

PLACE MAKING - TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING

BY

CHERYL P. BRAY

**A Practicum
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of**

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**Department of Landscape Architecture
Winnipeg, Manitoba
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The literature and research relating to urban open space and the creation of place delineates principles and important concepts for inclusion in the design process. This study distills this information into seven essential constituents in placemaking: legibility, diversity, nature, territoriality, safety, comfort and linkage. In an attempt to confirm the importance of these concepts to individuals in the urban centre of Vancouver and understand how they evaluated the level achieved at specific sites a questionnaire was designed. The questions asked were three-fold in nature: how do these components interrelate, how important are they as concepts, and how well have they been achieved at three specific sites? The analysis of the results in conjunction with site research presents information useful for all urban designers. The principles become a compendium giving direction in prioritizing and creating design elements and generating open space form, based on an understanding of how people in the urban environment evaluate and prioritize these components of place.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to our knowledge of how we as designers can create place in the dense urban environment with today's diverse and complex social fabric, making cities both more livable and lovable.

"The soul of a city is mirrored not only in the character of its buildings, but even more decisive is "the relationship of these buildings to each other and, most important of all, the spaces created between them." "

Lennard Crowhurst, Suzanne H., Henry L. Lennard. *Public Life in Urban Places*. New York: Southhampton Press, 1984.p.1 , Victor Gruen. *The Heart of Our Cities*. A Touchstone Book, Simon & Schuster, N.Y. 1964. p.24

I would like to extend my appreciation to the many people who helped make this thesis possible and who believed in me. My thesis committee, chairman Professor Charlie Thomsen and Professors Sue Weidemann and Doug Paterson, gave invaluable direction. Professor Thomsen accepted my initial application into the Department of Landscape Architecture and saw me through many courses over the past four years. He supervised my initial research and followed this project over the last two years constantly furnishing a stream of ideas, suggestions and encouragement as it bumped and lurched along between Vancouver and Winnipeg. Professor Weidemann provided invaluable support and direction as I gathered the research, designed the questionnaire, and wrote the thesis. She suffered through many long distance calls in the process. Professor Paterson probably wore out a pair of shoes walking around the West End comparing sites. His insights into the concepts of placemaking and their application were inestimable in rounding out the project. Department Head, Professor Alex Rattray initially encouraged my interest in small urban spaces and supervised my research on pocket parks. His constant support and direction over the last four years has made completion of the master's degree possible.

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Landscape architects Jane Durante and Mary Anne Tupling reviewed a draft of the questionnaire and were helpful in giving insight into the West End scene and encouraging me to trim and revise.

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Thanks to my many friends, colleagues and family who through unfailing encouragement made it possible, even obligatory to carry on, for who could stop with so much support and faith.

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INTRODUCTION

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As cities grow and face problems of pollution and social conflict there is increasing concern about how the urban form should be adapted to change to create a more humane environment. Open spaces such as parks, squares, plazas and the undifferentiated spaces in the urban core appear not to meet the current needs posed by a growing and increasingly complex society. The city centre has undergone a transformation as pressures to adopt to social change continue into the 90's and urban sprawl accelerates. As space becomes a scarcer commodity its effective utilization becomes more critical. There is a need to revitalize urban centres, to ameliorate the social spaces and facilitate pedestrian traffic, allowing public open spaces to "become a determinant of social contact, reflection and vitality."¹ Through study and careful planning small pockets of open space scattered throughout the urban jungle of highrises lend the glass and concrete mass a more human aspect, serving as links to larger green spaces and natural areas. Through the creation of spaces which facilitate direct human communication, an exchange of goods and ideas, and the ability to have express life, the city itself becomes more animated. As people live in a city, the spaces through which they pass must have a greater sense of meaning and a feeling of belonging. This contributes to the legibility of the city and the imageability of geographic forms, enhancing the sense of place. This thesis is a contribution towards our understanding of the importance of small public open spaces in the urban realm, and an attempt to begin to delineate a set of principles which will assist professionals in the planning and design of these spaces.

Outdoor space has been studied in a variety of ways, eliciting numerous responses on what the important values are, how spaces should be structured to meet people's needs, and what those needs are for the general population. Jan Gehl² suggests that public spaces should provide desirable conditions, and thereby choices, for necessary and optional outdoor and recreational activities, as well as socialization. The greater the range of potential activities, the more likely people will be drawn to these places to participate in a number of activities. They will recognize the freedom that is allowed in such a place. If outdoor spaces facilitate leisure, relaxation, socialization, and purposeful activities, they are more likely to be used and seen as desirable places to congregate. People seek

places which provide a richness and diversity of environment and experience.

In the industrial age the machine became the central focus, with an emphasis on mass production and simplified form. The advent of the automobile introduced a new mode of transportation which would direct the form of the cities away from small interpersonal environments. As the cities became industrialized, overcrowded, polluted wastelands it was possible to separate the location of home and work. To ameliorate these conditions the parks movement evolved, contributing some of the finest expanses of open spaces now available in large metropolises. The modern era began to focus on reconnecting the city with the natural environment, providing small pockets of greenery and open space in settings where people can both live and work.³ In the current age of post-modern society with sophisticated communication networks and rapid change there is a movement towards reintegrating our home and work environment . We have come full circle to a greater emphasis on attention to detail in form, relating to nature and humane spaces, pedestrian networks and limited access for the automobile.

Uhlig⁴ notes that pedestrian zones promote mixed use activities,, increasing animation and encouraging meaningful social behavior. Pedestrian zones, whether they be the street, urban plaza, small parks or open markets, act as places of communication and become part of a larger open space network. As Lynch⁵ notes “We are not simply observers of this spectacle, but are ourselves a part of it, on the stage with the other participants.” Lennard⁶ discusses this sense of being in public as part of a theatre experience with the buildings the backdrop and the various furniture or amenities as props. At any moment you may be an observer or an actor. For the play to be successful there must be a full range of roles available, personal, social or cultural. While these roles are being played out people develop a relationship to each other and to the place of the drama. There are many benefits to the individual and society to being seen in public. Being with others is reassuring and in addition to encouraging appropriate behavior, a factor of safety, it is also an opportunity to become familiar with others who may be different, enhancing sociability and diversity⁷. If open spaces

contribute to the social enhancement of the city and its livability, surely their design is of paramount importance not only to landscape architects and planners, but to all who use these spaces.

Jane Jacobs⁸ in her discussion of streets and sidewalks emphasizes that people are attracted by other people, and this in turn increases activity and improves safety. People are less likely to act in a negative, disruptive, or inappropriate way when they are being observed. Buildings with adjacent views into open spaces increases the ability to observe and be observed. Balconies not only make viewing more possible, but add to the sense of interaction with the street and contribute to the stage set as theatre. Relph notes the significance of open spaces in the city, citing them as “fusions of human and natural order and are the significant centres of our immediate experiences of the world.important sources of individual and communal identity, and are often profound centres of human existence to which people have deep emotional and psychological ties.”⁹

Unfortunately the social significance of these open spaces is often overlooked due to economic considerations. Public space is a commodity and these places are often designed to facilitate the revenue generating functions of the adjacent structures while serving as a pretense for meeting the social needs of society. Many of the critical decisions about components that serve to make an effective public space, for example, linkage and demand goods such as open air food markets, have already been made, and the landscape architect and the public in effect have very few options remaining. (This issue recurs in the later discussion of the specific sites which were selected for study and how they came into being.) It is paramount that there be a full understanding of the dynamics of public open space so that the impact of decisions is realized. Given the likelihood that a full range of choices is unavailable it is still more important to understand the principles that are at work in open spaces, and as landscape architects to incorporate them in our expression of aesthetics.

Outdoor open spaces in the city centre which reflect and respond to people's needs and aspirations are vital to enliven and animate the city core. City centre

signifies a specific life style synonymous with being chic, sophisticated, civilized and cosmopolitan. Victor Gruen⁹ states that revitalization of the city centre requires a sense of urbanity which is dependant on the opportunity for direct communications between people, an exchange of goods and ideas, and freedom through easy access to a multitude of choices as an expression of life. Jacobs¹⁰ also argues that this be achieved through functional physical diversity between adjacent uses, demand goods and opportunities for choice in activity.. People thrive in environments where there is diversity and opportunities for sociability. One strives for animation and vitality with intimate environments for interaction, and the synthesis of an urban social life.

The literature on urban spaces and the city as a whole is diverse and each author advocates a special focus or concern. There is limited research which utilizes an integrated approach to testing a broad base of behavioral theory about people's preferences and evaluations of small urban open spaces. The seminal and extensive studies by Whyte and Lynch were based primarily on observations. Whyte examined plaza use relating to size, aesthetics, solar exposure and amount of seating, and gave us insights into how people use open outdoor plazas, but did not explain fully enough why or how factors were interrelated. Appleyard evaluated streetscapes and residents preferences at specific sites, drawing conclusions from their evaluations of these environments. This provides valuable information about safety on streets. Jane Jacobs and Clare Cooper Marcus have developed a broad range of design suggestions relating to streetscapes to landscape design and housing based on observations and questionnaires about specific sites. This literature is referenced throughout this study, and the work of many others provides a starting point to integrate and test the previous studies and observations. These studies were selected to provide a starting point based on their wide acceptance and degree of agreement, however the limitations of this study require that other work will have been excluded.

This study tries to both identify and test theories and observations relating to placemaking, condensing this information into a form which the landscape architect can use as a reference, a list of principles which function as a model for

developing a design. Previous observations and studies on one aspect of design have been accepted as 'truth' but there is a lack of integration of tested material and therefore no clear hierarchy between attributes or components of place. The lack of integration between component attributes requires subjective prioritization by the designers and may not reflect the community needs and cultural composition. The following chapter on objectives clearly delineates the process for this study. What is the hierarchical nature of people's priorities relating to open space? Design decisions generally involve trading off one priority for another of less significance. If we fully understand how people in an urban situation set priorities for issues such as safety and linkage for example then we are able to create designs which reflect their priorities and lifestyles.

This study therefore assumes the perspective that the information we need for good design can be tested, and that what people rank as important on a questionnaire will correspond with what they value in urban open space. In this way observations and theories can be verified, giving greater validity to the information. There are numerous studies offering guidelines on ecology, open space users, housing environments, and park design, but the material is often not interrelated, or too site specific. Clare Cooper Marcus, co-author of Housing As If People Mattered, advocates the use of succinct guidelines, but notes that many designers do not use them¹³. Social science techniques are becoming increasingly accepted with research being networked between landscape architecture, planning and architecture. This quantitative approach can compliment the qualitative studies which have formed the basis for much of the current knowledge. This thesis advocates the approach that research is multi-modal and solutions need to be provided from several different perspectives.

Given the political nature of public space it is important to value the decisions we are able to make and try to realize the fullest potential of design for it impacts the very nature of the city itself. In the words of Lewis Mumford "We must restore to the city the maternal, life-nurturing functions, the autonomous activities, the symbiotic associations that have long been neglected and suppressed. For the city should be an organ of love..."¹⁴

¹ Norman Pressman. ed. *Creating Livable Cities*. Contact, Vol. 13, No. 2/3, (Waterloo: Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, 1981).p1

² Jan Gehl. *Life Between Buildings*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987).

³ Michael Laurie. *An Introduction to Landscape Architecture*. (New York: Elsevier, 1986).

⁴ Klaus Uhlig. *Pedestrian Areas*. (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1979).

⁵ Kevin Lynch. *The Image of the City*. (Cambridge: Joint Center for Urban Studies, (The M.I.T. Press, 1988).p.2

⁶ Suzanne H.Lennard Crowhurst, Henry L. Lennard. *Public Life in Urban Places*. (New York: Southhampton Press, 1984)p.21.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Jane Jacobs. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1961).

⁹ E. Relph. *Place and Placelessness*. (London: Pion Limited, 1976).p.141.

¹⁰ Norman, Pressman, ed., *Creating Livable Cities* Vol. 13, No. 2/3, Contact (Waterloo: Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, 1981), p.4-5.

¹¹ Jane Jacobs. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1961).

¹² Mark Chidister, *The Effect of Context on the Use of Urban Plazas*. Landscape Journal. Volume 5, No. 2, (Fall 1986).

¹³ Simpson Lawson, *Landscape Research in Landscape Architecture* (March 1992), pp.41 - 46.

¹⁴ Suzanne H. Lennard Crowhurst, Henry L. Lennard. *Public Life in Urban Places*. (New York: Southhampton Press, 1984)p.68.

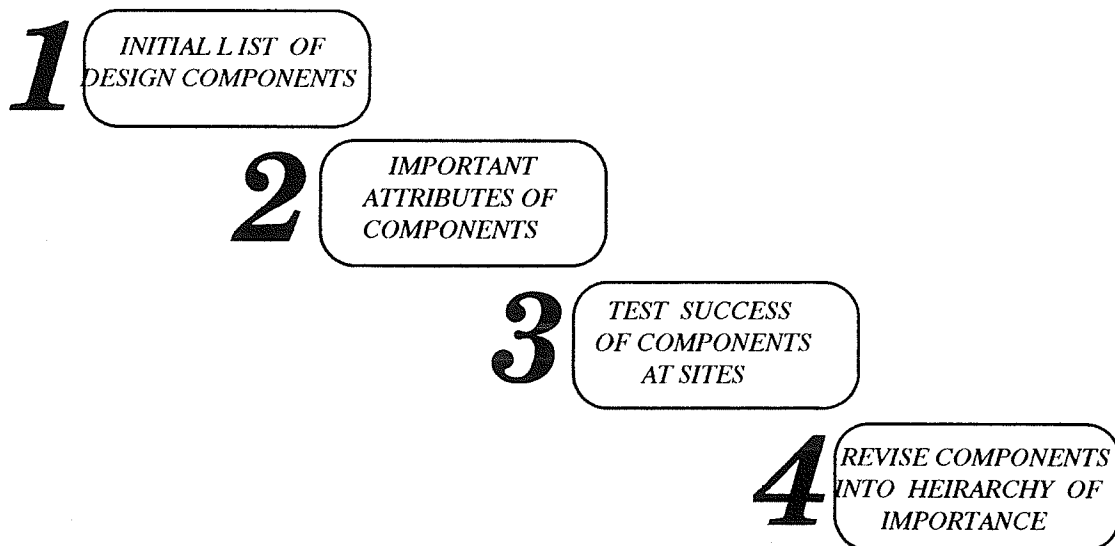
OBJECTIVES

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OBJECTIVES

As a prospective landscape architect with an interest in designing small urban open places it seemed essential to understand the essence of place, and analyze how these places are created. The objectives for this thesis relate to this search. Initially a literature search which culminated in an annotated bibliography revealed that there were several components which were essential for inclusion in an open space for placemaking. While these components were discussed at length, it was often without reference to how they interacted, and to how people using open spaces might prioritize between components. The primary objective therefore of this thesis is to distill a list of components considered important for placemaking. These components comprised of various attributes serve as a conceptual model for design. The second objective is to develop an understanding of the attributes representing a component and compare their importance in relation to each other. The third objective is to test how respondents evaluated the success or failure of these components relative to the specific sites. This could provide an understanding of what they interpreted as a level of success. Through analysis of all the data the fourth objective would be realized, the development of a model for small urban open space design



comprised of a hierarchical listing of important components and their attributes for placemaking. Discussion would also include some recommendations for how these priorities might be realized. While the information gleaned from this study should not be generalized widely without further study to the unique cultural or social factors of other urban areas it is hoped that it can serve as a basis for further research into understanding placemaking in the urban setting and assist designers as they create these places so essential for vibrant humane cities.

LITERATURE

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INTRODUCTION

Outdoor open spaces in the city centre which reflect and respond to people's needs and aspirations are vital to enliven and animate the city centre. Municipalities throughout North America are searching for ways to revive city centres, such as reintegrating residential environments. A vital healthy centre necessitates outdoor spaces which act as forums for informal human interaction and passive relaxation.¹ Cities such as Vancouver, B.C. with the recent Urban Landscape Task Force (1992) are examining the interrelationship of people with their environment. If large urban centres are to become more humane centres of community identity they need to provide a diversity of environment and experiences reflecting the social and cultural diversity of the community. As landscape architects if we understand the process for creating 'place' then we are contributing not only essential spaces which contribute to and reflect the demographics and interests of the community, but are enhancing the city as a whole.

One of the objectives for this thesis was to synthesize the available literature and research into a list of several components which would comprise the essential essence of 'place'. Norberg-Schulz² refers to place as that existential space with rich possibilities for human experience. 'Place' involves both a place of action and point of departure, and is considered necessary for human existence. It expresses the very essence of being a "qualitative 'total' phenomenon".

In searching through the literature there were seven components which were reiterated as being significant aspects of place. The following discussion outlines these components which are part of creating place and explores their relationships to each other. This list provides the basis for a set of components which will help to guide the design process and lead to a greater understanding of placemaking. The categories which are derived from the literature and attempt to combine concepts critical for placemaking. The seven components are legibility, diversity, nature, territoriality, safety, comfort and linkage.

Buchan, Robert and Larry Simmons. *Downtown Plaza Study*. City of Vancouver: social Planning Department, 1985.

¹ Norberg-Schulz, Christian. *Architecture: Meaning and Place*. New York: Rizzoli International Publication, 1988.

² Ibid., p.8.

LEGIBILITY

Legibility refers to the clarity of the space. It is the ability of a space to be organized into a coherent whole which creates a positive space.¹ If the space is clearly understandable it can be mentally grasped, the symbols within the space readable, their meanings understood and the form as a whole comprehended as being recognizable and familiar. This ability to recognize and categorize forms allows people to cope in a complex urban environment by simplification. It is part of the process of learning based on the physical and cultural environment and experiences.

Legibility of a space implies enclosure, the careful placement of exits and entrances, and walls either implied or real, which focus the attention on the space and the activities within it. Lennard notes that legibility is the physical embodiment of place and includes identifiable enclosure or boundary, spatial organization, spatial hierarchies, sight lines and focal points.² Structure was also seen as important by Eckbo who lists it as one of three urban physical elements for the creation of quality in spaces.³

It is important that urban spaces be legible, clearly articulated and distinctly defined to allow for imageability, and the sense of existential space essential for place.⁴ People have a strong need to recognize and pattern our surroundings to enable way-finding and orientation. People use several means of orientation such as identifying landmarks, memorizing a sequence of movements and having a sense of orientation relative to the space⁵. Thus orientation is a part of imageability and legible spaces more easily facilitate

orientation. Being lost entails feelings of anxiety and panic, much more than just not recognizing the immediate surroundings. Legibility allows us to not only feel comfortable in a neighborhood but enables us to make sense of the larger city. There is an emotional reassurance, a general satisfaction at knowing a place.

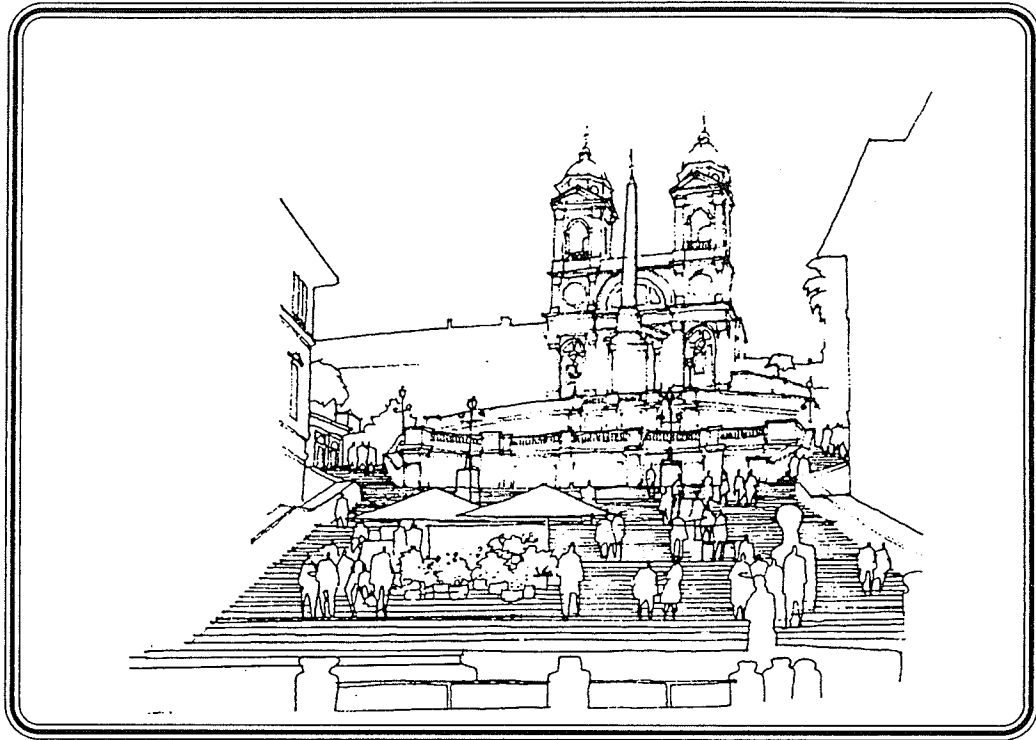


Figure 3.1

SCALA DI SPAGNA, ROME⁶

People use many sensory cues to structure and identify the environment (Figure 3.1 & 3.2). The colour and texture of buildings or pathways, the smells for nearby restaurants or bakeries, the smells, colours and textures of vegetation lining the streets and open spaces all comprise part of the organizing system. This environmental image is different for everyone, tailored to each individual's interests and organizing patterns. Previous experience also colours the place and is used to determine actions or responses to a place. These experiences influence our future patterns and choices and allow us to move about easily in the complex environment the city presents. This image created through legibility is dynamic, constantly changing with interaction with the environment.

There is flux, but not chaos, a pleasant interchange of information as new patterns are discovered without confusion or loss of orientation.

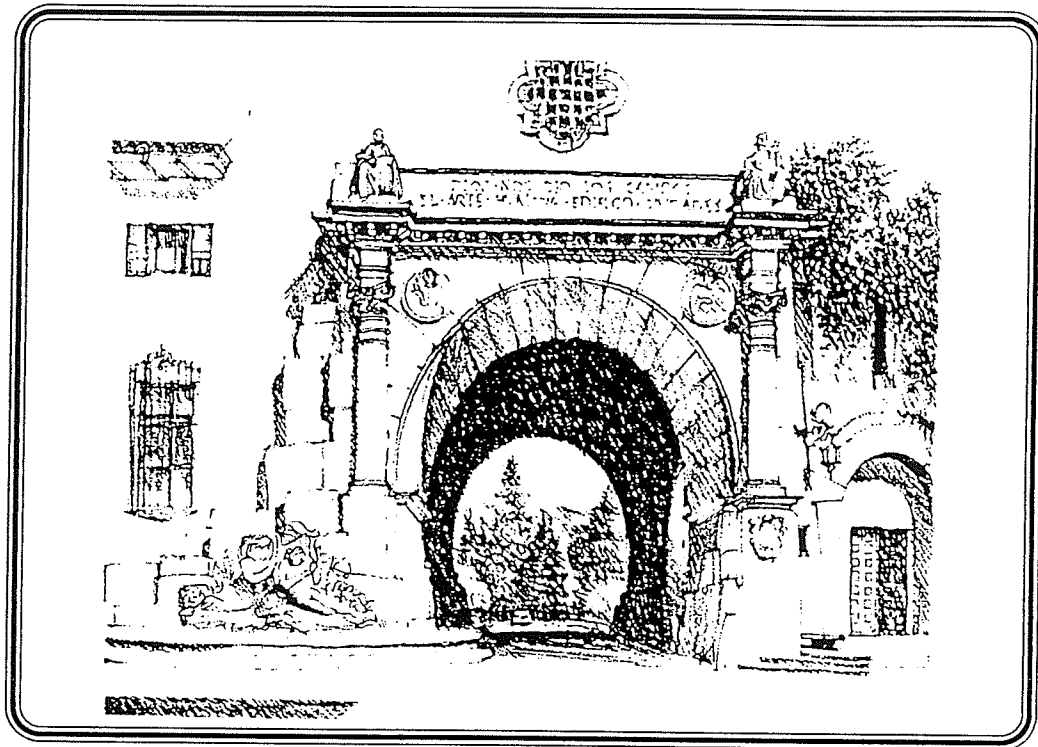


Figure 3.2

MAIN ENTRANCE - SANTA BARBARA COURTHOUSE⁷

Legibility relates strongly to Lynch's other properties in the image of the environment. The clarity of form entailed in legibility is enabled by structure, identity and meaning.⁸ The structure refers to the spatial or pattern relationship between the object, the observer and other objects. The identity is the recognition of the uniqueness of that particular object. Meaning is the associations which are related to the environmental image.

SUMMATION

While we as designers are able to determine structure and identity, meaning is influenced by numerous factors beyond much of our control. The

attributes of identity and structure the strong mental image a place provokes, are physical qualities which relate to imageability. When an environment possesses structure and identity, it is legible, and we are capable of forming a clear image of the place in our mind. Meaning, as determined by experience, in conjunction with a strong mental image of a place, combines into an imageable place which can provoke feelings ranging relaxation to fear. For open spaces in the city to function as places they must be legible. Once there is a strong image the understanding and sense of ownership of such a place can then evolve. It invites the participant to be more involved with it, to augment the initial image. Often when walking through a familiar environment I will look for new observations to add to my inventory. These do not alter the sense I have of the place, but serve to augment the information and allow me to expand the comprehension I have of the place. Once the place is understood, is legible, one can then evolve a more complex relationship with it.

¹ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: Joint Center for Urban Studies, The M.I.T. Press, 1988).

² Suzanne H. Crowhurst Lennard, Henry Lennard. *Livable Cities* (New York: Gondolier Press, 1987).

³ Garrett Eckbo, *Urban Landscape Design* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964).

⁴ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Architecture: Meaning and Place* (New York: Rizzoli International Publication, 1988).

⁵ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: Joint Center for Urban Studies, The M.I.T. Press, 1988), p. 131.

⁶ Francis D. K. Ching, *Architecture: Form - Space & Order* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979), p. 36.

⁷ Ibid., p. 269.

⁸ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: Joint Center for Urban Studies, The M.I.T. Press, 1988), p. 8.

DIVERSITY

Diversity is an important component of 'place,' but difficult to define and seldom clearly articulated. It has enabled species to adapt and survive, and plays an important role in perceptual preference. It is this latter role which is significant in the design and understanding of place. In terms of ecosystems, diversity is the key to survival and growth. The economy is changing from a plethora of small family businesses to fewer large conglomerates. The current post-modern age and culture values efficiency and productivity, both values anathema to diversity.

Watt¹ outlines four arguments in favor of facilitating diversity based on the understanding of ecosystems, including the human population and its environment. The arguments are as follows: 1. Diversity of components in the ecosystem improves the stability of the system, 2. Diversity minimizes risks, 3. Diversity more fully utilizes natural resources, such as the sun, and finally, 4. Diversity contributes to the mental well being of humans.

The following discussion will define diversity more clearly and explore its relevance to the creation of place from an ecological perspective. Diversity in the design is a sense of the measure of the evenness and richness of the stimuli at a site.² The evenness is the distribution of elements within a set. For example, if a park has between four to six each of seven different shrubs, the diversity is greater than if there were fourteen of one shrub and between two to three each of the remaining six shrub species. Therefore the environment with a more even distribution of components has a greater diversity. This even distribution also implies that there is not a hodge-podge of different elements, rather several of each selection, creating coherence. The other component of diversity, richness, represents both the number of items and the variety of items in each set. In an environment where there is a greater prevalence of rare species there is greater richness. In the age of manicured parks and boulevards, stock landscape furniture, and the general simplification of our surroundings, we are starving for diversity. Just as the information age has left us starved for knowledge, the

increasing consumerism has deprived us of diversity.

Diversity promotes stability because it spreads the risks of harm across a wider field, and the system is able to function more harmoniously if it is larger and has more feedback loops. The current preoccupation with maximizing efficiency and productivity leads to a reduction in diversity, with inevitable consequences³. Cities are strewn with large concrete and glass structures which cater to economic objectives, but fail to make the city more livable. Large shopping centres have the same generic design filled with the same outlets and food fairs. Some large food chains have made their reputation on being consistently identical irrespective of location or country. There is a loss of niches, of that cultural and environmental diversity which enriches us and ensures our continued survival. The strongest argument for preserving diversity in the urban environment is that it preserves mental well being. The expression 'a change is a rest' reveals insight into the workings of the human mind. People talk about getting a change of pace, getting away for a few days, not just to avoid work, but to experience new environments. Tourism is a thriving industry in Canada because people want to experience new sights and sounds, taste new foods, take part in different cultures. While people are creatures of habit and do not enjoy too many changes at once, environmental diversity provides positive stimulation. If everything looked the same there would be no landmarks.

Jane Jacobs⁴ notes that open spaces require a wide range of diversity. Interesting places should have a sequence of users and uses, both within and adjacent to the site. There should be a functional physical diversity in adjacent structures so that there is a diverse community surrounding the site, and diversity in the rhythms of activities is enhanced. This increased use of the space by different people improves interest, but also safety. Different people have opportunities to meet, becoming familiar with different perspectives and reducing the sense of danger associated with strangers.

SUMMMATION

Diversity based on an ecological approach fulfills a significant role in

placemaking. Elements comprise a set and the greater the sets and evenness and richness within the sets, the greater the diversity. Diversity therefore improves interest, creating a space that is a vital dynamic public place. The concept of richness within sets, varied items and numbers of items, promotes landscape design which can be unique to each setting with richness in design and yet recognizable order (Figure 3.3).

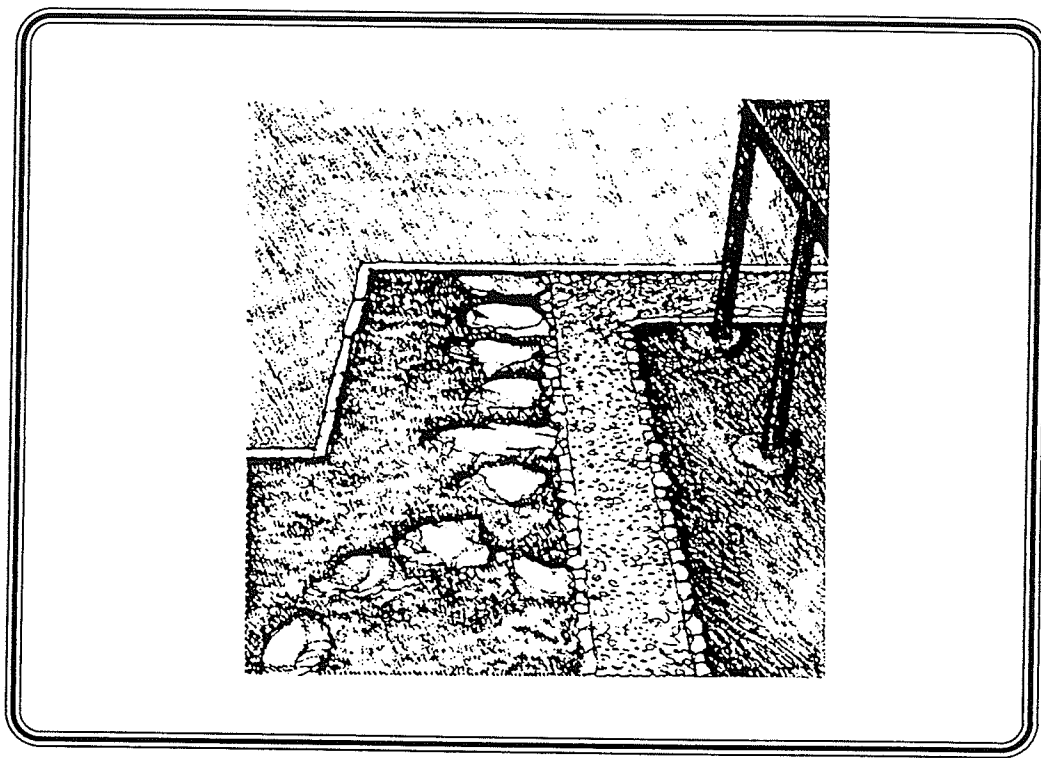


Figure 3.3

DIVERSITY IN GROUND MATERIALS: KATSURA IMPERIAL VILLA⁵

¹ Kenneth E.F. Way, *Man's Efficient Rush Toward Deadly Dullness* ed. Stephen Kaplan and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982).p.162.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961).

⁵ Francis D. K. Ching, *Architecture: Form - Space & Order* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979), P. 117.

NATURE

The previous discussion has touched on nature as it contributes to diversity, but nature also has its own special role in placemaking. Spirn¹ emphasizes in her discussion of nature and the urban environment that only if we view the city centre, suburbs, and countryside as part of a single system interconnected through the processes of nature in conjunction with the social and economic systems will there be real solutions to related problems. While city dwellers have long held a fascination with nature, only now are we beginning to see that it has the potential to reshape our lives and environment if we work in harmony. Landscape ecology defines an approach which focuses on the landscape or geosphere as a foundation for plant communities, animals and humans.² Ecosystems comprised of numerous organisms provide services on which we depend for our survival; oxygen production, nitrogen fixation, and the breakdown of organic wastes and chemical pollutants.³ Cities represent cultural ecosystems and in this setting the human is the controlling agent establishing goals to meet their needs.

People have not always understood the ecological processes of plants, but have long incorporated them into their physical surroundings. In seventh century B.C. Sennacharib provided the citizens of Ninevah with a park.⁴ In ancient Athens philosophers would gather with their students in gardens filled with tree groves. City residents in Mesopotamia cultivated their own fields or gardens, much like community gardens today. In medieval cities in addition to knot and physic gardens in the city there was an interconnection with the countryside. The wall and moat served as a recreational area "Outside the city, there are two hills and a broad moat, shaded by green trees, which serve as playing grounds in summer, and are used for the recreation of the students..⁵ Unfortunately as urban congestion increased these small green spaces disappeared and by 1516 when Sir Thomas More published *Utopia* the gardens of cities such as Cologne had disappeared.

People have continued to struggle since that time with how to reintegrate

nature into the city. Figure 3.4 is one way of expressing nature, integrating built forms with the natural scenery beyond. The Garden City Movement is also a part of this history. The argument has progressed from green spaces being important to the moral and physical health of citizens to the now much broader comprehension of the landscape ecology approach. Kaplan describes the inclusion of trees, grass, shrubs or other aspects of nature as a 'greenness'.⁶ This is a shorthand for nature even though the colour may actually be white, yellow, red or any variation. It is that encounter with the natural environment that is important to people.

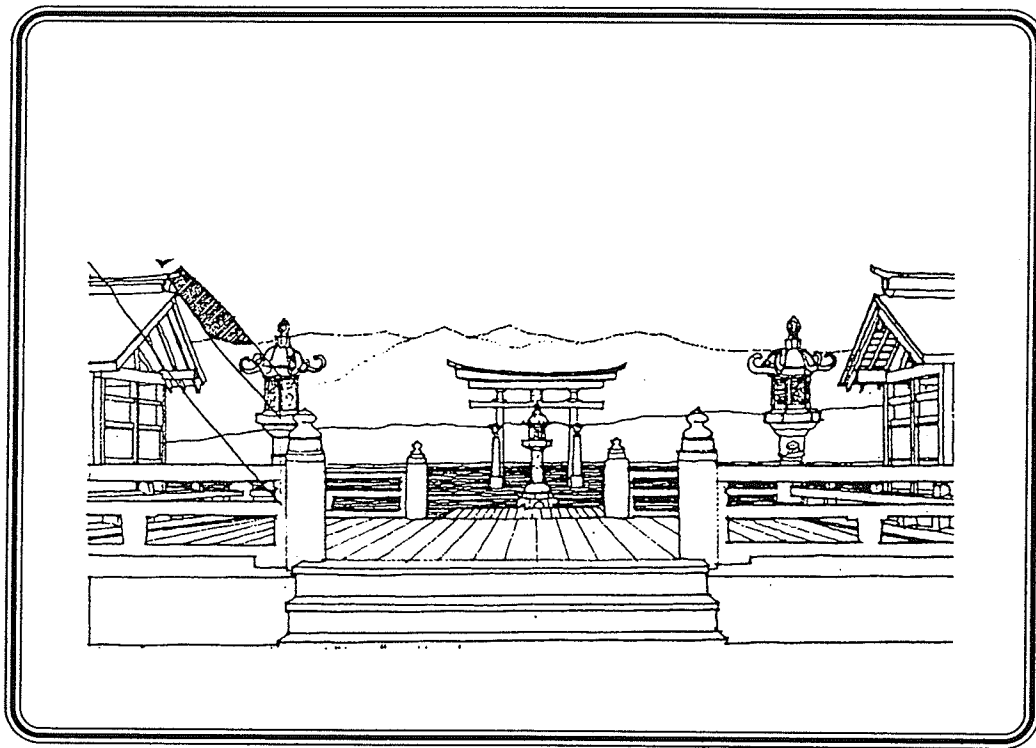


Figure 3.4

SYMBOLIC GATE TO THE SEA: ITSUKUSHIMA TEMPLE⁷

In one study examining if nature was preferred to built environments the only image that was liked as much as natural scenes was a scene showing some trees against a backdrop of tall buildings.⁸ This and other of her studies indicated that nature content per se was important to people.

One other aspect that emerged was the importance of mystery. It is an aspect which draws the participant into a more complex relationship with the environment. While mystery is more a natural part of nature areas, it may be incorporated in a number of different ways in urban design. The Japanese garden has mastered this art, dividing the garden into portions with screened or framed views and threaded through with a meandering path. Adding mystery also adds to the diversity, the richness of a place.

