

# Planning for greyfield redevelopment in Edmonton, AB: impeding and facilitating factors

by

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## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

## **Abstract**

Spurred by changing retail and development patterns, as well as continuous suburban growth, greyfield sites can be found at the heart of most postwar suburbs in North American municipalities. Ranging in definition, greyfields are best described as an “underused, economically obsolete, retail tract located in an inner ring suburb that requires significant public and private involvement to curtail decline” (Feronti, 2003, p.11).

However, tied to demographic trends and increased municipal urbanization, these vacated retail sites are positioned well for redevelopment. Yet, the redevelopment process of these sites is fraught with impeding and facilitating factors that can have significant implications for redevelopment options and viability. As such, research questions considered were: Do municipalities address greyfield challenges and opportunities? What factors impede and facilitate greyfield redevelopment? This thesis also asks these questions within the context of the City of Edmonton’s current policy and existing built form, and asked: How should greyfields be planned in the City of Edmonton?

This thesis attempts to answer these questions through a review and analysis of existing literature, case studies (Belmar in Lakewood, Colorado and Century Park in Edmonton, Alberta) and through primary research conducted with key stakeholders. The research found that municipalities were largely unacquainted with the challenges and opportunities of greyfield redevelopment. Where support guidelines did exist, they were largely aspirational and lacked consideration for the unique impeding and facilitating factors of greyfield redevelopment. It was found that impeding factors to greyfield redevelopment ranged from administrative hurdles fraught with inexperience in greyfield redevelopment, to financial and land economic constraints. Facilitating factors were found in collaborative stakeholder consultation, municipal and administrative leadership, and a range of supportive fiscal mechanisms. Lastly, ten recommendations to facilitate greyfield redevelopment within the City of Edmonton were discussed.

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Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my wife, Berrie, who has offered unconditional support and love throughout my educational career.

## **Dedication**

To my wife, Berrie, who has been encouraging, patience and loving throughout the course of my thesis. Thank you for your continued belief in me, and unconditional support.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

North American cities have seen myriad development trends over the past century. Shaped by fluctuating trends of engineering, planning, transportation policies, and by the seemingly endless availability of open land on the edge of cities, the process of city building has been in a continuous state of flux and reinvention. However, as evident in the wide-ranging and vacated built found in municipalities across North America, this process of city building has rarely been applied to existing retail structures and established community commercial centres.

Nevertheless, with compounded municipal pressures such as increasing infrastructural costs, cities are looking to reinvent and reinvest in the established urban framework of postwar suburbs. The plans and executed actions of such reinvention are varied, but similarities can be found in the urban canvas they are working with. Not unique to these aging areas of municipalities, large, dying retail centres dot the landscape in various states of occupancy, disrepair and abandonment. Often called greyfields, these depressed retail sites are prime pieces of land for initial civic attempts at suburban redevelopment. These sites vary in size form depending on their context. However, in some centres they are “the first wave of large landholdings located in established areas, often near transit, with existing utilities and transportation systems, and the potential for significant densification” (ARC, 2001, pg.2). In other centres, they are the abandoned neighbourhood commercial centres at the heart of established, first-ring, suburban communities.

Yet municipal inexperience with large-scale redevelopment projects in established retail-designated areas has left developers and municipalities alike searching for best practices and approaches that are mutually beneficial and easily implemented. If locally harnessed and contextually applied, greyfield redevelopment has the potential to be a foundation and catalyst for continued suburban redevelopment projects in municipalities across North America.

As the literature on greyfield redevelopment has focused primarily on the end product and redevelopment designs alone, the goal of this research is to explore the process of greyfield redevelopment, and gain an understanding of the impeding and facilitating factors. Of particular

relevance to developers, municipalities and the public at large are relatable case studies on the topic at hand. Analysis of case studies is particularly relevant because this method uses the communicative format of narratives and stories, while providing examples of the planning paradigm a community is currently wrestling with (Feronti, 2003). Although these examples are not always transferable as they are tailored to fit the needs and problems of their original community, they offer templates that can be considered and shared accordingly.

Two case studies were selected to examine the process of greyfield redevelopment in two different contexts. Belmar, located in Lakewood, Colorado, was chosen due to the success the redevelopment has had to date, and that it remains a flagship example of greyfield redevelopment in the literature. The second case study, Century Park, which is located in Edmonton, Alberta, was chosen to provide a contextual example for the City of Edmonton, of which recommendations for facilitating future greyfield redevelopment were drafted.

Primary research with interviewees who were involved in a variety of capacities with greyfield sites both in Edmonton and other municipalities, provided first-hand accounts of these facilitating and impeding factors, and contributed to the recommendations. The resulting recommendations for the City of Edmonton were considered through the context of the municipality's currently existing policy and built-form.

This thesis will address four research questions. They are as follows:

1. Do municipalities address greyfield challenges and opportunities?
2. What factors impede greyfield redevelopment?
3. What factors facilitate greyfield redevelopment?
4. How should greyfields be planned in the City of Edmonton?

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. The following chapter reviews the literature of greyfields, starting with an exploration of the definition of greyfields, the evolution of recent retail history, and factors contributing to greyfields. Chapter 3 discusses the current status and opportunities of greyfields, as well as the impeding and facilitating factors in greyfield redevelopment. Chapter 4 explains the methodology used in this the research. Chapter 5 reviews the two selected case studies, and expands on impeding and facilitating factors these case studies faced. Chapter 6 discusses the

findings from primary research interviews, starting with knowledge of greyfields and greyfield policy, impeding and facilitation factors in greyfield redevelopment, and suggestions for improving the redevelopment process. Chapter 7 provides concluding statements based on the research. Chapter 8 provides a list of recommendations for the City of Edmonton based on the findings from the literature review, case studies and primary research findings. Finally, Chapter 9 contains limitations to the research, guidelines for future research and concluding remarks.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Definitions of 'Greyfields'

The term 'greyfield' is relatively new in planning and development circles. Attributed in origin to the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) approximately ten years ago, it has come to encompass numerous different land uses and building typologies. In contrast to brownfields (contaminated urban land, usually of an industrial origin) and greenfields (undeveloped rural lands), greyfields refer to large, developed sites in urban areas that are well positioned, both economically and physically, for redevelopment (CNU, 2001a). The term greyfield also refers to "the large seas of parking lots surrounding [these] underperforming [buildings]" (Merritt, 2006, p.14). As the definition is still in its formative stages, these suggested land uses could represent examples such as vacant office buildings, remnant parcels of land resulting from transportation infrastructure, vacant public institutions and struggling retail developments (McKay, 2007). However, greyfields typically refer to old, obsolete and abandoned retail and commercial sites, especially malls (Chilton, 2006). This has been supported by organizations like the Congress for New Urbanism, whose research relating to greyfields has focused on regional shopping centres.

To aid in the classification of the definition, the Congress for New Urbanism (2001a; 2001b) established econometric tools to classify greyfield retail sites (see Appendix A). The CNU study established a benchmark for greyfield classification using annual sales per square foot as a coinciding measuring tool. Their research suggested that North American malls with sales rates under \$150 per square foot are no longer economically viable, and are thus classified as greyfields. Sales rates in-between \$150 to \$199 per square foot were consider 'vulnerable' of becoming greyfields.

Based on a consolidation of the literature covered, a greyfield can best be identified as an "underused, economically obsolete, retail tract located in an inner ring suburb that requires significant public and private involvement to curtail decline" (Feronti, 2003, p.11).

For the purpose of clarity and the survey of corresponding literature and research, this thesis will focus on regional shopping centres. However, that should not lead one to assume that this is the



boundary of the definition, as there are various other types of studied retail properties that have similar effects on adjacent neighbourhoods, and pose similar development challenges such as strip-malls and larger format retail such as big box stores (ARC, 2001).

Although still fairly young in its definition, the term ‘greyfield’ describes a widespread situational land use and built form problem found in municipalities across North America. Although a complex understanding and analysis of greyfields remains underexplored by most municipalities, this phenomenon needs to be examined in greater detail.

## **2.2 Recent Retail History**

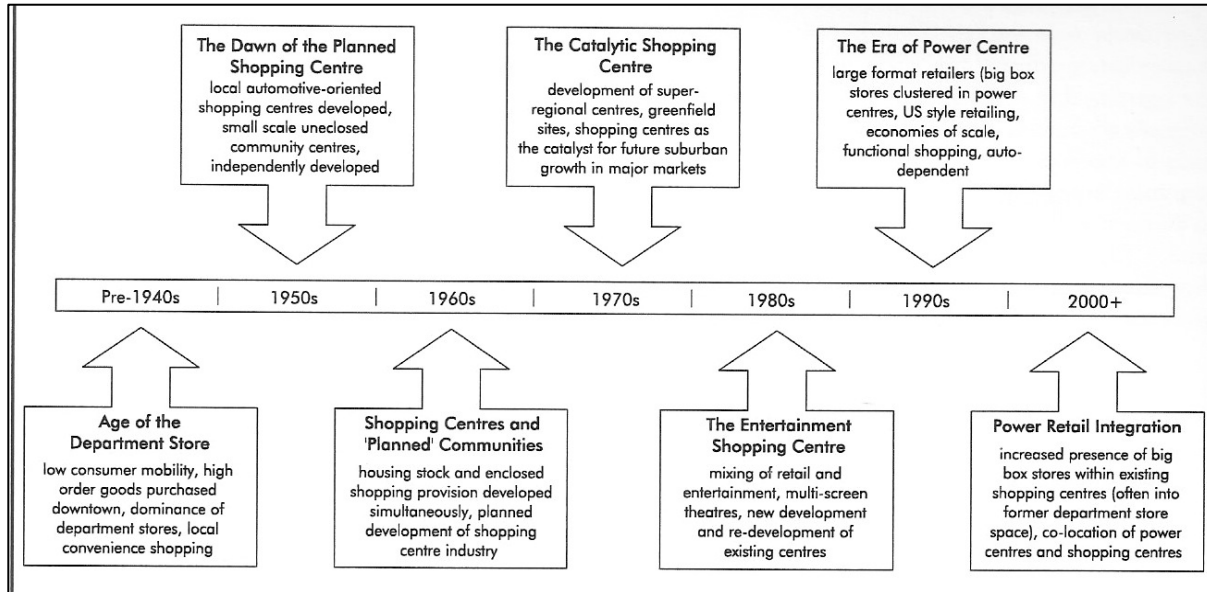
### **2.2.1 Context of Recent Retail History Applied to Greyfield Sites**

To understand the barriers facing the redevelopment of greyfield sites, it is important to understand the context in which they are rooted, and the lifecycle of the site. Greyfields are located in a wide variety of established neighbourhoods and are often rundown and fraught with high levels of vacancy. Considering the progression of ‘shopping development eras’ (as noted by Hernandez, 2007; Hernandez, Helik & Moore, 2006) and outclassing retail formats, helps in understanding the causes of decline, and some of the barriers faced when redeveloping these sites (see Figure 2-1).

### **2.2.2 Recent Retail History: Retail Development**

In the decades following World War II, many North American city-dwellers left the apartments and small homes of established urban centres to settle on the periphery of older, higher-density cities, such as New York, or in newer, low-density cities like Los Angeles (Smiley, 2002). As noted by Smiley (2002, pg. 13), “while this phenomenon had been underway since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the postwar scale and intensity of suburban residential growth were unprecedented.” Following close behind the residential shift, and “in order to meet the needs of the growing [suburban populations], large-scale retail that had previously been located in the central business districts, began to move away from the [central core of] cities between the World Wars” (Jackson as cited in Feronti, 2003, p. 5). Retail stores began to relocate further away from the dense urban core as an increase in

automobile ownership and better roads allowed consumers to travel greater distances to purchase goods (Jones & Hernandez, 2006).



**Figure 2- 1: Development of the Urban Retail System (Source: Hernandez, Helik & Moore, 2006)**

Compounding this retail shift was the relaxed planning and zoning regulation of outlying counties, and the inexpensive land that made development easier (Capital and Counties Property Company, 1969). While retail strips survived in some larger and older American cities, the shift towards suburban retail development caused the loss of a significant retail presence in the majority of metropolitan centres (Hernandez, Helik & Moore, 2006). The suburban fringe, “with its virtually unlimited land area, [had] given the planners an opportunity to design theoretically perfect residential, as well as retail solutions” (Capital and Counties Property Company, 1969). No longer were planners restricted to the built form of the city centres and main streets for retail development planning. Instead, planners and engineers alike were able to design retail establishments that catered to the suburban lifestyle, and most importantly, the car.

It was this rapidly developing, automobile-based consumer class that was being catered to in a retail format for the first time, and this changing trend subsequently shaped the future form of retail

planning. As noted by Smith (2011), “the first retailers that shifted to the suburbs were convenience oriented [in nature, and included] gas stations and grocery stores”. These were built as stand-alone stores, or often in the form of smaller car-orientated clusters in what are now commonly called strip malls. Jones & Hernandez (2006, p.289) note that “during this period, retail planning controls were in most cases non-existent and often a form of uncontrolled retail sprawl resulted”. Shortly thereafter, these small retail plazas were followed by the first larger, regional shopping malls. These regional malls were one-stop destinations that were designed to cater to all the suburban lifestyle shopping needs. These new regional retail centres were often anchored by one to two department stores, and were constructed with a set formula of a central axis lined with 30 to 60 small stores (Feronti, 2003). Such malls had a controlled environment, which meant heat in the winter and air conditioning during the warmer summer months. Perhaps most important to their target consumer, these malls provided an ample supply of free parking.

Beyond that, regional malls were designed to not only satisfy the assumed retail and servicing needs, but also to service “civic, cultural and social community needs” (Smiley, 2002, p.10). Victor Gruen, “the architect perhaps most responsible for the proliferation of shopping centres in the 1950s” (Smiley, 2002, p.10), believed these new shopping centres, as designed to his specifications, “would give order and shape to mushrooming suburbs” and predicted that “greater social interaction and richer public life would be created in these new environments” (Smiley, 2002, p.14). Gruen believed these contained developments would “provide an important centrality and focus” (Crawford, 2002, p.24) to the fragmented pattern and development uniformity of suburban growth by providing “shopping, recreational, social and respite places for persons of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds” (Jacobs, 1984, pg. 1).

However, starting in the 1960s, these regional malls were soon outclassed by larger shopping malls even farther out in the expanding suburban fringe (Gomez-Insausti & Simmons, 2006). Retail developers realized that the shopping experience was as important as the goods they were providing, so they designed and built new shopping venues to fulfill this need. These larger shopping environments had a more contemporary design, over twice the square footage of previous regional malls, ample public space and multiple floors of retail stores (Maitland cited in Feronti, 2003). It was this targeted competition that began to seal the fate of the original regional shopping centres, and as a

result, “a substantial percentage...[became] architecturally, economically, and socially obsolete” (Smiley, 2002, p.14).

As retail sites increased in size and changed in format, so did the size of their trade area. These trade areas are the “approximation for the area around the store from which most [of] its customers are drawn” (Hernandez, Lea & Bermingham, 2004, p.55). Trade areas, which were once restricted to local neighbourhoods, grew exponentially with the size of retail centres and the prevalence of automobile usage. Smaller retail strips and centres that remained economically viable at first and had survived the initial flight of retailers to larger or ‘new format’ centers, often fell victim to new competition from centres that would have traditionally been outside their trade area. For example, regional shopping centres saturated a trade area of 20-30 mile for apparel related-goods, making it difficult for similar retailers to compete outside of these centres (Smith, 2011).

The subsequent development of shopping centre growth exploded rapidly. By 1964 there were a total of 7,600 shopping centers already constructed in the United States. Only 8 years later, that number had doubled (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). By 1982, shopping centres accounted for half of all annual general merchandise and clothing sales. Jones & Hernandez (2006, p.290) noted that “certain types of retail chains were disproportionately represented in [Canadian shopping centres]”. These included examples such as women’s clothing (91 percent of all retail sales), luggage and leather goods (89 percent) and jewelry stores (85 percent) (ibid). This is particularly impressive when considering shopping centres had only been around for approximately 30 years, and 90 percent of these centres were less than 20 years old (Feagin, 1982).

Throughout the latter half of the 1980s, shopping center construction continued at a rapid pace of expansion and outclassing, “and did not slow down until the savings and loan crisis in 1989 tightening credit, leading to a 70% decline in shopping center starts” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.65). Few shopping centres were built in the following decade, and expansion slowed as new formats of retail were beginning to show market growth and eventual outclassing. This new format was the big-box discount stores and ‘category killers’ – “warehouse style stores devoted to a single product type” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.66) (see Figure 2-1). These large format stores can be defined as “a large, freestanding, one-story warehouse building, with one main room, ranging from 20,000 to 280,000 square feet, used initially for retail purposes” (Christensen, 2008, p.5).

Their large size and massive inventory dedicated to a specific retail sector meant big-box retail trade areas were even larger still than the previous generation of shopping centres and department stores. Simmons (2007, p.5) notes that “in their desire to minimize location costs, the first wave of big box stores avoided the obvious location choices, the regional shopping centres, in favour of industrial-type buildings with matching amenities, in awkward locations”. However, their rapid expansion over the next two decades saw the new format occupy a wide variety of locations and formats ranging from suburban shopping centres to downtown retail strips (ibid).

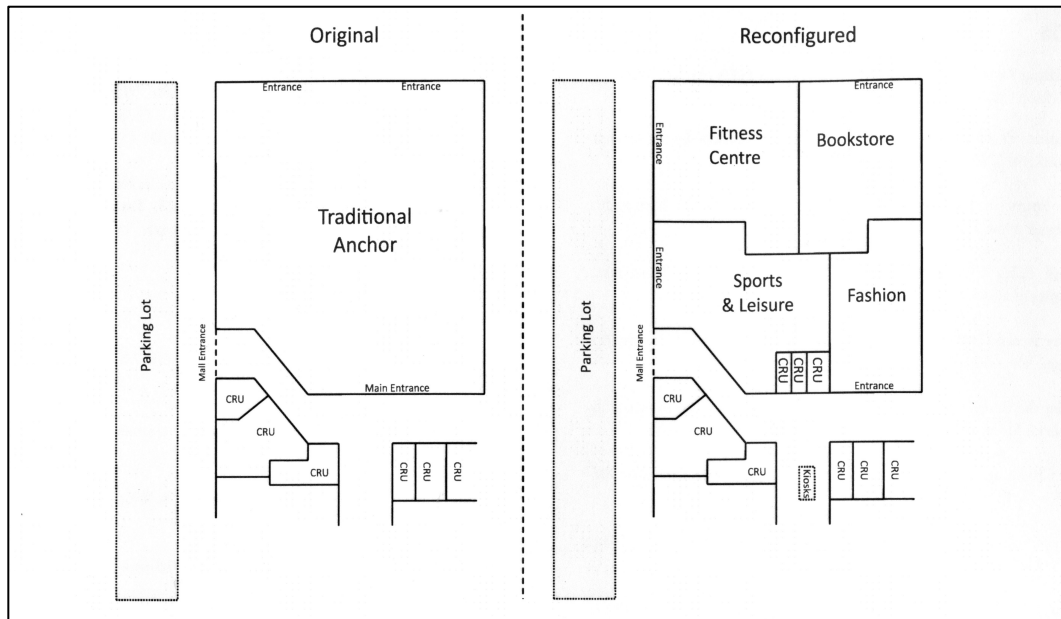
Simmons (2007, p.5) noted that “the success of this [shift in retail format] as compared to the traditional shopping centre or downtown department store, required customers that respond to price differentials” above all other criteria such as at the expense of amenities or the shopping experience as championed by Gruen and other pioneers of the shopping centre. Savings found in economies of scale and minimal operating and infrastructure costs were passed on to the consumer for the first time. As Simmons (2007, p.3) notes, “in the past, department stores or larger retail organizations might [have diverted] such savings to profits, or [invested] in new kinds of products or retail formats, or even [constructed] flagship and landmark buildings”.

The “open-environment characteristics of big box clusters” (Buliung & Hernandez, 2009, p.32) changed consumer spatial behavior and shopping patterns as well. Consumers often targeted retail strips or clusters for specific stores and often moved and then re-parked their automobile multiple times during the shopping process as the layout of these new formats encouraged it (Buliung & Hernandez, 2009). With a disregard for the pedestrian and the shopping experience, retail consumption had become more of a struggle than pleasure, relegating enjoyment to be found in the substantial price savings rather than the shopping excursion as it once had (Simmons, 2007).

In some cases, failing shopping centres have attempted to directly compete with the power centres by accommodating larger format retailers. This typically would happen through the division of larger anchor tenant units or the combination of smaller commercial units (see Figure 2-2). Hernandez, Lorch & Du (2008, p.4) note,

“the boundaries between retail types have become increasingly blurred: the shopping mall has taken on elements of power [center]

retail... while power centers are now attempting to replicate some of the elements of traditional mall retail such as tenant mix and the provision of ancillary services.”



**Figure 2- 2: Example of Mall Space Reconfiguration (Source: Hernandez, Lorch & Su, 2008)**

In the past decade, we can identify four trends in retail development. First, several retailers who found rapid growth in the development of big-box stores and power centers, expanded their traditional large, warehouse format into even larger ‘supercentres’. These formats tend to be over 200,000 square feet in size, and often increase the retail niche of the retailers as capacity warrants. Walmart has been a good example of this phenomenon, having largely abandoned traditional big-box buildings for structures up to five times as large, often within a mile of the original structure (Christensen, 2008). This has given the company the ability to expand its product lines, and most important, add full-service grocery stores under the same roof (see, for example, Simmons, 2007).

Conversely, a second trend has been the development of ‘lifestyle centres’ and ‘town centres’. Combining a variety of retail unit sizes, the growth of this retail format has been the final blow to the development of regional shopping centres (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). Anchored by user amenities and a pedestrian atmosphere that mimic urban ‘mainstreets’ that are missing from many suburban communities (Tamaki, 2004), attention to the pedestrian realm and shopping experience

means “featuring brick sidewalks, streetlights and even public clocks evoking the main street of yore” (O’Connell, 2011, para.5). At best, these sites implement a mix of uses, new urbanism principles and connect to the surrounding neighbourhood with fine-grain network of streets. At worst, they are one more iteration in the cycle of suburban retail adaptation and evolution; marketed as an ‘urban experience’, but bound to a suburban, car-dependent form and location.

However, just as every retail cycle prompts outmoded retail landowners to consider renovations, the popularity of lifestyle centres has driven “many owners of enclosed malls [to consider] dramatic makeovers, some including plans to tear off the roof of, or “de-mall” enclosed shopping centers” (O’Connell, 2011, para.5) in an effort to compete directly. Although this format has been gaining popularity in the United States since the late 1980s, this format has yet to see much development in Canada (Hernandez, 2007). Although Canadian retail markets are slow to adapt to retail trends, another limiting factor may be that wealthy suburban communities are not as concentrated. This could mean that obvious markets for “lifestyle type developments may be harder to meaningfully identify and thus harder to justify in terms of attract the mix of retailers, developers and investors to the table” (ibid, p.4).

The rise of the Internet and the coinciding rise of digital commerce has prompted the third major trend in shifting forms of retail. Although retail real estate still generates 95 percent of retail sales in North America, several retail categories such as music and book stores, which often could be found in regional malls, have been severely affected and nearly driven out of business entirely (Nyren, 2010).

One final emerging trend worthy of comment, a seemingly contradictory recent iteration of big-box retailers, has been the addition of smaller format stores. With recessionary pressures affecting the profitability of big-box retailers traditional business model, the search for elusive profits in untapped markets has given rise to new format sizes and locations, namely in urban areas. Walmart, for example, has led the charge for ‘express’ formats (stores that tend to be one tenth the size of their largest supercenter formats) opening in areas that have traditionally had what would be considered impeding factors, such as house hold income levels and difficulties with urban site acquisition (Schmitt, 2011). Although only a couple of years prior, big box retailers had abandoned their already-large format for ever-larger structures. This recent trend has been a response to decreasing sales and profit margins, triggered by recessionary economic realities, which have prompted a search for under-retailed areas and “letting go of their attachment to suburban development models” (Groover, 2011).

Combined with the rise of internet-based sales, “many chains are concluding that their future lies in more intimate stores...that present visitors with a unique sensory experience and...stock only best-selling items, directing customers online for the rest” (Bustillo, 2011, para.13).

## **2.3 Factors Contributing to Greyfields**

Although the change in retail formats and consumer preferences have been major factors in the emergence of greyfield sites, societal, demographic and economic changes have also affected this phenomenon (Feronti, 2003). As these factors are intricately linked, “very minor shifts in the income, demographic, lifestyle and/or competitive characteristics of an area can lead to quite rapid changes in both form and structure of the retail environment” (Hernandez, Helik & Moore, 2006).

Considering such, several of the studied and recognized causes for the development of greyfields are noted as follows:

### **2.3.1 Loss of Anchor Tenants**

Prior to the development of shopping centres, commercial clusters in retail corridors, downtowns and town centres were grouped along important transportation intersects and often developed a hierarchical system of relationships to each other and their neighbourhood (Yeates, Charles & Jones, 2001). The aggregate benefit of locating adjacent to these retail establishments that had a large drawing power, was the spill-over effect (known as locational interdependence) that would accompany the large amount of pedestrian traffic (ibid). This locational relationship to other retail establishments which found compounded strengths in adjacency to larger department stores, would soon support the growth of suburban retail. At first, it became evident with the grocery stores in suburban commercial plazas. Eventually, this same relationship could be observed in the regional shopping centre as anchor stores related to adjacent retail stores.

Shortly after the construction of numerous smaller, regional shopping malls in the 1950s and 1960s, direct competition in the form of larger shopping centres opening in nearby suburban neighbourhoods. The regional shopping centre owners’ confidence in long-term fiscal retail resilience was quickly proving to be based on fleeting market and economic realities as larger and newer competitors soon outmoded their retail centres. With the perception of stability based on long-term,



inexpensive leases from their anchor tenants, these regional owners had sought security in something that was destined to change significantly. As consumers slowly chose to abandon these regional malls for the new retail centres, so did these anchor tenants.

