

DETROIT RIVERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

DETROIT RIVERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT

By

Robert Gordon Brown

American cities are facing many severe problems such as a shrinking tax base, high unemployment, inadequate educational facilities and increasing crime rates. Paramount among these problems is the decay of the city's physical structure.

Very often at the center of such physical decadence is the urban riverfront. Because many cities were originally settled along river banks, riverfront developments in such cities are typically the oldest developments in the entire urban center. Accordingly, it is such developments which are often in the worst physical state in the entire urban center.

Despite the fact that the Ford Motor Company is embarking upon a major redevelopment project on Detroit's Riverfront much of the riverfront in Detroit is in disrepair. Much of it is abandoned and underutilized. The Ford Development could serve as a spark for redevelopment of Detroit's Riverfront but in order for a program or redevelopment to be successful it is necessary that a formal redevelopment structure be created to implement such a program.

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By

Robert Gordon Brown

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INTRODUCTION

Urban Waterfront Perspectives

Because water has historically been of great importance to urbanized America, the nuclei of our sprawling metropolises are often located on waterfronts adjacent to urban rivers. In America, populations first centered adjacent to our nation's major waterways during colonial times because control of primary transportation routes yielded trade advantages. As industrialization expanded, waterways remained important because they provided a source of power, a means of importing raw materials and of exporting finished products. As America urbanized, demands upon water grew because of a greater demand for consumption, demand for water used in industrial processes, demand for electrical power, and a greater demand for the importation of food, clothing, and other necessary commodities.

Just as technology drew masses of people to the urban center, advances in technology also permitted masses of the new working class to migrate from the crowded urban center adjacent to our nation's waterways. Such out-migration did not have an immediate adverse effect upon urban waterways. On the contrary, urban waterways remained an essential part of the urban scene on an expanded scale. Water requirements continued to exist but for greatly enlarged service areas.

Eventually, however, the exodus from the water centered urban core began to have an influence upon the water resource. As Robert E. Mendelson states with reference to American urban rivers in his publication, East St. Louis--The Riverfront Charade:

. . . very early in their histories, most American river cities allocated prime frontage for industrial and transportation purposes. Within the past twenty-five years, most of these original uses have ceased to function efficiently, and the productivity of riverfront land has declined rapidly.¹

This does not mean that the importance of urban waterfronts should be discounted. As long as the urban core represents the center of the American metropolis urban waterways will remain at the center of many of our major concentration of populations. As Mendelson concludes:

Because many riverfronts are located near the concentrated office and retail functions of downtown business districts, their reuse potential is great. They lend themselves to the placement of housing, parks, office buildings, and rapid transit terminals.²

As large tracts of prime waterfront property became available, the reuse potential of such tracts of land must be considered. In many cases, it may become necessary to evaluate the urban river as a resource of great importance in terms of its role as part of the contextual fabric of the city and not necessarily as a resource which can be exploited for profit.

¹Robert E. Mendelson, East St. Louis--The Riverfront Charade, Regional Urban Development Studies and Services, Report No. 6, (University of Southern Illinois, 1970), p. 26.

²Ibid.

Detroit Riverfront Redevelopment Study
Objectives--A Political Planning Approach

Planning for the use of a physical resource cannot be approached as a purely objective scientific allocation of that resource based upon the demands for that resource. As resources become less available, there exists a wider variety of demands for use of these resources. In order to avoid the conflict inherent in allocation of physical resources between various factions, planners have traditionally used their professional expertise in defense of planning without the input of interests affected or concerned with the use of a resource. Therefore, planners have typically employed two planning techniques to avoid opposition to their plans: 1) completing the entire plan for the use of a resource before letting anyone know of the plans, and 2) gaining support during the planning process by feeding bits and pieces of planning proposals as planning proceeds. In this study of redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront, an attempt will be made to integrate the priorities of various interest groups into the planning process and, therefore, face the issues of planning for the use of the Detroit Riverfront in context of the political atmosphere in which that resource exists.

This study will first attempt to determine the importance of urban waterfronts in terms of their relationship to water centered urban areas. The present physical condition of urban waterfronts and their uses and misuses will be examined as well as their potential for reuse. A review of waterfront renewal attempts in other urban centers will be made in order to identify those variables affecting waterfront redevelopment.

Those factors identified as affecting redevelopment of waterfronts in other urban areas will be discussed in relationship to the Detroit Riverfront. Moreover, the significance of each of these factors will be considered within the context of the political decision making arena existing in Detroit. This study is not designed to examine a physical approach to planning but to identify a political decision making process and determine how that structure will affect riverfront redevelopment. The study will attempt to identify those interest groups concerned with the redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront as well as how the physical resource itself is related to this process. Through identifying the attitudes and opinions of interests in the redevelopment process it is intended that the potential of redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront will be revealed as well as those factors which may enhance or impede redevelopment. This study will attempt to identify the riverfront redevelopment priorities of involved interests and those political structures which will affect the scale of redevelopment. Having identified these structures and the concerns of involved interests an approach to redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront will be synthesized.

CHAPTER I

Urban Waterfronts The Centers of Urban Decadence

Despite the fact that the potential of urban waterfronts for varied types of use is great, many American urban waterfronts exemplify urban obsolescence and decadence. As stated in the study done by Clare A. Gunn, David J. Reed, and Robert E. Couch which examines the cultural benefits of metropolitan river recreation in San Antonio:

Along with general urban decay came wanton abuse of a resource vital to the initiation and growth of most cities--the waters.³

Guy J. Kelnhofer, Jr., in his book, Metropolitan Planning and River Basin Planning, correlates the degradation of America's river resources to the drive for industrialization:

In the motivational drive for industrial development, the river was used by city builders as callously and wrecklessly as other natural resources . . . The river of urban America, carelessly exploited, became unlovely to look at and unpleasant to be near.⁴

Kelnhofer used the following description to characterize the general conditions of America's urban waterfronts as "disreputable":

³Clare A. Gunn, David J. Reed, Robert E. Couch, Cultural Benefits from Metropolitan River Recreation, San Antonio Prototype, Texas Water Resources Institute, Technical Report No. 43, (Texas A & M University, June, 1972), p. 7.

⁴Guy J. Kelnhofer, Jr., Metropolitan Planning and River Basin Planning: Some Interrelationships, Water Resources Center, (Georgia Institute of Technology, 1968), p. 168.

Shorelines frequently are lined with railroads, warehouses, storage yards, petroleum tanks and industrial buildings. Frontage not suitable for commercial and industrial uses commonly is left undeveloped. The unutilized portions of many metropolitan riverfronts are low, poorly drained and overgrown with brush. Alternatively, they may be used by public and private parties as handy dumping places for construction debris, discarded automobile bodies and worn out household appliances.⁵

The fact that the urban riverfront many times represents the center of urban decadence should not be interpreted to mean that urban blight is unique to the riverfront. Urban blight is a disease common to many sections of many of our cities. The urban riverfront represents only one example of land available for redevelopment as previous demands upon such lands diminish. The key to redevelopment of the urban structures lies in wise reuse of such available urban lands; the key to decadence the failure to use such lands wisely.

Although decadent urban riverfronts are not synonymous to urban blight, riverfronts many times display the symptoms of blight much earlier and emphatically than other urban areas. Donald F. Wood, in an article entitled "Waterfront Renewal in Metropolitan Areas", points out that waterfronts are commonly singled out as a cause of urban blight. Wood, however, emphasizes the fact that they are a symptom of blight and not a cause as:

. . . the area (waterfront) is the oldest in a city and that the main causes of blight are the deficiencies of age.⁶

⁵Ibid., p. 164.

⁶Donald F. Wood, "Water Renewal in Metropolitan Areas", Journal of the Urban Planning and Development Division, (Ann Arbor, December, 1967), p. 199.

In that waterfront areas commonly symptomize urban blight earlier than other urban areas because of age, Wood outlines several causes which lead to decadent waterfronts. These are:

1. Lack of use of a part;
 - a. disappearance of waterborn shipment;
 - b. inability of a port to handle new larger freighters;
 - c. loss of traffic to better ports;
2. Inadequate land transportation systems;
 - a. piers and roads outdated;
 - b. the existence of a freeway parallel to the waterfront severing it from the rest of the community;
3. Abandonment and lack of maintenance of shoreline structures such as;
 - a. piers;
 - b. shoreline retention structures;
4. Floods and water pollution;
5. Poor uses of waterfront areas;
 - a. parks converted to residential areas, etc.

In contrast to Wood, Guy Kelnhofer emphasizes four less tangible, yet very valid reasons for waterfront decadence. All four of these, according to Kelnhofer, point out unconcern on the part of metropolitan residents which allows for the degradation of the urban water resources. These underlying causes are:

1. Inaccessability to the resource by the general public;
2. Low visability of the resource to the residents;

3. The historical legacy of the urban river; and
4. The fact that the value of the river resource is unknown to the residents.

In summary, whether due to tangible or intangible factors, degradation of our urban waterfronts represents one of the earliest symptoms of urban blight in river oriented American cities.

Renewing the Urban Core-- Riverfront Redevelopment

Recently attention has been drawn to the deteriorating status of our urban centers. All levels of American government (federal, state and local) have begun to emphasize programs intended to deal with the greatest illness of our cities--urban blight. Such emphasis should be drawn to the very center of the problem, the urban core. As Charles Abrams summarizes in his publication, The City is the Frontier:

Although urban renewal started as a measure to clear the city's slum towns, its emphasis has steadily veered toward rebuilding the city's downtowns . . . And since regenerating a city's downtown is a vital part of its medication, this phase of the renewal program is one of its more important contributions.⁷

Just as the redevelopment of the urban core is of central importance to urban renewal, the redevelopment of the urban waterfront is essential to the revitalization of water oriented urban centers. Such redevelopment does not necessarily depend directly upon economic benefits. As stated in the conclusion of the publication, Cultural Benefits from Metropolitan River Recreation--San Antonio Prototype:

⁷Leo Adde, Nine Cities: The Anatomy of Downtown Renewal, The Urban Land Institute, (Washington, D.C., 1969), p. 157.

The recovery of urban river areas for recreation, education, esthetics and other amenity reasons is becoming a stronger argument for redevelopment.⁸

Thus, redevelopment and utilization of urban waterfronts should be viewed as a goal in itself important to the renewal of the urban core irrespective of monetary benefits to be derived from such utilization.

On Other Fronts

In many instances, riverfront redevelopment has become a primary consideration with respect to urban renewal. The President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty reported in 1968 that 50 cities were involved in programs to renew their waterfronts. In 1971, the number of cities involved in such programs had grown to 100. The following accounts of waterfront redevelopment efforts attempt to indicate the emphasis of recent riverfront renewal efforts and the various approaches to such redevelopment.

The St. Louis Dichotomy

The following comparison of the twin cities--East St. Louis, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri--was chosen to show a distinct dichotomy in waterfronts. The extent of riverfront redevelopment which has occurred within these opposing Mississippi centered cities revolves around one distinguishing factor; the federal government as a stimulus to development. As Robert E. Mendelson points out in his publication, East St. Louis--The Riverfront Charade:

⁸Gunn, Op.Cit., Conclusion.

While the St. Louis riverfront acquired a \$37 million memorial and a spinoff in additional development . . . the East St. Louis riverfront became the home of writhing, spaghetti-shaped interstate highway system which displaced hundreds of families and which became a high speed raceway through desirable riverfront property and through the city as a whole.⁹

As Mendelson points out, despite continued efforts by various groups to redevelop the East St. Louis riverfront, the impetus has never reached the development stage:

New Proposals and riverfront improvement committees have kindled temporary bids of excitement, and planner and development consultants have come and gone. Nothing has happened.¹⁰

The result:

St. Louis development has meant little to East St. Louis except that the view of the St. Louis skyline has become magnificent from the Illinois side of the river.¹¹

One consideration with respect to East St. Louis' inability to redevelop its waterfront is the fact that most of its waterfront is controlled by the Terminal Railroad Association. Even an attempt by the State Attorney General in the years 1937-39 failed to release riverfront lands for public use. Several other attempts have failed. But although this is an important consideration, it is not the principal factor which differentiates between the success of the twin cities.

The real difference between St. Louis and East St. Louis which has resulted in the redevelopment of St. Louis' waterfront and lack of development of the riverfront of East

⁹Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

St. Louis, is the impetus for redevelopment as a result of the investment of federal funds. The investment of \$37 million by the federal government for the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial has provided the impetus necessary for the redevelopment of the St. Louis riverfront. Since the federal government provided such a spark to redevelopment:

. . . nearly \$300 million in new construction--mostly for apartments, offices, a new civic center, and Busch Memorial Stadium has poured into the City's downtown area.¹²

All East St. Louis received was more federal highway monies to further clutter its riverfront with expensive interchanges and make it no more than an access point to St. Louis.

The "Sudden" Need to Redevelop the Little Rock Riverfront

In many cases, redevelopment of urban riverfronts occur in response to a change in the nature of the urban waterway. In Little Rock and N. Little Rock, Arkansas no effort was made to enhance the waterfronts of either city until action was taken to improve the navigability of the Arkansas River. There was no great demand for the use of these riverfronts when navigability was hindered by sand bars and the water was turbid and saline. There was no conflict or dispute. Soon after the Army Corps of Engineers embarked upon a project to provide flood control, hydroelectric power and restore the Arkansas to a navigable river, however, the attitude of the residents of the Little Rock Metropolitan region change.

¹²"St. Louis Spruces Up Down on the Levy: Renewal of Mississippi Riverfront", Business Week, (New York, May 31, 1969), p. 46.

At the present time the officials and residents of the Little Rock Metropolitan Area are definitely interested in using the river and its abutting lands in ways that are consciously designed to advance the economy and enhance the appearance of the area.¹³

Although the metropolitan Little Rock area is not unified in its developmental objectives, improvement of the river resource has spurred interest in redevelopment. Park areas, a scenic drive and industrial belts have been planned for the riverfront. Such plans have, however, been formulated by the Little Rock Metropolitan Area Planning Commission which has no legal power to develop the riverfront. Therefore, optimism for the Little Rock Metropolitan Area lies with state government to provide a decision making structure to incorporate plans to accommodate various redevelopment interests. Guy Kelnhofer suggests that all proposed plans can only be tentative without an active development agency because:

Some are eager to exploit the scenic recreation potential by building walks, parks and ponds along the river's edge, particularly in the downtown area . . . Still others are concerned with the image that the City projects to tourists and other visitors who approach their communities over the bridges. Then there are those who are thinking about the commercial and industrial opportunities that might be realized by local property owners whose land will be fronting on a navigable waterway.¹⁴

Thus, the realization of the redevelopment of the riverfront of the Little Rock Metropolitan Area depends upon the formulation of an agency with development authority with regard to their water resources. Until such time incorporation of the prospective uses of the riverfront into a workable plan are only speculative.

¹³Kelnhofer, Op.Cit., p. 129.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 128-9.

