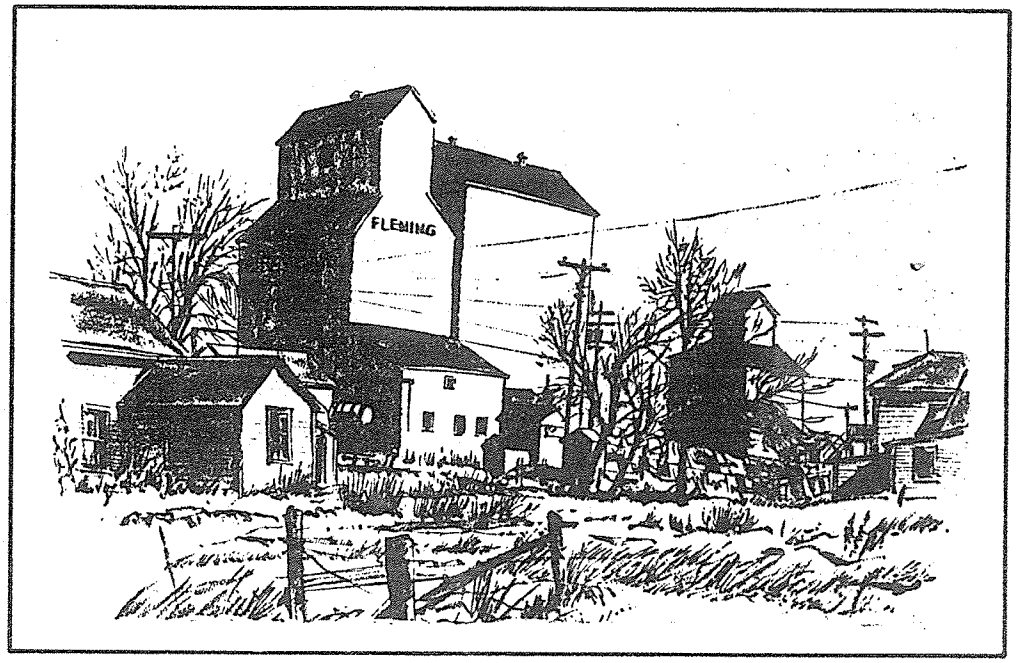

Development and Planning of the Small Prairie Community in an Era of Rural Change

The University of Manitoba

DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING OF THE SMALL PRAIRIE COMMUNITY IN AN ERA OF RURAL CHANGE

by

Larry O. Spencer

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
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OF MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

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CHAPTER ONE
Introdution

"Development and Planning of the Small Prairie Community in an Era of Rural Change", as a thesis topic, grew out of the research work in which the author was involved under the Regional Analysis Program undertaken in the Province of Manitoba in 1971-72. At that time, field work of the Program took the author to many of the small towns, villages, and hamlets within Southern Manitoba. It appeared evident, even then, that many of these small urban communities were declining. It also appeared evident in many cases, that nothing remained that could realistically be done to save the small prairie community. Further, indications seemed ever present that a similar fate awaited many other small communities that exhibited an apparently healthy facade. The question remained, however, whether or not impressions concerning "the decline of the small community" were accurate or whether, as some contend, that these communities were merely contracting and not declining, in response to changing technology. Irrespective of whether the small community is declining or stabilizing,

what was of concern was that previous planning efforts directed at this segment of the urban continuum were apparently assuming that what was needed was planning for sustained growth (i.e., expansion). Little thought appears to have been given to planning for "decline" or "stabilization". Also, given the economic concepts of "regional specialization and "activity linkage", the question presents itself as to whether or not the small community can be planned in isolation of the economic system of which it forms an integral part. These, in essence, are the aspects of planning for the development of the small prairie community in an era of rural change, with which this thesis will be concerned.

The primary concern of this thesis, therefore, is to examine the small prairie community - its functions, its problems, and its prospects - in an attempt to develop a planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community given that such a policy is needed. To allow for a thorough understanding of the nature and implications of planning for the development of the small prairie community in an era of rural change, Chapter Two will explore a framework of regional economic theory, Chapter Three will examine the prairie community system concentrating, primarily on the small prairie community and the various functions it performs within that system, Chapter Four will detail numerous problem areas encountered by the small community, and Chapter Five will outline various possible future prospects of the small prairie community. Chapter Six, based on the information of preceeding chapters, will attempt to formulate a systematic planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community within the context of regional economic theory given the function(s) it performs within the Prairie Community

System, the constraints imposed by its limited resource base (human and financial), and its various possible future prospects.

It is hoped this thesis, which represents the first and least adequate stage of systematic reasoning concerning the process of planning, will become a small contribution to an ongoing discussion with respect to planning for the development of the small community. As such it is intended.

CHAPTER TWO
Theoretical Framework

INTRODUCTION

The small prairie community is in an embryonic phase of economic development. The value of the small community, however, should not be underrated. Irrespective of the fact that the small community depends to a considerable extent on larger settlements for specialized goods and services, the small community nevertheless performs a viable economic and social function, a function that has changed and will continue to change over time.

Through the concepts of "regional specialization" and "activity linkage", regional economic theory provides a framework for analyzing the dynamics of settlement growth, the process of community and regional specialization, and the economic interrelationship(s) of communities. Within the context of regional economic theory, the small prairie community can be examined as it relates to other communities, the function it performs within a region, and the changes it is required to make over time to ensure continued survival.

The following discussion of regional economics therefore, explores various aspects of regional economic theory (i.e., concepts, models, the objectives of, and obstacles to, regional economic planning) and establishes the context within which a planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community will be developed.

THE DEFINITION OF REGIONAL ECONOMICS

Regional economics is a relatively new subject. Due to its recent phenomenal growth, attempts have been made to formulate an operational definition that would provide "a unifying link between the diverse problems that are considered and analyzed in it by its practitioners (and) in order to spotlight the essential difference between (regional economics) and overlapping disciplines".[1]

Denying the possibility of isolating such a discipline forms the first approach. The proponents of such an approach maintain that regional studies form one indivisible whole - "regional science" in which economics, geography, sociology, and demography constitute the interdependent and interrelated components of regional analysis. Economics, however, is not distinguished by its subject matter, but by its point of view (i.e., that economics is not a special group of activities but an aspect of all human activities).

That a 'group' of problems that form the subject matter of regional economics can be distinguished, and that a listing of such problems could serve as a definition of the subject, constitutes

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1. Vinod Dubey, "The Definition of Regional Economics," Regional Economics: Theory & Practice (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1970), p. 3.

the base for a second approach to defining regional economics. "Regional economics is not the study of the economic problems of regions, however, as the 'list of problems' definition seems to imply. Rather, it is the study of all the problems of regions from the economic viewpoint."[2]

A third approach to regional economics regards the discipline as the economics of spatial separation (i.e., a spatial general equilibrium theory). Such a conception, however, does not describe the whole field of problems covered in regional economics, and therefore, is logically incomplete. "The presence of spatial separation is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the existance of problems studied in regional economics. Spatial separation by itself does not provide the rationale and the unifying link for regional economics."[3]

Regional economics conceived as the economics of resource immobility, is a fourth approach. Regional resource immobility, however, is not sufficient to give rise to the regional economic problem, but only becomes significant when considered jointly with the fact that resources tend to be unevenly distributed over space.

The alternative approaches to defining regional economics, although inadequate in isolation, yield the elements of a new definition of the discipline. The ultimate justification, therefore, for regional economics derives from "three fundamental and

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2. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

3. Ibid., p. 5.

ubiquitous facts about human existence."[4]

> First, human activity and its concomitants occupy space. There is a spatial separation .... Secondly, resources and their production and consumption are not evenly distributed over space. Not only do real differentials exist, but they also vary over time .... Thirdly, though the ends of human activity are many, the resources to attain them are scarce and capable of alternative uses. There exists the economic problem of the allocation and augmentation of scarce resources.[5]

Spatial separation, uneven distribution of resources, lack of perfect mobility, and the necessity to economize combine to form the elements of a complete definition of regional economics. Regional economics, therefore, is "the study from the viewpoint of economics of the differentiation and interrelationship of areas in a universe of unevenly and imperfectly mobile resources."[6]

REGIONAL THEORIES AND REGIONAL MODELS

Concept of the Region:

The history of the regional concept is one of argument and disagreement. A discussion of the existence or non-existence of regions will, therefore, be ignored. Rather, the regional will be regarded simply as "some sort of aggregative classificatory device that is used for the purpose of reducing the number of cases with which the investigator of spatial phenomena must deal."[7] By means

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4. Ibid., p. 6.

5. Ibid., p. 6.

6. Ibid., p. 7.

7. M.B. Teitz, "Regional Theory: Regional Models," Regional Economics: Theory and Practice (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1970), p. 11.

of this heuristic definition it is possible to develop certain basic notions that can be applied to the idea of regional and to an examination of regional theory and regional models without first resolving the "existence-nonexistence" conflict.

Regional Theories:

(i) Location Theory

Interest in the theoretical aspects of the location of economic activity - location theory - dates back approximately one hundred and fifty years to the work of Johann Heinrick von Thunen, and more recently to that of Weber, Losch, Hoover, and Isard.

In general, location theory suggests that growth in a region's volume of economic activities is directly related to two factors: its access at competitive costs to the inputs of production and its access at competitive costs to markets for the outputs of this production. The quantity and quality of a region's resources, therefore, are significant for growth.

Attempts to construct a theory that would explain the process of subnational development, however, are of relatively more recent origin. Two distinct theoretical frameworks have emerged. One, largely attributed to the work of Edgar M. Hoover, is frequently referred to as the "stages" theory. The other, or alternative approach, known as the "export base" theory, is the result of work initiated by Douglass C. North.

(ii) "Stages" Theory

"Stages" theory is an extension of location theory combined with generalizations derived from empirical studies and

observations of structural change facilitated and partially caused by technological progress. The theory posits regional development primarily as an internal evolutionary process and subsequently defines the "normal" sequence of development stages in a region (i.e., the stages through which regions experience economic growth). It is suggested that the development of most regions will be characterized by a progression of development from an initial stage of a self-sufficient subsistence economy ultimately to an advanced stage of rapid self-sustaining growth where there is specialization in certain tertiary industries for export, including the export of capital, specialized personnel, and services to less advanced regions.[8] The sequence, therefore, is a threshold-by-threshold upward movement as resource exports expand and as regional markets grow in size.

In many ways "stages" theory is descriptive of the national development of Great Britain as opposed to the rest of the world. "In North America many (if not most) regions were initially developed because their natural resource base provided a direct incentive for capitalistic exploitation. Each region began its economic history in the framework of a market society. The subsistence stage was entirely absent. An external demand for the region's resources or products was the major stimulus which generated settlement and

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8. The initial step in the development process is a particularly difficult one where two critical conditions must be met. The first involves a reduction of transfer costs. In a developing economy, the best probable method of accomplishing this condition is by improving the transportation network. Lower transfer costs thus make it possible to trade with other regions. By shifting the region's resources into that use (or uses) which provide the greatest competitive advantage, the second condition is satisfied and a basis for trade is established.

development."[9]

(iii) "Export Base" Theory

"Export base" theory is an extension of location theory combined with aspects of international trade theory that are useful for subnational analysis. In the "export base" framework, capital is attracted to any region promising favourable profit opportunities in the amount necessary to create whatever requirements are needed (including transfer, processing, and service facilities) to exploit the natural resource base of the region. Income received from the sale of the export will induce some further investment in population-serving or residentiary activities, the extent of which depends on whether the resource is exploited under labour intensive or extensive conditions and the resulting income distribution. With a highly unequal distribution, development of residentiary activity will be limited. With a more equal distribution much more development will be encouraged. However, continued growth of the region is directly a function of the expansion of its exports. Expansion of the export sector may occur because of "the improved position of existing exports relative to competing areas or as a result of the development of new exports."[10] If the initial export has required large investments in transfer facilities and other types of social overhead then external economies are created which

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9. J.C. Stabler, "Exports and Evolution: The Process of Regional Change," Regional Economics: Theory and Practice (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1970), p. 52.

10. Douglass C. North, "Location Theory and Regional Economic Growth," Regional Economics: Theory and Practice (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1970), p. 40.

facilitate the development of other exports. However, the transition to a manufacturing base may be neither necessary nor desireable. (Within the framework of "stages" theory, failure to make the transition to an industrial base places the region outside the mainstream of economic progress.)

In focusing on the growth-generating capacity of industries producing for "external" markets, "export base" theory has noted one of the major determinants of regional development. However, changing technology and the income elasticity of demand for the region's products are also important considerations, especially in the long run as "resource endowment" is continually redefined by changes in national final and intermediate demand, production technology, and economic organization. The economic growth of a region, therefore, is directly related to its relative advantages in the production of goods and services for the national market or from a favourable degree of access to the national markets - more appropriately, from a combination of the two factors (i.e., cumulative advantage).

Thus, both theories - "stages" and "export base" theory - concentrate on important aspects of subnational growth, but each is only a partial explanation of the complete process.

(iv) Development Pole Theory

One further element should be introduced in the discussion of the theoretical aspects of the location of economic activity and regional economic growth - the notion of growth poles as formulated by Francois Perroux.

According to Perroux, the national economy presents itself as a combination of relatively active systems ("motor" or propulsive industries, poles of geographically agglomerated industries and activities) and of relatively passive industries ("affected" industries, regions dependent on geographically agglomerated poles). The first induces the phenomenon of growth on the second. Development pole theory, therefore, states that "growth does not appear everywhere at the same time; it becomes manifest at points or poles of growth, with variable intensity; it spreads through different channels, with variable terminal effects on the whole economy."[11] To lift itself to higher economic levels, therefore, "an economy must and will first develop within itself one or several regional centers of economic strength. This need for the emergence of 'growing points' or 'growth poles' in the course of the development process means that international and interregional inequality of growth is an inevitable concomitant and condition of growth itself."[12]

A Model of System Change:

Developing an adequate appreciation for the requirements of transforming a lagging socio-economic system and the manner in which limitations of the system may be overcome through the regional development effort has yet to be provided, in a comprehensive

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11. Francois Perroux, "Note on the Concept of Growth Poles," Regional Economics: Theory and Practice (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1970), p. 94.

12. Albert O. Hirshmann, "Interregional and International Transmission of Economic Growth," Regional Economics: Theory and Practice (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1970), p. 105.

manner, in the discussion of regional economic theory. Therefore, the following model of system transformation is presented to fill that void.[13]

The model is pertinent because it provides a foundation for dealing with resources development, human settlement patterns, and industrial location, which are core considerations in regional development efforts. It might also be suggested that the concepts of regional specialization and activity linkages, with which the model concerns itself, provides valuable organizing concepts for dealing with the problem of planning for the development of the small prairie community in an era of change.

Economic growth in all of its dimensions is primarily a result of the application of new technique - new to the nation in the case of national development; new to the region where the focus is on regional economic growth. The application of new technique calls inevitably for a change in the organization of economic activity.

Particularly important is the fact that new economic techniques are accompanied by an increase in the specialization of function. The greater specialization of function implies that each specialized activity must extend its linkages to activities external to itself (as it reaches out for productive inputs and seeks outlets for its products) and increase its dependence upon,

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13. The model presented is an abstract of that developed by Resources for the Future, Inc. and presented in Design for a Worldwide Study of Regional Development (Baltimore: The John Hokins Press, 1966, pp. 17-22.

and interdependence with, other activities. Thus, growing specialization associated with economic development creates within the total economic system a network of activity "subsystems" that have especially strong functional ties growing out of the complementarity of specialization.

National economic growth, however, does not occur at a predetermined point. The system of specialized activities emerges in space. A discernible pattern of regional specialization emerges, characterized by evolving urban subsystems - with their associated hinterlands - that vary in form and size and that represent an hierarchy of functionally interrelated activity clusters within the total economy. Its special form is dictated in part by the distribution of natural resources and of human skills and in part by the requirements for more elaborate communication and organization growing out of activity specialization. Thus, the different regions of an economy share in the total national economic growth in a way that is largely dictated by present and emerging activity linkages.

The earlier stages of regional development and urban clustering tend to be an outgrowth of external activity linkages associated with a limited number of industries or activities. Usually these linkages with the rest of the country result from resource exploitation and are superimposed on an undifferentiated subsistence economy, or appear de novo in an empty region. A rather ubiquitous type of urban cluster is the agricultural town that performs an importing-exporting role for farm products and

supplies and that becomes the nodal point of an extensive regional activity network. These embryonic agglomerations of economic activity are usually spawned by the economic growth of the larger economy that seeks to extend its resource base, its organizational control, its capacity for exchange or its specialized sources of relaxation and education (the heartland - hinterland concept). The various regional agglomerations, therefore, tend to grow or decline as the markets for the export products increase or decrease and as individual regions continue to be competitive in national (and/or world) markets.

If the markets for the regional export industries continue to grow, then the regional complex can be expected to grow as the initial external link formed by its export specialization is supplemented by additional external links formed by import functions. Further, the regional complex may be expected to pass through a phase of significant consolidation and internal growth (i.e., a marked reduction in dependency upon the outside in local servicing and trade, food processing and basic transportation). At the same time, however, some increase in the import of products and services needed for the growing export activities can be expected. Urban centers during this phase, therefore, are doing more for themselves, but at the same time are extending the range of their demands upon the parent economy or abroad.

Once this level is attained, the emergent line of economic growth can then move into yet another phase. The range of export activities and basic production can be expected to

continue to widen as output in various items comes into surplus allowing the larger urban centers to become self-sufficient in some of the more advanced requirements - professional services, utilities, construction - and to contribute to the nuture of smaller sister communities (i.e. the subdominant communities in the hinterland).

If the development process continues, the regional complex moves into a surplus position for a whole range of advanced community or system-serving functions (e.g., government, wholesale trade, entertainment, personal services, and warehousing). At the same time, it loses its export status in some of the more basic resource activities characteristic of its embryonic phase and continues its dependency upon the metropolitan centers of the nation for more advanced business services and manufacturing. The more advanced emerging cities within the regional complex may advance even more and emerge as the central ganglia of the national economic system.

All regions, of course, do not advance through the entire process described as the growth experience of each region is different in terms of the level and variety of economic activity it can attain, the rate of growth generated by its activity linkages, and the stages of economic advance achieved at any point in time. Thus it is that national economic growth is manifest in its regional subsystems in different ways and gives rise to differential regional economic growth.

THE OBJECTS OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC PLANNING

"In most countries experiencing rapid economic development, a not uncommon circumstance is the existence of a sharp disparity of fortunes between newly industrialized urban areas and the rest of the country. An effort is often made, therefore, to ameliorate the political strains created by this so-called 'economic dualism' by initiating special regional development programs."[14] The primary goal of regional economic planning, therefore, has been traditionally to raise "the region's" rate of economic progress to at least parity with the rest of the nation (i.e., regional economic growth with a special emphasis on a variation of the balanced growth problem is typical of most regional development program goals).

The Role of Government:

Given the existence of interregional differences in prosperity, the broad policy problems for government become:

(i) whether or not to intervene in an attempt to reduce these differences; and,

(ii) if intervention is considered appropriate, how to intervene most effectively.[15]

In principle government could decide these questions within the framework of standard cost-benefit analysis by first

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14. J.R. Meyer, "Regional Economics: A Survey," Regional Analysis (Penguin Books Ltd., 1968), p. 28.

15. L. Needleman, Regional Analysis (Penguin Books Ltd., 1968), p. 8.

deciding what its objectives were that would accomplish the generalized "balanced growth" goal and the relative weight of each (i.e., the objective function). An attempt would then be made to forecast how the objectives would be affected in the absence of intervention; also what would be the effect of specific intervention programs. The policy would then be sought (which might be non-intervention) which resulted in the highest value of the objective function. As an example, as long as the costs of intervention to reduce unemployment, ignoring non-fiscal effects, are less than the loss in revenue through letting that unemployment remain, intervention would be economically feasible.

Given that government feels justified in intervening, the question remains - how can government intervene most effectively? The answer depends partly on what government wants to achieve in their regional policy and partly on the nature of the regional problem in each particular case. Clearly, if the government's major objective in regional policy is to reduce unemployement in less prosperous regions, the appropriate combination of measures may well be different from that which will most effectively raise the average income level in those regions. In some circumstances, measures which raise the average income in a region could lead to increases in unemployment.

The Objective Function

"The desired economic end embodied in most community and regional development programs is a simple one-dimensional objective: to secure the largest possible increase in the number of available

jobs in the region. In many instances, the expansion of the region's employment base is accepted virtually without question as an expression of development policy."[16] The reasons for this myopic view of regional development will not be discussed. Rather, that an increase in employment is, by itself, both a necessary and sufficient condition for increased community welfare is questioned. Economic objectives other than maximizing the number of available jobs are, therefore, relevant. Thus, in most regional development programs, if not all, the following objectives could be sought:[17]

> (1) An increase in national production, income, and employment.
>
> This objective, concerned with economic efficiency and national economic progress, might extend from the building up of the economic base of a "new" or frontier region to the provision of additional growth leverage in relatively backward regions.
>
> (2) Evolution of an improved pattern of rural and urban human settlement and productive activities.
>
> Migration to one city or a few giant cities may be so large that it is deemed economically and socially undesireable. Regional development may be conceived of as a way to achieve decentralization or counter-centralization by increasing the holding power of the countryside and creating new "growth poles" (increasing the attractiveness of selected provincial towns for industrial and service activities).

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16. C.L. Leven, "Establishing Goals for Regional Economic Development," Regional Development and Planning (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1964), p. 585.

17. The objectives presented are those documented by Resources for the Future, Inc. in Design for a Worldwide Study of Regional Development, pp. 10-12.

