

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 14, 2005

TO: Board of Trustees  
FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools  
SUBJECT: Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2006 – 2015)  
ORIGINATOR: C. McCabe, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Jenise Bidulock, Randy Billey, Michael Ediger, Leanne Fedor, Roland Labbe, Randy Leal, Deanne Patsula, Amy-Irene Seward, Larry Schwenneker

RECOMMENDATION

That the Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2006-2015 be approved be approved for submission to Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation

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Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation requires that school boards review their ten-year facilities plan on an annual basis to confirm its continued relevance and then submit an updated plan if needed. Through the course of this year and in accordance with this direction, the administration reviewed and updated the district's Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2006-2015). The current plan will be forwarded to Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation after being presented to the Board of Trustees tonight as information. (Attachment I).

Introduction

The plan is intentionally general and conceptual in its nature. However, it is intended to provide clear direction for the identification of the district's long term facility needs and emerging priorities. The plan provides the district with direction; it does not prescribe a final outcome.

Sustainable Facilities

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation gives direction to school districts in terms of its perspective on priorities for capital projects. Funding for school capital projects is therefore based on a provincial review wherein priority is given to:

- projects vital to the health and safety of students and staff;
- projects designed to provide space to meet increases in enrolment where no other reasonable alternatives are available; and
- projects designed to meet essential facility needs arising from obsolescence or to address critical need for additional instructional space to accommodate educational programs.

Backing the objectives of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation's School Capital Plan and Funding Process are a set of provincial principles which effectively frame the notion of "sustainable facilities" within school districts. They include:

- equity in the provision of educational facilities for all students;
- healthy and safe school facilities;
- the effective use of existing instructional space; and
- the prolonged life of school facilities.

These principles are consistent with the aims and directions of the work done by the district in its endeavours to provide sustainable facilities that guarantee quality environments for teaching and learning.

The teaching and learning environment is also comprised of other non-facility related elements. These include the mix of program choices, the balance between regular and special needs, class sizes, extra-curricular opportunities and the availability and accessibility of learning resources for each student. A quality learning environment implies both a high quality school facility and an optimal level of enrolment in order to maximize the range and value of opportunities for both teaching and learning.

### A Strategic Approach

Edmonton Public Schools Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2006 - 2015) presents a strategic approach to planning and decision-making that is focused on addressing the district's ongoing priorities for facility investment in a manner that will ensure the value of the educational experience for all students well into the future.

This approach is based on clearly defined principles and an examination of needs by sector. Sectors are areas of the city developed in 1999 in collaboration with Alberta Education and Edmonton Catholic schools. Sectors were meant to divide the city into areas with similar needs and demographics and were a recognition that district wide utilization become less and less accurate as the city grows.

Principles that served as a guide and reference point for the district's work in capital planning, student accommodation and program distribution in the coming years include:

#### *Equitable Access to Quality Learning Environments and Choice of Programs*

- (a) Students at all grade levels will or should have equity of access to high quality, modernized facilities wherever they live in the city.
- (b) A balanced range of regular, alternative and special education programs will be provided within each sector.
- (c) While district programs will be established and maintained to meet the needs of the public, their distribution will be intended primarily to accommodate students from inside sectors.

#### *Creative Re-Use of Surplus Space*

- (a) Surplus school space that is viable and has value to the community should be identified for potential partnership use.
- (b) Partnership agreements will be at no cost to the district.

### *Efficient Use of School Space in Sectors and Retention of Small Schools*

- (a) In sectors with excess space, modernization projects will consist of targeted preservation of the school's required instructional space. This may be combined with demolition of unused and unneeded space within the school.
- (b) The process will lead to retention of smaller schools in neighbourhoods, although consolidation, rightsizing or closure will be required, on an increasing basis, where enrolment is no longer viable.
- (c) In growth sectors, initiatives will be aimed at achieving a sector utilization rate of 85 per cent to enable construction of new schools where they are needed in developing communities.
- (d) The process will reduce the dependency on designated receiving schools and long ride times.
- (e) Consideration will be given to upgrading receiving schools identified as a result of school or program closure.

### *Accommodation and Program Needs Met Within Sectors*

- (a) Where possible, student needs for programs will be met within the sector of the city where the student resides.
- (b) Consideration will be given to ensuring that there is sufficient space within the district so that students do not have to travel great distances to access basic programs.
- (c) The need to provide new schools in growth areas of the city is affirmed.

### *Capital Investment Contingent Upon Confirmation of Long-term Viability*

- (a) In the identification of existing schools for preservation projects, the school's long-term viability from a programming and student enrolment perspective will be considered first and foremost.
- (b) In instances where long-term viability is confirmed within existing oversized buildings, space reduction initiatives will be incorporated as a component of a proposed preservation project.
- (c) The district will continue to maintain and invest in existing school buildings where long-term viability has not been confirmed to ensure that all life, health and safety responsibilities are addressed.

### Capital Year and Plan Sequence

Within its *Infrastructure Manual*, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation also directs that facilities and capital plans must be submitted by June 30th of the year prior to the commencing year of the plans or as requested by the Minister (i.e. June 30th, 2005 for the 2006 - 2009 Three-Year Capital Plan and 2006-2015 Ten-Year Facilities Plan). Accordingly, the administration has prepared the district's plan for the forthcoming ten-year period entitled the Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2006 – 2015).

### Submission of Current Plan

As with the previous plan, the current plan sets out a framework and context for planning the district's facilities over the next ten years. The plan provides an overview of the City of

Edmonton, the surrounding area and of the district. The district overview outlines the district's future geographic, demographic and fiscal challenges. The plan's strategy to address these challenges is articulated within a framework of planning principles intended to support planning and decision-making around the issues of student accommodation and transportation, program distribution and capital development.

In its review of the previous plan, and with the plan having been submitted to Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation late last year, the administration concluded that only minor changes are warranted. A full consultative review will be undertaken by the administration of the current ten-year facilities plan early in 2006. This will enable the preparation of the district's ten-year facilities plan and three-year capital plan to follow in the sequence set out by the province and for the Board to deal with them in a timely manner each year.

Attachment II shows the provincial capacity and utilization rate by school for the 2004-2005 school year.

JB:cp

Attachment I Ten Year Facilities Plan 2006 - 2015

**TEN-YEAR FACILITIES PLAN (2006 – 2015)**  
**Prepared by the Planning Department, June, 2005**

**Plan Overview**

**1.1 Provincial Policy Context**

The submission of Edmonton Public Schools' *Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2006 – 2015)* to the Minister of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation is consistent with the requirements set out in Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation's *School Infrastructure Manual*.

*Policy 4.2.1 Ten Year Facilities Plan*

1. *A school board must submit a ten- year facilities plan to Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation.*
2. *A school board must review its ten- year facilities plan on an annual basis to confirm its continued relevance and submit an updated plan to Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation if needed.*
3. *The fiscal year for facilities plans will be April 1st to March 31st.*

*Policy 4.2.1 General Procedures*

*The plans must be submitted by June 30th of the year prior to the commencing year of the plans or as requested by the Minister (i.e. June 30th, 2005 for the 2006-09 capital plan and 2006 - 2015 facilities plan).*

**1.2 Purpose**

The Edmonton Public Schools *Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2006 - 2015)* is intended to assist the Edmonton Public School Board and Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation with the identification of the district's long-term facility needs. As a planning tool, it also presents the district with the opportunity to work within a more strategic and comprehensive framework to appropriately plan and make decisions around issues of student accommodation and transportation, program distribution and capital investment. In providing this framework, the plan will serve to bring further focus to the district in supporting "***Superb Results from all Students***".

The plan will help guide the district in ensuring that capital priorities are appropriately identified and that its long-term investment in facilities is effective in maintaining the critical relationship between quality learning environments and excellence in teaching and learning.

In supporting the success of Edmonton Public Schools in this work, the plan will:

- guide the district in the annual preparation of its three-year capital plan;
- provide broad direction in the identification the district's long-term facility needs;

- communicate the district’s long-term facility needs to the public and others;
- further contribute to the effective and efficient use of capital funding;
- provide assistance to the Board in policy development and decision-making around issues of student accommodation and transportation, program distribution and capital investment; and
- facilitate effective planning for quality learning environments that will benefit all students wherever they may live within the district.

### **1.3 Objectives**

The plan provides a basis, or “point of reference”, for actions and decisions aimed at preserving and improving the quality of public education for all students within the City of Edmonton, present and future. Through an annual review of the plan, Edmonton Public Schools is also afforded the opportunity of revisiting and refining its focus and energies in the coordination of policies, programs and capital investment in the work of meeting its goals and responsibilities as a public Board.

The essential objectives of the plan can be summarized as follows:

- A. To maximize the district’s advantage in securing the levels of provincial capital funding needed to ensure that its priorities for school space can be strategically addressed over the long term;
- B. To ensure the effective and efficient use of capital funding that the district does receive; and
- C. To support and promote excellence in teaching and learning by ensuring that all students within the Edmonton Public School system enjoy equity in terms of access to quality learning environments and programs.

### **1.4 Plan Review**

In May, 2004, Edmonton Public Schools submitted its ten-year facilities plan to Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation for the period 2005 - 2014. The current Edmonton Public Schools Ten-Year Facilities Plan follows from that plan as well as from previously submitted ten-year facilities plans.

As with the previous plan, the current plan sets out a framework and context for planning the district’s facilities over the next ten years. The plan provides an overview of both the City of Edmonton and surrounding region and of the district. The district overview outlines the district’s future geographic, demographic and fiscal challenges. The plan’s strategy to address these challenges is articulated within a framework of planning principles intended to support planning and decision-making around the issues of student accommodation and transportation, program distribution and capital development.

### **1.5 Interpretation and Implementation of the Plan**

The planning and decision-making processes must be flexible enough to respond appropriately to emerging opportunities and changing conditions. The Ten-Year Facilities

Plan is a long-range planning document and, as such, it does not pre-suppose immediate outcomes. The plan is intentionally general in nature. It is not intended to be prescriptive. It is, however, intended to provide clear direction for the identification of the district's long-term facilities needs and emerging capital priorities.

It is intended that the plan be implemented directly through the three-year capital plan. The three-year capital plan specifically identifies the district's priorities for capital investment (e.g. preservation and new construction projects) over a three-year period. On an ongoing basis, the plan will also give direction and focus to a variety of planning initiatives undertaken by the district aimed at addressing a range of issues around student accommodation and transportation, program distribution and capital investment. Through its implementation, the plan will attempt to merge together the notions of "sustainable facilities" and "sustainable funding".

## **1.6 Monitoring and Review**

A key element in the effectiveness of any plan is a sound process of monitoring and review. The application of the plan as a useful reference document and planning tool will continue to be monitored, informally, within the district throughout the year. The plan provides the district with a direction; it does not prescribe a final outcome. The success of the plan, in terms of its fundamental objectives, will become more or less evident each year as the district works through the process of confirming existing capital priorities and identifying new ones.

The process of monitoring the success of the plan will be an important element in its annual review. The annual review of the plan is a requirement of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation and it will logically precede the district's preparation of its three-year capital plan. The plan's review should involve an inclusive process of consultation providing all identified stakeholders with the opportunity to provide meaningful input.

## **Public Education in the City of Edmonton and Surrounding Region**

### **2.1 Learning Opportunities**

The Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) of Edmonton has a population that has recently surpassed one million. While the district's boundary corresponds with Edmonton's city limits, students attend district schools from throughout the CMA and beyond. The quality of education offered by Edmonton Public Schools and the availability of choice from a range of alternative and special education programs attracts students to the district from a very broad area.

Edmonton Public Schools' location within a major regional urban centre benefits the district through its ability to offer a rich variety of learning opportunities to a large number of students. The district's concentration of specialized teaching and learning resources attracts students with special needs from outside the district. Often, students re-locate to Edmonton because of the availability of these specialized programs. Fully addressing the needs of all students continues to be Edmonton Public Schools' highest priority.

In addition, the recently instituted Class Size Initiative from Alberta Education has changed the configuration of learning spaces in Edmonton Public Schools. More space will be required within schools as a result, causing a greater disparity between the Provincially Rated Capacity, and what schools require in the way of space to provide programming for students.

***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Space requirements within schools for both moderate and severe special education programs are greater than for regular programs.*
- *The district will need to remain both receptive and responsive in terms of providing the variety of choices in education demanded by the public.*
- *The district will need to continue to ensure that the distribution of programs is balanced throughout the district in order to maximize opportunities for all students.*
- *The district will need to address the demands for more space to meet class size ratios, in particular for elementary schools.*

**2.2 Demographics and Growth**

**2.2.1 Declining Birthrates**

A 2003 Statistics Canada report based on Federal Census and tax data provides information on the population of the nation, including changes in the pre-school and elementary/junior high school-aged populations from 1996 to 2003. The chart below provides national and provincial statistics.

**Figure 1: Changes in the pre-school and elementary/junior high school-aged populations (1996 to 2003)**

	0 - 4 year-olds	5 - 9 year-olds	10 - 14 year-olds
Canada	-13%	-3%	+5%
Alberta	-4%	-4%	+6%

Source Data: Statistics Canada Annual Demographic Statistics 2003

Declines in the birth rate and a drop in immigration are identified as key contributors to the national trend of slower population growth and an aging population. Declines in the 0-4 and 5-9 year old age groups reflect a continued decline in the percentage of the population that are school-aged, as the average age of residents continues to rise.

***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Smaller families impact directly on the requirements for school facilities, both in terms of size and number.*
- *The need for school space is directly impacted by the fact that the typical household is likely to have fewer children.*

**2.2.2 Edmonton Demographics**

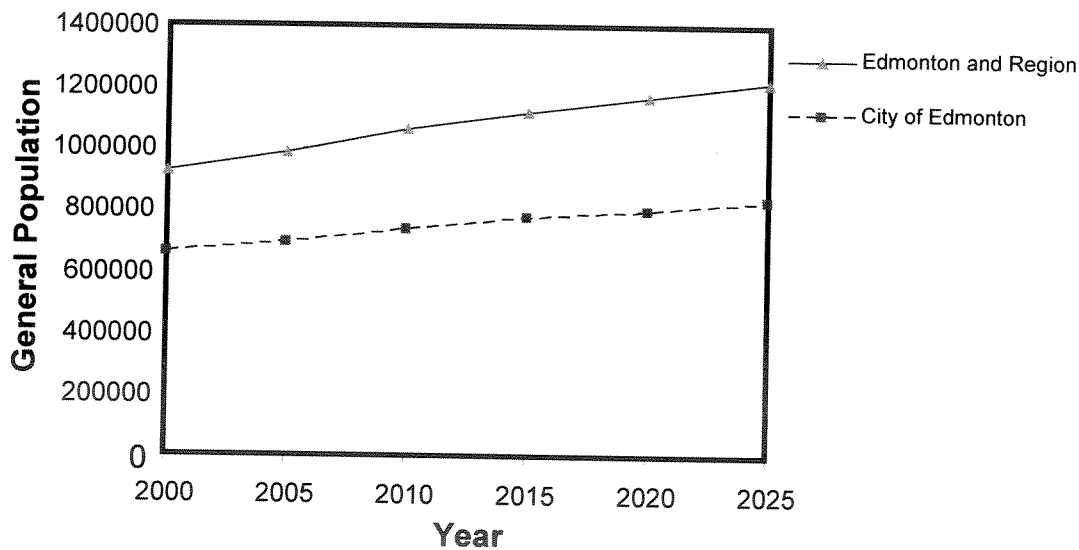
The City of Edmonton is one of the fastest growing urban municipalities in Canada. In recent years, migration into the City has remained at a relatively high level of approximately 6,000 people each year. With this trend expected to continue over the next several years, the City of Edmonton is projecting an increase in the city's total population from approximately



666,000 in 2002 to 738,500 in 2010. This represents an increase of approximately 72,500 people, or 11 per cent, over that period of time.

