**University
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Discussion Paper

URBAN WATERFRONT
REDEVELOPMENT IN CANADA:
PROPOSITIONS AND
# PERSPECTIVES

Brian S. Hoyle

Discussion Paper No. 38 *Part 1 ?*

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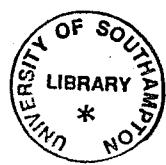
URBAN WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT IN CANADA:

PROPOSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Summary

This paper reports on a component of a research project on Canadian Dimensions of Waterfront Redevelopment based on forty-five interviews held in Canadian port cities with port authority representatives, urban planners and developers.[1] Interviewees were invited (a) to complete a questionnaire and (b) to respond to a series of twelve proposition sets. The findings from the first six proposition sets, dealing with contextual issues and with processes and characteristics of waterfront renewal, are discussed in this paper. Some methodological problems are highlighted, and contrasts between planning philosophies in different professions are discussed.

Context and objectives[2]

Problems of stimulating successful inner-urban regeneration are a focus of extensive interdisciplinary research, and waterfront redevelopment provides substantial challenges and exciting possibilities for redevelopment in this context. Research interest in this theme originated in Canada and the USA in the 1960s and 1970s. Concern for the future of technologically outmoded port areas, and their associated urban communities, subsequently spread to Europe, Australia and the Far East. The rapidly expanding literature (in fields such as planning, geography, architecture and urban design) has typically been biased towards the discussion of change in specific locations. Critical analysis of processes and outcomes has often been lacking, as have attempts to establish deeper understanding of this form of regeneration at the international scale.

In many parts of the world waterfront redevelopment is now an element in the process of inner-city regeneration, and numerous attempts have been made to analyse the issues and trends involved. Urban waterfront redevelopment is not, of course, confined exclusively to port cities but is found as a continuous process in most places where settlement and water are

juxtaposed, whether or not commercial port activity is or was present. Port cities, however, as a result of the concentration and juxtaposition of urban and maritime influences, generally present the major issues involved in waterfront redevelopment most clearly. The continuing work of the Waterfront Center in Washington DC deserves recognition, but remains largely idiographic rather than nomothetic in its approach. A conference at Southampton in 1987 included papers emphasising the importance of Canada as a research field for waterfront redevelopment studies (Desfor, *et al.*, 1988; Tunbridge, 1988) and led to a pioneer book drawing attention to a model of forces and trends (Fig. 1), variations in problem perception and policy formulation, and the balance between social goals and commercial interests (Hoyle, Pinder and Husain, 1988). Subsequent European conferences (in Venice, Manchester and Genoa, for example, in 1991-2) have also attempted to pursue comparative, problem-orientated investigations.

The research on which this paper is based was designed to analyse specific aspects of the evolution and application of development strategies in a range of Canadian port cities, with particular attention to the comparative roles of developers and port/urban authorities in strategy formulation and implementation, as evidenced by the views of decision-makers involved. The balance of power between authorities and developers is regarded as central to the outcomes involved. Economic impacts, the structure of new urban environments and social consequences are all fundamentally influenced by decisions reached at an early stage. A primary objective, therefore, was to elucidate policy evolution in terms of the interplay between private sector and public sector goals.

Technological change

Global competition/ deindustrialisation

Port user retreat

Downward transition in maritime quarters

Port authority retreat

REDUNDANT SPACE CONTINUUM

Inner urban

t_2

t_1

Greenfield sites

t_2

Problem perception/analysis

Revitalisation selection filter

Increasing perception of resource opportunity

Involvement of commercial interests

Public authority involvement

Port authority involvement

Strategy formulation

Emulation

Strategy evolution

OUTCOME CONTINUUM

Commercial interests dominant t_2

Private sector/public sector cooperation/coalition

Social goals dominant

t_1

Figure 1 : Retreat, redundancy and revitalisation : a model of forces and trends
(after Hoyle, Pinder and Husain, 1988, 249)

Public sector approaches to the problem of establishing policies with a strong social dimension are examined by focussing particularly on the role of housing in redevelopment programmes. Residential provision is a virtually ubiquitous feature of North American and European regeneration schemes, yet experience suggests that the social component of housing projects proves highly vulnerable as developers increase their influence in strategy formulation processes. The challenge of linking private-sector dynamism with public-sector non-monetary objectives is critical; there is evidence that Canadian authorities (like those in the USA and the UK) are less capable of resisting private-sector pressures for social goal dilution than are equivalent bodies in continental Europe.

Research design and fieldwork

Although based on fieldwork in a variety of contrasted locations, the research on which this paper is based was not designed to produce a series of case studies but rather to focus on a series of issues common to all relevant locations. Fieldwork was conducted in Canada between September and November 1990, on the basis of interviews with senior decision-makers in selected port cities. Before the visit, interviewees were carefully selected and specific appointments made with the most highly-placed executives available in the public and private sectors. Pilot interviews were held in the UK to verify and refine the methodology involved. The method used is based on one employed by Bird in his studies of seaport development in the European Communities (Bird, 1982 and 1988; Bird and Bland, 1988; Bird, Lochhead and Willingale, 1983).

Interviews were held in twelve locations across Canada (Fig. 2): St John's (NF), Halifax (NS), Saint John (NB), Québec City (Qué), Montreal (Qué), Kingston (Ont), Toronto (Ont), Hamilton (Ont), Thunder Bay (Ont), Vancouver (BC), New Westminster (BC) and Victoria (BC). It was initially intended, as a basic framework for the research, to hold 30 interviews, three in each of ten locations: one with a leading waterfront property developer, a second with a senior representative of the port authority, and a third with a senior urban planner. The choice of port cities was based on prior knowledge of most of the locations involved and on the recommendations of colleagues in the UK, in Canada and elsewhere. The main objective was to include as wide a variety of contrasted locations and situations across the country as possible in the time available.

However, during the research planning stages it was decided (a) to add an eleventh location, in case the programme was disrupted for any reason; (b) to treat New Westminster separately from Vancouver; and (c) to seek representatives of the four levels of government involved in the complex case of Toronto (city, metropolitan, provincial and federal). Additional interviews with developers were also sought, as it was felt that this category might prove more difficult than the other two. This raised the total number of planned interviews from 30 to 48, of which 46 were successfully completed. In all locations not less than three interviews (one in each category) were successfully completed (Fig. 2).

In each selected cityport, interviews were conducted with representatives of the three organisational 'actors' involved in strategy formulation:
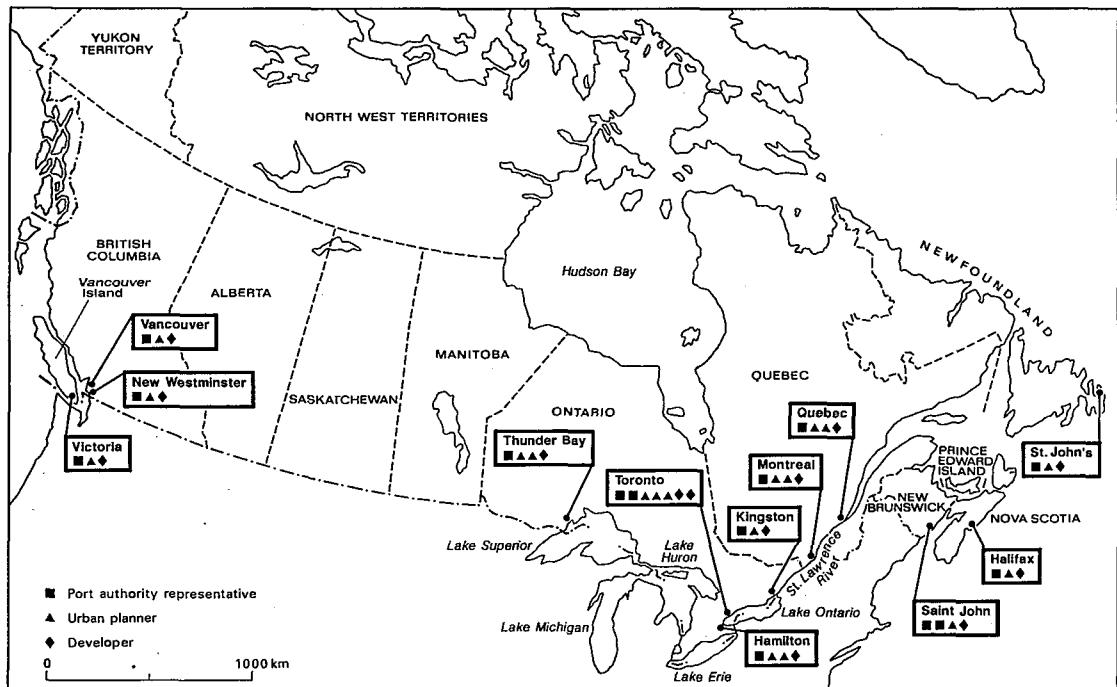
Figure 2 : Location of the 45 interviews with port authority representatives, urban planners and developers (after Hoyle, 1992, 281)

urban planning authorities (U), waterfront property developers (D) and port authorities (P). In all cases the aim was to interview senior personnel closely involved with project initiation, design and development in the locations under review. Each interview involved a questionnaire form and a recorded response to a set of propositions. Analysis of the questionnaire part of the interviews has been presented elsewhere (Hoyle, 1992a and b). This paper is one of two concerned with the analysis of 46 interviews.

It is readily acknowledged that it would have been advantageous to include a senior representative of community groups involved in waterfront development, but this proved to be too contentious an area for 'external' investigation based on a limited fieldwork period and was therefore not attempted on this occasion. Community attitudes, however, play a distinctive and sometimes decisive role in the process of waterfront redevelopment in Canada, as elsewhere, and this role demands careful assessment in any detailed investigation of specific locations on an individual or a comparative basis.

Interviewees were selected by a careful process based on personal knowledge or acquaintance and advice derived from the network of contacts established through earlier investigations. Only a very limited number of refusals was encountered, usually for practical reasons. This was fortunate, because "the limitation of refusals is essential when the population in question is not large and where there may be no opportunity for substitutes" (Bird, Lochhead and Willingale, 1983, 145). An interview schedule established by correspondence was disrupted only to a very slight extent in the field.

Normally a maximum of three interviews were scheduled for any one interview day, although this was occasionally exceeded, as in Toronto. Each interview involved at least one hour in the respondent's office, and sometimes this limit was significantly extended. All interviewees appeared to find the methods and topics interesting, and none experienced any serious difficulties with either the questionnaire or with the proposition sets presented during the interview.