(3) Differential improvement in a region's level of living compared to the rest of the nation, so as to promote equalization of income and opportunity.

This objective is generally motivated by the feeling that certain groups or subcultures have not gained as much as others in a nation's economic and social advance. It is felt that this is inequitable, generates social tensions, and political dangers, and limits overall national advance. Thus a regional development program may be intended to raise levels of living and economic competence within the subject region at a rate higher than the average for the nation as a whole.

(4) Integration of a region into the national culture.

Where a region is particularly isolated and backward compared to the rest of the nation, a regional development effort generally puts a high priority on the objective of bringing the people of the region into the mainstream of national life - culturally, socially, and politically, as well as economically. In some instances, however, regional development efforts are undertaken to maintain the cultural identity of a region, or of various regions within the nation.

(5) Advancing the social development of the region.

Generally, this objective is to bring about a social system in which modernization is pursued energetically and the society becomes more open, with ever-increasing opportunities for upward mobility. Often an effort is made to bring social development into an economic development context so as to cope with social problems more effectively (such as crime and family instability in relation to unemployment).

(6) Evolving an improved organizational and administrative form for carrying out economic and social development objectives.

Often a major reason for the launching of a special regional effort is the assumption that a more powerful development drive can be achieved through the use of a specifically designed regional operational apparatus. Frequently a regional authority with broad powers is established and special administrative regulations are brought into being in an effort to escape the presumed limitations of existing organizational and administrative forms.

In the long run, logical conflict and inconsistency are not implicit among these various objectives. "Gains in economic efficiency may increase the possibilities for a more equitable distribution of income. Achieving equity goals may bring economic non-participants into the mainstream of economic activity and thus support economic efficiency. Programs of social transformation that are tied to goals of improved equity and efficiency may contribute to social and cultural advance which cannot be equally achieved in their absence. Political stability may make easier and more effective the gains in efficiency and equity."[18]

In the short run, however, conflicts can develop among the various objectives, examples of which are the following:[19]

(i) a more equitable distribution of income may temporarily lessen the flow of investment or hamper the growth of total output;

(ii) in some cases, social transformations may be brought only at the expense of halting or reversing productive activities that satisfy immediate demands;

(iii) programs designed to bring a region into fuller participation in the economy may require investments sorely needed for infrastructure in other regions; and,

(iv) development programs may create or aggravate conditions of political instability.

These, and other, conflicts are discussed in greater detail in the following section - The Obstacles in Regional Economic Planning.

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18. Resources for the Future, Inc. Design for a Worldwide Study of Regional Development (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1966), p. 12.

19. Ibid., p. 13.

THE OBSTACLES IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC PLANNING

The following analysis of the obstacles, explicit or implicit, to regional economic planning is selective. Because of the myriad of problem areas encountered in regional economic planning, the discussion will be confined to a limited number of major typical conflict situations.

Delineating Functional Economic Areas:

"Implicit in the study of regional planning is the concept of economic space. The establishment of common markets; changes in zones of influence; conflict of policies of territorial remodelling: these are not merely controversial topics: they invoke questions affecting prosperity and the development of national space."[20]

Traditionally three different approaches have been used in defining regions. "The first stresses 'homogeneity' with respect to some one or combination of physical, economic, social, or other characteristics; the second emphasizes so-called 'nodality' or 'polarization' usually around some central urban place; and the third is 'programming' or 'policy oriented' concerned mainly with administrative coherence or identity between the area being studied and available political institutions for effectuating policy decisions."[21] Regional definitions as established in practice, however, often represent a compromise between these different pure

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20. J.R. Boudeville, Problems of Regional Economic Planning (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1966), p. 1.

21. J.R. Meyer, "Regional Economics: A Survey," Regional Analysis (Penguin Books Ltd., 1968), p. 23.

types. Moreover, the three traditional definitions of regional type are not mutually exclusive, but are simply variations on the homogeneity criterion. The only real question is what kind of homogeneity is being sought.

If economic homogeneity is the criterion used for delineating the region (i.e., a functional economic area) then the term 'region' could be used to describe "a group of geographically contiguous areas which have certain common or complementary characteristics or which are tied by extensive interareal activity or flows."[22] Regional economies, however, are almost invariably more open, in the sense of being more reliant on external trade and institutions, than national economies.

Delineating the areal extent of regions defined in terms of "economic homogeneity" (i.e., the geographical extent of activity linkages) is not a process that produces a finite limit or discrete geographical area. Due to the nature of activity linkages and economic growth, the economic region, therefore, is limitless. Thus, the nature of the existence - non-existence conflict previously discussed becomes clear.

The problem in regional economic planning, therefore, is one of artificially limiting the areal extent of the economic region to a geographical entity such that economic planning is

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22. H.S. Perloff, et al., Regions, Resources, and Economic Growth (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960), p. 4.

viable. For practical purposes, the real determinant of regional boundaries may often be homogeneity with respect to statistical compilations.

Economic Efficiency:

Technically, economic efficiency means "an organization of production and distribution of the national product so that the highest total real value of output is achieved with the resources available."[23] The pertinent point is that national economic efficiency may require that the volume of economic activity in certain areas grow less rapidly than in others or actually decline. Conversely, the question as to whether a nation's income as a whole is being increased or diminished through a regional effort may be a critical one in many instances.

In general, there are at least three major reasons why optimization at the national level may be inconsistent with optimization at the level of the region. "First, where there are multi-dimensional economic goals, the preference patterns of regions may be such that there will not be a consistent ordering of these goals at the national level. Second, even if maximum output were the only goal, each region's share in the relocation costs needed to achieve it may not be equal to their share in the resultant gains. Third, in either case, external economies or diseconomies in production extending across regional boundaries have not been taken into account."[24]

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23. Ibid., p. 56.

24. C.L. Leven, "Establishing Goals for Regional Economic Development," Regional Development and Planning (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1964), p. 586.

Even an individual region acting unilaterally, and concerned only with its own welfare, would have to take into account at least the third of these possible inconsistencies - the effect on its own production functions or developments in other regions. The problem for regional economic planning, therefore, becomes one of resolving the apparent conflict between adopting policies for optimizing economic development in every region and a single optimum policy for a set of regions (i.e., the nation) as a whole while simultaneously attempting to ameliorate the political strains caused by a sharp disparity of fortunes between newly industrialized urban areas and the rest of the country (i.e., "economic dualism" and the "balanced growth" problem).

Migration:

Where the regional problem is largely a matter of an uneven dispersement of unemployment between regions, there are broadly two types of policy that can be followed: either work opportunities can be expanded in the depressed areas (which is constrained by "economic efficiency") or the workers in the depressed areas can be encouraged to move to the prosperous areas. The first policy may involve persuading firms outside the impoverished region to move to or set up branches within the region, or, by making industrial conditions within the region so favourable by tax incentives that the existing firms within the region expand so as to absorb all the surplus labour. The second policy relies unequivocally on encouraging more labour mobility.

Beyond the effects of migration on population size, are the numerous development consequences that may arise because of the composition of the migrants. The people who migrate most readily in search of work are the young and the enterprising, the adaptable and the skilled, and it is not among these but among the older workers that persistent unemployment tends to be concentrated. Consequently, programs designed to induce migration to the prosperous areas may denude the depressed region of its key technicians and managers as well as of the more enterprising young. Further, the sex-age-marital composition of the migrants, by affecting general fertility rates, may have an important bearing on potential for future population growth on each of the "losing" and "gaining" regions and consequently on development needs and policies.

Further, emigration from the less populous to the more prosperous regions "reduces aggregate demand with the depressed region and tends to increase it within the prosperous region. The unemployed in the depressed area spend even though they are unemployed, so that when they emigrate, aggregate demand within the region falls by an amount equal to the expenditure of the emigrants plus any multiplier effects generated. The higher the level of public assistance to the unemployed, the greater the depressing effect of emigration. On the other hand, the immigration of previously unemployed workers into the fully employed prosperous areas will, in the first few years at least, add to the inflationary pressure of such regions rather than reduce it. The output of the newly employed immigrant increases aggregate supply, but the consumption

of the immigrant and his family, and much more important, the social and industrial investment done by him or on his behalf in the first few years after the move adds much more to the aggregate demand and so produces a net effect that is inflationary for a number of years. The more that social capital, such as housing, schools and hospitals is provided by public authorities, the greater will be the inflationary effect of immigration into the region of full employment."[25]

Which policy is emphasized - expansion of work opportunities or migration - in the government's overall strategy for dealing with regional unemployment depends very much on the traditions, institutions, and economic circumstances of the area concerned. Efforts to encourage migration may be subverted and uneconomic unless the personal side - the social, psychological, economic, and environmental determinants of migration decisions by individuals - is taken into explicit account.

Legal, Political, Organizational, & Administrative Factors:

The framework of law, the nature of indigenous political institutions, the structure of governmental activities, and the quality and character of administrative practice constitute important elements of the environment within which regional economic planning is undertaken. A regional development program is authorized and undertaken within the institutional framework that governs the country as a whole. Therefore, although the development program is only concerned with a portion of the nation, the legal institutions,

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25. L. Needleman, Regional Analysis (Penguin Books Ltd., 1968), pp. 14-15.

the political environment, and the structure of the nation's governmental activities, will have a profound influence upon the conduct of the regional economic planning effort.

The Settlement Pattern:

In the ideal situation, a nation would benefit from "a well-developed, highly diversified network of cities, towns, and rural areas capable of (i) maintaining effective relations among resource-exploiting activities, centers of productive facilities cum infrastructure, and markets for goods and services; (ii) providing for increasing versatility in the employment of capital and labour; and (iii) expanding economic channels to transmit the consequences of development - such as higher levels of living, social development advances, and increased labour productivity - to all groups in the country."[26] Thus, a crucial policy issue confronting the regional development effort, and consequently the process of regional economic planning, can be simply stated: How is it possible to intervene in the processes which at present determine the geographic flows of capital and investment, in order to evolve a settlement pattern for the region and the nation as a whole which is conducive to rapid development?

SUMMARY

Unless a region has already attained a variety of activities that constitute a more or less integrated economic system and a level

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26. Resources for the Future, Inc. Design for a Worldwide Study of Regional Development (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1966), p. 32.

of affluence that will support and/or attract substantial capital, it cannot ordinarily expect to develop internal growth dynamics that will carry it forward on its own momentum. Consequently, most regions whose activities have a primitive systemic character have to rely upon the parent economy for the developmental initiative and for the extended links that will permit it to share in national growth. When these links are inadequate to maintain a favourable balance between population and productive opportunities, disadvantaged regions result.

Regional economic planning efforts therefore can be described as attempts to forge powerful new activity linkages - to change the relationship between export and import activities. The tools utilized to accomplish this end are the establishment or encouragement of directly productive - job-creating and income-increasing - investment flows; infrastructure investment flows which look forward to the development of natural resources, the improvement of human resources, and the extension of transportation and communication links as well as other essential social and economic overhead; and the encouragement of migration when this is essential to the achievement of some reasonable relationship between population and productive opportunities when the movements of population are not by themselves adequately equilibrating.

CONCLUSION

Regional economic theory and the concepts of "regional specialization" and "activity linkage" provide the organizational and conceptual framework within which the general problem of planning

for the development of the small prairie community in an era of rural change will be focused and a planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community will be developed. Utilizing the two concepts, it is possible to examine the small prairie community as it relates to other settlements within the prairie community system, the function it performs within a particular geographic area or region, and the changes it is forced to make to ensure that the social and economic functions it performs remain viable over time. Reference to the concepts of "regional specialization" and "activity linkage", although not made specifically, is inherent in much of the discussion that follows and is particularly important in the discussions contained in Chapter Three on "The Modern Prairie Community System" and "The Farm City Dominated Community System".

Although considerable emphasis has been placed on the two economic concepts and their importance to the focus and approach of the thesis, the overall discussion on regional economic theory nevertheless, is as equally important as the two concepts in developing a planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community. The discussion of regional theories and models forms the base, and is inherent to, the analysis and the evolution of the "Prairie Community System in Canada" (Chapter Three). The obstacles to regional economic planning (e.g., migration, economic efficiency, legal, political, and administrative factors, and the settlement pattern) form one set of constraints in planning for the small prairie community. Other constraints, such as a limited human resource base, an inadequate financial resource base, and social

barriers, are explored in Chapter Four. The examination of the objects of regional economic planning becomes particularly important to the discussion in Chapter Six: Planning of the Small Prairie Community in an Era of Rural Change. Specifically, the object of "evolving an improved organizational and administrative form for carrying out economic and social development objectives" is central to the discussion of Chapter Six, as it is the contention of the thesis that a reorganization of local government is a prerequisite to planning and maintaining the small prairie community as a viable production - consumption and living community of man.

CHAPTER THREE
The Prairie Community System

THE SYSTEM CONCEPT

The word "system" has been used a number of times in the preceeding chapters in ways in which it is hoped that its meaning is implicit in its usage. A formal definition of the concept is, however, required to facilitate the following analysis of the Prairie Community System in Canada.

The Definition of a System:

In the most general sense, "a system is the phenomenon or idea of an interacting of interdependent elementary components which form a unified whole with a common goal and purpose."[27] The term "system", therefore, stands for plan, method, order, and arrangement. While this is useful, it is better to attempt more precision, and the definition following is preferred. "A system is a set of objects together with relationships between the objects and

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27. W. Willborn, "Systems, Management Systems, Systems Management," (unpublished mimeographed research paper, 1968), p. 1.

between their attributes."[28] The terms "objects", "attributes", and "relationships" are defined as follows:

> (i) Objects are the parts or components of a system, the parameters of systems;
>
> (ii) Attributes are properties of objects. A property is an external manifestation of the way in which an object is known, observed, or introduced in a process. Attributes characterize the parameters (the objects) of systems; and
>
> (iii) Relationships (e.g., activity linkage) are the bonds that link objects and attributes in the system process. Relationships are postulated among all system elements, among systems and sub-systems, and between two or more sub-systems.[29]

In essence, therefore, a system is basically a complex of inter-dependent and interrelated components serving a common purpose. Figure 1: "A System" defines the system concept graphically.

The definition of any particular system is, however, arbitrary. The universe appears to be made up of sets of systems, each contained within one somewhat larger. Just as it is always possible to expand the system to a scope of wider perspective, it is also possible to reduce the system to a smaller version. The critical point is that if what is considered is the interactions affecting one simple entity (e.g., the small prairie community) then that entity must be identified or defined as part of a system (e.g., the Farm City Community System). The system chosen for definition as a system is such because it contains interrelated

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28. G. Chadwick, A Systems View of Planning (Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1971), p. 36.

29. Ibid., pp. 36-37.

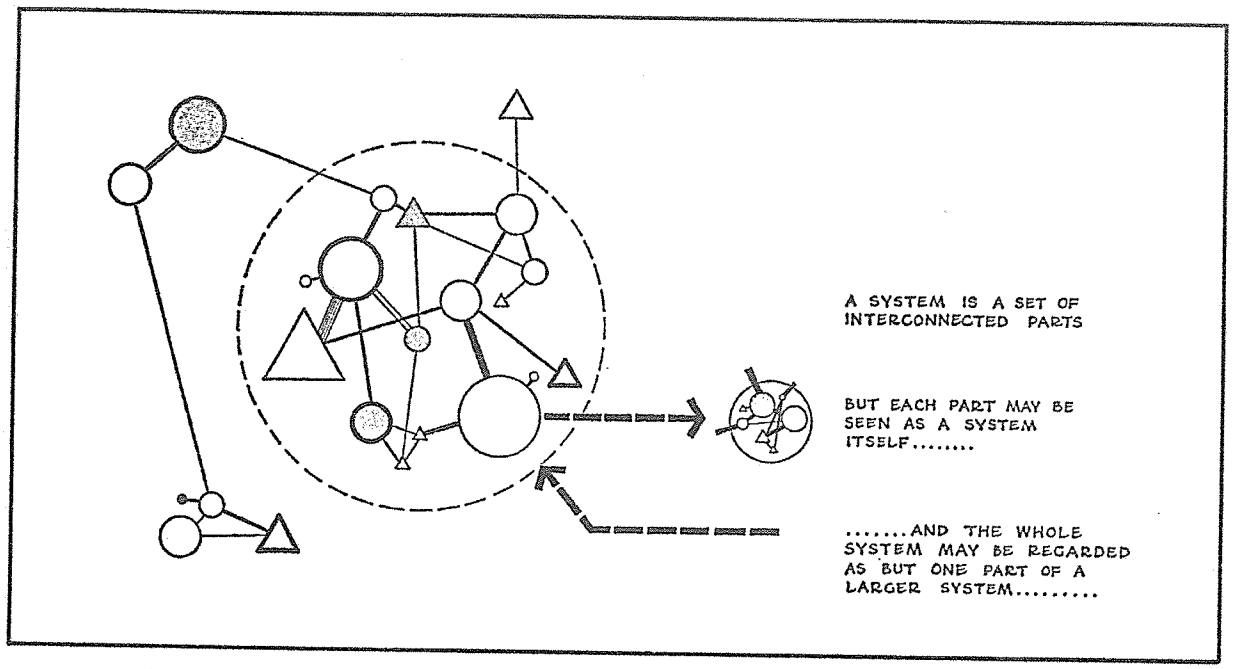

FIGURE 1

A System

SOURCE: J. Brian McLoughlin, Urban and Regional Planning: A Systems Approach (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1969), p. 76.

parts, and in some sense is a complete whole in itself.[30] The entity being considered however, will certainly be part of a number of such systems, each of which is a sub-system of a series of larger systems (e.g., the Prairie Community System).[31]

The small prairie community therefore, is defined as a component within a system - the Farm City Community System - and the Farm City Community System is identified as a sub-system within the larger system of the Prairie Community.[32]

THE PRAIRIE COMMUNITY SYSTEM IN CANADA

Site of the Prairie Community

The interior of Western Canada, the small communities of which form the topic of "Development and Planning of the Small Prairie Community in an Era of Change", is known collectively as the Prairie Provinces. It is with the large central area of treeless plain that the study is concerned (Map 1). Although there is a certain proportion of the population associated with industries such as coal mining, oil drilling, and potash recovery, the

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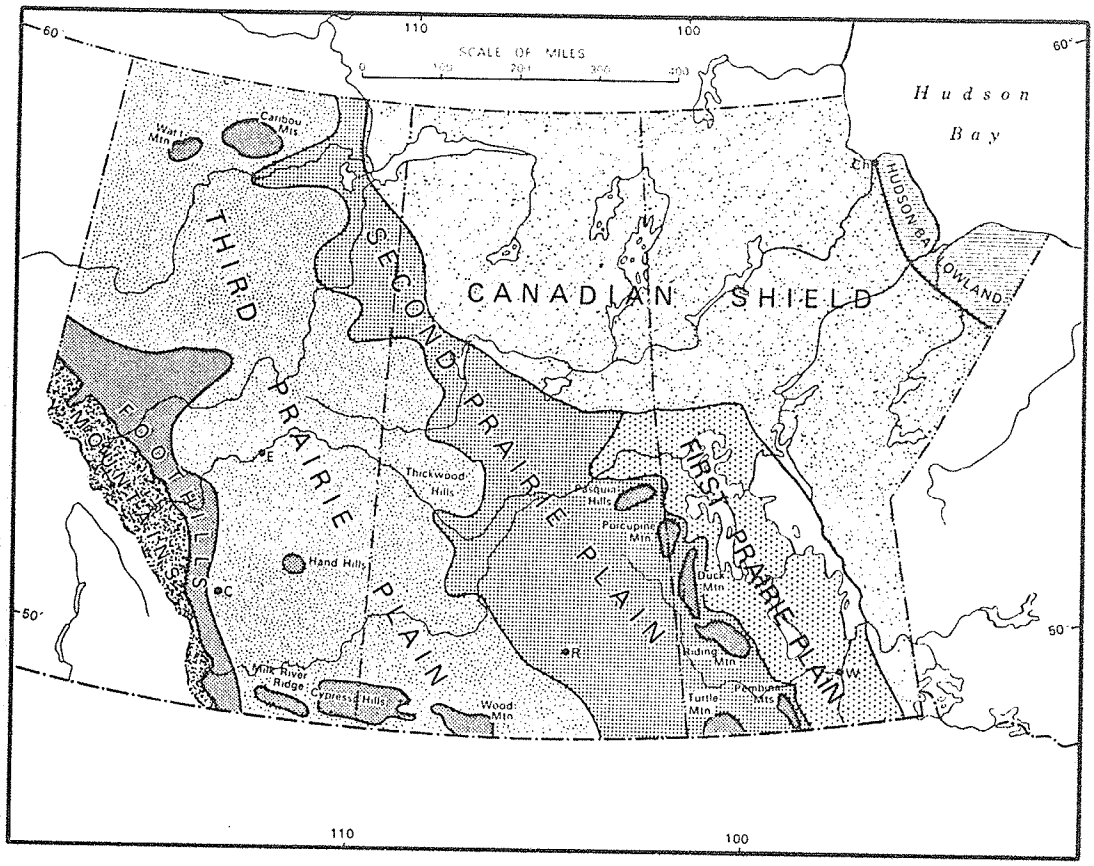
30. The definition of the Farm City Community System as a system follows from the analysis of the Prairie Community System in Canada.

31. J. B. McLoughlin, Urban and Regional Planning: A Systems Approach (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1969), p. 77.

32. The size and location of cities are dependent upon their functions. Trading centers in which economic activities relatively free of input constraints locate tend to form an hierarchical system of cities. From this underlying trade framework differences occur because human and natural resources are not uniformly distributed. Thus, a group of cities and central places in a region is in fact a system of systems of cities and is, as such, susceptible of the same kinds of analysis and characterized by the same generalizations, constructs, and models as other systems.



