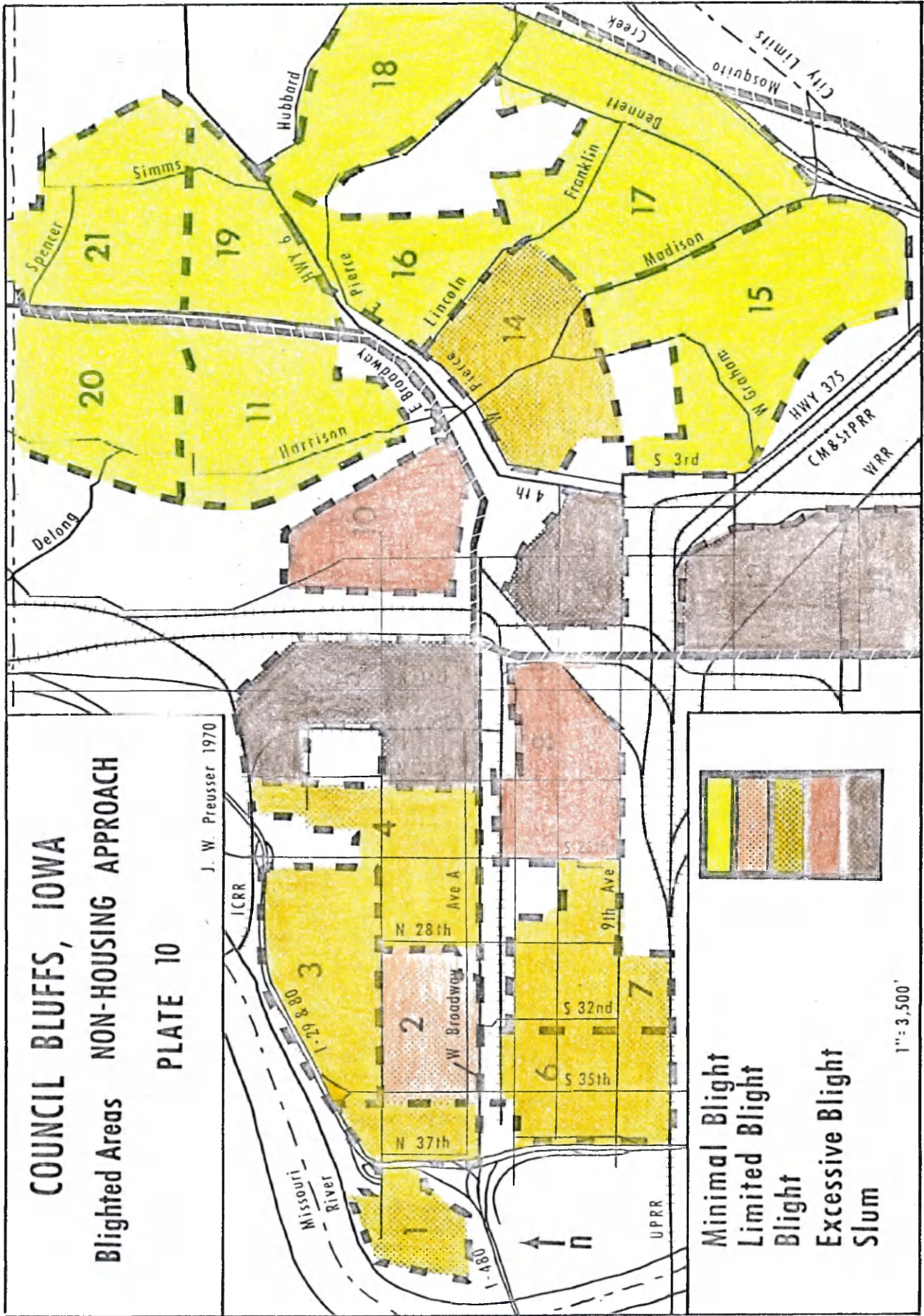other north-south trending strip zone comprised of two

# COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

## Blighted Areas NON-HOUSING APPROACH

### PLATE 10

J. W. Preusser 1970

Minimal Blight
Limited Blight
Blight
Excessive Blight
Slum

1" = 3,500'

TABLE IX

HOUSING VS NON-HOUSING NEIGHBORHOOD HIERARCHY

| | Housing Approach | | | Non-Housing Approach | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Name of Neighborhood | Category of Blight | Rank | Name of Neighborhood | Change |
| 1 | Bennett Avenue | | 1 | Gunn | ' |
| 2 | Gunn | | 2 | Bennett Avenue | – |
| 3 | Lewis and Clark | | 3 | Lewis and Clark | |
| 4 | Hoover | (MBN) | 4 | Memorial Park | ' |
| 5 | Memorial Park | | 5 | Hoover | – |
| 6 | Franklin | | 6 | Cook Park | ' ** |
| 7 | Rue | | 7 | Fairmont Park | ' ** |
| | | | 8 | Prospect Park | ' ** |
| 8 | Cook Park | | 9 | Franklin | – * |
| 9 | Prospect Park | | | | |
| 10 | Walnut Grove | (LBN) | | | |
| 11 | Peterson Park | | | | |
| 12 | Fairmont Park | | | | |
| 13 | Roberts Park | | 10 | Rue | – * |
| 14 | DeForest | | 11 | Walnut Grove | – * |
| 15 | St. Peter | | 12 | St. Peter | ' |
| 16 | Ray Meyer | (BN) | 13 | DeForest | ' |
| 17 | Sunset Park | | 14 | Ray Meyer | ' |
| 18 | Tinley | | 15 | Roberts Park | – |
| 19 | Roosevelt | (EBN) | 16 | Tinley | ' * |
| 20 | Bayliss | | 17 | Cochran Park | ' ** |
| 21 | Cochran Park | (SN) | 18 | Peterson Park | – * |
| | | | 19 | Sunset Park | – * |
| | | | 20 | Roosevelt | – * |
| | | | 21 | Bayliss Park | – * |

'   Neighborhood attained a higher ranking in the Non-Housing Approach than in the Housing Approach

–   Neighborhood received a lower ranking in the Non-Housing Approach compared to the Housing Approach

\*   Neighborhood changed categories to a lower category having increased blight

\*\*   Neighborhood changed categories to a higher category having less blight

Excessively Blighted Neighborhoods (EBN) and four Slum Neigh-
borhoods (SN) crosses through the center portion of the city.
Five of the six Blighted Neighborhoods (BN) form a strip zone
in western Council Bluffs. The sixth Blighted Neighborhood
was the previously mentioned St. Peter neighborhood.

TABLE IX compares the housing and non-housing approaches
to a neighborhood hierarchy as determined by blight. As in-
dicated in TABLE IX, nine neighborhoods attained a higher
ranking in the non-housing approach. Eleven neighborhoods
had a lower ranking in the non-housing approach than they had
attained in the housing approach. One neighborhood, Lewis
and Clark, kept the same ranking in both approaches. Four
neighborhoods moved up to a better category characterized by
less blight. Eight neighborhoods dropped enough in ranking
and points to be listed in a lower category containing a
greater amount of blight conditions. Nine neighborhoods main-
tained the same categorical ranking in both approaches.

## Equal-Value Approach

The equal-value approach is a combination of all eleven
blight indicators. As the condition of the housing is given
the same point value as any of the other ten blight indica-
tors, all eleven indicators have an equal point value. The
ten physical, socio-economic indicators are the same as those
used in TABLE VIII. To those is added the eleventh indica-
tor, the percentage of deteriorated or deteriorating housing.

TABLE X

EQUAL-VALUE APPROACH TO NEIGHBORHOOD HIERARCHY

| Rank | Name of Neighborhood | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gunn | 21 | (MBN) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| 2 | Bennett Avenue | 17 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| 3 | Lewis & Clark | 20 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| 3 | Memorial Park | 18 | ≤20.0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| 5 | Hoover | 19 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 17 |
| 7 | Cook Park | 16 | | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 |
| 7 | Fairmont | 15 | (LBN) | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 20 |
| 7 | Prospect Park | 11 | 20.0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 |
| 9 | Franklin | 2 | | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 22 |
| 10 | Rue | 6 | 24.9 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 24 |
| 11 | Walnut Grove | 3 | (BN) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 25 |
| 12 | St. Peter | 14 | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 26 |
| 13 | DeForest | 7 | 25.0 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 27 |
| 14.5 | Ray Meyer | 1 | | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 29 |
| 14.5 | Roberts Park | 4 | 29.9 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 29 |
| 16 | Tinley | 10 | (EBN) | 4 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 32 |
| 17 | Peterson Park | 13 | 30.0 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 34 |
| 18 | Cochran Park | 8 | 35.0 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 35 |
| 19 | Sunset Park | 12 | (SN) | 4 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 36 |
| 20 | Roosevelt | 5 | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 38 |
| 21 | Bayliss Park | 9 | >35.0 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 44 |

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CODE FOR TABLE X

A   Number of Neighborhood - Plate 7

B   Category of Blight - TABLE VI

C   Average Family Income

D   Average School Years Completed

E   Annual Juvenile Arrests Per 1,000 Population

F   Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) Per 1,000 Population

G   Old Age Assistance (OAA) and Soldier's Relief (SR)
     Per 1,000 Population

H   Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Caseloads Per
     1,000 Population

I   Percent of Deteriorating and Deteriorated Houses

J   Deteriorated Sheds

K   Lots Containing Rubble

L   Unlicensed Automobiles

M   Negative Land Uses

The procedure used for determining the value is the same as was used for TABLE VIII. Each indicator has a value range from one to five, MBN, LBN, BN, EBN and SN respectively. The values were tabulated in TABLE X. The point values were totaled for each of the 21 neighborhoods.

The sum of the total points was then determined (525) and divided by the number of neighborhoods (21), resulting in an average of 25. The average was then divided by the number of blight categories (5) to determine the amount of

variations between the categories on the blight continuum.
The variation of 5.0 for each category resulted in the follow-
ing point differentials. The MBN has a point value of less
than 20.0; LBN between 20.0 and 24.9 points; BN 25.0 to 27.9
points; EBN 30.0 to 35.0, and the SN has a point value greater
than 35.0. The categories are listed in column B of TABLE X
and were determined using the same procedure as was used in
the non-housing approach, TABLE VIII. The average of 25 plus
the variation of 5 resulted in a BN of 25 to 29.9, as the
EBN started at 30.0 and ended at 35.0 (an additional 5).
Anything in excess of 35.0 is SN. Going 5.0 variation in
the other direction provided an LBN of 20.0 to 24.9. Less
than 20.0 was considered MBN.