The introduction of the proposition sets

At the start of each interview it was emphasised that the identity of the interviewee would remain confidential to the researcher and would not be disclosed in any report or publication based on this investigation. The structured interview was based on a series of twelve 'Proposition Sets' ranging from simple statements through more difficult topics to open-ended issues. Each proposition set includes (a) an introductory general statement, designed to set the scene and likely to be accepted; (b) a proposition, possibly controversial; and (c) supplementary question(s) designed to guide the respondents' thinking. The twelve proposition sets are arranged in four sub-sets of three, dealing progressively with general or causal topics; characteristics and processes; problems and outcomes; and with evaluation. The first six proposition sets are discussed in this paper, and the remainder elsewhere.

For each of the twelve proposition sets, the interviewee was invited, in the context of the introductory statement, to respond to the proposition and to the supplementary question(s). Some questions appeared to invite

answers based on the interviewee's local case, project or location, but most were intended to invite a more wide-ranging answer. Interviewees were requested to make their answers as direct and concise as possible, concentrating on ideas and principles (especially in response to propositions) rather than on case-study details (which were sometimes more appropriate in the context of supplementary questions). It was suggested that in most cases an answer lasting just a few minutes would be sufficient, but many interviewees took no notice of this and in some instances gave very extended but usually coherent answers. Interviewees' responses to each Proposition Set were taperecorded and subsequently transcribed for later analysis.

Methods of analysis

Given that the purpose of the project was the identification of attitudes towards and perceptions of a fairly general range of issues, on the basis of a few open-ended propositions, and also because English is not the first language of several Québécois respondents, it seemed appropriate to analyse the interview transcripts by the selection and coding of themes rather than by the dissection of texts using content analysis techniques. The interview transcripts were carefully compared with the proposition sets, and only directly relevant responses were included in the analysis. Each separate relevant point was coded under a summary heading, and six or more points made by separate interviewees and coded under the same heading qualified as a major response. This method is based on one employed by Bird in his studies of seaport development in the European Communities (Bird, 1982 and 1988; Bird and Bland, 1988; Bird, Lochhead and Willingale, 1983).

Responses to each of the first six proposition sets are analysed below. In each case the proposition set as presented to the interviewees is reproduced; a diagrammatic illustration summarises the results in terms of major headings under which responses are coded, categorised by port authority representatives (P), urban planners (U) and developers (D); and verbatim quotations from the transcripts, identified by category and location, are used to illustrate specific points and to enliven the text.

Proposition Set 1

The first proposition set (PS1), designed as a straightforward opening topic with the intention of putting the interviewee at ease and getting the interview off to a good start, proved in the event to be much more controversial than expected. The introductory statement sets the scene by reiterating a basic fact of politico-economic life in Canadian waterfront development contexts. The key word in the proposition, however, is 'positive', the implication being that some interviewees might think that the involvement of different government levels is a negative or neutral factor in the promotion of successful schemes. The proposition set also gently but neatly introduces the dichotomy between local and general perspectives by initially inviting an overall response followed by a comment on local circumstances. In this way, PS1 was intended to underline a point made in the introduction to the interview, that interviewees were requested firstly to concentrate on ideas and principles, using case-study or local details only in response to supplementary questions.

PROPOSITION SET 1

Introductory statement
Canadian waterfront redevelopment frameworks involve federal, provincial and local governments.

Proposition
THE INVOLVEMENT OF DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT LEVELS IS A POSITIVE FACTOR HELPING TO PROMOTE SUCCESSFUL WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.

Supplementary questions
Do you agree or disagree with this proposition?
In your case, which level of government is dominant in waterfront redevelopment policy formulation and implementation, and what form does this domination take?

In practice, many interviewees found it difficult to maintain the distinction between general principles and case-study details and some, despite reminders, never got around to answering both parts of the question. Some sought refuge in the familiar local situation almost immediately, while others attempted useful comparisons between two or morelocations with which they were familiar. Overall, however, as Figure 3 indicates, a majority of respondents (77 per cent) agreed with the proposition. Some did so wholeheartedly, occasionally seeking to strengthen rather than question the wording:

"The involvement of the different levels is not only positive but it's essential, primarily because of the financial implications involved ... " (P, Thunder Bay). "It's a given in redevelopment that you do involve several layers of government" (P, Vancouver). "It's not only positive, it's imperative" (D, New Westminster).

However, very few respondents accepted the proposition without some elaboration or qualification. Most were prepared to accept the proposition, while recognising a balance between positive and negative elements, but a

## Agreement or disagreement with proposition

Agreement with proposition	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	12
	OOOOOOOOOO	10
	◨◨◨◨◨◨◨◨◨◨◨◨	12
Disagreement with proposition	—	0
	OOOO	4
	◨	1
Balanced view on proposition	☐☐	2
	OOO	3
	—	0

Other points raised by five or more respondents

Federal government dominant	☐☐☐☐☐	5
	OOOOOOO	7
	◨◨◨◨	4
Provincial government dominant	☐	1
	OO	2
	◨◨	2
Municipal / local government dominant	☐☐☐☐☐☐	6
	OOOO	4
	◨◨◨	3
Need for coordination between government levels	☐☐☐☐	4
	OOOO	4
	◨◨	2
Practical difficulties of integration	☐☐	2
	OOO	3
	◨◨	2

☐ Coded individual point raised by port authority representative
O Coded individual point raised by urban planning authority
◨ Coded individual point raised by developer

Figure 3. Proposition Set 1 : Coded individual points in responses arranged under major (5+) headings

few (11 per cent) who perceived both sides of the issue were unable or unwilling to come down on one side or other of the fence. Another small group of respondents (11 per cent) rejected the proposition outright, disagreeing with the statement and (sometimes quite forcefully) arguing that multi-level government involvement is quite clearly a negative constraint:

"My answer on the multi-government aspect of this is negative, it's not positive. It could be positive if the goodwill and the leadership, the glue were there ... What is negative is jurisdictional gridlock" (U, Toronto).

Numerous respondents, in considering the proposition, stressed the necessity for the involvement of three levels of government, for a variety of reasons and in different contexts:

"Each of the levels of government is involved in waterfronts, and therefore if one takes any action that involves waterfronts one needs to get the three levels together, either in terms of jurisdiction or to get the financial assistance to actually make it work. Having said that I think it is always difficult to get the three parties to work together as one" (U, St John's).

"There must be some mechanism by which these different levels of government act in the same direction, or in a similar direction, so that something can actually get done" (P, Toronto).

"... Now with this Royal Commission you're seeing some people sitting down round a table and saying 'We've been ad hoc-ing it, let's get something formalised'" (P, Toronto).

"The involvement of different levels of government is not a positive factor, it's a required factor, because of land ownership patterns" (P, Toronto).

Furthermore, most interviewees emphasised - sometimes at great length - the problems involved in attempting to resolve conflicting viewpoints, or simply in having so many viewpoints in the first place; but also underlined

the advantages of inter-governmental agreement as and when it could be

achieved:

"It can be an excuse for doing nothing, to have so many people involved"
(P, Victoria).

"The federal nature and the mixed jurisdiction is clearly negative, and is
something we work on hard, because you're constantly looking for ways to
find a consensus, or build a common approach" (U, Toronto).

"In this particular case we had perhaps five or six agencies of the federal
government involved, and we had the city involved (which I always treated
as one entity although there were various departments of the civic
government). When you have that many people all with slightly differing
objectives which aren't necessarily exclusive to one another, it's very
difficult to get anything done. The positive aspect comes from the fact
that the support of the three levels of government, if you need help, makes
things happen faster" (D, Saint John).

"The positive aspect is that there is an interest which occasionally does
come up money, which means that redevelopment can take place with the input
of the various levels of government. Through good communication this can be
tremendously positive, and the Crombie Commission and its work most
recently in trying to map out a picture of putting the various levels of
government together into an entity has done a lot towards indicating how
that can be used positively. We have a good chance if we can avoid our
petty differences of using it to a great advantage in creating good
waterfront redevelopment" (U, Toronto).

" ... there's a power struggle between the different government levels, and
the objectives don't always seem to be the positive redevelopment of the
waterfront ... The various government lock horns with one another, have
different agendas outside the waterfront ... "(D, Toronto).

The practical difficulties of integration between governments, and of the

implementation of development proposals, were also of concern to several

respondents. A particular issue in this context is the question of land

ownership, about which precise information is not always readily available.

Obstructions at a personal level sometimes also enter in.

"The negative factor is where you have one level of government working but
then trying to work through the myriad of bureaucratic approvals that are
required - it tends to make it more costly, (and) somewhat more difficult

to proceed on any particular project" (P, Hamilton).

"There seems to be a continual fight in this country to get possession of the lands so you can actually carry out the redevelopment. Often you'll get, right in the middle, the Ministry of Defence with a section of land, and they're extremely loathe to get rid of it" (U, Thunder Bay).

"In some areas we don't know exactly which level of government owns the ground, so it's quite hard to negotiate something when you don't know who is the owner, and that's another negative aspect of different levels of government here in Quebec City" (U, Quebec).

"We have things around here like NIMBY effects (not in my back yard) and currently we have the the NIMTOO effect (not in my term of office" (P, Vancouver).

"I feel that things become very difficult when more than one level of government is involved. Developing a workable plan for the area takes much longer, and is maybe much harder, and in fact it may not happen at all" (U, Vancouver).

Another noticeable element running through the responses is the differential emphasis given to the three principal levels of government – federal, provincial and municipal – a situation complicated in the Toronto case by the involvement of the metropolitan ('Metro-Toronto') layer as well as the city administration. Many respondents sought to emphasise the importance of federal involvement, especially as a source of funding, although some urban planners viewed federal port authorities as a significant constraint:

"There's no question about it, the federal government's involvement is a key factor in waterfront development" (D, Kingston).

"The involvement of the three levels of government tends to be more of a negative factor than a positive factor in promoting waterfront development, because of the dominance of the federal agency, the Hamilton Harbour Commissioners ... in theory the involvement of the three levels should be a positive factor, but this has not proved to be the case" (U, Hamilton).

Relatively few respondents considered the degree of provincial government involvement to be particularly significant, in relative terms, and

interviewees in Québec, particularly, saw this as a matter for regret:

"Provincial has been a little put aside by the federal government because the ownership of the site is federal ... so the provincial is not really enough of a factor in the discussion of redevelopment. If the provincial government were there, there would be a more dynamic discussion" (U, Quebec).