The larger shopping centres were not solely responsible for outclassing regional shopping centres and stealing anchor tenants. In some cases, anchors had joint ownership of regional shopping centres built exclusively around their needs in the late 1960s. Later, despite dwindling fiscal realities, they would continue to occupy these custom sites, or chose to remain in suffering centres with favorable leases (Yeates, Charles & Jones, 2001). However, the collapse of several department stores in the 1990s attributed to new retail realities and formats, namely big-box stores, had just as devastating an impact.

This initial loss of traditional anchor tenants in shopping centres can be the trigger that starts the inevitable cycle towards becoming a greyfield. According to the study by Gatzlaff, Sirmans and Diskin (1994), non-anchor tenant occupancy rates tend to decline by an estimated 25% after the loss of an anchor. Specifically, this model suggests that rental rates began declining as a result of the increased vacant space left from tenants fleeing alongside the departing anchor tenants. Inevitably, this starts a process of continued declining rental rates, a likely turnover in tenant mix, and the inevitable collapse of the shopping centre.

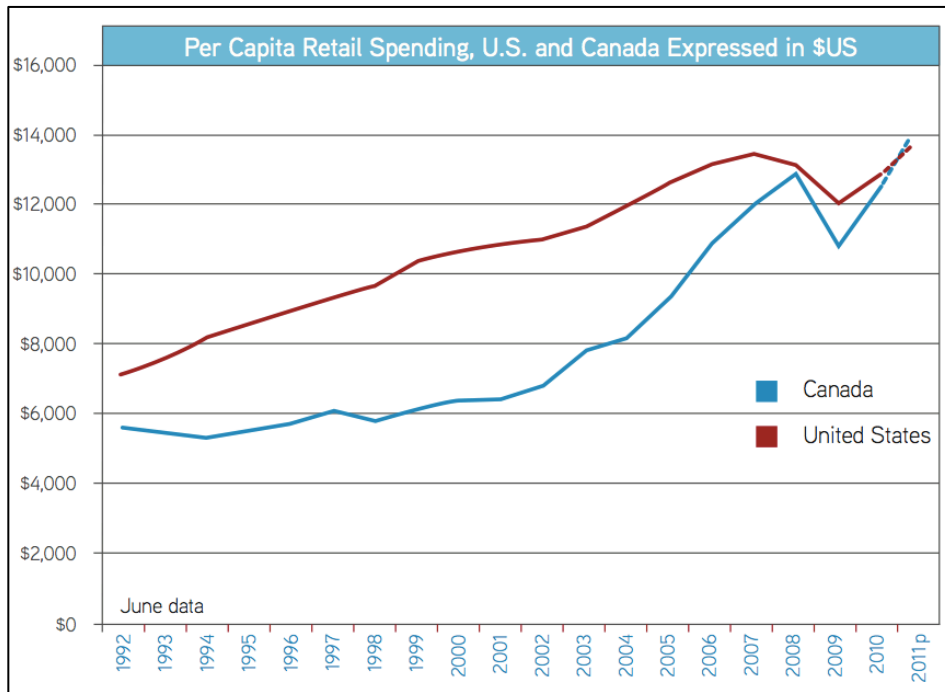
Sometimes the anchor tenant does not even need to have left before this process begins to happen. Announcements from the publicly-traded, parent holder companies of the tenant anchors about potential or intended closures can have an adverse effect on underperforming malls, and cause the acceleration of malls into greyfield status (CNU, 2001a). Smaller tenants familiar with the potential downward spiral of vacancies and sales figures will often choose not to re-sign leases, or even opt to sublease their space at a loss (CNU, 2001b).

### **2.3.2 Evolving Retail Formats & Retail Overbuild**

Retail trends have been evolving over the past century to meet a growing variety of needs and desires of consumers. Newer retail formats in new centers tend to capture a large portion of the market share as they respond to the most current consumer desires and trends (CNU, 2001b). The regional shopping centres have been at a competitive disadvantage. The size of standardized commercial units,

lack of public amenities and outdated design all are factors which contribute to the inability of these regional malls to attract a desirable tenant mix, and in turn, clientele.

Continually evolving retail trends have moved from the traditional 'main street' retail, to the regional mall format, to the larger shopping centres with more public amenities, and on to the development of big box stores, power-centres and 'category killers'. As a result of continual retail adaptation and attempts to dominate existing developments with new greenfield development, there has been a noted overbuild and oversupply of retail space in the United States. So much so, that there is now over 7.3 billion square feet of shopping centre space at the national level (ICSC, 2011a), which equates to "more than 23 square feet of shopping centre floor area per capita" (Colliers, 2011a). Even more staggering is that these figures represent less than 50% of the total retail space in the United States, which translates into more than 52 square feet of retail space per capita (ICSC, 2011a). Relating to the competitively disadvantaged regional shopping centre, figures from ten years earlier equated to an average of 2.3 million square feet of directly competing retail space within a five-mile radius (CNU, 2001a). Although this overbuild has been significant in the newer, greenfield forms of development which have notably higher lease rates and amenity costs, there remains a large and ever-growing supply of vacant, outclassed retail developments in well-established, inner suburbs. The most outclassed, inner-suburban formats have been the ones to suffer with high vacancy rates and low consumer attraction. These older malls often tend to fight obsolescence through direct competition rather than redefining themselves into a new community asset through adaptation (Chilton, 2006), however, this has proven to be a losing battle in most cases.



**Figure 2- 3: Per Capita Retail Spending: U.S. and Canada Comparison (Source: Colliers, 2011a)**

By contrast, the Canadian retail market has witnessed historically slower adaptation to new formats, and usually follows the retail trends of the United States by about 10 years (McLeod, 2007). Retail space overbuild is less of a concern in Canada because municipalities often err on the side of caution in terms of retail spacing allocation through permitted zoning. Although some argue this protectionist attitude is intrusive and restricts residents from retail options, Canadian shopping centre retail profitability has remained significantly higher than their U.S. counterparts, averaging nearly double at \$580 a square foot, compared to \$309 a square foot in the United States, despite having similar consumer spending patterns (see Figure 2-3) and nearly 60 percent less square footage (Colliers, 2011a). However, both new formats of retail and the average square footage per consumer have grown significantly over the past decade in several major Canadian retail trade centres, and is currently at just over 14 square feet per capita (ICSC, 2011b). Despite these comparatively optimistic figures, these factors have not insulated Canada from the decline of regional malls and formation of greyfields.

In the United States, an overbuild and subsequent vacating of retail space has also been exacerbated by suburban municipalities that lure large retail tenants from adjacent counties. As “very few residential developments ‘pay for themselves’ through traditional sources of revenue” (Benfield, Raimi & Chen, 1999, p.107), suburban municipalities often look for additional means of generating income either through varied local taxation or a diversity of land uses. As a result, “many local governments still aggressively seek commercial and industrial developments to subsidize the negative fiscal impacts of residential developments” (Benfield, Raimi & Chen, 1999, p.113). As such, adjacent municipalities often begin the process of outclassing and competing for retail taxation dollars, luring retailers with TIFs (tax increment financing) and the ability to establish PIFs (public improvement fee) in their new shopping centre to pay for amenities and maintenance (Logan & Nicklaus, 2010).

To combat this adversarial battle for new retail sites, several municipalities have entered into shared taxation agreements and convinced retail establishments to build on land on their shared municipal boundaries, while sharing infrastructure and tax-relief costs (Evans-Cowley, 2006). However, the measurable result of net-fiscal gain from the addition of these varied land uses often proves to be overly optimistic, especially after the implementation of TIF tools (Benfield, Raimi & Chen, 1999). Blais (2010) refers to this phenomenon as ‘perverse subsidies’ and is defined as “financial incentives for inefficient development... that exerts adverse effects on the economy, environment and society” (p.9). Logan & Nicklaus (2010) note that “in a slow-growth region... these government giveaways amount to a zero-sum game”, with “the only true winners in these circumstances [being] the businesses that receive tax breaks” (Benfield, Raimi & Chen, 1999, p.115).

### **2.3.3 Consumer Preferences**

Consumer retail preferences have changed significantly over time. There is a clear distinction and evidence of consumer preference shifts that resulted in shifts in retailing formats over the past several decades, and continues to do so. For one, the shift from the regional mall to the larger format was driven by several factors including increased demand for larger areas of public space. As noted by Maitland (in Feronti, 2003, p.12) “since the 1980s, during which shopping center construction increased dramatically, increased emphasis has been put on the design of public space in shopping malls” to cater to these needs directly, and to attract coveted retailing dollars. What theorists such as Victor Gruen noticed, and what developers discovered, was that consumers longed for aspects

missing from the shopping experience of the first generation of malls: the social areas and urban design emphasis of the public realm found in the traditional main street shopping experience that consumers longed for. The socialization and enjoyment of the shopping experience had been removed with the first generation of regional shopping centres, and the first developers to respond accordingly, benefited directly.

As shopping centres became more numerous and began competing with each other directly, attempts to attract consumers took on new approaches. As malls have traditionally been somewhat homogenous in their appearance and tenant mix, these retail developments have tried to leverage consumer preference by distinguishing themselves from one another by emphasizing design, shopping experience and ability to attract unique and desirable tenants (Salvesen, 2001).

However, it should be noted that it is difficult at times to distinguish between a market-driven demand and one imposed or influenced by marketing forces. For instance, the retail shift towards a power centre format was driven by larger, 'category killer' retailers who had developed a square footage requirement and car-orientation that was not adaptable to the traditional shopping centre format (Buliung & Hernandez, 2009). Whether these retailers were responding to consumer demand, or in fact were creating this demand through the lure of selection and lower price points, is questionable. Nevertheless, these responsive formats saw their initial growth and largest gains during periods of economic recession where these preferences were prioritized over older priorities such as shopping atmosphere and corresponding experience.

#### **2.3.4 Socio-Economic Changes**

Once the location of the first homes of the growing middle class in the 1950s and 60s, first generation, postwar suburbs have experienced socio-economic changes that now tend to make them as diverse as the North American cities they are located in. Although some are often composed of an older demographic, many of whom were the original purchasers, others have transitioned to immigrant-based neighbourhoods with distinctive ethnic groups making up large percentages of the population. Some have become derelict or even partially abandoned communities, whereas others have become the subject of gentrification and reinvestment (see, for example, Hulchanski, 2010). These variations in socio-economic makeup of postwar suburban communities are driven by a variety

of factors, including access to services, amenities and transportation options (Hulchanski, 2010). Those with limited financial means are limited in choice housing options, and are increasingly relegated to first-ring suburban communities with poor service accessibility (ibid). As for the homeowners fraught with ever increasing barriers and costs tied to their geographic choice of residence, their collective situation has been worsened substantially over the last number of years. Dunham-Jones (2009, p.44) noted that:

“For the first time in history, suburban municipalities now house more people living in poverty than central cities do. Maps showing recent mortgage foreclosures concentrated in the newer outermost suburbs indicate the future decentralization of poverty and an ever-shifting [socio-economic] terrain.”

As demographics in these communities have changed, so have the purchasing habits and needs of potential retail clients. In most cases, decreased demand for certain retail services and decreased spending power has reduced the economic potential of older retail establishments in these neighbourhoods (Bodzin & Greenberg, 2001).

Retail development has traditionally followed the location of new residential neighbourhoods, and through suburban expansion, this has led retail continually further from the municipal core. In an effort to outclass existing municipal fringe retail with new formats, retailers have traditionally pursued households whose demographics are positioned in their purchasing years (e.g. new families with young children, single professionals), which often coincide with new suburban growth (Chilton, 2006). As established neighbourhoods changed and retail began to vacate for new space on the suburban fringe, emptying shopping centres were often left semi-vacant or backfilled with lower-order retail establishments, and began the slow decline towards obsolescence. Smiley (2002, p.14) noted that “unfortunately, the older shopping centres and models through which they were built proved far less adaptable” to both the demands of the original tenants who left, as well as new formats and uses as the community changed around them.

However, the abandonment of necessary services for larger greenfield developments at greater distances away has left a retail and services vacuum in these established urban and suburban areas. Inadvertently, this has built the framework for potential reinvestment and reclassification to meet to needs of the both the established and new residents.

### **2.3.5 Failure to Reinvest**

After the first generation of regional shopping centers were constructed, there was a market-driven desire for increased pedestrian spaces, comprehensive architectural details and other unique features that made these malls a destination as much as they were a place to purchase goods. Although “mall renovation[s] on [their] own [do not] make financial sense” (Boyce, 2012, p.A12), repositioning and rebranding the mall to attract new tenants can be a strategic reinvestment (ibid). Some of these regional malls attempted to adapt and modernize in order to stay competitive with new malls opening nearby, while others did not. As a result, “according to life cycle theories, real estate properties without necessary maintenance, renovation and other capital expenditures [often] depreciate in value due to functional obsolescence” (CNU, 2001b, p.6).

Greyfield sites have often made attempts at reinvestment through renovation or expansion, but these efforts usually have proven to be too late or irrelevant for the current retail context in which they operate (CNU, 2001a). The first wave of regional malls to lose tenants to new sites and formats “fought back by expanding, adding new anchors, or doing multi-million dollar renovations. In most instances, these changes did not substantially improve sales” (Falcone, Reilly, Sher, Zuchelli & Bernjamin, 2002, p.86) and often prolonged the decline by acquiring additional financial liabilities. Current reinvestment schemes have often required a drastic approach to the form and function of these outmoded retail establishments in order to make the best and highest use out of the property rather than competing with similar retail centres nearby.

### **2.4 Summary**

Although far from colloquial in usage and understanding, the term ‘greyfield’ has come to represent a growing problem in the retail development patterns of municipalities. Finding the roots of its causation within the history, expansion and outclassing of retail development patters, greyfields owe their existence to the continued suburban growth model adopted by countless municipalities nearly half a century ago.

Beyond the history and causation of greyfields, the literature also looked at the redevelopment of these commercial centres. As explored in Chapter 3, the reviewed literature highlighted opportunities greyfield sites have in light of their geographic location, development trends and demographic

patterns. Subsequently, as directed by the research questions, the chapter also considers as well as the impeding and facilitating factors to greyfield redevelopment as noted within the literature.



## Chapter 3

### The Current Status of Greyfields in North America

In order to be able to classify greyfields sites (in the context of regional shopping centers as previously outlined), a set of parameters needs to be established. Although there are several methods to do so, (e.g. percentage of vacancy, number of visitors compared to the population of the total catchment area, etc.) the annual ‘sales per square foot’ of a retail establishment is often one of the best indicators of health. This cumulative and standardized statistic is one of the best indicators of success comparable to a wide variety of other retail establishments because it helps set the lease rates, attracts prospective tenants, and can set the barometer for potential renovation or redevelopment.

According to the American *Greyfield Regional Mall Study* by the CNU (2001b), the parameter chosen to define greyfields was to be less than \$150 per square foot per annum in sales based on “industry publications and interviews with major regional mall investors” (CNU, 2001b). To provide some context, this is less than half the national (US) average for shopping malls, which was \$341 of sales per square foot as of 2005 (Groover, 2005), or \$309 as of 2010 (ICSC, 2011a), but closer to the average for regional malls which has been measured anywhere between \$180 per square foot by ULI and \$251 by ICSC; the latter of which has a vested interest in the health of all forms of shopping mall models, and their continued success (ULI ; ICSC as cited in CNU 2001b). The 2010 Canadian average is much higher at \$580 per square foot, however it should be noted that this data set lacks specific information for regional shopping centres and therefore cannot be compared directly (ICSC, 2011b). Ideally, some of these inconsistencies would be minimized and the data more consistent if it were cross-referenced with population density as suggested by several studies (CNU, 2001b). Regardless, the data speaks to the reality of dead and dying regional malls, and an econometric unit of measuring such.

As of 2001, approximately 7% of existing regional malls in the United States fit the CNU greyfield criteria; with an additional 12% of regional malls potentially moving toward greyfield status within 5 years (CNU, 2001b). Considering the estimated number of American regional malls to be between 1,689 and 2,076 in 1999, according to different reports by the *NRB Shopping Center Directory 2000* and the *ICSC* respectively, this puts the then current (2001) number of greyfield rated regional

shopping malls between 114 and 140, with a potential to move up to between 317 and 389 considering the state of near-greyfield malls.

Considering the trend of the data at the time of measurement over 10 years ago, as well as the continued shift in retail towards new retail formats, the likely number of classifiable greyfield regional malls is much higher now. However, without a comprehensive up-to-date study of such, it should be acknowledged that this assumption is based on historical trends alone.

Canadian regional shopping centres have faced similar observed problems over the last twenty years. Gomez-Insausti & Simmons (2006, p.6) noted “the store closures are more widely distributed, with some of the highest losses occurring in the ring of regional shopping malls, ... part of the first wave of malls constructed in the late 1960s and early 1970s”. The data for these Canadian regional shopping centres on the other hand, are not as clear. According to ICSC and to data of shopping centres grouped by square footage, as of 2011 there are over 1,300 community and regional shopping centres - representing nearly 55 percent of the country’s total shopping centre space (ICSC, 2011b). Unlike figures for the United States, this does not distinguish different newer formats such as smaller power centres and other regional retail groupings. The same lack of clarity applies to sales figures of regional shopping centres. Although Canadian shopping centres have enjoyed statistically higher sales per square foot average compared with their American counterparts, thorough and accessible data are missing that would distinguish sales figures by shopping centre size, format and location. Despite this, on the basis of studies and observed trends, it is safe to say “many of [these sites] are now in a state far different from when they were cutting-edge facilities, taking Canada by storm in the 1950s” (McLeod, 2007).

### **3.1 What Opportunities do Greyfields Offer?**

Despite varying factors of causation, greyfield sites offer opportunities for both repurposing and redevelopment. However, tied to a variety of development, economic and social factors, it should be noted that all inner ring suburbs are not created equal. Despite similarities found in housing stock and typology, land use formats and development patterns, these neighbourhoods represent a broad spectrum of demographics and community health across North American cities.

Although these forms and functions can vary greatly, there are often commonalities found in their design and location that position them well for revitalization efforts. Will Fleissig, a developer with Continuum Partners in Denver who was responsible for the successful greyfield redevelopment of Villa Italia (now known as Belmar), in Lakewood, Colorado believes that “these greyfield sites are the first wave of large landholdings that are in existing communities - near transit, with existing utilities and transportation systems - with [the] potential for significant densification.” (CNU, 2001a) Considering such, some of the noted opportunities that greyfield sites present are as follows:

### **3.1.1 Shifting Demographic Patterns**

Once attributed as a contributing factor to the failure of regional shopping centres, shifts in demographics now present a huge opportunity for the redevelopment of these failed sites.

The demographic perception and original market of the 1950s first-ring suburb has become a generalization that is not only outdated, but also increasingly false (Stabiner, 2011). These suburbs are “increasingly characterized by [a] diversity in income, race and ethnicity” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.xiii), and are no longer the exclusive home of white, middle-class, young families. These suburbs also have become home to the greatest percentage of working poor in American cities, growing at a rate more than twice as fast as their municipal counterparts (Florida, 2010). Current “demographic trends suggest that suburban areas will become more diverse than they currently are” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.35), as will the varying health of these communities.

The suburban communities that have fared well, especially in the context of the recent economic downturn, “share many attributes with the best urban neighborhoods: walkability, vibrant street life, density and diversity” (Florida, 2010, para.4). It is these characteristics that will be the focus of the next large shift in real-estate investment driven by the two largest demographic cohorts in North America, the Baby Boomers and their children, the Echo Boomers, and give suburban communities with greyfield sites an opportunity to reinvent themselves.

This demographically-driven shift has the potential to reshape the suburban and urban landscape of municipalities “as profoundly as the wave of suburbanization after World War II did” (Leinberger, 2010, para.16). If anything, the current opportunity is larger than “the returning veterans and their

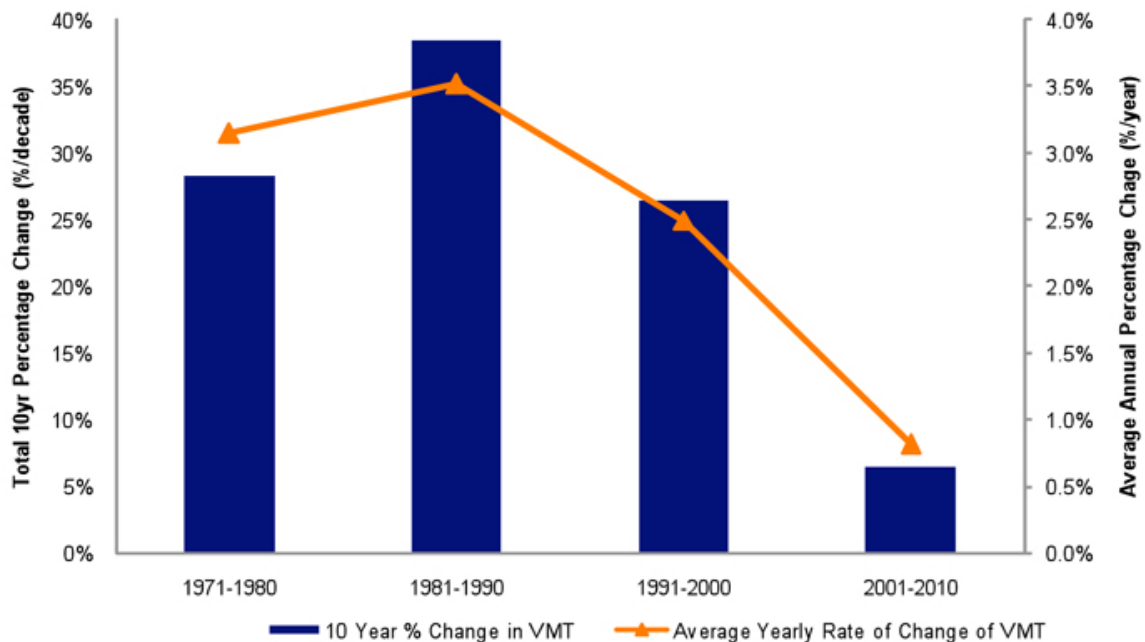
spouses [who] represented approximately 20 percent of the American population at that time; [whereas] the current demographic convergence—77 million [Baby] Boomers plus 76 million [Echo Boomers]—comprises nearly 50 percent” (ibid, para.16). The shift of Baby Boomers “typically is thought to entail leaving behind their large suburban home for smaller, more manageable living quarters in vibrant, entertainment-driven environments” (Lynn, 2011, para.8), whereas Echo Boomers are increasingly attracted to the urban cores of municipalities (Leinberger, 2010). Stemming from a variety of contributing factors, together, these trends “represent a progression toward greater urbanization...and diverse patterns of mixed-use development” (Lynn, 2011, para.2). Combined with the large, centralized sites that greyfield malls often occupy at the centre of these communities, “this new diverse demography suggests that analyses of the mall need to transcend questions of commerce to address how these places support the public life of their communities” (Smiley, 2002, p.15) and the new format of specialized retail. As such, the faltering suburban shopping centres offer an answer to the pressing question of how these suburban communities can supply choices to aging suburbanites who would choose to remain in their neighborhoods if the housing stock and community features they desire were present (Stabiner, 2011).

### **3.1.2 Existing Transportation and Infrastructure Options**

Greyfields offer the unique opportunity of capitalizing on existing infrastructure, which is often designed to handle a heavy amount of usage considering the existing function of the site. This would include not only supportive transportation infrastructure, but also waste and storm water systems, water lines and electrical supply system. Existing infrastructure mitigates costs for both the potential developer and municipality, while offering the opportunity for it to be adapted, retrofitted or replaced as needed while any potential redevelopment process is underway.

Older regional malls also often play the role of a minor community hub for public transit based on their previous retail role and centralized location. With an established public transit network and collection point, this allows the easy integration of more intense land usage and subsequent multi-modal transportation options (Peiser, Fleissig & Zogran, 2002). As noted by CNU (2001a, p.3), “the development of new activity centers on greyfield sites concentrates origins and destinations built at densities high enough to support transit service.”

Beyond public transportation, the appropriate design of greyfield sites can lead to the reduction of automotive use in and around the site, while generating less impact than the original shopping centre was designed to handle. Considering the continued increase in energy prices, specifically oil, the “assumption can be made that due to increased automotive travel costs, people will drive less and prefer to live in areas where they are closer to work, necessities and entertainment” (Lynn, 2011, para.25). This shift in behavior has already been noted in terms of aggregated data measured in total vehicular miles traveled (VMT) in the United States, which has generally increased year-over-year for the past 30 years (Lynn, 2011). However, this increase has begun to slow dramatically recently, despite continued growth and population increases (ibid) (see Figure 3-1).



**Figure 3- 1: Change in Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) in the United States (Source: Federal Highway Administration as cited in Lynn, 2011)**

As such, greyfield sites that offer the opportunity in existing communities for a car-free or car-reduced lifestyle will flourish. With supportive transportation options and a mix of land uses on the site, greyfield retrofits following new urbanist principals offer the internalized provision of services that would normal require a car in the suburbs, and “routinely achieve projections of 25% to 30% internal trip capture rates” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.4).

### **3.1.3 Large Size of Greyfield Sites**

Due to their inherent large size in the heart of first-ring suburban communities, greyfield sites offer redevelopment potential beyond what could be justified in smaller sites within these neighbourhoods.

As noted by CNU (2001a, p.3):

“Most development sites available in existing cities and towns are too small to justify the increased costs and risks of infill development. They are also too small to accommodate development projects of sufficient scale to offer real community benefits. Larger properties such as greyfield mall sites spread site development costs and enable projects that embrace the full range of new urbanist principles.”

The redevelopment of these sites also offers the opportunity to divide up the original super-block formation with collector streets and pedestrian access, and “reintegrate them back into the settlement fabric that has grown up around them in recent decades” (Taylor, 2002, p.49). In doing so, these benefits include enhanced design and opportunities for site marketability, as well as the ability for developers to offer newly divided parcels under a cooperatively established site redevelopment plan.

## **3.2 Impediments to Greyfield Redevelopment**

Considering the strategic advantage that greyfield sites offer, one would assume the redevelopment of these sites is in high demand by developers and subsequently facilitated by the municipalities in which they occupy. The reality, however, is far different. The redevelopment of greyfields is impeded by a variety of factors, often rooted in the patterns of suburban growth facilitated by municipalities over time. Caught in this cycle, “[North] American suburban development patterns [have become] so highly specialized for single uses that their layouts are resistant to incremental adaptation” (Dunham-Jones, 2009, p.40) such as is the case in the redevelopment of greyfield sites.