The equal-value approach resulted in a hierarchy with
five neighborhoods in each of the MBN, LBN, BN categories,
and three neighborhoods in each of the EBN and SN categories.
The more even spread is illustrated in PLATE 11. In com-
parison to PLATE 9 and 10 the equal-value approach has pro-
duced a more definite EBN-SN strip zone. The BN, LBN, and
MBN respectively, form concentric zones outward from the ex-
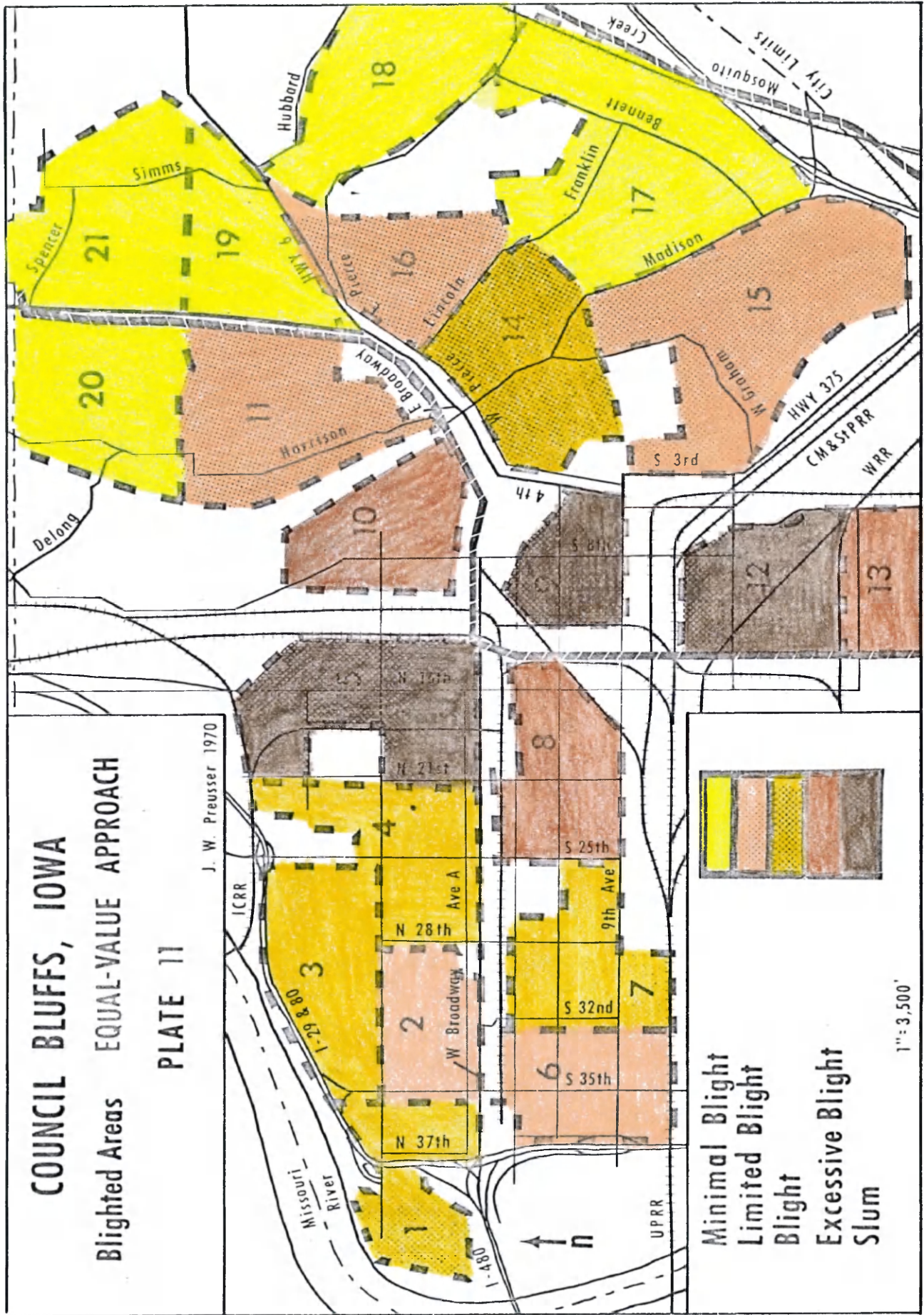cessively blighted strip.


Weighted-Value Approach

The third approach to developing a neighborhood hierarchy
that is based on blight indicators encompassing more than
housing conditions is the weighted-value approach. The two

COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

Blighted Areas    EQUAL-VALUE APPROACH

PLATE 11

J. W. Preusser 1970

Minimal Blight
Limited Blight
Blight
Excessive Blight
Slum

1" : 3,500'

previously mentioned approaches considered (1) ten non-housing indicators of blight and (2) housing having the same value as any one of the ten other indicators of blight. The weighted-value approach will place an added value on housing conditions while maintaining the same value for each of the ten other blight indicators. This approach will not give housing conditions the concentrated value it had in the housing-condition approach, TABLE VII, but it will give housing a weighted or preferential treatment among the eleven blight variables.

The weighted-value approach shown in TABLE XI makes use of the procedures used in the equal-value approach; however, the positive neighborhood conditions are tabulated. For each neighborhood in Council Bluffs there is a possible 200 positive points. These points are divided into 100 points for sound housing, and 10 points for each of the ten variables. One point is allotted for each percent of sound housing within a particular neighborhood. Thus a neighborhood with 9 percent of the housing deteriorated or deteriorating has 91 percent sound housing, or a total of 91 points in column I of TABLE XI. In the previous approaches, five categories of blight were used to obtain point values ranging from two to ten. Two points represented the characteristics of a SN, four points an EBN, six points a BN, eight points a LBN, and ten points a MBN. The positive is attained because the point value increases whenever there is a decrease in blight. The

TABLE XI

WEIGHTED-VALUE APPROACH TO NEIGHBORHOOD HIERARCHY

| Rank | Name of Neighborhood | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | Total Points |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gunn | 21 | (MBN) | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 98 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 198 |
| 2 | Bennett Avenue | 17 | | 8 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 99 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 197 |
| 3 | Lewis & Clark | 20 | >186.5 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 97 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 195 |
| 4 | Memorial Park | 18 | | 8 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 93 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 191 |
| 5 | Hoover | 19 | | 10 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 97 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 185 |
| 6.5 | Cook Park | 16 | (LBN) | 8 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 6 | 89 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 173 |
| 6.5 | Prospect Park | 11 | | 10 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 89 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 173 |
| 8 | Franklin | 2 | 186.5 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 93 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 4 | 171 |
| 9.5 | Fairmont Park | 15 | | 6 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 83 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 167 |
| 9.5 | Rue | 6 | 155.5 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 93 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 167 |
| 11 | Walnut Grove | 3 | | 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 86 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 158 |
| 12 | St. Peter | 14 | (BN) | 8 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 80 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 154 |
| 13 | DeForest | 7 | | 6 | 10 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 6 | 81 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 153 |
| 14 | Roberts Park | 4 | 155.4 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 81 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 149 |
| 15 | Peterson Park | 13 | | 4 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 85 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 141 |
| 16 | Ray Meyer | 1 | 124.3 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 68 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 134 |
| 17 | Tinley | 10 | (EBN) | 4 | 10 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 62 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 124 |
| 18 | Sunset Park | 12 | 124.2 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 67 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 121 |
| 19 | Roosevelt | 5 | | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 60 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 112 |
| 20 | Cochran Park | 8 | 93.2 | 4 | 10 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 42 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 102 |
| 21 | Bayliss Park | 9 | (SN) <93.2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 59 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 99 |

Code Next Page

CODE FOR TABLE XI

A   Number of Neighborhood - PLATE 7

B   Category of Blight - TABLE VI

C   Average Family Income

D   Average School Years Completed

E   Juvenile Arrests (Annual) per 1,000 Population

F   Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)

G   Old Age Assistance (OAA) and Soldier's Relief (SR)

H   Visiting Nurse Association Caseloads Per 1,000 Population

*I   Percent of Sound Housing

J   Deteriorated Sheds

K   Lots Containing Rubble

L   Unlicensed Automobiles

M   Negative Land Uses

*      In all previous tables column I represented the percentage of deteriorated and deteriorating houses. This table, however, lists the positive values of each neighborhood, and thus column I designates sound housing (% of deteriorated and deteriorating subtracted from 100).

ten physical, socio-economic variables are the same as those in the equal-value approach:  income, education, juvenile arrests, ADC, OAA and SR, VNA caseloads, deteriorated sheds, lots containing rubble, unlicensed automobiles, and negative land uses.

The point values were tabulated for each of the eleven

variables by neighborhood, and so resulted in a total positive point value for each neighborhood. The five categories of blight were determined by utilizing the ranking procedure used in the previous approach. The total points were added. for each of the twenty-one neighborhoods in Council Bluffs, resulting in a sum of 3,264 points. The average positive points for neighborhoods in the city was 155.4 (3,264÷21). The point variation per category (31.1) was obtained by dividing the average points (155.4) by the number of categories (5). The categories were determined by using this point spread and the mean, as in TABLE X. The mean (155.4) minus the variation, 31.1, equalled 124.3, and thus determined the point spread for the BN category as 155.5 to 124.2. The EBN category of 124.2 to 93.2 was the difference of 124.3 minus 31.1. The SN category had a point value of less than 93.2. The categories of less blight were determined by adding the 31.1 variation onto the mean. Thus the LBN of 155.5 to 186.5 was the result of the mean 155.5 plus 31.1. The MBN category had a point value of more than 186.5. Using this procedure, no neighborhood in Council Bluffs was classified as a slum neighborhood. The writer's definition of a slum, however, stated that it was an area with more negative than positive conditions. This would require a neighborhood to have at least 100 of the 200 positive points. Using this criteria, the SN category was revised from less than 93.2 points to less than 100 positive points. The breakdown is shown in

column B of TABLE XI.

The neighborhood distribution resulting from the weight-
ed-value approach listed four neighborhoods as Minimal Blight
Neighborhoods, seven as Limited Blight Neighborhoods, five
as Blighted Neighborhoods, four as Excessively Blighted Neigh-
borhoods, and only one as a Slum Neighborhood. PLATE 12
illustrates the neighborhood distribution of the weighted-
value approach, which of the four approaches used, produced
the most identifiable concentric zone pattern.