Statistics Canada's analysis of the Edmonton CMA indicates that the total population has grown by 12 per cent for the 1996-2001 period. The City of Edmonton's rate of total population increase over the same time period was 8 per cent. The following graph illustrates the City of Edmonton's anticipated population growth in relation to the growth within the entire region through to the year 2025.

**Figure 2: Population Projections for City of Edmonton and Region (2000-2025)**

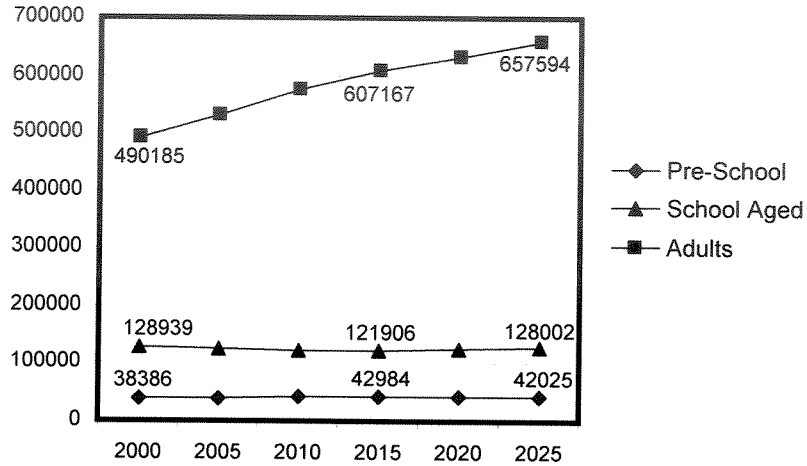


Source Data: City of Edmonton Population & Employment Forecast Allocation Study Summary Report 2001

While the total population is increasing in the City of Edmonton and surrounding area, the total for the 5-19 year old age group within the City is in decline and projected to continue to decline through to 2015. This is consistent with national and provincial trends. While the declining school-aged population trend is projected to begin to increase again after 2015, it is only projected to return to year 2000 levels by 2025.

The projected decline in the City of Edmonton's percentage of school-aged residents is compared to growth in the City's adult population in the following graph.

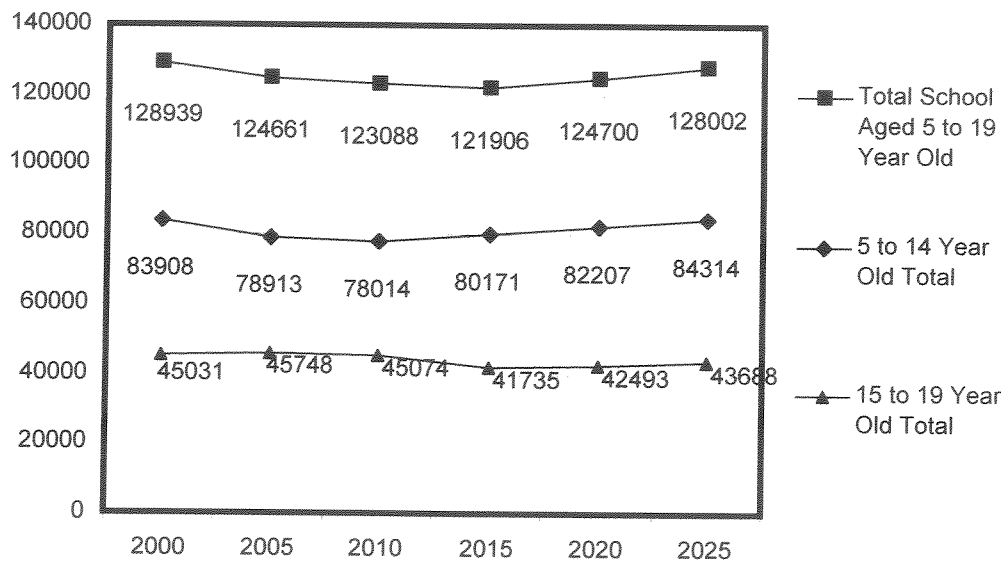
**Figure 3: City of Edmonton Population Profile 2000 to 2025**



Source Data: City of Edmonton Population & Employment Forecast Allocation Study Summary Report 2001

A further breakdown of the decline in the number of school aged residents in the City of Edmonton over the next ten years is illustrated in the following graph.

**Figure 4: City of Edmonton School Aged Projections (2000 to 2025)**



Source Data: City of Edmonton Population & Employment Forecast Allocation Study Summary Report 2001

### ***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

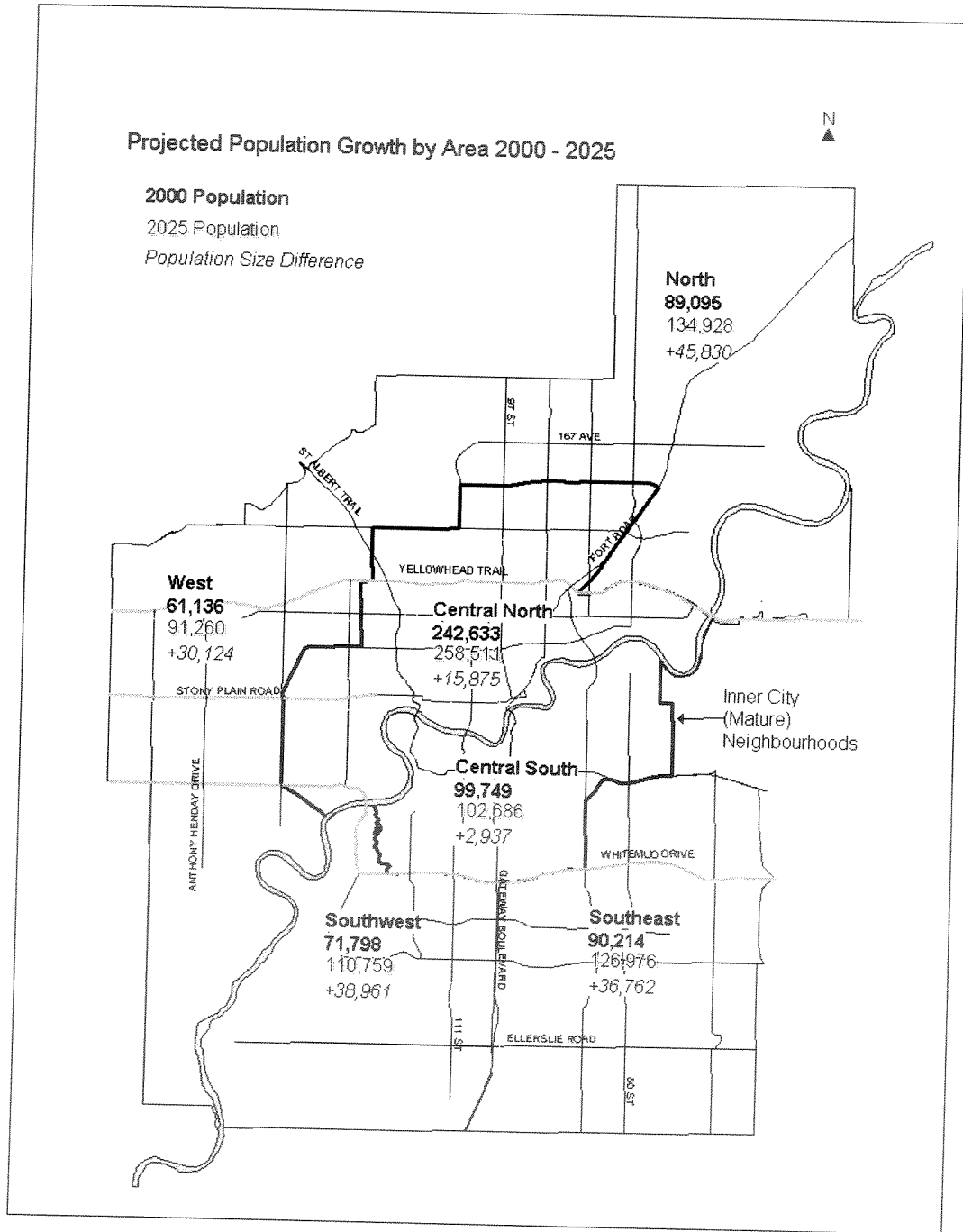
- *Edmonton and region growth trends indicate that families with school aged children are as likely to locate outside the boundaries of the City of Edmonton and thus outside the district's boundary.*
- *Even with Edmonton's population shown to be increasing, the decreasing fertility rate and other factors are contributing to a trend of decline in the size of the school-aged population to 2015.*
- *The projected decline in the percentage of resident that are school-aged within the City of Edmonton significantly impacts on the district's future needs for student space.*

### **2.3 Residential Growth Patterns**

Another factor influencing school aged population totals in City of Edmonton and surrounding region is the changing nature of residency patterns as communities continue to grow. Most of the growth in the City's population is occurring in newly developing suburban areas. In coming years, the City expects that the areas within its limits that will experience the greatest amount of growth in population are North (46,000 residents in the neighbourhoods of The Palisades, Lake District, Pilot Sound, Castle Downs Extension and Clareview and Griesbach), Southwest (39,000 residents in the neighbourhoods of Heritage Valley, Terwillegar Heights, and Windermere), Southeast (37,000 residents in the neighbourhoods of The Meadows, Ellerslie, and Ellerslie East) and West (30,000 residents in the neighbourhoods Lewis Farms, The Grange, and Cameron Heights).

The following map illustrates the City of Edmonton's anticipated pattern of residential growth to the year 2025.

**Map 1: Projected Population Growth by Area (2000 – 2025)**



Source: City of Edmonton Recreation Facility Master Plan on August 31, 2004  
 Source Data: City of Edmonton Population & Employment Forecast Allocation Study Summary Report 2001

The City of Edmonton is also forecasting a modest increase in the population of the inner-city over the next 25 years. This development will be primarily in a form consistent with the city's strategies intended to increase the residential population of the downtown core and utilize existing infrastructure (i.e. higher density and infill). A significant shift in the number

of residents, including school aged residents, from mature areas to newer development areas has been occurring over the past twenty-five years and it is projected to continue to the year 2025.

***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Suburban areas will have a larger population than mature inner city areas by 2010.*
- *The demand for new school construction nearer the student population base will intensify over the next ten years as the student population in the suburban areas of the city continues to increase.*
- *With most of the district's schools located in the older areas of the city, it will be critical for the district, with support from the province and the city, to secure the means of providing new schools in new areas to ensure equity of access to public education for all students in the city.*
- *Requirements for the upgrading of aging infrastructure in mature inner city neighbourhoods will continue to increase while the number of students residing within these areas is projected to decline or at best remain unchanged.*

**2.4 Residential Densities**

Currently, there are over 45 new and developing neighbourhoods in the City of Edmonton. Within these new residential developments, the density of housing is decreasing and the size of the average household is also decreasing. It is becoming more evident that final build-out densities in new areas are significantly lower than projected in the neighbourhood development plans. Neighbourhoods planned at densities of approximately 18 – 22 units per hectare are yielding densities of only around 12 – 15 units per hectare. In addition, most if not all multi-family housing is heavily oriented to the adult and senior's market, both in newly developing and infill areas. This housing generates few students. Even with Edmonton's population shown to be increasing, the decreasing fertility rate and other factors are contributing to a trend of decline in the district's annual enrolment to 2015.

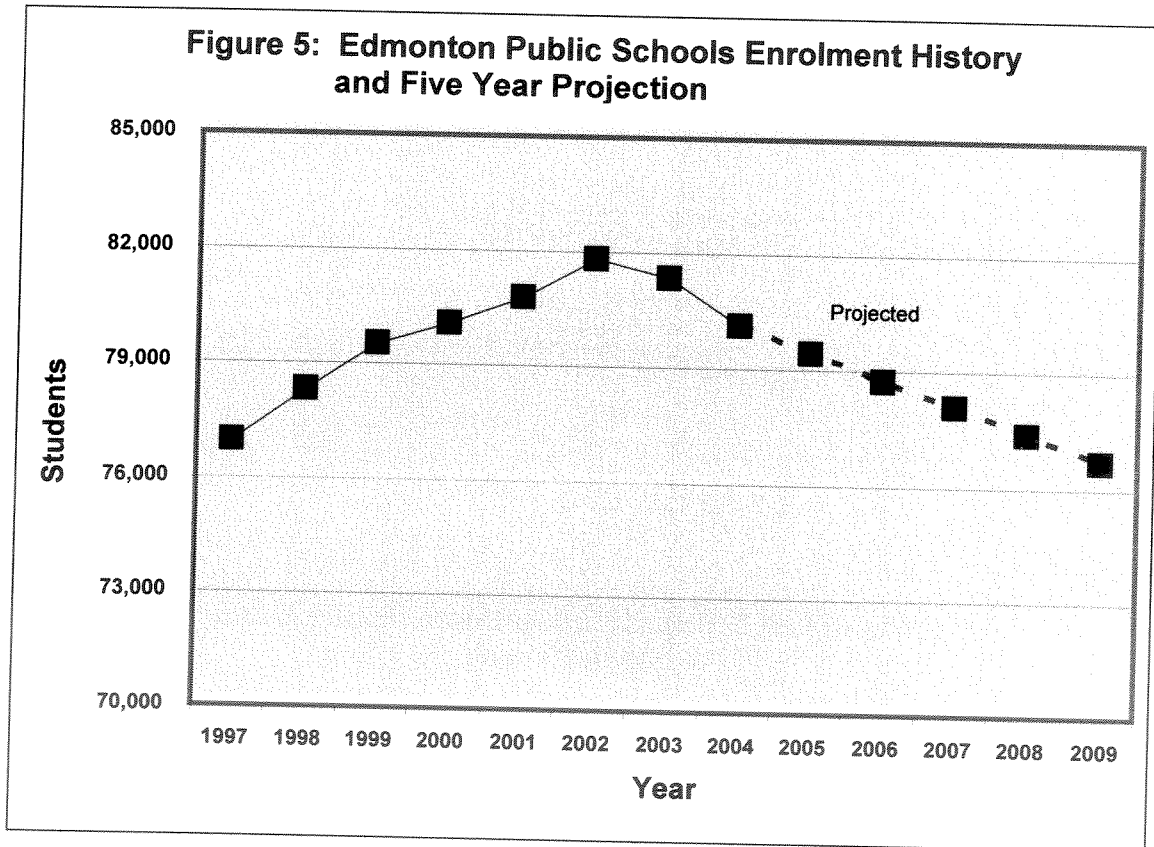
***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *The traditional practice of planning for an elementary school serving each new neighbourhood has been revised and capital plan priorities now reflect schools serving larger geographic areas comprised of multiple neighbourhoods.*
- *Within the municipal planning process, the district advocate for larger neighbourhoods and road and neighbourhood configurations that facilitate safe walking access and linkages between neighbourhoods.*
- *Local school planning and facility development may need to incorporate more student transportation for students residing within a larger local attendance areas.*
- *The number of new neighbourhoods developing concurrently makes it challenging to determine optimum site locations and to secure suitable sites in a timely fashion for new school construction.*

- *Capital resources to fund new schools in newly developing areas are scarce and resident student populations in these areas are projected to continue to grow through to the year 2025.*

## 2.5 District Enrolment and Distribution of Students

The district prepares five-year enrolment projections annually. Current projections indicate that, for the next five years and perhaps beyond, declining enrolment will be a challenge for the district. The following graph illustrates district enrolment projected over the next five year period.



