

PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, CENTER FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS

## Introducing the CURA REPORTER

The Regents established the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) to help to make the University more responsive to the needs of the larger community, and to increase the constructive interaction between faculty and students, on the one hand, and those dealing directly with major public problems, on the other hand.

In one way, this Center is merely a small addition to a large, effective, long-standing community service effort which ranges from the Extension Divisions to the internship and applied research programs of the professional schools, to the varied projects and services of individual departments and faculty.

Hence the question is, What more can the University do? One task of CURA--a by-product of all it does--is to help answer that question. But more important is the day-to-day experimentation.

The specific projects of the Center are selected within a half-dozen broad problem areas. These reflect the major lags in the evolution of the American urban system in this generation: housing, human relations, urban transportation, waste management, local government reorganization, and the diffusion of information about these topics. These problems cut across a wide and changing array of disciplines and colleges.

The Center's role is to help to coordinate and stimulate projects in these problem areas. It works through the faculty and students

of all academic units of the University. All CURA programs are pilot, experimental, or short-term. The goal is to probe and evaluate, to complete short-term projects, discard unsuccessful ones, and help to build successful ones into the appropriate part of the academic structure. CURA will not develop permanent faculty or research staff, or offer degrees; and it confines itself to projects for which there is currently no other practical administrative home.

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## FISCAL MODEL PLANNED

An effort to bring together massive amounts of local governmental fiscal data for ready analysis is underway in Minnesota. The project -- acronymed RAFT (for Rapid Analysis Fiscal Tool) -- has been undertaken jointly by the Upper Midwest Research and Development Council and the Citizens League, supported by an \$80,000 grant from Ford Foundation.

About 1500 separate categories of information have been defined for inclusion in the RAFT data dictionary on such subjects as real and personal property valuation, exempt property, sales ratios, levies, mill rates, tax receipts, state aids, population, income and employment.

The project was initially planned for operation in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area but data is now being gathered on almost 1000 units of government or their subdivisions. Complete files begin with 1967, but some earlier data is being sought to establish base years for trends. A less comprehensive, but much

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## MICRO CITY PROJECT

The Micro City Project is one of several projects now underway at the Center for the Study of Local Government at St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. Director of the Center is Dr. Edward L. Henry. It is operating under a sizeable grant from the Ford Foundation made originally in January of 1968 and renewed for another two years as of July 1, 1970.

The terms of the Ford Foundation grant call for the Center to perform a catalytic function in drawing attention of public decision-makers and academic researchers to the plight and potential of small cities in the 10,000 to 50,000 category. Additionally, the Center is to conduct research on twelve outstate cities in Minnesota and develop analytical models for analysis of such cities. Under a Title I grant the Center has created a "delivery system" for its findings and is conducting "community analysis" forums in each city between May and November of 1970.

The research is multi-faceted and inter-disciplinary in nature and includes the following components:

- An analysis of citizen attitudes towards their communities in three of the cities. The project is a cooperative one with Concordia College and Bemidji State College and involves an interview survey conducted with more than 800 citizens. Satisfaction with city services, attitudes toward elected officials, and characteristics of the population are among the subjects covered in the in-depth interviews.

- A study of elected city officials was made in January of 1969 and updated in January of 1970 in an effort to determine characteristics of micro-city

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## CURA

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Working in this frame during the past year, fourteen faculty members have served as part-time CURA coordinators. Through them the Center has operated seminars and varied pilot instructional projects; offered consultation which has involved about sixty faculty members from almost as many departments, and perhaps one hundred of their students; and it has helped to stimulate experimental courses and programs which have involved several hundred more students. The projects have been cooperative with federal, state and local agencies, community citizen and service groups.

As the CURA work program has evolved, all connected with it have felt the growing need for more communication among ourselves. We want to keep informed about:

- what the CURA projects are doing;
- related programs and projects in the University;
- related programs in other Minnesota colleges and universities; and
- actions outside the educational establishment which affect our plans and programs.

To fill this need, we are initiating the *CURA Reporter*. We are circulating it widely because we believe that the activities it reports will be of interest well beyond the circle of current CURA coordinators. We invite further information and comment from all readers.

John Borchert, Director CURA

## Micro City Project

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decision-makers and the recruitment system which drew them into office.