Atlanta--Action by Public Spirited Individuals

Atlanta is a rather unusual case. It was not founded upon a river and thus the Chattahoochee River, which does not run through the heart of Atlanta, does not represent the typical urban river. The only redevelopment has been carried out by the Army Corps of Engineers in an effort to build dams and canals to improve the river's navigation potential.

The Corps of Engineers has threatened to stop its improvement program on economic grounds. Little reaction has come from the general public.

Instead, a relatively small, but organized group of people have pressed for the development largely in response to their own special views and interests.¹⁵

Guy Kelnhofer describes this group of individuals as:

. . . public spirited citizens who firmly believe that the improvement works will help to upgrade the economy and promote the general welfare of the basin.¹⁶

In Atlanta a definite power structure has formed to promote navigation upon the Chattahoochee. In this situation a group of individuals are seeking to persuade the federal government to embark upon a river improvement program, as opposed to former cases where action followed federal government involvement. Spearheaded by the Atlanta Journal, Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Atlanta Water Works, one Senator and one Army Corps of Engineers engineer, a River Development Committee was formed to push for river improvement. There is no organized opposition, yet the general public is unconcerned and

¹⁵Ibid., p. 96.

¹⁶Ibid.

uninvolved. Thus, in Atlanta the future of the Chattahoochee is dependent upon a "power structure" which Kelnhofer states:

. . . is solidly behind the proposal that Congress authorize the Corps of Engineers to make the improvements that are necessary to extend navigation to Atlanta.¹⁷

Cincinnati Redevelopment--A Joint Venture of Planning Agencies

Many times there is little input by local groups with respect to redevelopment of a community's riverfront. Such is the case in Cincinnati where redevelopment of the Ohio Riverfront appears to be a joint venture of the Army Corps of Engineers and Local Planning Agencies. As Guy Kelnhofer states:

In the Cincinnati area, as in Atlanta, plans for development and use of the River are made without participation of local representatives in the formulation of the planning recommendations.¹⁸

At times, public participation is perhaps not all that important. In the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area strong and cooperative planning agencies exist for both Cincinnati and Hamilton County. These agencies have worked very successfully with the Corps of Engineers and existing riverside parks, roads and businesses as well as boat ramps and marinas make the river reasonably accessible physically.

As Guy Kelnhofer points out, the dangers to riverfront redevelopment may be in the fact that:

At this point in time . . . the Cincinnati Metropolitan Area has not yet adopted a method of determining its overall interests in the development and use of the area's water resources . . . it has not yet

¹⁷Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 106.

devised a system whereby it would be able to represent its collective interests in water resources, if it were able to define them . . . there is no organization charged with the responsibility for the management of the regions water resources to which the Area could send representatives to represent its interests.¹⁹

Perhaps such a system of citizen representation is not yet needed or wanted, or local planning agencies are providing input in keeping with the interests of the metropolitan citizenry. It is highly unlikely, however, that the best interests of a county, tri-state urban area can continue to be best served by such a structure indefinitely.

Denver--Strong Local Leadership for Redevelopment

Denver is a case of a deteriorating riverfront saved by catastrophe and strong local leadership. At the time the Platte River flooded its banks causing \$325 million damage to the City of Denver, its deteriorating condition was under study by the Colorado Public Health Department, private conservation clubs and the Army Corps of Engineers. Thus, following the flood the Mayor of Denver launched a planning study using \$540 thousand of HUD money to "determine the feasibility of a massive redevelopment of the Platte River Valley through Denver."²⁰ Under the leadership of the Mayor of Denver:

A wide spectrum of the civic, business and political leadership of the community participated in the preparation of the plans outlined in the Mayor's program of redevelopment for the South Platte River.²¹

¹⁹Ibid., p. 107.

²⁰Ibid., p. 111.

²¹Ibid.

The program, which was to cost \$628 million over twenty years includes:

. . . thirty-five urban renewal, four open space, and five specific beautification programs in addition to others necessary to provide street and highway improvements, channel construction, educational complexes and recreational facilities.²²

Because of a strong mayor form of government, an effective planning board, widespread and organized public support, and a sympathetic federal government, redevelopment of the Platte River looks very promising for Denver.

San Antonio--Citizen Pressure for Aesthetics

In 1921 the City fathers of San Antonio sought to cover the San Antonio Riverfront with concrete making the top a street, the interior a large sewer. This action was in response to massive flooding of the San Antonio River which caused \$3 million damage and took 51 lives. The citizens of San Antonio who had seen their River misused for many years, however, resisted the City father's proposal and defeated it. Instead, a flood prevention program was initiated for the City of San Antonio.

The idea to save the downtown riverfront grew and local citizens formed a San Antonio Conservation Society in 1924, which later led to the creation of the San Antonio Improvement District. In 1928, a \$75,000 bond was passed and by 1939 work was started to redevelop the riverfront. The real impetus for the now famous San Antonio River Walk did not come until 1962, however, when a River Walk Commission was established.

²²Ibid.

The River Walk Commission was the real impetus for redevelopment for the San Antonio River. As Clare A. Gunn states in the publication, Cultural Benefits from Metropolitan River Recreation--San Antonio Prototype:

By creating a River Walk Commission, the City government provided a mechanism for guiding and controlling development along the river in a way deemed desirable for the entire city.²³

Since the origin of the Commission, other improvement bonds have passed, offshoot organizations have materialized, and the San Antonio Riverfront has become one of the most beautiful in the world.

Factors Influencing Redevelopment

The preceeding six case studies in riverfront redevelopment are unique from each other in many aspects. Several of the case studies point out that investment on the part of the federal government in improving urban waterways many times acts as a catalyst to riverfront redevelopment. In St. Louis the impetus for redevelopment was a national monument; in Little rock it was improvement of navigation. Whatever the program, however, federal dollars in both cases served as the spark for riverfront redevelopment.

Other cases show that specific interest groups play an important part with respect to initiation of riverfront redevelopment projects. The lack of such interests in part explains the failure of East St. Louis to redevelop its riverfront. In Atlanta redevelopment involving federal funds was

²³Gunn, Op.Cit., p. 15.

promoted by public spirited individuals; and the success of Denver and San Antonio can in part be attributed to the action of local interest groups.

In some cases, local government can be singled out as the main interest influencing riverfront redevelopment. In the case of Cincinnati, riverfront redevelopment primarily grew out of the work of local planning agencies. In Denver, redevelopment would have probably never been an issue if it weren't for the organizing efforts of the Mayor of Denver.

At times, riverfront redevelopment was more dependent upon an act of nature than the action of any particular person or group of people. Denver and San Antonio experienced considerable flood damage, wiping out the riverfronts of their Central Business Districts. Atlanta and Little Rock sought to rejuvenate their riverfronts along with improvements of their rivers' channels for navigation. Thus, in many cases the physical state of the resource itself may serve as the inspiration of riverfront redevelopment.

The Riverfront Redevelopment Process

By examining the riverfront redevelopment process, it becomes apparent that three basic components are involved in this process.

The most basic component involves the physical resource itself. Not only is the urban river the focus of the redevelopment process, but it also exhibits attributes which serve to impede or enhance this process. Such attributes include the river's positive and negative potential as well as physical barriers to the redevelopment process.

The second component of the riverfront redevelopment process is the role of government. Government, either federal, state or local, can be of central importance to the redevelopment process. Government's decision to support, initiate, resist or remain inactive in the redevelopment process can in many instances determine the success of the program.

Likewise the involvement of interest groups, the third component of the redevelopment process, can be a key factor in the redevelopment of riverfront resources. Interests, whether they direct their attention to influencing government, independently acting to redevelop riverfronts, or remaining uninvolved can effect riverfront redevelopment much the same as government.

Component I: The Role of the Urban River as the Physical Resource

The urban river is the central component of the riverfront redevelopment process, as it is the use or non-use of this physical resource which determines the need for redevelopment.

Four basic uses of the urban river many times directly influence the decision to redevelop urban riverfronts. Three of these are very common to urban rivers; consumption, waste disposal and industrial processing. Any decision to develop these potential uses of an urban river, at the same time, affects the use of the riverfront as the value of the water resource increases or decreases. Another use of the urban river affecting the use of the riverfront is the physical relationship of the urban river to the urban core. Various other

factors actually determine the physical relationship between the river and the urban center, but it is important to note that this relationship may affect the development of the riverfront.

Negative aspects of an urban river may also affect riverfront redevelopment. Flood damage and impeded navigation are two negative influences of an urban river, which bring attention to the river resource and frequently to the river's front. Therefore, programs to combat these two problems many times yield programs to redevelop the riverfront. Two other potential negative influences of the urban river resource are the lack of access to the river resource, and the lack of use leading to abandonment and physical deterioration of the urban riverfront. These factors oppose the potential use of the river resource so that at times it is difficult to ascertain whether redevelopment arises out of recognition of positive potential of the riverfront or out of recognition of the negative effects of neglect.

Component II: The Context of Government

Riverfront redevelopment decision making normally takes place within the context of government. Redevelopment plans are many times made exclusively by the federal, state or local level. Because of the proximity of riverfront redevelopment, however, such plans most commonly involve a joint venture of all three levels of government. C. F. Kindsvater, in the publication Organization and Methodology for River Basin Planning,

points out the primary reason behind the need for a joint governmental approach to planning:

. . . in the early days of our country water development was primarily concerned with the provision of mechanical power and navigation facilities on quite a limited basis, whereas now we have systems of regional development in which flood control, irrigation, hydroelectric power, waste disposal, outdoor recreation, and fisheries management are taken into account.²⁴

Simply because decision making for riverfront redevelopment most commonly occurs within the context of government does not mean that the governmental arena is necessarily efficient in dealing with the redevelopment process. For example, the weaknesses of states to act is pointed out by Roscoe Martin in the publication River Basin Administration and the Delaware:

Handicapped by outmoded constitutions, ineffectual administrative organization and procedure, and inexperienced and part-time legislatures, states have failed to confirm their positions through positive action and so many fields have lost the initiative to the federal government by default.²⁵

And as Kelnhofer points out, the federal government is not necessarily concerned with the best utilization of a resource with respect to local preferences:

Planners reported consistently to the author that the Corps (Army Corps of Engineers) sought data from them and not opinions, advice or planning assistance.²⁶

²⁴C. F. Kindsvater, Organization and Methodology for River Basin Planning, Water Resources Center, (Georgia Institute of Technology, 1964), p. 69.

²⁵Roscoe Martin, River Basin Administration and the Delaware, (Syracuse University Press, 1960), p. 51.

²⁶Kelnhofer, Op.Cit., p. 185.

Furthermore, Kelnhofer points out that the third governmental alternative, the local level, is usually not equipped to handle projects of the magnitude of riverfront redevelopment.

What generally escapes notice is that, with few exceptions, the metropolitan area has not developed the political and institutional means for making decisions about what it wants to do about its areawide problems.²⁷

Thus, as all levels of government display various weaknesses with respect to the redevelopment process, alternative courses of action are taken. One possible alternative, of course, is a combined effort of the various levels of government. Many times, however, such efforts are also ineffectual and other alternatives are explored. Kelnhofer suggests metropolitan-wide decision making as an alternative.

Without collective decision making on the metropolitan level that is capable of dealing decisively with these problems on a metropolitan scale, development will continue to occur without being subject to the critical scrutiny of an informed public and without the overt and prior concurrence on the part of the general public in the results that emerge from these development activities.²⁸

In the publication Open Land for Urban America, Joseph J. Shoman suggests the need for a strong national governmental framework:

What is lacking in America is a strong land policy and some central coordination of land use. A national planning authority with powers to buy or otherwise acquire future public urban land is what is called for.²⁹

²⁷Ibid., p. 170.

²⁸Ibid., p. 191.

²⁹Joseph J. Shoman, Open Land for Urban America--Acquisition, Safekeeping and Use, (Baltimore and Maryland, 1971), p. 54.

The private sector, according to Shoman, would work within such a framework to provide the best possible developmental mix.

The private sector could best provide the local development, management and safekeeping of these areas planned by the government, which in essence is very much what we see in England, Sweden, Finland and France.³⁰

The approaches of both Kelnhofer and Shoman have obvious potential as applied to redevelopment of urban riverfront properties. These two approaches represent one extreme as they involve reorganization of previously existing governmental bodies or creation of new government bodies. At the other extreme Leo Adde, author of Nine Cities (The Anatomy of Downtown Renewal), and Donald F. Wood, author of Waterfront Renewal in Metropolitan Areas, suggest softer approaches which do not require major reorganization. Through existing governmental structures they make suggestions such as:

1. Government encouragement of an orderly transition of uses and discouragement of new non-conforming uses;
2. Education of riparians;
3. Vigorous enforcement of codes;
4. Rearrangement of waterfront uses utilizing urban renewal;
5. Planning which regards the entire central city as entity;
6. The use of eminent domain; and
7. The active participation of a small group of a community's most influential citizens.

³⁰Ibid., p. 57.

The suggestions of Adde and Wood are obviously considerations worthy of attention in the redevelopment process. They represent, however, dependence upon presently existing governmental structures which at times have proven to be ineffectual. The approaches of Kelnhofer and Shoman, on the other hand, are perhaps more favorable in those situations where an alternative to the existing decision making structure is required.

Component III: Interests--
The Motivating Forces

One suggestion Leo Adde makes with reference to bringing about redevelopment of urban areas which deserves special attention, is his suggestion to amass the active participation of a small group of the city's most influential citizens. In many instances, the actions of community influentials have been essential to the redevelopment process. Such influentials, whether they are members of the private sector, civic organizations or governmental sector, constitute a viable constituency. As Guy Kelnhofer emphasizes with respect to metropolitan river basin planning:

Every large community, however its government may be ordered, is composed of a variety of competing and conflicting interests. These conflicts affect every facet of community life where people from many backgrounds must share a limited supply of land, air, water, space and community facilities.³¹

Joseph J. Shoman, in order to insure representation of those concerned with the quality of the American urban environment, encourages interests' involvement in the decision making process. Shoman suggests that:

³¹Kelnhofer, Op.Cit., p. 3.

Whether they represent planning groups, architects, zoning boards, government agencies, or private conservation groups, organizations and individuals who seek the preservation and wise use of natural environments in urban America must involve themselves in biopolitics.³²

Such involvement is essential for as C. E. Kindsvater points out in his publication, Organization and Methodology for River Basin Planning:

Most of the decisions in resource management have been, and will continue to be, made privately by business firms, organizations and individuals.³³

To put resource decision making theory into a functional framework we must direct our attention first of all to a variety of interests competing within any specified decision making context. In general, these interests represent members of government, the private sector, civic organizations and the nebulous general public; with the primary conflicting interests represented by the private sector and the general citizenry.

The strength of the business and industrial sector is well known, and they many times exhibit their strength with respect to water resource decisions. Roscoe Martin makes mention of the power of the private sector:

It is obvious without further exploration that many of the demands for government action in the water-resource field come from business and industry, and that many of the associations supporting or seeking state and federal programs represent commercial interests exclusively or in part.³⁴

³²Shoman, Op.Cit., p. 59.