Source: Edmonton Public Schools

### ***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

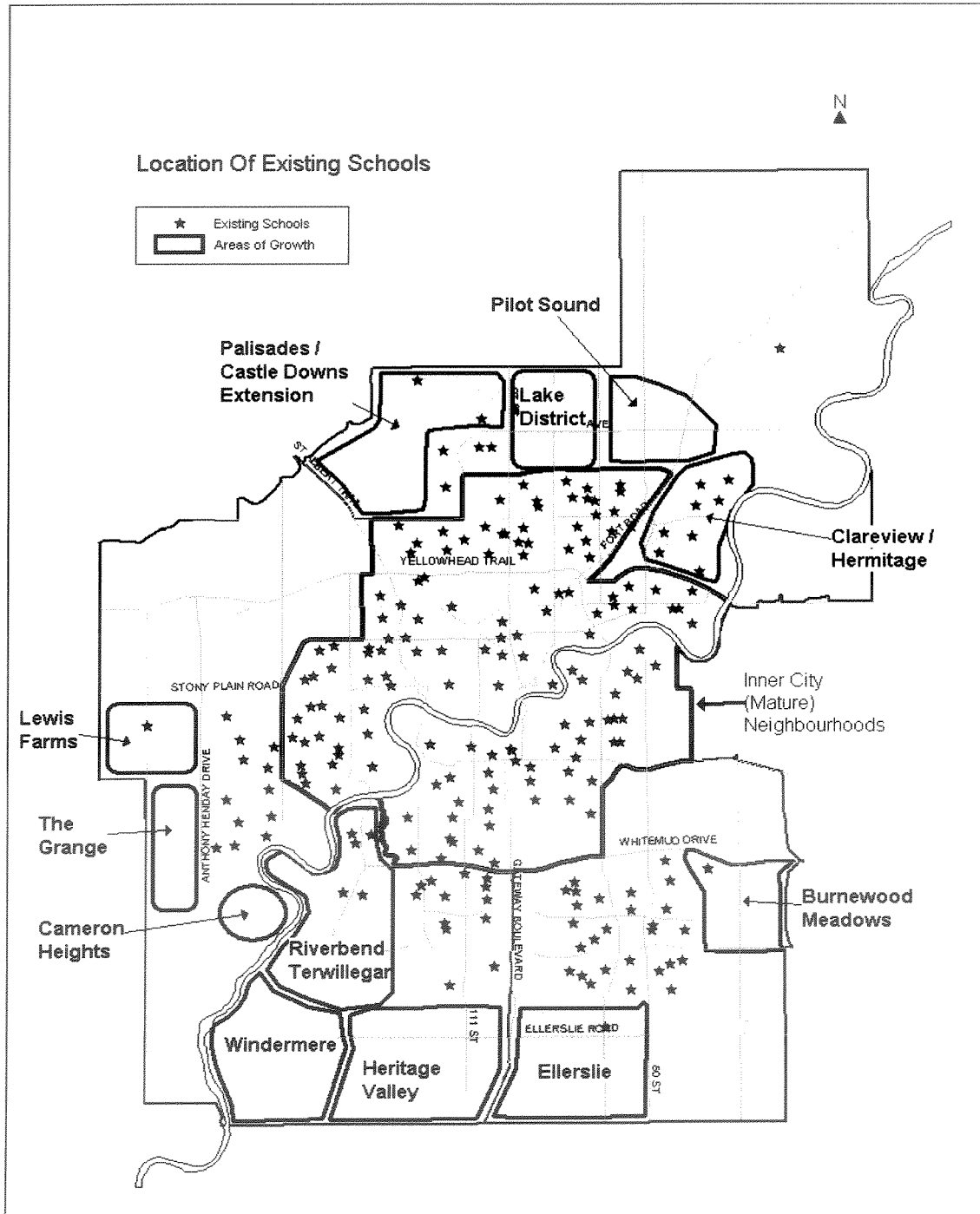
- *Declining enrolment means that the district must reduce its total number of currently available student spaces.*
- *Decreases in neighbourhood densities and in student generation per household will challenge the district in finding the most appropriate means to serve educational needs within growth areas.*
- *The pressure for new school construction nearer the student population base is likely to increase over the next ten years as the greater proportion of the district's student*

*population shifts to the suburbs. This will place increased pressure on the district to reduce space where it is not needed.*

- *With district high schools currently at or over capacity, the need for additional high school space is immediate.*
- *The district, with support from the province and the city, will need to secure the means of providing new schools in new areas in order to ensure equity of access to public education for all students in the city.*
- *Schools will continue to require assistance to both rationalize the use of school space and to ensure that class size targets are met.*

The following map illustrates the location of Edmonton Public's existing elementary schools in relation to the areas of the city where the most significant growth in population is projected to occur over the next 25 years.

## Map 2: Location of Existing Schools



Source: Edmonton Public Schools



### ***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Where enrolments are projected to decline, various alternatives such as school consolidation, space rationalization and “right-sizing” of buildings will be examined to assist the district in improving efficiency and reduce the costs of operating and upgrading excess space.*
- *Where student populations are anticipated to increase as a result of new residential development, additional funding will be required for the construction of new school facilities.*
- *With most of the district’s schools located in the mature areas of the city, it will be critical for the district, with support from the province, the city and the community, to balance its investment in facilities so that it can provide new schools in new areas and ensure equity of access to public education for all students in the city.*

## **2.6 Future Directions for Edmonton Public Schools**

Given the national and provincial aging trend, and the higher growth rate of municipalities outside of the City of Edmonton and the district’s boundaries, it is likely that the overall district enrolment numbers will continue to experience slight overall decline for the next ten years.

While most of the district’s schools are located in the city’s older, more established areas, growth in the district’s student population is anticipated to occur primarily in newer suburban neighbourhoods. Only about one-third of the district’s schools are in newer areas where a large and growing number of students live. Eighteen per cent of the district’s elementary students live in neighbourhoods without a local elementary school. Students living in the city’s newer areas are currently transported by bus or private vehicles to schools toward the inner part of the city.

### ***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Even with Edmonton’s population shown to be increasing, a trend of decline in the district’s annual enrolment is projected to 2015.*
- *More families with school-aged children are choosing to locate in newer development areas, whether within the City of Edmonton or to surrounding bedroom municipalities.*
- *There is a significant and growing number of students residing in newly developing areas without local schools.*
- *There is a continuing decline in the number of students residing in the mature areas of the City, where many large and aging school buildings are located.*
- *Capital priorities will need to be distributed between preservation and new construction projects and investment in preserving older facilities will require increased scrutiny to include the assessment of long-term viability.*

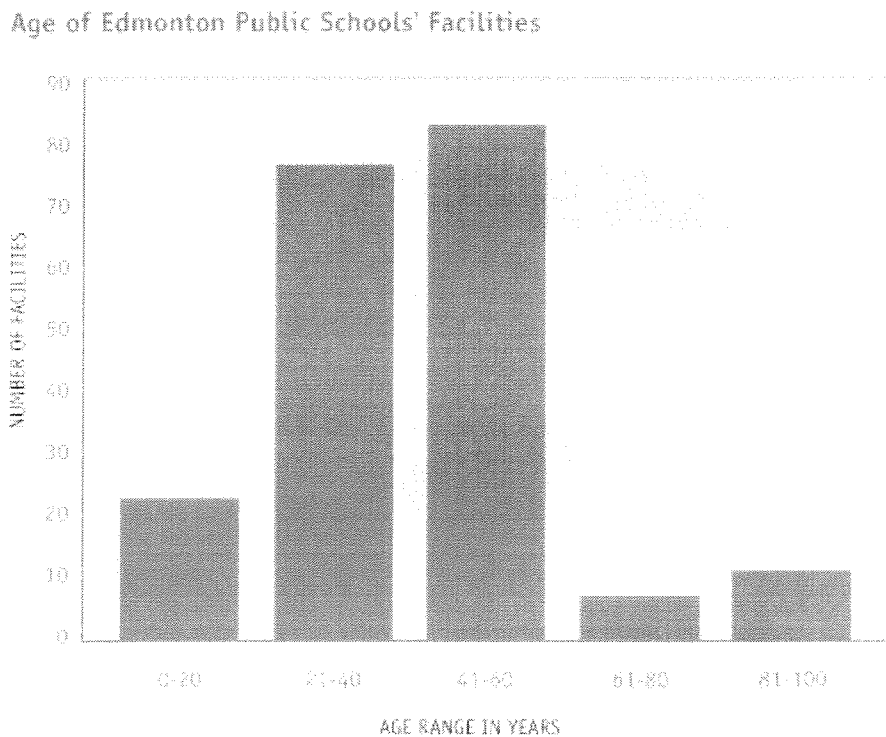
## Inside the District

### 3.1 School Buildings

Edmonton Public Schools currently operates over 200 school buildings, with an average age of 43 years. Based on an average provincial rate of \$1,300 per square metre for the cost of constructing new schools from K-12, the replacement value of the district's inventory of school space is over \$1.325 billion.

The chart below illustrates the age of school buildings currently operated by Edmonton Public Schools.

**Figure 6: Age of Edmonton Public Schools' Facilities**



Source: Edmonton Public Schools

#### ***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Ongoing consideration needs to be given to the fact that the district has a sizeable investment in an aging inventory of school buildings.*

### 3.2 Open Boundaries

Edmonton Public Schools is committed to providing choices to students, both in terms of schools and educational programming. Student choice is facilitated through the district's system of open boundaries, enabling students to attend any school within the district subject only to the availability of space in the school. The district also offers approximately 32 alternative programs and 14 special education programs in over 103 locations.

Edmonton Public Schools is a district of choice and, as such, its students have the ability to choose which schools and programs best suit their needs and interests. Currently, 49 per cent of the district's elementary students attend a school other than the one to which they have been designated. Among the district's junior high and senior high school students, 54 per cent and 66 per cent, respectively, choose to attend schools outside their designated area.

These figures lend support to the district's belief that open boundaries offer a system of public education that provides benefits to students by enabling them to access programs best suited to their individual learning needs. Through the system of open boundaries, students are also afforded valuable opportunities within district schools for positive interaction with others who may come from different socio-economic or cultural backgrounds and from all areas of the city.

***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *The ongoing provision of choice impacts directly on the geographic requirements for school facilities within the district and on how capital investment in schools is distributed throughout the city.*
- *The "costs" of students attending schools other than the one to which they have been designated include impacts on neighbourhood schools, a decreased sense of community and an increased reliance on private and public transportation (as an alternative to walking to school).*

**3.3 Schools in the Community**

In its October 2003 report "Every child learns. Every child succeeds.", Alberta's Commission on Learning called upon school authorities and government to "develop schools as hubs of services for children and communities" (p. 75). Recommendation 20 highlighted the need to "ensure that schools become the centre of a wide range of coordinated, community services targeted at meeting the needs of children and youth".

Edmonton Public Schools acknowledges and maintains a high regard for the role of its schools within the city's communities. Where it is feasible, the district enters into collaborative partnerships with other agencies, groups and service providers in an endeavour to meet the broad needs of both its students and the surrounding community. The Joint Use Agreement between Edmonton Public Schools, the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Catholic Schools is one means by which the district is able to fulfill this role.

In recent years, after-school bookings for youth and community sports, recreation and education programs and use by various community and service groups have become ongoing and widely accepted functions of the district's school buildings. This helps to maximize the efficient utilization of school space during times when the facilities are not used for K-12 instruction.

Edmonton Public Schools also leases available space to partners within the community who provide services that complement the district's role in serving Edmonton and area families through public education. The district's various partners include providers of child care and health services and others involved in the delivery of educational services outside the K-12 envelope such as Head Start and groups offering early literacy programs. The existence of

these and other non-profit services within district schools impact positively on the district's ability to wisely utilize its space and improve cost-efficiency in the operation and maintenance of its facilities.

***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Schools continue to play a wider role in the community, facilitating a variety of different functions in addition to traditional K-12 education.*
- *The district needs to continue to advocate with the Provincial Government for recognition of the wider role played by schools in the community and needed changes to government policy and legislation which redefine the use of reserve lands.*
- *Any downward trend in the district's student enrolment is likely to be mirrored, as well, by a decrease in the demand for other services for children within the community and, consequently, their reduced demand for space within district facilities.*

**3.4 Space Utilization**

Edmonton Public Schools provides quality programming and learning environments to a total of 80,500 students within a total gross area of 1.1M square metres. According to the Province, the net capacity of the district's schools is 110,893 students and the district's utilization rate is 68 per cent.

The efficient utilization of space within its facilities enables the district to provide quality learning environments and thereby maximize the ability of each student to access the full range of learning opportunities and resources available within each of its schools. Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation considers space within a school to be fully utilized when 85 per cent of the school's total area (i.e. capacity) is used for instructional purposes. The 85 per cent figure does not mean, however, that should a school go beyond the 85 per cent, that the school is overcrowded. The approval of capital support for the construction of new schools within the city's areas of growth is negatively impacted by Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation's requirement that schools within the district must first be fully utilized.

The district acknowledges that fully utilizing space within its schools also maximizes the availability of provincial funding for the operation and maintenance of those schools. Efficiency in the use of these funds is further increased with full utilization since available funds are not being used to operate and maintain space within schools that is not being used by students for instructional purposes. Edmonton Public Schools affirms its goal of achieving full utilization with respect to school space throughout the district.