In other studies scoring sources of environmental preference by Kaplan and Ulrich nature items ranging from everyday nature to less accessible settings gave the highest score. These nature attributes were appreciated not for their spectacularity but for the fact that they were present. Neither was it important that people actively interact with it, but it could be enjoyed in a passive way. Eckbo in his definition of the primary elements of the urban physical environment lists nature as a necessary part for the creation of quality of space. The quality is based on the interrelationship of nature, structure and open pedestrian spaces.

Gardening takes the thereness of nature further encouraging a more dynamic relationship with the environment. The increase in community gardens and garden therapy programs indicates the benefits which are being credited to this more active involvement. In addition to the benefit accrued by participants other people using the space are able to enjoy well tended gardens and watch the dynamics of people and nature. This direct interaction with the site imparts a greater pride and stronger sense of personal identification with a public place.

Nature in the form of vegetation is able to mitigate the negative effects of an urban environment. Plants and trees reduce the wind and clean and filter the air reducing dust and other forms of pollution. The right species for each site will ensure it is able to survive given the stresses of the site. Walls covered with vines present a more interesting sight and reduce the glare and reflection of the sun. Trees also provide filtered light, creating dappled or heavy shade which will add

to the diversity and comfort of the open space.

Other forms of nature that are part of urban green spaces are animals. Birds, squirrels, chipmunks, cats, dogs, and skunks are some of the urban animals that are a part of the ecosystem. People derive great enjoyment from feeding animals in a park, or watching their antics as they scurry across the ground. Green spaces extending through the city provide corridors for wildlife habitat. In this way the wildlife from large urban parks can have a greater range, increasing the diversity of birds throughout the city.

A varied ecologically balanced environment is attractive in its diversity and is more likely to attract aesthetically desirable bird species.⁹ The greater the diversity in vegetation, the greater will be the diversity in wildlife. The inclusion of native species and ornamental plants will provide greater habitat diversity. Many birds have adapted to urban ornamentals and enjoy the fruit they offer. Diversity in topography in combination with diversity in plantings will create more microenvironments. This environmental diversity serves to facilitate wildlife and benefits people using these public spaces. The inclusion of living creatures where appropriate adds an important sense of vibrance and character.

In the urban environment there is an uneasy truce between animals and people. People who have domestic animals often do not act responsibly restraining and cleaning up after their pets. While this offends some people others are upset by those people who feed and attract wildlife to open spaces. Some people would like to use their little patch of green for recreation without having to evade the remnants left by pigeons, squirrels or dogs or worry about insects. People's diverse preferences in wildlife and pets requires the same consideration and cooperation as when sharing any public space.

Even when trying to attract wildlife the stresses of the city; pollution, little food, poor cover and habitat, make it challenging. Further, the potential habitats are often fragmented preventing ground travel between areas. Each species has specific requirements for survival and spaces can be manipulated to

provide appropriate sites for desirable animals and to discourage pests. In the urban parks examined in this study there were the presence of wildlife and domestic pets.

SUMMATION

The inclusion of nature is an important part of placemaking. It has a role in the larger sense of the ecological landscape in the urban environment and the macro examination of insects and animals in these settings. This study examined this spectrum of nature and also included scenic components such as mountain and ocean views. As with the other components of placemaking it attempts to understand what people define as being a part of nature, how they prioritize their importance, and how they assess their presence or absence in the three sites.

The well designed city as described by J.B. Jackson in *Landscape* "one where we everywhere feel at home; it reminds us, everywhere and at all times, that we are in an environment no less natural, no less stimulating than the environment of the country dweller. Its trees and parks and lawns are more than agents of health; they tell us of the passage of the seasons, and its open places tell us the time of day...If it cannot provide us with the sounds of the remoter landscape, it at least provides us with areas where the sound of human voices and footsteps are not drowned out by mechanical noises, it provides us with quiet. It cannot imitate all of nature, but it gives us archways and pools of daylight, and flights of steps and views; the splash of water in fountains, echoes and music; the breath of damp cool air, the harmony of colors and the unpolluted sun; indeed it gives us so much that our excursions into the countryside cease to be headlong flights from a sterile environment and become a concious searching for the missing ingredients; solitude in the presence of other forms of life, space and mystery." Zube, Ervin H. *The Natural History of Urban Trees*. ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982.p.185.

¹ Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden*. (New York: Basic Books, Inc.,1984).p.37.

² A.P. A. Vink, *Landscape Ecology and Land Use*. (London: Longman Group Limited, 1983).p.4

³ Calvin Webb, *Reserves for Nature*. Alberta: Environment Council of Alberta. p. 2

⁴ Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden*. (New York: Basic Books, Inc.,1984). p.29.

⁵ Ibid. p.31.

⁶ Rachel Kaplan, *The Green Experience*, ed. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. ed. Stephen Kaplan and Rachel Kaplan (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982).

⁷ Francis D. K. Ching, *Architecture: Form - Space & Order* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979), P. 338.

⁸ Ibid. p.188.

⁹ Garrett Eckbo, *Urban Landscape Design*. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964).

¹⁰ Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden*. (New York: Basic Books, Inc.,1984).p.222.

TERRITORIALITY

Territoriality is a state which is associated with a well developed image of place and associated positive feelings, extending towards stewardship and a sense of ownership.¹ Previously in the discussion of nature it was noted that in a dense urban setting there is a need for cooperation. As much as possible it is important to minimize prejudice, hostility, and fear by increasing communication across socioeconomic lines.² This requires a recognition and understanding of the complex social interactions which are woven through life in the city, and which play an important role in determining the success of outdoor spaces in being places for human gathering and interaction. All humans exemplify the need to create order out of their environment, and establishing a territory is one means of creating a comfortable and familiar environment.³

Territory in this study as it relates to public open spaces is defined as that area controlled by a collectivity of people who have a face-to-face relationship.⁴ These people recognize each other and understand that they are part of the group which frequent the specified area. People feel an emotional attachment to the spaces adjacent their homes, and in an urban environment this space often takes the form of small open spaces. Territoriality exists for communities as well as smaller spaces, it may be clearly bounded or fade from a central point. Territoriality which relates to a collective of people by its nature implies that it will also reflect their cultural composition. If places are to reflect the culture of the community they must therefore accommodate the territorial needs of those people.

The complexity of territoriality in humans as an emotional function relating to space is expressed by Fried and Gleicher " ... individuals feel different spatial regions belong to or do not belong to them and, correspondingly, feel that they belong to...specific spatial regions or do not belong (1961, p.313)."⁵ People become attached to particular areas, as exemplified in the patterns of seating in restaurants, classrooms, meeting areas, or the frequenting of particular pathways. People develop a familiarity and comfort with these spaces that enables them to function more easily in the complex urban setting, avoiding conflict and enhancing

their enjoyment of the place.

Humans communicate through a complex symiotic process. This often takes the form of overt symbols such as personal possessions rather than acts of aggression. Another form of possession which denotes territory is the physical occupation of the space. For example there may be a retired person who always sits on 'her' bench every morning to feed the squirrels. Later in the day this same place may be taken over by a few friends who enjoy their lunch in the sun. Still later in the evening people meeting friends after work may use the same bench as a gathering spot. Territoriality then has a significance for place, but also time. There is a complex schedule evolved for who has 'possession' of that particular space during a specific time frame. Territoriality may range from a permanent status to a temporary time.⁶ The territory itself may be fixed, or portable, such as that relating to personal space. Territoriality is also extrapolated to objects⁷ as expressed by people denoting 'my bench, my table, my spot'.

Territoriality also relates to social status, determining possession of space and mobility across spaces. Research has indicated that higher status individuals are not limited to specific territories.⁸ Conversely lower status individuals are relegated to secluded and undesirable locations. A natural consequence of territoriality is that if self-defined boundaries are respected it creates an atmosphere of cooperation and well-being.⁹ Places therefore require a diversity of spaces for people to identify with and occupy. Conflict is minimized if there is a stable social hierarchy, therefore it is important to acknowledge this dynamic through design by creating open places with diversity in niches, edge conditions, seating arrangements, enabling people to find their own special place.

Natural forces such as ethnic groups or communities with shared value systems lead to territorial organization. There is an increased group coherence and minimalization of conflict.¹⁰ Territoriality therefore is also a reflection of culture. If individual members of a collective are socially compatible the quality of the social interactions is improved and more crowding is tolerated.¹² There is

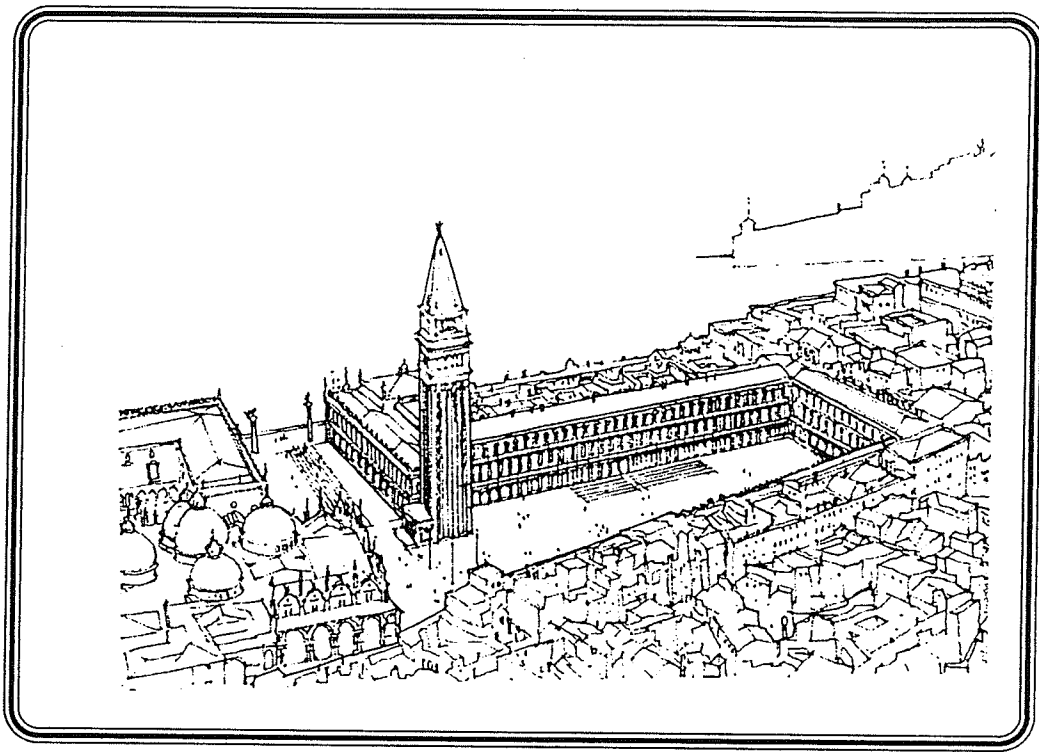


Figure 3.5

CULTURAL EXPRESSION : PIAZZA SAN MARCO, VENICE¹¹

a protection of ethnic and social spheres with self defined boundaries and spatial arrangements which enhances the sense of comfort and protects the less empowered members of society. Gradual growth results in incremental changes in a community, facilitating the reflection of territoriality and culture. Through the creation of a positive sense of space greater population density and diversity can be accommodated, reflecting in a dynamic way the cultural makeup of the collective.

Reflecting the culture is an important component of creating place, interpreting existing physical and social patterns. Different expressions of public open space reflect and celebrate the diverse cultural communities which comprise our cities (Figure 3.5). Piazza San Marco reflects the culture and history of Venice and serves as a gathering place for shared community events, or more intimate individual activities.

Territoriality allows different people in society to co-exist, though people with lower social status are relegated to spaces of lower value¹³. Without this ability to identify with a place and call it our own we would lack the bond to place so essential for the existential self. The temporal nature of territory allows different cultures to peaceably co-exist without impinging on each other as over time they negotiate space. This facilitates changes in the rapidly evolving urban environment.

One aspect of culture which is rapidly evolving is the definition of the family. Different communities may define family in different ways and require open spaces which reflect this difference. As one T-shirt slogan says "A family is a circle of friends who love you."¹⁴

SUMMATION

Ensuring the existence of diverse spaces which allow for territoriality will reduce social conflict and facilitate the creation of a place which is comfortable and familiar. Territoriality represents one way of creating order in the complex urban environment. It functions as a reflection of culture, those behavioral and social patterns and beliefs characteristic of the surrounding community. As territoriality is accommodated it facilitates greater density and the increasing and evolving cultural diversity within the city. Reflecting the surrounding community and providing spaces for identification, contributes an important component to placemaking by recognizing territorial needs. As landscape architects designs to accommodate territorial needs and patterns of use makes cultural artifacts more tangible, less remote or esoteric. Patterns of seating, resting and circulation reflect territoriality. People's sense of crowding, security and satisfaction with a place in addition to their preferred area of use, sense of choice, and feelings about other users of the place reflect the degree to which territoriality has been accommodated.

"A behavior setting is bounded in space and time and has a structure which interrelates physical, social, and cultural properties so that it elicits common or regularized forms of behavior" Ittelson et al., 1974:70 in La Gory, Mark. John Pipkin. Urban Social Space. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company. 1981.p. 216.

¹Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982).

²Barrie B. Greenbie. *Social Territory, Community Health, and Urban Planning*. ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982), p.213.

³Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982), p.267.

⁴Robert Sommer. *Territory*. ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982), p.268.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Lou McClelland, *Crowding and Territoriality*. ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982), p.204.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Barrie B. Greenbie. *Social Territory, Community Health, and Urban Planning*. ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982), p.213.

¹⁰D. Harvey. *Social Processes, Spatial Form and the Redistribution of Real Income in an Urban System*. ed. Murray Stewart. *The City: Problems of Planning*. [Middlesex: Penguin Books. 1972] p.331.

¹¹Francis D. K. Ching, *Architecture: Form - Space & Order* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979), p. 258.

¹²Lou McClelland, *Crowding and Territoriality*. ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982), p.205.

¹³Ibid.p.203.

¹⁴Signals. (Fort Erie), p.36

SAFETY

The creation of safe spaces is an important aspect of placemaking. Maslow ranks security as a primary need after hunger and thirst. Places are not able to function if people feel their security is threatened. Newman coined the words 'defensible space' in arguing for better public housing design leading to more security.¹ Defensible spaces are those areas that have clear rights of possession defined by physical association, circulation paths, and visual surveillance. They meet people's needs for safety and allow them to fulfill other functions. There has been considerable debate about the extent to which a physical environment controls people's actions, but generally there is agreement that some places permit or facilitate behavior which reduces safety through the lack of sensitive design. Hough² in a Toronto study stated that design of the physical environment influences the perception of territory and the ability of people to monitor their

surroundings, two critical factors which could deter crime and vandalism. Safety is also related to pedestrian traffic in relation to other traffic such as vehicles, bicycles, or other forms of transport. Safety may be enhanced by the types, placement and form of materials.

Visibility into the open space improves safety because of the increased opportunity for surveillance by other site users either active or passive (Figure 3.6). Opportunities to see into the site as in the Piazza del Campo may be from the windows of residences or offices, people sitting at restaurants, or pedestrians

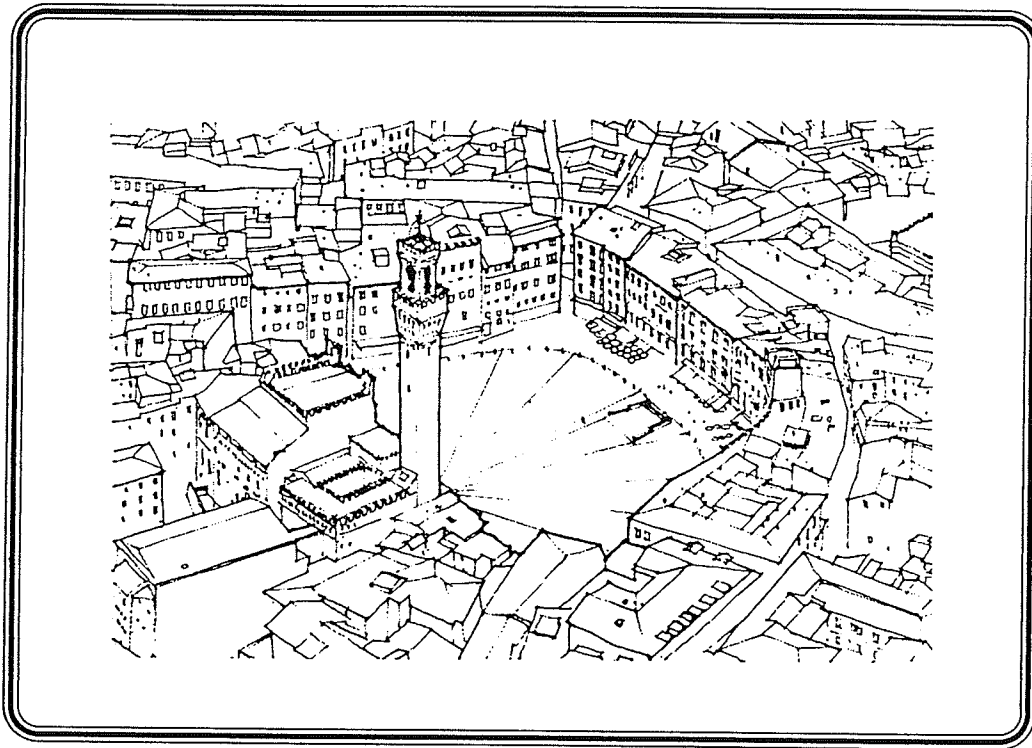


Figure 3.6

OPPORTUNITIES TO SEE INTO THE SITE: PIAZZA DEL CAMPO: SIENA²

passing by. Parks having views from adjacent residences or streets as well as having greater visibility within the site, have a lower incidence of problems⁴. Lynch in his plan for Boston calls this indirect and direct surveillance afforded by an open site the "eyes on the street"⁵. Jane Jacobs and Kevin Lynch advocate buildings which allow views into the open spaces and encourage regular and

frequent users, two critical components which enhance safety.⁶ Balconies or windows onto the space encourage people to interact with people within the area and give the sense of being watched. Crimes are less likely to occur in areas that are being observed since people modify their behavior in these conditions. Regular users in the space increase the chances of being observed, are more likely to have a sense of proprietary interest, and more likely to intervene when there is inappropriate behavior. Often regular users of an area will know each other as passing acquaintances and be friendly and helpful on these terms. Frequent use of a space at various times of day enhances safety. An effective system of linkages and demand goods facilitates more people passing through the space throughout a longer period of time day and night and creates a sense of a dynamic lively place, rather than a dull threatening one.

Amenities such as lighting are significant since they improve visibility and help prevent hidden corners which may present a threat. Adequate lighting at night is important to ensure the optimal use of the site throughout a 24 hour period. People prefer a well lit route where other people also frequent and will make it part of their regular pathway if they feel it is safe. Safety has a strong link to maintenance and a sense of comfort that a site conveys. If maintenance is poor and the lighting at night is erratic over time, it will not attract regular consistent traffic flow and without surveillance there is no self policing.

Jan Gehl⁷ notes that safety from vehicular traffic is another safety concern, particularly when we wish to improve pedestrian access and usage. This may be achieved by designing roads which physically slow traffic down and emphasize the priority of the pedestrian. Vehicles may also be blocked access by bollards or other structures, encouraging pedestrian use unencumbered by fears of walking across at the wrong time. Other types of traffic such as bicyclists or roller skaters are sometimes allotted specific paths to minimize conflict with the slower moving pedestrians. Single use paths though sometimes give a false sense of safety and encourage faster passage and reduced caution. Mixed use areas through parks require that everyone be observant and considerate of others sharing the site. Lynch notes that forms and materials are design tools

in clarifying circulation and defining realms.⁸ They can present a clear but subtle message about traffic speed and separation.

Some suggestions for improving the environment for older pedestrians are provided by Frances Carp in Appleyard's *Livable Streets*⁹. "Walkways must provide secure footing on sidewalks or paths in good repair. Pedestrian territory must be safe from invasion by vehicles. Where it is necessary for pedestrians and vehicles to share space, rights-of-way should be clearly indicated."

Appleyard suggests that closing the street partially or completely to traffic and widening sidewalks are ways to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort. Jacobs also encourages focusing on purpose of use rather than taxonomy, making open spaces which are adapted to specific site needs and may be various permutations and combinations of streets, plazas, parks, or sidewalks. Diversity in environments make them interesting and distinct while reflecting community culture and values.

A number of traffic schemes are suggested for protecting the integrity of the neighbourhood. Appleyard lists four principle approaches to control traffic; boundary control, internal control, one-way exits, and hybrid systems.¹⁰ Boundary control restricts access to a few arteries with streets branching off. Internal control restricts traffic entering the area with bollards, diverters or other obstacles preventing the through flow of traffic. One-way exits are less visible and easier to ignore. Hybrid systems is the application of different devices on different streets. This facilitates individual solutions for areas with high resident participation and a complex street pattern, but is complex to navigate through. These traffic patterns are tools for controlling traffic to enhance street safety and protect the integrity of the community. The streets can facilitate pedestrian passage or prevent it, creating a strong sense of boundary and edge. They influence the perceived character of any nearby open space and the neighbourhood, from quiet and safe to noisy and dangerous.

Friedberg suggests that while diversity is important, especially in children's

play areas, safety is vital.¹¹ Diversity in forms and materials can contribute positively to safety while enhancing the visual interest of the site. Small open spaces shared by a few residential units such as courtyards, cultivates territoriality which enhances supervision of children. Large spaces which have less territoriality are less controlled, more poorly maintained and less safe.¹²

Maintenance is an important visual clue that the site sends about what type of activity is acceptable there¹³. Maintenance extends to having garbage receptacles easily available, ensuring the furniture and amenities are presentable and functioning. Neglect suggests that the place has less value and no one is paying attention. A negative reflection on the neighbourhood makes negative behavior more acceptable and discourages people from using the site, creating a cycle of deterioration and misuse. In this way there is a strong link between maintenance and safety.

SUMMATION

Safety is a vital aspect of placemaking. In order to derive pleasure from a place individual's basic needs for safety must be first met. If there is safety from traffic, including the physical presence of vehicles and the noise and pollution which accompany them, people will be more comfortable there, and likely to frequent the place. Lighting in the site and along linkage routes improves safety as it improves visibility. Visual linkage into and around the site allows for formal and informal surveillance and will contribute to appropriate behavior. The extent to which the site is safe may also be revealed in the maintenance of the space. Appearances send a message and establish a pattern of behavior.

¹ Mark La Gory, John Pipkin, *Urban Social Space* (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1981), p.232.z

² Francis D. K. Ching, *Architecture: Form - Space & Order* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979), p. 140.

³ Michael Hough and Suzanne Barrett, *People and City Landscapes* (Toronto: Conservation Council of Ontario, 1987), p.105.

⁴ Michael Hough and Suzanne Barrett, *People and City Landscapes* (Toronto: Conservation Council of Ontario, 1987), p.106.

- ⁵ Tridib Banerjee and Michael Southworth, ed. *City Sense and City Design Writings and Projects of Kevin Lynch*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990), p.686.
- ⁶ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961).
- ⁷ Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987).
- ⁸ Tridib Banerjee and Michael Southworth, ed. *City Sense and City Design. Writings and Projects of Kevin Lynch*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990), p.686.
- ⁹ Donald Appleyard, *Livable Streets* (Berkeley: University of California Press. 1981), p.138.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p.310.
- ¹¹ M. Paul Friedberg, *Playgrounds for City Children* (Washington, D.C., Bulletin 27-A. 1979).
- ¹² Michael Hough and Suzanne Barrett, *People and City Landscapes* (Toronto: Conservation Council of Ontario, 1987) p.106.
- ¹³ Ibid.

COMFORT

Comfort is a rather nebulous term used to describe people's general satisfaction with the site in relation to their sense of well being both mentally and physically while in the place. This is an important component which encompasses the more abstract sense of how a person feels in a place, the emotions it evokes and the likelihood that they will go there frequently or incorporate it on their routes. Comfort overlaps with the seven components previously outlined as each play a role in creating a positive sense of place. The term comfort augments them, relating to environmental attributes of the open space and the interaction with the people using the area.

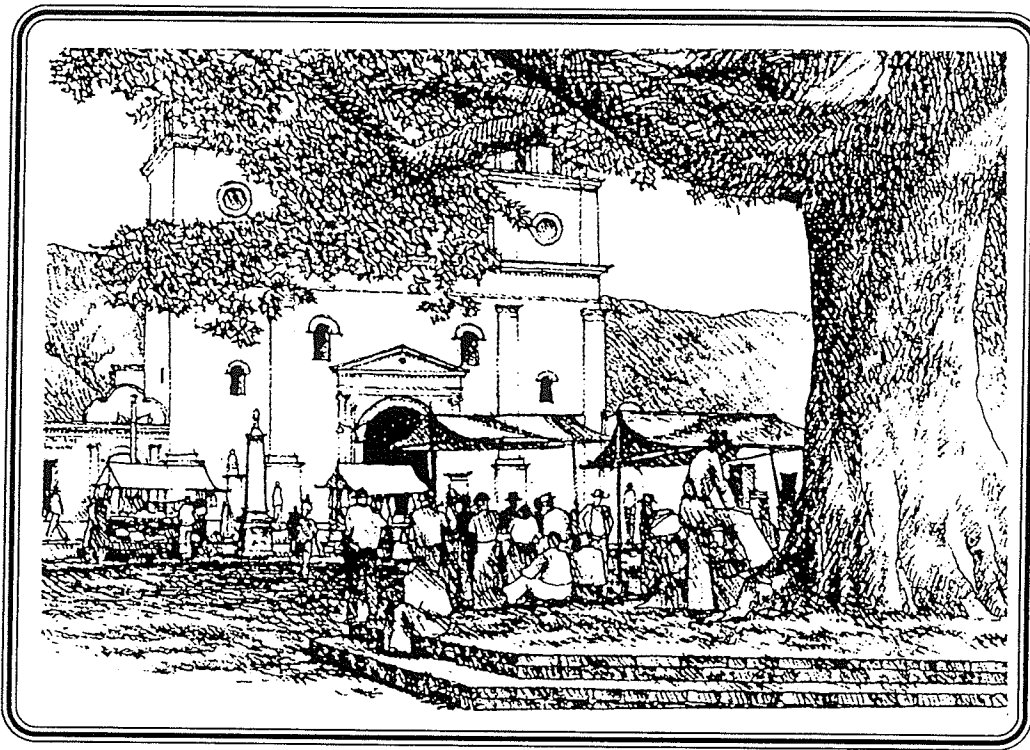
One of the greatest impacts on comfort relating to an urban open space is vehicular traffic. Places are spaces for social interaction and if there is low traffic and low noise there is greater satisfaction overall with the site.¹ In an Appleyard study inhabitants on a light traffic street had three times as many friends and acquaintances as those on a heavily trafficked street. The street was a part of their territory and they were more aware of their environment and used it as part of their social environment. There is a greater opportunity to establish acquaintances, especially for those with the greatest physical mobility. Familiarity with neighbours and those passing through the area increases the safety of the site as it impacts on increased ownership. The fact that more

pedestrians were comfortable using the street suggests that there will be more pedestrian traffic, and this increased usage increases safety. A lighter vehicular traffic allows for a closer residential community to develop with a richer social climate. When a place is seen as primarily pedestrian territory slow moving vehicles can animate a commercial area increasing the general social activity and bringing in people.

Expectations for a quiet safe environment on a light traffic street are high and therefore there is less tolerance of disruptions. An individual vehicle which is noisy or dangerous can disturb the situation on a generally quiet street. People on low traffic streets are therefore more likely to voice complaints to traffic which disrupts these expectations for the quality of life they wish to maintain. Issues of "safety, stress, condition, pollution, privacy, and territoriality, followed closely by neighborliness, were of primary concern to the inhabitants of all streets."² These are all factors relating to the comfort, the general satisfaction, people feel with a place.

Comfort also relates to the protection from natural elements such as excessive wind and rain, exposure to sun or availability of shade. It is a matter of being able to choose the right balance for each person at any particular time from a diversity of environments. Air movement and mean radiant temperature can be readily manipulated by urban design to create hospitable environments.³ What is comfortable is determined by the individual and the type of activity being pursued. Physical activity produces two or three times the body heat, compared with sitting. Diversity of environments; sun catches, leafy canopies offering dappled shade to heavy shade as well as protection from strong winds and rains allow people to enjoy the outdoors, and an exposure to the natural environment. Part of being in touch with nature and having comfort in a small urban plaza might be reclining in your favorite sun catch reading your newspaper as zephyrs waft through, tantalizing the senses. A sense of well being is created by the exposure to the elements without being threatened by them.

Comfort relates to the physical amenities available in a space which

*Figure 3.7***OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMFORT: SQUARE IN GIRON, COLUMBIA⁴**

encourage people to stay. These may relate to furniture elements such as benches or chairs, elements to lean against or structural components as shelters. The availability of telephones, washrooms or drinking fountains may encourage people to stay in an area longer. People often prefer edge conditions and opportunities to linger⁵. Gehl stresses the importance of primary and secondary seating for greater choice, the placement determined by spatial and functional qualities of the place.

Orientation and view are also important in creating comfortable spaces. Orientation of the site should present as many diverse opportunities as possible along the continuum from deep shade to full sun. It should also express the special character of that particular place in the physical and cultural environment (Figure 3.7). The view may relate to the natural rhythms of the earth and moon, features such as mountains and oceans, or monuments either natural or

designed, or it may be life's social drama unfolding in front of you. Diversity in opportunities for views, to face the sun, or sit with your back to it, to sit on the edge and watch the people in the centre space, offering different choices for orientation and view. All these design elements and amenities can work together to create places where people can be comfortable and fulfill their needs. They facilitate rather than inhibit human activities.

This social nature of people to stop and chat as they meet acquaintances, or just to pause and enjoy the activity about them relates to another dimension of comfort. The relationship of crowding and territoriality to placemaking was referred to previously. People are attracted to places by other people and what they perceive as uncomfortably crowded is a factor of perception and relates to context. Some of the most successful small urban spaces such as Paley and Greenacre Parks in New York are often congested, but in a friendly dynamic manner.⁶ Sidewalks may be crowded, but if there is no safety hazard such as fast moving traffic adjacent, they may be a very effective width. There is no ideal width for these pedestrian ways since it depends on cultural norms and context, but observation in the community of different open spaces and the needs of those utilizing the space will give the landscape architect direction.

SUMMATION

Comfort, the sense of well being a place offers individuals, is created through sensitive and creative design which considers the impact and interrelationship of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, site orientation and view, amenities and opportunities to enjoy and be protected from the elements of wind, sun and rain and the urban environment. In part placemaking is the art of creating those outdoor spaces which facilitate human interaction and existence while minimizing feelings of discomfort or fear.

¹ Donald Appleyard and Mark Lintell, *The Environmental Quality of City Streets: The Residents' Viewpoint*, ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982).

² Donald Appleyard and Mark Lintell, *The Environmental Quality of City Streets: The Residents' Viewpoint* ed. Kaplan, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan. *Humanscape: Environments for People*. (Ann Arbor: Ulrich's Books, Inc., 1982), p. 253.

³ Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1984), p. 67.

⁴ Francis D. K. Ching, *Architecture: Form - Space & Order* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979), p. 114.

⁵ Gehl, Jan, *Life Between Buildings*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987).

⁶ William H. Whyte, *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (Washington: The Conservation Foundation, 1980).

LINKAGE

The final component in this discussion of components for placemaking is linkage. Trancik in his discussion of urban spatial design theories includes linkage, the connecting together of city spaces, which in addition to place and figure-ground theories provides a means for understanding the city.¹ When all three are used in conjunction they serve as a basis for optimum urban design. While the previous components discussed in the conceptual design strategy; diversity, legibility, safety, territoriality, nature and comfort, relate to being within the open space, or nearby, linkage refers to how the space is related to other paths or places in the city structure. Linkage is vital for placemaking. If a place is well linked there is greater activity in the space, animating it and improving safety. A good new place will attract people and encourage them to use new paths to access it if possible.² The place may become a destination itself, or serve as a landmark on a path, part of the pedestrian circulation.

Whyte found that linear spaces often comprise a significant proportion of open spaces, and are effective for maximizing visual impact and physical access. As the city becomes increasingly developed with space at a premium, small open spaces linked by pedestrian paths offer opportunities to join the city into a legible whole. While the open spaces may be identified as nodes or landmarks which also allow circulation through, when unified linkage is achieved they give order to the whole.³ Linkage is important to placemaking by providing context and

differentiation to open spaces, and facilitating animation of these places with activity.

If a place is not animated by demand goods such as food vendors and the people they attract, effective linkage which thrusts the space across already travelled routes will expose people to its presence and may encourage them to linger. The experience of travelling along a path is heightened if parts of the city are revealed to people.⁴ The path serves to bring people to or through the place, and the place accents the path, giving it differentiation and imageability (Figure 3.8).

Jacobs stresses the importance of people using open spaces at as many times throughout the day or night as possible to increase safety. One means of doing this is to site the place so that people partaking in a variety of activities will cross through it. For example people on their way to or from work in the morning and early evening, shoppers throughout the day, restaurant patrons, and recreationists in the mornings and evenings, provide a stream of people through the open space during the day and evening.

Placemaking applies to open outdoor spaces as these include parks, plazas, squares, widened streets, all those places which draw people together and serve as a locus for activity. Linkage is both a part of placemaking and an artifact of the process. Open spaces become part of a greater whole when there is linkage, the identity of each individual entity is expanded to include a character beyond the neighbourhood. The pattern of linkage varies. For example it may form a line connecting neighbourhoods across boundaries, or create an edge condition identifying a community. The nodes or small urban open spaces along this continuum should have individual characteristics which identify them. This serves to clearly mark and give interest to the open space, and individuals can orient themselves in relation to it. As a landmark and linkage system it may further identify whether one is 'in' or 'out' of a certain district. Linkage thus serves an important role as placemaking for the space itself, but also for the neighbourhood identity.

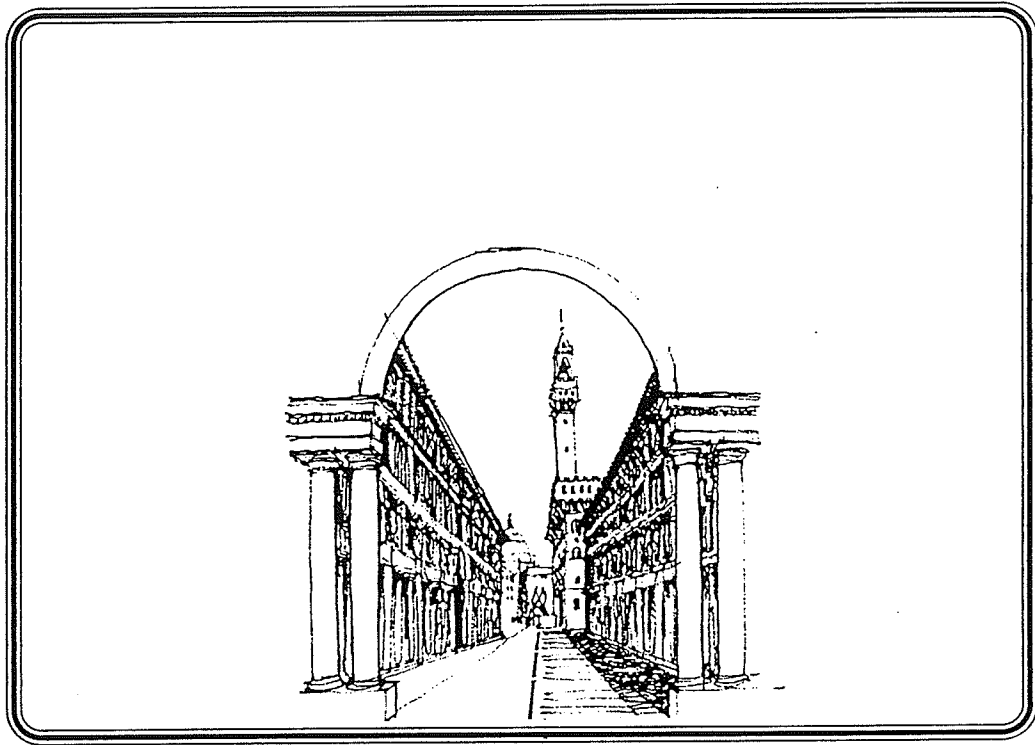


Figure 3.8

STREET LINKAGE TO PAZZA DELLA SIGNORIA⁵

SUMMATION

Linkage is an essential component to placemaking in small urban open spaces if they are to serve as a points of departure and places of action. It enhances safety, through increased circulation through the space, and improves imageability. Linkage may be the primary *raison d'être* for the space, or it enhances spaces which have other attributes.

¹ Roger Trancik, *Finding Lost Space* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1986).

² William H. Whyte, *City* (New York: Doubleday, 1988).

³ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: Joint Center for Urban Studies, The M.I.T. Press, 1988), p.96.

⁴ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: Joint Center for Urban Studies, The M.I.T. Press, 1988).

⁵ Francis D. K. Ching, *Architecture: Form - Space & Order* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1979), p. 334.

SUMMARY

The seven components of placemaking suggested in this study, legibility, diversity, nature, territoriality, safety, comfort and linkage each have their importance as suggested in research and literature. Together they form a comprehensive list of ideas to consider in the design process.