MAP 1

Site of the Prairie Community

SOURCE: D. F. Putnam & R. G. Putnam, Canada: A Regional Analysis (Toronto: J. B. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1970), p. 252.

large majority of people are closely related with agriculture or those serving the farm and ranching population. Scattered throughout the area are semi-autonomous groups of native Indians and Metis (mixed bloods), colonies of Hutterites, and Mennonite settlements. These settlements, however, are dwarfed by the extensive system of prairie wheat agriculture and related rural communities.

Evolution of the Prairie Community System:

In spite of interregional variations, the farming economy of the prairies may be characterized (i) as an industry settled within a unique institutional framework (the "homestead" provision of the Land Act of 1872), (ii) subject to a high degree of climatic and market uncertainty, and (iii) in which the period of development and adjustment was accompanied by an accelerating rate of technological innovation. These three characteristics of the environment that produced a degree of uniformity in prairie agriculture and the related settlement pattern, form the basic framework for examining the process of development and adjustment of the prairie community system.[33]

For convenience, the examination of the prairie community system has been divided into three periods: the settlement phase, the adjustment phase, and the stabilization phase. The latter of these periods - "the stabilization phase" - for which various possible future prospects of the small prairie community are explored, forms the fundamental component of Chapter Five.

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33. The primary sources of information relating to "Evolution of the Prairie Community System" were (i) STAHL, John, "Prairie Agriculture: A Prognosis," Prairie Perspectives, David P. Gagan (ed.), (Toronto: Holt, Rhinehart, & Winston Ltd., 1970), (ii) ZIMMERMAN, Carle C. & MONEO, Garry W., The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), and (iii) FUGITT, Glenn V., "The City and Countryside," Rural Sociology, 29 (September, 1963).

(i) The Settlement Phase

Throughout the first two thirds of the 19th century, development on the prairies was limited to a fairly small population clustered along the river bottoms and other well-watered areas. Being few in number and relatively isolated, the colonists practiced an agriculture that was basically self sufficient in nature. Beginning in 1870, however, a series of events occurred that were to signal the start of a new era in the Canadian West. The Government of Canada, having awakened to the awareness that the West could, and should, make a significant contribution to the building of the nation, extended her sovereignty over the West; title of the lands held by the Hudson's Bay Company was transferred to Canada (1870) and the Province of Manitoba was created.

The institutional arrangement made to bring about the requisite settlement and the major instrument for disposing of public lands in the West was the "homestead" provision of the Land Act of 1872. Under this legislation, the head of a family could make application for 160 acres of unalienated land. The applicant was prohibited from applying for more than one tract of land and was required to satisfy certain residence and improvement conditions within three years. If at the end of three years these conditions were met, the settler was granted patent, or title, such title allowing the individual full rights in fee simple to his "homestead".

Before documenting the settlement pattern that was characteristic of this early phase of development, two significant factors that provided the technical capability for westward expansion should be noted. The first of these was the arrival of a colony of Mennonites in Manitoba during 1875. Earlier settlers lacked the techniques

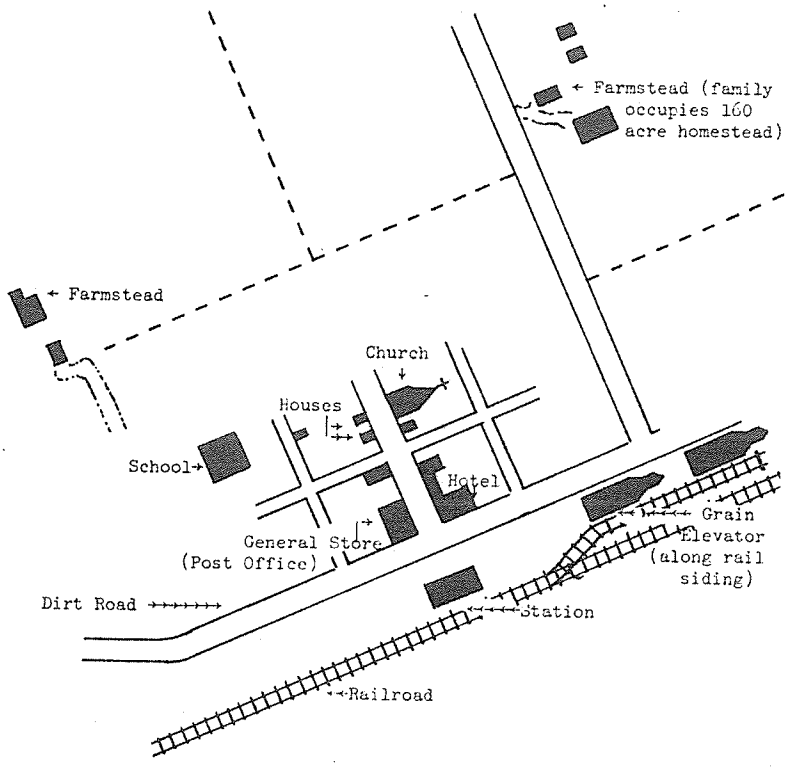
essential for development of this unfamiliar, and often hostile, environment. The Mennonites, however, coming from the steppes of Southern Russia, were experienced in the ways of farming in the "new land" and, therefore, led the way in showing others that agriculture could be practised in such an environment.

The second barrier to westward expension dissolved with the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885. This trans-continental link, with feeder lines fanning throughout the prairies, became a colonizing agent and, through its efforts, along with those of the government, settlers poured into the Canadian West. The goal of settling the Prairies with a class of independent proprietors was thus achieved with the completion of the C.P.R. and the "homestead" provision of the Land Act of 1872.

The first form, or "settlement type", of the prairie community was a constant succession of small, quickly built villages strung along the rail lines which permeated the cultivated parts of the prairie provinces (Figure 2). Each village, of which there were 1,304 in 1910 and 2,423 in 1930, had a railroad siding and several elevators for grain storage and loading as the economic purpose of the settlement was mainly wheat. The fringes of each, or the inter-stitial space, consisted of isolated 160-acre homesteads.

During this phase of development, social relations centered about the country "neighbourhood". Within the neighbourhood, informal visiting and exchange of work occurred, and families built and carried on many of their own institutions (i.e., schools, churches, cemeteries, and stores). Beyond the country neighbourhood was the nearby village, eight to ten miles distant, which was often the only center to which the rural person turned for other goods and services and to market

[Small (160-acre) homesteads are scattered throughout the surrounding open country, the farthest 8 or 10 miles distance from the trading center.]



THE FIRST FORM OF THE PRAIRIE COMMUNITY WITH ITS SIMPLE (UTILITARIAN) TRADE CENTER AND ISOLATED 160-ACRE HOMESTEADS

[These trade center communities developed along the railroads during the settlement period 1897-1930.]

FIGURE 2

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 6.

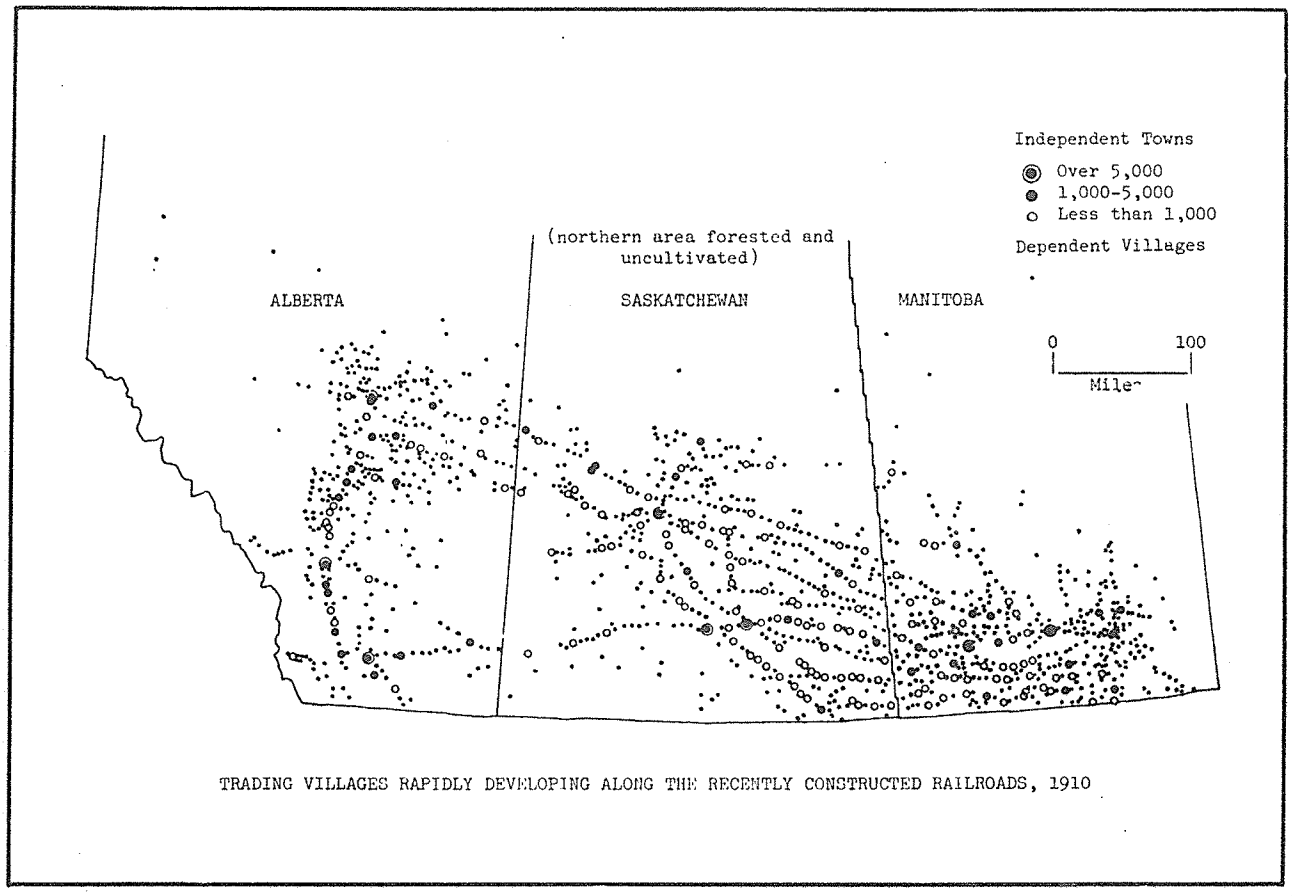
the farm's produce. Thus, the "traditional rural community" of the period included not only the trade center but also the population surrounding the village and living in the open country and were important social entities for their members.

Such communities were never, of course, self-sufficient; neither were all the trading centers identical. There was some differentiation between centers in that between 1910 and 1930 only about ten per cent of all villages - the "independent" towns - included all the then important local institutions for communication and finance (i.e., post offices, telegraphs, express offices, banks, licensed hotels, and newspapers). The remainder - the "dependent" villages - had fewer business establishments, fewer people, and not all of the six key institutions. Nevertheless, the communities were remarkably similar, the ten per cent of fairly complete trading towns being somewhat more elaborate than the other ninety per cent of "dependent" villages (Maps 2, 3, and 4), with each having a clearly defined trade function.

The first phase in the process of development of the prairie community, the one of settlement and initial formation which coincided with the expansion of the railway system during the 1880 - 1930 period, ended with the onset of the violent disruption of the Depression in the early thirties.

(ii) The Adjustment Phase

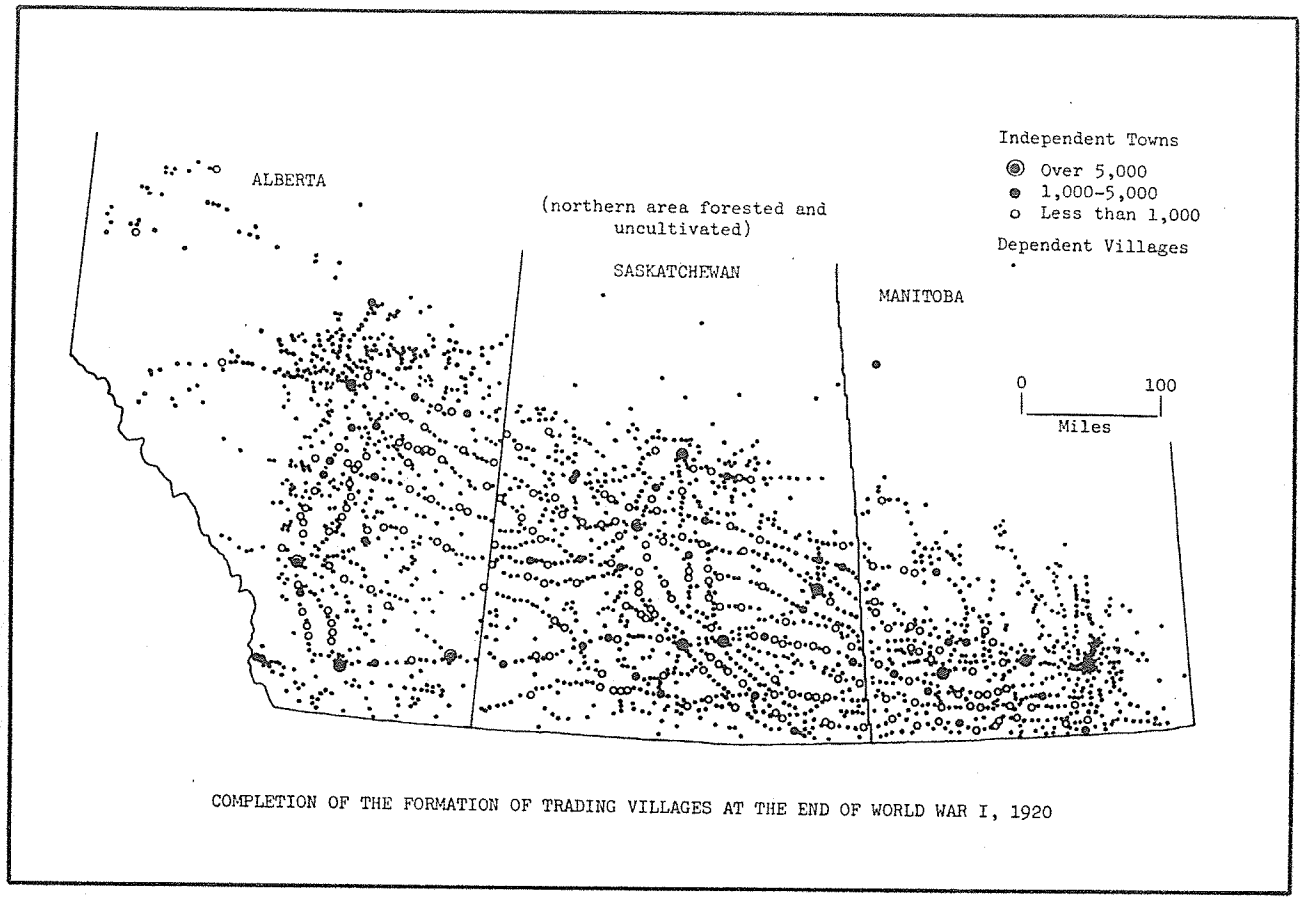
The economic disaster of the thirties was the result of a unique confluence of drought and a collapse in world commodity prices. Either the drought or price collapse alone would have caused economic distress, but the conjunction of the two so wretched the fabric of



TRADING VILLAGES RAPIDLY DEVELOPING ALONG THE RECENTLY CONSTRUCTED RAILROADS, 1910

MAP 2

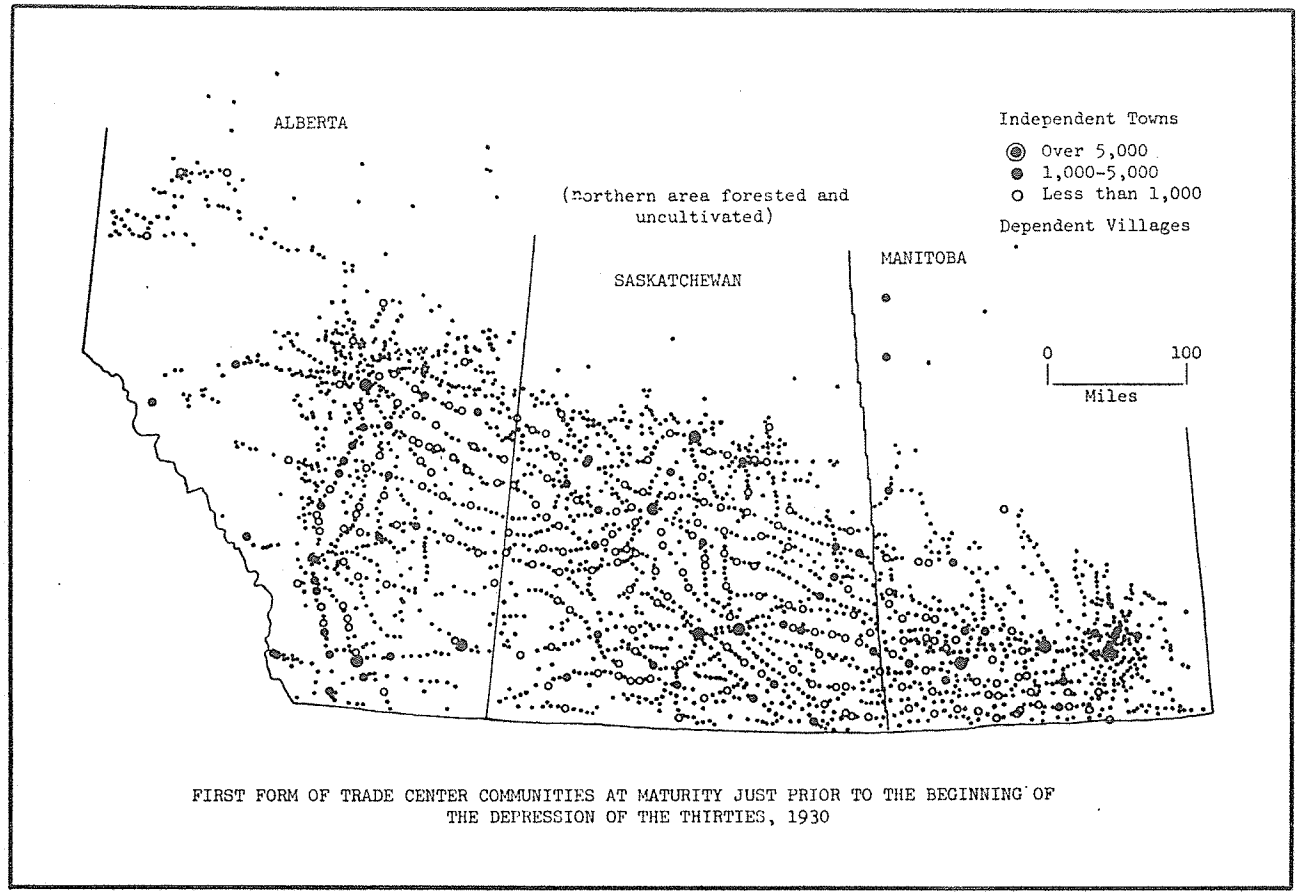
SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 9.



COMPLETION OF THE FORMATION OF TRADING VILLAGES AT THE END OF WORLD WAR I, 1920

MAP 3

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 10.



FIRST FORM OF TRADE CENTER COMMUNITIES AT MATURITY JUST PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE DEPRESSION OF THE THIRTIES, 1930

MAP 4

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 11.

society on the Prairies that the effects are still being felt.[34]

During this period of violent economic disruption, every class of center except the smallest (less than 10 businesses) fell back in the sense that some businesses failed and the villages retreated to a lesser classification (Table 1). The villages with less than 10 establishments, however, increased from 1,571 to 1,893, a rise in proportion to 70% of all centers contrasted with 64.8% which was the case in 1930. Not until 1951 did the number of villages with 70 or more business establishments increase materially over the 23 in 1930.

The drought and Depression of the thirties, therefore, tested and sifted the prairie community system eliminating a substantial proportion of the structure that could not survive the tightened economic conditions (Maps 5, 6, and 7). Similarly, the Depression created a greater differentiation between the independent trading centers and the smaller villages, a phenomenon that was to allow for the development of the second form of the prairie community which began to emerge clearly after the Depression of the thirties.

This second form of prairie community - the "division of labour" type - was characterized by the development of certain centers into embryonic "Farm Cities"[35] that subordinated the remainder of the territory to them including the majority of small villages and the

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34. The extent of the economic disaster in the prairie community stemmed from the high degree of market orientation characteristic of prairie agriculture, the fact that the market for much of the region's output was, and remains so today, international, and that the natural endowment of the prairie community did not allow the farmer to offset unfavourable market conditions for cash crops with subsistence crops.

35. The "Farm Cities" should not be confused with the eleven larger "Prairie Cities" (all of which have certain wholesaling, manufacturing, and government administrative functions not found in the farm cities) that emerged in the thirties and which are excluded from detailed analysis.