***Implications for Edmonton Public Schools:***

- *Within its schools, the district needs to maintain and operate a volume of space that is consistent with its capacity requirements in order to help ensure the availability of provincial support for capital projects and the operation and maintenance of its schools. This means that consolidation of schools continues to be necessary.*
- *When space within schools is fully utilized, less capital is required to operate and maintain space that is not being used by students for instructional purposes.*

- *“Rightsizing” schools in association with a modernization would require provincial funding support that could be recovered through savings in heating, cleaning and maintenance.*
- *The district needs to continue to work with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation to ensure that “provincially rated school capacity” reflects the ability of schools to accommodate students and provides considerations which exempt students with mild and moderate special needs and space which is made available for lease within the community.*

## **Planning for the Future**

### **4.1 The Challenge**

Edmonton Public Schools, through its capital planning process, will continue to work toward greater efficiency in the allocation and use of available funding for the ongoing maintenance of existing facilities, for school preservation projects and for new construction. In an environment of scarce capital resources, however, the district finds itself under increased pressure to address, more directly, efficiencies in the utilization of space in schools and, at the same time, continue to provide quality environments for teaching and learning over the long term. The district is therefore challenged to adopt a strategy that strikes a balance between “sustainable facilities” and “sustainable funding” so that it is better positioned to capitalize on its ability to proactively plan and manage for real success, whatever the fiscal realities of the day may be. This means that there will continue to be a very real fiscal need for aggressive ways to reduce the amount of excess student space in the district.

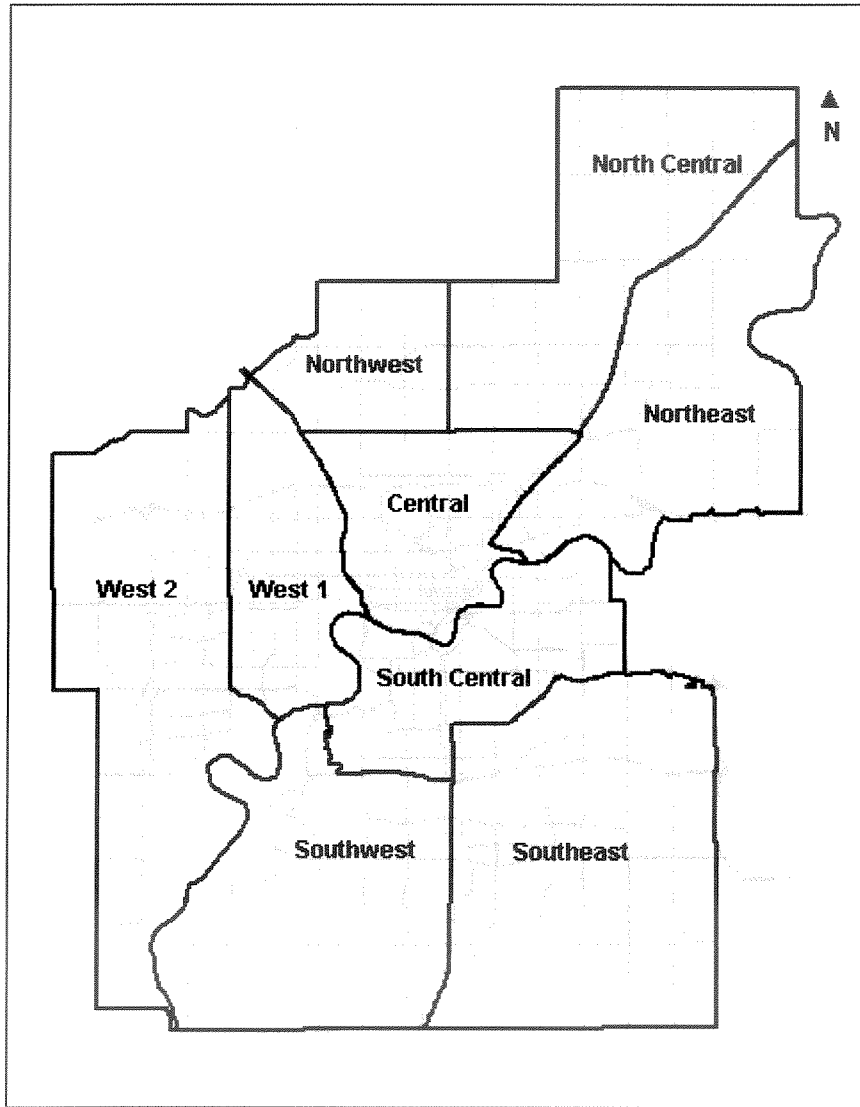
### **4.2 Sector-Based Planning**

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation has recognized that school jurisdictions across the province all face a variety of unique challenges. One of the unique challenges faced within the province’s larger urban centres is the differences that exist between and among areas and neighbourhoods within their jurisdictional boundaries. Edmonton Public Schools’ district boundary is the same as the City of Edmonton’s and, as a result, the diversity that exists within the city is the same diversity that the district is challenged with in providing Edmonton and area families with the opportunities inherent within a system of public education.

As a means of more equitably addressing the range of student needs within the district and, at the same time, more efficiently managing issues around the utilization of school space, the district established nine planning sectors within its boundaries and formalized them with provincial approval.

By focusing on manageable geographic areas that share both common and unique challenges, the sector-based approach enhances the district’s capacity to plan more effectively for the accommodation of students throughout the district. Sector-based planning also helps to focus the district’s efforts on ensuring an even distribution of viable school facilities throughout the entire district and equity of access to quality learning environments for all students. The map below illustrates the location of Edmonton Public Schools’ nine geographic sectors within the city. The tenth district sector is the district-wide High School sector.

### Map 3: Edmonton Public Schools Planning Sectors



Source: Edmonton Public Schools

A map and a profile of each sector are outlined in Appendix I. The total number of student spaces in a sector is equal to the provincial total capacity. The number of students residing in the sector and enrolled in the sector is compared to the sector's capacity. Residency and enrolment values have been weighted to reflect the adjustment that is currently applied to kindergarten students (0.5 full-time equivalent) and students with severe special education needs (3.0 full-time equivalent). All other students are counted as 1.0 full-time equivalent.

An additional weighting has been applied to the residency and enrolment values in order to reflect the class-size targets prescribed by Alberta's Commission on Learning. The adjustments that have been applied are identified in the chart below.

**Figure 7: Weighting applied to residency and enrolment values reflecting class-size targets**

Level	Class Size	Weighting (full-time equivalent)
Kindergarten	17	0.74
Division I	17	1.47
Division II	23	1.09
Division III	25	1.00
Division IV	27	0.93

Sectors with schools in mature neighbourhoods typically have more student spaces than both the number of students residing in the sector and the number of students enrolled in the sector (e.g. Central, South Central and West 1 Sectors). A significant proportion of the enrolment within these sectors includes students who do not reside in the sector. Some of the schools within these sectors are designated as receiving schools for students who reside in new or developing neighbourhoods where there are no local schools. These schools may also have sufficient surplus space to accommodate district alternative and special education programs.

Sectors that include new or developing neighbourhoods typically have fewer student spaces than the number of students residing in the sector (e.g. North Central, North East, North West, South East, South West and West 2 Sectors). A significant proportion of the students who reside in these sectors do not have a local school and have to be designated to schools in mature neighbourhoods where most of the district’s excess space is located. Some students may also leave the sector to attend district alternative and special education programs, also typically offered in schools located in mature areas of the city.

### **4.3 Quality Environments for Teaching and Learning**

In its report, Alberta’s Commission on Learning recognized that “Schools must be places where excellence is the hallmark of everything they do.” (p. 8). Edmonton Public Schools believes that the learning environment is important to success in both teaching and learning. The learning environment is comprised of several elements including the school’s physical condition, air quality, lighting, and how the space within the school is configured and employed to support programming and curriculum.

The teaching and learning environment is also comprised of other non-facility related elements. These include the mix of program choices, the balance between regular and special needs, class sizes, extra-curricular opportunities and the availability and accessibility of learning resources for each student. A quality learning environment implies both a high quality school facility and an optimal level of enrolment in order to maximize the range and value of opportunities for both teaching and learning.

### **4.4 Sustainable Facilities**

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation gives direction to school districts in terms of its perspective on priorities for capital projects. Funding for school capital projects is therefore based on a provincial review wherein priority is given to:

- *projects vital to the health and safety of students and staff;*

- *projects designed to provide space to meet increases in enrolment where no other reasonable alternatives are available; and*
- *projects designed to meet essential facility needs arising from obsolescence or to address critical need for additional instructional space to accommodate educational programs.*

Backing the objectives of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation’s School Capital Plan and Funding Process are a set of provincial principles several of which effectively frame the notion of “sustainable facilities” within school districts. They include:

- *equity in the provision of educational facilities for all students;*
- *healthy and safe school facilities;*
- *the effective use of existing instructional space; and*
- *the prolonged life of school facilities.*

These principles are consistent with the aims and directions of the work done by the district in its endeavors to provide sustainable facilities that guarantee quality environments for teaching and learning.

#### **4.5 Sustainable Funding**

Alberta’s Commission on Learning acknowledges the need to maintain and build schools within the Province of Alberta. Recommendation 22 in its report encourages the provincial government to “ensure that sufficient and predictable funding is available to renovate existing schools and build new schools where and when they are needed”.

In recent years, Edmonton Public Schools has been confronted with the challenge of uncertainty around levels of provincial funding for capital projects. While this has added a measure of complexity to its capital planning process, the district has managed to ensure that the financial resources requested for its capital priorities have been responsibly defined and prudently allocated.

The need for the district to work toward more sustainable levels of funding from one year to the next is becoming increasingly more apparent. Through a focus on achieving “sustainable funding” in its planning work around the issues of student accommodation and transportation, program distribution and capital development, Edmonton Public Schools can reasonably expect to continue to succeed in delivering the high standard in public education for which it has become internationally renowned.

### **The Plan: A Principled Approach**

#### **5.1 Making It Work**

Edmonton Public Schools Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2006 - 2015) presents a strategic approach to planning and decision-making that is focused on addressing the district’s ongoing priorities for facility investment in a manner that will ensure the value of the educational experience for all students well into the future.



It is anticipated that a focus on principles will enhance the district's capacity, in coming years, to integrate planning and decision-making around issues of program distribution, student accommodation and transportation and extensively augment the capital planning process. In addition, the application of a principled approach to a sector-based model will support the clearer and more systematic identification of the district's current and future capital priorities.

Principles that will serve as a guide and reference point for the district's work in capital planning, student accommodation and program distribution in the coming years include:

**5.1.1 *Equitable Access to Quality Learning Environments and Choice of Programs***

- (a) *Students at all grade levels will have equity of access to high quality, modernized facilities wherever they live in the city.*
- (b) *A balanced range of regular, alternative and special education programs will be provided within each sector.*
- (c) *While district programs will be established and maintained to meet the needs of the public, their distribution will be intended primarily to accommodate students from inside sectors.*

**5.1.2 *Creative Re-Use of Surplus Space***

- (a) *Surplus school space that is viable and has value to the community should be identified for potential partnership use.*
- (b) *Partnership agreements will be at no cost to the district.*

**5.1.3 *Efficient Use of School Space in Sectors and Retention of Small Schools***

- (a) *In sectors with excess space, modernization projects will consist of targeted preservation of the school's required instructional space and this may be combined with demolition of unused and unneeded space within the school.*
- (b) *The process will lead to retention of smaller schools in neighbourhoods, although consolidation, rightsizing or closure will be required, on an increasing basis, where enrolment is no longer viable.*
- (c) *In growth sectors, initiatives will be aimed at achieving a sector utilization rate of 85 per cent to enable construction of new schools where they are needed in developing communities.*
- (d) *The process will reduce the dependency on designated receiving schools and long ride times.*
- (e) *Consideration will be given to upgrading receiving schools identified as a result of school or program closure.*

#### **5.1.4 Accommodation and Program Needs Met Within Sectors**

- (a) *Where possible, student needs for programs will be met within the student's resident sector.*
- (b) *Consideration will be given to ensuring that there is sufficient space within the district so that students do not have to travel great distances to access basic programs.*
- (c) *The need to provide new schools in growth areas of the city is affirmed.*

#### **5.1.5 Capital Investment Contingent Upon Confirmation of Long-term Viability**

- (a) *In the identification of existing schools for preservation projects, the school's long-term viability, in terms of programming and student enrolment, will be considered first and foremost.*
- (b) *In instances where long-term viability is confirmed within existing oversized buildings, space reduction initiatives will be incorporated as a component of a proposed preservation project.*
- (c) *The district will continue to maintain and invest in existing school buildings where long-term viability has not been confirmed to ensure that all matters of life, health and safety are addressed.*

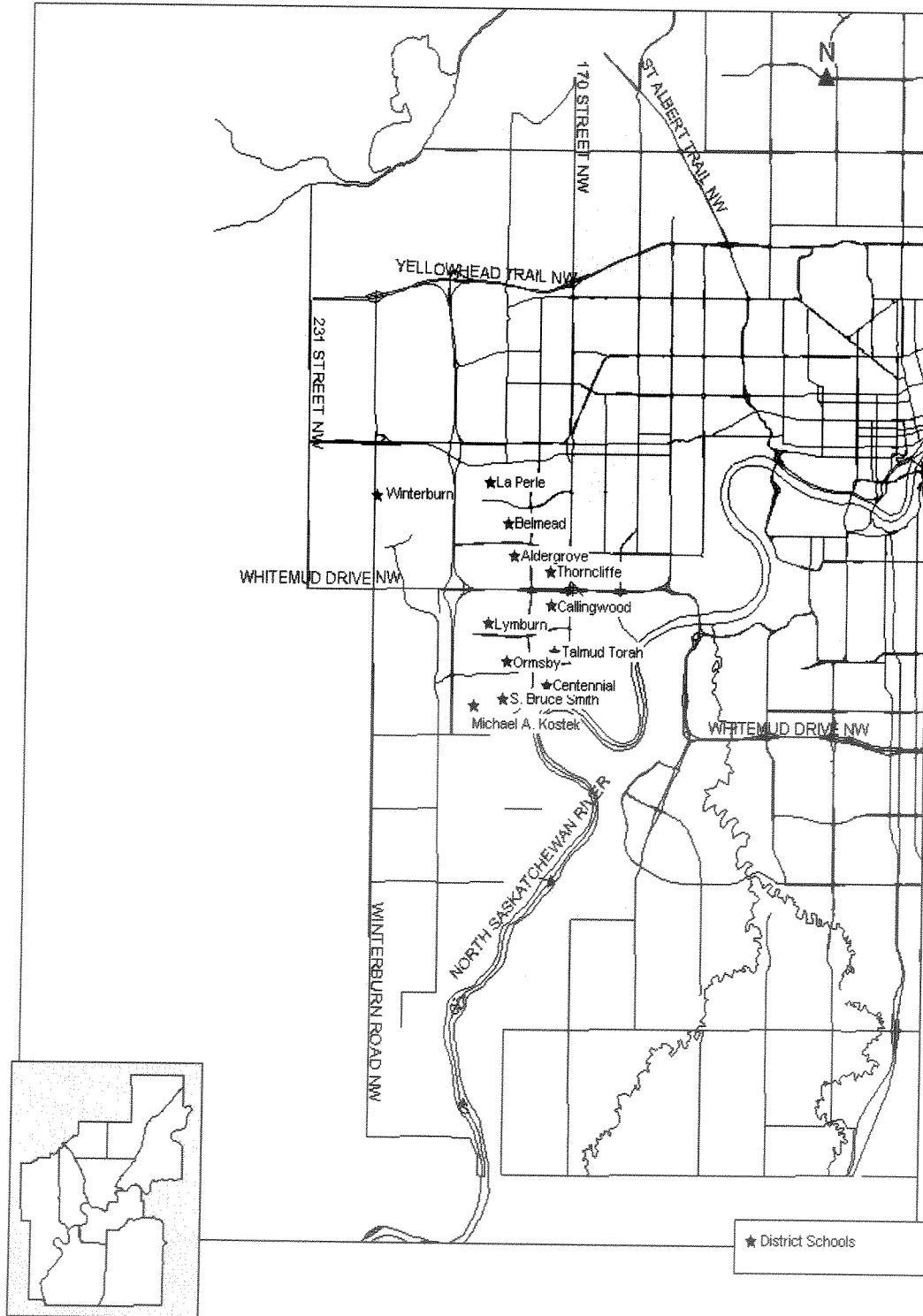
### **5.2 Keeping It Working**

Edmonton Public Schools is resolved to remain at the forefront of originality and innovation through the leadership it has shown in devising and working within an organizational structure that is fully responsive to demographic challenges and ever-changing facility needs. With stakeholder input, Edmonton Public Schools *Ten-Year Facilities Plan* will be more process driven than results-based. As a framework for planning in support of “**Superb Results from all Students**”, it is anticipated that the plan will play a significant part in guiding the district toward continuing success in offering all young people unparalleled opportunity and unrivalled excellence in public education.