Legible open spaces, the clear physical embodiment of place, facilitate the forming of a mental image, relative orientation and are emotionally reassuring providing comfort through familiarity and comprehension. This image created through the dynamic process of experience using all the senses is used to determine patterns of use and simplifies the complex urban environment. Designers manipulate the structure and identity of the open space, controlling sight lines, enclosure and spatial organization which can contribute to legibility and imageability while facilitating safety, linkage, and comfort.

Diversity is essential for the survival of ecosystems and is also vital on the macroscale of placemaking in small urban open spaces. It refers not only to the physical environment, but the dynamic processes of social interactions and activities in and around the site. Enhancing diversity can also contribute to legibility, comfort and nature components.

Nature is a process consisting of strongly symbolic elements. The integration of these elements such as vegetation enhances people's relationship to nature. In conjunction with an ecological approach and recognition of the interrelated cultural, social and economic systems the urban ecosystem and connection with the countryside are enhanced. Nature elements enhance a site by increasing diversity. They can also improve comfort while creating unique and easily identifiable landmarks.

People have a need to establish a sense of territory, to become attached to a spatial region and on a smaller scale a particular site. Territorial organization reduces conflict, essential in crowded urban conditions, simplifying the sharing of space. Increasing opportunities for territoriality also increases diversity,

improves comfort and safety and enhances a sense of ownership.

Safety is a component relating to linkage and territoriality. Visual and physical linkages allow surveillance into a site, encouraging appropriate behavior. Outdoor public places are important venues for social interaction and this in turn improves safety. Safety is also a factor of circulation patterns and paving materials relating to comfort, linkage, legibility and diversity.

Comfort relates to safety, territoriality, diversity and nature. Through nature, like opportunities for shade and sun, protection from the wind and rain comfort can be enhanced. Diverse choices for activities which accommodate territoriality allow people to be comfortable and encourage them to utilize a space. This improves safety and in turn the reassurance of safety enhances comfort.

Linkage is vital for placemaking, both the aspect of physical access and the visual connection to the surrounding environment. Linkages give context to an open space and while attracting people improves safety. Small urban open spaces should serve as distinct places, but also relate to a larger network of open spaces and pedestrian pathways.

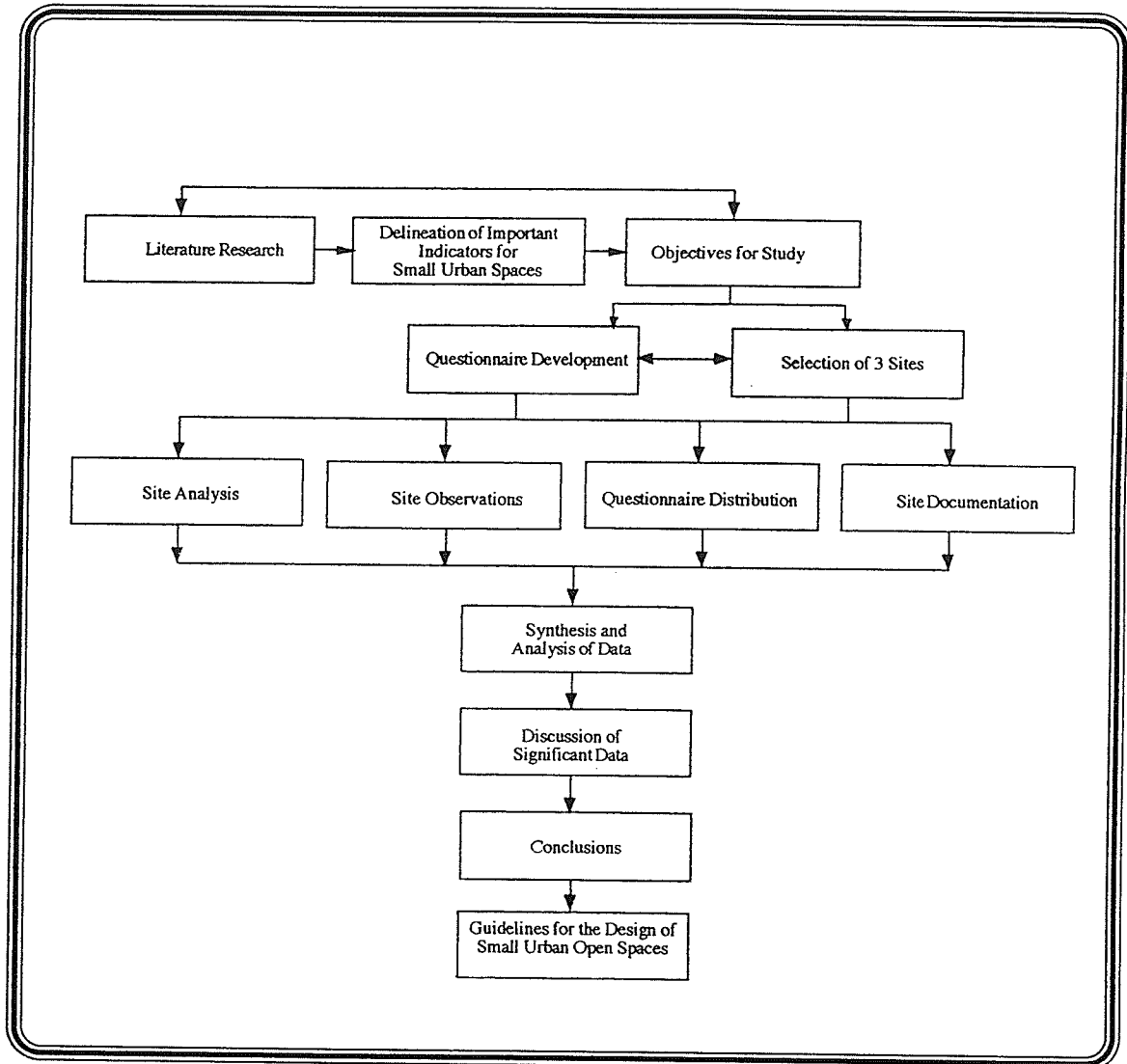
The seven components outlined as essential for placemaking are important both individually and as they interact with each other. If the purpose of small urban open space is to enliven the city and encourage social interaction then the incorporation of these components which compliment each other will achieve this result. This list of components for placemaking represent the first objective of this study. Through the testing of their importance at different sites it is hoped a hierarchy will become evident, leading to the final objective of this study; an integrated approach for design based on research and tested observations.

"Tell me the landscape in which you live, and I will tell you who you are" Ortega y Gasset cited in Ittelson et al., 1974:17, La Gory, Mark. John Pipkin. Urban Social Space. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company. 1981.p. 215.

METHODOLOGY

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PROCESS INTRODUCTION**PROCESS DIAGRAM***Figure 4.1*

This study began a few years ago with an interest in pocket parks. It was generated out of concern for the rapid growth of cities with an accompanying rise in property values and concerns being expressed about an increasingly dysfunctional society. There was little being done to create 'place' in the city; special public open spaces to ameliorate some of these problems. Studying pocket parks and further delving into the literature suggested that one should

not study places based on a taxonomy, but rather focus on those characteristics which are critical to placemaking and transcend form.

The initial selection of principle components integral to placemaking for study were derived from the current body of literature as indicated in the bibliography. (Figure 4.1 Process Diagram). While different authors focused on different aspects of placemaking and used a variety of terms, the seven components represent the distillation of the available information. An annotated bibliography was compiled to serve as a reference for the thesis as it continued. The theoretical components, their definition and importance are delineated in Chapter Three. These seven theoretical components, or indicators as in the diagram; legibility, diversity, nature, territoriality, safety, comfort and linkage served as the basis for further study.

OBJECTIVES

Once the essential components of place were delineated, based on available research and studies, it was evident that they would have greater significance if tested in some way to further explore their importance and interrelationship. The objectives included testing them to discover their relative significance and to determine how people at specific sites measured their success there (Chpt. 2). The culmination of the study would then be to make revisions to the initial list of components based on these tests and examine the various attributes which comprised the components or indicators.

SITE SELECTION

To meet the objectives of testing these components thereby deriving more information about the seven suggested components it was necessary to select study sites. This process was concurrent with developing the questionnaire to ensure integration of the questions relating to the seven components and selection of specific sites which could address these questions.

Three sites in downtown Vancouver were selected for this study (Chpt 5). The city of Vancouver, and the West End in particular where the sites are located, has a dense urban fabric and presents opportunities for studying the mix of residential and commercial environments. Criteria for site selection was reached through discussion with the thesis committee and follow the general scientific concept of comparing similar but different . The community and sites as described in detail later were selected because they met the prescribed criteria; each exemplifying several aspects of the seven components in placemaking, similar in size and design, spanned different socioeconomic groups in the same region, but represented different neighbourhoods. While they were similar there were differences in each site which related back to the seven components and would allow valid comparisons of factors relating to importance and level of achievement at each site. While none of the sites represent a utopia, they are considered generally successful.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

A questionnaire was developed once the seven components of placemaking were delineated. A copy of this questionnaire is included in the Appendix. It was refined concurrently with the site selection process. This allowed a good fit between aspects of placemaking and the conditions existing in each site. The questionnaire was presented in a booklet format with subject headings progressing from general questions, to the site in the neighbourhood, and extending to specific park features and demographic questions.

The majority of questions were designed on a five point scale so that they would represent clear statistical information. Numerous surveys were examined which could provide helpful information about the format and wording of questions.¹ Since the information to be obtained was highly theoretical to the average person the specific components were each represented by simple questions which were intended to relate to an aspect of their character. The questions range from the general to the specific to gather the greatest range of

information both about specific components in comparison with general views and specific attributes of components. There is also overlap between the components addressed in specific questions, for example a question about vegetation may relate to nature and safety. A few open ended questions and a general comments section at the end of the form gave an opportunity for people to provide information that might otherwise be missed.

The questionnaire went through numerous drafts. In addition to changes under the direction of the thesis committee was also pretested by two landscape architects. The new draft in booklet form was then presented to five people at a site. They completed it at the site asking questions and making suggestions for changes as they completed the questionnaire. Further discussion of overall concerns and suggestions followed. This process was interesting and helpful. It became evident that questions with fine nuances of difference were seen as being the same and repetitive. It also served to indicate areas where there was confusion. These responses were gathered and the survey was further refined. More sketches were added to make the booklet user friendly. One criticism that remains is that the length of the survey is too long. This study could indicate which type of questions could be omitted and facilitate reducing the length to a shorter and equally valid list of questions for future study.

There were a total of 80 participants who responded out of the initial distribution of 100 surveys at each of the three sites, approximately 27% return. The surveys were distributed by hand in each site to individuals passing through at random. Although initially it was intended to distribute the survey by mail there was difficulty in compiling a complete address list, and the preponderance of unsolicited mail to residents in this area presented a concern that the return rate would be too low. The questionnaire was presented in a booklet format and the respondent was requested to complete the survey and seal the booklet returning it by post using the self-addressed stamped page.

ANALYSIS

QUESTIONNAIRE

The resultant survey data were compiled into a spreadsheet format using the software StatView. The data was initially compiled for each site separately. Missing responses for attributes, excluding the demographic information, were replaced with the mean of all the responses if there were no more than 50% of data missing. In this way the veracity of information for each individual site was maintained. Only five attributes from Part III, #8 for "Achieved" did not have adequate data and were omitted from the analysis; playing with children, attending special events, taking pet out, tending plants, and eating. All the data were then compiled into one spreadsheet and four types of statistical analysis performed: frequency distributions, analysis of variance, Pearson correlations, and T-tests. This process generated a considerable amount of information and therefore not all is addressed in this study or included in the appendices. The frequency distributions are presented in Appendix B in the format of the questionnaire.

The process of examining the data and the basis for the discussion which follows was to examine the responses from the sample of respondents, compare between the parks, and examine correlations among items which made the parks most successful.

SITE OBSERVATIONS

In addition to the questionnaire there were general site observations made and a site inventory catalogued (Appendix A). Numerous slides taken during these visits provided visual information for later reference and are presented throughout the thesis. During visits to the site some people took the opportunity to discuss both their particular concerns and delights or knowledge about particular features and all this information gave a richness to the information compiled which could not otherwise have been collected. The

planning, engineering, and parks departments also supplied maps, reports and site plans.

¹ Robert Buchan, Larry Simmons. *Downtown Plaza Study*, City of Vancouver, 1985.

Larry Diamond and Planning Department. *Plaza Design Guidelines - Draft*. City of Vancouver, 1991.

Larry Simmons. *Downtown Plaza Inventory*. City of Vancouver, 1985.

Sue Weidemann. Personal Communications Relating To Surveys. Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois.

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates. *Mill Race Park User Survey*. June 1989.

Roine Thomsen, *Clark Park*. University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, March 1992.

SITE ANALYSIS

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THE WEST END CONTEXT

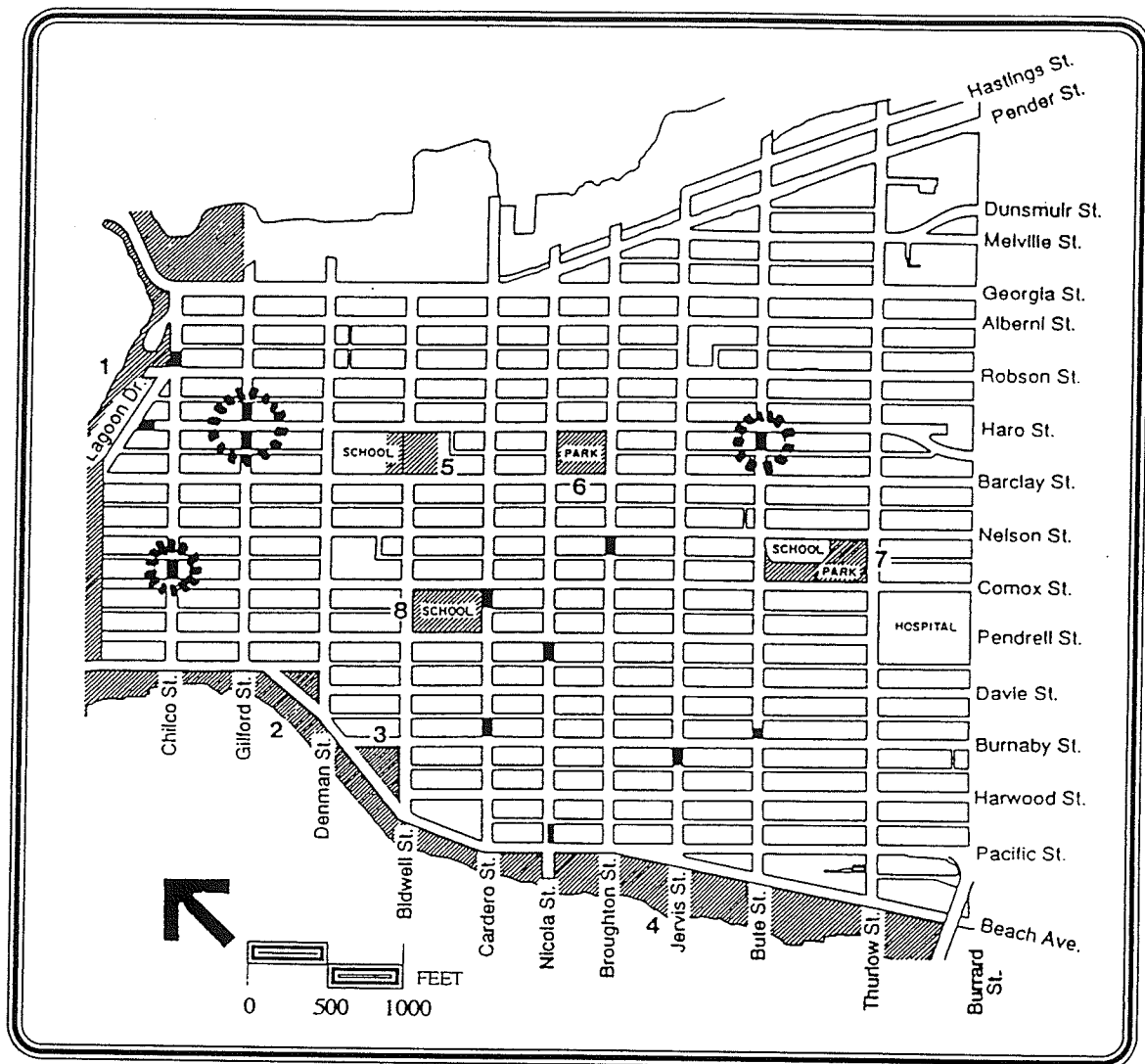
The West End in Vancouver is a unique compilation of dense urban fabric comprised primarily of highrises mixed with commercial activities (Figure 5.1). Located on a peninsula between Coal Harbour and English Bay its 480 acres is sandwiched between 1000 acre Stanley Park and the downtown core.¹ The Parks and Open Space map² (Figure 5.2) indicates the location of Stanley Park to the North, and Sunset Beach to the South-east, which comprise beautiful open spaces rich in scenic views and recreational amenities. The supplementary amenities of schools, community centres, parks and mini-parks are interspersed throughout the West-End.

Initially established in the 1890s with a roadway to Robson and Denman and the construction of large elegant homes it has undergone a slow transformation with the conversion of homes to suites beginning around 1910, three storey walk-



Figure 5.1

DENMAN & BUTE - WEST END, VANCOUVER



WEST-END PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

1. STANLEY PARK
2. ENGLISH BAY BEACH
3. ALEXANDRA PARK
4. SUNSET BEACH
5. KING GEORGE SCHOOL/COMMUNITY CENTRE
6. BARCLAY HERITAGE SQUARE
7. NELSON PARK
8. LORD ROBERTS SCHOOL

■ MINI-PARKS

★ STUDY SITE

Figure 5.2

up apartments constructed in the 1940s and the high-rise boom in the late 1950s to 1970s. Some of streets display the four types of development and this feature adds an important historical character. More recently is the conversion of apartments to condominiums and with the increasing congestion the establishment of Mini-parks, traffic circles, and the West End Community Centre.³

The contemporary character of the West End is influenced by the residential proximity to numerous amenities and commercial activities. Interspersed throughout the area are residential hotels, corner stores, churches, and two firehalls. Three commercial strips extend along Davie, Denman and Robson streets. Davie Street has concentrated commercial development near Denman and to the east between Jervis and Burrard. Denman has maintained a more historical character of older low rise retail/residential developments. In addition, there is a mall and the combined Secondary School and Community Centre. Robson Street, closer to the commercial downtown centre, has numerous restaurants to the west extending to hotels further east, mixed with commercial establishments. This trendy area serves the local community and the tourists which find the area very walkable.

One objective of the 1982 Park Board Master Plan is to have a neighbourhood park within 800 metres of each West End resident. Sunset Beach and Stanley Park are the two most prominent public open spaces and the boundary they form along the North and West sides of the West End delineate the area while their paths, open lawns and beaches encourage pedestrian circulation (Figure 5.3). Mini-parks were introduced as a result of community initiatives to limit vehicular traffic. The three sites selected for this study are within this network of open spaces, and are located to the West on Chilco and Gilford streets, and Bute Street to the East.

In the middle of the continuum from small to large spaces are Alexander, Nelson and Barklay parks. Alexander Park near English Bay is a pastoral park featuring a bandstand surrounded by an expanse of lawn with large towering

*Figure 5.3*

ENGLISH BAY LOOKING NORTH

trees forming a canopy for a roof in the style of the 19th century . Barclay Heritage Square has won design awards for the restored 1900s houses bordering a herb garden, rectangular formal terrace, and the lower informal expanse of garden beds and lawn. Nelson Park with an elementary school is an open expanse of lawn with gentle contours and trees along the paths which transverse the site. The restored heritage houses across the street to the south-west are in marked contrast to the towering apartment buildings to the north-east. The linear parks and open spaces throughout the West End do not appear to form any particular pattern. These larger parks compliment the small mini-parks which are scattered throughout the west-end forming part of the continuum from very small open spaces to large expanses such as Stanley Park.

¹ Planning Department. West End Information Report. City of Vancouver: September, 1985. p.3.

² Planning Department. West End Residential Areas Policy Plan. Report 3: Strategies. City of Vancouver, December 1987. p.24

³ Planning Department. West End Information Report. City of Vancouver: September, 1985. p.5.

BUTE/HARO MINI-PARK

CONTEXT

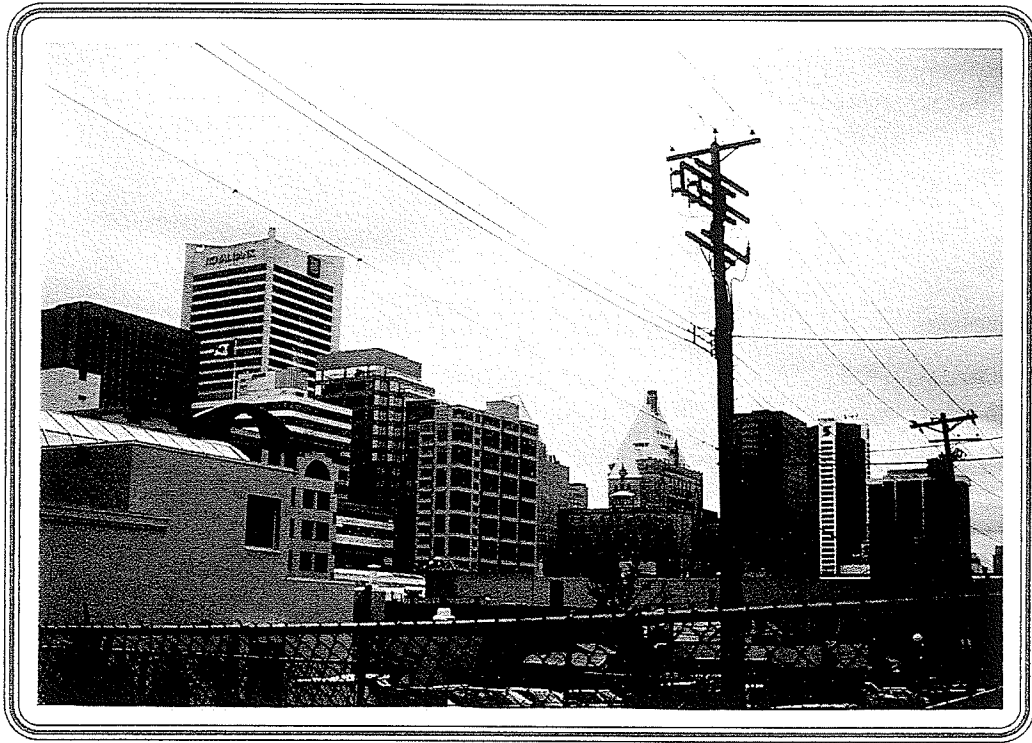
Bute/Haro mini-park as it is known to the city staff is closest to the urban core of Vancouver of the three sites under study. It occupies the half block along Bute between Haro street and the lane before Barclay street. Generally the flow of people is in a north-south direction along Bute street. People approach from Robson street, a busy commercial hub, walking south-west up the hill, past the ice cream shop and Bread Garden restaurant, eyes following the bright banners



Figure 5.4

BUTE ST. SOUTH TOWARDS MINI-PARK

and boulevard trees (Figure 5.4). An older three storey house backs onto the lane revealing its losing battle with time, and the view through the lane back to the city centre to the north-east provides glimpses of the copper topped roof of the Hotel Vancouver and numerous high rise offices (Figure 5.5). Across the street adjacent the park is the seniors centre, a 200 bed facility. There is a regular flow of traffic along Haro and from Bute, but the pace is slow enough and broken up

*Figure 5.5*

BUTE ST. TOWARDS DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER

sufficiently to make crossing easy. Looking down Haro in either direction the boulevards are lined with cherry trees which present a stunning display in the spring. The grade levels as one crosses Haro street and enters the site.

Approaching from the other direction one walks through a residential area of medium and high rise buildings with mature trees lining the streets along a fairly level grade into the site. When the survey was distributed in the summer of 1992 there was a construction site bounded by a tall solid plywood barrier decorated with graffiti in the south-east corner adjacent the site. This summer a year later construction is well underway for a high-rise. There is wheelchair access in both directions and there are no changes in grade across the site.

Haro street slopes away gently to the east towards the city and busy Burrard street, a main connector, and to the west towards Denman street and

onto Stanley Park. This eastern portion of the West End is known for lively parties and is generally considered lower income, though there is a mix of newer and older buildings. A traffic engineering report for September 1992 taken on Haro just east of Bute noted that during a 24 hour period 2300 vehicles travelled east and 890 vehicles travelled west. More than half of this traffic was between seven am and six pm.

Bute/Haro is bounded by four storey apartment buildings with a leafy canopy from mature tulip trees in the site (Figure 5.6). It interrupts the vehicular traffic and forms a transition between a dense residential apartment area and a dense urban commercial area. The buildings to the east are older apartment buildings somewhat dilapidated, with students and professionals coming and going periodically (Figure 5.7). In contrast the apartment building opposite is much newer and an older lady watches me warily from her living room as I take pictures of the park. All the buildings face into the site and have expansive windows to view activities in the park. The plan view (Figure 5.8) clearly depicts the strong linear nature of the park, reinforced both in the buildings and the raised planting beds. The interlocking paving and the curbs serve to identify the boundaries on the ground plane, in addition to signs, lamp standards the the planting beds.

VEGETATION

The plantings consist of massings of shrubs and some ground covers such as ivy, with a few perennials such as ferns, in addition to the large leafy trees spaced evenly across the site. Many of the shrubs are evergreen with glossy leaves, such as the masses of *Viburnum davidii*, and *Rhododendrons*, but there are also some *Pinus mugo* (Figure 5.9). Even with the water shortage during the summer of 1992 the strong massings made a distinct green space. The raised planters sharply define the beds. There is no grass or open ground cover area for reclining. This spring the white flowering evergreen shrubs near the north benches brightened the nook and lent the air a wonderful light scent. A maple tree behind adds fall colour enhancing diversity in texture and colour (Figure 5.10). No one seems to use the planter ledges for sitting, but they do serve as



Figure 5.6

BUTE SITE LOOKING SOUTH



Figure 5.7

BUTE SITE LOOKING NORTH

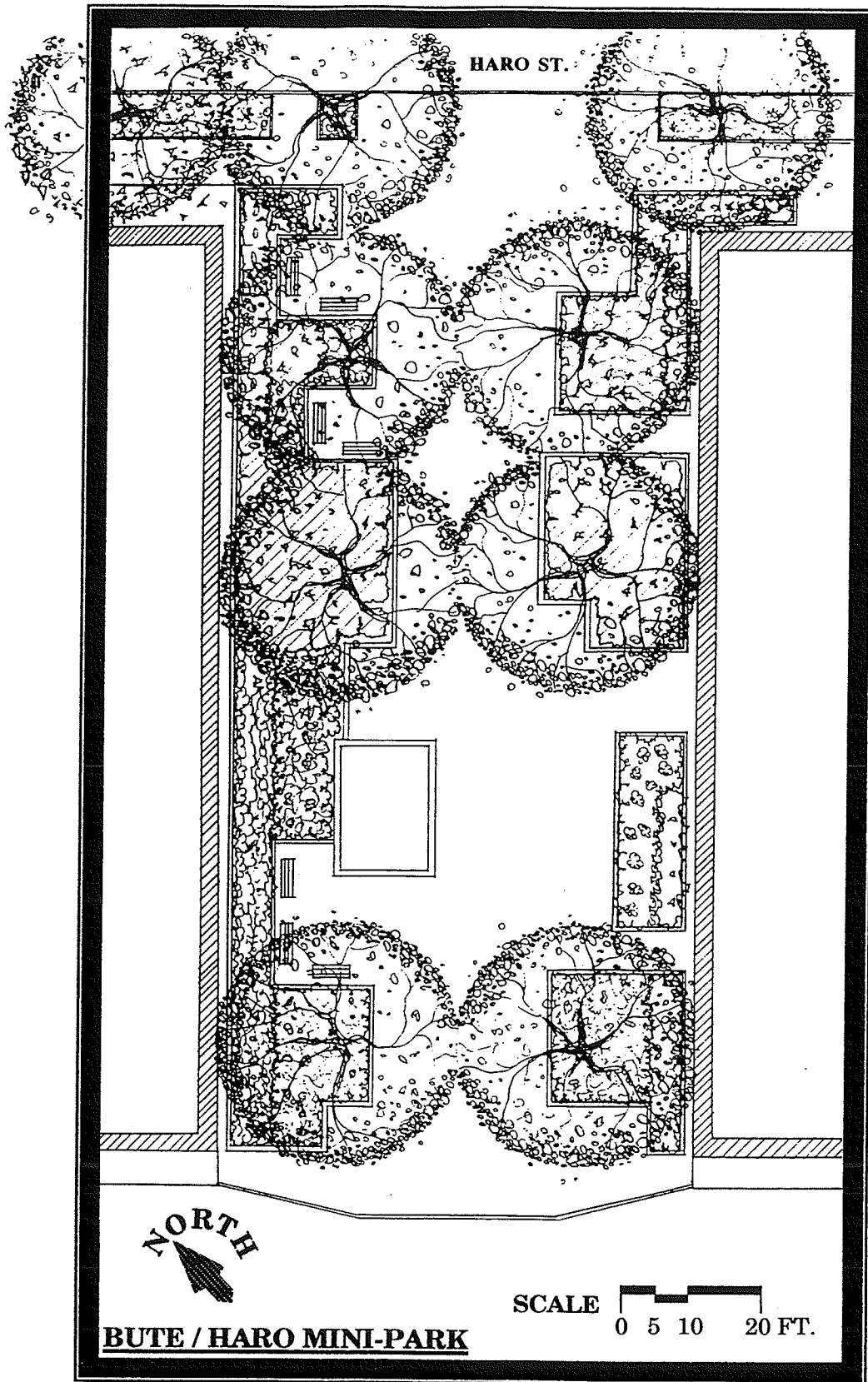


Figure 5.8



Figure 5.9

SOUTH-WEST CORNER



Figure 5.10

NORTH-WEST NOOK

display tables for some of the street merchants. The light filters through the site, though the tall trees and buildings make it a relatively shady place. In the mornings in the summer there is full sun at the north entrance and on one of the benches.

FURNISHINGS

The seven benches placed in various groupings or singly accommodate people during the lunch hour and transients catching some sleep day and night. The benches all designed with armrests and backs out of metal and wood are relatively comfortable and soften the severe concrete walls. Their placement suggests people gathering and some empty wine bottles as well as numerous cigarette butts littering the ground indicate these nooks are well utilized. Though there are garbage receptacles both at the site, and at the nearby shops there seems to constantly be litter strewn across the site which gives it a dirty appearance not belied by the dark stained concrete planters.



Figure 5.11

NORTH-EAST CORNER

The lights are high and well placed to enhance safety at night. There is also a water fountain and information kiosk near the Haro end (Figure 5.11). A bicycle rack at that entrance also accommodates cyclists who periodically pass through. At times posters are also placed on the benches and signs around the site to make them distinct from the usually crowded and often outdated notices on the kiosk.

This is the only site with an interesting water feature, the rough cut granite blocks add an interesting sculptural element (Figure 5.12). However there has not been any water there for the past two summers, and often it serves more to collect refuse than project an artistic spirit animating the site with sound. What could be a strong attribute is thereby turned into a detractor, lending to the sense of poor maintenance and lack of attention.

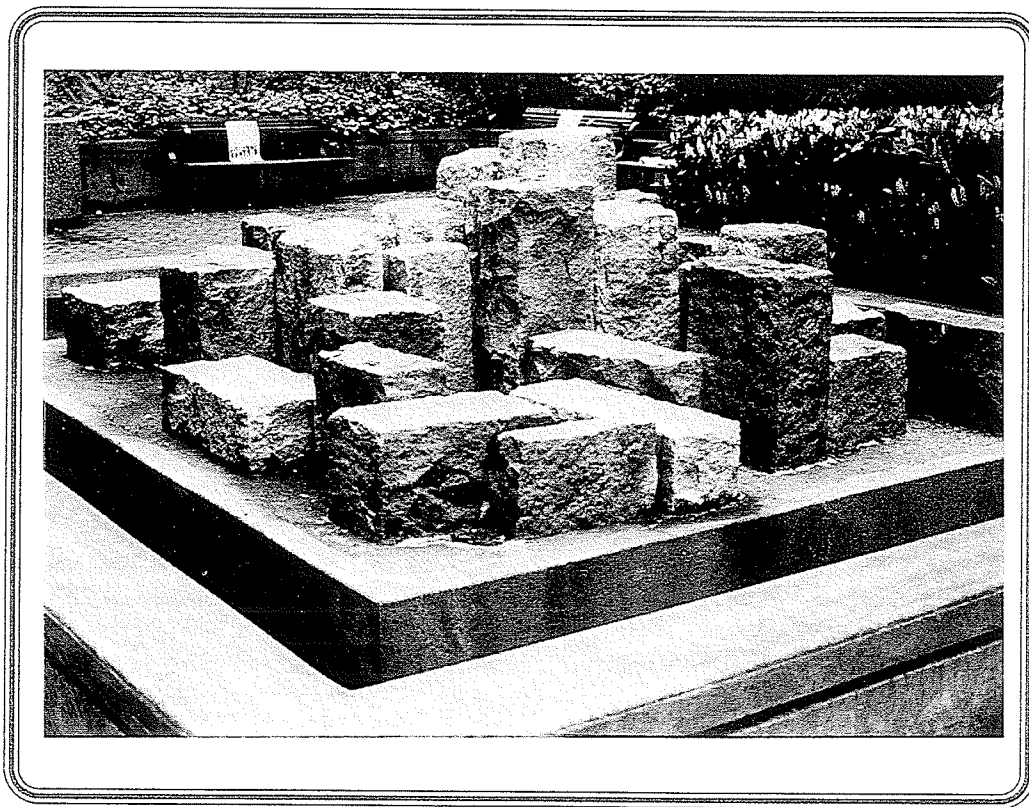


Figure 5.12

GRANITE WATER FEATURE

BUTE/HARO MINI-PARK USE

There is a steady progression of people through the site during the day (Figure 5.13). In June 1992 over a ten minute period during a late weekday morning sixty-one people walked through the site, and one bicyclist rode through. Two ladies sat together, one person used the water fountain, three punkers gathered on a bench, and a car drove in, unpacked some bags and left. During this time only one of the people was a child. When I was distributing the surveys in the site several people declined on the basis that they were tourists, so there is a mix of residents and visitors using the site as a connecting route. There is the impression of a diverse range of people from university students, working professionals, retired seniors to unemployed youth and street people. The city crew also comes through during the day to conduct routine maintenance.

*Figure 5.13*

CONSTANT ACTIVITY

SUMMARY

Bute/Haro is a small half block open space delineated by four storey apartment buildings looking into the site from two sides. It opens out onto a street and lane at either end. The tall mature trees and massings of shrubs make a distinct green node linked to boulevard trees in all directions. This shady site



Figure 5.14

SHADY NODE ON WELL TRAVELLED ROUTE

is busy with all kinds of people passing through, though few people linger despite the availability of benches and nearby restaurants and coffee shops with take out food (Figure 5.14). The inoperational water feature, litter strewn across the interlocking pavers, and raised concrete planters give it a hard urban appearance.

GILFORD MINI-PARK

CONTEXT

Gilford mini-park is west of Denman in what is considered a more upscale neighbourhood than east of Denman. The site is comprised of two components divided by Haro street, each a half block long. The site to the south has a richer character, while to the north it is primarily sloping grass canopied by cherry trees. People approach the site from all directions; north uphill along Gilford from Stanley park with the bus route along Georgia, east along Haro from

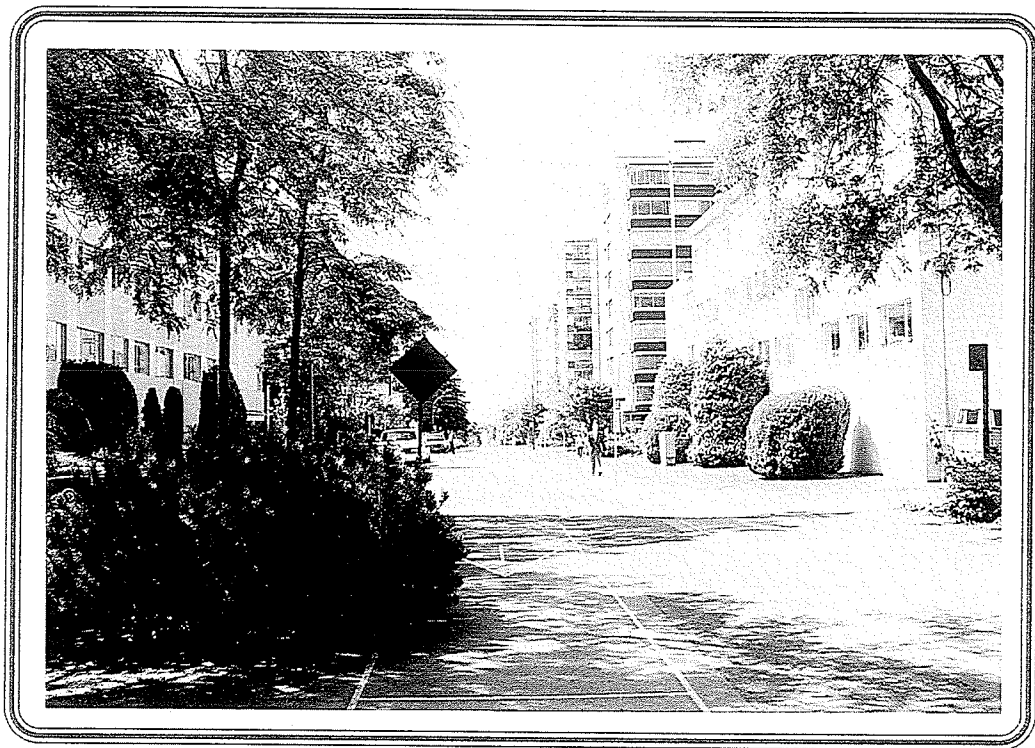


Figure 5.15

GILFORD LOOKING SOUTH TO ENGLISH BAY

Denman where there are restaurants, shops, a community centre and school, west from Stanley Park, or from the south where English Bay beach meets the shore. When leaving through the southern most edge of the park one just catches a glimpse of English Bay as the road gently slopes downward (Figure 5.15). Whether on Gilford or Haro one passes through streets lined with trees and bordered by apartment buildings.