- A study of patterns of city expenditures and demographic trends using city size and city type (metro, suburban, outstate) as control variables is being completed.

- A mathematical formula for predicting population growth and for studying intra-urban mobility has been developed and utilized in a study of population movement in one of the cities.

- A model of city economic processes analogous to models for national economies is being developed and used to evaluate city economic growth.

- A community power structure study was done in one of the cities and will be published this summer.

In addition to these projects, the Center expects as a result of the project to publish two volumes this year. One of them will be a series of essays and case studies on one of the cities to illustrate the types of problems small cities face and how they deal with them.

The other volume will consist of a series of essays outlining methodological means of approaching small city analysis and presenting some of the results of the Micro City research.

The Micro City project is designed to fill a lacuna in the field of urban research, which except for power structure studies has largely neglected the smaller cities of the nation that are vital to countryside development. The project is an experimental one insofar as it is trying to develop techniques of simultaneously studying several communities for comparison purposes.

Cities in Minnesota being studied as part of the project include: Austin, Hibbing, Mankato, Fergus Falls, Moorhead, Willmar, St. Cloud, Winona, Red Wing, New Ulm, Albert Lea, Bemidji.

## Fiscal Model Planned

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longer, data file for several thousand representative governmental units throughout the state is being created simultaneously in cooperation with the Governor's Property Tax Advisory Committee with State Planning Agency and CURA support.

RAFT's basic data unit is the "location," defined as that part of a school district falling within a single municipality. This building block will enable RAFT to combine the levies of all levels of local government under which a single person lives to estimate the total governmental tax load and spending amounts.

Besides a data bank function of retrieval, elemental computations, and statistics, RAFT contains calculating formulas representing all types of taxes, grants, and property classifications. Each legal policy is entered into the formula as a variable, so that the present settings, determined by statute, can be changed to provide a test of some alternative policy under consideration.

For example, the current legal policy of giving the individual homeowner a credit of 35 percent on the non-debt part of his property tax can be calculated alongside an alternative policy of granting 35 percent credit on the debt portion also. RAFT automatically compares these two "situations" -- the present and an alternative policy -- at electronic speeds with a simple change in controls.

Present display formats are planned to illustrate the variations in fiscal capacity of the many governmental units, and the differing impact state grant and tax-sharing policies have on those units and on families of different incomes in those units. Fiscal disparities among the many units of government appear to be the principal handicap to more broadly based developmental decisions in the metropolitan area, such as location of major facilities like airports, shopping centers, freeway interchanges, and open space reserves, or even low-income housing which are sought (or avoided) primarily because of their property-tax implications.

Once operational, RAFT will correlate fiscal, demographic, and geographical indicators from the several communities.

Present data gathering, and ultimate completion of RAFT, is handicapped by the unavailability of much needed information. Up till now, the state government has not required local governments to preserve the report fiscal information not needed to administer some statute presently on the books. When considering any tax or spending proposal, therefore, the legislative body does not have available the basis for estimating the effects of a new policy in advance of enactment. Also, some individual counties have proceeded to automate their fiscal records, but without common specifications and often without planning to deliver information in a form suitable for convenient and accurate analysis. RAFT should both

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## **Fiscal Model Planned *continued***

show the need for more comprehensive and comparable data and point to improved procedures for reporting it, since it has the capacity to digest, analyze, and display complicated interrelationships among vast amounts of data in a simple way.

Tom Anding and Ted Kolderie, executive directors respectively of the Upper Midwest Research and Development Council and Citizens League, are co-managers of RAFT. Paul Gilje, research director of the Citizens League is in charge of data gathering, and Irma (Mrs. Harry) Sletten is project tax economist. Charles H. Backstrom, Professor of Political Science, is designing and executing the computer program.

## **MAPS Designated**

The Minnesota Analysis and Planning System (MAPS) has been officially recognized by the Bureau of the Census as a 1970 census tape processing center.

MAPS is currently operational as a data bank with storage and retrieval capabilities for the states of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wisconsin and Michigan. First through sixth count census summary tapes for these same states will be available from MAPS to state and local government and institutions of higher education; selected data for the entire U.S. will be available as well.

For further information, please contact Dr. David M. Nelson, Assistant Professor and Coordinator, Extension Management Information Systems, Agricultural Extension Service, 226 Temporary South of Coffey, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101. Telephone: (612) 373-1098.