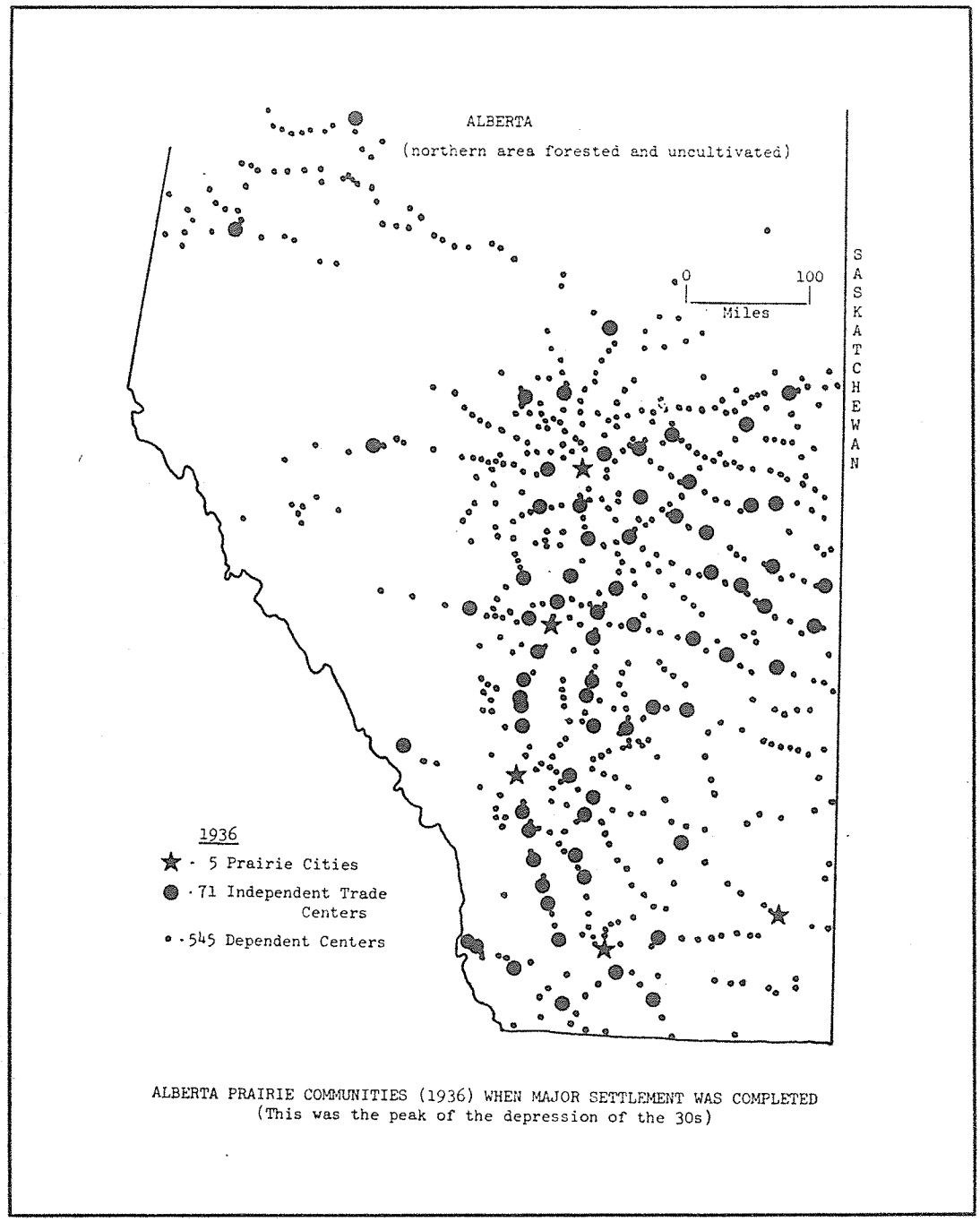
PRAIRIE TRADE CENTERS CLASSIFIED BY NUMBERS OF BUSINESSES, 1910-1966

Business Units in the Centers	1910		1920		1930		1936		1951		1966	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1-9	904	69.3	1490	67.6	1571	64.6	1893	70.0	2066	71.8	1708	73.4
10-19	175	13.4	354	16.1	459	19.0	449	16.3	395	13.7	304	13.0
20-29	122	9.4	203	9.3	218	9.0	216	8.0	197	6.9	124	5.3
30-39	52	4.0	81	3.7	85	3.5	73	2.7	94	3.3	63	2.7
40-49	19	1.5	27	1.2	32	1.3	29	1.1	37	1.3	27	1.2
50-59	18	1.4	18	0.8	21	0.9	18	0.7	22	0.8	24	1.0
60-69	7	0.5	14	0.6	14	0.6	10	0.4	17	0.6	13	0.6
70 and more*	7	0.5	16	0.7	23	0.9	21	0.8	46	1.6	64	2.8
TOTAL	1304	100.0	2203	100.0	2423	100.0	2709	100.0	2874	100.0	2327	100.0

*Excludes the 11 largest prairie cities.

TABLE 1

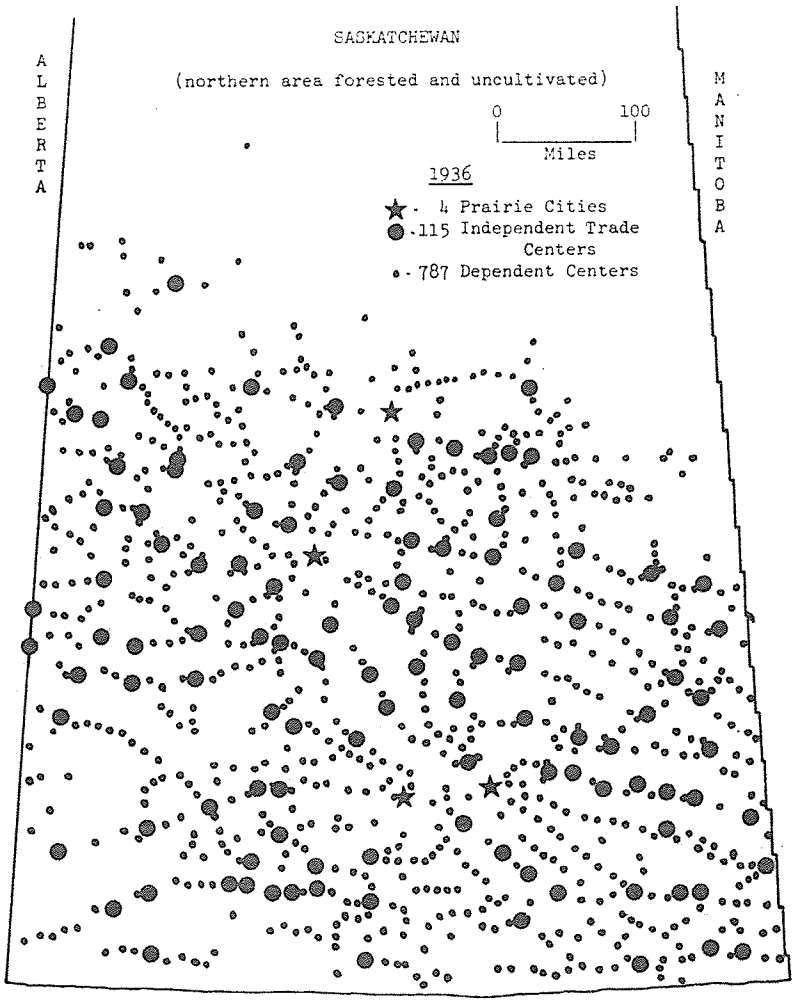
SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 30.



ALBERTA PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES (1936) WHEN MAJOR SETTLEMENT WAS COMPLETED
(This was the peak of the depression of the 30s)

MAP 5

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 36.

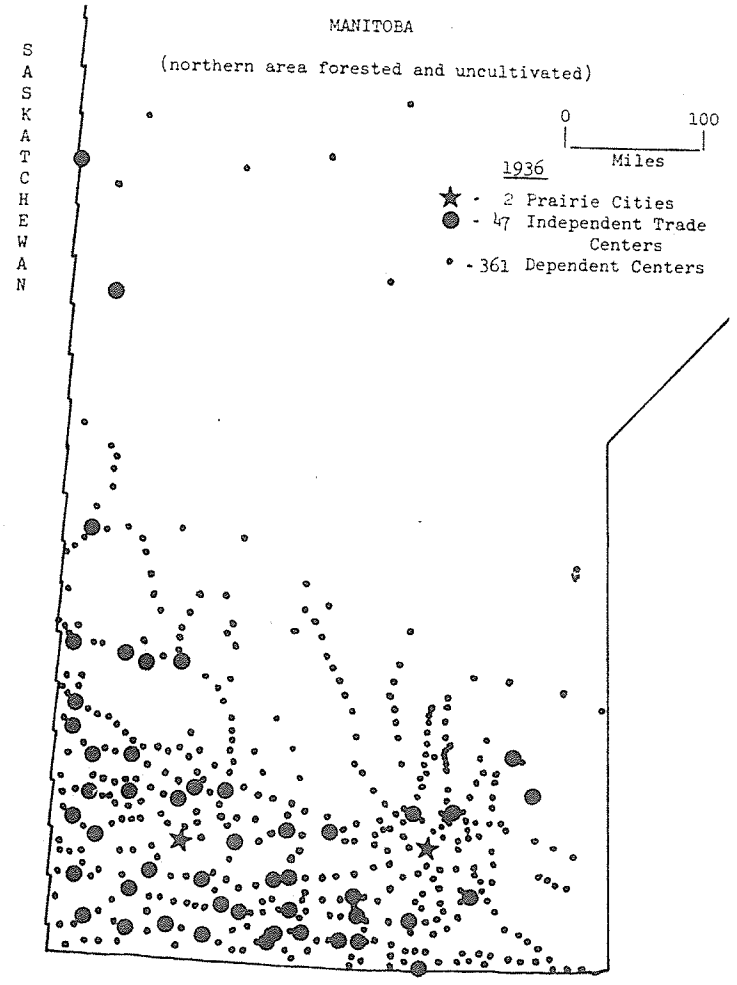


SASKATCHEWAN PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES (1936)
WHEN MAJOR SETTLEMENT WAS COMPLETED

(This was the peak of the depression of the 30s)

MAP 6

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 37.



MANITOBA PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES (1936) WHEN MAJOR SETTLEMENT WAS COMPLETED

(This was the peak of the depression of the 30s)

MAP 7

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 38.

open country. (The division of labour existed in that the economic life of the population of the trade area became largely centered in the independent trade centers and the social life, of a somewhat more personal and neighbourly character, was left to the dependent villages.) The smaller villages could not compete in trade with the larger centers which had begun to offer a larger number and variety of services. The dependent towns, therefore, lost some of their former economic individuality and became more dominated by the larger towns within whose trading areas they were located. Thus, in the years 1936 - 1966 the Farm City developed in the prairies.

In analyzing the transition of the Prairie Community System in the 1936 - 1966 period, four interrelated sets of trends contributed to the rise of the Farm Cities and the domination of the economic sector of the rural area by the Farm City or superior trading town:

(i) changes in transportation and communication;

(ii) changes in trade, institutional, and social relationships;

(iii) rural occupational changes; and,

(iv) population changes.

After the settlement era, which culminated about 1931, and the recovery from the Depression of the 30's, the automobile, probably the single most decisive factor contributing to rural change, and the complementary development of an extensive network of all-weather, hard surface roads made it possible for people in the country to greatly expand their area of contact. Concurrently, railroads, the important factor in the earlier settlement era, began to

lose their complete dominance over transportation. Gas conduits and electric lines began to be substituted for freight traffic in the sense that bulk fuel, such as coal or coke, was no longer concentrated in many of the villages for winter use. Machinery, however, had to be freighted in, but these shipments began to be concentrated at a few favoured towns, and from these, the individual items were trucked to the farms or smaller villages. The separation of rural and urban was reduced by the wider geographic circulation of city newspapers and the general increase in the availability and use of mass media in rural areas. This availability and wide use of new transportation and communication facilities, therefore erased the isolation from the rural scene that was characteristic of the settlement phase.

With the wider range of movement afforded by the advent of the automobile, people in rural areas were no longer required to trade at the nearest center. Increased demands for more specialized goods and services meant travel to more remote but larger centers. Thus specialization of centers developed and established a trend toward growing interdependence between centers, larger service areas, and more overlapping of areas. At the same time, schools began to be consolidated, churches united or began offering fewer services with one pastor serving several congregations, and small postoffices and other institutions were moved to become concentrated in fewer places. The changes in institutional relationships were, in turn, reflected in the decline of the distinct, locally recognized country "neighbourhood". All of this was a general adaptation to the greater ease and rapidity of communication and transportation.

Given the precarious situation of the prairie farmer in the late thirties, significant changes in the nature of the farm firm were also necessary if agriculture was to continue to provide products at competitive prices and compensate the producers at some acceptable level. Over the 1941 - 1966 period such changes did take place as may be evidenced by the fact that the amount of land in farms increased from 120 million acres in 1941 to 133 million acres in 1966, the number of farms decreased from 279,000 (1941) to 195,000 (1966) and the average farm size increased from 400 acres in 1941 to 700 acres in 1966. More dramatic than such intensification of land use was the substitution of capital for labour. An indication of this shift is noted in the fact that in 1941 Prairie agriculture employed 153,000 farm labourers. By 1966 this figure had fallen to less than 40 thousand. With increasing commercialization, farming became more and more a business rather than a way of life.

Simultaneously, manufacturing and services were attracted to the Prairie locale by the available labour supply expended, therefore providing further opportunities and attracting labour to higher paying non-agricultural employment. Developments in oil, mining, and power served to accentuate the trend. Occupational heterogeneity, formerly thought to be exclusively urban, therefore, became common in various rural areas and established the economy of the Prairies as less vulnerable to fluctuations in agricultural income.

Trends in rural farm population (i.e., the number of people living on farms) followed closely the trends in the number of people employed in farming (Table 2). In 1941 the prairie

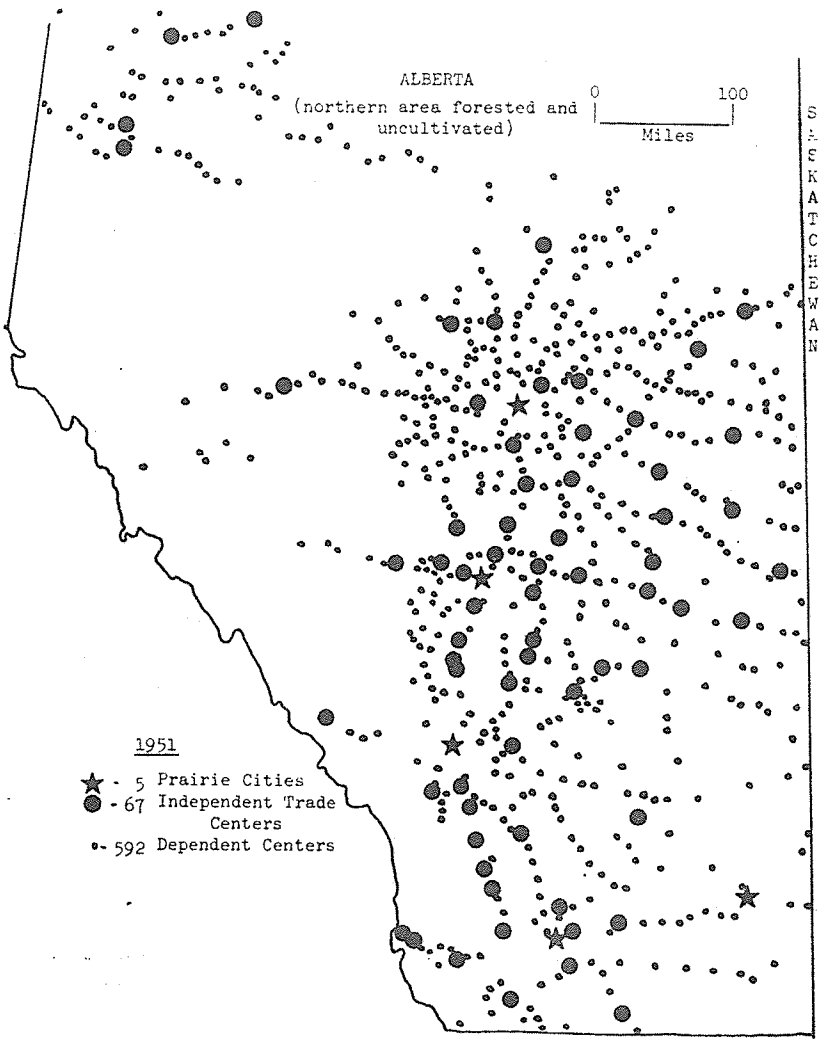
POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR THE ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED SEGMENTS OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES SINCE 1931*

Population of Segments of the Prairie Provinces	1931		1941		1951		1961		1966	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
11 Prairie Cities	578,515	24.6	611,331	25.2	795,612	31.1	1,466,003	46.1	1,666,250	49.3
164 Independent Trading Towns (Embryo Farm Cities)	183,454	7.8	190,358	7.9	260,913	10.2	371,767	11.7	423,318	12.5
1401 Dependent Villages	396,146	16.8	471,976	19.5	527,317	20.7	574,541	18.1	567,711	16.8
Farm Population (Open Country)	1,195,414	50.8	1,148,240	47.4	963,928	37.8	766,500	24.1	724,334	21.4
TOTAL	2,353,529	100.0	2,421,905	100.0	2,547,770	100.0	3,178,811	100.0	3,381,613	100.0

*Source: Census of Canada. The division of the communities for 1966 into Independent and Dependent is carried through the thirty-five year period 1931-1966 without reclassification. In the prairie cities population tripled during the period. In the Independent Towns (1966 classification) it doubled. In the Dependent Villages it increased up to 1961 and then began to decrease. In the Open Country it decreased from a half of all in 1931 to a fifth of all prairie people or from 1200 to 724 thousands.

TABLE 2

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 28.

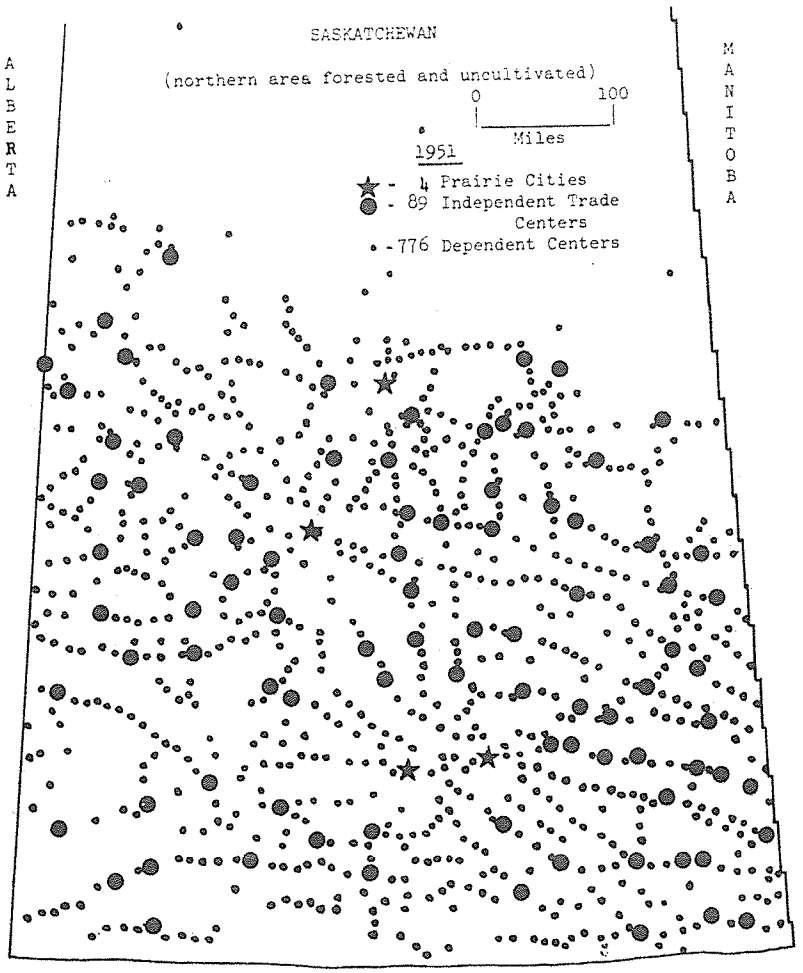


ALBERTA PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES (1951) AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF AUTOMOBILES AND TRACTOR FARMING

(Off-farm migration followed the shakeout of the depression and the employment opportunities elsewhere in the 40s. Conversely, farm income rose as ready markets existed for the bumper wheat crops.)

MAP 8

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 39.

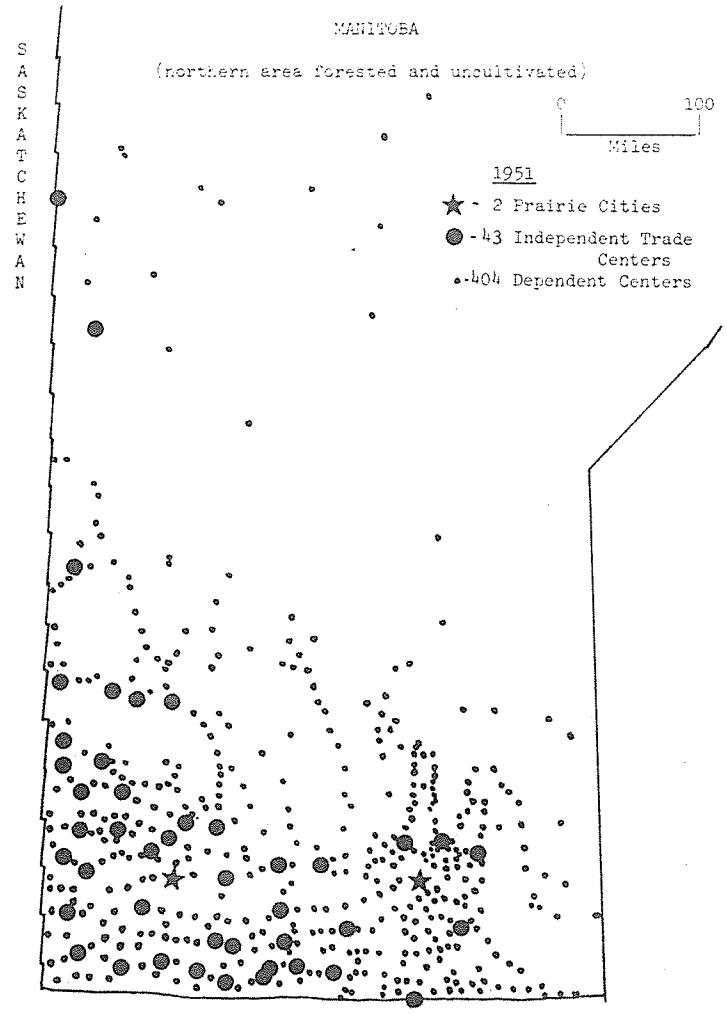


SASKATCHEWAN PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES (1951) AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF AUTOMOBILES AND TRACTOR FARMING

(Off-farm migration followed the shakeout of the depression and the employment opportunities elsewhere in the 40s. Conversely, farm income rose as ready markets existed for the bumper wheat crops.)

