

Community rejuvenation through placemaking initiatives:
Planners, farmers' markets and urban neighbourhoods,
Central Park neighbourhood, Winnipeg, Canada

BY

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ABSTRACT

The research project focused on studying the effectiveness of placemaking initiatives to promote social, physical and economic improvements. The case of study is the Central Park neighbourhood in Winnipeg, Manitoba, named after its major public space. The research indicated placemaking initiatives were capable of contributing to increasing safety, promoting community development and enhancing opportunities for social interaction. However, the capacity of placemaking to achieve positive improvements is directly determined by the involved stakeholders. The Central Park initiatives were successful due to the emphasis on engaging the residents and neighbourhood organizations. The residents were given the opportunity to meaningfully share their experience and aspirations with external stakeholders. The collaborative approach to placemaking contributed to the development of a sense of ownership. The residents saw their input reflected in the amenities and programming offered in Central Park. The planning profession can benefit from using placemaking practices to engage in comprehensive planning.

Keywords: placemaking, comprehensive planning, farmers' markets, urban revitalization, inner city neighbourhoods

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DEDICATION

A mi padre, Francisco José Velarde y Moya, que descansa en paz.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“First we shape the cities – then they shape us”
Gehl, J., *Cities for People*

The urban built environment is an artificial construction of humankind. Naturally, the function and appearance of the built environment is expected to serve the needs and purposes of people. Historically, cities were effectively built at a human scale; the city structure was compact and individual buildings responded to their surrounding environment. Yet, over the last century technological advancements brought drastic changes to the built environment. For example, the mass ownership of the private vehicle allowed people to travel greater distances. Proximity between the home and the locations of employment and recreation became less relevant.

In the 20th century, the traditional compact built form and mix of land uses was often thought to be no longer essential for community development. The suburbs often became, for those able to afford it, a preferred option for living. Meanwhile, the inner cities of many communities were negatively impacted as people and sources of employment left for newer suburban locations. Over time, many urban spaces traditionally used for social and cultural interaction were sacrificed to make way for the changes demanded to accommodate urban sprawl.

The human dimension was increasingly ignored in many communities. People saw their living environment increasingly invaded, and often dominated, by the requirements of economic activities and transportation needs (Gehl, 2010, pp. 3-4). For example, even today many cities have a disproportionate expenditure for road construction or law enforcement in comparison to community services and amenities. However, the social, economic, and environmental costs of ignoring human needs are becoming increasingly visible and harder to ignore. The City of

Winnipeg itself experiences a burdensome infrastructure deficit partially attributable to decades of uncontrolled urban sprawl.

Not surprisingly, cities are increasingly recognizing the value of emphasizing people's needs. A city that is lively, safe and sustainable is more likely to attract resourceful people necessary to overcome current and future challenges (Rogers, 2000, p. 227). However, to attract the right people to our urban areas, and to retain them, changes are needed in the approach to community building. Fortunately, there are many options and opportunities to integrate the human dimension in our built environment. For example, after an earthquake in 1989 San Francisco closed the Embarcadero Freeway to vehicular traffic and instead redeveloped the freeway for pedestrian use. Meanwhile, Copenhagen aggressively promoted biking for people of all ages and backgrounds in an attempt to change the patterns of travel of residents.

The initiatives undertaken by San Francisco and Copenhagen are very different, yet, the two initiatives share a common objective; both were focused on creating memorable places for people to enjoy. These memorable places were created through a placemaking process. Placemaking can be described as an undertaking directed at enhancing the urban living conditions for the benefit of people. Through the use of placemaking both initiatives prioritized the human scale over other urban elements. The two initiatives are in their own ways open invitations for people to enjoy the urban experience of the city.

San Francisco and Copenhagen are not alone in their efforts to integrate the human dimension. Many other cities are also implementing their respective initiatives to redevelop neglected and dull spaces into memorable places that fulfill the needs of residents. The city of Winnipeg is among the cities that are gradually becoming more involved with placemaking initiatives. These local initiatives deserve attention and analysis in order to draw learning experiences translatable to other similar communities in the city and beyond.

The following practicum attempts to document two recent placemaking initiatives in the city of Winnipeg, one initiative is known as the Central Market for Global Families and the other is the rejuvenation of the Central Park public space. The particular initiatives occurred in the neighbourhood of Central Park in Winnipeg's inner city. The neighbourhood of Central Park takes its name from the park of the same name located within the neighbourhood's boundaries. At the end of the 19th century, the Central Park neighbourhood was an affluent area that enjoyed the benefits of having one of the first urban parks in Winnipeg (Cavett, Selwood and Lehr, 1982, p. 27). However, over the decades the neighbourhood experienced a number of changes including an increasing in urban density and a socio-economic downturn from which it has only recently started to recover.

The Central Market for Global Families and the park rejuvenation represent part of the efforts by residents, community organizations, and public and private entities to revitalize the neighbourhood. The author selected these placemaking initiatives for their potential to positively redefine the identity and character of the Central Park neighbourhood over time. The placemaking initiative involved the rejuvenation of the Central Park through the addition of new amenities and the establishment of a seasonal farmers' market by a local community organization.

The practicum presents an overview of the evolution of the park rejuvenation and seasonal farmers' market from their initial conception to the time of writing in August, 2012. The overview was developed through a critical analysis of publicly available information and conversations with key stakeholders. The inquiry process included the diverse perspectives and opinions of people involved with aspects such as design, financing and management of the rejuvenation project and the seasonal farmers' market.

Overall, the practicum is expected to provide the reader with a broad view of the challenges and opportunities associated with the implementation of placemaking initiatives in the context of an inner city neighbourhood. Additionally, the research offers insight into the value of public places as resources for urban rejuvenation. The Central Park neighbourhood defines, and is defined, by its urban park. The future of the community is inherently linked to the way existing assets are preserved and enhanced.

The practicum emphasizes the potential of placemaking as a transformative tool for Winnipeg's neighbourhoods. This author believes Central Park is simply one of the latest, but certainly not the last, Winnipeg neighbourhood that can use its public places for the benefit of residents. This author is convinced the planning profession is strategically positioned to assist Winnipeg in its journey towards reintroducing the human dimension into our built environment. The following pages are a direct reflection of the author's belief in the potential of the planning profession to integrate placemaking to create better communities.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Planning is a multidisciplinary endeavour. Cities, to be comprehensively understood, require the combined skills and knowledge of planners with a broad range of backgrounds. Over the years, the profession has continued to expand its scope. Planners often engage in diverse activities such as promoting social justice or natural resource protection (Kaufman, 2004, p. 335). However, generally little attention has been paid, until recently, to the relationship between the planning profession and activities such as placemaking and food system planning (Wight, 2011, pp. 29-30; Clancy, 2004, p. 435).

Placemaking and the food system have often been assumed to be outside the planner's area of influence. Placemaking has generally been dismissed as being connected with more

design-oriented professions such as architecture or landscape architecture. Meanwhile, the food system is commonly thought to be linked with rural areas and the food supply market.

The lack of attention on placemaking and the food system represents a gap in the knowledge and skills of the planner. These gaps must gradually be overcome for planners to become increasingly involved with initiatives such as the Central Park rejuvenation and the seasonal farmers' market located in the same park. Fortunately, the profession is becoming increasingly aware of the potential contributions that placemaking and the food system can make to planning. For example, placemaking is known to be useful to promote resident investment and commitment towards the improvement of neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, food system initiatives such as farmers' markets can be used to strengthen the social capital of a community by providing low-risk business experience for entrepreneurs.

The previous examples indicate that placemaking and the food system can help to achieve goals that planners commonly strive for. The planning profession is advantageously positioned to benefit from the addition of the placemaking and food system dimension in their practice. For instance, planning initiatives seeking to encourage more healthy, sustainable and resilient neighbourhoods can benefit from taking into consideration the food system. In this way, the consideration of the food system can complement and enhance the range of options available to promote desired changes. Otherwise, planning initiatives face the risk of overlooking essential elements to the success of their intentions.

The emphasis on comprehensiveness in planning gives greater meaning to the addition of new skills and knowledge to the planner's toolbox. The planning profession has the opportunity to create a valuable synergy with placemaking and the food system. However, a better understanding of both placemaking and the food system is required to effectively harvest their potential. The present document is intended to increase the understanding and application

of placemaking and the food system in a planning context. The Central Park rejuvenation and the Central Market for Global Families were deemed effective cases to answer the main questions of the author.

1.2 Key Research Questions

The key research questions posed here were developed based on a preliminary literature review. The questions were gradually adapted to accurately reflect the author's interest and intentions. Originally, the questions focused heavily on the food system aspect of the Central Market for Global Families. However, the increasing understanding derived from the case study and the literature indicated some changes were necessary to the initial research questions. The changes performed on the research questions reflect the need to include a stronger emphasis on placemaking over the food system aspect.

The author became aware of the broader planning implications that an initiative such as a farmers' market and public space rejuvenation can have on the surrounding community. The key questions were therefore modified to effectively connect the research with a broader planning context. The changes were deemed necessary to increase the relevancy of the project's findings to the planning field. However, despite the changes the key questions remained unchanged at their core. The final questions often simply expanded upon the purpose of the original questions.

Overall, the key questions presented below provide information regarding how initiatives that integrate both placemaking and the food system can advance a variety of community improvements such as urban revitalization. The key questions also provide insight to the potential contributions that planners can make to the successful implementation of current and similar initiatives in the future. Additionally, the questions were developed to identify key

stakeholders for the implementation of placemaking and food system improvements. Each question is answered later in the document by the author to be best of his ability.

The main question is:

- How effective are placemaking initiatives in advancing diverse objectives and community improvements?

This question is further explored and complemented, by the following three sub-questions:

- How does a varied group of stakeholders influence the implementation of initiatives such as the Central Park rejuvenation and the establishment of the Central Market for Global Families?
- What are the incentives to make use of placemaking initiatives for revitalization?
- What can the planning profession learn from the establishment of the Central Market for Global Families and the rejuvenation of Central Park?

1.3 RESEARCH FIELD SITE/CASE STUDY

The document focuses on the study of two initiatives that took place in the urban park from which the Central Park neighbourhood in inner city Winnipeg takes its name. The studied initiatives were the farmers' market called the Central Market for Global Families, and the rejuvenation project undertaken at Central Park. The neighbourhood is home to 3,555 people living in a land area of 0.2 km² and a population density of 15,277.3 per km² (City of Winnipeg, 2006). Central Park is bound to the north by Cumberland Ave, to the south by Ellice Ave and Qu'Appelle Ave, to the west by Edmonton St, and to the east by Carlton St (see figure 1 below).

The Central Market for Global Families is a farmers' market started by community members, particularly those involved with Knox United Church located at 400 Edmonton St -

across from the Central Park public space. The market initiative was originally developed to help reclaim the park and to encourage a positive perception of the neighbourhood. The area is known for having a high cultural/ethnic diversity with 53.7% of the population being a visible minority and 18% being of Aboriginal ancestry. The market was intended to celebrate the cultural diversity of the area (Wiseman, 2010). The market provides an opportunity for the large newcomer and Aboriginal population to interact with each other.

The second studied initiative, the Central Park rejuvenation, consisted of a multi-stakeholder investment made for the improvement of the open public space. An investment of \$5.6 million (CDN) was made to enhance physical amenities and policing (Western Economic Diversification Canada, 2008). The added amenities included the construction of a water park, installation of children's play structures, public bathrooms and change rooms, open turf field for year-round use, landscaping and new park furniture. The rejuvenation project also considered and accommodated the on-going, and future, needs of the Central Market for Global Families or similar initiatives by providing easy access to services such as sewage and water (Centre Venture, 2010).

The two initiatives were studied making use of semi-structured interviews and literature review. Contact was established with key stakeholders including people involved with aspects such as the management, design, and implementation of the initiatives. The research process provided a greater understanding of the contributions by placemaking and food system initiatives to the Central Park neighbourhood.

The decision to study these two initiatives was taken based on the growing need to understand placemaking and food system initiatives (Wight, 2011, pp. 29-30; Kaufman, 2009, p. 12). The two studied initiatives were seen by the author as opportunities to simultaneously analyze the application of placemaking and food system initiatives in an inner city

neighbourhood. The study of the Central Park case contributes to filling a gap in planning practice.

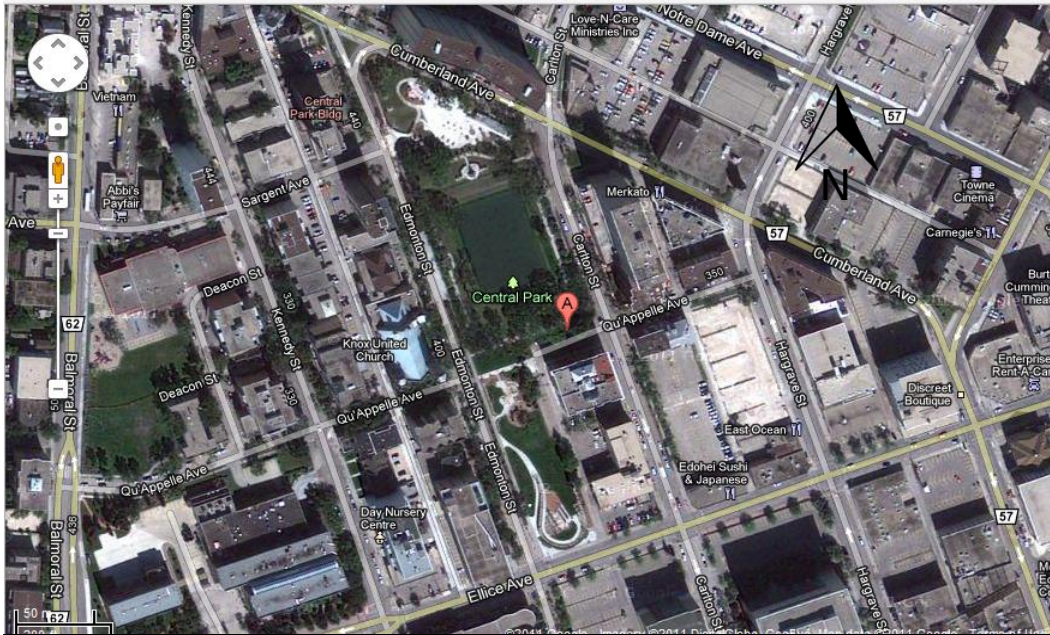


Figure 1. Central Park Location. Note the park extends over two blocks (Scale - 1:50 m retrieved from Google Maps, Nov 8, 2011).



Figure 2A. Redevelopment Site Plan. Central Park rejuvenation site plan (Scatliff + Miller + Murray, 2009).



Figure 2B. The north end of the park. Rejuvenation site plan showing location of Waddell Fountain, Splash Pad and Maintenance Building (Scatliff + Miller + Murray, 2009).

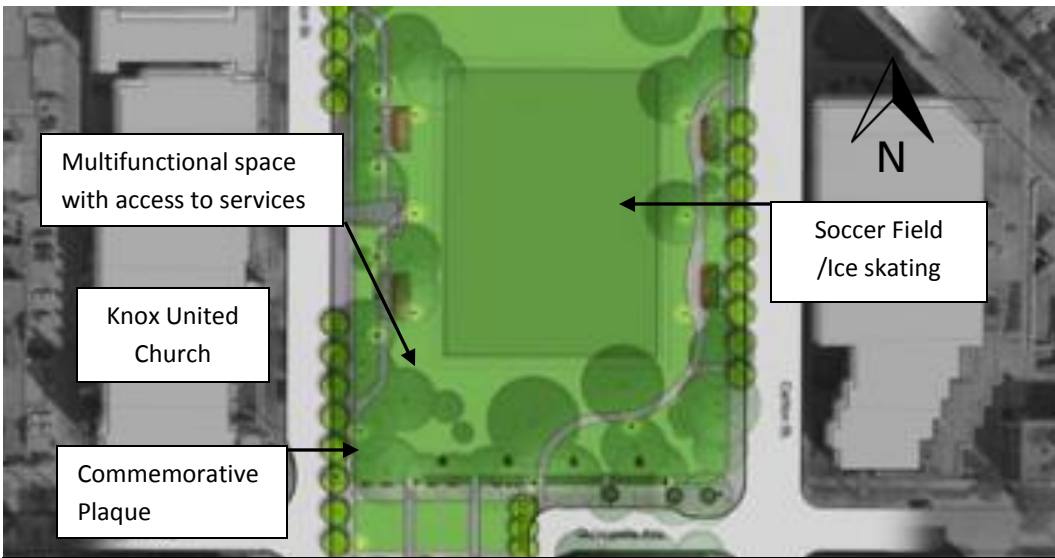


Figure 2C. The midsection of the park. Rejuvenation site plan showing the location of the soccer field and the multifunctional space designed to accommodate a market or other events. The multifunctional space provides access to services such as water and electricity (Scatliff + Miller + Murray, 2009).



Figure 2D. The south end of the park. Rejuvenation site plan showing the location of the slide and tobogganing hill, the “DIY field” artwork, children play structure and sandbox (Scatliff + Miller + Murray, 2009).

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The study is important for its contribution towards overcoming the gaps in the knowledge and skills of the planning profession. The analysis of the Central Park rejuvenation and the Central Market for Global Families provides insight into how placemaking develops and evolves. The findings also offer readers an understanding of the stakeholders commonly involved with the implementation of placemaking initiatives.

The study documents the range of potential effects and benefits provided by placemaking initiatives. The study assesses the extent to which placemaking initiatives can advance diverse goals beyond what they are commonly associated with or originally intended for. The study’s findings confirm and expand upon the work of other authors (Vallianatos, Gottlieb, and Haase, 2004; Wiseman, 2010).

The findings of the study provide an opportunity to identify the potential to synergise planning practice with new approaches to community development. The study hints at ways placemaking initiatives can be integrated into the profession to complement the objectives of planning. Reciprocally, the study also indicates the role of planners and the contributions that planners can make to support the successful implementation and development of placemaking initiatives such as the Central Market for Global Families in Central Park, Winnipeg.

Academically, the study findings are expected to be of interest to planners with the potential to contribute submissions to professional journals such as the Journal of Planning Education and Research. The study contributes to the fulfillment of the demand of professional journals for the gradual increase in the coverage of placemaking initiatives in a planning context. Therefore, the study adds to the growing wealth of research and knowledge available to the planning profession in its pursuit of comprehensiveness.

The findings are expected to also be of interest from a non-planning perspective. The study documented some of the effects and benefits of implementing placemaking initiatives within an inner city context. Groups working on inner city revitalization, such as Centre Venture, Business Improvement Zones, and community organizations, are likely to be interested in learning more about the potential contributions that placemaking initiatives can make to their work. Additionally, the documentation of effects and benefits of placemaking initiatives can prove valuable to stakeholders in their search for financial support for similar initiatives in the present or near future; by providing proof of improvements the study represents a compelling argument to justify investment in placemaking initiatives.

The study documents the challenges and barriers to the successful implementation of placemaking initiatives. The documentation of challenges, successes, and occasional failures is fundamental to the development of solutions and the refinement of the approaches used to

undertake placemaking initiatives. The study contributes to the development of environments more conducive to the implementation of placemaking initiatives.

Overall, the findings of the study should prove valuable to a broad range of stakeholders. The findings can be useful to inform, and influence, the decision of stakeholders to become involved with placemaking initiatives. The study provides stakeholders with a clearer idea of the results to be expected from their work. Therefore, the study can be part of the key information available for stakeholders to decide if the implementation of placemaking initiatives fits their goals and objectives.

1.5 BIASES AND LIMITATIONS

The document was written under the influence of a few limitations and biases. The limitations included the availability of key stakeholder informants; each person that agreed to participate in the research had busy schedules to be considered. The author had to be flexible during the arrangement of meetings. Some of the stakeholders initially selected to be interviewed were not available. For example, some individuals were not able to be part of the interview process. Meanwhile, other individuals not originally considered for the interviews were later invited. The lineup of interviewees needed to be adjusted based on the willingness and availability of informants.

The scope of the project was also designed to be insightful, yet manageable for the time available to the author. Some topics that merited study, yet falling outside the scope of this research project, were considered at the end of the document. The author attempted to diminish the effects of the project's time limitation by identifying potential ideas for further research.

Regarding biases the author discloses his passion for the topics of placemaking and the food system in a planning context. The passion for the topics had the potential of influencing the

perception of the project's findings. However, the author is convinced the passion for a study area is unavoidable, and necessary, for performing meaningful research; without this passion a project such as this practicum would be unlikely to ever be completed. The document was revised several times to ensure the document fully reflected the findings of the project.

Finally, the author had an additional bias originating from his work at the West End Business Improvement Zone (BIZ). The West End BIZ is a non-profit organization working towards promoting the West End area as a positive environment for business. Central Park forms part of the area of influence of the West End BIZ. The involvement of the author with the work of the West End BIZ could represent a potential conflict of interest. However, the author would like to clarify that his interest and work with Central Park preceded his involvement with the West End BIZ. Nevertheless, special attention was paid by the author to truthfully present the findings from the Central Park case study including the improvements, challenges and failures.

The author is aware that only by presenting a full array of conditions can a place be more fully understood. The document was written to present the good and the bad as accurately as possible; even if doing so implies saying things that other people might rather leave unsaid. Ultimately, the author believes that his involvement with the West End BIZ was an asset for the research project, having gained through this work an understanding of the overall context surrounding Central Park - knowledge that would have been hard to obtain otherwise.

1.6 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The document comprises five chapters and an appendix. The first chapter presents the overall reasoning for the development of the project including key research questions, significance of the project, and biases and limitations. Chapter Two presents the literature review that was instrumental in developing an understanding of the topics of placemaking,

urban revitalization and farmers' markets - in a planning context - and their relationship with the case study. Where applicable, a section named "Central Park Connection" is presented at the end of some of the literature review sub-sections, making the connection between information regarding Central Park and the findings from the literature review.

Chapter Three offers an overview of the research methods used to obtain information and the reasons to select them over other alternatives. Chapter Four gives a summary of the findings and analysis from the application of the research methods. Finally, Chapter Five provides the conclusions for the overall research project. Recommendations are also provided to potentially improve similar research projects. Additionally, ideas for further research are suggested at the end of the fifth chapter. The suggestions for further research include topics that were considered worth exploring, yet fell outside the scope or timeline of the research project. The appendix provides supplementary information such as photographic records of Central Park, sample interview questions, consent forms, and ethics approval, including the informed consent letter (authorizing the undertaking of semi-structured interviews).

CHAPTER 2: KEY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

“Democratic societies depend on the ability of citizens to meet on common ground.”
Jay, Dixon, and Gillham, Urban Design for an Urban Century

Planning as a profession is linked with the creation of communities that fulfill the needs of its residents. The planner must engage in continuous analysis of the current, and future, needs of the population (Canadian Institute of Planners, n.d.). The continuous analyses provide planners with the understanding needed to allocate the community’s resources in environmentally, economically and socially efficient ways.

The planner is expected to predict, and address, the challenges likely to affect the wellbeing of a community. The planner is often involved in developing, in collaboration with other stakeholders, the necessary measures to overcome these challenges. The issues affecting a community can broadly differ in nature, origin, and scale. Yet, regardless of the type of challenge planners must be prepared to deal with them. Some issues affecting a community can be dealt with through simple changes to local regulations. However, other challenges require a more comprehensive approach due their complexity.

Inner-city decay is an example of the later type of challenges. Inner-city decay has often proved too complicated even for many of the best efforts performed to address the issue. The scale and complexity of inner-city decay demands the implementation of comprehensive solutions that address the root causes. Luckily, the planning profession has over the years continued to expand its professional boundaries to adapt to the growing complexity of the challenges it faces (Kaufman, 2004, p. 335). The profession is now engaged with a diversity of topics such as sustainability, social justice, and active transportation.

The diversity of skills that planners can rely on is unprecedented for the profession. These skills can prove useful when developing solutions to the multiple and cross disciplinary

issues affecting our communities. However, despite the profession's drive for comprehensiveness certain topics have often received limited attention (Wight, 2011, pp. 29-30; Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 2000, p. 113). The first chapter of the document made an argument for the inclusion of placemaking into the array of skills available to planners. This second chapter, the literature review, explores the available literature to further strengthen the argument in regards to the employment of placemaking in a planning context.