Many were at greater pains to stress the critical role of local initiatives derived from public administrative or private developer sources. Interestingly, some stressed the geographical variations across Canada in terms of local/provincial/federal relationships, together with the difficulties experienced by local authorities in achieving the ever-elusive consensus. Some developers clearly found the opinions of local pressure groups somewhat irritating:

"One of the driving forces ... is the municipal government level (which) could prove negative in some respects because they tend to be swayed or influenced by public opinion, lobby groups etc., which has inhibited developers from putting plan A, B or C ... (This) has created a great deal of angst in this city in particular ... The municipal government is the catalyst for much of the development that goes on here, recognising that we do have people who have their network into the entrepreneurial sector" (P, Kingston).

"Which level of government is most dominant depends on the area of Canada that you're in, and on what type of waterfront it is. I believe very strongly that the local governments – responsible to the local constituencies which have the most to gain or lose – play the dominant role when it comes to such things as planning and the execution of those plans ... " (P, Toronto).

"In the waterfront redevelopments that I've been involved with, it's been the local level that has shaped the nature of the development with the other levels of government coming in with a resource contribution ... Usually the local level has been the lead agent in terms of defining the programme and the involvement of the other levels of government has taken on more of a political than a programmatic nature" (U, Victoria).

"Political people ... listen too much to the 15 or 20 per cent of the population who are against any project anywhere in the city. That is my opinion" (D, Quebec).

In considering the supplementary questions, designed to guide respondents' thinking, several interviewees sought to question, or elaborate upon, the use of the word 'successful' in the proposition and the words 'dominant' and 'domination' in the supplementary questions:

"I should also note of course that that word 'successful' is a loaded term. How would one describe a scheme as being successful? It might be successful in financial terms, or its promoter might be successful in physical terms ... Or it might be successful in design terms, or in social terms, meeting certain public policy objectives such as providing access for the public to the waterfront" (U, Toronto).

"If the key issue is settling among the various levels of government, how you're going to organise urban renewal or waterfront redevelopment, then 'domination' is not the right word, (but) leadership has come from the city" (P, Victoria).

Two concluding quotations effectively summarise some common viewpoints on the issues raised by the first proposition set.

"The involvement of several levels of government has been a source of confusion in the development of the waterfront, but it may also be the source of its resolution" (U, Toronto).

"It is a positive factor because it is a land which belongs to all Canadians, that is to citizens who are part of a city, part of the province and part of the country. But it is the same citizens, the same taxpayers, who foot the bill for any improvement" (D, Montreal).

Proposition Set 2

The second Proposition Set (PS2) introduces the idea that waterfront development is a stage, in a metaphorical and a physical sense, on which actors (developers, planners, port authorities, government departments, communities) all play their part. One is reminded of Shakespeare's well-known lines:

> "They have their exits and their entrances,
> And one man in his time plays many parts."

(As You Like It, II, vii) although Canadian interviewees seemed frequently

to prefer metaphors based on ball games. One developer, however, seemed

anxious to avoid the limelight.

"Your introductory statement is interesting ... certainly some groups like
to be front-centre on stage, but certainly developers don't want to be seen
anywhere near the stage. We want to get on with our business. We don't want
to be on stage" (D, Toronto).

The proposition suggests that, in this interactive context, waterfront

redevelopment schemes usually depend primarily upon a single initiator who

starts the ball rolling, rather than upon several initiators acting

together.

PROPOSITION SET 2

Introductory statement
Waterfront redevelopment is a stage on which various actors play their
part, including government departments, developers, port authorities and
urban authorities.

Proposition
THE DEVELOPMENT OF WATERFRONT REVITALISATION SCHEMES USUALLY DEPENDS
PRIMARILY ON A SINGLE INITIATOR.

Supplementary questions
Do you agree or disagree with this proposition?
In your case, who initiated waterfront redevelopment, and why?

Interviewees were asked to respond on three points: (a) to agree or

disagree with the proposition; (b) to identify (by category) an initiator

in the local case; and (c) to offer an explanation for the character of the

initiation process. In the case of (a), the word 'usually' was included

specifically to prevent non-committal replies, a technique that was not

entirely successful!

Almost all respondents (86 per cent) agreed with the proposition: some wholeheartedly, others reluctantly, but invariably with substantial qualification. As the following quotations illustrate, respondents emphasised that initiatives surface within a broadly favourable environment, cooperative attitudes are essential, and an initiator – whether an individual or a corporate body – must demonstrate leadership qualities and an ability to handle criticism.

"This is a more difficult question. I believe that it does require a single person or organisation to get the ball rolling. But they may be the ones that have to push the ball ... But to get to that point it probably involves a variety of players coming to an agreement to get the person that's supposed to push the ball to push it ..." (U, Saint John).

"It's often possible to identify somebody who is an apparent initiator, but typically waterfront developments evolve or seem to reach a point in the collective consciousness of the community and then finally one person appears who sparks the catalyst for the development" (P, Saint John).

"The simple answer is that in almost every case a single initiator is the key to waterfront redevelopment happening... (but) in each case an environment has to be present which will facilitate that happening ... Very often the environment is one which builds up with a number of players, and may have a lot of initiatives involved in it, but it takes one single initiative to pull together what becomes waterfront redevelopment" (U, Toronto).
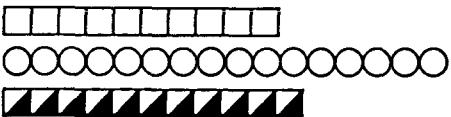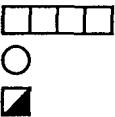
"My belief is that any scheme originates at a point, which is usually an individual ... however, it's sometimes hard to identify where a scheme came from" (D, Saint John).

"I do agree with the proposition. A single initiator is important, is vital because this kind of redevelopment involves a lot of co-ordination ... the single initiator has to be some level of government which has some kind of power of co-ordinating things ... In the case of Montreal, the federal government as landowner is the initiator" (U, Montreal).
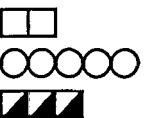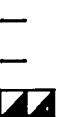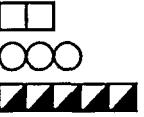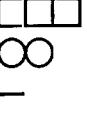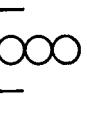
"Almost any project I can think of had one organisation, often an individual who was the driving force behind getting things done, and the others follow on ..." (U, Montreal).

"My sense of it is 'Yes, there has to be some lead agency or initiator or force for change that can stay in there and take a lot of criticism" (U, Toronto).

Agreement or disagreement with proposition

Agreement with proposition

□□□□□□□□□□	10
○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○	16
◪◪◪◪◪◪◪◪◪◪◪	11

Disagreement with proposition

□□□□□	4
○	1
◪	1

Initiators identified by respondents

Federal government

□□	2
○○○○○	5
◪◪◪	3

Provincial government

—	0
—	0
◪◪	2

Municipal government

□□	2
○○○	3
◪◪◪◪◪	5

Port authority

□□□	3
○○	2
—	0

Urban planning authority

—	0
○○○	3
—	0

Developer

□□	2
○	1
◪◪◪	3

Local community pressure group

□	1
—	0
—	0

□ Coded individual point raised by port authority representative
○ Coded individual point raised by urban planning authority
◪ Coded individual point raised by developer

Figure 4. Proposition Set 2 : Coded individual points in responses arranged under major (5+) headings

Some respondents sought to differentiate between different kinds of initiative or, in one interesting case, to speculate on the effects of the absence of any initiative.

"... There are initiatives to halt development, there are initiatives to continue development, there are initiatives to actually form the plans ... but in each case it takes a strong initiation to make any of those happen, whether it be halting, changing or beginning the plan" (U, Toronto).

"The reverse of the proposition it is interesting, because if you look at why things have broken down here in Toronto, it's because there isn't an initiator. There are several groups who are protecting their interests, protecting how they appear before the public, and a freezing of government, almost a paranoia at all levels of government to do anything because, if they do anything wrong, then they're going to be the ones that will take the blame" (D, Toronto).

Some disagreement surfaced among respondents regarding the categories of initiator, some underlining the role of their own organisation, others pointing to alternatives or hinting at controversies beneath the surface.

"There are seven ports in Canada with local port corporations ... they have to be the initiator in respect of changing the property, or even making it available for urban development. They can be induced to do something ... because ... each must be financially viable" (P, Saint John).

"It's absolutely correct. There's got to be one person who organises it, and my experience has been it's really the municipal government that starts this off, and then chivvies and kicks everybody else until they get some help" (U, Thunder Bay).

"The actual development of a scheme is a cooperative process involving the private and public sectors working towards a plan which satisfies their mutual objectives. The plan is basically the city's plan, not a developer's plan, although the distinction becomes somewhat blurred as it goes through the process ... " (U, Vancouver).

"There has to be one party that has the lead role ... The initiator may be a different party from the party that eventually takes the lead role. There may be an initiator who proposes the concept in the first place, but isn't equipped to implement it ... for success you've got to be able to identify and relate to a leader. In Toronto many different waterfront schemes have depended upon a single initiator ... all schemes that the public at large agree have been successfully executed and well done. They have all depended upon a single agency at the core" (U, Toronto).

Some interviewees, however, were somewhat reluctant to accept the idea of a

single initiator, preferring to emphasise multiple initiation,

intergovernmental cooperation and the development of a consensus.

"In our case development was initiated by the federal and provincial
governments, with a combined agreement, combined funding ... At the time
the Halifax waterfront was badly run down, the type of place where you
wouldn't want to go after dark. The funding was from the federal and
provincial governments, working with the muncipal level, purchasing and
upgrading the land, getting it ready for developers" (D, Halifax).

"They have to have something to agree to, or to resist ... This notion of
building a vision by consensus and public hearings, and all that good stuff
... There's ugly trade-offs in waterfront redevelopment with commercial
interests, human values, access, the kind of stuff that politicians ... the
choice they're likely to make, if they can,   if its a tough choice they
duck, or procrastinate, or pass the buck" (U, Toronto).

In similar vein, many respondents - not all of them from Toronto   -

underlined the problems of fragmentation and coordination in a complex

planning situation.

"When you get to a large metropolis like Toronto, it's really hard to
single out one person, one group, because there are just too many players
in the scene now" (P, Toronto).