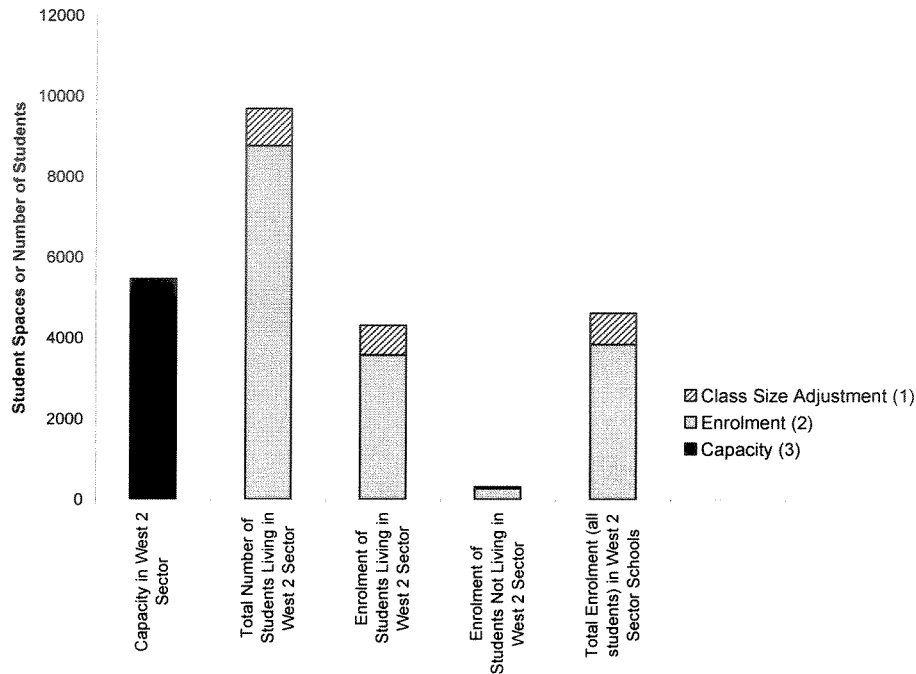
#### **Appendix I Sector Maps**

SECTOR MAPS

West 2 Sector



### West 2 Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- West 2 Sector includes many new and developing neighbourhoods.
- There are 9,692 students living in West 2 Sector, and 5,461 spaces.
- Forty-four per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in West 2 Sector, and 56 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at their designated receiving school, or at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- There are 845 surplus spaces.
- Capital investment will focus on the construction of new schools.

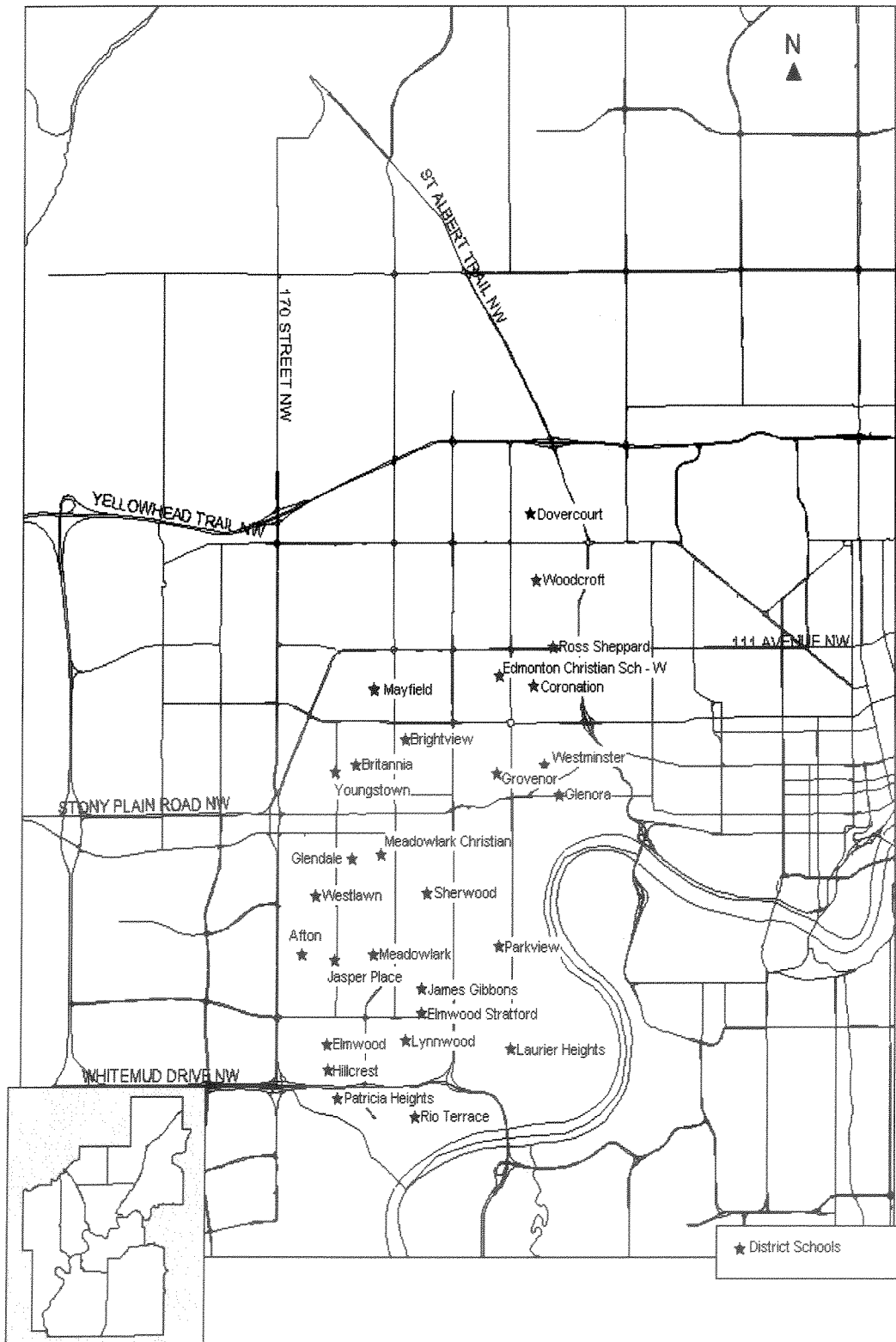
*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

(1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.

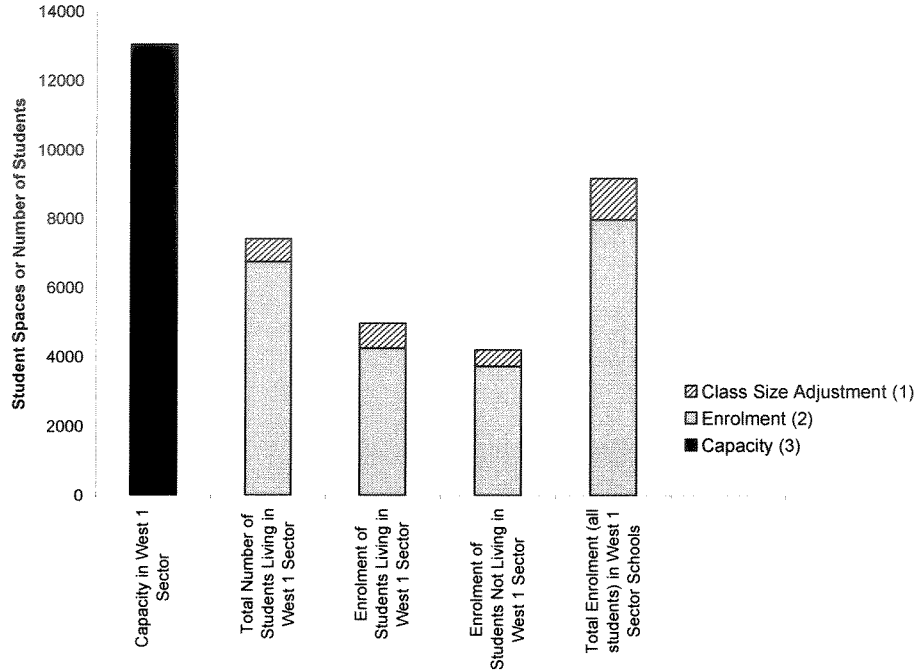
(2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.

(3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.

West 1 Sector



### West 1 Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- West 1 Sector is made up of mature neighbourhoods.
- There are 7,413 students living in West 1 Sector, and 13,042 spaces.
- Sixty-seven per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in West 1 Sector, and 33 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- Forty-six per cent of the students enrolled in this sector live outside the sector.
- Most district alternative and special education programs are found within West 1 Sector. These programs enhance the viability of many West 1 Sector schools.
- There are 3, 872 surplus spaces in West 1 Sector.
- Major capital investment in West 1 Sector schools will be contingent upon confirmation of their long-term viability.

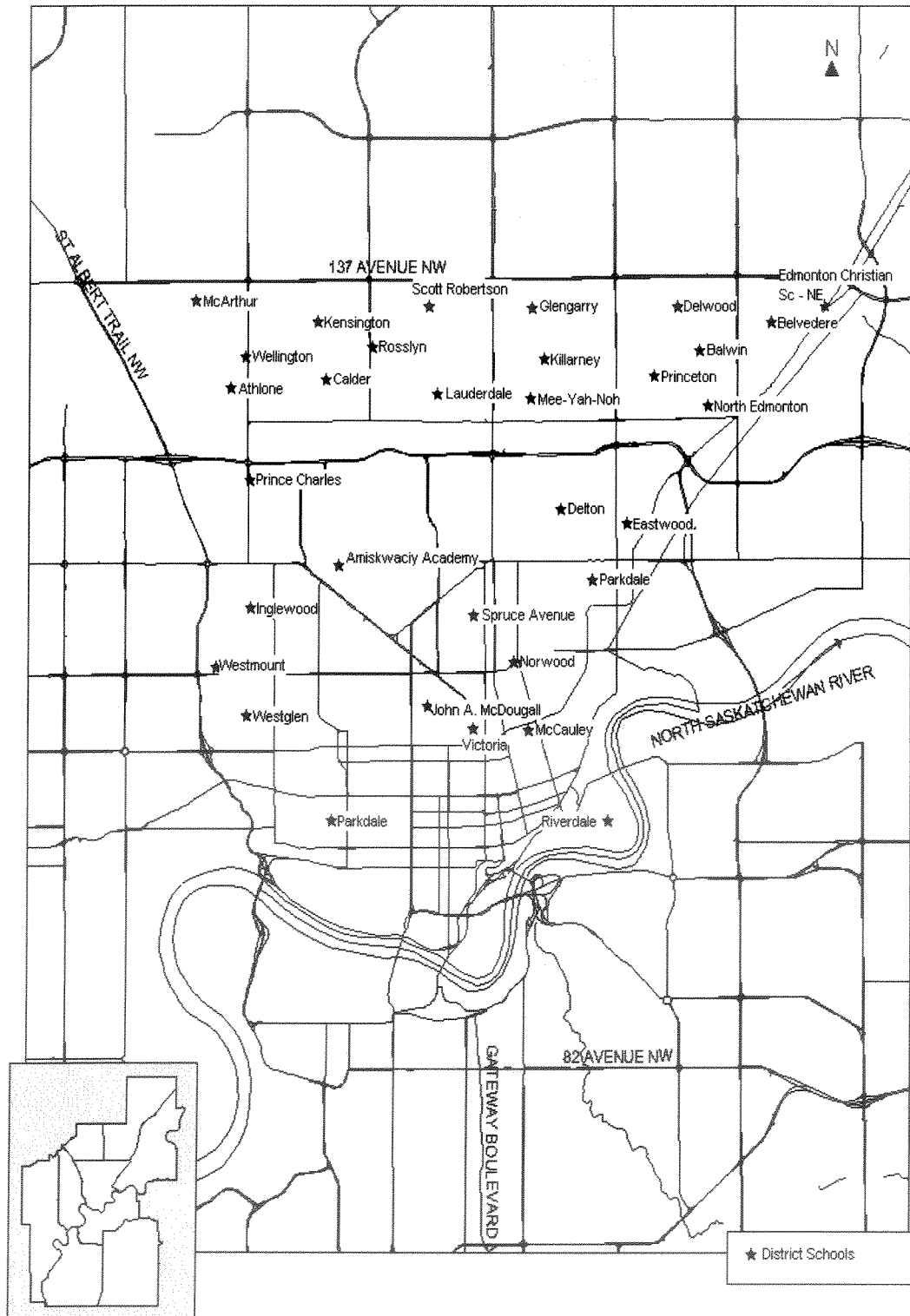
*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

(1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.