The literature review first presents fundamental information about the process of urban decay and revitalization. The causes and consequences for urban decay are provided. Subsequently, information about traditional approaches for urban revitalization is supplied. The second section offers a basic explanation of what is understood as placemaking and the food system. Finally, the third section of the literature review present an argument for using, and integrating, placemaking and the food system to complement, and expand upon, traditional approaches to community building and revitalization.

The literature review and the document in general emphasize the value of placemaking and the food system. However, the real purpose is to promote the undertaking of planning that is comprehensive and responsive to the needs of communities. The author sees planning as a profession that must be engaged in creating communities that provide residents with a fulfilling, healthy and enjoyable life. The profession to achieve these grand goals and objectives need the "right tools" and approaches to promote the desired changes. From the author's perspective, placemaking and the food system represent the "right tools" needed by planners to integrate a human dimension in their work. The literature review is expected to strengthen the validity of the author's conviction. The following information provides the reader with the necessary information to form its own opinion. The next section provides information about the causes and of urban decay and traditional approaches to revitalization. Subsequently, later sections

argue for the value of placemaking initiatives such as farmers' markets in the revitalization of neighbourhoods.

2.1 URBAN DECAY

Degrees of neighbourhood decay are a process observed in most, if not all, urban and rural areas (Skifter, 2003, p. 1). This process involves neighbourhoods that experience lower levels of prosperity and progress than surrounding neighbourhoods in their respective communities. A neighbourhood experiencing decay is often characterized by the declining physical condition of the built form. Properties are commonly in poor condition and badly maintained.

The declining physical condition of a decaying neighbourhood frequently impacts the attractiveness of the neighbourhood to existing, and potential, residents. In many cases, those able to afford it move outside the area creating conditions of low demand for property. In severe cases abandonment can become an issue. For example, cities are known to experience abandonment due ailing economic conditions (Yeebo, March 2011). Declining economic conditions and low demand for dwelling units causes cash-strapped landlords to struggle to maintain minimum levels of repair further reinforcing the decaying process.

The social fabric is also negatively affected by neighbourhood decay. Anti-social behaviours become more regular with vandalism, littering and crime increasing in general. As neighbourhoods decay the use of drugs and alcohol often become more prevalent as an escape for the people living within the struggling neighbourhood (Skifter, 2003, p. 52). The low-quality living conditions within a decaying neighbourhood can often cause social tensions between people, particularly in ethnically diverse communities.

Frequently, the residents living in a decaying neighbourhood have a higher mobility in comparison to other neighbourhoods. The high resident turn-over leads to reduced social

interactions and limited investment from transitory residents towards the betterment of the neighbourhood. Overall, the high mobility of residents undermines the social capital available within the community. Social capital is understood as the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000, p. 225). Without social capital residents are isolated and badly positioned to face poverty and disinvestment.

The disinvestment can manifest in several ways. The flight of businesses and homeowners is one of these ways. Businesses and homeowners when they leave a community take with them the former sources of employment and taxes. Meanwhile, landlords can also fail to invest in the upkeep of their building. Shrinking population and declining tax revenue often cause governments to cut back on public services (Skifter, 2003, p. 5).

Overall, these negative conditions constitute the process of neighbourhood decay. The process must be understood as variable and strongly influenced by unique community circumstances. For example, neighbourhood decline occurs differently depending on prevention measures implemented by local or national governments. Many European countries are familiar with the process of neighbourhood decay. Yet, the effects of neighbourhood decay have often been documented to be milder than in similar-sized American cities (Skifter, 2003, p. 49). The difference in the severity of neighbourhood decay is generally attributed to the level of involvement of government authorities.

Public involvement and investment can play a crucial role in reducing the likelihood of severe neighbourhood decay. However, despite the potential benefits public investment must be carefully implemented and planned. Otherwise, there is the potential for unexpected negative effects that outweigh the expected benefits from public intervention. During the 1960's and 70's many urban renewal initiatives ultimately failed to achieve their intended

purposes. The next section explains how the urban decay that affected many urban neighbourhoods came to occur.

Central Park Connection (theme: Urban Decay)

The Central Park neighbourhood has a population of 3,555 persons. The residents have an average household income of \$22,341. The City of Winnipeg average household income is nearly three times as much at a total of \$63,023. Additionally, Central Park's economic families rely on government transfers for 33.2 % of their income (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 14). Meanwhile, 30.2% of non-economic families depend on government transfer payments as their main source of income. In comparison, 9.7% of economic families and 18.1% of non-economic families in the city of Winnipeg rely on government transfer payments as their main source of income.

The residents of Central Park are in general less affluent than the average city of Winnipeg resident. However, despite the income disparity the total dwelling stock (1,950 units) is mostly in good condition within the boundaries of Central Park. Out of the total 1,950 units, 1,360 units are in need of regular maintenance, 460 are in need of minor repairs, and 130 units are in need of major repairs (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 16). The numbers indicate the conditions and level of maintenance of the dwelling stocks in Central Park is actually higher than in the city of Winnipeg as a whole; there are less badly maintained units, and more units in an overall good level of repair.

The overall good level of repair of the dwelling stock in Central Park can be attributed to the fact that many of the units are part of large apartment complexes. A total of 1,640 dwelling units are located in apartment buildings with five or more storeys. Another 300 dwelling units are in apartments with fewer than five storeys (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 16). On a side note, there are only 10 single-detached houses in the whole neighbourhood. Many of the neighbourhood's apartment complexes are under the supervision of government, such as Manitoba Housing.

This involvement of organizations provides a good level of maintenance for the existing housing stock. The involvement of Manitoba Housing increases the affordability of the rental dwelling stocks. For example, the area is known to have an average gross rent of \$481 in one family household (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 17). Meanwhile, the average gross rent of the city of Winnipeg is nearly \$200 more expensive at \$664 (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 17). However, despite the lower average gross rents in Central Park a total of 32.5% of the tenant population still expends 30% or more of their household income on shelter. In general, Winnipeg is not much different in this regard; a total of 27.5% of the city's population expends more than 30% of their household income on shelter.

The neighbourhood despite adequate maintenance levels and relatively affordable cost of rental units has a high mobility rate. In the period of 2005 to 2006, 68.9% of the Central Park population did not move out of the neighbourhood. However, in comparison the city of Winnipeg has a lower mobility rate at 84.9%. The mobility statistics indicate that many of the residents of the neighbourhood are newcomers to the city, and to the country itself. For example, 26.4 % of the neighbourhood population moved into the country in the period of 2001 to 2006 (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 17). Therefore, the area is known to be an entry point for

new immigrants.

The high mobility rate has been partially attributed to the incongruence between family size and the size of available dwelling units. On average dwelling units in Central Park have 1.1 bedrooms. Meanwhile, on average there are 2.9 persons per family and 1.3 children per family (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 15). Therefore, the one bedroom dwelling units rarely satisfy the needs of residents with children. The situation represents an obstacle for single parents and couples with children seeking to stay in the neighbourhood. The discrepancy between family size and dwelling size is an issue when considering that single parents and couples with children represent 36% of the Central Park population.

The high mobility of the population is also likely to be linked to the predominant tenure type in the neighbourhood. Renters or tenants occupy 89.2% of the dwelling units. Only 10.8% of the dwelling units in the neighbourhood are owned by residents (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 16). The percentage of renters in Central Park is unusually high for the city of Winnipeg. For example, renters represent only 34.9% of the city of Winnipeg tenure type. Overall, the differences between dwelling units and family sizes and the high rental rate gives Central Park a transient character that can potentially undermine the social capital of the neighbourhood.

The previous statistics were based on the Neighbourhood Profile prepared by The City of Winnipeg based on 2006 Census information. The information based on the 2011 Census information is not available at time of writing, August 2012. However, from observations the conditions in Central Park are speculated to be similar to what was documented in the 2006 Census. Families observed in Central Park are often part of visible minorities with more than one child. Meanwhile, Manitoba Housing continues to have a high involvement with many of the large apartment complexes found in the area. The involvement of Manitoba Housing is attributed with the good level of maintenance observed in the dwelling stock and the relative affordability of the neighbourhood in relation to the rest of the city. The observations indicate a consistency with the available information from 2006.



Figure 3. Large Multi-Family Dwelling Building. Example of the large multi-unit dwelling buildings common in the neighbourhood.



Figure 4. Multi-Family Dwelling Building. Example of smaller multi-unit dwelling buildings typical in the neighbourhood.

2.1.1 Causes of Urban Decay

The free market is often unable to create, by itself, the necessary conditions to prevent, or revert, urban decay. Neighbourhoods despite being located within thriving urban areas or receiving heavy government investment can be subject to the effects of decline (Bristol, 1991, pp. 170; Roe, 2010, pp. 89-90). Often, two similar neighbourhoods located in the same city can experience very different fates. While one neighbourhood thrives, the other can be affected by conditions of urban decay.

The planning profession is directly engaged with developing solutions to urban decay. However, the development of adequate solutions depends on the understanding of the problem's multiple causes. In the case of urban decay, the causes are wide-ranging and complex. The next section focuses on analyzing the main conditions that contribute to the development of urban decay. Subsequently, the next section presents an overview of traditional approaches to urban revitalization.

2.1.1.1 Physical and Economic Explanations of Urban Decay

Neighbourhood decline in many Western countries has often been explained using economic principles (Skifter, 2003, p. 55). Economists argue decay has occurred as the result of two main circumstances. Firstly, the failure of the market is primarily attributed to the demand for low quality housing to accommodate the needs of low-income people. Secondly, government interventions negatively impact the market by eliminating its "natural" efficiency to meet the demand.

Urban decay is attributed to inadequate wealth distribution that causes parts of society to be unable to afford suitable housing. Simultaneously, government interventions such as rent controls disincentivise investment by limiting profitability for property owners (Gaffney, 2001, pp. 67-68; Skifter, 2003, p. 55). However, these two arguments fail to explain the occurrence of

urban decay in regions with different socio-economic and regulatory conditions. For example, Europe has an extensive history of public intervention in housing provision. Meanwhile, in United States government intervention has been more limited. Yet, urban decay has presented a challenge for both regions.

The presence of neighbourhood decline in all urban areas, despite their background, indicate the action of forces beyond economic principles of supply and demand. One of such “forces” includes building life-expectancy. The building life-expectancy explanation argues that urban decay occurs in correlation with the rising cost of maintaining and updating aging building stock. The building life-expectancy adds a physical dimension to the explanations of urban decay. However, the physical explanation is not enough to fully explain the process of neighbourhood decline.

There are variables that are left unconsidered in the physical explanation. For example, as buildings age is reasonable to expect maintenance cost to increase. Yet, research indicates maintenance costs plateau at approximately 40% of initial cost stabilizing after the first 20-25 years (Rydell, 1970, pp. 21-28). As long as maintenance is performed regularly, and in a timely basis, there is little empirical evidence suggesting a building cannot be preserved indefinitely (Rothenberg, Galster, Butler, and Pitkin, 1991, pp. 232-233). In addition, as the cost for construction of new dwellings has increased the economic viability of replacing older buildings is diminished.

It is logical to assume that bearing the maintenance cost of older building can outweigh, under given circumstances, the replacement of dilapidated and neglected properties (Skifter, 2003, p. 57). Overall, the wider recognitions of embodied energy and disruption cost also supports the performance of regular maintenance. The next section expands on the physical

explanation of urban decay by presenting the market and social reasons neighbourhoods experience decay.

Central Park Connection (theme: Physical and Economic Explanations of Urban Decay)

Buildings in Central Park are generally over 25 years old. A total of 83.8% of the dwelling units in the neighbourhood were built before 1980 (City of Winnipeg, 2007, p. 16). The building life-expectancy, or physical dimension, can be expected to play a dismissible role in the processes of neighbourhood decline in Central Park; theoretically, the maintenance cost plateau has been reached in the neighbourhood a long time ago. Therefore, it is more reasonable to simply maintain the existing high-density building stock and urban structure of the neighbourhood. Little incentive exists to demolish the available older dwelling stock to replace it with newer properties.

Available information indicates the physical explanation of neighbourhood decline has limited effect in Central Park. Older buildings are mostly in adequate state of maintenance. However, the economic explanation to neighbourhood decline is more likely to have an effect on Central Park. The neighbourhood is known to fulfill the demand for affordable or at least cheaper housing stock in the city of Winnipeg. The city of Winnipeg is also known to have a very low vacancy rate. The province of Manitoba itself has the lowest rental vacancy rate in the whole country at a 1.0% vacancy (CMHC, 2011, p. 4). Finding suitable shelter is a challenge within the existing market. Nevertheless, low-income people require places to live and Central Park has often provided suitable housing to people with a limited housing budget.

Neighbourhoods such as West Broadway have a higher rental unit supply at a 92.8% (City of Winnipeg, 2006b, p. 16). However, Central Park is a more affordable option with a higher tenant turnover rate than other neighbourhoods (City of Winnipeg, 2006a, p. 17). Therefore, the low vacancy rate for rental units indicates supply and demand for affordable housing has, and will continue to, perform a key role in the evolution of Central Park as a neighbourhood. The large supply of rental units in Central Park, 89.2%, will continue to attract people struggling to find suitable accommodation in other neighbourhoods due to the low supply of dwelling units in the rental market. However, it must be acknowledged that it is not suitable for a neighbourhood to have such high rental percentages.

A balance must be found between ownership and rental for Central Park to become a more stable neighbourhood. Yet, if the number of renters in Central Park is to be reduced, by transitioning to homeownership models such as condominiums, new rental stock must be made available in other areas of the city. Otherwise, the already low rental vacancy of the city is only likely to further increase.

2.1.1.2 Market and Social Explanations of Urban Decay

Skifter (2003, pp. 57-61) explains that urban decay has been often attributed to socio-economic explanations. The socio-economic explanation establishes that over time society's tastes and incomes have changed. As a result, certain neighbourhoods and dwelling types have

become outdated to the demands of society. For example, the well documented urban flight of the post-war years indicate people left their aging urban communities in favour of suburban locations. These suburban locations fulfilled the demand of the times for larger dwellings and perceptively safer environments with better amenities (Jego and Roehner, 2005, p. 75; Cullen and Levitt, 1999, p. 159).

Nowadays, the effects of socio-economic conditions are still as influential in the fate of a neighbourhood as they ever were (Skifter, 2003, pp. 57-58). When a neighbour begins experiencing initial signs of decline a portion of the residents will also start leaving the community (Skifter, 2003, p. 64). However, leaving the neighbourhood often further reinforce the process of decline already in action (Skifter, 2003, pp. 64-65). The migration of the most affluent residents from a neighbourhood leaves a vacuum that deprives the area of residents willing, and able, to invest in the community.

The migration also creates a surplus of available vacant property. The available properties are often occupied by whoever is willing to tolerate the conditions that drove the previous residents out of the neighbourhood (Skifter, 2003, p. 58). The new residents, often with low-incomes, are generally likely to fail to keep up with maintenance cost; or in the case of tenants, they are not the ones responsible for performing maintenance.

Similarly, landlords often lower their maintenance standards to meet the demands of low-income tenants. Deciding to reduce the maintenance budget is an unfortunate choice especially considering that maintenance cost tends to increase in decaying neighbourhoods. The increased maintenance cost is attributed to the wear and tear caused by disadvantaged occupants (Rothenberg et al., 1991, pp. 276-278). Ultimately, lower maintenance levels impacts the overall quality of the properties permanently. After years of neglect, the cost of repairing the properties is such that demolition becomes the most suitable option (Skifter, 2003, p. 59).

The effects of wear and tear indicate a physical variable to the socio-economic explanation. However, just like in the previous section the physical explanation once again fails to successfully explain the process of urban decay. For example, some neighbourhoods with older and outdated building stocks can, and have, become desirable locations under proper circumstances (Rothenberg et al., 1991, p. 233; Skifter, 2003, p. 59). The process through which older neighbourhoods become sought after is known as gentrification. Gentrification is the process where high-income people displace low-income residents from their neighbourhoods (Redfern, 2003, pp. 2351-2353). Gentrification can in some cases be so severe that it represents a challenge in itself for those involved with revitalization initiatives.

The socio-economic explanation argues the process of gentrification is simply part of a neighbourhood's life cycle (Skifter, 2003, pp. 65-66). It is argued that all neighbourhoods are "naturally predisposed" towards urban decay. Eventually, when the conditions are right the urban decay is followed by a revitalization stage. Yet, some neighbourhoods seem to escape their "natural predisposition" towards decline. Everything indicates there are variables at play that are not commonly accounted for by the physical, economic, or socio-economic explanations. According to different authors (Rothenberg et al., 1991, pp. 287-289; Skifter, 2003, p. 59) the attitude of homeowners, landlords and tenants towards an area can be fundamental aspect for avoiding urban decay. This section explored the market and social explanations to urban decay. The next section provides the behavioural explanations to urban decay.

Central Park Connection (theme: Market and Social Explanations of Urban Decay)

Central Park is an example of the effects socio-economic changes can have on neighbourhoods. When Central Park was originally established it was home to affluent Winnipeg citizens. However, over time these affluent residents gradually moved away from the neighbourhood and Winnipeg's urban core in general. The former residents moved to newer neighbourhoods that catered to their taste and growing income more effectively. The migration process left a population vacuum that took years to be filled with people gradually returning to the neighbourhood. Yet, the new residents are socio-economically different from the previous residents; the new residents are less affluent, but more culturally diverse, than they were in the early years of the neighbourhood (Artibise, 1997, p. 56).

Central Park demonstrates socio-economic changes can have a direct impact on the evolution of a neighbourhood. Yet, even though the socio-economic changes have influenced the neighbourhood Central Park has also managed to defy certain expected effects of the process of urban decay. For example, property owners have maintained buildings at a high repair level that exceeds the average condition of buildings in the city of Winnipeg. The decision of landlords to invest in their buildings contradicts the behaviour that is typically expected from them based on the literature.

Landlords in Central Park have maintained high standards of repair regardless of the lower-income of tenants. However, the neighbourhood has not managed to avoid all the negative effects of urban decay. For example, the neighbourhood has an overconcentration of low-income residents. In 2006, the incidence of low-income after taxes was 55% (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 13). The low-income incidence in Central Park is nearly 5 times higher than in the city of Winnipeg in general. The overconcentration of such a large percentage of low-income people is likely to create a negative perception from outsiders to the area.

2.1.1.3 Behavioural Explanations of Urban Decay

The attitude of homeowners, landlords and tenants is influenced by a number of variables that interact and often reinforce each other. The physical, market and social conditions create expectations towards the future of a neighbourhood and the likelihood of urban decay. These expectations develop based on real or perceived signs of decline. For example, a greater incidence of crime can be seen by some neighbourhood residents as a sign of decline. The simple perception of insecurity in itself is sufficient to discourage neighbourhood residents from becoming involved with the wellbeing of their community (Skifter, 2003, p. 105). Therefore, a sign, or perception, of decline can have real effects on the future of a neighbourhood; people often consider signs of decline as a variable of risk to any investment made in a neighbourhood. Risk is a determining factor in a stakeholder's decision to invest (Kutty, 1995, pp. 212-215). A stakeholder's attitude and willingness to invest is, therefore, influenced by their perception of a neighbourhood future (Skifter, 2003, p. 68).

The stakeholder's attitude and likelihood to invest is hard to predict. Attitude is a variable dependant on individual decisions and perspectives. Economically speaking, landlords

and homeowners could be expected to behave rationally. However, landlord and homeowner behaviour is generally anything but rational. Landlords can, and do, behave in ways that could be considered counterproductive to their general economic interest. For example, a landlord might decide to perform building maintenance in an irregular basis. The lack of maintenance ultimately erodes a building's life span reducing the time a landlord can collect an income from the property (Skifter, 2003, p. 73). Meanwhile, homeowners might often improve their properties even if the investment is unprofitable. For example, a homeowner might update their house even if the return on investment was considered low or non-existent (Rothenberg et al., 1991, pp. 276-277).

Gaining a better understanding of the behaviour of landlords, homeowners and tenants can provide valuable insight into the ways to promote positive attitudes and discourage negative behaviours. Nowadays, it is known that the predominant form of tenure is of great influence in the development of a neighbourhood. In particular, landlords display a strongly unique behaviour and motives that are determined by the number of properties they own and manage (Skifter, 2003, pp. 71-72). For example, a landlord owning a large number of properties often displays greater levels of professionalism than owners of one or two small properties. A case study of Danish rental units identified 8 main types of landlords that included informal landlords, small investors, professional landlords, companies with other business objectives, speculative landlords, building trade landlords, financial landlords, and public utility landlords (Skifter, 2003, pp. 79-82).

Each type of landlord has different approaches to the management of property. Additionally, each type has different levels of access to financing and has particular motives for being involved with the rental market. For example, informal landlords are often individuals that happen to own a single property with only a few dwelling units. Frequently, informal landlords

are engaged in the rental market not for financial purposes, but for personal reason such as having inherited the property to which they attach sentimental value (Skifter, 2003, p. 79). Generally, this type of landlord establishes close relationships with their tenants, which encourages them to maintain reasonable levels of repair. However, informal landlords often have difficulty obtaining financing for major upgrades due their lack of experience or evidence of sufficient cash flow (Skifter, 2003, pp. 79-80).

Other types of landlords display very different motives and behaviours than the informal landlord. For example, the professional landlord focuses on ensuring long-term profitability of their property. They also have access to greater financial resources. The professional landlord's likelihood of investing on their properties is determined by the willingness of their "customers" or tenants to pay for improvements (Kutty, 1995, p. 225). Ultimately, the professional landlord sees their property as a long-term investment (Skifter, 2003, p. 80).

Overall, the presented examples help to demonstrate that personal motives of landlords and homeowners perform a role in the fate of a neighbourhood. However, attitude is a variable that is often more difficult to quantify, and predict, than building life span or market demand. Not surprisingly, many models predicting neighbourhood decline often neglect the effects that attitudes and neighbourhood expectations have on the development of urban decay (Kutty, 1995, p. 212). Nevertheless, in conjunction physical, market, social, and behavioural information is valuable when trying to understand neighbourhood decline.

Every piece of new knowledge represents a piece of the complex process known as urban decay. The previous few pages have focused on briefly explaining the factors that are commonly attributed with neighbourhood decline. These pages have provided a glimpse of the variables and stakeholders that are involved with urban decay at all times. Among the different variables at work, people's perception and attitude towards a neighbourhood seems to be

significantly important in influencing the evolution of a neighbourhood. Surprisingly, revitalization initiatives rarely acknowledge the importance of improving a neighbourhood's reputation. Improving the reputation of a neighbourhood is essential to also enhancing the perception and attitude of people towards the neighbourhood.

Many revitalization approaches seek to enhance a neighbourhood by simply improving the physical environment. Investment and grants from governments are often directed to increasing the quality of dwelling units or reducing vacancy levels. These traditional approaches are suitable for certain neighbourhoods. However, neighbourhoods such as Central Park require initiatives that address their specific conditions. For example, vacancy and abandonment is low in Central Park. Likewise, dwelling quality and maintenance levels are already high.

Available information indicates Central Park requires revitalization initiatives that highlight and reflect the strengths of the neighbourhood. At the same time, initiatives are needed to promote changes in the perception outsiders and Central Park residents have about the community. Changes in reputation, perceptions and attitudes are necessary to promote continued investment in Central Park. A promising way to achieve the changes is to make use of placemaking initiatives. The next section explains the importance of reducing social segregation and also presents an overview of the variables that influence the success of urban revitalization initiatives. Subsequently, a detailed analysis of placemaking is presented.

Central Park Connection (theme: Behavioural Explanations of Urban Decay)

Central Park is a neighbourhood where the predominant tenure type is rental (89.2%). Therefore, the attitudes and perceptions landlords have are important for the future of the neighbourhood. For the most part, landlords in Central Park have demonstrated a willingness to maintain high maintenance standards for their properties (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 16). The decision to invest in the neighbourhood can be attributed to the average size of existing apartment buildings (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 16).