³³Kindsvater, Op.Cit., p. 429.

³⁴Martin, Op.Cit., pp. 52-53.

Because commercial interests are a strong factor in water resource decision making is not to say they represent at all times a united front. Neither should it be assumed that this sector's actions are necessarily deleterious to the resource as Martin also points out:

Private enterprise has a further significance in the water field, private business not only originates demands for water uses, but may also serve as the means to carry on and provide services demanded.³⁵

At times, however, the private sector does utilize resources in a manner which is interpreted as being in opposition to the well being of a community's general citizenry. Such conflict many times evolves as the general citizenry has difficulty in representing their interests in water resource decisions in advance. At best, the public interest is an unidentifiable conglomerate as Kindsvater points out:

In the broadest sense, the public interest could be considered essentially the aggregate of various groups or individuals interests.³⁶

Thus, the public interest becomes a weak factor in most decision making processes, for it is only when interests organize around a specific goal or objective that they become a viable force. Because, as Kelnhofer points out, river resource decision making seldom represents an identifiable concern of the general public, the public interest seldom forms a strong interest in the decision making processes:

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Kindsvater, Op.Cit., p. 436.

River development plans and programs tend to receive little direct attention from the general public in our metropolitan areas. Few people are likely to become concerned about a river whose relation to their welfare is not readily evident to them.³⁷

This lack of concern directly contrasts the interests of the private sector whose goals, objectives and orientation are typically well defined. Therefore, except in those cases where the general public rally around a common issue which represents a threat to their welfare, representation of the public interest is most commonly entrusted to civic organizations and publicly elected officials. Roscoe Martin attempts to point out a conscientious effort by those involved in the decision making process to keep the interests of the general public in mind:

Each individual and group is interested in maximizing the satisfaction of his own desires; the interests of the public as a whole lies in recognizing desirable additional objectives, in ensuring that the less important segmental interest does not triumph over the more significant whole.³⁸

Unfortunately, such a conscientious effort often becomes at best an afterthought, or at times it is more expedient to sacrifice the appraised desires of the general citizenry for the better identified goals of the private sector. Therefore, a dramatic inequilibrium often exists with respect to the representation of a community's general citizenry in contrast to the private sector. A possible solution to dissipating such an inequilibrium must involve more research to

³⁷Kelnhofer, Op.Cit., p. 5.

³⁸Martin, Op.Cit., p. 55.

determine the interests of the general citizenry. To expect the general public to unite as a viable interest is certainly unlikely as well as impractical, except in those cases where their well being are directly threatened.

CHAPTER II

Component I: The Physical Resource

Detroit and Its River

Not only is it now recognized that much of Detroit's riverfront has been allowed to fall into a state of marginal land uses and into a general condition of blight, but it is also recognized that the areas bordering the riverfront, along with several thousand additional acres of advanced blight in the central city, generally represent an unprecedented opportunity for Detroit to build in its central areas and along its waterfront the most exciting and beautiful part of the future city, appropriately most accessible to the entire metropolitan population by reason of a well thought out and clearly articulated pattern of freeways supporting major thoroughfare routes.³⁹

The above quotation is taken from the summary of a 1963 Study of the Detroit Riverfront by the Detroit Planning Commission. Such a statement reinforces the importance of careful examination of the first component of the riverfront redevelopment process identified in Chapter I--The Physical Resource.

The Detroit Riverfront represents a resource of great potential which can benefit the people of the Detroit Metropolitan region if properly utilized. Because the Detroit Riverfront represents a major resource of great potential, this segment of the Study will examine the history of resource planning and analyze physical data with respect to the riverfront.

³⁹City of Detroit Planning Commission, City of Detroit Riverfront Study, (Detroit, 1963), p. 95.

A Chronology of Riverfront
Planning: 1944-1973

1944-1949: The first study of the Detroit Riverfront was made in 1944. Prior to then, there was little concern over riverfront uses except for industrial use and its supporting services. Up to the time of the depression, port facilities, rail yards and industry controlled the riverfront as priority uses. The depression, however, brought on wholesale foreclosures and "scavenger" properties reverted back to the State or to the City of Detroit.

Years later, war time industries brought new prosperity to Detroit. Due to a severe shortage of building materials, however, little new development took place on Detroit's Riverfront. The Detroit Planning Commission, therefore, hired a consultant to make recommendations for redevelopment of the riverfront and in 1945 approved his plan. Among these recommendations were:

1. Providing additional port facilities;
2. Extension of Riverfront parks;
3. Alternative uses for residential areas;
4. Relocation of existing industries;
5. Providing facilities for pleasure craft; and
6. Alignment of the proposed riverfront Park Drive.

At this point in the Riverfront's history, it looked as though redevelopment would become a reality. Common Council authorized the Planning Commission Report and citizen reaction indicated overwhelming approval. Final approval was deferred until 1947, however, because of revisions which had to be made

in the original plan. Nonetheless, the Common Council was not inactive during the interim, securing 12 parcels of riverfront property from the State Land Office Board in 1946.

Progress in developing the riverfront appeared to continue in 1948. 62 acres of land for the development of the riverfront were acquired. 66-1/2 acres of foreclosed and scavenger property was assigned to the Department of Parks and Recreation on the recommendation of the Excess Properties Committee with the approval of Common Council. 33 acres were deleted from the riverfront plan by the Common Council.

The riverfront was the seventh of nine priority items in Detroit's 1948 appropriations for capital improvements. Although this appears to be a relatively low priority, it should be pointed out that additional funds were obtainable indirectly through the redevelopment and parks and recreation appropriations which were ranked second and fifth, respectively. Furthermore, plans for a riverfront civic center were underway, and appropriations for such a civic center ranked ninth among all capital expenditures. Thus, it was apparent that in 1948 riverfront development was becoming a priority item.

By the close of 1949 the City of Detroit held title to 60 percent of 371 acres of the areas shown for public development in the riverfront plan. The days of obtaining unwanted excess lands and wide public support were, however, drawing to an end. Public hearings had to be held to respond to riparian owners' contentions that riverfront parcels were needed for industry and port facilities. The Planning Commission was

forced to recommend condemnation proceedings to Common Council to safeguard areas for riverfront recreational uses before building permits were granted for construction of buildings not suited to the overall riverfront plan. By far, the greatest obstacles to riverfront master plans were legal ones, particularly with reference to the riverfront civic center plan. Obscure provisions of the Michigan Home Rule Act for Cities restricted closing of streets leading to the waterfront and sale of park and waterfront properties without a vote of the people. Through the efforts of the City Planning Commission, these provisions were repealed in the 1949 session of the State Legislature and such provisions were removed from the City Charter in November by passage of a charter amendment. Thus, by the end of 1949, at least one major obstacle to riverfront development plans had been removed.

1955-1962: Little information concerning riverfront development exists for the period 1950-1955. Little was accomplished during that period as many obstacles continued to impede riverfront development. A 1955 study made by the Detroit Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Commission, Progress Report . . . Waterfront Land Use Plan, emphasized three major obstacles to riverfront development plans:

1. Pressures of an expanding economy upon the waterfront;
2. Non-water using industries and services located upon the waterfront; and
3. Limited size of usable acreage.

The opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway had a dramatic effect upon the riverfront as it was a major factor in

expanding the economy of Detroit. Soon after the Seaway opened many industries sought riverfront parcels upon which to relocate, and the demand for port facilities increased. Such demands were not considered as a factor of the original riverfront development master plan and called for adjustment of that plan.

According to the 1955 study, the greatest obstacle to development of the riverfront was that non-water oriented industry and transportation services still occupied much of the waterfront. The study points this out with particular reference made to the section of waterfront between Belle Isle and Fort Wayne:

Here are situated many industries which do not make use of their waterfront potential; here also are many feet of frontage being used as railroad yards. In many cases these firms made use of the water at their door in past years, but the changing economy of the nation made such uses obsolete as far as these particular firms were concerned.⁴⁰

Unfortunately, this obstacle to redevelopment of the riverfront still exists today. It appears as though complete obsolescence is a necessary pre-condition to relocation of industry and transportation facilities.

Closely related to the obstacle of waterfront control by non-water oriented industry and transport facilities is the problem of limited usable acreage upon which such industries are located. Just as their need for water may become obsolete many such industries are of a physical scale which is

⁴⁰Detroit Metropolitan Area Regional Planning Commission, Progress Report . . . Waterfront Land Use Plan, (Detroit, 1955), p. 5.

considered obsolete by modern standards. Thus, as parcels are acquired, planners are faced with the problem of how to develop such parcels. As pointed out by the 1955 study:

As the land holdings are usually short in depth, they represent a problem in redevelopment into usable acreage according to today's standards.⁴¹

Despite the obstacles alluded to in the 1955 Riverfront Progress Report, some riverfront development progress was made. During the period 1955-1963, Detroit's harborline was extended and a bulkhead constructed, the Civic Center Marina was constructed and four new major buildings were constructed on the riverfront or in close proximity to the riverfront. All of these buildings, Cobo Hall, Ford Auditorium, the City-County Building, and the Consolidated Gas Company Building, are noteworthy as all of them focus upon the civic center area located at the foot of Woodward. Not only is this area an integral part of the Detroit Riverfront, but it is also the true center point of the City.

1963-1973: The Detroit Riverfront Study of 1963, a major effort of the Detroit City Planning Commission, represents the most significant effort ever to plan for the redevelopment of the riverfront. This Study, although thirteen years old, constitutes the greatest source of riverfront data available and the basis for subsequent riverfront development master planning. Furthermore, this document goes beyond a simple economic and physical statistical appraisal as pointed out in page two of the preface:

⁴¹Ibid.

The plan covers all riverfront uses and for the first time in a major comprehensive planning report, has given consideration not only to economic and physical requirements but to significant site planning and visual design aspects of the ultimate development of Detroit's Waterfront.⁴²

Recommendations of the Study

In keeping with the overall objectives of the 1963 riverfront study and plan, recommendations for redevelopment of the riverfront were incorporated into several separate plans as categorized below:

1. Industrial Port Terminals;
2. Land use;
3. Trafficways;
4. Public Facilities; and
5. Riverfront Development.

The essence of these plans are summarized below. Greater detail with respect to areas of special interest will follow later.

1. Industrial Port Terminal Proposals: In general, this plan calls for the expansion of existing for hire port terminals and creation of one new such terminal. All such terminals are to be located at the extreme western part of Detroit near the heavy industrial complexes of Zug Island and River Rouge.

2. Land Use Proposals: The land use proposals of the 1963 Study constitute the bulk of the report. The major recommendations of this proposal include: new industrial development near the heavily industrialized western edge of Detroit,

⁴²Detroit City Plan Commission, Op.Cit., p. 2.

a new residential park complex east of the civic center, additional recreational areas for the west side of the City and expansion of east side recreational areas, completion of the long proposed Parkway, development of special commercial areas adjacent to each side of the Civic Center which would include motels, hotels, apartments and marina facilities, new and expanded shopping centers, and development of a special commercial area near the Ambassador Bridge.

3. Traffic Proposals: This plan calls for a coordinated system of trafficways relating riverfront vehicular traffic to the City and region as a whole. The system includes four types of roads; a) limited access freeways, b) major thoroughfares, c) secondary thoroughfares, and d) parkways between parks and other community facilities.

4. Public Facility Proposals: This plan provides for necessary public facilities such as the new and expanded parks mentioned above, passenger boat docking facilities, a new elementary school, and other neighborhood community and city-wide facilities.

5. Riverfront Development Proposals: This plan provides for alternative arrangements of buildings and open space for the riverfront, and allows for further adjustments as the need arises.

The 1963 Riverfront Study incorporates a great volume of physical data. Some changes in the riverfront have, of course, affected some of this data. Much of the data, however, is still accurate by today's standards and even that data which has been altered by new developments upon the riverfront is

still meaningful as a guide to general characteristics of the riverfront. Furthermore, this data represents the only large accumulation of data without having to compile such physical data piecemeal through annual Planning Commission reports.

Physical Data

The total length of the Detroit Riverfront from its northern extremity at Lake St. Clair to its southernmost point, Lake Erie, is twenty-seven miles. For the purposes of this Study, however, only the stretch of riverfront included within the incorporated City limits of Detroit was examined. This stretch of riverfront represents 10.7 miles of riverfront. The riverfront's inland limits were further circumscribed by those traffic arteries most immediate to the riverfront, Fort Street and Jefferson Avenue. (See Appendix A)

There are many characteristics of the river other than length, however, that should also be noted. The river links Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie, and serves as the international boundary between Canada and the United States. The river links the Great Lakes with the St. Lawrence Seaway, making it an international shipping lane and making Detroit an important international port. Despite great concern over the quality of the water, the Detroit River supports a fine sport, fishery. This is primarily due to the fact that the River's strong current completely flushes the River approximately every 24 hours.

Thirty-seven percent of the 10.7 miles of river frontage being considered in this Study is privately owned. Another thirty-two percent of the Detroit Riverfront is used for public

and institutional purposes. The remaining land along the riverfront is used for various purposes such as private and public utilities, right of way, or is owned by railroad companies. Table I represents the ownership of the riverfront by length.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF RIVER LENGTH BY OWNERSHIP	
	<u>Detroit River</u> <u>(feet)</u> %
	56,400
Private property	37
Private utilities	6
Public utilities	6
Railroad property	17
Public & institutional	32
Right of way	<u>2</u>
	100%
	10.7 miles

Source: City of Detroit Riverfront Study; 1963.

A very important consideration with regard to redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront is the existing land use. Tables 2 and 3, taken from the 1963 Riverfront Study, give a breakdown of existing land use at that time. Since that time there have been some changes in land use as a result of new riverfront developments, most notably the new Ford Project-- Renaissance Center. For the most part, however, the data presented in Tables 2 and 3 gives a fair approximation of existing land use. Special attention should be paid to the small amount of land devoted to residential and commercial

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING LAND USE IN RIVERFRONT AREA
(acres, not including streets or railroads)

	West of West Grand Boulevard	West Grand Boulevard to Woodward	Woodward to East Grand Boulevard	East of East Grand Blvd.	Total Acres	%
Residential	420	0	10	580	1,010	24
Commercial	200	20	20	50	290	7
Industrial	1,020	150	250	400	1,820	43
Institutional	130	50	10	90	280	7
Recreation	20	10	10	260	300	7
Vacant	350	30	60	80	510	12
Area Totals	2,140	250	360	1,460	4,210	100%

Source: City of Detroit Riverfront Study, 1963.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF EXISTING RIVER LENGTH BY LAND USE

	Detroit River (feet)	%
Residential	3,470	6
Commercial	1,790	3
Industrial	18,880	34
Institutional	6,580	12
Recreational & Open Space	12,480	22
Railroads	9,830	17
Vacant	2,450	4
Right of Way	900	2
Total	56,380	100%

Source: City of Detroit Riverfront Study, 1963.

development. The City of Detroit hopes to increase the amount of riverfront used for these purposes.