Considering such, some of the impediments to greyfield redevelopment include:

### **3.2.1 Process and Consultation**

It has been argued that municipal government processes can impede greyfield redevelopment (see, for example, Gee, 2011; Merritt, 2006; Falcone et al., 2002). These impediments can include a lack of

supportive policy, unknowledgeable and incapable municipal staff, and unwilling elected representatives (Merritt, 2006). With representatives often “elected to protect the status quo” (Gee, 2011), and municipal policy that has been fashioned to facilitate limitless suburban expansion over the past 60 years, the time, effort and finances required to redevelop greyfield sites is often a barrier for even the most intrepid developers. In municipalities where regulatory reform that would correspond with mixed-use redevelopment projects is not the norm, greyfield redevelopment plans might be considered risky and unlikely to succeed (Merritt, 2006).

Beyond the process handled at the municipal level, another high-profile issue is the extra time and resources that need to be considered with additional required consultation and delays (see, for example Gee, 2011; Falcone et al., 2002). Despite potentially supportive policy guidelines and municipal staff members, convincing local residents to be supportive of change can be an arduous task. These standardized fears of increased traffic levels, height of buildings and generalized devaluation of their property can be found with nearly every project of intensification, and can often be traced to a general fear of change and familiarity, amongst other things (Gee, 2011).

As such, developers often go above and beyond the requirements of consultation in order to mitigate fear and attempt to establish consensus and common vision. In one example, despite supportive zoning already in place on the greyfield site, the process of site plan approval for the first phase of the development took six times longer than it would have for a similar project in a different location (CMHC, 2005a). “This delay was due largely to the extensive consultation with residents of the lower-density neighbourhood located [adjacent to the site]” (ibid). These concerns are often in contrast to brownfield sites that have significant land use separations, and thus mitigate apprehensions of adjacent use (see, for example, CMHC, 2005b).

Although some argue that starting the consultation process earlier on in the redevelopment process mitigates concerns and expedites the process (see, for example, Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009), without a supportive administrative and policy structure, these time and costs savings can easily be lost.

### 3.2.2 Restrictive Covenants

Many older shopping centres were constructed when anchor tenants carried substantial weight and contractual sway that has had a lasting impact on the capacity for redevelopment of these sites, often even long after the original tenant has left (Peiser et al., 2002). As “an investor requires an evaluation of the encumbrances that come with a piece of property, existing leases, contracts, easements, and other arrangements...[can] reduce the developer’s capacity to reposition the shopping centre” (Falcone et al., 2002, p.86) or redevelop the site from both the practical and the financial perspective.

Of particular consequence has been the lasting effect of restrictive covenants on greyfield sites. In some situations, these restrictive covenants have obstructed redevelopment for years afterwards, and left perpetually derelict sites at the heart of communities. As explained by Ziff (2011, p.18);

“Restrictive covenants running with freehold land are sometimes used as a means of impeding retail competition. For example, where a firm elects to relocate a retail operation and sell the existing site, a covenant may be placed on the title to that site designed to prohibit a competing retail business from operating on those lands. It is known, for example, that the multi-national grocery chain Safeway has adopted this practice extensively in Edmonton. Likewise, the practice is found in other Canadian and American cities, in relation not only to grocery stores, but also concerning pharmacies, hardware stores, theatres, banks, gas stations, and restaurants. Still, the extent to which covenants are used in this manner is essentially unknown.”

The same often applies for vacated big-box stores which “can be thought of as products that act as placeholders for real estate” (Christensen, 2008, p.8). Restrictive covenants tied to these buildings are often drafted to exclusively prevent competitors from entering their market, and as such, have relegated their amorphous design to other adaptive functions such as institutional uses (ibid).

Furthermore, the control mechanisms given to anchor tenants means “many existing mall tenants have leases that contain restrictions on changes to the physical layout of the mall without the tenant’s approval” (Peiser et al., 2002, p.83). As “there is no industry-standard formula for determining just how much compensation a tenant should receive for exiting a lease prematurely” (Atchison, 2011, para.18), in the prospect of redevelopment, tenants with particular clout or lease strength often hold out for significantly larger settlements and impede the process. Challenges such as these have left developers and investors seeking municipalities to act on their behalf to overcome these often insurmountable hurdles to greyfield redevelopment, sometimes to no avail (Falcone et al., 2002).



Although not always feasible, seeking a win-win solution with anchor tenants can be a facilitating process in the shift to repurpose or redevelop greyfield sites (Stern, 2010).

### **3.2.3 Financial Constraints**

Investor reluctance is yet another impediment to capital-intensive greyfield redevelopment projects. Since greenfield models have historically proven to be operable models with higher rates of return, financiers have been hesitant to invest capital in models that have not only a shorter track record, but also are being implemented in non-traditional locations and municipalities considering the form of development (Falcone et al., 2002).

Greyfield redevelopment projects also often do not have the projected annual rate of return required by investors to finance these projects in their entirety, thus developers attempt to partner with municipalities to bear some of the financial weight as well as the risk. A 1999 study by the Harvard Graduate School of Design, commissioned by the Congress for New Urbanism, found that “New Urbanist revitalization [of greyfield sites required] public subsidy, most frequently provided in the form of assistance in purchasing ground leases and upgrading infrastructure” (Bodzin & Greenberg, 2001, p.76). Given hesitancy from investors, and especially “at a time when new development is not an option for most retail developers, repositioning existing properties in ways that increase their value [have become] a viable alternative—but only if it is executed properly” (Stern, 2010, para.1).

### **3.2.4 Do Nothing Scenario**

Due to expansion, incremental property investment and other upgrades over the years, contrasted with what has traditionally been a depreciating asset, regional shopping centres tend to be worth far less than an evaluation might assume. Falcone et al. (2002, p.86) noted that “an older mall in this situation might...be worth \$70-\$80 million on paper, but the real market value of such a complex is substantially less, and in some cases, that market value is just the value of the land” on which the shopping centre sits. In this case, “the owners are better off holding on to and neglecting the property, since it has already created incredible returns on their original equity investment made 15-20 years earlier” (Peiser et al., 2002, p.82).

Thus, instead of redevelopment, the preferred strategy of the site owners is often to continue operating the site as long as the rents obtained cover real estate taxes and minimal operating expenses, often exacerbating the cycle of decline (Peiser et al., 2002). These property owners will often hang onto these sites until another investor offers to purchase the property for the value of the land alone (ibid). In such cases, the redevelopment or repositioning of the site is impeded by an owner who does not care, nor wants to invest in what has been a once profitable but depreciating asset for them.

### **3.3 What factors facilitate greyfield redevelopment?**

In contrast to the impeding factors of greyfield redevelopment, the literature also notes a variety of facilitating factors. Several of these noted factors include:

#### **3.3.1 Public Financing**

The integration of public financing tools is imperative for the success of greyfield redevelopment projects. The financial partnership between the public and private sector is often cited as a key component in the success of American greyfield redevelopment projects, with “up to 95 percent of the projects done by most lenders [involving] some sort of public financing from a variety of different sources such as loan guarantees, tax relief, or other grants” (Falcone et al., 2002, p.89). Other tools used include sales tax rebates, development fee waiver, property tax abatement and job creation tax credits (Evans-Cowley, 2006). It is “these kinds of subsidies [which are said to] remove some of the risk involved in complex reuse projects and encourage the usually conservative banking community to participate” (Falcone et al., 2002, p.89).

Examples of American greyfield redevelopment often tend to be heavily anchored by retail integration in new formats and layout from the original design of the site, and subsequently integrate large amounts of public space. Developers argue that as “additional public space in a project does not produce revenue, ... financing becomes more difficult” (Falcone et al., 2002, p.88) and often requires the supportive public financing such as TIFs to make the inclusion of such spaces viable. Canadian examples, on the other hand, are often anchored by high-density residential integration, coupled with retail, office or civic uses as complimentary rather than supportive factors. However, this is not always the case, and outside larger markets such as Toronto and Vancouver can be heavily dependent on location and context (see, for example, Bula, 2011). The upzoning of these sites, in the context of

the lucrative market of high-density residential development in supportive markets, often is coupled with bylaw requirements of public space inclusion that are more easily justified from a private financing perspective.

In Ontario, lower and single-tier municipalities have powers granted under the *Planning Act* (section 28) in which they “may exercise powers that include providing financial assistance programs involving activities such as the provision of grants and loans” (CMHC, 2005d, p.1) and can be utilized “for the purpose of carrying out a municipality’s community improvement plan that has come into effect” (Province of Ontario, 1990, sec.27(7)). Although often exercised in infrastructure-based plans that do not include financial assistance, municipalities also have the power to provide “financial assistance to stimulate private sector investment in activities such as the rehabilitation of derelict or defunct industrial and commercial sites” (CMHC, 2005d, p.1).

Nevertheless, the use of TIFs to finance large redevelopment projects has increased substantially over the past decade in the United States, and to a lesser extent, Canada (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). The implementation of TIFs is often a complex issue with many variables and “often require city council and school board approval, as well as in some cases, a local referendum” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.77). TIFs can be used in a wide variety of supportive measures for greyfield redevelopment, often with the assumption of generalized infrastructural and built-form improvements to site or geographic area that would not be able to do so on their own. One of the most common methods in both the United States and Canada is the use of TIFs to finance the municipal allocation of land parcels and corresponding infrastructure investment, with the newly subdivided and upgraded properties sold off to developers. This process is often preceded by a planning and land-use study to explore best practices, as well as municipal and stakeholder aspirations. This, however, is not the limitation of TIF schemes when used for greyfield redevelopment. In other cases, TIFs can be paired with conceptualized development projects from private developers whose projects might range in public benefit from an expanded lucrative tax base, to the inclusion of public amenities and space.

As noted by Dunham-Jones & Williamson (2009, p.78), “while many [greyfield] retrofits...have benefited from tax-increment financing, it is certainly true that not all retrofits have relied upon public subsidies”. This is visible in successful documented greyfield redevelopments such as Mashpee Commons on Cape Cod, MA and Santana Row in San Jose, CA, which were both driven by tenacious

and optimistic developers (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). However, the lack of public support, both fiscally and in social capital, generated other costs. In the case of Mashpee Commons, it was the loss of time and extended approvals process, whereas in the case of Santana Row, the project, despite its current success, cost the CEO of the financing REIT his job due to low project returns on investment and significant invested capital (ibid).

Although the use of public funds can be a risk-laden venture, suburban communities desperate for alternative revenue sources are often willing to take financial gambles on potential community-transformative projects. In some municipal cases, “as much as 70 percent of public services... are supported by nonresidential entities” (Falcone et al., 2002, 93). In these cases, municipalities can be very dependent on localized retail sales, which have often dwindled as once lucrative shopping centres have been out-classed by other development. These communities have a vested interest in reviving their depressed retail establishments because they are needed to generate taxes for the municipality. This explains why municipalities are willing to accept the socialized risk of public financing schemes in which potential losses are borne by taxpayers and profits are passed on to the private developers (Falcone et al., 2002).

### **3.3.2 Municipal Leadership**

Many developers believe that “suburban redevelopment projects need the support and confidence of public agencies and elected officials” (Falcone et al., 2002, p.87) if they are to be successful. It is this support that is often a major facilitating process for redevelopment in these smaller communities, and can often have contributing effects on the ease of redevelopment. Beyond a more responsive administration and development application, the support of municipal officials often ensures a collaborative process for site vision and stakeholder integration.

Having supportive, elected municipal officials often coincides with those who have the ability to see and plan beyond the confines of election cycles. As greyfield sites often result from a lack of long-term planning (Falcone et al., 2002), those who can work with progressive ideas and holistic thinking in mind are best positioned to aid greyfields redevelop beyond their cyclical patterns of failure and temporary solutions (ibid). Unfortunately, in many American, suburban municipalities, “local leaders are often resistant to any conversion of retail space to nonretail uses” (Gulley, 2011, para.6) because

they fear lost taxation revenues, “leading many elected officials to keep corridors zoned for commercial regardless of the retail environment” (ibid).

### **3.3.3 Land Acquisition**

One tool used by municipalities to help facilitate the redevelopment process of greyfield sites is the acquisition of assembly of land parcels (Evans-Cowley, 2006). Using various arms of government such as redevelopment authorities, municipalities in both the United States and Canada (see, for example, CMHC, 2005c) have used various tools to assemble land for both private and public projects, often when traditional means are unproductive, or existing landowners are unwilling. Peiser et al. (2002, p.83) note that “using urban renewal powers and public financing to demolish obsolete structures, create new road and parking facilities, construct civic or cultural buildings, and enhance the streetscape and pedestrian system are typical tasks for the public partnership” in redevelopment projects.

As noted by Misonzhnik (2010, para.3), in the United States, “typically, eminent domain has been used to seize property in order to make way for government or other public use. Less frequently, municipalities have tried to use the power for economic development” such as the redevelopment of greyfield sites by private interests. In these instances, municipalities uses governmental extensions to deem the private land in question ‘blighted’ in order to “[remove] empty and unsightly buildings” and “stem the decline of surrounding activities” (Peiser et al., 2002, p.83). This course of action is taken because law in most American states “prohibits the seizure of private property for the purposes of economic development” (Misonzhnik, 2010, para.9). However, under the designation of a blighted property, which gives municipalities power to cease property for land assembly and economic development, the courts would generally defer to the municipality for the definition and tests for blight (Misonzhnik, 2010).

The question must be asked: are municipalities responding to malls, which are obviously struggling both quantitatively and qualitatively, and are truly blighted, or are municipalities “... pushing the boundaries of the definition in order to seize... property that it otherwise would be unable to take”? (Misonzhnik, 2010, para.6). The reality is that municipalities hold these powers to exercise in moderation for the benefit of the public they represent. Considering such, municipalities must ask

themselves if the greyfield project in which they choose to exercise these powers does in fact represent the public interest, either for revenue generation, public space, or community redevelopment, and if traditional, private options of assembly have been exhausted prior to commencing the controversial process.

### **3.3.4 Changes to Policy**

One of the major facilitating factors of greyfield redevelopment is a supportive policy and bylaw framework in which cooperatively envisioned redevelopment plans could be easily executed. This points to the complexities and hurdles of existing policy and zoning ordinances that impede redevelopment of greyfield sites, and often make the process more complicated, expensive and lengthy than it needs to be. As noted by Welty (2011, para.10), “by making desired development the standard rather than the exception, developers face one less hurdle in undertaking a redevelopment project, which are typically more complex to begin with.”

Other suggested creative policy shifts include amendments to planning documents that take into consideration future desired uses, densities or design of the site in a pre-emptive manner that would anticipate future redevelopment (see, for example, CMHC, 2005d). As expected, appropriate consultation with stakeholders needs to be considered when zoning a site for future densities and uses to ensure a common vision. However, this should be coupled with appropriate flexibility or permissive language in order to prevent having to redo the process if the site developer’s vision alters slightly from the binding site plan or zoning.

## **3.4 Summary**

If one thing can be summarized from the literature, it is that North American greyfield redevelopment is without a common direction and solution to say the least. One thing that has been increasingly evident, however, is the lack of resiliency and sustainability in the conventional 20<sup>th</sup> century form of sprawling development. Experts agree that the land use experiment of ever-expanding suburban growth has proven to be problematic for both municipalities and home-owners alike, burdened by the debt of externalities not previously considered, or not previously evident, when making their development and home purchasing choice.

This same pattern of development and lack of foresight can also be attributed to the history of retail development patterns. Retail development, often with a 30-year lifecycle obsolescence, may be profitable to the developer, but the unaccounted costs are passed on to the municipalities and the residents of communities that are directly impacted. These costs of the out-classing development cycles, like continued suburban residential expansion, are finally catching up to municipalities.

Contributing to the formulation of the research questions, the impeding and facilitating factors to the redevelopment of greyfield sites are under-identified and under-explored in the review of literature. It is this gap in the literature that established the direction for this research, and is subsequently explored through the existing policy and built form in the City of Edmonton.

Explored and appropriately implemented according to context, the literature shows that greyfield redevelopment has potential to be a puzzle piece in municipal redevelopment. Examples show greyfield redevelopment projects acting as everything from a civic and economic catalyst within a municipality, to providing services, housing and public space to older communities who might otherwise continue to go without (see, for example, Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009; Feronti, 2003, McKay, 2007 and CMHC, 2005c).

The literature summarizes that despite their notable success, “greyfield redevelopment techniques for community revitalization remain relatively unevaluated and sorely under-appreciated” (Feronti, 2003, p.2). Finding the right use for a greyfield requires vision and going beyond “repackaging the shopping experience” (Chilton, 2006, p.7), and needs to be formulated out of a collaborative process with stakeholders, municipalities and developers alike. The sites themselves, as well as several failed attempts at redevelopment, have become a multifaceted problem in municipalities across North America, but offer just as many opportunities to those up to the challenge.

## Chapter 4

### Methodology

This thesis used several different research methods to explore the factors which impede and facilitate greyfield redevelopment. These research methods focused on a qualitative approach to the corresponding research questions using an applied research perspective. This research was conducted insights from the literature review, case study research, and interviews with key stakeholders.

#### 4.1 Research Methods

As seen in table 4-1, the methodology chosen for each corresponding research question is as follows:

**Table 4- 1: Comparing Research Questions to Selected Methodology**

Research Questions	Methodology		
	Literature Review	Case Studies	Interviews
1) Do municipalities address greyfield challenges and opportunities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2) What factors impede greyfield development?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3) What factors facilitate greyfield redevelopment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4) How should greyfields be planned for in the City of Edmonton?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

##### 4.1.1 Applied Research

An applied research perspective, was used to explore these research questions. The research questions and thesis topic warrant an applied research approach which linked existing knowledge with gaps in



Edmonton's current municipal policy, leading to policy recommendations for the City of Edmonton. This goal parallels the general focus of applied research which "focuses on the use of knowledge rather than the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake" (Jupp, 2006, p.8), and to produce practical payoffs or uses for results (Neuman, 1997).

The qualitative nature of applied research is exemplified in the fact that it is frequently linked with descriptive research, "more likely to pay greater attention to external validity" (Jupp, 2006, p.9) and is warranted for immediate practical use (Neuman, 1997). This application-driven research differs from that of basic research because the scope of the research questions and the finished product is pragmatic in nature. As such, the indicators of success for applied research can then be found in the application of results and findings by the study sponsors or associated decision makers.

Due to the current lack of existing greyfield redevelopment research and literature, producing policy-relevant recommendations based on relatively exploratory research does produce a bit of tension. As such, guidelines and recommendations from this research should direct further research in the appropriate areas before policy-related implementation.

#### **4.1.2 Literature Review**

This thesis used a review of existing literature to explore the subject matter and approach the research questions. This literature review methodology used previously written material "which [contained] information, ideas, data and evidence,...[as well as] the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed" (Hart, 2003, p.13). Using a literature review methodology took advantage of the limited selection of available documentation on greyfields, as well a more generalized selection of retail development history.

A case study approach, in which cases were selected through a list of corresponding criteria, was used within the literature review framework. These cases were the launching point for further exploratory research into related policy documentation and were then linked to the identification and selection of research subjects as primary-data information sources. Other case-related sources included online list-serves, forums, search engine-based RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds, industry-related magazines and publications, and journal articles. These emerging data sources served both as relevant

to answering the thesis research questions, as well as then directing additional study of associated and applicable information through further research methodology.

### **4.1.3 Case Studies**

Case-study research commonly examines a large and complex number of features related to a select number of cases. These cases can be individuals, groups, organizations, movements, events or geographic units. The data collected from these cases are usually more detailed, varied and extensive than other forms of research, and often contain a substantial amount of qualitative data (Neuman, 1997).

The logic of case study research involves demonstrating a causal argument about how general forces shape and produce results in particular settings (Neuman, 1997). Case studies aid in connecting the micro-level of individual or contained action, to the macro-level of theory, process and policy. In doing so, qualitative case studies “[tend] to take an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research” (Bryman, Teevan & Bell, 2009, p.38). In the case of this research, the analysis of selected case studies connect the theory and existing research of greyfield redevelopment, with the practical application in two distinct contexts. This form of research is “an empirical inquiry that: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (Yin, 1989, pg. 23). Using the logic of analytic instead of enumerative induction, case study research integrates well with the multifaceted nature of the problems and solutions associated with greyfield redevelopment (Neuman, 1997).

As indicators of the applicability of theory and hypothesis, as well as “providing examples of the impact of policy” (Jupp, 2006, p.20), relevant case studies played an integral part in answering the research questions. Since the majority of the existing literature and subsequent case study research has focused on American greyfield redevelopment projects, a Canadian case study in Edmonton, Alberta was selected to ensure practical and contextual recommendations. The other case study selected, Belmar in Lakewood, Colorado, is a prominent American greyfield redevelopment example that has received significant attention for not only its design, but also the execution of redevelopment.

Although both operate in different planning policy contexts, parallels were extracted and compared appropriately as warranted.

The case studies were selected using various criteria to ensure a best fit for analysis and the subsequent recommendations. Firstly, using a targeted selection process, the appropriate case studies were selected from a municipality where greyfield redevelopment, or any form of infill development, is not the norm. This ensured that policy hurdles needed to be overcome, and the municipality had to play an active role in the formation of the redevelopment. This also meant that developers associated with such projects also had to be actively engaged in the process with the municipality, resulting in potential information that could be extracted at a primary or secondary level, relating to the research question of factors that impeded or facilitated these greyfield redevelopments in question.

Secondly, the case studies were not to be more than ten years old, ensuring that the necessary secondary data was available and relevant to current planning practices, as well as easier to find. For primary research, this ensured that interview subjects were easier to contact, and related information and experiences were not forgotten over time.

The research focused on a smaller number of cases in depth than might be found in similar studies. As Jupp (2006, p.20) noted, “the main criticism of the case study method is that in most circumstances the individual cases are not sufficiently representative to permit generalization to other situations”, and therefore the “external validity or generalizability of case study research [is questionable]” (Bryman, Teevan & Bell, 2009, p.38). Increasing the number of case studies is often used to subsequently increase representation and mitigate this perceived shortcoming. However, as this methodology is not exhaustive in nature, and rather establishes a generalized framework from which primary research can build from, these criticisms are not a concern. Also, there are additional trade offs made when the number of cases analyzed increases, such as the depth of analysis for the benefit of additional breadth. In this study, due to the exploratory nature of the research, it was decided that the corresponding depth of analysis was more important than the benefit of breadth of additional cases.

The case studies are of particular relevance as they are informative for creating recommendations for the City of Edmonton based on analysis and feedback of one prominent greyfield redevelopment site

within the city boundaries, and one best-practice redevelopment example from a different municipality. This research method allows insight into the impeding and facilitating factors of redevelopment through the perspective of the framework of existing policy. However, this method was limited by a lack of easily available information in regards to Century Park in Edmonton, compared to the substantial amount of material that has been written about Belmar in Lakewood.

#### **4.1.4 Interviews**

Primary research for this thesis was conducted using interviews with selected stakeholders. This methodology can be particularly useful for exploring the details regarding the participant's direct experiences, and pursuing questioning that may not have otherwise been considered (McNamara, 1996). As the direction of inquiry may change frequently, the use of creative questioning and soft parameters should be explored to take advantage of serendipitous moments that could have larger study implications (Neuman, 1997).

For this thesis, snowball sampling was used to seek interviewees. Snowball sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which a “researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses them to establish contacts with others” (Bryman, Teevan & Bell, 2009, p.198). This connected, selection process “continues until either the researcher fails to make any new contacts, or the new data [does] not appear to add anything substantial to existing understanding” (Jupp, 2006, p.281).

Snowball sampling is often used “when it is difficult to find a sample in any other way [as] there is no accessible sampling frame for the population from which the sample is to be taken” (Jupp, 2006, p.197). This found particular relevance in relation this thesis topic as finding interviewees who had familiarity or direct experience with greyfield redevelopment proved difficult using other selection methods as their numbers were limited and sparse. Although the use of snowball sampling typically does not lead to a complete and balanced, representative sample, it does become a useful tool when the research in question has a limited understanding and pool of individuals from which knowledge can be drawn. As noted by Jupp (2006, p.282), “the advantage of snowball sampling is it enables the researcher to identify potential participants when it would otherwise be extremely difficult to do so”. This advantage is contrasted with the inherent “disadvantage of the approach, [in] that it is dependent

upon each participant sufficiently understanding the nature of the research in order to be able to identify another suitable participant” (Jupp, 2006, p.282). This proved to be one of its shortcomings the interview process of this thesis.

The snowball method of sampling is not without its critics, nor without its limitations. For one, starting from a small initial sampling pool of individuals can lead to a subjective and narrow list of potential future candidates. Jupp (2006, p.282) argues that “the very fact that they are all acquainted with each other is a source of potential bias”. As such, it is beneficial to work with largest and most diverse possible group of initial candidates, and to constantly evaluate the key interview subjects that interviewees recommend. It is also beneficial to gauge the reputation of the original selected candidates amongst their peers to ensure topical fluency (Jupp, 2006). This, however, does little to mitigate selection bias. In the case of this research, selection bias could be argued in that a large number of the interviewees represented the private sector of greyfield redevelopment (see section 4.2). Aside from individuals working for the municipality, finding public-based stakeholders such as community members, proved difficult.

## **4.2 Information on Primary Research Subjects; Interviewees**

Primary research on factors impeding and/or facilitating greyfield development was carried out through telephone interviews with a total of 16 individuals involved directly or indirectly with greyfield redevelopment. Initial interviews were as a result of their association with specific projects, or their knowledge and experience in the local development market in Edmonton, while later interviewees were selected using snowball sampling based on the recommendations from initial interviewees. Telephone interviews followed a list of questions (see Appendix F) linked to the research questions (see Chapter 1). In cases where the questions did not apply to the individual, the interview progressed in other directions, and when time constraints limited the questions that could be asked or the interviewee could not answer a particular question, the questions were adjusted and some lines of inquiry were not pursued.

I attempted to achieve a balance of interviews between those involved in the public sector and those in the private sector to maintain a balance of perspective. A total of seven of the sixteen interviewees would be considered public sector employees or having a public-sector involvement. The remaining

nine were employed in the associated private industry, of which five were professional planners, and four had various roles in the development industry.

