

Social Impact of a Highway on an Urban Community

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•IN JUNE 1963, the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) contracted with the Health and Welfare Council of the National Capital Area for a study of the social implications and relocation requirements of the North Leg of the Inner Loop. The Planning Commission, as one of the participants of an advisory group to the District Commissioners who were to report to the President, believed that one of the factors in its deliberations should be the social impact of such a major highway on the community through which it was proposed to go. It turned to a citywide agency concerned with the social welfare to prepare a report with two major objectives: (a) with knowledge of the impact on those who must move and those who would remain, the decision makers could be influenced in determining the location and type of artery; and (b) with this knowledge, programs to reduce possible harmful effects on the people concerned could be developed as a part of the total operation.

An exhaustive search of the literature, interviews with persons identified with the highway planning field, and information from others in sociology, community organization, and relocation indicate that little or no work has been done in studying the social effect of any major improvement on a community before its construction. This includes not only highways, but also urban renewal, dam construction, and other public programs. Hopefully this may foreshadow a new trend in physical planning-social planning relationships. Certainly the NCPC should be congratulated for initiating this inquiry. A city (or physical) planning agency and a health and welfare council are but two major participants in this joint effort, and much experimentation still must go on before the role of each is defined. Thus, regardless of the results of the study or the techniques used, it was an exercise which should prove useful to those in the urban affairs field who are interested in the relationship of people with their physical environment.

Although the time period originally set for the study was 6 months, it had to be completed in 4 months due to the pressure from the planning advisory committee which wanted to make its recommendations on type and location of artery in time for the District Commissioners to include the results of its decision in the next year's budget.

The time spent trying to determine the actual impact on the residents through interviews was 1 month because the six alternative proposals which were being considered were not released till the beginning of October. As a result, only 71 families in a study area containing about 10,000 families were interviewed. Therefore, the opinions expressed can only be described as illustrative. Twenty-seven civic, school, church and business leaders were also contacted for their opinions as to the effect of a free-way through their community and what it might mean to the residents and to their institutions.

Without a more thorough knowledge of the characteristics of the families in the study area and a much larger interview sample, the findings cannot be considered definitive. However, with what is known about peoples' reactions to urban renewal and from the views expressed at public hearings on highway matters, it is very likely that many of these are representative of the views felt by those directly affected by a major public improvement program.

The study area was a rectangular strip between P and U Streets, N. W. and 5th and 22nd Streets, N. W. Those who are familiar with Washington, D. C., will recognize that not one but three identifiable major neighborhoods are involved. To the west, between Massachusetts and Connecticut Avenues, is a high-income, predominantly white area with a high percentage of childless couples and single-person families. The center sector between Connecticut Avenue and 15th Street has a mixed racial composition with a median income placing it in the low-middle income category, with a number of older persons who have lived there for a number of years. Recently, there have been efforts to upgrade the area with new apartment building construction and renovations. The eastern sector, that area between 15th and 5th Streets N. W.,

is predominantly Negro with low incomes accompanied by the family instability and social problems associated with underemployed and undereducated groups. It is interspersed with pockets of good housing owned by long-time residents.

Simple, easy-to-read maps were prepared illustrating three alternate highway proposals; the other three proposals were variations of these. One showed a likely location of an eight-lane freeway which, if adopted, would be eligible for the 90 percent-10 percent funds from the Federal highway program. The second showed a six-lane tunnel idea and the third, alternate one-way streets which would require an expansion of the present right-of-way. These, plus an open-ended interview schedule were the tools of the interviewers, who were assigned homes throughout the area and given a three-hour briefing to prepare them for any contingency. It was known that probably no one in the area was familiar with the specifics of the proposals, and very few had any knowledge of the projected highway.

A summary of the views expressed and several illustrative quotes reveal the following attitudes:

1. The general consensus was that the residents did not want to be dislocated from their present location. In selecting one of the alternate proposals in terms of their preference, the interviewees were first concerned as to whether their homes were to be affected, and second, that the proposal finally approved be the one that affected the least number of homes causing a minimum relocation problem. The majority favored the proposed tunnel, believing that this would fit the aforementioned criteria.

A physician living on the west side of Connecticut Avenue "hopes the Commission will take human values into consideration—people still continue to be the most important factor."