The importance of the pattern of land use takes on more significance when the distribution of such uses are graphically represented as in Appendix A. It is important to note that most residential property is located at the extreme eastern and western edges of the city. Another significant factor is that 87 percent of all recreational lands are east of East Grand Boulevard. 56 percent of all industrial land is located west of Grand Boulevard. (Two-thirds of all industrial land is west of Woodward.) At first glance, such data indicates an imbalance in land use distribution. After further consideration, however, such an imbalance serves as a justification for segregation of non-compatible uses. The 1963 Study, which in part supports such a philosophy, does, however, point out that there is a demand for more commercial and recreational lands in residential areas located west of Woodward.

With approximately 50 percent of the Detroit Riverfront being used for industry or railroad yards it is important to examine the status of these uses. Shipping of cargo and passenger traffic by rail has been steadily declining in recent years. Thus, many of the railroad yards located along Detroit's riverfront receive little or no use. Such land could obviously be made better use of. Many industrial sites, especially those to either side of the Civic Center, could also be better utilized. Until very recently, this area, the focus of the City of Detroit, was generally the oldest section of the City and many of the buildings located there were obsolete. As the 1963 Study points out:

Generally, inspection of information on the general industries of the entire city in previous industrial studies show that the greatest concentration of factors indicating industrial obsolescence and poor condition are close to the riverfront.⁴³

Factors indicating obsolescence included long and short term vacancies, lack of floor space, and buildings over 60 years old which had not been remodeled to meet existing standards. Such structures, by any standards, represent a poor use of valuable riverfront parcels.

One important result of the 1963 Study was the recommendation of the Planning Commission to effect a transition in riverfront uses. A comparison of Tables 3 and 4 exemplifies this transition. Table 3 presents data showing the existing land use at the time of the 1963 Study and recommendations of the Commission. Table 4 presents the proposed distribution of land use according to the recommendations of the Study and as incorporated into the proposed plan of land use. A comparison of the data previously presented in Table 3 and that in Table 4 show significant proposed increases in the length of riverfront used for residential, park and commercial development and only a very slight increase in the amount used for industrial purposes. At the same time, the proposed changes in land use would utilize riverfront now vacant or occupied by railroads. The proposals of the Commission indicate that a general increase in parklands should occur in the stretch of riverfront extending from West Grand Boulevard to Albert Road. The Plan proposes that commercial development occur between

⁴³Ibid., p. 30.

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF RIVER LENGTH AS SHOWN ON PROPOSED PLAN OF LAND USE
(in feet)

	Schaefer	West Grand Boulevard	Woodward	East Grand Boulevard	Alter Road	Totals	% of Total
Residential		---	---	2,240	3,500	5,740	10.2
Commercial		---	11,580	1,980	---	3,560	6.3
Industrial		77,820	5,480	4,420	2,700	20,420	36.1
Park		2,360	4,840	4,660	14,940	26,800	47.1
Sub Area Totals		10,180	11,900	13,300	21,140	56,420	100.0%

Source: City of Detroit Riverfront Study, 1963.

East and West Grand Boulevard, primarily around the Civic Center area. The Plan also calls for increased residential development for the western and eastern sectors of the riverfront, with a slight decline along the far eastern edge.

Based upon the analysis of the physical resource and resource planning presented, it is apparent that the potential for redevelopment is great. A high degree of obsolescence and less than best alternative uses of riverfront land are justification for reuse of these lands. The recommendations of the City Plan Commission as stated in the 1963 Study are a step toward correcting this situation.

Relationship of the Physical Resource to Riverfront Planning in Detroit

The preceding discussion of the Detroit Riverfront was given to present an overview of utilization of that resource from the period 1940 to 1972. In analyzing the planning efforts of that era and the physical characteristics of the riverfront some very interesting insights into the political planning process of Detroit emerge.

The review of the planning efforts to redevelop the Detroit Riverfront indicated obvious changes in emphasis over the thirty year period examined. When redevelopment of the riverfront first became an issue in the early 1940's, Detroit Common Council and the Detroit City Plan Commission acted as the initiators for active redevelopment through gaining control of tax reverted riverfront parcels, through purchase of parcels and by implementing a major study to create a redevelopment plan for the riverfront. Although public support of

the Council's plans for redevelopment was overwhelming for nearly a decade, a segment of the public interest came forth in 1949 in opposition to the plans of the City Plan Commission. Representatives of this segment pressured Common Council to allocate more riverfront for industry and port facilities. In an attempt to preserve riverfront lands for institutional facilities, recreation, parks, and facilities for pleasure craft, the City was forced to use condemnation procedures in response to the advice of the City Plan Commission. The State Legislature became a participant in the riverfront redevelopment process in 1949 when it assisted the City in furthering its plans for the Detroit Civic Center by repealing provisions of the Home Rule Act for Cities which restricted closing of streets leading to the riverfront without a vote of the people. By this time, opposition to the City Plan Commission's plans by industrial interests were so vocal that public hearings had to be held in order to secure parcels of land.

It appears that the strength of the private industrial segment of the public interest became more vocal as time went on. The opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway lent more credence to their argument for more port and industrial use of the riverfront. The strength of this sector is evidenced by the fact that major industrial and port facilities have developed along the western edge of the riverfront since the late 1940's. During the same time, the City had developed their plans for the Civic Center and expanded some of their park areas, most of them along the eastern edge of the riverfront. Competing demands upon the riverfront for industrial and port facilities

in contrast to the City's plans for public use of the waterfront created a situation where little redevelopment occurred during the 1950's and 1960's. As an example, the riverfront parkway proposed in the 1948 riverfront redevelopment plan is still not yet a reality. Likewise, except for the River Rouge Industrial Complex along the western edge of the city limits, little new industrial development has occurred along the riverfront. Instead many parcels are occupied by obsolescent industrial structures and rail transportation spurs. The major contribution of the City of Detroit during this period would probably have to be the 1963 riverfront study, the most comprehensive study of the riverfront to date.

It appears that the period of stagnated redevelopment plans may be coming to an end. The Ford Motor Land Development Corporation, using its strong political and financial clout, has begun construction of a major commercial residential development on Detroit's central riverfront. In order to accommodate such a development the City Plan Commission and Common Council were willing to change zoning restrictions governing the height of buildings located along the riverfront. Detroit Renaissance, a civic organization who has as it's governing board the major business interests of Detroit, is planning residential redevelopment west of the civic center and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority is finalizing plans for a moderate income high-rise housing development upon the riverfront. It appears that the 1970's may become an era of redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront brought on by those with the political clout to make their demands for riverfront use known.

The Detroit Riverfront, as the review of physical data points out however, still represents many obstacles to redevelopment. For example, the physical size of the resource makes planning on a small scale impossible. The river itself represents a major recreational asset, an international boundary and major shipping lane. It's riverfront represents a prime industrial port, residential and commercial site. Because the riverfront must represent all of these uses, many varied demands are placed upon it. Another major obstacle to redevelopment is that approximately 65 percent of the total riverfront is privately owned or in the ownership of railroad companies and public or private utilities. With the City only controlling 32 percent of the riverfront, it will be difficult for them to control the use of the riverfront even if they develop the most elaborate redevelopment master plan conceivable. Without land ownership, the City will have to depend upon zoning to control use which, as it has been shown, is subject to change if the interested party has strong political and financial resources.

The review of the physical data also pointed out that there is potential for redevelopment in that many of the industrial and transportation facilities located on riverfront parcels have become obsolete. Again, however, land use control of these properties is a potential problem. The study also pointed out that it is possible, because of past redevelopment patterns, to isolate industry from other uses and to concentrate redevelopment of the downtown section of the riverfront for commercial and public use. The problem of integrating the priorities of all segments of the public interest into planning for the redevelopment of the entire riverfront, however, remains.

CHAPTER III

Government and Interests: The Second and Third Components of The Riverfront Redevelopment Process

Defining "Interests"

The riverfront redevelopment case studies formerly presented indicated that an inventory of the physical components of a water related resource does not necessarily dictate successful development of that resource. It is for this reason that an attempt must be made to examine the effects that government and interests may have upon the use of such resources. As Spencer Havlich points out:

Water centered decisions in an urban river basin are seen as emerging from a continuous political social process, made up of many smaller acts over time, and carried out by various people over different periods of time.⁴⁴

In the previous discussion of the riverfront redevelopment process, as it occurred in several case examples, the role of government and other interest groups were presented as two separate components of the redevelopment process. The primary difference between government and other interest groups which sometimes warrants identification of government as a separate component of the redevelopment process is that because various divisions of government are often entrusted with

⁴⁴Spencer Woodworth Havlich, Attitudes Held by Water Influentials About Major Obstacles in Establishing Institutional Arrangements in an Urbanized River Basin, (University of Michigan, 1967), p. 2.

decision making responsibilities, they are sometimes considered as the arena into which interest groups attempt to translate their concerns or priorities. Such a distinction is borne out with regard to the redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront when considering the various planning efforts of the City Plan Commission endorsed by Common Council and implemented by various departments of the City. This particular role of government was previously explored in the examination of the physical resource.

If, on the contrary, an interest is defined as an individual or group of individuals who become involved in a decision making process in order to present their priorities related to a specific issue, the role government plays in the riverfront redevelopment process can be assumed to be very similar to other interests. Therefore, for the purposes of this Study, the influence of government with respect to their function with the similar roles of other interests was examined, keeping in mind the distinctive characteristics of each.

In order to ascertain the affects that government and other interests might have upon the redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront, it was necessary to identify those individuals, groups and sectors of the community who exhibit an interest in such redevelopment. In addition to identifying such interests, it was particularly necessary to determine the reasons for their involvement, the nature of their involvement, their priorities for redevelopment, and their proposed approaches to redevelopment in order to determine the effects these interests may have upon redevelopment of the Detroit

Riverfront. The remainder of this Study will deal specifically with such issues. By so doing, it may be possible to determine in what direction redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront will proceed.

Identifying Riverfront Redevelopment Interests

A major objective of this phase of the Detroit Riverfront Redevelopment Study was to identify those interests which may be involved with such redevelopment. In order to accomplish this objective three identification approaches were employed: the intuitive approach, through association with proposed redevelopment projects, and through identification by other involved interests.

The intuitive approach involved listing several organizations which, by nature of their existence, were likely to be involved with riverfront redevelopment. Such an approach identified primarily units of government, particularly planning agencies, as potentially involved interests. The second approach utilized, identification through association with proposed projects, necessitated investigation of proposed redevelopment projects to determine those interests who are involved with them. This approach successfully identified interests from the private sector, government and civic organizations. The third approach to identifying interests utilized a questionnaire which asked respondents to name individuals whom they felt were involved with riverfront redevelopment. This approach, much like the former, identified interests from the private sector, government and civic organizations.

From the above methods employed to identify interests a list of twenty-five potential interests was compiled. These interests were classified as representing the private sector, governmental organizations or as civic organizations as shown in Appendix B.

Surveying the Attitudes and Opinions of Involved Interests

As stated earlier, it is essential to go beyond a simple identification of potentially involved interests and attempt to estimate the effects such interests involvement will have upon the redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront. Several components of interest involvement were considered very important considerations with respect to this redevelopment process. Such considerations included:

1. The nature of interest involvement;
2. Motives for becoming involved;
3. Favored approaches to redevelopment;
4. The evaluation of redevelopment potential;
5. Favored redevelopment proposals;
6. Coordination between interests; and
7. Approaches to promote redevelopment proposals.

Because the sample to be surveyed was small, consisting of only twenty-five individuals, the personal interview was employed. The interview format was structured to provide answers to the specific areas of concern indicated above.

(See Appendix C - Question Format.) The following discussion explains in greater detail several of the major areas of concern the question format attempted to survey.

The Nature of Interest Involvement

Identification of the nature of interest involvement in redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront is important for two reasons. First, because the sample surveyed included three major classifications of interests--private, civic, and governmental--it is likely that the nature of their involvement in the redevelopment process will vary. Secondly, because redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront is an endeavor of massive scale, it is likely that those interests capable of involvement on the physical redevelopment level will need support from other interests. Based primarily upon this second assumption, the Question Format attempted to identify two major types of interest involvement--active and supportive.

Supportive interest was defined as those types of actions which make redevelopment possible without actually physically redeveloping specific riverfront parcels. Such actions might include publicly voicing support for redevelopment or endorsing changes in zoning ordinances. Active redevelopment, on the other hand, was construed to include actions such as investments of land, labor or capital.

With respect to the various interests surveyed, it was anticipated that the nature of their involvement would vary in keeping with the nature of the interest. Except in those cases where governmental agencies were entrusted with parcels of riverfront property it was expected that their involvement would be supportive in nature. Likewise, the same assumption was made with respect to civic organizations. In contrast, it was felt that the private sector, although capable of supportive

actions, were more likely to exhibit the characteristics of active involvement if they were to become involved at all.

Motives for Interest Involvement

The motives for becoming involved in the riverfront redevelopment process are varied as there are a number of potential uses of a riverfront and a number of varied interests who become involved in the redevelopment process. It was expected that several motives for redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront would be identified by the sample surveyed, and furthermore, that a pattern of motives would develop by nature of the type of interests surveyed--governmental, civic, or private.

Profit as a motive for redevelopment was expected to be a major concern of the private sector but of very little concern to governmental interests. Civic organizations, on the other hand, were expected to exhibit at times a concern for the profit motive and at other times very little concern for profit depending upon the constituency of their organization.

Although "civic pride" is a phrase which is difficult to define in exact terms, it was expected that because the City of Detroit has a poor image as a city which is physically and socially deteriorating many interests would identify as a motive for redevelopment the need to remove this stigma of the City of Detroit. In doing so, such interests are exhibiting a need to instill a feeling of civic pride in the City of Detroit. It was, therefore, felt that irregardless of the type of interest being surveyed (governmental, civic, or private) civic pride would be a motive for redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront.

A third possible motive for involvement in the river-front redevelopment process relates to community goodwill by those interests which become involved. Governmental agencies, because their actions are exposed, must constantly consider their public image and act in a manner which is in the best interests of the community in order to establish goodwill in the community. Increasingly, however, attention has been drawn to the actions of the private sector to the point that they must also consider their public image as exhibited by the great number of public spirited private businessmen who serve on Boards of many civic organizations. Keeping this in mind, it was expected that improving their public image through establishing goodwill throughout the City would be a motive for all interests who become involved with the redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront.

Attitudes and Opinions About the City of Detroit and Its Riverfront

In discussing civic pride as a motive for interest in redevelopment it was pointed out that present opinions about physically and socially deteriorating state of the City of Detroit are factors influencing civic pride. More specifically, however, opinions and attitudes with respect to the City of Detroit and its riverfront can also be considered key indicators as to whether redevelopment will occur and in what direction it will proceed. The questions form, therefore, surveyed the attitudes and opinions of involved interests with respect to the present image of the City of Detroit, the future of Detroit, the present condition and potential use of the Riverfront

and what role the Riverfront will play in Detroit's future. In this particular case, no assumptions were made to correlate these attitudes and opinions to particular types of interests.