Comparison Of The Various Approaches

The four proposed approaches to a residential neighbor-
hood hierarchy based on blight had many similarities and yet
some basic differences. While housing conditions was the
sole criteria in one approach, it was excluded in another.
A third approach gave housing conditions less than 10 percent
of the total value, but another gave it a 50 percent value.
Likewise, the ten physical, socio-economic variables were
ranked zero, 50 percent, 90 percent, and 100 percent within
the four methods. Each of the four approaches resulted in a
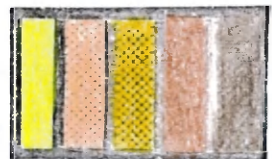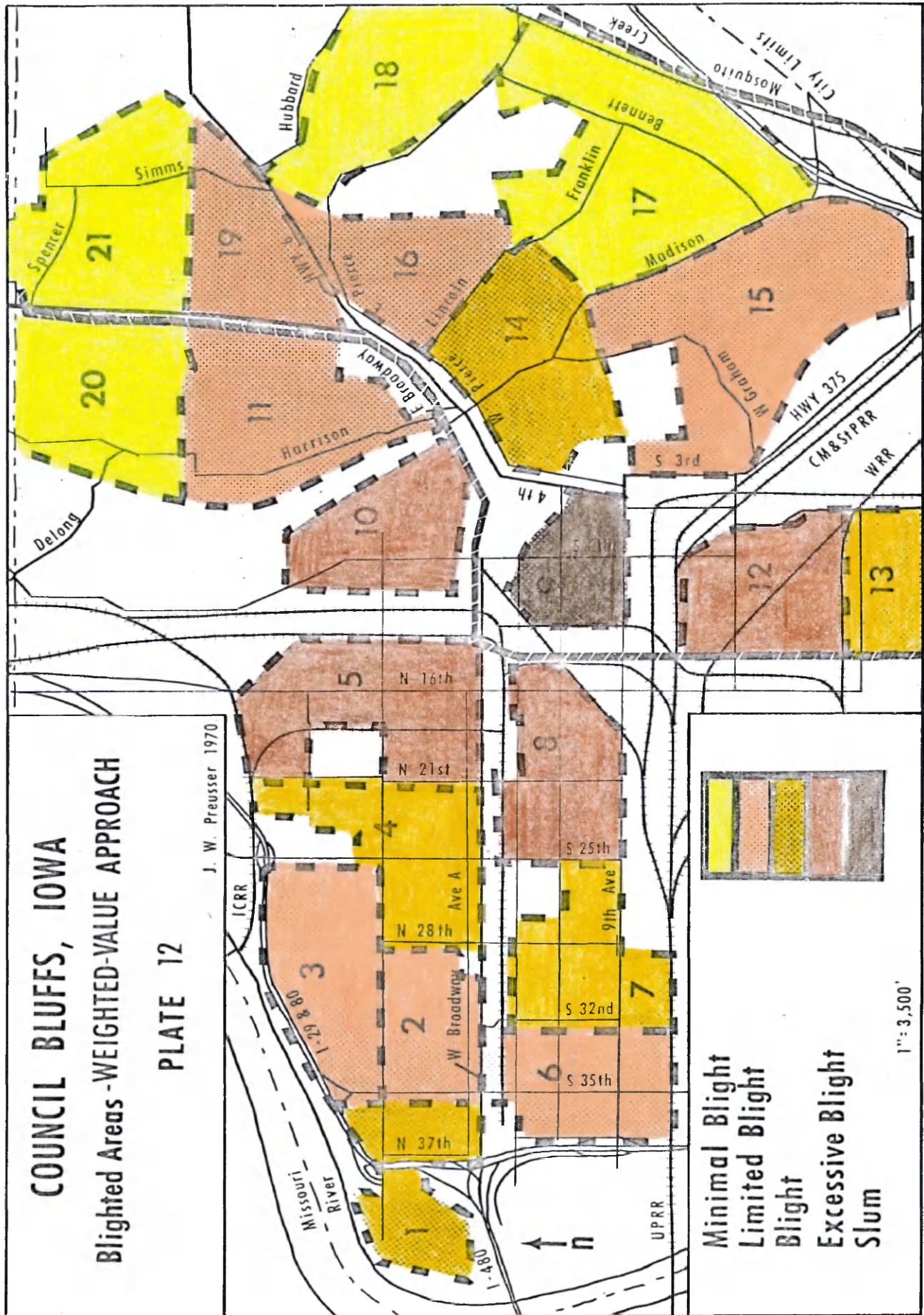different neighborhood ranking, as shown in TABLE XII.

A comparison of the four approaches revealed that eight
of the 21 neighborhoods in Council Bluffs, Iowa remained in
the same category of blight in all four approaches. Four of
the eight neighborhoods, Bennett Avenue, Gunn, Lewis and Clark,
and Hoover, were in the MBN category of blight. DeForest,

# COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

## Blighted Areas - WEIGHTED-VALUE APPROACH

### PLATE 12

J. W. Preusser 1970

Minimal Blight
Limited Blight
Blight
Excessive Blight
Slum

1":3,500'

Missouri River

I-29 & 80

ICRR

UPRR

I-480

CM&StPRR

WRR

HWY 375

Mosquito Creek

City Limits

Spencer
Simms
Hubbard
Delong
Harrison
HWY 6
Pierce
Lincoln
W Pierce
Franklin
Bennett
Madison
W Graham
S 3rd
4th
S 4th
E Broadway
W Broadway
N 37th
N 28th
N 21st
N 16th
Ave A
S 25th
S 32nd
S 35th
9th Ave

1
2
3
4
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21

Ray Meyer, Roberts Park, and St. Peter neighborhoods remained within the BN category of blight throughout the four approaches. The LBN, EBN and SN categories did not have a neighborhood that appeared within a single category in all four approaches.

The overall neighborhood ranking remained rather consistent for only five of the 21 neighborhoods. Bennett Avenue, Gunn, Lewis and Clark, Hoover and Memorial Park neighborhoods ranked within the top six in all four approaches. The other 16 neighborhoods formed a considerable variation in rankings, as shown in TABLE XIII.

A comparison of the four rankings, as illustrated in TABLE XIII, revealed the lack of a unanimous ranking for any one of the 21 neighborhoods in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The Lewis and Clark neighborhood ranked 3.5, 3, 3 and 3. The DeForest neighborhood ranked 13.5, 13, 13 and 13. Both neighborhoods had a ranking range of .5, thus having the distinction of the least variation in rank. Five neighborhoods had only a one point range among the four ranking approaches. Ray Meyer and Hoover varied by a slim 1.5. Another five neighborhoods had a range of two. Two neighborhoods had a three point spread, while two others had a four point ranking range. Rue, Fairmont Park and Peterson Park neighborhoods made substantial rank changes within the four hierarchy approaches. Their point range was 5, 5 and 7 respectively. All of the above ranges are listed in TABLE XIII.

A further comparison of the four approaches for

TABLE XII

COMPARISON OF FOUR APPROACHES TO A NEIGHBORHOOD HIERARCHY

| Category of Blight | Housing Approach | Non-Housing Approach | Equal-Value Approach | Weighted-Value Approach |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minimal Blight Neighborhood | Bennett Avenue<br>Gunn<br>Lewis & Clark<br>Hoover<br>Memorial Park<br>Franklin<br>Rue | Gunn<br>Bennett Avenue<br>Lewis & Clark<br>Memorial Park<br>Hoover<br>Cook Park<br>Fairmont Park<br>Prospect Park | Gunn<br>Bennett Avenue<br>Lewis & Clark<br>Memorial Park<br>Hoover | Gunn<br>Bennett Avenue<br>Lewis & Clark<br>Memorial Park |
| Limited Blight Neighborhood | Cook Park<br>Prospect Park<br>Walnut Grove<br>Peterson Park<br>Fairmont Park | Franklin | Cook Park<br>Fairmont Park<br>Prospect Park<br>Franklin<br>Rue | Hoover<br>Cook Park<br>Prospect Park<br>Franklin<br>Fairmont Park<br>Rue<br>Walnut Grove |
| Blighted Neighborhood | Roberts Park<br>DeForest<br>St. Peter<br>Ray Meyer<br>Sunset Park<br>Tinley | Rue<br>Walnut Grove<br>St. Peter<br>DeForest<br>Ray Meyer<br>Roberts Park | Walnut Grove<br>St. Peter<br>DeForest<br>Ray Meyer<br>Roberts Park | St. Peter<br>DeForest<br>Roberts Park<br>Peterson Park<br>Ray Meyer |
| Excessively Blighted Neighborhood | Roosevelt<br>Bayliss Park | Tinley<br>Cochran Park | Tinley<br>Peterson Park<br>Cochran Park | Tinley<br>Sunset Park<br>Roosevelt<br>Cochran Park |
| Slum Neighborhood | Cochran Park | Peterson Park<br>Sunset Park<br>Roosevelt<br>Bayliss Park | Sunset Park<br>Roosevelt<br>Bayliss Park | Bayliss Park |

**TABLE XIII**

**NEIGHBORHOOD RANKINGS**

| No. | Name of Neighborhood | Housing Approach I | Non-Housing Approach II | Equal-Value Approach III | Weighted-Value Approach IV | Range | A I/II | B I/III | C IV/I | D I/IV | E IV/II | F IV/III |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ray Meyer | 16 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 16 | 1.5 | — | * | | | | |
| 2 | Franklin | 6 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 3.0 | | | | | | |
| 3 | Walnut Grove | 10 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 1.0 | | | | | * | * |
| 4 | Roberts Park | 13.5 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 14 | 1.0 | | | — | | | |
| 5 | Roosevelt | 19 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 1.0 | | | * | | | |
| 6 | Rue | 6 | 11 | 10 | 9.5 | 5.0 | | | | | | |
| 7 | DeForest | 13.5 | 13 | 13 | 13 | .5 | | | | | * | * |
| 8 | Cochran Park | 21 | 17 | 18 | 20 | 4.0 | | | | | | |
| 9 | Bayliss Park | 20 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 1.0 | | | | | * | * |
| 10 | Tinley | 18 | 16 | 16 | 17 | 2.0 | | | | | | |
| 11 | Prospect Park | 8.5 | 7 | 7 | 6.5 | 2.0 | | | | | | |
| 12 | Sunset Park | 17 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 2.0 | | | | | | |
| 13 | Peterson Park | 11 | 18 | 17 | 15 | 7.0 | | | | | | |
| 14 | St. Peter | 15 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 4.0 | | | | | | * |
| 15 | Fairmont Park | 12 | 7 | 7 | 9.5 | 5.0 | | | | | | |
| 16 | Cook Park | 8.5 | 7 | 7 | 6.5 | 2.0 | | | | | | |
| 17 | Bennett Avenue | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2.0 | | | | | | |
| 18 | Memorial Park | 6 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3.0 | | | | | | |
| 19 | Hoover | 3.5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 1.5 | | | | * | * | * |
| 20 | Lewis and Clark | 3.5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | .5 | | | | * | * | * |
| 21 | Gunn | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1.0 | | | | * | * | * |

— Housing Approach Comparison

* Weighted-Value Approach Comparison

establishing a neighborhood hierarchy based on blight disclosed that there was little similarity when the Housing Approach was compared to the other three approaches. However, a considerably higher degree of similarity occurred when the weighted-value approach was compared to the other three approaches. Currently the housing approach is the most frequently used method for determining blight within residential neighborhoods. It was utilized first, and when compared with both the non-housing approach and the equal-value approach, failed to produce even one neighborhood with like ranking. When compared to the weighted-value approach only the Ray Meyer Neighborhood, with a ranking of 16, and the Roosevelt Neighborhood, with a ranking of 19, had the same rank in both approaches. This is illustrated by a hyphen in column C of TABLE XIII.