MAP 9

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 40.



MANITOBA PRAIRIE COMMUNITIES (1951) AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF AUTOMOBILES AND TRACTOR FARMING

(Off-farm migration followed the shakeout of the depression and the employment opportunities elsewhere in the 40s. Conversely, farm income rose as ready markets existed for the bumper wheat crops.)

MAP 10

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 41.

provinces had a population of approximately 2.4 million, 62% of whom were classified as rural (farm and nonfarm). By 1966 this population had grown to about 3.4 million with 63% classed as urban. Not only had the proportion of rural people declined, but their absolute numbers had decreased. Further, much of this shift was the young rural adult movement to urban areas which significantly altered the age-sex composition of the prairie population.

The four interrelated sets of trends in (i) transportation and communication, (ii) trade, institutional, and social relationships of rural residents, (iii) the nature and types of occupations of rural residents, and (iv) population size and composition, all contributed to the rise of the Farm City during the "adjustment" phase. The dependency of a large portion of the area of the countryside to these independent trading towns was never formalized by law nor recognized as an obligation of the Farm City. While the roots of the trading towns were in the trading areas surrounding them, nevertheless, during the "adjustment" phase, there was no ostensible cultivation of these "hinterlands" upon which the trading communities depended.

(iii) The Modern Prairie Community System

The process of differentiation that began in the 1931 - 1966 period - the "adjustment" phase - has continued to 1973 although, that process appears currently to have reached a point of equilibrium (i.e., stabilization). Up to 1966 the concepts "Independent Trading Community" (occassionally specified as embryonic "Farm Cities") and "Dependent Villages" were used to identify the two types of centers within the prairie community. It was recognized, however, that

with the degree of differentiation experienced in the adjustment phase, the simple "two-type classification" of centers was neither adequate nor valid in analyzing the modern prairie community system. Therefore, a triple classification was adopted for 1970: (i) Farm City; (ii) Home-Town; and (iii) Stop-Off Center.[36]

The largest retailing trade specialist center, with the exception of the eleven Prairie Cities, that can operate economically in a given region is the Farm City. The present Farm Cities are economically independent, functional organizations, incorporated, and self-governing to a considerable extent that view as their "community" responsibility the area defined by the legal limits of the incorporated area. Below the Farm Cities are the Home-Towns, that have some retail establishments, but whose primary characteristic is the complete high school system for a surrounding area. The Stop-Off Centers dominated by no single institution other than a grocery or general store, and characterized by face-to-face existence and intimate social contacts, are for convenience and continue to exist because they satisfy certain basic and intangible human needs. The occupation of the Prairie provinces by this assortment of community types is shown graphically in Maps 11, 12 and 13.

The three types of centers, although serving different functions, are related, however, in a mutual symbiotic fashion and all are required for the most advantageous use of the area as a production-consumption and living community of man. Each type fits in an interstitial area around a larger type forming a total community

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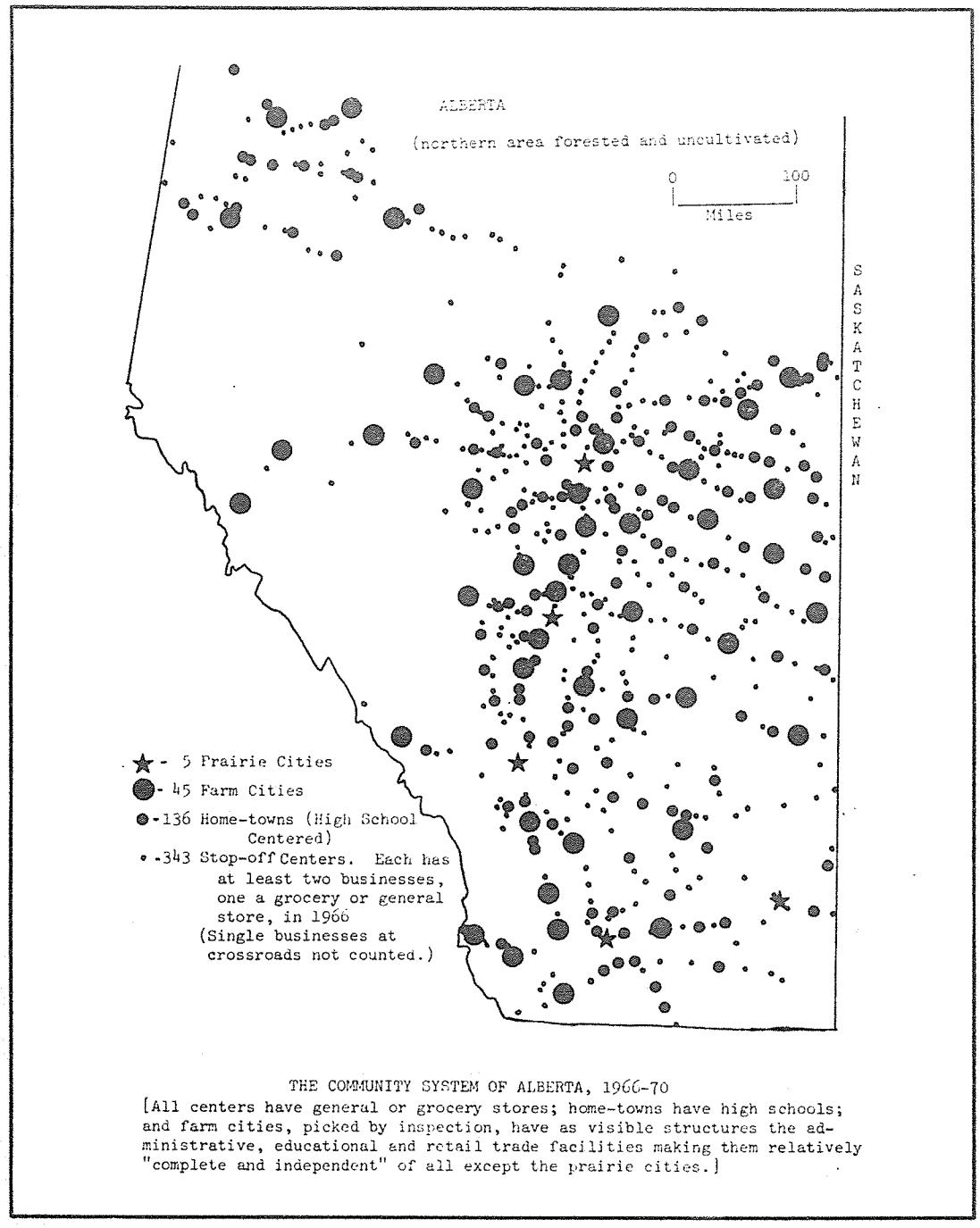
36. The classification of centers used was developed by Carle C. Zimmerman and Garry W. Moneo in The Prairie Community System (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971).

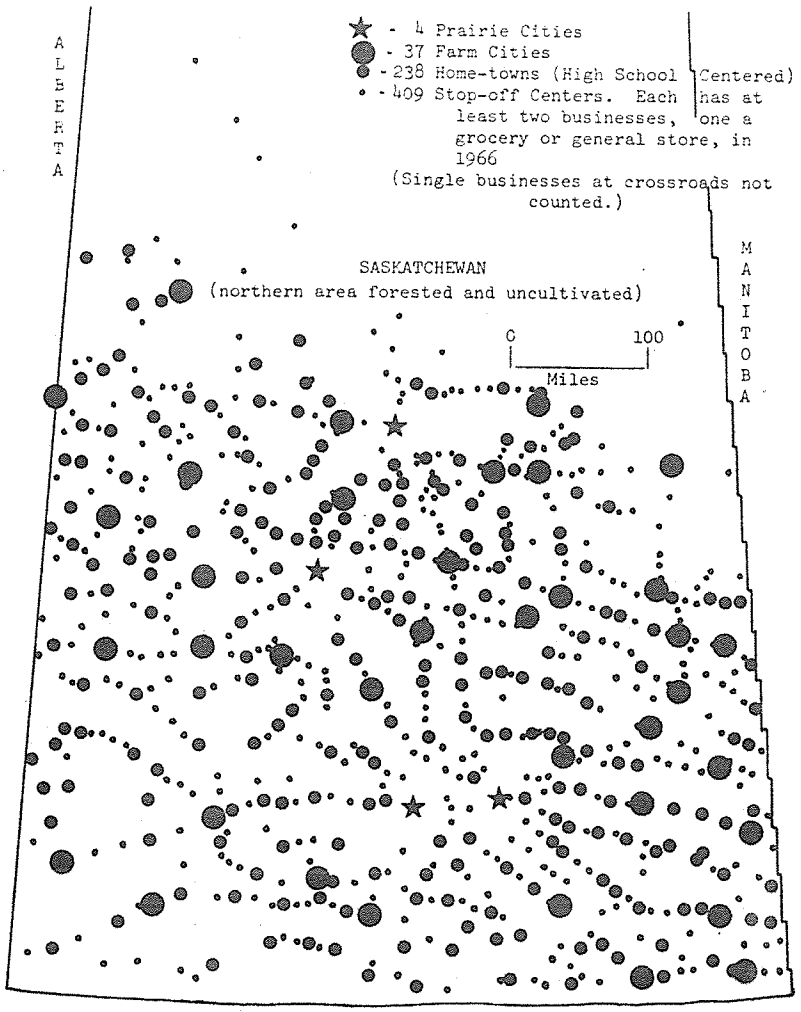


THE COMMUNITY SYSTEM OF ALBERTA, 1966-70

[All centers have general or grocery stores; home-towns have high schools; and farm cities, picked by inspection, have as visible structures the administrative, educational and retail trade facilities making them relatively "complete and independent" of all except the prairie cities.]

MAP 11

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Monèo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 67.

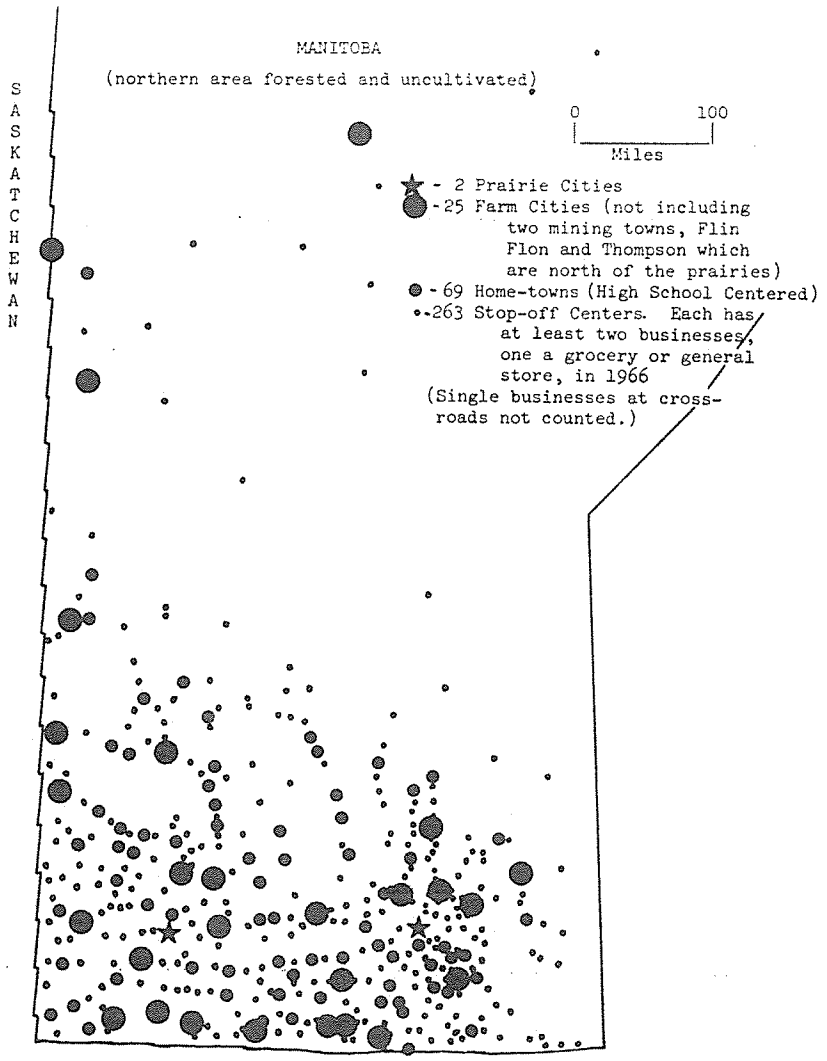


THE COMMUNITY SYSTEM OF SASKATCHEWAN, 1966-70

[All centers have general or grocery stores; home-towns have high schools; and farm cities, picked by inspection, have as visible structures the administrative, educational and retail trade facilities making them relatively "complete and independent" of all except the prairie cities.]

MAP 12

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 68.



THE COMMUNITY SYSTEM OF MANITOBA, 1966-70

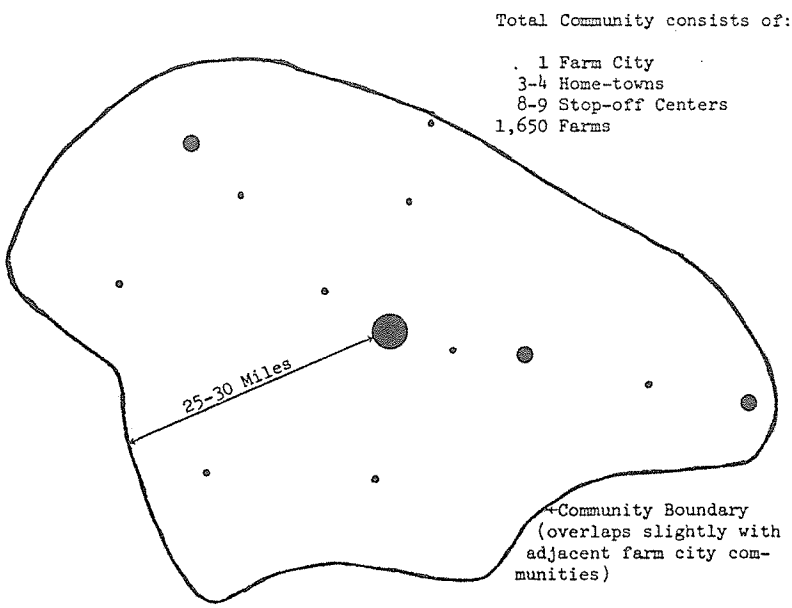
[All centers have general or grocery stores; home-towns have high schools; and farm cities, picked by inspection, have as visible structures the administrative, educational and retail trade facilities making them relatively "complete and independent" of all except the prairie cities.]

MAP 13

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 69.

system that is dominated by the Farm City (Figure 3). Each system covers an area with a radius of 25 to 30 miles and includes from 2,000 to 2,800 square miles of territory. In 1966, about 15,300 persons lived in each of these areas; 3,300 in the average Farm City, 2,150 in the 3 or 4 Home-Towns per system, and 3,700 in the 8 or 9 Stop-Off Centers. Approximately 6,200 persons, primarily farm families, resided in the open country. There were about 228 businesses in the average system; 92 in the Farm City, a total of 81 spread among the 3 or 4 Home-Towns, and 55 in total in the 8 or 9 Stop-Off Centers. An average of 1,650 wheat, grain, and cattle farms made up the balance of the total Farm City Community System. (The figures given are those of the statistically average "Farm City Community System" and, therefore, will vary with the intensity of land use in any particular region. Where the land is productive and well used the communities will be in close proximity to one another. Where the prairie land is not so productive, because of the divergent gifts of nature, the communities will be few and far between.)

Before 1930 and the changes that created the Farm City complex or community system with its dependent area, the rural community was limited in size, simple in structure, and consisted of a rather homogeneous population. Since the locality was more or less monopolistic, in that a journey of 30 miles was a major event undertaken only out of necessity, the people of the community (i.e., the village group and the surrounding farmers) all were known to each other, at least by repute, and possessed many similar attitudes and values. Further, most of their life experiences were similar. After the changes of the "adjustment" phase, the rural people who



REPRESENTATION OF THE TOTAL FARM CITY DOMINATED COMMUNITY SYSTEM, 1970

Average number of persons per community system	15,300
Average number of persons residing in farm city	3,300
Average number of persons residing in the home-towns per community	2,150
Average number of persons residing in the stop-off centers per community	3,700
Average number of persons residing in the open country per community	6,200
Average number of businesses per community system	228
Average number of businesses per farm city	92
Average number of business units in all the home-towns per community	81
Average number of business units in all the stop-off centers per community	55
Area, in square miles, of the total community system (including park lands, Indian Reservations and farms)	2,000-2,800

FIGURE 3

SOURCE: C. C. Zimmerman & G. W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System, (Ottawa: The Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971), p. 77.

were dispersed, mostly on farms, found their interests divided in the sense that another trading community monopolized their economic attention while the smaller centers continued to provide basic human needs (i.e., schools, churches, cemeteries, friendships, and retirement homes). The end result was the decline of the traditional country "neighbourhood" and, seemingly, decline in importance of the small prairie community with the loss in economic function and leadership.

(iv) The Stabilization Phase

The third phase in the process of the development of the prairie community system, the one which is in process of being formulated at the present, probably will have a structure similar to the second phase (i.e., the Farm City Community System), but may add a new system of organization and experience a change in psychosocial orientation. These developments, together with the future prospects of the small prairie community, are discussed in Chapter Five.

SUMMARY

The settlement phase in the process of the development of the prairie community system witnessed the original structure of the pioneer community strung out along the railroads as these had been, or were being, constructed. This community system was basic to commercial agriculture and to the occupation of the Prairies for wheat, small grain, and cattle production. Up to 1930 the area continued to fill out with the railroad and numerous small commercial horse-powered grain and cattle farms. From 1930 until World War II took

over, the drought and Depression of the thirties tested and sifted the community system eliminating a great deal of the structure that could not survive the tightened economic conditions. After that came the hard surfaced roads, the automobiles, machine powered farming and the resultant domination of the economic sector of the countryside by Farm Cities or superior trading towns, the emergence of the Farm City Community System, the decline of the distinct, locally recognized country "neighbourhood", and seemingly decline in importance of the small prairie community.

CONCLUSION

The domination of the economic sector of the Prairie Provinces by Farm Cities during the "adjustment phase" resulted in the small prairie community becoming a functionally dependent part of a much larger whole - the Farm City Community System. Given the social and economic interaction, or activity linkages, that bind the various components of the Farm City Community System together and the economic specialization of that system, and its components, within the larger complex of the Prairie Community, it follows that attempts to plan for the development of the small prairie community in isolation of the system of which it forms an integral part are bound to fail.

The challenge, therefore, becomes one of developing an improved organizational and administrative form (e.g., a new and innovative form of local government) for carrying out economic and social development objectives directed at the small prairie community that recognizes the economic and social structure of the Farm City

Community System. The challenge is based on the assumption that the form of local government that currently exists within the Prairie Community (i.e., small urban centers legally distinct and separate from their rural hinterland) is inadequate to meet the need of maintaining the small prairie community as a viable economic settlement and social focal point. That the existing form of local government is inadequate to meet the stated need follows from the discussion contained in Chapter Four of the problem areas encountered by and the development constraints inherent to the small prairie community.

CHAPTER FOUR
The Small Prairie Community
Problem Areas & Development Constraints

INTRODUCTION

Not all situations, or facts, about rural areas are, in themselves, problematic. Many people prefer to live in the rural environment of the small center,[37] and will continue to do so, finding this way of life satisfying. There exists, however, a number of distinctive problem areas experienced by the small community and the rural environment that demand attention together with a series of specific development constraints characteristic of the small community that limit the options that are available in planning for its development.

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37. The small prairie community has as yet not been specifically defined. Its economic, social and physical attributes have been described and its relationship with other centers within the Farm City Community System has been noted. What constitutes a "small prairie community", therefore, is implicit to the preceeding discussion. For purposes of clarity, however, when reference is made to the small prairie community it is generally intended to signify that the discussion centers around the two classes of communities below the Farm City - i.e., the Stop-Off Center and the Home-Town.

"THE RURAL PROBLEM"

The concerns most frequently mentioned and emphasized by the rural resident and organizations involved in rural development are taken as the basis for the general definition of "The Rural Problem". To facilitate discussion four general areas of concern are identified. The categorization, however, is done with the recognition that there are interrelationships among those concerns and that they cannot be seen to exist as separate entities.[38]

Underdevelopment of resources in rural areas, the need for redirected and major efforts aimed toward conservation, and more rational development of resources are identified as critical components of the first of the major areas of concern. Specifically, the need for environmental control in application to land use planning and the conservation of renewable natural resources demand a comprehensive planning approach.

Deficiencies in basic education and vocational training in rural areas represent the second major rural area of concern. Among the detailed problems within this general category are (i) the relative imbalance in education between urban and rural areas and (ii) the low level of educational opportunity and achievement, both of which act as major deterents to effective adaptation by the rural resident to either the urban industrial community or to changing rural conditions.