Haro street which divides the park into two distinct components has relatively light traffic. The parking on both sides, in addition to the mature trees which line and arch over the road, serve to give a sense of a narrower passage and slow traffic. People frequently cross the road at any point along the street unhindered by vehicular traffic. The interlocking paving and lowered curbs denote entrance and accommodate wheelchairs. While Haro physically divides

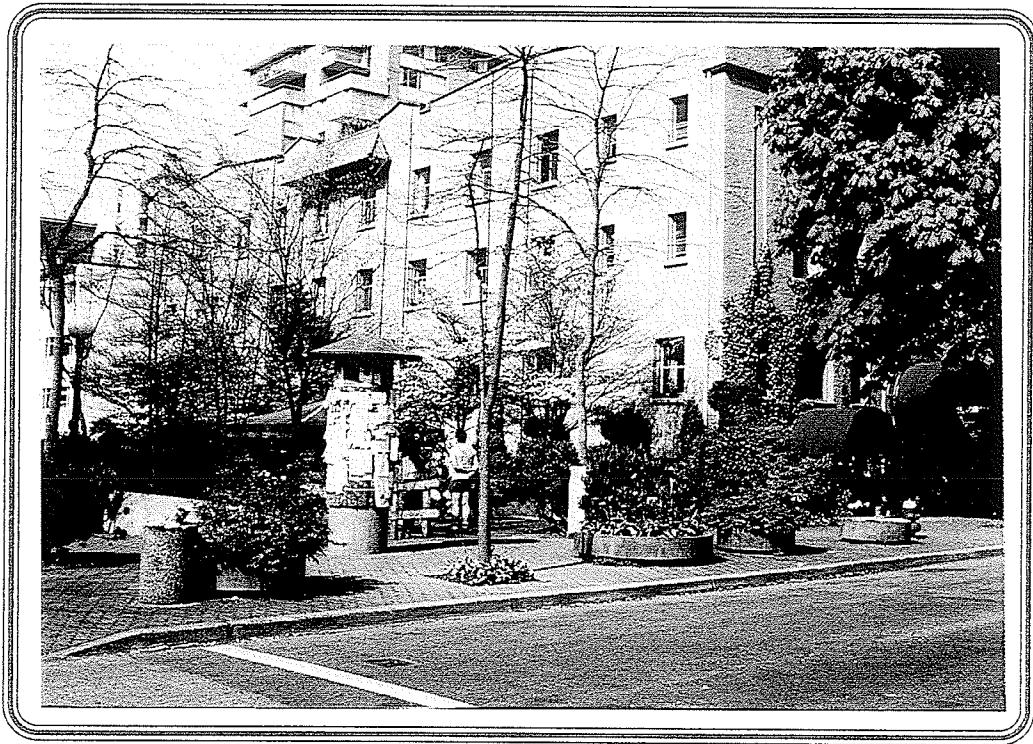


Figure 5.16

HARO STREET FACING THE BUCHAN HOTEL

the site in two this is not the reason for the sense of discontinuity between the halves. There is little sense of physical continuity, no strong visual connection and such a strong contrast between the sites that other than the fact that they are both open spaces there is little relationship between them. The plan view illustrates the distinct nature of the two constituent parts (Figure 5.16 & 5.17).

The site is nestled into an area of older and newer apartment buildings of various heights and vintages, though all well maintained. Similar to Bute there

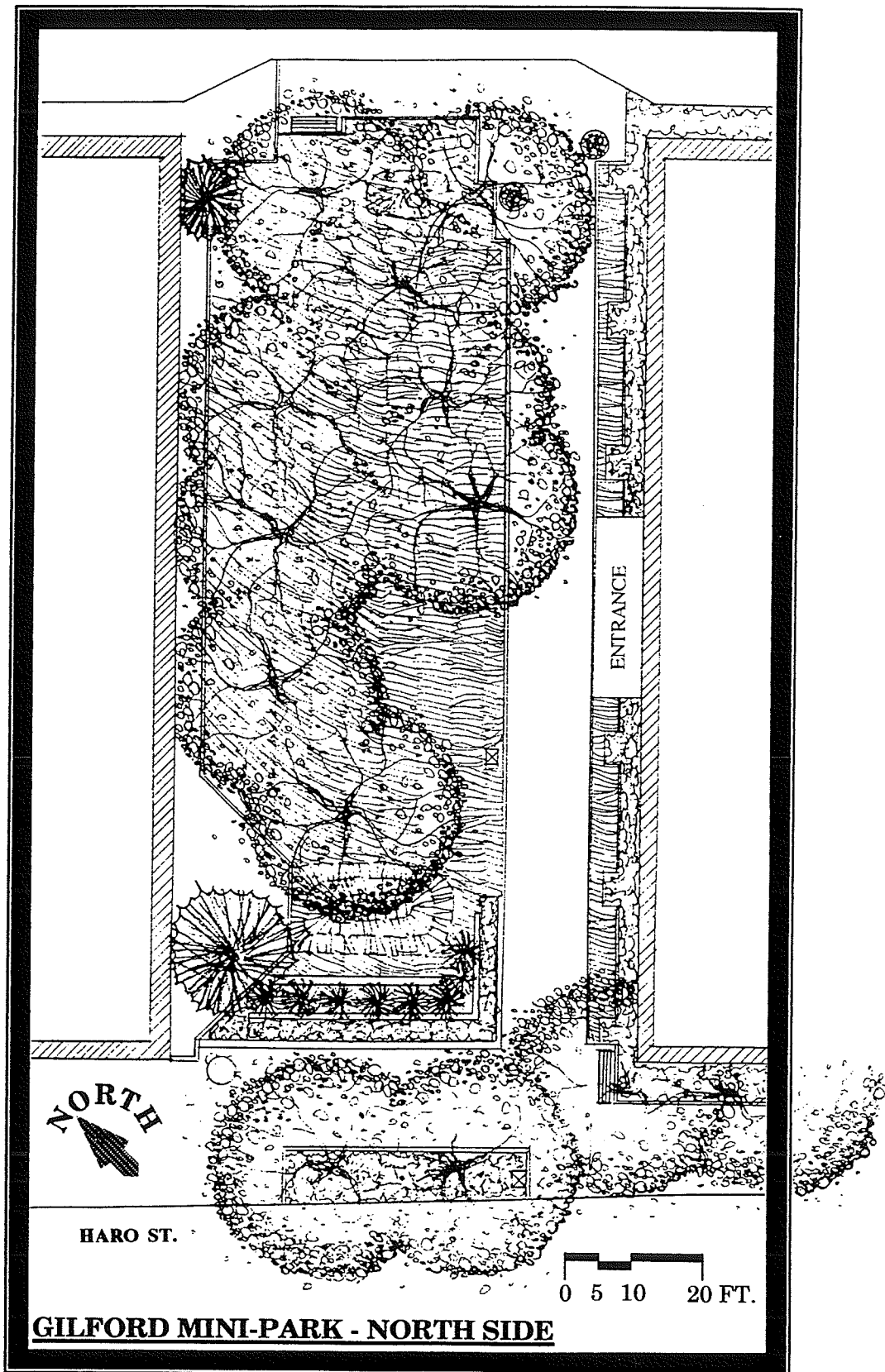


Figure 5.17

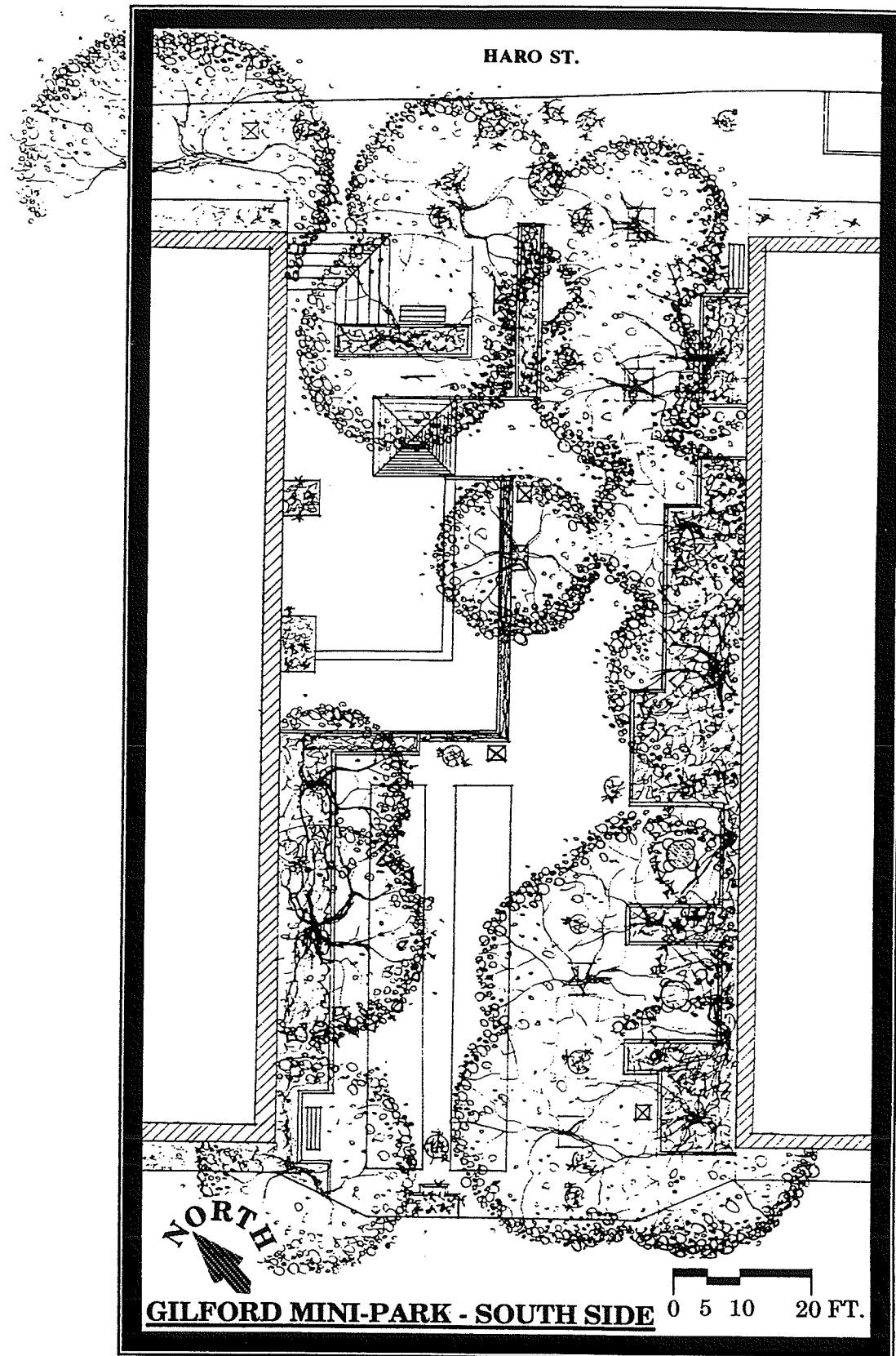


Figure 5.18

are low rise apartment buildings forming the boundaries to the east and west along both components of the site, all looking into the site, though there are some significant differences between Bute and Gilford. With the exception of the building on the north-east corner of Gilford, the fronts of the buildings and therefore all the entrances, face out onto Gilford street. The building across the street, which forms the north-west boundary, while it appears initially to be an apartment building, is actually an hotel.

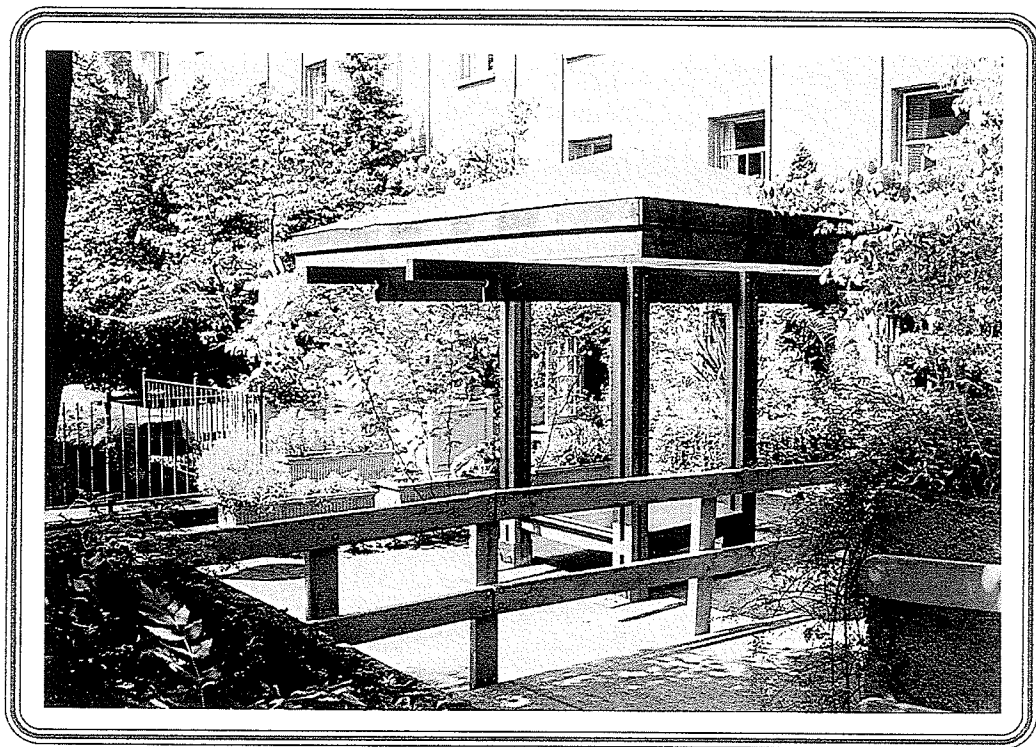


Figure 5.19

DELILAH'S OUTSIDE SEATING ADJACENT HOTEL

Established for over twenty years, the Buchan Hotel used to house many residential guests who also dined in the main floor restaurant (Figure 5.19). Now it is a lower cost hotel which hosts many tourist and school groups, and the restaurant caters to the upscale crowd with prices beyond what many seniors on a fixed income can afford. The hotel has a comfortable homey environment and the manager is friendly with many of the park regulars. Restaurant staff and patrons animate the park with the courtyard set up to serve several small tables

in the evenings. The courtyard merges with the park, set off by its proximity to the hotel, a yew hedge on two sides and a ramp and stairs leading down into the slightly lower level. The restaurant and hotel entrances are distinct with their individual canopies off of Haro street. On more than one sunny afternoon I noticed the staff sitting outside enjoying their coffee and sharing a relaxed camaraderie. However, discussions with several park patrons who lived in the vicinity revealed that the restaurant staff are very boisterous when they leave for home about 2:00 am. The restaurant was initially to be open only until 11:00 pm, not 12:00 as it is now. In addition there is a sense that the restaurant is no longer for many of the seniors who live in the area.

NORTH SIDE

To the north the planting consists of shrub beds adjacent each building predominated by a large lawn with rolling berms and a canopy of cherry trees (Figure 5.20). The trees on either side of the interlocking walk in conjunction with the period lamp standard and two round planters serve to mark the entrance. A bench on the sidewalk along the park end looks back down the street towards Georgia and beyond to the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club and the mountains behind. Unfortunately the cherry trees look attractive only for a short time while in spring bloom, and are so diseased and ravaged the remainder of the year that they detract from the site. (The cherry trees throughout the city of Vancouver are so diseased and prone to problems that the city is going to begin replacing them with other species.) Adjacent Haro the grass is open and serves as a place to stretch out and enjoy the sun's warmth. Planting beds adjacent the apartment buildings have some large evergreens and flowering deciduous shrubs which form an edge defining the site and softening the buildings face. The numerous windows looking into the site enhance safety and add to the complexity of the site (Figure 5.21).

SOUTH SIDE VEGETATION

In contrast there is much more diversity and interest in the southern half of the site between Haro and the lane. Looking across Haro from the north side one sees planters of different sizes, delicate locust trees with plantings at the



Figure 5.20

GILFORD - NORTH SIDE LOOKING SOUTH



Figure 5.21

GILFORD - NORTH SIDE LOOKING NORTH

base, ivy winding it's way up the building' edge, dogwoods in full bloom and an immense chestnut tree in the foreground dominating the hotel front and road (Figure 5.22). It is the restaurant and hotel which maintain many of the colourful plantings in the park in front and adjacent the hotel. The plantings throughout are widely coloured and feature a broad range of diversity in size, texture, colour and species. In addition to the Cornus trees near the hotel there are colourful shrubs such as the purple Ceanothus and annuals and perennials including herbs such as Santolina and Ocimum basilicum, ferns, the ground cover Epimedium, Calendula and Tulipa. The twelve planters of varying size scattered around the south side enhance the richness of the site and interrupt the strong linear design. The cream coloured apartment building to the east maintains its small plot of grass and a colourful border of flowers in addition to some planters. Opposite the hotel contributes substantially to the planters and garden beds adjacent (Figure 5.23). The interest of the restaurant staff in cultivating unique and colourful plants is reflected in the interesting diverse plantings. Throughout this south side of the Gilford site the planters compliment and add interest to the shrub beds bordering the site. The only raised planters are the concrete ones comprising the sides to the ramp leading into the restaurant alcove.

SOUTH SIDE FURNISHINGS

The furnishings provided by the city leave a lot to be desired (Figure 5.24). The round concrete and wood stools have no backs or armrests and are far from portable. Similarly the round wood table top on a concrete pedestal does nothing for ambience. Located in the alcoves to the east where it is generally shady I was the only one who appeared to use them on my visits. The clunky benches near the Haro entrance and the shuffleboard, across Haro street and near the lane to the north are solid, but hardly inviting. Of the five benches scattered throughout the site and the five table/stool combinations only three benches seemed to be regularly occupied. While they have backs, there are no armrests, though this doesn't discourage some of the street people who periodically rest here.

The other types of furnishings on the site south of Haro are two ash-



Figure 5.22

BUCHANAN HOTEL & RESTAURANT ENTRANCES

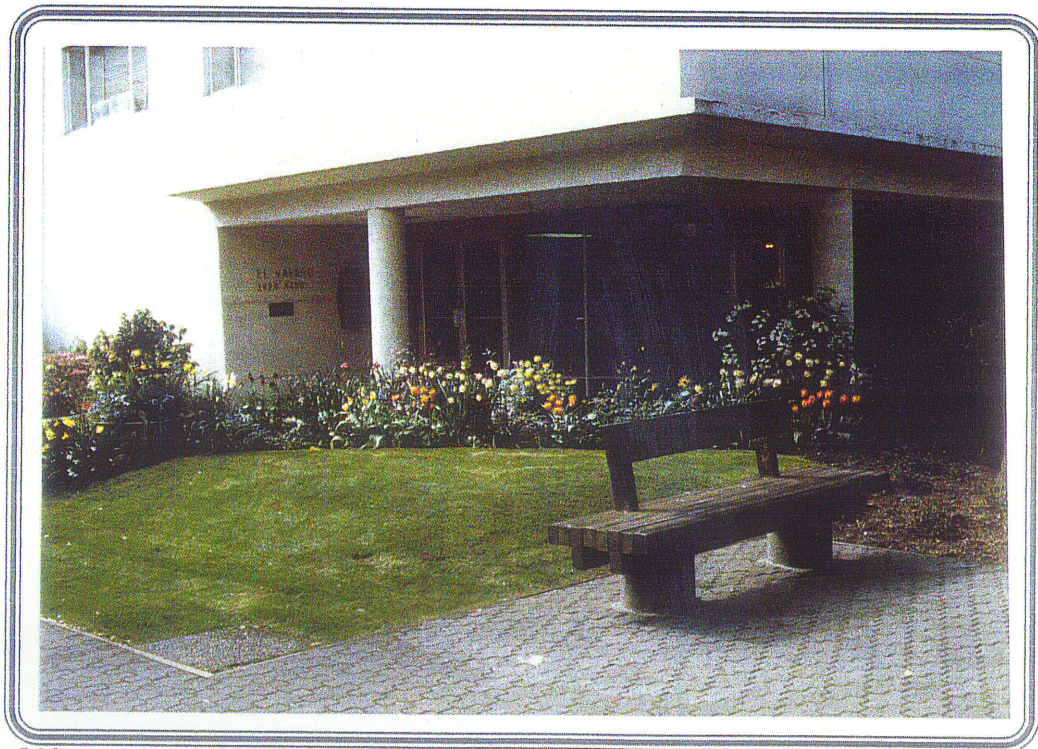


Figure 5.23

NORTH-EAST CORNER ADJACENT HARO

trays and a fire hydrant. Three newspaper boxes for the Globe, Sun and Province papers and a mailbox curbside on Haro are demand goods which encourages people to stroll into the site. The three period light standards spaced across the site enhance safety and add to the general ambience. The globe lights are simple but effective.

SOUTH SIDE GROUND PLANE



Figure 5.24

SOUTH SIDE GILFORD NOOK

The interlocking pavement is found throughout the site and serves to mark the presence of the site on the ground plane as one approaches along the sidewalk or crosses the street (Figure 5.25). The pattern is the same throughout the site with no variation, except where there is smooth concrete for the shuffleboard design and stairs near the hotel (Figure 5.26). No one ever played shuffleboard while I was there and in discussion none of the regulars knew of anyone playing shuffleboard or anything else on them. The lowered curbs for wheelchair access

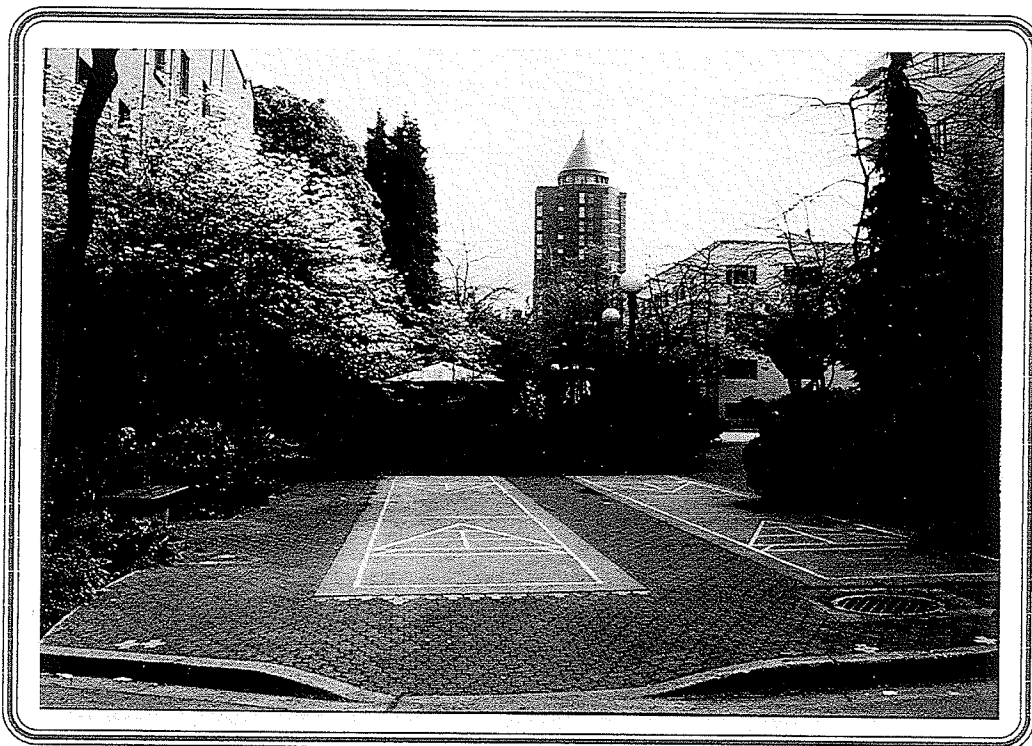


Figure 5.25

SOUTH EDGE OF SITE FACING NORTH

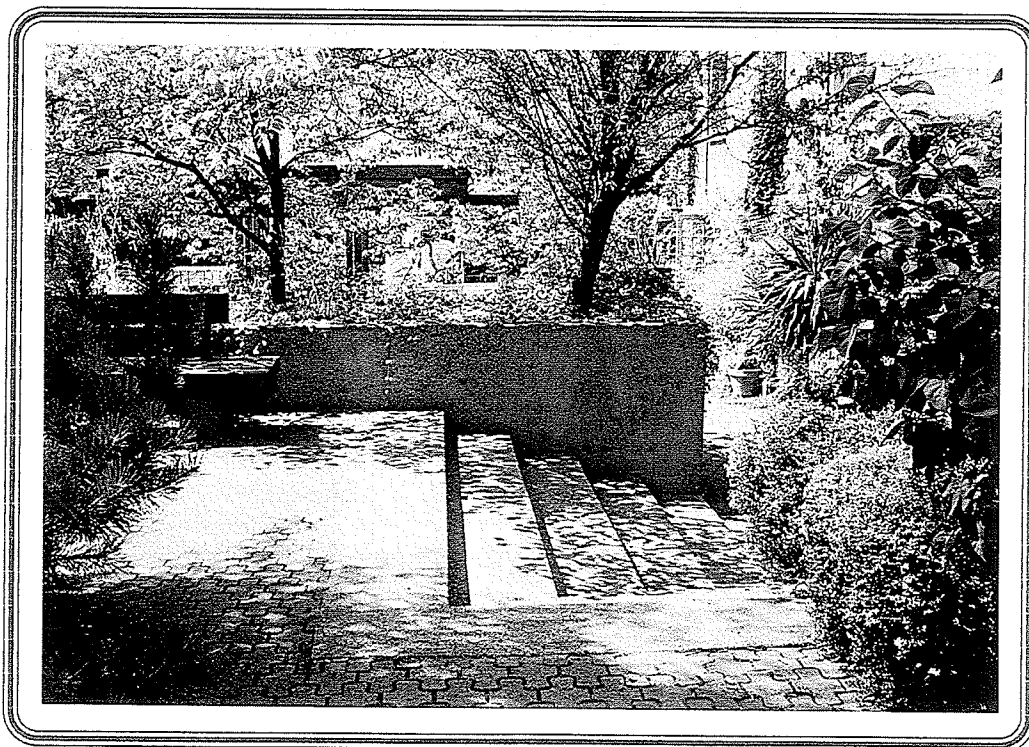


Figure 5.26

ELEVATION TRANSITION ADJACENT HOTEL

were at specific points at the entrances rather than across the site as a whole. This related to the crosswalk marked across Haro, but would also influence bicycle traffic.

GILFORD MINI-PARK USE

In late June at noon over a ten minute period I observed one street person asleep on a bench, two bicyclists passed through, and twenty people walked through. This is a third of the traffic that Bute experiences, and is consistent with the general impression that there is a steady flow of people into and through the site, but it is generally quiet and peaceful. There are several regulars who congregate or sit quietly watching people on the benches on either side of Haro. Though there is a very simple gazebo near the hotel it is just an open structure and no one appears to use it, rather it detracts by seeming so out of place.

SUMMARY

Gilford mini-park comprised of two very different half block components divided by Haro street has strong boundaries as established by the adjacent buildings. The character of the site is strongly influenced by the nature of these buildings. The simple chunky chairs, tables and benches are distributed throughout the site providing some choices for seating type and location. There are opportunities to enjoy a variety of shade and sun. The gazebo and shuffleboards seem out of place and as such detract from the overall character of the place. As with the other sites in this study the design is of a linear nature open on the ends. There is good visibility in and around the site. The trees extending into and along the sides of the site soften the building exteriors and serve to mediate between the height of the buildings and the human scale, as well as adding diversity in colour, texture and light.

CHILCO/COMOX MINI-PARK

CONTEXT

This is the quietest and most eastern study site only a few blocks from Stanley Park and English Bay. The neighbourhood has a few larger period houses and medium to high rise buildings. People generally approach along Chilco street from the south and north. To the south is the linear park and sea wall walk along English Bay flanked by high rises on the north side of Beach Avenue and lined with large mature trees on both sides. The open green space and bandshell of Alexandra Park and a small park across from English Bay Beach have a strong visual link to English Bay. Towards the east along Denman there are some commercial spaces such as shops and restaurants (Figure 5.27).



Figure 5.27

DENMAN SOUTH

The parks board offices and tennis courts are just west of the site in Stanley Park off of Beach Avenue and linked with footpaths off Comox. To the north is Stanley Park and other mini-parks. Established in approximately 1974 as determined by site drawings, it is the same vintage as the Gilford/Haro site, and seven years

older than Bute/Haro. The plan view depicts the same linear design and half block size as Bute/Haro, but it contrasts markedly with the softer landscape and quieter character (Figure 5.28).

As in Bute and Gilford the east/west boundaries are established by buildings. To the west is a white contemporary nine storey apartment building designed by leading Canadian architect Arthur Erickson. Bands of windows look into the park and the front door entrance is in the south west corner of the park, facilitating visual and physical linkage (Figure 5.29). To the east is an older three storey apartment building and duplex. Both have windows and main entrances into the site. The duplex is a period house which contributes to the historical character of the West end and this site in particular, but there is no attempt by the owners to enhance the landscaping and there is an unclear relationship between the private and public space (Figure 5.30). The apartment buildings both have the park landscaping extending up to their walls with shrubs and ground level planting beds.

Progressing through the site from north to south there is a general slope towards the waterfront and the water becomes visible as one approaches Comox street. The apartment buildings on either side of the road frames this view, enhanced by the small flowering trees and further punctuated by the large mature boulevard trees along Beach Avenue (Figure 5.31). In the other direction looking north the plain three storey apartment building on the west has a lawn and a few shrubs which make no visual connection to the green oasis of the park (Figure 5.32). Across the street the newer apartment building has an enhanced boulevard with extensive plantings which extend the character of the park into the streetscape. Tall weeping tree forms another block north on the east add visual interest and character to the street. Both the apartment and boulevard landscaping enhance the imageability of the approach to the park, and heighten the sense of expectation.

VEGETATION

As seen in the plan view this site has extensive shrub beds and is the only

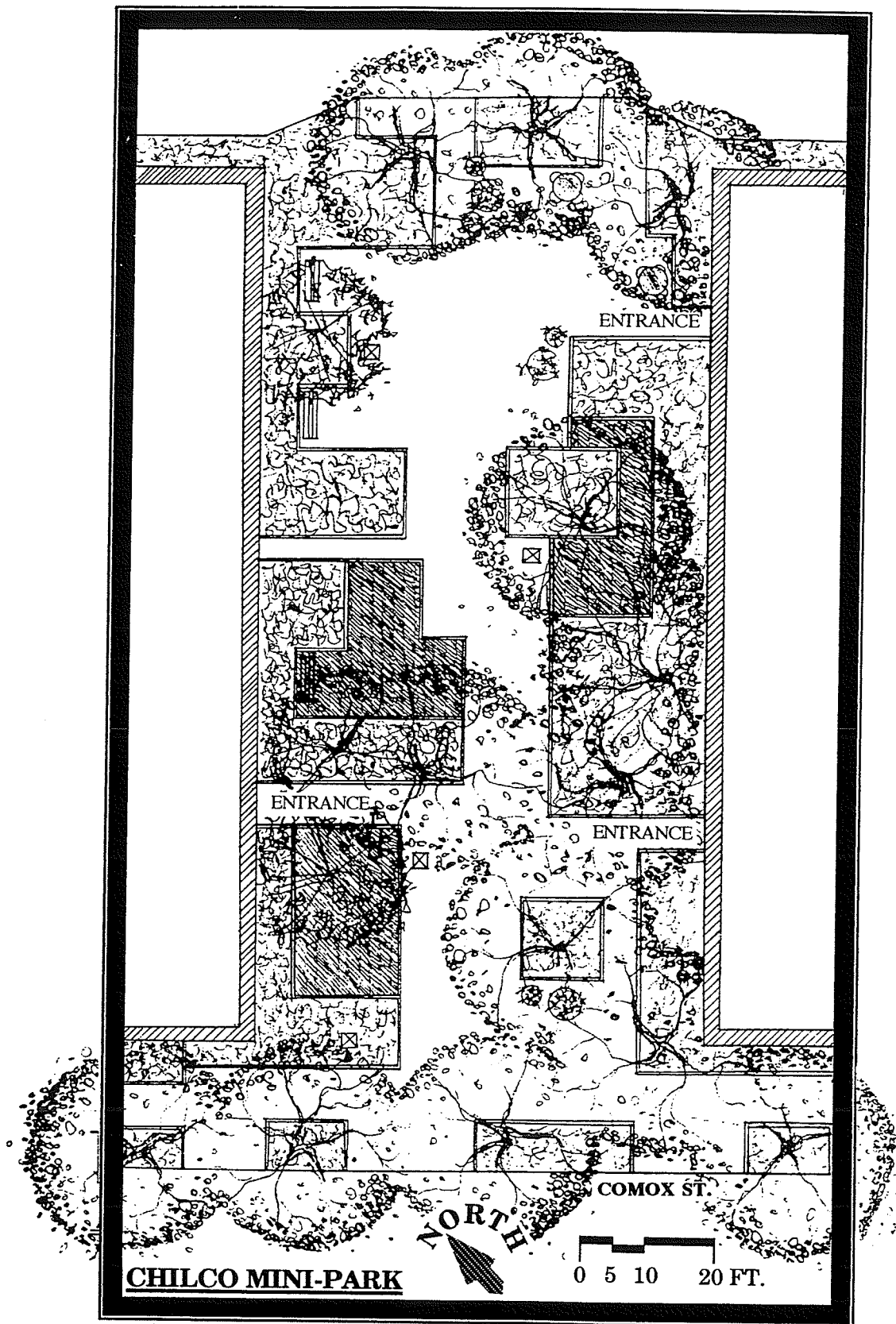


Figure 5.28



Figure 5.29

VIEW SOUTH FROM LANE INTO SITE



Figure 5.30

HOUSE ON WEST EDGE



Figure 5.31

TOWARDS ENGLISH BAY



Figure 5.32

NELSON/CHILCO LOOKING SOUTH TOWARDS SITE

site under study with grassy areas (Figure 5.33). There is massing of evergreen shrubs such as Pieris, Rhododendrons, Photinia, Mahonia and Pinus mugo, but this is punctuated with individual species of Rhododendron, Hydrangea and other flowering shrubs. There is also an abundance of perennials including Bergenia, variegated Hosta, ferns and sprinkled throughout the grass, tiny delicate white and yellow flowers. The planters and beds also feature bulbs and annuals.

A canopy is formed overhead from the cherry trees in addition to other species of deciduous trees and the large Ilex evergreens. This gives some height to the site, a sense of ceiling which encloses the space and forms a transition between the tall adjacent buildings and the intimate site on a more human scale. The Prunus trees cast a dappled shade across the central pathway (Figure 5.34). In the spring their gentle pink blossoms form a delicate ceiling which is transformed into a carpet of pink as they fall. The trees the rest of the summer are diseased and unhealthy looking, though perhaps they just fade into the background with attention focused on other flowering foliage.

The planting beds finely articulate the site moving in and out from the building walls to the centre of the site interrupting the strong linear north and south flow. The grassy patches add another dimension, a variation in ground plane and another play of texture against the shrubs and perennials. It completes the range of green from ceiling to floor plane giving greater enclosure and definition to the site. The small square shapes of grass are also distinct from long stretches of green boulevards and express a sense of play, particularly with the small white daisies informally sprinkled throughout. On these patches of grass children delighted in playing picking the daisies and chasing the cats. The small nooks formed by the walls of shrubs and carpet of green provide small rooms within a small open space, giving greater character to the site and enhancing imageability.