"There are so many players involved in any waterfront that it's my feeling
and experience that everyone has a different ideal of what should be
happening after their own interests. One individual or group or body must
take the initiative to bring these groups together. Everyone would be
running off in their own directions if not" (U, Hamilton).

"You do need one single body or initiator to carry the ball, and take an
idea, implement it and get things rolling. All the other agencies and
bodies involved seem to want to get involved, but they only have a single
issue they're concerned about, or a handful of issues. It's like they're
trying to get their pound of flesh, and once they've got that they leave
the picture ... We've always had to maintain the vision ... otherwise we'd
just end up being pushed and pulled and we wouldn't be going anywhere" (D,
Vancouver).

A small number declared themselves against the idea of a single initiator.

Coincidentally, some also noted a change over time, making a clear

distinction between what happened in earlier decades and today, and
admitting the benefits of hindsight.

"It seems to me that the notion of a single initiator may not be an
accurate description. You can't have one group saying 'Now I recognise the
problem, and now we will do something about it'. The need to redevelop
waterfronts becomes obvious over a period of time ... and it is the general
public who, through the political process, demand that change be made" (D,
Halifax).

"The original motivation to get on with it is not dependent on a single
initiator unless he has a big piece of land or something, but it's more
likely to be initiated by social or political circumstances" (P,
Vancouver).

"The initiator changes all the time ... you get progress being achieved
over a period ... It's due to a series of initiators" (P, Victoria).

"I don't agree ... because waterfront redevelopment depends on many people
involved. It has to involve, right at the beginning, the government levels,
the city levels and the promoters. In order that this project is accepted
is has to involve the population first ... If a promoter wants to do
something in a port he won't be able to do anything unless he has the will
of the population behind him, and of course the will of the federal
government to go along with the project" (D, Quebec).

"What seemed like a good idea at the time after 15 years looks like a
pretty dumb deal ... So it's now turned the tables from an individual
initiator coming to the municipality saying 'We want to build this, this
and this', and it's now the city saying 'This is what we want - you conform
to it' " (U, Kingston).

"In the case of Toronto or other complex urban waterfronts, there may be a
very difficult analysis of who that initiator may have originally been ...
some plans have their genesis decades earlier " (P, Toronto).

Punctuating many responses were indications of community attitudes as a
factor to be reckoned with in the formulation and implementation of
waterfront redevelopment plans and projects. In such cases the issue of
public access to the waterfront often looms large, both in terms of the
need to preserve or create such access and in terms of the popularity of
waterfront open spaces.

"Waterfront redevelopment ... has now become a topic for general public discussion, and initiation tends to come from what in Halifax we call the friends ... of this and that. Now we're beginning to see an unnamed group which could go by the name of the Friends of the Waterfront. In the past there may have been a single proactive agent, perhaps reactive agents too ... Today in most cases it would still be a single agent because the pressure group would tend to focus its efforts on someone, and that would tend to be the provincial government, because they're nicely in the middle" (P, Halifax).

"I agree that waterfront redevelopment depends on a broad spectrum of actors, including in the case of Kingston a lot of local minority citizens with good intentions ... The result has been a combination of people taking the initiative" (D, Kingston).

"Fortunately we were able to get in just at the last moment, and establish some public access to and along the water's edge, fingering and working its way through these various private sector undertakings. It got to a point that the public felt that Kingston's waterfront had been raped by the private developer ... On the other hand, we had people from all over the country and continent coming to look at our waterfront, because it was a lively, happening place. It was moving, and working ... The residential component, the commercial component and the retail component make this area lively. It's a place for people. And they're there in droves" (D, Kingston).

Answers to the final question "why?" in PS2 were diverse, partly because of a deliberate ambiguity within the wording of the question. Some respondents took the question to mean "Why this initiator rather than another/others?" while other respondents thought it meant "What was it that made this initiator take the initiative?" Answers in both cases proved interesting - some elaborate, others succinct.

"There was a lot of derelict land on the waterfront, there was a blight, an eyesore, and it needed a lot of upgrading in terms of infrastructure. There was clearly development potential there, but it needed basic work on infrastructure to be done first. Funds were channelled towards improvements ... but needed some kind of comprehensive plan to give them a framework" (U, Halifax).

"Why? It's usually the business or profit motive of what can be made out of a particular scheme" (P, Kingston).

Proposition Set 3

The third Proposition Set (PS3) — the last of the introductory, general
sets — starts with the idea that inner-city redevelopment comes in many
forms, of which waterfront revitalisation is but one. The proposition
itself then suggests that there is no _essential_ difference between the
redevelopment of waterfront lands and that of other major inner-city zones.
Obviously the key word here is 'essential', since there are inevitably
differences in detail. Respondents were asked to consider whether they
agreed with the proposition, and to give their reasons.

PROPOSITION SET 3

Introductory statement
The revitalisation of waterfront zones is one form of inner-city
redevelopment, among others.

Proposition
THERE IS NO ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT AND THE
REDEVELOPMENT OF OTHER LARGE TRACTS OF INNER-CITY LAND.

Supplementary questions
Do you agree or disagree with this proposition?
What evidence leads you to this opinion?.

One reason for including this proposition at an early stage in the
interview was specifically to re-emphasise the point (established in the
preliminary questionnaire)(Hoyle, 1992a and b) that a wide variety of
responses was expected, some propositions being accepted and others
rejected, wholly or in part. In the case of PS3 it was anticipated that
most respondents would reject the proposition, for a variety of reasons,
and this in fact proved to be overwhelmingly the case. Only 7 out of 42
respondents (17 per cent) offering clear and relevant answers to this

question agreed with the proposition. Some did so in terms of broad

principles, others in terms of practical experience, as the following

quotations illustrate.

"There is no essential difference ... because the principles must be the
same" (P, Quebec).

"An easy one, because I totally agree with it. To me as a planner there is
no difference. The problems are the same - land acquisition, getting a plan
accepted by all levels of government - it's the same problem, just in a
different context" (U, Thunder Bay).

"The proposition is largely true. In my experience (elsewhere), exactly the
same model was used for the implementation of waterfront redevelopment as
for downtown retail/mixed use development in a distressed area, the
delivery mechanism being a public development corporation structured in
exactly the same fashion for both projects" (U, Victoria).
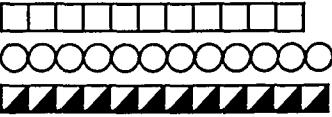
"I would agree with the proposition in the sense that there is basically a
similar process, and even the involvement of the public sector is probably
almost equally critical in my experience in both scenarios, whether it's a
waterfront or not ... I can't really put my finger on anything that is
essentially different ..." (U, New Westminster).

Such views were, however, exceptional. Several interviewees adopted a more

balanced view, emphasising both similarities and differences between

waterfront and other inner-city redevelopment, but in the end came round to

the general opinion that an essential but broadly conceived difference

between the two types of redevelopment area does exist.
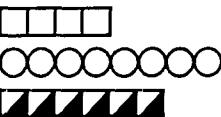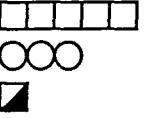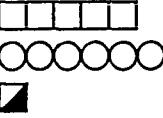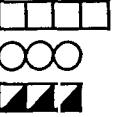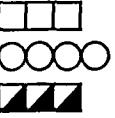
"I do not agree with this proposition. Some of the basic characteristics
are certainly there - a derelict or underutilised resource, land that could
probably be acquired fairly cheaply, and a need to change the land use. But
what I think makes it different from other inner-city redevelopment
proposals is the future use of the land" (U, Halifax).

"The basis of redevelopment on the waterfront follows the same patterns and
has the same basic issues as other redevelopment. We have to deal with
transportation, land use, appropriate scales of development, economic
issues, that are part of redevelopment of any other area ... but because
waterfronts are so visible, and redevelopment so comprehensive, they create
a set of situations which are quite unique" (U, Toronto).

Agreement or disagreement with proposition

Agreement with proposition	□□	2
	○○○	3
	◩◩	2
Disagreement with proposition	□□□□□□□□□□□	11
	○○○○○○○○○○○○	12
	◩◩◩◩◩◩◩◩◩◩◩◩	12

Reasons for disagreement

Universal access	□□□□	4
	○○○○○○○○	8
	◩◩◩◩◩◩	6
Finite, non-renewable resource	□□□□□	5
	○○○	3
	◩	1
Historical significance	□□	2
	○○	2
	◩◩◩	3
Environmental issues	□□□□□	5
	○○○○○○	6
	◩	1
Political sensitivity	□□□□	4
	○○○	3
	◩◩◩	3
Multifunctional character and waterfront / city integration	□□□	3
	○○○○	4
	◩◩◩	3

□ Coded individual point raised by port authority representative
○ Coded individual point raised by urban planning authority
◩ Coded individual point raised by developer

Figure 5. Proposition Set 3 : Coded individual points in responses arranged under major (5+) headings

A majority of respondents were rather more specific, often focussing upon one aspect of waterfront redevelopment which was, to them, the key essential difference; an interesting outcome in view of Freud's well-known conviction that there is always one real reason for everything, all else being imagination and supposition. The interest of the analysis of responses to this proposition lies largely in the variety of reasons given by interviewees for their disagreement. Some - notably from Toronto - emphasised above all the scale of waterfront redevelopment zones. Others underlined the problems of maintaining a working waterfront, sometimes with declining industries and uncooperative labour unions, alongside a redeveloping waterfront; and the novelty of waterfront redevelopment in many locations.

"This is something we've never had an opportunity to do before. It's a brand new ball-game we're dealing with here, and the issues are very important to the citizens of our community" (U, Hamilton).

Beyond this, the reasons for disagreement may be classified into six broad groups. Firstly, many respondents emphasised the need to establish and preserve universal access to waterfronts, involving not only public involvement and recreation facilities but also a careful blending of land and water uses.

"I think that a waterfront would be for the use of all the population whereas an industrial park would probably tend to be limited to maybe some government departmemnts and of course commercial users" (D, St John's).

"No matter where you live in a community, if you live along the lakeshore, if you live ten miles from it, that's still your waterfront. You can be far removed from it, but you will still want to have a say in what happens down there" (P, Toronto).

"There is a perception on the part of the public that the water is an amenity, and access to that amenity is one of their rights ... Our

objectives (involve) mating together a system of public access and walkways and parks, together with housing and office developments" (U, Vancouver).