When the writer's proposed, weighted-value method was compared with the housing method, it was only logical that the same two neighborhoods, Ray Meyer and Roosevelt, (column D of TABLE XIII) would have equal ranking in both approaches. When the weighted-value approach was compared with the non-housing approach, however, six neighborhoods were found to have like ranking. The neighborhoods of similar ranking are designated by an asterisk in column E of TABLE XIII. The weighted-value approach was then compared to the equal-value approach, which resulted in seven neighborhoods of like rank as, shown in column F of TABLE XIII by the asterisk.

The above comparisons revealed a marked difference be-
tween the currently used housing approach and the writer's
proposed weighted-value approach. The weighted-value approach
showed the greatest amount of merit among the four presented
approaches used to determine a hierarchy of residential neigh-
borhoods based on blight. The housing approach, although
currently in use, is insensitive to blight conditions other
than housing. It is the opinion of the writer that other
physical, socio-economic conditions can and must be considered
when developing a residential neighborhood hierarchy. The
non-housing approach is the opposite of the housing approach
and thus insensitive to housing conditions. This approach,
however, does provide for an evaluation of the socio-economic
status of the residential neighborhoods. It also provides
for an evaluation of the physical condition of lots and of
buildings other than houses. The equal-value approach has
merit in that it evaluates housing and other physical, socio-
economic variables within a neighborhood. The greatest weak-
ness of this approach is that a deteriorated house is rated
equally with a junked or unlicensed automobile. The weighted-
value approach combines the physical, socio-economic indica-
tors of blight with the condition of the housing. The value
is weighted so that housing has the same value as the com-
bined value of the other physical socio-economic blight in-
dicators. The physical blight indicators include: sheds,
lots containing rubble, unlicensed automobiles and negative

land uses. The socio-economic indicators include: average family income, average school years completed, annual juvenile arrest per 1,000 population, aid to dependent children, old age assistance, soldier's relief, and visiting nurse association caseloads. On the preference given to the weighted-value approach the residential hierarchy developed in TABLE XI was, in the writer's opinion, the best ranking of the residential neighborhoods yet devised for the city of Council Bluffs, Iowa. Likewise, PLATE 12 illustrated the distributions of the 21 residential neighborhoods of the city as determined by the various categories of blight. To verify the value of the proposed approach, information was obtained in a field study of the individual residential neighborhoods of Council Bluffs, Iowa. This information was to be presented in order to evaluate the blight existing within the individual residential neighborhoods. The merits of the weighted-value approach are (1) the preferential treatment given to blighted housing, (2) the evaluation of other physical blight indicators, and (3) the consideration given to the socio-economic blight indicators.

For these reasons, the writer has given preference to and selected the weighted-value approach to develop a hierarchy of residential neighborhoods based on blight for Council Bluffs, Iowa.

CHAPTER V


WEIGHTED-VALUE APPROACH ANALYZED IN COUNCIL BLUFFS


Reasons for Blight in Council Bluffs, Iowa

Having stated and illustrated that blight exists in each

of the twenty-one residential neighborhoods of Council Bluffs,

the writer attempted to account for the possible reasons for

the blighted conditions. Field data is presented for the

purpose of analyzing the accuracy of the residential hierarchy

provided by the weighted-value approach.

The conditions of blight within the city are associated

with a combination of historical, economic, physical and tra-

ditional factors. Some of the problems can be dated at the

early development of the original settlement. As cited in

Chapter II of this study the initial settlement was a trading

post. Later, the first seemingly orderly settlement was

created, named, disciplined and shaped by the Mormons in a

development known as Kanesville. The settlement lost its

order resulting from the gold rush and the Mormon exodus to

the Salt Lake area. The settlement was renamed and incor-

porated as Council Bluffs in 1853. Since the town was con-

trolled at this time by gambling and liquor interests, law

and order were unknown. The local interests took advantage

of both the immigrants and the migrants for their own per-

sonal economic gain.

Due to economic greed, it was natural that the coming
of the railroad to the town of Council Bluffs meant an epi-
demic of what may be called "railroad fever." Investors,
speculators and tycoons alike sought fortunes in railroad-
building. The town went to all lengths to encourage rails
into Council Bluffs. At one time eleven railroad trunk lines
had been persuaded into the city.

Because each of the early railroad companies sought to
operate their own routes into Council Bluffs, they formed a
ring around the early city. Today this encirclement sur-
rounding the present downtown portion of Council Bluffs con-
fines any expansion. As is illustrated on MAP I in APPENDIX
IV, a considerable portion of the present city remains domi-
nated by railroad property. The railroads were probably the
greatest impetus to a growing Council Bluffs. However, today
the railroad is one of the greatest influences in the physical
decline of the city. Railroads tend to be among the most
inflexible elements in an urban pattern owing to the capital
investment they represent. This constriction has remained
a constant factor in the physical and economic decline of the
central strip of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

The residential neighborhoods associated with the cen-
tral strip of railroad tracks, PLATE 7, consist of four
excessively blighted neighborhoods and one slum neighborhood.
The causes for this very evident area of blight may be a re-
sult of the large tracts of land and the sizable working

force associated with the early railroads. The areas near
the railroads were the first areas to be developed. Because
of the limited transportation facilities in the early period,
the residential neighborhoods were located near the places
of employment. Presently the physical blight of the rail-
dominating residential neighborhoods appears to be the re-
sult of age and the preference of present city residents,
financially able, to live elsewhere. Another blighting in-
fluence of the railroads in Council Bluffs is the loss of
revenue. Railroads are taxed on through lines and thus all
other track footage in the city is not subject to taxation.
Thus, the taxing procedure results in a loss of revenue for
the city. A third blighting influence is the detrimental
attitude of the railroads. It is extremely difficult if not
impossible to evaluate attitudes but it would appear that
the railroad companies are content with their past record.
They seem to take pride in their past role and consider
themselves the driving force in the building of Council
Bluffs. The apparent attitude of the railroad companies is
that they have done more than their fair share and thus they
are reluctant to make any improvements. The result is that
railroad property and the associated residential neighbor-
hoods are among the most unsightly examples of physical
blight in the city. A final blighting effect of the railroad
on Council Bluffs has been its decline. Today Council Bluffs
is served by only eight of its former eleven railroads. Rail

employment has also decreased by over twenty-five percent

in the years from 1961 to 1965 with another eight percent

decrease expected by 1985.[1]

Other than railroad fever, Council Bluffs has suffered

from a lack of progressive enthusiasm. Culturally and tra-

ditionally Council Bluffs has been economically and politi-

cally conservative. The city had its beginning prior to

Omaha, Nebraska but it was unable to compete. "The town was

afflicted with fossils who resisted improvement fearing tax-

ation,"[2] commented J. J. Steadmar, editor of the Nonpareil

newspaper in 1880. Besides resisting improvement, factions

displayed tremendous jealousies within the city and also

toward Omaha. Even obvious improvements such as a bridge

linking Council Bluffs and Omaha brought resentment and fear

that benefits would accrue solely to their developing Nebraska

neighbor.

Such negativism had no resources to fight the financial

depression and the drought years of the 1930's. Iowa had

adopted prohibition; sectarian and political disputes divided

the people. Worst of all, ill-timed rail schedules dis-

couraged travel and business was unable to get investors into

Council Bluffs. A generation of conservative Victorians pur-

suing profits without regard for the community's total health,

_____

[1]Land Use, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

[2]Genevieve P. Mauck, "The Council Bluffs Story" The
Palimpset, September, 1961, p. 432.

along with a decade of natural and national disasters, spelled

doom for Council Bluffs, Iowa. The city had lost to Omaha

in the race for primary importance.

The local jealousies went beyond the Council Bluffs-

Omaha rivalry and were very evident within the city itself.

The writer believes the city might well have been two cities

namely East Council Bluffs and West Council Bluffs. The

divisions are designated by Indian Creek and the Illinois

Central Railroad tracks illustrated in PLATE 6. West Coun-

cil Bluffs, located on the Missouri River floodplain, had

its own shopping district (near the present 24th and Broad-

way) as early as 1880. The residents of this area were uni-

fied by the threat of flood and the battle with the high

water table. The people of West Council Bluffs were identi-

fied with Omaha rather than with East Council Bluffs. Pre-

sently West Council Bluffs remains closely identified with

Omaha since between 50 and 90 percent of the employed people

of this area work in Omaha. An area dominated by laboring

people, West Council Bluffs was looked down upon because of

the lack of cultural identity.

East Council Bluffs had such cultural aspects as a library,

theater and playhouse. Its residents, dominated by busi-

nessmen and professional people, snubbed anyone living west

of the tracks. So as not to be identified with laboring peo-

ple, East Council Bluffs resisted industry with its dirt and

filth because such aspects were reminders of their ever

progressing Nebraska neighbor. Through three and four gen-
erations of historical influence the people of East Council
Bluffs resisted progress.

Suffering through several generations of extremely con-
servative republican heredity that resisted well such things
as change, tax improvements and community betterment, Council
Bluffs emerged into the 1960's as a struggling, underdeveloped
and blighted city. The peculiarity of it all was that both
what the city supported and the very things that it resisted
have now come to haunt the city. The railroad crossing which
once had meant life itself to a pioneer community is now the
cause of physical blight. The dirt, filth and ugliness which
the local residents associated with industry are now prominent
within Council Bluffs despite a damaging lack of industry.