The seven low round planters feature a diversity of vegetation from several large Pinus mugo to Tulipa and Geranium species. Their presence adds another

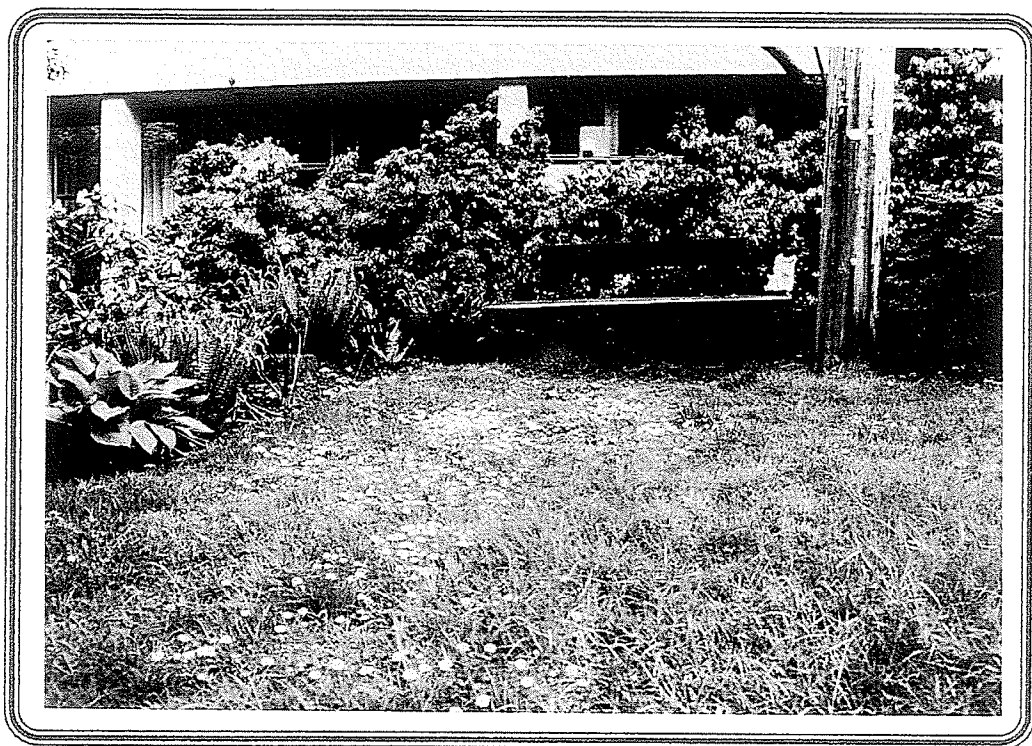


Figure 5.33

GRASSY SPOT FOR SUNBATHING



Figure 5.34

DAPPLED SHADE ADDS LACEWORK PATTERN

dimension to the site though their vegetation is less interesting than that in the shrub beds and they are not placed to stand alone in contrast to the ground plane. The two sizes do contribute somewhat to the diversity of features.

FURNISHINGS

The benches and chair/table styles are the same clunky ones seen in the Gilford site. The two table chair groupings are both in shady areas near the lane entrance (Figure 5.35). Cigarette butts littering the ground around the north-east corner grouping under the mature tree indicates use by patrons and one day



Figure 5.35

FURNITURE IN NORTH-WEST CORNER

a couple of gentlemen were observed having lunch at this table. The benches sited individually on the grass and pavers are on the west side and open to the hot afternoon sun. While I found it unbearable hot to sit there on a sunny day, the cats which frequent the site are quite comfortable on a dark wood bench (Figure 5.36). They also provide opportunities to sit and read being bright but not hot in the morning.

*Figure 5.36*

BENCH ON WEST SIDE

The two ash trays at either end of the site are conveniently located near to the site and building entrances though this does not prevent everyone from littering as is evident in the traces.

There are three period lamps distributed across the site. In addition there is a tall green street light at the south end. In addition to the lighting at the apartment and house entrances these lamps distribute light particularly to the centre path where people would pass on their way through (Figure 5.37).

There is no bicycle rack and a bicycle chained to a sign post one day suggested that a bicycle rack would be an asset. There are no bicycle racks at any of the adjacent buildings and it is probable that residents cycling in the area keep their bikes in their apartments. The last remaining furnishing that contributes to people's comfort when visiting the site or passing through is the water fountain (Figure 5.38) at the south entrance to the west extremity adjacent

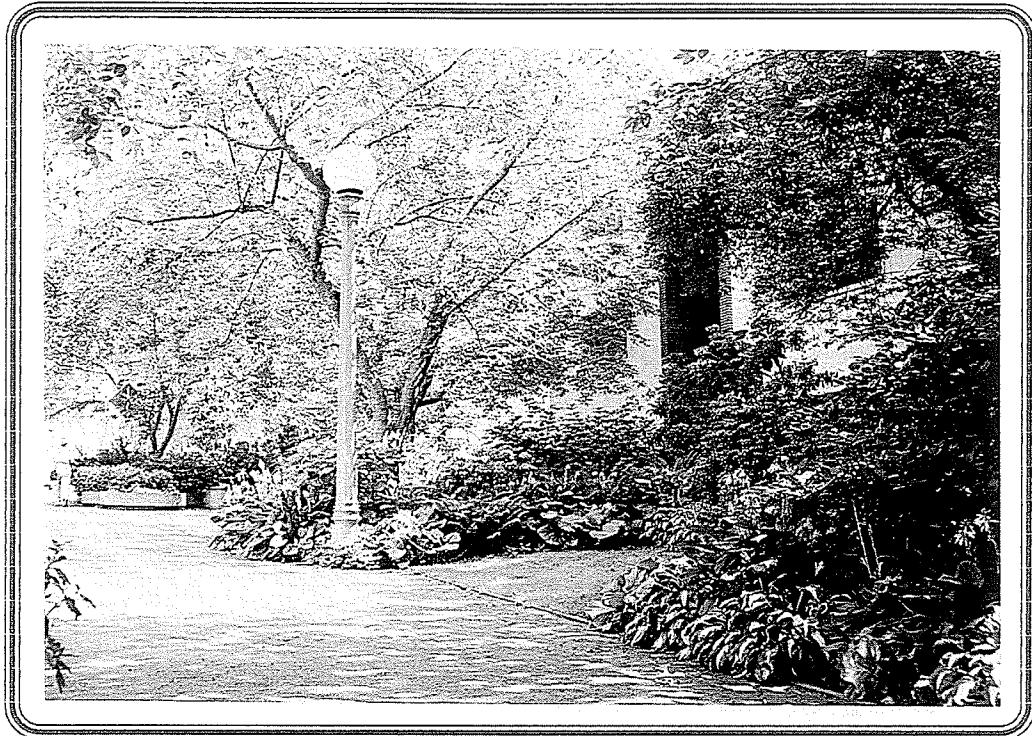


Figure 5.37

LAMP NEAR EAST SIDE APARTMENTS



Figure 5.38

DRINKING FOUNTAIN AND VIEW TO STANLEY PARK

the sidewalk.

CHILCO MINI-PARK USE

This site is frequently deserted between people trickling through. It is a very quiet location with no noise from adjacent buildings or the streets other than the periodic automobile. Many of the apartment windows were open and

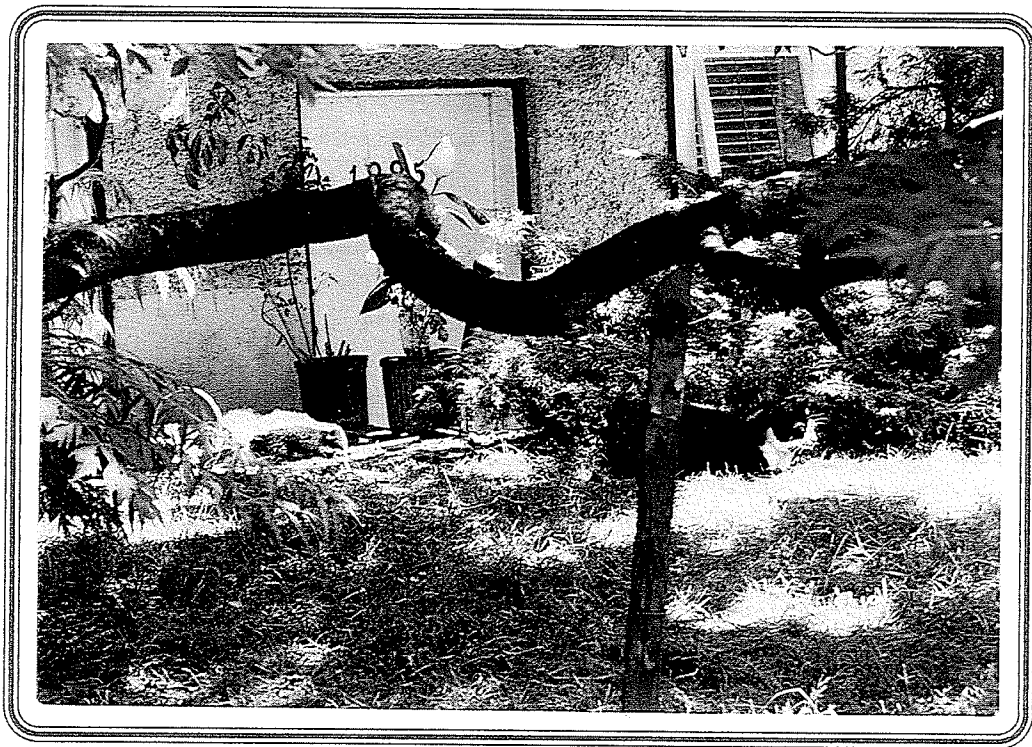


Figure 5.39

CAT AND SKUNK PEACEFULLY CO-EXIST

this informal surveillance enhances the safety of people using the site. Late in June shortly after noon during a ten minute period only eleven people walked through and two bicyclists rode through the site.

During this same time four cats were noted resting or passing through the area, though one person mentioned that there are sixteen cats living in the vicinity who frequent the park. One other observation was of a young skunk who liked to snack on the cats leftovers around the corner at the house under the magnolia tree (Figure 5.39). These animals are quite a topic of conversation. One

young professional couple made a point of mentioning they had moved away because the skunks habit the area using the dumpster in the alley as a food source. To further exacerbate the situation the lady in the house operates an informal cat shelter and there is a steady supply of cat food outside. These people found the scent left was often pungent and unpleasant. Other people including a young boy were eager to mention in conversation how wonderful the cats were, and that since a news story on TV their reputation extended beyond the neighbourhood. As one lady said, there was no reason to visit the park until the cats came.

At another time there were young children walking and riding their tricycles through the park as their fathers visited. They paused to chase the cats and play on the grass, just enjoying being outdoors. This quiet place also serves to bring the wide range of diverse people together giving them reasons to communicate with each other, from very young to very old they can observe and share conversations about the cats, squirrels, skunks or birds which animate this space. Perhaps the proximity to the wooded area of Stanley park contributes to the ability of the animals to survive in an urban area.

SUMMARY

Chilco-Comox mini-park is a quiet oasis for contemplation and reprieve from the busy city pace. Everything in the layout suggests that one should slow down or pause. Plantings run across the ends punctuating the boundaries and diverting people from a direct route through. The niches and plantings extending into the centre further encourage one to pause. Diversity in vegetation from shrubs to trees and perennials and some annuals add interest and seasonality to the site. The lighting is effective and the simple period style fits well with the romantic landscape and mix of contemporary and period buildings. The paving is the same interlocking paving seen in the other sites but the ground plane is enhanced with the small pockets of grass. The animals add a dynamic component to this place providing a focal point for conversation between strangers or acquaintances and a reason to be drawn into the site, or to pause. There is a

strong visual connection between the site and the boulevard to the north on the east side where there is continuity in landscaping. There is also a strong visual linkage between the site and the beach and linear park to the south enhancing imageability and the sense of neighbourhood. Though there are no demand goods such as vendors or artistic furniture or water features, perhaps this site with its quiet and solitude provides needed respite and informal pet therapy in the urban jungle.

Surrounded by Stanley Park, English Bay, Coal Harbour and opening into downtown, the West End of Vancouver is a long established area that has evolved into primarily highrises with some remaining historic houses. To resolve problems of disruption resulting from too much through traffic the community established mini-parks and traffic islands on some streets. The three mini-parks selected for this study are all similar in design with their linear street width design allowing emergency vehicles, boundaries to the east and west formed from apartment buildings, and open ends onto streets. They each have their individual character: Bute to the east with the water feature and raised concrete planters is designed to accommodate heavy urban traffic, Gilford to the west is comprised of two sections and has a hotel and restaurant on the south side, Chilco, the quietest site, features grassy nooks and is occupied by cats and skunks. Through their similarities in design and context these mini-parks provide opportunities for study and their unique features offer interesting comparisons. By comparing the responses from people utilizing these open spaces it is hoped to gain greater understanding about what attributes people value in these small urban open spaces, and how they evaluate the existing sites.

ANALYSIS

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DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

This chapter will now examine the sample population of the three sites as revealed through respondents' answers to the questionnaire and site observations. (See Methodology and Appendices for more information). While the majority of respondents did answer these questions there is some missing data (See Chpt. 4, Methodology).

Figure 6.1 indicates that almost all of respondents live in apartments or condominiums, and that the majority rent their accommodation. This is consistent with the demographics in the West End and the appearance of the area as generally high density.

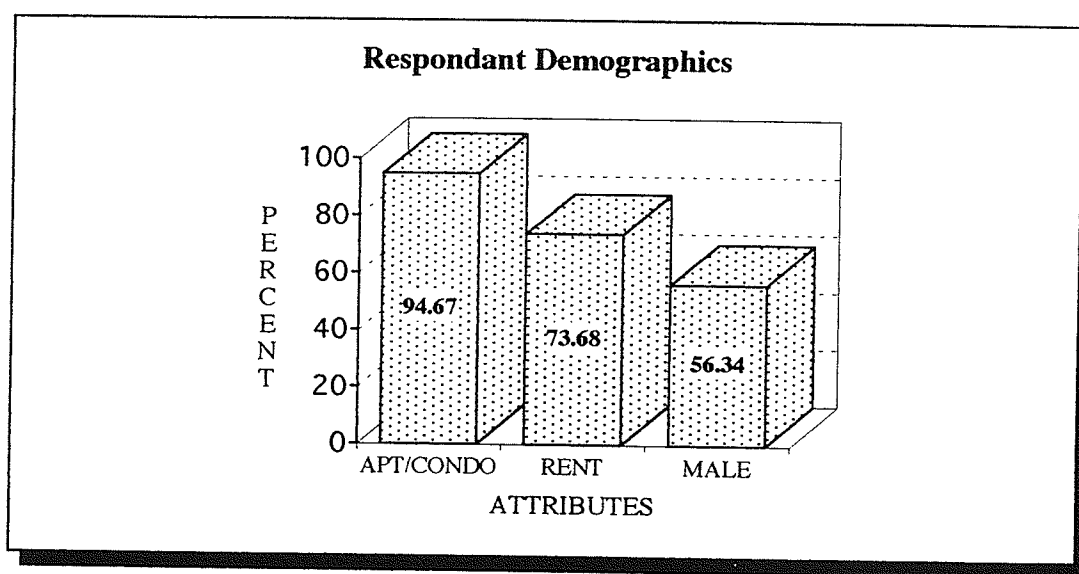


Figure 6.1

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The percentage of males was slightly over half. While the West End has a reputation as a predominantly homosexual male enclave site observations and frequency distribution for gender indicates that the actual distribution of males

Frequencies for age, Figure 6.2, reveal that the majority of respondents, 61%, were forty-one years of age or older. This is consistent with the site observations which suggested that people who frequented the area were retirees or working professionals. Only at the Chilco site were young children ever seen playing. The fact that no respondents were younger than twenty-one may be because it is not an affordable area for people without equity.

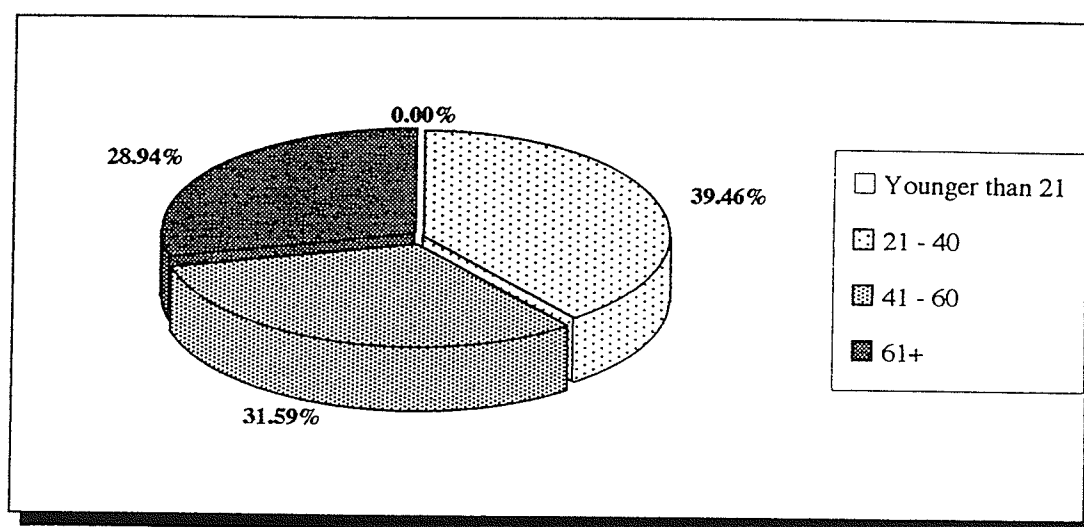


Figure 6.2

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

of variance, for the attributes of accommodation, gender, or age, suggesting that each site has similar demographics. The one category where there were differences was in the income distribution between sites.

Figure 6.3 indicates that no respondents had a before tax income of over fifty thousand dollars. 57% of respondents had an income between twenty and forty thousand dollars. When compared to the age distribution frequencies the data suggests that the sample is primarily middle income earners and retirees. The differences in income between sites is expressed in Figure 6.4 where the analysis of variance reveals that Gilford has the lowest mean, followed by Bute though they are both in the same salary bracket. Chilco is the only site with houses nearby and along one side of the open space.

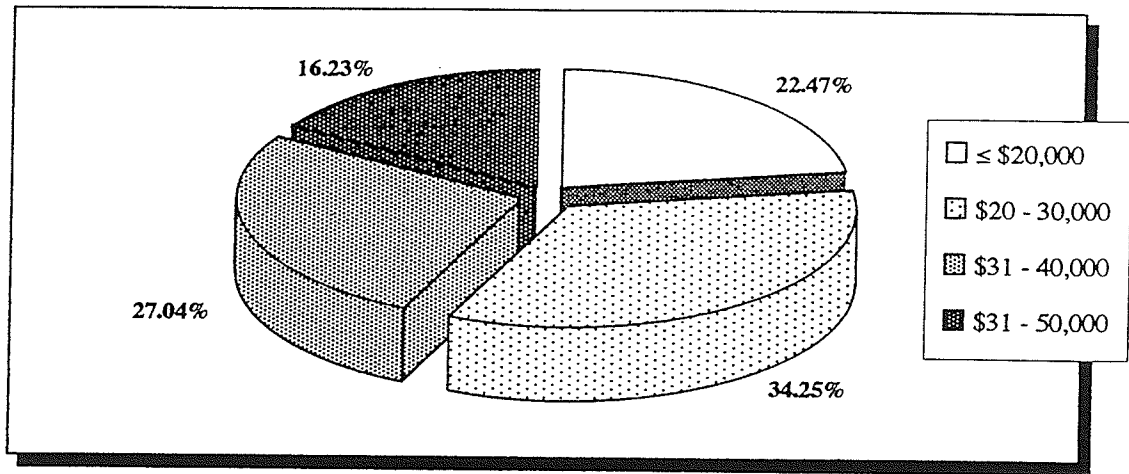


Figure 6.3 INCOME OF SAMPLE

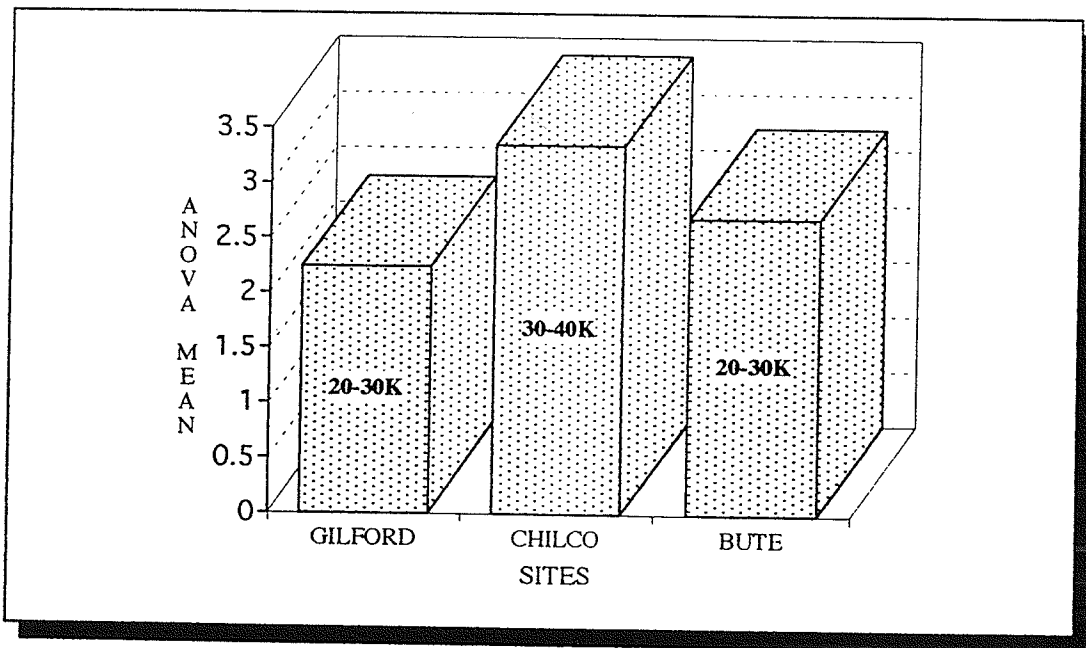


Figure 6.4 RESPONDENTS INCOME RELATED TO SITE

RESPONDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH SITES

The differences of responses between the three sites was determined through analysis of variance. Overall this analysis reveals that Chilco and Gilford mini-parks were consistently ranked more positively than Bute mini-park for the attributes present at each site. This was consistent with my initial impressions and site visits. It is interesting to note that when distributing the surveys in Bute park some people said that they did not use the site, even though they walked through it regularly. It seems to be almost a non-entity, an unfortunate circumstance given its potential. It is important to note that there was agreement by people at all the sites that neighbourhood parks are very important (76.25%). The following discussion will revolve around the differences in level of achievement of attributes and features between the different sites.

Figure 6.5 indicates in a reverse scale from 1 which is very positive to 5 which is very negative, some significant statistical differences between responses at the three sites. In the general question comparing their neighbourhood park to others, Bute received a significantly poorer ranking than Chilco or Gilford. Bute had a mean of 3.5, whereas Chilco and Gilford were statistically similar between the ratings of Better and Same. Similarly, when asked how much they like their park, Bute ranked in between Very Much and Not at All with a mean of 2.2 whereas Chilco and Gilford were 1.3 and 1.6 respectively, both significantly more positive rankings than Bute. Another general question asked respondents to rank the sites for Attractive Overall Appearance on a five point scale from Very Well Achieved (one) to Not at all Achieved (five) and again Bute was significantly different (2.9) from Chilco and Gilford which were between Very Well and Well (two).

There is often public debate about the merits or disadvantages of public art, and difficulties in meeting consensus about what is attractive or appropriate, and the process of acquiring and siting it. Public open spaces are supposed to contribute to the beauty of the city and function as a form of art themselves, however to find out how people in this area felt about artistic elements in general

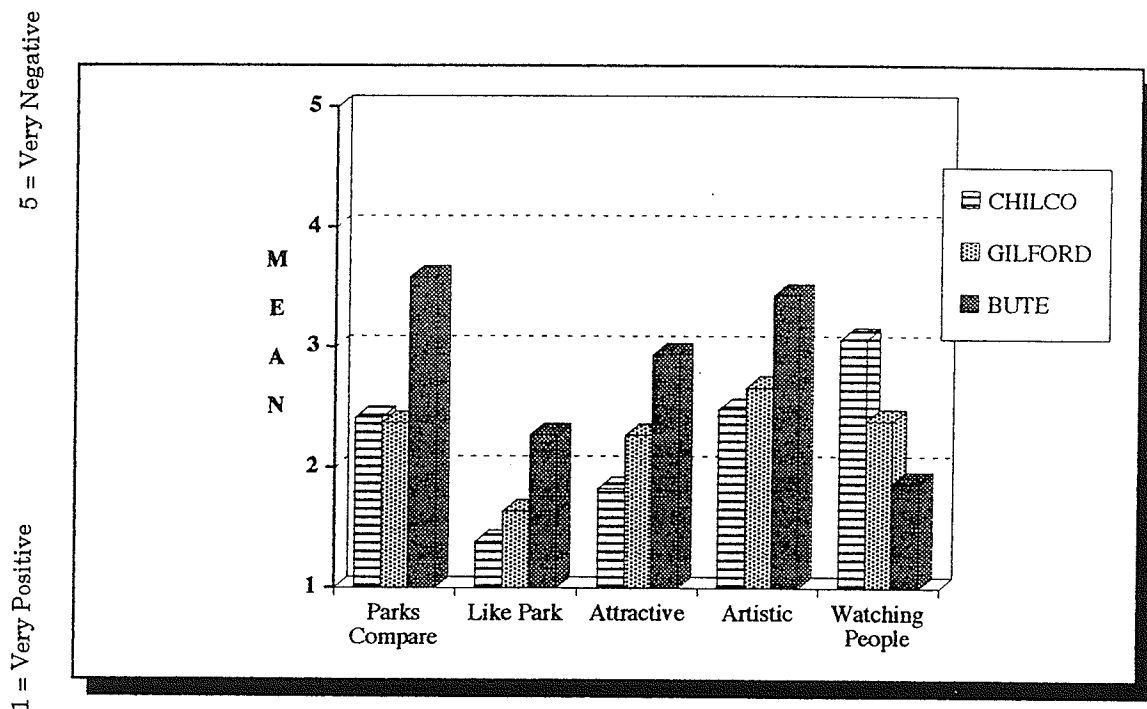


Figure 6.5

COMPARISONS BETWEEN SITES

they were asked to rank it as with the other questions on a five point scale. Though Bute was the only site with what might be called an artistic element, the rough hewn granite block fountain feature, and it was thought that this might increase its ranking for this question, it was considered the least artistic (3.4). This may be due to the fact that there has been no water in the fountain for the past two summers. Without the water it is too static a feature and serves to collect refuse, which is more prevalent here than in the other sites.

In general the Bute site was statistically different from Chilco and Gilford, the trend being towards a lower level of achieved attributes overall and less well liked by respondents. Specific aspects will be compared in later discussions relating the attributes back to the seven components under study.

Section III.8 of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their reasons for being in the park and the importance of these activities. Analysis of

variance indicated that watching people was the only factor that was statistically significant in difference between the sites. Interestingly, watching people was most important at Bute the busiest park where people were more work oriented. People were less likely to go to restaurants or bars through Bute, but more likely to go to offices. Similarly people were more likely to pass through Bute on their way to their employment. This emphasis on Bute as a link for work oriented activities is consistent with another response, people were less likely to be on their way to other parks, in contrast with Gilford and Chilco park.

SIGNIFICANT STATISTICAL ATTRIBUTES

Previously we have examined comparisons between the parks and discussed the differences in both the way people use the sites, and the perceived success of the sites. The primary objective of this study, however, is to examine which components and their attributes relating to placemaking are important and their hierarchical arrangement for the purpose of creating a design strategy. One way of achieving this objective is to examine people's general response to small neighbourhood spaces in relation to more specific attributes relating to the seven components of place outlined. This analysis is undertaken through correlations, the statistical significance relating one variable to another and frequency distributions which give further meaning to the data. There are some statistical differences in responses between sites revealed through the analysis of variance and these serve to clarify what people require from a mini-park.

To look initially at which questions might serve for a closer examination the frequency distributions for some general questions were studied. It should be noted that the graphs generally indicate the end point ratings. However, in the discussion to provide a fuller sense of the results the totals for the two highest rankings are often mentioned.

The first general question under study is #I.2 in the questionnaire which asks "How important is it in general to have neighbourhood parks?" This

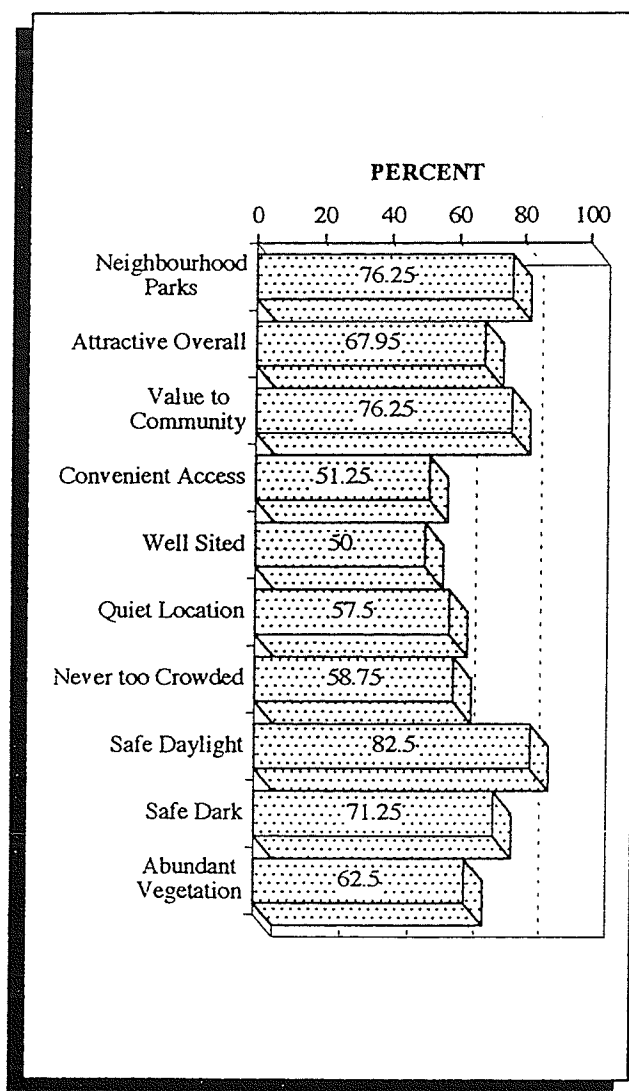


Figure 6.6

PERCENT OF PEOPLE WHO RANKED
ATTRIBUTES VERY IMPORTANT
N = 80

same amount, 76.25% of respondents, also feel that these small open spaces are of value to the community, (Question III.7). This indicates strong approval for these type of small mini-parks despite their individual failings.

Being safe during the daylight ranked the highest of all these responses stressing how important people feel it is to be safe when they are outdoors during the day. This attribute of safety is higher than the importance of being safe after

discussion will now examine how important these types of small urban open spaces and their particular attributes are for the respondents. Though the success of different attributes varied between sites, there was overwhelming agreement on the importance to individuals and the community of these small neighbourhood parks. Figure 6.6 indicates frequencies over 50% for questions I.2 and III.1 showing the percent of people saying Very Important, the end point of the scale. Several general attributes were very important to respondents. To establish initially whether these small neighbourhood parks were seen as valuable regardless of their level of success respondents were asked how important in general it was to have neighbourhood parks. The majority of people (76.25%) feel they are very important. The

dark probably because people use the parks more during daylight hours and their expectations for safety during the day would also be higher. Safety is one of the park users primary needs and is essential before they can realize any of the other attributes the site may have to offer.

The next most important general attribute was that the site have an attractive overall appearance. This relates to the importance of abundant vegetation which also rated highly. In contrast good maintenance which relates to both safety and appearance was ranked as being very important by only 17.5% of respondents. There was a difference as indicated through the analysis of variance in the importance of maintenance between sites. It was most important at Bute where there is more litter on the ground and the water feature has not operated for the last two years. In general though how attractive a park appears is important to people who like and use neighbourhood parks.

A quiet location was important to 82% of respondents but there was a difference between parks. Bute which is closer to the busy commercial and office areas along and north of Robson street did not rank a quiet location as important compared to the other two sites. This suggests that people in this area where work oriented activities are important are more tolerant of noise.

A well sited location was not ranked as highly as other attributes, though for overall importance was 82%. The difference between sites here is that it was equally important for the Bute and Chilco sites, but significantly less important for the Gilford respondents. This relates back to the linkage issue where people in Bute need a site which is located on the way to their work oriented activities if they are to use it. It is not immediately evident why location is more important at Chilco than Gilford, though it may relate to its proximity to the beach and Stanley Park. Convenient access was important to 85% of respondents, even if it was not ranked as highly as other attributes. Perhaps if the survey had reached people further away from a mini-park they would be more concerned about the access.

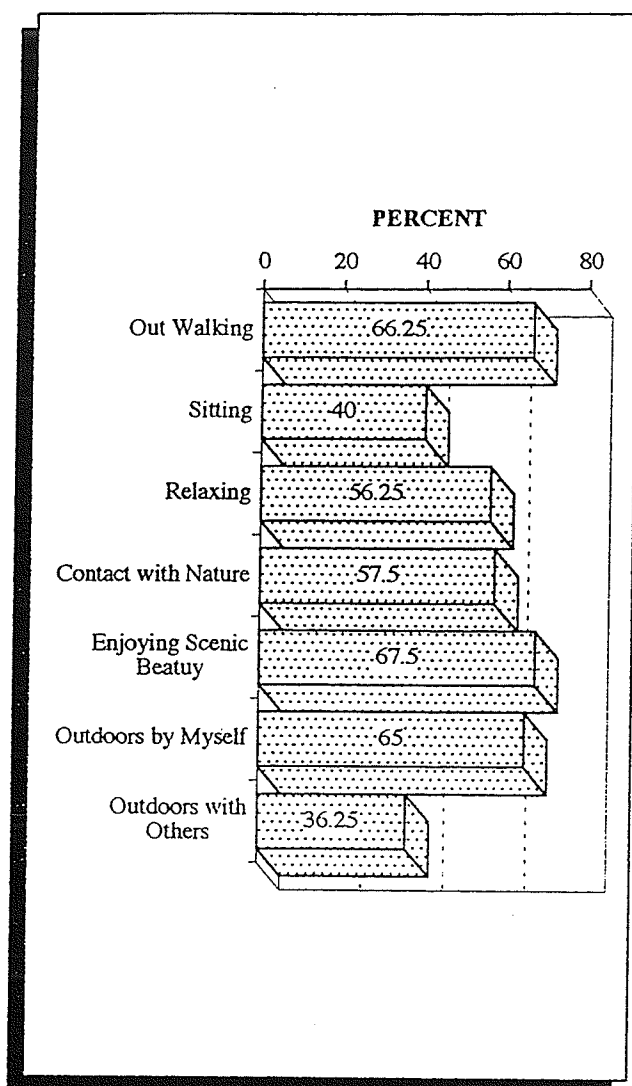


Figure 6.7
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION
REASONS FOR BEING IN THE PARK

N = 80

time. Some of the written comments did suggest that the lack of activity around what Jane Jacobs calls demand goods was part of the tranquility and charm of the place. It was not uncommon to go to Chilco and be by myself with only the periodic passage through of someone. While a place is safer with a steady flow of people this need for safety needs to be balanced with room for one's own space.

The frequency distribution for the importance of reasons (Figure 6.7) to be in the parks indicates that the three highest percentages for factors ranked Very Important are; enjoying scenic beauty (67.50%) followed by out walking (66.25) and being outdoors by myself (65%). This suggests that these people use the sites primarily to relax and relate to the natural outdoor environment. They enjoy the sites as they pass through on their way to other places be it to the office or for recreation.

There was agreement between sites that it was very important that the site never seem too crowded. This attribute relating to territoriality seems to be of less importance than safety but more important than access or site location. At no time when I visited the sites were all the seats, benches or nooks filled. Even Bute which had the highest amount of through traffic did not ever have a large number of people at any one

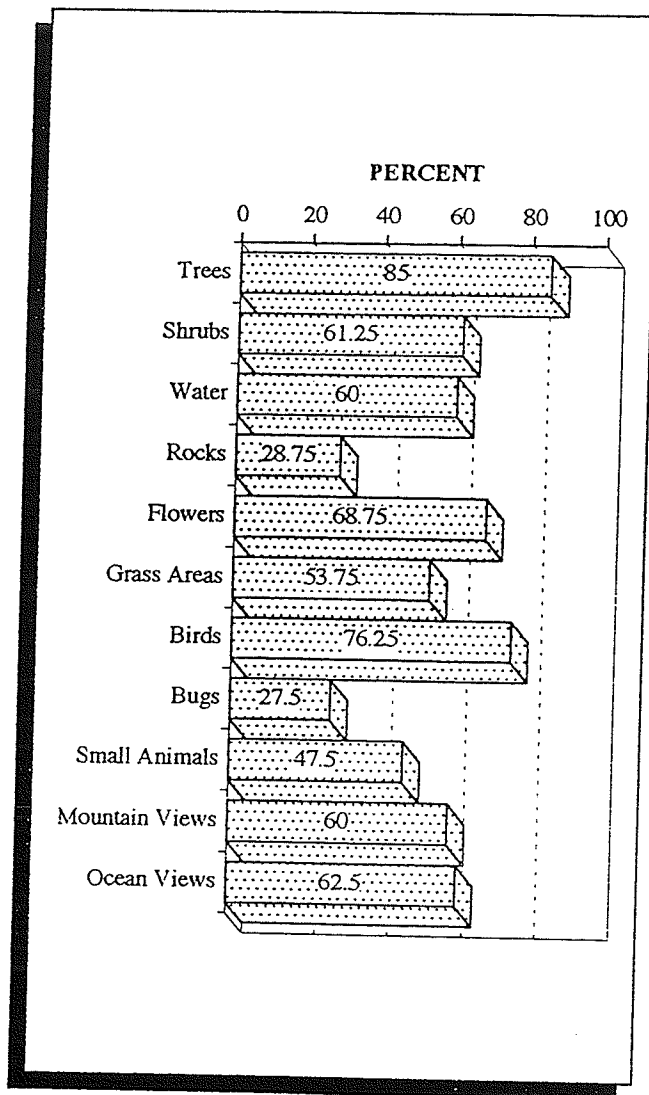


Figure 6.8
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION
NATURE ATTRIBUTES
N = 80

Since there is a strong value placed on enjoying scenic beauty and walking outdoors the following graph presents features relating to nature that people say are very important (Figure 6.8). Trees which are predominant features at all three sites rank 85%. The trees provide a sense of enclosure, a ceiling to the space. They also provide a visual clue to the space while linking it to the street where there are boulevard trees. The trees filter both the rain and the sun and diminish noise from the surrounding areas. At all the sites the trees are very large mature specimens that strongly influence the character of the sites both through their grandeur, their seasonality, and the contrast to other forms of vegetation.