"A very big thrust in redeveloping waterfronts is to try to create a very public presence on the waterfront ... land was perhaps formerly industrial, warehousing or wharves and were private at one time ... Now there's a need for waterfront walkways and parks, to give the waterfront back to the public ... Very often we're really trying to change the land use and the image of the area very substantially - and you do not find that in other inner urban redevelopment areas " (U, Halifax).

"Cities across North America are beginning to regret the privatization of waterfronts and the denial of access by citizens ... Waterfronts have an essential difference from inland developments in that they are only approachable by Jo Average citizens from one direction" (D, Saint John).

"The waterfront in many cases in the Canadian context, and perhaps a lot of others, is somewhat like a rediscovered resource. It's looked upon as a public resource, not simply a private one ... (but) if you put a lot of people down on the waterfront to enjoy the open water, you effectively build a barrier between the water and the rest of the population that can't get to see it because of the development" (U, Kingston).

Secondly, a number of respondents emphasised the finite character of

waterfront zones, sometimes describing them as a non-renewable resource

requiring particularly sensitive development.

"There is one really essential difference ... and that is that the waterfront is a finite resource. Whether you're living on the banks of the River Thames or on the shores of Lake Ontario, there's only so much waterfront" (U, Toronto).

"You have to be much more particular and careful on your balance of what type of development you have on the waterfront as compared with a non-waterfront area ... You've got to be careful that you don't push out industry, that you have a proper mixture of commercial and public and non-water orientated commercial ventures" (D, Halifax).

"Waterfront land is finite and limited as opposed to other land in the city ... that puts our waterfront properties under a spotlight, people have certain expectations of it, it is much more in the public eye, and has to be developed much more sensitively" (D, Halifax).

"There is an essential difference. The waterfront in any city is the only waterfront that it has. You can't just make it elastic, it can't be stretched, there's only so much of it. It's a linear thing, and very finite" (P, Halifax).

"Ports look upon their waterfront as a non-renewable resource. From an urban development perspective we don't. So it makes them far more conservative in their desire to remove land from port uses" (U, Saint John).

"Inner city or other large tracts of land typically offer alternative uses ... Port lands by their nature are committed and dedicated and difficult or impossible to reproduce. As a result the decision-making process is a bit tighter when you're looking at waterfront redevelopment. Once you commit waterfront properties to alternative uses you can't think of it in terms of a temporary allocation ... Probably you won't ever get it back" (P, Saint John).

Thirdly, some interviewees - particularly from Quebec - emphasised above all the historical significance of the waterfront, its doorstep function in the context of the foundation and growth of a city.

"Waterfront redevelopment has a meaning which is really different from development in any other part of the inner city. All waterfronts have their own story of the development of the city. In each city you go to, life started with the waterfront" (D, Quebec).

"It's an entrance to and an exit from the city, the door where you come in ... waterfronts are the locale of the birth of a city - that makes the essential difference" (D, Montreal).

Fourthly, although relatively few respondents discussed environmental issues at any length, such issues came to the fore occasionally both in a general sense and in terms of specific practical developmental problems in waterfront areas.

"We have wetlands, all kinds of natural phenomena where water meets land, and that has to be treated with some respect and dealt with differently, with a higher priority" (U, Toronto).

"The interplay between the water and the building edge is most uncomfortable from an urban design point of view" (P, Toronto).

"You have development problems in terms of servicing, keeping the water out of the basements, sewers often upstream from the waterfronts - all these problems you don't get in a standard urban renewal project in downtown areas " (D, New Westminster).

Fifthly, the political sensitivity of waterfront development issues provided for some respondents the key factor differentiating waterfront zones from other inner city urban areas.

"When you develop a waterfront everybody is looking. The plan principles seem to be thrown out of the window for political posturings ... everything is on a stage ..." (D, Toronto).

"Anything to do with the waterfront in this region has far broader constituencies ... It's highly sensitive politically, and almost invariably involves a tri-level governmental effort. It has been accompanied by a notion that waterfront redevelopment is a basic human right belonging to at least everybody in British Columbia, and most assuredly everybody in Greater Victoria. You end up with enormous pressure for public uses, public access, and as a result the whole process moves more slowly" (P, Victoria).

Sixthly, some respondents were at pains to underline the multifunctional character of waterfront zones, sometimes listing the numerous functions to which the land/water juxtaposition gives rise, emphasising the need for planners to be aware of all the issues involved in a complex series of processes. In addition to many specifically urban functions, waterfront zones reflect the presence of water through transportation (port activities, ferries, cruise ships, water taxis), and recreation (marinas, water sports), and the employment that these functions provide. A related point touched on my numerous respondents is the changing relationships between waterfront zones and other inner city areas which waterfront redevelopment brings in its wake; and the value of waterfront property and the impact that this may have on a city's tax base.

"One of our objectives in waterfront development is the continuity of the city to the waterfront ... to tie it in to make it a living, breathing piece of the city and not something that is special and separate - which in the case of Toronto has been a difficulty ..." (U, Toronto).

"More waterfronts are becoming an extension of the city's fabric, particularly where major boundaries or barriers along a lot of waterfronts are being moved or somehow penetrated, and the influence of inner-city type development comes to the waterfront ... (but) We have to be more cognisant of the fact that waterfronts are a unique part of a city, available only in a particular form and location, (and) you can't just borrow solutions from the inner city and then place them on the waterfront" (P, Toronto).

"Waterfront properties are very valuable ... the potential for getting taxes and a better tax-base for the city, thus making it a healthier community, is there on the waterfront, and should not be ignored. You want the whole thing to be aesthetically pleasing and functioning properly, but you should really capitalise on the dollar potential" (D, Kingston).

Finally, one respondent considered that ultimately the differentiating factor between waterfronts and other inner-urban areas lies in a spiritual rather than a practical realm. In emphasising the 'special quality' of waterfronts, this interviewee effectively summarised what many other respondents said or implied in raising more specific points.

"If you look at the spiritual relationship of land and water and the way that human beings respond to that relationship ... People are drawn to water and many cities started at the water's edge. There is a special quality between the land and the water, involving both human heritage and animal and plant life at large, that has to be recognised and protected. That makes to my mind an essential difference ..." (U, Toronto).

Proposition Set 4

The fourth Proposition Set, which introduced a second series of three dealing with processes and characteristics of waterfront redevelopment, is based on the idea that a recognised factor in such development is the emulation of schemes that have proved successful in other places. The designers of waterfront development schemes usually base their proposals upon careful scrutiny of experience in a variety of locations, seeking to differentiate between the more attractive and less attractive elements in any individual design, to discover how and why certain elements are more

successful than others, and to abstract from this process an appropriate mixture of possibilities and proposals for new schemes. This said, no urban architect or waterfront development corporation wishes to be seen too openly to reproduce designs and patterns from other locations, and great stress is therefore placed on the individuality of place and on the special distinguishing features that can be highlighted as a waterfront development scheme evolves. The enhancement of uniqueness, and the positive cultivation of a sense of place, are highly significant principles underlying waterfront regeneration.

PROPOSITION SET 4

Introductory statement
Emulation of successful schemes elsewhere is a recognised factor in waterfront redevelopment.

Proposition
IN SPITE OF EMULATION TENDENCIES, EACH WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME OR LOCATION REMAINS TO SOME EXTENT DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS.

Supplementary questions
What are the chief distinguishing characteristics of your waterfront redevelopment scheme or location?
What steps, if any, has your organisation taken to enhance this distinctiveness?

Accepting emulation as a normal but (in terms of its significance) variable fact of life in the waterfront redevelopment industry, therefore, the question at issue in PS4 is the balance between emulation and individuality – the former representing to some extent a safe developmental option, the latter involving a degree of risk. A spectrum of opinion exists, in theory, between the idea that each scheme is unique and the idea that each is a clone of some earlier development. It was anticipated that respondents

would accept the thesis that every waterfront redevelopment scheme is
ultimately unique, although similar to others in some respects; but the
wording of the proposition allows a response based on the conviction that
all such schemes are basically the same.

Outright rejections of the proposition were, as anticipated, few and far
between. In fact, only three respondents - one port official and two
developers - took the view that all waterfront development schemes are
essentially similar.

"I don't know that I take the position that they necessarily need to be
different. The market in any area should drive the development" (D,
Victoria).

"They pretty well all look the same. I honestly don't believe there's a
heck of a lot of difference ... They've all got housing and restaurants and
boutiques. Some are a little cuter than others, they all have a maritime
theme about them, made to look like a ship of some kind or a seashore walk
..." (P, New Westminster).

Two others - both port officials - were roundly critical of the emulation
concept.

"Emulation has not always been successful ... Because something has been
done elsewhere doesn't necessarily mean it's the right thing to do" (P,
Hamilton)

"We shouldn't try to be something we're not. We should build on our own
strengths, and not try to emulate other ports" (P, Saint John).

All other respondents offering a clear opinion (38, or 84 per cent of
interviewees) accepted the proposition without much argument. Many,
however, were quick to point out similarities while emphasising variety.

"There are many waterfronts ... where you have no real sense of where you
are ... you don't necessarily have a sense of place" (U, Montreal).

