# COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO ARCHITECTURAL INNOVATION

SYMBOLISM IN ARCHITECTURE

BY

GRANT MCKERCHER

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

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# COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO ARCHITECTURAL INNOVATION

# SYMBOLISM IN ARCHITECTURE

BY

GRANT MCKERCHER

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

## ABSTRACT

Within the field of architecture there have been relatively few attempts to make use of anthropology in critical readings of buildings designed by architects. This thesis is centred around the case study of a building, constructed in 1992, in a town of 2600 people in western Saskatchewan. Together with an analysis of the ordering principles behind the architectural expression of the building, the critical framework of 'key symbols' from the field of anthropology is employed to investigate the symbolic importance of the building. A close reading of the design process, along with an analysis of the symbolic importance of the building is provided. The specific actions of the architect in relation to the symbolic importance of the building are discerned, showing that through the design of the building the architect made a substantial contribution to the process of symbolic loading.

The building has been generally well received by the community, for which it is a key summarizing symbol. Further, it is found that although the building is formally and visually dissimilar from its built context, the townspeople do not view the building as an aberration, as the building is consistent with the community's collective self-concept.

The results of two papers on the subject of contextualism in urban design are discussed in light of the findings of the case study. Although it has already been shown that most implementations of contextualism suffer from ill-defined and tautological guideline statements, this thesis questions the viability of contextualism by virtue of its emphasis on visual and formal aspects of the built environment.

**KEY WORDS:** ARCHITECTURE, ANTHROPOLOGY, SYMBOLISM, CONTEXTUALISM

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks to my advisor, Peter Forster, and my committee members David Stymeist and Brian Sinclair. Their diverse interests helped me to proceed with this work in a critical manner, and held this work accountable in ways that I would not have foreseen by myself.

Special thanks to Peter for having confidence in me, allowing me to move forward in an exploratory fashion at the beginning of this work, for his knowledge of and insight into the history of modern architecture, and for his continued interest in my schooling and myself over some nine years to date. Peter's words of support have been important to me as I have moved toward the completion of my professional architectural education.

David Stymeist was one of the handful of people that were willing to speak with me while I was still trying to figure out what exactly I wanted to study. As a committee member he played an advisory role in the undertaking of the fieldwork, kept me enthused, and critiqued my work with openness and vigour. Working with David was an experience I appreciate very much.

Brian Sinclair has been a driving force in helping me to attain a higher level of rigour and consistency within this thesis than I would have myself.

Two others have been important in my schooling regarding symbolism in architecture, prior to this thesis, and they are Rory Fonseca and Dongyang Liu. Rory taught a studio on symbolism in architecture named 'Artifact X', and Dongyang's door was always open while he was working on his PhD. It was a combination of these two people's thoughts that directly lead me to pursuing symbolism in architecture as a thesis topic.

I was fortunate to have the complete cooperation of the architect and Prairie Centre Credit Union while collecting the information for this thesis and for that I am extremely grateful. I cannot imagine completing this thesis without their help. I also received help from everyone I spoke with in Rosetown, which made my work efficient and quite pleasurable.

Thanks to Tammi Denby, Doug Shearer, and Anna Ringstrom for proofreading copies of my first draft and offering their opinions.

Thankyou to my parents, Bob and Norma, and my father-in-law, Dallas, for assisting me with my travels between Winnipeg, Rosetown, Saskatoon, and Regina, at various times. My parents also assisted and supported me in many other ways, for which I am very grateful.

Lastly, a special thankyou to my wife, Tammi Denby, for helping me to work intensely on my thesis for extended periods of time.

# DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandmother, Zelma Ellen McKercher (1906-1994), a strong and gracious woman who always answered my questions.

# LIST OF FIGURES

All figures are by the author unless otherwise noted.

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **CBC** | CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION |
| **CDR** | CRITICAL DESIGN REQUIREMENT<br>A written requirement for the new building generated by the credit union building committee and given to the architect early in the design process. |
| **CNR** | CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILROAD |
| **CU** | CREDIT UNION |
| **E2000** | ENTREPRENEURS 2000<br>The new name for Rosetown's REDA. |
| **EAGLE** | THE ROSETOWN EAGLE<br>Rosetown's newspaper. |
| **MSO** | MEMBER SERVICE OFFICER<br>The credit union euphemism for 'teller'. |
| **PCCU** | PRAIRIE CENTRE CREDIT UNION<br>The name of the regional credit union whose main branch is in Rosetown. Prior to becoming a regional credit union, PCCU was known as the RDCU. |
| **RDCU** | ROSETOWN AND DISTRICT CREDIT UNION<br>The name of Rosetown's credit union before it became a regional credit union through a series of amalgamations with smaller credit unions in the area. |
| **REDA** | REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY |
| **TD** | TORONTO-DOMINION BANK |

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# PREFACE

Issues of symbolism in architecture have been discussed fairly regularly throughout my architectural education (1). In one particular design studio named "Artifact X", my classmates and I were asked, amongst other things, to design something symbolic. My first reaction was that the achievement of this task was improbable. It struck me that it was presumptuous to assume that one could make symbols for other people, since the processes behind symbols were likely uncontrollable. However, as was later pointed out to me by John Matthiasson, an anthropologist, anyone can indeed create a symbol, and do so instantaneously, as long as there is a consensus. In retrospect, I see that my confusion toward the task set to us in that design studio was largely due to us being asked not only to create something symbolic through design, but that the product should be sacred. It is not very likely that the preconditions for a sacred symbol could be arrived at instantaneously.

It may be a challenge to intervene into existing symbolic systems and to create new symbolic systems, but symbolic importance in the built environment is prevalent everywhere. Take for example, two buildings in Hughton, Saskatchewan (figs. 1,2). In 1959, the town of Hughton was quickly becoming a ghost town. The people in Hughton recognized this and became actively involved in a variety of efforts aimed at saving the town. They raised funds and built two new buildings, a community hall (fig. 2) and a curling rink (fig. 1). In retrospect, Hughton was

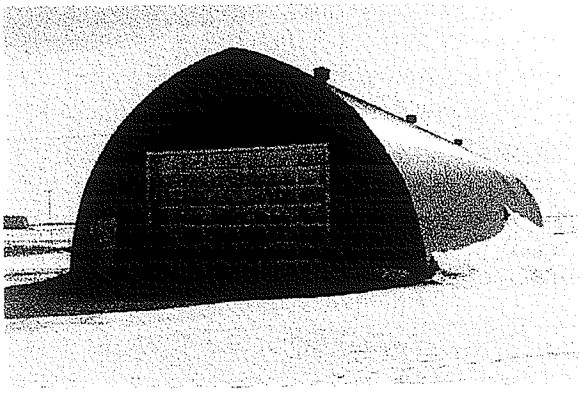


Figure 1. Curling rink, Hughton, Saskatchewan

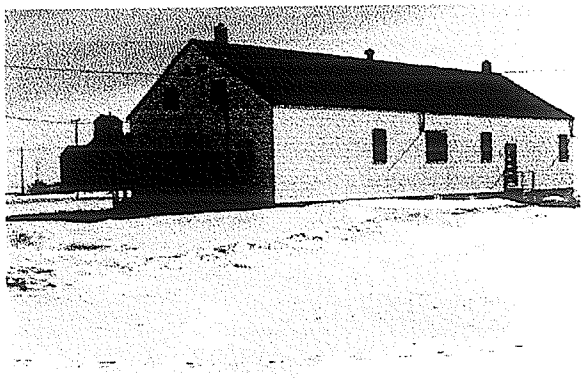


Figure 2. Community hall, Hughton, Saskatchewan

dead before they began, and now there are only a handful of buildings and a few residences in the town. The community hall and the curling rink are symbolic of the communal effort to save the town, and its failure. The only physical change to the buildings has been the addition of the large overhead door to the curling rink, to accommodate its present function as an agricultural storage building.

For a more obvious example, consider the modifications to some council housing blocks in Aberdeen, Scotland (figs. 3, 4, 5). These townhouse-style flats were constructed in the early 1950's by the local authorities and have been rented out to the residents until recently. A few years ago residents had the option to buy their homes at a greatly reduced price, which a few of them have done. Figures 3 through 5 show modifications undertaken by residents who now have a freehold on their homes. The figures also indicate a progression of three different types of display. Figure 3 shows a home where the facade has had new harling (similar to stucco, but made up of tiny stones, usually granite in Aberdeen) applied to their section of the facade. In many cases, the original harling is in need of repair, so the facade in figure 3 likely the result of a straightforward, pragmatic decision on

Figure 3. Council housing, Aberdeen, Scotland

Figure 4. Council housing, Aberdeen, Scotland

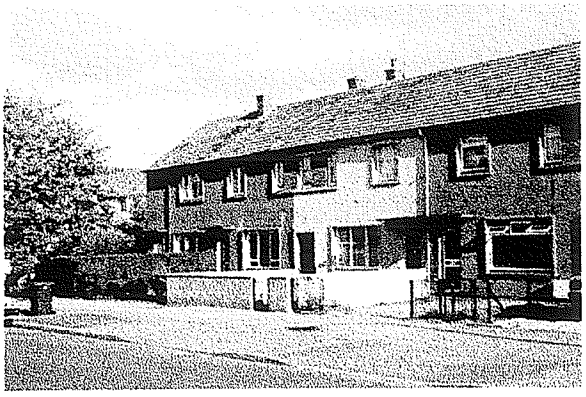
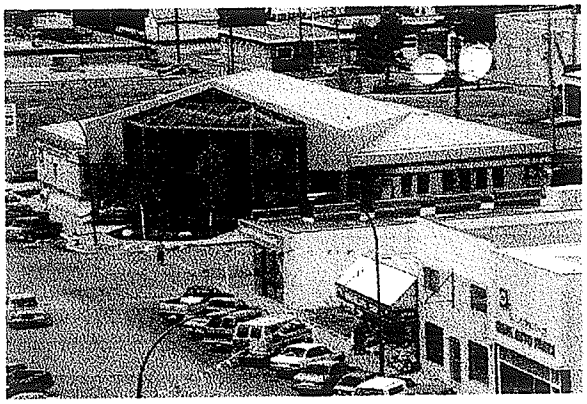


Figure 5. Council housing, Aberdeen, Scotland

behalf of the owners to maintain their property at a certain standard. The home shown in figure 4 is slightly different. Although harling has been applied in a similar fashion, small parts of the exterior have been painted white as well. The painting of the exterior offers no improvement to the longevity of the building envelope, so one may assume that the paint is decoration, meant to improve the image of the owner, or to satisfy their aesthetic preferences. The last image, figure 5, shows the home of a resident who has painted their section of the facade, thus the decoration of their home may be considered solely a display of ownership.

From these ordinary examples, one can deduce that symbolism can play an important role in most architectural projects, and not only in projects with an obvious and expected symbolic value, such as with museums, churches, art galleries, and city halls.

I chose to investigate the credit union building in Rosetown, Saskatchewan, Canada as the subject of a case study in this thesis (right, and see Appendices A and B for exterior and interior photographs). The summer before I began this thesis, I was visiting with my Grandmother who lived in Rosetown, a town of 2600 inhabitants in southwestern Saskatchewan. My father grew up in Rosetown, and I grew up visiting there. At the time of my visit, a new building was being constructed on Main Street, and it was different from all the other buildings around it. For



Credit union building, Rosetown, Saskatchewan (fig. 99 (A-7))

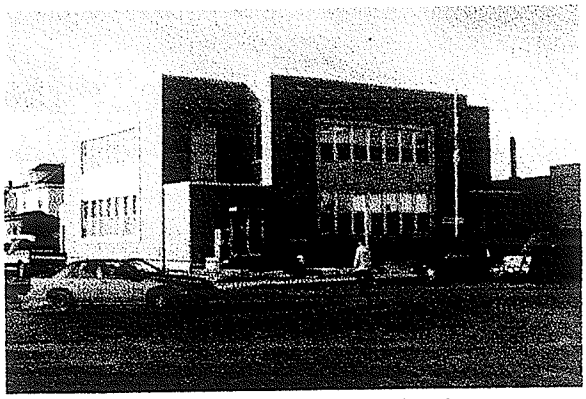


Figure 6. Post office, Rosetown, Saskatchewan

one thing, it was an 'object' building - it stood out as a distinct object in the streetscape, similar to the post office (fig. 6, previous page). The rest of Main Street was made up of smaller buildings, their facades linked together in a continuous row (figs. 7-13, following pages).

That same visit, I spoke about the building with two residents. The first didn't really know what to think about the building, but thought it was "kind of ugly." The other, a shopkeeper on Main Street, was very enthused about the new building. For him, it was completely in context; Rosetown was a strong, progressive town with a viable economy, and the building objectified this.

In my experience of architecture school, being sensitive to context is a common goal, and investigating context made up the bulk of the group research that we undertook in our studio projects. In the case of the credit union however, its importance as a symbol is consistent with townspeople's self-concept, although it is visually different from its built context.

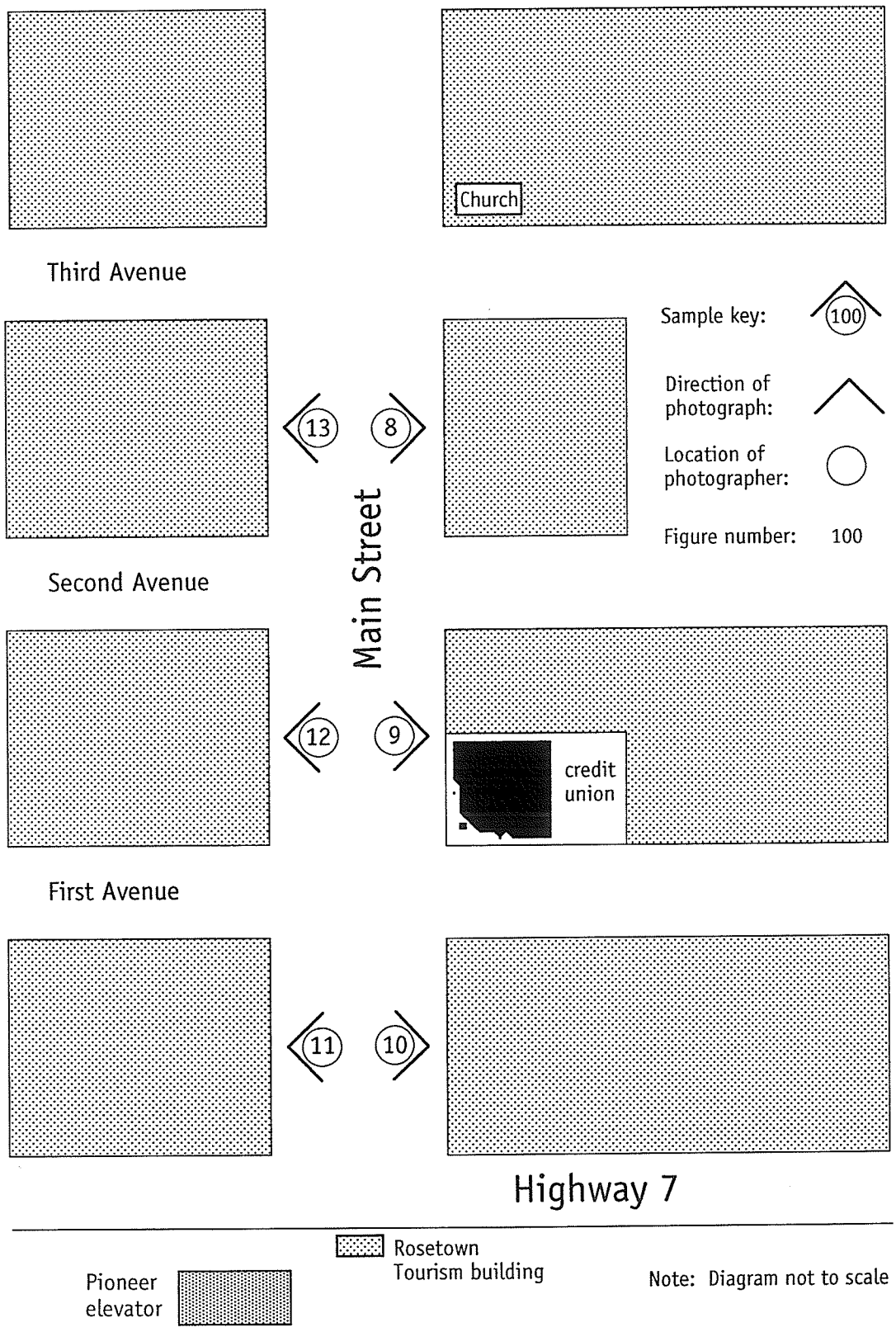



Figure 7. Main Street streetscape keys

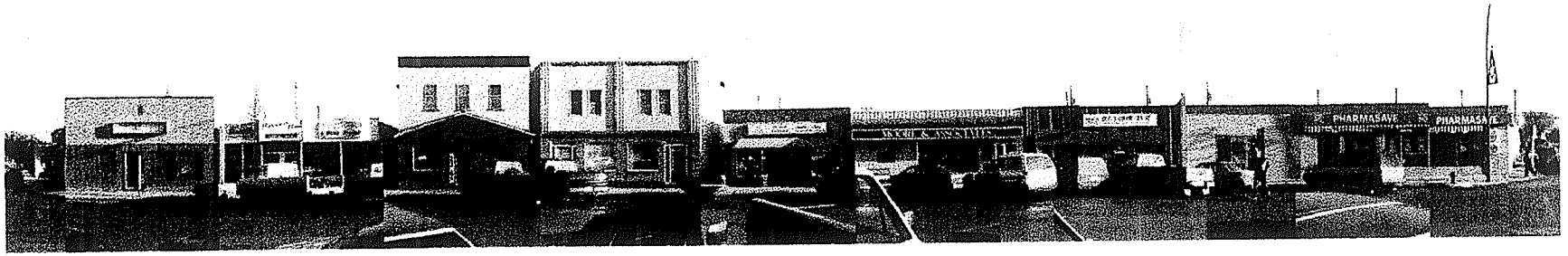



Figure 8. East side of Main Street, streetscape 1


Figure 9. East side of Main Street, streetscape 2

Figure 10. East side of Main Street, streetscape 3


Figure 11. West side of Main Street streetscape 1

Figure 12. West side of Main Street streetscape 2


Figure 13. West side of Main Street streetscape 3

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 HYPOTHESES

The goals of this thesis are twofold: To examine a building project, designed by a registered architect, where the building has acquired symbolic importance for a given group of people; then to discern the specific actions of the architect which contribute to the symbolic importance of the building. Therefore, the two hypotheses are: (1) the Rosetown and District Credit Union (RDCU) building is symbolically important to the inhabitants of Rosetown, and (2) the design of the building played an role in the construction of the building's symbolic importance. The second hypothesis refers to what anthropologists know as the process of 'symbolic loading'.

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY

The four main methods used in the case study were: interviews with key informants, architectural analysis, a literature survey of previous work on symbolism in architecture, and a review of other sources on the town.

The critical framework from the field of anthropology, key symbols (Ortner 1973), was used to investigate and describe its symbolic importance. The investigation of the credit union building proceeded with the premise that the building was a key symbol, as described in section 3.2. The framework of key symbols and the approach of the investigation is aligned with an interpretive approach to ethnography, toward a 'thick description' (Geertz 1973, ch. 1).

The architectural analysis draws upon the skills the author has been developing while studying in the Faculty of Architecture. Visual, spatial, functional, and geometrical systems of the building form the basis of this study. Other more external factors such as the effect on the streetscape and the position and orientation of the building on its site are also discussed. This type of analysis is derived almost completely from the analysis and interpretation of architectural design drawings and construction documents.

## 1.3 SELECTION OF INFORMANTS

A key informant is a person who one could assume would speak for a large number of people within a given group. Also, key informants tend to have a special position within a group, particular knowledge, insight, or experience which makes them valuable resources for an ethnographer.

For the Rosetown case study, the central key informants were the architect and the credit union (CU) informant. Other key informants were found through questioning of townspeople and ex-townspeople. The process involved giving a verbal description of the author's thesis topic area to an informant and then asking "who would be a good person to speak with?". Certain names came up consistently, and these people were pursued as key informants. The key informants also suggested other possible interviewees during interviews, which were also pursued.

Most of the key informants were retirement age and above, white males who had lived in Rosetown most of their lives. Until recently, this would have accurately reflected the type of people who have historically held prominent positions in the community (2).

Of the informants the author spoke with, 34 are considered to have been interviewed. An interview involved the questioning of the informant in particular topic areas (see following section), taking notes during one or more interviews, summarizing the interview notes, and the interpretation of the responses. Of the 34 informants interviewed, 13, including the architect and client representative, are considered by the author to be key informants. Four of the key informants were sources specifically for the description of the agricultural industry at the time surrounding the construction of the credit union building. The other nine key informants were sources for all the topic areas being pursued in the thesis.

## 1.4 NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWS

*"I've never really thought about it... But when I think of it I look to the future".* (Response of a key informant regarding the symbolic content of the RDCU)

Four main topic areas were pursued in the interviews:

- The credit union as one of the town's institutions
- The credit union building and its symbolic content
- Main Street and its symbolic content
- A CBC newsprogram which aired in 1992 (CBC 1992)

A concerted attempt was made to have each informant speak to each of these topic areas, and the informants were encouraged to offer any anecdotal evidence they saw as relevant. Anecdotal evidence is crucial to this type of study.

The CBC newsprogram noted above proved to be a very useful tool in the interviews. The topic of the newsprogram was the state of the agricultural economy and diversification in farming. Rosetown was used as the paradigm of a small prairie town. However, many of the townspeople disagreed with the portrayal of Rosetown in the newsprogram and found the subject matter somewhat sensational (see section 4.5). All the key informants expressed an opinion on the newsprogram, even though it aired three to four years previous to the interviews.

The length of each interview with the key informants was consistent at approximately two hours. With one exception, all the key informants were interviewed at their homes or places of business, other informants were contacted largely by telephone.

Different classes of informant and orders of response became clear upon analysis of the interview notes. There are two classes of informant. The first consists of the CU informant and the architect. The second consists of all the others. The CU informant and the architect may be classified separately because their understanding of the symbolic

nature of the object (the credit union building) is generative in a conceptual sense, versus perceptual; their vantage point was qualitatively different from the other informants. Then there are classes of responses, which the author has named low, middle, and high order responses, meant to indicate a progression from vague and undefined at one end (low order), and complex and well defined at the other (high order). What is interesting is where the client and architect fit into this progression.

The lowest order of response was from people who had never thought of the building or Main Street in the manner in which the interview was directing them to, at certain points. These informants were further unable to comment explicitly on some of the subject matter presented in the interview, for example, the symbolic content of Main Street. They would still respond to the question asked, but their answers were tangential and led the author to rephrase the question or approach the subject again later. The author found these informants to be much more difficult to interview, as the interpretation of their responses required substantial effort, compared with the responses from other informants who would make explicit statements on a given topic area.

The middle order of responses consisted of the type of response from people who had not considered their environment in explicit symbolic terms, but who could make the leap, with varying ease, to comment on what was usually a backdrop to their lives. The informant who made the statement quoted at the beginning of this section is good example. The free responses the informant gave during the interview were reserved and reflective. In other cases these informants would easily speak to a topic at a fairly high level. They were able to leave their usual frame of reference and comment on their environment in a more detached manner than their daily life would ask of them. After speaking with the architect, the author would include him in this group. Undoubtedly, he was dealing with issues of symbolism while designing the building, but his thoughts in these areas appear to have been largely unconscious, intuitive, and task-oriented. Most of the key informants responses fell within this middle order of response.

The highest order of response came from two of the key informants, an ex-mayor, and the town archivist. (The town archivist has written on the history of the town, and been the impetus for the archive at the Rosetown library). Both of their responses were very ideological in nature and the ex-mayor gave highly articulate and direct answers to the author's questions. Their responses were surprisingly consistent with each other, in a complementary fashion.

Where the CU informant's responses fit into this ordering system is not easily discernible. The CU informant, like the architect, was more aware of the symbolic issues that the other informants. However, this may be *ex officio* rather than a conscious effort on the CU informant's part, as the CU informant's main intent was the satisfactory construction of their new building. Still, the CU building committee's demands on the architect were progressively aimed at accomplishing as much as possible within their idea of what would be found acceptable by the public (3). This indicates that the CU building committee and the CU informant had formed articulate ideas of the nature of the town's public symbolic system. Therefore, the responses of the CU informant seem to vary between the middle and high orders.

## 1.5 OTHER SOURCES

The libraries on campus provided the literary sources the author refers to in the literature survey regarding symbolism in architecture and the social sciences. The document delivery system was used to obtain copies of microfilm, microfiche, and periodical articles. The Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals CD-ROM in the architecture library is where author found references to most of the periodical articles obtained through Document Delivery. All the architectural drawings were made available to the author by the architect.

The Rosetown library has a small archive on the town, including a collection of some four hundred black and white photographs, some of which have been included in this thesis. The author also searched the Saskatchewan Archives Board collections in Regina and Saskatoon. Most of the author's time at the collections was spent at the Saskatoon branch of the Archives Board at the University of Saskatchewan, reviewing the Rosetown Eagle newspaper (EAGLE) on microfilm from the four years previous to the construction of the building onward. There were a few relevant documents in the Regina archive. The author has also held a subscription to the EAGLE for approximately two years.

One of the key informants has written two pieces on the history of town, which were given to the author at our interview. Two maps and a magazine article (Sterling 1993) were given to the author by the town office, where the author also purchased one of their promotional videos (Brown 1994). A Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) television movie (CBC 1959), a CBC newsprogram (CBC 1992), and a University of Saskatchewan Extension Department video (Baker 1980) were viewed. These were obtained through the University of Saskatchewan audiovisual library and Visual Resources at CBC Toronto.

The CU informant gave the author a copy of the Critical Design Requirements (CDR) which were given to the architect during the design of the building. (This is explained further in section 5).

## 1.6 CONTEXTUALISM

One of the issues which first attracted the author's attention to the RDCU building was that it was dissimilar from the buildings surrounding it. The nature of the relationship between the RDCU building and its built context has implications for a widely used and accepted design principle, contextualism. As mentioned in the preface, contextualism has also been a consensual goal during the author's architectural eduction at the University of Manitoba.

Contextualism is based on the assumption that buildings that are formally similar to their built context are preferable to buildings that are dissimilar (4). Two recent studies by Day (1992) and Stamps (1994) use experimental approaches to the study of contextualism, and are introduced in the following two sections to be held as references to the Rosetown case study. Both Day and Stamps are discussed in light of the findings of the case study in section 7. The Day study is relevant because of its unsuspected findings, and the Stamps study is relevant because it is extensive and confirms its respondents preference for contextualism.

### 1.7 THE DAY STUDY OF AN ATTEMPT CONTEXTUAL COMPATIBILITY

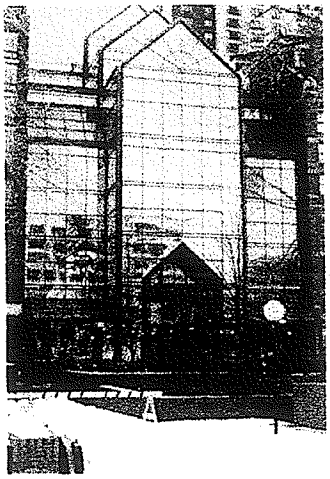
In 1992, a study was published about the new development at Lowertown, St. Paul, Minnesota (Day 1992). A large new building was built in an area deemed "historic" with the intent that the revitalized area would become the catalyst for redevelopment of the Lowertown area. The project, Galtier Plaza, is a 1.3 million square foot building with two tall towers. The City of St. Paul, the Minnesota Historical Society, the Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation, and the architect of Galtier Plaza, attempted to ensure that the design of the new building would be contextually compatible with the existing buildings. This contextual compatibility was pursued by saving and reconstructing the facades of some of the buildings which had been torn down, then re-erecting and integrating them in the design of the new Galtier Plaza (with considerable expense). However, it is not clear from the study if the reuse of the old facades was the only way which was attempted to ensure that the new, and comparatively large, Galtier plaza would be successfully integrated into the historic district of Lowertown.

The theoretical background to the study is that a variety of factors affecting American downtowns, issues of contextual compatibility, historic preservation, and placemaking, are becoming more valued. The author, Linda Day, adds that there is a consensus that "contextual fit" is desirable, referencing two books on the failure of modern architecture, but without defining what contextual fit is.

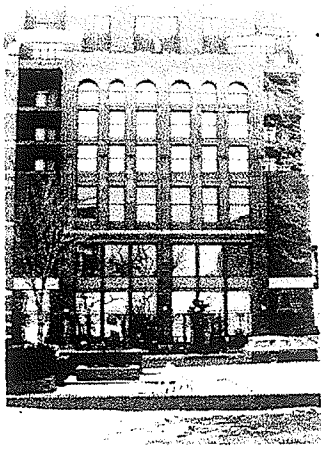
Day used a multiple sort task (a technical term) to ascertain the level of success of the design in regards to contextual compatibility. Seventy-three respondents were asked to group photographs of buildings according their own criteria. The photographs were of existing and newer buildings, including examples of the reused facades (fig. 14, following page). The results were analysed, with particular focus on the reused facades. Day's findings, relevant here, were threefold. First, the attempt to replicate the existing buildings by reusing the facades of older buildings was highly successful, as the respondents liked all of the Galtier Plaza facades. Secondly, however, it was found that the facade attributes which respondents referred to while making contextual comparisons, were elements such as fenestration and fenestration patterns, not any mnemonic or symbolic function, as had been anticipated. This may be due to the nature of the study, which did not ask respondents to reflect in any critical manner upon their decisions. Thirdly, the study revealed something quite unsuspected by Day and the authorities involved with Galtier Plaza. The glass atrium (photograph 2, fig. 14, following page) received a positive response despite the fact it displayed a low degree of similarity with its context. Day summarizes the findings of the study as:

> *The idea that place meaning would be effectively communicated by an obvious link to the community's past was not supported. Evidence of care being taken with the design of a building having an inviting public nature is more important than explicit links to the past.* (Day 1992, 326)

Photograph 1



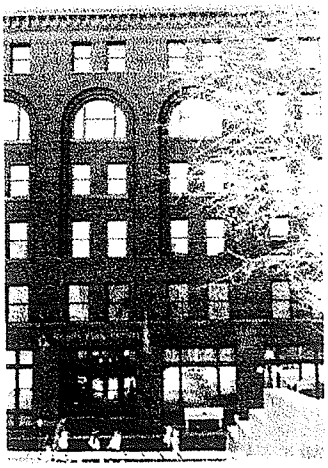
Photograph 2



Photograph 3

Photograph 4

Photograph 5



Photograph 6

Figure 14. Day study photographs, from Linda Day, Placemaking by Design, 334-339.

## 1.8 THE STAMPS STUDY ON CONTEXTUALISM

A more in-depth study of contextualism was published by the Journal of Environmental Management (Stamps 1994). The study, by Arthur Stamps, is a statistical testing of respondent preferences to a combination of contextual relation and architectural attribute scenarios. The contextual relations examined were replication, diversity, and degree of development. The architectural attributes examined were scale and character. Stamps used synthetic photographs (fig. 15, following page) to generate the images of city blocks in elevation (streetscapes), which the respondents were required to consider. The results of the study were that eight of the nine hypotheses inherent in contextualism were affirmed, clearly showing that the respondents preferred scenarios which contextualism would provide for.

Stamps is quite clear on the relevance of such a study, and lists three reasons why such undertaking such a study is important:

> *A review of the planning and legal literature suggests that there are three reasons why there is a need for studying urban design principles: (1) almost all cities in the United States have implemented such principles; (2) there is an implicit relationship between aesthetic controls and growth management; and (3) many urban design principles are too vague to be useful.* (Stamps 1994, 226)

The first reason is illustrated by the fact that approximately 80% of cities in the United States have some sort of controls on "architectural aesthetics" (terms which he leaves undefined), and over 75% of those controls "assume that contextual relationships are important aesthetic determinants" (Stamps 1994, 223).

Given the prevalence of such controls, Stamps proceeds to describe some of the literature regarding which architectural attributes frequently come under some sort of aesthetic control, and the principles of contextualism:

Figure 15. Stamps study photographs, from Arthur E. Stamps, A Study in Scale and Character, 236.

*Lightner provided the best estimates of the extents to which cities currently use various controls. For example, the percentage of planning departments which had controls on building height was 94%; on bulk, 87%; materials, 84%; facade articulation, 76%; location of entrances, 71%; color of materials, 71%; roof profile, 70%; details, 67%; proportions, 64%; windows, 62%; and style or character, 60%."*

*Finally, the literature provides estimates of what contextual design principles are in use. Principles which were used by over half of Lightner's sample included:*

*1) New buildings should respect existing patterns of buildings and open space.*
*2) Designs should neither diverge widely nor stand out from their surroundings.*
*3) Designs should use the context as inspiration rather than a basis for imitation.*
*4) Designs should not exceed the heights of existing buildings.*
*5) Designs should use similar or the same materials as nearby buildings.*
*6) Large buildings should be massed or detailed to recall the finer grains of nearby buildings*
*7) New buildings should use windows of similar proportions to nearby buildings.*

(Stamps 1994, 224)

Stamps continues by pointing out that there is no consensus as to what constitutes principles of contextualism, however, as listed above, there are many consistencies in the control of aesthetics by which one can loosely define its principles.

At this point it should be stated that all of the introduction to the study was based on data from the United States, and that one may not be able to assume that its conclusions can be extrapolated to Canada. However, since the planning methods in both the United States and Canada are based on zoning it is highly likely that the situations are indeed similar. Also, the fact that the majority of cities in the United States have implemented some sort of aesthetic controls should not overstate the case. In Canada, design guidelines which directly govern the formal expression of buildings are used only infrequently. Where they are used is largely in downtown areas and historic districts. Zoning does have, as Stamps makes quite clear, a governing effect on such attributes such as height and bulk, but these may be considered indirect controls. Design guidelines where there is explicit control over the finite details of architectural expression such as fenestration, cladding, etc. are infrequently implemented, except in the cases mentioned. Stamps, however does not make this distinction, stating that aesthetic controls are growth management controls and vice versa.

## 1.9 LIMITS OF THE CASE STUDY

As with any research project, the methodology and the topic areas investigated within this case study will draw boundaries around the possible conclusions one may draw upon the research. The fact that the investigation is interpretive rather than experimental is one such example: where the use of key informants is well-recognized in one field, it may be insufficient in another where sample sizes are crucial. The author views this thesis as preliminary research into the RDCU building in Rosetown. Further study should be able to test and elaborate on any findings from this case study.

Although a critical framework from the field of anthropology is being used, the reader must be reminded that this thesis is toward the degree of Master of Architecture. Typically, a student working toward a Master's degree in anthropology would spend approximately one and a half years living in the society which was being studied in order to complete their field work. In the case of this study, interviews with informants were held intermittently over a period of approximately two years, with considerable investigation into archival sources. Many issues that an anthropologist would investigate, such as rituals and other observable behaviour, kinship, and activity sets, were not the subject of this study. This will potentially limit the depth of interpretation regarding the RDCU building as a key symbol in Rosetown, because of the background necessary to make such a classification. As Victor Turner alludes to, in his discussion of Ndembu ritual in "The Forest of Symbols", it is important not only to study specific symbols, but also to study their role in larger symbolic systems (5):

> *Each kind of Ndembu ritual... has several meanings and goals that are not made explicit by the informants, but must be inferred by the investigator from the symbolic pattern and from behaviour. He is able to make these inferences only if he has previously examined the symbolic configurations and the meanings attributed to their component symbols by skilled informants, of many other kinds of ritual in the same total system. In other words, he must examine symbols not only in the context of each specific kind of ritual, but in the context of the total system.* (Turner 1967, 43)

However, this case study is an ethnography only as far as the investigation of the RDCU building as a symbol is concerned. The critical framework of key symbols and the methodology employed and are well suited to the investigation of a building project, complementary to traditional formal and spatial analysis from the fields of architecture and art criticism.

# 2. LITERATURE SURVEY

## 2.1 SYMBOLISM AS AN ACADEMIC TOPIC IN ARCHITECTURE

Much of the work concerning symbolism within the field of architecture has been on early Christian architecture. This type of work has strong roots in historical and archaeological research and has a long and prestigious history. Generally speaking, the research on Christian architecture is quite well-rounded. There have been thorough investigations of how symbolism arose and was used, such as: "The Dome of Heaven" by Karl Lehmann (Lehmann 1945).

In "The Dome of Heaven", Lehmann surveys "one of the fundamental artistic expressions of Christian thought and emotion... the vision of heaven depicted in painting or mosaic on domes, apsidal half-domes, and related vaulted forms" (Lehmann 1945, 1). Lehmann finds that the dome of heaven "is the culminating theme of the theological decoration of religious buildings from the beginnings of ecclesiastical art in the age of Constantine the Great throughout the entire development of Byzantine art" (Lehmann 1945, 1). Clearly, the formal configurations studied by Lehmann were deeply rooted in Christian symbolic systems.