A white homeowner who had purchased his property a few years ago and was proud to live in an integrated neighborhood, said that he felt strongly that "changes affected thus far and those contemplated, including the alternate proposals for the North Leg, have been made or considered without due regard for the interests of citizens in general, the underprivileged especially, Negroes in particular." He believes that major changes are generally made in the interest of large property owners and builders who profit from these developments.

A long-time resident said that "widening the one-way streets would be bad for schools affecting a lot of children. The freeway wouldn't be good either because traffic would be going so fast. The tunnel would be best because it would save more homes, but tunnels aren't pretty. They don't do anything to beautify a neighborhood." She commented that it seems a shame to take people's houses when they do not have any other place to live. "That's how they did in the Southwest area. That is why there is so much overcrowding and so many people living in one house. It looks like something ought to be done about people who have to move. They put up apartments that are too expensive for people in the low bracket incomes. There should be some low-rent homes."

An elderly couple, originally from South Carolina, commented: "I don't agree with any of it. People ain't got nowhere to live now. Tear down more houses to take care of traffic? I don't see no sense in it—in any of the proposals. They're tearing down places now all over town—making parking lots out of them. They're always looking out for traffic. They're doing all they can for people passing through; how about the people living here?"

2. There was special concern expressed by and for the elderly and long-time residents, including homeowners, as to their psychological and financial future if forced to vacate their homes.

A long-time resident commented: "I think it's just awful. All or many of these people have been living in this neighborhood for 40 years or more. I guess it would just about kill some of these old people around here, and it would make everybody mad, but the Government's going to do whatever it wants, so why worry about it at all?"

A 71-year-old widow who has owned and lived in her home for 31 years said that she didn't feel that it would be difficult for her to find a home in some other area of the city or the suburbs. In fact, she felt that it would be relatively easy for her to sell her home for a sizeable profit and purchase a smaller place in Maryland. The most difficult part about this type of move or change is that it would involve leaving old friends and attempting to make new ones. "Life would never really be the same again, and it would sort of be like losing a part of your body."

A retired white couple stated that they would not put up a fight as long as they are treated fairly. The wife felt they could easily find a place to go even if it would mean moving in with one of their children. However, she added that there are several elderly couples living in the block that are not as fortunate as they are; these couples do not have children and change in their lives would be difficult. She was concerned about the Government forcing people to sell. "People should never be forced to give up or sell anything that is rightfully theirs. This is the real core of our democratic system."

Another retired couple, living in their house for 35 years, responded: "I think it's just awful. All or many of these people have been living in this neighborhood for 40 years or more. Why do they have to go around taking people's homes, especially old people? How are they going to live? Many of them have chopped up their homes into apartments and rent out two floors and live on the first floor. Even if they were paid for the houses, they couldn't live on it for the rest of their lives. At our age, we just don't want to move."

A widow of 81, living in her present home for 40 years, asked: "What's all this tearing down going to do for the children? No longer do they get settled than they're unsettling them. Well, I'm going to just stop thinking of them and start on us. But every time I do, I guess I just get sort of sick in the pit of my stomach 'cause I'm scared. What's going to happen to us, lady? We're so old and sick and the people on this street are so good to us and the church people too, and if all our houses are taken from us all, they won't have no time to bother about us."

An elderly retired couple reported that they had paid ten times in renovations what the house had originally cost. Now their home was really beautiful. "Why, only this year, and even last, folks had been by wanting to buy this home of ours. But we're too old to pull up roots. We just want to end our days here. Yes, I feel sorry for the children and everything. But lady, I'll tell you the truth. I feel most sorry for papa and me."

3. The civic leaders expressed what was so often implied by the householders—that no displacement should occur until there was sufficient housing available for the displaced.

A civic leader said that any displacement of homes by the construction of a freeway would meet with intense opposition unless provision were made for the relocation of the residents. The displacement effect of the Southwest construction was cited as being vivid in the minds of the area's residents.

Another civic leader said a successful plan must have both rapid transit and freeways; highways alone are not the answer for many reasons. It is likely that they will not adequately carry the traffic load, and they dislocate too many families. Practically no preparation is now being made for dislocated families and the needs for new families coming into the city are not being met. Private investors are unwilling to build low-cost housing because of the high cost of land. The Government must subsidize this as well as the rehabilitation of houses.