Most apartment buildings in Central Park are large complexes five storeys high or more; a total of 1,640 dwelling units (84.1%) of the neighbourhood's 1,950 dwelling units are located in apartment buildings five storeys high or more. Another 300 dwelling units are on apartment buildings with fewer than five storeys (City of Winnipeg, 2007, p. 16). The large apartment sizes

indicate that professional landlords are the predominant type of landlord. Informal or small investors are generally unlikely to be able to have the capital to own and operate the large apartment complexes typical in Central Park.

Professional landlords are known to be interested on the long-term profitability of their investment. Performing regular maintenance allows the professional landlord to extend a building's lifespan. The predisposition of professional landlords to protect their investment explains the overall good quality of properties in Central Park. The capacity to perform maintenance can also be linked to the capacity of professional landlords to access capital and financing. For example, professional landlords are often better able to apply for government grants such as the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative or the Rental Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program. Not surprisingly, in years past landlords in Central Park have successfully obtained grants for rehabilitation projects (Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative, 2005, para. 1).

The willingness of landlords to invest in their properties can be said to be contradictory from what could be expected in a neighbourhood negative reputation. The neighbourhood, together with Winnipeg's urban core, has a tarnished reputation in public opinion. Many Winnipeggers tend to characterize the area as a haven for gangs, and drug users. Comments on local newspaper websites are often charged with negative connotations regarding Central Park, and the urban core in general, even when associated with positive news (Cassidy, May 27, 2012, msg 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 12). Central Park and Downtown residents are often stigmatized as poor and service dependant by certain individuals (Kohut, November 15, 2011, msg 5; Cassidy, May 27, 2012, msg 5, 6, 7, 10 and 12). The oversimplification of the "typical" Central Park resident fails to truthfully reflect the diversity of life circumstances experienced by people living in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, the misguided perception of the neighbourhood has become embedded in the opinion a portion of the population of the city has of the area.

Luckily, the vacancy rates for rental property in the city are considerably low creating a demand for the dwelling units offered by landlords in Central Park (CMHC, 2011, p. 4). Therefore, the area is not affected by abandonment as the urban cores in other cities often are (Skifter, 2003, p. 46). The demand for rental units provides landlords with the necessary cash flow and motivation to continue to maintain their property despite the negative reputation of the neighbourhood. The situation experienced by the neighbourhood requires the implementation of initiatives that help create a more productive and positive attitude towards the neighbourhood and its residents.

2.1.2 Segregation and Approaches to Urban Revitalization

Urban decay is caused by unique conditions that are specific to each community. The decay of many neighbourhoods can be attributed to the physical, market, social and behavioural explanations previously presented. These explanations play a varying degree of influence over the process of urban decay. However, segregation is a constant variable that influences all other

aspects associated with decay. Skifter (2003, p. 130) argues that segregation is a cause of urban decay; yet it is also a consequence of decay.

Acknowledging segregation as a cause and a consequence of decay represents a key step towards fully and effectively addressing urban decay (Skifter, 2003, p. 3). Therefore, urban revitalization initiatives must directly attempt to reduce segregation. However, traditionally-used revitalization initiatives are commonly ill suited for the purpose of reducing segregation (Skifter, 2003, p. 19).

Generally, traditional revitalization initiatives rely heavily on measures that modify the demand, supply or market circumstances (Rothenberg et al., 1991, pp. 293-356). These initiatives are often effective at modifying the behaviour of landlord and homeowners. Yet, the traditional approaches have limited effect on the reputation and public opinion of a neighbourhood. The effects of urban decay on the daily lives of neighbourhood residents are rarely consciously considered by traditional revitalization initiatives.

New approaches and skills are needed to develop effective revitalization strategies that successfully enhance the lives of people. However, these new strategies must acknowledge five factors that shape the implementation of revitalization strategies (Skifter, 2003, pp. 133-134). The first factor that shapes urban revitalization initiatives is the level at which measures are implemented, for example city-wide, sector, or property level (Skifter, 2003, p. 133). The second factor is associated with the nature of the implemented measures, they can either be preventive or reactive, or a combination of both. The third factor deals with the level of government involvement, for example some governments take a direct role in the implementation of revitalization initiatives, other governments take more hands-off approaches perhaps by drafting regulations. The fourth factor shaping renewal initiatives is the role of local authorities, for example centralized or decentralized. For many years urban renewal was primarily handled

by the Federal government, yet over the years municipal governments have gained influence over the revitalization of neighbourhoods. The fifth, and final, factor is regarding the selectiveness of the renewal programs, for example some might focus on specific types of tenures, buildings or geographic areas, while others are more general in their implementation of measures.

Giving consideration to these five factors is essential to positively change the physical, market and social conditions of a neighbourhood (Skifter, 2003, pp. 134-135). Most importantly, new revitalization approaches must also be capable of creating new perceptions regarding the fate of an area by addressing the effects of segregation and negative public opinion.

Placemaking is a strategy that has received increased attention from the planning profession for its value to promote revitalization and reduce social segregation. Placemaking is a suitable tool for revitalization due its capacity to complement and be used in conjunction with other more traditional revitalization approaches (Giloith, 1999, pp. 82-84). The next section explores the potential uses of placemaking and public spaces to encourage positive changes in struggling communities. Subsequently, farmers' markets are considered within the context of placemaking and urban revitalization.

2.2 PLACEMAKING AND URBAN REVITALIZATION

The study of urban decay and revitalization often focuses on the intervention cost and expected outcome. Different authors place emphasis in cost-benefit analyzes regarding the interventions to be implemented to counteract urban decay (Kutty, 1995, p. 212; Rothenberg et al., 1991, pp. 354-355; Skifter, 2003, pp. 53-55). Not surprisingly, the success of a revitalization approach is often measured by the capacity of the measure to influence positive change at an acceptable cost. Still, a cost-benefit analysis often fails to acknowledge, and quantify, the effects on resident wellbeing.

Resident wellbeing is a variable that should be a key consideration in the implementation of revitalization initiatives (Lan, Yuen, and Low, 1999, pp. 3-4). Unfortunately, wellbeing is often relegated to the background when many other variables such as cross-price elasticity, rehabilitation subsidies and rent controls come into consideration (Skifter, 2003, pp. 131-132, 136-139). The human aspect to revitalization is often ignored; even when research indicates the human aspect is particularly important given its influence on reputation, behaviours, and attitudes.

Many revitalization initiatives are often top-down interventions. Top down interventions have been demonstrated to be ineffective to fully solve the problems of a struggling neighbourhood (Bristol, 1991, pp. 168-169; Smith, 2002, p. 506). Without considering community input, and wellbeing, a revitalization initiative is unlikely to succeed. Often, even when a revitalization initiative succeeds improvements are gradual over the medium- and long-term. Yet, urban decay has everyday effects on the quality of life of community residents. People living with urban decay require prompt changes in their communities. Stakeholders involved with revitalization need alternative approaches to complement the medium and long-term improvements provided by more traditional revitalization initiatives.

Placemaking has arisen as a viable option to promote positive changes in the short-term, but with long-term benefits. Placemaking revolves around the purpose of creating places that matter to people (Zelinka and Harden, 2005, p. vii). Placemaking can be used to enhance the everyday experiences and perceptions that people have of their community. The next section focuses on explaining the importance of places and the role placemaking can have on preventing, or reverting, urban decay. Subsequently, a more detailed explanation of placemaking is provided and its relation with city planning is explored.

2.2.1 Quality of Life and Places

Urban decline is a process that gradually erodes the physical, economic and social capital of a neighbourhood (Gilloth, 1999, pp. 68-71). As decline advances, the built environment often becomes dilapidated; the economic conditions worsen as investment decreases and anti-social behaviours tend to increase (Catlin, 1999, p. 55; Skifter, 2003, p. 46). Overall, the process of urban decline has a negative effect in the quality of life of neighbourhood residents (Rothenberg et al., 1991, pp. 280-285; Skifter, 2003, pp. 101-107). An often used approach to revert these negative effects in the quality of life is focused on improving variables such as the building stock to encourage neighbourhood reinvestment (Rothenberg et al. 1991, pp. 293-294). However, such approaches often lack the fine-grained impact necessary to appreciably increase the quality of life of residents. For example, amenities such as public parks are hard to be assigned a value. However, public parks are community assets that when properly managed have positive spill over effects in the quality of life of residents of the surrounding area (Branas and Walker, 2012, p. 23-25).

It must be argued, that often revitalization initiatives have a very limited definition of quality of life. Under certain definitions, quality of life is expected to be improved by simply enhancing concrete variables such as quality of housing. For example, many regeneration schemes attempt to increase wellbeing by constructing new developments, yet have little consideration for the character and specific needs of residents (Hamdi, 2010, pp. 32-35). Many of these new developments often display in their design careful attention to detail and the use of best design practices (Hamdi, 2010, p. 23). Nevertheless, quality of life is rarely improved by constructing expertly designed developments. Simply providing housing or subsidies to disadvantaged people does not solve urban decay. A single-minded initiative such as a subsidy is unable to create cohesive and enduring communities by itself.

The previous example indicates that a broader understanding of quality of life is required as part of the process of implementing more effective revitalization initiatives. Community-building professions can benefit from acknowledging quality of life as a concept defined by more than material and quantifiable aspects of life; the quality of life of people is determined by more than the size or quality of their dwelling units. Opportunities for recreation, community involvement and social interaction are also key aspects in the overall satisfaction of people (Lan, Yuen and Low, 1999, pp. 2-3).

In conjunction, standards of living and personal satisfaction shape the wellbeing of people. Quality of life can be understood as the degree of wellbeing, based on standard of life and personal satisfaction (Lan et al., 1999, p. 4). Both aspects associated with wellbeing need to be addressed for a revitalization initiative to be considered truly successful. Placemaking is considered a suitable option to improve personal satisfaction (Castello, 2010, p. 1). However, before proceeding to study the process of placemaking the concept of place itself must also be well understood. The next section provides essential information regarding the way places are shaped by its attributes and features.

Central Park Connection (theme: Quality of Life and Places)

Central Park is often portrayed as a neighbourhood troubled with anti-social behaviour. For example, a total of 29 robberies were committed in Central Park from June 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2011. Meanwhile, the suburban neighbourhood of Fort Richmond experienced only 7 robberies over the same time period. However, the statistics must be carefully weighted; a single statistic is rarely sufficient to provide an accurate portrait of the overall safety of a neighbourhood. For example, a closer look at the two neighbourhoods previously compared, Central Park and Fort Richmond, indicates that Central Park reported a total of 8 break and enters and 3 sexual assaults from June 1st, 2011 to December 31st, 2011 (Crime Stats, 2012). Meanwhile, Fort Richmond reported 32 break and enters and 4 sexual assaults over the same time period (Crime Stats, 2012).

Based on numbers alone, it could be concluded crime has the same incidence level in both neighbourhoods despite large socio-economic differences. The conclusion drawn from looking at law enforcement statistics support the findings of the literature indicating that the number of reported crimes is generally evenly distributed throughout different city areas such as the urban core, suburbs and rural periphery (Christens and Speer, 2005, p. 115). However, the nature and frequency of the crime varies from area to area. For example, violent crimes

such as arm robbery appear to be generally more common in the urban core. Meanwhile, other crimes such as sexual assaults are uniformly distributed in all areas of the city.

The comparison between Central Park and Fort Richmond demonstrate that crime can occur in a neighbourhood in one form or another; crime is an unavoidable part of social cohabitation. However, the difference between Central Park with other areas of the city is strongly influenced by its portrayal in the media. Central Park, and other urban core neighbourhoods, is often depicted negatively; violent crime events are frequently covered and highlighted as part of the local news. Meanwhile, crime events in other neighbourhoods such as Fort Richmond are rarely covered at the same extent the urban core is. The media in its attempt to cater to its readers has partially contributed to the establishment of a negative perception of the urban core, low socio-economic status, and the higher population densities typical of urban environments (Christens and Speer, 2005, p. 115).

The portrayal of crime in the urban core areas rarely takes into account the differences in the character of urban neighbourhoods and its influence on the occurrence of crime (Tapia, 2010, p. 256). For example, many urban dwelling units in Central Park are inadequately designed for the family size typically residing in the neighbourhood. The lack of private space is likely push people to make use of the public realm. In addition, dysfunctional conditions within the family structure are also known to encourage people, particularly youth, to seek refuge outside their houses. Without adequate measures, the use of the public realm can create opportunities for illicit behaviour and conflict among individuals. It is inaccurate to assume residents of Central Park are more prone to commit crime. However, when low-income people do engage in crime they often do it in a more visible fashion than high-income people. Crime committed by low-income people is often performed in the public realm. High-income people are more likely to engage in criminal activities within the confines of private property (Tapia, 2010, p. 256).

Public spaces are likely to be given extensive use by Central Park's resident. Therefore, the investment in public spaces is necessary to prevent potential anti-social behaviour. Improvements such as enhanced recreational amenities can help discourage illicit behaviour by providing alternative activities. The improvement of public spaces is the type of fine grained measures neighbourhoods such as Central Park need to comprehensively promote a positive sense of community. Placemaking is one of the approaches that can be used to complement the revitalization efforts that can gradually increase the quality of life in Central Park.

2.2.1.1 Characteristics of a Place

A place is a space in which the user experiences a unique physical and psychological reaction that make the location stand out above the surrounding context of the city (Castello, 2010, p. 2). The user's experience depends on two aspects. The first aspect involves the material elements of the site such as the landscaping and surrounding amenities. The second aspect is related to the subjective elements determined by the reaction of body and mind to the place's

environment. All spaces have the capacity of creating a reaction. However, only specific spaces are capable of producing a memorable experience in any given observer (Lynch, 1960, pp. 9-10). This capacity to create memorable experiences is what separates a place from a space.

Lynch (1960, p. 9) described the capacity of a place to capture the attention of an observer as legibility or visibility. Legibility is the quality by which a space, or object, is able to promote the creation of mental images and new meanings in an observer's mind (Lynch, 1960, pp. 9-10). A legible space is known to encourage greater attention and engagement from the user towards the space. The heightened involvement ensures that a place is seen and felt at levels that an illegible space is unable to achieve.

A legible place is not necessarily orderly and well structured. A place can be legible even if not structured "efficiently." For example, places in cities such as New Orleans or Jersey City are able to evoke strong experiences even despite the overall dysfunctional appearance and operation of the city (Piiparinen, 2012; Lynch, p. 1960, p. 32). A place is valuable not necessarily because of its aesthetic beauty, but because of its meaning and expressiveness (Lynch, 1960, p. 10).

A place is the combination between settings and human experiences. A place is a socio-physical construct that attribute meaning and intentions to a physical configuration influencing the activities performed in the location (Castello, 2010, p. 4). The meaning and intentions of people towards a location are determining aspects of the character of a place. A place owes much of its identity to the perception people have of it. These perceptions can be categorized in three main groups: 1) socio-cultural, 2) morphological-imaginary, and 3) enjoyment-functional stimuli (Castello, 2010, p. 9). Within each category there are a number of attributes and features that establish the identity of a place.

The socio-cultural category is associated with features such as narrative, history and tradition (Castello, 2010, pp. 4-6). A narrative can define a place by highlighting the importance of visiting it to experience what the location has to offer. For example, a place such as Central Park in New York City has a strong narrative that encourages visiting. Meanwhile, history and tradition can position certain historic buildings or local celebrations as worth experiencing. For example, the Exchange District in Winnipeg Manitoba offers a distinct architectural setting to explore.

The morphological-imaginary category is linked with features such as available natural assets, reputation, or capacity to stimulate imagination (Castello, 2010, p. 4-6). The natural environment can be a defining element that shapes the character of a place. For example, a nearby mountain range or a beach provide stimulus that influences the experiences of users. Meanwhile, a reputation is the result of the combination of socio-cultural narratives that become embedded to particular places. For example, a place like Venice has a reputation, formed by individual narratives, that have position it as a must see destination within Italy. A place can also be defined by its capacity to evoke a sense of wonder and discovery. For example, Disneyland attracts visitors by offering an experience that strives to surpass reality through expertly-constructed fantasy (Zelinka and Jackson, 2005, p. 4).

Finally, the enjoyment-functional category involves features associated with the comfort and services a place can provide (Castello, 2010, p. 9). For example, some places are frequented because of their capacity to offer sensorial stimulation that enhances the visitor's perception of wellbeing. Meanwhile, other places are visited because of the number of amenities available to users.

The previous categories indicate a place can be created based on numerous types of attributes and features that infuse a location with a character that promote certain intentions

and activities (Castello, 2010, p. 4). These intentions and activities define the experience of the users. However, the different intentions and activities are not mutually exclusive. For example, a place known for its natural assets can also be recognized for its capacity to produce enjoyment through the stimulation of the senses.

A place is successful not because of a particular attribute or feature, but because of its consistent capacity to create memorable experiences in most people. These memorable experiences must be understood as the result of the actions of common people performing common, but enjoyable, activities in a common space (Castello, 2010, p. 14). A successful place does not necessarily need to be expensively constructed or micromanaged. Ultimately, it is the human component of the community, which adds value to the attributes and features available at a location. The categories previously presented highlighted the human component by emphasizing the role of the collective community experience.

The collective experience is the source of the narratives that allows common spaces to become cherished destinations within a community. For example, Charles Lee, a well-known cinema designer, once argued “the show starts on the sidewalk” (as cited in Valentine, 1994, p. 9). Charles Lee used the ideology to create a singular experience for the user the moment they arrived to the cinema. Lee’s designs allowed cinemas to be commercially profitable, while also creating a distinctive experience worth repeating (Valentine, 1994, pp. 9-10). Lee’s ideology while originally related to the design of “movie palaces” can easily be correlated to the concept of places. The design of a place should not focus on the place itself, but rather on the experiences and memories created on users.

The cinema example is valuable to emphasize the importance of creating memorable collective experiences. In addition, the example also brings attention to the needed discussion regarding the nature and origin of places. Cinemas are by nature commercial enterprises.

Nevertheless, a cinema by catering to the needs of its patrons can establish itself as a place. Therefore, a place is not necessarily publicly-owned. Under the right circumstances, a privately-owned semi-public place, such as a cinema, can be just as effective as a publicly-owned place.

The effectiveness of a privately-owned, and publicly-owned, place depends on the capacity of society to make a location their own and appropriate it for their social needs. The process of appropriation infuses a location with meaning and identity. A place owes its origin to a sense of belonging and ownership established by the community. Accurately, places have been described as the locations where society is at “home” outside the house (Hamdi, 2010, p. 32).

The use of the concept of “home outside the house” to describe a place adds a private and personal dimension to the character of places. So far, places have been described as the result of the collective experience. Yet, the collective experience must be also understood as the combination of individual experiences. Even if a place is a venue for communal interaction, a place is also the space where individual needs are fulfilled while surrounded by our co-habitants (Castello, 2010, p. 19). The fulfillment of individual private needs in public places foster the opportunities for social interaction and inter-mingling that are essential for developing solidarity and understanding among individuals.

Places are an important element of the built environment because of its role in cultivating people’s urbanity. Urbanity is the capacity for exchange and communication that we rely on to civilly and successfully interact with other members of society (Castello, 2010, p. 21). Places provide cities with a level of plurality and heterogeneity not commonly found in private locations. The plurality and urbanity promoted by places is one of the strongest assets that a neighbourhood can have.

In previous sections, urban decay was attributed, among other reasons, to segregation and negative neighbourhood reputations. A place can counteract the effects of segregation by

linking residents with each other (Garvin, 2011, pp. 198-199; Castello, 2010, pp. 15-16, 21). In addition, a successful place can also help overcome negative neighbourhood reputations by showcasing positive elements of a community. For example, parks or farmers' markets are suitable settings to display community assets such as ethnic diversity. Therefore, places can be valuable in preventing, and reverting, the effects of urban decay.

The section has explored how the attributes and features of a location shape the character of a place. Additionally, the role of communal experiences in defining a space as a place has been briefly studied. The origin and nature of public places has been covered. Finally, the section presented a short overview of some of the benefits a place provides to their home communities. The next section focuses in the way places can be created and improved upon.

Central Park Connection (theme: Characteristics of a Place)

The neighbourhood of Central Park has two fundamental physical elements. The first element is the multi-residential properties that occupy a large portion of the neighbourhood. The residential properties are generally over 25 years old with over 5 or more storeys of rental dwelling units (also see "Central Park Connection" section 2.1.1). Overall, the buildings in the neighbourhood are generally well maintained despite their age.

The second main physical element of the neighbourhood is the Central Park public space. Central Park was developed as one of the first four public spaces in the city of Winnipeg (Cavett, Selwood, and Lehr, 1982, p. 32). The park was constructed in 1893 over land considered of low potential for building development due drainage and soil issues (City of Winnipeg, 1988, p. 6). The construction and original design of Central Park was influenced by different design movements and ideologies prevalent in the late 19th Century. For example, parks were seen as a way to increase land values of surrounding areas (Cavett et al., 1982, pp. 27-28). Additionally, green spaces were considered as a way of beautifying the city and eliminating the urban blight of the disorderly industrial city (Cavett et al. 1982, p. 28). In addition, parks were attributed the social and moral purpose of uplifting society. Overall, the intention behind the creation of Winnipeg's early parks was to contribute to the health of the citizenry, while providing concrete and quantifiable benefits to land developers (Cavett et al., 1982, pp. 27-31).

Central Park was originally constructed with amenities such as an ornamental square and walkways. However, over time other amenities were added to serve the changing needs of society. For example, a bandstand and two tennis courts were added in 1905. The Waddell Fountain was later added in 1914. These amenities were well-used features by the affluent residents of the neighbourhood in the early 20th Century. The extensive use actually represented a challenge for the maintenance staff of The City (City of Winnipeg, 1988, p. 6). Yet, over the course of the 20th Century the neighbourhood's demographic drastically changed; eventually, the original amenities became obsolete and were removed or fell into disrepair.



Figure 5. Waddell Fountain. The fountain was repaired as part of the rejuvenation of Central Park.

2.2.2 The Process of Placemaking

Placemaking is the process through which we transform the spaces where we are located into places to “live” (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 1). This process can either occur in the private or the public realm. Certain places such as homes are of a private nature, while other places such as parks are public. Regardless of the setting, placemaking represents a human effort to give meaning to our surroundings.

The placemaking process has been described as an inherent human capacity (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 1). Everybody is capable to engage in the tasks associated with placemaking. Placemaking can involve the implementation of changes that add features or remove negative elements. However, placemaking does not necessarily involve the

implementation of changes. In some circumstances, placemaking simply involves the maintenance and enhancement of existing and well-regarded attributes.

Surprisingly, despite of the fact that anyone is capable of engaging in placemaking many communities have suffered over the past decades from an increasing lack of public places (Zelinka and Jackson, 2005, pp.1-3). For example, mass produced strip malls and large parking lots have replaced the local destinations of many communities. The loss of local destinations has created a sense of “placelessness.” Strangely, as society becomes more ethnically diverse the built environment has often become increasingly homogeneous and dull.

The homogenous built environment has been attributed to the decreasing involvement of the community residents with the creation of our neighbourhoods. Often, the “placemaking” process has been left in charge of “professional placemakers.” Professions such as architects, engineers, city planners have attempted to use their knowledge and expertise to create places (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 2). However, professional expertise by itself has proved ineffective to create the places people want, and need, to live a fulfilling life.

In the previous section, it was seen that public places are created through the collective community experiences (Castello, 2010, p. 14). Likewise, the maintenance and improvement of public places should be a collective endeavour. Placemaking is not a process performed by a few placemaking experts; placemaking is a process performed by the many voices of a community. Still, the placemaking expert can, and should, be an involved stakeholder in the placemaking process (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 5). However, the role of the professional placemaker should be adjusted to facilitate the fulfillment of the resident needs.

Instead of dictating the development, and design, of a place the expert should perform the role of facilitator (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, pp. 5-6). The professional placemaker facilitator can guide community residents through the process of distilling the assets, needs, and

challenges to create suitable public places. The professional planner can facilitate the sharing of information among stakeholders. Yet, for information to be shared the professional placemaker must acknowledge the value of the resident's knowledge and expertise regarding their own community. Wrongfully, the community's knowledge is often disregarded due its informal and unstructured character. However, living and experiencing the conditions within a community on a daily basis provide a source of information that might not be available to a non-resident expert.