## **Rice Street**

### **Teen Center Project**

The Rice Street Teen Center Project serves as an example of the way in which the Center for Youth Development and Research combines its three interdependent functions: teaching, research, and community service.

In June 1968, Family Service of St. Paul and NECO (North End Community Organization) asked CURA to assist them in the establishment of a teen center in the Rice Street Area of St. Paul, a white, working-class neighborhood with a very high delinquency rate. At the time of the request, this was an area almost totally lacking in services and facilities for young people. There was an urgency in the request to CURA; it was already summer and the neighborhood representatives were concerned that another summer would pass with nothing for the youngsters to do.

In two weeks, CURA recruited a program staff for the center composed of undergraduate and graduate students, Eleanor Felker from the School of Social Work as a consultant and trainer for the staff, and a doctoral candidate in social work as the community organizer. The Teen Center was in operation by July 1968 in a storefront on North Rice Street.

The University students continued to staff the center through the 1968-69 school year and gained knowledge and skill in working with these young people. One sociology student described her experience in this way: "They weren't real bad kids or hard-core juvenile delinquents for the most part. They just need someone to help show them some of the things that they just don't realize exist."

The contribution of Michael Connolly, the Community Organizer, was especially significant in mobilizing community resources to continue support for the Teen Center. Family Service of St. Paul took over primary funding responsibility in Summer 1969.

During the year's work at the Teen Center, the racist attitudes of the young people there seemed to be one of the most difficult problems for the staff to work with. The Center for Youth Development and Research set out to verify the racial attitudes of these young working-class youths and to experiment with ways to change such attitudes.

An undergraduate student in psychology, Mitchell Berdie, was employed to work as participant-observer in the Teen Center. Again, there was an effort made to combine direct service with research, and the student spent ten hours per week as a direct youth worker in the Teen Center and devoted ten hours to his research topic.

Berdie's report confirmed the thesis that there were deeply entrenched racial prejudices among these youth. He also found that "the beliefs of working-class youth about black people were a consistent part of their attitude system," and any attempt to change part of this system was perceived as a severe threat. Some programs were instituted at the Teen Center in regard to this problem, such as personal encounters with black people followed by group discussions, and an art program to help these young people deal with abstract ideas and feeling.

At this point, Center for Youth Development and Research (CYDAR) staff thought it was necessary to convene a small working conference of experts to share ideas about the causes of prejudice in working-class youngsters and develop alternatives for research and action. As a basis for discussion, the University and community experts read Mitchell Berdie's report. Thomas Pettigrew of Harvard University served as the major resource person at the May 8, 1970 conference. The participants proposed a number of specific situations out of which a long-term model could be utilized in changing racial attitudes among youth. A doctoral student in psychology will be employed by CYDAR during the 1970-71 academic year to try out some of the proposals made by conference participants. Thus, the Rice Street Project has provided direct help to a community, put students and faculty into a situation that is relevant to their teaching and studies, provided a research topic which is being investigated, and opened ways to new positive action.

## **Plymouth Avenue Shopping Center**

What retail stores located in a shopping center planned for North Minneapolis will best serve the needs of the local residents and be economically profitable? That was the question posed to Dean Paul V. Grambsch of the University's School of Business Administration by John M. Warder, President of the First Plymouth National Bank, last fall.

Warder, representing the Plymouth Avenue Businessmen's Association, had come to Dean Grambsch because businessmen in the area recognized a need for studies of the feasibility of various stores that might be considered for the shopping center. The proposed location for the

shopping center is on the south side of Plymouth Avenue between Morgan and Oliver Avenues.

Dean Grambsch enlisted the aid of several faculty members in the School of Business Administration, and the project was subsequently undertaken. The actual feasibility studies were done by four students in Professor William Rudelius's graduate course in Marketing Research: Robert Hoel, Ali Khalif, Curtis Sippel, and John Wright. Preliminary insurance analyses were done by Steve Alexander, David Bardin, Gary L. Pielemeier, and David Thompson, in two of Professor Andrew Whitman's courses in insurance. The final insurance analysis was done by Roger Kerin as a part of a course in Risk Management and Insurance taught by Professor C. Arthur Williams, Jr.