A minister said that housing for low-income groups is the greatest need—substantial low-cost housing. The housing situation is the primary moral problem.

A minister strongly objected to the freeway because of the displacement of people. A better solution would be an efficient transit system with subways. It would serve the needs of the suburban commuters and would not uproot people. He thinks the planners take the line of least resistance and the people here do not have an effective voice. Even if a good and humane relocation program were developed, a freeway would not be a good idea because (a) the city needs the space--we should keep it and improve or replace the housing; (b) freeways in cities are divisive and cut neighborhoods off; and (c) he is bitterly opposed to any kind of freeway that goes through a city.

4. There was resentment expressed by both whites and Negroes towards the suburban communities which were forcing District taxpayers to move from their homes to permit the building of roadways for the convenience of the suburban commuters. This criticism implied that many Negroes seemed to harbor a deeper resentment towards whites than was openly expressed. A number of Negro families expressed a desire to be able to move to the suburbs themselves.

A respondent wondered how any of the proposals would help the people living in Washington. "If this is another scheme to improve transportation for people living out of the District primarily, then the whole idea should be abandoned."

A well-informed elderly lady commented that "It just isn't just for those people out in Maryland and Virginia with such beautiful homes to expect us to give up the little we have just so they can get into the city more conveniently." She said that she hoped that she will be dead before they begin displacing people for the North Leg; she foresees that the problems will be very bad because they already have so many people from the Southwest in the area now.

A Washingtonian stated that "cars have taken over the city when schools are so poor all over the city. Washingtonians resent all of the taxes they must pay to sponsor these construction projects which are for the convenience of the people who live out of town. There are racial implications involved too. When the commuters come to work in Washington, they take up all the parking spaces on the streets and don't pay taxes in the city."

A dental student with a young family who had grown up in the area said: "You can tell whoever you are working for that I want to be relocated in Silver Spring or Takoma Park. I want to live where I want to, not where somebody says I got to. I want to live in one of those apartment buildings that's got a swimming pool and be able to get out with my white neighbors. Sure I know why they want to get that freeway through here. It's so the white folks will have a better way to get to the suburbs."

A mother of three children, receiving public assistance, told the interviewer she wouldn't mind if she could get a good location in the suburbs. In fact, that is what she would like. She would love to move now, but rents are too high.

A civic leader conceded that "someone has be hurt with progress." He added that the problem is that routes always seem to go through depressed areas. "Of course it is because these are the areas where land costs are lowest, but it seems as if the freeway always goes through the Negro neighborhoods to bring in the suburbanites. Highway planning is often dominated by the suburbs and is not in the best interests of minority groups."

"A freeway is not necessary--traffic should be kept out of the city." This was the opinion of another civic leader. He claimed that most of the cars parked on a particular street in his neighborhood are from Maryland and Virginia, and he wondered if the highway department was not responding to the desires of these commuters for cheap transportation and parking at the expense of the District residents more than to the welfare of the District.

5. There was generally little known about the North Leg proposal. Those who were best informed received the information from the civic associations and Parents and Teachers Associations. The majority of those interviewed expressed appreciation when learning about the proposals through this personal contact. One response to the interviewer is worth noting:

"Well, this is the first time I've known the Government to send anyone around to show us maps and all. Tell 'em thanks for that, lady."

6. Those in the lower income groups believed that regardless of their opinion, the Government would do what it wanted to. Some of the white families who objected to the freeway proposals, although recognizing their relative ease of housing mobility, believed they could have an effect on the final highway decision.

A respondent said she did not care when and if construction started because she could not do anything about it. "You don't have the vote in Washington, so there's nothing you can say. You can't buck the Government. You live longer if you become reconciled to it." Her husband said they "always put these highways in Negro settlements where they shake the houses down from the impact of the traffic."

A World War I veteran said he was not too concerned because the Government was bigger than he and that they already knew which type of freeway they would have. "Listen, lady, are you dumb enough to think that the Government is giving a hoot about which I'd prefer or what I do? Why didn't they ask before they decided on just three types? I don't want any."

A prominent Republican family felt that all of the people in their neighborhood would be financially able to relocate, but they are also financially able to put up a strong fight against putting a freeway through their property.