The section has explained how that the establishment of relationships is the key concept in the process of placemaking. Placemaking is a process of relationships; relationships between people and between people and places. These relationships are necessary to create the willingness of the involved parties to share their expertise and to engage on the tasks associated with placemaking. The next section briefly describes the way placemaking excellence is defined based on the principles defined by the Rudy Bruner Award.

Central Park Connection (theme: Process of Placemaking)

Placemaking is a collaborative process where different types of knowledge are used to give meaning to a location. The previous sections have indicated that Central Park is a neighbourhood with both assets and weaknesses. Many of the weaknesses are often associated with the reputation, perception and language used to describe the neighbourhood. Placemaking can be used to transform and dispel these weaknesses by preserving, enhancing and highlighting the real strengths of the neighbourhood. Socially, Central Park has a wealth of knowledge provided by its ethnically diverse population. The residents of Central Park are expected to bring to a placemaking process numerous ideas about the type of place they want their neighbourhood to be.

Engaging in placemaking in Central Park involves identifying the amenities needed to be added, removed, and enhanced. Placemaking can be a lengthy process. However, anyone is capable of contributing to the process. Professional placemakers are likely to be valuable partners in the process by facilitating the sharing process. The rejuvenation of Central Park was performed with the assistance of a local consulting firm, Scatliff+Miller+Murray. The interview analysis presented later in the document provides further information about the role performed by the consulting firm. The analysis provides clarification about the position of the consultant in regards to community involvement and participation.

2.2.3 Placemaking Excellence – Rudy Bruner Award

Placemaking excellence is a difficult goal to achieve; many aspects such as community needs, available funding, and site constraints must be considered before a placemaking initiative can be successfully implemented. However, despite these challenges placemaking excellence occurs through the efforts of committed stakeholders. The Rudy Bruner Awards were established in 1986 to recognize initiatives that achieved placemaking excellence in the contiguous continental United States.

The Rudy Bruner Award is granted to projects that help redefine our understanding of the built environment through innovative placemaking approaches that integrate social, economic, and environmental variables into the design of great places (Wener, Shibley, Farbstein and Axelrod, 2009). The awards emphasize in their selection criteria projects that accurately respond to their urban setting by providing the amenities and improvements needed by local stakeholders. Above all, award winning projects are generally focused in enhancing the quality of life of residents.

Most award winning projects are the result of the collaborative efforts of many different stakeholders with diverse agendas. Often, the projects are only viable due an extensive community dialogue that allows the diverse stakeholders to reach a consensus to achieve a common goal. The community dialogue allows the stakeholders to bring their resources and skills together to achieve projects that would otherwise be impossible.

The collaborative nature of many of the award winning projects allows them to overcome challenges such as limited budgets and different agendas. Against all odds, many of the Rudy Bruner Award winning projects can be found located in unlikely places such as

distressed neighbourhoods. Therefore, many of the award winning projects often directly benefit underrepresented populations by providing quality places for their enjoyment.

The Rudy Bruner Award winners are an example of what can be achieved within an urban setting. The award also help to define what can be considered as placemaking excellence. However, the award winning projects are not blueprints that can be simply transplanted to other communities; each project is context sensitive. Yet, the concepts and approaches advanced by the award winning projects can generally be adapted to reflect the character of different communities and harvest the unique resources of individual neighbourhoods.

Overall, the Rudy Bruner Award winning projects are characterized for being tools for community transformation. Commonly, the awarded projects focus in re-defining the role of familiar institutions to face the current and future challenges of a community in meaningful ways. Additionally, the winning projects often act as catalyst for change by enhancing the physical environment and increasing the wellbeing of residents.

The winning projects are usually small in scale, yet focused in long-term sustainability and gradual, but continuous, change. Therefore, many of the projects are works in progress that generally demonstrate a high adaptability to the changing nature of a neighbourhood. Most importantly, many of the winning projects represent a sign of renewal brought about by effective conflict resolution and leadership; the projects are often a collaborative investment in the future of a neighbourhood.

The investment made by the award winning projects commonly take the form of projects that approach problems in an innovative manner accepting the risk associated with community development. Generally, the stakeholders associated with many award winning projects are willing to accept the risk of failure; the potential benefits of implementing a placemaking initiative often outweigh the option of not acting to resolve the problems of a

neighbourhood. This section has explained the success of many of the winners of the Rudy Bruner Award depends heavily on a process that encourages empowerment and collaboration. The next section concludes the placemaking section by presenting an overview of the concepts previously presented.

Central Park Connection (theme: Placemaking Excellence – Rudy Bruner Award)

The placemaking initiatives in Central Park, the Central Market for Global Families and the park rejuvenation, fulfill many of the characteristics that are considered essential to achieve placemaking excellence. Chapter Four, Analysis, presents a brief overview of the Central Park initiatives within the context provided by the Rudy Bruner Awards. The overview in Chapter Four takes into consideration the process that lead to the implementation of the Central Park initiatives. The achieved improvements and future challenges to the Central Park initiatives are also considered in Chapter Four.

2.2.4 Conclusions of Placemaking and Urban Revitalization

The previous section has provided an overview of placemaking and associated concepts. Placemaking was demonstrated to be an activity that depends heavily in establishing relationships among stakeholders and making use of their experience and knowledge. These relationships are essential for the development of a dialogue that provides the necessary information to develop interventions that reflect the needs and aspirations of a community. Placemaking is known to be a variable and fluid process (Walljasper, 2007, pp. 3-4). Those engaged in placemaking are generally simultaneously involved in a process of conversation, enquiry and confirmation among each other; the process is necessarily and inherently a collective endeavour (Castello, 2010, p. 146).

The approach taken to perform placemaking can vary from process to process. Yet, community involvement is an element that is an unquestionable element of all placemaking processes. The local residents must be recognized as experts in regards to the conditions and needs of their community. Placemakers should acknowledge that the daily experiences of residents constitute a source of empirical information that should be harvested.

The process of harvesting and translating this information into concrete actions can be assisted by the involvement of professional placemaking experts. However, anyone is naturally capable of engaging in the activities associated with placemaking; places have been historically created by many types of people all over the world. Therefore, professional placemakers must perform a role in assisting communities to prioritize their needs. In addition, the professional placemaker can help if necessary to advance social justice by empowering the voices of commonly overlooked groups. Ultimately, the role of the professional placemaker is as a facilitator of placemaking initiatives that positively impact the condition of the community.

The right stakeholders involved with the right placemaking project can change a whole neighbourhood. The willingness of stakeholders to engage and commit to a project determines the likelihood for success. Usually, highly committed placemakers are able to overcome most obstacles. The need for financial resources, materials or labour is simply a minor obstacle when there is commitment. The real challenge of any placemaking initiative is establishing meaningful partnerships with suitable stakeholders.

The support of suitable stakeholders increases the availability of needed resources. The support and collaboration of stakeholders also provide legitimacy to the project. Legitimacy is a key element to achieving long-term benefits. The potential of placemaking is only fully achieved when the initiative truthfully represent the stakeholders. Without legitimacy, a placemaking initiative is likely to lose overtime the support and commitment of its original stakeholders.

The presented information indicates placemaking is a revitalization tool that makes use of many local assets and resources. Overall, placemaking has the potential to positively change a location for the better. Placemaking promote a positive perception and attitude towards a neighbourhood by enhancing the experiences of residents and visitors. Other urban revitalization approaches rarely take into consideration the human aspect of a neighbourhood.

However, the human experience is the guiding element of placemaking. Placemaking is focused on creating neighbourhoods people can grow attached to (Hamdi, 2010, p. 32).

The sense of investment of people is what placemaking relies on to revert and prevent the negative effects of urban decay. With increasing frequency, placemaking projects of different nature are used as symbols of renewal (Walljasper, 2007, pp. 76-77). Up to this point, the placemaking section has presented information regarding the concept of place and placemaking. However, a concrete example of placemaking is yet to be presented. The next section briefly explores farmers' markets and their potential uses as placemaking initiatives. The section explains the social, economic and environmental benefits farmers' markets can have in a neighbourhood. Subsequently, a final overview of the topics discussed in the literature review is presented linking the topics of urban revitalization, placemaking and farmers' markets.

2.3 FARMERS' MARKETS, PLACEMAKING AND URBAN REVITALIZATION

A place is defined as a location where memorable experiences are offered to the users. These experiences are prompted by the available amenities that create unique reactions from the observer. A place is not necessarily an orderly or well structured place. However, without exception a place offers a sense of belonging and security to most users despite their background (Lynch, 1960, pp. 9-10). Places are locations that fulfill the human need for interaction and socialization. A place is where our civility and understanding for each other is developed.

Through time, specific places have played a key role in different civilizations. However, few places match the continued importance of markets. Historically, the market is, and has always been, a location for intermingling and discussion among cohabitants (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 5). The farmers' market itself offers food products and opportunities for exchanges between customers and producers. It could be assumed the main role of a farmers'

market is to provide food products for the community. However, being in company of other people is in itself a key part of the experience offered by farmers' markets (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 9; Wiseman, 2010, pp. 5, 28-29).

The experience offered by farmers' markets is hardly possible to replicate in other settings. In the twentieth century, supermarkets became the predominant location where people purchased their food. The supermarket with its commonly homogenous produce and growing number of self-checkout machines rarely provide the human interaction typical of farmers' markets. Nevertheless, the supermarket offers the convenience often required for the lifestyles of many urban dwellers.

For decades, the growing number of supermarkets in North America seemed to indicate that convenience had triumphed over the social experience of the farmers' market (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 13). The construction of new supermarkets was often followed by the closure of local farmers' markets. Yet, farmers' markets have demonstrated great resiliency. Gradually, the number of farmers' markets has started to increase once again over the past decade. The growing public interest in sustainability and healthier lifestyles has driven people to support local farmers and their markets. Farmers' markets are increasingly seen as an alternative to the more conventional global food system that supplies supermarkets with food products from all over the world (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, pp. 43-45).

People across North America are rediscovering the experiences offered by the farmers' market. Certainly, the farmers' market does not replace the supermarket; but neither the supermarket fully replaces the role of the farmers' market. The supermarket and the farmers' market both perform different roles and fulfill different needs. The farmers' market is likely to coexist with the supermarket; the farmers' market will continue to provide a needed human

dimension to the purchase of food (Stephenson, 2008, pp. 5, 78-79). The human dimension to the farmers' market could be described as an added value to the purchase of food.

The same human dimension is the essential element to engage in placemaking. Placemaking as described in the previous section might seem to be a complicated process. However, we engage in placemaking on a regular basis giving meaning to the locations we are fond of; placemaking is simply the process of taking ownership of a location by giving it an identity and significance based on its users. A farmers' market is generally one of such locations quickly assigned with a distinctive character.

The next section presents the elements that infuse farmers' markets with their character as a place. Understandably, the human dimension must be described to grasp what make a farmers' market what it is. Two main groups of people in a market, customers and producers, are analyzed in the next sections. The reasons and effect of the participation and contribution of customers and producers to the farmers' market are briefly explored. The section is expected to clarify why establishing a farmer market can be understood as a placemaking endeavour.

Central Park Connection (theme: farmers' markets, Placemaking and Urban Revitalization)

The Central Park public space was previously characterized by the presence of people engaging in anti-social behaviour (Millar, October 6, 2005, para. 1). The presence of anti-social activities was a known deterrent for the use of Central Park by other residents of the area. Not surprisingly, surrounding institutions such as Knox United Church were interested in developing an initiative to retake the public space to promote more positive uses (Millar, 2005, para. 9).

The ideas for revitalizing the park included the potential construction of a coffee shop across the street (Millar, May 17, 2005, para. 2). However, the idea of constructing a coffee shop was eventually abandoned; the input from residents indicated the community was in greater need of a different amenity (personal communication, April 5, 2011). Chapter Four, Analysis, provides further information regarding how the decision to organize a farmers' market was reached. The analysis section also provides details of the influence the Central Market initiative had on the activities performed in the public space.

2.3.1 Farmers' Market and its Customers

The farmers' market is a place for the sale and purchase of food. However, for anyone that has had the opportunity to visit a market there is much more to it than obtaining food. Most farmers' markets provide complementary amenities such as music, gardening information or recipes (Corum, Rosenzweig, and Gibson, 2001, pp. 82-83). These amenities create an attractive atmosphere for visitors, even those without the intention to buy food. The communal experience of the market has a remarkable capacity to create a sense of belonging and security where people can feel at home in the public realm (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 105). Many visitors prefer to patronize the farmers' market over the supermarket as a result of these subtle differences. The reasons to visit a farmers' market often go beyond the availability of food and its price. The next sections present some of the aspects associated with the willingness of customers to support farmers' markets.

2.3.1.1 Prices in the Farmers' Market

Farmer markets can rarely compete with supermarkets in regards to prices. Therefore, vendors at the farmers' markets provide an added value to the products on sale. For example, many vendors often fulfill the customer's demand for seasonal produce representative of the local region (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 106). Meanwhile, the seasonality and local nature of the produce is also seen by many customers as an indication of freshness. Additionally, production practices play an important role for purchasing decisions of some customers. Certain customers are willing to pay a higher value for products ethically and sustainably produced (Corum et al., 2001, p. 20). Subsequently, these sustainably grown food are attributed a higher nutritional value by farmers' market costumers.

Many of the features attributed to food sold at farmers' markets are subjective. Evidence seems inconclusive in determining the validity of the nutritional or freshness claims of

alternative production methods. However, this literature review is not focused on discussing the validity of the claims attributed to local produce. Instead, the section attempts to present an overview of the aspects that influences the willingness of people to purchase at the farmers' market. The section is focused here on the capacity of farmers' markets to respond to the demand of its customer base. Farmers' markets are generally flexible and capable of quickly adapting. The adaptability of farmers' markets allows them to fulfill a niche in ways commonly unavailable to supermarkets (Corum et al., 2001, p. 12-13, 16-20).

The capacity to respond to customer demand is what makes markets viable even with higher food prices than supermarkets. The high price itself has successfully been used as part of the strength of the farmers' market model. Producers argue that the higher prices truthfully reflect the real cost of food production; by charging a higher price the environmental and social cost is internalized (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, pp. 109-111). The higher cost ensures a fair and suitable profit for the producer.

The farmers' market is considered by some customers as a way to directly support the producer without the need for a middleman. Supporting the producer can also be potentially seen as tool to protect agriculturally-valuable land from development pressure. A profitable agricultural operation is less likely to be sold or subdivided (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, pp. 111-112). Overall, purchasing food at the farmers' market is associated to many variables other than convenience and price. The farmers' market for many customers is a way to learn about their environment, support their local economy and achieve a healthier lifestyle. This section has explained how the cost of produce and goods is not the determining factor to patronize a farmers' market. The next section provides information on the community-building role of farmers' markets.

Central Park Connection (theme: Prices in the farmers' market)

The Central Market established in Central Park was intended to support and encourage

the revitalization of the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, economic-self sufficiency of the farmers' market is a variable shown in Chapter Four, Analysis, to be of importance for the organizers. The Central Market to be successful requires a consistent supply of produce. Additionally, these products, and its vendors, require an adequate turnover of customers. Otherwise, the feasibility of the market is compromised. Chapter Four, Analysis, explores the role fulfilled by the Central Market. The analysis provides information about the objectives and goals that were supported through the Central Market. The findings indicate how the Central Market for Global Families helped to advance numerous objectives beyond the provision of fresh produce in the neighbourhood.

2.3.1.2 Community-building and Farmers' Markets

The earlier discussion of urban decay indicates struggling neighbourhoods are often characterized by the segregation experienced by residents. Residents who are isolated from each other are unable to coordinate their efforts to promote positive changes (Skifter, 2003, p. 130). In this context, establishing connections among people is a fundamental step towards revitalization. A cohesive community is more capable of working in conjunction to address its challenges (Skifter, 2003, p. 130). However, community connections must be deliberately nurtured and encouraged; otherwise, people are unlikely to become engaged with their communities (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 112). A community for its continued wellbeing require places where bonds among residents can be developed.

The farmers' market is a suitable option to promote the creation of community connections (Stephenson, 2008, pp. 78-79). The farmers' market is a communal and collective experience. Visitors have the choice to actively or passively interact with other people. The character of farmers' markets adds a personal dimension to the process of buying food. Producers, consumers and neighbours are all brought together and immersed into a setting where face to face interaction is the norm (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 118). The face to face personal interaction is a suitable occasion to establish relationships that are commonly unavailable to people. The farmers' market provides a motive and excuse to get people to learn about each other.

Farmer markets are also usually hosted at a set location and time. Regularity gradually helps to establish the farmers' market as part of the routine of community life. For example, visiting a weekly farmers' market can become a habit for residents (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 112). Many of the weekly visitors are often in the farmers' market because of the offered sense of community. Often a person that attends the market frequently and long enough becomes part of its unofficial membership. Each regular visitor has the potential of developing a known place and identity within the structure of the farmers' market.

The individual visitors of the farmers' market rarely share a common background. Yet, they are all brought together by the farmers' market. The successful interaction among people with different backgrounds is made possible by the accountability provided by the communal and collective experience of the farmers' market (Stephenson, 2008, pp. 136-137). Visitors at the farmers' market are engaged in a personal relationship not only with producers but also with neighbours. Anonymity is rarely an option when visiting a farmers' market.

Overall, the regularity of the farmers' market is for many people a grounding element of the character of the community (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, pp. 118). However, the farmers' market is not a static element. Just like the seasons of the year, the farmers' market is constantly in a process of change; every week, aspects such as the type of vendors or music performers can suddenly change. The variability of the farmers' market provides each visit with a degree of novelty and sense of discovery.

In combination, the regularity and variability of the farmers' market serve as an occasion for creating a genuine sense of community. Truthfully, a neighbourhood where residents are disconnected from each other is not a community. The initial connection established at the farmers' market can represent the basis for the development of more meaningful bonds among residents if required. For example, if an issue demands resident involvement for its solution a

cohesive community is better suited to adequately coordinate its efforts. Overall, the farmers' market can be the difference between segregation and interconnectedness. Therefore, the farmers' market is a suitable community-building tool that can provide real benefits to any neighbourhood. This section has explained the community-building role farmers' markets can play in neighbourhoods focusing mostly on the customer's perspective. The next section explores the function of farmers' markets from the perspective of farmers' market vendors.

Central Park Connection (theme: Community-building and farmers' markets)

Central Park is known to have a large population of new immigrants to Canada. 26.4% of the residents immigrated into Canada over the period of 2001-2006 (City of Winnipeg, 2006a, p. 17). Overall, a total of 53.7 % of the population is part of a visible minority (City of Winnipeg, 2006a, p. 5). Additionally, 18% of the residents are of aboriginal ancestry (City of Winnipeg, 2006a, p. 5). The numerous ethnic backgrounds are also associated with many religious beliefs. Roman Catholics, Muslim, Buddhist, and other religions are in direct contact with each other within the boundaries of Central Park (City of Winnipeg, 2007, pp. 4-8). Interaction among the many ethnic and religious backgrounds in the neighbourhood might not occur naturally; especially, considering the language barriers among people.

A farmers' market can effectively work as a motive for people to come directly into contact with each other. Chapter Four, Analysis, provides further information about the community-building role performed by the Central Market.

2.3.2 Producers and the Farmers' Market

The farmers' market cannot exist without its customers. Likewise, the success of a farmers' market depends greatly on the products offered by farmers. Each farmer has a unique story and motivation to be involved with a farmers' market. Some farmers have been in the business for generations; other farmers might have recently started on their farming enterprise. However, the farmers' market offers real benefits to participating producers despite their background.

The benefits for a farmer to become involved with a market include the opportunity to complement their income. Many medium and small producers are rarely able to completely rely on wholesaling to remain in business (Corum et al., 2001, pp. 21-22). However, the market offers a venue where the farmer is able to sell their products for a premium price. The higher

price at the market can often offset the lower prices collected from wholesaling. For example, some producers report earning 80% more at the farmers' market than from selling the same product through wholesaling. In addition, the sales revenue at the market is paid directly to the farmer, without the need for a middleman. Eliminating the role of the middleman increases the income percentage kept by the farmer (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, pp. 128-129).

The farmers' market is also a suitable venue for entrepreneurship (Morales, 2009, pp. 437-438). Most farmers' markets have a low-cost of entry. A new and inexperienced farmer can easily, and cheaply, become a vendor in a farmers' market. In comparison, maintaining a conventional retail presence is more financially demanding. Usually, the low-cost of entry increases the willingness of producers to innovate and take risk. Even if a business initiative fails the financial consequences are smaller than in other types of retail venues.

The opportunity of being involved with a market also has the positive effect of providing vendors with valuable business management experience. Many producers often lack the knowledge associated with tasks such as dealing with customers and marketing. The farmers' market provides firsthand experience with many of the tasks that are important to the retail-side of food production. Often, the vendor can use the experience from the farmers' market to further expand its business. In this way, the farmers' market can perform the role of low-risk and low cost business incubator (Corum et al., 2001, pp. 21-22). However, there is more to the involvement of producers than financial or entrepreneurship reasons. The following subsections briefly explain more of the motives to become a vendor at a farmers' market.

Central Park Connection (Producers and the farmers' market)

Vendors are an essential component for the success of a farmers' market. Therefore, the organizers of the Central Market established no market fees to help attract vendors on a regular basis. Additionally, the producers from the Rainbow Community Garden project were welcome to participate at the Central Market. Chapter Four, Analysis, provides further information regarding the character of the vendors and the effects of becoming involved with the Central Market.

2.3.2.1 Farmers' Markets and Producer Diversification

Financially depending in a single source of income is often a risky decision. Not surprisingly, many farmers have recognized the need to have a diversified revenue source. As a result, some producers have opted to use farmers' markets to sell a portion, or all, of their products. Diversification provides greater safety against unforeseen circumstances (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 130). The diversification of the income source is also reflected in the type of products offered at the market. For example, a producer is unlikely to be able to subsist simply by selling a single product.

Succeeding at the market often requires producers to branch out into an array of products. Seasonality and timing of harvest represent an important element for making a good profit at the market. Vendors often attempt to stay ahead of the competition by having an early harvest of certain products (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 130). For example, using a greenhouse can allow a producer to have a specific crop available before anyone else. An early crop also allows producers to avoid selling their product at a low price when the market is saturated during the product's season. Meanwhile, other farmers opt out to create an added value for their product. For example, some produce can easily be canned for a higher sale value (Corum et al., 2001, pp. 14-15).

A different strategy is to fulfill specific needs of the customers (Stephenson, 2008, p. 81). Often for many small-scale producers the most profitable strategy is finding a niche and adapting to changing customer demands. For example, vendors can benefit from growing products commonly used in the cuisine of specific ethnic groups. As long as there is a demand for unique products filling a niche often proves to be profitable (Corum et al., 2001, pp. 2-3, 84-85).

Overall, participating in the market provides producers with access to customers and income that would otherwise be unavailable. In fact, for many vendors the farmers' market represents the difference between staying in business and abandoning the farming business (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 143). This section has provided an overview of how farmers' markets can support the viability of small producers. The next section explains how farmers' markets can also support the traditions and lifestyles of small producers and vendors.

The Central Market Connection (theme: Farmers' Markets and Producer Diversification)

The Central Market is established in a multicultural neighbourhood. Understandably, the produce and vendors attempted to capitalize on the multicultural nature of Central Park. The multiculturalism provides opportunities for vendors to occupy specific niches by catering to the needs of specific ethnic groups. Chapter Four, Analysis, explains how the vendors benefitted from the sale of ethnic produce by catering to the needs of the unique demographics found in Central Park.

2.3.2.2 Farmers' Markets, Traditions and Lifestyles

The farmer market is attractive to producer for reasons beyond the financial benefits. The farmers' market is for some vendors a place that enables them to continue family traditions. For example, a few generations ago many people in North America lived in rural areas. A connection with farming activities is still common place for many urban residents. The connection translates for some people to an interest in farming activities. However, few persons have the opportunity to engage in large-scale production. The farmers' market provides producers with the opportunity to fulfill their desire to farm even at small or medium scale levels of production (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, pp. 137-138).

Certain farmers are involved with the market because it allows them to explore a difference facet of their personalities. For example, many small vendors often have other main professions or jobs. Yet, farming is a topic for which vendors might have a passion and affinity (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 139). The market is an outlet that allows them to display the fruit of their labour while also complementing their income (Stephenson, 2008, p. 138).