There is some evidence that the barriers between East
and West Council Bluffs are gradually dissolving, but a much
greater sense of unity and cooperation will be required to
develop the potential that the city had in the 1860's and
1870's. A trend toward greater cooperation began as a result
of the 1953 flood on the Missouri River. West Council Bluffs
was cut off from Omaha and was forced to turn to East Council
Bluffs for its life and safety. The city was able to take
advantage of this event and a seven block long viaduct was
completed in 1955 connecting the two sections of Council
Bluffs. Little progress has been made since. In 1969 a drive
entitled "The Awakening Giant" was sponsored by local banks,

businesses and local political leaders which gave some in-
dications of a united effort. Hopefully this policy of co-
operation will be pursued and developed. However, at present
both sections of the city continue to have a considerable
amount of blight within and outside the residential neigh-
borhoods.

There is a much greater incidence of blighting factors
within the commercial and industrial portions of Council
Bluffs as is evident in the statistical data for the non-
residential planning areas as shown in APPENDIX II-F. The
non-residential areas are beyond the scope of this study and
thus the following analysis is related only to the residen-
tial neighborhoods of Council Bluffs, Iowa.


Field Data Applied To Hierarchy

The residential neighborhood hierarchy which resulted
from the weighted-value approach was field checked in an
attempt to evaluate the neighborhood classifications and
ranking. An attempt was also made to account for the blight-
ed conditions found within the individual residential neigh-
borhoods. The twenty-one neighborhoods will be discussed
beginning with the neighborhood having the greatest amount
of blight or the lowest rank within the neighborhood hier-
archy.

The Bayliss Park neighborhood located in central Coun-
cil Bluffs has the lowest ranking, 21st, of any residential

neighborhood in the city and was designated a slum. The
low neighborhood ranking is a result of several economic,
physical and social factors. The statistical data shown in
TABLE IV-C depicts the residents of the neighborhood as poorly
educated, having low incomes and a considerable number of
aged people. The ADC rate was the highest in the city as
was the number of juvenile arrests. The field study revealed
that the neighborhood is bordered on the west by Indian Creek
and on the south, east and north by railroad tracks. It is
associated with the Central Business District of Council
Bluffs and appears to be a classic example of the Burgess
zone of transition.[1]

Business and light manufacturing has moved into the resi-
dential neighborhood. Improvements have been neglected and
the result is residential deterioration. There is also a
considerable number of old, large, single family dwellings
that have been converted into multi-family dwellings. An-
other field note concerns the racial element within the neigh-
borhood. Bayliss Park and the Cochran Park neighborhoods con-
tain the Negro element of the city. Although the total Negro
population for the city is only about one percent, the Negroes
are concentrated within the two previously mentioned neigh-
borhoods. Bayliss Park is one of the most blighted

[1]Chauncy D. Harris and Edward L. Ullman, "The Nature
of Cities," Readings in Urban Geography, Howard M. Mayer and
Clyde F. Kohn (eds.), (Chicago: The University of Chicago
Press, 1954) pp. 277-286.

residential neighborhoods in the city although it is rather
difficult to distinguish the Bayliss Park neighborhood from
the Cochran Park neighborhood.

The twentieth-ranked residential neighborhood is Coch-
ran Park. It is surrounded by a commercial area on the north
and an industrial area on the south. Railroad tracks border
the neighborhood on the north, east and south sides. Indian
Creek also borders the area on the east. The writer feels
the Cochran Park neighborhood is another example of a zone
of transition found around a CBD. Although the neighborhood
is some distance from the CBD of Council Bluffs, it abuts
the 24th and Broadway business district which serves as the
central business district of West Council Bluffs. In the
field the Cochran Park neighborhood appears to have more
physical blight than the Bayliss Park neighborhood. The
statistical data tends to reinforce this observation with
reports that 58 percent of the housing is deteriorated or
deteriorating as compared to 41 percent in the Bayliss Park
neighborhood. The social-economic conditions of blight are
not as severe in the Bayliss Park neighborhood. The Negro
population is also very evident in the neighborhood. The
excessively blighted classification appears to be very sat-
isfactory for the Cochran Park neighborhood.

The other three excessively blighted neighborhoods are
Roosevelt, Sunset Park and Tinley, 19, 18 and 17 in respec-
tive rank. These three neighborhoods complete the transition

zone around the CBD and the 24th and Broadway business district. These three neighborhoods have the same blighting influences as the previous two neighborhoods with the exception of the racial element. The blighting factors consist of railroad tracks, Indian Creek, and industrial encroachment; however the degree of each is not as severe as in the Bayliss Park and Cochran Park neighborhoods. The field study revealed fewer deteriorated houses in the Roosevelt, Sunset Park and Tinley neighborhoods than in the Cochran Park neighborhood. The poorest housing is located near the railroad tracks and the commercial and industrial areas. There is a noted improvement in the condition of the housing as one moves outward toward the blighted neighborhoods.

The blighted neighborhoods of Ray Meyer, Peterson Park, Roberts Park, DeForest and St. Peter ranked 16 through 12, respectively, form the next category of blight in Council Bluffs. Ray Meyer neighborhood appears to have the most blight of the five blighted neighborhoods. It is located next to the Missouri River in the far western portion of Council Bluffs. Although most of the houses have been built since 1940, the neighborhood has shown little tendency toward improvement and as a result few houses have been built within the past few years. Of the existing housing, one out of every ten appears to be deteriorated and another two or more are deteriorating. Future blight may be expected because the neighborhood has been bisected by the new interstate

highway. The portion of the neighborhood west of the inter-
state to the Missouri River has many unpaved streets and va-
cant lots covered with tall weeds and rubble. The area is
dusty and poorly maintained. There is also danger of flood-
ing and an associated high water table. The overall appear-
ance of the neighborhood is poor. The residents seem to have
little incentive to properly maintain their surroundings.

The fifteenth ranked neighborhood is Peterson Park, the
southernmost neighborhood in Council Bluffs. There are ap-
proximately two dozen poor homes in the neighborhood, but at
least every fourth or fifth house is in need of maintainence
and repair. The neighborhood is enclosed by Indian Creek
on the west, Highway 192 and the railroad tracks on the east,
and the new interstate on the south. With these restricting
borders on the east, south and west the neighborhood is
forced into close proximity with Sunset Park neighborhood,
an excessively blighted neighborhood on the north. The re-
strictive borders have resulted in many dead-end streets.
This may be the reason that about one-third of the streets
are unpaved. The present social-economic conditions also
indicate a need for future rehabilitation of the neighborhood.

Roberts Park and DeForest neighborhoods, ranked 14 and
13, form a middle zone between the excessive blighted neigh-
borhoods and the limited blight neighborhoods of western
Council Bluffs. The homes in these two neighborhoods were
built from the 1920's to the 1940's and thus age is becoming

an evident blighting condition. It appears that these older
homes will pose considerable problems in the very near future.
The appearance of these two neighborhoods are downgraded con-
siderably by the vast number of rubble and weed covered lots
as well as by the presence of junked cars. Roberts Park
neighborhood has several high volume streets, Avenues A and
B and 25th Street, that are extremely dangerous for a resi-
dential neighborhood. DeForest neighborhood has a heavy
commercial development on the north and an industrial develop-
ment on the south, and railroad tracks on the north and south.
More than one-half of the employed residents of these two
neighborhoods work in Omaha. The blighting conditions may
be in part due to the division of allegiance between the city
of employment and the city of residence.

The highest-ranking blighted neighborhood is St. Peter,
ranked twelfth in Council Bluffs. The neighborhood bounds
the CBD on the south, however, it is located in the bluffs.
Because of the bluffs, the neighborhood pattern and streets
are disorganized. Limited access to the neighborhood is due
to dead-end, steep, narrow and winding streets. Also related
to the bluffs are many vacant and undeveloped lots that have
grown up into weeds and trash. The neighborhood served as
the better residential district in the developing years of
Council Bluffs but presently the houses are suffering from
age.

There are seven neighborhoods in the limited blight

neighborhood classification ranked 11 through 5. The neighborhoods are Walnut Grove, 11th, Rue and Fairmont Park tied for 9th, Franklin, 8th, Prospect Park and Cook Park tied for 6th, and Hoover the highest ranking LBN is 5th. Walnut Grove, Rue and Franklin neighborhoods are the highest ranking neighborhoods in the western one-half of Council Bluffs. Walnut Grove has the lowest quality housing of the three as the majority of the homes in Franklin and Rue neighborhoods were constructed since 1940. For the most part the residents of these three neighborhoods are young and over 50 percent of the employed residents are working in Omaha. The chief blighting influence appears to be vacant lots full of weeds, rubble, and junked cars. The four remaining LBN's are in the eastern portion of Council Bluffs and serve as a buffer zone between the CBD and the minimal blight neighborhoods. Hoover neighborhood is a borderline neighborhood and could well be in the highest classification. Judging from observations made during field work, the neighborhood seems to be very sound. The neighborhood has many older residents who are receiving old age assistance. The welfare cases lowered the points of the neighborhood to a level missing the minimal blight neighborhood classification by less than two points. The housing in the other three neighborhoods appears to be 80 to 90 percent sound but as a transition zone these percentages are apt to decrease. These three neighborhoods were the better neighborhoods of years past and with the movement of residents to

suburban neighborhoods the LBN's will suffer the consequences of age. These neighborhoods have also been affected by some leap-frogging and lack of full usage. As a result, numerous lots have been left undeveloped and have gone to weeds and rubble. The limited blight neighborhoods have reached their peak. As age and movement to areas farther out take their toll the LBN's will decline even farther. As residents leave their homes, the dwellings are reoccupied by persons of a lower income level and less desire to maintain the neighborhood. The exodus of residents from limited blight neighborhoods has been to the minimal blight neighborhoods.

The four minimal blight neighborhoods are Memorial Park, 4, Lewis and Clark, 3, Bennett Avenue, 2 and Gunn the number one ranking neighborhood in Council Bluffs, Iowa. From the field the four minimal blight neighborhoods are areas of new housing and thus in appearance deserve a high ranking. The field appearance coincides well with the statistical data of above average education and income levels. The neighborhoods are socially stable and well above the city averages. Logically these four neighborhoods are the most favorable to live in. The residents of these neighborhoods are identified with Council Bluffs as the vast majority are employed in the city. It is the writer's opinion that this sole allegiance to one city is a favorable condition to developing a stable neighborhood of minimal blight.