The attribute birds had the next highest response rate. They are the antithesis to trees being small and unobtrusive and their presence ephemeral. They can contribute to the ambience of a place both by their lively nature and their melodious song. Individually they add a sense of life and movement, in flocks they greatly animate the space, particularly these small intimate environments. Other than a robin and some sparrows no birds were observed at any of these sites.

Flowers are considered very important and this is reinforced in people's comments. Flowers lend a place a strong element of time, the passage of seasons. Flowers add the dimensions of scent and colour. Flowers can relate to different spatial arrangements, on trees, shrubs or as small herbs. The cherry blossoms on the trees in Gilford create a ceiling of pink in spring followed by a carpet of pink a few weeks later. Some of the flowers like the California Lilac in Gilford or azalea in Chilco are vibrant colours. Others like the evergreen flowering shrubs in Bute are simply white, but have an exquisite scent.

The other attributes of nature indicated on the graph give a sense of what is primary for a sense of nature to be expressed. The fact that bugs score 27.5% as being very important indicates an appreciation for an ecological approach (Question I.1 frequency distribution in appendix). While more people feel trees, birds and flowers are very important to express nature, many people feel that the other attributes listed in the survey also express nature. Some people are willing to recognize creatures often despised such as is implicit in 'bugs'. Mountains and ocean views are a larger form of nature appreciated from afar, but they both dominate the character of Vancouver. While they are appreciated by many as an asset and as borrowed landscape contribute to a sense of place, they are not however sufficient without other expressions of nature.

This initial analysis presents some preliminary indications about which attributes people feel are important in placemaking. This information will now be utilized to examine which attributes correlate with two general statements, that neighbourhood parks are important and they are of value to the community. Through the study of general questions related to specific information the conceptual strategy of components for placemaking begins to take shape.

CORRELATIONS TO GENERAL QUESTIONS

It is important to the creation of a design strategy to establish which general aspects about small urban open spaces are most important to people, and relate these to more specific components and attributes of placemaking. The two general statements which indicated the strongest support are that these small parks are of value to the community, and that having them is important (Questions I.2 and III.7 Appendix B). By correlating the responses to these questions to other responses and examining those that are statistically significant ($>.286$) it is possible to determine which components of nature, linkage, legibility, diversity, territoriality, safety and comfort and their attributes are also valued.

IMPORTANCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

To facilitate discussion of the data relating to the importance in general of having neighbourhood parks the related attributes are indicated in graph form. The discussion analyzes the seven primary components of the strategy, each divided into constituent parts relating back to the survey questions. By revealing design considerations important to the users of these open spaces the creation of successful designs and thereby placemaking is more likely to be enhanced. Through comparison of attributes relating to the seven strategy components a hierarchy becomes clearer, setting priorities for design considerations.

DIVERSITY

The category with the greatest number of statistically significant ($p<.05$) correlations is Diversity. (Figure 6.9). This abundance partially relates to the inclusion of activities people may do in the park, and attributes relating to seating and vegetation which also relate to comfort, territoriality and nature. The closer the correlation is to 1.0 the closer the relationship between the two attributes. Seating locations (Question II.1) exhibits the highest correlation to the importance of parks. This corroborates findings by Whyte and Appleyard that seating choices are important to people. Respondents do not seem overly

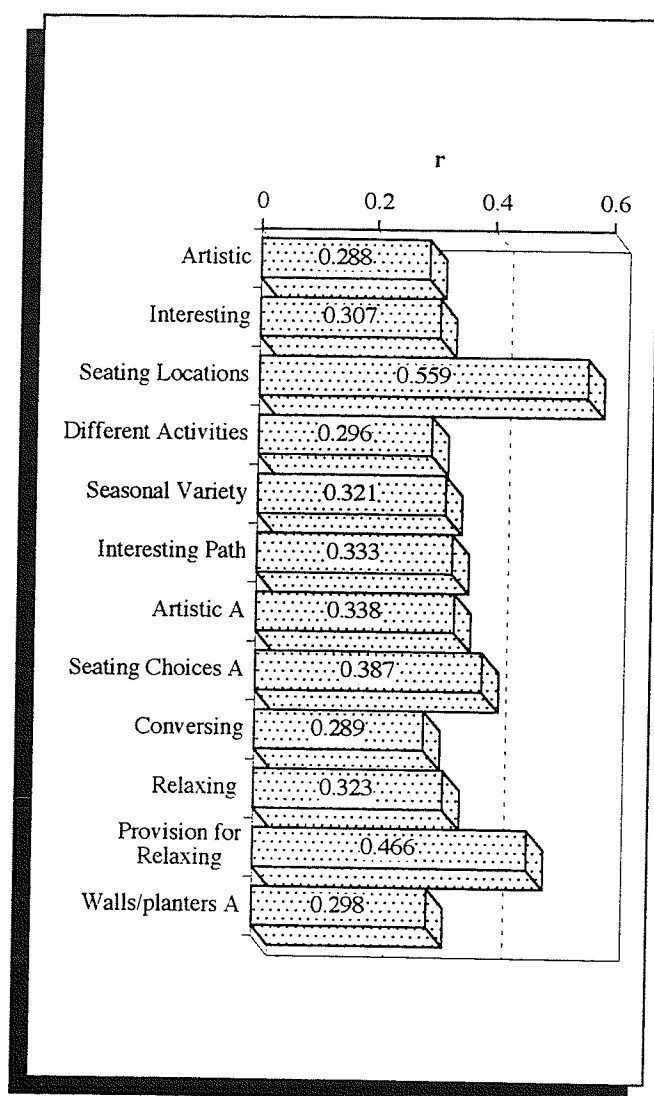


Figure 6.9
DIVERSITY ATTRIBUTES CORRELATED WITH
IMPORTANCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

concerned about the aesthetics of seating but rather the emphasis is on sufficient seating and it's distribution around the site, permitting personal choice. When people wish to stay in a site for a while, as the activity of sitting suggests compared to standing or leaning, they want to be able to position themselves so they are comfortable relative to other people in the site and their reason for being there. When in the same graph we examine the extent to which the seating choices were achieved (.3) this is much lower. The seating in all the sites examined is not portable and is located around the periphery of the sites. While seating is an important component of diversity in design as indicated here, perhaps as other research and observations have revealed, it also requires attention to making it attractive,

comfortable, and easily moveable. Seating location can also relate to safety and the benches at Gilford which were regularly occupied by the same people were the ones with the highest visibility, near the sidewalk and road.

Provision for relaxing (.4) and the activity of relaxing (.3) are also important to respondents. This relates both to choices in types of activities and conditions which establish an ambience of safety and comfort so that one is able to relax. If

there were more choices in seating locations people would probably find there were greater provisions for relaxing. Seating locations and ones ability to relax also relates to finding a spot with a comfortable amount of sun or shade. The seating at all the parks was predominantly either in full sun or heavy shade depending on the time of day, but there was a lack of middle ground.

That the site facilitates a number of different activities is also positively correlated. People prefer a place where they can exercise their choices, whether this relates to the type of activity they do or the area in which they do it. Only two activities correlate, relaxing and conversing. Relaxing and conversing are therefore most important to those people who also consider these types of small neighborhood sites important. Relaxing and conversing were considered equally important at all the sites, 80% and 67.5% respectively for the total of important and very important. These type of activities don't require sitting in the park or any particular organization but generally take place through happenstance. Previously it was noted that there are other activities that were rated more highly important, such as walking or enjoying scenic beauty, but these are intricately connected to relaxing and conversing.

Walls/planters refers to the question IV.1. which asks respondents to indicate how important are "low walls or planters to relax on". Here is another element relating back to relaxing. Lynch, Whyte and Jacobs have all noted the importance of having intermediary leaning or resting furniture which encourages people to slow down and stay awhile but does not commit them to sitting or staying. Walls and planters give people a perch to rest on or against while they survey the scene about them or engage in casual conversation.

Correlations to the site itself as being interesting, the path as interesting, or the artistic merit of the site, both as important and achieved ratings, reinforce the concept that people seek a place which is stimulating. They want to be comfortable and relaxed, which means a place which is stimulating but not threatening. Artistic, but not uncomfortably so. It is interesting that artistic achieved has a stronger correlation than artistic important.

Another factor, seasonal variety, relates to diversity but also to nature. Seasonal variety implies more than just the presence of vegetation, it is the way the materials reflect the seasons, such as rain on the pavers, snow on the benches and tree branches, the bare ground where the herbs have died back. In relation to nature it is the falling leaves, bare branches, autumn colours, new buds, fresh shoots, which indicate the passage of time and seasons. In Vancouver and these sites in particular, the mild climate accommodates the evergreen rhododendrons and viburnum which provide relief for the brown branches and tree trunks of deciduous species, and the generally dull colour of the paving and concrete. Another aspect of seasonality is the park's board maintenance program which cleans out planters in the fall, adds new plants in the spring, and sprays the trees during the summer. The presence of small animals such as cats, squirrels and skunks also provides seasonality as old faces disappear and new ones make themselves known. Varying species of birds present may also indicate seasonality. The proximity to Stanley park and boulevards of mature trees may facilitate the presence of more than the usual urban birds such as robins and sparrows.

NATURE

To examine nature more closely as one aspect of the conceptual strategy in placemaking Figure 6.10 represents significant positive correlations of attributes relating to the component of nature from throughout the questionnaire to the general question of the importance of neighbourhood parks. The importance of having abundant vegetation was by far the strongest correlation, suggesting that while there should be a variety of other nature features, extensive vegetation is most important (Question II.1.). The arrangement of the plants is also important and this refers back again to diversity. There must be abundance, but people care about how this abundance is distributed around the site. This suggests that appealing planting arrangements which provide interesting blends of colours, textures and seasonality are more interesting and enjoyable.

When we examine the types of vegetation listed (Question I.1), shrubs rank higher than trees, but are similar in correlation to water. This is in contrast

to the frequency score where trees were ranked as the most important nature feature. This suggests that trees are important in placemaking, but other attributes such as shrubs, flowers, and grass areas play an important role

through their abundance and arrangements, again reinforcing the importance of diversity in placemaking.

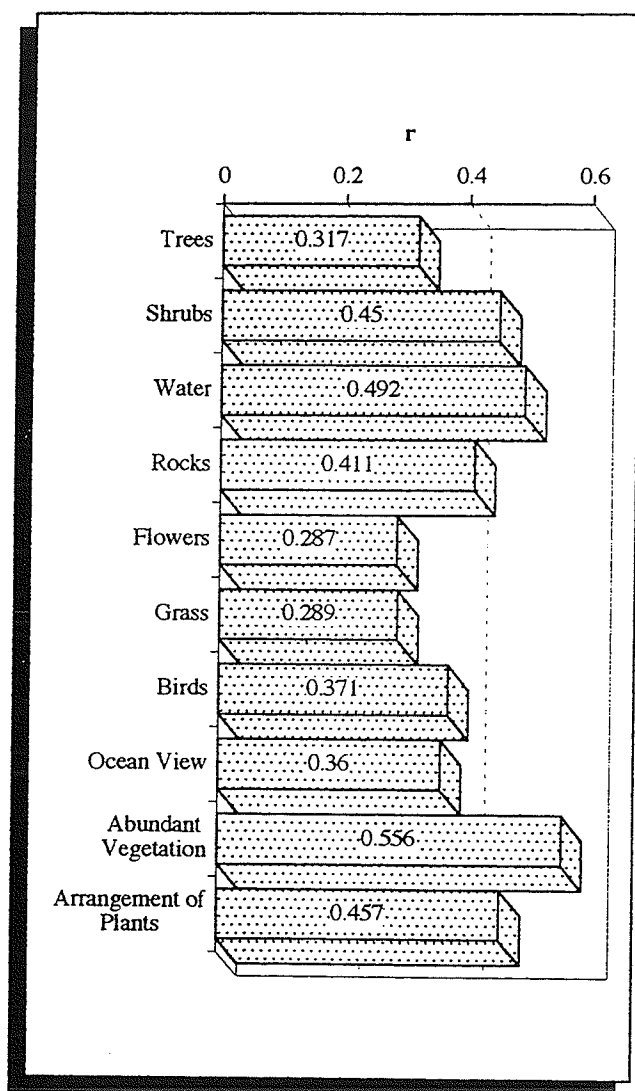


Figure 6.10
CORRELATIONS OF NATURE
ATTRIBUTES WITH IMPORTANCE
OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

Water, water elements and rocks are important to these sites probably for the same reason. They can provide contrast and diversity to the surrounding vegetation, and metaphorically relate to the larger environment of mountains and oceans which surround Vancouver. Ocean views, those beautiful, expansive, borrowed landscapes relate to the larger natural environment, but also serve to provide strong imagery and linkage.

COMFORT

There are also a number of comfort attributes which correlate significantly to the importance of neighborhood parks (Figure 6.11). These relate back to the earlier discussion about diversity. If the site is accommodating it will have

choices of seating locations, allow different activities, and provisions for relaxing. It becomes apparent then that people tend to value sites which have

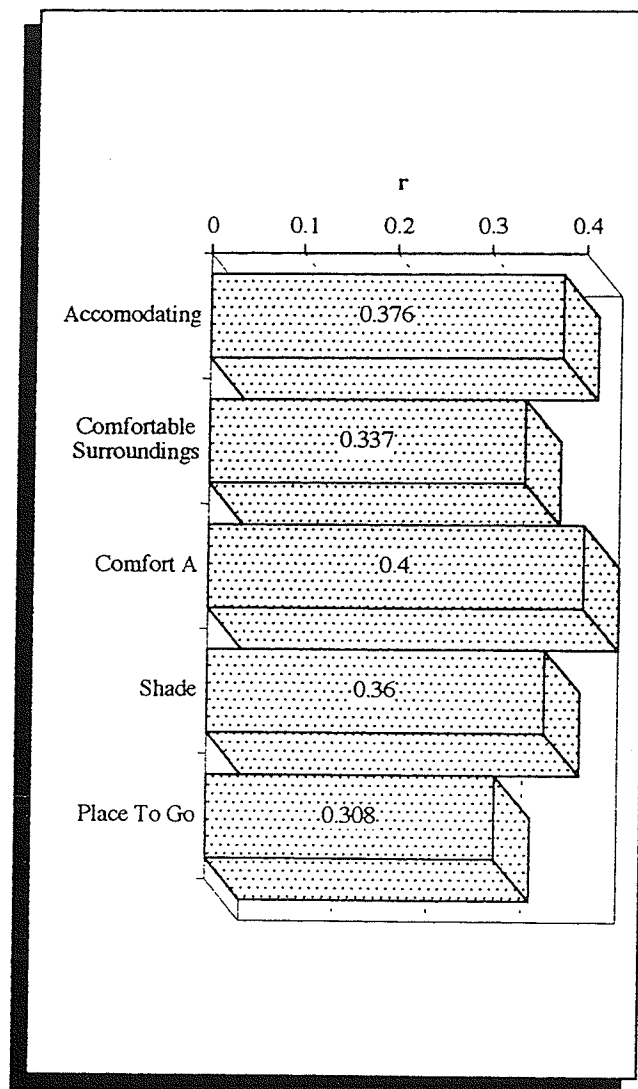


Figure 6.11

CORRELATIONS OF COMFORT ATTRIBUTES WITH IMPORTANCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

great diversity but are accommodating and comfortable. This is not a surprise to those who have reviewed the literature, but it is important to keep in mind when designing small urban spaces. Opportunities for shade also correlates and has a total frequency distribution of 84% for Very Important and Important. Opportunities to enjoy the sun shows no correlation and is also considerably lower in frequency at 70%. This makes sense when one considers the importance of abundant vegetation and relaxing environments to the respondents and the relationship to these attributes of a soothing shady atmosphere created by overhanging trees and borders of shrubs.

At the same time it is important that the surroundings be comfortable and function as a place to go. If there are choices in places to linger and diversity to

heighten interest, the place becomes a place to go, rather than only linkage on the way through to other places. If the ambience is one of relaxing suggesting a place to meet friends or converse with acquaintances it is more likely to be a destination. The relationship between a place to go and the importance of these small neighborhood places relates to the need people have to identify a public open outdoor space which they can feel comfortable in and go to as an escape from

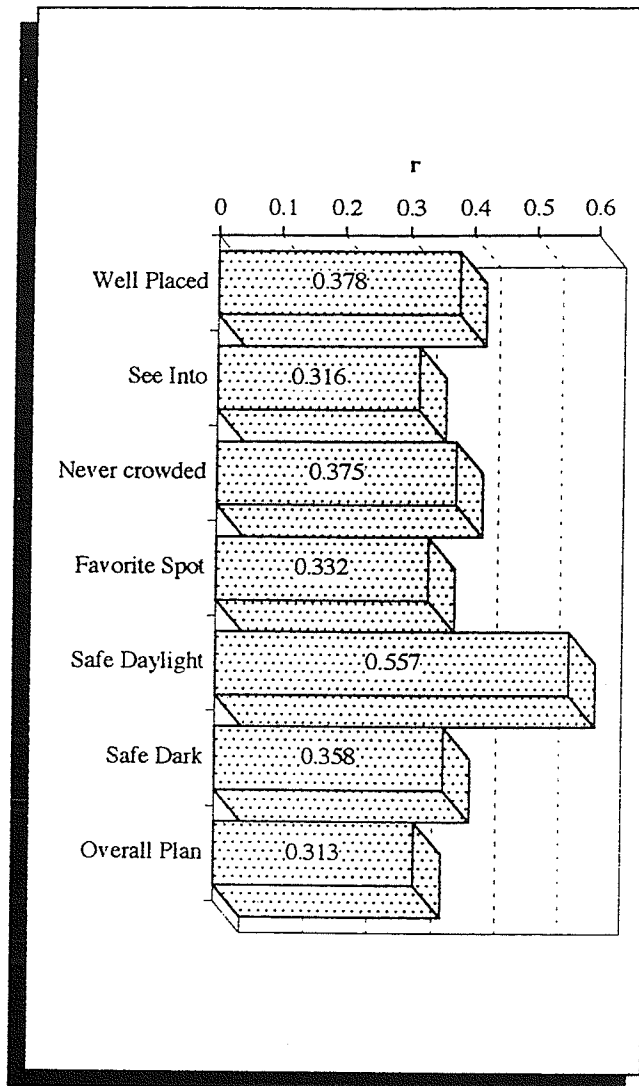


Figure 6.12
CORRELATIONS OF ATTRIBUTES OF
LEGIBILITY, SAFETY, TERRITORIALITY
AND LINKAGE WITH IMPORTANCE OF
NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

the concrete jungle. In the West End where apartment buildings predominate these spaces are the only 'yard' these people have.

LEGIBILITY, SAFETY, TERRITORIALITY, LINKAGE

Other significant correlations to the importance of neighborhood parks are indicated in Figure 6.12 and relate to attributes of legibility, safety, linkage and territoriality. Safety during daylight is clearly the strongest correlation and considerably more than safety when it is dark. This is the same trend as seen in the frequency distributions. In relation to other correlations it reinforces the importance of safety for relaxing and comfort. People do not seem to be concerned that abundant vegetation might limit their safety, and indeed if it is used sensitively it need not present a danger. Visual linkage into the site facilitates informal surveillance and increases safety. The importance of the

overall plan and achievement of clarity both relate to safety and legibility. Clarity does not mean the absence of mystery or surprise, but the presence of a clearly represented plan which people understand and feel comfortable in.

The correlation to both the importance and achievement of having a favorite spot to sit (Question III.1) suggests that for those people who like to stay in these places longer having their favorite spot is important, relating back to the correlation of seating locations in Figure 6.9. There should be a diversity of seating locations for comfort and to accommodate territoriality. Despite the simplicity of the three sites they have managed to accommodate this territorial need to have a place in the park one can call ones own. Often the favorite spot is shared by different occupants over a period of time. One lady in Gilford considered a particular bench hers for about half an hour every day when she walked her dog and then paused to chat with acquaintances passing through. At another bench several gentlemen gathered every morning to chat, friends would pause on their way to or from their errands. These benches were clearly proprietary during specific times of day, but this lent character to the Gilford site and increased its animation. The benches chosen for these activities were near the road dividing Gilford and had light shade during these gathering times. There was also an abundance and diversity of vegetation in this area nearest the hotel and apartment entrances making this area colourful and attractive.

SUMMARY

In summary there are significant correlations between the importance of having neighborhood parks and attributes associated with components suggested for the design strategy for placemaking. Many of these attributes relate to diversity, the most significant being seating locations. Provisions for relaxing which relates to diversity and comfort also is very high. The strongest correlation for the attribute of safety is the importance that the site be safe during daylight, of similar importance to seating locations. Relating to nature the attributes which stand out are abundant vegetation followed by water and arrangement of plants. Attributes relating to components of legibility, linkage, territoriality and comfort correlate to the general question but are of less significance to respondents. It is possible that due to their more abstract nature they are seen as important when their absence is more keenly felt. All seven attributes of placemaking as suggested initially in the concept strategy play an important role for people who value these small neighbourhood open spaces. It is becoming clear

however that some attributes have a greater priority than others. Discussion examining attributes correlating to the next general question will explore this hierarchy further.

CORRELATIONS TO THE VALUE OF THE PARK TO THE COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

This section will examine correlations to the second general question that the park is of value to the community (Question II.7). Ranking their responses from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree on a five point scale, 76.25% of respondents strongly agree with this statement. This is despite particular failings or areas of concern expressed in other responses in the survey. This is the same level of agreement indicated for the previous general question on the importance of neighbourhood parks. The discussion about the seven attributes of legibility, diversity, linkage, comfort, nature, territoriality, and safety which comprise the design strategy reveals that the patterns of correlations as found for the first general question is similar. However there are differences in some of the attribute components which comprise the general categories. This discussion will examine each of the seven design strategy components and their constituent parts which are statistically significant and provide direction on the development of a paradigm with a hierarchical structure to guide landscape design of small urban open spaces.

DIVERSITY

Diversity includes the concept of opportunities for different activities (Figure 6.13). There are a number of activities which were both important to people and achieved a level of success at the three sites. Supporting the previous finding regarding conversing and relaxing they correlate to the park being of value to the community. In this correlation however sitting and reading were also related. When reading or conversing people are often sitting so it makes sense that if they feel one is important, so is the other. Interestingly there is also a significant, if lesser, degree of correlation to the value to the community of the park and sitting, conversing, relaxing and reading as achieved attributes. In the analysis of variance there is no agreement between respondents at the three sites about the level of achievement for these four activities. On the five point scale (1 Very Well Achieved to 5 Not at all Achieved) Chilco and Gilford had means closer to two while Bute was statistically different with means closer to

three. This is consistent with the finding that Bute is not as well achieved in general though people at each site value the same activities. In addition to these activities there is also a correlation to the importance of being outdoors by myself. The frequency distributions presented previously showed that many people did use these sites on their own. This need to be by oneself also relates to the importance of having the sites safe during the day.

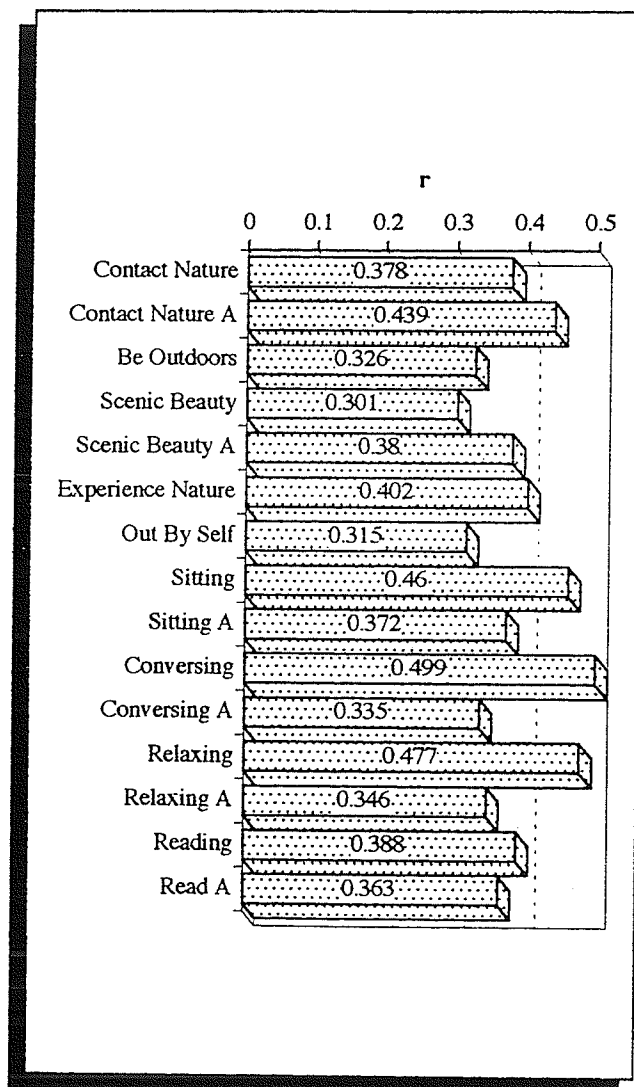


Figure 6.13

DIVERSITY OF ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTES
CORRELATED WITH THE PARK IS OF
VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

The component of diversity also revealed other significant correlations to the park being of value to the community (Figure 6.14). There should be choices for seating locations and sufficient seating for everyone. This is consistent with the discussion previously and makes sense in terms of the activities that people feel are important. If designers provide diversity in choices for seating, then there will more likely also be an increase in the amount of seating available. The amount of seating achieved also correlated though to a lesser degree with the value to the community. In this instance Bute and Gilford had similar means, (2.7 and 3.0 respectively on a five point scale) in the analysis of variance while Chilco was ranked more favorably at 2.2. The importance of seating in this correlation and in the previous

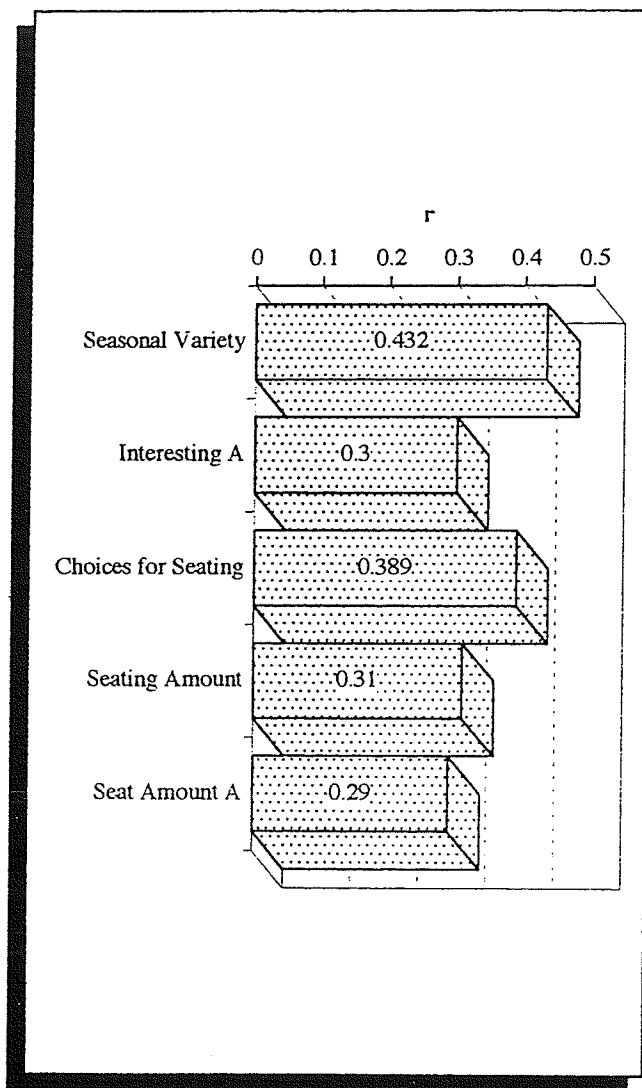


Figure 6.14

DIVERSITY ATTRIBUTES CORRELATED WITH THE PARK IS OF VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

discussion of importance of neighbourhood parks, suggests that people have high expectations and needs for this component of design. Even though there are benches or chairs throughout all the sites this is not sufficient to be considered very well achieved. This importance of seating to people who use public open spaces is also supported in the work of Appleyard and Whyte.

Seasonal variety another attribute relating to diversity correlates significantly with the value to the community. It also ranks higher than the previous correlation to importance to the neighbourhood. If a site has seasonal variety it has a dynamic sense of change over time. Though slightly less important than the activity components it would contribute to people's ability to relax, go into or through the site by themselves, or enjoying sitting and

reading. Seasonal variety should compliment and enhance these activities.

NATURE

Nature components (Figure 6.15) correlating to the park being of value to the community are numerous. When comparing these to the previous discussion of nature relating to importance of neighbourhood parks it is noted that some of

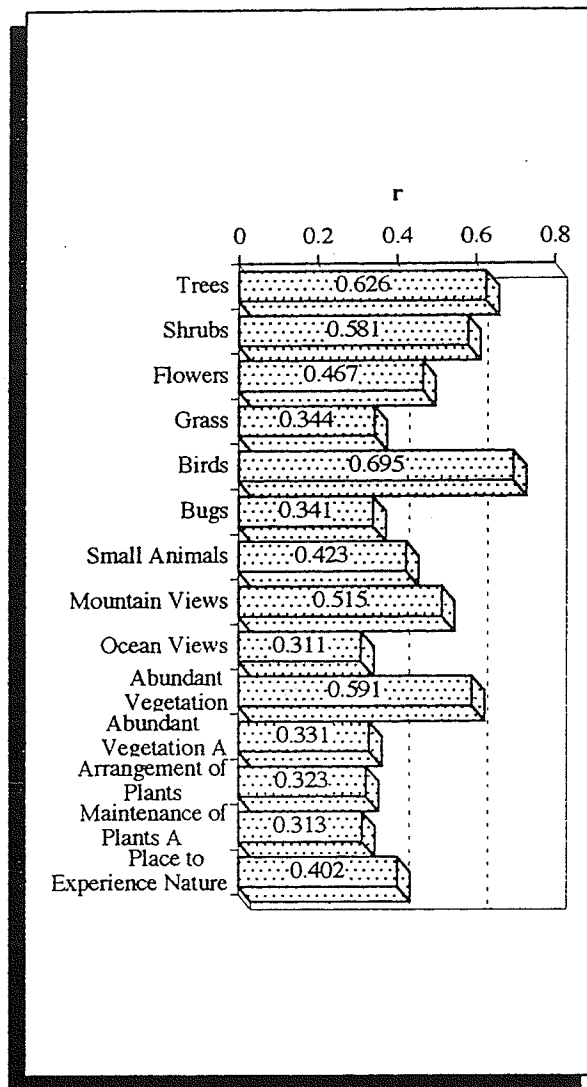


Figure 6.15
CORRELATIONS OF VALUE TO THE
COMMUNITY TO NATURE ATTRIBUTES

the correlations are much stronger. The attribute 'birds' is by far the strongest nature correlation in this analysis. Trees, the next highest correlation, is almost double, but relative to birds is of similar importance. Abundant vegetation is slightly more than the previous correlation and is the third strongest correlation in this graph. Therefore in this new correlation the three strongest correlations relating to nature have only abundant vegetation in common.

There are deletions between the two nature correlations, this one having no water, rocks or water element. The additions include bugs and small animals which shows an appreciation for the entire ecosystem. People recognize a link between live things such as plants and animals with the park as an entity being of value to the community. There were birds, squirrels, cats and skunks at the parks though more prevalent at

Chilco. Comments by respondents and discussions at the site make it apparent that some people feel the primary merit of the park is as a place to visit and watch the animals. One cat at Chilco had been on television and the young boy who told me this story was quick to point out that this cat was a star. Another older lady mentioned that the only reason to go into the park was to visit with the cats. In contrast a young couple felt that they and some of their friends were being forced

away from the area by the odorous skunks which visited the dumpster in the alley and ate the cat food leftovers.

Abundant vegetation is strongly correlated both to the value to the community and the importance of these small neighbourhood parks. This importance of vegetation is reinforced in this correlation with the other correlations which are evident; abundant vegetation achieved, arrangement of plants, and the importance of these open spaces as places to experience nature. Flowers and grass are both correlated to value to the community. A pattern is emerging that there should be trees, shrubs, flowers and grass which are well arranged to create a sense of abundance and a place where nature is found.

Maintenance of the plants as a level of achievement, compared to importance, is an interesting correlation and suggests that if the park is to be of value to the community the plants should be well maintained or they detract from the experience of nature and beauty people are seeking. The analysis of variance suggests that in order from best, at 1.8 in Chilco, to Gilford at 2.5 and the lowest ranking of 3.0 for Bute, maintenance of plants, from ensuring sufficient water to trimming, is important to the value of the open space to the community. Statistically Chilco is significantly better than the other two sites for maintenance of plants. It is interesting that there is diversity in shrubs, trees and annuals, but it is only here that there is grass. In the water shortage experienced in Vancouver last summer when the survey was conducted the vegetation here was not as wilted as the massed vegetation of evergreens at Bute. The grass at Chilco even though very small patches does contribute to the sense of a soothing green refuge and contributes to diversity in vegetation.

The lack of a correlation to questions about more interesting trees and shrubs or greater diversity in plants suggests that the nature attributes people are looking for are the presence of trees, shrubs, flowers and grass in abundance, but not necessarily with great variation within these categories. This fits with diversity as defined earlier where there is an evenness across nature elements as well as within these types. Chilco has some of everything, in contrast to Bute

where there is no grass and an abundance of shrubs and trees.

In the value to community correlation both mountain views and ocean views are significant. These attributes relate to nature, but are also an important part of linkage and legibility. In the West End where there is an abundance of views onto the ocean and out to the mountains these borrowed landscapes form an important part of community identity. It makes sense then

that as features they correlate with small open spaces having value to the community. They are an expression of place and as such if it is possible to incorporate them into these small urban open spaces they give a greater sense of meaning. They also form strong visual references of place enhancing legibility.

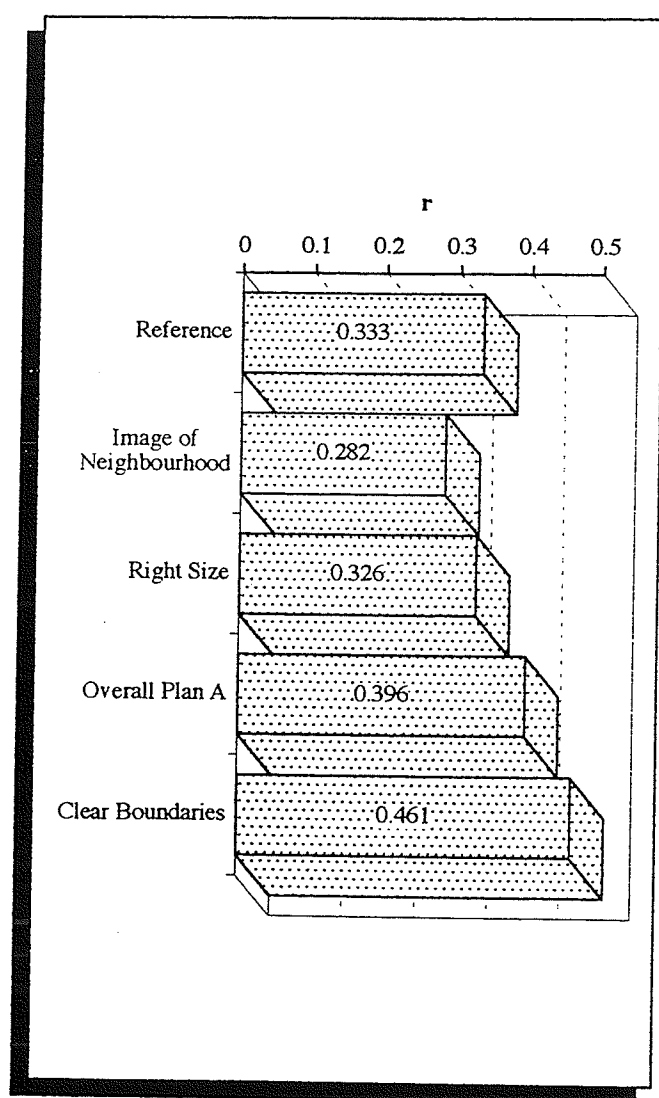


Figure 6.16

LEGIBILITY ATTRIBUTES CORRELATED WITH THE PARK IS OF VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

LEGIBILITY

Correlating to value to the community of these parks are several attributes relating to legibility (Figure 6.16). People who think that these sites contribute to the community also place an importance on the sites as reference points (Question II.9). The park acting as a reference point in the area refers back to the discussion of views out onto the ocean and mountains. They act as reference points from the park. The parks as places to experience

nature and abundant vegetation are distinct in the neighbourhoods, creating reference points. They are the nodes along the paths, places along a continuum between home, work and recreation.