Other producers derive satisfaction directly from the opportunities of social interaction available at the market. Vendors at the farmers' market are often able to share their knowledge and passion for farming with customers. However, the social interaction is not limited to only customers. Vendors share their experiences among each other. Older vendors frequently share ideas and advice with new vendors. The atmosphere and sense of camaraderie is often one of the motives for vendors to continue coming back to the market (Stephenson, 2008, p. 137).

Frequently, the market becomes more than a source of income. At many farmers' markets, is not uncommon to see a farmer in company of family members selling their products. The farmers' market often represents an occasion for farmers a way to connect and teach their children about family traditions. Additionally, the farmers' market also provides other learning experiences for a farmer's children such as business management and customer relationships (Meta and Hartenfeld, 2007, p. 149). Attending the farmers' market becomes part of the producer's lifestyle. Ultimately, the market is a way for producers to fulfill desires and personal interests in ways not available in other forms of employment. This section has explained how farmers' markets support the lifestyles and traditions associated with small producers. The next section provides an overview of the connections between farmers' markets and their surrounding community drawing. The next section draws overall conclusions from the farmers' market section.

Central Park Connection (theme: Farmers' Markets, Traditions and Lifestyles)

The Central Market offered producers from the Rainbow Community Garden project with a venue for selling their products. The Rainbow Community Garden itself provided people, mostly residents from Central Park, with an opportunity to become engaged in farming and food growing. The urban high-density character of Central Park leaves little undeveloped land available. There is limited space in Central Park for farming. Chapter Four, Analysis, presents the community development value of the Central Market and how it supported the Rainbow Community Garden project.

2.3.3 Farmers' Markets and the Community

Farmer markets are generally beneficial for both customers and vendors. For customers, the farmers' market offers the opportunity to support local agricultural producers. In addition, the farmers' market generally also offers seasonal and fresh produce. Meanwhile, vendors get the opportunity to access an additional source of income. Directly selling their products at the market allows vendors to obtain greater profit without the need for a middleman. Furthermore, participating in the farmers' market provide other benefits such as valuable business experience.

There are many benefits for vendors and customers to attend a farmers' market. However, the community as a whole also benefit from having farmers' markets within their boundaries. For example, by making farming more profitable farmers' markets help preserve the local food production capacity. A community with local producers is generally less susceptible to the effects of global phenomena such as climate change and peak oil (Steel, 2008, pp. 48-50; Mougeot, 2006, pp. 9-10). Overall, preserving and enhancing local food production capacity provides greater resiliency for the community against the price and supply fluctuation of the global food market (Rosset, 2008, pp. 460-461).

At a more local scale, the farmers' market is valuable to nurture social and geographical connections. Socially, the farmers' market can become the setting and motive for human interaction. The farmers' market often acts as a barrier breaker than provides incentives for interaction between people of different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Geographically, the farmers' market helps raise awareness regarding the surrounding local environment. Many of the products offered at the market help display and highlight aspects such as the local weather or the endemic edible plants of the area. The local nature of many of the available products lends the market an educational value. Frequent customers of the market

can obtain a better understanding of the local environment. In addition, the market is a suitable setting for city dwellers to directly meet local producers.

The farmers' market also provides opportunities for economic and urban revitalization. For example, the farmers' market can be used to bring residents and outsiders to specific areas of a neighbourhood. These visitors to the farmers' market subsequently bring activity and help to passively increase the safety of the area with their presence. Meanwhile, these visitors are able to personally observe the true character of a neighbourhood. For example, many inner city neighbourhoods are negatively affected by their reputation. However, a neighbourhood's reputation rarely reflects the true nature of a neighbourhood. The farmers' market can help dispel inaccurate reputations by displaying and highlighting the assets of the community. Therefore, the farmers' market can be effective to help enhance the identity of a neighbourhood.

Farmer markets also have other spill over effects over the surrounding community. For example, customers at the farmers' market are usually simply buying ingredients for food such as fresh produce. Generally, there is little conflict between local businesses and farmers' markets; the products available at the farmers' market are different for the most part from those sold by other outlets. Additionally, the farmers' market customers after concluding their shopping are often likely to patronize other businesses in the area such as restaurants. In this way, the farmers' market can help turn a slow weekend morning into a more profitable day for surrounding businesses. Overall, the farmers' market provides benefits for customers, vendors and the community in general. Properly implemented the farmers' market can advance social, economic, and environmental objectives.

2.3.4 Farmers' Markets and Agricultural Urbanism

The previous sections have shown farmers' markets have broad implications for neighbourhood residents, vendors and the overall community. Additionally, farmers' markets can also be linked to the intentions of the agricultural urbanism movement that has increasingly received attention from city building and design professions (de la Salle and Holland, 2010, p. 13; Gorgolewski, Komisar, Nasr, 2011, p. 11). Agricultural urbanism is a movement with the objective of creating a sustainable and more self-sufficient food system through the use of planning, policy and design (de la Salle and Holland, 2010, p. 30). The objectives of agricultural urbanism can be achieved at different community scales including the neighbourhood, city and regional level.

The farmers' market is a neighbourhood level initiative that integrates different principles of the agricultural urbanism movement. For example, farmers' markets are a visible venue for the sale and purchase of food. The visibility of farmers' markets makes them suitable initiatives to bring increased public attention to the food system. Often, the food system is rarely noticeable in more conventional retail spaces. However, farmers' markets when implemented adequately are capable of showcasing the local character and natural environment through the products available at the market. A farmers' market can also be described as a celebration of food by bringing people together around the theme of food. Therefore, a farmers' market performs an educational purpose by engaging people with their food and the land where the food products are grown (de la Salle and Holland, 2010, p. 31).

Farmer markets also contribute to increasing the availability and access to food. A farmers' market can generally be accommodated in a diversity of settings such as a parking lot or a public space. Therefore, a farmers' market can fill the gaps regarding food access by providing food to neighbourhoods potentially underserved by conventional food retailers.

Additionally, a farmers' market provides with greater revenue supporting in this way the economic viability of agricultural activities near or within an urban setting (also see section 2.3.1.1 and section 2.3.2.1).

Finally, farmers' markets can also be associated with the purpose of agricultural urbanism due their capacity to promote the establishment of partnerships to support a more sustainable food system. Farmers' markets generally depend for their implementation in the collaboration among different stakeholders. Therefore, a farmers' market is a suitable venue to encourage a collaborative decision-making process regarding food system improvements (de la Salle and Holland, 2010, pp. 30-31).

Despite the potential of farmers' markets to advance the integration of the food system into the development of a community there are many other variables that must be considered. Farmers' markets simply by themselves are unable to create all the necessary changes to promote sustainable and more self-sufficient communities. Farmers' markets must be consciously used in conjunction with other measures to significantly enhance the quality of life and food security of people. Not surprisingly, agricultural urbanism uses planning, policy and design tools in its approach to integrate the food system into the built environment.

Central Park Connection (theme: Farmers' Markets and Agricultural Urbanism)

The Central Market for Global Families initiative in Central Park was intended to encourage community development. However, despite the community development orientation there were other side benefits that were achieved in Central Park due the implementation of a farmers' market. Chapter Four, Analysis, briefly presents the improvements advanced by providing residents and stakeholders with a venue to integrate the food system more visibly in their neighbourhood. Chapter Five, Addressing the Research Questions, provides with recommendations of how the agricultural urbanism aspect of the Central Market could be better understood through the undertaking of further research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

“The true delight is in the finding out rather than in the knowing.”
Isaac Asimov

Research is a systematic endeavour oriented towards methodically investigating a topic. The process of research can be undertaken for a number of reasons. The most common reasons for performing research include the development of solutions to problems or the creation of new knowledge and understanding about specific topics (Gray, 2009, p. 2). Based on the previous two reasons research is generally separated in two categories: basic research and applied research. Basic research is oriented on the expansion of our understanding of the topic of study in a way that is significant to society. Meanwhile, applied research is focused on creating practical solutions to specific problems.

The author of the present research project attempted to perform both basic and applied research with his approach to the subject of study, the Central Market for Global Families and the rejuvenation of the Central Park public space. First, the research project tried to provide insight into the ways the Central Park initiative can be enhanced and supported. Secondly, the research project also seeks to contribute to the understanding of the role of the planning profession in regards to placemaking and farmers’ market initiatives. Attempting to perform both types of research proved to be a complicated, yet worthy endeavour, by the author of the research project. However, the likelihood to successfully accomplish both goals is fully dependant on the quality of the approaches taken to the research process.

The researcher identified the case study, literature review, and semi-structured interviews to be the most suitable research methods to realize the project’s objectives. The following sections provide an insight into the motives and reasoning for selecting each particular research method over other potential alternatives. Additionally, the section provides the reader

with an understanding of each element that constituted part of the overall research methodology. Finally, information is also provided in this chapter regarding how each research method was employed. The first research method to be explained is the literature review. The literature review is presented first due its role in informing the selection of the case of study and the semi-structured interviews. The next section presents the motives and reasoning for the literature review. Subsequently, an explanation of how the literature review was used is presented.

3.1 RESEARCH METHOD: LITERATURE REVIEW

Most research projects generally involve undertaking a comprehensive literature review (Gray, 2009, p. 98); the present practicum document was no different. A literature review was performed due the overall benefits it was expected to provide to the research project. Accurately, the literature review was instrumental for allowing the author to become familiarized with key authors and concepts associated with the topic of study. Additionally, the literature review gave an indication of the most commonly used methodologies to perform research on topics such as planning, placemaking and farmers' market initiatives.

The literature review was a continuously evolving process that involved adding and removing elements and topics as the research project progressed. However, there were two key stages to the development of the literature review. The first stage of the literature review was the process of inquiry performed to inform the research proposal on which the present practicum document is based on. The initial literature review permitted the author to develop an understanding of the gaps in the knowledge base of the planning profession. The author attempted to shape the research questions and objectives in a way that the project contributes to addressing the gaps in the knowledge base of the planning profession.

Meanwhile, the second stage of the literature review involved expanding and building upon the preliminary research. Chapter Two provides information on the topics considered key to the subject of study. The two main stages of the literature review allowed the author to recognize the connections between seemingly unrelated topics such as planning, placemaking and farmers' market initiatives. For example, the author originally assumed that farmers' market initiatives in an urban context were strongly connected to food security issues. However, the literature review demonstrated that farmers' markets, and placemaking initiatives, in an urban context are more commonly used as revitalization initiatives. Without the literature review, other similar connections between the different topics might have potentially eluded the author.

The literature review also provided the author with the chance to develop some distance with the subject of study. Studying the findings of other researchers is a key step towards developing expectations that can be dispelled, confirmed, or expanded based on the data collected for the research project (McCracken, 1988, p. 31). For example, without a literature review an author is likely to be unable to identify the moment an interview yields an exceptional piece of information; all data is unremarkable to a researcher without familiarity with the subject of study.

The literature review also makes possible the application of knowledge and skills from one discipline to another. For example, placemaking has generally received more attention from design-oriented professions such as landscape architecture. However, the use of placemaking in a planning context is feasible and potentially beneficial for the overall objectives of the planning profession. Therefore, the literature review permitted the author to adapt existing knowledge and applying it in a new setting as suggested by Wengraf (2001, p. 93).

The literature review chapter in itself also serve the purpose of providing a glimpse to future readers of the context under which the research project was performed. The presented literature review is a snapshot of the information readily available at the period of time during which the document was written, August 2012. Therefore, the literature review acts as a grounding element of the whole document; without the literature review the research projects becomes isolated and disjointed from the framework within which it occurred.

The literature review was also performed to support the other two research methods, case study and semi-structured interviews. For example, the literature review assisted in the definition of the scope of the case study and the collection of data just as recommended by Yin (1989, pp. 33, 84). Meanwhile, a literature review also helped the author to develop an insightful interview questionnaire; the literature review was useful to identify preliminary topics to frame and organize the research around. Therefore, the literature review was a useful guide to develop questions and prompts for the interview process as McCracken advises (1988, p. 32).

Ultimately, the literature review was seen by the author as an endeavour of “generativity” that builds upon the academic and scientific tradition and contributes to the refinement of the overall research process. The researching, analyzing and writing of the literature review were essential for the author to achieve a degree of “mastery” of the topics of study. Candidly, Gray (2009, p. 99) argues the literature review is a process that primarily promotes the sophistication of our shared human knowledge.

3.1.2 Literature Review Process

The author started the literature review process with a limited understanding of the subject of study. At the initial stage, a number of preliminary themes were selected to perform research on. However, as the literature review advanced unanticipated subjects emerged as relevant to the research project. For example, the urban revitalization theme was not initially

considered as part of the literature review. Yet, urban revitalization was added due its prominent role on the Central Park case study.

The process of research was accompanied with a gradual refinement of the scope of the project; the research was scaled from broad topics to a more manageable size. At first, the research project was meant to have a prominent portion dedicated to the food system and food security. Yet, the author determined based on the research the food aspect was of less importance than originally expected to the context of the case study. The refinement of the project allowed the author to instead focus the research on the most relevant topics. The main topics were determined to be urban decay and revitalization, placemaking and farmers' markets.

The literature review was not a straightforward endeavour. The final literature review required a large degree of flexibility. Certain topics that were comprehensively researched were eventually discarded. However, the adjusted allowed the final literature review reflects the needs and intentions of the research project truthfully.

Overall, the literature review involved reading and analysing a wide array of materials such as articles, government reports, books, theses, and blogs. The diversity of information sources was valuable to corroborate information. Additionally, the research provided the author with the necessary understanding of key theories and concepts to perform an analysis and develop conclusions. For example, the literature review indicated the most suitable analysis approach to answer the project's questions. Meanwhile, the arguments and findings presented in the conclusion section built upon the concepts and theories discovered during the literature review.

Ultimately, the literature review was an element that permeated and influenced all the other parts of the research enhancing the overall quality of the project. However, the case study

and the semi-structured interviews were the methods that provided much of the data that was fundamental to answering the project's research questions. Therefore, the next section explains the reasoning for using case studies. Subsequently, an overview is presented regarding the usage of the semi-structured interview method.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD: CASE STUDY

The case study is a research method that is generally used to perform qualitative research (Gray, 2009, p. 246). More specifically, the case study is commonly used for the study of planning-related topics (Yin, 1989, p. 13). The case study is often employed to study many topics, yet focused on a limited number of events, organizations or people. The method is useful when the context surrounding the subject of study is considered important. Early on, the researcher knew that the project would involve the study of many different topics such as urban revitalization, placemaking and neighbourhood safety. Additionally, the topics were also meant to be studied within a specific context such as the Central Park public space. Therefore, the case study method was considered as a suitable approach to achieve the project's intentions.

The case study is suited for research projects where the researcher has no control over the variables in action (Yin, 1989, pp. 19-20). In the Central Park case, the researcher had no capacity to directly influence the initiatives of interest for two main reasons: the Central Market for Global Families and the park rejuvenation were well-established and completed at the time of writing, August 2012. In addition, the researcher was also in no position to influence the actions of stakeholders involved with the continuation of the initiatives.

The case study approach was also selected due its usefulness to perform research where the main intention is to answer "how" or "why" questions (Yin, 1989, pp. 16-17). The research questions asked were mostly focused in studying relationships and interactions among the variables in action. The author's intention was to learn why the Central Market for Global

Families initiative and the Central Park rejuvenation were implemented and how the two initiatives were used to advance diverse improvements in the Central Park community. The research project was not focused in simply describing the Central Market and the park rejuvenation; otherwise, a different approach might have been used.

Finally, the case study approach was used due its value to increase understanding and conviction about a particular subject (Gray, 2009, p. 246). The author had the expectation that placemaking was indeed a valuable tool to advance community improvements. Therefore, the project's research questions were developed to provide insight into how and why the studied initiatives were used to promote positive changes in the neighbourhood. Additionally, the author also attempted to identify how the planning profession could potentially contribute to the successful implementation of similar initiatives in the future.

On the researcher's opinion, the case study method was effectively used to increase the understanding of the subject of study while considering the real-life context on which it occurred. A different approach, such as a survey, would have been idly fitted to make the statement intended by the researcher. The following section explains how the case study was used to undertake the research. Subsequently, the researcher explains the value of using semi-structured interviews.

3.2.2 Case Study Process

The first stage of the case study method involved the development of an approach to the research. The case study can either be an inductive or deductive endeavour. The inductive approach is of an exploratory nature; the research is started with no theoretical position. Meanwhile, the deductive approach is of a confirmatory nature, the research process is started with a set of hypotheses that are confirmed or denied over the course of the project.

The selected approach is a key consideration that influences the overall way the research is conducted. Based on preliminary research, the author considered the inductive approach to be the most suitable for the purposes of the project. Even though the project had research questions that needed to be answered these questions were exploratory in nature. The research questions were not directed towards confirming or denying a theory or assumption; the questions were developed to understand how and why placemaking and farmers' market initiatives can be used in a planning context. Therefore, the inductive approach considered adequate to perform the research project since no major conjecture was made at the beginning of the project.

Subsequently, once the inductive approach was selected a theoretical stance needed to be developed. The theoretical stance represents the overarching idea the research project seeks to study. The theoretical stance is defined by the project's hypotheses or research questions. For example, the researcher's project was aimed at determining the usefulness of placemaking and farmers' market initiatives to promote positive community improvements in a planning context. Each research question explored a different aspect of the theoretical stance. Yet, the research questions when considered in combination provided a stance that bounded the project together.

The following step involved selecting a case to study. Originally, the researcher considered studying a similar initiative located elsewhere in the city of Winnipeg. However, the conditions and circumstances associated with the initiatives in Central Park were more directly linked to the intentions of the research project. For example, the Central Park initiatives were remarkable because of the urban high density nature of the neighbourhood in which they occurred. Also, the socio economic characteristics of the neighbourhood were singular. For example, the number of ethnical backgrounds is uncommon elsewhere in the city. Additionally,

the involvement and pro-activeness of the community with the development and implementation of the Central Market and Central Park rejuvenation was considered an asset. Most importantly, the key stakeholders involved with the initiatives in the neighbourhood were willing to share their knowledge and experience with the author. Without the collaboration of the key stakeholders none of the research would have been possible. Understandably, the favourable and unique conditions directly influence the decision to focus the research on Central Park.

The next stage of the case study process involved making a decision regarding the type of case study design to use. There are four types of case study designs that include single holistic case, single embedded case, multiple holistic cases, and multiple embedded cases. The holistic case design is used when a single or multiple cases are to be studied in their entirety instead of its individual elements (Yin, 1989, pp. 49-50). The embedded case design is when a single or multiple cases are analyzed taking into consideration individual elements within it. The project was performed using a single embedded approach.

The decision to use a single case was based on the project's scope and timeline. The single case design is manageable and recommended by the literature for a Masters Project (Yin, 1989, p. 53; Gray, 2009, p. 258). The multiple cases design is suggested for larger undertakings such as doctoral projects. Additionally, the Central Park was considered to be unique case in its context (Yin, 1989, pp. 47-48). Having access to other cases similar enough to compare Central Park with would have been unlikely. The author concluded a single case was the most fitting design for the intentions, scope and timeline of the project.

The use of an embedded design was based on the units of analysis that were of interest to the project. The author was not attempting to analyze the totality of the elements associated with the two placemaking initiatives. However, the intention was still to study the effects of the

two initiatives from a number of perspectives. The different perspectives represent the subunits of analysis. For example, elements such as safety and economic development were all subunits of importance to the research project. The study of these subunits provided the author with the necessary information to answer the project's research questions.

The next stage of the case study method involved choosing the most effective research tools to use based on the project's approach, theoretical stance, and design. The case study can be conducted using six different sources of information that include documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts (Gray, 2009, p. 259). The author decided to use documentation and interviews to perform the research project. The documentation was selected because it provides unobtrusive information that dates back a long period of time providing useful background information (Yin, 1989, pp. 85-87). Meanwhile, the interviews were chosen since they could be performed directly to provide insightful information directly related to the case study (Yin, 1989, pp. 88-91).

The decision to use two information sources was made to increase the validity of the project's findings. The multiple sources of information were used to overcome the disadvantages of using a single case design; the multiple sources of information allowed the corroboration of findings. For example, documentation research was used when possible to validate the findings from the interviews. In addition, the validity of the findings was also increased by interviewing different types of stakeholders. For example, interviews were conducted with stakeholders such as community members, city officials, and designers. Each stakeholder group provided their respective viewpoint of the case study.

The different viewpoints were essential to develop conclusions that were representative of the case of study. However, despite the measures to increase the validity of the project the findings cannot be generalized. The single Central Park case is too limited to yield the necessary

results to be extrapolated to other cases. Nevertheless, the project is considered valuable; the intention of the project was never to provide generalizable findings. The project was intended to provide an increased understanding of how and why placemaking and farmers' market initiatives can, and should, be used in a planning context.

The final aspect that was given consideration as part of the case study method was the reliability of the project. The reliability depends on documenting the research process to ensure that any researcher can reach the same findings and conclusions by replicating the project. The document provides information such as a list of interview questions, methodology description, and interview protocol. Other additional information is presented throughout the main body of the document or in the appendix section.

The author considered the provided information sufficient to inform and guide anyone interested in replicating the study. For example, the previous section itself forms part of the measures performed to increase the reliability of the project; a description is provided about how and why the literature review was performed. Meanwhile, the next section provides information regarding the interview process for the benefit of any researcher willing or interested in repeating the research project.

3.3 RESEARCH METHOD: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Case studies can rely on six different sources of information (Gray, 2009, p. 259). The interview is one of the most commonly used approaches for information gathering for case studies (Yin, 1989, p. 88). The interview is usually described as a one on one conversation in which one of the parties has the role of researcher (Gray, 2009, p. 369). Generally, the researcher has a set of questions or topics that guide the conversation.

The interviews can be performed on a variety of styles; the interview can be highly structured, partially structured, or mostly informal. Among the different interview styles the

partially structured, also known as semi-structured interview, was considered the most suitable for this particular research project. The semi-structured interview provides the capacity to engage in a qualitative analysis for projects with open and complex research questions (Gray, 2009, p. 371, 373); all of which were characteristics of the researcher's project. Therefore, the semi-structured interview approach closely fitted the needs of the researcher.

The semi-structured interview is a method in which the researcher has a list of topics or questions to be asked, an interview structure. However, the interview structure is not restrictive; the researcher is still capable to add new questions or modifying the order and type of questions based on the input from the interviewee. The use of the semi-structured interview approach for the project provided a guide for performing the interview without limiting the capacity for improvisation.

The flexibility and capacity for improvisation of semi-structured interviews allowed the author to explore unanticipated topics as they were presented during the course of the interviews. A different interviewing approach would not have provided that option. For example, a highly structured and scripted interview cannot be spontaneously adapted. Meanwhile, the interview structure was also a valuable reminder of the project's objective. For example, the interview questions and prompts helped the author to focus the conversations on the research questions and avoid overtly deviating from them.

The research project was focused on exploring the social implications that the Central Market for Global Families and the Central Park rejuvenation had on the community. A method that provided the opportunity to study the attitudes and opinions of stakeholders was necessary. The literature indicated that when used adequately semi-structured interviews are capable of exploring the personal meaning attributed to specific events or concepts (Gray, 2009, p. 370, Yin, 1989, p. 90). Consequently, the author determined semi-structured interviews were

suitable to provide insight into the human aspect of the two studied placemaking initiatives. The literature also demonstrated semi-structured interviews were widely used for projects that were similar to the author's research (Breckwich et al., 2007; McCullum, Pelletier, Barr, and Wilkins, 2002, p. 964). The literature findings provided confidence on the decision of using semi-structured interviews.

Overall, the semi-structured interviews proved to fit the intentions and scope of the research project. The semi-structured interviews were used as a tool to allow interviewees to express explicitly what is generally been implicit (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p. 32). However, despite all the benefits of using semi-structured interviews there were also a number of challenges associated with the selected approach. For example, the semi-structured interview often requires extensive preparation and planning to be properly implemented. The preparation is necessary due the inability to fully anticipate in advance the direction the interview will take.