For studies of Renaissance architecture, "Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism", by Rudolf Wittkower (Wittkower 1988 (1949)), is a seminal text. Wittkower sought to "dispose, once and for all, of the hedonistic, or purely aesthetic, theory of Renaissance architecture" (Kenneth Clark, quoted in Wittkower 1988, 7). This book had far reaching effects on Renaissance studies and also on the study of modern architecture (Millon 1972). Wittkower's pupil, Colin Rowe, wrote an essay in which he compared the ordering systems of a villa designed by the well-known modern architect, Le Corbusier

(1877-1965), to the villas of Palladio (1508-1580) in Renaissance Italy (Rowe 1976 (1947)). This type of comparative analysis draws formal similarities between different buildings from different cultural contexts, and is useful in examining typology in architecture.

More recently, Richard Betts has shown in "Structural Innovation and Structural Design in Renaissance Architecture" (Betts 1993) that contrary to much academic writing on Renaissance architecture, there were indeed notable structural design innovations taking place, and that architects did have theories and practices governing structural design, something that was often claimed to be left to others through a lack of technical discipline on behalf of Renaissance architects. Betts accomplishes this through an analysis of extant documents by Francesco di Giorgio (1439-1501), amongst others, regarding specific building projects as well as writings on architecture.

While both of the works by Lehmann and Wittkower involve and benefit greatly from historical and cultural studies, Betts' and Rowe's work to a marginal extent, James Ackerman tackles a more closely defined problem and integrates sociocultural investigation in his methodology in a more developed manner. In his "Gothic Theory of Architecture at the Cathedral of Milan" (Ackerman 1949), Ackerman poses to test the Rationalist theory of Gothic architecture which holds that Gothic architecture was the result of an attempt to create a 'pure' architecture based on its structural system:

> *The problem we have posed is to discover whether or not the attempt to derive the form of Gothic architecture from its structure is justified, and if not, to suggest a more illuminating approach. The method of procedure which suggests itself is to some degree implicit in our criticism of Rationalism, for if we wish to avoid the imposition of modern criteria upon the Gothic style, we are bound to seek for Gothic criteria. This involves a reconstruction of the specific intentions of the Gothic architect with respect to the form, the purpose, and structure of his building. Since the analysis of remaining monuments provides insufficient evidence for this task, we must turn, not to the works, but to the men who created them, whose aims are most concretely revealed among the textual remains of the period."* (Ackerman 1949, 85)

Here, Ackerman is demonstrating the importance of understanding a particular social context in the critical analysis of a work of architecture and the process behind it. However, to Ackerman, symbolism is important only through the verifiable actions people took, given that the investigation of symbolism in Gothic architecture is not the objective of Ackerman's study. Still, very little mention is made of the public perception of the buildings studied by Lehmann, Wittkower, or Ackerman.

Geoffrey Scott, in his "The Architecture of Humanism: A study in the history of taste" (Scott n.d. (1914, and still in print), did however, deal with symbolism directly. In the cause of arguing for a humanist approach to architecture, Scott lists a series of fallacies: the Romantic fallacy, mechanical fallacy, ethical fallacy, and biological fallacy, which are a series of counter-critiques of attacks on Renaissance architecture (6). While each of Scott's fallacies are still germane today, the ethical fallacy, in particular, where Scott describes the illogical nature of some morally-motivated arguments, specifically those of John Ruskin (1810-1900), still describes much of architectural theory today, especially the reactionary stances adopted by those arguing for 'socially responsible' architecture, as much as for certain aspects of modernism. Scott's fallacies are also, as indicated earlier, motivated for reactionary reasons, but he takes his arguments much farther. What Scott attempts to clarify are the inconsistencies which develop as a result of various stances toward architectural theory. In the ethical fallacy, for example, Scott attacks John Ruskin's argument that Renaissance architecture is absurd, since it is morally corrupt (Scott n.d., 97). For Ruskin, Gothic architecture is symbolic of all that he finds morally upstanding, for diverse reasons, but Scott illustrates the weakness of this premise as the basis of a social theory of architecture, as Ruskin attempts (Ruskin 1981 (1851)). Scott proceeds in a similar fashion with each of the other fallacies, critiquing the prevalent criticisms of architecture at the time.

In 1977, David Watkin's analytical historiography "Morality and Architecture" was published (Watkin 1984 (1977)). In a manner similar to Geoffrey Scott's comments on the "academic tradition" (Scott n.d., 141), Watkin shows how many of the prominent architectural historians have ultimately held social and moral beliefs over and above their aims in writing about architecture. It is also interesting to see, through Watkin, how the same architectural historians frequently go beyond writing architectural history and begin to write polemical architectural theories. Watkin followed with another book on architectural historiography, "The Rise of Architectural History" (Watkin 1980). The mixture of elements of architectural historiography, which Watkin describes: solid scholarship, knowledge of precedent, social agendas, and aesthetic preferences goes far to describe the characteristics of much architectural theory.

In comparison to the volume of work on symbolism in early Christian and Renaissance architecture, there has been very little work done within the field of architecture on symbolism in contemporary architecture, despite the advances which have been made in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology. If one were to ask an architect to name a book about symbolism he or she would likely answer "Learning from Las Vegas", of which the subtitle reads, "the forgotten symbolism of architectural form" (Venturi, Brown, and Izenour 1977 (1972)). Although this book is important in the architectural history of North America, its concepts and methods do not go beyond providing a merely editorial indication of a theory of symbolism in architecture, partially due to its reactionary stance to modern architecture, which constitutes most of its theoretical premise. The importance of Venturi et al.'s work lies in its attempt to change the attitudes of many architects and scholars regarding popular built environments (commercial strips, non-architect designed buildings, signage, setbacks) (7). However, the appearance of books such as those by Watkin and Venturi et al. do indicate a rising awareness of symbolism and meaning in architecture, and interest how such concepts could be integrated into architectural theory.

In the same few years that Watkin's and Venturi et al.'s works were published, books on the topic of semiotics began to appear (Jencks and Baird 1970 (1969), Broadbent, Bunt, and Jencks 1980, Broadbent, Bunt, and Llorens 1980, Preziosi 1979a, Preziosi 1979b). Semiotics has been the most prevalent area of architectural writing dealing with symbolism. For approximately one decade, much effort was put into attempting to construct semiotic theories of meaning in architecture. The Environmental Design Research Association held a conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba on the topic of semiotics in 1977 (Bonta 1977) and both Preziosi's books had as their general editor, Thomas Sebeok, the renowned semiotician and author of the "Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics" (Sebeok 1986) (8).

An interesting difference between the work of Lehmann, Wittkower, Rowe, Betts, Ackerman, Scott, Watkin, for example, and the work of semioticians, is in their use of terms. Regarding meaning and symbolism, the former group did not require a well defined, consensual set of terms in order to proceed with their work, as the topic areas they were researching were diverse and well served by existing terminological frameworks. In architecture, for example, there exists a substantial number of terms to describe formal attributes of classical architecture. Semiotics, in contradistinction, is a relatively new field which required the invention of new terminology, and clarification of existing terminology. Semiotics is consumed with semantics. This emphasis on terms is consistent with semiotics' origin in literary theory. As mentioned previously, much of the investigation into semiotics by those from within the field of architecture involved attempting to correlate semiotic terminology with built form, and semiotic theory with experiential aspects of architecture and architectural theory (see for example, Eco 1980).

However, semiotics' romance with the field of architecture was already cooling by 1980. Broadbent was already beginning to distance himself from semiotics by writing more generally on architectural paradigms (Broadbent 1980). The release of two books in 1980 reflect the fissure that would leave architectural semiotics in a new and diminished position. The books were: "Signs, Symbols and Architecture" (Broadbent, Bunt, and

Jencks 1980), and "Meaning and Behaviour in the Built Environment" (Broadbent, Bunt, and Llorens 1980). It is clear from the writing on semiotics done by Broadbent and Jencks that they supported the study of architectural semiotics, while an essay entitled, "Linguistics into Aesthetics Won't Go" (Bunt 1980), by their coeditor Richard Bunt, indicated that most work in semiotics avoided the important issues of cultural conditioning, because of the particular aesthetic orientation of most semiotic studies. In 1990, another book by Geoffrey Broadbent was published entitled, "Emerging Concepts in Urban Space Design" (Broadbent 1990). No mention of the studies or relevance of semiotic research is made in the book, signalling the bypassing of semiotics as a major field of study into architectural meaning and symbolism. With the publication of "Emerging Concepts in Urban Space Design" Broadbent appears to have loosely continued on from the last book he published prior to his foray into semiotics (Broadbent 1973). This is not very surprising, as during the heyday of semiotics in architecture, developed theories of symbolism in architecture had not materialized. Jencks' semantic reading of James Stirling's Olivetti Centre (Jencks 1980) clearly demonstrates the shortcomings of an approach which is culturally and socially contextless, as Bunt described. However, in architecture, as in many other fields, some semiotic terminology and basic concepts (symbol, sign, signifier, signified) have endured despite the decline of semiotics.

What has happened since 1980 is that the field of environment-behaviour research, the subject loosely of "Meaning and Behaviour in the Built Environment", has continued to grow, albeit largely outside of architecture. It is a branch of psychology, and is a field which is largely based upon empirical study of respondent preferences. The field of environment-behaviour research absorbed something of architectural semiotics, as well as something of architectural aesthetics, and has continued to develop.

A year previous to "Signs, Symbols and Architecture" and "Meaning and Behaviour in the Built Environment", Roger Scruton's book "Aesthetics in Architecture" (Scruton 1980 (1979)) was published . In it he attempts to define architectural aesthetics as a

legitimate field of study in its own right. There are some commonalities in this type of approach with semiotics, which attempted the same, and with the format of Geoffrey Scott's "The Architecture of Humanism". Scruton, like Scott, gives short critiques of prevalent types of architectural thought, including Marxist criticism and linguistic theories (semiotics). In fact, Scruton decisively dispenses with semiotics on the grounds that not only does architecture have a poor resemblance to language, but also that the arguments within linguistic theory, regarding the nature of language, are so diverse that any particular linguistic argument cannot admit to having a sufficient understanding of language.

In 1988, and also on the topic of aesthetics, a book entitled, "Environmental Aesthetics" (Nasar 1988) appeared, discussing among other things, aesthetics of the environment, social symbols, aesthetic perception, wayfinding, cognitive analysis, and also made some references to semiotics. The appearance of this work seems to indicate that researchers working within the field of psychology are quite prepared to create new architectural theories. At the moment, however, their greatest achievement for the field of architecture lies in research into wayfinding; the theoreticians within architecture have not readily embraced the advances of environmental psychology.

## 2.2 ARCHITECTURAL SYMBOLISM IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Reading through the previous section may give one the impression that anthropology has not been included in research into contemporary architectural symbolism, and this is largely the case.

Of course, there has been an incredible amount of investigation into built environments by archaeologists, and there are well developed theories of symbolism used in the field, but particular attention to symbolism in contemporary architecture generally has not yet been given by anthropology.

As with environment-behaviour research, semiotics has been somewhat absorbed, in a diminished form, by certain areas within anthropology, the most prevalent being within the cognitive approach to anthropology. The cognitive approach is also an area which has a close connection with psychology, interestingly enough. (See for example, Foster and Brandes 1980, cf. note 5). However, semiotics has not become a conduit for the exchange of ideas between the fields of architecture and anthropology.

A segment of anthropologists known as applied anthropologists have made some headway in describing and showing the potential use of anthropological research and interpretation in problem solving (for cross-cultural design projects, for example), but historically, there has been little attention paid to these efforts by both the field of anthropology and the field of architecture (see for example, Van Willigen 1993). Even the work of Amos Rapoport, who has written in areas which overlap considerably with anthropology, such as cultural geography, has been largely bypassed in the field of architecture (9).

In fact, in the introduction to "Meaning and Behaviour in the Built Environment", Geoffrey Broadbent and Tomas Llorens state that although anthropology is where studies into the meaning of the built environment began, anthropology is an unsuitable resource for the study of architectural meaning and symbolism:

> *The earliest literature on meaning in the built environment was triggered in part by studies such as those by A. Rapoport or C. Levi-Strauss, of a definite anthropological kind. But what anthropologists say (or usually have to say) about meaning in the built environment seems somewhat limited for two reasons:*
>
> *(a) Their work tends to be descriptive and bound by the peculiarities of the individual communities they take as the objects of their studies.*
>
> *(b) Their methods of observation. The scientific paradigms within which they operate tend - on the whole - to apply much better to 'primitive' societies which differ substantially from our own in complexity and in many other ways (this still tends to be true, in spite of claims of higher (theoretical) levels of generality.)* (Broadbent, Bunt, and Llorens 1980, x)

Rapoport similarly states that "when references to dwellings and settlements occur in anthropological literature, for example, they are descriptive rather than analytical" (Rapoport 1969, viii). Both sets of these comments are rather negative toward the field of anthropology, however, the important issue is the attitude that is shown, which may be indicative of a collective attitude within the field of architecture. Certainly, it was used as a defining criterion for the environment-behaviour research approach favoured in Broadbent's book.

However, this attempt at distancing architecture from anthropology seems odd considering the incredible importance given to the study of meaning and symbolism in anthropology. This is exemplified by the following quotation:

> *Archaeologists examine the end products of design - particular structures - that can be characterized by formal properties, such as size, shape, and construction materials. To explain how structures come to have specific designs - why some are large and others small, why some are made of wood and others of stone, why some are internally partitioned and others not - we must examine design processes. In particular, we must identify the general causal factors (and their interrelationships) that influence the decisions leading to the designs for specific structures.*
>
> *On the broadest level, of course, availability of materials and technology constrain architectural designs. Although they may have desired it, the builders of Pueblo Bonito in Chaco Canyon could not have used marble; nor, with their technology, could the same Bonitians have erected a pueblo of 50 stories. However, these type of constraints, which put generous limits on designs, furnish relatively few insights into the causes of variability between societies, and contribute little to explaining differences or changes in the vernacular architecture within societies. Given the wide limits set by technology and available materials, investigators must pay special attention to the social process of design that determines where - within the limits - choices actually fall. The social process is likely to narrow the options considerably, and, on occasion, it can alter the existing constraints by inventing new technologies or by securing formerly "unavailable" materials.* (McGuire and Schiffer 1983, 278)

It may be that within the field of anthropology, between 1980 when Broadbent and Llorens made their comments and 1983 when the above quotation was published, great steps were made which categorically altered the face of anthropology. However, this is highly unlikely. It was probably a combination of lack of knowledge and academic territoriality which led to the dismissal of anthropology by these two architects attempting to use semiotics and environmental psychology in the study of architecture.

What McGuire and Schiffer are affirming in the previous quotation is the importance of the processes behind a design in critical analysis, a significant shift in focus from Jencks' semantic reading, for example. They also note elsewhere that "the goal of architecture is to express both utilitarian and symbolic functions" (quoted in Monks 1992, 38). McGuire and Schiffer were embarking on the creation of a middle-range theory of architectural design for vernacular architecture with the writing of that paper. The author cannot see the particular relevance of restricting their theory to vernacular architecture, other than the fact that they are referring to societies with a low degree of fragmentation, quite unlike our modern, highly fragmented societies. This careful naming also allowed them to disregard almost everything (aside from a few obscure sources) which has been written within in the field of architecture on architectural theory, making their endeavour considerably less cumbersome. It is also interesting to note that this naming does potentially serve to limit the applicability of their theory precisely in the manners which Broadbent and Rapoport describe.

Given the importance of symbolism within the field of anthropology, what work has already been completed specifically regarding the critical analysis of architecture? While there are likely many more examples than the author is aware of, two notable examples will serve well here.

The first is a book by James Holston, an anthropologist who studied both anthropology and architecture at Yale University. Holston's PhD dissertation became a book entitled, "The Modernist City: An anthropological critique of Brasília" (Holston 1989). The book is a comprehensive critique of the concept, design, and functioning of Brazil's new (1957) modernist capital.

The second, more relevant through its similarity to this thesis, is an article by Gregory Monks entitled, "Architectural Symbolism and Non-verbal Communication at Upper Fort Garry" (Monks 1992). Monks' abstract explains:

> *The archival research component of the Upper Fort Garry Archaeological Project recovered extensive detailed information on the architectural history of the fort. It quickly became clear that changes in architecture during the fort's occupancy (1836-1881) correspond closely to economic and social changes in the Red River settlement at large. Built by the Hudson's Bay Company to house its administrative elite in North America, the fort played a central role, both physically and conceptually, in the life of the settlement. This article takes a non-verbal communication approach to the fort and examines it as a set of architectural symbols by means of which the Hudson's Bay Company established and maintained its dominant position in economic and social relations with its employees and settlers. (Monks 1992, 37)*

Monks found, for example, that new walls were erected without proper foundations and lacking the necessary military configurations which are consistent with the need for such fortifications, indicating that the walls were constructed to communicate dominance. (This is similar to the discussion of the renovations made to the exterior of the council housing in Scotland, discussed in the preface to this thesis). What is of interest here is that the symbolic importance of the architectural objects being studied can be critical to understanding the architecture itself, and that a critical analysis of any work of architecture may benefit from analysis of its symbolic importance. This was the primary motivation for the undertaking of the following case study.

# 3. A KEY SYMBOL ON MAIN STREET

## 3.1 WHAT IS A KEY SYMBOL?

In an article published in 1973, cultural anthropologist Sherry Ortner sought to better define certain terms commonly used in cultural analysis (Ortner 1973). The terms and methodologies she was speaking of were based on key symbols. The main idea behind key symbols is that there may be certain symbols within a culture that are descriptive of the culture as a whole. Although the study of key symbols in a culture was not a new one in American anthropology, (other others had written about 'core symbols', 'dominant symbols', 'themes', and 'focal values', for example (Ortner 1973, 1338)). Ortner's article is a comprehensive description of terms, methodology, and an outline of the many possibilities for the interpretation of key symbols. However, her main departure point was in defining what is meant by naming a symbol as 'key'.

Ortner states that all key symbols will appear somewhere in the public symbolic system of a culture, rather than, for example, a personal symbolic system, since this is the only "source from which the natives themselves discover, rediscover, and transform their own culture, generation after generation." (Ortner 1973, 1339). A culture may have a few key symbols, not only one. Also, anything can be a symbol, and any symbol could be a key symbol:

> *We can cite from the anthropological literature such things as the cattle among the Dinka and Nuer, the Naven ritual of the Iatmul, the Australian churinga, the slametan of the Javanese, the potlach of the northwest coast, the forked stitch of the Ndembu rituals, and from my own research, the wheel-image in Tibet and food among the Sherpas. We could also add such intuitive examples as the cross of Christianity, the American flag, the motorcycle for the Hell's Angels, "work" in the Protestant ethic, and so on.* (Ortner 1973, 1339)

There are two main methodologies which have been used to study a key symbol. One is to first analyse a culture for its rudimentary elements and then search for a symbol from within the culture that appropriately represents these elements in a concise fashion.

The other involves analysing the meaning of something which appears to be of interest to the culture. The latter approach is more commonly used than the first. However, cultural interest is not what makes a symbol 'key'. The keyness of a symbol lies in its relation to "the internal organization of the system of cultural meaning" and how it functions within that system (Ortner 1973, 1343).

Ortner describes the body of key symbols as a continuum between two poles - the poles are 'summarizing' and 'elaborating' symbols. Summarizing symbols tend to be very dense and resistant to analysis, and are generally sacred symbols. They stand for a powerful and complex mixture of ideas and emotions, and they do this for each element simultaneously. The nature of this type of symbol is that "It does not encourage reflection on the logical relations among these ideas, nor on the logical consequences of them as they are" acted out in reality (Ortner 1973, 1340). These symbols integrate complex theses and summarize them as one form.

Elaborating symbols are usually not sacred, and they are the opposite of summarizing symbols in that they are "essentially analytic" (Ortner 1973, 1340). They provide "vehicles for sorting out complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible to oneself, communicable to others, and translatable into orderly action...[and]...are accorded a central status in the culture on the basis of their capacity to order experience" (Ortner 1973, 1340).

Elaborating symbols operate in two modes: as root metaphors and key scenarios (refer to figure 16, following page). The difference between these two modes is that of thought versus action, respectively. Root metaphors are conceptual by nature, and are symbols that can be seen as similar to many experiences in life. Metaphorically, they are used "...as a source of categories for conceptualizing the world" (Ortner 1973, 1340):

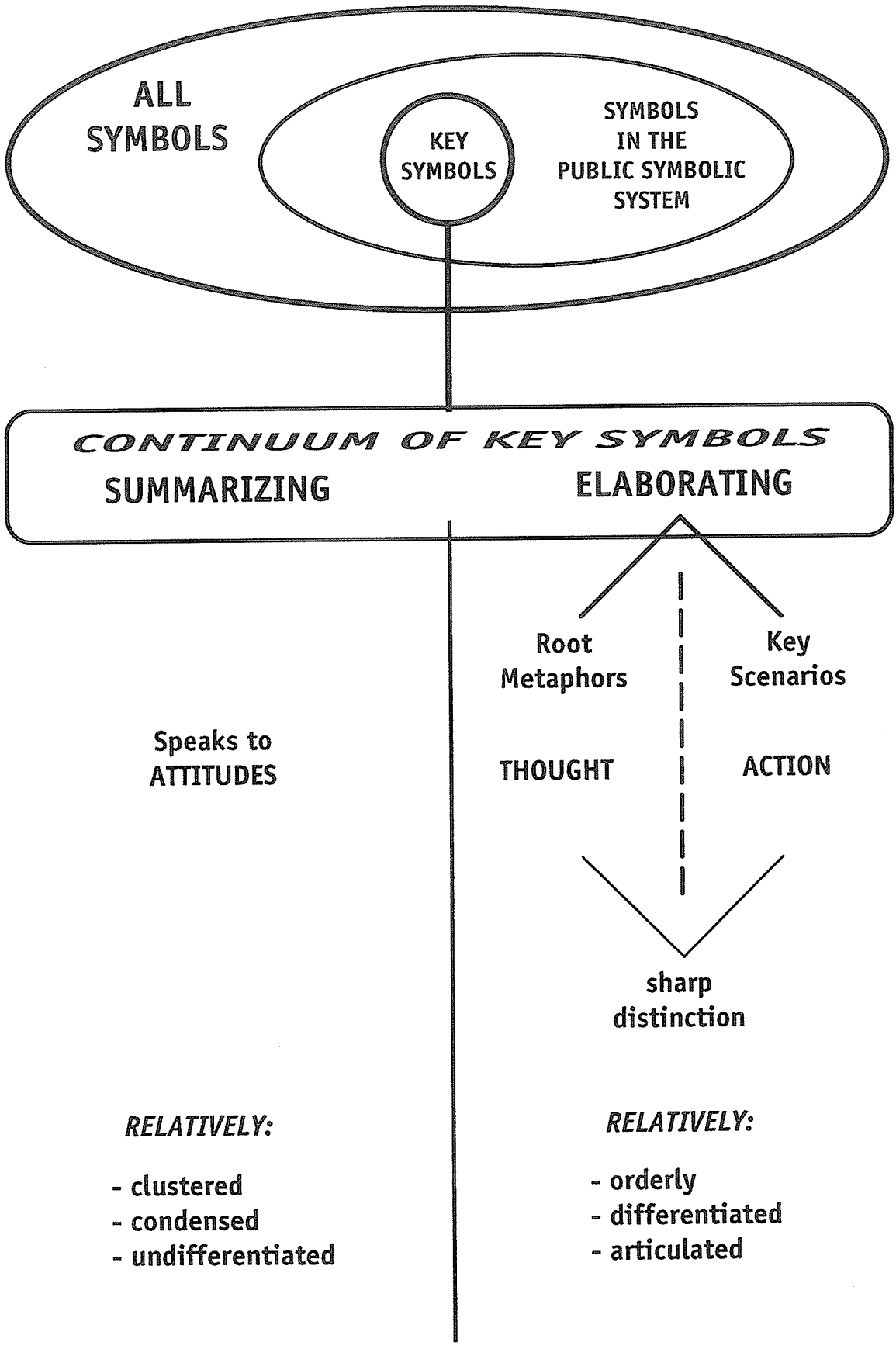



Figure 16. Key symbol diagram

> *One of the best examples of a cultural root metaphor in the anthropological literature is found in Godfrey Lienhardt's discussion of the role of cattle in Dinka thought. Cows provide for the Dinka an almost endless set of categories for conceptualizing and responding to the subtleties of experience. For example:*
>
> > The Dinkas' very perception of colour, light, and shade in the world around them is... inextricably connected with their recognition of color-configurations in their cattle. If their cattle-colour vocabulary were taken away they would have scarcely any way of describing visual experiences in terms of colour, light, and darkness.
>
> *More important for Lienhardt's thesis is the Dinka conceptualization of the structure of their own society on analogy with the physical structure of the bull. "'The people are put together, as a bull is put together,' said a Dinka chief on one occasion"...* (Ortner 1973, 1340)

Key scenarios, on the other hand, are action-oriented by nature. They provide unambiguous examples of how to conduct one's self in an accepted and proper manner within the culture. A key scenario may be a ritual, or it may be a sequence of action that is not formally realized as a ritual.

> *An example of a key scenario from American culture would be the Horatio Alger myth. The scenario runs: poor boy of low status, but with total faith in the American system, works very hard and ultimately becomes rich and powerful. The myth formulates both the American conception of success - wealth and power - and suggests that there is a simple (but not easy) way of achieving them - singleminded hard work.* (Ortner 1973, 1341)

Again, the important distinction between the root metaphor mode and key scenario mode is that of thought versus action. In summarizing symbols, this distinction is almost irrelevant, due to the manner in which summarizing symbols function. This is not to say that summarizing symbols do not in some way contribute to certain conceptualizations or scenarios; only that the distinction is far more pronounced in elaborating symbols, and therefore more useful in their definition.

Ortner concludes by reminding the reader that although her analysis has drawn clear definitions of the different types of key symbols, the contrasts highlighted for definitive purposes in the essay are in reality much more diffuse. One key symbol may have aspects of each type and mode as its constituent parts, or it may fluctuate between types and modes at varying times. It is possible for a key symbol to function differently

at different levels of a public symbolic system. Also, in defining symbol types, symbolic functions become highly relevant and in turn describe the type of keyness a symbol has. In many cases a description of how a symbol functions may be of more use than a definition of the symbol itself.

## 3.2 THE ROSETOWN AND DISTRICT CREDIT UNION BUILDING AS KEY SYMBOL

The most versatile aspect of Ortner's theory is that a key symbol can be almost anything. An ideology, a daily sequence of behaviour, an object, something sacred, or something apparently banal. It is this openness that allows one to place architectural objects under the scrutiny of the method. The results of testing architectural objects and ideas in this way would yield greatly different results from the pragmatic testing (time schedules, budgets, durability of finishes, for example) that architectural objects must submit to on a daily basis.

The object that is to be investigated here is the RDCU building in Rosetown, Saskatchewan (fig. 99 (A-7)). It was built in 1992 and is architecturally innovative in relation to other buildings in the town (see figs. 7-13 (5-7)).

How is it that the RDCU building suitable to be investigated as a key symbol? It was pointed out to the author that one does not have to go looking for a key symbol - they shout out to one. Ortner would agree with this, although she states it in a more structured manner. In her essay, Ortner outlined five indicators that something may be a key symbol:

*The observation that some symbol is a focus of cultural interest need not be very mysterious or intuitive. I offer here five reasonably reliable indicators of cultural interest, and there are probably more. Most key symbols, I venture to suggest, will be signalled by more than one of these indicators:*

*(1) The natives tell us that X is culturally important.*
*(2) The natives seem positively or negatively aroused about X, rather than indifferent.*
*(3) X comes up in many different contexts. These contexts may be behavioral or systemic: X comes up in many different kinds of action situation or conversation, or X comes up in many different symbolic domains (myth, ritual, art, formal rhetoric, etc.).*
*(4) There is greater cultural elaboration surrounding X, e.g., elaboration of vocabulary, or elaboration of details of X's nature, compared with similar phenomena in the culture.*
*(5) There are greater cultural restrictions surrounding X, either in sheer number of rules, or severity of sanctions regarding its misuse.*

*As I said, there may be many more indicators than these of the key status of a symbol in a culture, but any of these should be enough to point even the most insensitive fieldworker in the right direction.* (Ortner 1973, 1339)

At the beginning of this study the following indicators became apparent:

(1) Main Street is a very important place to the people in the town.

(2) The architectural expression of the RDCU building is different from the other buildings on Main Street.

(3) People had expressed an interest in the building.

Very shortly after the author had begun to investigate the RDCU as a key symbol, another indicator arose:

(4) The image of the building was given a prominent place in two media sources which portrayed the town in a positive manner (Brown 1994, Sterling 1993).

The correlation between Ortner's list of indicators and the author's is strongest between points (2) and (4) of Ortner's. This is partly to the fact that Ortner's indicators rely almost completely on the observation of human subjects, and are not centred on an object such as the RDCU building. Rather, they are centred in the perception and use of an object. This may reflect the difference between the topic areas of cultural anthropology

(in contemporary cultures) and archaeology. Both areas in anthropology are likely interested in the same objects, but approach the reading of the objects from two different points: archaeology from the object outwards to the culture, and cultural anthropology from the culture inwards to the object. There may also be some consistency of approach between archaeological and architectural analysis.

Given the correlation between Ortner's sample indicators, and those found in Rosetown, the author proceeded to investigate the RDCU building as a key symbol.

# 4. ROSETOWN, SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA

*One group of men drove from Regina by democrat to the Merrington District, four miles north of the present town of Kindersley, approximately 300 miles, and they had nothing to guide them but a compass and the surveyors marks or mounds. These mounds contained an iron stake on which were marked in roman Numerals the number of section, township, and range in the middle of four square holes...*

*In 1909, the steel was laid into Kindersley, and the long trips were over. People coming in at that time had to ride in the caboose of the train. The track was so rough that often the caboose came uncoupled and the rest of the train would go on without it...*

*In December 1909, the writer left Ontario to locate a homestead. Dressed in summer clothes and underclothes he was unprepared for the 40 below zero weather which was met at Guernsey. It was found almost impossible to keep warm even by running. Two weeks later I filed on a homestead North West of Kindersley. Taking the train for home the train stopped at night in Rosetown. After sleeping in a hotel in a room on whose walls was one inch of frost, I went down to the depot to see what time the train left for Kindersley. I was informed that it would not be able to go for at least two days as it was frozen on the track at Zealandia.* (Church 1958)

## 4.1 ROSETOWN AND THE EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT MAKE OR BREAK TOWNS

Rosetown is a town of approximately 2600 people, 115 km southwest of Saskatoon (See fig. 17, following page). It is the hub of a district which comprises several smaller towns. Historically it has always been larger than its neighbours. This is partly because both the Canadian Pacific Railroad and the Canadian National Railroad (CNR) cross through town, as well as two highways, Highway 4 (fig. 18) and Highway 7 (fig. 19).

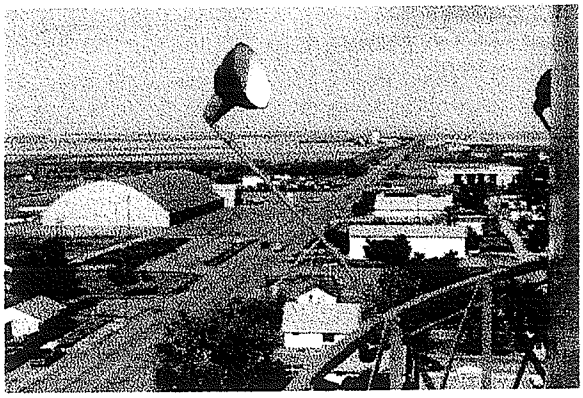


Figure 18. Highway 4 from the water tower, northward

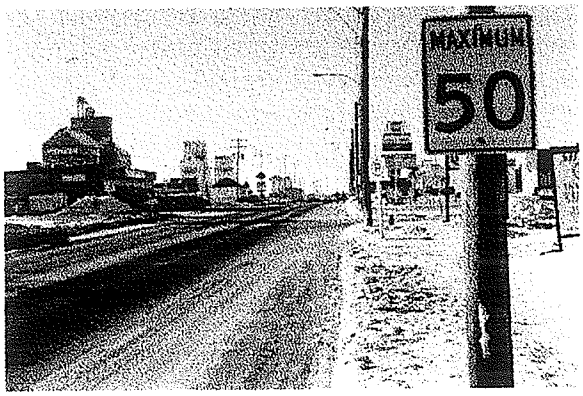



Figure 19. Highway 7, westward

Rosetown has survived and surpassed other smaller centres due to external reasons which affect almost every small town on the Canadian prairies. The external factors - infrastructure changes, mechanization of farming, population loss, fire - control to a large extent the survivability of a town.

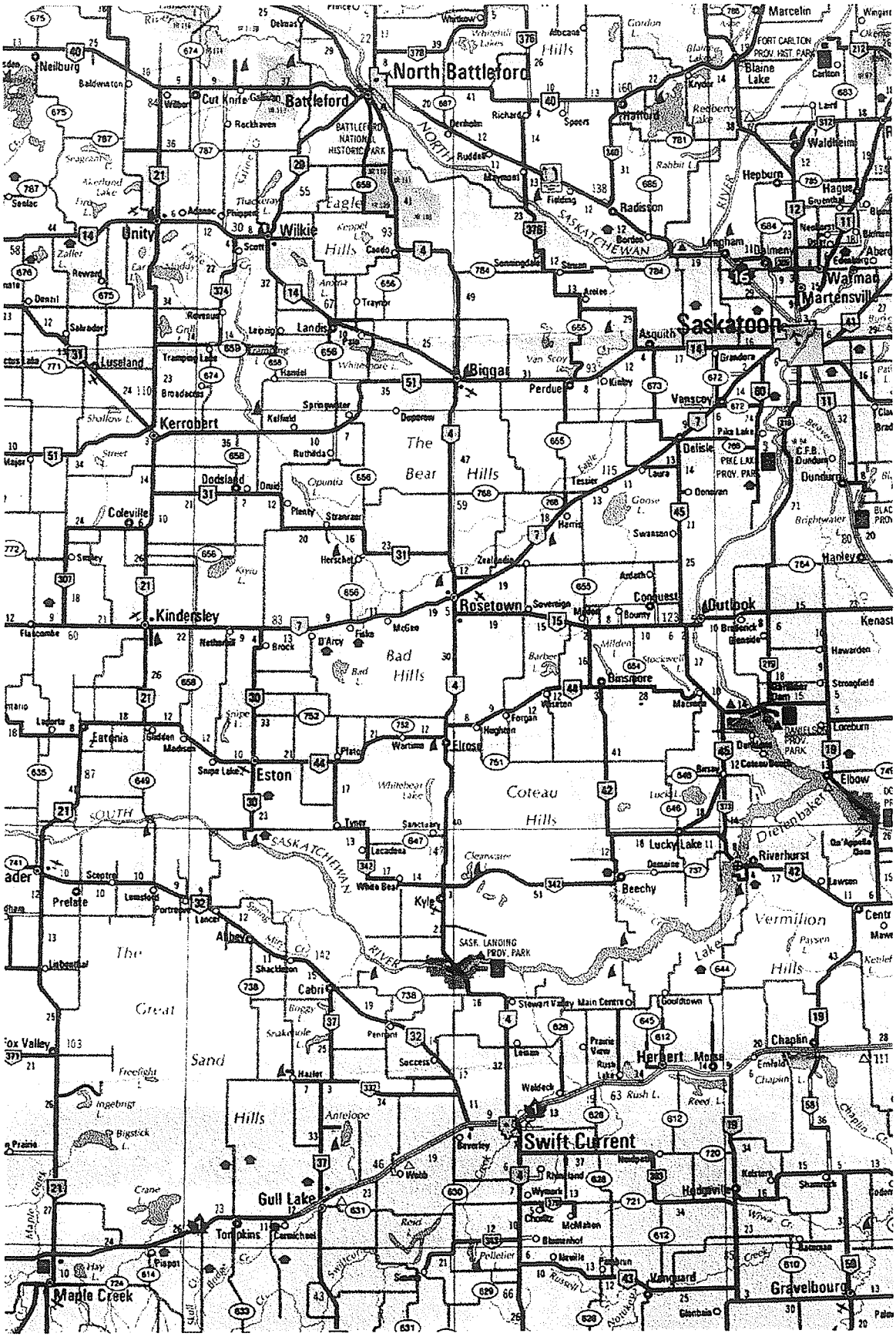



Figure 17. Saskatchewan Official Highway Map 1992. Courtesy of Saskatchewan Highways and Transportation, Communications Branch.