### Objectives of Study

After several meetings with members of the Plymouth Avenue Businessman's Association, three main objectives were identified for the study. These were:

- To identify a list of stores that should be considered for inclusion in the shopping center.
- To estimate the sales, costs, and profitability of fourteen of these stores.
- To rank the fourteen stores in terms of their expected chances for success in the proposed shopping center.

Thus, the overall goal of the research study was to identify stores for the shopping center that would best serve the continuing needs of the residents of the area and have the greatest chance of success.

### Approach Used

Discussions were held with members of the Plymouth Avenue Businessmen's Association to determine what stores they felt should be considered for the shopping center. To obtain the attitudes of residents in the area, ten group interviews were held with women residing in the census tracts that were in the principle trading area for the proposed shopping center. Each group had six to eight women in it. These interviews had several purposes. First, they sought suggestions from the residents themselves for stores to include in the shopping center. In addition, the interviews were also used to identify where the residents shopped at the present time for various goods and services, the convenience of the proposed shopping center location for them, and

the likelihood that they would buy various goods and services from stores in the proposed center. These interviews also brought out specific suggestions that might be used by potential owners of the businesses going into the shopping center.

The final step was to estimate the revenues and expenses for the individual stores. The revenues were determined by estimating factors such as the total income of residents in the census tracts located in the shopping center's trading area, the proportion of that total income to be spent by the residents on a specific good or service, and the likelihood that a resident in that census tract would patronize a store in the shopping center selling the specific good or service.

The expenses were estimated for each store by considering the store's sales volume and the depth and breadth of the goods and services offered by the contemplated store. The result was an estimate of the profitability for each of fourteen proposed stores. The analysis also included the availability of financing from various federal agencies, such as the Small Business Administration. Various local retail firms provided data on expense ratios for individual stores and the costs incurred by a store leasing area in a shopping center.

### Use of the Study

The principle use of the feasibility studies of individual stores is to aid members of the Plymouth Avenue Businessmen's Association in detailed planning for the shopping center. For example, how large a drug store or hardware store could the shopping center support? An answer to this question depends not only on a minimum economic size of the store but also on the size of the market to which the store caters. Thus, the store analyses must reflect not only expense consideration but the ability of these stores to serve the needs of customers living in the area served by the store.

The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs has provided administrative support for the project by arranging for the funding and printing of the final report, which is expected to be completed by the middle of June.

## Office of CAREER DEVELOPMENT

In an era when it is intensely aware of its relationship with the community, the University is searching for appropriate responses to the community in crisis. The ways in which it responds to those individuals who are unemployed and underemployed because of barriers of race, lack of education, and the accident of being born in poverty, are the particular concerns of the Office of Career Development (CURA).

The focus is primarily on ways in which we can summon the resources of the University to open up career development in the human services (education, welfare, corrections, community development, health) for a disadvantaged population.

Can new levels of personnel for community agencies, public institutions, and private industry, be drawn from this group, and through higher education be provided far-reaching and open-ended opportunities for career development? We believe one answer to this question can be structured through the new careers model, which is based on these principles:

- The trainee acts as a "bridge" between the professional staff of the agency and the "client" group, as an interpreter of one to the other, in the interest of improved service delivery.
- The work/study components complement one another.
- Ascending ladders of job tasks are assigned, with appropriate salary increments.
- Academic credit is awarded for supervised work experience.
- Entry into the credentialing system of an institution of higher learning is offered, facilitated by special counseling and supportive services, remedial education when necessary, and career-related curriculum.

The fact that at the end of a two year program in New Careers, one third of the enrollees are continuing in higher education, in pursuit of a two-year or full professional degree, and have increased job responsibilities, seems to us an affirmation of the viability of the concept.

The Careers in Community Development and Urban Planning Program (funded by HUD and the State Planning Agency) is designed on the new careers

model and chiefly offers inner-city persons a career opportunity in the field of public service, with an emphasis on urban programs. The CUP program was initiated in response to the notable lack of minority groups persons in the staffing structure of developmental government agencies. This has contributed, in our judgment, to the current crisis in the cities.