A resident manager of 18 years' standing assured the interviewer several times that the people in the elegantly kept-up and restored houses across the street from her "would never stand for having any freeway go through near enough to spoil the area." She refused to consider what she or her neighbors might do if one did come through because to her it was not even a remote possibility, these neighbors being apparently all-powerful in their ability to stop it.

A family, maintaining an estate near Silver Spring but enjoying their town house in the city, said: "I wish you would tell these people (for whom you are making the survey) how much I hope Washington will realize before it is too late that a rapid transit into the city, not across it, is the great need that should take precedence over all highway building." She realized that a freeway is bound to create hardship and dislocation to the people in whatever areas through which it passes, and fears the people in certain areas would have less voice in the matter than she and her neighbors.

7. The factors which made these neighborhoods desirable to the residents included convenience of location to shopping, bus lines, and the central business area; accessibility to employment; the schools and play areas; community cohesion as illustrated by block organizations; the racial and income mixture which makes it a desirable cross-section of the city; and efforts to upgrade the area by public and private action.

A couple with a preschool-aged child had just moved into the area because of a new school now under construction. The mother believes that the new school will be less crowded and have more play space. They like the area very much and attend church within walking distance. They are near a health center and a hospital.

A housewife, living in her home for 41 years, had reared two children there "without any difficulty." She said the area is going to the dogs. It is now a commercial zone. "I know we are in the slums, but it's my home and I enjoy it. I really think this is the nicest location in the city."

A 65-year old domestic worker found her neighborhood convenient for everything. She is thankful for the health care and services that are available.

8. Those features which made their neighborhoods undesirable to some included the influx of undesirable people in the community (several specifically identified these persons to be the displaced from the Southwest redevelopment project) who tended to cause the physical and social deterioration of the area, fear for one's life and property because of inadequate police protection, a need for more play space, overcrowded schools, landlord exploitation, and poor city services in the area.

A mother on public assistance with three daughters said: "The neighborhood is not a good one to bring up children in. The schools are close enough, but what can you do about all the teenage parties? The noise and racket is terrific." She had lived in the neighborhood for nine years, found the play space was adequate and transportation and shopping facilities were good. There was still a secret hope that relocation would bring a nicer neighborhood.

A mother of an 11-year-old daughter lives in a house full of roomers, with five families using one bathroom. She does have a private kitchen but feels that an 11-year-old girl should not sleep in the same room with her parents. The neighbors have been very kind. However, the children in the neighborhood are terrible and think nothing of "cursing the adults out." She does not allow her child to go anywhere alone in the neighborhood. She dislikes the neighborhood's physical setting but not the people.

A couple who had been living in their own home for 15 years were anxious to move out. "This neighborhood is terrible. If it was up to me, they'd tear all these houses down and put up new ones. You can't expect 13 or 14 people living in one house to keep it clean." Children from her block, including her own son, have to cross a one-way street to get to the playground, and this is very dangerous. Her husband said he would like to live in a suburban section where he could get some sleep. He invited the interviewer to spend a night there some time to see how noisy the neighborhood is. "It would be impossible to go anywhere that would be worse."

A widow of 67, living in her home for 46 years, wishes the neighborhood were back to what it used to be when everybody owned his own house and took care of it. "Now the people here don't care. The change has been within the last 15 years, brought about by World War II and breaking up the Southwest. Now the people who need to live in Southwest are living in rooming houses." The neighborhood is good for shopping, and transportation is good. But the real reason she does not want to move is that she is too old and too sick to start over.

A couple with three children really did not like where they lived. The street was not to their liking and neither was the apartment. But others were so high that they had decided, after having to move from a rented house in Northeast which was sold, that they would live cheaply for five years, save, and later pay down on some little house. They did not allow their parents and other relatives to visit them in the evenings because it was too dangerous.

9. Neighborhood identification tended to be based on selective features such as the church, the block, neighbors of similar education and income background, prestige or status of an area, or on sentiment.

A retired white widow who has owned her home for 31 years said, "All of my memories are wrapped up in my home, and I couldn't part from these at this stage of life." She stated that she knew several elderly women living on the block who are property owners and are devoted to the community. Several of these women are infirm and truly depend on the convenient shops and stores in the area for their survival.