Since the 1940's, the size of an average farm in the Rosetown area has increased fivefold, from about 320 acres in 1940, to 1100 in 1960, to 1600 in 1990. This has been due to the mechanization of farming, and the need for each farm to have enough cropland producing grains to remain fluid. However, good farmland is not easy to acquire. One must inherit, buy, or rent land from someone, and land prices are usually quite high. The land around Rosetown is some of the best wheat growing land in the world, and the price of land reflects this quality. Throughout Saskatchewan land prices vary widely, but the average, according to one columnist, appears to be at about seven or eight times the assessed value of the land (Hursh 1996). In the Rosetown area, however, one can expect to pay fourteen to sixteen times the assessed value (Hursh 1996). This means that the land value alone of an average farm in the Rosetown area (1600 acres) is approximately $1.12 million. The weather and recent yields also affect land prices, but traditionally the Rosetown area has been good farming land. Still, with most farms being family farms, the younger family members frequently have no place to go. They are forced to leave farming if the family farm can only support their parents or they cannot afford the startup costs of a new farm. It is a fairly rare and esteemed farmer who can keep his sons on the farm, with a lot of hard work and a great deal of chance (10):

> *At that time* [c. 1992] *there were virtually no young people staying around. I noticed this at my curling rink. Most of the curlers are forty and older. When times got tough the young people left. Some, quite a few, come back. With the new processing plants there are some more jobs, so people take the opportunity and come back to work. Sometimes it's because maybe their dad isn't quite ready to retire from the farm yet.* (Farmer)

This migration of people away from the farming life also erodes the tax base of the smaller communities, leaving their public institutions in an inviable financial situation.

While Rosetown's population has remained relatively constant for the last decade, this should not lead one to assume that some sort of natural population cycle has been reached. Even in 1959, the editor of the EAGLE, Jack Pinckney, noted that he had seen

the readership of his paper remain the same over a ten year period, while the location of those readers had been increasingly urban-based (CBC 1959). At this point in time, Rosetown is a good example of a location where rural people come to retire. As the number of retirees will likely not remain on the rise over the long term, given the previous comments on population decline, one may forecast that although Rosetown is a larger centre, it will eventually have to face the same problems it's much smaller neighbours have had to in the past.

Improved roads and better automobiles have had a strong impact on many small towns, while affording the individual easier access to a higher standard of living. With a horse and wagon, travelling from Rosetown to Saskatoon took one week. In the late 1950's, before Highway 7 was improved, it was a two and a half hour car ride on dirt roads that zigzagged along the grid roads. The CNR offered one day excursion fares to Saskatoon (Figure 20), and this service has now been taken up by the bus lines (Figure 21). Now, it is commonplace for a Rosetown resident to drive into Saskatoon ("the city") on a moment's notice. This also puts


Figure 20. CNR newspaper advertisement, 1957. Rosetown Eagle, 21 March.


Figure 21. Saskatchewan Transportation Company newspaper advertisement, 1995. Rosetown Eagle, 18 December.

Rosetown merchants into the same market as those in Saskatoon, in many instances. But more important than travel time has been the change in infrastructure that road improvements represent. Most towns originated along the railroad lines. Their placement was based upon a combination of rail access and physical geography with the survey grids playing a lesser role. The advent of automobiles and all-weather roads, along with the decline of rail travel altered traffic patterns considerably. A town ten minutes drive from another could become almost completely bypassed if it was not on a paved highway. Also, when such road improvements were undertaken, the new roads were frequently on the other side of the railroad tracks from where a town lay. The town was then forced to begin to straddle the highway and the railroad tracks, which was disruptive for many small towns.

Rosetown, on the other hand, was strengthened by the road improvements. It had always been a crossroads for rail travel, and was on Highway 4, which was later improved where it lay; but the boost really came from the improvement of Highway 7. The train station was at the end of Main Street on a road called Railroad Avenue. Rosetown developed outward, roughly concentrically, from the train station down Main Street and out the side streets (see fig. 22, following page). Highway 7 used to join with Highway 4, three and a half miles north of the town (see fig. 23 (46)). When Highway 7 was improved, it was rerouted through Railroad Avenue and effectively reinforced what was already existing. The expansion of the town from the railroad, as in previous days, was now re-fortified by new highway access (see fig. 24 (47)). This change in infrastructure is a significant historical fact to the town, as a casual visitor would easily assume that Highway 7 had always ran through Railroad Avenue. Highway 7 is now the main access to the town, and a small commercial and industrial strip is developing along it (fig. 19 (40)).

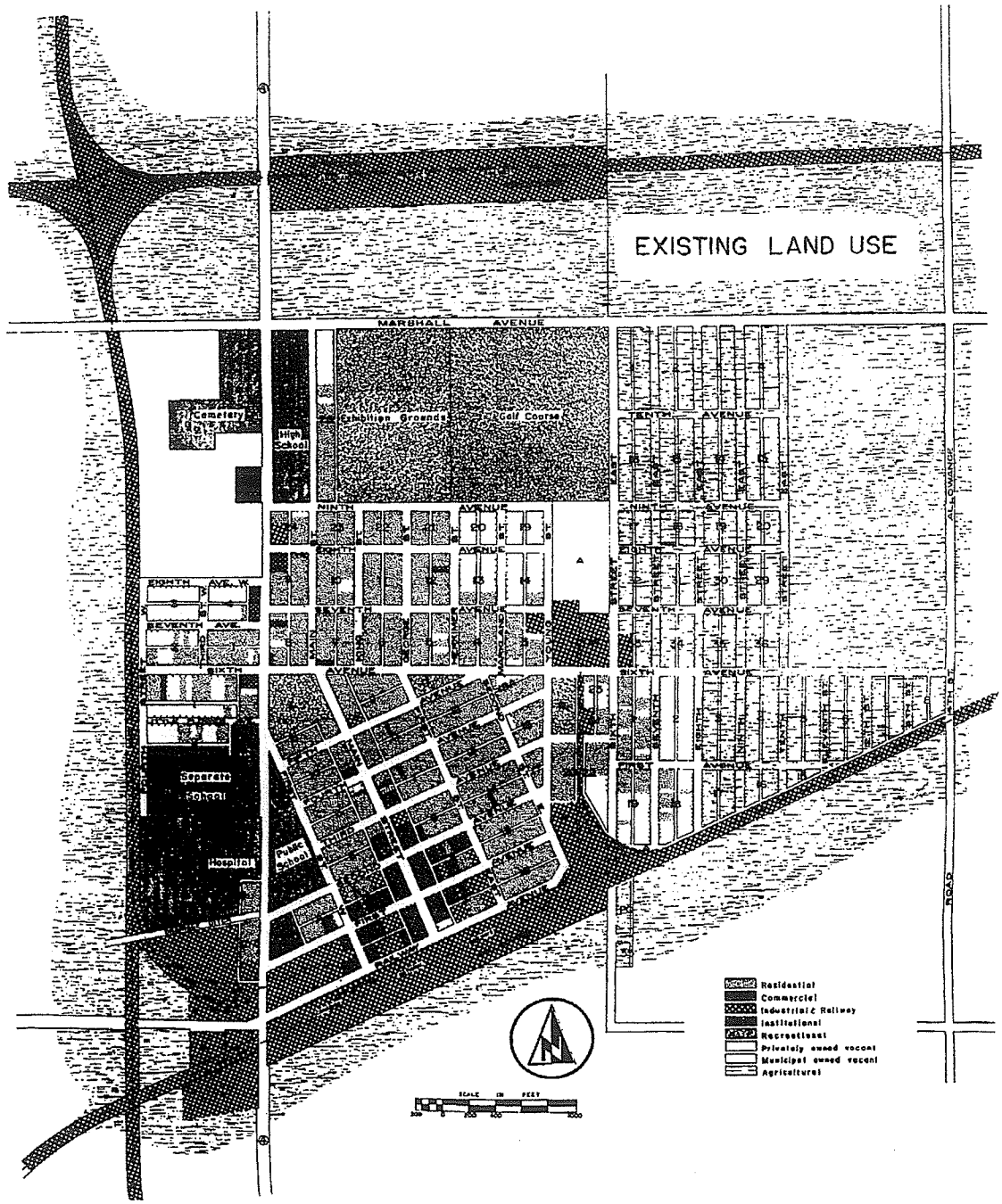



Figure 22. Existing Land Use diagram, 1957. Courtesy of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, from Community Planning Branch, Department of Municipal Affairs, Rosetown Plans its Future, 13-14.

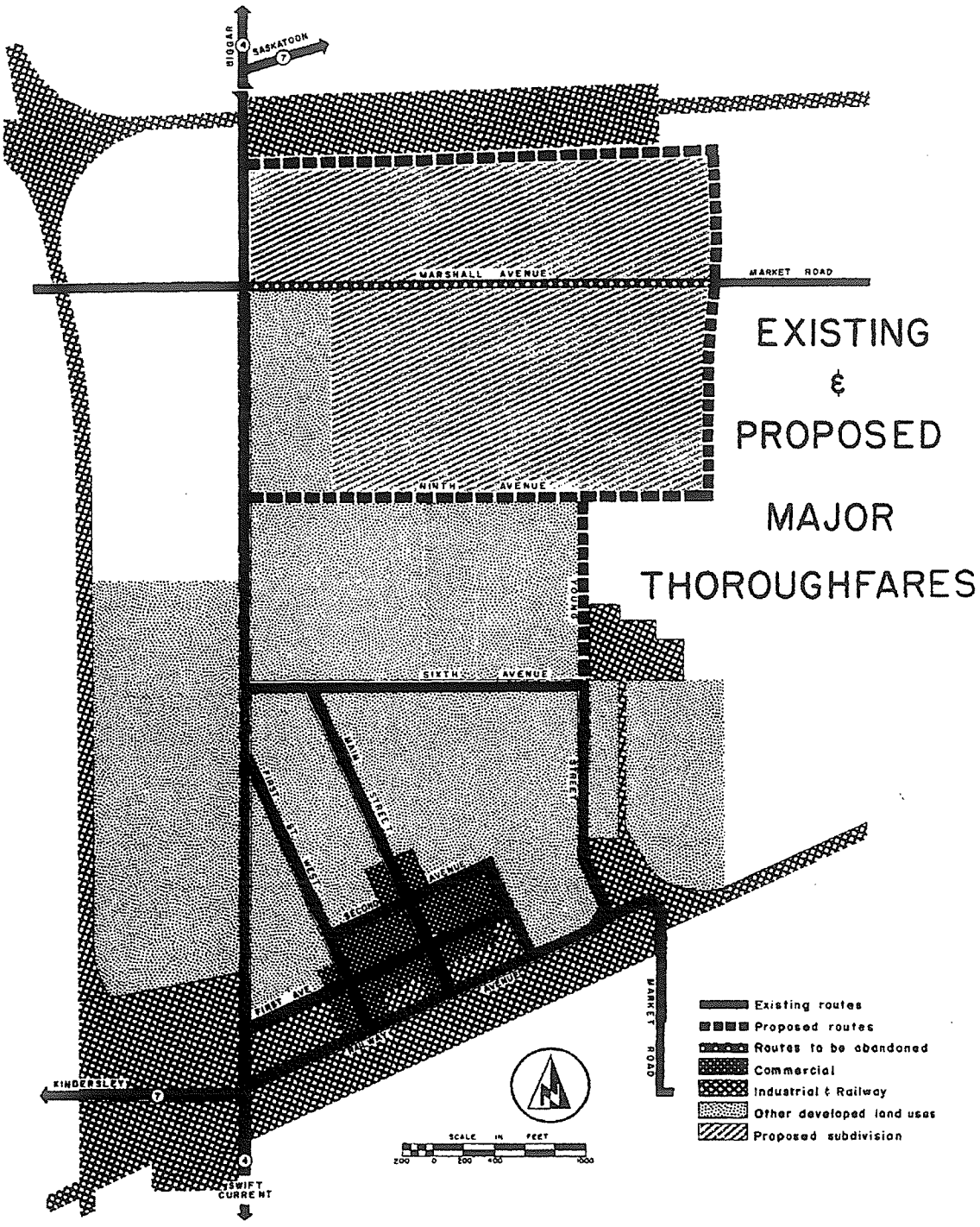



Figure 23. Existing and Proposed Major Thoroughfares, 1957. Courtesy of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, from Community Planning Branch, Department of Municipal Affairs, Rosetown Plans its Future, 34.

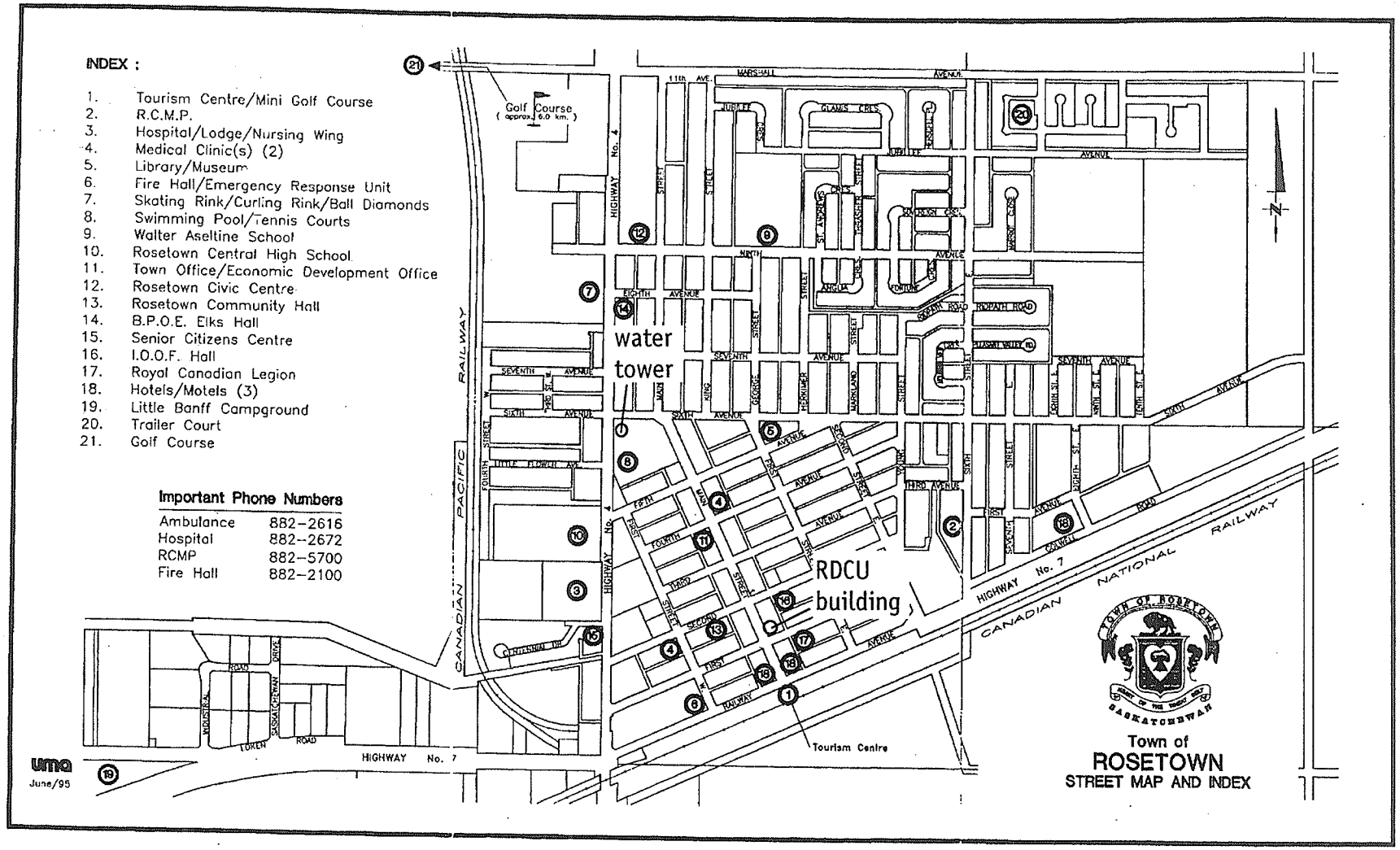



Figure 24. Map of Rosetown, 1995. Courtesy of the Town of Rosetown and UMA Engineering. (Water tower label, RDCU label, and markers by the author).

The most unlikely factor contributing to the success or demise of Canadian prairie towns is fire. Many of the small towns around Rosetown - Zealandia, Milden, Herschel, Hughton - have all experienced major fires that have crippled the town. Rosetown has also had fires, and even the Rosetown fire hall burnt down one year (Waldern 1991c). This is one of the reasons for the construction of some of the newer buildings on Main Street, but the important fact is that rebuilding did occur. In many small towns it didn't pay to rebuild considering the business prospects. This was compounded by the fact that even in the short span of time it would take to rebuild, clientele could be lost to other larger centres, where people were already travelling to on a regular basis. For many small towns a fire easily devastated its economy. Ghost towns and razed sites have become an expected feature on a drive through the Saskatchewan prairie.

For a prairie town, Rosetown has fared exceptionally well. It has been a larger centre right from early settlement, with a high level of services and the ability to maintain them. And it is not just a matter of means; Rosetown has always displayed a propensity to survive by pulling together and pooling resources when times get tough - a propensity known as the 'pioneering spirit'. For Rosetown and many towns, the 'pioneering spirit' is descriptive of the current attitude of the townspeople, just as it was for the original settlers.

### 4.2 A SATURDAY NIGHT TOWN

Most people living in Rosetown in the 1930s or 1940s will remember Rosetown as another "Saturday Night Town". Saturday nights were special nights in most prairie towns, as Saturday was almost the only day when the farmers came into town to pick up their groceries. It was a large social event. On Saturday night, in Rosetown, the stores were open until eleven o'clock; but those were only their advertised hours. People would begin to arrive in the late afternoon. Some who arrived earlier, did so just to get a good parking spot so they could sit in their cars and watch people on Main Street.

Finding a good parking spot was not easy if one arrived later in the day. The Main Street parking stalls, as well as the ones on the side streets, filled up quickly. One resident recalled that one couldn't walk down Main Street on a Saturday without rubbing shoulders with others since there were so many people on the sidewalks.

## 4.3 A COMMUNITY IN THE HEART OF THE WHEATBELT

> *In the early days, the twenties and thirties, a shelterbelt nursery was planted along the north the of town. These trees were then transplanted as needed for new housing development, and other things.*
>
> *I remember when I was about eighteen, I went to Eston for the first time to play ball. When I got there I noticed something wasn't the same. I wondered, What's different here? Then I realized there were no trees in Eston. I thought my town looked better. Rosetown has always planted trees and flowers.* (Key informant on one of the first times he remembers thinking about his town)

The author asked one informant to generalize about the character of the people in Rosetown. The informant said, "'Conservative innovators.' They have a certain entrepreneurial spirit. For instance, they raised $800 000 overnight to bring Precision Metals to Rosetown. They are not afraid to take a calculated risk." (11)

Like all boomtowns, Rosetown has seen many speculators trying to make money in any way possible. In the early 1900's, people advertised, and fully expected, that Rosetown was to become another city on the prairies, similar to Saskatoon. One brochure, circa 1912, describes the growth of Rosetown within the context of "The Birth and Growth of Great Cities" (figs. 25, 26 (50)), and also

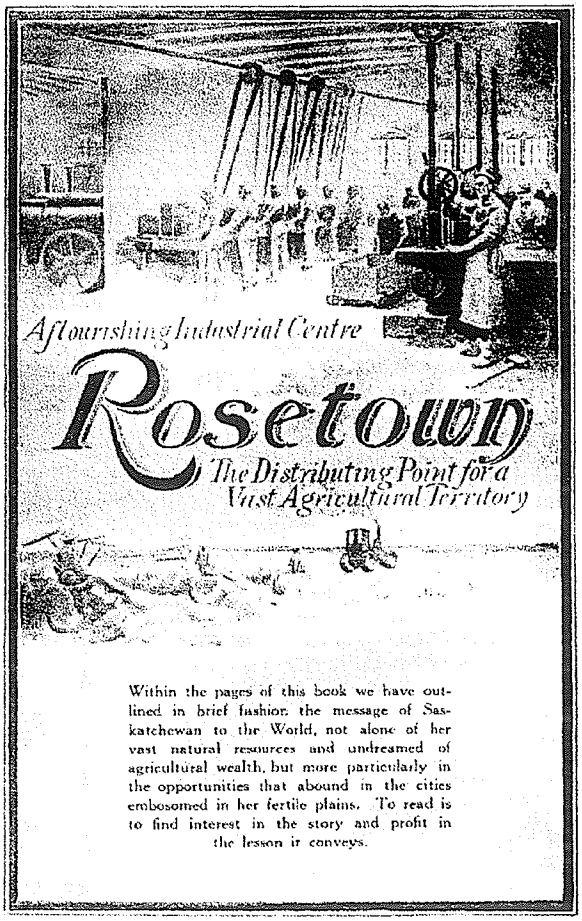
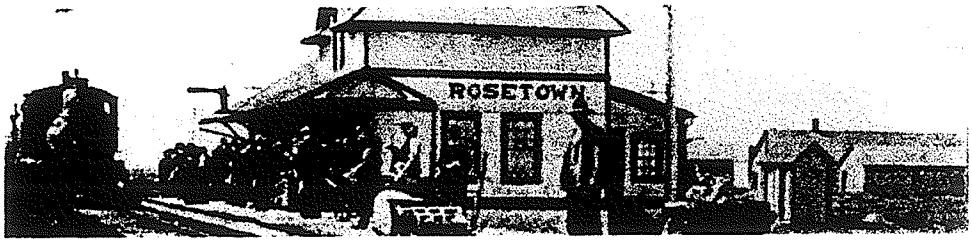
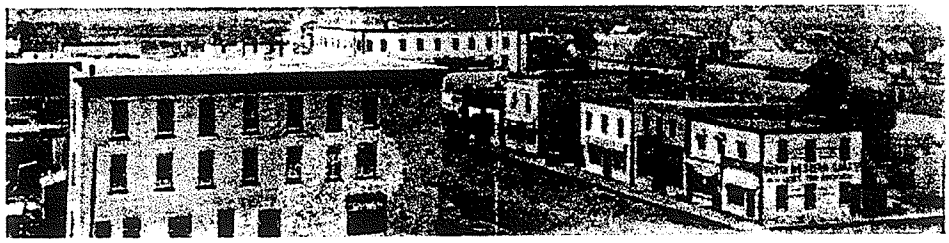



Figure 25. Booster brochure for Rosetown, c. 1912. Courtesy of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, from Rosetown: A flourishing industrial centre, the distributing point for a vast agricultural territory, 1.


Main Street



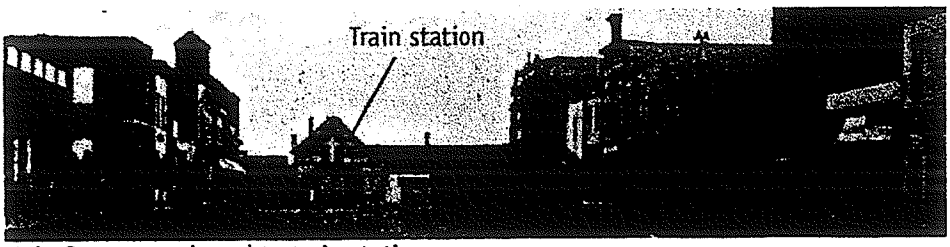

Train station



Main Street

Rosetown Hotel

Wagons waiting to unload at elevator




Main Street, southward to train station

Figure 26. Photographs of Rosetown, c. 1912. Courtesy of Saskatchewan Archives Board, from Rosetown: A flourishing industrial centre, the distribution point for a vast agricultural territory. (All labels by the author).

supports most of the common booster philosophies of the west as an uncared for and wild frontier. Needless to say, the course of history did not run the way such boosterism desired, at least not on the scale they predicted.

The booster mentality, or perhaps unadulterated optimism, is a recurrent theme in Rosetown's history. A planning document completed in 1957 by the Community Planning Branch, Department of Municipal Affairs, in Regina, included a population growth diagram (fig. 27, following page). If one extended the forecast beyond its 1971 limit, Rosetown would have had a population of approximately 4000 in 1995.

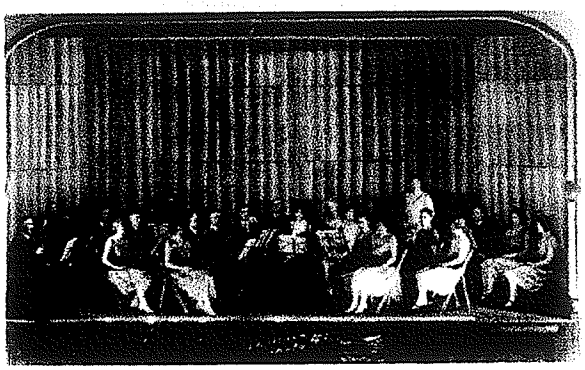


Figure 28. Rosetown Concert Orchestra, 1928. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

Figure 29. Rosetown Fair Day, 1919. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

Figure 30. Rosetown Fair Day, 1922. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

Still, many of the things that one would expect from a boomtown are still part of Rosetown. Take, for example, the Rosetown Concert Orchestra (fig. 28) and the Fair Day (figs. 29, 30). Rosetown has a strong music program in the schools, and the Rosetown Jamboree, which includes a parade and a rodeo, is a major event. Older attractions, such as the Lion's Ferris wheel running off a John Deere tractor, are insignificant in the face of the newer, larger events (fig. 31 (53)). The tradition of Saturday night

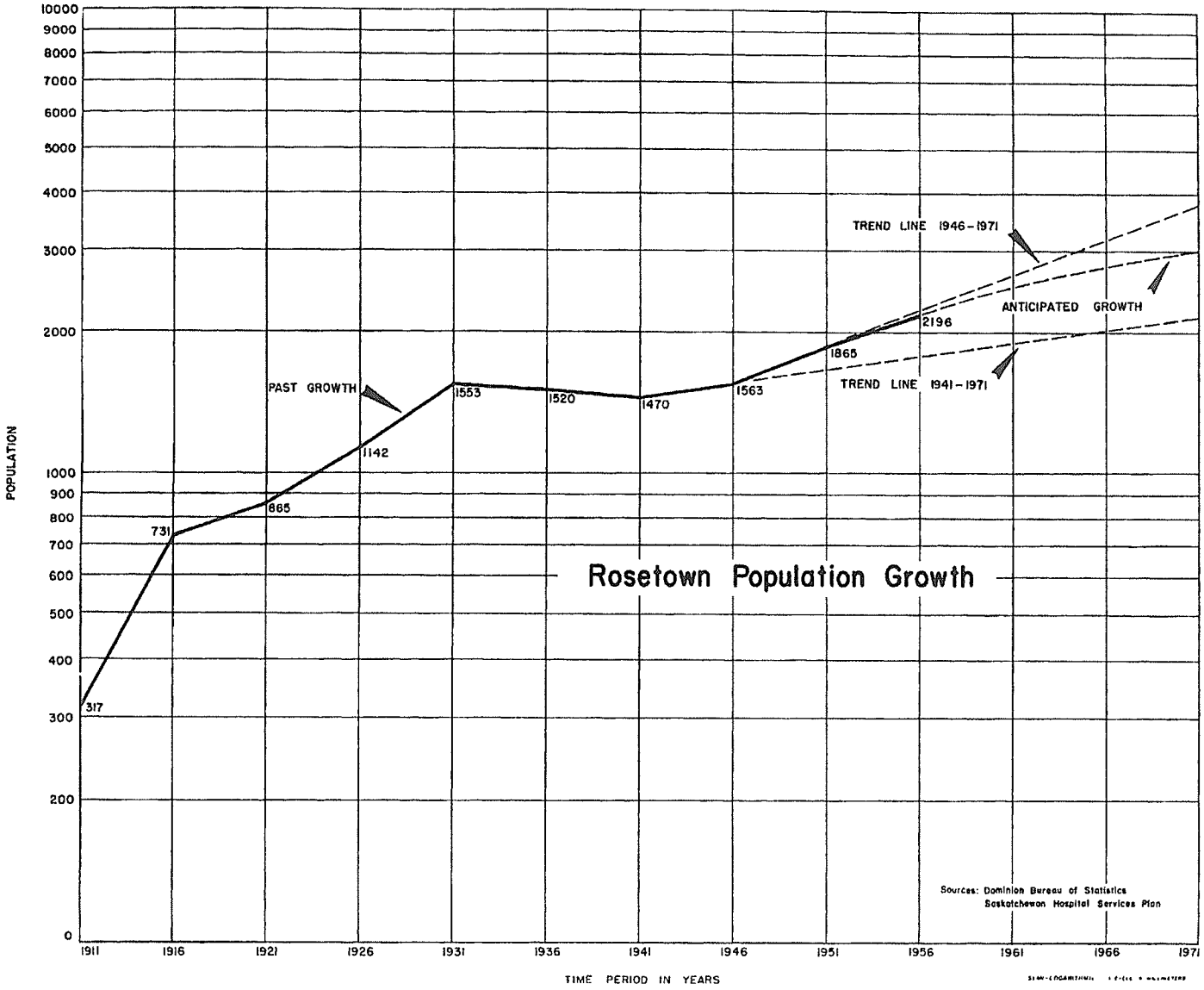



Figure 27. Rosetown Population Growth diagram, 1957. Courtesy of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, from Community Planning Branch, Department of Municipal Affairs, Rosetown Plans its Future, 4.

is vestigially present in an event put on by the Rosetown and District Chamber of Commerce and Rosetown merchants called Midnight Madness. Midnight Madness is a consumer-oriented event that lasts for a few days before Christmas. Similar to the old Saturday nights, there is also a large social component. Sporting events, such as curling bonspiels, still consistently large draw numbers (60 Rinks In Action At Rosetown's Annual Spiel (1957)). Other boomtown elements, such as the old style hotels with their beer parlours, or the Unique Theatre (fig. 32) are gone.

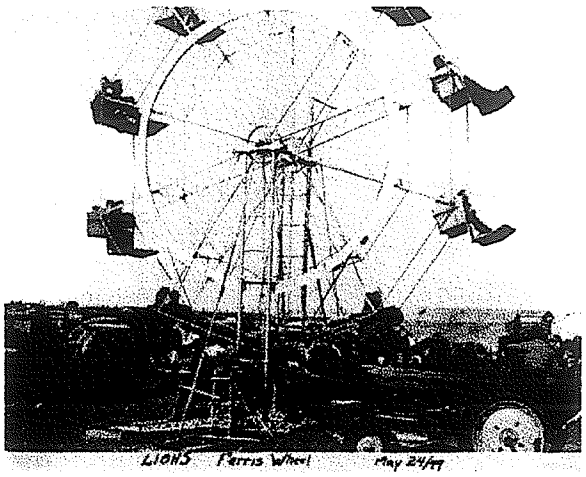



Figure 31. Lions ferris wheel, 1949. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

However, Rosetown, Tommy Douglas's old riding, has matured considerably from its boomtown days. The level of services has remained high. There is a hospital, seniors citizen's lodges (fig. 33), a good selection of merchants on Main Street, churches (fig. 34, following page), a large farm implement dealer, well-established seed cleaning operations near Elrose and Milden, a regional high school (fig. 35, following page), a new grade school (fig. 36, following page), a civic centre (fig. 37 (55)), a recycling facility, a municipality shop and yard, an adult education college, a radio station, a facility which employs mentally handicapped people, a new water

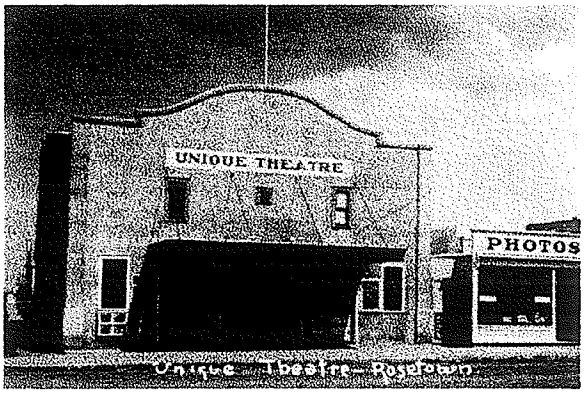



Figure 32. Unique Theatre, undated. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

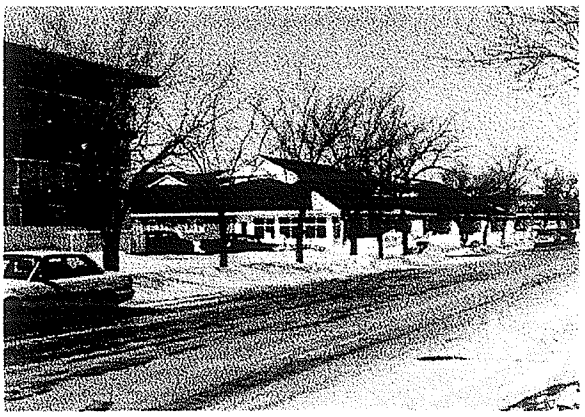


Figure 33. Lions Manor senior citizen's home

treatment plant, and more. An area has been zoned for industrial use, and new suburban-styled subdivisions are starting grow on the north east side of town, but not without support from the town (fig. 38, following page). Even Rosetown has fallen victim to a recent suburban oddity, the pink stucco house (fig. 39, following page), which stands in stark contrast to some of the older homes (figs. 40 (56), 41 (56)) on older streets (fig. 42 (56)). Some of this newer development appears as an overlay on a previous time, as Rosetown had been economically stagnant for some time. Only through the efforts of Entrepreneurs 2000 (E2000) and community bonds programs are such ventures being undertaken. The most recent example was the raising of $800 000 in community bonds to attract a Saskatoon business, Precision Metals, which makes a combine pickup attachment called Rake-Up, to locate in Rosetown. This company employs 30 local workers and is a growing company. However, a dispute arose between the town and Precision over whether moving Precision's head office to Saskatoon was a violation of their contract with the town, or worse, an indication that they will move out completely once their contractual obligations to the town are closed.

Figure 34. Rosetown United Church

Figure 35. Rosetown Central High School

Figure 36. Walter Aseltine School

Precision was taken to court and the court ruled in favour of the town, a relevant ruling for most community bonds programs (12). The loss of such a business has happened to many towns in the past, where a substantial effort was given, and stiff competition overcome, in order to bring in business and jobs, which then only lasted for a few years. Rosetown had an oil refinery (fig. 43) and a dairy at one time, as well (not due to community bonds, however).

Like most small communities, there are a number of clubs, lodges, associations, and miscellaneous groups, providing for the townspeople and the disadvantaged townspeople alike. This is another traditional feature of small town rural life that continues on to the present. In 1959, even the town of Hughton, with a population of 100, had multiple women's organizations which played a strong roles in the community:

> *Yes, we've quite a number* [of organizations]*: there's the Ladies Orange Lodge, the Women's Association of the United Church, and the Girl Guide mothers have a group, a good number of us belong to the Hughton square dance club, and there's the Homemaker's Club which is the Women's Institute. To date the Homemakers have spent well over two thousand dollars on the furnishings of this community hall that we are in this evening. A lot of our money that we've raised has come from catering to weddings and conventions and field meets.* (CBC 1959)

Figure 37. Rosetown & District Civic Centre

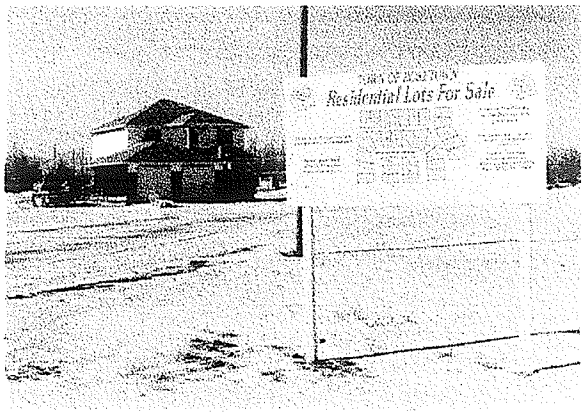



Figure 38. Town of Rosetown residential development

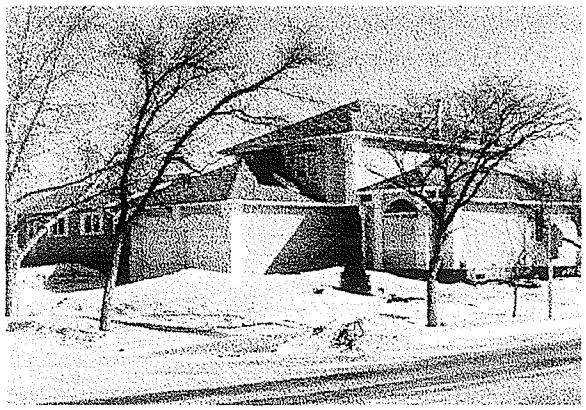


Figure 39. Pink stucco house

Socially, Rosetown's residents are supportive of one another. Still, whether one is 'from' there or not is noteworthy to most townspeople. This distinction may based upon where one lives, or one's family history in the area. There are still a fairly large number of families whose relatives were among the first to settle the area. No matter how long one spends in Rosetown, if one's family hasn't been there for a few generations, one will not be thought of as 'from' Rosetown. It was suggested to the author that there are different levels of acceptance in the community, and one must a second generation relative or closer to be fully accepted. However, these levels of acceptance are not usually used in discriminating amongst people, it is more of tag - a classification system which allows people to place others in context.