A lack of general planning for the development of the rural environment has fostered the third major area of concern - the supply

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38. A more detailed examination of "the rural problem" is provided by Nicholls, William M., Views on Rural Development in Canada (Ottawa: The Queen's Printer, 1968), pp. 9-28.

of manpower. Concern over the implications of the emigration of a major segment of the rural population to urban centers, specifically, the trend of selective out-migration of the young rural adult, forms a significant component within the general area of manpower as the shift of rural populations creates an imbalance in the provision of services and the distribution of resources.

The fourth general area of concern - relative economic disadvantage - emerges strongly primarily as the three areas of concern noted above all point in this general direction and lead to concern over income imbalance generally and poverty in particular.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Each of the four general areas of concern, have numerous specific implications on the rural environment that act as development constraints to the small prairie community. The following section identifies three of the more important constraints in the rural environment that severely limits the options available in planning for the development of the small prairie community.

A Limited Human Resource Base:

Although the change from agriculture to industry has been in process since 1900, it is in the years since World War II that changes have been most dramatic. In 1901, 45 percent of all male workers were in agricultural occupations. By 1960 little more than 11 percent of the labour force were engaged in agriculture, a significant drop from 20 percent in 1950. The loss of farm workers between 1946 and 1958 averaged 39,000 annually. In the ten years since 1950, the farm labour force

fell by 340,000 - from over a million in 1950 to less than 700,000 in 1960. The young rural adult was the most geographically mobile during this era of change, and it is they who moved to the urban areas to be fitted into the new occupational structure with its extensive skill gradations. Of the rural population fifteen to nineteen years of age who were living on farms at the time of the 1951 census, some 40 percent had gone by the 1956 census. Saskatchewan, the agricultural center of the great plains, lost 100,000 of its farm population within the four years preceeding 1960.[39]

Associated with this general decline in the proportion of the rural population engaged in agriculture was the rapid changes occurring in farm technology and the increasing commercialization of the farm complex. Farming very quickly shifted to a business endeavour and away from a "way of life". Most noticeable, however, among the changes that took place in the agricultural labour force during this period was the higher proportion in the older rather than the younger age groups in the rural and farming populations.

> Age and sex distributions for rural and urban populations in 1961 differed significantly in three respects. The first and most apparent distinction ... is the larger proportion of both males and females in the age groups under 20 years residing in rural areas. Second is the relatively smaller proportions in the young labour force, ages 20-44 years, to be found in the rural population; and, third is the proportionately greater numbers of rural males in the age groups beyond 50 years in contrast to the excess of females in all age groups over 20 years which is found in most urban areas.[40]

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39. John Porter, "Rural Decline", Canada: A Sociological Profile, W. E. Mann (ed.), (Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Co., 1968), pp. 20-23.

40. Warren E. Kalbach & Wayne W. McVey, The Demographic Bases of Canadian Society (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Ltd., 1971), pp. 122-123.

The urban population, therefore, in 1961, had relatively fewer under 20 years, more of the young labour force, and more women over 20 years than did the rural population.

The consequences that follow, directly or indirectly, from "the general decline in rural population" and the increasingly aging rural population structure, as a result of the continuing substantial outmigration of the young rural adult, are numerous. The most critical among the various effects, however, are the following:

(i) The rural environment and the small community have been left with a limited human resource base and an insufficient pool of local management skills relative to urban areas. Yet, as far as the environment in concerned, the rural population has most of the surface of the economically usable prairie lands in their possession.

(ii) The rural environment and the small community have a substantially greater proportion of the population that can be classified as "dependent" (that segment under 20 years of age - the "school-age" population - and that group over 65 years of age - the "retirement-age" population), relative to urban areas.

An Inadequate Financial Resource Base:

The second distinctive development constraint follows from the latter major consequence of the general decline in the rural population. Municipalities and small urban centers must perform certain minimal and fixed functions regardless of "fiscal capacity" [41]

41. The fiscal capacity of a rural municipality or small incorporated town is defined as the municipality's or town's ability to raise revenue to meet annual expenditure needs.

which depends essentially upon the level of real income within the area over which the municipality or small center has jurisdiction or, upon "economic capacity". With a substantial portion of the population being dependent, (i) the economic capacity of a particular jurisdiction is severly limited, and (ii) the demand for specialized services (i.e., educational facilities and low cost accommodation for the "retirement-age" population) is great. Weakness in fiscal capacity together with a high proportion of available revenue being allocated to various fixed costs (i.e., the demand for specialized services, administrative costs, and capital equipment expenses) simply means that less of the tax dollar remains for expenditure on general community services, including public works. The small community in isolation, therefore, is not in a position, financially, to establish various types of social overhead or infra-structure (e.g., public utilities) to serve the community while concomitantly attracting private development that would eventually, if development continued, lead to the creation of external economies and further, to significant consolidation, internal growth, and a degree of self-sufficiency. One of the most persistent arguments for change in the present municipal system in the prairie provinces, of which the small community forms an integral part, therefore, relates to the limited fiscal capacity of the municipal government - the inability to raise sufficient revenue to meet the need for services and, therefore, for development.

The Source of Municipal Finance

Finance, as previously noted, is the central problem of municipal government. The source of municipal finance, however, raises yet a further controversy. The income of a municipal unit, including the small town, lies in the productivity of land, the land assessment

and mill rate applied in taxation of property, plus grants and loans.

Grants from senior levels of government have long been used to raise the level of local services and to minimize differences in service in rural jurisdictions with varying fiscal capacities. Previously, the equalization grants represented a negligible proportion of total municipal revenue. In recent years, however, the grants have been substantial including grants for schools - an important "leveller" of revenues, relative to need, which do not involve stringent and inequitable tax burdens on the local population - hospitals, and other institutional construction, housing, roads, and other municipal capital work undertakings, in which the provincial and/or federal governments have shared the costs.

In addition to tax collections and grants, rural jurisdictions raise funds through various types of loans. Loans, however, have not played a major role in municipal financing since the depression of the 1930's. Further, insofar as borrowing power is determined by the collateral security the borrower can offer, which is the tax base in the case of rural jurisdictions, municipalities and small centers have difficulty in obtaining loans due to a limited tax base. Thus, their weak financial position is aggrevated by their disadvantage in securing capital through debenture borrowing.[42]

The current, major, and virtually exclusive source of tax revenue for the rural jurisdiction, however, is the tax on land. Over 60 percent of local government funds are derived from property taxes.[43]

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42. Saskatchewan. Royal commission on Agriculture and Rural Life. Rural Roads and Local Government (Report #4), (Regina: The Queen's Printer, 1955), p. 99.

43. Ibid., p. 89.

The property tax, however, is widely criticized and the criticism is, to a considerable extent, deserved. Since people with lower incomes (e.g., the rural resident of the small town) spend a higher percentage of their income on shelter than do people earning higher incomes, lower income groups tned to pay higher property taxes in relation to their income than do higher income groups. The effect of the property tax is, therefore, regressive.

Reform of property taxation is necessary and is required not only because it is regressive, but also because it has a regional bias. "In attempting to provide reasonable municipal services and educational opportunities, municipal governments and school divisions have pushed the tax burden to its highest levels in those areas where the capacity to tax is lowest.[44] For example, the real property tax on single dwellings amounts to a consumption tax on the annual value of shelter. In cities, this comes to about 20 percent of the value of such shelter, whereas in towns it is approximately 30 percent and in villages, 50 percent."[45]

Weakness in fiscal capacity and the regressive effect of the property tax represent, therefore, the second major development constraint of the small prairie community. Further, these two components of this second general development constraint have tended, through

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44. In short, equity of tax load is compromised in the direction of equality of tax revenues prompted by pressures for equality in certain basic services.

45. The Province of Manitoba. Guidelines for the Seventies - Volume 1: Introduction and Economic Analysis. (Winnipeg: March, 1973), p. 38.

various implications, to deteriorate the prairies, in particular, the small center within the prairie community system, as a living community of man.

Social Barriers:

The third, and least tangible, constraint to the development and planning of the small prairie community manifests itself in varying degrees of opposition, overt and covert, to change, planned or unplanned, in rural areas. Planning in rural areas, however, is becoming increasingly important. In particular, three trends are pressuring the planning profession for application of its methods and expertise to rural communities:

> First, there is the rising national concern with economic development of depressed rural areas. Second, there is recognition that urban poverty and related problems are, at least in part, a consequence of conditions in rural areas (from which great numbers have migrated to the cities). Finally, the outward scatteration of dissatisfied urbanites is extending beyond areas that can accurately be called suburban, and into countryside and jurisdictions that are quite rural.[46]

These demands or pressures, unfortunately, are not being answered with any success, a major obstacle being the recalcitrance of rural citizens, leaders, and government. Acceptance of planning as a local public activity is, therefore, absent, or half-hearted at best. Reasons for this prevailing attitude among the rural population appear to be numerous.[47] First, rural opposition to planning is clearest in attitudes toward zoning, which the rural community confuses with planning in

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46. Alan J. Hahn, "Planning in Rural Areas" Journal of the American Institute of Planners: January, 1970, p. 44.

47. A thorough examination of the reasons for the resistance to planning as a local public activity is provided by Alan J. Hahn, "Planning in Rural Areas" JAIP: January, 1970.

general. Informal social pressures in the small community serve to check land use changes. The tendency toward conformity, as a result of informal group pressure, therefore, is more effective than zoning regulations in preventing "nonconforming" uses in purely rural areas. (As a rural jurisdiction urbanizes, however, these methods become less and less effective.) Further, the rural citizen realizes that zoning will restrict all and not just those responsible for the individual nuisances. The resistance to zoning, therefore, often diffuses to planning with the prevailing confusion between zoning in particular and planning generally.

Second, the combination of a dispersed population and relatively small numbers raises costs while preventing economies of scale. Planning, as a consequence, assumes a low priority when viewed by the rural resident in terms of local public activities requiring substantial capital expenditures.

Third, out-migration from rural areas has resulted in a loss of potential leadership, especially leadership with important technical and professional skills. The consequence of this phenomenon is that the leadership pool that remains appears as least sympathetic to planning and other professional concerns.

Four, whether it is true or not, planning is seen by most rural citizens and leaders as rather narrowly focused on physical development in urbanizing environments. However, for most rural areas - those well beyond the influence of urban fields - immediate needs are for something quite different. Community leaders in these jurisdictions worry about how to attract development, not how to control it.

Finally, in very rural areas, there is a high value placed on individualism, a frequent preference for making do for oneself, and a general reluctance to use collective or governmental means for

resolving local problems. Hence, the resistance. Until the jurisdiction urbanizes subjectively as well as objectively planning will be ignored or resisted as inconsistent with tradional informal, personal ways of doing things, unnecessary, and too costly.

SUMMARY

Concerns most frequently mentioned and emphasized by the rural resident and organizations involved in rural development define "The Rural Problem". A relationship exists among the underdevelopment of rural areas, problems of manpower, and the low level of basic education and vocational training which, in turn, leads to concerns over income imbalance generally and poverty in particular. Basic to the rural problem situation, however, are three distinctive development constraints: (i) a limited human resource base, (ii) an inadequate financial resource base, and (iii) the recalcitrance of rural citizens, leaders, and government to planning each of which limit the options available in planning for the development of the small prairie community.

CONCLUSION

Given the inadequate financial and limited human resource bases of the small prairie community, means must be found to increase the fiscal and economic capacities, and expand the human resource base, of the small trade center. Also, given the recalcitrance of rural citizens, leaders, and government to planning, a mechanism must be provided through which the rural population could first be appraised of the need for planning and second, that would allow for the full participation by rural residents in the planning process. Further, the mechanism developed must be able to meet the need of maintaining the small prairie

community as a viable economic settlement and social focal point.

The existing form of local government in the Prairie Community System unfortunately, is inadequate not only to meet the stated need; also, it appears inadequate in its ability to expand the financial and human resources of small trade centers while providing for the involvement of the general population in planning for the future of the small prairie community.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Prospects for Small Centers in Future Settlement Patterns

DECLINE, GROWTH, OR SYSTEM STABILIZATION?

Approximately four decades ago, Edmund deS. Brunner put forward the question: Do villages grow?[48] He answered with a qualified "yes", claiming at least "slow growth or relative stability" for rural centers. The question, prompted by the controversy surrounding J. M. Gillette's 1923 prognosis of the eventual decline and disappearance of rival villages and towns, however, demands an analytical answer; at stake is the ability of the Prairie Community System to sustain a viable, social and economic living environment. As Gerald Hodge has pointed out:

> Rural villages and towns are the focal points of social and economic activity for surrounding areas as well as places of residence and locations for investment of many people. The

48. Edmund deS. Brunner, "Do Villages Grow?" Rural Sociology 1 (December, 1936).

> decline of a commercial center often presages its diminution as a site for public facilities, and it affects the population holding power of the center and jeopardizes its housing investment. Provincial programs are also affected by trade center decline: e.g., the location of schools, hospitals, and roads, and the system of local government. From almost all standpoints, continued decline of trade centers and dispersion of the rural settlement pattern mean higher costs for rural residents to maintain their present standard of living.[49]

What then are the prospects for small centers in future settlement patterns? The increasing concern for the future of the metropolis and the megalopolis tends to obscure the question despite the fact that over one-half of all Canadians either live in small centers or are directly dependent on them for a substantial portion of their goods and services. There are those who claim "The handwriting is on the wall for a substantial number of small towns". Conversely, there are those who claim that evidence does not support the contention that small centers are dying out. No doubt a good deal of nostalgia for the small town also clouds the issue.

It is possible, however, to report on the findings of a selected number of major studies on the growth and decline of small centers within the Prairie Community System through which it will be possible to state with a relative degree of certainty the prospects for growth of small centers and the role the small center will likely play in future settlement patterns. On the basis of the prognosis offered by the research together with previously documented findings, it will then be possible to formulate a systematic planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community.

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49. Gerald Hodge, "Do Villages Grow? - Some Perspectives and Predictions" Rural Sociology, 31 (June, 1966), p. 184.

TRADE CENTER VIABILITY: THE RESEARCH

Among the most forcible research on community life and settlement patterns is that of A. H. Anderson.[50] Studies of Adams, Nebraska and of six counties in that state indicate that small trade centers can hope to supply only day-to-day needs because rural shopping patterns are shifting to large centers (i.e., centers with a population over 2,500 people) or "Farm Cities". Two large-scale studies by the Saskatchewan Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life and, the Upper Midwest Economic Study, render similar conclusions: hamlets and villages can expect to survive but not necessarily grow; most population growth in the past three decades has occurred at relatively few centers; and, retail trade is increasingly being concentrated in the "Farm Cities".[51] The Upper Midwest Economic Study also found that larger centers were "penetrating" their trade areas more fully than the small center consequently attracting buying power away from the small center. The penetration of trade areas was found to be a result of the favoured position of larger centers due largely to economies of scale, the increased speed and range of transportation, bringing both consumers and goods to those centers, and the increasing competition among the large centers that encourages further internal economies.

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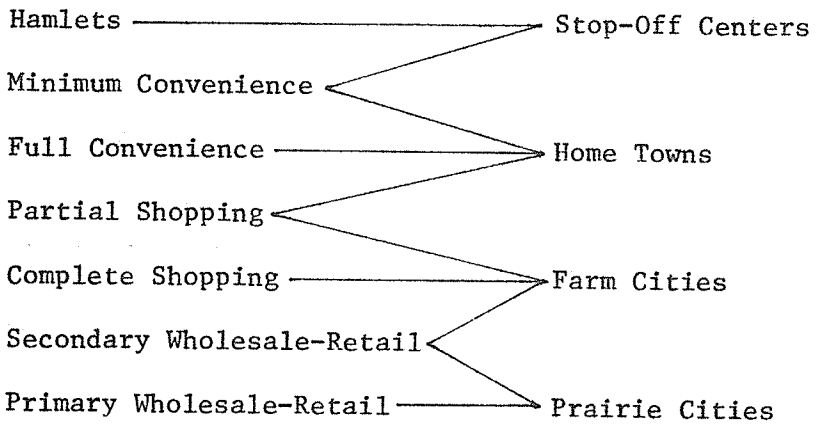
50. A. H. Anderson. "The Changing Role of the Small Town in Farm Areas." (Lincoln: Nebraska Agricultural Experimental Station, Bulletin 419, May, 1953); and "The Expanding Rural Community", (Lincoln: Nebraska Agricultural Experimental Station, Special Bulletin SB 464, September, 1961).

51. Saskatchewan, Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life, "Service Centers", Report #12 (Regina: The Queen's Printer, 1957).

The research undertaken by Anderson and the Saskatchewan Commission is typical of most of the research on trade center viability in that it lacks a solid analytical design from which to view trade center change. Various researchers however, have attempted to construct such an analytical framework, the most noteworthy being the work of Gerald Hodge.[52]

For the purposes of analysis, Hodge developed a trade center classification system utilizing seven distinct categories of centers. The classification system utilized in this thesis, however, employs a more generalized four-level system. Therefore, to facilitate comprehension of the following discussion of Hodge's work the two systems are compared:



Three rural trade center systems were studied by Hodge: Saskatchewan, Eastern Ontario, and Prince Edward Island. Although two of the regions studied are not included within the regional framework of the present study, it is nevertheless important to note that

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52. Gerald Hodge, "The Prediction of Trade Center Viability in the Great Plains:, Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1964).

"analogous changes may be expected in other rural regions of North America"[53] (i.e., the Prairie Community System).

Changes in the Number & Distribution of Trade Centers.

With respect to changes in the number and distribution of centers within the three rural trade center systems, Hodge documented the following findings:[54]

(i) Since 1951, there has been the outright disappearance (in commercial terms) of nearly 15% of the centers in Saskatchewan, 17% in Eastern Ontario, and nearly 30% in Prince Edward Island;

(ii) In addition, the three regions, respectively, suffered decline among 17, 12, and 7% of their centers;

(iii) The three lowest levels of centers (above hamlets) in each region contributed less to the total number of centers in 1961 as compared to 1951;

(iv) The four highest ranking classes, in turn, assumed a significantly larger proportion of the total number of centers. In both Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island this transformation in the hierarchy was accompanied by a major downgrading in the position of convenience centers;

(v) Over 95% of all changes were one-step changes of either growth or decline;

(vi) Convenience centers demonstrated a great deal of instability in all regions;

(vii) Small centers decline at a faster rate than do large centers, however, an increasing rate of decline for each successively lower ranking type of center was not substantiated by the data. In Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island hamlets declined at a much slower rate than convenience centers. In Eastern Ontario minimum convenience centers showed a slight increase while hamlets and full convenience centers exhibited large rates of decline.

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53. Gerald Hodge, "Do Villages Grow?", p. 195.

54. Ibid., pp. 191-193

(viii) The Saskatchewan data suggest the emergence of partial shopping centers as a strong intermediate level between the highest and lowest forms of centers (i.e., the emergence of the Farm City between the Prairie City level and the Home Town/Stop-Off Center level). These intermediate centers increased substantially in both number and proportion and developed a remarkably regular spacing of approximately 22 miles.

The Persistence of the Small Town

A recent report by Zimmerman and Moneo,[55] which refers to the phenomenon of the persistence of the small community however, contradicts the major findings of Hodge outlined above. The researchers note that from 1910 to the present, the percentage distribution of various sizes of communities has remained relatively constant, graphically forming a reverse "JAY" type curve. According to the data source (Dun and Bradstreet), the total number of communities in the Prairie Provinces declined from 2,874 in 1951 to 2,327 in 1966 (Table 1). The reduction in numbers however, between 1951 and 1966, according to Zimmerman and Moneo, was not the result of very small communities going out of existence but rather was due to the fact that many centers were being comgined by Dun & Bradstreet and reported along with larger, nearly communities.

On the basis of the preceeding information, Zimmerman & Moneo therefore, contend that "the small community, contrary to most predictions, has shown the tendency and ability to survive with the development of transportation, the coming of the year-round roads and the

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55. Carle C. Zimmerman and Garry W. Moneo, The Prairie Community System (Ottawa: Agricultural Economics Research Council of Canada, 1971)

automobile culture, and the increased specialization and division of labour."[56] Irrespective of the conclusions reached by Zimmerman and Moneo, it is nevertheless difficult to accept that virtually no communities have gone out of existence and that most of the very small communities will continue to exist in the future. This is particularly so in light of the findings documented by Hodge and the fact that in a great many communities one finds abandoned stores, garages and other places of business as well as abandoned residences, churches, schools, meeting halls and ice rinks: all that is left is a grain elevator.

Changes in the Spatial Pattern of Trade Centers

The possibility that large centers have an enfeebling effect on small, nearby centers was also researched by Hodge,[57] his findings being largely confirmed by Hassinger.[58] Hodge compiled data both for the rate of decline and the change in density of small trade centers (below the complete shopping center level) in two concentric zones about large centers (complete shopping centers and above). In Saskatchewan, not only was the density of small centers found to be less within the 0-9 and 10-14 mile zones than in the province as a whole, but it was also decreasing at a faster rate. The rate of decline of small centers was found to be greater, too, with increasing proximity to large centers than for small centers regardless of location. The hypothesis (i.e., that large centers have an enfeebling effect on small nearby centers)

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56. Ibid., p. 23.

57. Gerald Hodge, "Do Villages Grow?", pp. 193-195.

58. Edward M. Hassinger, "The Relationship of Trade Center Population Change to Distance from Larger Centers in an Agricultural Area", Rural Sociology, 22 (June, 1957).

however, was not affirmed with any degree of conclusiveness for the other two regions studied (i.e., Prince Edward Island and Eastern Ontario).