Alternative Redevelopment Uses

In order to further ascertain the direction in which riverfront redevelopment might proceed it was necessary to go beyond the opinions of interests with respect to the redevelopment potential of the Detroit Riverfront. The sample surveyed was, therefore, presented with specific redevelopment uses in an attempt to determine what form of redevelopment use is most favored. The potential uses presented to the sample included housing, transport facilities, industry, commercial development, recreational and open space, and tourism, as well as an "other" category for any uses not listed but felt to be important. It was anticipated in this instance that there would be differentiation in redevelopment alternatives based upon the type of interest being surveyed. It was expected that the private sector would favor income producing uses such as industrial, commercial, transport and tourist related uses as opposed to more public oriented uses. Governmental organizations were expected to favor public oriented uses such as recreation, open space and housing. Civic organization alternative choices were expected to be difficult to predict, again depending upon the nature of their constituency.

The Scale and Approach to Riverfront Redevelopment

To redevelop the 10.7 miles of riverfront considered in this Study would require massive amounts of planning,

cooperation, coordination and finance. An integral part of the survey was, therefore, to attempt to determine the scale of redevelopment likely to occur as well as what approach to redevelopment would be most successful. The survey presented the interests involved with a choice of massive or incremental riverfront redevelopment and proceeded to survey their opinions as to what approach they most favor and what approach they feel is most likely to be taken. Respondents were then also surveyed in an attempt to determine why they felt riverfront redevelopment would proceed at the scale they indicated. In this case, no differentiation in response was expected based upon the nature of the interest being surveyed.

Identifying a Power Structure With Respect to Riverfront Redevelopment

In many of the previously presented riverfront redevelopment case studies a group of individuals were identified which could be considered as a "power structure" with respect to such redevelopment. Therefore, a major concern of the survey was to first identify any interests in the Detroit Riverfront Redevelopment process not previously identified and to determine if particular individuals were considered essential to that process. In addition, the survey attempted to analyze the correlation between decisions made by staff and those made by chief administrators and boards of directors to determine if key individuals are repeatedly making key decisions.

Coordination Between Involved Interests

In order to effectively implement a program of riverfront redevelopment, a great deal of cooperation between

involved interests is necessary. The Question Format utilized attempted to evaluate the coordination between involved interests in two ways. The first method employed was to determine whom the surveyed interests felt should take the responsibility for leadership of the riverfront redevelopment process. A lack of consensus might indicate a lack of coordination. The second approach attempted to determine if communication between involved interests was adequate and if involved interests were in fact working with other interests on proposals for riverfront redevelopment. A lack of communication might also indicate a lack of coordination.

Methods of Achieving Redevelopment Alternatives

A method of effectuating riverfront redevelopment alternatives by an interest is as important as the alternative redevelopment use advanced by that interest. Involved interests were, therefore, surveyed to determine the alternative approaches each interest would take to establish their favored uses of the riverfront. The survey suggested six possible methods: the use of publicity, formation of a coalition of interests, use of personal influence over decision makers, use of master planning for the riverfront, the use of zoning and ordinances, and interaction with other agencies or officials and asked respondents for other possible methods. It was expected that governmental agencies were more likely to use conventional techniques such as planning and zoning while the private and civic sector were more likely to use personal influence, coalitions of interests, and publicity.

CHAPTER IV
Survey Results

Of the twenty-five organizations selected for the survey, only eighteen were interviewed as seven organizations indicated no interest in riverfront redevelopment. The eighteen organizations interviewed represented ten governmental units, five civic organizations, and three private organizations.

(Appendix D)

Fifteen of the eighteen respondents surveyed indicated they were presently involved with specific riverfront redevelopment projects. From the fifteen respondents who indicated that they were involved with specific projects and planning endeavors, five specific riverfront redevelopment projects were identified. These projects and those respondents who indicated that they were involved with them are listed below:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Involved Interests</u>
Ford, Residential Commercial Complex, Renaissance Center	Ford Motor Company Detroit Renaissance Chamber of Commerce
Cadillac In Town-New Town	Metro-Fund
Riverfront Stadium	Detroit Renaissance Chamber of Commerce Wayne County Stadium Authority
Boardwalk Riverfront Park	MUCC, HCMA, BOR, DNR-Recreational Services
Open Space & Recreation Plan	SEMCOG, Metro Fund Department of Parks and Recreation

All Projects

Wayne County Plan. Comm.
Detroit Common Council
City Planning Commission
Mayor's Office

The Nature of Interest Involvement

For the purposes of this Study, it was essential to go beyond a simple correlation of interests to specific redevelopment proposals and attempt to determine the nature of interest involvement. The survey, therefore, attempted to determine if interests were actively involved in redevelopment (investing land, labor or capital) or if their interest was supportive in nature (voicing public support for redevelopment or endorsing changes in zoning ordinances or land use plans).

Three representatives of the eighteen organizations interviewed indicated that the nature of their involvement was active only. Nine indicated that their involvement was supportive only and six indicated that the nature of their involvement was both active and supportive.

Responses to the questionnaire did not conclusively indicate a relationship between the nature of an organization's involvement with riverfront redevelopment and the type of organization surveyed. The responses did indicate, however, that civic and governmental organizations very often played supportive roles in the riverfront redevelopment process. Four of ten governmental respondents and three of five civic organizations surveyed said the nature of their involvement was supportive only. In addition, five governmental and one civic organization respondent indicated that their involvement was both active and supportive in nature. Two of the three private

organizations surveyed indicated that their involvement was supportive and the third active. Because the number of private organizations surveyed were so few, however, no conclusions were drawn with respect to the nature of their involvement.

In that it was anticipated that governmental and civic organizations would exhibit primarily supportive roles in riverfront redevelopment, it is worthy to note the reasons for exceptions to this assumption. First, several governmental respondents felt that their involvement in riverfront redevelopment should be considered active in that they are entrusted with the ownership of many riverfront parcels. Secondly, because several units of government exert land use restrictions over much of the riverfront and are involved with land use planning for the riverfront, they felt that the nature of their involvement should be considered active. It should be pointed out that such interests felt very strongly that land use planning and zoning control should be considered active involvement whereas prior to administering the survey such actions were assumed to be indications of supportive interest involvement. Civic organizations who indicated that their participation in riverfront redevelopment was active in nature did so because they were presently involved in activities such as acquiring options on riverfront parcels or acting as development agents. As was pointed out earlier, however, the majority of both governmental and civic organizations did see their involvement as being supportive in nature supporting the original assumption made concerning the nature of interest involvement.

Motives for Interest Involvement

Because the sample surveyed included representatives of private, civic and governmental organizations it was anticipated that motives for becoming involved in redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront would cover a wide spectrum. Three specific motives for involvement that were tested for in the survey included; 1) monetary gain, 2) civic pride, and 3) establishment of community goodwill. It was anticipated that the latter two motives would probably apply to all categories of respondents, but that monetary gain would probably be restricted to the private sector or civic organizations representing the private sector.

All of the respondents surveyed felt that the private sector would participate in redevelopment primarily for profit. None of the respondents indicated that they felt monetary gain would be a motive of redevelopment by either civic organizations or agencies of government. One-half, or nine respondents, felt that civic pride was a motive for participation in redevelopment by all categories of interests. Twelve respondents felt that community goodwill was a motive for involvement in riverfront redevelopment by all who participate. It is important to point out, however, that several respondents emphatically indicated that community goodwill should be correlated to commitment to the enhancement of the City of Detroit and not to a superficial commitment employed to improve their public image as was originally anticipated.

The fact that respondents felt a real commitment to the City of Detroit was supported by the fact that two-thirds of

all respondents added providing social benefits as an additional motive for involvement with redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront. Several of the (social benefits), it was felt, would evolve as a result of riverfront redevelopment included: 1) allowing access to the river for the general public, 2) providing new jobs, 3) increasing the City's tax base, 4) changing the social fabric and lifestyles of the City's residents, 5) bringing pride back to the central city, and 6) enhancing commercial development by private investors. The twelve respondents who indicated that providing social benefits should be included as a motive for involvement in riverfront redevelopment also indicated that such a motive was one shared equally by government, civic organizations, and the private sector.

Attitudes and Opinions About the City of Detroit and Its Riverfront

The attitudes and opinions of respondents concerning the present physical state of the City of Detroit and specifically its riverfront and the future of both was a primary consideration of the Study. Such attitudes and opinions may have a major effect upon the direction in which riverfront redevelopment will proceed.

All eighteen respondents felt that the City of Detroit had a negative image although one respondent felt that the City's image was improving rapidly. Some of the reasons respondents offered as an explanation for Detroit's poor image were:

1. Detroit as an "unknown" to non-residents; a lack of knowledge concerning the good points of the City;

2. "big city" problems such as;
 - a. a high percentage of residents receiving public assistance and high unemployment;
 - b. a high crime rate;
 - c. a decaying physical structure;
 - d. the stigma of "big city" aesthetics;
 - e. a high percentage of non-white residents; and
3. negative coverage by out-of-town press leading to an increased misunderstanding and fear of Detroit by non-residents.

Despite the negative image that respondents felt was held for the City of Detroit, fourteen of the eighteen respondents indicated optimism with respect to the City's future. The other four respondents were not fatalistic with respect to the City's future but were more cautious and uncertain in their opinions. Several of the more optimistic respondents indicated that they were enthusiastic about the City's future and anticipated an "awakening", "revitalization", "regeneration", or "renaissance" in the City's future.

Seventeen of the eighteen respondents surveyed indicated that they felt the Detroit Riverfront would become a focal point in the "revitalization" of the City. Some of the phrases used with reference to the potential of the riverfront in the City's future included; main asset, key to the central business district, prime area, center of the City, catalyst to redevelopment, and environmental plus. Although one respondent felt that the riverfront could represent either the back or front door to the central city depending upon what action was taken, optimism was the prevailing attitude with respect to the future of the riverfront.

Such an opinion with respect to the riverfront's potential as an asset to the City of Detroit is in direct contrast to the opinions held by respondents regarding the present condition of the riverfront. All eighteen respondents unanimously agreed that the riverfront was presently underutilized. Several respondents referred to the riverfront in its present state as a wasted resource, as being unplanned, prostituted, mis-used, a non-revenue producing resource, a mess, pitiful, and an eyesore.

Alternative Redevelopment Uses

Having determined that respondents felt that the Detroit Riverfront is an underutilized resource of great potential to enhancing the future of the City of Detroit, the survey proceeded to attempt to determine what alternative uses of the riverfront respondents considered most important. Respondents were asked to rank from among seven alternative uses (housing, transport facilities, industry, commercial development, recreational and open space, and tourism), the three uses they felt were most important in the order of their importance.

Recreation and open space, housing and commercial development were overwhelmingly selected as the best potential uses of the riverfront. Use of the riverfront for industry, transportation and tourism were ranked very low by all respondents. A summary of respondents' favored redevelopment uses are presented in the Table below.

TABLE 5

Ranking of Potential Riverfront Uses

	Recreation and Open Space	Housing	Commercial Development	Transport Facilities	Tourism	Industry
1st Priority	6	3	3	0	0	0
2nd Priority	1	5	4	0	0	0
3rd Priority	2	0	1	4	3	1

The above Table clearly indicates that recreation and open space was considered the most important potential use of the riverfront. Housing and commercial development were ranked very closely as second priority uses. By applying weighting factors to the rankings of the respondents (ranked 1st, factor = 3; ranked 2nd, factor = 2; ranked 3rd, factor = 1) it was found that recreation and open space was chosen as the first priority use of the riverfront (weighted ranking = 22), housing the second priority use (weighted ranking = 19), and commercial development third (weighted ranking = 18). Use of the riverfront for transportation facilities was ranked fourth by using the weighted ranking method, tourism fifth, and use for industrial development last.

Such rankings of priority uses for the riverfront directly corresponds to the comments of several respondents who felt that they could not rank potential uses in any particular order. In such cases, almost all respondents indicated that

recreation and open space, housing and commercial development represent the best possible uses of the riverfront even though they were not able to rank these uses in the order of their importance.

Prior to surveying respondents it was anticipated that redevelopment priorities would vary in relationship to the type of interest surveyed, private, governmental, or civic. The assumption that private organizations would support income producing uses of the riverfront in contrast to governmental agencies which would favor public oriented uses could not be supported by the survey in that there was a general consensus among all interests that recreation and open space, housing and commercial development should be priority uses of the riverfront.

The Scale and Approach to Riverfront Redevelopment

The scale of riverfront redevelopment which occurs in Detroit may determine the success of such an endeavor. Thus, respondents were surveyed to determine which approach, large or small scale redevelopment, was likely to occur and which approach they felt would prove to be most successful.

Fifteen of the eighteen respondents surveyed felt that redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront would proceed incrementally. It is interesting to note that all ten governmental organizations surveyed felt that redevelopment would proceed on an incremental scale. This particular response is specified because it was anticipated that governmental organizations would anticipate large scale redevelopment in keeping with their efforts toward master planning and zoning. The results

of the survey indicate, perhaps, a more practical realization of the redevelopment process. The responses sought by this particular segment of the survey were intended to indicate the scale of redevelopment most likely to occur.

In conjunction with the scale of redevelopment likely to occur, respondents were also asked to indicate the approach to redevelopment they favored or that they considered to be most successful in bringing about riverfront redevelopment. The survey indicated that ten respondents favored massive redevelopment and that eight favored an incremental approach. Such response would indicate that many respondents who feel riverfront redevelopment will occur at an incremental scale would in fact like to see redevelopment occur on a larger scale. This is true of several of the governmental organizations who, as previously pointed out, felt riverfront redevelopment would proceed incrementally, but when asked which approach to redevelopment they favored indicated that they favored large scale redevelopment. The responses to a favored approach to riverfront redevelopment indicated that four of the ten governmental organizations surveyed favored massive riverfront redevelopment. It is also important to note that four of the five civic organizations surveyed preferred a large scale approach to redevelopment, as well as two of the three private organizations who indicated interest in the redevelopment of the Detroit riverfront.

Probably as important as the contrast between the approaches to redevelopment favored and those expected to prevail are the reasons the respondents feel such approaches should or

will be taken. Several reasons were given to support the opinion that redevelopment would proceed incrementally:

1. Caution with respect to investment in such projects;
2. Lack of resources, principally finance;
3. Lack of commitment to redevelopment;
4. Absence of a multi-jurisdictional coordinating agency; and
5. The need for supply to follow demand, assuring riverfront projects provide marketable commodities.

The only reasons supporting massive redevelopment given by the three respondents who felt that redevelopment would occur on a large scale were related to present projects underway--the Ford Renaissance Center and Civic Center West--which the respondents felt were massive endeavors.

With respect to favored approaches to riverfront redevelopment those interests who favored large scale redevelopment did so because they generally felt that such an approach would yield coordinated comprehensive planning of the riverfront. Such an approach if coordinated by a multi-jurisdictional development agency, it was felt, would insure the optimal use of the riverfront without political interference.