Clear boundaries are also strongly correlated in relation to value to the community. The boundaries establish the sites as distinct places. Boundaries can be established in many ways through vegetation, paving patterns, gateways, bollards, level changes. They should be a distinct change from the adjacent landscape which denotes place. They not only define where place begins and ends, but also contribute to the statement a place makes about its character. The importance of clear boundaries relates to other factors which have correlated. The ability to relax is based partly on knowing where traffic may or may not go, where it is safe to rest and relax. Similarly if boundaries restrict traffic and provide a buffer of vegetation they also reduce noise which facilitates conversation and contact with nature. Clear boundaries provide an important sense of edge. People often choose to linger near the edge and boundaries may form part of the seating or resting components. To act as a reference point clear boundaries make it easier to understand where one is in reference to the place. The place is distinct and as an entity can be imaged more easily if there are clear boundaries.

The correlation between the park being of value to the community and being just the right size, is not as strong though it is statistically significant (Figure 6.16). Similarly the level of achievement for overall plan has a low correlation to the sites value to the community. Regarding these two achieved attributes there are differences between sites. Though Bute and Chilco are both half block sites and Gilford consists of two half block sites, the significant variance was between Chilco and Bute. Chilco has the highest mean, 1.9, on a scale of one (Just the right size) to five (Too small). It would seem then that it is apparent size which is important, not actual dimensions. Chilco has lower houses on one side in contrast to taller apartments on both sides at Bute and Gilford.

People who feel that the parks are of value to the community also think

these sites serve as an image of the neighbourhood. The correlation is not as significant as others, the significant level is at .2. There are differences in ranking between parks with Chilco at 1.5 rating the highest for serving as an image of the neighbourhood. Bute at 2.3 was between fairly well and neutral. Gilford was slightly better than fairly well at 1.8. If the sites better served as

images of the neighbourhoods there would be a higher correlation to their value to the community. Open places can present a positive or negative image about their neighbourhood and it is important to create designs which reflect the cultural values of the communities and contribute in a positive manner to the way people see themselves.

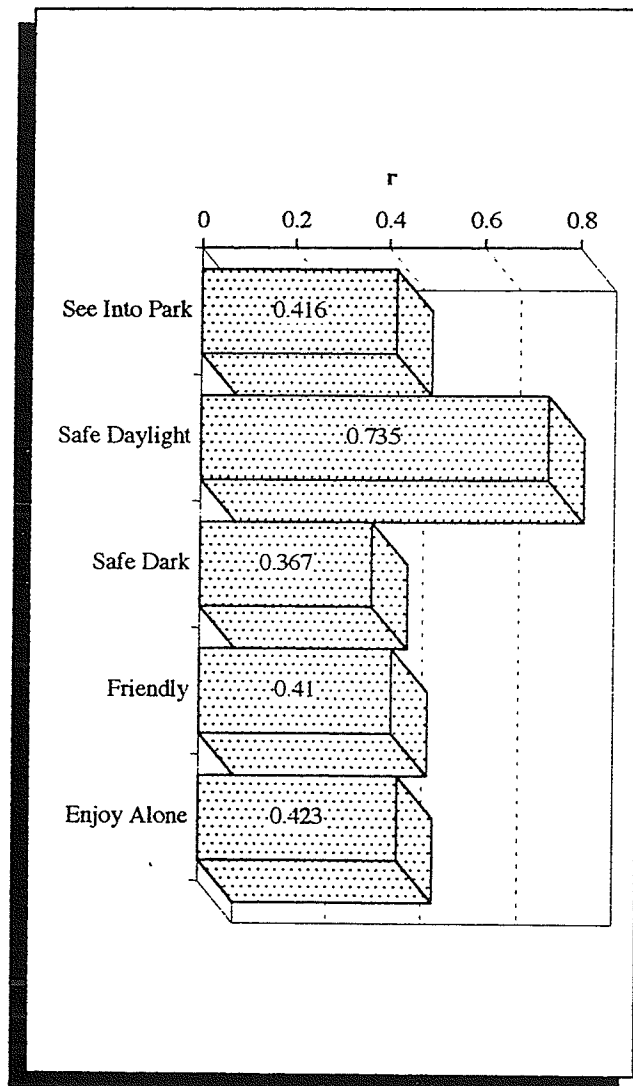


Figure 6.17
SAFETY ATTRIBUTES CORRELATED
WITH THE PARK IS OF VALUE TO
THE COMMUNITY

SAFETY

Safety is very strongly related to the sites being of value to the community (Figure 6.17). In particular, safety during daylight is the most significant attribute in any of these correlations. This factor of safety during the day and at night is also statistically significant in the correlation of importance of having neighbourhood parks. If a site is safe it presents a more positive image of the neighbourhood. Again, expectations are greater for safety during daylight than at night. Other factors relating to safety are the ability to enjoy time alone. Many

people have a preference for enjoying time alone and being able to do this contributes to the value the site has in the community while reflecting safety. Similarly people value being able to see into the park. This enhances linkage and improves informal surveillance, thus safety. A friendly site is one where people feel relaxed and can enjoy informal conversations with acquaintances. Analysis of variance reveals that the sites are most to least friendly from Chilco to Gilford and Bute, though none of them are considered unfriendly. As suggested in the

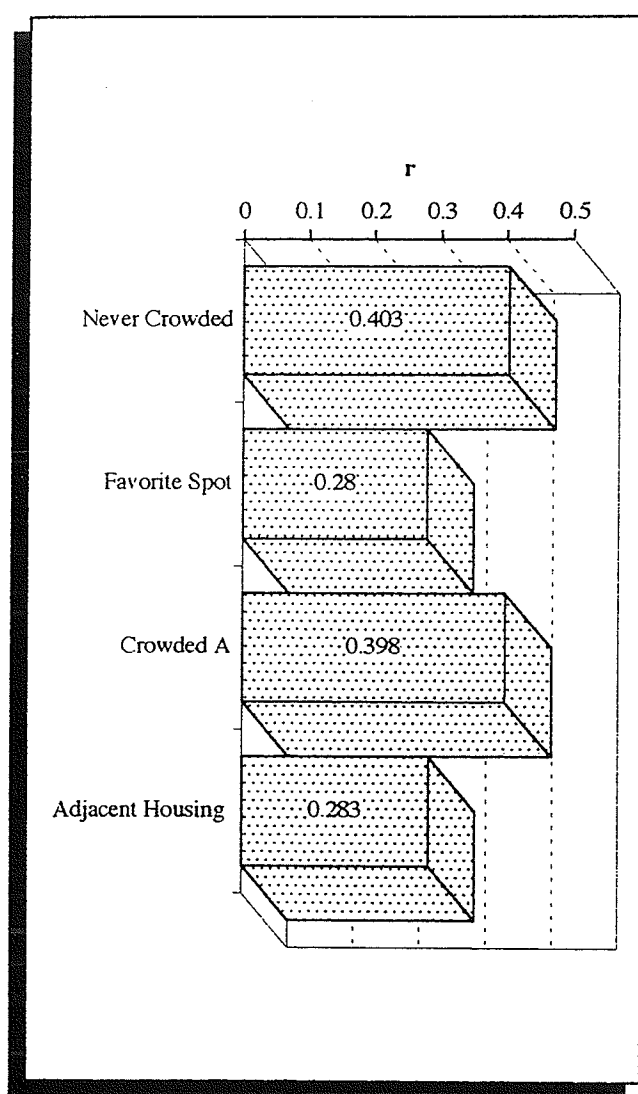


Figure 6.18
TERRITORIALITY ATTRIBUTES
CORRELATED TO THE PARK IS
OF VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

literature these small open spaces in the dense urban environment need to focus as social hubs allowing people an opportunity to express their humanity and interact with their fellow city dwellers on an ad hoc basis. If public open places are to be of value to the community they must be friendly so people are encouraged to interact with each other. These public spaces provide neutral territory for a sense of community to develop through the sharing of common experience. As noted in the City of Vancouver Urban landscape Task Force report¹ if people are outdoors interacting together the neighbourhoods are safer. Neighbourhoods are comprised of people living and working together. It is the opportunities for social interaction which will dispel fears about those around us and create stronger social bonds.

TERRITORIALITY

Territoriality relates to people's sense of ownership of a place and acknowledges their needs to establish their special place in a site (Figure 6.18). People who feel these small urban open spaces have a value to the community also value having their favorite spot to relax at the site. Of greater statistical significance is that the site not be crowded. These two dynamics are interrelated. Crowding is a factor of perception and it is through territorial behavior that people learn to share a space with other people, enhancing their enjoyment and minimizing conflict. A favorite bench may have a series of occupants throughout the day and each may regard this space as theirs. In this way many people may go through or congregate in a place throughout the day, but if the sense of territory is maintained then it will not seem crowded. Diversity in seating and the niches created in sites to reflect the cultural needs of the users will facilitate the complex patterns of circulation and resting.

When asked whether they strongly agreed or disagreed on a five point scale to the statement that adjacent housing intrudes on the park 60% of people disagree, 17.5% agree. Therefore respondents that feel these neighbourhood parks are of value to the community do not feel that the apartment buildings which form such distinct boundaries detract from the parks. They do enhance the strong sense of boundaries, a valued attribute, and increase safety. The windows looking over the parks provide a sense of surveillance which encourages people to act appropriately. They also provide opportunities for direct interaction with people in the sites.

LINKAGE

In the correlation of value to the community and attributes related to linkage the strongest correlation is to the importance of the site being convenient (Figure 6.19). There is also a correlation to the sites having achieved convenience. Similarly there is a strong relationship between the importance of a site acting as a place to pass through and being on route to other places to its value to the community. When asked the degree of agreement to the statement that the site is a place to pass through 67.5% of respondents strongly agree. Jacobs, Lynch

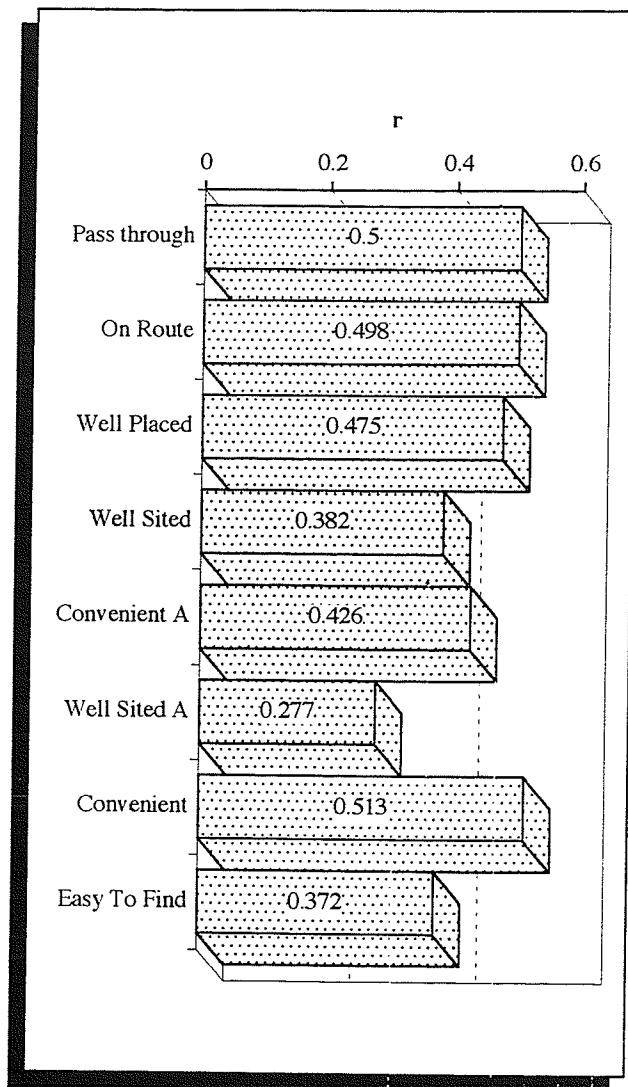


Figure 6.19

LINKAGE ATTRIBUTES CORRELATED WITH THE
PARK IS OF VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

and Norberg-Schulz all reinforce the importance to people of having open spaces which are enroute to a variety of places and conveniently placed. In this strategy for placemaking respondents are indicating that regarding linkage, it is most important to have a site which is convenient and can serve as part of the route to other destinations. If these criteria are met the site should be easy to find, more self revealing than concealed. There is a strong correlation to the importance of the sites being well placed and their level of achievement for placement. 85% of respondents agreed that the park is well placed in the neighbourhood. This coincides with their earlier responses that they pass through the sites on the way to work, leisure and shopping activities.

In contrast, the correlation of the importance of neighbourhood parks with attributes relating to

linkage indicates that only 'well placed' is in common between them. To the people who feel these small neighbourhood parks are of value to the community, versus important to have in general, there is more emphasis placed on the effective linkage of the site. If a site is to be of value to the community, well used and a focus of activity, it should encourage through its placement a natural flow of pedestrian traffic.

SUMMARY

The questionnaires provided extensive information ranging from the demographics of the respondents, their satisfaction with aspects of the three sites under study, things that were important to them in small urban open spaces to the more specific constituent attributes that were significant. The primary focus of this study is to understand which concepts or components are important for a design strategy based on responses from people using small urban open spaces. Therefore this is the nucleus for discussion and due to the limitations of time other aspects are not explored in further.

The types of people that gave us this information were primarily apartment dwellers who rented, slightly more than 56% being male. The majority of people were forty-one years of age or older and had annual incomes between twenty and forty thousand dollars.

Respondents' satisfaction with the sites is generally higher at Chilco and Gilford compared to Bute. At all the sites watching people was an activity, though highest at Chilco. Going to the office was more predominant at Bute.

Despite their dissatisfaction with aspects of each site and the poorer overall rating of Bute, over seventy-six percent of respondents felt that it is important to have neighbourhood parks and that they are of value to the community. There was agreement between respondents at each site for these two general questions.

Correlating these general questions to more specific component attributes both for their importance to respondents and levels of their achievement at each site, provided the basis for in depth study into components for a strategy on placemaking. In summary all seven components of the strategy for design being proposed were found to have some level of importance to respondents. Each of the components; legibility, diversity, nature, territoriality, safety, comfort, linkage, revealed insights into aspects that people value in small urban open spaces. There was general support for the literature discussed in Chapter Three.

Two of the components which revealed the most numerous related attributes were diversity and nature. While these are interrelated there do seem to be some patterns for the priorities that people in these urban environments have for open space design. People have the basic human need to feel safe, particularly during the day when use is greatest. They also would like the space to be attractive and quiet. Convenient access and linkage were valued and all the sites were used as routes to other places, more than as destinations in themselves. Nature is ranked very important with attributes of trees and birds correlated highest to the park being of value to the community. Seating choices plays a role in diversity as does provision for relaxing. People enjoy relaxing, conversing or just sitting while being surrounded by nature and these aspects have been achieved to some degree at all the sites.

The respondents have revealed significant and abundant information about what is important to them in these small urban spaces in the West End of Vancouver. To some extent it reinforces what professionals now consider 'common knowledge' in design because the theories and observations have become so integral to our information. This study has been an opportunity to test some of this knowledge and explore more specific aspects about people's preferences. This will not give us specifics about exactly what to put into a design, or how many linear feet of seating there should be, and one could follow the design strategy and still create a 'bad' design. However it reveals useful information that integrates the theories and concepts around design and helps landscape architects or planners prioritize when they are creating urban open space.

DISCUSSION

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DESIGNING WITH COMPONENTS FOR PLACEMAKING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will synthesize the information presented previously, integrating the information from the literature review, questionnaire analysis, site analysis and observations. The data suggests which components of placemaking and their related attributes are important to people and should be considered integral to placemaking. A design strategy, or plan of action for landscape design, should incorporate all of these components, taking into consideration as many of the attributes as possible. Within the seven general components some specific attributes seem to have more emphasis. This does not mean that if nature has eight attributes, while legibility has only one that the latter is less important. There are some indications that some attributes are more strongly correlated to the general questions of park value and importance to the community, and therefore seem to be more of a priority, but the other attributes are still important attributes for inclusion given the interrelated nature of the design components. In addition to examining correlations, frequency distributions will also be compared to more fully comprehend the complex nature of placemaking. Therefore it is the correlations and frequency distributions discussed previously that form the basis for the design strategy.

One way of looking more closely at the components and attributes of placemaking beginning to comprise the design strategy is to encapsulate them into a visual representation. Figure 7.1 indicates all of the seven general components and their attributes which had a correlation of .40 or greater to the statement that the park is of value to the community. By including only these strongest correlations it focuses on those attributes of most importance yet includes a broad range of information. Given more space and time this diagram could be expanded. In the appendix and tables in Chapter Six all of the attributes are clearly delineated with the corresponding correlations. These correlations are useful for discussion because they generate a wide range of statistically significant attributes relating to the more general list of components. In addition the discussion refers to some attributes which appeared in the

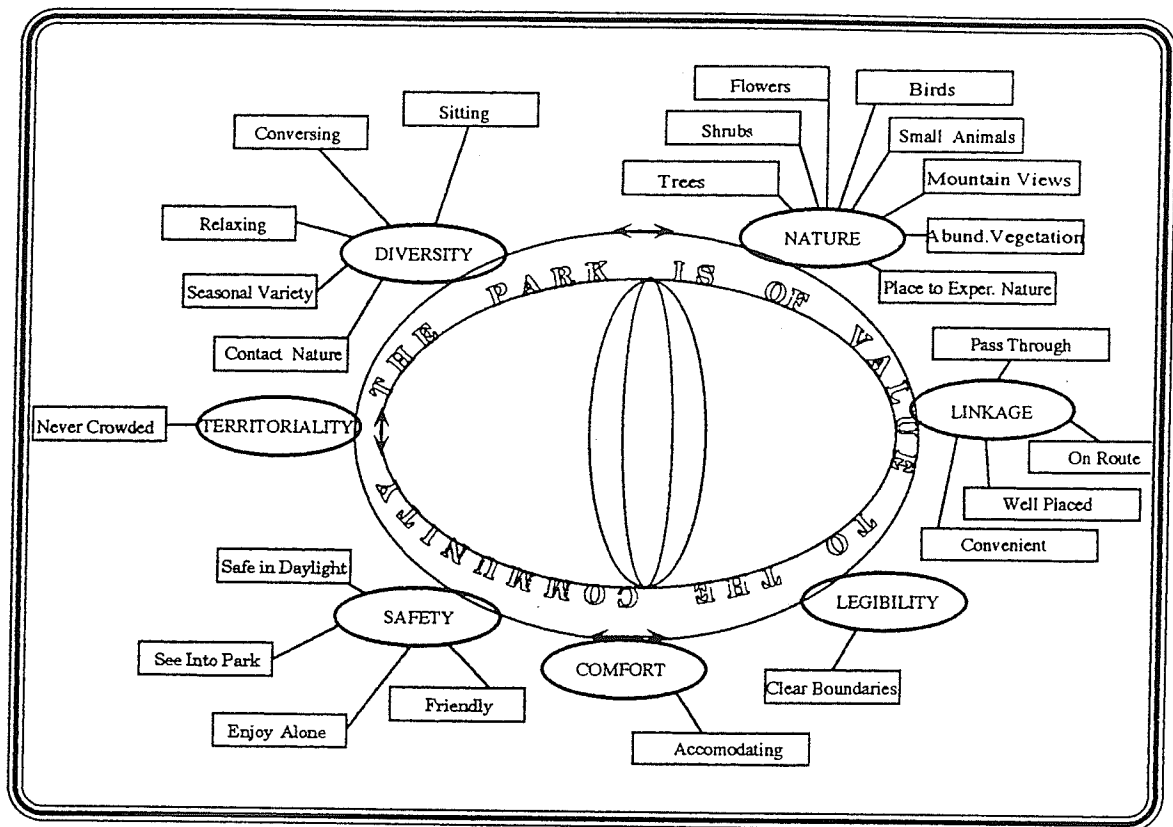


Figure 7.1

PLACEMAKING COMPONENTS AND ATTRIBUTES DIAGRAM

correlations to the question about the importance in general to have neighbourhood parks for the purpose of augmenting the understanding of attributes important in placemaking.

DIVERSITY

Referring to the diagram in Figure 7.1 gives an immediate indication about many of the attributes that are important to people in small urban spaces. There should be diversity; opportunities to experience nature, the sense of the passage of time, and opportunities for different activities. It is interesting that the types of activities people express the most interest in are passive, often spontaneous and involve few if any props. Seasonal variety can be enjoyed by walking through the site, or sitting and closely observing. Diversity attributes which are most valued can be appreciated in many different ways, the individual is in control and

the site is available in a way which enhances one's life. Of these attributes seasonal variety is the highest correlation at .4 (Appendix or Chapter 6). This suggests that seasonal variety is very important to those who feel the park is of value to the community, however it is not to be assumed that this alone would account for diversity.

The diversity in the opportunities to relax and sit could be improved at the sites by providing furniture which could be moved about. Another option would be to provide different types of seating options at each site; for example benches that curve around a corner, circular seating around trees in the middle of the sites, separate chairs alone and in a variety of groupings dispersed through the site, not only around the sides. This would improve all the sites where the furniture is limited to one or two types of seating, and is along the sides. Placing more across the entrances would more clearly mark the boundary and allow more options for watching people.

In the other correlation on the importance of parks seasonal variety is also significant and important overall to sixty-six percent of respondents. One of the highest correlations is to choices for seating locations, felt important by seventy percent of respondents. This would enhance the attributes in diversity of relaxing, conversing and sitting, and reiterates peoples desire for choices to enable control over situations.

Seasonal variety is considered important to a varying degree to sixty-six percent of respondents. Contact with nature is important to eighty-percent of respondents, and perhaps one way this is experienced is through seasonal variations. At Bute where there is more shrub massing and many of these are evergreen there is less of a sense of seasonality beyond the flowers coming into bud. This site could benefit with more perennials and shrubs that change more markedly with the seasons. The trees in all three sites mark spring as they come into leaf and flower however a greater diversity in the trees at each site would enhance diversity throughout the year. The introduction of maples or oaks would incorporate native species and increase fall colour. Separate planters

with herbs at Gilford add a sense of harvest and this idea could be expanded at each site both by adding individual planters with seasonal plants at Bute and by incorporating this concept into the planting beds at all the sites. The oregon grape at Chilco works well because its seasonal and a native species, placing the site in coastal B.C.. Another way to express harvest is to plant fruit trees and have a neighbourhood celebration of harvest. The crabapple 'Thunderchild' has leaves turning from green to plum in spring, delicate pink blossoms, and shiny crabapples which the birds can devour or people can pick.

NATURE

Nature has numerous attributes ranging from different types of plants, abundant vegetation, to some fauna and borrowed landscapes in addition to the concept that the site be a place to experience nature. There is an overlap between nature and diversity. Part of diversity is the expression of seasonality and diverse types of experience including relating to nature. By inference the more diverse the nature attributes, the greater diversity including the opportunity for the site to be a place to experience nature.

While trees, shrubs and mountain views were slightly above or below .60 in the correlation to the park being of value to the community and therefore might be interpreted as having greater importance for inclusion, the sites would not necessarily be a place to experience or be in contact with nature if only these elements were considered. However Kaplan's research did indicate (Chapter Three) that when people rated a range of photographs for preferences of scenes even the inclusion of one tree would enhance the preference rating. Since however the purpose of a design strategy is to optimize the design possibilities using only those attributes of highest priority would neglect other components of the strategy. The study sites would be improved if the available views beyond were better visually linked, for example to English Bay and Stanley Park.

At Gilford this could be achieved by extending the trees in a bosque on the north side leading towards the shore and continuing this strong focus beyond the park along the boulevards. The present boulevard plantings are too amorphous

and inconsistent to create a strong visual link. The north side would have a heightened identity if it took more advantage of this borrowed landscape, improving the nature attributes and linkage. The link to the south side would be strengthened and the visual connection to English Bay improved if this bosque continued through to the south and along the boulevards. The trees could be under planted with shrubs and perennials to heighten this visual statement and offer more diversity. There are native species which have seasonal foliage changes, summer flowers and winter berries to attract wildlife and add winter interest. These would compliment the many hybrids such as rhododendrons, azaleas and hydrangeas existing in the sites. Similar improvements at Chilco would enhance the visual link to English Bay.

At Bute the large leafed *Liriodendron* trees dominate an already shady site. What is needed is a more open, finely articulated tree like the locusts at Gilford to let in more light and contrast with their delicacy to the raised concrete shrub beds. Similarly the predominance of shiny leafed evergreens should be replaced with diverse groupings of deciduous and evergreen shrubs and perennials which give a stronger sense of seasonality. The *Pinus mugo* would be complimented by under plantings of *Polygonatum* or *Galium odoratum* in addition to the ferns and ivy.

While 'bugs' is a lower correlation, its recognition as important for inclusion indicates that people are willing to tolerate even the lowest beings and recognize their importance in the ecosystem. Perhaps this would not be the case in a city in another part of the country where bugs can be a greater source of irritation. In downtown Vancouver where one rarely encounters a mosquito and wasps or bees are uncommon in my experience there is a greater tolerance for insects. Perhaps someone might explore this aspect in more detail in another study. Incorporating plants that attract butterflies would not only enhance the colour of the site, but would attract more wildlife. This type of theme can give a site a unique character, an identity for people to relate to.

Attributes of water and rocks appeared in the correlation to the general importance of parks. Their inclusion in design would enhance diversity and interest. Water features are often used as white noise to cover the sound of traffic and in many new condominium developments are a feature of the centre courtyard. Water can animate the site in unique ways and add a sense of playfulness that might otherwise be missing. Rocks are often used as metaphors for mountains, particularly in oriental and alpine gardens where their inclusion is part of the nature of the site and they speak in abstract ways about nature. Water adds a spiritual dimension as a metaphor for life.

The water feature at Bute is important because it could animate the site and provide a focal point for discussion. People who know Vancouver are also familiar with a similar concept on an expanded scale along the shore in West Vancouver. The knowledge of this other site on the water reminds people at Bute about their relationship to the ocean and gives them another point of orientation on a regional scale.

Water is also effectively used as linkage and diversity, for example in the Moorish garden of Alhambra where it leads the eye from one court to another metamorphosed into numerous forms from narrow channels to formal rectangular ponds and bubbling round basins. This one site alone suggests innumerable design ideas for incorporating water. As part of the design strategy it is another means to enhance diversity while bespeaking the wonders of nature. Water could serve as a visual link along the length of one these small linear sites and provide a reference to the ocean on either side. At Gilford this could be used very effectively and would be another reference between the two sides. Features relating to nature become one way to express linkage as suggested previously. In urban environments where we would like to include nature in the design it is not necessary to be elaborate, but adding trees, shrubs, some greenery or a simple water feature will enhance the environment.

LINKAGE

As indicated in these attributes and the types of activities that people like

to engage in, including using the park to access work and other parks, it follows that it is also a priority for the site to be convenient and available to pass through. By meeting these needs the open space can enhance people's enjoyment of the area and ability to relax. By offering a pleasant place to pass through that is also convenient it enhances people's lifestyle. It is an opportunity to relax and unwind while achieving another goal. As Gehl notes¹ in his observations people prefer places that are the shortest distance to walk, are integrated into a network and are interesting.

Another attribute not shown in the diagram is that the site be easy to find. In addition to adding another nuance to convenient and well placed, it also relates to legibility. A place that is clearly defined and stands as distinct in the site is probably more easily found and imageable. All of these sites are somewhat lost from a distance because we only see ongoing boulevards of trees when viewing cross streets and even when facing the parks there are no gates or archways to announce entry. They are easy to find when you are familiar with the intersections where they are sited, and you might stumble across them when walking through the west-end, but a stronger visual identity leading up to them or marking the entrance would create better visual linkage.

There is good visual linkage into the site from the adjacent apartment buildings with their windows and many entrances facing in. The short length of the sites and their linear nature also ensures good views in from the streets. Being able to see into the sites is important to sixty-seven percent of respondents. This could be further enhanced with balconies into the sites, or having demand goods on the site, such as a coffee bar, which would attract more watchers.

Linkage relates closely to legibility and safety in the design strategy. Jane Jacobs states that encouraging people to pass through sites by siting them well and placing diverse functions around them, including housing where people can see in, will enhance safety while it offers convenient linkage.

That all the study sites are linked to streets certainly facilitates linkage.

Sixty-seven percent of respondents strongly agreed that the sites were on route to other places, and fifty-six percent felt that they were well placed in the neighbourhood. The idea promoted by the community of closing off streets, creating small mini-parks to deter through traffic, has placed the sites on routes convenient for linkage. While this might have been optimized further by basing their placement on a study of pedestrian routes, the linkage of street, housing and open space compliments the urban pedestrian lifestyle. These parks were designed to block traffic and it is beyond the scope of this study to examine the exact location of the sites or the implications in relocating them.

COMFORT

There are several attributes in comfort, but only accommodating fell into the criteria of having a correlation of greater than .40. Other attributes that respondents felt were important were comfortable surroundings, provisions for relaxing, a quiet environment and shade.

The attribute of accommodating different types of people appears in the other correlation on importance of parks and might have also been included under safety. If people are comfortable with the site to the extent that people different to them can also utilize it, they probably feel it is safe.

It is also important to eighty-four percent of respondents that the place have comfortable surroundings. This relates to being able to relax at a place and may reflect the importance of nature as a mediator for comfort. Anne Spirn² attests to the importance of nature elements for mitigating against harsh winds and hot sun. Since shade is part of comfort and appears in both correlations, in marked contrast to the absence of sun, trees may be valued for several reasons including shade.

The unattractive immovable furniture at Gilford and Bute does little for comfort. Chairs and benches with backs and armrests designed for aesthetics and ergonomics would be more likely to attract people to stay longer. The bench designs at Bute are more attractive, but there are no chairs.

LEGIBILITY

Clear boundaries stand out as important for small urban spaces. This contributes to safety, clearly defining the exclusion of vehicular traffic, and enhancing the existential thereness. Having these nodes on a pedestrian route contributes to the imageability of place, creating a sense of here and there. That the site be a reference point was also important and this is more successfully achieved if the boundaries are clearly marked. Alexander suggests planting trees in bosques or groves, forming enclosure to create rooms or spaces, with interconnecting elements.³

Clear boundaries involve stating edge in numerous ways; paving pattern changes, vegetation, built elements, furniture, colour, grade changes or signage for example. The signs present, the traffic symbol for do not enter, are harsh and authoritarian. The addition of bicycle racks at each entry, attractive bollards which could function as seating or leaning posts, benches or chairs in groups, vegetation carried across the site, would all serve as signs of edge. The interlocking paving does serve that purpose now, but this should be extended across the roads for pedestrian walks as a sign to drivers that they are approaching a pedestrian area. The paving could also vary at the entrance to the site marking entry. To people who are visually impaired this type of surface change is important for way-finding. A gateway or archway at entry would also serve to establish clear boundaries, celebrating entry and perhaps denoting the particular theme, character or name of the park in addition to being more distinct from a distance. Currently there is no sense of name for the sites other than their identity as intersections, neglecting a valuable opportunity for celebrating a community feature, historical event, or person, enhancing the sense of place and proprietary interest.

SAFETY

Safety during the daylight stands out in the correlation to the value to the community at .735. Factors which contribute to safety such as visual links and people passing through the site have been addressed as they relate to linkage,

comfort, and nature. The sites now are considered safe during the day by approximately ninety percent of people. Bute was considered the least safe, Chilco the most safe. Only fifty-two percent of people at all sites considered them safe after dark. Although expectations for safety after dark were much less, perhaps by making the sites more a focal point for informal activity safety would be better at all times of day.

Jan Gehl⁴ found that people tended to stay longer in an area when there were other people present already, activity creates more activity. The wildlife and cats attracts some people to Chilco. Perhaps exploring this interest more by creating specific pet areas or planting flowers to attract birds or butterflies would encourage people to stay longer and develop acquaintances in the area. In Bute the water feature offers a focal point for people to gather and talk. Moveable seating might encourage people to bring a coffee or snack and stay longer. The edges where people like to linger have little opportunity for choice to lean or rest other than sitting on the planter edges which are very low and are cold concrete. Buskers or vendors during certain times would fit with the more urbane location and could serve as demand goods. At Gilford the restaurant enhances safety by increasing peoples presence over a longer time, but since this is aggravating some residents in the vicinity perhaps a good will gesture such as limiting the hours slightly and providing a coffee service in the site would attract more people and enhance the comradely between frequent users.

Safety from vehicular traffic is already ensured by the narrow streets, which slow traffic and the separation from car and pedestrians in the sites. There is the advantage of having car circulation adjacent, but not competing for space. There are other types of circulation through the park including bicycle and wheelchair traffic though this is minimal.

TERRITORIALITY

The most significant territorial attribute was that the site never be too crowded. It is important to seventy-six percent of respondents that the site not feel crowded (question III.1). The success for achieved overall for the three parks

was eighty percent and respondents also felt that the sites accommodated different types of people. Only fifty percent of respondents felt that their park had a favorite spot to sit, but it is unclear whether this relates to the poor seating, poor placement of seating, or lack of clear territorial definition. Some people did verbally state that they had their seat which they liked to sit in regularly for a short time each day.

It was mentioned that some street people slept on some of the benches, but they usually left when anyone entered and stayed in the parks. If the seating and options for lingering were enhanced as mentioned previously it would improve other factors related to territoriality. That the site not be crowded is important to respondents, whether it is or not is a matter of subjective judgment. Currently most people pass through the site and the centre walkway is public space so territoriality is less of an issue than it might be in a different situation. At Chilco the site rated the most successful overall there were the least number of people passing through at any one time and this certainly reduces the concern about crowding.

When designing for territoriality it is important to ensure that all the site resting and lingering niches are well designed so that people of lower status are not relegated to unsafe uncomfortable corners. By designing for diversity, safety and comfort people's needs for territoriality will be able to met. Currently with the lack of opportunities for linger and all the seating adjacent the periphery of the sites there is limited choice to establish a territory that meets peoples needs for comfort and safety. Through diversity there would be varied opportunities for sun and shade, watching people from different vantage points, sitting quietly alone or passing through the site unhindered.

SUMMARY

The primary focus for this research is to distill a list of components integral for placemaking based on responses from people using these urban outdoor public spaces. As a part of this process the relationships between components

and the attributes which are most important to people are explored. The process of distilling a list of components consisted of initially selecting factors to consider based on theory, concepts, research and observations in the literature and then evolving a questionnaire which would examine aspects of these components in a way that people could understand. The results of the questionnaire have been discussed and statistical techniques of correlational analysis and frequency distribution have revealed which attributes people valued more in their responses, and confirm that all the components delineated are interrelated and are important for inclusion in design considerations.

The diagram (Figure 7.1) illustrates all of the components and many of the attributes which people value in urban open space design. This is the middle ground, that all these attributes be included in design. Depending on what aspect of the component one considers, attributes may be in one or more components. There are numerous attributes for the component of nature ranging from mountains to small animals, and this in itself involves diversity. Similarly being able to see into the park relates strongly to safety, but is also an attribute relating to linkage. This research does suggest a starting point for design and further research into placemaking. The strategy puts forth seven components which respondents have supported as being important in small urban open spaces, and has further articulated specific attributes or characteristics which constitute these components. This gives designers and planners information on which to make decisions, including studying some of these ideas further.

¹ Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987).

² Anne Whiston Spirn, *The Granite Garden* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1984).

³ Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein, *A Pattern Language*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

⁴ Jan Gehl, *Life Between Buildings* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1987).

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SUMMARY

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WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?

The process of trying to delineate a design strategy for placemaking began by examining literature on theory, concepts and observations about placemaking, particularly relating to small urban open spaces. This process implied that the information could be tested, and that this testing would lead to conclusions about factors people value in urban open spaces. The questionnaire was developed on this basis utilizing information that was generally given support by several authors and deemed to be good research by people in the profession of landscape architecture. There was little information that integrated and tested this body of knowledge so that this design strategy is seen not as testing an existing study, but as a starting point for further examination.

As I worked with the research, statistics and theory and began to generate some conclusions as the design strategy evolved I reflected on what all this means and where it leads. The questionnaire was able to generate much more information beyond the scope and resources of this thesis. It is not the culmination of research but begins a process of investigation made possible by the research. The design strategy as outlined in the previous chapter can be utilized in various ways depending on the agenda of the designer, resource constraints and philosophical approach.

One could go through the spreadsheet in the appendix and with the push of a sort command arrange all the attributes in order from large to small. This would supply numbers which could justify some design decisions, but overlooks the basic concept that each attribute and component are interdependent, and design is more than just numbers. While this study was approached from an empirical perspective, outlining an hypothesis and attempting to prove it, there is still art and magic in any medium where people are involved. Human beings by their very nature are unpredictable and one cannot study one to determine the behavior of all the rest, though there are some recognizable patterns. This design strategy gives direction and support for people who are striving to create environments which go beyond the minimum requirements. It reinforces much of the research and studies made previously and tries to link this information

into a whole which can be understood and accessed easily. It takes general concepts and theories linking them with some means of application, but it still relies on the ability of the landscape architect to create good design that fuses art and basic needs into a form which elevates people's lives.