A similar analysis confirmed two further hypotheses advanced by Hodge concerning changes in the spatial pattern of trade centers. According to the first, small centers should be found farther apart presently, than in 1951, and large centers should be found closer together. The data subsequently revealed that hamlets and the two types of convenience centers increased in their average spacing whereas all higher ranking centers had smaller, or the same average spacing compared with 1951. The second hypotheses stated the likelihood of finding a greater degree of decline among pairs of like centers which were separated by less-than-average spacing for their class. This was found to hold true for Prince Edward Island and for the full convenience and partial shopping center classes in Saskatchewan. (A graphical summary of the changes in the number and distribution of trade centers and changes in the spatial pattern of trade centers is provided at Figure 4.)

Hassinger, as previously stated, largely confirmed the research documented by Hodge, finding that there was a systematic and positive relationship between growth and distance from centers of 2,000 population or larger, and that the size of the larger center affected the growth pattern of surrounding centers (i.e., smaller places in proximity to larger ones are at a disadvantage in maintaining population growth). A kind of suburbanization appeared to take place around centers of 5,000 or larger (i.e., smaller places provide housing and certain basic services, and the larger center provides employment and specialized services), which was not so clearly indicated for centers with

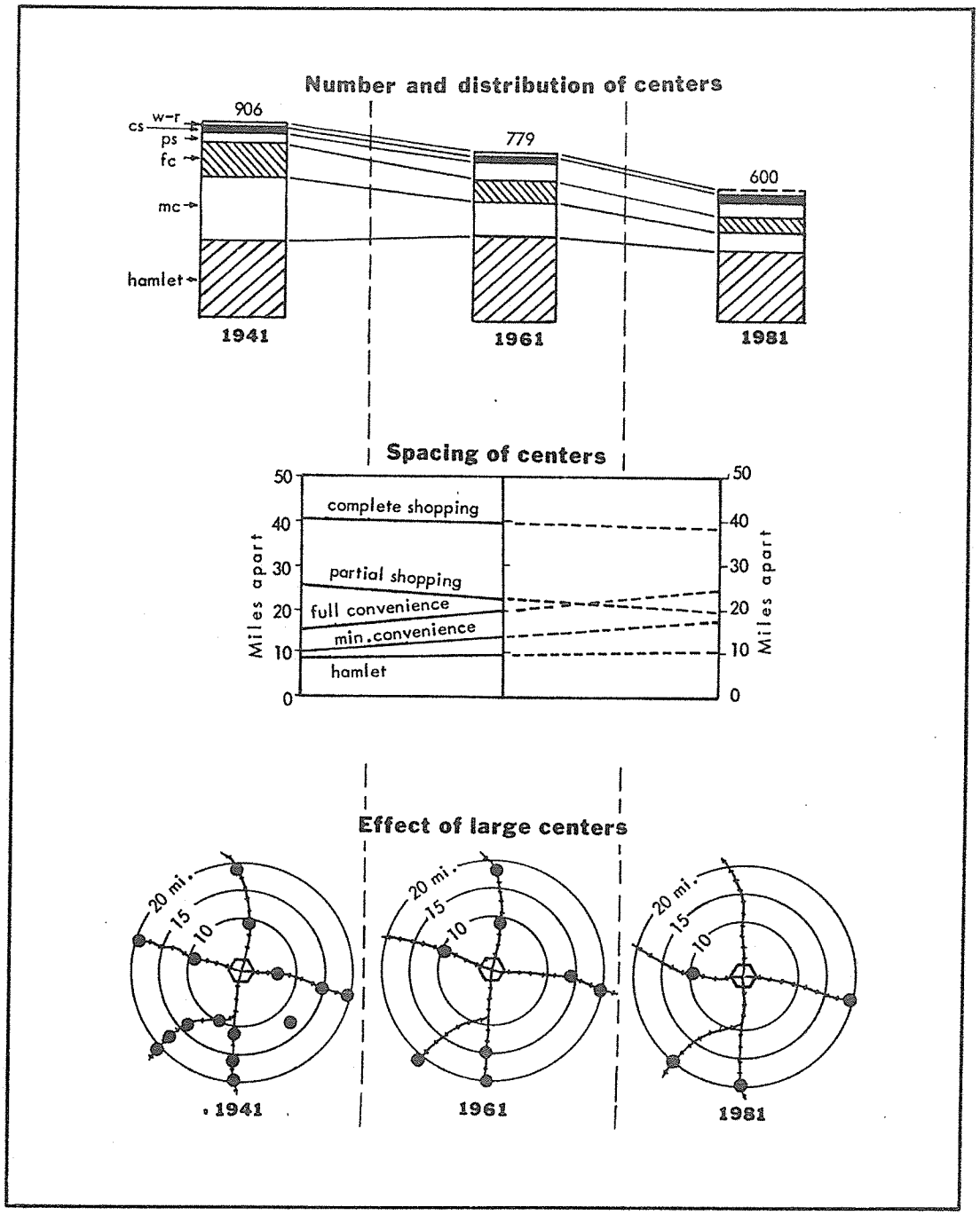

FIGURE 4

SOURCE: Gerald Hodge, "The Prediction of Trade Center Viability in the Great Plains", Geographical Approaches to Canadian Problems, R. Louis Gentilcore (ed.) (Toronto: Prentice - Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1971)

population between 2,000 and 5,000 people. When size of trade centers was controlled, distance from larger centers remained a factor in the growth pattern.

Branch Line Abandonment

Two current proposals have brought the issue of trade center decline into yet a sharper focus, particularly as it relates to the Prairie Community System. Grain distribution companies have urged the consolidation of elevator facilities for the sake of economy in storage and efficiency in allocating box cars. Railway companies have meanwhile, urged the abandonment of uneconomical branch lines amounting to about one-third of the rail mileage in Saskatchewan alone. Whether it would be true that these two proposals would turn hundreds of prosperous towns and villages into ghost communities is open to question.

That question formed the major hypothesis of further research undertaken by Hodge, the major conclusions of which were the following:[59]

> (1) No definite indication was noted that a cessation of the grain shipment function would adversely affect community structure in Saskatchewan centers. The analytical results suggested, on the other hand, that most communities have a better than even chance of not sustaining significant or long-lasting disruption with the demise of the grain shipment function.
>
> (2) The abandonment of branch rail lines will not significantly affect the ability of Saskatchewan centers to grow, as growth, measured by the tendency of centers to add population or retail firms, is a function of other activities besides grain collection, the sole remaining reason for being for rail service of any kind.

Thus, the spectre of branch line abandonment and cessation of the grain shipment function, as far as community growth is concerned,

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59. Gerald Hodge, "Branch Line Abandonment: Death Knell for Prairie Towns?", Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics, 16 (1968).

must assume much smaller proportions than originally assumed.

FUTURE TRADE CENTER SYSTEMS

Several important predictions about the future of trade centers appear possible on the basis of the research reviewed. The predictions, framed in general terms, are summarized as follows:[60]

(1) The number of farm trade centers will continue to decline as increases occur in farm size and farm mechanization, thereby lowering the main-land ratio and the market potential for trade center establishments.

(2) Hamlets will satisfy most daily shopping needs and convenience centers will be bypassed by rural people seeking centers with a wider range of specialized goods and services. Convenience centers will decline to hamlet status in most instances and many present hamlets will disappear.

(3) Except for a limited amount of "suburbanization" around large cities, small trade centers will likely disappear within a radius of ten miles and will show substantial decline in areas up to fifteen miles away from the large center. Only beyond this distance is the trade area integrity of small centers likely to remain secure.

(4) As the thinning out of small centers continues, rural people will have to travel as much as one-third farther to reach a center offering even day-to-day necessities. Higher-order centers will tend to emerge in a more regularly spaced pattern to serve the demands created by expanded farm economies and the ability to exercise greater choice because of increased mobility.

The research reported above, and the predictions concerning the future of trade centers that were based on the findings of that research, demonstrate the influence of location and retail class upon the growth of trade centers. Although the findings and predictions with respect to trade center decline and/or disappearance were measured in terms of the ability of a center to provide retail services, that,

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60. Gerald Hodge, "Do Villages Grow?", p. 195.

after all, being the prime "raison d'etre" of trade centers in agriculturally based regions, the findings and predictions, nevertheless, apply equally to all facets of the community and the ability of a center, in general, to sustain a satisfactory living environment.

CONCLUSION

Recent research, particularly that by Hodge, which is based on a systematic analysis and which deals directly with the problem of diagnosing trade center viability, outlines the prospects for small centers in future settlement patterns. Predictions, based on that research, indicate that farm trade centers are declining and will continue to decline, that hamlets will satisfy most daily shopping needs, convenience centers being bypassed by rural people seeking centers with a wider range of specialized goods and services, that small trade centers will disappear within a radius of ten miles of large trade centers, and finally, that as the thinning out of small centers continues, rural people will have to travel as much as one-third farther to reach a center offering even day-to-day necessities.

The process of differentiation, or "division of labour", of trade centers, therefore, that began in the "adjustment" phase of the development of the Prairie Community System, appears currently to be reaching a point of equilibrium or stabilization. Requisite to that process, however, was, and is, the decline and disappearance of a number of vestigial small prairie communities as the trade center system adapted and continues to adapt, in the face of changing technology, social reorganization, and the modern world division of labour.

CHAPTER SIX
A Planning Approach Appropriate to the Small Prairie Commnity

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the Prairie Community System has pointed to the inability of the small trade center to efficiently function unilaterally. The three types of trade centers - the Farm City, Home-Town, and Stop-Off Center - although serving different functions, are related in a mutually symbiotic fashion, each being required for the most advantageous use of an area as a production - consumption and living community of man and each fitting in an interstitial space around a larger settlement type forming a total community system that is dominated by the Farm City. No longer can the small trade center, therefore, be viewed, or treated, as if it were a self-contained, structural,

and functional whole which can be understood in terms of itself alone. Neither can individual communities be studied and planned as if the larger whole were simply a mosaic of such parts. Only in an ideal sense can individual population centers be conceived of as isolated and, with their hinterlands, self-sufficient.

The contention is, therefore, that in order to formulate a systematic planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community, the dependency of the smaller trade centers to the larger independent trading towns (i.e., the Farm Cities) must be formalized and the economic and social activity linkages that bind the various settlement types of the Farm City Community System together must be recognized. Further, the mechanism adopted to formalize the dependency relationship must also recognize the smaller trade centers as economic and social obligations of the Farm Cities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

The mechanism suggested to formalize the dependency relationship of the small prairie community to the larger trading town and provide the recognition of the economic and social activity linkages that bind together the various trade center types of the Farm City Community System, is a reorganization of local government within the Prairie Community into units that approximate the form traditionally referred to as "the county system of local government".[61]

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61. The uncertainty that surrounds the future of small centers stems largely from the operation of forces much beyond the range or control of small centers: changes in the demand for a region's export products, changes in the pattern of industrial location, changes in transportation, changes toward a more urban way of living. Irrespective

Area and Functions:

The present jurisdictional units for both municipal and school services, the two units that together absorb a major portion of the local property tax, would be dissolved and replaced by a single local government unit. The common denominator which should provide a base for the standard boundaries and related jurisdictions is the system of service centers and areas that exist within the Prairie Community System (i.e., the Farm City Community System).

Political Organization:

A regional council, comprised of elected representatives from the jurisdictional area and incorporated centers within the region's exterior legal limits, would have responsibility for all school and municipal services within the region and would direct the region's planning efforts. So as not to duplicate efforts within the incorporated settlements of the region, the council's representatives from those centers would serve as the "town council" directing the day-to-day activities of those centers in accord with council policy. Election to the council would be essentially similar to that under the present municipal system, the chairman of the council being either elected at large or from the elected members of the council. The council would establish various standing committies (e.g., education and municipal improvements) with citizens having a special interest in the work of the standing committies being co-opted to the committee in an advisory capacity.

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of the additional justification that this provides for advocating a reorganization of local government, the lowest level at which some sense can be made of the trends in these forces and a context provided for local planning and a reorganization of local government in the province. A requirement exists, therefore, prior to attempting local government reorganization, for a "provincial master plan" which would

Intergovernmental Relations:

Since both municipal and education functions would be concentrated in a single body, the problem of intergovernmental co-ordination among numerous local agencies, characteristic of existing systems, would largely disappear. Effective co-ordination with the next senior level of government will require either the creation of a single department within the provincial administration or close liason of the present provincial departments, with the regional council. Provincial services would be extended directly to the regional council and its standing committees.

A SYSTEMATIC PLANNING APPROACH: REQUIREMENTS FOR A VIABLE SYSTEM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Any viable system of local government must enable rural residents to act effectively under present and probable future conditions. Weak local government, can have serious, long-term effects on the rural economy particularly if there is a failure in making the most efficient and effective investment of tax dollars. Strong local government, on the other hand, can meet present and future needs. The Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life in a technical reference document entitled "Alternate Forms of Local Government" formulated a set

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be based on an extensive examination of economic, demographic, and environmental factors in the region and which would include a policy on the location, quality, and intensity of urban development; a policy on industrial location; a policy on transportation; and a policy on other major land uses such as agriculture, forestry, and recreation. Within the context of such a plan could be co-ordinated the programs of provincial government departments and agencies which affect physical development and planning efforts of local government.

of requirements which, it is contended, will ensure democratic and efficient local government and which must be met by any system that is to be strong enough to succeed under present and future conditions. A system of local government, therefore, which meets these requirements will be strong enough to attain, among other objectives, a satisfactory solution to the "Rural Problem".

The specific requirements for strong local self-government, which the Commission formulated and which are utilized in evaluating the proposed reorganization of local government in the Prairie Community System, are grouped into five categories: sociological, political, administrative, financial, and intergovernmental. The sociological requirement is concerned with the relation of the general social, or community, life of the residents to local government. The political requirements deal with the basic relationship between the citizens and government. The administrative requirements are those which are necessary to ensure efficiency in the administration of services. The financial and inter-governmental requirements are considered necessary to attain efficiency. Each of these specific requirements is described individually, however, it is emphasized that they are closely related and interdependent.

What follows, therefore, is an evaluation of the proposed system of local government organization within the framework of the requirements for democratic and efficient local government formulated by the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life. As yet the requirement of the system to recognize the smaller trade centers as obligations of the Farm Cities has not been explicitly detailed; neither has a systematic planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community been outlined. However, implicit in the evaluation

of the proposed system of local government organization, and the consequent policies and proposals that follow, is that recognition and that approach.

The Sociological Requirement:

"The area of the local government unit should correspond with the communities being developed by farm people for trade and social life to ensure integration of local government with non-governmental aspects of rural life."

With the wider range of movement afforded by the advent of the automobile and the rise of the Farm Cities following 1940, rural residents were no longer required to trade at the nearest center. Increased demands for more specialized goods and services meant travel to the more remote but larger emerging Farm Cities. Thus, specialization of centers developed and established a trend toward growing interdependence of centers through various economic and social activity linkages, larger service areas, and more overlapping of areas. The "economic community" that developed was a large trade area surrounding specialized service centers that replaced the former village - centered areas. The result was the Farm City Community System.

This new division of the life of the former monolithic rural community also had some important social effects. Prior to 1930, the "social community" consisted of a trading village and the surrounding rural people, the total interests of the local group tending to be concentrated in that one center. However, after the emergence of the Farm City, the rural population found their interests divided in the sense that another trading community monopolized a great deal of their attention. The old isolation of the traditional country "neighbourhood" disappeared.

The general social life of rural residents increasingly became oriented to the service-centered "community" in much the same manner as economic activities of the rural population had been altered and redirected.

The reorganization of the present system of local government would, therefore, provide a means of strengthening "community" activity linkages as the proposed base of that reorganization is the Farm City Community System which reflects the "economic" and "social" communities of the rural population. Further, a reciprocal relationship between governmental and non-governmental activities would be stimulated, which would increase the vitality of rural life in a local setting, as local government would be conducted within a single jurisdictional unit that would coincide with the area within which rural people associate economically and socially.

The Political Requirements:

(1) *"Local government units must be capable of assuming responsibility for the performance of functions which, individually and collectively, are considered of vital importance to the local community".*

The allocation of functions to local government is the constitutional responsibility of the province. The decision, however, to entrust functions to the local unit and to provide financial assistance is dependent upon the senior level of governments' estimate of the efficiency with which the local unit conducts assigned tasks. The local government unit, therefore, should be so organized as to demonstrate efficient performance of a variety of functions and services.

Since the proposed system of local government reorganization features a single, integrated authority within a common area delineated according to the "community" within which people associate, optimum opportunity should be possible for efficient functioning of the local

government unit. Further, with increased efficiency, the system should stimulate public interest and encourage greater public participation, the latter point being particularly important in light of the planning function assigned to the local government unit.

(2) "There must be assurance that the ultimate control of the activities of the local government unit rests with the citizens as a group."

This condition is necessary if local government is to attract wide public interest and implement the democratic ideal of encouraging general and vigorous participation in its political processes. Further that vigorous public participation is a necessary and sufficient condition of the planning function of the local government unit is evidenced in the following propositions and proposals.[62]

How can the rural community assure that farmer dollars will be spent in the rural economy? Further, how can the rural community retain the people leaving farming? A similar problem can also be posed regarding nonfarm people who are forced to leave rural communities. These people are "expensive commodities" to export. Legitimate questions, therefore, arise with respect to the feasibility of relying substantial on local property taxes to finance education and the provision of municipal services.

There are no easy solutions to the important problems posed. The proposed solutions which follow are difficult in that they suggest adjustments which are severe. One must compare, however, the severity of the proposed adjustments with the detrimental consequences of clinging

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62. The propositions advanced were originally formulated by Allan A. Warrack in "Rural Economic Reorganization as Induced by Agricultural Adjustments", Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics, 18 (November, 1970).

to the status quo. If the adaption process is unduly delayed the ultimate adjustments will become increasingly painful.

To state the first proposition: "There is a need for spatial economic reorganization to consolidate rural communities within the Prairie Community System." Accordingly, economic, social, educational, and governmental activities would be concentrated in proven, viable population centers in an attempt to achieve regional decentralization of economic activity. An exceedingly difficult aspect of the proposition is the byproduct that many nonviable rural centers must be permitted to decline and disappear.

If this first proposition holds, at least two crucial questions are immediately presented. What would be the criteria to decide which population centers should remain? Who should initiate and implement the spatial economic reorganization of rural communities? The analytical design formulated by Gerald Hodge provides the required framework for analyzing trade center viability and determining which centers should be permitted to decline and disappear. With respect to the second question, the contention that reorganization be imposed by higher levels of government must be rejected. Unilateral actions by large centers typically are doomed; broader participation is essential. It is doubtful, consequently, if successful reorganization can be initiated and implemented by anyone other than the local populace. The needed economic reorganization, therefore, must be an intrument of democracy and local self-determination. The process, as a consequence, of economic reorganization is only possible given the assurance that the ultimate control of the activities of the local government unit rests with the citizens as a group, an assurance that is a necessary and sufficient condition of the proposed system of local government reorganization.

The suggested adaptation is severe, but the choice still remains in choosing between the stated proposition and watching rural dollars flow outside all rural communities. Similarly, there are few options to assure that people leaving farming need not leave the rural community. The second proposition, therefore, contends that: "there is a need for a program of industrial decentralization to provide employment in the rural economy". A fundamental point of this second proposition is that it cannot be achieved unless the spatial economic reorganization of the first proposition is accomplished. Therefore, the second proposition provides a further impetus for the spatial economic reorganization of the Prairie Community System.

The essence of the above discussion is an attempt to provide, what has been referred to by the Province of Manitoba in "Guidelines for the Seventies", as an effective stay option for rural residents who wish to live and work, without disadvantage, in the rural environment of the small prairie community. There are, however, a number of obstacles to this general scheme, the most notable of which is the recalcitrance of rural citizens, leaders, and government to planning. As stated previously, a requirement exists, prior to attempting local government reorganization, for a "provincial master plan" which would include a policy on the location, quality, and intensity of urban development. Further, it has been stated, that the responsibility for initiating and implementing that policy, which would include the spatial economic reorganization of rural communities, rests with the local citizens as a group. The "stay option" represents, therefore, a challenge to the democratic process and local government. What may appear to be a pious hope must nevertheless be accomplished if the Prairie Community is to remain a viable production - consumption and living community of man.

(3) *"There should be optimum opportunity for the rendering of useful public service through election or appointment to office of qualified personnel."*

The democratic ideal includes the concept of the development of the individual through participation in the political process as an official, elected or appointed. It implies, therefore, that the number of offices to be filled should be as large as other circumstances permit and, that there should be maximum encouragement for the best qualified members of the region to present themselves as candidates for office. In the face of competition from non-governmental organizations, local government must provide opportunities for useful service which challenge the best in rural leadership. In the proposed system of local government reorganization, however, the number of elected officials would be smaller than under previous systems (as a consequence of the consolidation of responsibility for education and municipal services in one body) and, therefore the opportunity for challenging service would be greater.

The spectre of the first development constraint of the small prairie community - a limited human resource base - however, appears as an obstacle to this third political requirement for a viable system of local government. A partial solution does, nevertheless, lie in the proposed local government unit. With a broadened human resource base to draw upon, which would be the result of the increased geographic reach of the region compared to previous systems of local government organization, particularly the municipal system, and the inclusion of incorporated areas within the jurisdictional confines of the unit, a reprieve of the constraint would be provided. Under such conditions, it is assumed, the most forceful representation on the regional council, at least in the early stages of development, would come from the larger urban areas within the local government unit. However, assuming an

effective "stay option" and the consequent decline in rural-to-urban migration, particularly of the young rural adult, a "balance" of effective representation would subsequently be achieved and the constraint of a limited human resource base eliminated.