A well-educated, middle-income family whose home has been in their family for almost 50 years is openly unhappy about living there because of the neighbors and the neighborhood. One of the wife's principal concerns is the reflection such a neighborhood has on their otherwise very high socio-economic status. "Most of the decent people have moved out, except for two or three families; they're all riff-raff here. They should fix the area for decent people." Her husband pointed out that this was once a good neighborhood, but they were all homeowners. Now the large houses have been converted to rooming houses, partly to accommodate persons displaced from urban renewal in Southwest and Foggy Bottom, making this a slum area. He said that the real estate operators turned this into a slum, but he does not hold them responsible. "The basis of any slum condition is economic—it's a matter of dollars and cents." He said he likes the location, not the neighborhood.

The father of three boys has lived on his block all of his 38 years. He said that the block had remained intact for Negroes more than any other location in Washington. His three boys were born here, and to them this location is very dear. There are block socials. The neighborhood club looks out for sickness and other happenings of note. He trains his sons to look out for the welfare of the old people living on the block by calling on the sick and the old. They also help with smaller children on weekend excursions. In the civic association, PTA, and church, this couple is concerned with the people and houses. "The houses need so much, and the people need even more."

10. There was an expressed hope that whatever action was taken would result in a better life in a better environment, either in the existing neighborhood or a new one if relocation occurred.

A family from Virginia, living here for three years, hoped that the Government would help them to find a nicer place to live. Her 12-year-old daughter would like very much to live in a better neighborhood so that she could associate with people whose ideas about living were a little bit better than some of the children she is exposed to.

A mother relocated from Southwest Washington said she would want to have a better house, but could not "say about the neighborhood. It might or might not be better. You never know what kind of neighborhood it is until you live in it." On the other hand, if she stayed in the neighborhood, she would expect the houses to be fixed up. "They would have to be."

The mother of six children who found her neighborhood had nothing to offer her children said she was anxious for the change and hoped it would come tomorrow. She also hoped the freeway would run right through her house and give her a chance to get away with her children. "I want something better for my children and for us too."

A minister said, from the Negro point of view, it would be tragic to wipe out a church that had existed as a Negro church since 1841. From a communal point of view, the goal of the District should be to become a first-class city in every respect. Transportation and other facilities are needed. What is good for the city would be good for the area, and he would go along with any proposal that would make the District a healthy place to live.

A civic leader said a freeway is needed, and progress always makes changes and causes discomfort. What is needed is some way to relocate the people who are here now. A freeway might help to clean up the city if the relocation problem could be solved.

11. In terms of action the Government should take, the general feeling was that the District should remove uncertainty about the North Leg, allow no displacement until housing is available, and have more Negro representation and citizen participation in the decision-making process.

A mother of a young daughter said that it would be good if the Government told her to move because the Government always tries to improve the housing situation when it places families, and maybe then she would get a better place to live. She thought that she and her family could adjust to any place if only they could have a decent place to live.

A retired Government worker, a widow who has lived in her present home for 46 years, said about moving, "I'm not a young woman. I can't go out and start again." The Government should make sure that there would be adequate housing for all those who are displaced. But people "shouldn't take their say-so—the Government should build the houses first." In Southwest, they promised the people houses but they did not keep their promises.

A man whose wife's family has owned their home since 1915 said regardless of which proposal was put into effect, people whose homes would be razed should be given reasonable notice (defined as a minimum of one year) and suitable accommodations should be built or otherwise arranged for displaced families beforehand, particularly for those with no money or other resources. He noted that the failure of the District Government to do this in Southwest and Foggy Bottom worked an undue hardship both on the displaced persons and on those neighborhoods blighted by the new arrivals.

A block leader said people are reconciled to the freeway proposal. The housing has deteriorated because it has been discussed since 1957. The basic injustice is that it "all depends on the convenience of Maryland and Virginia—what they want for their convenience is a serious situation with us." There should be more Negro representation in high-way planning and more representation for the city residents.

The neighborhood is going downhill. There is so much absentee ownership that there is a feeling on the part of the residents that upkeep may not be worthwhile because highway or redevelopment may be coming. They also feel there is neglect by the city. The District could give the area some future security for planning purposes, and could provide more adequate public services and more park and play areas for the young who have nowhere to go. The crowding is increasing, probably because of many southern immigrants coming in and the failure to provide relocation for the families displaced from Southwest redevelopment area. Also, there is failure to enforce the Housing Code, and the tenants fear eviction if they complain.