Although a larger number of respondents favored large scale redevelopment, several sound reasons were given in support of an incremental approach to riverfront redevelopment:

1. The need for a programmed approach of incremental stages of development which would yield the decision timing needed in redeveloping the riverfront;
2. Increased flexibility of redevelopment uses;
3. A lack of resources to support large scale redevelopment;

4. The belief that the economy and social and physical environment affected by such redevelopment can only adjust to incremental changes; and
5. A wider variety of riverfront uses will be realized through incremental redevelopment.

In addition to the opinions offered by respondents concerning the scale of redevelopment they favored and which they felt would occur, the survey attempted to correlate four specific factors--the amount of available finance, interest in riverfront redevelopment, leadership in the riverfront redevelopment process by the public sector, and success of present redevelopment proposals, to the scale of redevelopment likely to occur. It was anticipated that all of the above factors would affect the attitudes of respondents and their degree of involvement with riverfront redevelopment and, hence, the scale or approach to redevelopment.

With respect to available finance for riverfront redevelopment, respondents indicated that they were uncertain if there was sufficient finance available. Nine respondents felt there was sufficient finance available to increase the scale of redevelopment presently occurring and eight did not. One respondent indicated that he simply did not know.

Some respondents indicated that lending institutions are apprehensive and that unless riverfront redevelopment showed the prospect of succeeding there would be no financing available. It was indicated more specifically that an indication that there will be profit to be made must be present before the private sector would become financially involved. On the other hand, some respondents felt that redevelopment of riverfront

parcels represents a sound investment and that the private sector would invest in such endeavors.

The attitudes of respondents with respect to financing by governmental agencies were as varied as those indicated with respect to the private sector. Some respondents felt that local governmental agencies did not have funds available to direct toward riverfront redevelopment but that perhaps state and federal units of government might later financially support redevelopment. Some respondents felt that such support was forthcoming and others did not. Thus, much as was the case with the opinions regarding the private sector's financial involvement with riverfront redevelopment the opinions of the respondents were mixed as to whether governmental agencies would lend financial support to redevelopment. Based upon the uncertainty of financial support to redevelop the riverfront, it is likely that such redevelopment will proceed incrementally.

The attitudes of respondents with respect to the degree of riverfront interest involvement present were again varied. Twelve of the eighteen respondents surveyed felt there was sufficient interest for large scale riverfront redevelopment. Two respondents felt that such interest was spotty, and several respondents felt that the interest was potentially present but simply had not surfaced or was presently being cautiously exercised. From these results, it appears that there is sufficient interest available for large scale redevelopment but that at present it has not solidified.

Only one-third of the respondents surveyed felt that the public sector was providing leadership or generating the public support necessary to increase the scale of riverfront redevelopment. Eight respondents felt that such leadership was weak and four felt that the public sector was ignoring its leadership responsibility.

Those six respondents who felt that the public sector was providing a leadership role pointed out that local, state and federal agencies such as Common Council, the Detroit City Plan Commission, Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Governor's Office, and Department of Housing and Urban Development had all indicated some interest in riverfront redevelopment.

The majority of those respondents who felt that riverfront redevelopment leadership was not what it should be by the public sector related to a lack of leadership within governmental units and weaknesses in basic governmental structures. Some other very interesting points were brought out with respect to the lack of leadership by the public sector. It was stated by one respondent that the public sector simply was not enthusiastic about riverfront redevelopment. Another indicated that there were other priorities such as a crisis in the educational system and transit problems which must be met first. One local governmental respondent indicated that other levels of government identify redevelopment as exclusively Detroit's problem. Irregardless of the reasons for a lack of leadership by the public sector to bring about redevelopment it appears that redevelopment will not be a large scale endeavor until some form of coordinated leadership evolves.

It was anticipated that success of proposed redevelopment projects may have an affect upon the scale of riverfront redevelopment. Seventeen of the eighteen respondents surveyed felt that success of presently proposed redevelopment endeavors would increase the scale of redevelopment for one primary reason. Because redevelopment of riverfront parcels requires a considerable financial investment, great caution is used before action is initiated. If other redevelopment endeavors are a success, however, other interests are likely to invest in such endeavors.

In conclusion it appears that at present redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront is expected to proceed incrementally even though a large scale approach is favored by most respondents of the survey. It also appears that the scale of redevelopment will not increase until such time that interest in redevelopment is strengthened and coordinated leadership is manifest. Even then, the scale of riverfront redevelopment may not expand if financing does not become more available and this may depend upon the success of present riverfront redevelopment endeavors.

Identifying A Power Structure With Respect to Riverfront Redevelopment

In many cities the success of major redevelopment proposals are many times dependent upon the influences of a community power structure. One concern of the Detroit Riverfront Redevelopment Study was to determine if such a power structure existed with respect to the individuals surveyed and if there

exists major organizations or interests not surveyed who may in fact be members of such a power structure.

The respondents of the survey were able to identify eleven additional organizations, not included in the original survey, which might have an influence upon redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront. They were:

1. The Metropolitan Detroit Citizens Development Authority;
2. The Detroit Model Cities Agency;
3. The Urban Design and Development Group;
4. The Economic Development Corporation of Detroit;
5. The Mayor's Economic Survey Commission;
6. The Governor's Commission on Population and Housing;
7. The Water Resources Commission (Department of Natural Resources);
8. The Michigan Historical Commission;
9. The Detroit Convention Bureau;
10. The South East Michigan Tourist Association; and
11. The State Housing Authority.

No inference was made that these organizations are instrumental to a community power structure in that they were not surveyed, nor did those respondents who indicated that such organizations should be considered as potential interests indicate that they were part of a community power structure. Two organizations, however, were repeatedly mentioned as organizations to which involved interests belonged. Fifty percent of all respondents had membership in New Detroit Incorporated and Detroit Renaissance which might indicate that these two organizations are of

primary importance to community activities within the City of Detroit and perhaps riverfront redevelopment.

The survey also attempted to identify individuals who might be considered key individuals to the riverfront redevelopment process. Many respondents did name individuals whom they felt were concerned with enhancing the quality of the City. A list of the individuals named and the organizations they represent is presented below:

<u>Individual</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Walker Cisler	Detroit Edison
Max Fisher	Detroit Renaissance
Kent Mathewson	Metropolitan Fund
Dr. Bernard Kline	University of Michigan
	Dearborn Extension
Dwight Havens	Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce
Frank Bennett	Wayne County Planning Commission
Mel Ravitz	Detroit Common Council
Bob Hoffman	Detroit Planning Comm.
Joe Hudson	J. L. Hudson Company
Henry Ford	Ford Motor Company
Stan Senecker	Ford Motor Company
Ralph L. McElvenery	Consolidated Gas
Larry Carino	TV-2 News
Tom Adams	Wayne County Stadium Authority
Lynn Townsend	Chrysler Corporation
Mayor Gribbs	City Hall
Larry Doss	New Detroit, Inc.
Diane Edgemonds	Detroit Central Business District Association

Only a few of the above individuals were named by respondents as key community influentials more than once. Among these, Henry Ford, Max Fisher, Walker Cisler, and Joe Hudson, only Max Fisher, Chairman of Detroit Renaissance, was repeatedly named.

Another approach to identify key individuals who make decisions which might effect riverfront redevelopment was employed. This method involved a correlation of organizational

decisions to staff, chief administrators and boards of directors. Four key decision making patterns were identified: 1) staff made decisions, 2) decisions made by chief administrators, 3) decisions made jointly by staff and chief administrators, and 4) decisions made by council or boards of directors. Six organizations felt that they could not respond to this part of the survey in that they 1) did not have staff, or 2) were not involved in making decisions concerning riverfront redevelopment.

The majority of respondents indicated that key decisions within their organizations were made by boards of directors or by councils in keeping with the traditional form of organizational decision making. Two respondents felt that key decisions were made by staff and two felt that chief administrators made key decisions. It is important to note, however, that irregardless of who makes the key decisions of an organization that all respondents felt that such decisions are consistent with the viewpoint of the organization.

Because of the small sample surveyed and the varied responses to the above discussed sections of the survey, it was felt that no community power structure could be identified.

Coordination Between Involved Interests

The survey attempted to evaluate the coordination between interests involved in redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront through two methods. One method involved an evaluation of coordination based upon responsibility for leadership and the other an examination of communication between involved interests.

With respect to the responsibility for leadership in the riverfront redevelopment process there were no less than seven different suggested sectors named as being responsible for providing such leadership. In considering leadership for redevelopment on a supportive level many combinations of governmental organizations were named as responsible for providing leadership. On an active redevelopment level, however, many respondents changed their opinions as to who should provide leadership and indicated that the private sector should provide leadership. Nine respondents indicated that leadership for active redevelopment should be equally shared between the private and public sector. Irrespective of who provides the leadership role for riverfront redevelopment, it is apparent that there is a lack of consensus concerning leadership responsibility which may be indicative of a lack of coordination.

When asked if communication was adequate between involved interests, ten respondents indicated that in their opinion it was not. Despite the fact that the majority of respondents felt that communication between involved interests was not adequate, all respondents indicated that they had worked with other interests involved in riverfront redevelopment. In the first case evidence exists indicating a lack of coordination whereas the second would indicate good coordination. It should be pointed out, however, that in most cases cooperation with other groups was on a limited basis. Few respondents have worked with a great number of other organizations and commonly interests also indicated that they worked with organizations which either had similar points of views or were unavoidable,

such as city, state and federal agencies. Overall, because leadership and communications were felt to not be adequate for riverfront redevelopment it was concluded that, despite the fact that surveyed interests indicated that they had worked with other interests on a limited basis, coordination between riverfront redevelopment interests was estimated to be poor.

Methods of Achieving Redevelopment Activities

The survey asked respondents which of six approaches; 1) the use of publicity, 2) forming a coalition of interests, 3) exerting influence over decision makers, 4) formulating master plans, 5) use of zoning ordinances and building codes, or 6) interaction with governmental agencies and officials, they felt would be most successful in achieving the alternatives for riverfront redevelopment that they favor. It was expected that governmental agencies would favor more conventional methods such as master planning, zoning and building codes, whereas the private and civic sector would be more prone to using publicity, exerting influence over decision makers and coalitions of interests to achieve their redevelopment choices.

The results of the survey indicated that each of the eighteen respondents favored a different combination of methods in order to achieve their riverfront redevelopment alternatives. This, in itself, is important as it indicates that it is felt that there is no established method of effectuating one's priorities and that the method selected may in fact depend upon the individual, the time of the action, or the nature of the priorities to be effectuated. Respondents did unanimously agree, however, that a combination of methods must be used.

The combination of methods chosen to achieve riverfront redevelopment alternatives were varied but one method appeared to divide respondents into two separate groups with respect to methods of effectuating their priorities. Eight respondents felt that the use of master planning as a method of achieving riverfront redevelopment priorities was essential. The remaining ten respondents rated master planning low as a method of effectuating their priorities and in some cases discredited the use of master planning altogether. Of the ten respondents who felt master planning was not an effective method of achieving their redevelopment alternatives, interaction with governmental agencies, direct influence over decision makers, or an approach less structured than master planning was favored.

Just as the use of master planning to achieve riverfront redevelopment alternatives was the primary factor differentiating the approaches of the interests surveyed, the use of master planning was the only method which indicated a correlation between the function of organizations and methods employed to achieve their redevelopment priorities.

Seven of the eight organizations favoring master planning as a method of achieving their priorities for redevelopment were organizations very much involved with the planning process. These organizations included the Detroit City Plan Commission, Wayne County Planning Commission, Detroit Department of Parks and Recreation, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, South East Michigan Council of Governments, and Wayne County Stadium Authority. The eighth organization, Detroit Edison, was not expected to be

deeply involved with the planning process. The involvement of this organization with the Wayne State University for Urban Studies and the fact that Detroit Edison had contracted Doxiados and Associates to do a study of the Detroit Metropolitan Area, however, indicated that this particular organization was involved in the planning process.

The ten organizations which favored other methods of achieving their priorities for riverfront redevelopment were organizations generally not involved in the planning process. Two organizations which did not support master planning which are normally involved in that process were the Metropolitan Fund and the Bureau of Recreation Services of the Department of Natural Resources. In both cases, these organizations felt that there was a need to coalesce a group of interests before planning could proceed. The other eight respondents represented civic, private and governmental organizations who would not be considered as having planning as one of their primary functions. These included:

1. The United Auto Workers of America;
2. The Ford Motor Company;
3. The Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce;
4. New Detroit Incorporated;
5. Michigan United Conservation Clubs;
6. Detroit Renaissance;
7. The Mayor's Office; and
8. The Detroit Common Council.

Significant Interrelationships; Interests and the Planning Process

The influence of various interests on the political planning process which evolves for the redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront will ultimately determine the redevelopment of that resource. In order to integrate the responses of the surveyed interests into the riverfront political planning process, it is first necessary to gain a basic understanding of the structures of these interests.

The Governmental Framework

The structure of city government in Detroit is centered around the strong mayor form of government. Within this structure, the Mayor's office is the chief executive office having control over all other departments of city government. The Mayor typically employs department heads and a staff of specialists to aid him with his administrative and decision making responsibilities. For example, in this study it was the Executive Assistance in charge of planning who had the responsibility of representing the Mayor's views on redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront.

In Detroit, the Detroit Common Council represents the legislative arm of government. Common Council, because it is primarily the policy making body, often represents a more formidable power than a check upon the power of the Mayor. In fact, it is mere speculation as to which arm of government--executive or legislative--is the most formidable power in the City of Detroit. It appears that the power vacillates between the two depending on the issue at hand. Both branches are

also subject to change as new public officials are elected every four years. The power relationship between the two is subject to change as new personalities are elected.

Among the departments of City government in Detroit, the Detroit City Plan Commission probably is the strongest. Unlike most other departments within the City governmental structure, the City Plan Commission has a semi-autonomous policy board. Theoretically, the Mayor's Office has executive control over the City Plan Commission and the Common Council has the final say regarding policy governing the Commission. In practice, however, the semi-autonomous commission overseeing the technical staff of the City Plan Commission and exerts great influence over both the Mayor's Office and the Common Council in setting their own priorities for their staff of technicians. The great influence of the City Plan Commission is also evidenced by the fact that, although all departments of City government must compete for the same budget dollars, all other departments of the City government must have their land-use proposals incorporated into the City's Master Plan by the City Plan Commission. Therefore, the success of other City departments, such as the Department of Parks and Recreation, in incorporating their development plans depends upon their effectiveness in dealing with the City Plan Commission.

The structures of government presently existing on the county level appear to lack the power necessary to have an affect upon the decision making process in Detroit. The Wayne County Planning Commission represents a policy board which is intended to coordinate planning for the county. The Commission,

however, has no technical planning staff and no jurisdiction over local units of government. The only way the Wayne County Planning Commission can exert any authority is through trying to manipulate political power and it appears that, generally, it is not capable of doing so. At the time of this study, an ad hoc county quasi-governmental unit existed--The Wayne County Stadium Authority. This particular agency was formed strictly to promote and develop a riverfront stadium in Detroit. The courts later ruled that the Stadium Authority could not sell bonds to finance a stadium and the Wayne County Stadium Authority ceased to exist.