The majority of the interviewed individuals had experience with greyfield redevelopment in various forms including direct project involvement, consultation and project representation, development of policy impacting greyfield sites, community representation and evaluating and approving greyfield redevelopment projects. A minority of interviewees had been involved in a less direct manner (see Appendix G). However, despite the varied yet discernible experiences with actual greyfield redevelopment, few were able to classify it as such, or had an understanding of what might fall under the umbrella of greyfield redevelopment. Frequently, interviewees mistakenly lumped together residentially zoned infill sites, brownfield sites and generalized urban redevelopment when attempting to discuss and characterize greyfield sites. This confusion would point again to the somewhat fluid and still crude definition of greyfield sites, and the lack of associated understanding. This phenomenon is expanded upon within the research findings.

### **4.3 Study Area of Primary Research**

The findings of the thesis were written as a list of recommendations for the City of Edmonton in order to aid policy development for the successful redevelopment of Edmonton's current greyfield stock. The findings were applied in the context of the current governing planning structure and documentation at the City of Edmonton. Appropriate review of current policy found in the City of Edmonton, which speaks to greyfield sites or the redevelopment process and objectives of the city, was vetted through a content analysis of documents, and was followed up with primary research of applicable individuals through a snowball sampling methodology.

The City of Edmonton was chosen as the study application area due to the City's continued development of infill and redevelopment-minded planning policies and their corresponding desire for civic transformation, redevelopment and infill. The City of Edmonton also has an ample supply of classifiable greyfield sites in established neighbourhoods, as well as transitional commercial sites that could become greyfield sites.

## Chapter 5

### Case Studies

Research shows that redevelopment of greyfield sites can take a wide variety of forms varying from the more traditional suburban greenfield models of retail power centres and lifestyle centres, to single-use residential, mixed-use and a variety of new urbanism approaches. Each of these chosen redevelopment approaches is dependent on a wide variety of internal and external factors, push and pull mechanisms of municipal bodies and consumer demand.

The two case study examples showcased in this research are an attempt to compare and contrast greyfield redevelopment in two very different settings. The first example, Belmar, in Lakewood, Colorado, is a notable example that reveals the spectrum of greyfield causation, as well as the opportunities exploited in the redevelopment process. Belmar has been esteemed by the planning community as one of the most successful models of greyfield redevelopment in terms of design and community integration. As this redeveloped greyfield site has been showcased by popular planning theorists, such as Ellen Dunham-Jones (2009), its popularity and review in planning literature has grown exponentially over the past number of years. The second case study example, Century Park, in Edmonton, Alberta was chosen in order to provide local contextualization for greyfield redevelopment, and because it is the most prominent and ambitious greyfield redevelopment within the city. This comparison is meant to explore whether parallels exist between the two sites given certain similarities, and also what aspects affect the redevelopment process and form in consideration of differentiating factors (see Table 5-1).

**Table 5- 1: Comparing Statistics of Belmar & Century Park (Source: Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009; Armin Preiksaitis & Associates, 2005)**

PROJECT	PREVIOUS USE	SITE SIZE	RETAIL SPACE	OFFICE SPACE	PUBLIC SPACE	RESIDENTIAL UNITS
Belmar - Lakewood, CO	Villa Italia Shopping Center	104 acres	1,000,000 sq. ft.	1,000,000 sq. ft.	9 acres	1300
Century Park - Edmonton, AB	Heritage Mall	43 acres	217,431 sq. ft.	203,438 sq. ft.	22 acres	2886

## **5.1 Belmar - Lakewood, Colorado**

### **5.1.1 History and Context**

Built in the soon-to-be-amalgamated suburban-city of Lakewood, Colorado, Villa Italia opened its doors in 1966 to supply the retail needs of the rapidly growing suburban population seven miles southwest of downtown Denver. Like many new shopping centres of its era, Villa Italia was accompanied by a corresponding quantifiable superlative (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). Dunham-Jones & Williamson (2009, p.157) noted that “upon opening, [it] was advertised as ‘the largest enclosed mall west of Chicago,’ a title it did not hold for long”.

The newly amalgamated city, lacking cohesion and a sufficient residential tax base to properly provide services, embraced the mall as a fiscally beneficial and uniting entity (Falcone, 2002). According to Shaer (2009, para.1) “In its heyday in the 1970s and ’80s, the Villa anchored this large, affluent Denver suburb, which never had a Main Street to call its own”. Initially, the mall was beloved by its citizens who used it for a myriad of public events ranging from local proms to a yearly Italian festival (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). By the 1970s, Villa Italia was not only the retail heart of the community, but also “a key component in the economic viability [of the city]” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.157), providing up to 50% of the city’s tax base (ibid).

The mall was still doing well up until the early 1990s, however, “a few short years later, the [retail] economic engine had broken down” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p. 157). Lakewood was beginning to deal with an over-saturation of retail competitors and over-build of new retail sites as competitors attempted to outclass existing developments (Falcone, 2002). By the mid-1990s, only one of the four original anchors remained. Despite the community’s desire to maintain the mall, its longevity was proving to be unlikely. Community leaders and retailer brokers contemplated other uses for the site such as a community centre and power centre retail, but these proved to be as unfruitful as promised improvements to the mall such as a multiscreen cinema (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009).

However, this slow decline of the retail heart of Lakewood was not the final form this site would take. Spearheaded by the municipality of Lakewood and the partnering development team, Continuum Partners, the Belmar redevelopment project began to rise out of the remains of Villa Italia (Truitt,



2003). Prior to the involvement of the City of Lakewood driving the redevelopment study and eventual redevelopment process of the site, several developers attempted to redevelop it, and had taken different levels of interest in the site (Pecsok, 2011). However, the site was mired in difficulties that prevented a cohesive, private redevelopment process; According to Pecsok (2011, personal communication), “the buildings were owned [by different individuals] than the land. There were long-term land leases. There were acres [of the site that already] that had approval rights [tied to them].” As such, the complicated process of redevelopment needed public involvement not only because it was a strategic asset at the heart of the community, but also because it was a complex problem that the private sector could not tackle alone.

### **5.1.2 Design**

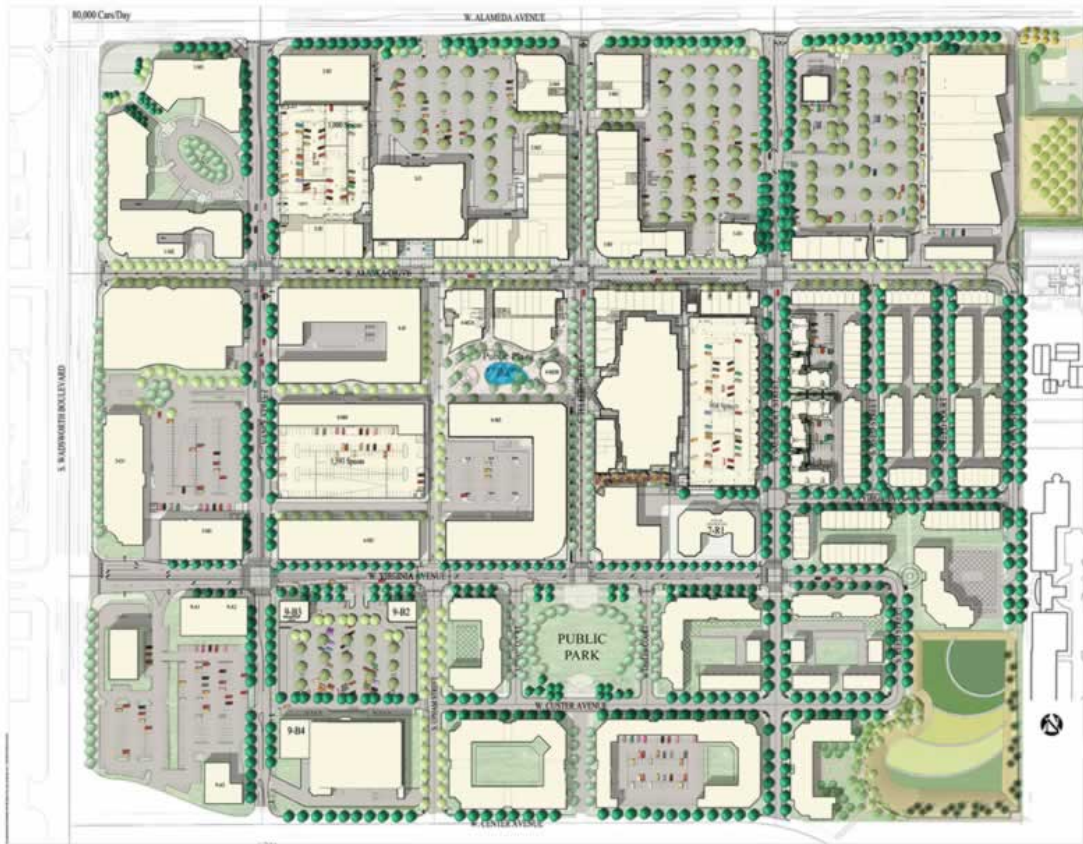
Beginning in the late 1990s, and hoping to attract a younger demographic of residents to their community, the City of Lakewood sought creative solutions to attract young professionals (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). Declining tax revenue from the shopping centre, combined with an aging demographic and housing stock in the community, had planners and politicians alike concerned as they forecasted for long-term civic management and fiscal security.

It soon became apparent to municipal authorities that action was needed to be taken to either curtail decline of the shopping centre or integrate redevelopment options within the site. As such, the City chose to partner with Continuum, a local developer with redevelopment experience. The City and Continuum began working with a newly formed citizen advisory committee to help address the needs and desires of the community, while trying to manage the reality of a declining integral asset. What quickly became evident through the community consultation process was that the community was afraid of losing the only thing they knew of a ‘downtown’ and centralized community-gathering place, and were fearful of the uncertainty of something different (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). Partnering with Civitas, a local-based landscape architectural firm, and Eikus Manfredi Architects, a Boston-based firm with considerable experience in the redevelopment of retail and mixed-use space, Continuum drafted plans to address these concerns and create a new public-realm centered development, which would act as the heart of the suburban community of Lakewood (Falcone, 2002).

After various iterations, and constant feedback with the administration and community advisory committee, Continuum released plans for a complete site redevelopment plan under the name Belmar. “[Derived] from the 750-acre Belmar Estate, which the land was part of before the construction of the Villa Italia mall in 1966” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.156), Belmar would break up the isolated design of the original site, and reintegrate the development into the adjacent community through a new grid-based street network (Falcone, 2002).

Marketed as the "new downtown" of Lakewood, Belmar was planned to become a \$560 million public-private partnership that would nearly triple the existing density of the site through a staged, mixed-use development comprised of 1 million square feet of retail, 1 million square feet of office space, and over 1,300 residential units (Truitt, 2003). This added intensity on the site was possible with access to the adjacent arterial roads, integration of existing transit lines and diffusion of different uses, which allowed the increase of tax-generating space without an increase of accompanied congestion issues (Truitt, 2003) (see Figure 5-1).

In addition to density and more efficient site layout, a higher degree of attention to detail, urban design and landscaping was stressed. Although limited in height to several stories, the narrower streets, zero-lot line development and generous pedestrian realm contributed to the high-quality development and design enthusiastically embraced by community members. Central to the development plan was 9-acres of open space, including a 2.2 acre park occupying a central block in the southern residential area and a 1.2 acre public plaza at the heart of the commercial district (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009).



**Figure 5- 1: Belmar Site Plan (Source: CNU, 2011)**

### **5.1.3 Impeding and Facilitating Factors**

The journey of redevelopment for the Villa Italia shopping mall in Lakewood was not without hardship and setbacks throughout its history of attempted redevelopment and final iteration. However, the redevelopment of the site into its current form came with the help of a variety of contributing factors. Both of these impeding and facilitating factors are discussed below.

#### **5.1.3.1 Political Will and Community Consultation**

Foregoing the “lure of quick revenue returns” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.158) at the sacrifice of long term potential, municipal officials of Lakewood rejected initial proposals to redevelop Villa Italia into a big-box power centre (ibid). “Instead, the mayor and chief planner [of the city]...actively searched for a redevelopment partner interested in pursuing a longer-term strategy of

creating a downtown for [the] suburban city that never had one” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.158). Amongst a list of potential partners, Continuum was selected not only because of their credentials, but also because of the relationship they forged with the city and jointly held desire to become a long-term invested partner in the community.

The City administration appointed a citizens’ advisory committee to strategize ideas, and “to be [the] critical link and support-builder in the community” (Falcone, 2002, p.52). By doing so at an early stage, the city and Continuum were able to include community members in the initial conversations of the redevelopment process, and were also able to build off of the desire and dreams they had for their community. Far from reactionary fears to increased density, traffic, and parking, community members helped constructively in the design of what would become the new heart of their community. That is not to say that the entire advisory committee or community agreed with Continuum on the future vision for the site. As expected, there were stakeholders who did not want to see variations of site design aside from the original format shopping centre (Pecsok, 2011). However, despite the community’s desire to maintain the mall, with only one of four anchors stores remaining during the period of consultation, its longevity as a mall was not likely. Will Fleissig, co-founder of Continuum Partners and its director for planning and design, noted that “it took some three months of discussion, in addition to bringing in independent retail consultants that are experts in assessing the market potential for shopping centers, to help [the committee] understand that it could [not] continue to be a mall” (Truitt, 2003, para.9). As the process continued, the committee came to the conclusion that “what they really cared about were the [associated] social and civic activities more than the mall itself” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, pg.158). As such, the continuation of these activities became a driving factor in the design of the future public space of the redevelopment project.

Continuum credited the steadfast support of the City of Lakewood for the success of the redevelopment project (Pecsok, 2011). From the beginning of the process, a clear direction was set from municipal council and administration to maintain an open mind to new ideas and uses for the site. The City then empowered Continuum, their design partners and the advisory committee, the ability to explore these concepts (Pecsok, 2011). Council also directed the City administration to facilitate the process by “removing red tape” (Pecsok, 2011, personal communication) and to work with a flexible zoning code that would allow changes on the site to be more responsive to market

forces (ibid). Overall, inclusion of the community through the initial formation of the advisory committee, right until the construction began, created a vision of consensus and political will (ibid).

### 5.1.3.2 Financial Assistance

The success of Belmar was also attributed to its ability to leverage funding through a variety of creative sources, which in turn, made the project viable (Anonymous, 2011). As the urban renewal authority deemed the site 'blighted', Belmar was able to secure public funding through TIF (tax-increment financing) as well as a PIF (public improvement fee) (ibid). The TIF would be paid for through additional property taxation revenue tied to increased property values and development on the site. The PIF on the other hand was to be financed through a 2.5 percent sales tax on purchases within the redevelopment site (Truitt, 2003). To alleviate the financial burden of the additional sales tax, the City of Lakewood "waived one-cent off of its [municipal] two-cent sales tax" (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.159) within the boundaries of Belmar. Once the debt was repaid, the revenues from the PIF were to be directed towards maintenance and operating of the site, as well as the higher level of public services (Truitt, 2003).

In addition to the localized funding measures, Continuum also secured a green building loan under the American Jobs Creation Act of 2004, with the aide of Colorado senators and representatives (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009). Dunham-Jones and Williamson (2009, p.160) noted "under the program, selected developers who demonstrated energy-efficient construction were allowed to borrow money and not have to pay taxes on the interest." Belmar received \$200 million to help fund the green initiatives of the project, including LEED [certification] of new buildings, recycling demolition material, adaptive reuse of an existing building, a 1.8 mega-watt rooftop solar array, and construction of a micro-wind farm in one parking lot (ibid).

### 5.1.3.3 Impediments to Redevelopment

Although there were several attempts to redevelop the site prior to the involvement of the city and Continuum, there were numerous, convoluted land issues that made the process next to impossible to accomplish without complete economic collapse of the site, or municipal government intervention.

Roger Pecsok (2011, personal communication), development director with Continuum Partners since 2001, said,

“The buildings [on the site] were owned [by different individuals] than the land. There were long-term land leases. There were acres that had approval rights on things. It was really complicated and it really required the city being on board.”

Although the “site offered a potentially complex valuation problem ...because the property had split ownership, ...the situation worked to [the advantage of Continuum] because the owner of the ground lease offered a highly discounted price... to get the project moving” (Falcone, 2002, p.51). As a result, “since the land was what generated the value of the property instead of the buildings” (ibid, p.51), Continuum was able to acquire control of the property and additional buildings with greater ease than those who had attempted before (Falcone, 2002).

Another impediment to the redevelopment of Villa Italia was the control originally allotted to the long-term anchor department stores. As Falcone (2002, pg.51) noted, “when the original centre was built, department stores had the clout to demand lease riders and extensive control over management issues”. Despite the anemic state of sales, the remaining department store, the May Company, chose to hold up the redevelopment process using these controls, and waited for a lucrative settlement (ibid). Instead, Continuum received a commitment from the city that they would use eminent domain to remove May Company from the site. Ultimately, however, a financial settlement was reached before the conclusion of the eminent domain proceedings the city had initiated (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009).

#### **5.1.4 Current Status**

Both Continuum and the City of Lakewood have continued to be patient yet active participants in the long-term development of Belmar, “[foregoing] short-term income for long-term value” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.155). As the redevelopment project continues its build-out schedule, Belmar has proven to be a successful revitalization project in the heart of the suburban community (see Appendix B). Those associated close to the project insist that Belmar “is not a shopping center imitating the form of a downtown, [but rather a] new downtown that, once seeded and nurtured, will have the necessary urban structure in place to grow and change over time” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, p.156). In line with their initial vision, current mayor of Lakewood, Bob Murphy

says that “Belmar has become the kind of ‘Main Street’ that malls ran out of business; the kind of gathering spot that Lakewood never had” (Shaer, 2009, para.11).

Shaer (2009, para.10) noted that “although the district has been hit as hard as any community by the economic malaise, 85 percent of the retail space in Belmar has been leased... and of 478 available rental units, 94 percent are occupied”. As well, these corresponding property values are now the highest in the county, providing a benefit for the residents, retailers and municipality through a revitalized tax base (ibid). As evidenced by demand for the addition of housing stock alongside the office and retail-focused development, it can be said that Belmar has become not just a revitalized shopping district, but a key component of a revitalizing suburban community as well.

## **5.2 Century Park – Edmonton, Alberta**

### **5.2.1 History and Context**

During a period of rapid economic growth in the province of Alberta in the late 1970s and early 1980s, development was occurring at a rapid pace in both Edmonton and Calgary. Once fairly quiet small prairie cities, the economic triggers of oil and gas exploration in the late 1940s launched a development cycle that sparked rapid, speculative interest and investment.

In the 1970s, a local developer, Jerry Naqvi, had accumulated land zoned for regional commercial development at the heart of the planned community of Kaskitayo in the developing Edmontonian suburban fringe (Webster, 2011) (see Appendix C). Naqvi had then decided to partner with an external development firm, Daon, from Vancouver, which eventually bought him out. In 1980, (as part of an aggressive and accelerated development strategy) Daon announced that they would open three new shopping centres in Alberta, one of which would be called Heritage Mall in the suburban Edmonton neighbourhood of Kaskitayo. This decision was partially fueled by the aggressive drive by department stores to capture target markets and expand their reach. Among those were Eatons, Woodward’s and the Bay. Around the same time, The Bay became a shopping centre developer of its own under the banner Markborough Properties, and had developed a competing shopping centre alongside Woodward’s, four kilometers north of Daon’s site, named Southgate (Schreiner,1980).

Eatons' desire to enter the south-Edmonton market was the largest driver of mall expansion for Daon, as both Woodward's and The Bay had prevented Eatons from entering Southgate, forcing them to look for new space (Webster, 2011).

At a cost of roughly \$30 million dollars [1981 value] (Webster, 2011), Heritage Mall officially opened on August 3, 1981 with 777,000 square feet of retail space, 155 stores, and four anchor tenants: Sears, Eatons, Woolco and Safeway (Schreiner, 1980).

Initially, and at what would be its prime, Heritage Mall captured 23 percent of shopping trips in southwest Edmonton (Munro, 1985). Although Daon had opened its Heritage Mall in the same year as the first phase of West Edmonton Mall, and an expansion of the regionally competing Southgate shopping centre which was doubling in square footage, future prospects looked promising (Webster, 2011). Even though the general opinion was that close proximity to Southgate was the curse and eventual undoing of Heritage Mall, the rampant growth of the regional economy and aggressive expansion of department stores had originally rendered this geographical barrier to be without concern. As the early 1980s economy slowed, interest rates skyrocketed and housing development south of the mall halted, the picture began to change significantly. Simon (1984, para.9) noted that "though almost all space [had] been filled, the mall [was] having difficulty finding tenants for the few remaining gaps. What's more, lease rates averaging \$20 per square foot [were] 15%-20% below levels when the mall opened three years [previous]". Daon eventually sold Heritage Mall, along with two additional shopping centres in Alberta, to Cambridge Shopping Centres Limited in June of 1984 in order to combat mounting debt levels (Daon group, 1984).

As Canadian department stores began to go bankrupt in the early 1990s, remaining anchor tenants began to shuffle around and backfill space in the now-more successful Southgate shopping centre. Eatons left for Southgate after Woodward's went bankrupt in 1993, and Woolco went bankrupt and sold its existing leases and sites, including its space in Heritage Mall, to Walmart, as they entered the Canadian market (Murray, 1994). However, Walmart would leave only a couple years later after they opened a larger store in the nearby, rapidly-expanding power centre, South Edmonton Common, which proved to be a serious competitive factor in the changing local retail landscape (Young, Regiec & Backstrom, 2005). Sears Canada purchased a number of vacated Eatons properties when the company went bankrupt in 1999, and left Heritage Mall for Southgate shortly after (Theobald, 1999).



The final remaining anchor, Safeway, left shortly after Sears when it opened in a standalone site southeast of the mall.

As Heritage Mall lost its anchor tenants, the new owners, Cambridge, did little to stop the exodus of retailers. Webster (2011, personal communication) stated that “Cambridge had a hard time looking at the site as anything other than a [traditional] shopping centre” in its existing condition. With adaptive reuse and non-traditional redevelopment of portions of the site off the table, Cambridge’s options for increased revenue generation and ability to prevent the mall from failing, were limited. However, even renovations and other adaptive tools used to prolong the life of shopping centres were avoided as internal company requirements prevented funding renovations that had limited returns outside of increased lease rates and revenue in their pro forma measurements (Anonymous, 2011).

Although Cambridge (Ivanhoe Cambridge at this point after a merger with Ivanhoe Properties in 2004) originally planned to demolish the mall and sell it as a vacant site, the company sold the site as-is in November 2003 to the highest bidder, Century Park Developments Ltd. (a joint-venture between Procura and Westbank developments), for an undisclosed amount (Heritage Mall, 2003).

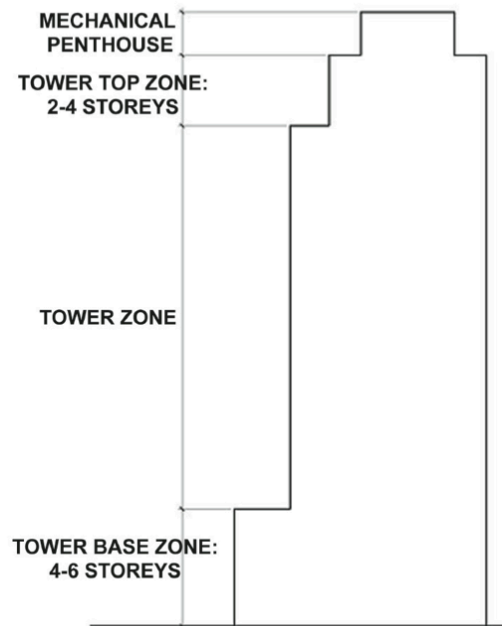
### **5.2.2 Design**

The original plan by Procura and Westbank for their newly purchased, derelict shopping centre involved maintaining a portion of the mall to repurpose, while building surrounding residential units as complementary components (Preiksaitis, 2011). The new owners considered attracting an educational institution to occupy the repurposed portion of the mall, as Ivanhoe Cambridge had implemented restrictive covenants limiting the parameters on the addition of retail tenants to the site. However, this plan quickly fell through (ibid). The resulting plan was to demolish the mall, and start planning the site as a blank slate (ibid).

Under the design of Vancouver-based James KM Cheng Architects, the refined site plan called for the design of a high-density, mixed-use community under the new name, Century Park. Century Park would be home to 2,886 residential units, nearly 218,000 square feet of commercial space and 204,000 square feet of office space (Armin Preiksaitis & Associates, 2005). These would be housed in a mix of mid and high-rise point towers, with active, street-fronted retail on the main floors, and

flanked by over 8.9 hectares of open space, including a large, centrally located lake (ibid) (see Appendix D). Other site uses included a parking structure adjacent to the proposed LRT (light rail transit) station, which would eventually be built by the city. The construction schedule considered a site build-out of 10 years, at a total cost of over \$500 million dollars (Preiksaitis, 2011).

Initial public consultation led to the adjustment of massing of higher towers in-order to reduce shadow impacts, and the improvement of the building's relationship to the pedestrian realm (Young, Regiec, & Backstrom, 2005) (see Figure 5-2). Other considerations and changes included the addition of a public art budget of \$1.1 million dollars, a number of residential units allocated for affordable housing, and considerable attention paid to landscape architecture and design (ibid).



**Figure 5- 2: Century Park Tower Massing Diagram (Source: Young, Regiec & Backstrom, 2005)**

Another major component of the site's design consideration was the integration of a future LRT station, which would be the terminus of the South LRT line extension. Although the initial design considered the LRT as a supplementary afterthought, the redesign considered integration of the LRT

as a key and crucial design consideration which would give allowance to the site density and residential unit count being considered (Young, Regiec, & Backstrom, 2005). Young, Regiec, & Backstrom (2005, p.4) noted that “with TOD (transit-oriented development) considerations in mind, refined parking guidelines were included, with potential for reassessment and reduction of parking requirements once the site [was] half developed or the LRT line completed”. At the time of initial design, the LRT extension had yet to begin, and given the history of the extension of the south-LRT line, nothing was guaranteed.