A civic leader thought there should be better coordination among the various District agencies. The municipal government, he feels, is unresponsive to the needs of the city and its citizens because the major share of the city employees are not residents of the city and, therefore, have no real stake in the welfare of the District. He felt this was particularly true in the highway department, which explains their eagerness to cut up the District with large highways to enable themselves to get downtown in a hurry. He wondered if the lack of housing code enforcement is not due to favored treatment for landlords who live in the suburbs as neighbors to people who should be doing the enforcement. "If the various agencies—police, welfare, housing—would do the job they are supposed to do, the neighborhood would be much better."

A better understanding of the potential effects of a physical change on a people can lead to the incorporation of programs that can help to dispel fears, immobilize some of the opposition, and produce results which not only correct the situation as the public improvement aims to do but also can contribute to the betterment of the community itself and to the satisfaction of most of its residents. Without programmed activities,

there is the possibility that resentment and hostility may increase towards such programs as highways and urban renewal to the point where public officials and political representatives, reflecting the views of their constituents, may postpone or cancel possibly necessary and desirable physical changes to the detriment of the city's progress.

As a result of the illustrative sample plus knowledge gained from experience in relocation related to urban renewal, the following propositions are offered:

1. Any involuntary move is upsetting, though much of one's attitude toward such a move depends on the availability of other housing. There were many expressions to indicate that, if there were housing available in unit sizes and at prices which could be afforded, in communities where the facilities were pleasant, adequate and easily accessible, and in locations which have a certain status attached to them and cause the residents to take pride, there would be little opposition to moving into them and adjusting to the new neighborhood of homes. However, minority groups face a limited housing supply from which to select, regardless of income. Low-income groups, regardless of race, have a small supply of decent housing from which to choose in Washington. It is a landlords' market. Many new units are being added to the citywide supply, but the overwhelming majority of these are of such size and price that they are of no use whatsoever to about 25 percent of the District population. The National Capital Housing Authority, which presently has 7,891 public housing units under management, has a waiting list of 6,162 families.

Areas of low-cost housing are steadily diminishing due to such factors as slum clearance, housing code enforcement, increased cost of inner city land, highway construction, other public improvement programs and private action which attempts to use land to its "highest and best use." Recognizing the difficulties which they will face, many low-income families would prefer to remain where they are. They at least know what they have. Others may view their homes or neighborhoods in terms of health and safety. But they would rather not trade it for the uncertainties and possibilities of higher rent, overcrowding, inaccessibility or locations which are unfamiliar to them. Opportunities for higher income groups, mainly white, to find other desirable housing which they can afford are much greater, and an involuntary or forced move becomes mostly a nuisance. Opposition to displacement on these families' part reflects present satisfaction and an objection to being forced, especially by the Government, to being inconvenienced.

2. Sense of neighborhood seems to be directed through sentimental attachment to specific neighborhood features such as church, school, block and homogeneous neighbors. The ethnic sense of neighborhood or the small-town type of neighborliness which we associate with some communities (perhaps more so in the suburbs rather than within the inner city) does not appear to be comparable to the sense of neighborhood which we find in many of our Northern lower income areas which have been affected by mobility and migration of Negroes and lower income whites. For lower income groups, especially Negroes, their choice of housing is limited and their sense of neighborhood developed perhaps more as a sense of security and self-defense. There is a need for mutual aid during the adjustment period to the new city for the migrant in finding housing, jobs, schools and social agencies, and for the long-term resident in his poverty situation. One might conclude that there is a sense of apathy in these areas towards the neighborhood, a feeling of making-do with whatever one can choose from and afford. It is very likely that the effect of disrupting these neighborhoods or changing their characteristics can be minimized if persons had confidence that there was housing available in locations and in other neighborhoods which are as desirable as or more so than the ones they are now living in. Until there is this assurance, the opposition from spokesmen for the lower income groups, particularly minority groups, will be vociferous and, in many situations, effective.