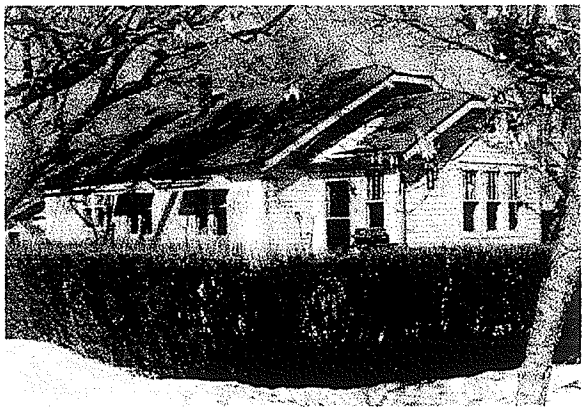


Figure 40. Typical older home

Figure 41. Typical older home

Regarding where one lives, an interesting situation kept coming up in the interviews. One of the topics the author used as a tool for questioning was a television program the CBC had produced on the state of the farm economy (CBC 1992). The program was broken into three segments and, in the third segment, the CBC interviewed a lady and her family from a farm near Biggar, 60 km north of Rosetown. She ran the farm and worked part time in Rosetown.

Figure 42. Typical older street

She was represented as being from Rosetown, or the Rosetown area, although this was not explicitly stated. In the interviews with informants, it was repeatedly made clear to the author that this lady was from Biggar, and not from Rosetown. For the informants, the distinction between the two towns and districts was clearly defined. This was a source of frustration for some regarding the CBC newsprogram since, they thought, if the show was about Rosetown, why interview someone from Biggar? The CBC had made an assumption about who was who and it had erred. One informant said, "I've lived here my whole life, and I've never heard of her" (13).

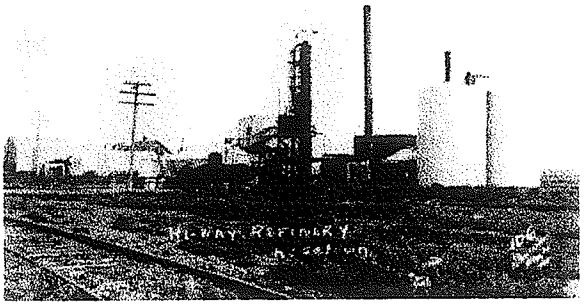


Figure 43. Hi-Way Refinery, undated. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

Another informant, a social worker, stated that it is more difficult to get Rosetown residents out to classes, such as parenting classes, than in other communities. Rosetown seems to have an image of itself as more prosperous and better-educated than other towns. Whether or not this is an accurate perception, Rosetown does have a lot to be proud of. Rosetown has frequently aspired to be more than just another town. Another informant stated that even in the droughts of the 1930s, people watered their trees as much as they could. It was explicitly expressed to the author, on more than one occasion, that those who stay in Rosetown do so for a reason, and they like living there.

## 4.4 A MAIN STREET TOWN

*Most of the buildings were built at a time when if you needed a building, you built a building.*
*If anything is happening, it's on Main Street.*
*Main Street is a large group of independent merchants who have to get along to survive.*
*I can go downtown and meet people; Main Street is a part of my life.*
*Main Street has always been the centre of town.*
*Main Street is seen as the hub of the town.*
*An indicator of the town.*
*Main Street is certainly the lifeblood of the town.*
*Any business is operating under a handicap if it isn't on Main Street.*
*Our Main Street has always been a fairly nice one. It is always neat and tidy.*
*You always compare it with other towns you visit.*
*Rosetown is a Main Street town.*
(List of responses by informants to questions regarding Main Street)

A "Main Street Town" is a phrase that was used to describe Rosetown. It also describes almost every other small town on the prairies, as long as they had enough buildings to make up a street. Nevertheless, it is highly descriptive of Rosetown. As is apparent from the preceding quotations, Main Street is important to the residents in an assortment of different ways - business, civic pride, level of service. Even though Main Street being called the centre of town is something that is becoming more of a conceptual statement, particularly as the town expands to the northeast and as a small commercial strip accretes along Highway 7, but it still describes Rosetown well. Main Street is meeting place for many people (figs. 44, 45).

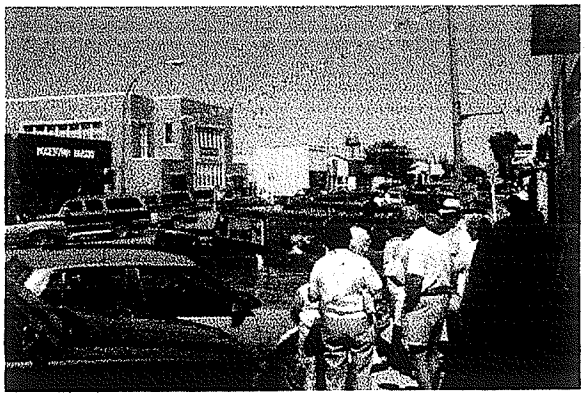


Figure 44. People meeting on Main Street

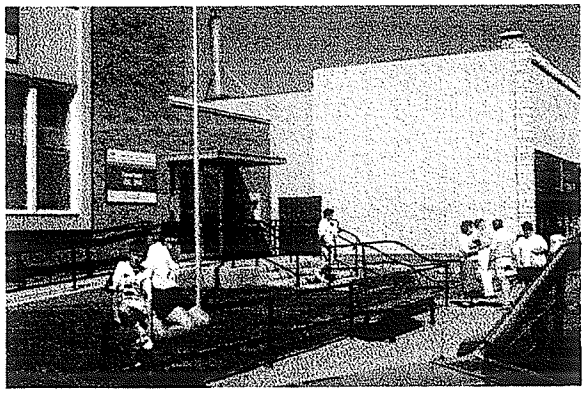


Figure 45. People meeting at post office

As mentioned in section 4.1, Rosetown expanded from the south end of Main Street, outwards from the train station. The train station is no longer

there (14), but it has been replaced by a renovated old school house which houses the local tourism centre (fig. 46, following page), a considerably better facility than the previous tourism booth (fig. 47, following page). The new tourism centre is also where the billboards advertising the level of commitment to the community bonds program have been strategically placed (fig. 48, following page).

Notwithstanding the previous quotations, the author found that the symbolic importance of Main Street was a difficult thing to get people to speak about, even indirectly. It is so deeply embedded in what the town is, that it is almost invisible in day to day life. Take this passage from another CBC show filmed in 1959, for example :

*Host:* *Lois Brown, a Hughton girl who attends Elrose composite. Lois, what will you do after graduation?*

*Lois:* *Oh, I think I'll go to teacher's college, if I pass, and I don't know, if I get my diploma I'll probably teach a year and then go to Varsity for a couple more. I'll have to get a degree to keep going.*

*Host:* *Have you any thoughts of coming back to teach or to live in Hughton eventually?*

*Lois* *No, I don't think I'd come back to teach. Not that I have anything against the town, but I just don't think I'd want to teach in my own home town, not where everybody knows you.*

*Host:* *Lois, I was just wondering, do you like living in Hughton...*

*Lois:* *Sure! I like living there.*

*Host:* *How do you feel about Hughton generally?*

*Lois:* *Oh, I don't know, it's just home.* (CBC 1959)

Here, Lois, a high school graduand is only being asked to comment generally on her home town, but cannot think of anything to say. Main Street invoked a similar response in most of the informants, even though some fairly obvious exigencies were often brought up, such as the response above, "Any business is operating under a handicap if it isn't on Main Street." However, one key informant, an ex-mayor, stated quite clearly what Main Street meant to the town:

> *The strength of Main Street is important since Main Street sums up the aspirations of a community. The level of economic vigour shown here helps one to gauge the level of 'survivability' of this town in the future. Main Street is an indicator of broad affiliates. I think the common perception is that the more businesses there are available, the greater it is a sign of longevity. The disintegration of Main Street mirrors the disintegration of the community.*

This informant feels that Rosetown has a strong Main Street and that it is an important factor in drawing people into the town. There have been some small attempts at the beautification of Main Street. There used to be a bed of flowers at the end of Main Street, the fire hydrants have been painted like cartoons, there are murals on the fences hiding a few of the vacant sites, and roses have been painted on the sidewalks at intervals. The shops are not particularly attractive, but they are well taken care of.

It is interesting to see how difficult it can be to think about what things mean to us. There are advantages in trying to understand our environment in a comprehensive manner. To a certain extent, this was done by the Rosetown and District Credit Union building committee when they chose to build their second building on Main Street, a few blocks down from their original one.

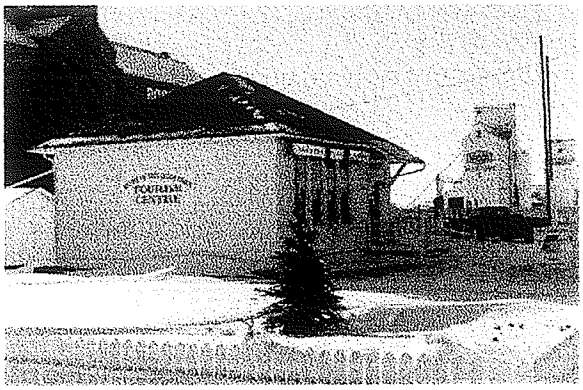



Figure 46. Rosetown Tourism Centre


Figure 48. Community Bonds sign

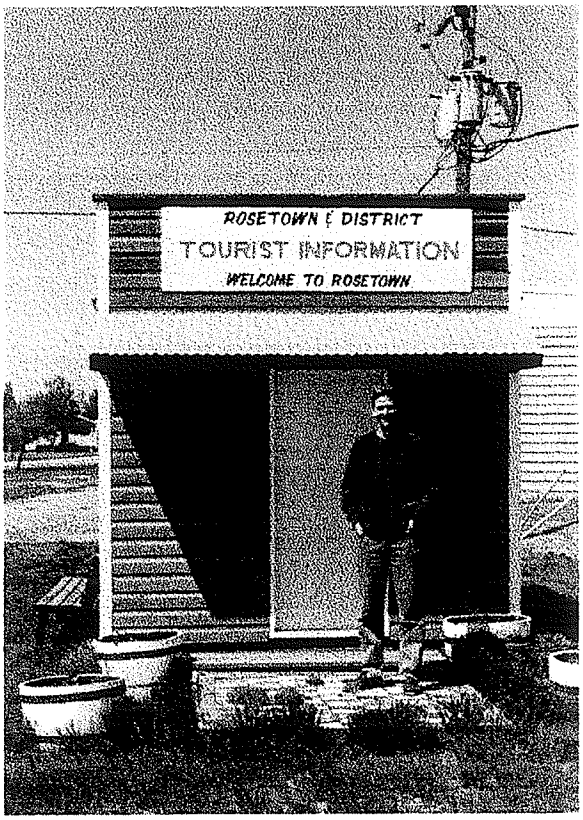



Figure 47. Rosetown and District Tourist Information booth

## 4.5 A DEPRESSED AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY AND A BAD MOOD

*In the '80s, far more devastating than any price war was the weather. Farmers had done all their input but weren't getting a crop out. Politics is a big factor, but nothing like the weather.* (Farmer and businessman)

The new credit union building was constructed over a period of nine months during 1991 and 1992. At that time, the economy had just taken its first major downturn, beginning the current recession. The economic situation for prairie farmers hadn't been strong through the late 1980s to begin with, mostly because of poor weather, which reduced incomes over a period of years. Farmers had had some good years, but the government was beginning to try and "wean us off their money", as one farmer put it. What made the situation worse was that just at the start of these poor economic times, the provincial government had made substantial loans available to farmers. A few years later, the situation had stayed the same and farmers were having to pay those loans back. This worsened the start of the recession by adding even more pressure to the farmers already having a difficult time with their businesses.

The farmers the author spoke with recognize the tough times, but they also say that it is not severe compared with the major recession and bad weather of the 1930s. They thought that the current slump was better described as a "bad time in a relatively good time." They also think that the economic depression in agriculture is overstated, especially in the media. They feel that with the media it is almost as if a farmer is not allowed to make money. There are success stories, but the media won't show them:

*There is a group of farmers, about 20 who are about forty years old, who are innovators and leaders in farming. They are not whiners and they are doing something about their economic situation. Rosetown is a very successful area, and it is probably THE place to farm, especially now. The media have really drove to town with agriculture in general.* (Farmer and businessman)

Rosetown has always been rather well off financially, and the economic situation was definitely worse in other areas of Saskatchewan.

Adding to the doom and gloom, the agricultural industry has also been under popular attack on environmental grounds (Knisley 1991a, MacMillan 1996). However, the hottest topics in the media were the price subsidy war between the United States and Europe, which is still particularly devastating to Canadian farmers, and diversification. The price subsidy war and diversification were not new topics to farmers, although they were frequently presented as such in the media. In 1956, an article in the EAGLE spoke about British subsidies as a "New Threat to Canadian Farmers" (New threat to Canadian Farmers (1956)). At near the same time, there was another article speaking about an upcoming meeting for veteran farmers who were being urged by the Veterans' Land Act to specialize their farming practices (Production Line Farming Meeting Here (1957)). Even now, diversification is a debatable topic, since some claim that low prices are the real problem (Knisley 1993), while at the same time the traditional crop of wheat may be rising in value again (Redekop 1996). Others have looked at the more academic topic of restructuring the ownership of farmland. Ineluctably, diversifying is currently the only way to survive.

The state of the agricultural economy led to a concerned farmers meeting which was held in the Rosetown arena, in the fall of 1991. The organizers hoped for a crowd of 500 to 600 people. Far beyond their expectations, 4000 people came, and the meeting was late in starting because of the unexpected numbers. It had been decided that the organizers would control the meeting in order to try and ensure that people would speak about agriculture from a non-political point of view. Everyone, no matter who he was, had to walk to the microphone from his seat; there were no special seats held for anyone. This well-publicized meeting is probably one of the reasons that "The Journal" came to Rosetown the next year.

CBC's "The Journal" came to Rosetown in the spring of 1992 and filmed a newsprogram on the state of the agricultural economy and diversification in farming (CBC 1992). The CBC used Rosetown as its example of a struggling prairie town, although Rosetown was

not struggling to the extent that the program portrayed. The program also overemphasized diversification as the solution to getting farmers out of the recession. Still, the subject was very timely, as diversification had not yet become commonplace in prairie farming. This is evident in the following statements of two farmers:

> *When I was taking a Ag. Econ.* [Agricultural Economy] *course, they talked about how there were innovators and followers. Most of the farmers around Rosetown at that time would have been followers and were being forced into diversification.*

> *This was the first time that the agricultural industry had been forced to diversify. Before that there was no necessity. The farmers that had lost or sold cows didn't bother to replace them. Wheat prices were up, at about four to five dollars per bushel, and most farmers went to a single industry. Now it is different, you're starting to see things like 600 sow pig barns, value-added industry.*

Another farmer stated that he is now growing seven crops instead of three, but at the time of the CBC show he thought that his few cattle were his diversification. He also stated that other farmers had already been growing lentils (a previously nonstandard crop for the area), and pursuing other methods of diversification well in advance of himself.

However, it is easy to forget that diversification is expensive, requiring money which many farmers still do not have. Also, the concept of diversification takes time to implement. It was in the middle of this uncertain and tense time for farmers that the credit union built a new building.

Aside from the agricultural industry, other disconcerting events are scattered through the EAGLE. At the national level there was the separatist debate surrounding the defeated Meech Lake Accord, and the introduction of the GST. Issues closer to Rosetown were the growing non-confidence in the provincial government (Knisley 1991b), a population drop within the town (15), and the jolt of the King's store closing (Town's First Business To Close (1992)) (16).

King's Ltd. was started by Bill King, the town's first overseer, in 1909, and store became an integral part of the town over time:

> *King's Ltd. was the quintessential small town department store.*
> *They sold everything: ladies clothing, ladies and children's shoes, groceries and yardage, everything except nuts and bolts; we never had hardware...*
>
> *The second storey of 'King's Hall', as it became known, was used for school and church and public meetings. The building was also a community centre on Saturday nights.* (Town's First Business To Close (1992))

Although the business at King's Ltd. had been declining over the years, and it slowly shed the different lines of merchandise it used to carry, the closing of the store still came as an unwelcome surprise. The closing of King's Ltd. was more than just the loss of a store on Main Street, it was, for many people, a saddening experience to see one of the town's institutions go down:

> *The young woman, in her early thirties, and her husband were buying shoes at the "Quitting Business" sale at King's Limited last week.*
> *When the transaction had been run through and goodbyes were being said, she hugged owner Gord Smith and, with tears in her eyes, said, "I'm sorry; I know my first pair of shoes were from King's.*
> *Other longtime customers have made similar remarks over the closing of one of the three remaining original businesses that date back to Rosetown receiving village status in 1909.*
> *"One lady moved to Rosetown in 1934, and she told me she has only bought here in all that time," says Smith, who started with King's delivering groceries in 1945.*
> *A young man about 39 years old said his shoes never came from any place else.*
> *It is the lack of enough customers - a declining rural population - that has led to King's Ltd. closing its doors, according to Smith.*
> *"It's a decision that we've agonized over for the last four years," he explains,... "Four years ago is when our accountant told us we should look at closing."* (Town's First Business To Close (1992))

Main Street lost more businesses, and each hole on Main Street was a dismal reminder of the poor economic times. Rosetown has always been an agricultural service town, and as agriculture goes, so does the town. Now, however, things are slowly changing. As mentioned before, through the work of E2000 and the community bonds program, the town lured Precision Fabricating to locate there. Its goods are marketed in Canada, the US, and overseas. The town now has a little bit more of the value-added business it has been seeking.

E2000 and the town council were also actively involved in ventures that brought in True Value Hardware to replace the MacLeod's franchise that went under, and that placed the RDCU on Main Street.

In mid 1996, most people in the town would say that Main Street has taken a dramatic turn for the better over the last three years, and perhaps some would even say that it has recovered.

Still, the perception of the time surrounding the building of the new credit union is important, as everyone was beginning to reduce their spending and many people were scared, anticipating a highly uncertain future:

> *The Rosetown and District Credit Union was not immune to the effects of the recession and low income in the farm community, credit union members were told at their annual meeting last week.*
>
> *In addressing the membership, president Colin Ahrens said, "There is no way to accurately assess what the future will hold for Rosetown, a community very dependent on the continued viability of agriculture." Low grain prices, large government deficits, huge increases in net farm operating expenses combined with low farm incomes, are being felt by every business in Rosetown. "It will leave a scar on Rosetown, but we'll come through this period of recession," Ahrens said.* (Pagé 1992b)

# 5. A NEW BUILDING FOR THE CREDIT UNION

## 5.1 THE ROSETOWN CREDIT UNION AND ITS ORIGINAL BUILDING

*A decade ago, few citizens of Rosetown had heard or thought much about Credit Unions, yet this week, a mere four years after its first organizational meeting, the Rosetown Svgs. and Credit Union Ltd. will move into its own modern office on Main Street. During its "Open House" event on Saturday, it is hoped that everyone who is able, will visit this new building, and make himself acquainted with the aims and operations of the Credit Union.*

*Before approving of or criticizing the Credit Union, a person should make the small effort required to learn what the Credit Union can do for a district. The organization serves various people in different ways: for some it means life insurance for the first time, as no medical is required for insurance on savings; for others, a method of financing at reduced costs and increased protection, for yet others, a resolve to start saving and continue saving, either in a big way or a small way.*

*The question as to whether a Credit Union is needed in Rosetown is already answered: almost 500 people have joined it, and they have saved $200,000 in just four years. They have also built a building which is an asset to any community, which will serve its members for many years to come. In the province, more than 80,000 people or 10% of the population have invested $33 million in Credit Unions. However the future of the Rosetown Credit Union depends on whether the people in the district will study its possibilities, and as they owe it to themselves to do so, I am certain of the outcome. Finally, one important point to remember is that the Credit Union has no affiliations with any religion, political party, race, social level, or any particular income group, it is responsible only to its members, the people of Rosetown and district.* (Down 1957)

This newspaper article from 1957 tells the story of the Rosetown Credit Union - a community based organization that flourished quickly. The credit union movement began in Saskatchewan and its development is quite remarkable.

The author of the above quotation knew what was involved in the creation of a credit union, since the Rosetown Credit Union began in the back of his store, Allan Down's Ladies Wear.

The original building (figs. 49, 50) was quite far down Main Street and somewhat removed from other commercial

Figure 49. Original RDCU building

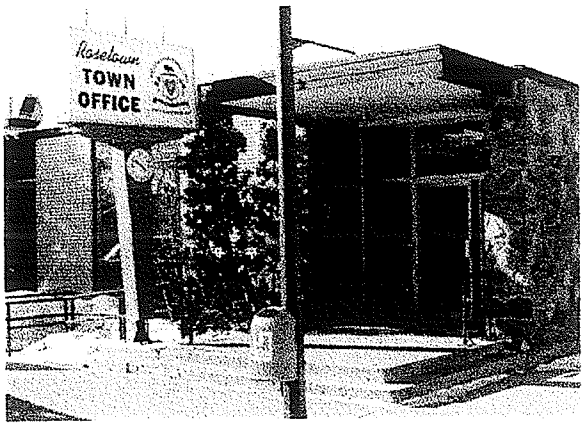



Figure 50. Original RDCU building

development. It was beside the Elks Hall to the south, and to the north were residences. Across the street were more residences and a church. The commercial development on Main Street was one block to the south. This changed twenty years later when the new Co-op store was built, effectively extending commercial development on Main Street to the credit union building.

One might assume that any new construction in a small town will receive attention. Indeed, even the recent expansion of the boilerhouse at the hospital in Rosetown was featured in the EAGLE. However, as the key informant indicates below, the original building was likely more than just the answer to a need for more space than was available at the rear of Allan Down's Ladies Wear:

> *The older credit union building was a distinctive building and was received quite well. They built their own building and they definitely grew out of it. At the time the older building was built, it was quite distinctive. It had rock work on the side and entrance and deep piles. It was a good thing when that building went up on Main Street.*

The construction of the first Credit Union building in 1957, like the construction of their present building, was an event:

> *On Saturday afternoon the Rosetown Savings and Credit Union held "open house" to celebrate the opening of its new office in the three hundred block on Main Street. About three hundred people visited the building, were served coffee and doughnuts and given an opportunity to inspect the new office.* (Credit Union Moves Into New Office Building (1957))

A picture of the interior of the building, showing the teller desk, was featured in the EAGLE (fig. 51).

A year previous to the opening of the original Credit Union building, the EAGLE ran an advertisement for the Toronto-Dominion bank (TD) which contained some interesting imagery (fig. 52,

INTERIOR OF NEW CREDIT UNION OFFICE

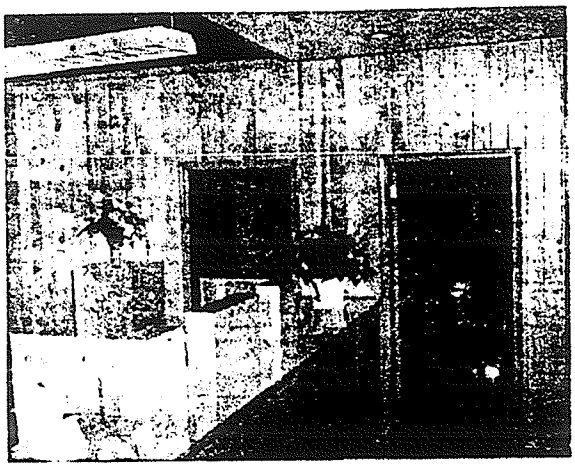


Figure 51. Original RDCU building, interior, 1957. Rosetown Eagle, 7 February.

following page). Behind the TD manager looms a photograph of the TD headquarters in Toronto (17). The headquarters, demolished in 1965, were built in 1912 as the Bank of Toronto (fig. 53, following page), before the merger with the Dominion Bank in 1955, and stood on the southwest corner of King Street and Bay Street:

> *The new building was designed by the New York firm of Carrere & Hastings, working with Eustace G. Bird of Toronto as associate architect. The choice would not have endeared the bank to Toronto's architects, who were at this time very nationalistic and defensive in the face of intense competition from large American firms. But Carrere & Hastings, was - with McKim, Mead & White (also of New York) - one of the two most accomplished and respected firms of the period. Any client of theirs could be certain that its new building would not only be an architectural event and have high prestige value, but would be well planned and meticulously detailed.* (Dendy 1978, 98)

The intent behind the advertisement is easily discerned. It is attempting to show a close relationship between the massive organization in eastern Canada and the small branch in Rosetown, by putting the local bank manager in the same frame of reference as the headquarters. The manager is even shown taking notes during a telephone conversation, presumably long distance to Toronto, to reinforce the slogan, "He's not alone behind his desk!" Still, contrary to the aim of the advertisement, the use of the image of the large building to exemplify the TD as a corporation reinforced the fact that the heart of the organization wasn't here, it was far away, somewhere else. However, it must be said that for many people the use of this image would have triggered feelings of security since the banking institution they were involved with had stability that came from investing in a much larger market, perhaps even a world market, something which the Rosetown Savings and Credit Union would have not been able to advertise with any degree of credibility.

It is highly unlikely that people would recognize the building in the advertisement for what it was, but everyone would recognize by the sheer size and the style of the building that it wasn't in a place the size of Rosetown. Banks have traditionally built relatively elaborate and/or substantial buildings in prairie towns. Whether it was the

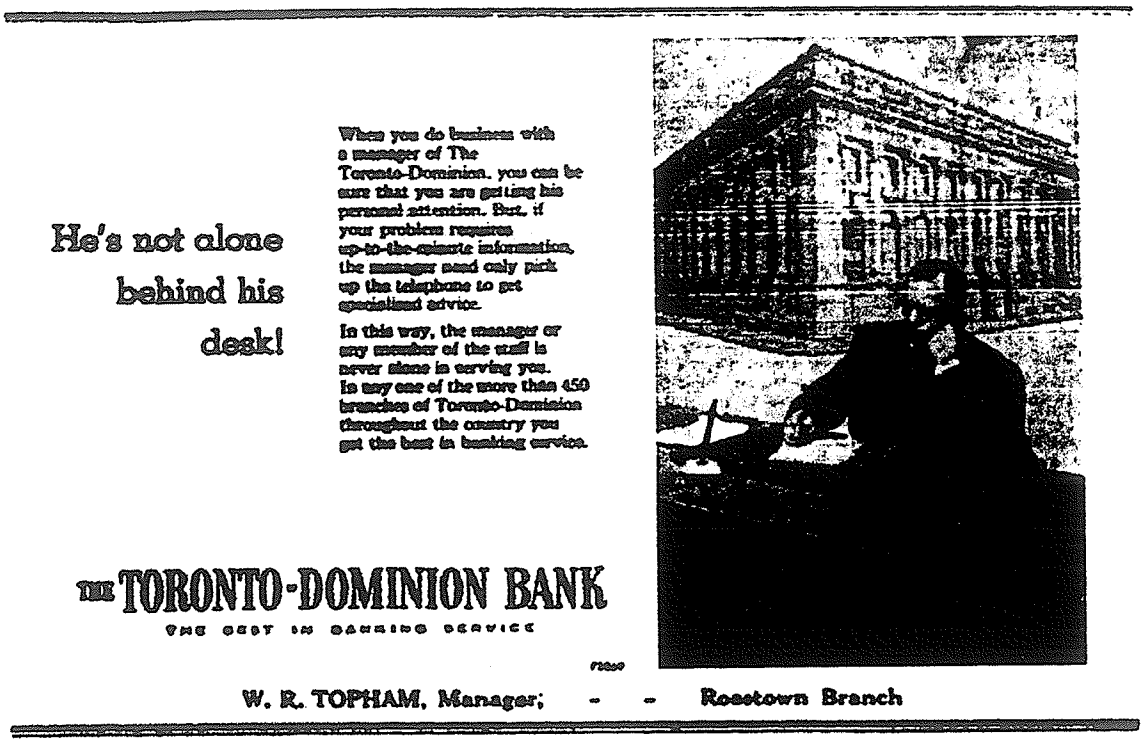



Figure 52. TD newspaper advertisement, 1956. Rosetown Eagle, 17 May.

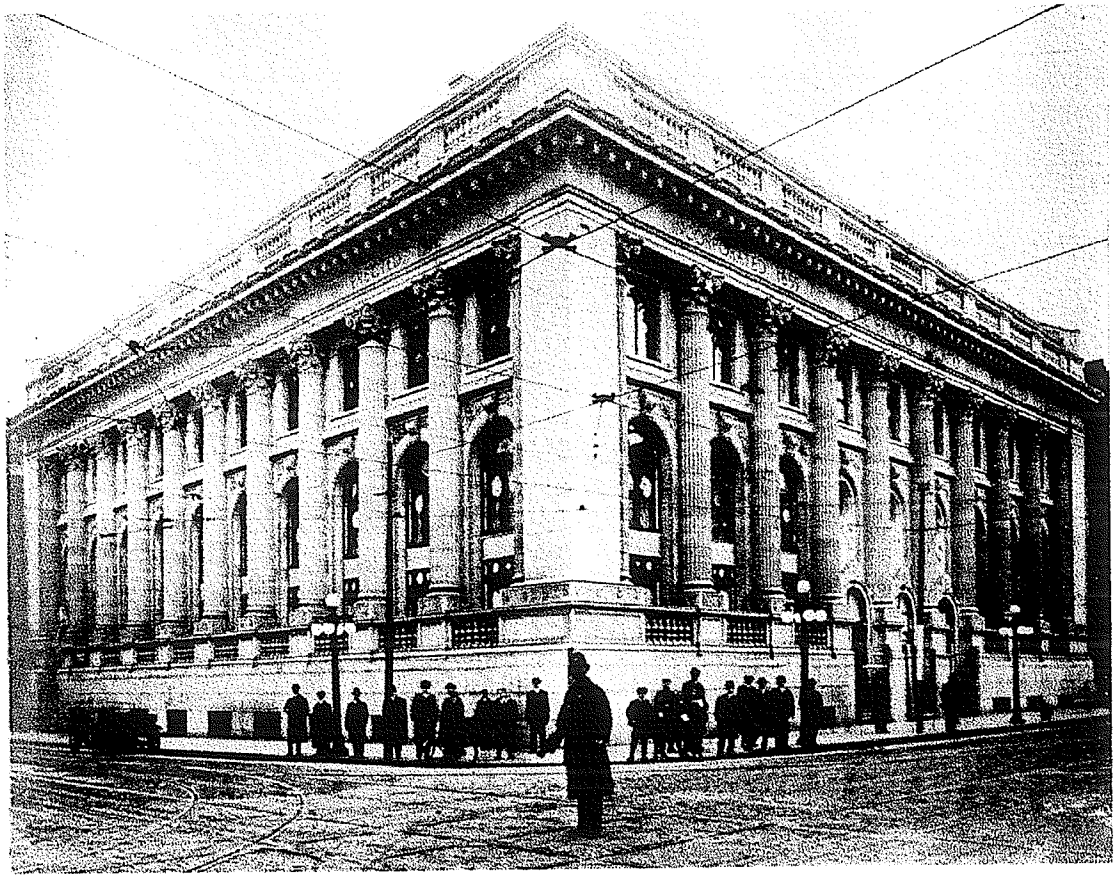


Figure 53. Bank of Toronto, from William Dendy, Lost Toronto, 99.

use of brick (fig. 54), decoration of the facade (figs. 55, 56, 57 (72)), or size, an attempt was consistently made to construct buildings which were distinct from their built context (cf. figs. 57, 58 (72)). The architectural expression of the credit union in Yorkton, Saskatchewan (fig. 59 (73)), and Credit Union Central, in Regina, Saskatchewan (fig. 60 (73)), indicate through the design of their buildings, credit unions still aspire to the architectural expression which banks have traditionally employed.

It isn't the object of this study to describe the symbolic importance of the original credit union building, but the comparison of the two institutions through the TD advertisement does describe one of the qualitative differences between a credit union and a chartered bank. For the Rosetown Credit Union, everyone who was a member was involved in some manner

Figure 54. Royal Bank of Canada, Rosetown, undated. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

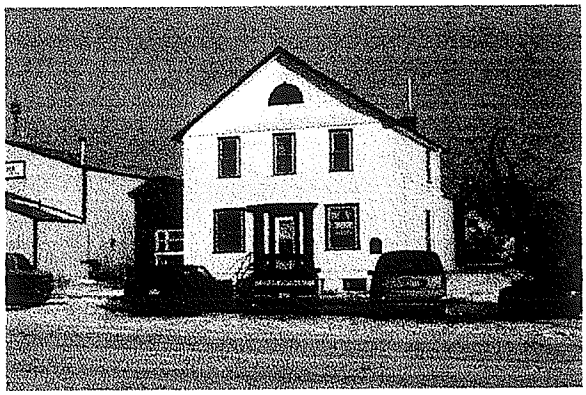


Figure 55. Bank of Commerce, Hawarden, Saskatchewan

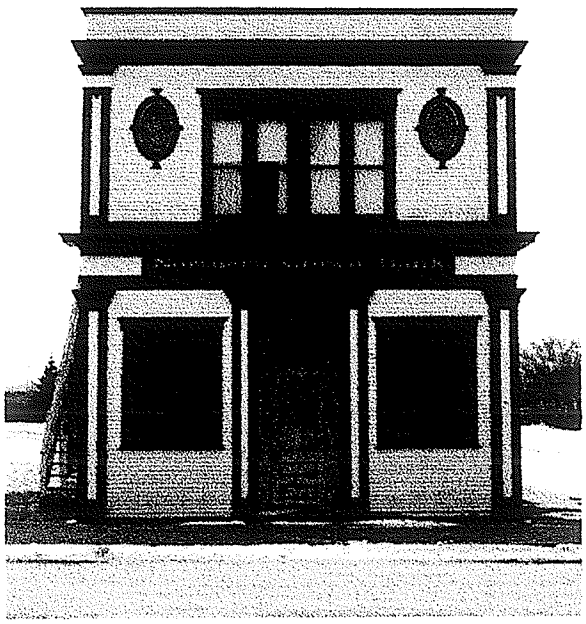


Figure 56. Northern Crown Bank, Dundurn, Saskatchewan

with the running of the institution, and its heart was right there on Main Street where the new building was. This is likely of great importance to those who support the credit union movement (see Appendix C).

The immediacy of the physical environment does lend a certain reassuring quality to the symbolic importance of building in this situation. The simple fact that a building exists may be symbolic in its own right, depending of course on the context in which it is read. Take for example the following letter written to Winnipeg in 1912. It was written by the secretary treasurer of the Leader Manufacturing Company, Rosetown, to the MacPherson-McCurdy Advertising Agency, Winnipeg (18). The following quotation is transcribed from the handwritten introduction to a more detailed description of the state of development of Rosetown:

*Sept. 24-12*

*MacPherson-McCurdy Ltd*
*Bell Block*
*Winnipeg, Man*

*Gentlemen:*

*I hereby take pleasure in submitting for your consideration the following additional information on the progress of Rosetown.*

*There are at present eight brick buildings under process of construction and easily three times as many residences in various stages of construction. The C.N.R. alone have three miles of side tracks and are building a large freight house. The C.P.R. have easily half as much side trackage as the C.N.R.*

*The telephone and electric lighting system is now being installed.*

*A ten foot vein of coal has been found thirty miles from Rosetown.*

*Plans are being made to bore for gas here.*

*I am having some more photographs taken and will send them to you very soon.*

*Yours very truly,*

*Leader Mf'g. Co. Ltd.*
*F.E. Hopkins*
*Sec.-Treas.*
(Hopkins 1912)

What is interesting is that the first development mentioned is the brick buildings, before the railroads and other infrastructure. This is repeated in the typewritten text of the main body of the letter (Appendix D). Perhaps F.E. Hopkins, the writer, saw brick buildings as the primary symbol of urbanity. Whatever his intent, brick buildings are different from the typical wooden and metal constructs erected on the prairie in that they cannot be moved. With many small towns which have 'disappeared', the reason they have done so, in a physical sense, is that the buildings were auctioned off and moved. Old farm houses became cottages at "the lake", churches were used as grain storage bins, and Quonsets were disassembled and re-erected on farmyards. But with brick buildings there is a sense of permanence. If one wants to move or alter such a building it must be partially or completely dismantled. Both the construction and demolition of brick buildings was a considerable task. Also, the more detailed aspects of brick construction may have played a role in the owner's choice of brick as a building material and F.E. Hopkins' perception of those buildings as an indicator of the progress of the town.

Figure 57. Bank of Commerce, Elbow, Saskatchewan

Figure 58. Main Street showing Bank of Commerce, Elbow, Saskatchewan

Load bearing brick is a type of construction that is rarely used anymore. It is labour intensive, costly, and offers poor insulation value. Currently, the most massive type of construction is reinforced concrete which is commonly used as the structural system of buildings. For those not familiar with building construction, the structural system

refers to the columns, walls, and floor plates which bear weight, or 'load' as it is known. Most of the walls in a building are simply partitions which enable, amongst many other things, the design of different levels of privacy and the separation of incompatible functions. The exterior walls of modern buildings are simply membranes which divide the exterior environment from the interior environment, and as with the partition walls, the exterior cladding is typically not load bearing. With load bearing brick construction, however, the exterior walls are load bearing.