On the metropolitan-wide level, there exists the South East Michigan Council of Governments which was originally formed to coordinate the actions of local governmental bodies in the Detroit Metropolitan Area. The SEMCOG is a weak assemblage of governments which, much like the Wayne County Planning Commission, has no legal authority over local jurisdictions of government. The Council which does have its own staff of planners and technicians is a step towards comprehensive metropolitan planning, but until such time that local governments are willing to relinquish some of their authority, it is unlikely that the Council will be a very effective influence in metropolitan Detroit.

Also, on the metropolitan level there exists an agency with the authority to acquire and develop lands for the purpose of providing regional parks. The agency, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, is a single purpose agency and administers parks over a five county area. Because the HCMA has

been effective in accomplishing its development goals for the past twenty-five years, it may represent an agency which might have an influence upon the Detroit decision making structure.

On the state and federal level only two organizations were identified as potentially affecting the riverfront redevelopment political planning structure in Detroit. The Division of Recreation Services of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources acts as the state agency responsible for approving local comprehensive park plans in keeping with state guidelines for bond money available through the DNR. They have no authority over local governments, but exert considerable influence through their distribution of funds. Very similarly, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation of the Department of Interior is responsible for approving state comprehensive recreation plans and for the distribution of Land and Water Conservation Funds. Again, the BOR exerts its greatest influence upon local governments through distribution of funds. Because of availability of funding, both the BOR and Division of Recreation Services must be considered potential influential interests in the redevelopment planning structure in Detroit.

Civic Organizations

Civic organizations, although they do not have any jurisdictional power, are many times key influences upon the decisions of those who do govern. One such organization, the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, represents the interests of the business sector of Detroit in pursuing those programs which are most beneficial in promoting the growth of business

in the Detroit area, as well as providing advantages to existing business enterprises. The Chamber of Commerce appears to be very active in the decision making process in Detroit and appears to be very influential.

Detroit Renaissance, a civic organization which developed as an outgrowth of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, represents an organization made up primarily of business interests, but with a much more specified goal. Detroit Renaissance was formed to bring about a revitalization of Detroit; a revitalization in terms of a stronger economy, controlled growth, and creating an image of Detroit as a great city. Detroit Renaissance also appears to be politically very active and an interest whose views must consistently be considered by the governmental decision making body in Detroit.

New Detroit Incorporated is a very politically active civic organization which was born out of the smoke and debris of the 1967 Detroit Riots. New Detroit came into being upon recommendation of a special Mayor's exploratory commission formed shortly after the riots of 1967 to determine the causes of the riots and propose programs to combat social unrest in Detroit. New Detroit, which is supported by the major business and financial institutions of Detroit, has as its major objectives the formulation of programs aimed at diminishing racial tensions and improving the human environment of all Detroiters. Because New Detroit is very active and because they represent a segment of the public interest which City government receives little input from, they have become a formidable influence in the City decision making arena.

The Michigan United Conservation Clubs represents a collective organization which is also concerned with the social fabric of Detroit, as well as human environment throughout the state. Although the MUCC has a more specified concern, that of providing recreational opportunities for its membership, it must also concern itself with larger proposals such as riverfront redevelopment as such projects may provide opportunities in the realm of recreation. MUCC is not a well known political force in Detroit politics and the input it is capable of contributing may go unnoticed unless its concerns are publicly very vocal.

The last civic organization to be examined has a formidable political base but because of its objectives may face considerable resistance in the Detroit political structure. Metropolitan Fund is a private organization representing governmental groups, financial interests, and private citizens concerned with metropolitan growth and a metropolitan form of government for the Detroit region. Based upon their planning proposals for the Detroit metropolitan area, such as the in-town new-town twin cities concept, they cannot be excluded from any group of interests concerned with development in Detroit. They may face considerable opposition, however, in promoting metropolitan government in Detroit.

The Private Sector

The private sector plays a very critical part in the structure of decision making in Detroit. Detroit is facing, among other problems, a shrinking financial base of support.

The decision of members of the private sector to leave the City or to invest in the City is critical to the public officials of Detroit. It is because of this that concessions are often made to businesses in order to get them to invest in the central city as was exemplified by the change in zoning approved to permit the Ford Land Development Corporation to finalize plans for Renaissance Center. There is another reason the private sector is influential in the decision making structure of Detroit. Although the private sector is typically not credited with attempting to serve the public interest, civic oriented divisions within business organizations are becoming common. Whether such a division is called the division of special programs, community affairs, or public and civic affairs, has relatively no bearing upon the motives for their concern. Increasingly, the private sector is making an investment in the community of which it is part. Based upon such community interest and upon potential as investors and developers, the private sector is a major influence upon the decision making structure in Detroit.

Relationship of Interests to Survey Results

Much of the survey was administered for the sole purpose of obtaining candid opinions by various interests concerning Detroit, the Detroit Riverfront, and redevelopment alternatives. Various parts of the survey, however, directly relate to the political planning structure likely to occur with respect to redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront. The survey supports the interrelationships drawn between participants of

the political planning process discussed in the previous section and serves to point out other relationships with respect to these participants.

In Detroit it appears that as yet no solidified faction of interests has evolved to support riverfront redevelopment. Many interests are concerned with redevelopment of the riverfront but no one wants to be assigned the leadership role. It seems as though the private sector is waiting for the City to take a leadership role in promoting riverfront redevelopment and that the City is unwilling to move forward with plans for redevelopment until they gain commitments from public and the private interests capable of investing funds towards redevelopment. The City Plan Commission has a beautiful master plan for redevelopment of the riverfront but the financial resources to redevelop the riverfront or a group willing to secure such funds have not materialized.

Redevelopment of the riverfront will probably proceed incrementally unless strong leadership soon materializes. The Ford Motor Land Development Corporation has made a considerable commitment to the riverfront in Renaissance Center. In this particular case, the Common Council yielded to the pressure of Ford by changing zoning in order to get the commitment for Renaissance Center, but it is my opinion that unless the City is willing to bend to bring commitments to redevelop the riverfront such redevelopment will continue to proceed incrementally for several reasons. First, those interests with the financial and political clout to contribute to redevelopment of the riverfront are waiting to see how successful other attempts will be.

Secondly, many of those interests which have grandiose plans for redevelopment of the riverfront do not accompany their proposals with a commitment for funding. In the first case, it appears that the private sector is waiting to see if Renaissance Center succeeds and governmental agencies such as the BOR and Division of Recreation Services are waiting to see a coalition of interests assuring a major redevelopment effort before committing their financial resources to redevelopment. In the second case, several organizations such as the Wayne County Stadium Authority, SEMCOG, and MUCC have made public their proposals for riverfront stadiums, major recreation areas and even riverfront boardwalks. None of these organizations have at the same time presented commitments for financing such plans. The City of Detroit is unlikely to actively support proposals which lack funding considering the financial problems the City is currently facing. In cases such as these, the City is more likely to uphold the City Plan Commission's master plan to redevelop the riverfront to discourage such planning when it appears it is willing to change the master plan in order to obtain financial commitments.

In terms of the ambiguous "public interests" it is difficult to determine what portion of the public sector will be served by riverfront redevelopment. It is my feeling that those segments of the public interest who have considerable political or financial clout will see their interests served. Those segments of the public interest who are less unified and have less political and financial clout may not see their interests in riverfront redevelopment become priorities. This

is not to say, however, that the public sector's well being will be sacrificed for money making endeavors. It should be kept in mind that recreation, open space, housing and commercial uses of the riverfront were considered most important by the surveyed interests. It should also be pointed out that most interests felt that social benefits were a primary benefit of any riverfront redevelopment likely to occur. Riverfront redevelopment projects are likely to bring pride back to the City, improve the City's tax base and provide jobs for the people of Detroit.

Ascertaining which priorities of various segments of the public interest are more important when choosing between priorities such as public use of a resource and re-establishing a strong tax base for the City of Detroit is difficult. I feel the real issue is not to decide which is most important, but to insure a decision making structure which considers the priorities of all segments of the public interest. The private business sector is vocal in their demands individually and collectively. The City of Detroit has established guidelines to redevelopment which attempt to represent the general citizenry as well as other interests but we have seen that their guidelines are subject to change. Other peripheral organizations such as MUCC and SEMCOG have submitted proposals which will benefit the general citizenry by preserving access to and use of riverfront parcels by the public but they have not devised methods of financing such redevelopment proposals. A political planning structure is now needed to integrate all these interests into the planning process, secure funding and publicly support riverfront redevelopment.

CHAPTER V

Summary and Conclusions

Many of our urban centers are at a critical point in their continuing effort to survive. Many of our cities face issues critical to their existence and to the welfare of their citizens. Deterioration of the physical structure of the city is one such issue. Great attempts, some successful some not, have been made by individuals and various levels of government to address themselves to the problem of the physical decay of the American city.

For those cities which, as a result of the historical development of our country, were built upon our Nation's waterways, the urban river represents an integral part of the urban center. The riverfront represents the birth of such cities as it was upon the banks of these rivers where settlements originated. It was upon the banks of these rivers where transportation facilities and industry chose to locate. It was upon the banks of these rivers from which corridors of population spread constantly linking people to the resources necessary for their survival and well being. Now, it is upon the banks of these rivers where the physical decay of the urban center is most eminent. That the riverfront should be the most critical symptom of the physical decadence common to many of our cities is only logical. Typically, development adjacent to the urban river

represents the oldest within the urban center. Subsequently, the physical structures found upon these parcels are often very old and in disrepair. Because of changes in modes of transportation, industrial processes, and changes in life styles and housing requirements, riverfront parcels are commonly occupied by underutilized facilities or vacated structures. Other parcels are left undeveloped and due to restrictions or early transportation routes, are too small to develop for industrial, transportation or housing purposes.

Despite the fact that many former uses of riverfront parcels are outmoded and that many of our nation's riverfronts are in a deplorable physical condition, these same riverfronts represent great potential as factors in renewing the urban core. Urban riverfronts represent potential ecological, environmental and financial assets to many urban centers. Its potential uses ranging from undeveloped open spaces to downtown commercial and cultural centers, represent possible catalysts to the renewal of the urban center. Just as the riverfront represents the birth place of many of our nation's cities, the riverfront can now become the focal point and symbol for the "rebirth" of these same cities.

In keeping with the riverfront as the focal point for redevelopment of our nation's cities, the Detroit Riverfront represents great potential as a key asset to improving the image of Detroit. At present, much of the Detroit Riverfront is poorly utilized and many of the physical structures are outmoded and in disrepair. With these factors in mind, this study was initiated not only to delineate the resource base and

examine plans and proposals now under consideration, but to isolate those uses best suited for redevelopment of Detroit's riverfront and indicate possible approaches to accomplishing such redevelopment.

A Conceptual Plan for Redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront

In examining the Detroit Riverfront as a physical resource, several factors were identified which will affect redevelopment. First, the mere physical size of the Detroit Riverfront represents a challenge to formulating a redevelopment plan capable of integrating many varied uses of the riverfront into the plan. Secondly, as pointed out earlier, the pattern of land ownership of the Detroit Riverfront makes it difficult for the city to fulfill its planning and development responsibility. More than comprehensive planning is needed as many interests become involved in riverfront redevelopment by nature of land ownership regardless of their interests in redevelopment. Land ownership patterns also have a profound effect upon land use patterns in Detroit. Approximately fifty percent of the entire riverfront is presently being used for industry and railroads and an additional four percent is vacant. Because the importance of rail transportation has declined and because many older industries have become obsolete by today's standards, there are many potential areas for redevelopment.

Other characteristics of existing riverfront land use are also significant in relationship to redevelopment. Eighty-seven percent of all recreational lands are east of East Grand

Boulevard whereas fifty percent of all industrial lands are west of West Grand Boulevard. (Refer to Appendix A) Such disproportionate distribution of land use could be justified on the basis of segregation of non-compatible uses were it not for the fact that the prime residential areas lie at the eastern and western extremities of the Detroit City Limits. Therefore, it appears that the residents of the west end are being deprived of recreational opportunities.

Based upon these observations, it is apparent that certain redevelopment efforts should immediately be made. Obsolete industrial and transportation structures should be demolished, or if advantageous, rehabilitated and converted for special commercial, historical, cultural or recreational purposes. It is also apparent that there is a need to increase recreational opportunities adjacent to residential areas along the western portion of the riverfront. Because industry is already concentrated along the western edge of the Detroit Riverfront adjacent to the Rouge River and Zug Island, it would also be advisable to restrict all new industrial development to that area and thereby segregate industrial development from other forms of development. This would also have the advantage of concentrating major shipping activities necessary to support industrial processes.

The results of the study survey indicated that recreation and open space, housing and commercial development are considered to be best uses of the Detroit Riverfront. Based upon these findings, it would be advisable to develop a riverfront redevelopment plan emphasizing these three uses. It has

already been indicated that there is a need to increase the amount of riverfront used for recreation and open space in proximity to existing housing at the western end of the riverfront. It would also be an advantage to reserve parcels of land adjacent to the central business district at the foot of Woodward Avenue for recreation as well as special commercial uses. Integrated with the existing cultural, convention, and civic facilities such use would create an environment which would potentially draw residents from the entire metropolitan area and bring excitement back to the riverfront and central business district.

In keeping with the results of the survey it appears that an inventory of the present housing stock adjacent to the riverfront should be made. Structurally sound housing stock of significant architectural value should be preserved and where necessary, rehabilitated. In those areas where the housing stock is not structurally sound, such housing should be replaced with new housing integrated with recreation and open space to create residential parks as opposed to "housing projects".

Special commercial areas should be concentrated adjacent to the central business district. Convenience shopping and comparison shopping should, however, be integrated with residential parks. Such residential parks and commercial areas could be developed where substandard housing presently exists, where obsolete or vacant industrial structures exist or upon presently vacant parcels. Incorporation of recreational and open space, housing, and commercial development in a well

integrated plan and reuse and removal of obsolete and vacant structures would help to revitalize the Detroit Riverfront and potentially the City of Detroit. The question is whether such priorities for redevelopment are consistent with the demands of the public interest and those interests who actively participate in riverfront redevelopment.

Interest Involvement in Riverfront Redevelopment

This study succeeded in identifying several different interests who are presently concerned with riverfront redevelopment. This was evidenced by the fact that several interests representing government units, civic organizations, and private concerns wished to be included in the sample surveyed. This conclusion is also apparent by nature of the fact that several other interests were identified for further study by respondents to the survey.

Genuine concern of such interests in riverfront redevelopment was verified by the attitudes and opinions expressed concerning the image of Detroit and the role of the riverfront in Detroit's future. All individuals surveyed were concerned about the poor image of Detroit. These same interests identified the Detroit Riverfront as a key factor in changing the image of Detroit and felt that at the present time the riverfront was a major resource being underutilized.