The writer believes the field checking proved the

weighted-value approach to developing a residential hierarchy based on blight to be quite accurate. With two exceptions the field evaluations seemed to correlate well with the weighted-value ranking. The two exceptions were the Cochran Park and Hoover neighborhoods. In field observation Cochran Park appeared to be a slum neighborhood because of its housing conditions. However, because it had fewer deteriorated sheds and junked automobiles, the neighborhood was able to attain enough points in the ranking system to register as an excessively blighted neighborhood. Hoover neighborhood looked very sound in the field but was lowered to the second classification because it ranked second highest in the city in the number of old age assistance and soldier's relief cases per 1,000 population.

Overall the weighted-value approach held up well in the field. It is the opinion of the writer of this study that the approach is a satisfactory solution to determining a residential neighborhood hierarchy based on blight conditions for Council Bluffs, Iowa. The validity of this procedure becomes questionable because no comparison has been made with cities similar in size to Council Bluffs. The assumption must be made that Council Bluffs, Iowa is representative of like sized cities. It is questionable whether Council Bluffs is a typical city of 55,000 to 60,000 population because of the above average railroad network, and the proximity to the Omaha SMSA. Until this study can be applied and tested to

other cities the assumption must be made that Council Bluffs
is a representative city.

There are many possible uses for a residential hierarchy
such as was developed in this study. A hierarchy of resi-
dential neighborhoods can be used when allocations are made
to needy neighborhoods. Urban renewal projects can and should
be developed on priorities established in a neighborhood hier-
archy ranking based on blighted conditions. A residential
hierarchy can be valuable to persons seeking to buy or rent
a home. The hierarchy may be used in bargaining when selling
a home or property. A residential hierarchy is also a valu-
able tool for realtors. Such a ranking should be used by
local officials to determine public services. Neighborhood
awareness of blighting problems can be instigated by the resi-
dential hierarchy. Based on knowledge attained from the rank-
ing system, neighborhood self-help projects can be initiated
to better a neighborhood. The list of values and uses of a
residential hierarchy based on blight is long and varied.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It has been the major objective of this study to develop

a method of determining a hierarchy of residential neighbor-

hoods based on blight conditions. This was done so with the

hope that the information gathered would serve as a basis of

comparison and thus aid future investigations. In order to

achieve the objective of this study, it was decided to util-

ize research techniques designed to evaluate both the overt

and covert aspects of residential neighborhood blight.

A review of the literature revealed that methods of

evaluating blight differ markedly from city to city and from

time to time. Thus, they can hardly be expected to yield

comparable data. The majority of the reviewed literature

determined residential neighborhood blight by housing cri-

teria. It is the writer's conclusion that residential neigh-

borhoods cannot be adequately evaluated solely on housing

conditions. A better evaluation can be achieved by basing

it on a combination of physical and socio-economic indicators.

Because of indiscriminate and undefined use of the terms

"blight" and "neighborhood," it was necessary to elucidate

their denotations in this study. A residential neighborhood

is considered here as an areal unit of varying size demar-

cated by a boundary. That boundary is characterized by local

shops and through traffic routes centered around an elementary school and/or a city park. Blight has been defined as an area of no minimal size having economic, physical and social conditions that destroy and/or prevent growth.

The selection of Council Bluffs as a research site was explained primarily in terms of its accessibility for the writer. Further, it provided experience for him, in as much as he conducted the bulk of the research himself. Due to a lack of resources, it was more manageable with respect to size than a larger city. Also, this city was chosen for study in hopes that it would make some concrete contribution to the existing knowledge of the residential neighborhoods and the city of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

A combination of the cartographic and descriptive methods was chosen for this study because they complement each other and facilitate comparison for future studies on residential neighborhoods. In conducting the research, use was made of city and county data, field notes, and land and air photographs taken by the writer.

The city of Council Bluffs was divided into twenty-one residential neighborhoods. The criteria for determining neighborhood boundaries was similar to specifications used by the Council Bluffs Planning Commission. All twenty-one residential neighborhoods are enclosed by well marked boundaries distinguishable in the field and on aerial photographs. It is this writer's conclusion that residential neighborhoods

are units that can be distinguished aerially and are ade-
quate units of comparison for urban studies.

A list of eleven rather arbitrarily selected physical
and socio-economic indicators of blight were chosen to de-
velop the residential hierarchy based on blight. The physi-
cal indicators of blight included percent of deteriorating
and deteriorated housing, deteriorated sheds, lots contain-
ing rubble, unlicensed automobiles, and negative land uses.
The socio-economic indicators of blight included the average
family income, average school years completed, annual ju-
venile arrests per 1,000 population, aid to dependent child-
ren per 1,000 population, old age assistance and soldier's
relief per 1,000 population, and visiting nurse association
caseloads per 1,000 population. The blight indicators varied
considerably among the various neighborhoods, and thus five
categories of blight were required. The arbitrarily selected
blight categories were minimal blight, limited blight, blight,
excessive blight, and slum.

An effort was made in the present study to explore and
confirm the benefits of the combined physical and socio-
economic approach to blight in development of a hierarchy
of residential neighborhoods. An examination of the data
revealed that similar results were forthcoming when either
the housing condition approach or the non-housing approach
was utilized. Sufficient inconsistencies were likewise pro-
duced to indicate that dependence solely upon one or the

other in research might produce spurious results. It appear-
ed that the two approaches were highly complementary, being
mutually supportive in terms of the strengths and weaknesses
of each. The combined approach used in this study was that
of the weighted-value. It provided preferential treatment
to housing conditions, evaluated other physical blight indi-
cators, and also considered socio-economic indicators of
blight. The present study concludes and supports the use of
a combination of the two approaches in future residential
neighborhood research.

In describing the residential neighborhood hierarchy
based on blight as applied to Council Bluffs, this study
focused upon a combination of historical, economic, physical
and traditional causes. While there was generally noted to
be a direct correspondence of education, income levels, and
age of housing with the ranking of a residential neighborhood,
these were not the most significant findings. More important
were observations regarding the causes of blight. These
causes include the railroads, inter city and intra city jeal-
ousies, overly-conservative attitudes, and employment out-
side of the local city. The latter cause infers that resi-
dents employed in a city other than their place of residence
are a source of blight. The finding appears to have potential
implications for future research when one takes into consider-
ation the large amount of commuting in urban centers today.
Although the evidence was somewhat inconclusive, it suggested

that persons who reside in Council Bluffs and are employed
in Omaha, are less likely to maintain a high residential
neighborhood ranking because of the divided allegiance. It
was, as a matter of fact, discovered that the highest ranked
residential neighborhoods in Council Bluffs were dominated
by persons employed within the city.

In order to put the findings yielded by the Council
Bluffs study into a more manageable perspective, and to limit
the extent of any generalizations made, it will be necessary
to compare the city with other cities of like size. This
comparison is beyond the scope of this research study and is
in turn its greatest weakness. It would have been desirable
to have studied, simultaneously with the study in Council
Bluffs, a similar city, using similar methods. This would
aid in determining if differences in the two studies were a
result of the methods employed, or differences in the cities
themselves.

It is also thought that certain weaknesses in the selec-
tion techniques should be taken into consideration in inter-
preting the results. In particular, improvements could be
made with respect to both the selection of the blight indi-
cators and the categories of blight. Comparisons among cities
cannot be truly accurate until there is increased reliability
in the selection processes.

In light of the conclusions afforded by this study, it
appears that future studies of residential neighborhoods will

benefit from the use of combined physical and socio-economic blight indicators. Nevertheless, the study of residential neighborhoods is considerably open to innovation, and could certainly benefit from exploration in new methods and techniques.

With respect to substantive findings, it is hoped that this study will serve its objective of providing a workable method for determining a hierarchy of residential neighborhoods based on blight conditions. It is also hoped that this study has demonstrated that the residential neighborhood can be utilized as a unit of comparison. More specifically, it is hoped that this study will make a worthy contribution to the existing fund of knowledge with respect to the city of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

HISTORY OF COUNCIL BLUFFS

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APPENDIX I

## History of Council Bluffs

Council Bluffs derives its name from "Council Bluff," a hill located near the present village of Fort Calhoun, Nebraska. At the foot of this historical hill Lewis and Clark and a local Indian tribe held council in July of 1804. The "Council Bluff" was thus commonly used by early trappers, navigators and government officials to indicate the site of that council. Later it became pluralized and the term "the Council Bluffs" was applied to the entire region between the Council Bluff and the mouth of the Platte River.[2] But the actual name of the present city of Council Bluffs, Iowa was to change several times between 1804 and 1853.

Although it is not conclusively established, there is at least very convincing evidence to indicate that the first name given to the site of the present city of Council Bluffs was "Hart's Bluff."[3] The name was derived from an Indian chief Hard Heart in whose country the present site was then located.[4]

In 1837 the Pottawattamie, Ottawa and Chippewa Indians

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[1] Charles H. Babbitt, Early Days At Council Bluffs, (Washington, D.C.: Press of Byron S. Adams, 1916), p. 9.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., pp. 13-14.

[4] Ibid., p. 15.

were transferred from Illinois and Indiana to Iowa. Billy
Caldwell, chief of the Pottawattamie, located near the pre-
sent site of Council Bluffs in what was then called Caldwell's
Village.[1]  A block house was constructed in 1839 for military
purposes just east of the present Council Bluffs Business
District.  The block house had been built by government troops
stationed here whose mission was to keep the Indians peaceful
and quiet.  Later, Fathers DeSmet and Verreygt used the build-
ing for a Roman Catholic Mission.[2]  According to government
reports in 1838-1839, the place now occupied by the city of
Council Bluffs was referred to by the Corps of Topographical
Engineers as Camp Kearney.[3]

In 1842, a company of dragoons was sent from Fort Leaven-
worth to protect the Pottawattamie Indians against threatened
attack by the Sioux.  Their encampment, named "Camp Fenwick,"
was later changed to "Fort Croghan."[4]

In 1846 the Mormons arrived in the vicinity, established
a camp and settled over the adjoining areas.  A settlement
grew, which in 1848 became known as Miller's Hollow, named
after a Henry W. Miller, a Mormon.[5]  In 1848 the name of the

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[1]Ibid., p. 16.

[2]Ibid., pp. 41-60.

[3]Ibid., p. 16.

[4]Ibid., pp. 61-76.