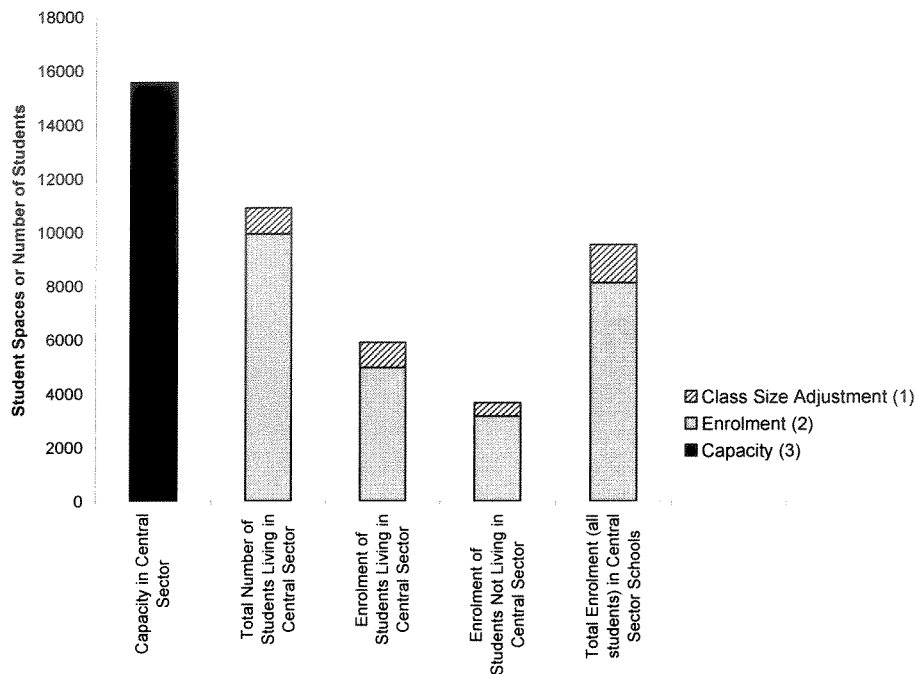
(2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.

(3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.

Central Sector



### Central Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- Central Sector is made up of some of Edmonton's oldest neighbourhoods.
- There are 10,902 students living in Central Sector, and 15,561 spaces.
- Fifty-four per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in Central Sector, and 46 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- Thirty-eight per cent of the students enrolled in this sector live outside the sector.
- Many district alternative and special education programs are found within Central Sector. These programs enhance the viability of many Central Sector schools.
- There are 6,024 surplus spaces in Central Sector.
- Major capital investment in Central Sector schools will be contingent upon confirmation of their long-term viability.

*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

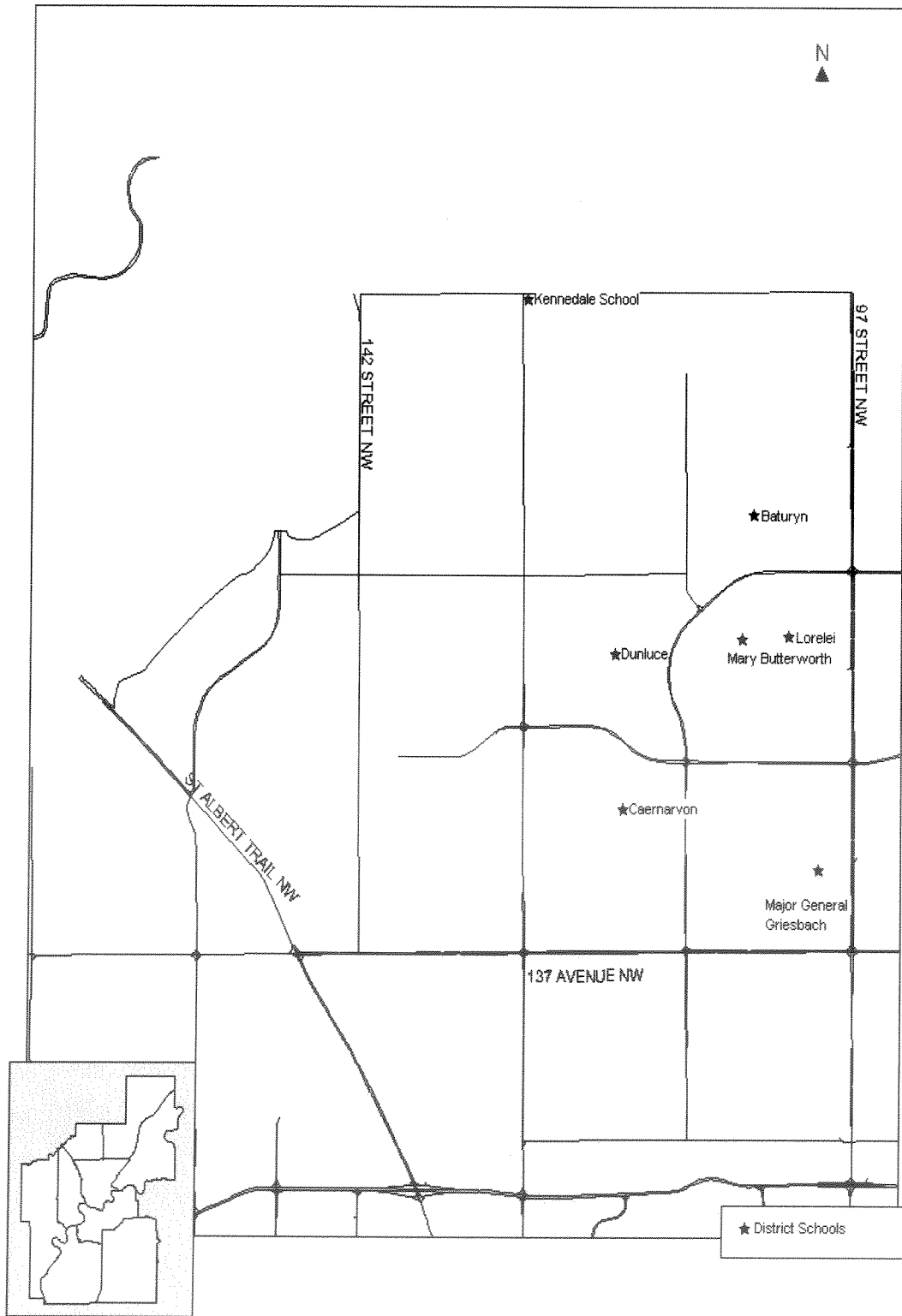
(1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.

(2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.

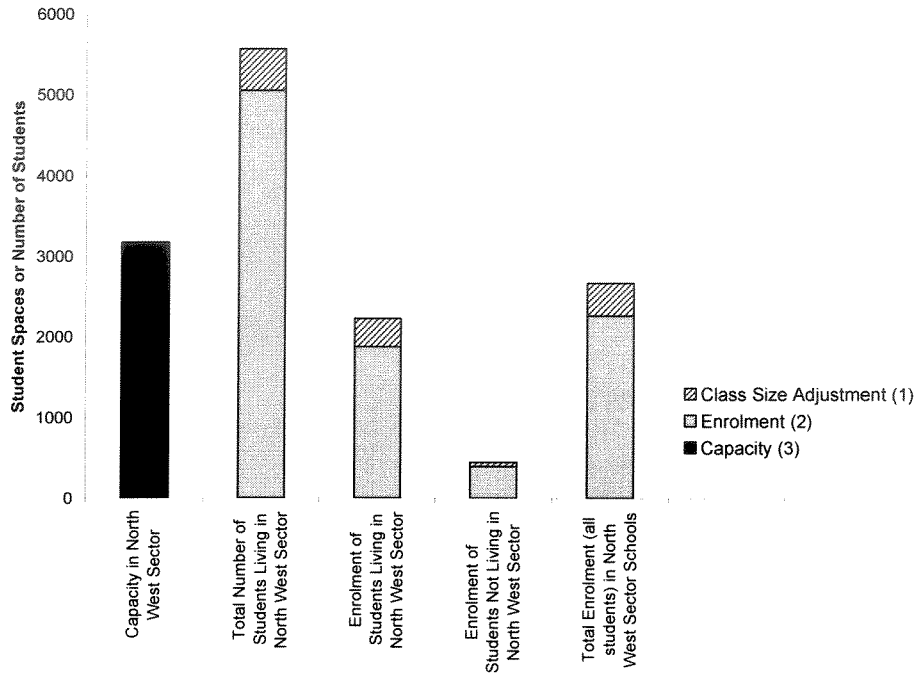
(3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.



North West Sector



### North West Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- North West Sector includes many new and developing neighbourhoods.
- There are 5,564 students living in North West Sector, and 3,167 spaces.
- Forty per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in North West Sector, and 60 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at their designated receiving school, or at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- There are 502 surplus spaces.
- Capital investment will focus on the construction of new schools.

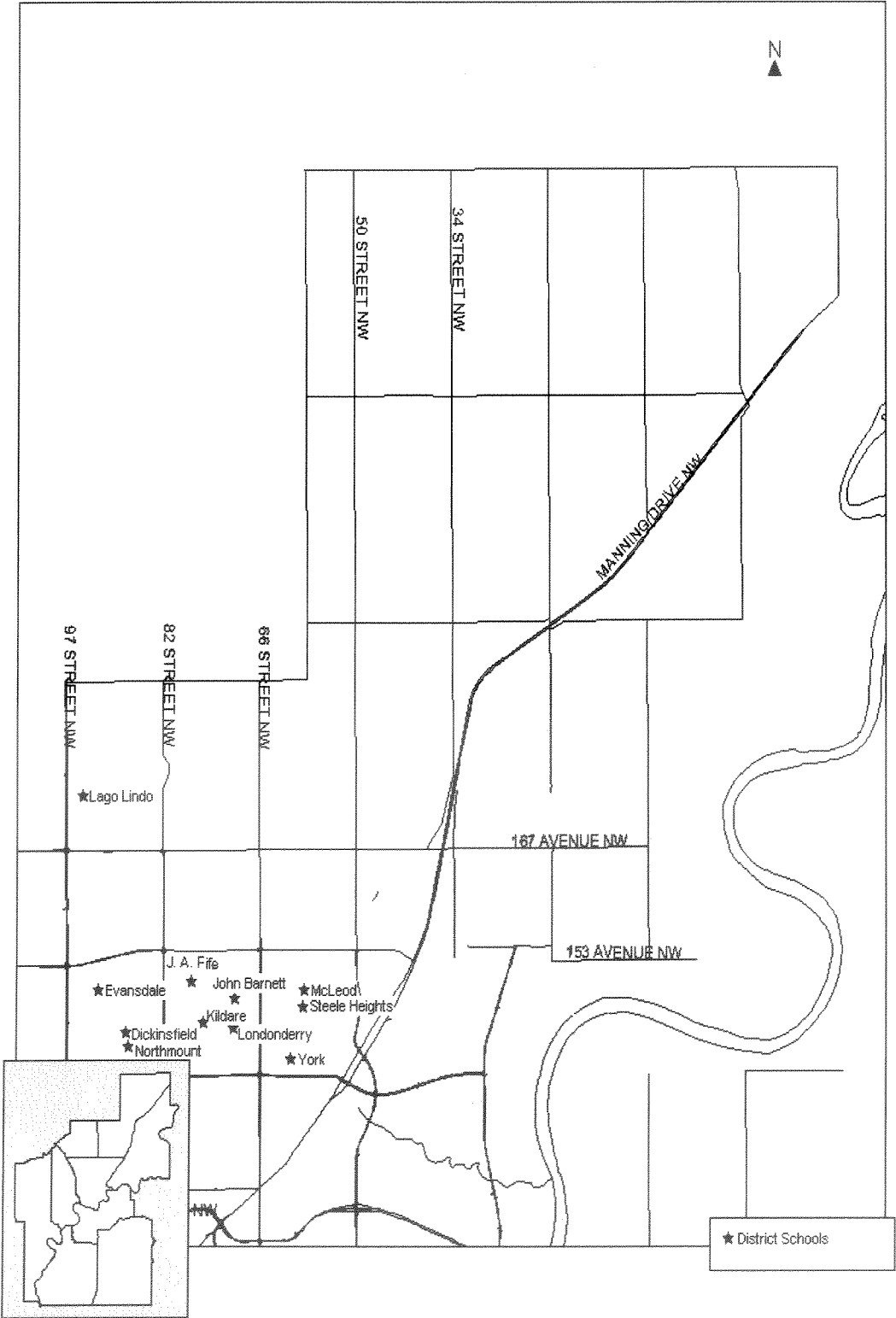
*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

(1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.

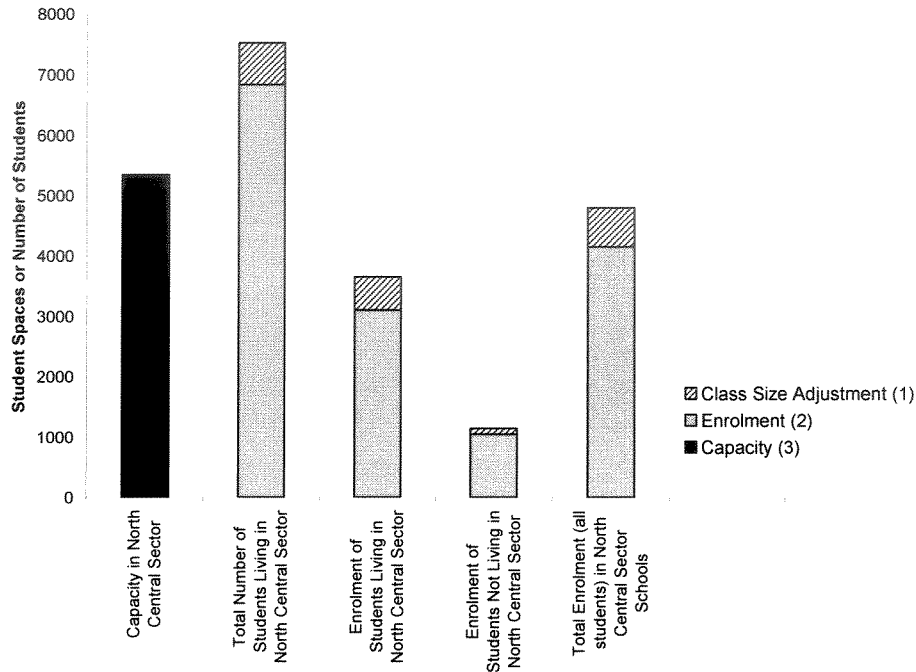
(2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.

(3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.

North Central Sector



### North Central Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- North Central Sector includes many new and developing neighbourhoods.
- There are 7,522 students living in North Central Sector, and 5,347 spaces.
- Forty-eight per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in North Central Sector, and 52 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at their designated receiving school, or at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- There are 557 surplus spaces.
- Capital investment will focus on the construction of new schools.