A thorough examination of related literature yielded the groundwork for understanding the role of interest groups in resource decision making. The review of the literature pointed out various coalitions of interests which have yielded

successful waterfront redevelopment projects in the past: the strong federal leadership exhibited in St. Louis, the special development commission in Atlanta, the strong mayoral leadership and public support in Denver and the special citizens' committee in San Antonio.

The survey administered for this study then identified the internal and external structures through which interest groups work and how these relate to each other within the City of Detroit. When riverfront redevelopment first became an issue in Detroit in the late 1940's, the Detroit City Plan Commission and Common Council appeared to be the major initiators of redevelopment. For approximately a decade the City was successful in developing plans for riverfront redevelopment and obtaining riverfront parcels for redevelopment. During the 1950's and 1960's, however, riverfront redevelopment plans appeared to lose momentum as conflicts between the private sector and the City concerning the best use of the riverfront developed. In 1963, the City Plan Commission developed a new master plan for redevelopment of the riverfront which is currently the major control tool of the City. More currently, many proposals for redevelopment of parcels of the riverfront have been presented by various public agencies and civic organizations. Few of these have advanced beyond the planning stages due to a lack of funding sources. The only actual active redevelopment proposal is the Ford Renaissance Center which has reached the construction phase as a result of Ford's strong political and financial clout. At present, there appears to be many interests concerned with riverfront redevelopment but no one

capable to pool the resources needed to make redevelopment a reality. The study clearly pointed out that the responsibility for leadership and cooperation needed to effectively redevelop Detroit's riverfront is lacking. It also pointed out that the methods selected to effectuate an interest's priorities for redevelopment are varied and depend upon the nature of the organization or person and their objectives and attitudes as well as their influence within the community.

Unfortunately, it was not possible within the scope of this study to identify a constituency which could be defined as the "public interest". This was due primarily to the fact that, as explained earlier, the public interest is typically not represented by a specific group unless a group of interests coalesce around an issue which directly affects their well being. It appears, at this time, that interests representing the private sector are waiting to enter the political planning process. Interests with strong financial resources and political clout are likely to push for major commercial development upon the riverfront parcels if Renaissance Center is a success. At the same time, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority is finalizing plans for a moderate income housing development on the riverfront. Such a use is in keeping with similar proposals of Detroit Renaissance which represents the major business interests within Detroit.

It appears that weak attempts have been made to protect that segment of the public interest commonly referred to as the general public. The Michigan United Conservation Clubs have attempted to promote a riverfront boardwalk concept which would

insure access to the Detroit River by the general public. The SEMCOG has developed a metropolitan wide recreational plan which would incorporate major recreation areas along the Detroit Riverfront. Similarly, the master plan of the riverfront developed by the City Plan Commission includes increased public access points and recreation opportunities. None of these organizations, however, have the needed finance to develop their plans. Furthermore, the City has changed zoning under their master plan to allow politically strong interests to proceed with their riverfront redevelopment plans even at the expense of restricting public access to the riverfront. In addition, it appears that the general public is unlikely to come forth to represent their views on riverfront redevelopment. Most of the citizens of Detroit do not identify with the riverfront because it is not immediately visible as a part of their general well being. Until this segment is threatened by relocation or considerable lack of access to the riverfront, they probably will not become actively involved in riverfront redevelopment.

Factors of Riverfront Redevelopment

Although housing, recreation and open space, and commercial use of the Detroit Riverfront were clearly identified as the most desired uses of the riverfront, factors considered to be affecting the redevelopment of the riverfront were varied. The four factors most clearly identified as affecting redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront, however, were: 1) governmental involvement in redeveloping the resource; 2)

available financing; 3) a market for whatever form of development which is selected; and 4) a workable plan to redevelop the riverfront.

Because government is typically involved with development of physical resources, at least politically if not practically, many of the interests surveyed expressed a desire to see what action governmental agencies planned to take and the nature of their leadership. Secondly, because redevelopment requires great sums of money, all interests were concerned with what financial resources were available and whether monetary gain was reasonable to assume. Whether public or private, every organization felt that there is a need to substantiate that a market exists for whatever form of development they decided to pursue. Such an approach is essential to providing a return on their investment with respect to private interests and to proper utilization of public funds with respect to governmental agencies. Perhaps the greatest factor affecting riverfront redevelopment (identified by various interests interviewed), however, was the need for an overall active development plan for the riverfront. Many felt that haphazard development of the riverfront would be detrimental to the riverfront.

Because of the several factors affecting riverfront redevelopment in Detroit and especially because of a lack of overall planning, there was a general consensus that redevelopment would proceed slowly and incrementally. The reasons for such an approach clearly relate to the four factors affecting redevelopment previously discussed. Several interests

expressed a need for caution in terms of investing time or money to redevelop the riverfront. They felt this would yield an incremental approach to redevelopment and would at the same time test the market for various forms of development. Several interests indicated that the structure for a large scale approach to redevelopment did not exist. This factor clearly relates to a lack of planning. Concern over the lack of redevelopment leadership by the interests surveyed clearly relates to the need for governmental involvement in riverfront redevelopment and explains in part hesitancy to redevelop. Because so many factors remain as uncertainties at the time of this study, it appears that redevelopment of Detroit's Riverfront will proceed slowly and with uncertainty.

Suggestions for Further Study

Because the sample used was small, the conclusions that can be drawn from the survey may not be representative of all interests who may become involved with redevelopment. The survey did attempt to identify several new interests and the conclusions drawn from the survey can be considered strong indicators of factors affecting riverfront redevelopment in Detroit. An important consideration for further study would be to survey the enlarged group of interests as a result of this study.

It would be worthwhile for additional research to be undertaken to measure the response of involved interests to project plans incorporating various combinations of development alternatives, and from this suggest an optimum development mix

for the Detroit Riverfront. Closely related to the above suggestions for further study there is a very critical and practical need to explore the availability of governmental financial resources and private sources of finance available which could be funneled into redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront.

The Future of Redevelopment--What is Needed

With our country embarking upon a program of reduced government spending and with the availability of funds from lending institutions becoming more limited, it is unlikely that redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront can proceed without strong leadership and political support. There is a definite need for someone who can: 1) package redevelopment proposals in keeping with market studies of the involved area indicating the need for specific types of development; 2) identify alternative sources of funding both public and private; and 3) incorporate proposals and coordinate funding on a scale large enough to encompass the entire riverfront.

With the many problems the City of Detroit currently faces such as lack of sufficient funds, a high crime rate, a high unemployment rate, a poor image, a financial crisis in the public schools, and loss of industry and middle and upper income residents, it is unlikely that the City will be able to provide the leadership needed to redevelop the Detroit Riverfront. The private sector is unlikely to push for overall riverfront redevelopment but rather individual endeavors which appear to promise a return on their investment. Civic organizations and peripheral government agencies, although probably

capable of integrating varied priorities into the redevelopment process, do not possess the jurisdictional and financial resourced needed. Thus, it is unlikely that any existing organization can successfully provide leadership for redevelopment of the riverfront.

Keeping in mind the types of organizations successful in other cities as identified in the review of literature earlier in this study and those areas of activity necessary to effectively redevelop Detroit's Riverfront, one overall recommendation warrants special attention. In order for Detroit to redevelop its riverfront, it is suggested that a multi-jurisdictional Detroit Riverfront Redevelopment Authority be formed. Such an agency is essential to coordinate all riverfront redevelopment activities in Detroit. Some of the specific powers and responsibility of such an agency should include: 1) overall planning authority for the Detroit Riverfront; 2) authority to purchase parcels of riverfront land for redevelopment upon approval of such agency's commission; 3) authority to enter into contractual agreements with governmental agencies and private developers; 4) authority to loan money to and to serve as mortgagee to those individuals or groups purchasing riverfront parcels; 5) authority to solicit funding from governmental agencies for the purposes of redeveloping the riverfront; and 6) authority to sell bonds to finance redevelopment proposals.

Because such an agency should be responsible for the best use of the Detroit Riverfront in keeping with the demands of various segments of the public interests, it is important that it is structured in a manner which provides for input

from all of these segments. In addition to having a staff of technicians to deal with planning, financing, and contractual arrangements, such an agency must have a policy board consisting of as many segments of the public interest as possible. Key representatives of the private sector, governmental units, and civic organizations should be represented on such policy board. As a safeguard of the general public, efforts should be made to create a citizen advisory committee which would have representation upon the policy board. Only through an attempt to integrate all interests into the planning process and through actions of an agency which are highly visible and public will it be possible to utilize the Detroit Riverfront to its highest potential.

Obviously, there are several approaches to riverfront redevelopment which might prove successful for Detroit. Perhaps strong federal leadership and federal funding is required to succeed in this endeavor. Perhaps the State of Michigan should provide the needed leadership and required funding. Perhaps government on the local level should provide the needed leadership, although it is doubtful that they can provide the necessary funds to embark upon such an endeavor. Perhaps redevelopment should proceed on a parcel-by-parcel basis depending upon the private sector for action even though it is impossible to expect a long range commitment from that sector. As evidenced by the review of related literature given earlier, there are several possible approaches to redevelopment. A multi-jurisdictional redevelopment authority, as outlined above, represents only one such approach to redevelopment of Detroit's

Riverfront. One which, in the light of the political planning process identified in Detroit, might prove to be successful.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX B

List of Potential Interests

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Representative</u>	<u>Type of Organization</u>
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation	Dick Miller, Larry Peterson	Governmental
Detroit Common Council	Dr. Mel Ravitz	Governmental
Detroit Department of Parks & Recreation	Cay Edwins	Governmental
Detroit Plan Comm.	Charles Blessing	Governmental
HCMA	Bob Bryan	Governmental
Mayor's Office	Joe Vitt	Governmental
Recreation Services	Bill Pearce	Governmental
SEMCOG	Gary Krause	Governmental
Wayne County Planning Commission	Tom Adams	Governmental
Archdiasty Detroit	John Cardinal Deardan	Civic
Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church	Dr. Clement F. Kern	Civic
Central Business District Association	Diane Edgecomb	Civic
Detroit Renaissance	Tom Zubiak	Civic
Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce	Jack Steiner	Civic
Metropolitan Fund	Kent Mathewson	Civic
MUCC	Paul Leach	Civic
New Detroit, Inc.	Dick Richards	Civic
Chrysler Realty	Forrest Browne	Private
Consolidated Gas Company	Ralph T. McElvenney	Private

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Representative</u>	<u>Type of Organization</u>
Detroit Edison	Wilbur Pearce	Private
Ford Motor Land Development Company	Stan Senecker	Private
General Motors Corp.	C. D. Hagler	Private
Hudson's Department Stores	Joe Hudson	Private
U.A.W.	Pete Ranich	Private

APPENDIX C

Question Format

Name:
Positions:

Organization:
Representative Of:

1. Are you or your organization presently involved with any projects or planning involving the redevelopment of the Detroit Riverfront?
2. Does any involvement include planning for or actual physical development of specific parcels of riverfront property? (If yes, answer below, OR question 3)
 - a. location
 - b. area involved
 - c. any specific dates
 - d. cost
 - e. any other foreseeable projects
3. Would you consider your or your organization's involvement more of a supportative nature such as general master planning or encouragement or endorsement of riverfront redevelopment projects?
4. What is your evaluation of the riverfront as it is presently developed/and
5. How do you appraise the potential for redevelopment of the riverfront?
6. Do you feel action for redevelopment should be spearheaded through public agencies, city, state, or federal, or through the actions of the private investors or both? Why? For a) Guidance; b) Active development?
7. Which do you feel (state or local agencies, or private concerns) are likely to invest time or money into redevelopment of the riverfront? Why?
8. Do you feel communication channels are adequate to make redevelopment a joint venture of the public and private sector? If not, who is failing to communicate?
9. Has your organization made attempts to work with other organizations who have shown an interest in redevelopment?
10. How do you view the future of Detroit, as dead, revitalized, or staying the same as present?

11. What role will the riverfront play in the city's future?
12. How do you perceive the image of Detroit outstate now and in the future?
13. Who will benefit from redevelopment; the city, the everyday man, private concerns, etc.?
14. What sort of benefits can possibly accrue to those who actively participate in redevelopment projects? (monetary, goodwill, civic pride)
15. Of the seven different alternative uses of the riverfront listed below, rank the three uses you feel are most beneficial or important?
 - a. Housing
 - b. Transport facilities
 - c. Industrial uses
 - d. Commercial development
 - e. Recreation areas and open space
 - f. Tourist attraction
 - g. Other
16. Do you feel redevelopment will proceed incrementally or on a massive scale? Why?
17. Which approach do you personally favor? Why?
18. Do you feel the success of present redevelopment projects will have an effect on other interests' decision to take part in redevelopment?
19. Do you feel that there is sufficient finance available to increase the scale of overall riverfront development? Why?
20. Do you feel there is enough interest in the riverfront for other developments to arise?
21. Do you feel public agencies are willing to provide the leadership or generate general public support necessary to increase the scale of redevelopment?

Interest Involvement

22. Are you or your employer a member of any civic organizations concerned with the enhancement of the quality of the central city? What is the extent of such involvement?
23. Please name other individuals who have shown similar concerns for the City of Detroit. As evidenced by what?

Your Organization

24. Within your organization, are key decisions concerning riverfront redevelopment made by staff or do they come from above?
25. Do you feel staff decisions clearly relate to the viewpoint of the chief executive?
26. Which of the below approaches do you feel are necessary or effective as a means of effectuating one's priorities for riverfront redevelopment?
 - a. The use of publicity--papers, news, etc.;
 - b. By forming a coalition of interests;
 - c. By exerting direct influence over decision makers;
 - d. By formulating master planning for the involved areas;
 - e. By use of zoning and building ordinances;
 - f. Through interaction with other agencies and officials.

APPENDIX D

Representatives of Organizations Surveyed

<u>Governmental Units</u>	<u>Representative</u>
Detroit Mayor Gribb's Office	Joseph Vitt, Executive Assistant Planning
Detroit Common Council	Dr. Mel Ravitz, Council President
Detroit Department of Parks and Recreation	Mr. Cay Edwins, Head of Landscape and Design
Detroit Plan Commission	Mr. Charles Blessing
Wayne County Stadium Authority	Tom Adams, Director
Wayne County Planning Commission	Donald Jucharatz, Commissioner
SEMCOG	Gary Krause, Transportation & Land Use Planning
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority	Bob Bryan, Chief Planner
Recreation Services (Department of Natural Resources)	Bill Pearce, Planner
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation	Dick Miller and Larry Peterson, Planners
 <u>Civic Organizations</u>	 <u>Representative</u>
Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce	Jack Steiner, Economist
Detroit Renaissance	Tom Zubiak, Staff
New Detroit, Inc.	Dick Richards, Recreations
Metropolitan Fund	Kent Mathewson, President
Michigan United Conservation Clubs	Paul Leach, Director

Private Organizations

United Auto Workers

Ford Motor Land Development
Corporation

Detroit Edison

Representative

Pete Ravich,
President's Staff

Stan Seneca,
Executive Vice-President

Wilbur Pearce, Director of
Special Programs

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