### **5.2.3 Impeding and Facilitating Factors: Process & Political Will**

Although a “majority of attendees indicated that they were in favour of the [proposed] project” (Young, Regiec, & Backstrom, 2005, p.5), there was significant vocal opposition to the project from a number of local stakeholders with a variety of concerns. Fundamentally, the built form and general massing of the project was a target of criticism by some who had trouble conceptualizing it as something that could exist in its proposed form outside of the downtown core, never mind their suburban community (Iveson, 2011). The familiar concerns voiced by residents was that the proposed redevelopment would be “too dense, would create too much traffic, and that the tall towers proposed for the site would be out of place and cause shadowing problems for the rest of the neighbourhood, most of which is suburban in character” (Young, Regiec, & Backstrom, 2005, p.5). It was this lack of community integration that SWAC (Southwest Area Council) argued exemplified a lack of neighbourhood cohesiveness and was designed as a sustainable island unto itself, not fitting with the current built form surrounding it (Crawford, 2011).

In addition, public consultation for this project was tied indirectly to both a proposed interchange southeast of the site and to the LRT extension (Preiksaitis, 2011). As this site would be the first TOD in Edmonton, and would be part of an LRT extension into a more affluent area of the city than where it had previously been located, there was a lot of apprehension about the kind of disruption the three combined projects would bring and how parking on the proposed site would be handled (Iveson, 2011).

The community consultation process was arguably the largest hurdle of the development application process, unlike anything the municipal administration had dealt with prior. As there were few

guidelines within the planning department, and the city was just beginning to emerge from a decade and a half of reactive planning rather than proactive planning, a policy vacuum existed (Preiksaitis, 2011). Despite the aptitude of the planners involved with the project, “they were [not] really prepared to handle a rezoning application of this magnitude... [and] kind of made it up as they went along” (Preiksaitis, 2011, personal communication). For example, compliance with the recently minted *Smart Choices* planning guidelines checklist (Edmonton’s first planning document regarding ‘Smart growth’ principals) were some of the only additional tools the administration had to measure with. This lack of guidance would be revealed in the remaining consultation process, when, faced with objections, the planning department “erred on the side of caution and required more public meetings, more delays, and technical studies” (Preiksaitis, 2011, personal communication).

As is common in many public consultation hearings, community representatives felt “annoyed that everything had been decided with respect to the project” (Crawford, 2011, personal communication) prior to the consultation process. They believed the new site owners were “doing what they thought was the ‘courtesy call’ to the communities [for regulatory approval alone]” (ibid, personal communication) Although community leaders argued residents “[did not] want an abandoned building in [their] community, [and] encouraged and welcomed development” (ibid, personal communication) the lack of preliminary public visioning and site design left community stakeholders feeling as though they did not have a chance to participate in the preliminary discussion and direction of site design. SWAC argued that the citizens they represented “wanted to see an integrated and productive community” (ibid, personal communication) reflected in the development plans, however, others believe the community representatives were not interested in reaching a compromise with the developers, but rather “stopping development in its tracks” (Preiksaitis, 2011, personal communication).

Community leaders attempted to reach out to additional community leagues within the city boundaries to jointly oppose development under the threat that approval of the Century Park in its proposed form would set the precedent for form and process (Crawford, 2011). Although additional community leagues declined to get involved and claimed that it was a localized matter alone, they kept a close eye on the process and results, especially as it would establish a standard for retail conversion adjacent to LRT stations (Iveson, 2011).

SWAC “ended up hiring a planning consultant [to argue on their behalf in front of] council as an expert [witness]. [The consultant promoted] alternatives to high-rise development, ...with 4 or 6 stories being the maximum” (Preiksaitis, 2011) height that they argued should be permitted. However, these arguments would have little impact the planned massing and design for the site. In the end, and despite professional representation, SWAC representatives believed that “it was not an equal fight, [and] was a very frustrating... [and] very intimidating process” (Crawford, 2011, personal communication). The final outcome and approval of the direct control zoning for the site can largely be attributed to “the City [council who] was on-board [with the project], wanted to see [it] happen, [and had] the political will” (Gibson, 2011) to do so. Others believed “the City was very focused on the external outcome, meaning the new tax base and a one-of-a-kind development in the city” (Crawford, 2011, personal communication), rather than what the community wanted – or in this case did not want – in their neighbourhood. However, the general consensus in the development community was that “Century Park was a watershed project because council [chose] not be bullied by... community groups, and [instead listened] to reason” (Preiksaitis, 2011) as they were “trying to begin to set the direction and change the direction [for infill development] in the city” (Iveson, 2011).

#### **5.2.4 Current Status**

Several years since the site was cleared and condo sales started, the developer, Procura, has decided to take a different look at the site. Condo sales slowed during the 2008-2009 recession, and only four of the low-rise buildings on the east side of the site have been built to date, with construction of the first tower to start shortly (see Appendix E). Considering the slowing sales and increased labour and construction costs, Procura is now looking at ways to redistribute densities among lower buildings, reformat the retail and office layout, and create a more inviting public space (Gibson, 2011). Some argued that beyond the redistribution of densities and uses around the site, the integration of a Vancouver-style project faced challenges in light of escalated local labour and construction costs, with housing prices only half what they would sell for in Vancouver (see, for example, O’Byrne, 2011). Regardless of motivating factors, any changes in design or site-layout will require an amendment to the direct-control zoning, and another round of public consultation (Ferguson, 2011).

### **5.3 Summary**

These two case studies are just two examples of the wide breadth of approaches to greyfield redevelopment as noted by the literature. These malls both were originally built in different municipal contexts, in different decades, had different functions and levels of importance for the adjacent community, and ultimately, different weaknesses that lead to their demise. Continuing this trend, the redevelopment design and process of each site was also vastly different. If anything, these case studies show that although the literature and research to date has been heavily focused on the design and final use of the sites, a determining factor for the viability and the success of a greyfield redevelopment is the local process and context in which the redevelopment happens. In the case of Belmar, the importance of the redevelopment of the site to the municipality led to the intricate involvement of the city administration to ensure the consultation, design and development were done in manner that would benefit all stakeholders involved. In the case of Century Park, municipal, community and developer stakeholder inexperience with large-site redevelopment projects led to an overly complex and adversarial consultation and design process.

Although these case studies do not necessarily provide solutions that can be extracted and applied universally to other sites, they do provide examples of what has worked in different contexts, as well as general concepts and directions that can be explored in greater detail. It is from the hurdles and facilitating factors of case studies that some of the primary research questions were formulated in an attempt to dig deeper at these contributing and inhibiting factors for redevelopment as explored in the Findings Chapter (Chapter 6).

## **Chapter 6**

### **Findings**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

Consistent with the research questions, the conducted primary research focused on factors impeding and facilitating greyfield development. This consisted of interviews with individuals involved with greyfield redevelopment projects in various capacities. Following a listing of questions that corresponded with the intent of the research (see Appendix F), these interviewees offered their insights based on direct and indirect experience.

#### **6.2 Knowledge of Municipal Greyfield Policy**

One of the goals of the research was to identify existing municipal greyfield redevelopment policy. This was considered both in the review of literature, and in the primary research gathering with interviewees. Following the primary interview questions (see Appendix F), interviewees were asked whether they were aware of greyfield redevelopment policy or guidelines. Their categorized responses are as follows:

##### **6.2.1 Were the interviewees aware of greyfield redevelopment policy?**

In addition to the general lack of understanding or definitions of greyfield classification, the interviewees were often not aware of the examples of greyfield policy that might exist. Often this question was understood and answered through a localized contextual setting, in at least as much as the interviewees' inexperience with the sparse field of governing greyfield redevelopment would allow. Some interviewees mentioned that they were either unaware of any form of directed greyfield policy, or did not believe policy specific to greyfield redevelopment existed in their geographical context (see, for example, Pecsok, 2011; Preiksaitis, 2011; Ferguson, 2011). A number of the interviewees cited associated "permissive aspirational [policies]" (Iveson, 2011) that dealt with greyfield redevelopment in a number of associated ways. Grouped together in generalized themes, the examples they gave are as follows:

### 6.2.1.1 High level, municipal policy documents which mention greyfields

Examples that were cited several times by the interviewees would be the Strategic Plan, Municipal Development Plan (MDP), or Transportation Master Plan (TMP) of the municipality they were actively involved in (see, for example, Anonymous Planner, 2011; Scott 2011; Iveson 2011; Backstrom, 2011; Ferguson, 2011). Within these policies, wording could often be found that would “[talk] conceptually about opportunities for redevelopment and intensification...[and] greyfields [could] certainly fall into that category” (Iveson, 2011). However, as these documents are higher-level, guiding planning documents, “there [is not] a lot of direction” (Anonymous Planner, 2011) for redevelopment of greyfields, aside from identification of major-activity centres or general encouragement of redevelopment. In some cases, the policy “speaks more towards the end-goal of what they should look like” (ibid) in terms of design and functionality as opposed to tools for the process of redevelopment itself. These interviewees noted that even where these plans speak to encouragement of redevelopment of “large scale commercial centres into vibrant, mixed-use, transit-supportive and walkable urban areas” (City of Edmonton, 2010c, 5.2.1.6), there is often disconnect between identifying these sites or pointing to accompanying procedural policy (see, for example, Backstrom, 2011).

### 6.2.1.2 Generalized redevelopment guidelines

Corresponding with a review of the literature on greyfield redevelopment, some interviewees noted that “a lot of attention is being paid to infill, but not necessarily focused on what the site once was, [but] more focused on what the site can be” (Ferguson, 2011). One interviewee encapsulated this concern by saying: “The short answer is, I don’t think there’s a policy specific to greyfields redevelopment. [However], there is a number of documents that impact the redevelopment of greyfields sites” (Preiksaitis, 2011).

Another common response from interviewees was to point to several generalized redevelopment guidelines or policies they were familiar with. These documents were usually related to their geographical or municipal context, however, some interviewees pointed to additional documents from other jurisdictions. These policies included:

- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) guidelines (see, for example, Scott, 2011; Preiksaitis, 2011; Iveson, 2011; Young, 2011; Anonymous Planner, 2011) These



considerations varied from established municipal TOD policy which considered “internal [municipal] consultation... in regards to development permit applications [and] land use redesignation around any transit station” (Anonymous Planner, 2011), to draft versions of municipal TOD policies “which [would] have something to say about [greyfield] sites... if major transit facilities are located nearby” (Young, 2011). However, it became apparent that these guidelines often considered factors such as residential densities, public realm, parking standards, and generalized redevelopment guidelines through various mechanisms rather than greyfield redevelopment or associated policy. The association with greyfields can be drawn through the permissive language of encouraged redevelopment of adjacent sites, but little in the way of corresponding framework.

- Specific to Edmonton, several interviewees mentioned the Residential Infill Guidelines for Mature Neighbourhoods (see City of Edmonton, 2009) as an example of greyfield redevelopment policy (see, for example, Dulaba, 2011; Iveson, 2011; Preiksaitis, 2011; Craig, 2011). The intent of this guideline, which is positioned half-way between being a statutory guideline and an informative document, is “to provide guidance for the location, form and height of residential infill development in Edmonton’s mature neighbourhoods” (City of Edmonton, 2009, p.A1). As such, its main intent was to address “[concerns held by stakeholders] about implantation and approvals of... infill projects” (Dulaba, 2011) by providing consistency for upzoning in geographically identified mature neighbourhoods. Although the intent of this guideline addresses residentially zoned redevelopment, there are components that relate to greyfield sites. One example of this is wording which suggests the guidelines can “support community and neighbourhood commercial centres by: a) Intensifying the population around community or regional shopping centres; [and] b) Redeveloping moderate to large commercial sites where housing diversity and choice can be provided” (City of Edmonton, 2009, p.B2). In turn, these guidelines contemplate redevelopment scenarios, heights and densities of adjacent community commercial sites (Iveson, 2011), however do not offer guidelines beyond that. Given that a theoretical greyfield site in question was situated in the aforementioned small-scale, commercialized-zoned land, then these policies would be as close to guidelines as exists for facilitating redevelopment.

Other interviewees suggested similarities to brownfield redevelopment guidelines (see, for example, Scott, 2001) and other policy documents such as ‘Places to Grow’ that looked at greyfield sites as “it talks about it as locations of where the density targets could be achieved” (O’Byrne, 2011). However, outside of generalized definitions and loose ties to similarities, nothing relating to greyfield policy was expanded upon. Despite a lack direct language relating to greyfield redevelopment directly, the cited documents speak to a shift in planning policy focus and attention to types of development and geographical areas that have been previously ignored in municipal planning direction.

### 6.2.1.3 Relatable greyfield redevelopment policy

The Large Site Rezoning Process (see City of Edmonton, 2009a) is another Edmonton-specific guideline that the interviewees with Edmonton-based planning and development experience were quick to note. This was thought to be partially because of its development and implementation during the summer of 2011 (i.e. as the research was being conducted), and partially because it was to become the first established policy “set up to address the gap between the community and [development] applicant, and attempt to build some initial project consensus” (Dulaba, 2011).

Emerging from the redevelopment process of Century Park and some of the other contentious large site rezonings done in the past number of years in the City of Edmonton, the Large Site Rezoning Process “lays out a different process for these sites to go through in terms of preparing a site vision and site plan... on a basis of charettes and [community] consultation” (Iveson, 2011). This process would “require the applicant to submit preliminary information to [the appropriate City administration before a formalized application], including the approximate number of units, built forms, phasing and tenure” (City of Edmonton, 2011, p.1). This information would then be passed on to community stakeholders where they would have an early opportunity to offer comments and feedback. The intent behind this formalized process was that it would be “a way to bring the community in and help them understand what’s happening much earlier in the process” (Iveson, 2011), while attempting to expedite the process for developers.

However, some people in the Edmonton development industry feared the new Large Site Rezoning Process would add additional expense, without providing the time savings promised (see, for example, Ferguson, 2011; Young, 2011). There were also industry concerns about “timing and

whether the [administration] has the resources to handle this [additional process]” (Dulaba, 2011a) considering the already strained status of the administrative process.

### **6.2.2 If so, were the interviewees aware of the process from which these policies were created?**

Most interviewees did not have an answer for this question. This was either due to a lack of understanding or correct identification of greyfield policy, unfamiliarity with the policy that they identified, or the question was not asked (i.e. the interviewee did not identify policy that could be expanded upon). When answered, the interviewee often expanded on policy that could be related and fell into the aforementioned categories associated with greyfield redevelopment policy.

When identified and related correctly, interviewees identified that these specified policies came out of larger planning exercises (see, for example, Dulaba, 2011), community groups and stakeholders urging for a more predictable process, or desire for expediency from the development industry (see, for example, Dulaba, 2011; Young, 2011). The Large Site Rezoning Process (City of Edmonton, 2009a) for example, emerged because “the direct control [zoning] route was felt to be ad-hoc and an overly politicized process” (Young, 2011). As such, this specified and relatable policy was established so that corresponding development would be more inclusive of stakeholders at an earlier process, and would aid communities to “better understand what their role is and what is within the realm of possibilities” (Young, 2011) for development.

## **6.3 Barriers to Greyfield Redevelopment**

Interviewees had a wide array of responses when considering what barriers existed to greyfield redevelopment. As described below, several common themes were identified. The matrix presented in Appendix H shows this grouping of answers by specified interviewees. It should be noted however, that, as with previous questions, the level of understanding of the question and subsequent answers did not always correspond with the intent. In some cases, interviewees regarded soil contamination as a barrier to redevelopment of greyfield sites, yet when expanded upon, listed gas station and industrial sites as examples (see for example, Zubot, 2011). If such sites are adjacent to retail properties, or part of large retail sites, the reality of these statements does in fact hold validity. However, upon probing,

it was clear the subjects were often discussing isolated sites that would be likely classified as brownfields. This again points to the limited understanding of the classification and definition of greyfield sites, despite the fact that a corresponding definition was often given beforehand. It also points to the often loose association some of the interviewees had between the term ‘greyfield redevelopment’, and any type of urban redevelopment.

### **6.3.1 Administrative Hurdles**

The number one barrier to greyfield redevelopment mentioned by the interviewees was administrative hurdles. Far from being a “problem unique to [one municipality]” (Craig, 2011), the frustration was seen to exist at various levels by both public and private sector interviewees. Greyfield redevelopment project frustrations were exemplified by interviewees who noted that the issue often is not that municipal administrations do not agree with proposed greyfield redevelopment schemes, but that they “[have] no idea from a policy standpoint how to actually put planning policies in place to allow it to happen” (Craig, 2011). “Municipalities... want to get there, they just [do not] really have the mechanism to do it, or at least an easy mechanism to do it, and it becomes very much trial and error to work through the approval process” (Craig, 2011). Put more simply, there appear to be higher-level aspirational policies that were previously noted, but a lack of practical implementation. “It is fine to say [municipalities] want this type of development to occur, but many of the planning policies and many of the processes that they follow are still ingrained in a system that allowed for the original type of shopping centre to develop 30 years ago” (Craig, 2011).

Interviewees also noted “the amount of time it takes to go through the process can be an impediment” (Backstrom, 2011) for greyfield redevelopment. This points to the lack of administrative familiarity with greyfield redevelopment compared to more traditional forms, the lack of “a common approach to these large development sites” (Anonymous Planner, 2011), and a substantial amount of “internal inconsistency which slows down the approval process” (Anonymous Planner, 2011). Others noted that the municipal administration “[goes] back and forth with changes, coming up with a new set of changes after resubmitting for the first ones. That in and of itself shows indecisiveness to make a major a decision, or even just continuing changes forced by a backlog of different departments who address it at different times” (Dulaba, 2011).

Despite these challenges, one interviewee acknowledged that “administrative hurdles will [continue to] be a problem no matter how [streamlined] a process they try to adopt” (Dulaba, 2011). Those who represented more of a public interest said that “some of it may be unavoidable because these things are more complex because they happen in context” (Iveson, 2011), and that “we have to be careful not to be railroading the whole thing for the sake of expediency” (ibid). Regardless of municipal expediency, interviewees made clear that administrative inexperience with greyfield redevelopment has been a detriment to this process and feasibility of future projects.

### **6.3.2 Land Development Economics**

One of the foremost barriers to greyfield redevelopment mentioned by development industry interviewees were land and development financial constraints (see, for example, Scott, 2011; Ferguson, 2011; O’Byrne, 2011). One interviewee believed that “it used to be cheap land prices [that were motivating factors for development], but that is not the case [in markets like Edmonton] anymore” (Gibson, 2011). As such, developing infill markets, and their corresponding developers, have had to adapt to these changes. Interviewees frequently saw greyfield redevelopment through the lens of multifamily residential intensification, and therefore saw the ability to development these sites closely tied land and real estate prices. “When you are dealing with local buyers, the biggest issue is cost... So if the land costs are prohibitively high, [it is] really hard to make the numbers work and make enough of a profit, versus other locations” (O’Byrne, 2011). These land costs were noted as an impediment when they “[ranged] anywhere from \$800,000 to a couple million per acre depending on the site and location” (ibid).

Whereas communities that opposed redevelopment of greyfield sites saw the residential intensification process to be outside the scope of a revitalization of the current retail space, one interviewee pointed to the economic reality that these projects “can’t be stand alone [projects in their current form] because the economics [of the neighbourhood] have changed. [These sites have] got to be part of something bigger, something greater, something more dense” (Ferguson, 2011) to justify redevelopment of these retail centres.

### **6.3.3 Community Opposition**

As expected, another one of the most noted barriers to greyfield redevelopment was community opposition. Several interviewees noted that greyfield sites are often located in older, established communities, with the demographics of residents often comprising of “older people...[who] are not receptive to change” (Craig, 2011). These residents “are often wed to [their community] and... have a [general] concern about the unknown. When [considering] redevelopment, [it is often associated with] things people [do not] have a handle on, so they are unknown and some times [accompanied with fear]” (Backstrom, 2011). While this assertion may be a little unjust from the perspective of affected residents, it is apparent that a lack of communication and unfamiliarity with municipal processes of greyfield redevelopment has exacerbated this problem at the community level as noted by interviewees (see, for example, Crawford, 2011).

Discussion with interviewees about community opposition highlighted the understanding of concerns stakeholders often had with redevelopment projects, as well as an honest consideration of the policy and application process that has exacerbated the problem. One interviewee noted that “there are real barriers, the concerns [community members] have are not lost; [it is] not just stuff they’re trying to create to be problematic” (Craig, 2011). The process by which these concerns were dealt with, or even dismissed, often created a larger problem than necessary, and exacerbated the disconnect that exists between residents and developers. It is perhaps this attitude towards the public participation process that aids in triggering the community opposition that some interviewees complained about. One interviewee noted that, “the problem is a lot of the large-scale rezonings were [executed in] a process in which the applicant packaged it up, [going] big and bold, and tried to push it through” (Dulaba, 2011). Rather than establishing trust and building rapport with stakeholders early in the consultation process to jointly establish holistic solutions, the results of this adversarial approach often seemed to magnify the problem of community opposition, rather than mitigate it as the applicant may have intended. As such, “the biggest challenge is a shift in mentality, and how these developments are approached from the applicants’ side” (Dulaba, 2011).

### **6.3.4 Parking Minimums**

Required parking minimums was another barrier to greyfield redevelopment mentioned by several

interviewees. Parking requirements as established in municipal zoning bylaws were noted to cling to outdated transportation policies, economic realities and civic goals. Interviewees noted that these outdated policies drive up project costs, restrict development options, and burden developers with parking requirements that contradict civic transportation goals (see, for example, O’Byrne, 2011).

Two interviewees commented on an Edmonton-based greyfield redevelopment project that failed largely due to community opposition over the developer’s request for parking standard relaxation. Interviewees representing different sides of the debate noted that the net result of the project not going ahead has been far more of a detriment for the community than the impact of additional cars without off-street parking spots would have been (see, for example, Ferguson, 2011; Zubot, 2011). The planner representing the community’s interests even said: “In fact, I know a lot of [community members] regret... that it didn’t move ahead” (Zubot, 2011).

One interviewee noted that the problem was being addressed in small steps in municipalities like Calgary and Edmonton by “looking at parking policies around major transit and [having] imposed maximums for starters, but also [have] pulled the minimums down quite significantly” (Iveson, 2011). The problem, however, is that developers eyeing greyfield sites targeted for future mass-transit “[can not] actually apply for the parking relaxations and realize that cost reduction unless the transit is actually going in the ground” (Iveson, 2011).

### **6.3.5 Ease of Greenfield Development**

In conjunction with some of the barriers mentioned when discussing administrative hurdles, interviewees noted that the relative ease of greenfield development in certain municipalities also acted as an impeding factor in preventing developers and property owners from redeveloping greyfield sites. With “the whole mechanisms for policy development and approval of subdivisions [having] been geared to the edge of city” (Anonymous Planner, 2011), interviewees noted that “it may be that [municipalities] make greenfield development a little bit too easy” (Iveson, 2011). For example, one interviewee noted that developers in some municipalities “can get an approval for a standard rezoning for suburban development on the edge of the city in 6 months or less, whereas trying to go through a rezoning process in any inner city location” (Young, 2011) (i.e. greyfield sites) is much more difficult and lengthy. One interviewee believed that “as long as it takes so much time to do rezonings in the

inner-city... there is a disincentive in investing in greyfield over greenfield” (O’Byrne, 2011). Whether this was due to the fact that “greenfield development [takes place] on the periphery where there are no neighbours and land costs are low,” (ibid) or the familiarity with standardized development patterns at the municipal level, was not agreed upon.

Several interviewees commented that the greenfield development “model that is in place and that is so easy to access... [it] works from the banks’ point of views, from the developer’s point of view, from the end-user point of view” (Scott, 2011). This facilitated development mechanism has been reinforced through years of continued suburban development, and therefore refined as the status-quo amongst municipalities, financiers, retailers and residents. As such, interviewees noted that development patterns or ideas that work in contradiction to this norm have often had to contend with significant administrative hurdles, and thus costs associated with development. Specific to Edmonton, “one thing that exists...for greenfield development is a whole bunch of systems that have been developed to make it easier for developers. Compared to greyfields, it doesn’t work the same way. So there may be barriers that make it more difficult” (Backstrom, 2011).

Understandably however, “if [a municipality wants] new development, there have to be hoops. But if you make it relatively so easy in the suburbs and so hard in the inner city, then you do drive away [inner city] development, and you will find fewer and fewer developers willing to take that risk” (Young, 2011). As such, the off-the-shelf facilitation of greenfield development in some municipalities has positioned developers to take the path of least resistance, and this has concurrently structured demand patterns of development as well.

### **6.3.6 Direct Control Zoning**

One impeding concern several interviewee subjects mentioned was the close association of direct-control zoning with greyfield redevelopment sites. Often due to their size and mixed-use nature, greyfield redevelopment schemes often do not fit within traditional zoning bylaw codes of various municipalities, and thus are relegated to a direct-control (or comprehensive development in some cases) zoning process. “Planning department[s] tend to prefer direct control zoning for these types of sites to address compatibility issues. The planning rationale with this is understandable, but it does make it much more complicated, much more difficult, much more expensive, and is less certain”



(Young, 2011).

That is not to say direct control zoning does not have its merits. Some noted the inherent power of direct control zoning to add powerful design and public space shaping requirements that help to create attractive projects and communities in a market where bottom-dollar economics might see these as frivolous externalities. Whereas some interviewees believed direct control zoning limited developers and their ability to respond to market demands (see, for example, Gibson, 2011), some saw value in aspects of direct control zoning that guaranteed a level of quality and design with larger sites and “gives some assurance to the people who are the early buyers, the early users of that site...that [they will] continue to see a certain [level of] quality develop on the site” (Ferguson, 2011).

However, the direct control zoning mechanism is not without its detractors. Beyond a longer and more expensive application process, several developers and consultants considered the added expense of extra amenities that are often requested in direct control zoning applications by the municipal administration. One interviewee noted that “if you want to do something really creative you’ve got to [apply for direct control zoning], and that is when the city hits you up for all the extras in terms of an amenity package...asking for affordable housing,...for public art,...for superior landscaping” (Preiksaitis, 2011). Another noted that, “given the opportunity,...[the citizens] throw everything in and see what sticks. And because the DC2 process becomes so politicized...a lot of it does stick. More than should perhaps” (Young, 2011).