New Careers, as a model for career development for the disadvantaged, has been described as one of the most innovative and far-reaching experiments in manpower development. The University of Minnesota, through excellent cooperation with General Extension Division, General College, and College of Liberal Arts, has been able to provide many firsts in the nation in developing a work-study program. Curriculum development, supportive services through Project HELP, and credits for work experience were among its models that were used throughout the nation's programs. Additionally, the only research unit attached to an operating program was lodged at the University of Minnesota by the Department of Labor. Our materials continue to be dispersed to education institutions, and manpower programs, throughout the country.

We are currently identifying the very serious obstacles to providing open-ended opportunities for minority group persons in their beginning professional development. The operation of these programs often gives one a feeling of stalking around a landscape that is full of land mines in which unpredictable blowups are part of the terrain. The professional guild systems, civil service, the "hardening of the categories" in curriculum conceptualization, the difficulties of remedial education (particularly for adults long out of school), our incomplete knowledge about the extraordinary range of supportive services that are necessary - all of these provide difficulties that must be dealt with, negotiated, and, if possible, overcome.

The question is often asked, "Is it worth doing?" In our judgment a new careers model offers one of the most productive approaches to significant employment to inner city residents, valuable not only to the participant, but to the staff of agencies who are genuinely interested in better serving inner city populations. We have available in our office, 219 Clay School, a list of printed materials and research studies documenting career development efforts at the University of Minnesota.

## Evaluation of "THE TOWN MEETING"

*By Eugene C. Jaberg, Ph.D.  
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THE TOWN MEETING, a weekly public affairs series on KTCA-TV (Thursdays, 8:00 - 8:30 p.m.) continues an earlier (1966-67) community-wide experiment in adult education. "The Town Meeting of the Twin Cities", with Title One funds to support it, involved both group discussion in community organizations and mass media presentations and attempted to bring about informed dialogue on urban issues in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

The present television series began in the fall of 1967 and has continued to this date. The program takes a summer hiatus beginning June 12 but is expected to resume in September. Town Meeting, Inc., the sponsoring group of Twin Citians who were leaders of the earlier experiment, has obtained funding for the show from local organizations and individuals. Program producers, hosts, and discussants volunteer their time.

The focus of TOWN MEETING is on issues concerning the metropolitan area. Recent programs for example, have dealt with the urban Indian, environmental education, drug abuse, women's liberation, and Nicollet Island development. While the usual format calls for a discussion panel, drama and the documentary have also been used to expose issues. Recently, an original "rock" musical on pollution was performed on the program. Viewers have occasionally been invited to phone in questions for the panelists and twice radio talk-back shows have been correlated with the televised discussion.

Both the KTCA-TV management and Town Meeting, Inc., continue to value the series. No one, however, would suggest it is directly productive of problem solution or attitudinal change. Research generally seems to indicate that mass media "influences" are indirect, most often mediated by primary societal groups and interpersonal relationships. The objective of the series is, more modestly, to raise the issues of the local urban area and to foster discussion of the same among those groups where opinion formation and change apparently occur.

Since expensive audience surveys are not normally obtained by KTCA-TV, evaluative data is limited. Some measure of viewer response is indicated by a telephone company busy signal count run on radio station WLOL last year following a TOWN MEETING telecast. Viewers had been invited to call the station during a talk-back continuing the discussion of the ABM System begun on a pre-taped TOWN MEETING. During the two-hour talk-back, 1413 busy signals were recorded. Presumably, many of those who called had viewed the initial telecast. On the occasional TOWN MEETINGS inviting phoned-in questions, typically more queries are received than can be managed during the half-hour. And, while mail response to the series is "light", direct appeals for such reaction are not made.

Chris Donaldson, assistant manager of KTCA-TV, indicates that "nothing can match the effectiveness of the TOWN MEETING telecasts in illuminating contemporary issues ever nearly a three-year period. Dealing as they have with a broad variety of issues and involving other organizations representing specific areas of interest, the TOWN MEETING leaders have made it possible to reach large numbers of specialized publics within the general audience. . . . That the series has been and is successful is beyond question. We believe it represents a model for service-minded television stations in every community."

On the other hand, it is obvious that better financial undergirding would make for an improved series. Since the programs are planned, produced and hosted by unpaid volunteers, time given to production is limited. Accordingly, the ablest panelists are not always obtained, nor do programs always succeed in highlighting the most critical issues. An adequate budget would also make possible more frequent utilization of the more appealing drama and documentary formats.

reporter



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