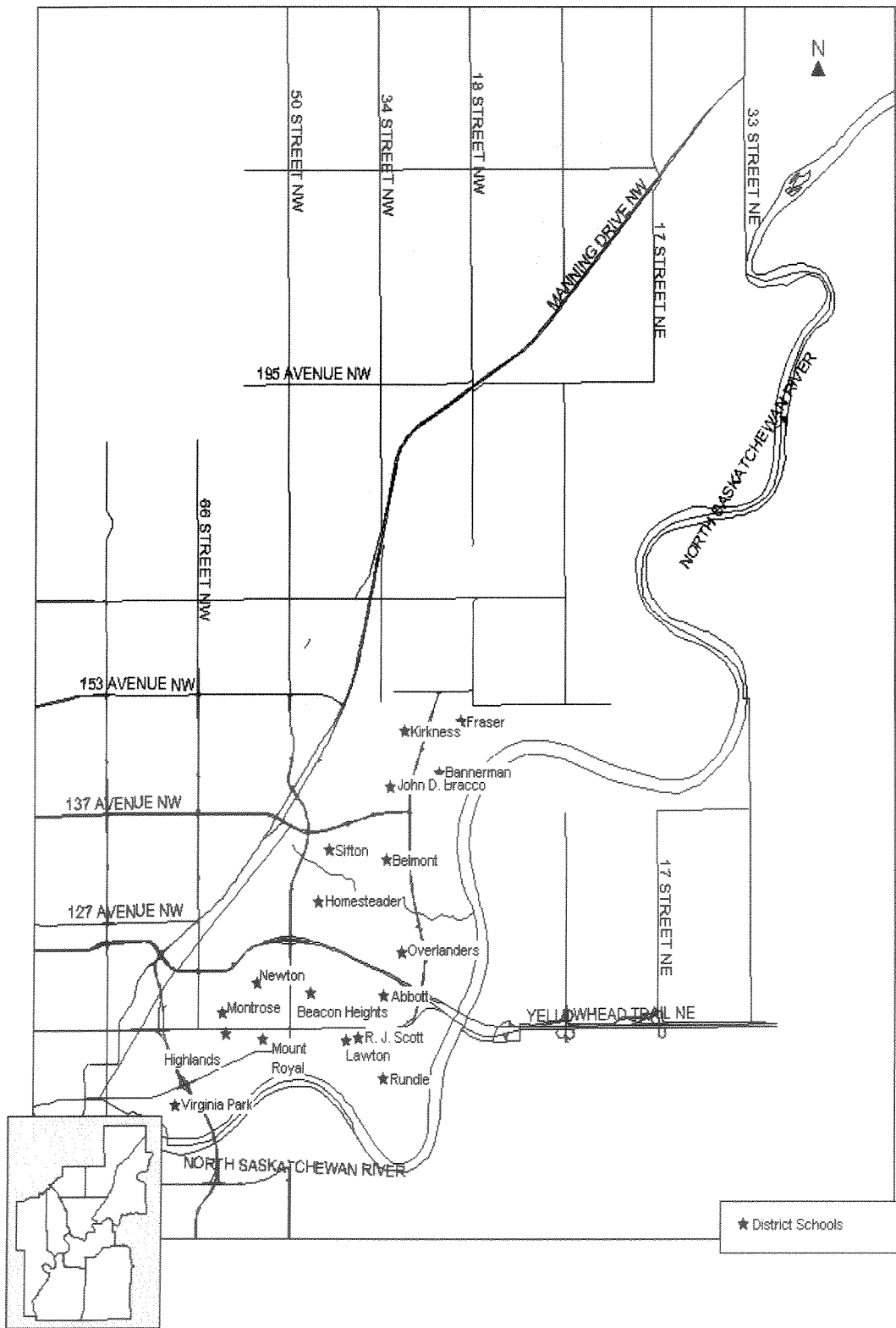
*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

(1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.

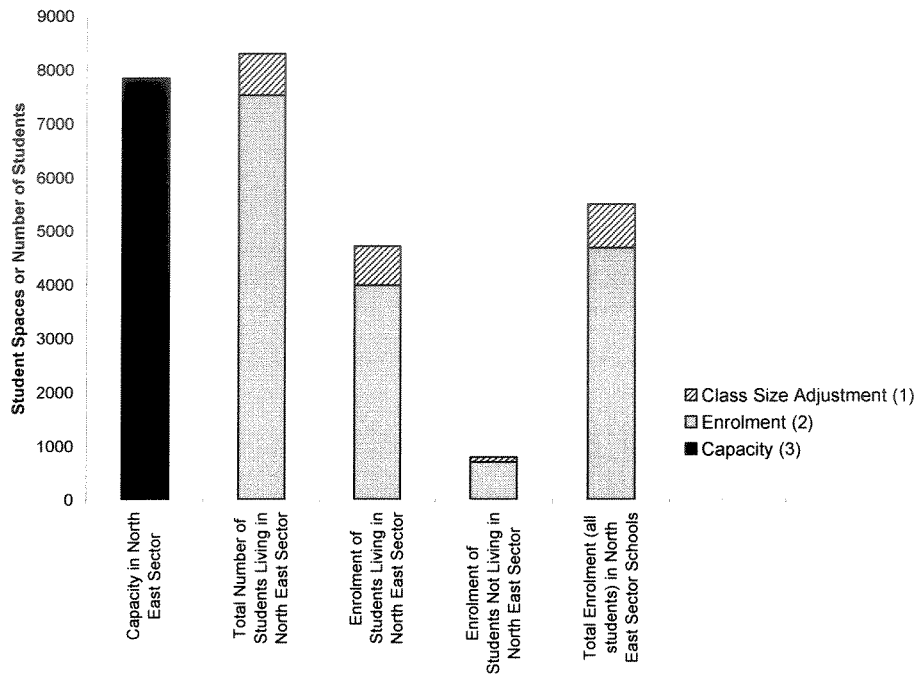
(2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.

(3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.

# North East Sector



### North East Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- North East Sector includes mature neighbourhoods, and new and developing neighbourhoods.
- There are 8,294 students living in North East Sector, and 7,839 spaces.
- Fifty-seven per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in North East Sector, and 43 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- There are 2,347 surplus spaces.
- Major capital investment in North East Sector schools will be contingent upon confirmation of their long-term viability.

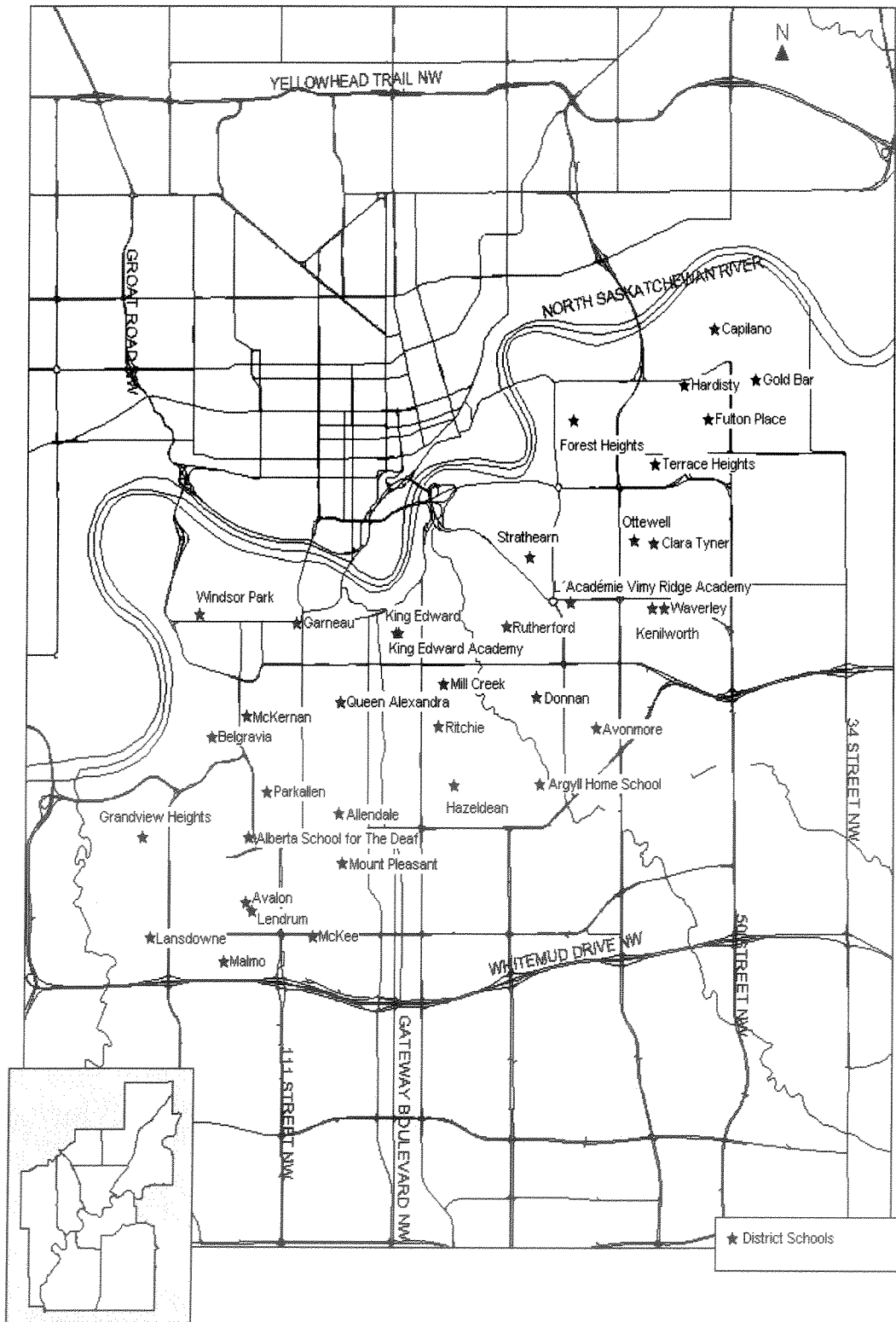
*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

(1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.

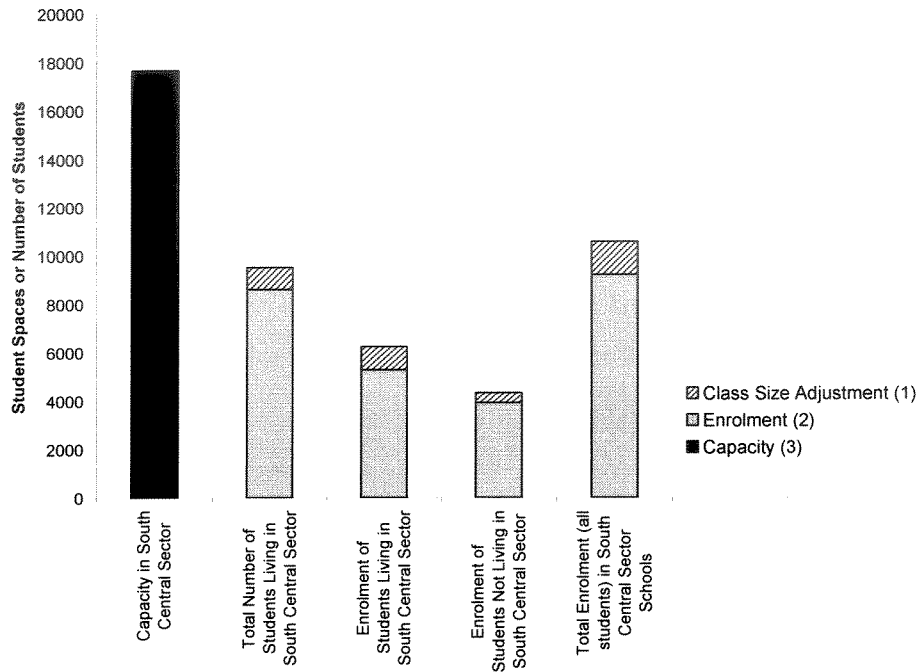
(2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.

(3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.

# South Central Sector



### South Central Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



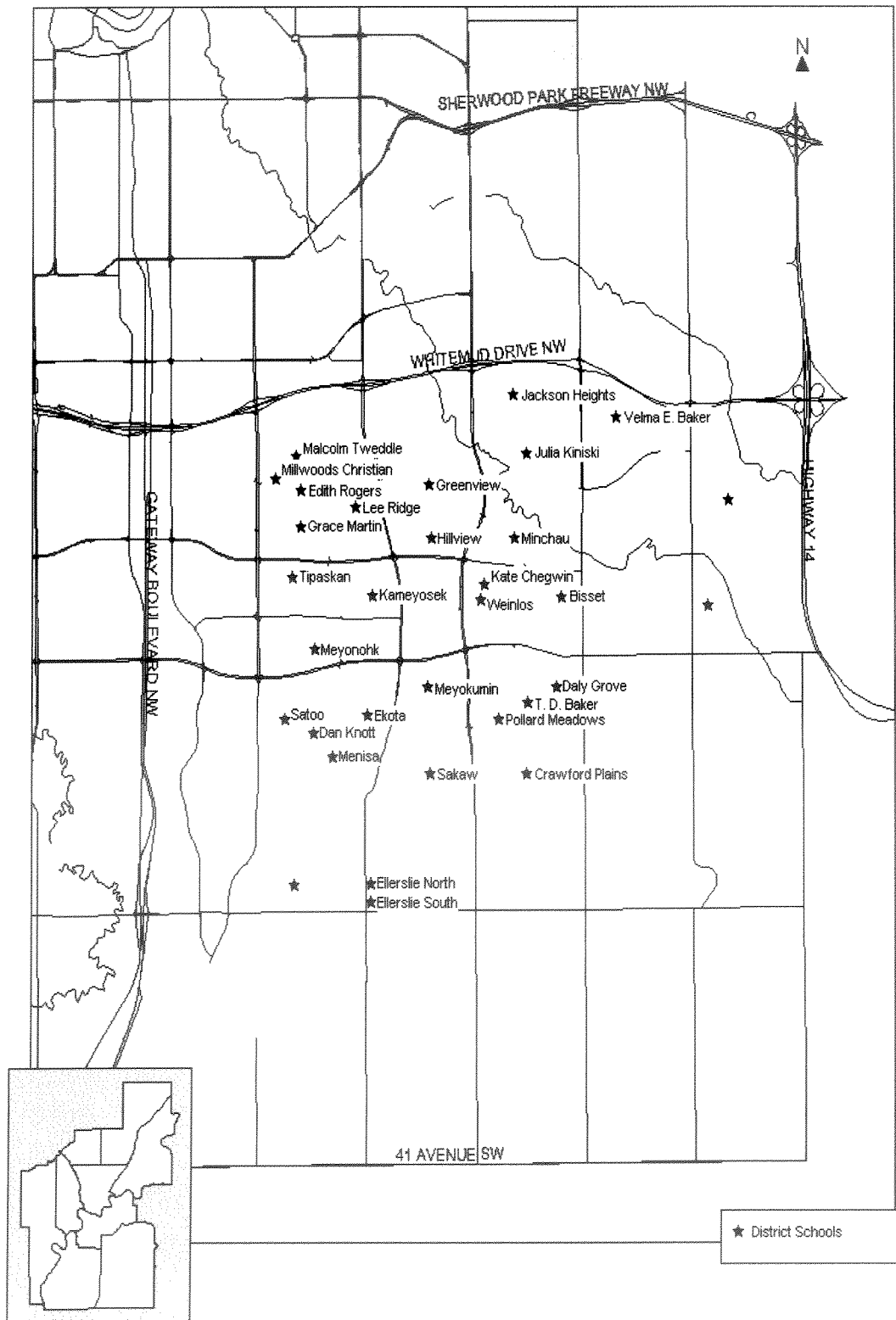
- South Central Sector is made up of mature neighbourhoods.
- There are 9,516 students living in South Central Sector, and 17,657 spaces.
- Sixty-six per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in South Central Sector, and 34 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- Forty-one per cent of the students enrolled in this sector live outside the sector.
- Most district alternative and special education programs are found within South Central Sector. These programs enhance the viability of many South Central Sector schools.
- There are 7,086 surplus spaces in South Central Sector.
- Major capital investment in South Central Sector schools will be contingent upon confirmation of their long-term viability.