◀With higher income groups, sense of neighborhood is identified and becomes more meaningful; these families have chosen to move where they did because of certain qualities they liked or preferred.▶ Their opposition to any disruption will be well organized and sometimes more influential politically. Often, however, if they feel they are getting

fair compensation for their property, or enough time to look elsewhere so they do not feel pushed, this opposition can be minimized.

3. People of low income, whose mobility is limited by racial or income factors and by familiarity with only certain sections of the city in which their employment, social service facilities, schools, recreational facilities, or shopping is located or easily accessible, tend to move into areas similar to the ones from which they have been displaced and close to or adjacent to these areas. One stays close to what one knows and is secure with, especially when experience and opportunities are limited. As a result, we find that some blame is attached to those displaced from the Southwest urban redevelopment project for the deterioration of the area which was studied. We do know that families from the Southwest did move into this area but not to the great extent indicated by the interviewees. It is a normal reaction for those who have lived in an area for a long time to be disturbed about forces which adversely affect their neighborhoods. They find a scapegoat. The meaning of their accusation is important to the policy makers. The diminishing supply of low-cost housing within the District limits has caused the few remaining areas where such housing can be found to be overcrowded by those who can afford no better. Whether it has been the Southwest displacees who were removed from one low-cost area in such large numbers in such a relatively short period of time, those from the South who move into these areas because of their limited incomes while hoping to find economic opportunities to better themselves, those forced out of their homes because housing code enforcement or the upgrading of neighborhoods cause higher rentals, or those of continuing unemployment who are unskilled and functionally illiterate, the fact does remain that this particular area offers low-cost housing resources to those seeking it. The supply diminishes but the demand is as great. Action taken in one part of a city can have an important impact on other sections. This is a problem tied in with more than housing; it involves economic opportunities, more appropriate education, and more effective social services.

4. Major physical changes in a neighborhood require a readjustment on the part of the inhabitants. Some will accept them and remain, others will reject them or find them a threat and will leave. The remainder will take a wait-and-see-and-hope attitude. There are various acculturation aids which are required by all urban inhabitants to make theirs a more healthful and satisfying life. Community institutions and facilities are a major supplement in providing for some of the needs of all residents. Easy accessibility and knowledge of these facilities help determine where inhabitants shall live. In planning for changes, these community aids cannot be neglected.

The following recommendations are not only directed to the highway planners, but apply to all urban officials as they program projects which can have such a significant impact on residents and other citizens alike.

a. Housing for low-income families, especially for those with large numbers of children and for the elderly living on small pensions or social security, must be built or greatly expanded. This is one of our major problems today. The local government has the responsibility to see that this need is met before authorizing any program which will result in the displacement of more low-income families. More public housing units are needed; private enterprise must accept a role in this; ideas must be tried such as tax concessions, subsidies or other financial inducements. A city is actually worse off in the long run with its public improvement because its possible benefits are offset by its effects throughout the rest of the city.

b. Community organization, including citizen participation, is accelerated by emergency situations directly affecting the lives, interests or property of those concerned. Highway planning can be a basis for initiating civic concern and action by the residents, thus serving as a catalyst and a major positive force. With the help of the residents serving as community advisors, the planners and community can not only work together to integrate the highway, urban renewal area, or whatever the public improvement may be into the community, but also take advantage of this upheaval to add other or additional facilities to service the community. Here is a good opportunity for the coordination of physical and social planning. Reaching as many people as possible while the plans are being formulated may help to shape the plans to satisfy the greatest number, give everyone a chance to participate in the decision-making process

and to react to the problems which may arise in the community so that solutions might be found while time is in their favor. When construction is completed, a new and strengthened community remains.

c. An effective relocation service must be provided to help all those displaced by government action. This includes assistance in finding other housing and in moving expenses. Relocation offices should also be prepared to help families with special problems and include appropriate social services. A central relocation service can work with the displacement agencies to schedule construction and relocation so that the projects need not be postponed or seriously hampered.

d. The social effect of a public action should be as important to the decision makers as are the economic, technical and aesthetic effects. The impetus of a major highway programmed through a specific section of an urban area has an effect on the currents of life within the whole community—those who remain, those who are displaced, other neighborhoods, public officialdom, private business and future projects. The engineer, the planner, the public official, the social scientist, the resident, the businessman, all citizens have a common objective—the betterment of their city. Only through their mutual concern, cooperation and respect can it be achieved.