[5]Ibid., pp. 77-87.

village was changed to "Kanesville" in honor of Colonel

Thomas Leiper Kane, an officer who had aided the Mormons on

their migration from Nauvoo, Illinois. In the same year,

Brigham Young petitioned for and succeeded in getting a post

office in Kanesville.

In 1849, the population was said to have approximated

6,000 to 7,000 people.[1] Prior to and during this time, the

settlement served as a trading center for traffic on the

Missouri River. It was also an important frontier outpost

for people heading west by land. In 1852, a large number of

Mormons accompanied Apostle Orson Hyde westward, leaving a

population of approximately 2,000 to 2,500 people in Kanes-

ville.[2]

Rumor indicated that the terminus of a transcontinental

railroad would be located somewhere in the area now referred

to as Council Bluffs. Therefore members of the community

deemed it wise in 1853 to change the name of their city to

that of Council Bluffs.[3] Thus on January 19, 1853, the Iowa

Legislature authorized the citizens of Kanesville to change

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Land Use Plan Vol. II, A Report Prepared by the Howard,
Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff Department of Urban and Regional
Planning (Kansas City: Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergen-
doff Department of Urban and Regional Planning, 1969), p. 7.

[3]Roger L. Pearson, "Power Structure of Council Bluffs,
Iowa: A Methodological and Descriptive Analysis," (unpub-
lished Master's thesis, The University of Nebraska at Omaha,
Omaha, 1968), p. 20.

its name, and in 1853 Kanesville became the incorporated

City of Council Bluffs.

Regardless of the name used to designate the site, its

role as a trading center and a frontier post brought upon it

some disparaging remarks. Thus began a reputation that has

endured to the present day. In 1849 James Kinforth wrote:

> I found Kanesville to be a very
> dirty, unhealthy place, and withal
> a very dear place to make an out-
> fit for the plains, not withstand-
> ing the assertions of holders of
> property and merchants there to
> the contrary.[1]

The effect history may have played in the blighting of Coun-

cil Bluffs will be developed later in the text.

In the decade following the departure of the Mormons,

Council Bluffs became urbanized, as indicated by a growing

number of churches, schools, and banks. As settlers from

other sections of the country came to settle in Council Bluffs,

bringing with them political and social ideas characteristic

of that section, the development and polarization of social

groups occurred also. Particularily at odds were those settlers

from New England and the South, sections that had strong

differences of opinion since the adoption of the Constitution.

The arguments between the "uptowners" and "downtowners" were

bitter and persistent.

The first railroad reached the city in 1867. The city

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[1]William S. Peterson, The Story of Iowa Vol. I., (New
York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1952), p. 603.

metropolitan area.

Council Bluffs' growth in the 1870's and 80's may be attributed to its natural qualities. Its strategic geographical location facilitated the making and the distribution of agricultural implements, and the distribution of buggies, surreys, phaetons and road wagons. Eight trunk lines of railway made the town a distribution center, and it remained one from 1880 to beyond 1900. It had twelve big warehouses and a local implement house that served not only Iowa, but all of Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas and northern Missouri.[1]

Near the beginning of the 20th century Council Bluffs seemed on the threshold of a swift expansion in every way; but unforeseen forces slowed it down. The railroads' eight trunk lines had completed their focalization in Council Bluffs. The Union Pacific bridge was up. Immigration was the heaviest in the history of the nation. The issues of the Civil War were fading, though local rivalry between East and West still persisted.

The city's leaders at the turn of the century were men of strong personality, individually successful in their own business and professional vocations. However their strength lay in their "rugged individualism" and not in their civic cooperation. Consequently, Council Bluffs was unable to grasp the opportunities that would have, with its railroad

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[1] J. R. Perkins, Council Bluffs Savings Bank 1856-1956 (Council Bluffs: Emarines, 1956).

facilities and strategic location, greatly accelerated its growth and potential. Council Bluffs entered the 20th century with a feeble and stumbling economic, political and social structure. She sought the present with little or no eye to the future.

According to the official census the population did manage an increase from 25,802 in 1900 to 55,641 in 1960.[1] It was and is presently the second largest community in the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) of which it is a part.

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[1]Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Population: 1960. Characteristics of the Population, Vol. I, Part 17, Iowa (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 9.

APPENDIX II

NEIGHBORHOOD STATISTICAL

SUMMARIES

APPENDIX II-A

AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN

September - 1968

| NEIGHBORHOOD | TOTAL |
|---|---|
| Roosevelt | 43 |
| Walnut Grove | 15 |
| Roberts Park | 26 |
| Franklin | 7 |
| Ray Meyer | 15 |
| Tinley | 55 |
| Prospect Park | 16 |
| Lewis & Clark | 1 |
| Gunn | 3 |
| Hoover | 0 |
| Rue | 16 |
| DeForest | 18 |
| Cochran Park | 77 |
| Bayliss Park | 87 |
| Sunset Park | 27 |
| Peterson | 21 |
| St. Peter | 18 |
| Fairmont Park | 7 |
| Bennett Avenue | 5 |
| Memorial Park | 1 |
| Cook Park | 3 |

Source: Pottawattamie County Welfare
Department Records

APPENDIX II-B

SOLDIERS RELIEF

September - 1968

| NEIGHBORHOODS | TOTAL |
|---|---|
| Roosevelt | 14 |
| Walnut Grove | 8 |
| Roberts Park | 5 |
| Franklin | 6 |
| Ray Meyer | 6 |
| Tinley | 18 |
| Prospect Park | 2 |
| Lewis & Clark | 0 |
| Gunn | 0 |
| Hoover | 0 |
| Rue | 2 |
| DeForest | 1 |
| Cochran Park | 17 |
| Bayliss Park | 28 |
| Sunset Park | 11 |
| Peterson | 2 |
| St. Peter | 3 |
| Fairmont Park | 3 |
| Bennett Avenue | 0 |
| Memorial Park | 0 |
| Cook Park | 0 |

Source: Pottawattamie Count Soldier's
Relief Records

APPENDIX II-C

OLD AGE ASSISTANCE

September - 1968

| NEIGHBORHOODS | TOTAL |
|---|---|
| Roosevelt | 16 |
| Walnut Grove | 5 |
| Roberts Park | 7 |
| Franklin | 9 |
| Ray Meyer | 3 |
| Tinley | 39 |
| Prospect Park | 33 |
| Lewis & Clark | 1 |
| Gunn | 1 |
| Hoover | 18 |
| Rue | 3 |
| DeForest | 10 |
| Cochran Park | 27 |
| Bayliss Park | 124 |
| Sunset Park | 15 |
| Peterson | 8 |
| St. Peter | 26 |
| Fairmont Park | 3 |
| Bennett Avenue | 3 |
| Memorial Park | 1 |
| Cook Park | 2 |

Source:   Pottawattamie County Welfare
Department Records

APPENDIX II-D

VISITING NURSE CASELOADS

September - 1968

| NEIGHBORHOODS | TOTAL |
|---|---|
| Roosevelt | 17 |
| Walnut Grove | 3 |
| Roberts Park | 7 |
| Franklin | 9 |
| Ray Meyer | 14 |
| Tinley | 33 |
| Prospect Park | 21 |
| Lewis & Clark | 0 |
| Gunn | 4 |
| Hoover | 2 |
| Rue | 6 |
| DeForest | 14 |
| Cochran Park | 20 |
| Bayliss Park | 42 |
| Sunset Park | 12 |
| Peterson | 14 |
| St. Peter | 11 |
| Fairmont Park | 9 |
| Bennett Avenue | 1 |
| Memorial Park | 0 |
| Cook Park | 14 |

Source: Council Bluffs Visiting Nurse
Association

APPENDIX II-E

JUVENILE ARRESTS

February 1965 - November 1968

| NEIGHBORHOODS | TOTAL |
|---|---|
| Roosevelt | 237 |
| Walnut Grove | 55 |
| Roberts Park | 145 |
| Franklin | 71 |
| Ray Meyer | 81 |
| Tinley | 92 |
| Prospect Park | 70 |
| Lewis & Clark | 41 |
| Gunn | 41 |
| Hoover | 18 |
| Rue | 74 |
| DeForest | 113 |
| Cochran Park | 261 |
| Bayliss Park | 238 |
| Sunset Park | 113 |
| Peterson | 93 |
| St. Peter | 138 |
| Fairmont Park | 61 |
| Bennett Avenue | 36 |
| Memorial Park | 1 |
| Cook Park | 41 |

Source: Council Bluffs Police Department Records

APPENDIX II-F

STATISTICAL DATA FOR THE

NON-RESIDENTIAL PLANNING AREAS OF COUNCIL BLUFFS

| Planning Areas | 1 Aid to Dependent Children | 2 Soldier's Relief | 3 Old Age Assistance | 4 Visiting Nurse Caseloads | 5 Juvenile Arrests |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North Union | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Central Business District | 14 | 16 | 19 | 8 | 32 |
| West Broadway | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| River Industrial Park | 8 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 30 |
| Union Pacific | 8 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 32 |
| Mosquito Creek | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| North Manawa | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 10 |

1  September 1968 - Pottawattamie County Welfare Department Records

2  September 1968 - Pottawattamie County Soldier's Relief Records

3  September 1968 - Pottawattamie County Welfare Department Records

4  September 1968 - Council Bluffs Visiting Nurse Association

5  February 1965-November 1968 - Council Bluffs Police Department Records

APPENDIX III

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

APPENDIX III

Neighborhood Boundaries

The following is a resumé of the criteria used in plotting the neighborhood boundaries as illustrated in PLATE 7. Beginning in the western portion of Council Bluffs and moving eastward we find neighborhood 1, Ray Meyer. It is located in the extreme northwestern portion of the city, bounded by the Missouri River on the north and west, by Interstate 480 and Broadway on the south, and by North 35th Street on the east. Franklin, neighborhood 2, is bounded by Avenue G on the north, Broadway on the south, 35th Street on the west, and 28th Street on the east. The boundary deviates on the southeast corner to avoid a city transit lines garage and a truck terminal. Walnut Grove, neighborhood 3, is bounded on the west by 35th Street, on the south by Avenue G, on the north by Interstate 29, and on the east by 26th Street. Twenty-sixth Street itself borders a general commercial area on the northeast corner. Neighborhood 4, Roberts Park, is bounded by Broadway on the south, 21st Street on the east, and by Franklin and Walnut Grove neighborhoods on the west. The neighborhood is irregular in shape due to the more dominant uniform nature of Walnut Grove Neighborhood, and in an effort to exclude the highway commercial area at the northwest corner of the neighborhood. Roosevelt, neighborhood 5, is bounded on the east by 13th Street, on the north by Avenue P and the Illinois

Central tracks, on the west by 21st Street, and on the south
by West Broadway. The western boundary of this neighborhood
detours around Wilson Junior High School and the Council
Bluffs Stadium. The latter structure serves the community
and city rather than just the Roosevelt Neighborhood.