Agreement or disagreement with proposition

Agreement with proposition	□□□□□□□□□□□□	12
	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○	17
	◪◪◪◪◪◪◪◪◪	9
Disagreement with proposition	□	1
	—	0
	◪◪	2

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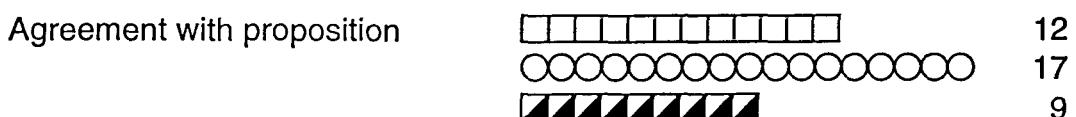
Other points raised by five or more respondents

Chief distinguishing features
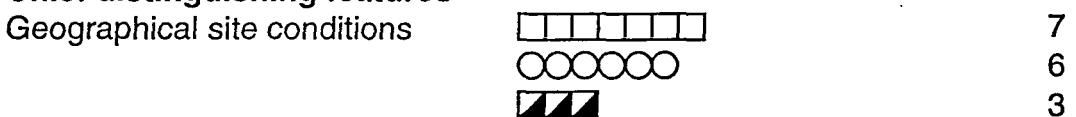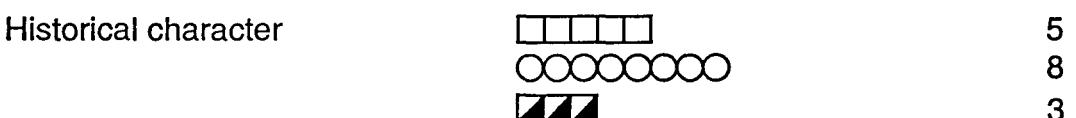
Geographical site conditions	□□□□□□□	7
	○○○○○○	6
	◪◪◪	3
Historical character	□□□□□	5
	○○○○○○○○	8
	◪◪◪	3
Community / cultural features	□	1
	○○○○○	5
	◪◪	2
Unusual characteristics	□	1
	○○○○○	5
	◪◪	2
Focus on working port	□□□	3
	○○	2
	◪	1
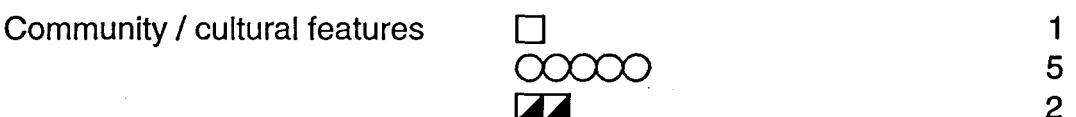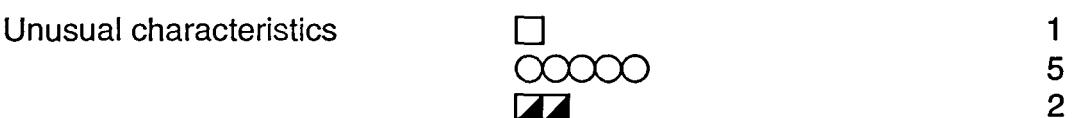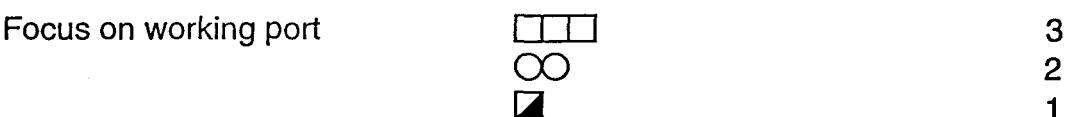
Steps to enhance distinctiveness
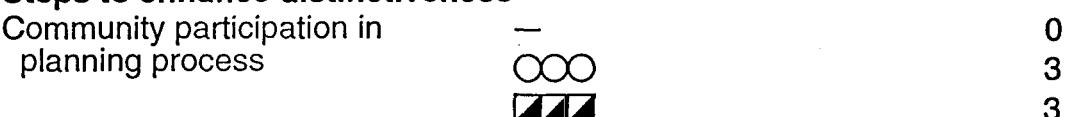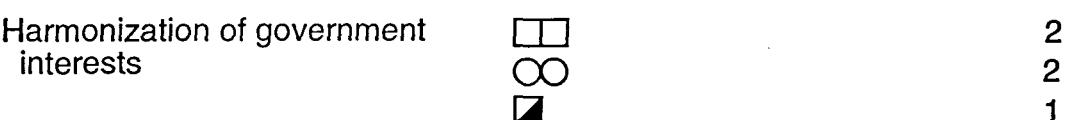
Community participation in planning process	—	0
	○○○	3
	◪◪◪	3
Harmonization of government interests	□□	2
	○○	2
	◪	1
Interlinkages with community in physical / social outcomes	□	1
	○○○○	4
	◪◪	2
Environmental concerns	□	1
	○○○○	4
	◪	1
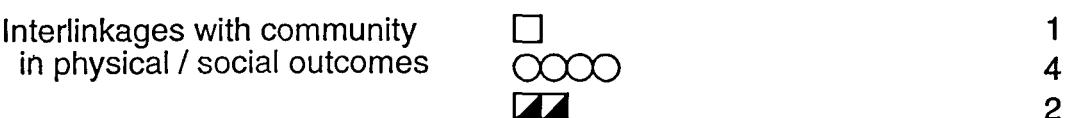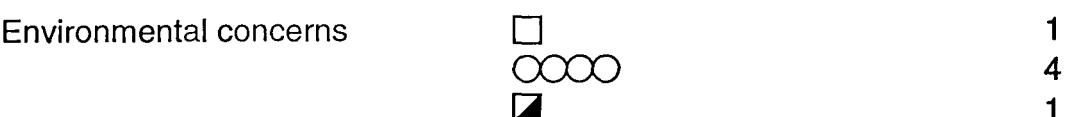
- -

□ Coded individual point raised by port authority representative
○ Coded individual point raised by urban planning authority
◪ Coded individual point raised by developer

Figure 6. Proposition Set 4 : Coded individual points in responses arranged under major (5+) headings

Others underlined emulation as a normal part of the development process,

and comparative analysis as an ultimate economy.

"Every waterfront development in some ways emulates certain aspects of others, and I take that as obvious, as natural and as healthy. No-one can work in a vacuum" (D, Toronto).

"Everybody goes and looks at other people's schemes, and often you can save a lot of money by saying 'No way would we do that!'" (U, Thunder Bay).

Most respondents, however, quickly came round to emphasising that

developers, while drawing on the experience of other places, seek

ultimately to capitalise on geographical individuality, recognising that

the attraction of a waterfront development is greatly enhanced by this

means for local people and for visitors.

"A reflection of the differences should be an objective of the processes involved" (U, New Westminster).

"All responsible thinkers and planners dealing with waterfront redevelopment tend to look around and see what is happening elsewhere, and to some extent we all find ourselves emulating success. However, one of the real keys to successful waterfront redevelopment is to identify, recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of the place that you happen to be dealing with. It's one of the fundamental premises on which waterfront redevelopment schemes should be planned and executed" (U, Toronto).

Some interviewees were not convinced that a great deal can in fact be

abstracted from the experience of other locations, because each waterfront

requires an individual solution. Others suggested that 'emulation' is

perhaps not quite the right word, because what is being looked for in the

experience of others is not some successful universal formula that can be

reproduced, but rather an answer to the question 'Why is this formula

successful here, in this location?', and 'How can we work out a similarly

successful formula in our own specific circumstances?'

"Certainly there are some common themes in many waterfront developments, in terms of public access, retail outlets, green areas ... But the nature of each waterfront, the nature of the community, suggests different approaches, different responses" (P, Saint John).

"We all look to other waterfronts for ideas and concepts of how things are dealt with, but when it comes down to it the amount that one can bring back from any one situation to your own is very limited. You have to recreate and understand and interpret your own situation" (U, Toronto).

"We're not trying to emulate, but trying to study what made it successful ... getting down to the root of success and then not copying but bringing in similar principles" (D, Toronto).

Repeatedly, respondents underlined the importance of close adaptation

('tying in' was a favourite phrase) of waterfront development to the

specific site conditions involved and to the character and wishes of the

local community. An urban planner, making this point, went on to express

misgivings about how long some recent clones might last; but a port

official emphasised that while some standard elements in waterfront

development may not succeed in the longer run, they have helped to

establish a more permanent principle of public access to waterfront zones.

"There's a fair bit of copying ... but the ones that are most successful are the ones that are tailor-made to the site and the community. There have been a number of festival markets that, to an extent, are clones of one another, and one wonders about their longevity. The originals are in Baltimore and Boston. They'll probably last because they were custom-made within their own community ... but some of the more recent clones ... I wonder!" (U, Victoria).

"Harbourfront markets ... are going to become passé from the marketing point of view, and one day somebody will take a bulldozer to them and develop something else ... But what you have gained in the process is the notion of public use in relation to the water itself" (P, Victoria).

Many of these issues were inherently subsumed in an interesting reponse

from an urban planner who identified a close relationship in Canada between

ideas and processes but remained somewhat sceptical about the extent to

which planners and developers escape from the temptations of emulation in order to think positively about local circumstances and needs.

"Waterfront schemes have an inherent collection of ideas that are consistent and that recur ... What tends to happen, more in Canada than perhaps in Europe, is that along with some of those ideas come processes. So you hire a consultant to examine the waterfront, and he gives you a package that says 'These are the kinds of things you can do, and these are the tools available'. And people generally accept that, with not much variation. The site is recognised to some extent, so is the uniqueness of the regional identity ... but these processes aren't necessarily sensitive to the fabric of a unique site. As a result you tend to get the model applied to all sites in a fairly similar way, unless you take very strong initiatives to identify the unique characteristics and to make them the strongest point behind the scheme" (U, Thunder Bay).

Interviewees were asked to identify the chief distinguishing characteristics of their particular waterfront scheme or location, in comparison with others with which they were familiar. Surprisingly, many respondents found this a rather hard question, even after discussing at some length the importance of geographical individuality. Several mentioned general or specific site conditions as being especially important. At Saint John, for example, the extreme tidal variation (28') presents difficult engineering problems; while at Kingston the waters of Lake Ontario provide world-class competition sailing conditions.

"All-round development remains distinct, just because of its geographical site" (P, Montreal).

"The area within the islands, which is the focus of redevelopment taking place in Toronto, is unique in many ways ... it is in some ways a giant public space" (U, Toronto).

Surprisingly, relatively few respondents mentioned the constraining influence of Canadian climates which largely restrain the utilisation of waterfront recreational facilities, for example.

"The developer went to Boston and to San Francisco to see what had been done, and he tried to do the same thing here - but the situation is not the same in Quebec ... We have winter!" (P, Quebec).

Other respondents sought to underline especially the historical character

of their locations.

"We have managed to retain some of the early warehousing and wharves from the 1800s, which is old in Halifax terms ... These historic properties, stonebuilt or wooden warehouses have given a basic guide to the kind of waterfront we want to create" (U, Halifax).

"We have made a conscious effort to maintain and rebuild the finger piers ... it's not every harbour that has this configuration of wooden piers coming out perpendicular to the waterfront" (D, Halifax).

"In our case in Montreal, this distinguishing characteristic is the presence of Old Montreal, the old city ... port and city are very complementary" (U, Montreal).

Most respondents, especially in the Maritime Provinces and in Quebec,

showed in one way or another a keen awareness of the character of the

community concerned as an influence upon waterfront redevelopment

processes. Local citizens in Saint John, for example, were thought to be

very conservative, while "Quebec is more French ... our heritage is

different" (U, Quebec).

"The chief distinguishing characteristic is just the way of living of the population of Quebec, which is for example completely different from Toronto ... We don't like the same things, in Quebec it's more like European life, we just love to sit and rest and talk to each other, having a chat and a beer ... (D, Quebec).