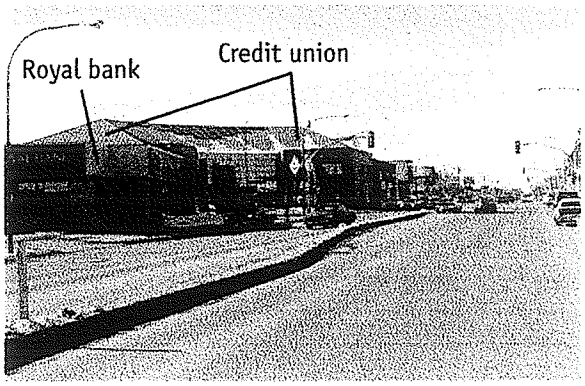


Figure 59. Yorkton Credit Union, Yorkton, Saskatchewan

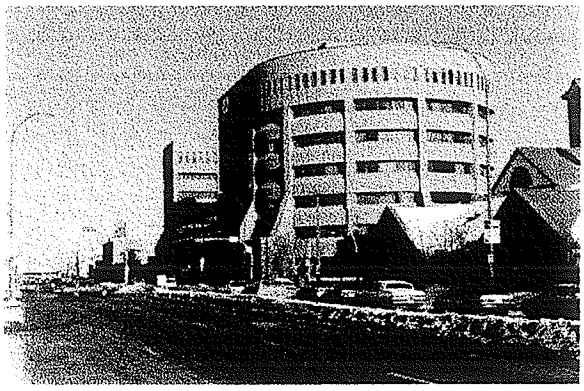


Figure 60. Credit Union Central, Regina, Saskatchewan

It is difficult to say if the buildings that F.E. Hopkins mentions were constructed using a load bearing brick system. By virtue of the time period it is highly likely, but early forms of brick veneer, the modern standard for the use of brick, were starting to appear. Regardless of the precise type of construction used, load bearing brick has a long history in building construction and, for many, even the obvious veneers used today still denote the substantial mass of the older brick building systems (and all that they symbolize).

Although the massiveness of load bearing brick is no longer an attribute that is incorporated into architectural expression, there are many other factors, some designed into the building by an architect, that lend a sense of permanence to a building. This was the case with the construction of the new RDCU building in 1992.

## 5.2 THE NEED FOR A NEW BUILDING AND THE SECURING OF A SITE

The Rosetown and District Credit Union had not been paying out dividends for some time, even before the building project was begun. Credit unions are required to have a minimum of 5% equity in reserve, while most credit unions are struggling to meet 3-4%. Years ago, the board of directors of the RDCU decided that 5% was too little, and that they would aim for keeping 10% of their equity in reserve. So, when it was later decided they would build again, the RDCU had money available for the building project.

Five years prior to construction they had been considering expansion. Expansion was considered for such a long period of time because of the economic situation, as described in section 4.5. They were also concerned with the political perception of their plans - they didn't want to appear to be flaunting their wealth in tough economic times. Within the credit union industry, the CU informant said, the hope was that the downturn in the economy has reached its bottom, and the state of the economy was in its worst-case scenario. The RDCU was very conscious of the question, "Who are we to be spending the members' money at a time like this?" At the same time, they thought that there is likely no better time to build since most businesses in the construction industry were desperate for work, therefore the RDCU would be able to build a building relatively cheaply.

The old building was crowded with twenty staff members, which were between five and eight people too many for the size of the space. They had a structural engineer assess the condition of the building, who found that it was sound. They then looked into adding another storey to the existing building, but that was deemed to be too expensive by the architect. They looked into putting an addition on the back of their current building. This would require the purchase and closing of the alley, which the town would agree to do, but this was not pursued as an option. They looked into putting a hole in the exterior wall through to the adjacent Co-op building, and renting

the Co-op's administration section. But the architect determined that this would be only a short term solution. While the RDCU was pursuing these different options, and brainstorming on what would be the best course of action, they were wondering, "Is it time?".

Soon, however, the building was simply too small and they had to do something. A survey of the membership had been completed earlier:

> *In 1989, the credit union surveyed its membership for areas where the institution needed improvement. Members felt the 25-year-old building needed private areas at the teller wickets, more space for the 16 member staff and upgraded decor.* (Waldern 1991a)

> *In surveying a percentage of the credit union members, they felt a lack of privacy when conducting their transactions at the teller wickets* [cf. fig. 51] *and while waiting for appointments. They also felt the present building is too crowded, and requested more parking, public washrooms, a play area for children and ground level access.* (Credit Union Announces Plans For New Building (1991))

A meeting was held, the membership voted to approve the allocation of funds for a new building, and the board of directors of the credit union appointed a building committee. The building committee gave monthly reports to the board of directors. The CU informant said that he thought the planning went very well and that he doesn't recall any of the decisions made by the building committee being overturned by the board. This was likely due to the fact that the building committee consisted of two permanent members and three rotating members. The rotating members of the building committee were usually from the board of directors of the credit union. Infrequently, staff sat on the committee, usually for a specific, job-related reason. The reason for the rotation of the board members was simply due to the availability of people to attend the required meetings at different times.

The CU informant stated that the RDCU had a few people close their accounts in protest of the choice to build a new building: one large account and two or three small accounts. The CU informant also stated, however, that it was difficult to tell if the closing of those accounts really was directly because of the building, adding that those

people may have had other complaints. Several people were concerned that the RDCU's interest rates would have to increase to pay for the construction, but as mentioned at the beginning of this section, the RDCU had the cash reserves to build the building. The construction did cost members though, as the funds used to pay for the building were not available for investment, and therefore the RDCU was earning less money.

The building committee surveyed the town for available properties. They had decided that if they were to build, they would build a building that would last them for the next twenty years. Highway frontage was deemed unsuitable, and they eventually settled on a site on Main Street where the Rosetown Hotel had stood (fig. 61). Figures 62 and 63 (following page) show a view down Main Street when the Rosetown Hotel was still standing (fig. 62), and the current view down Main Street showing the RDCU building standing on the same site (fig. 63).


Figure 61. Rosetown Hotel, 1927. Courtesy of the Rosetown Library.

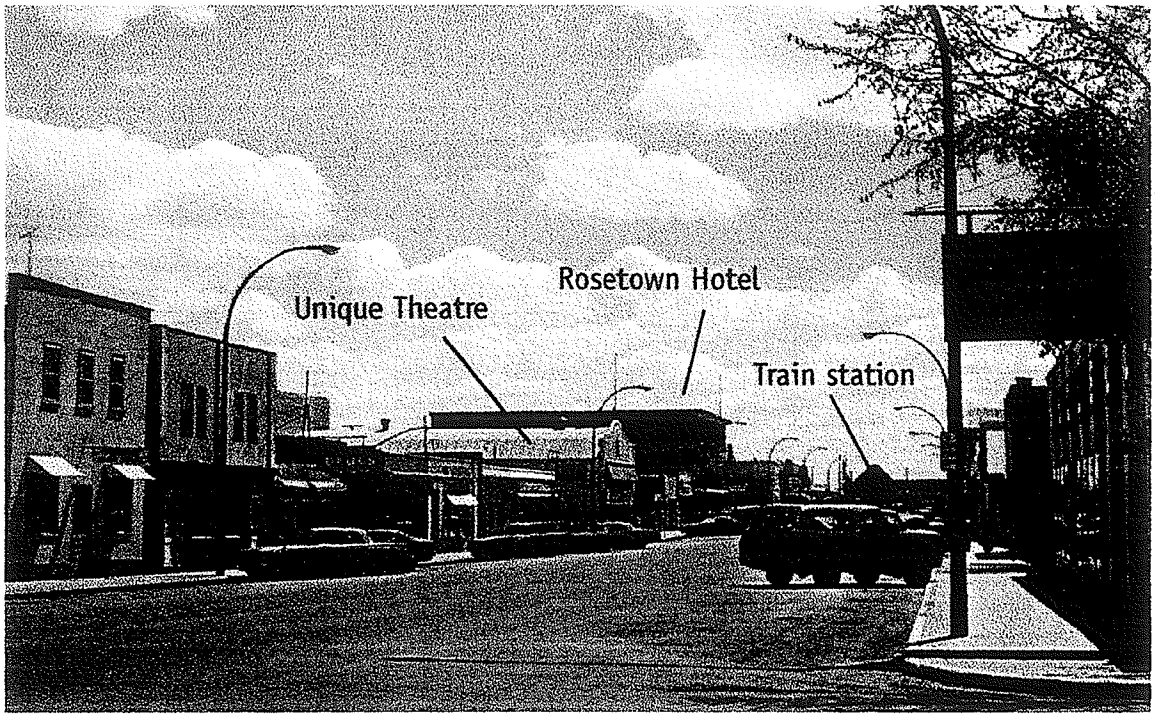



Figure 62. Postcard of Rosetown's Main Street, c. 1970

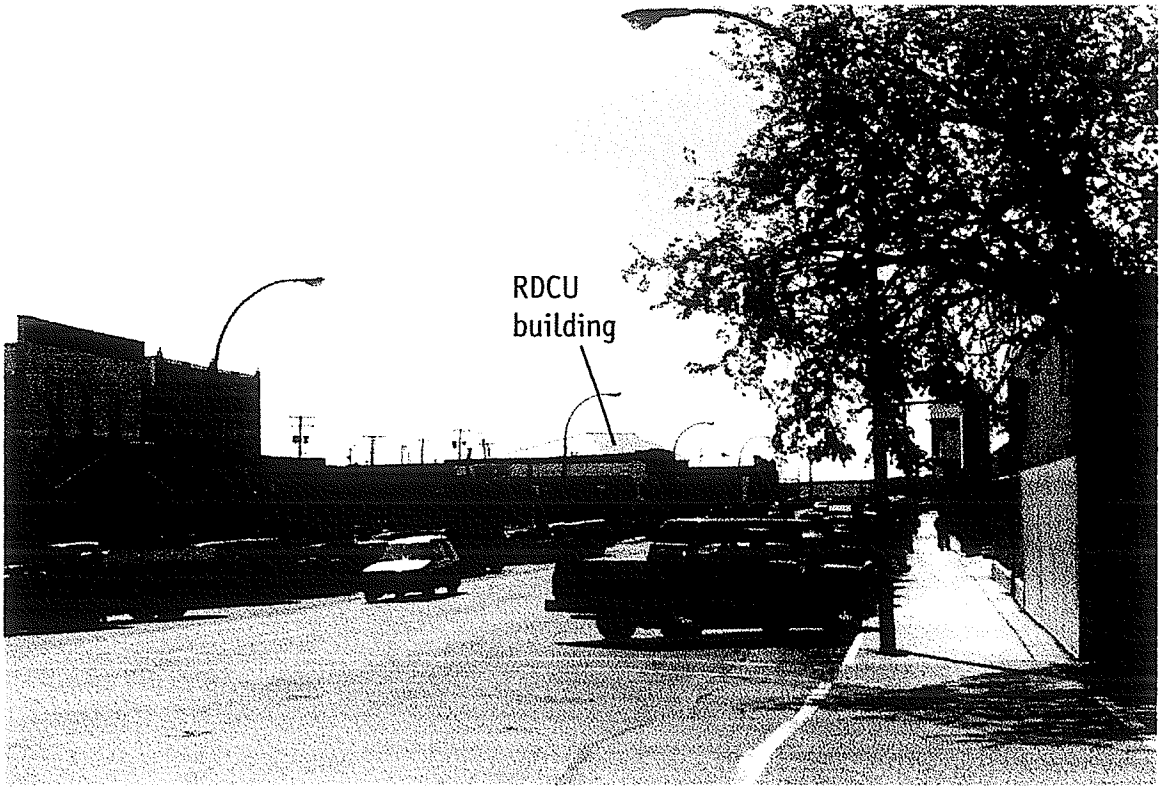



Figure 63. Similar view down Main Street, 1992

The initiation of discussions between the RDCU and the town council at this point is unclear, but clarity here is not critical. What is important is that the town council was actively involved in getting the RDCU to build on the old hotel site. The Rosetown Hotel had been demolished, unrelated to the RDCU's plans. The owners of the hotel property had simply left, leaving the town with over $40 000 in taxes owing. The prospect of being able to sell the land at all, let alone to an institution like the RDCU, was a unique opportunity for the town and something they made every effort to do. The proceedings of the negotiations between the town and the RDCU were kept private, in order to help keep the issues clear and limit outside pressure, much to the chagrin of the editor of the EAGLE.

The Rosetown Hotel was located on a corner with good exposure to Main Street and First Avenue (fig. 24 (47)). The site is central in downtown, "Smack dab in the middle", as the CU informant said. Looking at the planning document from 1957, the centrality of the site is confirmed by a diagram entitled "Central Business District" (fig. 64, following page). The diagram shows the centre of the district near the site of the Rosetown Hotel, on the Northeast corner. (The southwest corner holds the Royal Bank and the southeast the TD).

The present location is actually five lots (see fig. 65 (80)). The hotel had three, there is a lot to the north and one to the east across the back alley.

The town and the RDCU negotiated, after which the RDCU were given an option on the hotel property (Waldern 1991a). The RDCU then approached the two private property owners. They negotiated an option on the land to the north, and the land to the east was bought as common property: if the credit union would make it public parking, the town would waive the taxes on it. The town also agreed to close the alley in the future to allow for expansion of the new RDCU building.

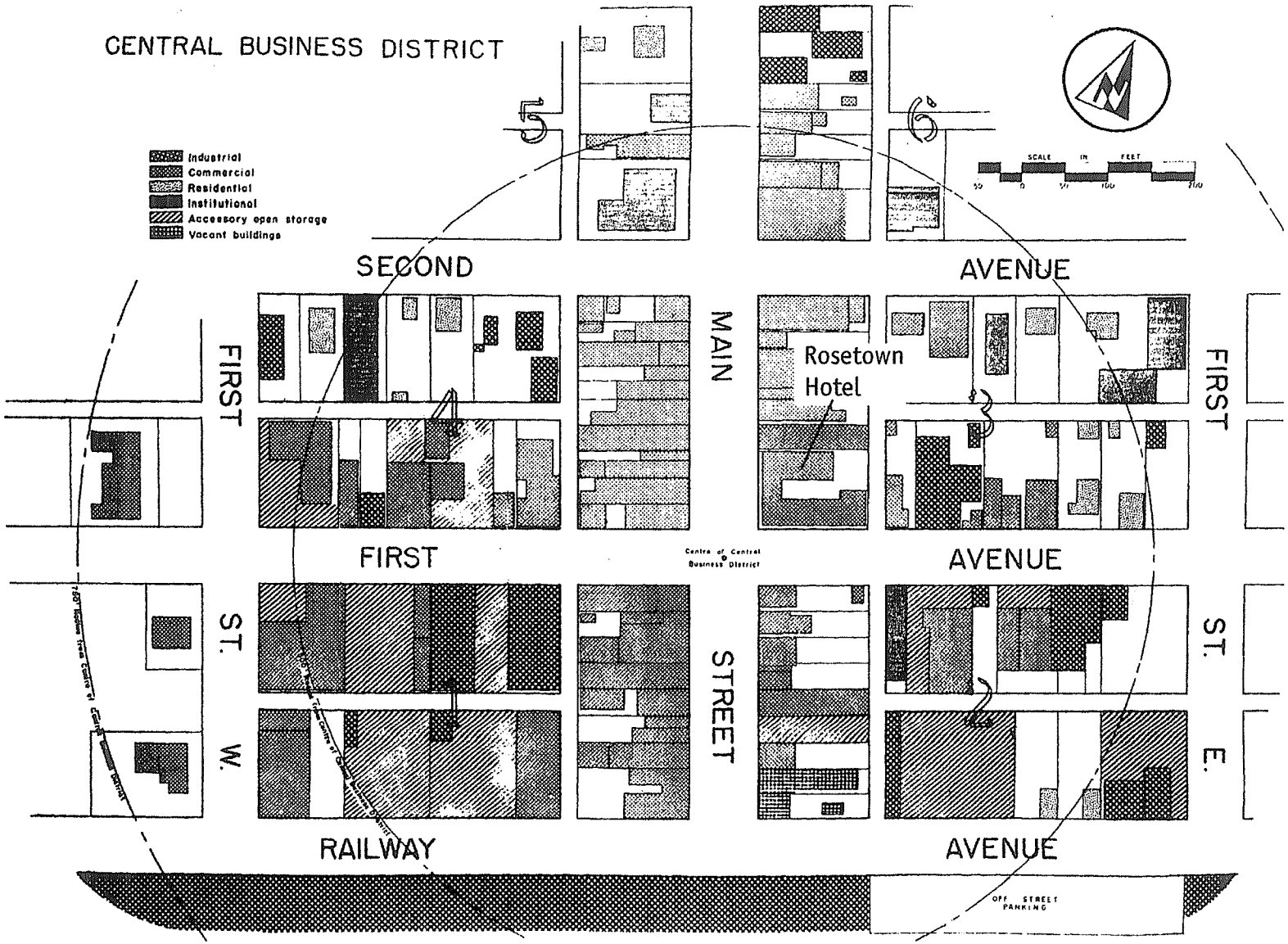



Figure 64. Central Business District diagram, 1957. Courtesy of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, from Community Planning Branch, Department of Municipal Affairs, Rosetown Plans its Future, 25. (Rosetown Hotel label by the author).

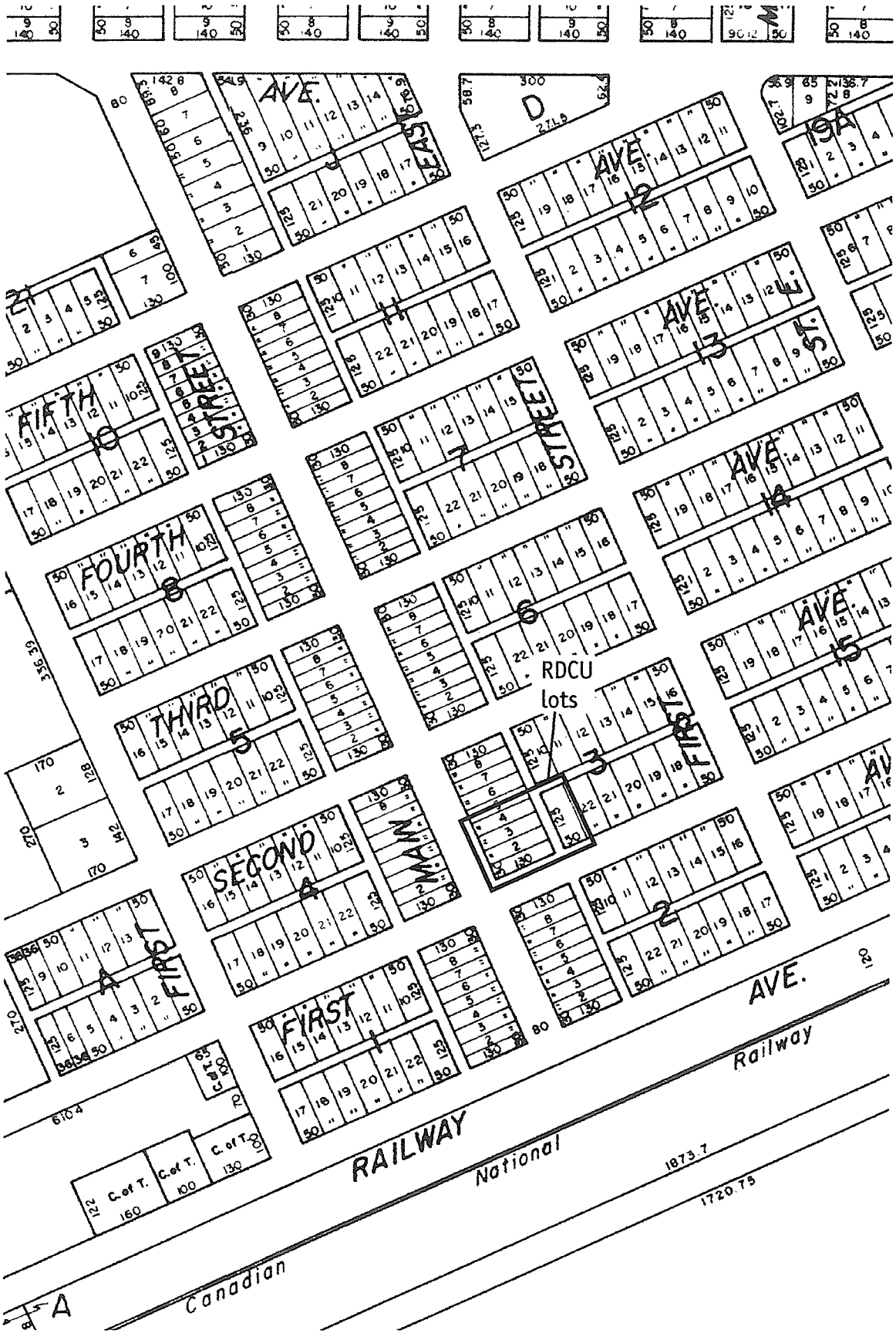



Figure 65. Rosetown Site Plan, 1990. Courtesy of the Town of Rosetown and UMA Engineering. (RDCU lots label and box by the author).

In 1990, before the RDCU's plans to build a new building were announced, the town had been discussing the building of a new town office (Aldermen Considering Options For New Town Office And Fire Hall (1990)). This became incorporated into the negotiations between the town and the RDCU, with the town agreeing to purchase and renovate the credit union's old office into the new town office.

On April 1st, 1991 the official plans for a new building were announced in the Rosetown Eagle:

> *The 90 by 90 foot building will be a single storey structure with a full basement and provisions for an elevator. The main floor will accommodate offices and a new design in teller wickets (six in all) that will allow members "more privacy" while doing their transactions.*
>
> *The new building will "show continued commitment to the community", vice president of the credit union, Wayne Russell, told the meeting.* (Credit Union Announces Plans For New Building (1991))

In the same issue there was an article describing the satisfaction of the mayor with the closing of the deal and how the council was beginning talks on the renovation of the RDCU's old office (Waldern 1991b). An editorial by the editor, again in the same issue, mirrored the positive feelings regarding the RDCU's decision:

> *The construction of the new building will be beneficial for the credit union's long-term growth, its present customers (or members as they are known), and for Main Street as well.*
>
> *The empty lots on Main Street, following the demolition of the old hotel building, were becoming somewhat of an eyesore. The new building will remedy this.*
>
> *Granted, painted murals by local artists on plywood sheets helped mask the nakedness of such a huge parcel of commercial property, but dirt and weeds during summer months brought to light the fact that there had to be something better for it.*
>
> *The construction of the new credit union may spark a Main Street revitalization program. The new building will definitely help draw attention away from vacant main Street buildings, and will provide more traffic for businesses in the downtown core.*
>
> *Started with one employee in a rented corner of a Main Street ladies clothing store almost 40 years ago, the credit union's relocation will, ironically, bring them back to roost a few doors down from that ladies shop.*
>
> *A fitting tribute, in a way, to its grassroots beginnings.* (Pagé 1991)

In retrospect, it may seem clear as to the course the proceedings leading to the construction of the RDCU's new building would take. For example, the CU informant stated in a later interview, "that searching for sites around the town was really erring on the side of caution." They had been considering their present site and it was really

the best and only choice. It is highly likely that the RDCU would have chosen the hotel site regardless of the town's involvement. As it went, however, the town council's role through two mayors, was active and positive, and proved to be important support for the RDCU's new building project.

Locating on Main Street satisfied other requirements set by the RDCU building committee besides good exposure, a central location, a buyer for their old office, and the availability of land for future expansion. Their hopes of locating on Main Street, and that particular site, were that it would show their commitment to the town. They wanted to anchor the business community to Main Street. Their intention was to symbolize that, "We are here for a long time" (CU informant).

The sod turning ceremony took place on October 2nd, 1991 (Sod Turning Marks Start Of New $1.6 Million Credit Union (1991)).

## 5.3 DESIGNING THE NEW BUILDING

> *We are the financial institution in this community. I think the management team is vibrant and dynamic, and our policies have statements in them that define how we see ourselves and how we want to operate. We are a rural-based financial institution. The building carries this through. While we are opening up a few rural branches, the chartered banks, like the Royal are pulling out from the smaller places.* (CU informant)

> *At that time a lot of credit unions were starting to falter, and some of the other chartered banks were closing their branches, like the Bank of Montreal. The question asked was, "How long are you going to hang on?", and our answer was that, "We are here for the long haul. We are here until the community goes down, but we won't let it." That's why we didn't build just another block building.* (CU informant)

The RDCU isn't a large credit union, but it is large for a town like Rosetown. It has about 5000 members, which would constitute, according to a very rough estimate by the CU informant, a 70% penetration into the trading area. The trading area is similar to the area known as the Rosetown District, approximately 20 miles in all directions except east, which extends a little further to approximately 35 miles. This trading area doesn't appear to have changed since the aforementioned planning document released in 1957 (fig. 66, following page).

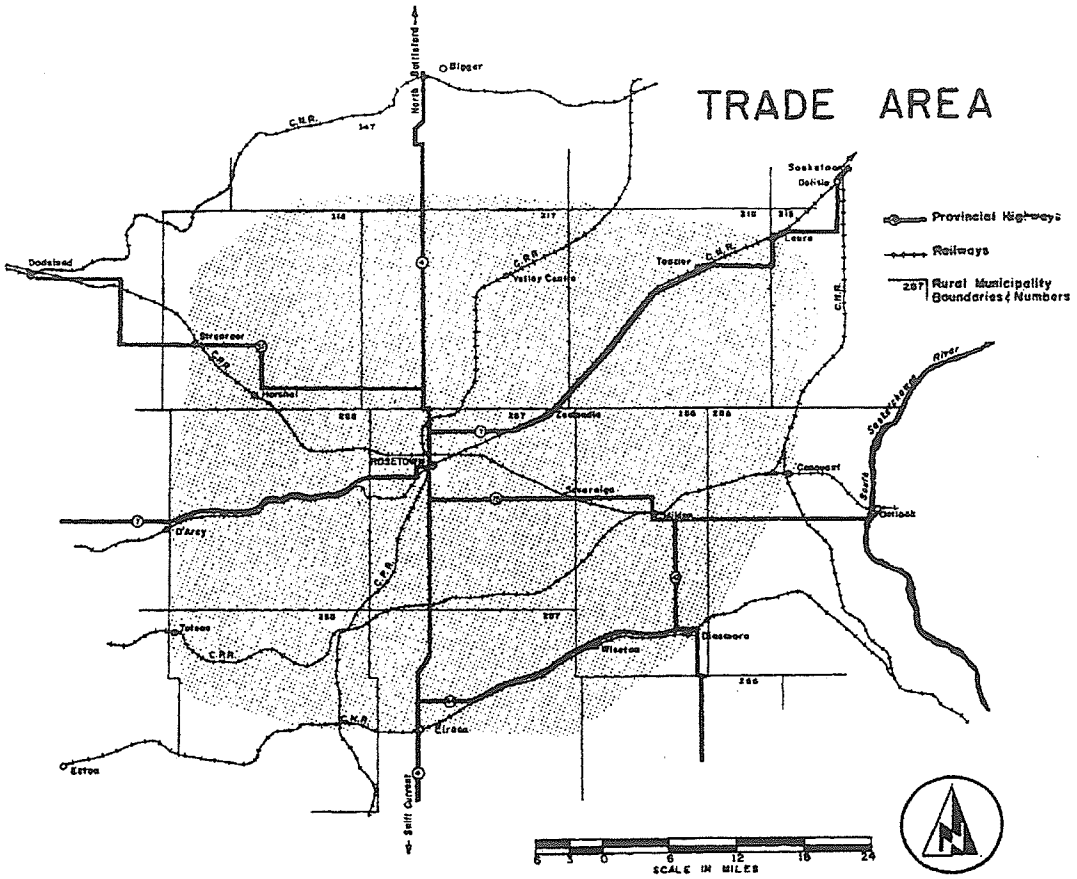



Figure 66. Trade Area diagram, 1957. Courtesy of the Saskatchewan Archives Board, from Community Planning Branch, Department of Municipal Affairs, Rosetown Plans its Future, 2.

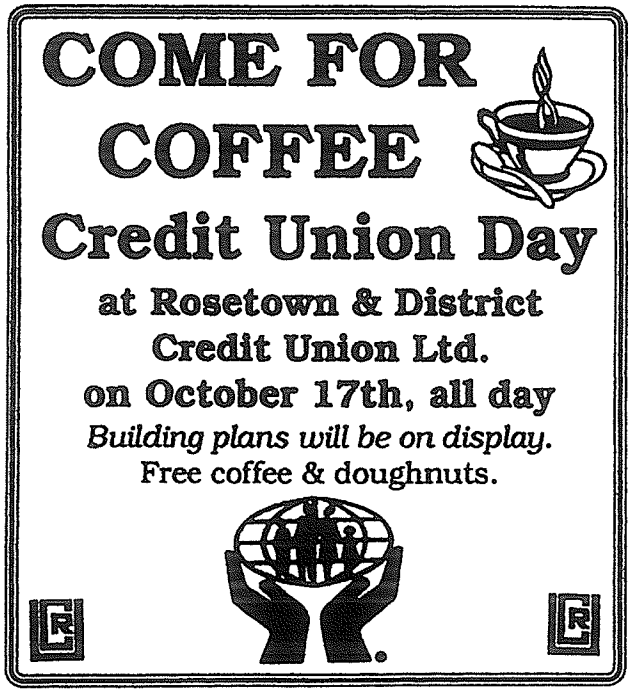



Figure 67. RDCU newspaper advertisement, Credit Union Day, 1991. Rosetown Eagle, 7 October.

The RDCU appears to have extremely good representation from the district. Further to this, when the new board of directors was elected, having good representation of people in the trading area was consciously considered. Most everyone involved with the RDCU, and in the town for that matter, adhere very much to the cooperative philosophy: they take an interest and they keep in touch. If something is happening which may be of interest to the RDCU, someone will likely come into the RDCU building to pass it on to the RDCU staff.

The credit union exhibited adherence to this philosophy during the pre-design phase of the new RDCU building. They sent out newsletters, conducted a survey of the members regarding the new building, and had the floorplans and a model of the new building on display at the annual meeting. There were also presentations given by staff members concerning the different parts of the building. The membership always knew generally what the RDCU was doing at each stage of the building project (see for example, fig. 67, previous page).

Through the member surveys completed previously, certain preferences were indicated, such as preferring to speak face to face with people, and banking with the same Member Service Officer (MSO) all the time. The RDCU has a significant senior clientele. The RDCU has a special interest in this large group of members and observed that seniors view their banking as a social event. Many seniors also feel that by banking with the RDCU, they have their money closer to home, and it is, therefore, more secure.

Through these surveys the RDCU building committee came up with a set of Critical Design Requirements (CDR), which have been included as Appendix E (19). The architect said that it was exceptional to get such a document from a client. He was both surprised and pleased to receive the CDR. It was the most substantial work undertaken by the client toward a building program.

For those not familiar with the process of planning and designing a building, one of the first things usually to be completed is a 'program'. A program may take various forms, but it will usually be a document including a list of qualitative and quantitative requirements for the project. For example, quantitative requirements may include the various sizes of rooms required and their relationship to one another, intended function and use of spaces, technical requirements for specific machinery, grades of materials and hardware to be used, and environmental issues, such as electromagnetic fields. Qualitative requirements are usually vaguely articulated statements which delineate an attitude toward the project, the spirit of the project, or wishes for how the building will be perceived by the user. These requirements are used to priorize certain aspects of the project. For example, a sense of compassion for the users of a halfway house may lead to concentrating the design effort on creating an environment that will meet the user's specific needs; or perhaps the importance of assimilation in military training may lead to the design of a highly regular environment for housing new recruits. The CDR the RDCU building committee created address the programmatic requirements for the project.

One of the first actions of the RDCU building committee was to organize a road trip to visit other credit unions in Saskatchewan. They rented two extended passenger vans, seating 6-8 people per van, with groups of people from the board of directors, management, and the staff, and set off for 3 or 4 days. They visited credit unions in Saskatoon, Humboldt, Nipawin, Canora, Regina, Estevan, Weyburn, Swift Current, Melfort, Tisdale, and others. Each credit union had done something new with their facility and variations of many ideas were seen on the trip. The difference in perceptions of each design by different groups of staff members at each credit union became obvious during the trip:

> *One thing that sticks in my mind was the visit to* [another small town]. *While the RDCU's administrative group was speaking to the other credit unions administrative group, and hearing about how well the design worked, the RDCU MSOs were speaking to the other MSOs who were saying things like, "It looked good on paper, but the counter wasn't high enough", etc. We wanted to avoid that.* (CU informant)

The building committee, as stated before, had two permanent members and three rotating members. The two permanent members were the most intimately involved with the project. The permanent members, who were from management, tended to be more concerned with function, while the rotating members spoke more of image and cost: they wanted to ensure that good quality was shown for every dollar that was spent. This is because the rotating members were largely a political body, concerned with the impressions of the members regarding the decisions of the committee. It should be stated that the majority of concerns with the reception of the project, etc., were focused on the membership, while remembering that the membership comprises a significant proportion of the population in the trading area.

The two permanent members of the building committee completed some substantial design work that influenced the present form of the building. Their main contributions were in three areas: the design of the MSO stations (figs. 117 (B-6), 118 (B-7), cf. fig. 68, following page), the functional concept, and a diagrammatic ordering of the functions in a plan view (figs. 126-130 (F-2 - F-4) (20). These two members worked on these problems during a period that spanned two years and overlapped by four or five months the architect's involvement in the project.

The new design for the MSO stations was based on the results of the surveys and observations made earlier. The two permanent members of the RDCU building committee had been cutting and pasting their own drawings as part of the process of designing the MSO stations. They decided that members should be able to sit or stand while dealing with a MSO, arrived at the "P" shape of the tables that would accommodate both scenarios, and they thought about the how each MSO station should be separated from the neighbouring MSO stations.

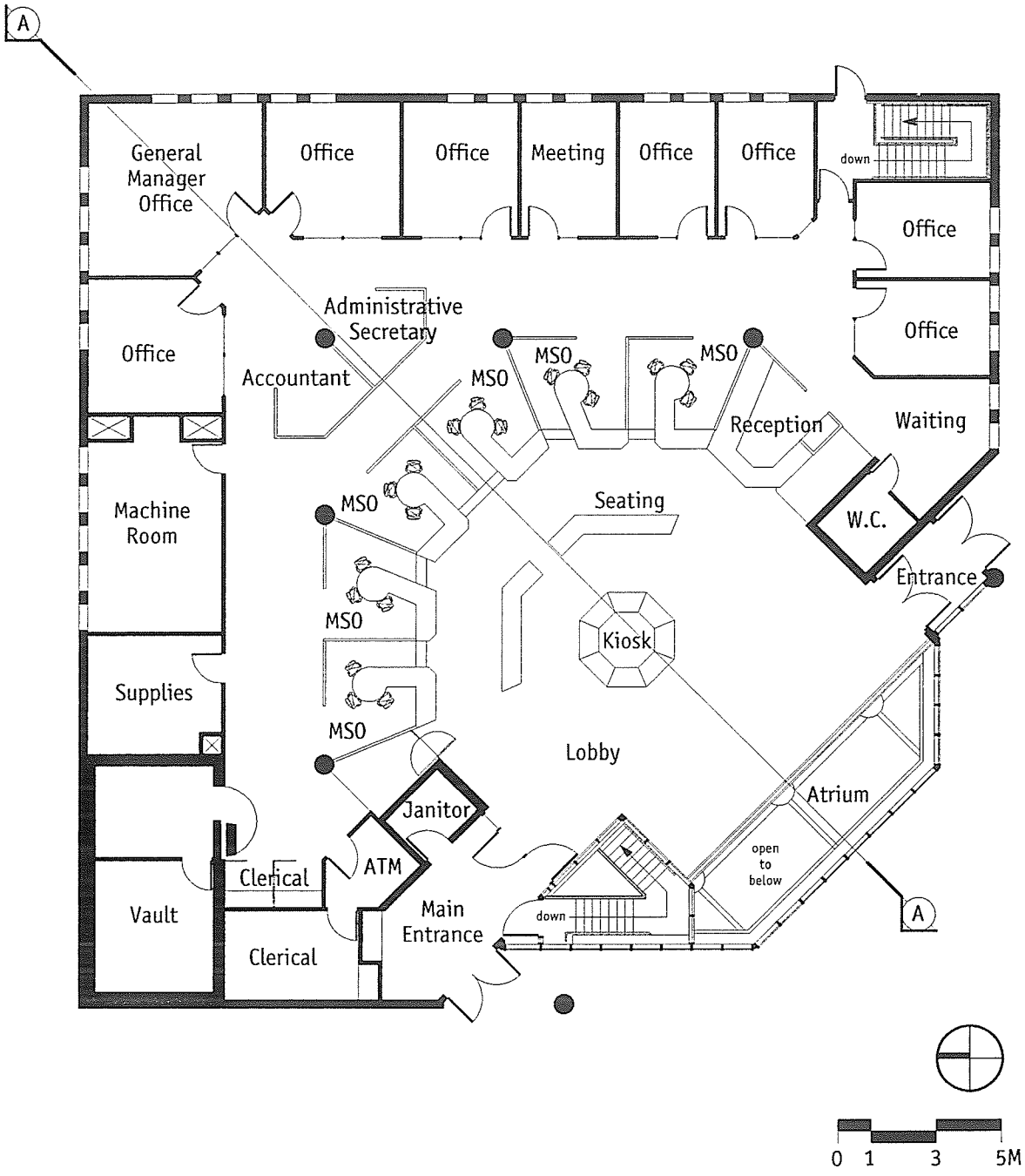



Figure 68. Main Level, floorplan. Original computer drawing courtesy of the architect. Drawing by the author.