(4) *"The organization of local government must ensure that services are rendered impartially to all members of the community."*

To ensure the attainment of this fourth political requirement it is necessary that the governing body be fully responsible as a unit for all policies, subject only to the constitutional control of the Provincial Government and to the will of the electorate as expressed through regular public meetings and the election of representatives.

Since the proposed jurisdictional unit would be responsible for all local services, it would be able to render impartial, integrated services for the community as a whole. This system, with its technical resources and centralized administration, offers the greatest assurance of the elimination of individual preference and the rendering of impartial services.

The Administrative Requirements:

The following individual administrative requirements are necessary to ensure the efficient provision of individual services and effective integration in the planning and execution of services as a whole within the region:

(1) *"Units of local government should be capable of entering into mature working relationships with the Provincial Government so as to provide efficient and integrated local services."*

Units of local government must be able: (i) to share clearly defined responsibilities with senior levels of government, (ii) to make effective use of provincial advisory and technical services; and, (iii) to achieve integration of provincial and local functions. The proposed unit,

which would be responsible for both education and municipal services, would be able to undertake its share of local functions most effectively and make maximum use of provincial advisory, technical, and financial aid as responsibility for all education and municipal services in a service-centered area would promote the highest level of efficiency and the integration of services.

The establishment of the proposed system of local government throughout the Prairie Community System, as stated previously, would follow from the formulation of a "provincial master plan". Further, it has been stated, that the responsibility for initiating and implementing the spatial economic reorganization of rural communities rests with the local citizens as a group. This general scheme, the essence of which is an effective "stay option", represents, therefore, not only a challenge to the democratic process and local government, but requires a mature working relationship between the two applicable levels of government. The proposed system of local government it is contended, would supply the mechanism through which that relationship could be most effectively developed and allowed to mature.

More important, however, is the fact that responsibility for *initiating* the policy on the location, quality, and intensity of urban development, which would include the spatial economic reorganization of rural communities, rests with the *current* system of local government. There must, therefore, be a recognition by the leaders of the present system of local government that reorganization of local government is a prerequisite to the continued existence and consequent development of the Prairie Community System as a viable production-consumption and living community of man. Once that recognition has been achieved,

which is the *real* challenge to the democratic process, the working relationship between the two levels of government in implementing the spatial economic reorganization would be formalized through, and enhanced by, a redefinition of local government organization.

(2) *"There should be optimum conditions for long-term planning of services provided by local government."*

In a rapidly changing rural environment, planning is not a luxury: planning is essential if the uneconomic use of a community's resources is to be avoided. Two conditions, in particular, are essential in providing effective planning. The planning body must have responsibility for all planning in the area in which an integrated service must be provided. In addition, appropriate planning procedures must be adopted which involves the realization of the need for planning with qualified personnel, physical facilities, and financial resources.[63]

The proposed local government unit, it is contended, is better adapted to unified planning than any of the current systems, primarily as a result of the following: (i) the planning function would be for the same geographical area as other services for which the local government unit would be responsible; (ii) the inclusion within the jurisdictional confines of the local government unit of incorporated settlements which would eliminate duplication of effort and minimize conflict between urban and rural areas within the unit; and, (iii) the financial resources of

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63. The need for planning with qualified personnel has been discussed at some length in previous sections of this thesis. Financial resources, which forms the fourth category of requirements for strong local self-government, will be discussed at length in following sections.

the region could be effectively allocated to the total planning needs of the local government unit. As with other larger area systems, special care would need to be taken to ensure adequate reflection of more local planning needs which could be done by full discussion and approval of all plans on an electroal district basis before final implementation into long-term programs.

Inherent in the proposed jurisdictional unit, however, is a complexity unprecedented in present systems of local government. With the integration of a number of functions, formerly administered by various legal entities, into a single body, the inclusion of incorporated settlements within the jurisdictional confines of the region, and the unit being based on the common denominator of the service-centered community system, a requirement exists to apply the techniques of scientific management to the public sector of the economy.

Since 1960, the development of Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems (PPBS) in governments at each level in Canada and the U.S.A. has attempted to accomplish this objective.[64] The techniques are commonplace; the essential feature of PPBS is the combination of the various techniques into a systematic management cycle. The major elements of PPBS are: (i) the determination of objectives, with measurement criteria; (ii) the design of programs and the consideration of alternatives; (iii) budgeting and resource allocation; (iv) execution of programs; and (v) evaluation of results. To what depth and level of sophistication the proposed local government unit should go with PPBS remains open. What is of importance is that the PPBS framework provides the techniques of

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64. An outline of some of the current thinking on PPBS implementation is provided by John F. Cotton, "Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems for Local Government", Municipal Finance (August, 1968).

scientific management in a systematic management cycle such that the complexity of the proposed local government unit can be effectively directed. Further, the PPBS framework would be established under the optimum conditions for long-term planning that are inherent to the proposed system of local government.

(3) *"The organization of local government should give optimum opportunity for economic employment of qualified personnel and of the most efficient equipment for each particular service".*

Qualified personnel should, appropriately, have specialized training and experience which would be dependant on the service involved. Accordingly, with the inherent complexity of the proposed system of local government organization, a need would exist, on establishing the system, to staff the policy-implementation branch of local government with qualified personnel. The employment of skilled personnel is particularly important if the local government is to be the initiator and implementator of the spatial economic reorganization of rural communities as it is extremely doubtful that the knowledge and expertise for such an endeavour can be found within the confines of the region. As in the case of personnel, the economic employment of equipment is dependent upon the amount of service provided. The more specialized the equipment the greater is the amount of work required to make its use economic.

The proposed system, with the increased geographical area and the removal of artifical jurisdictional boundaries, would be able to consolidate the equipment owned currently by the jurisdictions within its area and would be able to apply the resources of its entire area to the economic employment of skilled personnel. Further, it would be able to allocate the time of its personnel and equipment in the best interests of the area as a whole consequently eliminating the duplication of effort

characteristic of present systems as well as providing essential services to areas currently unserviced (e.g., snow removal in small incorporated areas unable to secure the capital required for such equipment). Finally, in regard to the economics of general administration, it is contended that there is likely to be greater chance of using to capacity personnel and equipment which are directed by a single responsible authority than under systems of separate government units that require similar skilled personnel and equipment to provide a like or complementary service.

(4) *"The organization of local government should afford optimum opportunity for economy and efficiency in general administration and in integration of the various functions performed".*

The combination in a single unit of responsibility for all general municipal and school services should provide for economy and efficiency of general administration and integration of functions. However, with the range of activities increased and the dispersal of responsibility, the possibility exists, without effective channels of communication and efficient administrative practice, for the organization as a whole to become less flexible in meeting the varying needs of the "community".

The Financial Requirements:

(1) *"The organization of local government should facilitate administration of the property tax and provide machinery for levying and collecting other types of revenues that may in the future appear desirable."*

It seems probable that the main reliance for local government revenue will continue to be upon taxes based on real property values. The property tax, however, is regressive. Further, it demonstrates a regional bias. Property tax reform therefore, is essential. To correct these inequalities, the Manitoba Government has proposed, in "Guidelines for the Seventies", to abolish residential and farm property taxes levied

for school purposes. Financing of local government would be provided by a progressive form of income tax.

Irrespective of the revenue source, the proposed local government unit would be well adapted to the levying and collecting of present revenues and to collecting any additional or alternate forms of taxes that might be imposed under a broadened revenue structure of local government. Further, with the responsibility for education and municipal services being vested in one body, the administration of local government revenue would be facilitated.

(2) *"Local government should be so organized as to promote increased and stable revenues."*

Central to the fiscal capacity of a local government unit are the problems relating to rural income. Not only is there a problem with the "level" of farm income in the Prairie Community System, also, there is a farm income "disparity" problem. The first farm income problem can in part be solved by farmers who have the ability to expand farm operations in an attempt to increase net farm income per operater. The disparity problem again can be solved in part by farmers, who are unable to adjust within farming to a viable unit by leaving farming.

There is a set of causalities relating farm and nonfarm components of the rural economy, however, that would lead to two specific nonfarm problems if the above adjustments were made that provide apparent solutions to the farm income problems of "level" and "disparity". How can the rural community assure that farmer collars will be spent in the rural economy? Further, how can the rural community retain the people leaving farming? The nonfarm adjustments to these related problems were discussed at length in a previous section of this thesis in evaluating the second political requirement for a viable system of local government.

To summarize the conclusions reached at that point, it was noted that, although severe, the required nonfarm adjustments were: (i) the need for spatial economic reorganization to consolidate rural communities; and, (ii) a need for decentralized industrialization to provide employment in the rural economy. Further, it was noted, that a fundamental point of the second adjustment was that it could not be achieved unless the adjustment of spatial economic reorganization were accomplished. Therefore, to promote increased and stable revenues there must be a spatial economic reorganization of rural communities which, it is contended, is only possible given a system of local government that is conducive to such an adjustment. The proposed system of local government, as evidenced by the discussion in previous sections, fulfills that requirement.

(3) *"The organization of local government should be conducive to the equalization of the cost of supplying a basic minimum standard of essential services for residents of different units."*

Weakness in fiscal capacity and the regressive effect of the property tax were previously identified as the two components of one of the major development constraint of the small prairie community. The first component, weakness in fiscal capacity, was discussed in the evaluation of the second financial requirement for a viable system of local government. Reform of the property tax is viewed as essential. The regional bias of the property tax, however remains largely unanswered. Further, with the provision of essential services at the local level, difficulties arise not only between the local unit's inability to raise revenues, also, differences arise in the cost of providing the service.

These difficulties may be met in two ways. First, in as far as other requirements permit, the areas of local government could be adjusted for population, assessment, existing boundaries and administrative

requirements. Since other requirements, however, will not permit a complete solution on this basis, a second means of reducing disparities is proposed: equalization grants to local government units by senior levels of government. Apart from these solutions, the proposed system of local government would permit equalization among units in the burden of local government services because the larger size of the expanded unit would make it more likely to include both more and less productive land resources. The region would be superior, therefore, in this respect to any system involving small municipal units.

The requirement to supply a basic minimum standard of essential services for residents of different units applies equally to the provision of essential services within units. However, with respect to the small prairie community, small size is a problem in itself, for neither a high level of amenities nor of local government services can be supported by the tax base that may depend on only a few hundred residents or less. Not only is it difficult for such small places to raise sufficient money for public projects, but the small scale at which they must be built also means generally higher per capita costs than for similar projects in large centers. Further, the density of development in small centers is a contributing factor to the excessive cost of the provision of many essential public services. The abundant subdivision into small lots combined with a light, almost haphazard, scattering of dwellings is typical of small centers within the Prairie Community System.

The problem, although severe, can be alleviated somewhat given the feasibility of the following proposal. Spatial economic reorganization of rural communities as stated previously, has the byproduct that many nonviable rural centers must be permitted to decline and disappear.

Given that this policy is approved at the local level, it follows that there is at least a moral, if not legal, obligation on the part of government to assist in, if not outwardly induce, the relocation of affected residents. Further, it should be an integral part of the policy on the location, quality, and intensity of urban development to retain the nonfarm people within the larger service-centered community who are forced to leave the rural centers designated in the "provincial master plan" as centers of decline. Assuming the acceptance of these two propositions, the proposal may be stated as follows: relocation assistance in the form of grants should be made available to affected households willing to relocate to a viable center within the service-centered community system. Those relocated would be encouraged financially, to take residence in one of the viable smaller urban communities thereby providing a form of "infill" development and raising the density of development in those centers to a point where the provision of public services would approach, if not attain, an economical level. Further the provision of essential public services to the small center, given that spatial economic reorganization is accomplished, would not depend solely on the tax base within that community alone for inherent to the proposed system of local government is a "revenue sharing formula" among the various units of the region.

The proposed organization of local government, therefore, is conducive to the equalization of the cost of supplying a basic minimum standard of essential services to residents of different units as well as within units and with "revenue sharing" recognizes the smaller trade centers as obligations of the larger service centers, or Farm Cities.

(4) *"Local government organization should facilitate lowest cost marketing of the debenture issues of all local units."*

The region as the sole unit of local government in an area would undertake marketing of debentures for all its component services. Further, insofar as borrowing power is determined by the collateral security the borrower can offer, which is the tax base of rural jurisdictions, the region would be at a distinct advantage when compared to existing systems of local government.

The Intergovernmental Requirements:

(1) *"Organization of local government should permit optimum use of provincial technical and advisory services."*

The concentration of responsibility for all general municipal services in the region would be conducive to the effective and efficient utilization of provincial technical and advisory services in the planning and execution of policies. The number of units would be fewer than in existing systems, the economic area required for large-scale services would exist, and the local personnel would be competent to make effective use of those services. Further, common areas for municipal and school services would facilitate use of provincial services and in addition, the elimination of the constituent small municipal units would facilitate liason with provincial field services.

(2) *"Local government should be organized so that provincial financial assistance may be made available under the most satisfactory conditions."*

As stated previously, to prevent the imposition of an undesireably onerous burden on the taxpayers of many units to assure basic standards of service, some type of government equalization grant will be required. Unconditional grants would be desireable in the interests of local autonomy. Until the units have demonstrated their efficiency in

expanding such grants, however, and in order to assure province-wide minimum standards of service, the province is likely to provide conditional grants-in-aid for particular services.

Irrespective of whether the grants are conditional or not, the proposed system of local government would be able to utilize provincial grants effectively for the following reasons: (i) an appropriate area for planning; (ii) adequate financial resources to provide a minimum basic level of service; and (iii) efficient and specialized personnel and equipment. Furthermore, consolidation of authority in the proposed regional unit, which would result in an integration of services, would heighten the effectiveness with which provincial grants could be utilized.

(3) *"The organization of local government should facilitate observance of provincial regulations without loss of local autonomy."*

The consolidation of authority in a single unit would permit the most effective contact by provincial departments with the regional government in the provision of services. Since the region represents one of the strongest and most unified systems of local government, local autonomy would be assured while provincial requirements would not be sacrified. Effective local government, therefore, can observe provincial regulations and still maintain local autonomy.

(4) *"The organization of the local government system as a whole should permit optimum co-ordination of the activities of local units with different service responsibilities."*

The proposed system of local government provides optimum conditions for co-ordination of all local services because it is automatically achieved by the consolidation of authority in a single body. With some services possibly continuing to operate in areas larger than the region (e.g., health services), machinery for the co-ordination of those services would have to be devised.

(5) "Local government should be organized to permit economy in the provision of all government services."

The sharing of resources for school and general municipal services under the regional system is not a problem of integrating the activities of separate local government units; rather it is a problem of integrating the activities of separate departments of the single unit since all its functions are concentrated in one authority. Concentration of authority should facilitate economies through sharing of resources by the unit, larger area services not included within the unit, and regional divisions of provincial government departments.

CONCLUSION

The planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community that has been outlined requires; (i) the formalization of the dependency of the small centers to the larger independent trading towns; and, (ii) the recognition of the small trade centers as obligations of the larger service centers. The planning approach proposed consequently necessitates a reorganization of the present system(s) of local government and the spatial economic reorganization of rural communities which, in turn, is required if the Prairie Community System and the small prairie community are to be maintained and developed as viable production-consumption and living communities of man.

The planning approach proposed, it is recognized, cannot be considered as "complete". Many of the detailed questions that should arise out of the approach being suggested have not been answered. Neither, it is suggested, is the approach an easy one. Considerable expenditures in time and money must be made in order for the approach to work. Further, formidable obstacles stand in the way of implementing

many of the proposals put forward. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the essence of the planning approach being suggested will become a small contribution to the ongoing discussion on planning for the development of the small prairie community. As such it is intended.

APPENDIX A
Thesis Abstract

The intent of "Development and Planning of the Small Prairie Community in an Era of Change" is to formulate a planning approach (i.e., a policy) appropriate to the small prairie community. To clarify the approach taken in arriving at this end, a schematic diagram of the planning process utilized in the thesis is presented at Figure "A" Thesis Abstract. Five phases are noted, each phase corresponding approximately to the various chapters in the main body of the document.

Phase I: Hypotheses outlines a number of propositions concerning the small prairie community which are as follows:

H_1: that many smaller urban communities are dying in the face of changing technology;

H_2: that indications are present that a similar fate awaits many of the smaller urban communities that currently exhibit an apparently healthy facade;

H_3: that, as a result of hypotheses H_1 and H_2, regional development policies need to give special attention

to that part of the settlement pattern that falls between the major regional center and the farm;

H_4: that the smaller urban community cannot be planned in isolation of the system of which it forms an integral part; and,

H_5: that planning for "decline", or "stabilization", is as much a concern of the planning profession as is planning for "growth".

Each of these propositions, or hypotheses, are then programmed through various intermediate phases, evaluated in the Synthesis Phase (IV), and subsequently accepted or rejected in the final Policy Formulation Phase (V).

Phase II: Theoretical Framework (i) explores various aspects of regional economic theory (i.e., concepts, models, the objectives of, and obstacles to, regional economic planning), (ii) establishes the context within which a planning approach appropriate to the small prairie community is developed, and (iii) allows for a thorough understanding of the nature and implications of the elements of the Analysis Phase (III) in planning for the development of the small prairie community in an era of change.

Phase III: Analysis is confined to three major areas, or elements of importance in planning for the development of the small prairie community. The prairie community system is examined, concentrating primarily on the small community and the various functions it performs within that system. Numerous problem areas (i.e., development constraints) encountered by the small community

are investigated. Various possible future prospects of the small community are explored.

Phase IV: Synthesis, through a process of deductive reasoning, evaluates the various hypotheses of Phase I and combines the diverse elements of the Analysis Phase (III), within the context of the Theoretical Framework developed in Phase II, into a coherent whole that forms the elementary structure of the policy to be developed in Phase V.

Phase V: Policy Formulation expands the basic structure developed in the Synthesis Phase (IV), through a process of inductive and deductive reasoning, to evolve a planning policy appropriate to the small prairie community in an era of rural change.

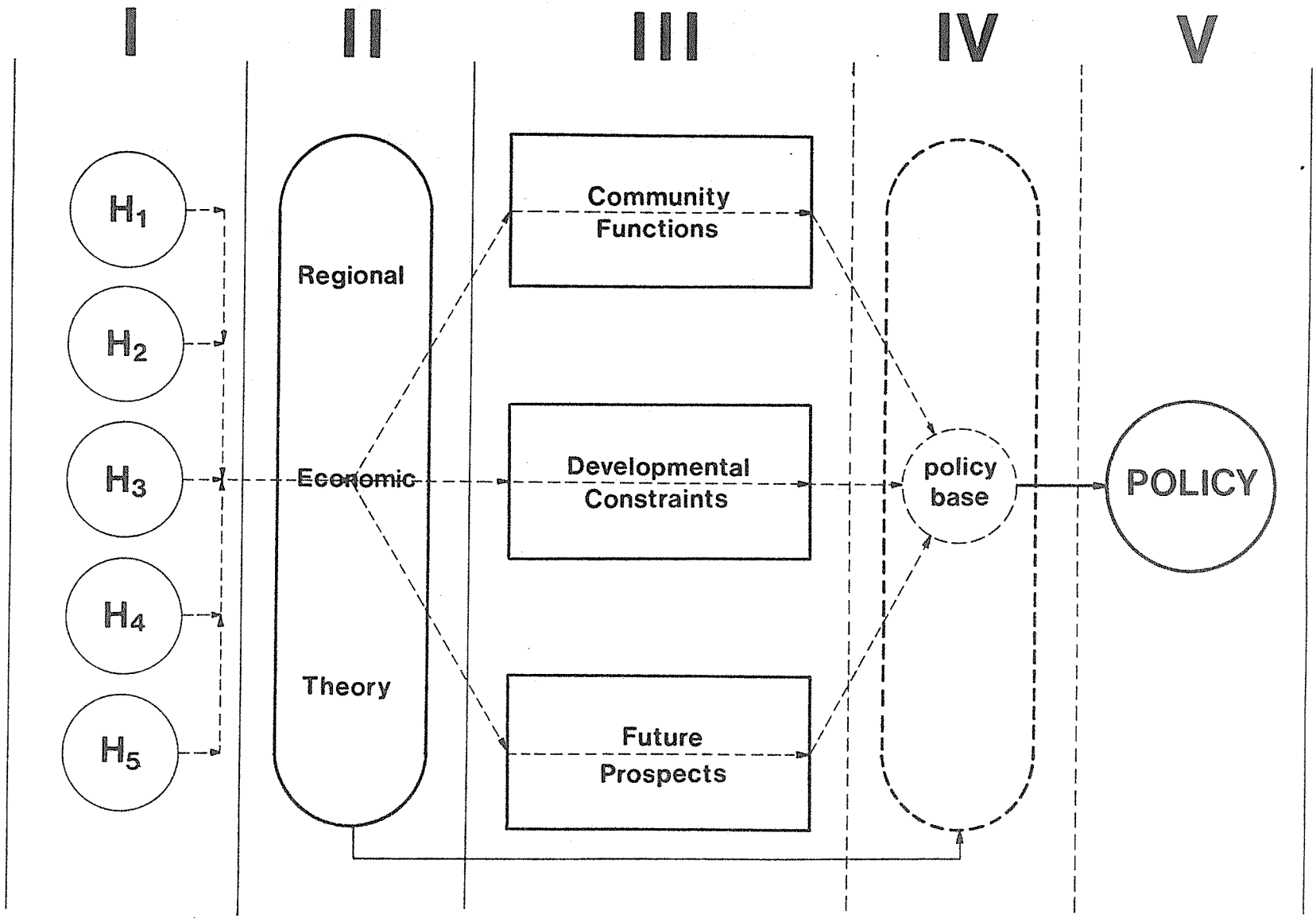

FIGURE A

Thesis Abstract

APPENDIX B
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