Another group displayed a sort of 'making the most of what we've got'

attitude, incorporating an unpropitious site, heavy industry, or the need

for compatibility between a working port and a redeveloping waterfront into

their development schemes.

"We're going to end up with a long, linear park ... I'm hoping people will not mistake Thunder Bay's waterfront for anyone else's" (U, Thunder Bay)

"The major distinguishing feature is the large, heavy industrial base provided by the major steel companies ... an awesome view from the water ... a distinctive feature quickly fading from other harbours on this lake and the other Great Lakes as well. There are not many harbours that can say they have these vital, heavy industrial activities on their waterfront, and it's something we can expand on and promote" (U, Hamilton).

"In Saint John the attempt is to build strongly on the existing or former waterfront uses, retaining the character and providing visibility or accessibility to the industrial port facilities rather than hiding them or trying to change them in the process" (P, Saint John).

Finally within this proposition set, respondents were asked to say what steps their organisation had taken specifically to enhance the distinctiveness of the location during the process of waterfront redevelopment. Answers to this question were varied, sometimes indirect, and often the question was avoided. However, a substantial number of intervewees gave specific illustrations of positive action. These ranged from "Very thorough participation processes ... the identification of issues, open-house sessions, focus-group discussions" (U, Victoria), emphasis on "compatibility with other projects" (U, Montreal), to "harmonization of government interests from different levels" (U, Montreal) and frequent references to the need to "tie it back into the community". Relatively few respondents mentioned the environment again at this point, but one urban planner emphasised a growing concern for environmental issues.

"We have waterfront on two sides of the city, and a large marsh area on the third ... these wetlands are one of the McDonald's hamburger stopovers for major north-south bird migrations ... What we're trying to do is to prevent any infilling, a long overdue recent change in concept" (U, Kingston).

Overall, attitudes to the issues raised in PS4 were perhaps best summarised

by a Vancouver urban planner.

"Through a sense of history in Vancouver, a sense of what's important to the Vancouver citizens, and through giving consideration to the existing Vancouver character, our development certainly is not an imitation of others but a solution to our particular setting and to the particular goals of our citizens and council" (U, Vancouver).

Proposition Set 5

Without exception, all respondents who gave a clear answer to Proposition

Set 5 did so in the affirmative, although interpretations of its precise

meaning were varied. As in the case of some other Proposition Sets,

however, interviewees found it difficult to dissociate themselves from the

circumstances of a particular case, so that the Proposition Set as a whole

was often dealt with, understandably perhaps, largely in terms of the

supplementary question rather than the main proposition.

PROPOSITION SET 5

Introductory statement
As waterfront redevelopment schemes evolve, there is normally an increasing perception of resource opportunity.

Proposition
DURING THE PROCESS OF STRATEGY FORMULATION, A WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME MAY BE SAID TO REACH A 'TAKE-OFF POINT'.
Do you agree or disagree with this proposition?

Supplementary question
Can you identify and characterise a critical take-off point or period in terms of your own scheme or location?

Most respondents agreed that there has clearly been an increase in

perception of resource opportunity, but some were rather reluctant to

concede the principle on which the Proposition Set is based, that this

perception and the consequent redevelopment strategy formulation process

normally lead to action and to an identifiable take-off point.

"It's a difficult question. There probably is a take-off point. I don't
know how compacted the point would be, but there is a point in the
evolution of a city when people become aware of opportunities. Many
waterfronts were for a long period inaccessible, occupied by industrial or
rail users, not part of the public consciousness. Then there comes a point
in time when enough of those previous uses is removed and there is an
opportunity to integrate" (U, Victoria).

A developer identified "an early point when things start to focus a little,

and somebody moves in one direction" (D, Kingston), and a planner

specifically pointed to "a take-off point reached when the city

expropriated the property from the industrial landowners and undertook a

fairly extensive public programme to develop a waterfront plan" (U,

Hamilton). More generally, as another planner underlined, "in any project

that get's achieved, there must be some point in time where people finally

say 'This is what we're going to do', and then start doing it" (U,

Montreal). Some questioned the quality of the take-off achieved. Others,

seeing port redevelopment as essentially demand-driven, did not see

corporate waterfront redevelopment in quite the same context as urban

planners or property developers. Many respondents, directly or indirectly,

and from a wealth of experience, underlined the difficulty of achieving a

smooth take-off. As one port official put it: "Yes, there is a take-off

point, but there's a lot of crash-landing points too" (P, New Westminster).

Some respondents, although conceding the theoretical point, did not

consider the proposition relevant to their case, in the sense that no

identifiable take-off point could be said locally to have been reached.

Agreement or disagreement with proposition

Agreement with proposition	□□□□□□□□□□□□□	13
	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○	15
	▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨	11
Disagreement with proposition	—	0
	—	0
	—	0

- -

Other points raised by five or more respondents

No local take-off point	□□□□□	5
	○○○○	4
	▨▨▨▨▨▨	6
Changes in perception	□□	2
	○○○○○	5
	▨▨	2
Not one take-off point but several	□□□	3
	○○○○	4
	▨▨	2
Finance as the critical factor	□□□	3
	○○○○	4
	▨▨▨	3
Public sector involvement	□□□□	4
	○○○	3
	▨▨	2
Private sector involvement	□	1
	○	1
	▨▨▨▨	4

- -

□ Coded individual point raised by port authority representative
○ Coded individual point raised by urban planning authority
▨ Coded individual point raised by developer

Figure 7. Proposition Set 5 : Coded individual points in responses aranged under major (5+) headings

There was widespread agreement among respondents from St John's, Halifax and Saint John that, while the idea of a take-off point could be accepted, no such point had in their experience yet been reached.

"Waterfront redevelopment, like any other enterprise, goes through a hatchery and incubation period, then reaches take-off and becomes self-sustaining ... This hasn't happened here ... Perhaps the market just isn't big enough" (P, Halifax).

Most respondents reacted positively to the use of the phrase concerning 'an increasing perception of resource opportunity' in the introduction to the Proposition Set. Some described how a major change occurred in the early 1970s in terms of public attitudes towards the opportunities provided by neglected waterfront zones. In the case of Halifax, for example,

"... the bulldozers were ready to move in and demolish historic properties and there was an injunction put on them, and it stopped. From then on ... an appreciation of Halifax's heritage and the scale of the city began to dominate planning thinking. So very definitely in Halifax it's possible to identify a take-off point, almost a kind of high-tide mark, where bulldozer-type urban renewal stopped and a more sensitive approach to preserving resources and rehabilitating what we have took over" (U, Halifax).

Similarly, but in a different time context, the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront, reporting in the early 1990s, may be seen in the future as a critical take-off point in terms of the fusion of ideas:

"Twenty years from now, people may look back at this Royal Commission and say 'That group was the one that instigated people thinking about the waterfront, that pulled all levels of government together ... That's not a physical take-off point, it's more of a conceptual thing. You have to get people to perceive the waterfront as an entity" (P, Toronto).

In contrast, some respondents were much more precise, even at times dogmatic, about what they thought were the essential components of the

take-off process. In particular, as anticipated, there was an emphasis on
the importance of funding. While planners tended to see the critical
problem as being that of getting everyone to agree on a strategy for the
common good, and port officials were inclined to stress demand-led
redevelopment policies, developers were quick to underline that what really
matters from their point of view is the availability of private-sector
finance.

"Our whole system works through dollars and cents ... If you try a pure
planning approach, you can very often be disappointed because it simply
isn't going to work" (U, Kingston).

"The take-off point was when funds were made available for the city to get
its programme underway ..." (P, Kingston).

"The take-off point is the time when a developer or a government agency or
anyone who is going to effect some change in the area makes their first
investment. That's in my mind the real take-off point." (D, Victoria).

"A take-off point is not when there's a major commitment on the part of the
public sector to make it work, because that's easy ... These things aren't
real in the mosaic of society on the waterfront ... To me the real take-off
point is when you see the first major project funded independently of
government sources going ahead" (D, New Westminster).

Several respondents argued that, particularly in the case of large and
complex waterfronts, the identification of a series of inter-related take-
off points provides a more realistic interpretation of events than the
search for a single point. As a Vancouver developer explained:

"You don't just have one take-off point and then everything unfolds. First,
we announced our project, with a plan in place. Second, we had our official
development plan approved, following a large public input process. Third,
when you actually turn the soil, that's another take-off point. But getting
the plan officially approved by the city council is a big milestone,
because up to that point everything is still up for grabs" (D, Vancouver).

Respondents in Montreal, a city perceived elsewhere in Canada as having

been rather slow to make progress in terms of waterfront redevelopment,
emphasised three critical phases each of which, in turn, was a take-off
point: first, the decision in the late 1970s to clean up the waterfront
zone by demolishing grain silos and removing railway tracks so as to
provide an urban window on the river; second, during the 1980s, the public
consultation process which provided opportunities for the opinions of many
contrasted groups to be accommodated with the perceptions of urban,
provincial and federal governments; and third, the acquisition of federal
development funding on the basis of agreed planning principles. Within this
context, the most critical take-off point is likely to be the moment at
which agreement is reached between the city and the federal government.

Ultimately, most respondents shared the view, explicitly or implicitly,
that take-off points usually depend upon a coalescence of factors from
different directions, and that a clear vision of where change and
development are leading is an essential element in the process.

"There is definitely a junction where it's going to move ahead, and make
people and money coalesce around its momentum, or it stays in the
backwater" (U, Toronto).

"There are points of systhesis ... (and) the proof of the pudding is always
what gets built ... There's a point at which budget, building plans, etc
come together, at which a redevelopment starts to take place. Usually it's
at a point when most of the issues have been resolved. Without that clear
take-off point, without the clarity of a good context, we run into problems
... To reach consensus, to reach clarity of vision is a very important part
of the process of any redevelopment" (U, Toronto).

Proposition Set 6

Numerous respondents dealing with Proposition Set 6 claimed to have little
knowledge or experience of housing matters, and some gave rather confused
or rambling answers that did not directly address the issues raised.

Inevitably, perhaps, there were many who confined their remarks to local experience, although a minority were able to make comparisons with other locations or to offer Canada-wide generalisations. Most accepted the idea that residential land use is a normal part of waterfront redevelopment, but some questioned this. Overall, a majority addressed directly and endorsed the principle that housing on the waterfront should provide for all socio-economic groups, although many qualified their acceptance of this view and some stated openly that waterfront locations are inappropriate for social housing. Respondents generally confirmed the proposition that "social housing takes very much a back seat in waterfront development" (U, Victoria).