South of West Broadway in the western portion of Council
Bluffs are located several neighborhoods. One of these is
Rue, neighborhood 6, which is bounded on the west by Inter-
state 29 and 80, on the east by 32nd Street, on the south by
the Union Pacific Railroad, and on the north by West Broad-
way. Neighborhood 7 is the DeForest Neighborhood which is
bordered on the west by South 32nd Street, on the east by
South 25th, and on the north by 2nd and 5th Avenues. The
jog is necessitated by a heavy commercial development to the
north. The southern boundary is made up of 9th Avenue and 12th
Street as they skirt the industrial development on the south.

Cochran Park, neighborhood 8, is situated in the west-
central portion of Council Bluffs. The west edge is south
25th Street, and the northern border is West Broadway with
deviations due to commercial development. The eastern bor-
der is formed by Indian Creek and the Union Pacific Railroad
tracks, while the southern border is 9th Avenue.

The central area of Council Bluffs is made up of Bayliss
Park and Tinley neighborhoods. The northern border of Bayliss
Park, neighborhood 9, is made up of the Union Pacific tracks,
1st Avenue and the Central Business District, and CBD, which

also abuts on the east to form with 4th Street the eastern
border of the neighborhood. The western boundary is formed
by 12th Street while 9th Avenue does the same on the south.
Tinley, neighborhood 10, abuts the Central Business District
on the north. The CBD forms its southern border. The west-
ern border is 10th Street while the northern and eastern edges
are complicated by the bluffs. The north edge is an imaginary
line extending southeast from the intersection of Avenue N
and North 10th Street to the intersection at Hackenberry Lane
and Oak Park Road. The east edge begins at this same inter-
section and continues southeastward to the intersection of
Elder Street and East Washington.

The eleventh neighborhood is Prospect Park Neighborhood.
It is located in north central Council Bluffs along the east
edge of the bluffs. The west boundary is North 1st Street,
and the north edge is Elliot Street. The east boundary is
North Broadway and the south boundary is the Central Business
District.

Sunset Park and Peterson Park, neighborhoods 12 and 13
respectively, are located in south central Council Bluffs.
Sunset Park Neighborhood is bordered on the north by 13th
Avenue, on the south by 21st Avenue, on the east by Highway
192, and on the west by Indian Creek. Peterson Park Neigh-
borhood is bordered to the north by railroad tracks, to the
south by Interstate 29 and 80, to the east by Highway 192,
and to the west by Indian Creek.

The neighborhood of St. Peter, 14, is located in central Council Bluffs. The northern boundary is represented by the Central Business District, while the west is formed by the bluffs. The east boundary is Lincoln Avenue and the southern boundary is a combination of Palmer Avenue and the northern edge of Fairmont Park.

To the south of St. Peter Neighborhood is Fairmont Park, neighborhood 15. The northern boundary is formed by Linn Avenue and Fairmont Park. The east border is Madison Avenue, the south border is Woodbury Avenue, and the east border is formed by Lynnwood Street and the bluffs.

Neighborhoods 16, 17, 18 and 19, Cook Park, Bennett Avenue, Memorial Park and Hoover, respectively, are located in east Council Bluffs. Cook Park is a triangular shaped neighborhood that borders the southeast corner of the CBD. The north border is the business district, while the east edge is Canning Street and the southwest boundary is Lincoln Avenue. The neighborhood of Bennett Avenue is located on the east edge of the city. The west boundary extends from the corner of Madison Avenue and Lindberg Drive to Gleason Avenue; the north boundary extends along Gleason Avenue, except for the area of Abraham Lincoln High School. The east boundary is the Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad and Interstate 80, and the south boundary is along Madison Avenue. The Memorial Park neighborhood is located in the middle of the east side of Council Bluffs. It is bounded by the Chicago Rock Island and

Pacific Railroad, Hubbard Street, open space, St. Alberts High School and Highway 6. Hoover, neighborhood 19, is located in the northeast section of the city. It is bordered on the north by Midland Drive, on the southeast by Highway 64, and on the west by North Broadway.

Lewis and Clark Neighborhood, 20, is located in northeast Council Bluffs. The boundaries are Elliott Drive on the south, the geographic limitations that result from the bluffs on the west, North Broadway, Indian Creek, and Highway 75 on the east, and open space on the north.

The last of the 21 neighborhoods in this study is the Gunn Neighborhood. It is situated in the northeast corner of Council Bluffs, and the northern edge of this area extends beyond the present city limits. The area is bounded by North Broadway and Indian Creek on the west, Midland Drive on the south, and bluffs and open space to the north and east.

Since this investigation began, Council Bluffs has annexed the southern portion of the city which includes Twin City, neighborhood 22. As only limited data is available on this neighborhood, it will not be included in this study. However, it is bounded on the north by 32nd Avenue, on the west by the Missouri River, on the south by Highway 92, and on the east by South 24th Street (APPENDIX IV, MAP II).

APPENDIX IV

GLOSSARY

# GLOSSARY

Blight:  A condition having a combination of physical and socio-economic indicators that destroy and/or prevent economic, physical and social growth within an areal unit of no minimal size.

Neighborhood:  An areal unit of varying size which is centered around an elementary school and/or city park.  A neighborhood has well-defined boundaries that may be identified by local shops, industrial or commercial areas, through-traffic routes or physical barriers.

Physical blight indicator:  A material object or objects of low quality that reduce economic value.  Some examples of physical blight are deteriorating and deteriorated houses, lots containing rubble, and unlicensed autos. The Public Health Service has photographed various examples of physical blight to aid in field identification.

Slum:  An area in which housing and other living conditions are extremely poor. Extremely poor conditions are represented by areal units in which more than 50 percent of the housing is deteriorated or deteriorating.  To be designated a slum area the socio-economic indicators must be at least three times lower than the city averages.

Socio-economic blight indicator:  Recorded data that identifies conditions of low social and economic quality. Examples of socio-economic blight are average family income, Aid to Dependent Children cases, juvenile arrests, Old Age Assistance and Soldier's Relief, school years completed and Visiting Nurse Association caseloads.
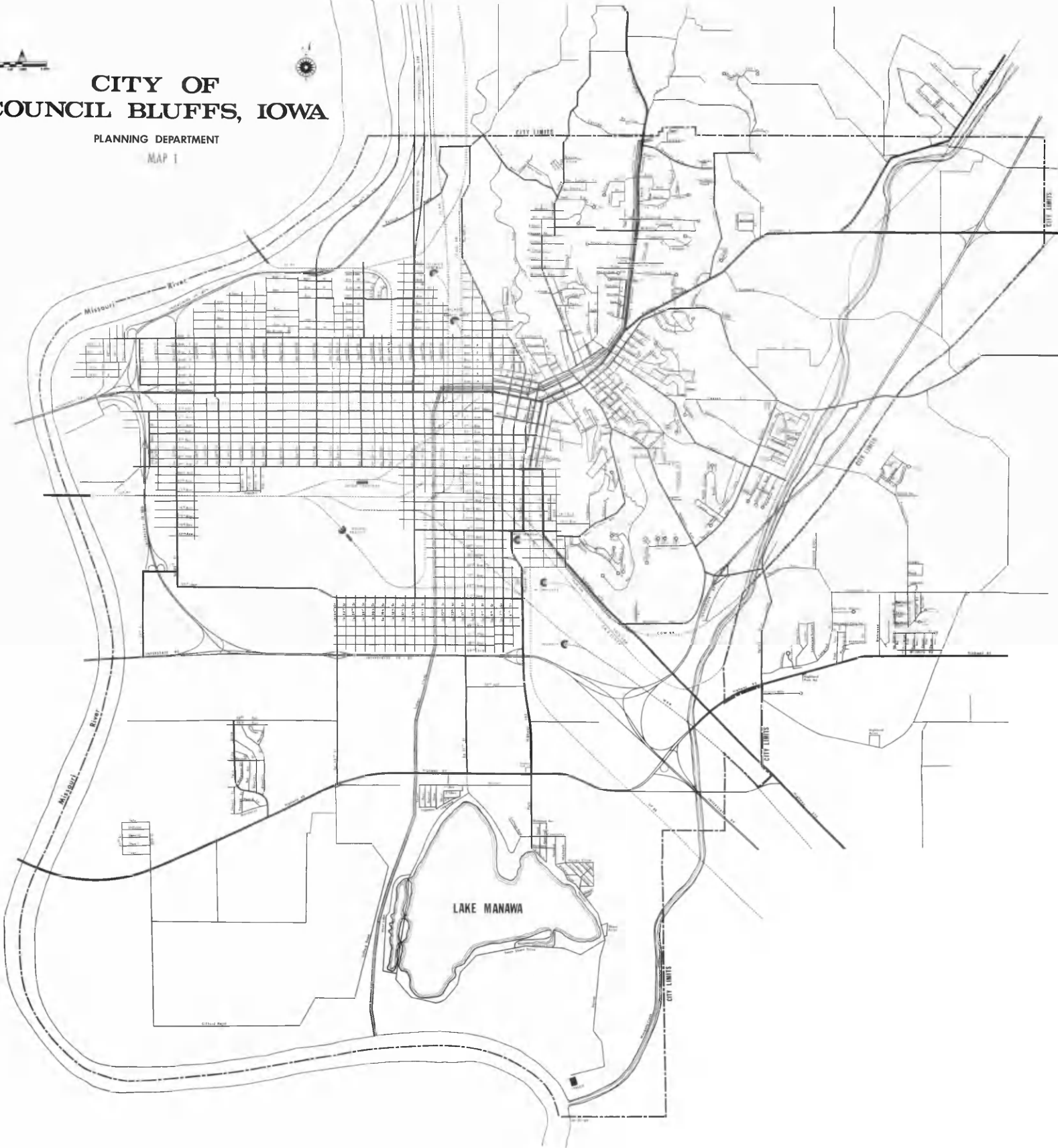
APPENDIX V

MAPS

# CITY OF
# COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MAP 1

CITY LIMITS

Missouri River

LAKE MANAWA

CITY LIMITS

# CITY OF
# COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Residential Neighborhoods
J. W. Preusser
1970

MAP II

LAKE MANAWA