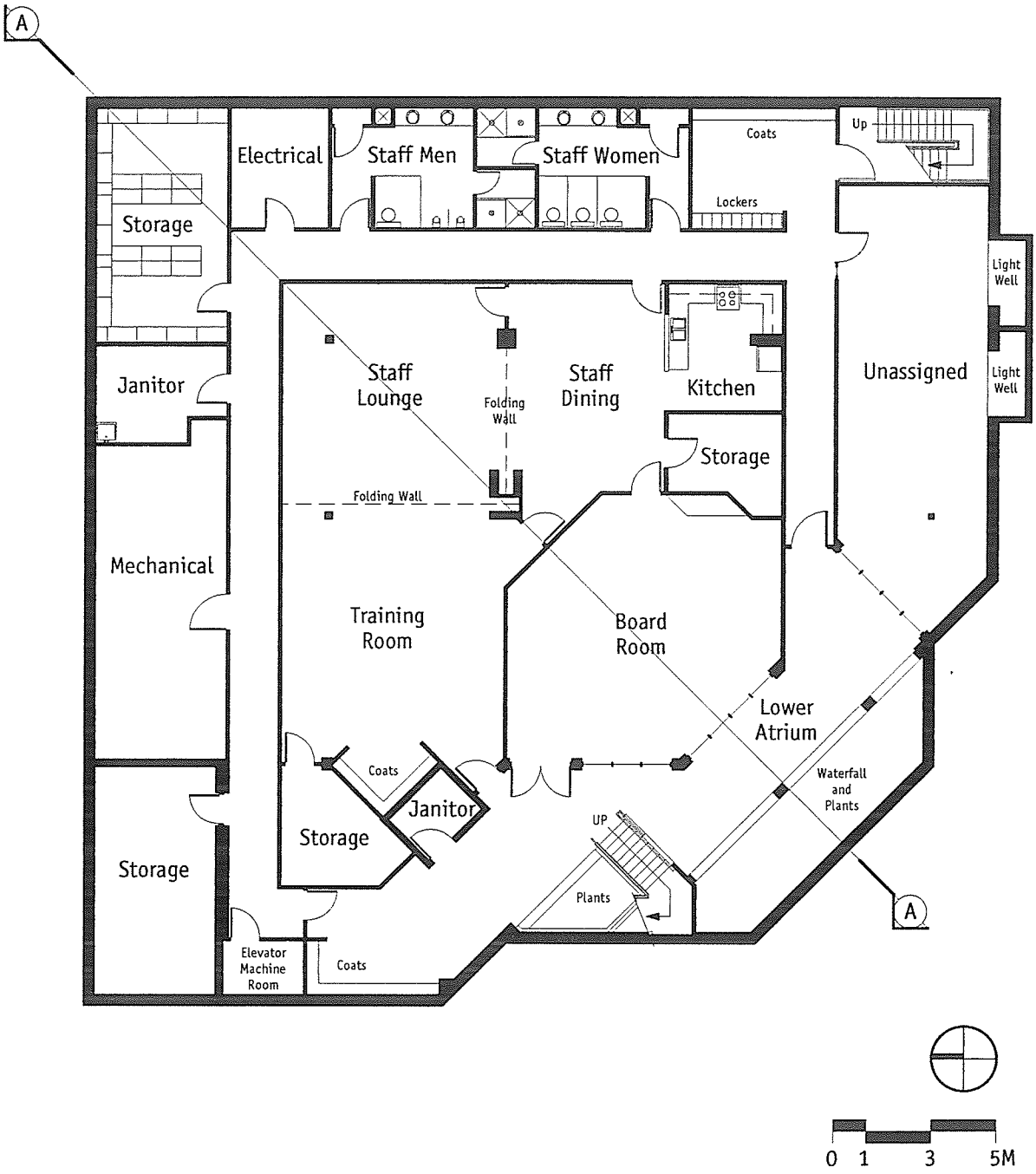



Figure 69. Basement, floorplan. Original computer drawing courtesy of the architect. Drawing by the author.

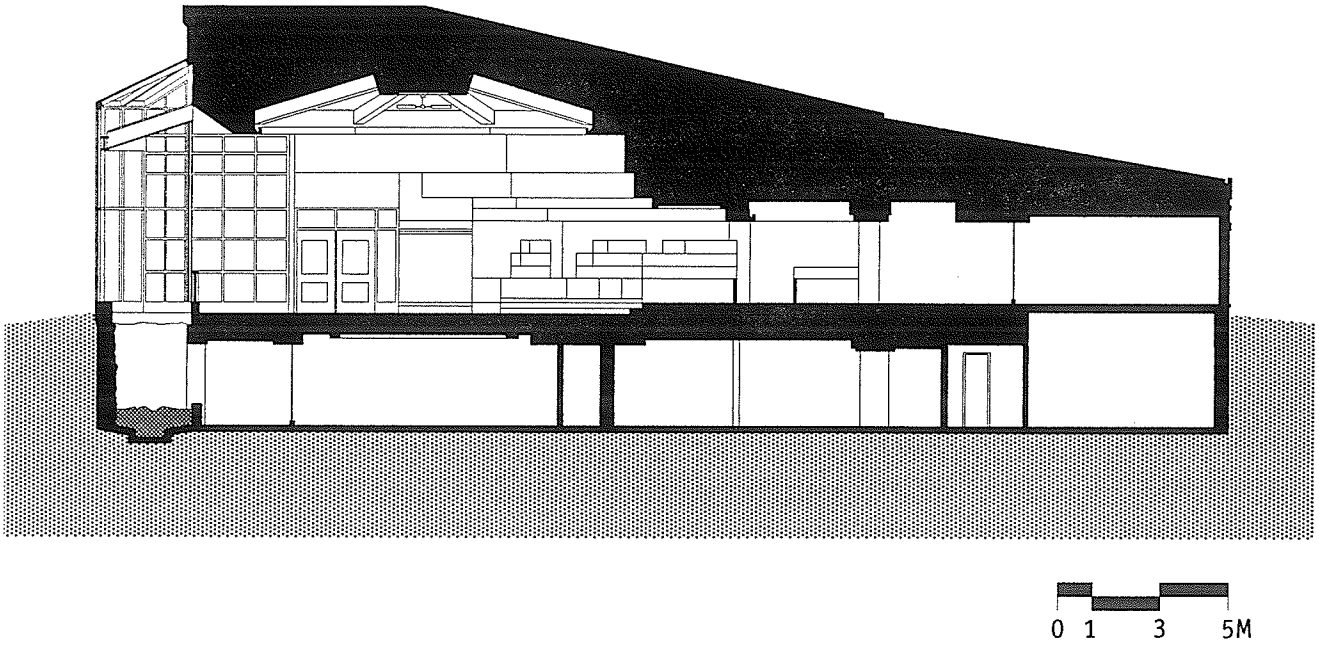



Figure 70. Section A-A. Original construction document courtesy of the architect. Drawing by the author.

It was the MSO stations that were the starting point for the design effort on the client's part as well as for the architect. The whole project was generated from the ideas and requirements of these stations, and this is apparent when one looks at the final version of the Main Level floorplan (fig. 68 (87)). Both the architect and the CU informant estimate that the two permanent members of the RDCU building committee put approximately 75% of the effort into the design of the MSO stations.

After the MSO stations, the two permanent members then considered the administrative section, and then the public space. This developed into the concept of the building being composed in a progression of three areas: the public, the MSOs, and the administration. They also gave a shape to this system of areas. It was a rough "C" shape (fig. 126), with the public space at the centre, and the MSO stations between them and the administrative section. For the CU informant, the MSO stations were the conceptual centre of the building. This system can be easily found in the Main Level floorplan (Compare figs. 68 (87) and 156 (G-2)).

When the architect came on the project the client presented him with rough sketches of the MSO stations (the tables, seating arrangements and half height walls), and the "C" shape. The tripartite system of public/MSO/administration was inherent in the early design sketches (figs. 126-133 (F-2 - F-5)).

The author asked the CU informant what the informant thought the two permanent members of the RDCU building committee directly contributed to the form of the building. The informant said that the main contribution was that "we were instrumental in the development of the main floor plan, but we didn't have a lot of input into what happened on the outside... We would spend countless hours cutting and pasting with a knife the blueprints that [the architect] would send us. Then [the architect] would redraw it and send it back. The work on the concept of the main floor plan was our biggest influence." Some of the more indirect contributions by the client to the building was the idea for

the atrium, the plants, and the waterfall. The client wanted to have some life in the building, literally. These ideas were supported by the architect and their planning and design was wholly incorporated into the design by the architect, and in the case of the waterfall, the landscape consultant.

The RDCU wanted to have a building that was part of the community. Once the architect came out and he and a few members from the RDCU building committee had "a walk around town", they told him that they were not concerned with fitting in with the rest of the street (CU informant). They said that they wanted to create the "new norm to fit into" (CU informant). They were looking to invent a new architectural tradition for building on Main Street (cf. Hobsbawm and Ranger 1993 (1983)).

More interviews were conducted, this time between the architect and his staff and the RDCU staff. By the end of the design process, almost every staff member at the RDCU had been involved in some way with the design of the building.

A second storey was pursued for a short time during the design of the building (figs. 139 (F-11), 147 (F-19), 150 (F-22)). "Fair Share" Saskatchewan was going to be implemented at that time, where all the provincial government offices would be decentralized to locations throughout the province. The RDCU had begun talks with Fair Share who said that yes, they would rent the second floor. But the government was slow in making a final decision and the building project had to move ahead, so the idea of building a second floor was dropped (21). The government lease have been for five years, with the second floor built to the government's specifications. The lease would have paid the cost of the second floor in the same five years.

The author asked the CU informant how the RDCU came to have these ideas about travelling to the other credit unions, doing a survey of the membership, and defining an image for the institution through the architecture of the building. The informant said it was simply the result of brainstorming, and the staff was receptive to the ideas. The informant reminded the author about the 'Building Day Out', another event which came out of brain storming.

When the design was near completion, the client had a cardboard model of the building from the architect, and some drawings. According to the CU informant, the RDCU building committee thought: "Gee that's nice. But before we put a million dollars into it (22), we want to make sure it works. Then we thought, I wonder how wide the ice surface is in the arena?". They bought roles of masking tape and markers, and the staff, their spouses, and the directors, laid out the floorplan on the arena floor, on a Friday in May or June. "We had [the architect] come up for it, and he was busy with the tape and a measuring stick the whole time. He had never heard of or done anything like this before. [An office furnishings store] helped us set up example offices." Their main question was, "Does it work?", and it led to some small revisions. Also, it was a social event.

The level of quality of materials was discussed, as the RDCU building committee wanted the building to look like a very solid building, and they wanted it to appear like it was of high quality. However, these discussions regarding the level of quality of materials were not in-depth. Decisions regarding materials were made quickly, but not lightly.

After the architect's first cost estimate they were looking to reduce the cost of the building. Initially they had specified the building to be of noncombustible construction. This turned out to be very expensive, so they specified partially combustible construction instead. There were issues of longevity, combustibility, and aesthetics, and they compromised in the area of combustibility (23). They wanted a low maintenance building.

The RDCU building committee and the architect had discussions over whether or not to use asphalt shingles, for example, but decided that they were too residential looking - they wanted a better quality of material. Later, the architect brought in samples of the glass, the roof metal, and the brick, and some choices were made based mostly on the longevity of the materials, with other qualities, such as price and appearance playing a much lesser role. Basically, the architect made the choices for all the exterior materials and designed the exterior of the building. It was at this time that an interior design firm became involved.

An interior design firm was hired to make sure that the offices worked, at a more finite level than what the architect had been considering. They completed another series of interviews with the staff, and did an appraisal of each staff member's job needs and of intra-office communication. They were responsible for the furniture tender, and they also specified virtually all the interior finishes (wall coverings, carpet, floor tiles), the exterior brick colour, and they designed the benches and information centre in the lobby.

The RDCU building committee did run into a some friction between the architect and the interior designer due to professional territoriality, but the strength of the RDCU as a client seems to have ensured that things were completed as necessary.

The CU informant was unofficially taken from the CU informant's job to work on the building about two years prior to construction. For about six months during construction the informant was working full-time on the building project - as a client representative to help resolve issues on site. The first time the author spoke with the CU informant, the informant was visibly proud of the building. The author also noticed this with another of the staff members who agreed to give the author an impromptu tour of the building, the first time the author entered inside. This staff member seemed proud of the building as well, and spoke as if the member had been involved in the design process, which the member had. To this topic, the CU informant recalled the following:

*We were possibly more involved in the project than an architect may like an owner to be. When we read the contract the first time we saw in there that it had a clause that we weren't allowed in when it was being built. We said, "Hold on."* [The architect] *said it was for insurance purposes. We told him that we wanted access to the building, and he would have to change the contract. It ended up that all of the staff just signed waivers. We bought a case of hard hats to satisfy the foreman. Still it turned out that we couldn't get into the building when it was being put up because the door was locked.* [The architect] *said for insurance reasons the foreman had the only key. We told him we don't care what he has to do, we want a key here by 9:00 tomorrow.*

The author asked the CU informant whether comparison or competition with other banks had influenced the project in any way, and the CU informant said that it was not discussed.

The author spoke with most of the sub-consultants (interior designer, contractor, mechanical engineer, electrical engineer, structural engineer) (24), and none of them thought there was anything particularly innovative or interesting regarding their input into the project, although the building does use in-slab heating, which is not standard (25).

However, the general contractor, who has built other credit unions and banks, did comment on the style of the RDCU building:

*The RDCU is a different style for a bank, the custom curtain wall framing and the roof especially. A normal bank is a square box with a flat roof and a little dress-up on the exterior. Credit unions are not typically like that. The normal banks are a hell of a lot cheaper.*

## 5.4 ACTIONS OF THE ARCHITECT

An architect will undertake a wide variety of tasks during the design and construction of a building. These tasks vary from synthesizing the client's qualitative and quantitative requirements, revising those requirements, designing the building, putting the construction contract to tender, and inspecting all the construction work as it progresses, to dealing with post-contract enquiries by the client. (A series of sketches and drawings reflecting the design process have been included as Appendix F).

What is of interest here, however, is not the gamut of tasks, rather the contributions of the architect that specifically relate to the design of the building, seeing the building as an object, an artifact. There are many instances of this type of contribution, and the contributions discussed here are deemed to be the architect's key actions in terms of the object.

Some elements of the design, as indicated in the previous section, were suggested by the client, the foremost of these being the MSO stations. Other such suggestions were that the client wished to have a sloping roof, a high level of quality in the exterior materials, an atrium, and a waterfall with plants. With the exception of the MSO stations, the final choice of materials, and the waterfall, the architect designed each of the elements.

Although substantial work had been completed on the design of the MSO stations by the client, a considerable amount of effort was still required to make the MSO stations work dimensionally (figs. 139 (F11), 147 (F-19), 150 (F-22)), and to develop a building design centred around the stations. One could classify the work carried out by the client on the MSO stations, before the architect began on the project, as planning work, still steps away from finished millwork drawings. The MSO stations were quite expensive, approximately $5000 each, since in order to build them there were twelve trades on site, due to union regulations. The architect had wanted to have the MSO stations contracted out and factory built by one trade.

The idea of having an atrium (a term used loosely here, as atrium refers to the planted and glazed area of the building, not the large lobby space), with a waterfall and planted area was supported by the architect because of the warm, friendly atmosphere it creates (refer to figs. 68-70 (87-89), 112-115 (B-4 - B-5), 121-123 (B-9 - B-10), 71, following page). In retrospect, the CU informant stated that the RDCU building committee wished that waterfall had been on the main level, in view of everyone in the lobby area.

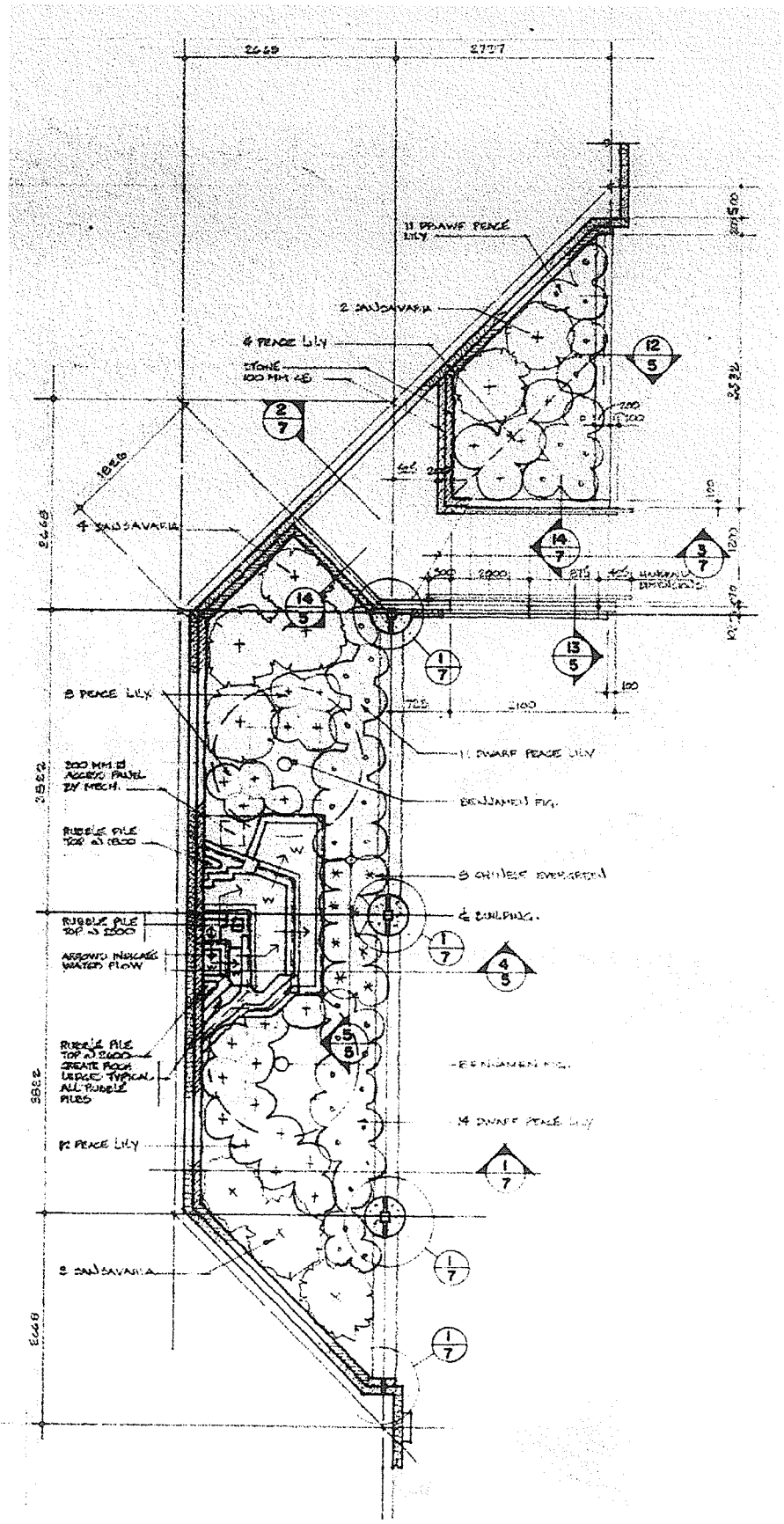



Figure 71. Architect construction document, Atrium Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

Flat roofs were of concern to the RDCU building committee, as they thought flat roofs were inherently prone to leaking, more so than pitched roofs. Therefore, a pitched roof was pursued in the design. Interestingly though, it is difficult to imagine having a pitched roof, similar to the existing one, if the second storey had gone ahead as planned. The wish not to have "just another block building", would likely also have been compromised, although it still would have been possible to put a pitched roof on a two storey building. The turn of events leading to the cancelling of the plans to build a second storey are very significant to the building, and more importantly with respect to what the architect was free to do with the design of the building. There is little doubt that if a second storey had been included as a design parameter, the result would have possessed few of the qualities of the present design. The limitations posed by a second storey would have influenced the floorplans, ceiling heights, and the roof shape, some fundamental aspects of any design.

The planning for the second storey that was never built is the reason there is an elevator shaft incorporated into the building, and for its location (janitor room on Main Level and Basement floorplans, refer to figs. 68 (87), 69 (88)). The elevator needed to be in the lobby so that a second floor tenant could go directly to their office without entering the credit union after hours. As the design had already progressed, the architect suggested that they may as well leave it in the plans, since if they ever wanted to put an elevator in at a later date, for handicapped accessibility, for example, there was already $15 000 of work completed. There is a seam in the brick veneer in the lobby wall beside the janitor's door where they can just peal away the brick veneer for the wider elevator door opening, and the wooden floors in the shaft in the basement and main level can be removed.

The following elements were brought to play in the design project wholly by the architect: the importance of addressing First Avenue in some manner (for the location of streets, refer to fig. 24 (47)), the incorporation of exterior landscaping, the formal

expression of the exterior, and the spatial system of the building.

Early on, the architect looked at the physical zoning of the site (fig. 134 (F-6)). Already he had involved the idea of a landscape buffer and placed values on different areas of the site. In the design drawings on can see the site zoning being incorporated into the design of the building (figs. 134-136 (F-6 - F-8), 138 (F-10), 142 (F-14), 143 (F-15), 148 (F-20), 149 (F-21), 151-153 (F-23), 155 (F-25)).

For the architect, the landscaping at the front of the building and the "pocket park" inbetween the RDCU and the Chinese Restaurant were indicative of what could be done on Main Street (figs. 102 (A-9), 104 (A-10), 107 (A-12), 155 (F-25)). He was approached by the head of the Rosetown Chamber of Commerce about doing similar work elsewhere on Main Street. This indicates that the landscaping was seen as an improvement to Main Street. The intention was to make use of a government program for Main Street revitalization, but this did not happen.

The landscaped area was intended to be a prominent feature and facilitate views down First Avenue. The use of a facade that wraps around both sides also displays the effort to address First Avenue (see fig. 72). There had always been discussion of a credit union "symbol" (*sic* logo) being placed outside, but they weren't sure how it would be built (see fig. 155 (F-25), where the sign makes its first appearance, labelled as a sign). It ended up becoming a sculpture of the credit union globe logo (fig. 105 (A-11)). The architect designed the base and a sign manufacturer built the globe.

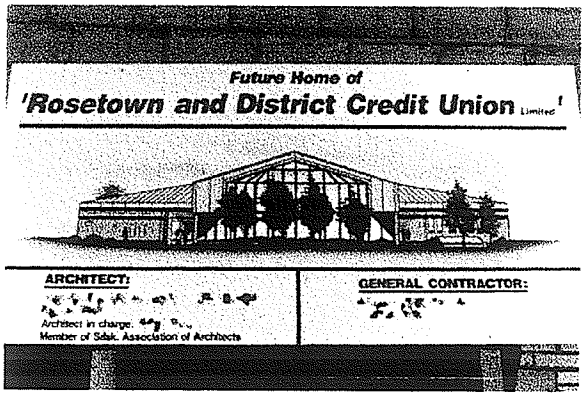



Figure 72. RDCU construction project sign

Deciduous trees were chosen rather than coniferous trees for the planted area outside. This was to be part of a system that includes the large glazed area at the front of the building. In the summer the trees will shade the windows to reduce solar heat gain, and in winter the leaves are gone, and therefore there should be significant a solar gain. A mechanical engineer told the architect that the heating system should only need to run at 50% of capacity in the winter, which the architect seemed quite pleased with. Whether or not this was balanced with an increase in cooling costs in warmer weather was not known. The concept behind such a system seems logical, but the working efficiency is doubtful. Since it was decided that people should be able to see into the building, they chose clear glass rather than mirrored. There have already been a series of blinds installed inside of the building (fig. 112 (B-4)) because of the superfluous amount of sunlight entering the building, causing discomfort to those working inside. The system may become more efficient when the trees are fully grown, but perhaps it is more significant to note that such an idea was given value, reflecting an attitude towards the building project, rather than attempting to gauge the efficiency of this system. This effort to include the landscaping as an integral part of the building's mechanical system, whatever its true efficiency, is a relatively innovative approach to supporting the built environment.

The architect found that the public perception of the building was a major concern for the RDCU building committee. The client spent much time speaking of the imagery of the building. They wanted it to "look good, but not ostentatious" (Architect). The architect also found that the RDCU building committee was straightforward when it came to many of the requirements it created: it wanted the roof to slope so the water ran off, brick because it was better quality, and the biggest issue with them regarding the design, after the public reception, was the amount of exterior glazing, because it was seen as expensive.

Regarding what the RDCU building committee actually desired in an image, there weren't many details given to the architect. The committee's statements were not well articulated: it wanted the building to be "clean, direct, and bold" (CU informant).

For the architect, when a client speaks of the imagery they want, most of it is immediately understandable, despite the low level of articulation:

> *I've been doing this for 25 years and I just draw on experience. If a client wants it to be open and friendly that means plants, natural light, and being able to see in from the street - that's open and friendly.* (Architect)

Here the architect is referring to a set of elements that correspond with the adjectives and statements of the client. These relationships between building elements and descriptions such as 'friendly' or 'authoritarian' are not easily definable, but everyone seems to know what they are. Of course there are frequent disagreements, but they seem to be socially accepted and modifiable relationships.

When the design began to get more driven by the geometry and the architect and client were determining the gross area of the building, the architect drew a very quick sketch which was intended for the CU informant only (fig. 148 (F-20)). The exterior expression was based on the analogy of a ring, with the crystal supported by the claws of the ring (Architect).

Lastly, the most important contribution that the architect made to the design of the building was in the ordering of the functional, spatial, conceptual, and geometrical systems of the building. The integration of these systems is the most important aspect of describing the building as an object.

As stated before, the client had indicated three areas which it wished to form the basis of the design, the public area, the MSO stations, and the administration area. The word 'area' here actually has two attributes: a physical map and a set of functions. Both of these attributes were further developed by the architect during the design process.

The achievement in this integration is that each of the three systems are put together in such a manner that each references the other, like three precisely fitted overlays. The architect used geometry as a tool to accomplish this. He reviewed what had been presented to him, developed the ideas further with the client, and searched for a geometric system which would best suit the three other systems. How the architect went about doing this was much more task-oriented than conceptual, as he was searching for a geometry that correlated with the various functions, but the result is the same. The author asked the architect why he had chosen to use geometry in this manner, and on this project. He said he always uses geometry in designing. There is no explicit philosophical or ideological meaning behind the use of geometry though, he sees it "just as a control." He begins with the "relationships of things, and [I] try to see what kind of a controlling element [geometrical system] would work." The reasoning behind his choices always comes out of the functional requirements.

The architect also stated that he has spent a fair bit of time in Rosetown over the years (his architecture firm also designed a new school there, fig. 36 (54)) and feels he knows the town fairly well. He has formed some friendships with people there.

### 5.5 MECHANISMS OF THE OBJECT

The new building has a number of architectural innovations, some of which make it different from the other buildings on Main Street. Buildings on Main Street tend to follow a very consistent pattern, although their facades vary widely (see figs. 8-13 (6-7). The buildings are essentially long rectangular commercial spaces with the Main

Street facade being the only side to receive any decoration or other architectural display, so there is a definite 'front' and 'back' to the scheme (fig. 73, following page). The use of the site area is maximized by building to the edge of the property line, perhaps with a small loading area in the rear of the building, and the front doors exit almost directly out to the sidewalk.

The RDCU building is different from the other buildings in five visible ways:

1) Building materials
2) Orientation
3) Facade treatment
4) Pitched roof
5) Landscaping

Building materials used on the RDCU are of a high quality in terms of longevity and performance. This is especially true of the metal roof and the brick veneer cladding. Another major component is the glass curtain wall which makes up the main facade of the building (26). This type of curtain wall involves a substantial amount of production in the factory (floating glass and extruding aluminum) and is exacting to install. The silver coloured metal cladding is less difficult to produce and install than the curtain wall, but is still a fairly tight fitting system which easily shows any poorly fitted pieces.

As a whole, the building materials are a relatively expensive, durable, and technically complex system, unlike any other on Main Street. Brick does appear on many other buildings on Main Street, and even in the same colour (white), so as an element alone it does not serve to differentiate the RDCU building from others on Main Street although it is consistent with the other materials used on the building. The other elements, the glass curtain wall, metal cladding and metal are more exotic than the other materials usually used on Main Street, and they form the most visibly stunning elements of the exterior of the building: the facade and the pitched roof.

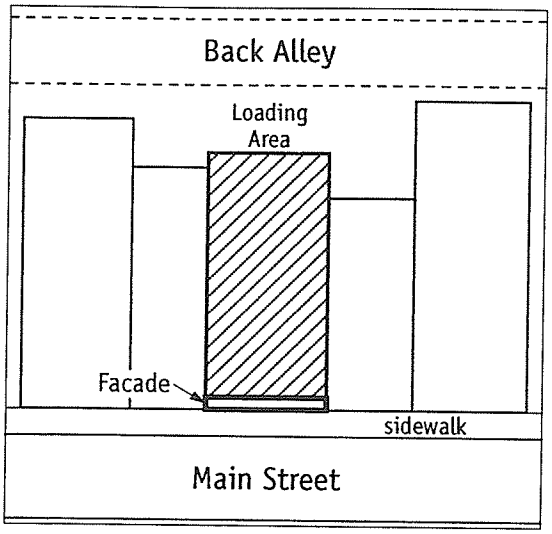



Figure 73. Typical Main Street Building, plan diagram

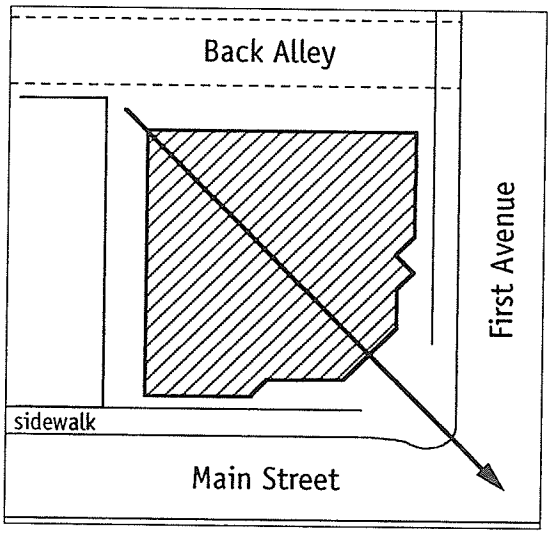



Figure 74. RDCU building, orientation diagram

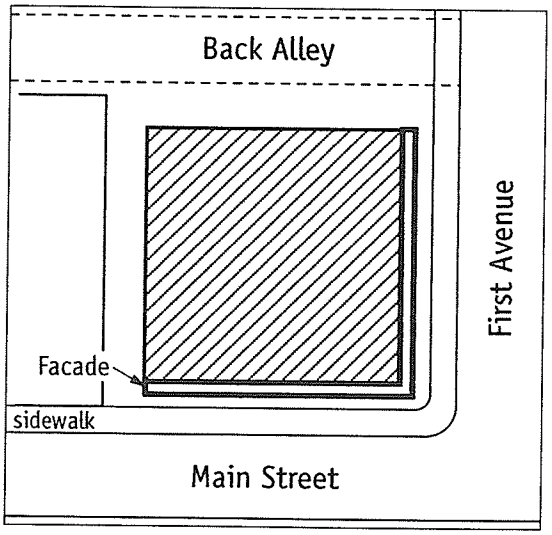



Figure 75. RDCU building, facade diagram

The facade of the building owes much to the orientation of the building on its site. The building is oriented toward the corner, as opposed to the typical orientation of the other buildings, which is toward Main Street (fig. 74, previous page). The direction the building 'points' is south, down Main Street toward Highway 7. Thus the building does appear to have a direction to it, somewhat similar to the front/back scenario of the other buildings.

The facade itself is bilaterally symmetrical, and is composed of three parts: a frontispiece, and two wings. Each wing represents a lower order of facade as opposed to the frontispiece. This is because the wings are lower in height, off centre of the axis symmetry, and, compared to the other materials used on the exterior of the building, executed in a lower order of material: brick (27). However, the differentiating feature of the facade is not in its elements, but rather in the fact that it involves three sides of a five sided building. This can be reduced to two sides for easy comparison with the typical configuration on Main Street, as described earlier (compare fig. 75 with fig. 73, previous page). Having such an extensive facade is a direct result of the architect's wish to use the building to address First Avenue in a positive manner.

Second to the building materials used on the exterior in differentiating the RDCU building from the other buildings on Main Street is the roof. The bulk and height of the building is substantially increased by the use of a pitched roof rather than a flat roof. This increase in bulk and height increases the stature of the building. Also, the roof is in two sections which correspond with the spatial system and the geometrical system of the building. (This correspondence will be explained in detail shortly). Therefore the roof describes, in an adumbrative fashion, what the interior of the building is like. This type of description likely serves to make the building more comprehensible to its users, as compared with a building in which the exterior shape does not articulate the interior spaces.

The fifth way in which the RDCU is visibly different from the other buildings on Main Street is the use of soft landscaping in the design. Hard landscaping components do exist - benches, a wheelchair ramp, handrails, paved surfaces - but aside from the benches, they are reduced to a purely functional role. The use of vegetation on buildable property on Main Street is largely without precedent. Only the post office is set back from the sidewalk and has a front lawn (fig. 6 (3), 45 (58)). One key informant was very pleased with the inclusion of soft landscaping: "It helps to change Main Street from a mercantile-only area. Small towns need to change from a very utilitarian type of Main Street, to soften it."

There are four conceptual mechanisms in the building which can be considered key to the building as an object. These mechanisms are vary in the scope of their relevance, from being relevant only to the object, to the credit union as an organization, or to the people of the community. The conceptual mechanisms are:

1) Building as a mnemonic
2) Affirmation of the relationship between the individual and the collective
3) Geometrical system as ordering device
4) Perceptual similarity with other buildings on Main Street

The RDCU building has mnemonic potential because of similarities to the building which occupied the site previously, the Rosetown Hotel (fig. 61 (76)). The Rosetown Hotel, like the RDCU building, was oriented toward the street corner as indicated by the location of the entrance, the angled corner of the building, the porch steps, and, more generally, the porch and balcony. The porch and balcony also constitute an architectural display vaguely similar to the frontispiece of the RDCU building. It was also a large building compared with the other buildings on Main Street (fig. 62 (77)), as is the RDCU building. The premise behind the RDCU being a mnemonic for the townspeople is that

the Rosetown Hotel stood on Rosetown's Main Street for a long period of time, it became embedded in the town's collective memory, and the new RDCU building reasserts this presence by virtue of the few core similarities the two buildings share. The architect had not seen a photograph of the Rosetown Hotel before or during the design of the RDCU building, but he was aware that the hotel had an entrance on the corner of Main Street and First Avenue. However, the architect stated that he made no conscious effort to recall the hotel with the design of the RDCU building.