PROPOSITION SET 6

Introductory statement
Residential provision is a feature of waterfront redevelopment, normally in both the public and private sectors.

Proposition
PLANS FOR SOCIAL (PUBLIC-SECTOR) HOUSING PROJECTS ARE HIGHLY VULNERABLE AS DEVELOPERS INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE IN WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FORMULATION PROCESSES.

Supplementary questions
Do you agree or disagree with this proposition?
Please give your reasons.

Public sector housing is not a major component of waterfront redevelopment in most Canadian cities. Relatively few authorities provide public housing within their waterfront redevelopment schemes, and the arguments for not doing so vary. Usually the high land values are emphasised, either for private residential use or office accommodation or both, so that it seems a

wasted opportunity to include public housing. Developers prefer to take

profits from the sale of housing units or from the rental of commercial

space, developing public sector housing in other locations which are much

less valuable.

"It's in the developers best interests to maximise his return on a project,
and certainly you don't make very much money doing social housing, although
we recognise that we have this commitmenmt" (D, Vancouver).

In some cities, however, planners and developers feel that it is very

important to provide housing on the waterfront for a cross-section of the

population. Vancouver respondents described the city as a "fascinating

laboratory" in this context (D, New Westminster), and commented that

"False Creek in Vancouver is well known and quite celebrated for having
achieved a mix of social and middle-income and higher-income housing within
the project, but it is architecturally invisible" (U, New Westminster).

Numerous respondents in all categories placed some emphasis on the

importance of developing a range of private housing, to cater for a range

of incomes. Objections are raised if all housing in a locality is

considered élitist, out of the range of a majority of the people.
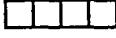
"One of the worst things you can do in waterfront redevelopment is simply
seize the opportunity and the market ... and build a wall of high-rise
luxury condominiums along the waterfront. It's fantastic for the few people
who have the corner appartments, but that is not what makes good waterfront
redevelopment" (P, Toronto).

Attempts to create mixed housing developments do not always work, however.

A scheme designed to provide lower-income private housing close to the

Halifax waterfront failed in its objectives, because

Agreement or disagreement with proposition

Agreement with proposition		
	☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	10
	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○	15
	▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨▨	13

Disagreement with proposition		
	☐☐	2
	○	1
	—	0

Other points raised by five or more respondents

Public sector housing uncommon on Canadian waterfronts		
	☐☐☐☐	4
	○○○○○○	6
	▨▨▨▨	4

High land values a major reason for private development		
	☐☐☐☐☐	5
	○○○○○○○○	8
	▨▨▨▨▨▨▨	7

Need to maximise return from investment		
	☐☐	2
	○○○	3
	▨▨▨▨▨▨▨	7

Support for mixed housing developments, in principle		
	☐☐	2
	○○○○○○○○○	9
	▨▨▨	3

Opposition to mixed housing developments, in principle		
	☐	1
	○○○	3
	▨▨▨▨▨▨▨	7

☐ Coded individual point raised by port authority representative
○ Coded individual point raised by urban planning authority
▨ Coded individual point raised by developer

Figure 8. Proposition Set 6 : Coded individual points in responses arranged under major (5+) headings

"these units were a tremendous bargain for the yuppie set ... It wasn't the lower-income group that moved in ... It only takes one young lawyer to move in, and there goes the neighbourhood" (P, Halifax).

The key issue involved in the differentiation of private and public sector housing in a waterfront context is of course the cost factor. Waterfront land values are generally high, space is limited, and urban authorities need to keep a watchful eye on their tax base. It is too expensive to put subsidised housing on higher value land, and the general feeling is that such land should be used for something that is more profitable for a developer.

"In most cases the value of the land is what determines the feasibility of public sector developments ... if competition for that land goes up, the public sector simply cannot afford it" (U, Kingston).

"Public housing is not revenue-generating in terms of filling the municipal coffers or indeed the developers coffers" (P, Kingston).

"Left to its own devices, the private market will inevitably take high-priced land and produce high-quality products, excluding social or assisted housing" (U, Toronto).

"Housing for poor people is pushed aside because developers are primarily interested in waterfront development to make money ... but governments are involved in these projects, and it's in the province of governments to provide low-cost housing ... So we have a controversy" (D, Saint John).

The controversy, if such it is, appears to centre on the degree to which the social interests of the community can be accommodated with the financial interests of the market. The impetus to develop social housing comes, if it comes at all, from local authorities, whereas the impetus to develop waterfront sites comes from developers interested in financial gain.

"The broad problem is how to marry the market to the social needs ... most revitalisation has basically been marketed from the very beginning, somebody seeing an opportunity and trying to capitalise in it" (D, Thunder Bay).

Two arguments appear to stem from this situation. The 'financial optimum' policy is that social needs do not require a solution based on the most expensive sites, and it is in the interests of municipal taxation systems to locate private housing on prime sites and to relegate social housing projects to less costly locations elsewhere.

"There is no need for social housing to be on prime land to develop a solid tax base for the municipality so they can afford more social programmes. If we keep eroding our tax base, where the potential for good bucks is, how are we going to meet social needs? What's wrong with letting the rich live there, and tax the deuce out of them, and use that tax money to do good things for the community?" (D, Kingston).

The 'social optimum' policy, in contrast, is that the most desirable outcome in community terms is mixed housing development on waterfront locations, although such a policy produces lower profits for developers and reduces municipal tax revenues. Although Canadian society is "not always as open and equality-oriented as it would seem" (U, Toronto), but there is "heightened awareness of the need to share the waterfront in certain areas" (P, Kingston), and government policy appears consistently to favour tilting the balance in favour of the underpriviledged.

An example from Kingston suggests that developments based on some form of compromise between the financial and social optima indicated above are sometimes successful.

"There was a government programme here in which up to 15 per cent of

apartment units had to be offered to the local housing authority ... In some buildings you can watch the tenants coming and going, and you have no idea which ones are on subsidy and which ones aren't. Occasionally you can tell, occasionally they tell you. The only one who knows is back in the office where the rents are paid ... They've been very successful, it breaks the psychology of poverty; there's salt and pepper all along the waterfront here, and most people don't even know it" (U, Kingston).

Such mixtures, however, are controversial.

"A condominium owner paying 100,000 dollars gets upset if across the street there's another guy living in a similar apartment on a subsidised basis paying six or seven hundred dollars a month ... But an average welfare family can't afford that kind of rent, so we have subsidised housing occupied by doctors, lawyers and others who are in a position to afford something more expensive but are taking advantage of a situation in a way no-one else can." (D, Saint John).

Ultimately, however, there is no optimum solution in the housing field, in view of the diverse and sometimes opposing objectives involved, and an acceptable compromise has to be worked out in each location and case. As one urban planner put it,

"How do we provide communities that are stable and work well, and how do we find the right mix of uses? How do we hold back the pressure to develop everything for housing?" (U, Toronto).

Conclusions

This paper is derived from an investigation of attitudes and perceptions of waterfront redevelopment in Canadian port cities as seen through the eyes and minds of urban planners, port authorities and developers. The study originated in discussions about attitudes to waterfront redevelopment in a variety of locations and contexts in Europe and North America and from a belief that useful perspectives on relevant issues might be derived from interviews with some of the decision-makers involved. Applied in a Canadian context, but involving Europe-derived perspectives, the methodology was

designed to allow selected decision-makers to give their views through structured questionnaires and through open-ended interviews based on proposition sets. This methodology proved successful, in that interviewees normally responded considerably more fully than was originally anticipated, and often displayed a wide range of detailed knowledge and opinion far transcending familiarity with their specific location.

The study attempted to isolate critical components of waterfront revitalisation in a way that facilitates comparative examination in different locations. Responses to an introductory questionnaire have already been reported elsewhere (Hoyle, 1992a and b). This paper has attempted, firstly, to sharpen awareness of a series of contextual issues involved in waterfront redevelopment. The answers reported to the first three propositions inevitably reflect the specifics of individual cases or locations, economies and political jurisdictions. They also reflect, however, a growing awareness of the international character of the phenomena, issues and problems involved. The dissemination of ideas, opinions and information about waterfront redevelopment through conferences and publications is of considerable value, for although ultimately every case is unique, each reflects global trends. The experience of each individual cases has significance for every other, and a global comparative perspective is vital.

Secondly, issues raised in this paper form a contribution to the continuing debate about the processes and characteristics of waterfront revitalisation. Discussion centred on three specific issues involving the

idea of emulation, the question of a take-off point in redevelopment strategies, and the problem of housing in the public and private sectors. As the responses to Proposition Sets 4, 5 and 6 have illustrated, interviewees displayed a wide variety of opinions on these issues, and three conclusions emerging from this material may be briefly stated.

- First, with regard to the emulation question, it is obvious that most respondents accepted the idea of emulation in terms of learning from the experience of others and in terms of adaptation to specific locational requirements, rather than in terms of a more straightforward replication of ideas, plans or schemes. The enhancement of distinctiveness is clearly favoured.

- Second, there is widespread agreement that a take-off point (or series of such points or periods) is an identifiable characteristic of the waterfront redevelopment process; and that take-off depends ultimately upon a convergence of positive, favourable factors and upon a clear vision of attainable goals.

- Third, there is a clear dichotomy between the widespread view that public sector ('social') housing should in principle be accorded a place in waterfront redevelopment proposals and schemes, and the widespread practice of allowing private sector housing to colonise a high proportion of the market and the most attractive sites. The range of views expressed, especially the housing question, provide a contribution to a wider understanding of the processes involved in waterfront redevelopment and

reflect a lively continuing debate in all cities on water where these issues are being confronted.

Waterfronts are increasingly and rightly regarded as opportunities, not as problems. They are, however, difficult and controversial areas to redevelop, moreso, perhaps, that any other type of urban zone. Outcomes are never likely to satisfy everybody. Yet as redevelopment proceeds, there is widespread interest: 'everybody's looking', as one respondent remarked. Decision-makers clearly have a great deal to offer in helping to shape future ideas, designs and policies for waterfronts, and most appear to agree with students of waterfront redevelopment that collaboration and cooperation are essential if satisfactory outcomes are to be achieved.

NOTES

2 The first section of this paper extends an outline of the project as a whole first published as an introduction to the analysis of the questionnaire survey component (Hoyle, 1992a and b).

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