The semi-structured interview approach also requires the researcher to be capable to rapidly and creatively adapt in order to have an insightful conversation. In comparison, a highly structured interview approach is generally easier to administer and prepare for; deviation from the interview script is less likely. For this reason, the author dedicated a considerable amount of time familiarizing with the semi-structured interview process. The next section briefly describes the way the semi-structured interviews were performed.

3.3.2 Semi-structured Interview process

The previous section demonstrated that semi-structured interviews were a suitable method to collect information for the project. However, the credibility of the semi-structured interviews, and the overall project, depends on the way the research method was used. Therefore, the researcher made a conscious effort to increase the validity and reliability of the interview data.

The validity depends on the capacity of the research instrument, the semi-structured interview, to measure the variables it was intended to measure (Gray, 2009, pp. 375-376). For example, a valid interview must be designed in a way it provides insightful information about the research subjects. Meanwhile, reliability is associated with the capacity of a research instrument to measure the variables it was intended to study in a consistent manner each time it is used (Gray, 2009, pp. 376-377). For example, a reliable interview is the one in which the researcher adheres to the interview guide or protocol by avoiding disproportionate changes to the interview structure.

The validity and reliability considerations were incorporated into each of the stages of the interview process. The interview process was composed of four stages. The first stage involved the work performed in advance and in preparation of each individual interview. The research had to first establish initial contact with potential interviewees. The researcher provided each person with a quick overview of the project's purpose, topics of study and an explanation for inviting them to participate in the interview process. When the person was available and willing to participate a tentative date was established for the interview.

The second stage of the interview process was conducted shortly before each scheduled interview. The researcher arrived early to the meeting place and used the additional time to review the project's main research questions and the interview guide (See appendix C – for sample interview questions). The preliminary exercise helped to increase the reliability and validity of the interview process. For example, reviewing the project's research questions helped the researcher to focus the interview on the project's objectives. Meanwhile, revisiting the interview guide before every interview was a useful reminder of the way the interview must be conducted including the order, phrasing and type of questions to be asked.

The third stage of the semi-structured interview process was the interview itself. The interview was always started with a summary of the project's objectives and purpose. Subsequently, the researcher explained to the interviewee how the interview was to be conducted and the approximate duration of the whole interview. The author also provided the interviewee with a copy of the consent form and time was given to review the form and ask questions. The consent form provided interviewees with information such as their rights, confidentiality considerations, topics to be covered and also requested permission to record the conversation. If the interviewee understood and agreed to sign the consent form the researcher proceeded with the interview.

The interview was undertaken following the interview guide as closely as possible. However, adhering to the interview guide was not always possible, or desired in all circumstances. For example, certain answers provided insightful or unexpected information that deserved further exploration. In those circumstances, the researcher modified the interview guide and added new probing questions. In other cases, an interviewee will touch upon more than one question in a single answer. In some cases, the researcher had to promptly eliminate later questions to avoid repetition.

Despite the changes, the researcher generally attempted to return to the structure provided by the interview guide. Finally, before concluding the interview the guide was quickly reviewed to ensure all topics have been satisfactorily explored. Once all topics had been covered the researcher provided an opportunity for the interviewee to add anything else that might have been left unsaid over the course of the interview. Afterwards, the researcher thanked the interviewees for their participation and asked for any suggestions of other key stakeholders the research might want to contact for potential interview opportunities.

The fourth stage was undertaken shortly after the interview. The fourth stage consisted of reviewing the interview notes and making any necessary clarifications. Generally, the interview notes consisted of key words quickly written down during the interview. The notes provided a useful preliminary overview of the interview. However, without clarifications the notes were likely to be incomprehensible when the analysis was performed later on. The fourth stage provided additional details that proved useful during the analysis process. Additionally, reviewing the notes was also valuable to enhance the interview process. For example, the researcher was able to identify the most effective way of asking for the needed information to fulfill the research objectives.

Overall, the semi-structured interview process was effective for the scope and intentions of the research project. However, the interview process presented a number of challenges. For example, the semi-structured nature of the research method required a fair amount of time for the transcription and analysis of information. Additionally, the interviewing process also demanded the researcher to simultaneously be able to perform multiple activities. For example, the researcher needed to be able to actively listen, improvise or provide the interviewee the opportunity to freely express their ideas while still focusing on the research's objectives.

3.4 CONCLUSIONS OF RESEARCH METHODS

The chapter has provided an overview of the reasoning for using each of the selected research methods. The literature review was essential to identify gaps in the knowledge base of the planning profession and identifying key topics to study. The case study approach was effective at collecting information about many themes but focusing on a particular setting. Meanwhile, the semi-structured interviews were suitable to explore from different perspectives how and why placemaking can be used to support urban revitalization.

The chapter also presented a brief description of how the research methods were used. The chapter was intended to increase the validity and reliability of the research project. The researcher attempted to provide as many details to the readers about how to replicate the project.

Finally, the chapter indicated how the different research methods complemented and supported each other. For example, the comprehensive literature review influenced the questions asked on the semi-structured interview process. Meanwhile, the case study approach influenced the selection of semi-structured interviews as an information gathering method.

Overall, the selected research methods were considered suitable and effective for the project's objectives. The author has the conviction that if other research methods have been used the findings and conclusions might have been different and perhaps less revealing. However, despite the usefulness of the research methods the final chapter, Conclusions, provides a brief overview of the ways the research project could have been enhanced.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

“Data don’t speak for themselves. We have to goad them into saying things.”
Barry Turner, as cited in Richards (2005, p. 67)

The analysis is the stage in which the information and data collected in other stages yields results and provides findings. The findings from the analysis stage represent the culmination of an extensive effort that gives meaning and significance to the overall research project.

The analysis stage requires the researcher to review and interpret the available data carefully. The process involves the identification of categories and subcategories and the establishment of connections among them. These categories and subcategories are also assigned a meaning that contributes to the overall findings of the project. Ultimately, the described analysis process is what allows the findings to emerge from the originally raw data. However, findings do not simply “emerge” by themselves (Richards, 2005, pp. 67-68). The researcher must methodically work with the data in an exploratory manner that constructs a whole from the many pieces collected along the research process.

The analysis process is a complicated endeavour; even more so, in the case of qualitative research. The analysis of qualitative data has often been a neglected and relatively obscure process (Spencer, Ritchie and O’Connor, 2003, p. 199). There are few practical resources explaining in a concrete way how to conduct data analysis (Yin, 1989, p. 105). Generally, much is left to the interpretation and best judgement of the researcher. Qualitative research is often criticized for its subjectivity and lack of rigour and consistency (Gray, 2009, p. 493).

The lack of well-established analysis methodologies is usually well depicted in the disparate approaches used by qualitative researchers to identify and express their findings

(Richard, 2005, p. 187). However, an extensive review of qualitative research literature is capable of indicating a number of approaches that are consistently used for analysis purposes. For example, transcribing data and using coding techniques is a common practice in qualitative research (Richard, 2005, pp. 84-103; Yin, 1989, pp. 105-106; Gray, 2009, 494). Therefore, the researcher transcribed and coded the interview data to develop categories. The analysis process permitted the research to successfully manage the large amount of data yielded by the interview process. The following section presents the findings from the research project.

4.1 CATEGORIES

The interview data was arranged in three main categories; additionally, each category had a number of sub-categories linked to it. The first category is “Stakeholders” which is associated to the role, motivations and intentions of particular individuals or groups and their influence on the case study initiatives in Central Park. The second category is “Community Enhancement” which compiles the improvements associated with the initiatives in Central Park. The third category is “Challenges and Opportunities for Improvement” which identifies past or ongoing issues connected to the Central Park initiatives and subsequently describes opportunities for potential improvements.

The three categories were developed based on the predominant themes that emerged during the semi-structured interviews. The following section presents the analysis and findings organized by category. The next section is focused on the stakeholders involved with the studied initiatives in Central Park and their role in the improvements that have occurred in the neighbourhood.

4.1.1 Category: Stakeholders

The interviewees included key representatives from community groups, the government, the rejuvenation’s design firm, and funders of the studied initiative. The

stakeholder's motives for being involved with Central Park varied with each individual. Often, the stakeholders became involved due their organizational mandate or professional responsibilities. Participating in rehabilitating the park allowed some of the organizations to fulfill their role in the community. As one of the community group interviewees expressed:

“The reason that [we] have any value, really, is that we exist to be an open door to the community, to engage directly with the community.”

Regardless of their motives, the stakeholders demonstrated with their actions a commitment towards the improvement of the Central Park area. Their decision to become involved was often influenced by the dire conditions the Central Park public space was originally found on. Many stakeholders considered their involvement with the park necessary to reclaim an important element of Winnipeg urban core. For example, one of the interviewees explained:

“... The park was [very] notorious; there were a lot of activities, unwanted activities, going on. And so, the community saw [their involvement] as an opportunity to reclaim the park.”

A similar perception of the original conditions of the park was expressed unanimously by all interviewed stakeholders. The unwanted activities that commonly occurred in the public space were seen as an obstacle for the widespread usage of Central Park by the overall community (also see section 2.1). Therefore, the stakeholders determined at different points in time an intervention was needed to position Central Park as a key community asset; the way it was intended when originally constructed more than a century ago.

Among all stakeholders the community groups were the first to become actively engaged in efforts to reclaim the park. The community groups initiated a discussion with residents regarding the potential opportunities to reuse the parks. Originally, the first considered option was the establishment of a coffee shop near the park. The coffee shop was intended to act as a community gathering space. However, obstacles such as limited resident's support and financing difficulties required the identification of a more viable option. The

community organizations in collaboration with area residents determined a market was a more fitting option for the park. In particular, the background of many residents was expected to support the establishment of a market. For example, the residents were described in the following way:

“There were a lot of immigrants [in the neighbourhood], refugees, specially coming from Africa. They were ... [small entrepreneurs] back home, back in their own countries. They used to carry ... wares ... to go from village to village to sell; and, most of them used to sell in markets. When they came to Canada there was nothing like that [for them in the area].”

The familiarity of residents with the concept of open air markets helped community organizations to rally support for the initiative (also see section 2.3 and section 2.3.2.2). However, before the market could be officially established a comprehensive effort had to be made to convince people of the viability of using a public space with a notoriously bad reputation. Many residents originally thought the park was in no condition to host the market. Therefore, the first step in the process involved physically cleaning up the park to remove the more visible effects of neglect. The clean-up effort was briefly described by an interviewee:

“The first time we did a community spring cleaning, we found a lot of needles and condoms, and all kinds of stuff ...”

Generally, similar community clean-ups have successfully been used to promote larger reinvestment in a neighbourhood across North America. For example, residents of Baltimore, Maryland, organized a community clean-up to revitalize a neglected public space called Mount Vernon Place (Walljasper, 2007, p. 114). The residents’ efforts encouraged wider community use; and eventually, the gradual improvements made the establishment of a flower market and a book festival possible. Ultimately, the direct community involvement convinced the Baltimore local government to invest on the maintenance and improvement of the park (Walljasper, 2007, p. 115).

Similar to the Baltimore example, Central Park residents and community groups built upon the momentum of the park clean-up with another initiative; the clean-up was followed by the establishment of the market. Initially, the “pilot” market consisted of two tents set up by the community organizations in order to identify potential issues that might arise from making wider usage of the park. The residents participated in the market as vendors, selling crafts and imported goods. The crafts and goods sold were usually representative of the various cultural groups that reside within the neighbourhood. Overall, there was no prohibition/restriction on the type of items sold except for used items; with the intention here to prevent an untidy look at the market.

Participation as a vendor in the Central Market was free of charge during the first year. The market was commonly open Friday nights and Saturday mornings from early July to late September to any vendor. However, preference was given to residents of Central Park in an effort to support the economic development of the community. Remarkably, the market ran without any major incidents. Originally, organizers thought safety might be an issue given the area’s reputation. Yet, the presence of the market had a transformative effect in the surrounding area by increasing the usage of the park by area residents; people in Central Park with their presence discouraged anti-social behaviour.

The improvements in Central Park encouraged by the community clean-up are not uncommon; many communities have experienced similar results by encouraging people to take ownership of their communal spaces. For example, residents of the Minneapolis neighbourhood of Lyndale organized neighbourhood walks to create a positive presence on the streets. The neighbourhood walks acted as deterrents for unlawful behaviour helping to reduce crime by nearly 40 percent (Walljasper, 2007, pp. 84-85).



Figure 6. Vendors at Central Park during Canada Day celebrations.



Figure 7. Programming at Central Park. Central Park is frequently used by community organizations to host special events for residents and visitors.

In addition to the enhanced safety, the market provided the residents with a concrete initiative to rally behind (also see section 2.2.4). The success of the first year provided the community groups with the drive to continue expanding the market the next year. The second year the organizers hired a market manager that contacted vendors and promoted the market within, and beyond, the neighbourhood boundaries. The outreach process was described by one of the organizers in the following way:

“We needed to reach out to all the other farmers’ markets, so we started going out, we started having workshops, we started ... talking about the market. And, so we had so many vendors [that year].”

The actions of Central Park’s community groups mostly revolved around taking ownership of the public space in an attempt to create a more positive perception of the neighbourhood (also see section 2.1.1.3 and section 2.1.2). The effects of these early efforts can be described as a symbol of renewal. According to Walljasper (2007, p. 76), a symbol of renewal is often essential to spark further investment in a neighbourhood.

Therefore, is not uncommon to see community groups and residents in other cities supporting similar initiatives to enhance and take ownership of their public spaces (Garvin, 2011, p. 191). For example, the Joseph C. Sauer Memorial Playground located in Manhattan’s East Village was for decades a key public space. However, due limited maintenance the playground was gradually taken over by illegal activities. The situation worsened over a decade-long period until neighbourhood residents became directly engaged with the fate of the park. The residents organized community cleanups, petition writing to local authorities, and became vocal about the condition of the park. The residents’ campaign succeeded in influencing the decision of the local government to invest in the park (Garvin, 2011, pp. 192-193).

Similarly, Central Park experienced problems with crime and anti-social behaviour in the park. These issues were more effectively addressed only when the residents became engaged

and collaborated with other stakeholders in reclaiming the park (also see section 2.2.1.1). The collaboration occurred in the form of a rejuvenation that refurbished, and expanded, the amenities available in the park. The rejuvenation represented a \$5.6 million investment from three levels of government and private donors. Many of the community groups considered the willingness of stakeholders to invest in the park as a reflection of the continued efforts of the community. For example, the following was expressed regarding the motives for the rejuvenation:

“The government saw that people were using that park. ... a philanthropist [also] saw that [and knew they] needed to act on it.”

A similar view was expressed by other stakeholders who recognized the value of being able to engage in a discussion with residents regarding the potential uses for the park (also see section 2.2.2). The funders of the rejuvenation originally had a different design concept for the park. However, the input from residents helped to accurately determine the most suitable amenities for the character of the surrounding community. The public consultation process proved indispensable to facilitate the collaboration between designers and residents; the process allowed the prioritization of key elements to be included in the park’s design (also see section 2.2.1.1). For example, the soccer field was added to the final design due community input. The interviewed funding organization explained the intention of the extensive consultation process was to let the community know:

“This is a community park and therefore, it should be driven by the community. We [are here] ... to make sure that [the park] got completed, financed, and maintained.”



Figure 8. Soccer Pitch. Soccer pitch is extensively used during the summer for diverse activities.

Overall, the rejuvenation process demonstrated to residents that Central Park was their community park. The funders, public and private, were committed to listening to the concerns and to consider the real needs of surrounding residents. The community groups were given the opportunity to assimilate the design proposals and make suggestions that were accurately reflected in the final product. The community groups confirmed that:

“They [, the funders,] were willing to listen to the community. I think that is what makes the project more successful.”

Meanwhile, the funders were pleased to acknowledge the consultation process was critical to the successful rejuvenation of the park:

“The things the ... [community] wanted to see, and advocated for, are in that park. So they were listened to, and the results bear witness to that consultation process.”

However, the success of the consultation process can be linked to the proactive role taken by the residents and community groups towards improving the conditions of the park. Years before the opportunity to redevelop the park presented itself the community was already engaged in reclaiming the park through their own means. The consultation process for the

rejuvenation was indeed facilitated by the community groups. The funders of the rejuvenation hired well-known community resident to act as the point of contact between outside stakeholders and the community. The approach was described as important to navigate the diversity of cultures found in the neighbourhood. An interviewee explained:

“[The community groups] ... help[ed to] facilitate some of the consultation for us. So [the consultation] wasn’t an issue; it would have been an issue if we had tried to do it. But the fact that we had people working through the community ... brought out ideas and suggestions ...”

Overall, the interviewees agreed that the consultation process and the collaboration among different stakeholders enhanced the rejuvenation initiative. In particular, the willingness to collaborate was essential to achieve the desired community enhancements. The rejuvenation brought different stakeholders together benefiting from the strengths of each individual stakeholder group (also see section 2.2.2). The rejuvenation initiative was often described as a success not based on the amount of money invested, but because of the positive “agenda” that was advanced. The Central Park rejuvenation allowed the residents of a multicultural neighbourhood to express their needs and aspirations. The consultation process democratized the rejuvenation by empowering the residents. The next section describes the empowerment and other benefits achieved through the implementation of the placemaking initiatives.

4.1.2 Category: Community Enhancements

The previous section broadly described the stakeholders and the two placemaking initiatives in Central Park: its rejuvenation and the market. The market and the rejuvenation initiatives were implemented in an attempt to reclaim one of the oldest parks in the city of Winnipeg. Conversations with different stakeholders indicate the two initiatives achieved their intended purpose; the initiatives promoted social, physical and economic enhancements in the public space and the surrounding area. These community enhancements have been classified in three main subcategories that include: safety, ownership and identity, and side benefits. The

subcategories are individually analysed in the following subsections. The next section is focused on the safety improvements achieved by the implementation of the studied initiatives.

4.1.2.1 Safety

The usage of a park is highly influenced by the levels of real and perceived safety (Garvin, 2011, p. 38-39). People are unlikely to use a park that is unsafe or considered unsafe (also see section 2.1.1.3). Before its rejuvenation, Central Park was not only considered unsafe, but also truthfully prone to anti-social behaviour. The stakeholders described in detail the anti-social behaviour often observed in the park sometimes at broad daylight. Not surprisingly, the first objective of the establishment of the market and the rejuvenation project was to increase safety. To achieve greater safety different approaches were taken.

The first approach used to enhance the safety of the park was by encouraging the usage of the park. The community park cleanups, described in the previous section, were successful in gradually increasing the confidence of residents to use the park. Garvin argues (2011, pp. 38-39) that a park to be safe needs of the social surveillance provided by its users; and, those users are only likely to visit the park if an adequate level of comfort is offered to them. The community park cleanup enhanced the physical condition to provide the needed level of comfort. In turn, the resulting usage acted as a needed deterrent for anti-social behaviour.

Subsequently, another approach was also used during the rejuvenation of the park to increase safety. The residents during the community consultation expressed their concerns with anti-social behaviour. The designers and funders agreed specific measures were needed to address the residents' safety concerns. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles were used throughout the park. For example, sightlines were improved by removing hiding places and increasing legibility. Meanwhile, the lighting levels were also enhanced. The final design provides visitors with a commanding view of most of the park from nearly any

location. Ultimately, the CPTED principles permeated into most elements of the park. For example, the following was said about the design used on the change rooms and maintenance building:

“[W]e wanted to make sure that there was a level of transparency, so that is why [the building] was completely transparent You could see actually what was going on.... So it tells the community we are not trying to hide anything.”

The safety of the park was also enhanced by higher maintenance standards than originally. The City of Winnipeg made the commitment to employ in Central Park the maintenance standards commonly reserved for regional parks. The regional park standard guarantees maintenance is provided on a daily basis; litter pickup is regularly performed, vandalism signs such as graffiti are quickly removed, and broken amenities are promptly repaired. The removal of litter and vandalism signs is known to be essential to create a positive perception of public spaces (Colquhoun, 2004, pp. 168-169).



Figure 9. Maintenance Building. The building in the North side of the park is a see-through structure that provides park users with bathrooms, change rooms and also allows seeing the system powering the splash pad.

The willingness to maintain the park at the regional standard was also essential to secure the necessary funding to redevelop the park. One of the interviewees explained:

“[T]he private funders were very interested in investing in the park, but were concerned about the long-term maintenance and viability ... If you put a million dollars into a park, you do not want to look at it 10 years from now and just see it as it was [before]”

Therefore, the regional standard provided funders with the confidence that their investment will be preserved at a high-quality over the long-term. Additionally, the regional standard also fulfilled the community expectations. The residents wanted to see the amenities that they have advocated for being well maintained.

Finally, safety in Central Park was enhanced by the number of recreation options available in the park. The design of the park was intended to promote usage during different times of the day and seasons of the year. The possibility of engaging in a diversity of recreational activities provides a sense of safety by attracting different demographics throughout the day (Colquhoun, 2004, p. 169). After the rejuvenation, amenities such as a soccer pitch, sitting areas, wading pool, slide, and play structures were added. Each of these amenities caters to different groups of people (also see section 2.2.1.1). For example, children from nearby childcare centers can often be found during the morning hours. In the afternoon, elderly people are generally seen sitting on park benches chatting with acquaintances. Meanwhile, in the evenings teenagers and young adults often use the soccer pitch.



Figure 10. Children Play Structure. Children's play structures were added to the park as part of the redevelopment.

Most importantly the added amenities were a reflection of the needs and aspirations of the residents. The design provides exactly the amenities prioritized in collaboration with residents. These amenities were also designed to be universally accessible to people of all ages and physical capacities. Therefore, visitors to Central Park can engage in their desired activities without obstacles. An interviewee explained:

“[Y]ou can sit, you can walk, you can go to market, you can take toddlers to play at the wading pool ... It provides [all] those opportunities and I think that with the community's early involvement [in the consultation process] it didn't feel like something being dumped on them ... they felt engaged.”

Regarding year-round use the park includes amenities that can be converted to other uses during the winter. For example, the soccer pitch can be flooded during the winter and be used as a skating rink. Meanwhile, the hill near the slide can also be used for tobogganing. The

adaptability of the park's amenities to the seasonal changes prevents the public space from being empty for large periods of time. An interviewee described the design intended to:

“... [M]ake sure that people are in this park at all times. Because the more people [you have] doing things that are positive in this park the more undesirable stuff isn't going to [occur].”



Figure 11. Hill at South end of the park. The hill is used for tobogganing during the winter and sliding during the summer. The hill is made accessible for people of all capacities by a ramp on the side.

The flexibility and variety of activities in addition to increasing safety also provide broad opportunities for public space programming. The community groups themselves have generally engaged in organizing different events that make use of the park. For example, in previous years the market was hosted on a weekly basis during the summer months. Meanwhile, in 2012 community barbeques were organized during national holidays. In addition, the soccer pitch is used to host events such as soccer games between residents and officers of the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS). During the winter residents also interact with the WPS officers in the “Skates and Badges” event where children get a chance to skate and play hockey with officers and cadets.

The different events and programming encourages social interactions that were not originally available. In particular, the events involving the WPS help establish better

relationships between the residents and law enforcement officers. The improved relationships are valuable for the prevention of crime. Different interviewees agreed in the beneficial effect of increasing the trust and understanding between the residents and government authorities. An interviewee eloquently explained:

“[C]riminal activity is unwanted by the residents and they are calling the police and they are the ones pushing forward.... [N]ow there is this trust going back and forth [between the residents and police].”

Safety wise the market and the rejuvenation were effective at achieving positive changes in Central Park and the surrounding area (also see section 2.3.3). The efforts to reclaim the park provided the residents with the confidence that they could use the park safely in ways that have not been possible in years. However, the community enhancements go beyond the safety improvements. The following section explores how the market and the rejuvenation were instrumental in achieving a greater sense of ownership of the park. Subsequently, other side benefits such as community reinvestment are presented.



Figure 12. Sign for ice skating at the park. The soccer pitch can be flooded during the winter allowing the park to be used during the different seasons of the year.



Figure 13. Skates and Badges. Neighbourhood children skating with cadets of the Winnipeg Police Service. The activity has helped develop better relationships among residents and law enforcement officers.

4.1.2.2 Ownership and Identity

Placemaking is a collaborative and community driven process (Walljasper, 2007, pp. 3).