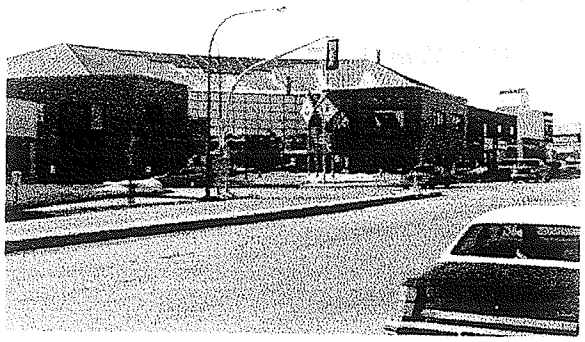


Figure 76. Yorkton Credit Union, Yorkton, Saskatchewan

Figure 77. Yorkton Credit Union, sign and landscaping

The relationship between the individual and the collective is an important relationship in many situations, and it is of particular importance to the cooperative philosophy to which credit unions subscribe. The credit union logo exemplifies this well, showing a family within a globe supported by the careful hands of the collective. This logo was interpreted into a three-dimensional icon and placed on a pedestal to become a sculpture in the garden at the front of the building (figs. 104 (A-10), 105 (A-11)). (The Yorkton credit union has a similar configuration (figs. 76, 77). The author explicitly questioned the architect on the shrine-like arrangement of the sculpture and garden against the glass backdrop, and he stated that there was no attempt to create a shrine or a monument of any kind, that it was merely a sign for the credit union placed in the landscaped area. Regardless of the intent, the

arrangement is quite suggestive (28). The landscaped area in front creates a zone which is clearly not meant to be occupied by people. In the middle of this area is a golden sculpture whose imagery recalls the fundamental relationship which constitutes the existence of the organization, that of individuals becoming part of a collective. The RDCU building is a physical symbol of the power of that collective, and to enter, the individual is deferred around the shrine at the front, to the doors at either side. However, once inside, the individual is at the centre of the building, in a large space with room for many people, and the people who are the collective's administration are lined up along the periphery. This sequence affirms both the individual and the collective as two partners in a relationship, and identifies the individual as having a greater importance than that of the administrators, all of which are consistent with the ideology of the credit union. As with the arrangement the author has labelled shrine-like, the architect didn't consciously conceive of this system of the individual and the collective, but he did consider the body of members as being the focus of the building, with the MSO stations being the centre of the building.

Thirdly, the building is ordered around a geometrical system created by the architect. As mentioned in the previous section, there are three systems in the building which have been integrated and which, in turn, reinforce each other. These are: the functional system, the spatial system, and the geometrical system. The functional system (fig. 80, following page) was developed by the client and is comprised of public, MSO, and administrative functions. The spatial system (figs. 78, 79, following page) and the geometrical system were developed by the architect.

That some sense of geometrical order exists in the building is immediately visible from viewing the Main Level floorplan (fig. 68 (87)), where two polygons can be discerned, a square and an octagon (fig. 156 (G-2)). The existence of these two polygons does not constitute a system, so the issue is how these two geometrical shapes are related.

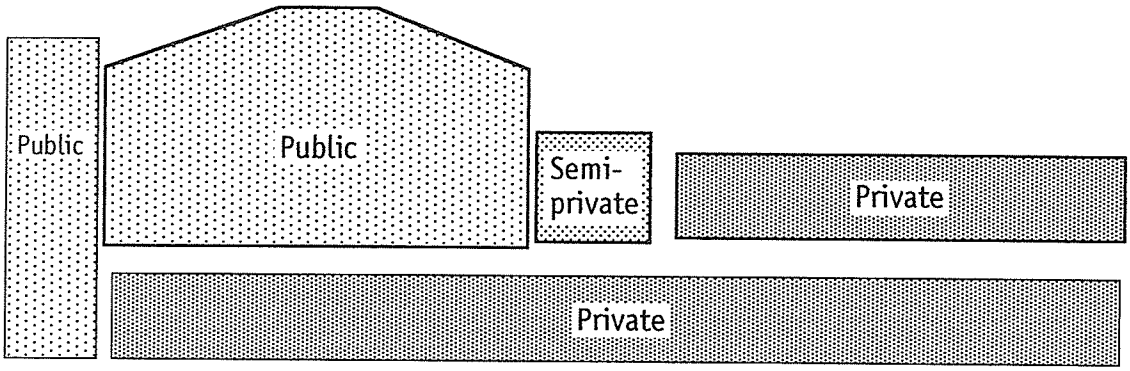



Figure 78. Spatial system, section diagram (refer to figure 70 (89))

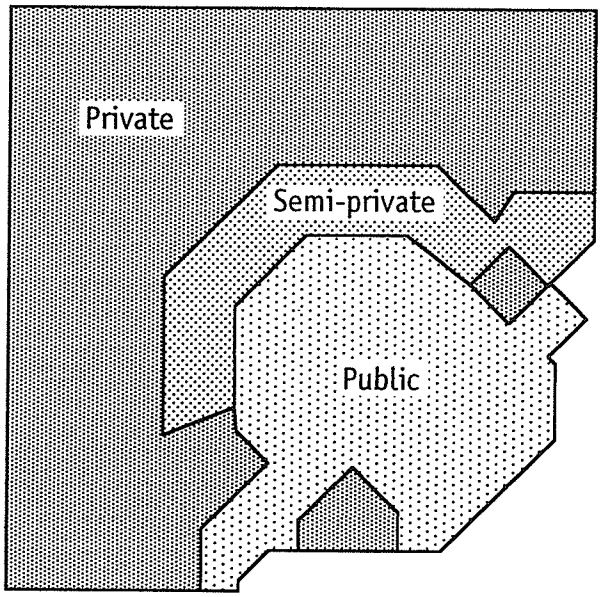



Figure 79. Spatial system, plan diagram

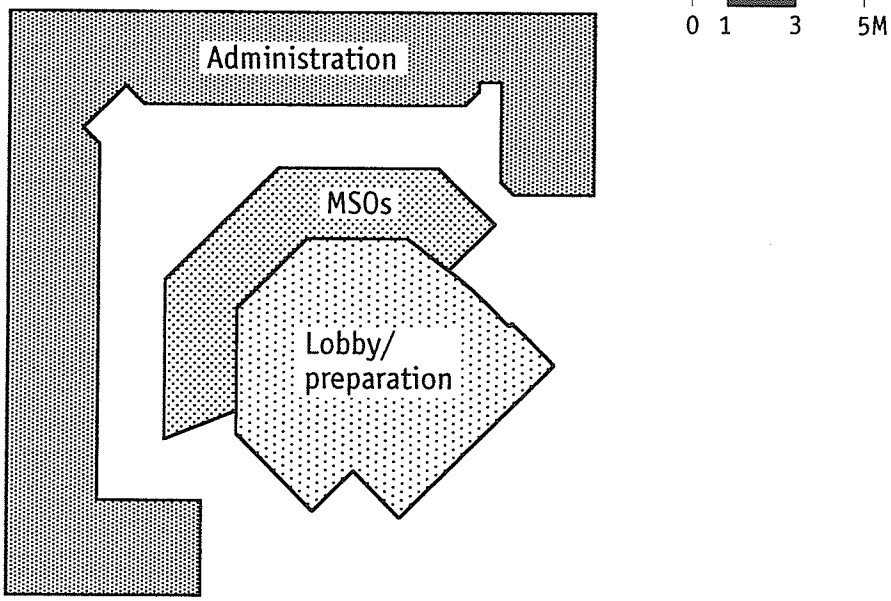



Figure 80. Functional system, plan diagram

Figures 156 (G-2) through 160 (G-6) are an attempt to show how it is possible to work from the square to the octagon shown in figure 159 (G-5), by successive geometric manipulations. Although this series illuminates the relationship between the two polygons and describes the relationships within the geometrical system, there are two inconsistencies which suggest that the architect did not manipulate the geometrical system in the sequence described while designing the building. This was confirmed by the architect.

This first inconsistency is that the square found in step one (fig. 157 (G-3)) is not the square within which the successive manipulations occur (cf. figs. 158 (G-4) -160 (G-6)). The second inconsistency is that the centre point of the octagon does not appear to be determined by any geometrical construct, although it does fall upon the diagonal running through the centre of the whole scheme (see fig. 160 (G-6)).

The architect actually worked in the reverse direction from the series the author has constructed. The architect's process is illustrated by figures 161 (G-7) through 165 (G-11). Regardless of how the system was constructed however, the geometric relationships are the same, and are summarized in figure 166 (G-12).

The question now is, how is the geometrical system significant as an ordering device? As stated earlier, the geometrical, functional, and spatial systems have been integrated in a consistent manner, where each system affirms the other. The functional system (fig. 80, previous page) is consistent with the geometrical system as the three functions of public/MSO/administrative are clearly divided into plan areas based on the geometry of the building. The spatial system (fig. 78, previous page) articulates the functional system in space based on the plan areas derived from the geometrical system. The spatial system also depicts the hierarchy mentioned earlier, of public/MSO/administrative, as the public space is the largest, most grand space, followed by the MSO station area (the interface between the members and the credit union administration), and the administrative area.

It is also visible in the plan that the MSO stations are of considerable importance. They play a role in articulating the geometrical system of the building. Compare the Main Level floorplan (fig. 68 (87)) with figure 81, following page, which shows the Main Level floorplan with the MSO stations removed. In figure 81, only the two floor plates and the glass curtain wall vaguely indicate the polygon, a very important shape in the geometrical system. The MSO stations are therefore a very important element of the building's ordering systems.

The last mechanism to be described is perceptual. The spatial system, relying on the geometrical system, creates an environment which is similar to the other buildings on Main Street. The buildings are generally composed of one rectilinear space which is immediately comprehensible upon entering the building. Therein lies the strongest similarity between the RDCU building and the other buildings on Main Street. When one enters the RDCU lobby, the spaces are also immediately comprehensible. The integration of the spatial, functional systems through the geometrical system has resulted in a clearly defined environment where nothing is hidden and everything is in its place. This reflects the attitude of the RDCU building committee which desired the design to "look good, but not ostentatious" (Architect).

Having a given a description of the design process behind the new building, the architect's actions, and the key elements of the design, it is now important to note events which have occurred between the opening of the RDCU building and the present.

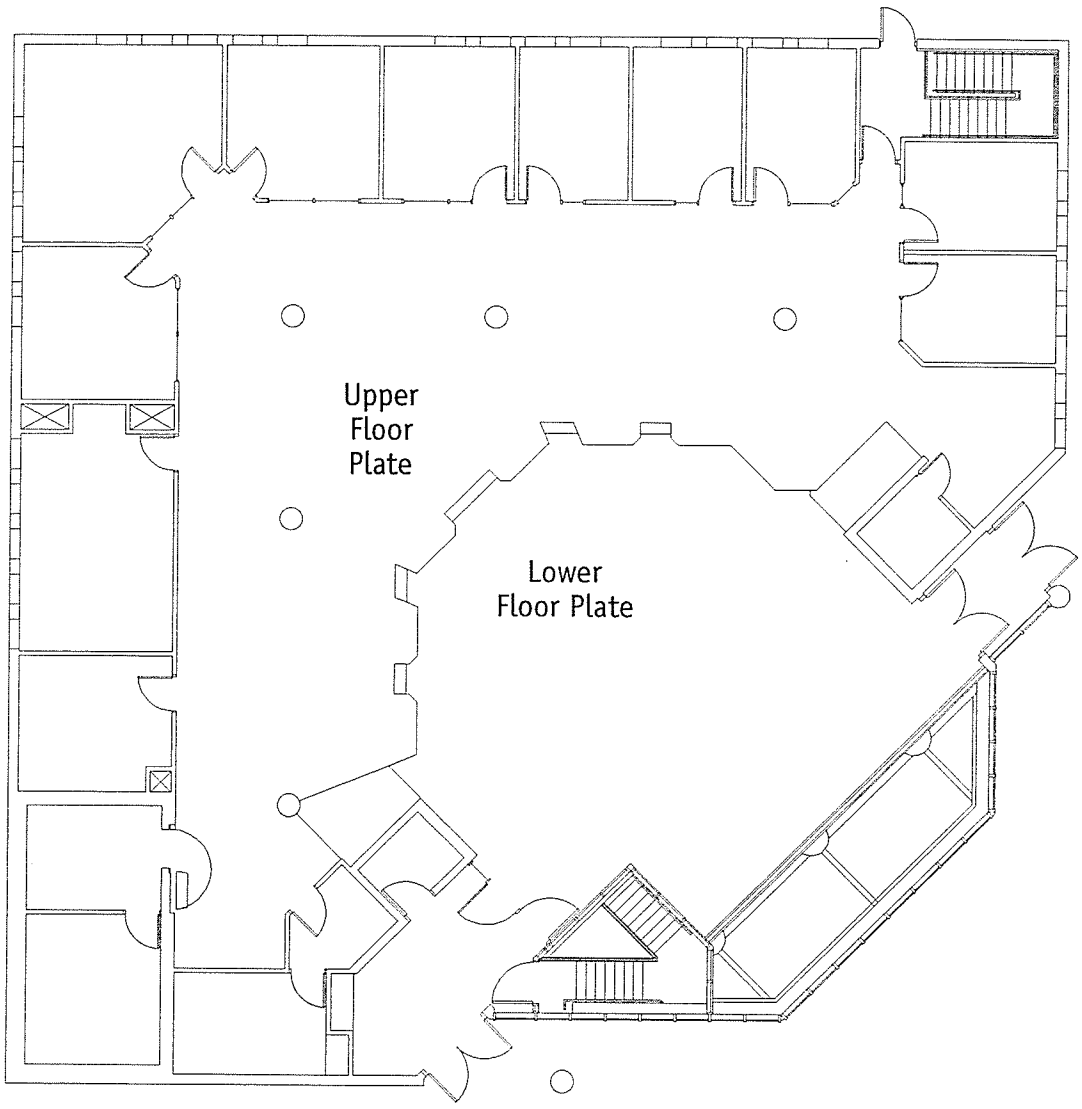



Figure 81. Main Level floorplan without MSO stations

## 5.6 A "VERY HISTORIC OCCASION"

The grand opening of the RDCU building was announced in the Rosetown Eagle with a full-page advertisement (fig. 82, following page). Tours, refreshments, keepsakes, and door prizes were given out. The following issue contained another advertisement (fig. 83), saying "Thank you" to those who attended, reportedly more than 1300 people, equivalent to half of the population of Rosetown. Tours were offered again on the first Credit Union Day following the opening of the new building (fig. 84).

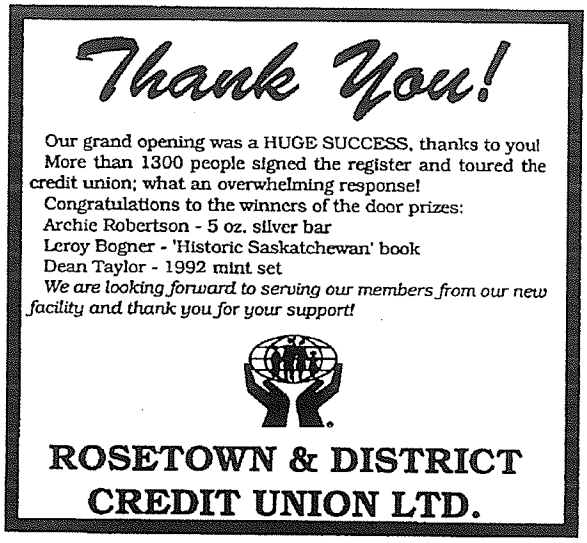



Figure 83. RDCU newspaper advertisement, grand opening thank you. Rosetown Eagle, 31 August.

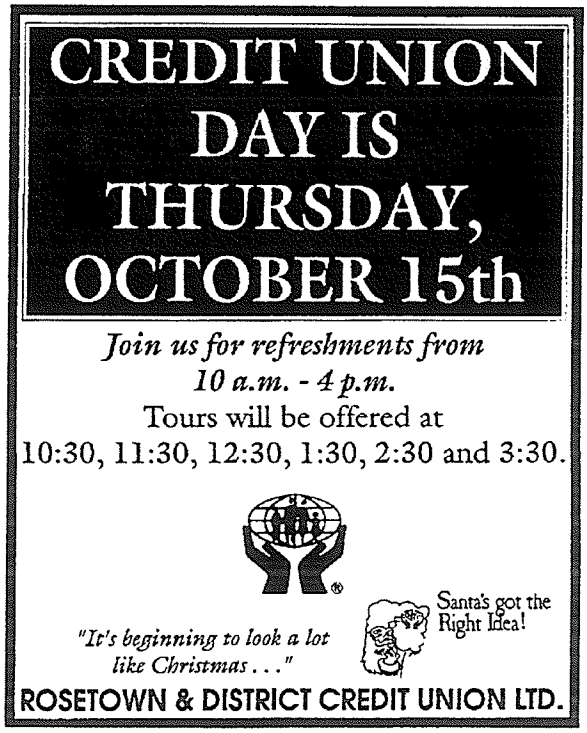
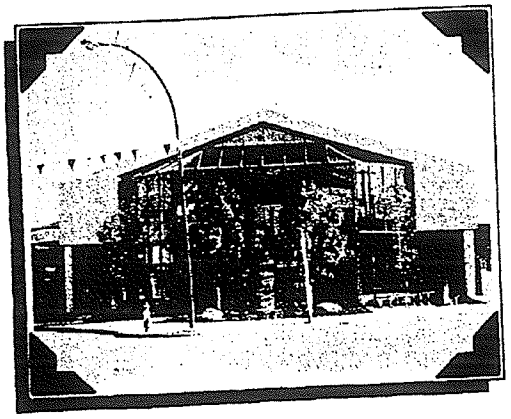



Figure 84. RDCU newspaper advertisement, Credit Union Day, 1992. Rosetown Eagle, 13 October.

At the time of the grand opening, the RDCU had $48 million in assets. However, even as the building was being constructed, profound changes were beginning to take place in the organizational structure of the credit union and in other credit unions around the province. The change was a series of amalgamations with other credit unions in the area. Most of the amalgamations were with small credit unions which were not doing very well due to unbalanced portfolios, minimal assets, or low membership. This change was not foreseen and has led to the Rosetown and

# GRAND OPENING

## Rosetown & District Credit Union Limited



## Tuesday, August 25th

**Official Opening Ceremonies**
10:00 a.m.

The Board of Directors, management and staff of the Rosetown & District Credit Union Limited invite you to attend the grand opening of the new credit union building, downtown Rosetown. This will be the first day the new facility will be open. This is your invitation to join in this very historic occasion.

**Tours until 4:00 p.m.**

***Refresh-ments served***

**Keepsakes for everyone**

**ROSETOWN & DISTRICT CREDIT UNION LIMITED**

Figure 82. RDCU newspaper advertisement, grand opening announcement, 1992. Rosetown Eagle, 17 August.

District Credit Union becoming a new regional credit union under the new name, Prairie Centre Credit Union (PCCU). The main branch is located in Rosetown, where the administrative section also is. The branch and the administrative section operate as two completely separate offices.

The building played a role in deciding where to locate the head office after the amalgamations. Many RDCU members were concerned with taking in weaker credit unions, but the PCCU is in a secure financial situation, even after constructing a new building and the amalgamations. The PCCU holds over 6% of their assets in equity, while the chartered banks usually hold 3-5% in equity.

In less than four years the RDCU went from $48 million in assets, 16 staff members, and one branch to becoming the PCCU with $140 million in assets, 9 branches and one administration section, and 85 staff members. This dramatic change in organizational structure has impacted strongly on the PCCU's facility, the 'old' RDCU building. The biggest change has been that the basement conference rooms are now tightly filled with people working at desks. This expansion into the basement, which was not designed to be permanently occupied by office staff, is seen by the PCCU to be a two to three year solution, after which they will have to expand their facility again (CU informant).

This situation brings to light one of the inconsistencies in the long term planning: the design of the RDCU building did not incorporate any provisions for the expansion of the building. In fact, the geometrical organization of the building and the pristine spaces on the main level will make it very difficult to effectively integrate an addition into the existing building. Logistically it would be easy to accomplish, but to maintain the level of quality of the original design, a considerable amount of design work and renovation will likely be required. Whatever solution is pursued, the character of the old RDCU building will be altered significantly.

"Hindsight is 20/20," said the CU informant:

> *At the time the building was going up we were at a crossroads in the credit union system. At the time there was the odd amalgamation in the province or even western Canada. We were looking at closing the branch in Herschel. When the building went up, it had an easy fifteen year life. We planned to grow to fill it, and that was the planning for expansion.*

The author reminded the CU informant that the eastern lot, currently used for parking, was purchased for expansion, and the main issue was that expansion was not incorporated into the design and was not included in the design requirements at all. The CU informant agreed, saying that when they were considering long term expansion the discussions were mostly superficial. It happened that the lots were available, they bought them, and they even spoke to the town about building into the alley, but nothing further was undertaken. The CU administration was planning that in fifteen years that they would double their assets to $100 million. Now however, the PCCU have already exceeded that amount and they even have a branch in Eatonia, 140 km westsouthwest from Rosetown.

The image of the RDCU building appeared in two media sources, a booster video commissioned by E2000, and in a magazine article. In both these sources the image appeared in a prominent position. In the video, the introductory narration is accompanied by a series of black and white images from the Rosetown Library archive. The first colour image is of the east side of Main Street, with the RDCU building in plain view, and is accompanied with the following narration:

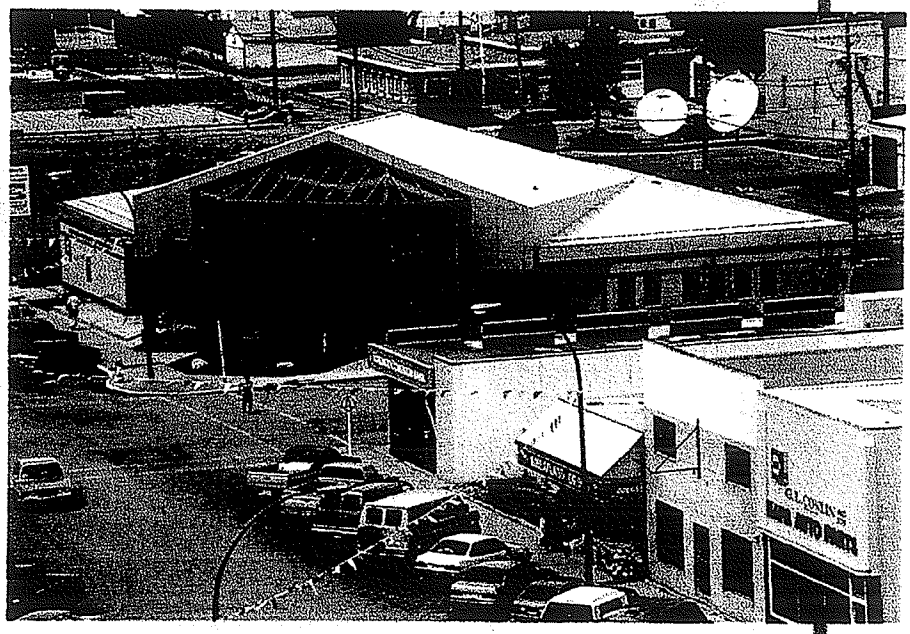
> *Rosetown's pioneering spirit has helped it to become a bustling community of around 2500 people living in clean, comfortable, well developed residential areas, with easy access to schools, recreational facilities, and shopping, all with plenty of room for growth and expansion.* (Brown 1994)

The other media source was an article in Sask Report Magazine, in 1993 (Sterling 1993). Here the image of the building is the centre piece of a decorated introduction to the article entitled: "The little town that could" (fig. 85, following page).

# The little town that could

## *Rosetown develops a comprehensive economic development plan that could well be a blueprint for the rest of Saskatchewan*

*By Heather Sterling*



It feels like the first day of spring. Positive ions are bouncing off the sidewalk. The sun is shining in that special new-season way and people on the street smile and exchange fine-weather pleasantries.

It's a good time to be in Rosetown because it's not just Mother Nature who is on the brink of rebirth; not just the weather that is putting a bounce in people's step. As the Saskatchewan farm crisis bites harder, this small farming community is not breaking down but breaking through with a creative plan for survival and growth. The Rosetown and District Economic Development Authority (EDA) is taking a proactive approach to socio-economic development that is grassroots driven. By its very nature it will create its own entrepreneurs.

Rosetown, an area of fertile farmland and progressive farming methods yet facing an economic crunch imposed by a world economy, is a good Saskatchewan case study. This town plans to be master of its own fate.

Having had an agriculturally-based economy able to support the provincial infrastructure for so many years, Saskatchewan has entered the economic development game quite some time after other parts of the world. It was when diversification was seen as the answer to dramatically depressed grain prices that government initiatives began to evolve.

But one of the problems was that although money was provided for new business initiatives, there was no structure in place to nurture a fledgling idea and help it fly. Too many rules and red tape compounded the problem

Figure 85. Sask Report magazine article, title page, 1993. Photograph by Philip M. Brown. Sask Report Magazine, 39. Courtesy of Heather Sterling. Photograph courtesy of Philip M. Brown.

In these two media sources where Rosetown is described in a positive manner, the image of the RDCU building is given great importance. On the contrary, when the CBC's "The Journal" filmed their newsprogram in Rosetown on the poor state of the agricultural economy, the building, which was under construction but largely complete by that time, was not included as it was not consistent with the theme of the program (CBC 1992).

Other, more subtle, symbolic loading was undertaken by the PCCU. In November, 1993, their new logo was unveiled, comprised of a globe and three stalks of wheat (fig. 86). On the PCCU business cards, the flipside explains the intended symbolism behind the logo in a few lines under the heading, "Our logo":

> *The wheat stalks, a prairie symbol, portray our rural and agricultural base and speak to its growth potential.*
>
> *The globe signifies Prairie Centre's ties with the credit union system provincially, nationally and internationally, and symbolizes our commitment to providing financial services with an eye to the future and the world around us.*


Figure 86. PCCU logo, from a PCCU business card, 1995.

The agricultural allusions are obvious, and in reality they hardly need to be affirmed - at the south end of Main Street, only one block south of the credit union, one can frequently see grain being loaded into rail cars (fig. 87 following page, cf. fig. 93 (A-4)). However, these allusions to agriculture, on business card and letterhead, are subtle compared with the architectural expression of one branch of the Royal Bank in Winnipeg, which is more distant from its agricultural clientele (fig. 88, following page).

With the above events brought into consideration, the public reception of the RDCU building can now be discussed.

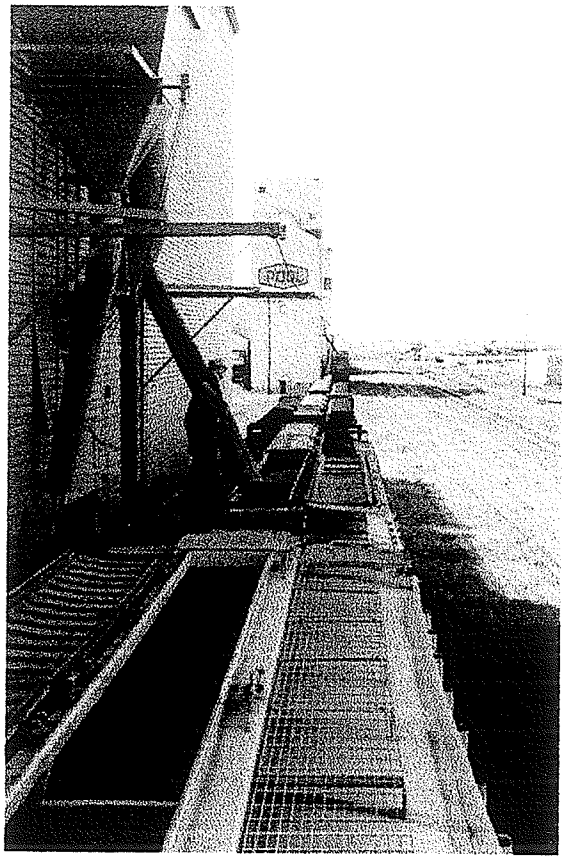


Figure 87. Loading grain at the Pioneer elevator, south end of Main Street

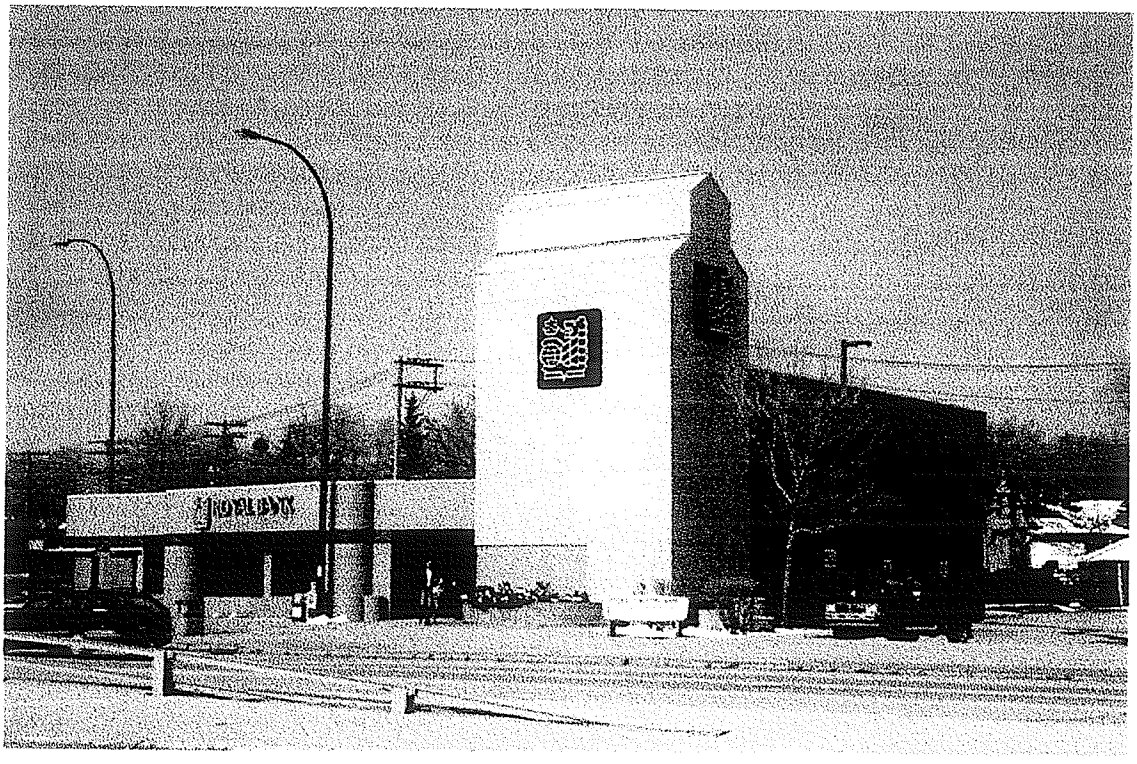


Figure 88. Royal Bank, Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba

## 5.7 THE RECEPTION OF THE NEW BUILDING

*I think the business community's response to the building was positive, but I'm not really sure about the general public."* (CU informant)

*A jewel in the crown of Main Street.*
*Shows this town has a future.*
*Gives a sense of permanence.*
*Almost an aberration.*
*Could interpret it as not fitting in, or that it is the spirit of the future.*
*Shows that we are ready for the next century.*
*The perception of the credit union is prosperity, that we are moving ahead.*
*Like the Taj Mahal.*
*Striking in contrast to the everyday kind of building on Main Street.*
*Moves away from mainstream architecture.*
*Shows faith in small town Saskatchewan.*
*A breath of fresh air.*
*A beautiful building which reflects the attitude of people in small towns.*
*An impressive building.*
*Makes you want to go and see what's in there.*
*Their location is the ideal place for it.*
*I've never really thought about it, but when I think of the building, I look to the future.*
*It looks a little out of place in the town, but I would have to agree with the people who talk about renewal.*
*An attractive building, the most attractive building on Main Street.*
*Definitely noticeable.*
*Striking.*
*Indicative of an attitude - makes it look as if we know what we're doing.*
*Shows the credit union is sound.*
*A pleasant place.*
*The employees like the building.*
*Doesn't fit.*
*By building such a beautiful building, it shows the bank can afford to do it and has a secure financial base.*
*Obviously the intent was not to blend in.*
*Symbolic of a secure institution and of some daring and success.*
*Striking, really hits you.*
*An impressive building.*
*A lot of wasted space, but it does add something to it.*
*It's a lovely building and Main Street looks a lot better since it went up.*
*I guess they need it.*
*They must have wanted to build in that manner and it was courageous of them to accept that design.*
*An asset to the town.*
*It's nice looking and attracts good feelings from passers-by.*
*It is not symbolic of stability, rather, looking forward to the future.*
*A great building, but not necessary.*
*Gives them a good profile in the community.*
*Looks sharp.*
*Shows they plan to stay for a long time.*
*Pretty splashy for Rosetown, nothing else compares to it.*
*A beautiful building, one everyone can be proud of.*
*I suppose they have got the jump on the other banks.*
*Immense edifice.*

*Has a central position on Main Street.*
*That type of building has a lot of waste space.*
*Less elaborate would have been okay.*
*Fills a hole on Main Street.*
*Symbolizes the great growth of the credit union, and the credit union movement.*
*I don't know why they built a building like that.*
*Unique.*
(Informant responses regarding the RDCU building)

As the above responses indicate, the new building was well received. However, as the list also shows, there were some mixed comments as well, which deserve attention. These mixed responses fall into three subject areas:

1) There is too much wasted space in the building:

*That type of building has a lot of waste space.*
*A lot of wasted space, but it does add something to it.*

2) The building does not fit into its context

*Almost an aberration.*
*It looks a little out of place in the town, but I would have to agree with the people who talk about renewal.*
*Doesn't fit.*

3) The building is too extravagant

*A great building, but not necessary.*
*Immense edifice.*
*Less elaborate would have been okay.*
*I don't know why they built a building like that.*

The first group of responses are toward the amount of 'wasted' space in the building, the primary example being the lobby on the main level (figs. 110, 111 (B-3)). One informant, a farmer, stated that if he were to build a building, he would design it so that every square foot was used. However, every square foot is used in the RDCU building, in some sense. The distinction here is that these informants would not consider constructing a space to support the portrayal of an image, for example, a legitimate use of space.

The second group of responses indicate that those informants find the innovation of the RDCU building to be incursion into Main Street (refer to fig. 9 (6)) The third group of responses also indicates that certain informants take issue with the formal expression of the building, finding it to be extravagant.

The formal expression of the building does challenge the aesthetic norms on Main Street and the expectations of what was suitable to build on Main Street. This is evident in the cautious interpretation of the informants who made such comments as:

> *A lot of wasted space, but it does add something to it.*
> *It looks a little out of place in the town, but I would have to agree with the people who talk about renewal.*
> *A great building, but not necessary.*
> *Less elaborate would have been okay.*
> *I don't know why they built a building like that.*

For example, one informant stated, "I built a house, but not the best one in town."

However, the challenge was successful since the informants have indicated that the building, although innovative, has been readily accepted. The key informants stated that after that passage of time, people get used to their surroundings. For some, the RDCU building just took a "little bit of time to get used to."

The building's architectural innovations were cause for interpretation for all of the informants. That is to say, the innovative design of the object needed to be understood by the community which in turn required interpretation. However, why is innovation cause for interpretation? In this case there has already been other notable buildings erected in Rosetown, of which informants were frequently reminding the author: the Rosetown United Church (fig. 34 (54)), the Rosetown Central High School (fig. 35 (54)), and the Walter Aseltine School (fig. 36 (54)). Yet, these buildings did not have the broad appeal as symbols that the RDCU building has had. The author sees a combination of three factors which indicate why the RDCU building attracted the scrutiny of the community, beyond the mere novelty of new construction in the town:

1) Main Street appears to be symbolically important
2) The RDCU is one of the town's institutions
3) The RDCU building is architecturally innovative

Firstly, as mentioned in section 4.4, Main Street is seen as the heart of the town by its residents, largely an economic indicator of the viability of the town, but also as a referent to the general condition of the town. Although Main Street was not the topic of this study, it appears that Main Street has key symbol characteristics. Therefore, one may assume that the RDCU building acquires some power from its relationship with Main Street, another space with local symbolic importance.

The nature of this relationship is that the RDCU building is a component of and modifies the symbolic importance of Main Street. This relationship immediately calls into question the autonomy of the RDCU building, but through the second and third factors the author has listed above, there is little question that the RDCU building is an important symbol in its own right.

Second, the RDCU (now the PCCU) has been a core institution in the town for at least thirty-five years now (section 5.1). Any major actions by the PCCU are likely to be considered by the members, and by the community. The current general manager of the PCCU has made the PCCU active in encouraging and supporting business in the town, and he sits on the board of directors of E2000. The PCCU as such, has a real and understandable value to the community, beyond its membership.

During the interviews the author was aware of the use of the phrase "the credit union" to describe both the RDCU as an institution and the RDCU building. The phrase is not peculiar to the townspeople as such ambiguities are committed frequently in everyday conversation in English everywhere, and are usually made clear by the context of the sentence. Still, it caused the author to consider the degree to which the importance of the RDCU building as a symbol was tied to the RDCU as an organization.

In fact, these two can be very clearly distinguished although they are somewhat self-referential. The main importance of the RDCU building as a symbol does not lie solely in its relation to the RDCU as an organization, although the relationship is important, because of the third factor: the RDCU building is architecturally innovative.

It would have been possible for the RDCU to have built on the same site, yet not have chosen to design such an innovative building. The symbolic autonomy of a 'normal' design would have been minimized because of the lack of architectural innovation. This is because the RDCU building articulates many aspects of the credit union beyond their requirements for a new building, whereas a building less architecturally innovative would only have played a sustaining role as a component of Main Street. The importance of the architectural innovation in this situation is that it serves to differentiate the RDCU building from its context, therefore contributing to the autonomy of the RDCU building as a symbol, despite its close relationship to Main Street.