This current development framework “tend[s] to put a lot of work on the land owner to deal with public realm issues around the project and past a certain point that may begin to affect the viability of it” (Iveson, 2011). As such, “[a developer is] almost guaranteed [their] development costs are going to be much higher because the expectations are higher in inner city locations. So... it takes a lot more risk to develop on these sites” (Young, 2011).

### **6.3.7 Inexperienced Developers**

One impeding factor noted by several interviewees was the lack of experienced developers in their geographic and municipal context. Outside major urban markets such as Toronto and Vancouver, where developers have had a longer history of market demands and land-supply constraints that have

helped build the capacities of infill and multi-family developers, Canadian municipalities have been largely dominated by greenfield development firms and are lacking “a development community that tends to specialize [in greyfield and infill projects]” (Preiksaitis, 2011). These greenfield developers often “are not that interested in going through the trouble [of greyfield redevelopment] when they can pursue their [standardized] business model that allows them get things approved relatively easily, quickly, and less expensively” (Young, 2011). Canadian municipalities outside Toronto and Vancouver have seen examples of infill and greyfield redevelopment “happening here and there, but there [are not] many companies that are focused on doing that exclusively. And because of the commitment and investment involved, you need companies that specialize in that” (Young, 2011).

Although there are many of examples of smaller firms taking initiative in these markets, and of larger, experienced firms from established markets beginning to take interest in these municipalities, change will continue to be slow because there is currently “too much risk [and time] involved” (Preiksaitis, 2011) in redeveloping these sites.

### **6.3.8 Restrictive Covenants**

One Edmonton-specific barrier to greyfield redevelopment is that of restrictive covenants. Interviewees noted that several smaller sites in first-ring suburbs that used to be anchored by grocery stores, were now bound by “an anti-competitive legacy [after the grocer] abandoned these sites” (Iveson, 2011), barring the entry of any grocer on this site for an extended period of time (see Appendix I). This would not be as big a concern if the intended reuse of the site did not include a grocery-based retail component, “but [is] usually one of the first things that the community asks for... if [a developers is] going [to intensify the site with multi-family residential]” (Iveson, 2011). One interviewee noted that the re-establishment of a neighbourhood grocery tenant is usually welcomed by community members who are often willing to make more concessions with its integration; “especially for those who want the site to return to the “vibrant commercial site [it once was]” (Zubot, 2011).

### **6.3.9 Remaining Economic Viability of Greyfield Sites**

Yet another barrier to greyfield redevelopment is the hesitancy from property owners to redevelop

sites that have historically maintained a marginal revenue stream for them. Despite a downgraded tenant mix, depressed lease rates and vacancies, there are a substantial number of properties “where these built forms exist, but [it is] still, perhaps marginally, economically viable” (Scott, 2011). “These previous owners [did not] understand the process,... [did not] want the risk or [did not] want to inject the capital necessary to up-zone and redevelop it” (Dulaba, 2011). As such, revenue-positive yet underperforming retail sites often remain despite the economic potential in redevelopment options. However, resale of these sites does “give the opportunity to [others investors] to get in and either reposition the asset, re-tenant, rebrand,... add some intensification on a small scale,... or [to carry out] full redevelopment” (Dulaba, 2011).

Several interviewees noted that it is also “quite rare to have a [retail] site that totally dies” (Young, 2011). Aside from one of the aforementioned case studies, Century Park, which was the victim of a perfect storm, greyfield sites are “often victims of a much slower decline” (ibid). The reaffirmed reality is often a much slower decline of outclassed retail sites that are still marginally profitable.

### **6.3.10 Demand**

Irrespective of other impeding factors, several of the interviewees questioned the demand for redevelopment of greyfield sites, or were “not really sure the market has been proven for [this type of development]” (Iveson, 2011) in the metropolitan areas with which they were familiar. This problem is reinforced in metropolitan markets where ‘typical’ greenfield development options are readily available, and developers and retailers are not “forced to think differently” (Fitzpatrick, 2012). Some questioned the often-associated multi-family integration on the sites of greyfield redevelopment, and noted the residential markets in their area were driven by single-family, thus had only some much annual capacity for multi-family residential development. As noted in the literature, the varied location of greyfield sites was a determining factor for potential use and intensification, and that the “values of greyfield locations in suburban areas... have not risen sufficiently to create market support for the kind of density needed to achieve a positive redevelopment value (Merritt, 2006, p.27). As such, this location-based housing demand could vary the reuse of sites from simple exterior envelope retrofitting on one end of the spectrum, to higher-density mixed-use development on the other (see, for example, Ferguson, 2011).

Interviewees also noted that attracting retail tenants to alternative-formatted greyfield sites can be a hurdle. Redevelopment options that stress retail spacing designs mimicking more urbanized layouts have been met with hostility from traditionally larger-format tenants. “The problem is [these tenants] only [are interested] in the really urban [core locations], whereas some of these centres... are [found] on the edge of downtown or [in first-ring suburbs]” (Craig, 2011).

## **6.4 Facilitating Factors to Greyfield Redevelopment**

In contrast to the responses concerning impediments to development, the interviewees had an equally diverse array of responses when asked to consider facilitating factors that support greyfield redevelopment. As listed below, and as also seen in the corresponding matrix found in Appendix J, there were common themes that were identified by the interviewees. It should be noted that these themes could also be divided into two broader categories as well, as they fall under planning or administrative facilitation, and marketplace factors.

### **6.4.1 Changing Demographic Trends**

Interviewees spoke repeatedly of changing demographic trends as supporting a move toward smaller, centrally-located housing options as a facilitating factor for greyfield redevelopment. Coupled with supportive data and plenty of research, redevelopment of these sites is seen to be increasingly driven by the “two major demographic units making waves in the housing market; Generation Y [which is just] entering the housing market, and ... Boomers who are ... entering their down-sizing years, [and] looking for housing options in both urban and suburban areas, who want maintenance free options” (Dulaba, 2011).

Although it was not addressed directly, the discussion of this facilitating factor also spoke to the assumption by many of the interviewees that greyfield redevelopment was often directly associated with higher-density residential inclusion. This is reinforced by the high associated costs of redevelopment of these sites, which almost guarantees an intensification of density and use that corresponds to potentially profitable, multi-family residential inclusion. One interviewee noted that if site owners or developers could “get the land costs and redevelopment costs of greyfield sites to work, then there [would be corresponding demand by] a [large] potential pool of consumers”

(O’Byrne, 2011).

#### **6.4.2 Transportation and Cultural Shift**

Associated with these demographic trends, interviewees also noted a shift in attitude towards urban living and the role greyfields can have in that process. Driven by people looking for communities that embody an urban atmosphere and promote experience, a shift towards urbanized residential, retail and office options has positively positioned larger infill sites within municipalities (see, for example, Preiksaitis, 2011).

Interviewees also noted that one of the motivating factors for examining housing options within the existing city framework has been congestion and individuals tired of commuting and being tied to their cars. Driven primarily by the Generation-Y cohort, interviewees pointed to “a larger percentage of that cohort wanting an urban lifestyle, or living in an area where they are not forced to drive all the time. It is a generation that wants to spend a lot of time and money on themselves and not tie it up in a big house and yard” (Dulaba, 2011) This has given way to “a paradigm shift in attitude... around the [perception] of public transportation” (Ferguson, 2011) and the role it can play in the transportation needs of medium and larger Canadian cities. “That, in turn, has created demand for infill projects,” (ibid) and positioned landowners to look at the roles their greyfield sites can play in meeting these needs.

#### **6.4.3 Economics**

In contrast to the same economics-related point noted in section 6.3.2, interviewees noted that “economic factors are probably paramount” (Dulaba, 2011) when considering facilitating factors for redevelopment. Whether driven by heated real-estate markets, rising land prices, the collapse of a retail site or a plethora of other contributing factors, the economics of a redevelopment project are principal considerations for determining its viability.

Several significant American greyfield redevelopment examples were noted to have been kick-started by economic incentives from various levels of government and community renewal funding mechanisms. Belmar in Lakewood, Colorado, one of the noted cases studies, was one of these

examples (as noted in section 5.1.3.2). However, interviewees were unaware of Canadian examples that benefited from direct economic incentives or injection from the public sector. Instead, examples were given of public dollars being spent on adjacent infrastructure, but not directly within the boundaries of the site.

One interviewee noted that “[municipal administrations] tend to fail to recognize [the economic factors]” (Ferguson, 2011) when determining development demand and redevelopment plans. They believed that “the only piece [that municipal administrations] understand is the planning development regulations, [and] what they think they want the piece to look like when its finished” (ibid).

#### **6.4.4 Collaborative Community Consultation**

Several interviewees noted that establishment of a more collaborative community consultation process would facilitate the redevelopment of these sites. One interviewee noted that “when [one is] talking [about] greyfields, we are talking about adjacent established communities with vested interests” (Backstrom, 2011). Mired in lengthy and even malicious development consultation processes, those with direct consultation experience noted that reformatting the consultation process from its current adversarial state would be beneficial and an opportunity for developers and stakeholders alike. One interviewee believed that “if you come to the table first and are reaching out to the community saying ‘let’s establish trust, let’s establish communication, let’s work together,’ ... that can go a long way at the end of the day with a plan that will be accepted by a community” (Dulaba, 2011).

Several interviewees noted that more positive collaborative consultation would involved meeting with community and stakeholders earlier on in the process so that they feel their voices are heard, and their opinion is more than just symbolic (see, for example, Crawford, 2011). In some cases, interviewees also noted that a collaborative process led to consistent and constructive plans for the redevelopment of greyfield sites that left developers, municipalities and neighbouring residents and stakeholders united in thought and action (see, for example, Pecsok, 2011).

#### **6.4.5 Public Transit Connection**

The development of adjacent rapid transit lines was also noted as one of the prominent facilitating factors for greyfield redevelopment. Specific to metropolitan areas in which the interviewees were based, the continued development and planned development of rapid-transit lines was a major factor in contributing to greyfield redevelopment, both planned and under-construction. It was considered such a catalytic form in some markets, that one public-sector interviewee suggested that “the presence or absence of LRT may be the game changer for [developers] in terms of the viability for their projects” (Iveson, 2011). Specifically, one interviewee noted that planned LRT lines adjacent to a couple of his firm’s properties was a facilitating factor for considered reinvestment and redevelopment (see, for example, Craig, 2011).

Interviewees noted that integrated transportation infrastructure has a boosting effect to adjoining land-values and the marketability, as well as redevelopment potential, of depressed retail sites (see, for example, Dulaba, 2011). From a developer’s perspective, adjoining rapid-transit means “it is much easier to justify the approval because you can introduce...[higher levels of] density and cut your parking numbers [accordingly]” (Craig, 2011). Others believed that the inclusion of adjacent higher-order transit “[does not] guarantee it, but certainly can set the stage for redevelopment” (O’Byrne, 2011).

#### **6.4.6 Greenfield Development Constraints**

Despite a historical greenfield development model that is regarded as significantly less cumbersome and more expedient than infill development, several interviewees noted recently increasing costs and time requirements needed to process new greenfield development applications. Combined with geographical and policy directed constraints, the decreasing amount of land available for greenfield development in a number of urban centres has increased the level of attractiveness of greyfield properties. Interviewees noted there has “been a recognition in the industry that [it is] getting tougher and tougher to buy land for more traditional [development models] at an economic price to make it profitable” (Craig, 2011).

Interviewees noted that developers who, until recently, would never have thought of doing infill projects, have started to take interest because the way that development policy and development

charges have been altered recently in markets such as Calgary (Scott, 2011). These developers have also discovered that “whereas these opportunities, when you put significant density on them and bring a residential partner in [that will]... pay well for that density, [these sites are] actually more profitable” (Craig, 2011) than traditional greenfield development.

#### **6.4.7 Proactive Planning Tools**

Functional and adaptable planning tools were mentioned as facilitating factors for greyfield redevelopment. Interviewees noted that many of the municipalities they were actively involved in had developed progressive policies that addressed greyfield redevelopment from various higher-order documents, and even mentioned the role of policy in identifying some of these sites. However, they noted that what was found to be lacking were “some of the implementation components” (Anonymous Planner, 2011). Therefore, “having the appropriate policies in your official plan or municipal development plan” (Backstrom, 2011) are important, but equally so are “having zoning tools that are useable ‘off the shelf’” (ibid).

Several interviewees believed that “having a good, adaptable zoning tool could theoretically speed up the process” (Backstrom, 2011), and thus ease the facilitation of redevelopment. However, some saw potential flexibility in zoning as advantageous for reasons beyond development approval speed in the adaptability of staged development of these larger sites. In the case of Belmar in Lakewood, Colorado, “one of the key things that worked well here was with flexible zoning. So we could respond to the market as we developed things over time and the market changed” (Pecsok, 2011).

#### **6.4.8 Knowledgeable Developers**

Finally, a facilitating factor mentioned by interviewees was the emergence of developers familiar with development within the constraints of established neighbourhoods, communities, and municipalities. These developers are familiar with a development typology that is considerably different from traditional greenfield development; these are developers “who ‘get it’ and who see the opportunity” (Backstrom, 2011) in infill and greyfield sites. These are developers who “see the opportunity not to just continue building things out in the suburbs, but the value in using the existing land base more effectively” (Backstrom, 2011).



Considering the quickly changing development landscape in Canadian municipalities, several interviewees believed there to be “an opportunity for some of these larger companies, or up-and-coming smaller [firms]... to [purchase] and unlock the value in these lands because they know what they are doing” (Dulaba, 2011).

## **6.5 Improving the Process of Greyfield Redevelopment**

After considering the factors that impede or facilitate greyfield redevelopment, interviewees were asked to give their thoughts on what should be done to improve the process in their metropolitan context. The question was originally considered as it related to bettering the process of greyfield redevelopment in Edmonton, since the majority of interviewees reflected this administrative and metropolitan context. However, because interviews followed a loose conversational format, the question was often reworded to represent the context in which the interviewee was familiar with. As such, aside from relating to Edmonton directly, there were also contributions from interviewees from other municipal contexts.

Recommendations for improving the process of greyfield redevelopment were often responsive to impeding factors which they had considered earlier. This was expected as the assumption was interviewees would have recommendations on how to overcome the impeding factors they have encountered or were familiar with. In some cases, interviewees reworded or directly repeated things previously mentioned when questioned about ‘facilitating factors’ (as found in section 6.4). Again this was expected as such recommendations logically emerge out of what the interviewees were familiar with or aware of.

Responses were grouped accordingly in summarizing sections as the interviewees often spoke to similar ideas. In addition to the evaluation expanded upon below, a corresponding matrix of the grouped comments can be found in Appendix K.

### **6.5.1 Site Identification and Investment**

One solution that was discussed in significant detail by interviewees was the idea of site

identification, coupled with infrastructural investment. Specifically, interviewees noted that municipalities “need to be more proactive in identifying sites... that [they believe] are strategic to invest, [complete] the land use policy work and then follow up with the implementation components, while being very specific in terms of public realm and infrastructure pieces” (Anonymous Planner, 2011). Therefore, “having [the] capital funding regime linked more closely with... growth management aspirations... would help” (Backstrom, 2011).

The main problem mentioned by interviewees was that “capital funding programs [are often not] aligned in a [really] strategic way” (Backstrom, 2011). To begin with, “to the extent that the [municipality] can forecast where development pressure may come next, it may make sense for [administration] to work with the neighbourhood and work with the land owners before they’ve started an application” (Iveson, 2011). As such, municipalities “need to develop a better relationship and communication channel with the owners of [these sites]” (Backstrom, 2011).

Beyond the identification and consultation with the landowners of greyfield sites, interviewees suggested coordinating meetings with adjacent communities and stakeholders that would focus on conversations of conceptual site design and community desires (see, for example, Iveson, 2011; Zubot, 2011). In addition, what “[municipalities] could bring to the table is a little more astute conversation about the public realm” (Iveson, 2011). Municipally-financed neighbourhood infrastructural improvements, rehabilitation and beautification were suggested as mitigation measures for communities who are willing to work with higher levels of intensification and accept redevelopment schemes of local greyfield sites “to make the whole prospect of significant change in the neighbourhood a positive, [rather than] purely on condition” (Iveson, 2011).

To capitalize on this suggestion, several interviewees believed that a solution would be “to start building [a capital reserve] and...leverage it to finance public improvement projects in [these] strategic areas” (Anonymous Planner, 2011). This specified targeting of capital expenditures would not only facilitate greyfield redevelopment, but community consensus as well (Backstrom, 2011).

### **6.5.2 Fiscal Incentives**

To finance strategic infrastructural investment in communities targeted for potential greyfield

redevelopment and intensification, several interviewees suggested that “ [if municipalities] want to actively encourage redevelopment, they need to look at [taxation] mechanisms” (Scott, 2011). It should be noted that in Canada this could not be a direct tax to aid in the financing of redevelopment projects as seen in various American examples as provincial constraints currently limit additional localized taxation. However, it could take the form of additional development charges through a variety of sources “either through a cost recovery or redirection of [development charges] from greenfield development” (Anonymous Planner, 2011).

The idea of additional taxation or levies on greenfield development in Canadian municipalities has garnered more attention over the last number of years as infrastructure debt has ballooned and redevelopment schemes have gained traction. “There is [the growing opinion by some] that suburban greenfield development is not paying its own way. It is, in fact, subsidized by the existing population and the existing built area and the existing tax base” (Anonymous Planner, 2011). These assertions confirm thoughts from the literature that suggest utilizing creative fiscal recovery tools such as ‘true cost pricing’ which would consider factors such as “location, density, local context and land use” (Blais, 2010, p.163) when considering development charges, infrastructure rates and servicing fees. Even amongst cities that have addressed the problem through a new formula of development charges ranging as high as a 50% increase, there are those who argue these changes are still unsustainable and do not go far enough (see, for example, Scott, 2011). Others countered these statements and argued that financing should be provided directly by the associated new redevelopment projects “through levies and charges...to help pay for public realm...and infrastructure improvement[s]” (Scott, 2011). The reaction to increased development levies “from the development community is... [that] these kinds of levies... get passed onto the home buyers in the end” (Scott, 2011). As such, they argue that these increased costs “[erode] the affordability of housing, and therefore [the municipalities] competitiveness” (ibid).

### **6.5.3 Third Party Moderation**

One suggestion that interviewees promoted was third party moderation for community consultation on greyfield redevelopment projects. The current format in most metropolitan areas has either a consultant representing the developer, or a municipal planner, or both chairing consultation meetings. However, what was felt to be missing from this process was “an impartial chair to direct traffic”

(Preiksaitis, 2011).

With the current consultation procedures, “it [is] difficult for a [municipal planner] to participate in the discussion, provide the safe perspective and try to control the meeting at the same time” (Preiksaitis, 2011). When the municipality takes the role of mediation, it “tends to be viewed by the developer as the city backing the neighbourhood and tends to be viewed by the neighbourhood as the city backing the developer” (Iveson, 2011). With this approach, the municipality “[does not] have credibility with either because the tension already is there” (ibid). Beyond that, several interviewees stated that “as much as [municipal planners] have to represent the communities’ interest, they have to represent the City’s interest as well, and balance that between the developers and landowners interests, as well as the community’s” (Dulaba, 2011).

Several interviewees felt the intimidating process of public consultation led municipal planning staff to abdicate the contextualized municipal planning framework and goals established by planning legislation, and instead, attempt to mediate conflict (see, for example, Dulaba, 2011; Ferguson, 2011). As such, they believed that an independent third party moderator to manage public consultation would allow their goals to be represented without the risk of politically motivated influence.

#### **6.5.4 Administrative Process**

Some of the interviewees raised the “need to [have] a much more expeditious [development application] process so it is more competitive with suburban development” (O’Byrne, 2011). They believed that it was important “to have a clear process for developers to follow to understand what will be expected of them, and what the likely outcome will be” (Young, 2011). Compared with greenfield development where the process and expected outcome has been standardized after years of development, “infill development is less defined, and [developers] do not know how [they] are going to ‘come out’ of the process, or what [they] are going to ultimately be allowed to build” (Young, 2011). This does point to one of the differences in direct-control zoning bylaws, but it also speaks to the administrative process and the lack of cohesiveness for redevelopment sites. “The municipality has to take some of the key roles for developing a framework for how this could be facilitated, and not just do it on an ad hoc basis, which they have been doing” (Dulaba, 2011). The problem with the current approach to greyfield and other infill site is that “each time they are reinventing the process,

when there are things that could have been employed that could have reduced the process” (ibid).

Another administrative suggestion offered by one interviewee was the need to staff redevelopment projects with knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff. “One of the biggest things that [municipalities need to do] is have a clear and transparent process for developers in terms of rezoning and development permits...and a commitment that [they will] staff those projects with your best people and expedite those applications” (O’Byrne, 2011). Even interviewees who worked in these municipal administrations saw the subsequent value of “[having] a team of planners who are willing to take some initiative” (Backstrom, 2011). Those that had success with greyfield redevelopment projects often attributed it to the steadfastness of the municipal administration they worked with. One interviewee said, “the project would not have gotten done without the steadfast support of the city...They really had a vision, a similar vision to kind of what we had for it. And frankly the community did as well” (Pecsok, 2011).

### **6.5.5 Community Consultation Process**

As expected, a multitude of concerns about the consultation process and reconfiguration of such were noted by interviewees. A variety of interviewees were concerned about the current length of consultation procedures in various municipalities, and the resulting impeding factor on project expedience. As mentioned earlier, others argued that “early consultation with [communities would help ensure] the vision that the neighbourhood has for that site is incorporated in the proposal that comes forward from the developers” (Zubot, 2011), and as such, ease the facilitation of redevelopment. However, “it [is not] just about expediting a process as a result of facilitating a visioning session, but is about trying to create a balanced system. It has to be a win-win-win between the three [parties involved], and that comes with building consensus and trust between all three sides” (Dulaba, 2011). Nevertheless, interviewee ideas about solutions beyond earlier consultation and visioning sessions with stakeholders were limited.

In terms of a proactive process which municipalities could utilize to facilitate redevelopment, the suggestions cited by interviewees were often vague or tied to complaints without offering solutions. One public-representative interviewee noted that consultation with stakeholders can walk a “fine line [and] offer too much community input and stall anything and everything” (Crawford, 2011).

However, they stressed that “[municipalities] needs to respect that the citizens want to see an integrated and productive community on every front” (Crawford, 2011), and desired to see more proposals for their community and be part of the development application process earlier on (see, for example, Zubot, 2011).

### **6.5.6 Direct Control Zoning**

Although direct control zoning was mentioned by some interviewees as a potential impeding factor, several interviewees suggested that a modified form of this mechanism could actually facilitate greyfield redevelopment. As it currently exists, direct control zoning was seen by some interviewees as being inflexible. Interviewees stressed that staged redevelopment plans often weather changing market conditions, and therefore need flexibility. Having a successful greyfield redevelopment project is also tied to the ability to respond to market demands and deal with project phasing in an adequate manner (see, for example, Pecsok, 2011). The concern mentioned was that “setting out a direct control zone that [is] tied to design in a project that might take 20 or 25 years to develop out, is inviting at each phase of the project, an amendment to that [zoning]” (Ferguson, 2011), and with that, additional stakeholder consultation. As such, one interviewee stated that there is a “need to have a way of either effecting those changes or a way of doing it in an expeditious manner” (Ferguson, 2011). Other suggestions included flexible zoning codes that would allow adaptability within a certain set of parameters such as staging, site reorganization and reorientation.

Other interviewees saw value in abolishing direct control zoning altogether in favour of upzoning larger sites with a “policy in place for large sites... that would be some form of ‘large site overlay’” (Young, 2011). To work within these parameters, one interviewee noted that appropriate conditions would need to be established to address the interface between the site and adjacent lower-density uses as well as urban design guidelines, but the remainder of the site could be upzoned accordingly (Young, 2011).

### **6.5.7 Parking Standards**

To make the redevelopment of greyfield sites viable, several interviewees stated that municipalities “need to drop the parking standards substantially so that...redevelopment is complimented with car

shares, transit integration, and... [letting the] market decide how many stalls are needed” (O’Byrne, 2011). They believed “[there is] too much of a big-brother attitude towards parking and reducing [of] the standards” (Preiksaitis, 2011). They stated that “if a developer [wanted] to take a risk on a project and go in with zero parking” (ibid), they should have that freedom.

Sites adjacent to mass transit have seen parking requirements reduced in Canadian municipalities in varying degrees and percentages. This has been beneficial in reducing costs and making redevelopment – and subsequent higher-density residential suites – more affordable (see, for example, O’Byrne, 2011). However, these reductions are often attached to limiting conditions, and fail to provide the freedom of choice that developers believe they should have and have the ability to work with.

Others argued that what should not exist is the current, traditional “parking minimums, [as municipalities] should let the market decide how many stalls there is going to be” (O’Byrne, 2011). What should exist in its place, they stated, is parking allocation maximums (ibid). Although these maximums have been introduced in some municipalities, several interviewees believed these did not go far enough, and failed to address the restrictive nature of minimum requirements.

### **6.5.8 Education**

A final recommendation by the interviewees was one that focused on providing education to those involved in redevelopment process. Although this was a broad suggestion often stated with hostility, it spoke to the frustration encountered by interviewees while dealing with the complex problems encountered with greyfield redevelopment.

Both public and private-based interviewees agreed on the need to provide better education for the general public concerning the impermanence of built form in their neighbourhood and the changing morphology of cities (see, for example, Backstrom, 2011; Anonymous Planner, 2011; Craig, 2011). However, that is where the agreement stopped. The public sector interviewees pointed fingers at other departments – in particular engineering and infrastructure-based departments – as those in need of re-education about the complex needs of greyfield sites in the face of insular standards policy. Private-sector interviewees often pointed to the need to educate municipal planning staff on the multifaceted

approaches needed to deal with greyfield sites, and the need to look outside the scope of traditional solutions and requirements which have been based on greenfield development standards (see, for example, Gibson, 2011; Anonymous Planner, 2011).

Although this suggestion did not provide any working tools to build from, it did reiterate the complexity of the issue and hand, the unfamiliarity of approach, and generalized frustration across the board when dealing with a form of development that is the exception rather than the rule in many municipalities.