The community's participation in a placemaking initiative is required to promote the improvements that truthfully represent the needs of the neighbourhood (also see section 2.2.2). Understandably, many placemaking initiatives are often started at the community level (Walljasper, 2007, pp. 3).

In Central Park, the residents recognized early on there were longstanding issues that demanded attention. In response, the community organizations with the support of residents developed solutions with the resources available to them. The initial efforts included activities such as the community cleanups and the market initiative (also see section 4.1.1 and section 4.1.2.1). Later on, the community efforts were advanced even further by the willingness of other external stakeholders to invest in the rejuvenation of the park. Yet, the key element for the

achieved, and ongoing, improvements is the direct resident involvement in all stages of the placemaking process. However, the resident involvement in itself was accomplished by fostering a sense of ownership throughout the process.

Ownership was encouraged by ensuring the revitalization efforts reflected the vision residents had for their neighbourhood. For example, a coffee shop was originally proposed to revitalize the area around the park. However, the community organizations quickly realized the residents were more interested in directly intervening to enhance the conditions of the park. Therefore, the community cleanup and market were organized. The willingness to adapt based on the priorities of the community was intended to show the initiative was community-oriented.

An interviewee explained:

“What we did was ... to go from door to door and let people know that this was their own stuff, their own project? Actually, we made [sure that] ... the ideas were coming from the people not us. We were only [there] helping them [do] ... what they wanted to do.”

During the rejuvenation of the park a similar attitude was adopted regarding the need for community input. The external stakeholders agreed the residents had to be meaningfully engaged for the rejuvenation initiative to be successful; for public and private funders the involvement of the community was a prerequisite for their collaboration. An interviewee elaborated:

“[The funders] ... biggest push was: ‘we are involved as long as the community is involved.’ It was really an initiative to just get the community in as much as possible.”

As a result, an extensive community consultation was performed to inform the rejuvenation of the park. The interviewees agreed the intention was not to create a design to superimpose on the neighbourhood, but to co-create a community gathering place. The design for Central Park had to be not only a physical manifestation, but also an expression of the needs,

intentions and meanings attributed to the park by the surrounding residents; the space had to be collaboratively converted into a meaningful place (Wight, 2011, p. 2).

To successfully create a meaningful place the material and subjective attributes of the park had to be well understood. Therefore, the community consultation included people of all backgrounds. The participants of the consultation provided their personal insight into the character of the neighbourhood. Ultimately, the different stakeholders agreed that the final design of the rejuvenation was indeed enhanced by the consultation process. In this regard, an interviewee mentioned:

“We have found out that we have better projects with that level of community engagement and [the community] ... tell you things that are wrong with your project too. Because ... they will know their community better than we ever will. And so we need their insights to make the project successful.”

The previous remark was often reaffirmed during the interviews with different stakeholders. Everything indicates that the residents were recognized as “experts” on their community during the rejuvenation of Central Park (also see section 2.2.2). The residents were able to collaboratively identify with the designers and other stakeholders the most fitting amenities for the needs of the neighbourhood. However, the involvement of residents and community groups with Central Park has not been limited to the rejuvenation of the park. To this day, nearly four years after the rejuvenation was announced the residents still continue to be engaged with the park. An interviewee explained:

“[A] lot of that program[ming in the park] is being done by the community. We have nothing to do with it. So any program that you see out there is being driven ... by the community.”



Figure 14. Splash Pad. The pad was added to the park based on resident feedback during the consultation performed as part of planning the redevelopment.

The willingness of residents to continue their involvement with the park helps illustrate how the reclamation initiatives positioned Central Park as a key element of the neighbourhood. The rejuvenation established Central Park as a galvanizing feature for the neighbourhood; the park is now a focus point for many of the community efforts to enhance the area. Most importantly, the park became an essential community gathering place for the diverse population of the neighbourhood (also see section 2.3.1.2).

Central Park is a neighbourhood where 71.7% of the population is part of a visible minority group; and many of which have often recently moved to Winnipeg or Canada itself (City of Winnipeg, 2007, p. 4). The reclaimed park provides the diverse population, in particular newly immigrated residents and families, with a place to gather and gradually integrate into their new communities.

The park acts as a social “mixer” that contributes to overcoming the isolation that many residents often experience after their arrival to Winnipeg or the country (also see section 2.1 and section 2.1.2). The integrative function of Central Park is not surprising considering how often public spaces have been used previously for that purpose with successful results. For example, Frederick Law Olmstead envisioned in the 1860’s Central Park in New York as the location where people of any class, race or religion were to come together as a civil society setting aside all differences (Garvin, 2011, p. 38).

Central Park in Winnipeg achieves Olmstead’s vision by being a venue acting as the motive for people to share with each other in the public realm. The opportunity for social interaction in the park was previously not widely available; before the park was reclaimed, the neighbourhood had no natural gathering place for all backgrounds. The reclamation of the park has a greater significance in its role of enhancing the interactions between the different groups found in the neighbourhood. An interviewee attributed the park with the following effects in the community:

“[The park] ... had an integrative function in the community, by defining the community as a safe place. ... [F]undamentally, it set the tone for a different experience of the park; and, the park remains central for these people’s life...”

The different interviewees agreed the park renewal helped redefine the character of the neighbourhood as a safer place. Additionally, the park was also infused by the desire of the many immigrants and refugees that reside in Central Park to understand and embrace their identity as new Canadian residents (also see section 2.2.1.1). For example, amenities such as the skating rink and the tobogganing hill were specifically requested by residents given the common association of both amenities with Canada. An interviewee expressed the following in regards to the skating rink and tobogganing hill:

“[During the community consultation] they never said: ‘we want to see something from where we are from.’ They said: ‘we want to learn how to ice skate; we want to learn how to toboggan.’ They wanted to know what it was to be Canadian.”

The inclusion of the skating rink and tobogganing hill and other amenities demonstrated the responsiveness of the park’s design to the needs and demands of the population. The willingness to adapt the park is an indication of the intention to create a place that was collaboratively shaped to fit within the neighbourhood it was intended for. The responsiveness to residents’ demands was successful, among other things, in enhancing the sense of ownership of the residents towards their park.

The achieved sense of ownership was considered unanimously by all interviewees as essential for the long-term sustainability of the achieved improvements; without the resident’s collaboration the improvements could be short-lived. For that reason, the sense of ownership is valuable to prevent the park from returning to the condition of neglect it was found before it was reclaimed.

Overall, the promoted sense of ownership and the new identity of the park provide the place with a social sustainability that welcomes a wide variety of users. At the same time, the community residents have a stake in the preservation and enhancement of the park. By engaging the residents and promoting collaboration between diverse stakeholders the initiatives to reclaim Central Park directly counteracted the neglect that affected the neighbourhood at large. Yet, the placemaking initiatives also had other unexpected side benefits that are described in the next section.

4.1.2.3 Side Benefits

The placemaking initiatives that occurred in Central Park had two major benefits: enhanced safety in the park and surrounding area, and higher sense of ownership from

residents through the provision of needed amenities and a meaningful community consultation process. However, the benefits from the market and rejuvenation initiatives were not limited to these two major improvements.

Other side benefits were achieved by the implementation of the placemaking initiatives. For example, an initiative known as the Rainbow Community Garden was established to supply residents with an opportunity to grow some of their own food. Additionally, the community garden supported the Central Park's market by providing produce to sell. The establishment of the community garden also help increase the visibility of the food system in ways that are encouraged by agricultural urbanism (also see section 2.3.4). Participants at the community garden were able to learn about the produce that could be grown in Winnipeg.

The community garden was started as a result of the conversations among residents and community groups involved with the organization of the market; the conversations helped identify the desire of the residents to farm and socialize in a different setting than that of Central Park. The community garden was established on property provided by the University of Manitoba at the Fort Garry campus in the South of Winnipeg. The community garden served as a place where residents, particularly women, were able to interact undisturbed by social, cultural or religious norms that often have to be observed while in Central Park.

The community garden also acted as a community economic development tool by supplementing the income of participants due its connection with the Central Market for Global Families. Markets have been documented to be well-suited to provide income-earning opportunities for immigrants due their low entry barriers (Morales, 2009, p. 431) (also see section 2.3.2). For example, many of the vendors at Chicago's Maxwell Street market are part of the immigrant population. The Maxwell Street market offers vendors the option to pursue self-employment, achieve a sense of economic autonomy and to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit

(Morales, 2009, pp. 437-438). The Central Market is potentially capable of increasing the economic viability of small scale produce sale in ways encouraged as part of the agricultural urbanism movement (also see section 2.3.4).

In the case of the Central Market for Global Families, the barriers of entry were kept purposely low to encourage residents to participate in the sale of produce and other goods. The market and the community garden were the most successful when focusing on ethnic food produce (also see section 2.3.2.1). Plants characteristic of certain world cuisines were grown at the community garden. The produce was often sold at a premium price due the uniqueness of the produce. For example, an interviewee recalled:

“[One time they were selling] sweet potato leaves, [and] so this lady, she was from Chad, when she saw it, she [bought] ... everything right away, she paid more than they were charging. Because she was so excited, she hasn’t seen it [in Canada], but she had been looking for it and gave extra money.”

The idea of catering to specific ethnic groups or filling a niche is a strategy often recommended for markets (Corum et al., 2001, pp. 2-3, 84-85; Stephenson, 2008, p. 81). As long as there is a demand for the products the likelihood of achieving a profit is possible.

Unfortunately, the Central Market for Global Families and the Rainbow Community Garden have both experienced a number of limitations that affect their viability as next described.

The distance between Central Park and the Fort Garry Campus is an obstacle for many of the residents without access to convenient transportation. The commute using Winnipeg Transit takes 40 to 55 minutes each way; additionally, taking transit requires walking for 10 to 20 minutes from the nearest bus stop potentially while carrying produce. The cost of transit itself can be an obstacle for some of the residents of Central Park. Meanwhile, the unpredictability of the weather is an issue that affects the crops at the community garden; and subsequently, the availability of produce at the market.

Despite the obstacles, the interviewees agreed the market and its community garden are important for the improvement of the neighbourhood and the quality of life of residents. An interviewee explained:

“I certainly think that the market remains key to the revitalization of the park, and the revitalization of the park remains key to the revitalization of the neighbourhood and the community. The challenge ... is that to build a sustainable market you need to have an ongoing [and] reliable merchant [and customer] supply.”

The obstacles identified by the interviewees are not unique to Central Park. Many other markets experience similar difficulties in fulfilling their purpose and transformative potential. The “Challenges and Opportunities for Improvement,” in section 4.1.3., briefly presents some of the alternatives to enhance the effectiveness of the initiatives in Central Park. However, before proceeding to that section other side benefits of the placemaking initiatives must be mentioned and explained. For example, the women’s sewing group was an initiative that was developed as a spinoff of the Central Market for Global Families.

The Women’s Sewing Group was an initiative that provided women the opportunity to learn how to sew within a safe and welcoming environment. The sewing group became a part of the activities available at the Central Park Women Resource Centre, which in itself is a community resource where women can learn new skills, practice their English and socialize. The sewing group also supported the Central Market initiative by providing women with a chance to sell their sewed goods at the Central Market. Similarly to the Rainbow Community Garden, the sewing group fostered the entrepreneurial spirit of interested women and provided a means to supplement their income.

Overall, the placemaking initiatives used to reclaim Central Park have had the effect of infusing hope and acting as a catalyst for further improvements. Central Park, before the reclamation of the park, had negative connotations associated to the neighbourhood (also see

section 2.1.1.3). However, the willingness displayed by the residents and the commitment of external stakeholders to invest in the park supports a more positive perception of the area.

The investment in the amenities of the neighbourhood highlights the assets and potential of Central Park (also see section 2.2.3). Other cities have taken similar approaches with success by creating anchoring attractions that bring attention to the transformation of a neighbourhood (Greco, 2012, p. 30). Greco concluded new public amenities can have a direct positive effect on troubled neighbourhoods after reviewing the \$1.5 billion investment made by the Salvation Army across the United States. Philadelphia's Park West neighbourhood was selected for the construction of one of the Joan Kroc Community Centres. Completed in 2010, the community centre was originally surrounded by long-vacant industrial facilities. However, since the completion of the community centre plans for redevelopment of surrounding lands have been initiated (Greco, 2012, p. 28).

In Philadelphia's case, the community centres became the centerpiece of an effort to generate interest for a long forgotten post-industrial area. For Central Park, the reclamation and placemaking initiatives occurring in the park showcase what one of Winnipeg's most culturally diverse neighbourhoods has to offer. One of interviewees described:

“[W]e want people to come in and mix with the community and see what [they] are missing. I remember very fondly the opening day and just seeing the mix of people there and ... seeing the mixes of people and activities were really quite encouraging.”

The different improvements that have been described cover a wide range of changes in the character and conditions of the neighbourhood. However, there are always opportunities for improvement and large challenges still to be overcome. The next section provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities for improvement that were most commonly mentioned during the interview process.

4.1.3 Category: Challenges and Opportunities for Improvement.

The Central Market for Global Families and the rejuvenation of the park have addressed some of the issues historically affecting Central Park. The previous sections explained how these placemaking initiatives have encouraged positive changes in the neighbourhood. Yet, during the development of the research project a number of challenges and opportunities for further improvement were revealed. A number of the identified challenges and opportunities for improvement were originally considered to be unrelated. However, further examination indicated that the challenges and opportunities are interrelated. The interrelation is well exemplified by the way programming occurs in Central Park; the programming at the park is linked to the management structures of community organizations. The management structures of these organizations in turn are related to the transient character of the neighbourhood. Therefore, achieving an improvement in a single aspect can help address a seemingly unrelated challenge.

This section presents an overview of the challenges facing the future placemaking efforts in Central Park and also emphasizes the opportunities for improvement in regards to the placemaking efforts occurring in Central Park.

A park is an element in a constant state of evolution; no park can be said to ever be “complete.” The amenities, vegetation and layout of a park should gradually change to reflect the needs and preferences of society. The changing character of a park also extends to its programming. A park to remain relevant and well used must be properly managed to provide programming and activities throughout the seasons of the year (also see section 2.2.2). Diverse programming is often attributed with retaining and attracting users to public spaces by offering motives to visit numerous times (Project for Public Spaces, n.d., para. 11).

Programming is also valuable to promote desired activities and discourage anti-social behaviour. The Central Market for Global Families in Central Park is an example of a community-organized program that discouraged anti-social behaviour by welcoming people back into the park. The presence of residents engaging in recreational activities reduced the anti-social behaviour that troubled the park. Meanwhile, the rejuvenation of the park also provided greater flexibility in the type of activities and programs that were possible in Central Park. However, despite the positive effects programming have had on Central Park interviewees explained that achieving long-term sustainability for programming is still an issue.

The challenge to achieve long-term sustainability in Central Park was linked to a number of variables. For example, the transient population of the neighbourhood was identified as a main obstacle to successfully program the park (also see section 2.2). The neighbourhood is known to have a high resident turnover rate. The turnover rate is associated with the high percentage of rental units; 89.2% of dwelling units are rental. The typical dwelling units in Central Park have an average of 1.1 bedrooms. Meanwhile, families in Central Park have on average 2.9 persons per family including an average of 1.3 children at home per family (City of Winnipeg, 2006, pp. 14-16).

The discrepancy between dwelling unit size and the family sizes contribute to the transient character of the neighbourhood. For example, during the period of 2001-2006 a 65.5% of all residents moved away from the neighbourhood (City of Winnipeg, 2006, p. 17). The transiency of residents causes difficulties in the consistent scheduling of community events. Community groups have to continuously reconnect with the changing resident population and adapt to their needs. An interviewee elaborated:

“[W]e are only as successful as we are grounded. The problem is that maintaining your grounding is remarkably difficult in a community that [continuously] transitions, changes, because it is exhausting to be frank, you don’t want to keep reinventing the wheel, but you have to.”

Initiatives such as the Central Market and the rejuvenation of the park are unable to directly change the discrepancy between dwelling unit sizes and family sizes. However, the initiatives do have the potential to promote changes to encourage people to stay in Central Park. Placemaking initiatives can be used to act as a symbol of the health of a neighbourhood to encourage reinvestment.

Pike Place Market in Seattle is a good example of how a placemaking initiative can be used to promote the provision of the amenities and housing options needed by a neighbourhood's residents (also see section 2.2.3). The Pike Place Market is a grassroots initiative originally focused on preserving a historic market (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 169). Yet, the Pike Place Market organizers quickly acknowledged that the long-term viability of their initiative depended on the overall health of the surrounding area. Therefore, the organizers became engaged on advocating and empowering the marginalized groups that have traditionally depended on the market (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, pp. 170-171).

The Pike Place Market branded itself as a welcoming mixed-income, mixed-use and multi-cultural place (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 172). Additionally, Pike Place Market organized a growing number of activities and programs that positively shaped the experience and opinion of visitors. The improvements increased the willingness to invest and develop new housing that accommodated the needs of low, moderate and high income residents. Ultimately, Pike Place Market due its socially-responsive agenda became a symbol of renewal in a previously decaying area of Seattle (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, pp. 172-173).

Similarly, programming in Central Park can be used to indirectly influence a seemingly unrelated variable such as the transient character of the neighbourhood; displaying and promoting the assets of the neighbourhood represent an opportunity to encourage the reinvestment necessary to accommodate larger families or those interested in homeownership

(also see section 2.2.3). However, the regular programming of Central Park faces another obstacle related to the management and organization of activities.

The second obstacle to programming Central Park is associated to having sufficient funding to secure and retain the services of a manager. In the case of farmers' markets, a manager is a crucial element to recruiting vendors and customers. For example, farmers' markets with a well-paid manager are generally more successful than those that rely on a volunteer or low salary manager. Particularly, as a market expands the amount of hours, on- and off-season, needed to successfully manage a market tend to increase beyond what can be reasonably expected from a volunteer.

Stephenson (2008, p. 125) based on his review of historical data published by the Oregon Farmers' Market Association has noticed that a market where the average of required work is more than 7 hours per week during season is recommended to have a paid manager. Additionally, the salary of the manager should reflect the amount time and effort required to manage the market. Without adequate compensation a manager might be unable or unwilling to dedicate the necessary attention to the market management. Not surprisingly, many markets experience a high rate of manager turnover that is connected to the common inability to make a living from managing a market (Stephenson, 2008, pp. 117-118). An interviewee from Central Park commented:

“[One of the managers] had to leave [the market] and find a job, because [the manager] was like a volunteer. So ... [the manager] had to leave.”

The interviewee expressed that even though the manager was committed to the Central Market the economic reality must be considered. While, a manager change is not inherently negative, changes in management do represent an adjustment period during which new managers must adapt and learn about their market. Therefore, the change of manager is often not recommended in new small markets. For example, a study of farmers' markets from 1998 to

2005 indicated that 77% of markets that closed permanently started their last season with a new manager (Stephenson, 2008, p. 123). The Central Market for Global Families has had a number of management changes which can potentially affect its viability unless measures are taken. An interviewee described the decision to change managers:

“[W]e had thought that ... perhaps if we had someone that was more detail focused maybe that would help, help get [the market] ... more highly organized and that kind of thing, so we [changed manager] ..., but in the end, that didn’t produce any more results.”

The situation in the Central Market is not uncommon for small-sized markets. Generally, “small markets” which have typically 9 to 30 vendors tend to be volatile, experiencing frequent changes in their management structure and their regularity (Stephenson, 2008, p. 126). The volatility of small markets is often associated with their unpredictable character in comparison to micro, medium or large markets. For example, a micro market is small enough to be informally managed by a volunteer. Meanwhile, medium and large markets are complex enough that their management is fairly predictable. However, a small market such as the Central Market occupies a threshold that causes unique difficulties. The largest difficulty is generally the lack of a well defined management structure for small markets, which makes the evolution and expansion of a small market frequently more difficult than smaller or larger markets.

Therefore, small markets would benefit from developing management tools such as market bylaws or establishing a board of directors (Stephenson, 2008, p. 181). Particularly, the organizers of the Central Market would benefit from forming partnerships with other community organizations in the area and establish a board of directors. Currently, a single organization is responsible for the administration of numerous programs in Central Park including the Central Market for Global Families. The current administrative arrangement represents a risk for the continuity of the programs occurring in the park; if anything happens

within the “parent” organization the activities in Central Park can be negatively affected. An interviewee elaborated on the situation:

“[The parent organization] have had some ... [internal] difficulties [lately]... which had mean that [they] ... haven’t been able to focus outward ... [They] ... have just been trying to keep things going.”

Establishing partnerships with other community groups would help to distribute the responsibility and reduce the dependency on a single parent organization. Additionally, establishing partnerships provide the opportunity to expand the scope and type of issues that are discussed as part of the placemaking process involved with the programming of a public place.

The Pike Place Market example is considered successful due its socially-conscious agenda that balanced the interests of different stakeholders. The diversity of “perspectives” and skills brought by a partnership clearly outweighs the effort required to establish them (also see section 2.2.3). Therefore, partnerships provide the safeguards to prevent a single interest or agenda to dominate an initiative; the safeguard is considered an essential element of placemaking excellence by the Rudy Bruner award committee (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 153). Fortunately, the organizers of the Central Market for Global Families seem to be aware of their need to establish partnerships to achieve program sustainability. An interviewee explained:

“[W]e have goodwill [from other organizations], but we haven’t been able to activate and maintain partnerships, [but] ... there is potential [for] partnerships ... we got a whole bunch of groups [in the area].”

However, interviewees highlighted the need for an individual that can assist in the establishment of partnerships. In this regard, planners can potentially perform the role of facilitators. The planning profession is strategically positioned at the confluence of many different professions. Planners can often engage many stakeholders in the necessary discussions

to manage and solve the conflicts among different interests or agendas in regards to programming and placemaking (Caton, 2004, p. 349). Caton concluded after studying the values and agendas of all the stakeholders involved with food system initiatives that planners are particularly suited to develop a “common” language to bridge differences among stakeholders (Caton, 2004, p. 341).

Planning involvement with grassroots placemaking initiatives such as the Central Market can also provide other potential side-benefits. For example, planner participation can help highlight the importance of the market in relation to the revitalization of the neighbourhood. Understanding the effects of the market and other programmed activities can be valuable when organizers are seeking further support from decision makers, funders and the general public (Caton, 2004, p. 349).

Additionally, planning involvement can help eliminate administrative barriers that complicate the implementation of activities such as the Central Market (Caton, 2004, pp. 349-350). Currently, interviewees described that local regulations represented a major obstacle to the Central Market due the high standards and the limited resources available to meet the standards. Planning involvement could contribute to the refinement of applicable regulations to reflect the scope and resources of community groups engaged in placemaking in public places. Context sensitive regulations could facilitate the programming of public places eliminating unnecessary barriers.

Planner involvement with placemaking can also help document the efforts made by community organizations and residents towards the betterment of their neighbourhoods. Many organizations and residents often lose sight of the improvements achieved through their involvement. Planners can help give recognition to the importance of taking ownership and being engaged in the community (also see section 2.2.1.1).

The documentation of such efforts can help reinvigorate organizations and initiatives that are caught up on the challenges faced on a regular basis (Caton, 2004, p. 352). For example, this Central Park research project in itself illustrates how planning can contribute to highlight the importance of the stakeholder's work. During interviews it was common to hear interviewees engage in a self reflection of their accomplishments to date. For example, an interviewee elaborated:

“[The community involvement] went to achieve security, it went to achieve the idea of government listening [to their input], and the ... [community] voices were heard. They got what they wanted, and I think they are enjoying it today. So yeah, the market and the community did a lot, [and] changed a lot of things on their own.”

Similarly, other interviewees expressed their optimism towards the potential for further improvements to occur in the neighbourhood. Despite the challenges yet to be addressed the neighbourhood is perceived to be on a positive trend. Most importantly, the issues affecting the neighbourhood are generally seen as opportunities for enhancing already successful initiatives (also see section 2.2.3). The Rudy Bruner Award selection committee itself defines the capacity of seeing problems as opportunities as a key consideration of placemaking excellence.