*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

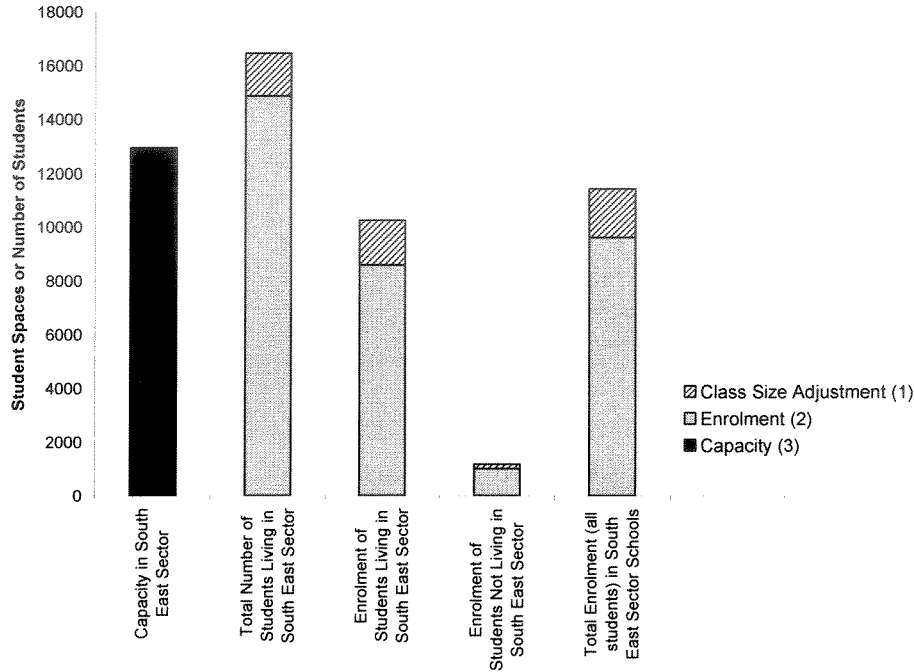
- (1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.
- (2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.
- (3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.



# South East Sector



### South East Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- South East Sector includes new and developing neighbourhoods.
- There are 16,467 students living in South East Sector, and 12,950 spaces.
- Sixty-two per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in South East Sector, and 38 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at their designated receiving school, or at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- There are 1,531 surplus spaces.
- Capital investment will focus on the construction of new schools.

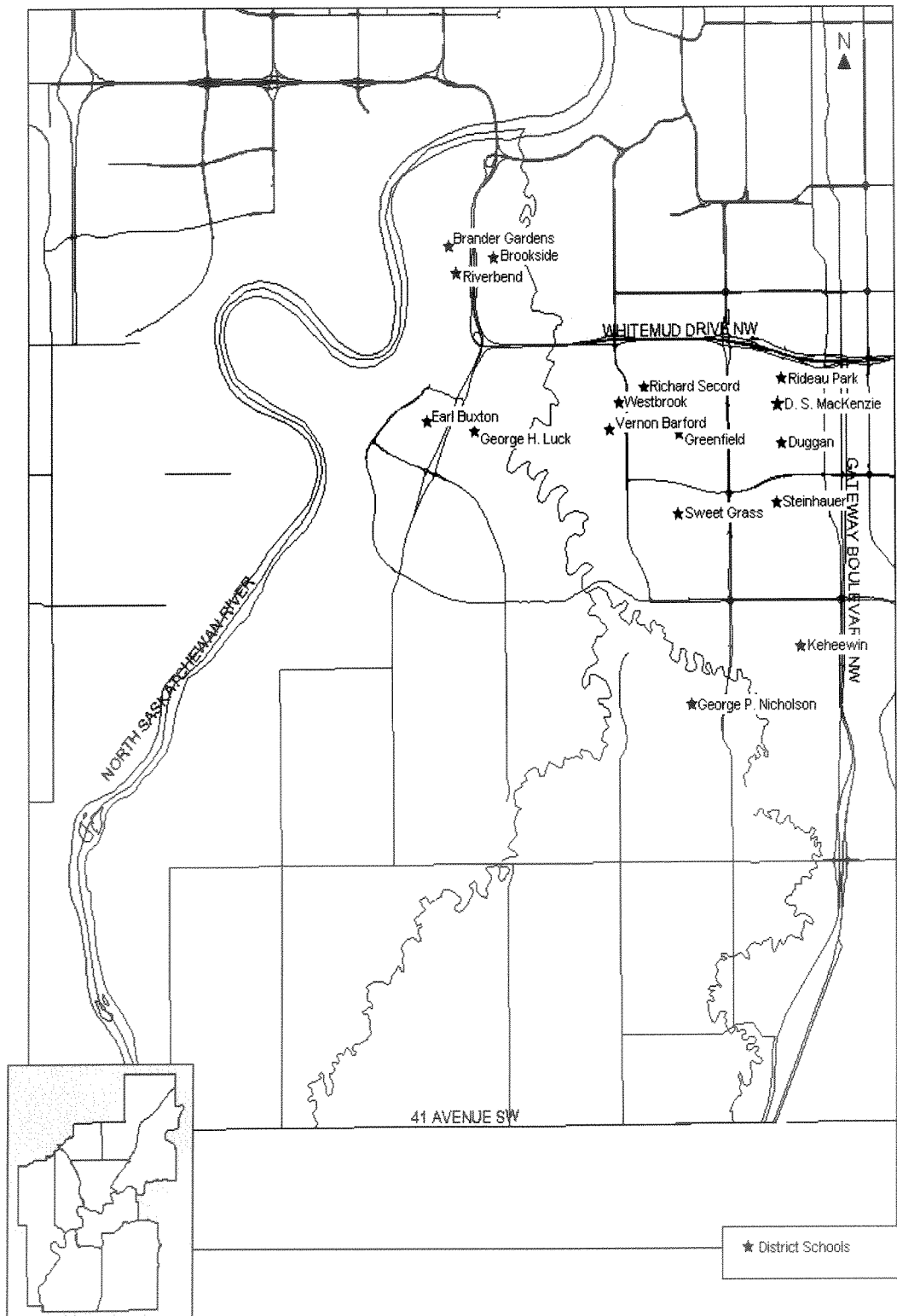
*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

(1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.

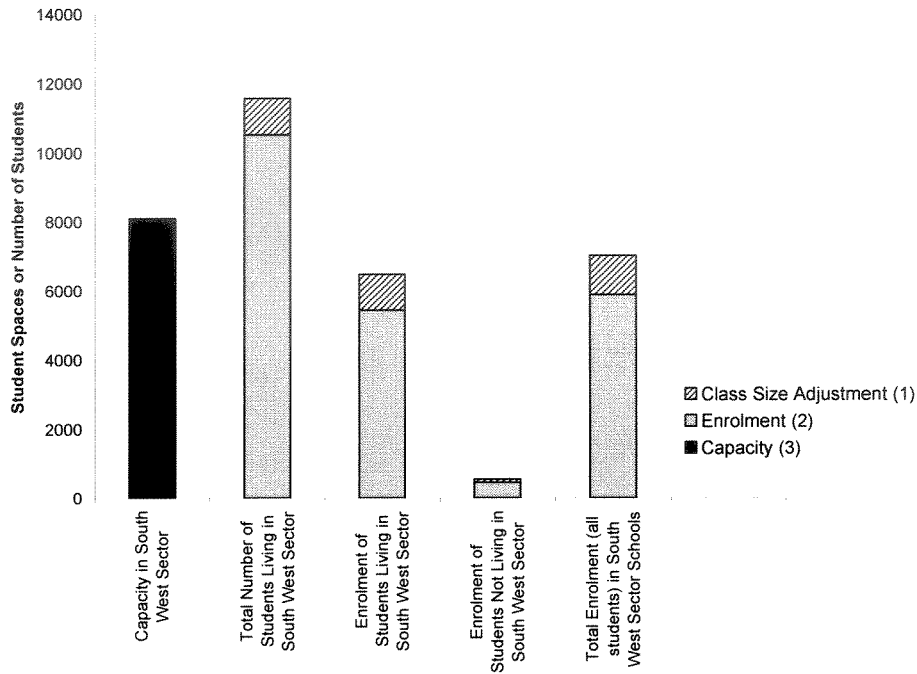
(2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.

(3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.

South West Sector



### South West Sector: Capacity and Enrolment

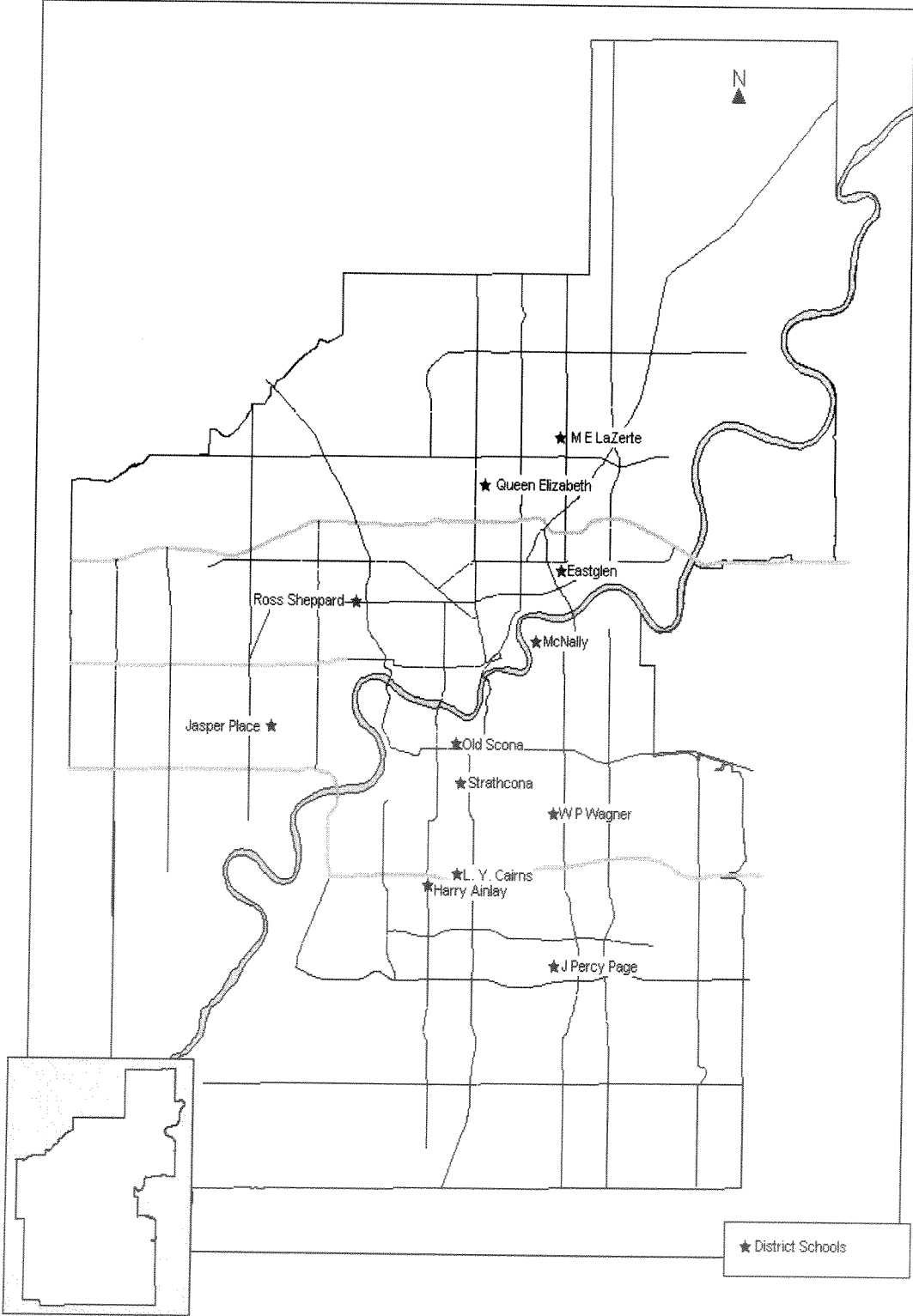


- There are 11,567 students living in South West Sector, and 8,092 spaces.
- Fifty-six per cent of students living in this sector are enrolled at schools located in South West Sector, and 44 per cent are enrolled outside the sector at their designated receiving school, or at other schools offering regular and district alternative and special education programs.
- There are 1,076 surplus spaces.
- Capital investment will focus on the construction of new schools.

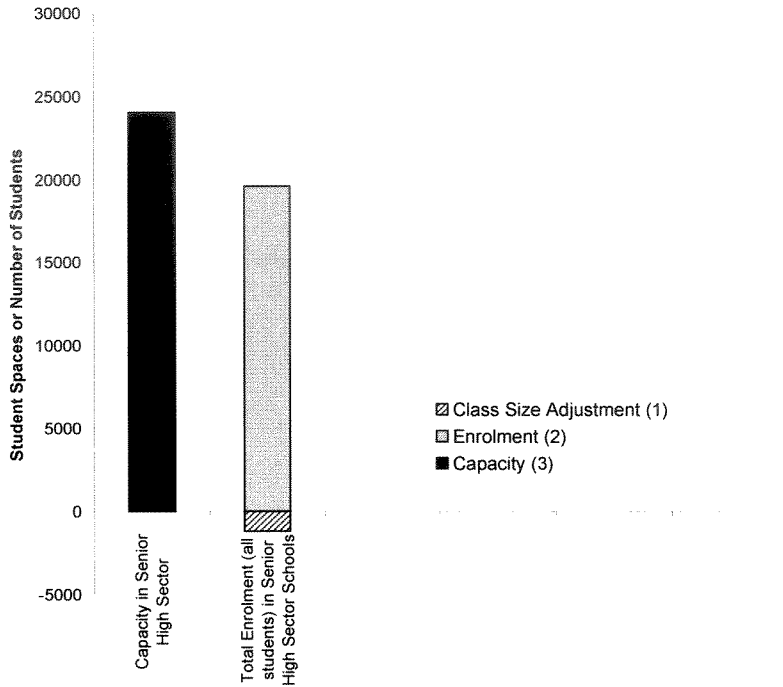
*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

- (1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission's class size targets.
- (2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.
- (3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.

High School Sector



### Senior High Sector: Capacity and Enrolment



- Capacity of the Senior High Sector is equal to 24,055 spaces.
- Senior High Sector includes schools at capacity, as well as schools under capacity.
- There are 5,628 surplus spaces.
- Major capital investment in Senior High Sector schools will be contingent upon confirmation of their long-term viability.
- Capital investment will also include the construction of new schools in new and developing neighbourhoods.

*NB: All residency and enrolment quoted reflects the class size adjustment.*

- (1) **Class Size Adjustment** is a weighting of students to reflect the Learning Commission’s class size targets.
- (2) **Enrolment** is weighted by counting kindergarten students as 0.5 full time equivalents, and students with severe special needs as 3.0 full time equivalents.
- (3) **Capacity** equals the total number of student space. Some surplus space is leased or used for decentralized district administration.