## **6.6 Identifying Greyfield Sites Within the City of Edmonton**

One of the questions asked of interviewees during the primary research data collection was “*What would you say is the state of greyfields in the City of Edmonton?*” (see Appendix F). The interviewees responded with varying opinions ranging from how widespread they thought the problem of greyfields was within the city, to actual identification and naming of specific sites in which they felt fit the description of a greyfield site. This identification and consideration was completed after the interviewees had been given an audible definition of a greyfield site at the beginning of the interview. Whether or not that definition made a lasting impact on what the specific interviewee considered to be a greyfield site is, however, undetermined. Since several interviewees continued to group greyfield sites with brownfield sites, as well as general infill development, it was evident that there was still confusion regarding what was classified as a greyfield sites.

Nevertheless, many interviewees did understand the definition of greyfield sites, and thus identified sites accordingly. These sites tended to be first or second ring suburban regional shopping centres and strip malls that had visible signs of economic depression and under-utilization. There were other retail sites that would not fit in the traditional definition of, or classification of, a greyfield site due to the continued functionality and success of their retail spaces. However, due to strategic location, these sites were seen as future opportunities for redevelopment. The fact that interviewees mentioned sites such as this exemplify the blurred definition of greyfield redevelopment, and ease for laymen to group general infill redevelopment sites that happen to have a functioning retail use.



## 6.7 Summary of Findings

The research provided several important insights. As discussed in the literature, interviewees confirmed the existence of a vague understanding of the term ‘greyfield’, yet they demonstrated familiarity with generalized redevelopment and associated factors. Interviewees confirmed a lack of existing municipal policy regarding greyfield redevelopment, but noted that what often existed was municipally-established language supportive of redevelopment. Despite this permissive language, any form of a guidelines or adaptive toolbox to guide the redevelopment of these sites were missing.

As expected, the interviewees echoed a number of impeding and facilitating factors as discovered in the literature review. There were, however, other considerations that came from interviewees with direct greyfield redevelopment experience that proved to be both astute, and sometimes unique to the project they had experience with. These unique considerations that were originally missed in preliminary review of literature helped target topics for further exploratory research. Whereas some of these unique points could be integrated with general themes as mentioned by other interviewees or literature findings, other instances relegated these comments to project-specific concerns and facilitating factors that did not translate well into generalized themes or adaptable recommendations.

Several broad themes identified by interviewees for both impeding and facilitating factors fell under two large categories: administrative issues and marketplace factors. Frustration was noted about the general lack of administrative familiarity with greyfield sites and the associated aspirational policies lacking implementable tools. However, with the same breath, interviewees were quick to praise administrative policies and political will that facilitate development in specific instances. Marketplace, demographic and economic issues were often noted as facilitating components to greyfield redevelopment, but were also cited when noting that redevelopment of these sites faced an uphill battle against a system designed to facilitate greenfield development above all else.

# Chapter 7

## Recommendations

### 7.1 Introduction

The redevelopment of greyfield sites can be a power tool for communities when executed properly.. However, with unidentified and unrecognized impediments often blocking the redevelopment of these sites, greyfields remain as underdeveloped and underperforming commercial sites, centered in these suburban communities.

One of the goals of this research was to create a list of recommendations for the City of Edmonton based on the accumulated and compiled knowledge gained from a thorough literature review and primary research, and apply it to the built form and policy framework that currently exists within the municipality. Ten recommendations have been proposed to manage impediments to greyfield redevelopment, and to facilitate the process:

1. Identify greyfield sites
2. Consider demand for greyfield redevelopment
3. Explore opportunities in public-private partnerships
4. Diminish parking requirements
5. Limit the strength of restrictive covenants
6. Facilitate the redevelopment process at the administrative level
7. Create guidelines for effective public consultation
8. Develop permissive and flexible zoning
9. Build knowledge through collaborative information
10. Develop supportive governing policy

Although these recommendations are not exhaustive in nature, they do address what has been identified as some of the major impediments and establish sound building blocks for future analysis and research.

## 7.2 Recommendations for the City of Edmonton

### 7.2.1 Identify Greyfield Sites

Edmonton, like a number of other Canadian cities, is not afflicted with the propensity of greyfield sites as may be found in American counterpart municipalities for a variety of reasons. For one, with a limited number of American-based retailers either held out of the Canadian market, or uninterested due to hurdles and lack of population density, the retail market is not as aggressive and unforgiving as found south of the border. However, as economic certainties of retail chains in the United States became more constrained over the past number of years, the prosperous retail market of Canada, and high disposable income markets such as Edmonton, have become targets for expansion and revenue generation. Nevertheless, despite a currently high average disposable income and strong retail sales figures, it should be noted that Edmonton is not insulated from the formation of numerous greyfield sites. With nearly 28 square feet of retail space per capita (higher than the national average of just over 19 square feet per capita), Edmonton is susceptible to the adverse effects of retail overbuild and the subsequent retail site decline (see Table 7-1).

**Table 7- 1: Canadian Metropolitan Shopping Mall & Power Centre Statistics - 2011 (Source: Colliers, 2011b)**

CMA	Total Shopping Mall + Power Centre Floor Area (SF per capita)	Year over Year Growth in Shopping Mall + Power Centre Supply 2010-11	
		Floor Space Growth	Per Capita Supply Growth
Halifax	26.73	0.5%	-0.8%
Montreal	14.67	2.2%	1.0%
Ottawa - Gatineau	18.25	3.3%	5.1%
Toronto	22.07	2.4%	0.3%
Winnipeg	15.53	-0.3%	-1.7%
Saskatoon	18.38	1.2%	-1.8%
Calgary	24.62	2.6%	1.5%
Edmonton	27.92	2.7%	0.9%
Vancouver	13.73	2.3%	-0.4%
Victoria	13.15	-1.5%	-3.1%
Total - Above CMAs	19.16	2.2%	0.4%

Another preventative issue is that Canadian municipalities, as well as their suburban counterparts, are not nearly as reliant on tax dollars from retail establishments, and thus are not as likely to dilute the retail market by over-supply and facilitated commercial rezoning. A final differentiating factor that has limited the number greyfield sites in Canada has been the slower response to new retail trends, and therefore, lack agility to outclass existing retail formats (McLeod, 2007).

In attempting to identify the sites that do exist within the city, in the publication 'Greyfields into Goldfields', the CNU established parameters to help classify and determine sites based on sales per square foot, the retail industry standard for success. The problem with this econometric tool, however, is that this information is not usually easily accessible, or in the case of smaller sites, may not even exist. As suggested by Merritt, (2006, p.50), "physical characteristics of a greyfield, such as a range of parcel sizes and ration of building footprints to acres of parking lots, could be specified, but determining what constitutes an "underperforming" or "underutilized" site is less precise." Other quantitative tools that CNU used reflects more so on the underlying factors of causation for greyfield sites rather than looking at any other identification tools.

Using the definition for greyfield sites as established by Feronti (2003) sets a better standard for qualitative measurements that can be applied without the proprietary sales statistics. Feronti (2003, p.11) identifies greyfield sites as "underused, economically obsolete, retail tract located in an inner ring suburb that requires significant public and private involvement to curtail decline". This definition uses a qualifying geographical boundary on the search to identify greyfield sites, but leaves little identifying tools beyond that. Others sources have offered additional tools that target identifiable factors such as sites with significant vacancies, non-retail uses, and frequent tenant upheaval, however there are no suggested values for classification that could be used accordingly. Traditional definitions and examples for greyfield sites have focused predominantly on regional shopping centres, but parameters can be established to determine retail typology that may have a greater local impact and regeneration potential such as community-anchored commercial strip malls.

One concern with municipal designation of greyfield sites discussed in the literature is whether current owners and occupants of designated sites would accept the designation. Merritt (2006, p.50) notes "it is possible that owners of failing commercial parcels may be resistant to this type of

designation if they are not convinced of the declining status of the site”, and are worried about what greyfield designation might do to what remaining economic viability it has in its current form. However, this points more to working with site stakeholders from early in the process, rather than the label and designation itself.

Establishing an agreed upon set of guidelines that would consider these listed tools will aid in establishing a criterion for greyfield identification within the city of Edmonton. Accompanied with an understanding of the factors of causation, this will also aid in the ability to identify retail sites headed toward greyfield status and help establish policy to help with preventative measures, and maintain strong retail centers at the hearts of communities.

### **7.2.2 Consider Demand for Greyfield Redevelopment**

One argument made by primary interviewees is that there is a lack of localized demand in Edmonton for the format of multifamily housing that often tied to greyfield redevelopment projects. As such, they believe that this lack of demand impacts the economic feasibility of greyfield redevelopment initiatives, and limits redevelopment options (see, for example, O’Byrne, 2011, and Ferguson, 2011). However, these interviewees also noted a latent demand for higher quality high and medium-density housing options, tied to active pedestrian orientation and streetscape. The lack of viable and attractive options for this housing typology in Edmonton has driven the target demographic market for centrally located multi-family projects to suburban and exurban single-family housing, and reinforced the cyclical lack of supply and subsequent lack of demand.

The same argument has traditionally been said of retail integration as it has pursued new formats and built adjacent to new-homebuyers. However, retailers have begun to look at the under-served market of first-ring suburbs in Canadian cities that have significant pockets of higher purchasing power than their exurban, greenfield counterparts, and have seen their adjacent retail centres fall into disrepair and neglect. Redevelopment of these sites for best use and new retail formats often means the undertaking of major retrofit and redevelopment, and therefore require considerable pro forma analysis beforehand to justify.

Both retail and residential markets do not just respond to demand, but often create it through identifying either an underserved market, or one that may not regionally exist due to constrained factors, and capitalizing on it. In this approach, greyfield site owners have opportunity to make headway and capitalize on these under-explored markets, as long as the redeveloped housing and retail typology adhere to high design standards and creative tenant mixes.

### **7.2.3 Explore Opportunities in Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)**

As noted by ARC (2001, p.11), “successful greyfield redevelopment relies on strong partnerships between the public and private sectors to accomplish sustainable projects that will have a lasting impact on the surrounding community”. To capitalized on the benefits of this joint relationship, one option Canadian municipalities have successfully used for greyfield redevelopment has been Public-Private Partnerships (P3s). Greyfield P3s give the ability for developers and municipalities to become partners in site redevelopment, while working collaboratively on the design and meeting collective goals. However, P3s, are not without their detractors who cite examples of decreased accountability, limitation of public involvement in decision making and the reduction of long-term flexibility of policymakers (see, for example, Vining & Boardman, 2008; Siemiatycki, 2007; Siemiatycki, 2006).

Partnering in P3 agreements can also bring a sobering perspective to municipal planners on the economics of greyfield redevelopment, something that some interviewees noted as a problematic disconnect. Financial incentives such as tax-abatement or waived development charges can be used in order to secure the involvement of private developers on municipally-identified sites that would not have garnered economic interest otherwise (see, for example, CMHC, 2005c). In one documented P3 greyfield redevelopment example, the municipality “expropriated one former business on the site, facilitated the development approvals process, and provided financial incentives to the developer” (ibid, p.5), while meeting the redevelopment goals and design for the site as envisioned by the municipality, community consultation and the governing planning documents.

### **7.2.4 Diminish Parking Requirements**

To prevent overbuild, reduce associated automotive transportation congestion and keep residential

unit prices from being needlessly inflated, several municipalities across North America have been phasing out outdated parking minimums in a variety of geographic areas, as well as introduce parking maximums (see, for example, City of Portland, 2011 & City of San Francisco, 2011). Rather than requiring new construction projects to supply excessive amounts of parking per unit or square footage in supportive geographical areas, these municipalities have restricted the number of parking stalls permitted, and let the builder and market demand determine the number below that.

This research suggests that current parking requirements within the City of Edmonton can be overly restrictive, and act as an impeding factor for the redevelopment of greyfield sites. These standardized parking requirements “do not necessarily represent demand at a particular site” (VTPI, 2011), but rather are relicts of dated transportation planning that tie the hands of the development officers and aid in preventing the redevelopment of greyfield sites. Aside from the geographic boundaries of downtown and within 400m of LRT stations, language supportive of parking requirement maximums, and elimination of parking minimums, is foreign. Examples of relaxed parking guidelines can be found in the Capital City Downtown Plan (City of Edmonton, 2010b) and under a five-year trial basis for the Urban Warehouse district (City of Edmonton, 2011c), but still lacking in other municipal areas where greyfield sites are prone to be located.

Previous research concerning Edmonton’s restrictive parking standards confirms these assertions. Jung (2009, p.54) suggested, “a comprehensive re-evaluation of minimum parking requirements for the entire city, not just for the main downtown area, should be considered”. Additionally, this research showed that restrictive “minimum parking requirements as required by land use bylaws in Edmonton... could have a significant negative effect on housing affordability has, until recently, been largely absent from discussions regarding housing issues” (Jung, 2009, p.1). These parking minimums impose “high economic and environmental costs, adding thousands of dollars per space to development costs” (VTPI, 2011) and “bundle the cost of parking spaces into the cost of development, and thereby increase the cost of all the goods and services sold at the [associated] sites” (Shoup, 1999, pg. 557). Beyond a reduction or elimination of parking minimums for greyfield redevelopment sites, where multimodal transportation options exist, other options include the introduction of joint-use parking in which parking would be decoupled from residential construction in greyfield retrofits and shared amongst site uses (see, for example, Kazis, 2012 & City of Portland, 2011).

As of early 2012, the City of Edmonton's executive council began taking a look at supportive policy for parking maximums for commercial sites within varying geographical proximity to LRT stations, transit centres and transit avenues shared parking models, as well as shared-parking models (see City of Edmonton, 2011b). However, at the time of publication, no decision had been made.

### **7.2.5 Limit Strength of Restrictive Covenants**

Noted in both the literature review (section 3.2.2) and the primary research (section 6.3.8), restrictive covenants are impediments to the redevelopment of greyfield sites, and this is particularly true in Edmonton. These restrictive covenants are private legal agreements between a supermarket chain and the purchaser of the former supermarket site, which, if without a specified expiry, can continue for perpetuity (EFCL, 2008). A 2008 report found a total of 18 restrictive covenants on old grocery store sites in the city of Edmonton, 14 of which were still in existence at that time (ibid) (see Appendix I). These greyfield sites, which are often located in the hearts of established, first-ring suburban communities, are prime candidates for redevelopment, but they are limited in built-form options and service provision due to these restrictive covenants. Even when demand has been warranted for food services in these locations, reintroduction of grocery stores and site redevelopment schemes have been limited by these restrictive covenants (Borkowsky, 2006). Despite a clear recognition of the problem, elected officials have been unable to lift the restrictive covenants or alter governing legislation that would weaken their power (Kleiss, 2005). Efforts by the City of Edmonton to remove restrictive covenants through powers granted under the Municipal Government Act have failed in previous attempts, as well as municipal lobbying of provincial officials to limit their power and enforcement period (Stolte, 2012).

Other municipalities have taken creative action against the harmful effects of restrictive covenants through various means. Fraught with derelict properties bound by restrictive covenants in several of the city's wards, the City of Chicago recently took strong action against both existing and future restrictive covenants on grocery and drug stores (Cameron, Amrhein, Smoyer-Tomic, Raine, & Chong, 2010). The corresponding ordinance introduced legislation that would remove restrictive covenants held by non-occupying tenants of previous grocery and retail space, and prevent future restrictive covenants as well. Applied in May of 2005, the ordinance incorporated a relaxation for future sites, allowing a three-year restrictive covenant if a retailer located in close proximity to their



former site (within a half mile), and opened within two years (Cameron, Amrhein, Smoyer-Tomic, Raine, & Chong, 2010) (see, also City of Chicago, 2005).

Although previous attempts at challenging restrictive covenants had run out of steam and political will (see Cameron, Amrhein, Smoyer-Tomic, Raine, & Chong, 2010), as of late 2011, city councilors had asked municipal lawyers to provide legal opinions in regards to restrictive covenants, with three variations were being considered as of early 2012 (City of Edmonton, 2011d). These ranged from municipal expropriation of sites bound by restrictive covenants with the intent of discharging them, to seeking provincial amendment to the Land Titles Act, which would give more powers to the municipalities over restrictive covenants (ibid). Most importantly, action taken to limit the power of existing restrictive covenants should also be coupled with limiting the force and length of future covenants on identified commercial sites or targeted geographic areas.

### **7.2.6 Facilitate the Redevelopment Process at an Administrative Level**

The expedited process of suburban development application has been reinforced through both historical development patterns and the established, facilitating administrative process. Both the literature covered, and interviewees associated with redevelopment projects, noted that greyfield redevelopment works in contradiction to this established norm, and therefore have significant administrative hurdles and costs. Although interviewees suggested addressing the administrative process in hopes to accelerate the application period, it was made clear that administrative inexperience with greyfield redevelopment, as well as an established process that facilitates suburban development, would make this a complicated endeavor.

However, as cities continue to reinvent themselves and adapt to their suburban counterparts, their ever-present polycentric nature and redevelopment ambitions need to be reflected not only in policy and growth plans, but also in the established norms of administrative process. Simply put, “we should make development easier in the places we want development to happen, and harder in the places we [do not]” (Smith, 2011). As “development, like water, often chooses the path of least resistance” (ibid), the barriers of current administrative processes, and the deficiency of interdepartmental collaboration, aid in dissuading development in the hearts of established communities fraught with greyfield sites. An analysis and revamping of administrative process should be considered to simplify greyfield

redevelopment. This should be accompanied with supportive policy and guidelines (see 6.2.8 & 6.2.10) that give municipal planners and staff easy-to-use tools to facilitate the process.

### **7.2.7 Create Guidelines for Effective Public Consultation**

The two case studies mentioned previously, Century Park and Belmar, both took very different approaches to public consultation, and both came out with very different results. For one, the smart growth policies that established policy justification for Century Park were being considered as nothing more than aspirational, and left aside as the process jumped through unorganized administrative hoops and adversarial community consultations. As a result, the administrative gut reaction was to require more consultation, for consultation sake alone, and a deferment of responsibility (Dulaba, 2011). As Rock (cited in Dunham-Jones & Williamson (2009, p.161), noted:

“[It is] unfair and an abdication of responsibility when local governments simply turn to a citizens’ group and say, “What do you want? What should we do?” Representative government says that at the end of the day [it is] really those elected officials and their staff who need to take that responsibility with appropriate participation. But you need to create venues for participation that are meaningful. [It is] not meaningful to as a group of citizens’ to come up with the final determination of what the reuse of a mall is. But what it is appropriate to do is to use an iterative process to talk about the components that make a place interesting and livable. What do [residents] want to preserve? What do [they] want to change?”

For developers, the additional cost of early and regular consultation can pay dividends in expediency and negate the risk of having the rezoning or development application for complex projects rejected (Fitzpatrick, 2011). For community members, pre-emptive consultation can move the conversation beyond the frustration with process, and can provide a sense of empowerment by adding meaningful consideration to the initial design process (Iveson, 2011). However, additional consultation should not be required for consultation’s sake alone. Unless the process and consultation relationship between developers, community members and municipal administration is addressed, additional consultation will do little in identifying and reaching common goals and producing a product all parties can be happy with.

### **7.2.8 Develop Flexible and Permissive Zoning**

Establishing creative zoning tools to address the complexities faced by greyfield redevelopment projects would be another facilitating factor for these sites. Although planning departments have traditionally tended to “prefer direct control zoning for these types of sites to address compatibility issues” (Young, 2011), the rigidity and often politicized process do not facilitate greyfield redevelopment with any ease.

One suggestion is the creation of a supportive zoning code that would allow the redevelopment of greyfield sites with a variety of built forms, uses, densities and site designs. This zoning would need to consider municipal goals, growth plans and aspirational policies, and should consider the impact on adjacent neighbourhoods as well., but otherwise would allow flexibility without needing to pursue a direct-control zoning process. One option could be to create and apply this zoning on a site-specific basis, through municipally targeted selection and associated conceptualized site design with the owners and other stakeholders. This initial work would save both time and money when the site owner does choose to redevelop the site, and would give flexibility within an established, collaborative framework. However, this process can be labor intensive, slow and requires municipal administration to take the initiative and site selection, leaving countless other greyfield sites with traditional redevelopment barriers left intact. As of late 2011, the City of Edmonton’s planning department has begun a process similar to this with a select number of sites and willing site owners, although the decision on final choice of zoning that would be implemented had yet to be determined (Backstrom, 2011).

In addition to creating permissible zoning, based on both interviewees’ suggestions and the highlighted case studies, establishing site zoning that allows for flexibility and adaptability can be advantageous for greyfield redevelopment (see section 6.4.7). Flexible zoning would be beneficial in the ability to avoid costly and lengthy rezonings for minor adjustments, as well as the ability to respond to market adjustments through staging, site use reorganization and minor design adjustments. However, larger adjustments that have community implications should maintain to consist of a process that includes public consultation.

### **7.2.9 Build Knowledge Through Collaborative Information**

If the goal is to facilitate the redevelopment process of greyfield sites, expertise and learned knowledge needs to be shared amongst developers, planners, the EFCL, and other municipalities as well. One approach this should take is the development of a mechanism for feedback in relation to the greyfield redevelopment process in which these groups can report hurdles encountered and facilitations discovered, adding to the expanding, collective knowledge of greyfield redevelopment-related issues in the city of Edmonton.

Maintaining the collaboration of information with community stakeholders is also important. This ranges from open information about the intent of developers early on in the redevelopment process, to pro-active planning practices that consider community feedback early on in the process. In the case study of Century Park, Young, Regiec, and Backstrom (2005, p.8) suggested that:

“Community workshops sometime before 2003 could have created a community vision for the site, and set principles in place that residents would wholeheartedly accept, having been actively involved in their creation. Such an exercise, of course, would have required funding and proactive planning by the planning department, often easier said than done.”

As noted in section 6.2.1.3, as of 2011 the City of Edmonton has commenced a process of proactive planning and community consultation for a select number of sites with future redevelopment potential.

### **7.2.10 Develop Supportive Governing Policy**

A final recommendation is the development of supportive policy and governing documents which reflect municipal support for greyfield redevelopment. Stronger, directed language beyond aspirational clauses should be included in future updates to governing planning documents such as the Municipal Development Plan, as well as associated planning documents such as the Residential Infill Guidelines (see, City of Edmonton, 2009). These policies would need to be developed in association with site identification, as well as other supportive policy, which would address current impediments and aid in facilitating the redevelopment process.

### **7.3 Summary**

When executed properly, the redevelopment of greyfield sites can bring positive change to the communities they are located within. Within the City of Edmonton, they have the opportunity to not only bring economic development through a revitalized commercial hub, but also active pedestrian environments, additional options in housing typology, a community nucleus and a sense of civic pride. To aide in the redevelopment of greyfield sites within municipal boundaries, it is important for the City of Edmonton to develop guidelines beyond aspirational policies to facilitate the process and avoid impediments that prevent complimentary redevelopment.

These ten recommendations summarize the major impeding and facilitating factors as identified by the review of literature, and primary research with stakeholders. As these recommendations are largely based upon relatively exploratory research with a limited number of subjects, as well a review of existing greyfield-related research and literature, these recommendations should act as guidelines to direct further research in the appropriate areas before policy-related implementation.

## Chapter 8

### Limitations, Guidelines for Future Research & Final Remarks

#### 8.1 Limitations and Guidelines for Future Research

In addition to the recommendations derived from the research, areas of limitation and opportunities for further exploration have been identified. As such, several noted limitations and suggested guidelines for future research follow:

##### 8.1.1 Defining 'Greyfield' Sites

Because the term greyfield is still relatively new in planning circles, never mind general knowledge, the definition and understanding continues to remain unclear. This was found to be true even amongst some of the interviewed planners and development industry professionals who had a generalized understanding, but would often lump 'greyfield sites' with other forms of infill redevelopment, or the redevelopment of commercial sites that were not depressed or struggling in any significant manner.

Despite future clarity or more time for the term to become commonplace in both the industry and public vocabulary, the term 'greyfield' will continue to be without an easy and representable identifier. Compared with brownfield sites, which are known to be old industrial lands that have contamination and remediation issues that limit development, or with greenfields, which are known to be undeveloped, fringe rural or suburban lands, greyfields represent a state of land use that is not easily recognizable or identifiable. The wide variety of greyfield site designs, formats and levels of activity and viability will reinforce this continued confusion and general lack of understanding. Likely, the term will come to represent the most studied and obvious identifier, that being suburban inner-ring, regional shopping centres.

Future research on the subject should make sure the definition and associated understanding of is clear in order to avoid confusion or misidentification. Provision of a geographically contextualized example proved to be an efficient clarification of the term with interviewees.

### **8.1.2 Limited Literature on Greyfield Redevelopment**

In addition to general understanding of the definition, as the term ‘greyfields’, is still a relatively new in the area of research, corresponding literature on the subject was limited. This was especially true as the research expanded beyond design ideas and best practices for greyfield sites, to consider the impeding and facilitating factors of greyfield redevelopment. It was this gap in the literature and research that initial triggered this thesis topic, however, it was fraught with hurdles. Where corresponding literature did exist, the definition of greyfield sites had been interpreted differently by the author, and therefore their conclusions were not as easily translatable (see section 7.2.1 for more on this phenomenon). This frustration about the lack of literature and corresponding greyfield redevelopment was noted by other researchers as well (see, for example, Feronti (2003) and Merritt (2006). One suggested area of future research where literature does exist and parallels could be established is the potential similarities in policy development with municipal brownfield initiatives. Merritt (2006) does touch on this from an American perspective and notes that the lack of externalities of greyfields has limited public funding and initiative for redevelopment, but conceptualized impeding and facilitating factors beyond that are limited.

There is no doubt that as the greyfield sites grow in popularity as parcels for redevelopment, corresponding literature will follow, along with a more refined definition. Until then, researchers need to be both patient and thorough considering the existing literature.

### **8.1.3 Additional Primary Research Subjects In Under-Explored Areas**

As found with a significant amount of research, with additional time, connections could have been established with more interviewees, adding to the depth of data collected. Future research should build on collecting additional data from two sources that were limited within this research due to various factors; that being community stakeholders involved in greyfield redevelopment projects and greyfield site owners. As the research used snowball sampling to find additional interviewees, the scope was initially limited. The other problem was that case studies in which public stakeholders were associated with were often dated by a couple of years and previous connections to these individuals had been lost. Although case studies were selected as to be fairly current (under ten years old), it would have been favourable to find examples that were in the process of approval for ease of access to information and interviewees. Speaking with additional in-house planners who worked exclusively for site owners of greyfield sites would also prove to be beneficial due to the close association with redevelopment projects, and greater understanding of impeding and facilitating

factors of greyfield sites. Although the primary research contained one such individual, contact with other sources was limited due to time constraints.