2.1 CONCLUSIONS OF ANALYSIS

Overall, it can be concluded that the Central Park initiatives can be described as an example of placemaking excellence (Schneekloth and Shibley, 1995, p. 177). Placemaking excellence is defined by the Rudy Bruner Award committee to be connected to three main aspects (also see section 2.2.3). The first aspect of placemaking excellence is when a place is capable of becoming a symbol of health and renewal in a neighbourhood. Central Park has become a galvanizing element for the neighbourhood by highlighting the assets of a community that was previously defined by negative connotations.

The second aspect of placemaking excellence is associated with the existence of a system that promotes partnerships and collaboration to ensure different perspectives are considered in the solution of problems. In this regard, Central Park has yet to fully realize the potential for collaboration. However, the neighbourhood stakeholders are aware of their need to cooperate and are working towards it.

Finally, the third aspect of placemaking excellence is connected to approaching problems as opportunities for improvement. The stakeholders involved with Central Park generally saw the issues affecting the neighbourhood as potential opportunities to act and improve the quality of life of residents. During interviews some of the challenges such as the need for a manager prompted interviewees to highlight the opportunities and value of partnering with other community organizations (also see section 2.2.3).

CHAPTER 5: ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

“Little by little, one travels far.”

J. R. R. Tolkien

The research project has documented the improvements, challenges, and opportunities associated with Central Park. The research project has also described stakeholder roles and motivations in the implementation of initiatives focused on enhancing the neighbourhood. Additionally, the research project has articulated the connections in the Central Park case with other similar initiatives portrayed in the literature. In combination, the findings provide a foundation to draw conclusions and answer the research questions that originally shaped the research project.

The following sections individually answer each of the research questions presented in the first chapter. Subsequently, a brief discussion is presented with potential topics for further research. The recommendations for further research provide ideas that are worthy of academic analysis, yet fell out with the scope and purpose of the research project. Finally, the last section provides an overview of potential changes that - in retrospective - could have improved the research project.

5.1 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

How effective are placemaking initiatives in advancing diverse objectives and community improvements?

The placemaking initiatives in Central Park included the Central Market for Global Families and the rejuvenation of the entire park. Both initiatives proved effective in advancing diverse objectives and in achieving substantial improvements to Central Park. The analysis chapter documented how the placemaking that occurred, and occurs, within Central Park has increased safety. The placemaking initiatives provided neighbourhood residents with confidence

that the park was safe to use. The implemented initiatives represented a turning point in regards to the perception of the area.

The stakeholders, through the implementation of measures such as physical improvements and programming, have increased the real and perceived sense of safety among residents and visitors. The safety enhancements gradually motivated people to visit the park more regularly, which in turn helped discourage the anti-social behaviour that had historically plagued the park.

The placemaking initiatives also promoted a greater sense of ownership and identity among residents. The two implemented placemaking initiatives represented commitments to engage neighbourhood residents; in both instances residents were included in extensive and meaningful consultation processes. For example, the Central Market for Global Families was a grassroots initiative that was shaped by the residents' input. Meanwhile, the rejuvenation of the park was also influenced by the collaboration of residents with other stakeholders, such as the designers of the rejuvenation; the residents were able to share their knowledge and experience regarding their neighbourhood.

The resident's participation ensured that both placemaking initiatives reflected the needs and aspirations of residents of the neighbourhood. For example, certain amenities such as the soccer pitch would not have been added to Central Park without the participation of the residents. The willingness to adapt the placemaking initiatives based on resident input also enhanced relationships among stakeholders; the residents were re-assured by the consultation process as regards the readiness of external stakeholders to collaborate with the community. The public and private contributors to the rejuvenation were interested in helping the neighbourhood achieve its potential, instead of imposing changes. The collaborative attitude of

external stakeholders towards the residents has encouraged residents to remain involved with the park and its future.

The placemaking initiatives also served as the catalyst for other unexpected improvements in the neighbourhood. The Women's Sewing Group and the Rainbow Community Garden were established based on conversations sparked by the placemaking initiatives. Once established the Women's Sewing Group and the Rainbow Community provided Central Park residents with benefits in their own right. For example, the Women's Sewing Group provided women, particularly refugees and new immigrants, with a location to learn new skills and integrate more effectively into their communities. Meanwhile, the Rainbow Community Garden offered residents the chance to engage in farming, increasing their food security. The community garden also gave opportunities for socialization in a setting beyond the boundaries of Central Park.

Overall, the placemaking initiatives in Central Park advanced a broad range of community improvements that extended beyond the original intention. The placemaking initiative had positive effects in expected areas, such as increased safety and sense of ownership. Additionally, the initiatives were also able to advance other improvements that were considered important by residents. Therefore, the placemaking initiatives can be considered to be effective tools to spark change responsive to the needs of the neighbourhood. Not surprisingly, the stakeholders engaged with enhancing Central Park became aware of the value of placemaking to fulfill their mandate. Interviewees described their work in many ways such as community building or reclamation of public spaces. However, in most circumstances their work was synonymous with the intention and purpose of placemaking.

The following complementary questions were intended to add depth to the research project by bringing attention to topics that were considered of interest. The complementary

questions also attempt to provide learning lessons specifically for planners and those involved with placemaking initiatives. The following sections are based on the topics associated with each question.

5.2. STAKEHOLDERS INFLUENCE AND ROLE IN PLACEMAKING

How does a varied group of stakeholders influence the implementation of initiatives such as the Central Park rejuvenation and the establishment of the Central Market for Global Families?

The research project demonstrated that placemaking initiatives benefit from including a diverse group of stakeholders in all stages of the placemaking process such as planning, implementation, and management. A placemaking initiative with a diverse constituency of stakeholders is enhanced by the perspectives brought by each individual group. For example, certain groups are concerned about social issues. Meanwhile, other groups are more interested in environmental or political issues. However, regardless of the ideological inclination of each stakeholder their viewpoints represent an asset for the placemaking initiative. For example, a major obstacle for one stakeholder might be a minor complication from the perspective of another stakeholder. Therefore, each viewpoint is a potentially different way to approach, and solve, the challenges of implementing a placemaking initiative.

Including different stakeholders as part of a placemaking process also contributes to well-rounded initiatives. The different perspectives brought by each stakeholder help reduce the likelihood of paying disproportionate attention to a single issue. Generally, the stakeholders want to guarantee that their particular interests are not overlooked intentionally or by accident. For example, during the implementation of the Central Park rejuvenation initiative long-term maintenance was a key concern for some of the involved stakeholders. The concerns of the stakeholders ensured that measures were taken to guarantee the long-term maintenance of the rejuvenation. Without the participation, and concern, of diverse stakeholders, the long-term

maintenance of the rejuvenation might not have been such an important consideration.

Therefore, diverse stakeholder “membership” in a placemaking initiative brings attention to an array of topics that might otherwise mean under-representation of important issues.

The participation of diverse stakeholders also generally provides an initiative with continued support; when the initiative is representative of the interest and concerns of participating stakeholders they are more likely to be invested in the successful implementation of an initiative. For example, the Central Market placemaking initiative was responsive to the needs of the neighbourhood’s residents. Years after the initial implementation of the Central Market, the residents continue to be involved voluntarily with the continuation of the initiative as it evolves. Similarly, a diverse stakeholder membership provides a greater level of support. When many stakeholders are involved the placemaking initiative benefits from a greater well of resources on which it may rely. In contrast, initiatives that exclude stakeholders generally have a more limited number of groups to sustain them. For example, the Central Park rejuvenation initiative involved public and private funders. In addition, the community organizations and residents were also meaningfully engaged. The inclusiveness of the placemaking initiative increased the support for implementation. Therefore, the inclusion of different stakeholders reduced opposition while increasing the goodwill towards the initiative.

Finally, the inclusion of a diverse stakeholder membership influences placemaking initiatives by increasing their feasibility. Often an initiative requires more resources than are available to a single stakeholder. Therefore, collaboration allows the stakeholders to combine their available resources to achieve a common goal. For example, the Central Park rejuvenation initiative would not have been possible without the financial contributions of each funder. Without the collaboration among public and private funders the placemaking initiative might have been less ambitious or simply not feasible.

Overall, a varied group of stakeholders benefits the implementation of placemaking initiatives. The neighbourhood of Central Park has seen major positive changes occur due the collaboration among different stakeholders. However, the research project has indicated that there are still potential opportunities for the formation of partnerships that could further support, and build upon, the improvements achieved to date.

5.3 INCENTIVES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PLACEMAKING

What are the incentives to make use of placemaking initiatives for revitalization?

The research project demonstrated that placemaking initiatives can have a transformative effect on the neighbourhoods where they take place. The use of placemaking in Central Park contributed to the physical enhancement of the neighbourhood. For example, before the establishment of the Central Market for Global Families the park was in poor condition, discouraging use by the community. However, the residents' involvement gradually improved the park, promoting wider positive usage, and discouraging the anti-social behaviour that was previously common. Additionally, new amenities were added to the park as part of the rejuvenation initiative; these new amenities allowed the park to accommodate the needs of a diversity of activities and groups.

Placemaking initiatives are not only physically transformative; their implementation can also have positive social impacts. For example, the rejuvenation of Central Park provided a place for interaction among the multi-cultural population of the neighbourhood. Before the park was widely available for usage many of the residents were isolated and not integrated into their communities. However, the participatory character of the placemaking process brought people together for discussion and collaboration. Therefore, the placemaking process contributed to overcome the isolation that affected the residents; in particular the many new immigrants and refugees that live in the neighbourhood benefitted.

The placemaking process also helped establish relationships and build trust among stakeholders. For example, the willingness of the community groups to adapt, based on the residents' input demonstrated commitment to advancing the needs of the neighbourhood. Similarly, the rejuvenation of the park also served as the catalyst for programming activities that brought different stakeholders together. For example, the ice skating rink is now used to program events such as "Skates and Badges," where the neighbourhood's youth have the opportunity to interact with law enforcement officers in a friendly environment.

Overall, the placemaking initiatives represent a viable option to promote revitalization. The placemaking initiatives in Central Park provided a visible and concrete improvement galvanizing the different stakeholders. The placemaking initiative contributed to developing goodwill, ownership and pride among residents and stakeholders. Most interviewees agreed the placemaking initiatives were successful beyond what was expected. However, the interviewees recognized there were challenges that had still to be overcome, for the placemaking initiatives to achieve their full potential. Nevertheless, the placemaking initiatives often infused a sense of hope among stakeholders, representing a turning point in the fate of the neighbourhood.

5.4 LESSONS FOR PLANNING PROFESSION

What can the planning profession learn from the establishment of the Central Market for Global Families and the rejuvenation of Central Park?

The Central Park case offers a number of lessons and reminders for the planning profession. The placemaking initiatives in Central Park demonstrate that collaboration among stakeholders is a valuable approach to overcome even seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The stakeholders in Central Park by combining their resources and skills were able to implement small and large changes. Gradually, the changes have contributed to the development of a more positive perception about the neighbourhood among stakeholders.

The Central Park placemaking initiatives also vividly demonstrated the importance of meaningful community consultation processes. The consultation process was used successfully to bring together stakeholders that do not generally collaborate. Additionally, the consultation process managed to create the necessary goodwill to increase the continued viability of the placemaking initiatives. Most importantly, the consultation process empowered the many visible minorities that reside in Central Park; the process guaranteed that their needs and aspirations were heard and fulfilled through the placemaking.

The Central Park case also highlights the importance of comprehensive planning. The two studied placemaking initiatives can be considered to be outside of what is traditionally considered part of planning practice. However, the planning profession has direct contributions to make to placemaking initiatives. The interviewees indicated that their efforts can be enhanced by the facilitation and research skills that are common among planners.

Finally, the research here is a reminder of the meaning of the concept of revitalization. Generally, the concept of revitalization often becomes associated with topics such as real estate values, growth of the property tax base, or the state of repair of dwelling units. However, the connection between revitalization and the residents' quality of life is often relegated to the background. During the research, the Central Park case brought attention to the positive everyday effects the placemaking initiatives had on the residents' wellbeing. The placemaking initiatives were valuable because they improved the area for the benefit of the community, not simply because they enhanced the urban fabric. In the author's opinion, this is ultimately a lesson that highlights the importance of planning as a profession.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The research project studied the effects of the placemaking initiatives in Central Park on the neighbourhood and involved stakeholders. The research successfully answered the

questions that were raised at the beginning of the project. However, despite the informative findings there are always topics that fall outside the original scope and timeline of the research project. Therefore, this section presents four key recommendations or topics for further study, as identified over the course of this research.

The first recommendation for further study is related to the effect the Central Market for Global Families has on the participating vendors. At the time of writing, August 2012, the market was experiencing some restructuring that is reshaping the initiative and influencing its continuity. As a result of the restructuring process, the author was unable to analyze the benefits and challenges associated with being a vendor at the market. However, the perspective of vendors is a valuable indicator of the success of the Central Market for Global Families as a community-led economic development tool. Market organizers explained during interviews that the market initiative has struggled to be economically sustainable.

The organizers argued that often vendors were unable to consistently make a profit, which discouraged their regular attendance to the market. The comments from interviewees indicate there would be value in further study of the effects of the market on vendors. Morales (2009, p. 428), over the course of three years of research, was able to study the individual motivations of vendors involved with Chicago's Maxwell Street market. Morales' research provided insight into the effects of being a vendor in a market on a personal level. This topic was considered outside the scope of the research project due to the focus on community wide effects. However, similar research can be conducted at the Central Market for Global Families to potentially better understand how vendors are affected by their role in a market.

The second recommendation for further study is associated with the model used to finance the major capital improvements undertaken as part of the rejuvenation of Central Park. All interviewees agreed that the rejuvenation of Central Park was only possible through the

collaboration of diverse stakeholders. The combined financial resources of public and private entities allowed the implementation of improvements in Central Park. Further research on how the financing model can or has been adapted in other neighbourhoods of the city would be valuable; in particular, considering that local governments are increasingly unable to fully undertake capital improvements of public spaces by themselves. Research on the effectiveness and implementation of alternative financing models is considered necessary, as fixed budgets must be distributed among competing initiatives.

The third recommendation for further study is to evaluate the effects the placemaking initiatives in Central Park have had, or are having, on private investment, and on the transient character of the neighbourhood. The interviewees described the predominantly rental tenancy as a challenge for community development and the implementation of programming in the neighbourhood. The placemaking initiatives managed to encourage wider community usage of Central Park, increased safety, and led to broader resident involvement with their neighbourhood. However, maintaining the accomplished improvements requires a stable tenancy mix. Therefore, stakeholders in the neighbourhood could benefit from a better understanding as to whether the implemented placemaking initiatives have encouraged private investment, or a more balanced tenancy mix. The information provided by such research could be valuable to determine if further measures are required to be implemented to support required changes.

The fourth recommendation is associated with the potential for further integration of the food system into the development of Central Park (also see section 2.3.4). The Central Market for Global Families was intended to be a community development tool. The food aspect to the market was an unintentional side benefit. However, the Central Market can potentially benefit residents even further by more consciously integrating agricultural urbanism principles

into the management and planning of the initiative. For example, the community could be well served by a research project focused on studying how the Central Market or the Rainbow Community Garden helped Central Park residents, particularly new Canadians, learn about local foods and the prairie environment. Meanwhile, research could also be conducted to explore how farmers' markets are included in municipal policy. A review of local policy could serve to identify existing barriers to the implementation of similar initiatives in other Winnipeg neighbourhoods.

The previous paragraphs presented recommendations for further study that were considered important, but beyond the scope of this research project. The next section presents a reflection summarizing potential ways the current research project could have been enhanced.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS: IMPROVEMENTS TO RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project was performed based on well-established methodologies and the guidance and insights identified through the literature review. However, despite the author's efforts to follow the most suitable approach there are always opportunities for improvement. For example, the author believes the research project could have been enhanced by reducing the overlap among coding categories. Certain categories were similar to each other; yet, interview transcripts were carefully scrutinised in search of mentions of each category. Given that certain categories were eventually grouped together the time spent reviewing the interview transcripts for each individual category may have been better used in other tasks.

The research project could also have been improved by a more consistent implementation of the interview protocol. The semi-structured interview method allows new questions to be asked based on interviewee's answers. The research method was effective, yet it can lead to unintentional deviations from the research objectives. During the first few interviews the structure originally established for the interviews could have been followed more

accurately; the interviews were longer than necessary and explored some topics outside the project's scope.

Later interviews were more successful in following the intended structure, and specifically focusing on the research's objectives. The slight differences between the first and later interviews made comparison more complicated in some circumstances. However, the improvements in later interviews are also an indicator of the increased interviewing skills of the researcher. As the research advanced the researcher became better able to make the judgment decisions regarding when is appropriate to allow an interview to deviate, and when should the interview protocol be followed.

Overall, implementation of the two previous changes could have benefitted the research project. While possibly other changes might have been beneficial, the researcher has not identified any other improvements at the time of writing, August 2012.

Nevertheless, despite the shortcomings the research project is considered successful. The research project provided insight into the positive effects that placemaking initiatives and community involvement can have on a neighbourhood. The Central Park case is an example of placemaking excellence that continues to promote improvements at the neighbourhood level. The initial measures implemented by community organizations and residents were undertaken in response to the negative condition at the park. The commitment and willingness of the community to take ownership of their main public space quickly achieved more than originally intended. The community-led project managed to increase the safety of the park by encouraging wider usage of the park. Additionally, the placemaking implemented in Central Park represented a turning point for the neighbourhood; public and private stakeholders became interested in also investing in Central Park shortly after the initial community involvement with the park. The collaboration and support of public and private stakeholders permitted the expansion of the

scope of the improvements to be implemented in Central Park. Ultimately, a substantial rejuvenation was implemented. The rejuvenation of Central Park brought stakeholders with many different agendas together, into discussions of the most desired amenities for the park. Overall, the rejuvenation initiative, and its community consultation, were focused on responding to the character of the neighbourhood. Therefore, the final design of the park responds to the needs of residents and is also infused with the aspirations of residents for the future of their community. In conclusion, the research project has been valuable, to document the potential of placemaking initiatives, to act as a catalyst for broad community changes.

5.7 RETROSPECTIVE

The research project documented here was a meaningful learning experience for this author. The research served as a reminder of the growing complexity of the built environment and the increasing need for comprehensive planning. The research's findings provide an indication of the skills and knowledge that are at the disposition of the planning profession for the development of better communities. For instance, placemaking was confirmed to be an effective community development tool to promote improvements at the neighbourhood level. However, despite the usefulness of placemaking, the research indicated that the determining factor for the effective implementation of a rejuvenation initiative is ultimately the level of commitment shown by involved stakeholders. The Central Park case study highlights the importance of engaging in a collaborative process that allows all stakeholders to meaningfully cooperate towards the achievement of common goals.



Figure 15. Commemorative Plaque. Plaque commemorating the redevelopment of Central Park and the recent damaged incurred on Knox Church by a lightning strike.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A: HUMAN ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER



UNIVERSITY
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Office of the Vice-President
(Research and International)
Research Ethics and Compliance

Human Ethics
208 - 194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Fax 204-269-7173

APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

February 16, 2012

TO: Fernando Velarde Trejo
Principal Investigator

FROM: Wayne Taylor, Chair 
Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB)

Re: Protocol #J2012:019
"Planners, Farmers Markets and Inner-city Revitalization: Community
Revitalization through Placemaking Initiatives"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval by the **Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board**, which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2). This approval is valid for one year only.

Any significant changes of the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Secretariat in advance of implementation of such changes.

Please note:

- If you have funds pending human ethics approval, the auditor requires that you submit a copy of this Approval Certificate to the Office of Research Services, fax 261-0325 - please include the name of the funding agency and your UM Project number. This must be faxed before your account can be accessed.
- if you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval; otherwise the account will be locked.

The Research Quality Management Office may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba Ethics of Research Involving Humans.

The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at: http://umanitoba.ca/research/orec/ethics/human_ethics_REB_forms_guidelines.html) in order to be in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Question 1: What is your involvement with the Central Market for Global Families and/or Central Park?

Prompts: Role, Purpose, Level of involvement, Objectives of initiative

Question 2: How did you become involved with the initiative?

Prompts: Motives, Relationships with other stakeholders (among markets)

Question 3: What were your expectations?

Prompts: Benefits, Weaknesses, community input

Question 4: What are the challenges involved with the initiative?

Prompts: Pressure, Continuity, Time management, needed skills, opportunities for improvement

Question 5: What are the consequences of being involved with the initiative?

Prompts: Personal growth, business opportunities/potential for growth, revitalization, amenities, ethnic diversity

Question 6: What are the changes in the community?

Prompts: Safety, community involvement, investment in the area, future outlook, expected/unexpected, investment/disinvestment, public perception of the neighbourhood

Question 7: What is the relationship between the initiative and government authorities?

Prompts: Planning practice, different levels of government, funding, year-round service

Question 8: How has the park rejuvenation impacted the safety of the area?

Prompts: intoxicated people, after-hours activity, presence of women and children, anti-social behaviour

Questions 9: What measures have been implemented to encourage social interaction?

Prompts: Seating arrangement, shade and sunlight, shared spaces

Question 10: How prominent was food security in the original development of the Market initiative?

Prompts: Primary/Secondary role, presence of food vendors, culturally acceptable food products, local food producers

Question 11: How important is activity programming for the success of the market and park rejuvenation?

Prompts: target populations, diversity of programming, funding and available resources (human, equipment), hours of operation, seasonality

Question 12: In what ways was the market a key design consideration?

Prompts: Market importance, anchor uses, community input, design priorities

Question 13: How important was to create an amenity that attracted visitors to the area?

Prompts: community needs, community landmark, neighbourhood perception

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITY
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Faculty of Architecture

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Consent Form

Project title: Planners, farmers markets and downtown communities: Community Revitalization through placemaking initiatives, the Central Market for Global Families, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Principal Investigator: Fernando Velarde Trejo, Master Student, City Planning, University of Manitoba

Research Supervisor: Dr. David van Vliet, Associate Professor, Faculty of Architecture

The following consent form is an invitation to share your experiences as a **Vendor** at the **Central Market for Global Families** in an interview. The project is being conducted by Fernando Velarde Trejo as part of his Master of City Planning Thesis project. The project is under the supervision of Dr. David van Vliet at the University of Manitoba.

The project's primary purpose is to explore **your experience** participating as a vendor at the Central Market for Global Families. The researcher is interested in your informed opinion regarding the market's effects on the surrounding community. There is **no right or wrong answer**, any information shared by you is of value to the research project. Throughout the interview, you are free to provide additional information that you feel will help the researcher better understand the market and your experiences as a vendor.

The project will use a semi-structured interview approach, which allows exploring different subjects as they arise. The interview will be scheduled on a date, time and location that is mutually convenient for you and the researcher. These interviews will be held at any location that is **private and safe** for both parties. No interview is expected to last approximately **15 to 20 minutes**.

Your **participation is fully optional**. With your consent, the interview will be **audio recorded**. If you do not consent to being recorded, the interviewer will instead simply take notes.

Following the interview, I may need to briefly contact you for further information or clarification. These additional conversations will be optional and dependent on your consent. You will also have the option to ask for a **summary of final findings** at the end of the project (**August 2012**). The project's final findings will be presented as part of a Thesis document. Quotes from our conversation might be used, but only after removing identifying characteristics such as names. Nevertheless, be aware that **some elements of our conversation may be identifiable** to others involved with the Central Market for Global Families.

All interview materials and information will be kept strictly confidential and safely stored. Only the researcher will have access to the interview information. Be advised, the research supervisor may be provided interview information by request. The University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board and/or a

representative(s) of the University of Manitoba Research Quality Management / Assurance office may also require access to your research records for safety and quality assurance purposes.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the provided information and agree to participate. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher from his legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent. If at any stage of the research process you have any questions, feel free to ask for clarification.

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

If you agree to each of the following, please place your name initials in the corresponding space. If you do not agree, leave the box blank:

I have read, or they have been read to me, the details of this consent form. ()

My questions have been addressed. ()

I, _____ (print name), agree to participate in this study.

I agree to have the interview audio-recorded ()

I agree to be contacted by phone or e-mail if further information is required after the interview ()

I agree to have the findings (which may include quotations) from this project published or presented in a manner that does not reveal my identity. ()

Do you wish to receive a summary of the findings? () Yes () No

How do you wish to receive the summary? () E-mail () Mail

Address/Email: _____

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____