The design strategy is a starting point for people to use as a resource list, a reminder of what to include and some suggestions for how this might be done. It gives a starting point and a guideline that indicates visually the importance of remembering that changing one attribute could have a detrimental or positive effect on another. Professionals in the landscape and planning profession have been talking about many of these ideas for years. This integrated strategy serves as a focus for brainstorming about how to include all the components for placemaking keeping in mind which attributes these respondents valued the most. It is an opportunity to let our creativity explore new ideas and means for resolving conflicts that arise when selecting and designing for a site or dealing with limitations presented.

WHERE DOES ALL THIS LEAD?

Examining placemaking to understand how to apply everything people need and want in urban open space is an ongoing process. Different researchers have approached it in numerous ways from observations to empirical studies and theories about human behavior. This thesis is a small part in that process and while it is hoped that people will apply it in design, it is even more important that they personalize it based on their own experiences with varying sites and cultural communities.

Usually any research initiates as many questions as it answers. This would seem to be true in this case as well. People will continue to present information from many disciplines which impact on landscape design. Drawing this information together is naturally selective due to one's limited ability to handle information and biases which one might not even recognize. As new information is presented it could be compared to the design strategy to assess if it fits with

what is already there, should be incorporated, or challenges some of the information and suggests new ideas to explore.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE EXAMINED FURTHER?

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The questionnaire, site observations and inventory garnered much more information beyond the time and resources of this thesis. There are numerous questions that are raised as a result of this study and information that could be investigated based on the data collected to date.

Some of the issues that deserve further exploration relate specifically to gender and urban open space. Are women consistently different in their responses than men, or are there specific areas such as has been suggested relating to safety where there are significant differences. Do age and gender create substantial differences in needs for open space, and what are these requirements? Some of this information is available in the statistics generated by this study but due to limitations of resources could not be explored as fully as it would merit.

As Vancouver continues to experience rapid growth it is important to optimize the available open spaces which may be undifferentiated and underused. Another direction to take this research would be how could the design strategy be applied to existing or potential sites to create a network of places which enhance the city?

There is a considerable body of information giving very specific guidelines about attributes relating to placemaking. Relating back to the design strategy how could these guidelines be further researched to give greater understanding about attributes people value. For example, seating choices and seating locations are both important to people as suggested in the design strategy, how do people make these choices, which other related factors are important such as shade, edge conditions, seating amount, seating groupings, furniture style?

While demand goods such as food or news vendors attract people to a place, they can also be annoying to the residents who live nearby or overlook the space. How do we balance having demand goods to make a place well trafficked and safe without disturbing other people who share the space? Perhaps more information about the nuances of demand goods, what attracts people in today's cities, if safety is only a priority during the day, do we need demand goods after dark? While the sites in this study were selected for their context in a residential setting, what are the effects of different contexts on the design strategy?

There are many more questions relating to nature. Abundant vegetation appears to be more valued than other nature attributes, however do people differentiate between cultivars and native species, is the setting for different plants important? As we move to more ecologically appropriate landscapes that utilize less resources how can we provide what people enjoy, such as grassy areas, in ways that work with rather than against nature? The response to insects as being important in nature attributes suggests that people are environmentally aware, but the term 'bugs' comprises a very general category. What types of insects do people think are appropriate in exterior landscapes, to what extent are they willing to tolerate a diversity of insects, how important is it to have habitats for butterflies, bees, moths, and how do we co-exist with them?

It was beyond the scope of this study to redesign the sites under study, however that is the next logical step in exploring the application of the design strategy. Suggestions have been put forth about the types of changes that could ameliorate some of the less successful aspects of each site, what type of expressions would these take?

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Another logical step would be to significantly trim the questionnaire based on the attributes and components of the strategy people expressed as being important, and test more sites. Alternatively the survey could be modified to examine more closely issues of nature, seating or gender for example.

The data collected in this study can be utilized to run more analysis on many of

these questions or others that may arise.

CONCLUSIONS

Landscape architecture seldom presents opportunities to be involved in all the decisions around site selection and design. Struggling with understanding placemaking contributes to the designers ability to make the available decisions well and the compromises work to the best advantage possible. It is hoped that by revealing the components and attributes important in placemaking information on which to make informed decisions is available. The research here is part of the process of trying to understand the essential elements of placemaking and means to incorporate them in design, both to answer some questions and pose new ones.

"Theory explains the complex relationship of built work and its world---physical, intellectual, social---and can motivate designers to consider their role in this complex interaction,"..."theory is not an enterprise outside the realm of practice for the intelligentsia. It is an enabling body of knowledge for design and for explaining design." Elizabeth Meyer, ASLA. Landscape Architecture, March 1992, p.45.

Landscape architecture seldom presents opportunities to be involved in all the decisions around site selection and design. Struggling with understanding placemaking contributes to the designers ability to make the available decisions well and the compromises work to the best advantage possible. It is hoped that the design strategy devised here is part of that process both to answer some questions and pose new ones.

SITE DATA

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SITE INVENTORY and OBSERVATIONS**Gilford/Haro Park**

Number	Type of Item
3	Benches with backs, no armrests, very chunky style.
2	Round tables with four 'chairs' ea., round, no backs.
8	Round, exposed aggregate planters, 16" high, 3 diam.
2	Round, exposed aggregate planters, 16" high, 5'diam.
2	Bowl type exp. aggreg. planters
1	Large raised planter/ramp
1	Wood gazebo - plain design, no seating.
1	Information Kiosk - full, but with space for more posters, appears current.
Light leaf litter, looks swept, no papers, cigarettes.....	
No garbage can.	
2	Ash Tray -exposed aggregate/sand
3	Light Standards - period style
1	Fire hydrant
3	Newspaper boxes: Globe, Sun, Province.
1	Mail box, curbside on Haro.

Notes: seasonal colour: basil and santolina in planter near restaurant, impatient in shade area, marigolds and pansies in planters plus others. Stores are within 3 blocks - Safeway etc. Near community centre and school. w/c accessible.

Gilford/Haro Park North Side

Number	Type of Item
3	Table/chair combinations, one table top missing.
2	Benches - chunky style
2	Light standards - period style
1	Slightly raised edge planter/grass area
1	Drinking fountain
1	Ash tray
2	Round, exposed aggregate planters, 16" high, 3' diam.

Notes: The cherry trees provide dappled shade and full shade mix at 11:35 Aug. 13th. w/c accessible.

Observations June 30, 1992 11:57 - 12:07

1 street person asleep on bench

2 bicyclists

20 people walking through

Chilco/Comox Park

Number	Type of Item
4	Round, exposed aggregate planters, 16" high, 3' diam.
3	Round, exposed aggregate planters, 16" high, 5' diam.
2	Round tables with four 'chairs' ea., round, no backs.
2	Chunky benches, no arm rests
2	Ash tray - exp. aggreg/sand
3	Lamp standards - period style
1	Green street light - S. end.
1	Drinking fountain

Leaf litter, cigarette butts particularly in NE corner near table under tree.

Notes: Seasonal flowers and vines in planters.

Plant colour August: Photonia - red, oregon grape, berries, lacecap hydrangea - blue, fuschia bush -red. Four cherry trees provided dappled shade across the park. Heavy shade over all tables at 12:00 noon, and two benches were very hot

in full sun.

Homeowners have cleared litter adjacent house, but not put in any seasonal flowers or new plants. The area is bare except for hosta and ferns on park edge.

Bike chained across alley to sign post indicates a need for bike racks.

No one is sitting, except for cats. Windows in adjacent Erickson building are predominantly open.

w/c accessible.

Observation Tuesday June 30 12:35 - 12:45

4 Cats - are up to 16 reported

No one was in the park initially. 11 people walked through, two bicyclist. Very quiet.

Bute/Haro Park

Number	Type of Item
1	Drinking fountain
2	Ash tray - exp. aggreg/sand
7	Benches with Backs and Armrest. 2 alone at either end, 2 grouped. tog., 3 grouped tog.,
1	Garbage can, black.
1	Water feature - non-operational
3	Tall green each with 2 lights.
1	Bike rack - 3 bikes
1	Information kiosk - crowded, messy.

Litter of cigarette butts, dried leaves everywhere, unswept appearance, small pieces of paper, 1 sherry bottle (Andres Almond Cream), Napkin, fork, ash.

Notes: Full sun at North entrance, and on one bench at 11:20 am August 13th. Plants generally green even with summer water shortage (rhodos, hydrangea, ferns, ivy, hosta, Japanese maple, Viburnum davidii - heavily shaded). No annuals, only hydrangea flowering - blue.

Nearby large tower (845 Bute) 210 Bed seniors centre, B.C. Ministry of Health.

Traffic Engineering Record Tuesday Sept. 1992 Haro East of Bute
24 hour period: East 2300 vehicles, West 890 vehicles.

7am - 6pm: East 1643 vehicles, West 576 vehicles.

Observation: June 30, 1992. 11:15 - 11:25

2 ladies seated, 1 person used water fountain, three punkers seated, one car drove in, unpacked, left. 61 people walked through, 1 bicyclist. Only one person was a child, and one biker type person observed me for about a minute.

INITIAL IMPRESSIONS

Bute/Haro Park

Just off Robson Street, turn up Bute, and walk past shops; the Bread Garden restaurant sidewalk tables, an ice cream shop, restaurants, sidewalks busy with people. Punkers are in one seat area near the bike racks of the park. People pass through with purposeful airs, sometimes exchanging greetings. A street person rises from his sleep on the south bench, gathers his belongings and moves off. Age and dress stretches a wide gamut from three piece suits and brief cases, students with books tourists, and people carrying home groceries. Two ladies sit exchanging conversation in serious muted tones over bag lunches.

The park is a small shady passage between Bute and the busy commercial world. It interrupts the vehicular traffic and forms a transition between a dense residential apartment area and a dense urban commercial area. This area of the West End is known for the interesting shops, nearby library and hotels. It is an area where the parties are louder and the apartments less than pristine. The building to the east is an older apartment building filled with younger people, perhaps students, coming and going periodically. In contrast the building opposite forming the west boundary is much newer and an older lady watches me warily from her living room as I take pictures of the park.

Gilford/Haro Park

After driving for several minutes in search of a parking spot I am finally successful and park on Chilco just off Haro. I stroll up the gentle slope past some construction, numerous old and new apartment buildings, under green tree canopies until abreast the canopy of the Buchan hotel where a recessed bench nearby makes the presence of the park more felt. The kiosk abreast the sidewalk encourages me to slow and read the small posters and handwritten notes. I turn towards the south catching a glimpse of the view beyond. People are talking loudly in a small anti-room of the hotel walled in by a hedge while they sip coffee and enjoy the sunshine. The gazebo looks particularly out of place next to the ramp away from the patio anti-room, not offering any seating, lacking any decoration or appealing characteristics. I continue past and am impressed by the splashes of colour; yellow flowering vines, the intense blue-purple California lilac, and abundant green shades and textures. People smile and nod as they pass on their way to or from shopping, strolls or whatever their mission is that day. An older lady and I exchange greetings and discuss the pleasant environment. She suggests that if my interest is these small West End parks I should explore the site on Chilco nearby which is less complex, but similar in nature. She reveals that she lives in an apartment nearby and that some buildings have adult only requirements. She lists the merit of this location with shopping nearby, particularly Safeway only three blocks, and buses as well as other conveniences. She finds the area quiet and generally safe. Three older gentlemen have quietly over an interval of ten minutes gathered at one of the benches and are settling into familiar conversation. Across the road someone is stretched out suntanning on the patch of grass facing us. There is a sense of tranquility and harmony as I stroll away towards Chilco.

Chilco/Comox Park

This park is indeed only two blocks away from the Gilford site but is much simpler though of similar size. Comox is dissected by the park for vehicular

traffic which can turn down an alley.

As I approach there are two fathers chatting in the middle of the park while their young children harass a cat. They have no objections of my taking a photograph and the children are much too distracted with their hunt to pay more than cursory attention. One child decides he is more interested in continuing to ride his tricycle on the pavers.

The cherry trees provide dappled shade across the central path and focus my view towards the water beyond. The apartment building on the west is a clear crisp white and people enter or leave at regular intervals. Some windows are open, though no one calls out or can be seen peering out. The rhododendrons are still in bloom and provide magnificent colour in addition to the other colours and textures of the surrounding shrubs. Though there are houses to the east the occupants express little interest in gardening with general indications of ignoring any fallen leaves and total absence of any special treatments in the garden. There is a ramp leading to one door of the duplex and perhaps the handicapped occupant is unable to garden.

Cats continue to frolic and one of the fathers tells me that the cats are well known in the area. One of the residents in the house brings them home from the SPCA and encourages people passing through the park to adopt them. One cat was even featured on the TV when the news heard the story earlier in the year. There are also tales of skunks frequenting the area. These urban scavengers live off of cat leftovers and the dumpsters which are in all the alley ways. There is no sign of disapproval from this small group, but rather a sense of pride at living in such a special neighbourhood.

Later I learn that the white crisp apartment building was designed by renown Canadian architect Arthur Erickson, and the large low windows are a feature which greatly enhance the interior allowing light in and excellent views out. This small park may not be as busy as Bute or as colourful as Gilford, but it is has a quiet flavor all it's own.

NEWSPAPER STORIES AND REPORT EXCERPT

We would support a program of environmental improvement which would include increased landscaping of apartments and the creation of garden apartments with recreational developments for tenants, expansion of tree planting and encouragement of pedestrian facilities and walk ways, and the reduction of through traffic in the area.

Trees and boulevards are two of the West End's few environmental assets, therefore, all trees should be kept and the streets should be retained at their present width which, in most cases, is 24 ft. wide.

Report on Submissions Downtown Development Concepts, Department of Planning and Civic Development, February, 1971.

Wider streets still on agenda

On another West End matter, Lynn Uibel and Barbara Lindsay of the West End team reported that council next month will be asked to approve a modified program of three mini-parks, new sidewalks, pavement and curbs. Two mini-parks have been eliminated and three street end parks have been dropped because of neighborhood opposition, traffic problems and lack of funds, they said.

Mini-parks will be built at Chilco and Comox, Haro and Lagoon, Haro and Gilford and Robson and Chilco.

But the two planning team members said brick-like sidewalks, trees, benches and other features designed to produce eventually a total West End pedestrian system are essential elements of the present plan.

The Province, March 11, 1974.

Leave roads as is-Council

West End streets should remain at their present widths, city council said after a lengthy debate Tuesday night.

The city engineering department had sought approval of a plan to widen local access streets to 27 feet from 24 feet and to increase the width of selected blocks of Robson and Nelson.

The Province, January 16, 1971

Urban park okayed

Park board Monday night approved an urban type park in Vancouver's West End that will preserve some of the finest turn-of-the-century houses and green space.

The square block site is located in the 1400 block Barclay and was proposed by the Community Arts Council and the Historical Society of Vancouver.

The proposal is to preserve the character of early 20th-century architecture, and "provide relief in a maze of steel and concrete towers."

The Province, March 4, 1980.

Fire department opposes more mini-parks

The Vancouver fire department opposes city council's plan to transform more West End intersections into mini-parks because the parks would impede fire trucks travelling to the scene of an emergency, deputy chief Alex Turkington said Wednesday.

Council's approval in principle Tuesday of the mini-parks went against the advice of the engineering department, which said the parks will make travel for West Enders more frustrating and impede emergency vehicles.

The parks, which may permit passage of emergency vehicles, would be placed at intersections yet to be chosen east of Denman.

Vancouver Sun, June 19, 1980

More West End mini-parks OK'd

Residents of Vancouver's populous WestEnd won agreement from city council Tuesday to transform more intersections into mini-parks, a move which some aldermen and city planners predict will create an unprecedented traffic snarl.

But the West Enders believe that turning streets into parks will make the densely populated area a more agreeable place to live.

The mini-parks, which may permit passage by emergency vehicles, would be placed in intersections yet to be chosen east of Denman. In the early 1970's mini-parks were installed west of Denman to deter through traffic.

Vancouver Sun, June 18, 1980

Down on Denman, summer nights are a noisy kaleidoscope

See, the mark of the genuine Big City is the show it sages on its night-time streets, the street action that springs up when the sun goes down, and south Denman is as heady and flashy and full-spectrum as any you might wish to find on the continent.

To qualify for Big City status, however, certain criteria must be met, and the first rule is that the sidewalks should be filled with people. (Lots of cars on the street is good, too, but it is the sidewalk scene that really counts.) On this Tuesday night, the night before the fireworks, the sidewalks of south Denman are jammed.

....Which brings us to rule three. There must be a place to sit as well as a place to walk. Denman has scads of eateries with sidewalk seating. the big tipoff that this is a Big City scene is that all of the chairs and their occupants have their backs to the storefronts and face the sidewalk. If the seats were evenly grouped around tables, this would be a tourist area. All facing outward means people want to see who's passing in the parade, want to be seen doing it.

QUESTIONNAIRE

&

STATISTICS

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FREQUENCY IN QUESTIONNAIRE*

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your ideas about what you think is important in small urban parks is needed for this research. The attached survey is part of a study of small urban parks in Vancouver's West End being conducted for a master's thesis in landscape architecture. This is an independant survey and there are currently no plans to redesign the park. Most questions require only a check mark in the box that indicates your response.

Significant population growth is placing greater demands on Vancouver city. The challenge is to create a city which can accomodate these demands while creating a humane, vibrant environment which meets people's needs and enhances their quality of life. There are a number of theories which suggest ideas for the types of outdoor spaces people enjoy. The purpose of this research is to ask the people using small urban parks what they think about these spaces and some of the ideas behind them. Your survey will become a part of that body of information which will lead to suggestions for the future design and planning of small neighbourhood parks.

The survey is being distributed based on a random sampling of people at each of the three West End parks. All responses are completely anonymous and will be tabulated into statistical information. If you have questions regarding this survey, please contact the Landscape Architecture Program at the University of British Columbia, 822-3786. *

Your help in this research endeavor is greatly appreciated. Please take some time now to complete and return this information.

Thank you!

CPB

Note: The survey must be TAPED closed for the post office to process its return.

II. GENERAL QUESTIONS -----

1. How much do each of the following items represent nature in the city to you? Circle your answers.

	<u>Very significantly</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	
Trees	85.00	10.00	1.25	3.75	0
Shrubs	61.25	22.50	6.25	10.00	0
Water	60.00	13.75	15.00	8.75	2.5
Rocks	28.75	27.50	21.25	20.00	2.50
Flowers	68.75	18.75	5.00	7.50	0
Grass areas	53.75	18.75	16.25	10.00	1.25
Birds	76.25	13.75	2.50	7.50	0
Bugs	27.5	25.0	22.5	18.75	6.25
Small animals	47.5	21.25	13.75	11.25	6.25
Mountain Views	60.00	12.50	18.75	7.5	1.25
Ocean Views	62.5	13.75	16.25	6.25	1.25
Other	-	-	-	-	-

2. How important is it in general to have neighbourhood parks?

76.25% Very Important 22.50% Important 1.25% Neither 0% Unimportant 0% Very unimportant

*Format revised to publish.

III. Gilford/Haro MINI-PARK in the NEIGHBOURHOOD

These questions relate to the more general nature of the park and its location in the West End.

1. Indicate the approximate frequency you use Gilford/Haro Mini Park in varying weather throughout the year.
 COOL, DAMP WEATHER 10% Never 13.75% Few times a year 27.5% Few times a month 20.0% Weekly 28.75% Daily
 SUNNY, DRY WEATHER 5.0% Never 15.0% Few times a year 12.5% Few times a month 28.75% Weekly 38.75% Daily
 2. When you go to the park, do you usually go with?
 73.75% Yourself 16.25% A friend 2.5% A group of friends 6.25% Your family 1.25% Other
 3. Overall, how does this park compare to other parks in your neighbourhood?
 Gilford/Haro is : 15.0% Much Better 27.5% Better 40.0% Same 13.75% Worse 3.75% Much Worse
 4. How do you reach the park? % Yes.
 96.25 Walk 12.50 Bicycle 1.25 Car 2.5 Motorcycle - Other
 5. Do you pass through the park on the way to any of the following places? % Yes
 36.25 Restaurants/Bars 26.25 Offices 51.25 Stores 33.75 Your employment 33.75 Friend's
 27.50 Beach 73.75 Other parks 56.25 Other places
 6. Is there a time during which you avoid the park? 38.75% - YES 61.25% - NO
 % Yes: 5.0% - 5 am - 12 noon 7.5% - 12 noon - 5 pm 16.25% - 5 pm - 12 midnight 40.0% - 12 midnight - 5 am
 7. How long have you been going to or through this park?
 22.5% - 2 years or less. 37.5% - 3-5yrs. 17.5% - 6-10 yrs. 22.5% - greater than 10 years
 8. During this time how has it changed?
 11.25% Much better 31.25% A little better 48.75% Same 7.5% Worse 1.25% Much worse
 9. Here are some characteristics related to the location of the park. Please rate how you feel about each of the following relating to Gilford/Haro mini-park.
- | | %Strongly Agree | | | %Strongly Disagree | |
|---|-----------------|-------|-------|--------------------|------|
| It's a place to go to. | 25.00 | 32.50 | 23.75 | 10.00 | 8.75 |
| It's a place to pass through. | 67.50 | 17.50 | 12.50 | 2.50 | 0 |
| It's on route to other places. | 67.50 | 18.75 | 11.25 | 2.50 | 0 |
| The entrances are clearly indicated. | 47.50 | 23.75 | 22.50 | 2.50 | 3.75 |
| The park is well placed in the neighbourhood. | 56.25 | 26.25 | 10.00 | 5.00 | 2.50 |
| The park acts as a reference point in the area. | 36.25 | 3.00 | 22.50 | 11.25 | 0 |
| Its good that people from nearby buildings can easily see what's happening in the park. | 45.00 | 28.75 | 20.00 | 3.75 | 2.50 |
10. How well does this park serve as an image of the neighbourhood?
 43.75% Very well 37.50% Fairly well 12.50% Neutral 3.75% Poorly 2.50% Very poorly
 11. How much do you like this park?
 55.00% Very much 31.25% Fairly well 8.75% Neutral 2.50% Not much 2.50% Not at all

- III. VISITING Gilford/Haro MINI-PARK** These questions relate to which characteristics in a park are important to you and how you assess these characteristics in the case of Gilford/Haro mini-park.
1. How important is it to you that the park have each of the following general characteristics and how well have these been achieved at Gilford/Haro mini-park?

% Very Important					% Not at all Important					% Very Well Achieved					% Not at all Achieved				
67.95	21.80	7.70	2.56	0	Attractive overall appearance	26.25	43.75	16.25	12.50	1.25									
22.5	35.0	30.0	5.0	7.50	Artistic expression	8.75	40.0	30.0	17.5	3.75									
1.25	1.25	8.75	25.0	53.75	Exciting events	5.0	3.75	6.25	38.75	46.25									
51.25	33.75	8.75	3.75	2.5	Convenient access	67.5	20.0	8.75	2.5	1.25									
50.0	32.5	10.0	5.0	2.5	Well sited location	51.25	32.5	8.75	6.25	1.25									
57.5	25.0	10.0	6.25	12.5	Quiet location	45.0	25.0	18.75	8.75	2.5									
15.0	23.75	31.25	13.75	16.25	Constantly interesting	16.25	20.0	37.5	13.75	12.5									
12.5	28.75	37.5	8.75	12.5	Clarity in its organization	15.0	36.25	30.0	10.0	8.75									
21.25	12.5	35.0	18.75	12.5	Be able to see out of the park	25.0	37.5	21.25	10.0	6.25									
27.5	38.75	20.0	5.0	8.75	Be able to see into the park	26.25	48.75	17.5	6.25	1.25									
30.0	42.5	18.75	3.75	5.0	Accommodates different types of people	40.0	33.75	22.5	2.5	1.25									
58.75	17.5	12.5	10.0	1.25	Never seems too crowded	48.75	32.5	7.5	8.75	2.5									
82.5	1.25	2.5	2.5	1.25	Feels safe during the daylight	70.0	20.0	6.25	1.25	2.5									
71.25	15.0	3.75	5.0	5.0	Feels safe after dark	17.5	35.0	25.0	12.5	10.0									
6.25	5.0	10.0	35.0	43.75	Has lots of activity	11.25	17.5	33.75	18.75	18.75									
11.25	2.5	27.5	16.25	42.5	Children's play area	11.25	6.25	37.5	17.5	27.5									
17.5	21.25	5.0	6.25	0	Good maintenance	35.0	30.0	20.0	11.25	3.75									
47.5	36.25	1.25	5.0	0	Comfortable surroundings	32.5	37.5	22.5	5.0	2.5									
38.75	31.25	20.0	6.25	3.75	Choices for seating locations	23.75	37.5	28.75	5.0	5.0									
31.75	6.25	42.5	18.75	28.75	Allows a number of different activities	7.5	6.25	47.5	20.0	18.75									
35.0	35.0	18.75	8.75	2.5	Abundant lighting	12.5	53.75	22.5	7.5	3.75									
62.5	21.25	10.0	6.25	0	Abundant vegetation	50.0	27.5	17.5	2.5	2.5									
36.25	30.0	22.5	8.75	2.5	Seasonal variety	28.75	31.25	26.25	10.0	3.75									
21.25	33.75	32.5	13.75	8.75	Path is an interesting shape	13.75	33.75	25.0	13.75	13.75									
26.25	21.25	35.0	6.25	11.25	There is your favorite spot to sit	18.75	33.75	27.5	8.75	11.25									

7. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following comments by circling the number which best shows how you feel about Gilford/Haro park.

	% Strongly Agree			% Strongly Disagree	
The adjacent housing intrudes on the park	6.25	11.25	22.50	21.5	38.75
It would be better if more shops were nearer the park.	2.5	2.5	10.0	13.75	71.25
Attracting more people to the park					
would make it nicer to visit.	2.5	3.75	15.0	22.5	56.25
There should be something in the park for people of all ages.	7.5	7.5	35.0	23.75	26.25
Boulevards nearby should be extensions of the park	16.25	25.0	31.25	11.25	16.25
Police should patrol the park more than they do now.	16.25	20.0	37.5	11.25	15.0
The park should have a more clearly defined boundary.	2.5	8.75	36.25	21.25	31.25
It should be easier to reach the park from downtown.	1.25	3.75	15.0	27.5	52.5
There should be better wheelchair access.	6.25	7.5	46.25	20.0	20.0
The park needs more interesting trees.	5.0	13.75	27.5	23.75	30.0
The park needs more interesting shrubs.	10.0	16.25	22.5	21.25	30.0
Apartment balconies overlooking the park would enhance it.	0.0	7.5	26.25	25.00	41.25
The park would be better with more variety and richness in features.	16.25	11.25	42.5	11.25	18.75
The park has too much litter.	18.75	17.5	31.25	17.5	15.0
Planned events are needed.	1.25	5.0	11.25	18.75	63.75
The park is of value to the community.	76.25	15.0	3.75	5.0	0.0

8. What are your reasons for being in the park? How important they are to you and how well they have been achieved at this particular mini-park? Circle your answer.

% Very Important					% Not at all Important					% Very Well Achieved					% Not at all Achieved				
66.25	15.0	12.5	2.5	3.75						62.5	23.75	3.75	5.0	5.0					
10.0	3.75	28.75	16.25	41.25						20.0	21.25	36.25	3.75	18.75					
40.0	33.75	13.75	5.0	7.5						56.25	25.0	10.0	3.75	5.0					
26.25	41.25	11.25	6.25	15.0						37.5	35.0	16.25	3.75	7.5					
28.75	28.75	22.5	2.5	17.5						25.0	47.5	17.5	5.0	5.0					
56.25	23.75	8.75	5.0	6.25						52.5	28.75	7.5	8.75	2.5					
27.5	31.25	18.75	3.75	18.75						40.0	21.25	21.25	12.5	5.0					
11.25	3.75	37.5	7.5	40.0						10.78	3.08	47.70	12.31	26.15					
22.5	28.75	21.25	7.5	20.0						37.5	25.0	26.25	6.25	5.0					
22.5	13.75	30.0	2.5	31.25						28.75	46.25	10.0	3.75	11.25					
57.5	23.75	13.75	1.25	3.75						40.0	35.0	18.75	3.75	2.5					
21.25	32.5	22.5	7.5	16.25						20.0	43.75	20.0	5.0	11.25					
67.5	16.25	10.0	2.5	3.75						40.0	40.0	13.75	2.5	3.75					
65.0	15.0	15.0	2.5	2.5						53.75	18.75	16.25	6.25	5.0					
36.25	37.5	16.25	2.5	7.5						36.25	40.0	12.5	5.0	6.25					
5.0	3.75	7.5	30.0	53.75						4.55	1.51	13.64	28.78	51.52					
8.75	2.5	18.75	15.0	55.0						17.20	7.81	37.5	4.70	32.81					
11.25	1.25	18.75	17.5	51.25						10.94	4.69	31.25	17.19	35.94					
7.5	7.5	27.5	15.0	42.5						12.5	10.94	39.06	12.5	25.0					

9. Which attributes best describe the Gilford/Haro mini park. Circle your response.

A place to bring friends	22.5	37.5	21.25	16.25	2.5	A place to stay away from
Just the right size	37.5	26.25	16.25	11.25	8.75	Too small
Friendly	47.5	23.75	22.5	5.0	1.25	Unfriendly
Comfortable	37.5	36.25	15.0	7.5	3.75	Uncomfortable
A place to experience nature	33.75	28.75	22.5	10.0	5.0	Lacking any references to nature
Quiet	37.5	28.75	26.25	6.25	1.25	Noisy
Active	10.0	11.25	37.5	25.0	16.25	Inactive
Convenient	58.75	22.5	12.5	3.75	2.5	Inconvenient
Easy to Find	60.0	21.25	12.5	6.25	0.0	Difficult to Find
A place to enjoy time by yourself	45.0	30.0	11.25	7.5	6.25	A place to avoid when alone
Linked to city	38.75	30.0	21.25	6.25	3.75	Isolated
Well organized	32.5	33.75	26.25	2.5	5.0	Poorly designed
Accommodating	26.25	38.75	27.5	5.0	2.5	Restrictive

10. How important are the following items and how satisfied are you with them relating to Gilford/Haro park?

Very Important	Not at all Important		Very Well Achieved	Not at all Achieved
57.5	20.0	17.5 2.5 2.5	Lighting in the park at night	13.75 41.25 31.25 8.75 5.0
48.75	26.25	16.25 6.25 2.5	Provisions for relaxing	21.25 43.75 25.0 3.75 6.25
27.5	36.25	23.75 6.25 6.25	Style of seating	15.0 37.5 32.5 8.75 6.25
26.25	37.5	25.0 8.75 2.5	Amount of seating	1 2 3 4 5
52.5	31.25	12.5 2.5 1.25	Opportunities to enjoy shade in the park	38.75 50.0 6.25 2.5 2.5
36.25	33.75	22.5 3.75 3.75	Opportunities to enjoy the sun in the park	22.5 31.25 30.0 8.75 7.5
17.5	18.75	25.0 22.5 16.25	Shelter from the rain and wind	7.5 3.75 38.75 30.0 20.0
45.0	36.25	11.25 6.25 1.25	Ease of entry into the park	75.0 13.75 10.0 0.0 1.25
37.5	37.5	20.0 0.0 5.0	Overall plan	30.0 46.25 18.75 3.75 1.25
6.25	1.25	15.0 18.75 58.75	Parking near the park for park use	6.25 7.5 41.25 10.0 35.0
60.0	28.75	10.0 1.25 0.0	Maintenance of trees and plants	27.5 35.0 26.25 7.5 3.75
51.25	27.5	20.0 1.25 0.0	Arrangement of plants	26.25 33.75 27.5 7.5 5.0
17.5	23.75	32.5 5.0 21.25	Location of park boundaries	21.25 40.0 36.25 0.0 2.5

11. Sketch a rough MAP of Gilford/Haro Park showing the boundaries and the adjacent landmarks. Don't worry about scale or accuracy, the sketch is to help us understand what features people feel best describes the park. Using the symbols shown, include in your map the following: A. Views into the park: V
B. Views out of the park: O C. Your route through the park: R - - - - D. Your favourite resting spot(s). 6

Did you do this sketch?

95.75% from memory

4.25% while in the park

IV. PARK FEATURES These more specific questions refer to some items which may not be in your park, but we need to know how important these features are to you.

1. How important is it to you that the park have each of the following features and how well has this been achieved?

<u>Very Important</u>					<u>Not at all Important</u>					<u>Very Well Achieved</u>					<u>Not at all Achieved</u>
35.0	35.0	11.25	7.5		11.25					22.5	33.75	30.0	8.75	5.0	
77.5	21.25	0.0	0.0		1.25					38.75	31.25	16.25	6.25	7.5	
25.0	35.0	22.5	5.0		12.5					16.25	31.25	37.5	8.75	6.25	
16.25	12.5	40.0	10.0		21.25					25.0	47.5	16.25	10.0	1.25	
21.25	46.25	18.75	7.5		6.25					16.25	53.75	25.0	2.5	2.5	
26.25	32.5	25.0	10.0		6.25					12.5	20.0	21.25	22.5	23.75	
37.5	43.75	13.75	3.75		1.25					33.75	38.75	22.5	3.75	1.25	
28.75	36.25	10.0	11.25		13.75					16.25	21.25	36.25	10.0	16.25	
66.25	22.5	8.75	2.5		0.0					17.5	37.5	22.5	17.5	5.0	
10.0	5.0	25.0	17.5		42.5					3.75	2.5	20.0	12.5	61.25	
8.75	8.75	26.25	11.25		45.0					3.75	2.5	20.0	12.5	61.25	
1.25	2.5	6.25	23.75		66.25					7.5	2.5	15.0	20.0	55.0	
22.5	43.75	20.0	6.25		7.5					27.5	51.25	18.75	1.25	1.25	
11.25	50.0	22.5	5.0		11.25					11.25	53.75	20.0	8.75	6.25	
15.0	12.5	28.75	10.0		33.75					7.5	3.75	35.0	17.5	36.25	
6.25	8.75	32.5	17.5		35.0					15.0	23.75	25.0	10.0	26.25	

#1. cont'd. How important is it to you that a park have each of the following features and how well has this been achieved in the Gilford/Haro mini - park?

<u>Very Important</u>						<u>Very Well Achieved</u>					<u>Not at all Achieved</u>				
22.5	18.75	27.5	10.0	21.25	water element; pond, fountain etc.	11.25	8.75	30.0	18.75	31.25					
5.0	8.75	16.25	11.25	58.75	Information kiosk	8.75	3.75	30.0	13.75	43.75					
5.0	6.25	11.25	25.0	52.5	Public art	8.75	0.0	20.0	18.75	52.5					
6.25	10.0	28.75	15.5	37.5	Nearby restuarants	31.25	28.75	21.25	3.75	15.0					
6.25	12.5	31.25	12.5	37.5	Gazebo	8.75	2.5	21.25	21.25	46.25					

2. Are there features or particular aspects you feel that Gilford/Haro park is lacking?

3. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

V. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION The following general questions help us to better understand how different people feel about the park and it's surroundings. All responses are completely anonymous and confidential.

1. Do you live in an 94.67% Apartment/condo 5.3% House
2. Which intersection do you live closest to? and
3. Do you 73.68% Rent 26.32% Own
4. Are you 56.34% Male 43.66% Female
5. Your age is between which years? 0.0% less than 21 39.47% 21 - 40 31.60% 41 - 60 28.95% 61+
6. Total Household Income Before Taxes: 18.18%: \$20,000 or less 28.78%: \$20 - 30,000 22.72%: \$31 - 40,000
13.64%: \$41 - 50,000 0 \$51 - 75,00 \$76,000 or more

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Please fold the survey over, TAPE and return the survey as soon as possible. Your ideas contribute to that body of research on park design.

CONGRATULATIONS, TAKE A BREAK!!!!!!

CORRELATIONS TO VALUE TO COMMUNITY*

Attribute	Legibility		Attribute	Nature
Reference	0.333		Trees	0.626
Image of Neigh	0.282		Shrubs	0.581
Right Size	0.326		Flowers	0.467
Overall Plan A	0.396		Grass	0.344
Clear Boundaries	0.461		Birds	0.695
			Bugs	0.341
			Small Animals	0.423
Attribute	Diversity		Mountain Views	0.515
Seasonal Variet	0.432		Ocean Views	0.311
Interesting A	0.3		Abundant Vege	0.591
Choices for Sea	0.389		Abundant V	0.331
Seating Amount	0.31		Arrangement o	0.323
Seat Amount A	0.29		Maintenance	0.313
			Place to	0.402
Attribute	Linkage		Attribute	Territoriality
Pass through	0.5		Never Crowded	0.403
On Route	0.498		Favorite Spot	0.28
Well Placed	0.475		Crowded A	0.398
Well Sited	0.382		Adjacent Housi	0.283
Convenient A	0.426			
Well Sited A	0.277			
Convenient	0.513		Attribute	Activities
Easy To Find	0.372			
Neighbourhood	0.333		Contact Nature	0.378
			Contact Nature	0.439
Attribute	Comfort		Be Outdoors	0.326
Comfortable Su	0.279		Scenic Beauty	0.301
Provisions for F	0.294		Scenic Beauty	0.38
Comfortable A	0.3		Out By Self	0.315
Quiet/Noisy	0.344		Sitting	0.46
Accom/Restful	0.428		Sitting A	0.372
Shade	0.346		Conversing	0.499
			Conversing A	0.335
			Relaxing	0.477
Attribute	Safety		Relaxing A	0.346
See Into Park	0.416		Reading	0.388
Safe Daylight	0.735		Read A	0.363
Safe Dark	0.367			
Friendly	0.41			
Enjoy Alone	0.423			

* Pearson correlation significant ≥ 0.286

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