#### **8.1.4 Considering the Imposed Costs of Greyfield Redevelopment versus Greenfield Development**

Although covered briefly, one area of significance for future research should be looking at the role that municipal tools, which facilitate suburban development, have played in limiting the redevelopment of greyfield sites. This problem ranges from established policy that facilitated greenfield forms of development and impeded other forms such as greyfields, to pricing of development charges and infrastructure. Blais (2010) is considered to be a good source on the matter and speaks at great lengths about the system that municipalities have developed to facilitate greenfield development. Blais (2010, pg. 85) notes that “while economists emphasize the role of externalities in contributing to sprawl, the mis-pricing of urban goods and services is rarely mentioned, nor is its critical role recognized.” This “mis-pricing...leads to underpricing of inefficient development and overpricing of efficient-development...which plays a crucial role of encouraging urban sprawl” (ibid, p.149).

## **8.2 Concluding Remarks**

The societal “concept of what falls in between [the urban core and pastoral rural fringe] relies on a snapshot of suburban life idealized in the 1950s. But these views, frozen in a misty past, continue to influence [current planning practices]” (Smiley, 2002, pg. 4), and place limitations, both directly and indirectly, on the redevelopment of greyfield sites. These greyfield sites offer the potential to be strategically located sites for redevelopment in the hearts of established, inner-ring, suburban communities. Identifying the hurdles that impede the redevelopment of these sites from an economic, policy, administrative and logistical perspective, are components of creating a facilitating tool for greyfield redevelopment.

As greyfield redevelopment “is also fraught with risks that [do not] come with greenfield development” (McLeod, 2007), working along side developers and community stakeholders to develop collaborative goals is imperative. The ten recommendations for the City of Edmonton are



designed to help develop effective tools to facilitate greyfield redevelopment within the city while considering these hurdles and risk, while capitalizing on the facilitating factors discovered in the literature and interviews. These recommendations are not prescriptive in nature, but rather help in establishing a framework to address greyfield sites from a perspective of collaborative knowledge.

## Chapter 9

### Conclusion

The redevelopment of greyfield sites can be an arduous task. Both the review of literature and this research have shown that although “retail structure is perhaps the most responsive element in the urban landscape” (Jones & Hernandez, 2006, p.288), and has altered dramatically in form and function over the past century, the reuse and redevelopment of derelict retail space is fraught with hurdles. Jones & Hernandez (2006, p.288) note that, “conceptually, the retail fabric of our cities has been created in response to the dynamic interplay of demographic, technological, behavioural and entrepreneurial change”. However, this market-responsive approach that is reactive to, and creates changes in the retailing landscape, has inadvertently caused the decline of these outmoded retail centres in countless postwar suburbs.

This thesis addressed the factors that impede or facilitate greyfield redevelopment through both a review of literature, and primary research with relevant interviewees. Generally speaking, municipal policy regarding greyfield redevelopment was found to be lacking. Where municipal policy did exist concerning greyfield redevelopment, it “[spoke] more towards the end-goal of what [these sites] should look like” (Anonymous Planner, 2011), or was presented in “permissive aspirational [policies]” (Iveson, 2011) which lack statutory powers. Very few municipalities have addressed greyfield redevelopment through policy (see, for example, ARC, 2001), and subsequently have positioned these sites as “unevaluated and sorely under-appreciated” (Feronti, 2003, p. 2). Those directly involved with greyfield redevelopment believe that “[these] projects need the support and confidence of public agencies and elected officials” (Falcone et al., 2002, p.87) if they are to be successful, and therefore dependent on the creation of supportive municipal policy.

The research showed that impediments to greyfield redevelopment often stem from the lack of greyfield-tailored redevelopment tools, policy, understanding and financing schemes. The lack of supportive greyfield policies was said to often leave municipalities without a supportive and implementable planning framework, as well as a lack of administrative knowledge and relatable experience (Craig, 2011). Whereas supportive public financing schemes were noted to be imperative

in many redevelopment projects, so too were other impeding economic factors such as municipal parking requirements and restrictive covenants in specific municipal examples such as Edmonton. One interviewee noted that “[municipal administrations tended] to fail to recognize [these economic factors]” (Ferguson, 2011), at the detriment to potential greyfield redevelopment projects.

Facilitating factors were often found to be an inverse of the observed impeding issues to greyfield redevelopment, however this was not always the case. For one, the facilitation of redevelopment was found not only in supportive municipal policy, but in implementable guidelines and accessible zoning tools as well (Backstrom, 2011). Examples from the United States noted that the facilitation of greyfield redevelopment was often aided by creative public funding mechanisms and localized taxation tools. In Canadian examples, although direct public subsidy was rare, indirect support such as the development of supporting infrastructure was found to facilitate development. Another key facilitating factor for greyfield redevelopment was proactive consultation with stakeholders. This was especially true when trust and a collaborative vision could be established early on in the development process.

The review of two applicable case studies showed how different greyfield redevelopment can be, and the variations of success that can follow. These variations were largely a result of the limited hurdles faced by the redevelopment of Belmar in Lakewood, Colorado, and the range of fiscal tools used to help finance the project. Century Park on the other hand, providing a local example in the City of Edmonton, and was a completely different scenario. Whereas Belmar had larger taxation and revenue-generation repercussions for the suburban community, the municipal administration facilitated the process. Century Park, however, was the first foray into large-site, suburban redevelopment for the City of Edmonton, and was a significant learning process for developers, and especially for the City.

Addressing the final research question, this research has produced a list of ten recommendations for the City of Edmonton (as found in Chapter 7). These recommendations highlight some of the unique hurdles and opportunities faced by greyfield redevelopment within the municipal jurisdiction, and

how to best capitalize on them. Although this list is tailored to the City of Edmonton, applicable recommendations could be transferable, and adapted accordingly, to other municipalities.

The redevelopment of greyfield sites has the opportunity to be a powerful tool for community revitalization and investment within countless municipalities. Despite their outmoded nature and underutilization, in a growing number of municipalities these sites have value in latent demand for reformatted retail space, employment lands and higher-density residential options. As such, “it is vital to clearly define what lies in the best interest of community revitalization efforts, and... foster partnerships to [design and] implement the project effectively” (Feronti, 2003, p.64), while deconstructing the barriers to redevelopment.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Average Greyfield Statistics**

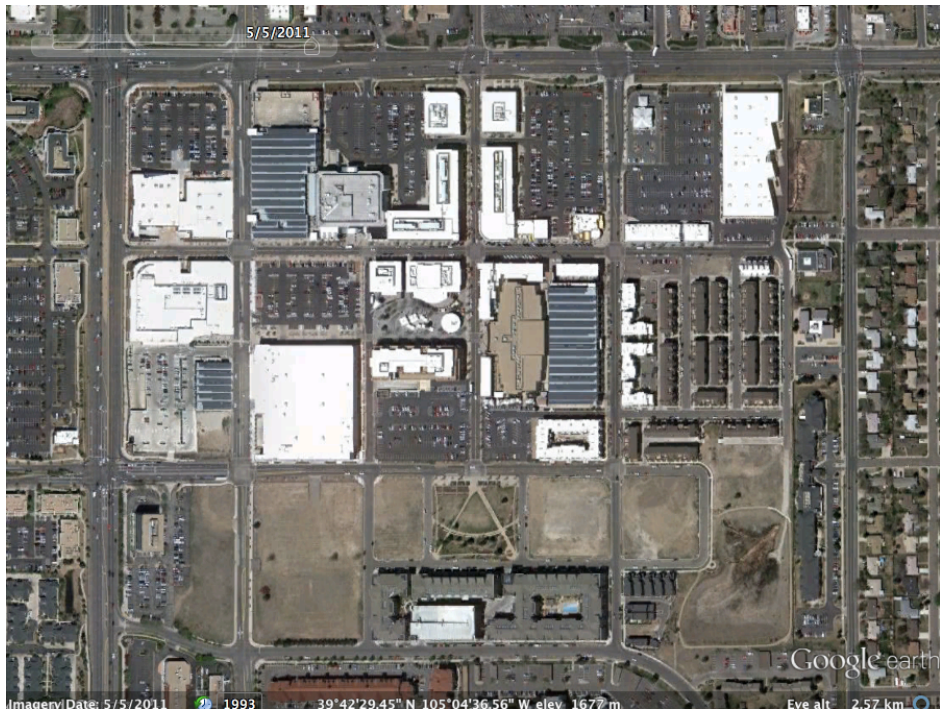
- The majority of greyfield sites are privately owned.
- Greyfield malls are more often located in moderate and low-income neighborhoods than non-greyfield malls.
- Greyfield sites have significantly lower occupancies than non-greyfield malls.
- The average greyfield mall gross leasable area (GLA) is under 0.5 million square feet (msf), significantly smaller than non-greyfield malls.
- The average number of stores in a greyfield mall is roughly 63 on 46-acre sites, while healthy malls offer nearly 124 stores on 71 acres.
- Greyfield malls compete with an average of 22 other retail centers within five miles, with an aggregated 2.33 msf of competing space.
- Greyfield malls are, on average, 8 to 10 years older than non-greyfield malls.
- Greyfield malls are on average 32 years old (as of 2001), and on average 8-10 years older than non-greyfield malls.
- The last major expansion or renovation of the typical greyfield mall was 13 years ago (as of 2001).

#### **Appendix A - Average Greyfield Statistics (CNU, 2001a; 2001b)**

## Appendix B

### Site Development Progression: Belmar, Lakewood, CO

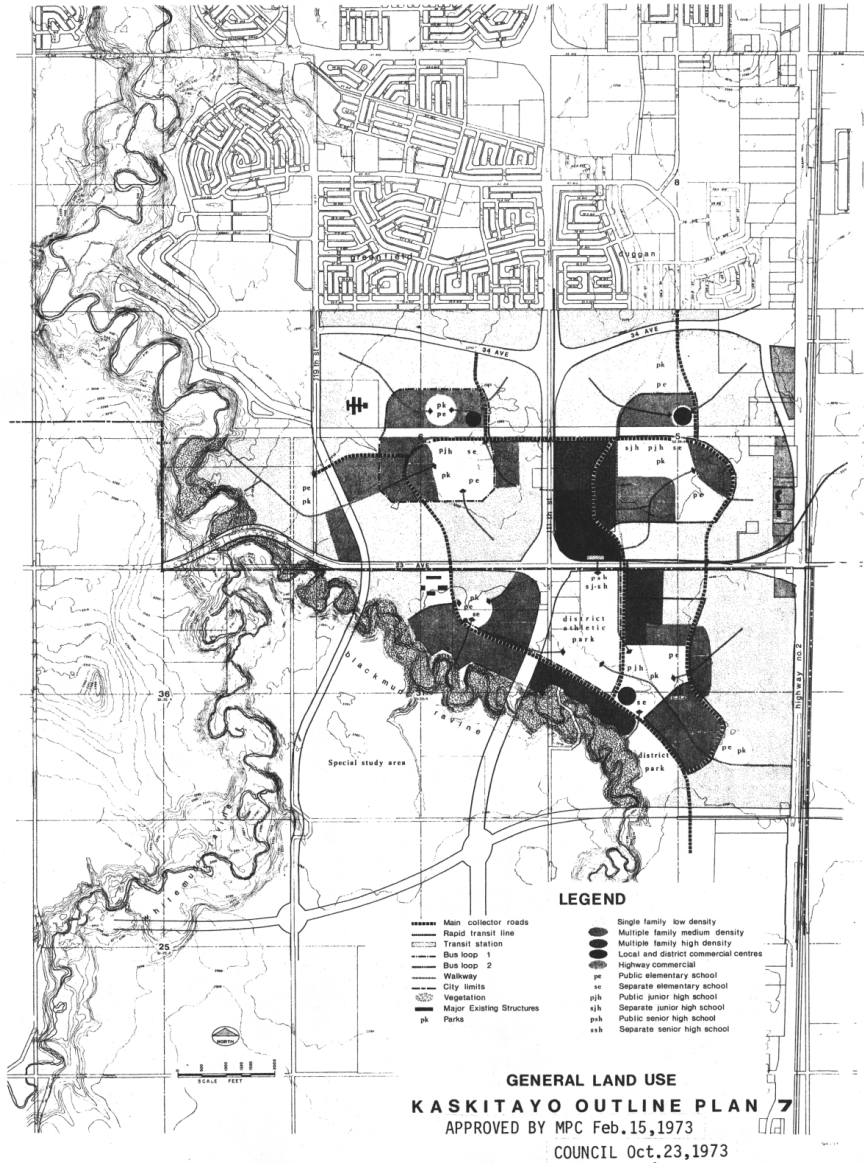




**Appendix B - Belmar site transition from Villa Italia Mall. 1999, 2003 & 2011. (Google, 2011)**

# Appendix C

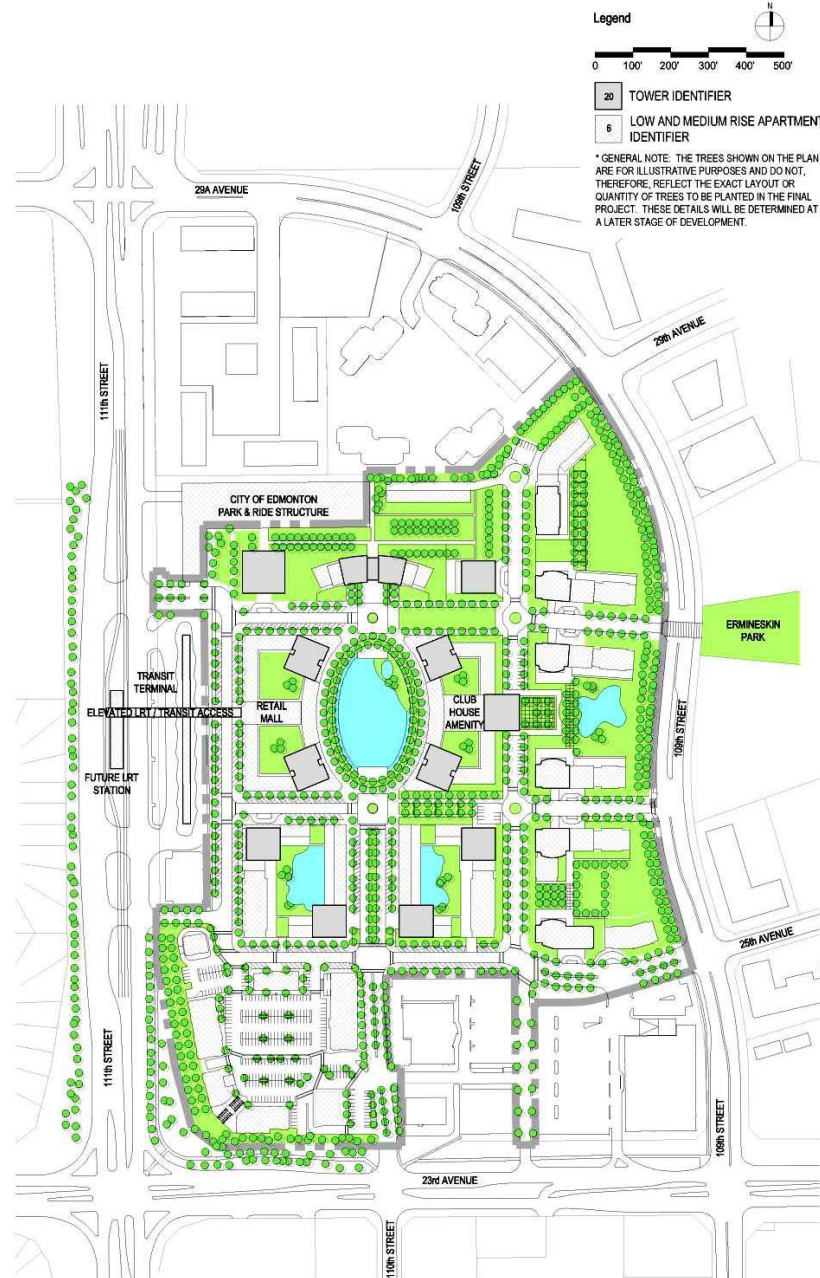
## Kaskitayo Land Use Plan



# Appendix D

## Century Park Site Plan

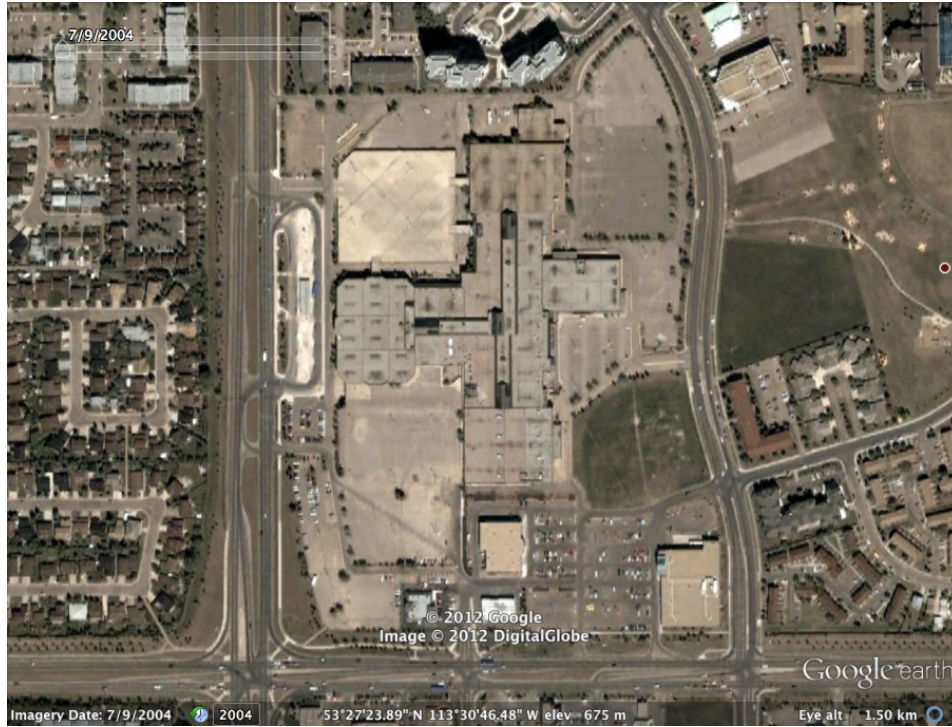
### Illustrative Site Plan



Appendix D - Century Park Site Plan (City of Edmonton, 2010a)

## Appendix E

### Site Development Progression: Century Park, Edmonton, AB







Appendix E – Century Park site transition. 2004, 2007 & 2008. (Google, 2011).

# Appendix F

## Telephone Interview Questions

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Date, 2011

### Interview Questions

#### A. General Questions

1. What has your involvement been with greyfield redevelopment?
2. What greyfield redevelopment policy or guidelines currently exists that you are aware of?
  - a. Are you aware of the process in which these policies were created? If so, what was the process?
3. In your opinion, what are the biggest barriers to greyfield redevelopment?
4. In your opinion, what factors facilitate greyfield redevelopment?

#### B. If the individual was involved directly with a greyfield development project:

5. How were you involved in the aforementioned greyfield redevelopment project?
6. What were some of the factors that impeded the process of redevelopment?
7. What were some of the factors that facilitated the process of redevelopment?
8. What have you learnt from the redevelopment process?
9. What would you do differently next time?

#### C. If the individual has been directly involved in greyfield redevelopment or greyfield policy in the city of Edmonton:

10. What would you say is the current state of greyfields in the city of Edmonton?
11. What policies currently exist in the city of Edmonton that addresses greyfield sites directly? Indirectly?
12. In your opinion, what barriers currently exist to greyfield redevelopment in the city of Edmonton?
13. In your opinion, what factors facilitate greyfield redevelopment in the city of Edmonton?
14. What do you think should be done to better the process of greyfield redevelopment in the city of Edmonton?

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## Appendix G

### Greyfield Redevelopment Experience

INTERVIEWEE	Greyfield Redevelopment Experience					
	DIRECT GREYFIELD PROJECT EXPERIENCE	CONSULTATION & REPRESENTATION	DEVELOPING POLICY WHICH IMPACTS GREYFIELD SITES	COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION	EVALUATION & REDEVELOPMENT APPROVAL	INDIRECT
Anderson, Kalen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backstrom, Erik	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Craig, Stuart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crawford, Sandra	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dulaba, Chris	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ferguson, Randy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gibson, Paul	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Iverson, Don	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O'Byrne, Simon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pescok, Roger	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planner (City of Calgary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preiksaitis, Armin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scott, James	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Young, Tom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zubot, Bev	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix G – Greyfield Redevelopment Experience of Primary Interviewees

## Appendix H

### Barriers to Greyfield Redevelopment

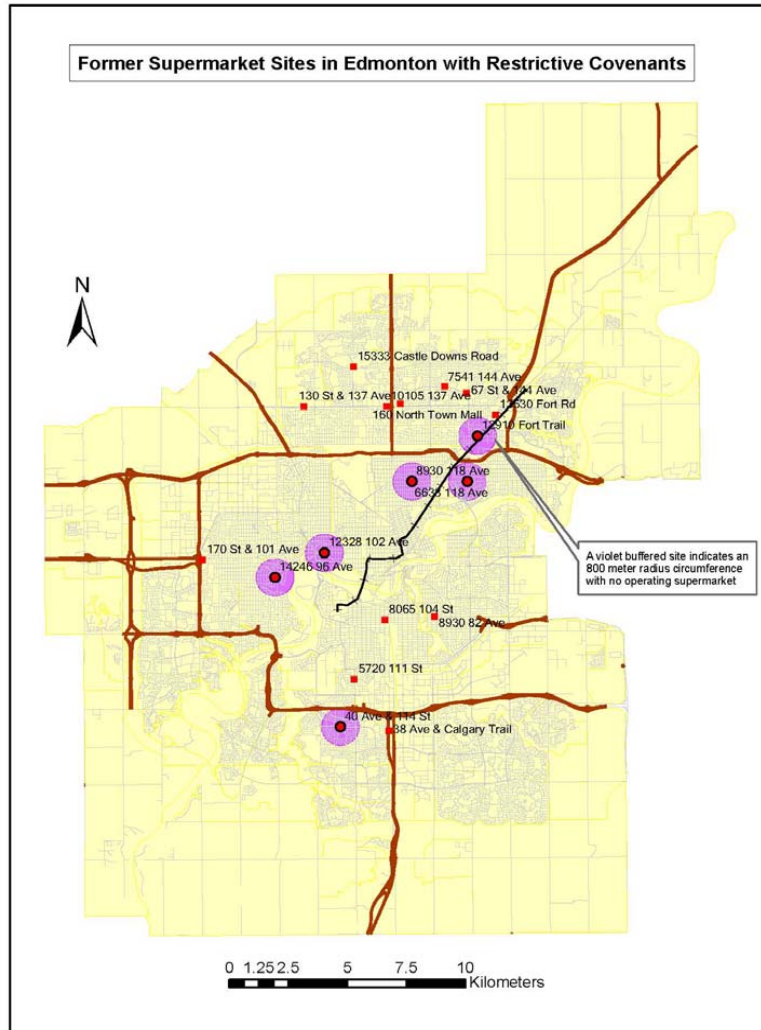
**Barriers to greyfield redevelopment, as discussed by primary interviewees**

INTERVIEWEE	ADMINISTRATIVE HURDLES	LAND & DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS	COMMUNITY OPPOSITION	PARKING MINIMUMS	EASE OF GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT	DIRECT CONTROL ZONING	INEXPERIENCED DEVELOPERS	RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS	REMAINING ECONOMIC VIABILITY	DEMAND
Anderson, Kallen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backstrom, Erik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Craig, Stuart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crawford, Sandra	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duliaba, Chris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ferguson, Randy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gibson, Paul	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iverson, Don	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
O'Byrne, Simon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pescok, Roger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planner (City of Calgary)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preksalis, Armin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scott, James	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young, Tom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zubot, Bev	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Appendix H - Barriers to Greyfield Redevelopment, as Discussed by Primary Interviewees**

# Appendix I

## Former Supermarket Sites in Edmonton with Restrictive Covenants



Appendix I - Restrictive covenants binding vacated grocery stores in Edmonton, AB (EFCL, 2008)

## Appendix J

### Facilitating Factors to Greyfield Redevelopment

INTERVIEWEE	Facilitating factors to greyfield redevelopment, as discussed by primary interviewees									
	DEMOGRAPHICS	TRANSPORTATION & CULTURAL SHIFT	ECONOMICS	COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION	TRANSIT CONNECTION	GREENFIELD DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS	PROACTIVE PLANNING TOOLS	KNOWLEDGABLE DEVELOPERS		
Anderson, Kalen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Backstrom, Erik	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Craig, Stuart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Crawford, Sandra	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Dulaba, Chris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Ferguson, Randy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Gibson, Paul	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Iveson, Don	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
O'Byrne, Simon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Pescok, Roger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Planner (City of Calgary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Preiksaitis, Armin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Scott, James	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Young, Tom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Zubot, Bev	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**Appendix J - Facilitating Factors to Greyfield Redevelopment, as Discussed by Primary Interviewees**

## Appendix K

### Improving the Process of Greyfield Redevelopment

Improving the process of greyfield redevelopment, as discussed by primary interviewees

INTERVIEWEE	SITE IDENTIFICATION & INVESTMENT	FISCAL INCENTIVES	THIRD-PARTY MODERATION	ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS	COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS	DIRECT CONTROL ZONING	PARKING STANDARDS	EDUCATION
Anderson, Kalen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backstrom, Erik	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Craig, Stuart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crawford, Sandra	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dulaba, Chris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ferguson, Randy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gibson, Paul	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iveson, Don	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
O'Byrne, Simon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pescok, Roger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planner (City of Calgary)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Preiksaitis, Armin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scott, James	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young, Tom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zubot, Bev	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix K - Improving the process of greyfield, as discussed by primary interviewee