The fact that the new RDCU building did not fit into its built context was not of concern to most of the informants. The informants had varying opinions about the quality of the buildings on Main Street, ranging from comments such as all the buildings on Main Street "looks pretty good, they're kept up nice", to "I don't think we have any bad buildings on Main Street", to "the buildings are mostly garden variety, like trying to keep a 1962 Dodge." The point here is not to suggest that fit should of been a concern to the RDCU and the architect, only to discern how the self-differentiation evident in the design was perceived by the townspeople. As one informant asked, "Do banks or financial institutions care about fit?", implying that they do not.

It may be that the informants carried some thoughts of rights in this situation, that what the RDCU did with its own building was the RDCU's concern and not a suitable topic for discussion, but none the evidence supported such a strongly coded sense of social territoriality. A much more likely assumption to make is that the RDCU was 'within its rights' to do what it did with its building. This implies that there was a

strong correlation perceived between the stature of the credit union as one of the town's institutions and the architectural display it created. A lower degree of correlation would have likely altered the perception of the building. For example, a display which was seen as too extravagant (as was stated by some of the respondents) for the RDCU may have been perceived as 'going beyond its rights.' This whole process, of rights and expectations, was mediated by the semi-public exposure the building committee gave to the project during the planning, or pre-design phase.

The members and the townspeople were aware of what was happening with the RDCU building project on a somewhat limited, but ongoing basis: the credit union members voted to approve the allocation of funds for the new building, the board of directors appointed a building committee with rotating members, the town council was involved in the project, the building plans were on display on credit union day at the original RDCU building, and through the holding of the "Building Day Out". These events made for a fairly open process, although the efficiency of the power chain was never in danger of becoming over-democratized. Those in power were either mandated or took it upon themselves to have the process develop in that manner. As has been described in thus far, the latter played the strongest role.

The mechanisms of public awareness contributed significantly to some consensus building before the building was opened. This made the process of interpretation easier as the process of interpretation could begin earlier, before the construction of the building, and there were concrete items to reflect upon, such as the approval of funds and the drawings of the building. There was no formal mechanism in place for members or other community members to voice concerns or show approval during the pre-design and design phases, but based on the discussions with the CU informant, there is little doubt that such concerns would have been considered if brought to the attention of the RDCU building committee.

The most significant action of the symbol is that it affirms the viability and strengths of the community. Rosetown is a strong community and relatively prosperous, and the community knows this well. The RDCU building is conceptually consistent with the self-image of the community, and the objectification of this image is reassuring to the community. In the eyes of the community, the building also affirms a more accurate description of the state of the community than do most of the external messages, especially from the media, which many communities are being bombarded with (section 4.5). The second most significant action of the symbol is that it is understood to speak beyond the present, toward a better, more viable future.

In section 4.5 a description of the time surrounding the construction of the building was given. The situation described played an important role in the symbolic loading of the RDCU building, but it is not vital to its symbolic importance. The time and mood described acted as modifiers on the symbol. They intensified its power and accelerated the process of symbolic loading for a period of time, approximately four years to date.

In summary, the following are points regarding the symbolic importance of the RDCU building, derived from the discussion in this section:

1) The RDCU building is an important symbol for the community of Rosetown

2) As a symbol, the RDCU building has a close and symbiotic relationship with Main Street, which also has key symbol characteristics.

3) The architectural innovation of the RDCU building is a key element of its symbolic importance.

4) The primary action of the RDCU building symbol is to affirm the strengths and viability of the community.

5) The secondary action of the symbol is to project the previous affirmation into the future.

6) Through a series of external factors the process of symbolic loading was intensified and accelerated for a period of time, approximately four years.

# 6. SUMMARY OF THE CASE STUDY

## 6.1 CLASSIFYING THE SYMBOL

Sherry Ortner's article set forth a series of terms and operating modes for key symbols (section 3.1). Similar to Turner's comments (section 1.9), in order to determine the keyness of the RDCU building one must be able to consider it in relation to other symbols within the public symbolic system. The nature of the evidence in the case study affirms that the RDCU building has symbolic importance (as indicated by the informants), indicates that the RDCU building is part of the public symbolic system in Rosetown (the building was the subject of interest within the town), and has key symbol characteristics (based on the interpretation of the evidence).

Regardless of the labelling of the RDCU building, classifying the operating modes of the RDCU building symbol within Ortner's terminological framework will aid in the understanding of the symbol, which is why Ortner's critical framework was used as the basis for the investigation of the symbolic importance of the RDCU building.

Ortner's terminological framework first distinguishes between summarizing and elaborating symbols (section 3.1). Summarizing symbols tend to be very dense, resistant to analysis, and integrate complex theses and summarize them as one form. They stand for a powerful and complex mixture of ideas and emotions. Therefore, the nature of the evidence and its subsequent interpretation indicate that the RDCU building is a key summarizing symbol.

The main sympathy of the informants toward the symbol was that it made sense - it was in agreement with what the town was about (section 5.7). For the townspeople, the RDCU building sums up a way of life, the aspirations, and status of the town. The high quality of the building sums up the informant's beliefs in the quality of the town, its residents, and the district. The RDCU building is a sacred symbol, which is indicated by the intense or emotional responses of some of the informants (cf. informant responses

in section 5.7) (29). This is also indicated by the manner in which the informants conceived of the building. Most of the informants did not describe any particular attributes of the building that they thought were important, rather, they repeatedly commented on the building only very generally, even when explicitly questioned. This is consistent with Ortner's description of summarizing symbols being dense, resistant to analysis, and not encouraging reflection on the mixture of ideas and the logical consequences which they summarize.

## 6.2 INTERPRETING THE ACTIONS OF THE ARCHITECT

Having previously described the actions of the architect and the symbolic importance of the RDCU building, it now remains to demonstrate a direct link, if any, between the symbol and the actions of the architect.

In section 5.7, the three reasons were listed by which the RDCU building required interpretation by the community, which are essentially the mechanisms of its symbolic importance:

1) Main Street is symbolically important
2) The RDCU is one of the town's institutions
3) The RDCU building is architecturally innovative

Clearly, the third point is the only avenue where a direct link between the architect and the symbol is possible, and indeed, the architect's contribution to the symbol has been through the conception and design of the building.

Although the client was very involved in the project, the formal expression of the building was almost completely achieved by the architect, since it is possible that given all of the parameters set by the client, that a wide variety of solutions could have been developed. Therefore, in terms of the RDCU building as a specific object, the architect may be generalized as the sole creator, while still recognizing the substantial contributions of other parties to the project.

As stated in the previous section, the extent to which specific features of the RDCU building instigated responses in the people of the community is not known. However, it would be interesting to undertake a further study in order to ascertain, as precisely as possible, which architectural features (physical and conceptual) the respondents consider the most influential.

Some indications of what these features may be were listed in section 5, where it was stated that there are several differentiating attributes to the design:

1) Building materials
2) Orientation
3) Facade treatment
4) Pitched roof
5) Landscaping

as well as other more conceptual attributes:

1) Building as mnemonic
2) Affirmation of the relationship between the individual and the collective.
3) Geometrical system as ordering device
4) Perceptual similarity with other buildings on Main Street

A further study which isolated the key architectural attributes would benefit by comparison with a broader, typological analysis of architectural objects and their ordering systems.

It is important to note that there was a conscious attempt on behalf of the client first and the architect second, to create an object which would portray certain ideas and ideals. The main aims regarding the imagery were to show that "We are the financial institution in this community" and, "We are here for the long haul. We are here until the community goes down, but we won't let it" (CU informant). The feat of translating these comments into an architectural design was the task of the architect, and the building ended up becoming a key summarizing symbol (30). This happened despite the assumption that the symbolic importance of the RDCU building, as ascertained by the case study, was not a conscious concern of the client or the architect (the public importance evident from the case study versus the image concerns of the client). However, how clear is this distinction? Certainly the results of the case study are consistent with the aims of the client and the architect, in that it is highly likely that both parties would be pleased with the extension of the ideas of what the image of the building should convey.

What is important to know of the architect is that he played a key role, vicariously through the object, in the processes which contributed to the RDCU building becoming a key summarizing symbol for the people of Rosetown.

# 7. IMPLICATIONS OF THE CASE STUDY FOR CONTEXTUALISM

The findings of Day's study (section 1.7), regarding the photograph of the glass atrium, appear to be consistent with the findings of the Rosetown case study, despite the difference in methodology and focus of the subject areas.

As previously shown, with the design of the RDCU building there was no attempt made to construct an obvious link with the building's built context, yet the RDCU building was viewed as consistent with the community and Main Street by the informants. This occurred despite one of the parameters set by the client, which was that they weren't concerned with having a building which was similar to the other buildings on Main Street. This should not be construed as a desire for the building to be contextually incompatible, however, as the RDCU case study also showed that compatibility with the community was a core principle in the design effort.

What Day's study affirms is that the reasoning behind contextual compatibility is potentially far more complex than a visual response to an architectural object. Indeed the complexity of such reasoning was beyond the reaches of the Lowertown case study, which only found that the glass atrium was favourably considered by the respondents, and not how or why this occurred. This is not the result of any oversight on Day's part, as the response to the glass atrium was not the topic of Day's study. However, further study on the atrium's reception would require a shift in focus and method.

Day's study was also different from Stamps' study, as Day's study was more of a post occupancy evaluation compared with Stamps' testing of the principles behind most contextual design controls.

It is interesting to note is how explicit design controls are usually administered in Canada. Although the existence and power of planning and design approval committees is usually legislated, the explicit design controls they implement are likely not. That is to say, the guidelines are not legal documents. The way such systems work is that the design approval committees have power that is derived from the supremacy of parliament,

and as long as due process is followed by the committee, there is no avenue to question judgments of the committee legally. Of course, such a committee would have a professional and ethical responsibility to make the best decision possible, but the fact is that any case against the decisions of a committee will likely not be heard by an external judge unless it can be proven that due process has not been followed. This is partly because the law generally does not deal well with aesthetic issues, in which cases a tribunal of experts is usually appointed to resolve a dispute. The fact that the guidelines a committee may be using, as Stamps found, may be vague and of little use to an architect is obscured by the fact that an approval committee usually has the ultimate say.

This type of power structure is also evident in most heritage acts, where exceptional power is given to heritage committees. However, this is not to insinuate that such power structures are inherently unfair or undemocratic. Most heritage designations, for example, are community driven efforts which begin with a consensus, therefore avoiding much potential conflict.

The fact that most urban design guidelines are too vague to be of use, as Stamps describes, is not solely the fault of the people who write them. Given that most planners are not educated in architecture, therefore inhibiting to some extent their ability to write guidelines which are successful in aiding designers, there is the greater problem of language and architecture.

Recently, a professor of ethics came to lecture at the Faculty of Architecture. In an attempt to define ethics he used, as an analogy, the definition of a table. He asked the crowd of architecture students, what is a table? Of course, it is impossible to find a definition suitably precise of what a table is, and this adequately describes the limits of language in certain instances. His example can be easily broadened to include architecture. In a design field such as architecture, one is frequently frustrated by the inability of

language to describe thoughts or analyses of form, and therefore it should come as no surprise that the written guidelines Stamps refers to are vague and tautological. Take for example the following excerpts from the RDCU CDR (Appendix D), regarding different requirements for different areas of the building:

*-spacious and attractive*
*-comfortable*
*-well done but not extravagant*
*-signage - visible, tasteful, consistent*
*-exterior - to create an image, but not too flamboyant*
*-building environmentally friendly, aesthetically pleasing with a presence*

Clearly, none of these requirements refer to any particular formal configuration. As discussed previously, in section 5.4, an architect simply interprets these statements based on experience and through discussion with the client. A similar situation occurs between designers or developers and design approval committees. Hence, the third reason why Stamps chose to undertake the study.

If one reviews the list of Lightner's, quoted in Stamps, what is striking about contextualism as an urban design principle is its strict reliance upon formal precedent. It would be easy at this point to begin a discussion of the whole process of zoning, design of urban environments, and the politico-philosophical roots of such actions, but it would also be a *non sequitur* given the focus of the RDCU case study. Instead, it is more useful to imagine what effect the implementation of contextualism as an urban design principle for Main Street, Rosetown Saskatchewan would have had on the outcome of the RDCU building project.

Currently, Rosetown has no design guidelines for any part of the town, nor does it have any historically designated buildings (31). Regarding the approval process for new buildings in Rosetown, a key informant, an ex-mayor, stated that the design approval process is: "Boy, if we had someone come and build, great!". He added that for 90% of projects built in the town, there would be no intervention by the town council. Perhaps,

if a building project involved toxic material, heavy electrical demands, or was exceptionally different from anything else in the town, the council would become involved. So it seems as if Rosetown represents an urban area that is as close as possible to being a free market in terms of formal architectural controls (32).

If some form of contextualism had been strictly enforced on the future design of any building on Main Street, prior to the RDCU building project, how would the RDCU building have been affected? What would the consequences of those effects be?

Firstly, contextualism would have precluded many of the architectural innovations employed in the design of the RDCU building. The pitched roof, facade treatment, orientation of the building, size of the glazed area on the facade, and landscaping are all elements which are dissimilar from the building's built context, and key to the design of the RDCU building; perhaps even the metal cladding would have been deemed unsuitable.

Secondly, the whole design process may have been significantly altered since the client would not have been the final approving body for the design. This may have changed the nature of the process, from one where the client was acting in a benevolent and programmatically focused manner on their own accord, to one where a substantial amount of control over the desired image of the building would be instead given to an external approving body. This suggests only that a different power structure may have had profound effects on the outcome of the design, and it does not preclude the production of a more successful design or significant cooperation between the client and the approving body.

Thirdly, given that most of the architectural innovations of the building would have been disallowed, it is doubtful if the RDCU building would have acquired the symbolic importance which it has. As has already been discussed, the architectural innovations evident in the formal expression of the RDCU building were identified as playing an

important role in the process of symbolic loading. If the formal expression was altered or diminished by the restriction of the architectural innovations of which it is composed, the process of symbolic loading would not have occurred as it did. The RDCU building would not have the symbolic importance that it has today.

It may be pointed out that one of the principles of contextualism is that "Designs should use the context as inspiration rather than a basis for imitation." (Stamps 1994, 224), thereby allowing for a degree of innovation. In fact, Stamps' study showed that some degree of innovation was desirable. However, there is a qualitative difference between the level of incremental change that Stamps' preference study found to be desirable and the level of innovation found in the RDCU building. The RDCU building is a drastic departure from the aesthetic norms of Main Street and does not represent a small, incremental change.

Given the hypothesis that contextualism would have precluded the design of the RDCU building and therefore the symbolic importance, one may ask whether or not contextualism is a viable urban design principle. In the case of the RDCU building, the implementation of contextualism in Rosetown would have had limited benefit to the community. Contextualism may have ensured a contextually compatible design, however, the RDCU building does much to support and define the community through its symbolism. The building is a meaningful part of Rosetown's urban environment, and it is a flag to outsiders that the town is thriving and progressive - the building is a type of advertising, and an emblem for the local social system.

Much of this difference between the case study at Rosetown and the findings of the two studies on contextualism derives from the focus of the studies. The Rosetown case study was focused on the symbolic importance of a particular building, accomplished through a close investigation of the processes behind the development of that symbolic importance. All of the informants in the Rosetown case study had direct contact with the object in question at an intimate level.

In contradistinction, Day's respondents were gathered to watch a winter parade in a park close-by Galtier plaza. 80% of the respondents were from the Twin Cities, 10% were from Greater Minnesota, and 10% from elsewhere in the United States. It is unclear how many of the respondents lived in the area or what level of contact or knowledge of the area the respondents had. It may have been possible to conduct the study in another city and obtain similar results. The relationship between the respondents and the real places depicted in the images used in Day's experiment is unclear.

The disconnection between the respondents and the places indicated in Stamps' study is more clearly defined, as the city blocks shown to the respondents were synthetic images, not images of real places. Both Stamps and Day defer to other studies which show that there is a high correlation between how respondents will react to images of buildings and to the buildings themselves. Again, this distinguishes between the two environment-behaviour research studies of Day and Stamps, and the Rosetown case study. All of the key informants in the Rosetown Case study have been inside and experienced the RDCU building, at least for a tour, and some are there regularly to do their banking. The informants were also the ones who conveyed to the author the symbolic importance of the building. Their preferences, therefore, are based on a much more complex set of criteria than an impromptu aesthetic response to images or diagrams of facades. Now, it could be that if a study such as Stamps' were done in Rosetown, that similar results would be found, but as with Day's study, and through the findings of the Rosetown case study, the RDCU building could also be given a positive response despite its formal dissimilarity.

Contextualism represents a broad and generic urban design principle. It may have value as an indicator of a sympathetic attitude towards the built environment on behalf of planning committees, but as the Rosetown case study has shown, it may preclude the support of other more intimate relationships between people and their built environment through design. Certainly, contextualism, as defined by Stamps through Lightner, is

much too narrowly focused on formal attributes, with far reaching consequences. There are multitudinous other types of context, specifically social and cultural contexts, which could be adopted into the term 'contextualism', which would greatly increase its viability. For the moment, one must recognize that contextualism in urban design refers almost solely to the relationships of form.

# 8. CONCLUSION

> *To make matters more complex, the symbolic meanings of specific environments are not dependent simply on their architectural qualities. They are dependent on such things as the names of places, ...the perceptions of those involved in the decision-making process, and the people in and activities taking place within the setting. ...They act as symbols of the process...*
>
> *Some places are peculiarly associated with certain people or events. A particular setting may have symbolic meaning not because of its physical attributes, but because of the events that took place there. The building becomes a symbol of the events. ...This type of symbolism is thus beyond the control of the designer; it is acquired over time or through an idiosyncratic occurrence.* (Lang 1988, 19)

In this quotation Lang, writing on environmental aesthetics, is unknowingly referring to the process of symbolic loading. As the author indicated in the preface to this thesis, the process of symbolic loading can be highly unstable and uncontrollable. Lang is correct when he indicates that certain symbolic processes are beyond the control of the designer, for an architect in most instances is involved only with the design and construction phases of a building project. Once the contracts are closed, so is the involvement of an architect. However, symbolic loading processes are not inherently unstable, only that predicting their course is improbable, like predicting the future. Indeed, it would be very interesting to see how the symbolic importance of the RDCU building endures and possibly changes through time. (The RDCU building had existed for a period of approximately four years by the end of the case study.)

Over a short period of time however, predicting and intentionally contributing to the process of symbolic loading may be a task which can be accomplished with some certainty. As the Rosetown case study shows, there was a concerted effort to communicate a self-image of the credit union and commitment to the town of Rosetown through the design of the building. It was also shown that these embedded messages were read by the informants, and with a high degree of accuracy. Further, there were other aspects to the design which were not explicitly discussed between the architect and the client, which contributed to the symbolic importance of the RDCU building. That is, the intentions on the part of the architect and the client were loose, indirect, and largely intuitive regarding the symbolic importance of the building. (One should remember, however,

that a great amount of work was put into the RDCU project by the client and the architect to ensure a positive, consensual response from the members of the credit union, and indirectly, the community). As well, the RDCU building is of high material quality, and the design process was a strong and intense effort. Whatever their intention, the fact remains that architecture, like any other of man's extensions, can have symbolic importance for a group of people, and that the nature of the object itself (its physical, conceptual, experiential aspects, for example) can play an important role in that symbolic importance.

What the author appreciates about this assertion of architecture as a culturally or socially viable undertaking is that the merit in a building, such as the RDCU building, does not lie one particular aspect, rather, in a continuum consisting of formal attributes, physical and conceptual ordering systems, attitudes toward urban intervention, and the conscious and unconscious perceptions of different groups of people. With the RDCU building there was a strong correlation between all of the key actions and concepts of the client and the architect even though neither is cognizant of all the interrelations. It requires a 'thick description' (Geertz 1973) and much interpretation in order to analyse such a process, which is why the author chose to pursue the study of architectural symbolism within Ortner's critical framework, from the field of anthropology.

The discussion of contextualism is important as the implementation of contextual design controls could have a very limiting and disruptive effect on the quality and symbolic importance of urban development, just as they may provide for better urban environments. Stamps stated the prevalence of aesthetic controls and their rapid growth in use (in the USA) from 1974 to 1984 (Stamps 1994, 223) Certainly such severe regulation should be well studied. The author is not suggesting that on the basis of the Rosetown case study that contextualism should be dismissed as a set of design principles. However, the description of contextual compatibility implicit in Day's study and the explicit description of contextualism in Stamps' study show contextual design controls lacking

focus in their approach to the betterment of the built environment. Contextual design controls are indiscriminating and heavy handed. Given the existence contextual design controls, there should be some sort of mechanism in place to allow for innovative projects, such as the RDCU building, to be built. This is unlikely, however, as this goes against the very premise of contextualism.

Aside from opening up new job opportunities for consulting anthropologists, what possibility is there for the explicit inclusion of symbolic issues in building programs in practice? Obviously, few clients are going to be willing to add another consultant to the list and increase their design budgets accordingly. Cherulnik, citing environment-behaviour research cases, list examples of applications of this work in building design (Cherulnik 1994). However, the examples are all for large, institutional clients who were building prisons, hospitals, dormitories, housing for the mentally retarded, and spaces in psychiatric hospitals, most of which use the research in a prescriptive manner, qualitatively different from the use of symbolism in the RDCU building. What could be done for smaller, non-institutional clients? The educational system is likely the only way in which architects could be made aware of, and practice dealing with, issues of symbolism. This is because there are currently two components to an architect's education in Canada (excluding the syllabus programs): university education and work experience; and work experience is a highly variable component. During the course of an architect's education, one required studio, or even one half-class on the subject of symbolism, could make an architect aware of the potential of symbolism for when he or she is later practising.

Another answer may be that symbolic issues do not need to be explicitly dealt with in building programs, and that these issues are best left to run their course intuitively. The author does not agree with this deterministic attitude. The benefits of being aware of the potential of symbolism in architecture, not to mention the associated potential for conflict, are matters which architects should be comfortable in confronting. Issues of symbolism may not be critical in every project, but when they are, they may have far reaching consequences.

The author is aware, however, of how carefully one must tread when exposing symbols. Unravelling the thoughts and concepts of people toward the analysis of a symbol can potentially alter the nature of a symbol. This is no different for a seemingly uncontroversial symbol, the RDCU building, since, as one author has stated: "Buildings betray what we value" (Duffy 1980, 255).

# NOTES

| | PAGE REF'D. | |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | *1* | By the use of 'symbolism' here, I am referring to 'symbol', loosely as something which stands for or refers to something else. A more descriptive definition of terms used in the case study is provided in Section 3. |
| (2) | *9* | For example, the current mayor of Rosetown is a local businessman and female, and the mayor previous to her is a visible minority from another country. |
| (3) | *12* | The CU informant sat on the CU building committee as one of the two permanent members, and played a key role in the design of the new building. |
| (4) | *14* | Geoffrey Broadbent, an architectural writer, defines contextualism as where "forms for the new design are derived from the context into which it is to be placed to which it will then relate in form, colour and scale" (Broadbent 1980, 24). |
| (5) | *20* *29* | Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney has attempted to describe the relationship between cognitive and symbolic classification approaches in cultural anthropology (Ohnuki-Tierney 1981, see also the introduction to the American Ethnologist special issue on symbolism and cognition, Whitten and Ohnuki-Tierney 1982). In doing so she identifies the approach taken by Ortner and Ortner's predecessor, Victor Turner, as studying meaning through the latter approach. The article is very cursory and technical, with semiotic and structuralist influences, and a focus on the cognitive approach. Those wishing to pursue this area of discussion should also see Shore 1991. |
| (6) | *24* | An exegesis of Scott's book and its reception history has been completed by Louise Durning, as her PhD dissertation in 1990 (Durning 1993). The dissertation abstract claims it to be the first thorough exegesis of Scott's book. A copy of this dissertation was ordered through the University of Manitoba Architecture library in September, 1995, but it was unfortunately not received before the completion of this thesis. |
| (7) | *25* | For a more consistent and rigorous study of urban form, see Moudon 1989 (1986). |
| (8) | *26* | Thomas Sebeok's dictionary of semiotics is a valuable resource, not only for those involved in semiotics, as it provides definitions, historical uses of the term, and summaries of debates on the meanings of terms. The entry for the term 'metaphor', for example, occupies eighteen pages. |
| (9) | *29* | This may be partly due to his antagonistic views of architecture as a profession, and architectural history and theory (see Rapoport 1969, ch. 1). |
| (10) | *42* | The apparent gender discrimination by the use of 'sons' is intentional here. The offspring that take up the running of a farm have traditionally been male and that has not altered appreciably, as far as I am aware. |

(11) *49* Precision Metals is a combine attachment manufacturer, which makes a product called Rake-Up, and was brought to Rosetown with incentives provided by a community bonds drive.

(12) *55* Precision Metal Fabricating Ltd. was brought to Rosetown through the Rosetown and District Community Bond Corporation, which raised $800 200. Precision was bound by contract to stay in Rosetown for ten years, or until the money was paid back. The dispute began when Precision expanded their operation into Saskatoon. Further, Precision considered further expansion and moving their head office into Saskatoon, as they said that expansion at Rosetown wasn't possible. The court ruling in favour of Rosetown's bond corporation, stopped Precision's further expansion in Saskatoon, stopped Precision from moving any employees, equipment or assets from Rosetown, suspended Precision's board of directors and gave the shareholders the ability to elect a new board of directors. As the bond corporation is a majority shareholder, the judge's decision effectively wrests control of Precision away from the original owners, Loren Katzenberger and his wife. Katzenberger immediately appealed this decision, and the old board of directors remains in place until October, 1996, when the appeal will be heard. Recently, John Buhler, a large and successful farm implement manufacturer took over a $1.2 million dollar loan to precision which the Bank of Nova Scotia had called in. Buhler's involvement, although minimal, indicates that Precision will remain an active company in the future despite the current dispute (see Barbour 1996a, Precision, Bond co. still talking (1996), Barbour 1996b, Barbour 1996c, Barbour 1996c, Barbour 1996d, Barbour 1996e, Pagé 1996, Barbour 1996f).

(13) *57* The general response in the town toward the program was mixed. Many residents found the portrayal of Rosetown to be unfair and hold negative opinions of the program (see Pagé 1992a).

(14) *59* The pointed roof of the train station can be seen in the bottom image in figure 26 (50), and in figure 62 (77).

(15) *63* See Waldern 1992, and Campbell 1992, regarding the 1991 census population figures and subsequent funding cuts to Rosetown.

(16) *63* See also Pagé 1992b.

(17) *68* My thanks to Gary Hawthorne for recognizing the building in the TD advertisement and referring me to Dendy 1978.

(18) *71* Wesley McCurdy (b. 1881), a partner in MacPherson-McCurdy, was a notable Winnipeg citizen (Dr. W. McCurdy - A. W. Moscarella, 1948). He disposed of his interest in MacPherson-McCurdy the year after this letter was written and went on to hold a series of important positions in the Winnipeg newspapers, The Free Press, and The Tribune, and in national newspaper associations. He also held positions on the Winnipeg Board of trade, Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, and was a founding member of the Manitoba Tourist and Convention Bureau. Through the latter, he was an important figure in the development of Manitoba's tourist industry, as the originator of the Pine to Palm Tour. This tour was a motorcade which first travelled from Winnipeg to New Orleans and back in January and February of 1926. Interestingly, the office of MacPherson-McCurdy was located for some time on the eighth floor of the Union Bank building, which stands on Winnipeg's Main Street. The Union Bank building was the first

steel framed skyscraper in western Canada, built in 1904 (Thompson 1982, 12). The Union Bank moved its headquarters from Quebec City to Winnipeg in 1912, 13 years before it merged with the Royal Bank of Canada, as the Union Bank aspired to become "the leading financial institution in western Canada" (Waddell 1989, 52).

(19) *84* The CDR list is worth reading through before continuing on here.

(20) *86* The rooms on the main floor and basement floorplans are labelled as they were on the construction documents. Names and uses of certain rooms have changed since the building opened, but those changes are not reflected here.

(21) *91* In the end, Fair Share was not implemented.

(22) *92* The budget for the building was just over $2 million including the furniture tender of $500 000.

(23) *92* In fire code ratings for building materials, combustibility is measured by the length of time a material can withstand exposure to a given amount of heat or flame before combusting. The fire rating for a certain type of wall construction, for example, would be referred to as 'one-hour' or 'two-hour' , depending on the wall's performance. The phrase 'noncombustible' used here refers to any type of construction which is highly rated for its resistance to fire, and does not mean that a building using such construction will not burn. The RDCU building committee's decision to go with 'partially combustible' construction means that the construction of the building does not ensure a maximum level of resistance to fire, although the level of protection may remain high. Their initial request for noncombustible construction was somewhat overzealous for a building of that type. A flammable chemicals storage building would be an example of a building where maximum fire ratings would be desired.

(24) *94* The landscape consultant was not able to comment on the project.

(25) *94* In-slab heating is a type of heating system where the concrete floor slab is heated. To accomplish this, special tubing is placed within the slab formwork, along with the reinforcing steel, before the concrete is poured. The concrete is then poured. After the slab has set, a pumping system is hooked up to the tubing. When the in-slab heating system is functioning, a heated liquid is pumped through the tubing, which in turn heats the slab and, subsequently, the interior of the building.

(26) *102* A curtain wall is a type of wall, usually used on the exterior of a building, which is hung off the structure of the building, rather than being built to support its own weight - hence the analogy with a curtain. In this case the curtain wall on the RDCU building is the system of windows which make up a large portion of the frontispiece of the facade. (Cf. the discussion of brick veneer in section 5.1)

(27) *104* The phrase 'lower order of material' refers to the general appraisal of a material upon criteria of longevity, precision in manufacturing, desirability, and social status. The fourth of these criteria, social status, is something that is debatable academically, but something that most designers and laypeople would accept as a given. In many cases, such as with the RDCU building, the order of the

material plays an important role in how a building displays order. Materials are frequently chosen for their ability to articulate and support conceptual systems an architect creates. For those wishing to pursue the relationship between materials and their social status, see for example, Sadalla and Sheets 1993.

(28) *107* The following interpretation of the sculpture and the landscaped area in the front of the RDCU is cursory only. The notion of 'garden', and 'sculpture garden' have a long history in a broad range of areas including aesthetics and cultural politics. I'm sure anyone with this knowledge would be able to write a much more in depth description of this shrine-like area, but for the sake of description, the following cursory interpretation will suffice. For one example of a work on gardens and cultural politics, see Pugh 1988.

(29) *127* The symbol is sacred, however, not in the same sense as with organized religion. Rather, in a secular fashion.

(30) *129* Imagery was a major concern of the client, but the two permanent members of the building committee, the two client representatives most intimately involved with the project, were more concerned with providing a workplace which was comfortable, and especially, efficient. It was the interior design firm who had affirmed and modified the efficiency and arrangement of the various workplaces, which is partly why these two members decided that, "If we ever had to do it again, we'd go to the interior designer first, and then bring the architect in to keep the rain and snow out" (CU informant). This points to two situations. First, the interior designer had given services which satisfied the primary desires of the two members. Second, a lack of understanding of the architect's actions on behalf of the two members, which was evident at certain points in the interviews with the CU informant. This is likely due simply to the degree which the architect took it upon himself to educate the building committee regarding his design process. However, this is speculation only, as the two members' lack of understanding of certain actions of the architect was not investigated as part of the case study. It should be noted that the client and the architect maintain a respectful, positive, and friendly relationship. This was explicitly stated by the CU informant, and confirmed through discussion with the architect.

(31) *132* Regarding the fact that there were no heritage buildings in Rosetown, one informant said to me, "That's like asking, 'Are you history?'"

(32) *133* As indicated by the case study, there are other, more powerful, social and cultural controls in place.

# APPENDIX A

## EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS

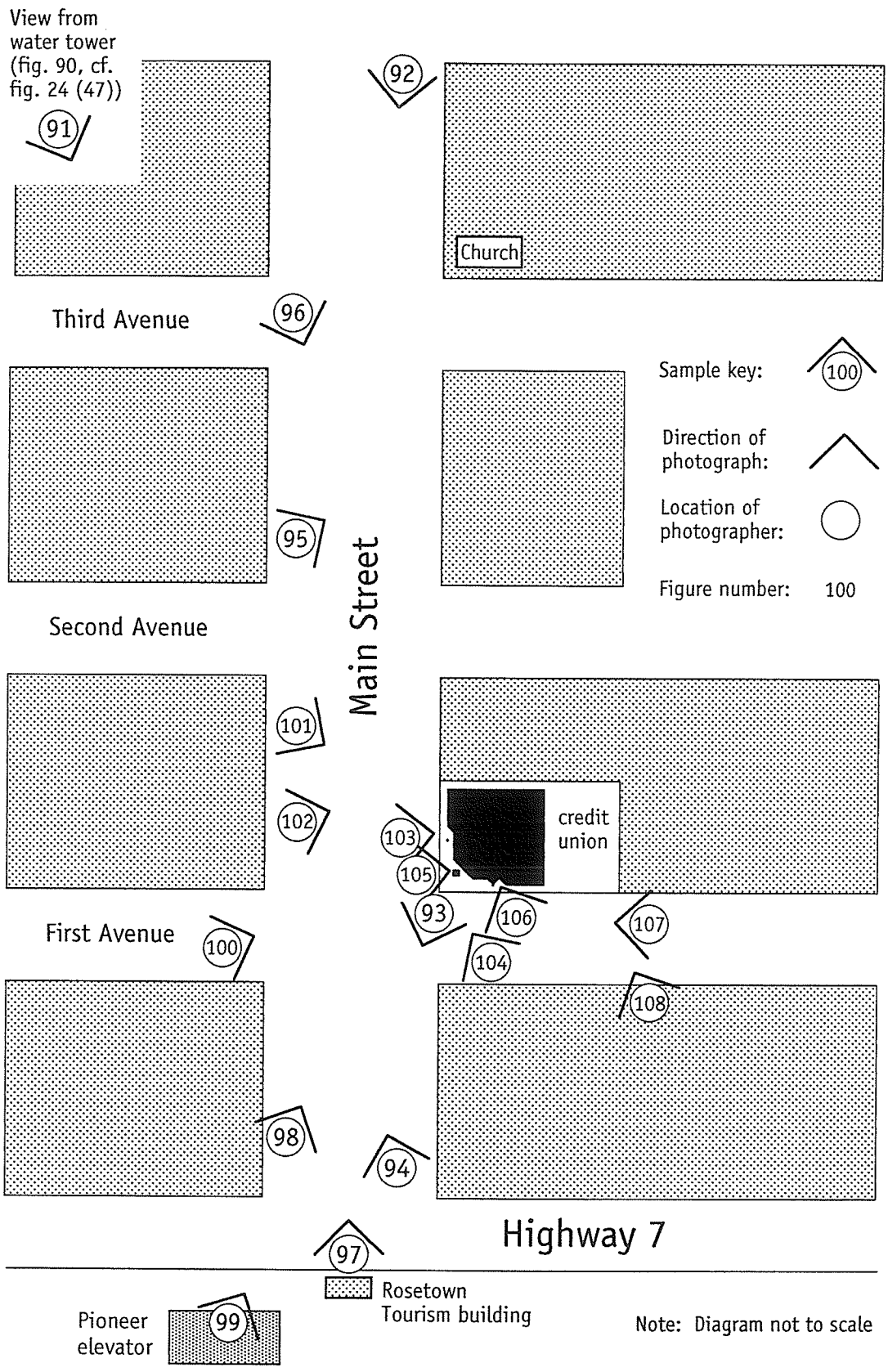



Figure 89. Exterior photograph keys

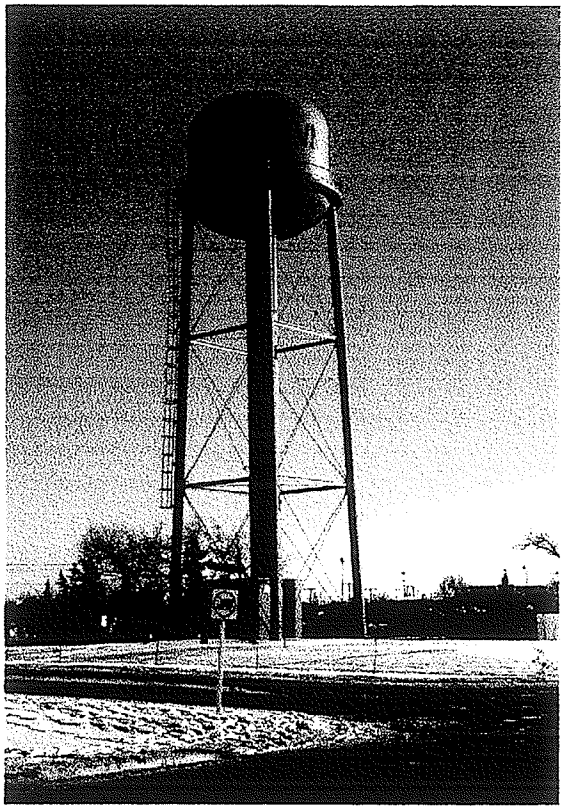


Figure 90. Rosetown water tower

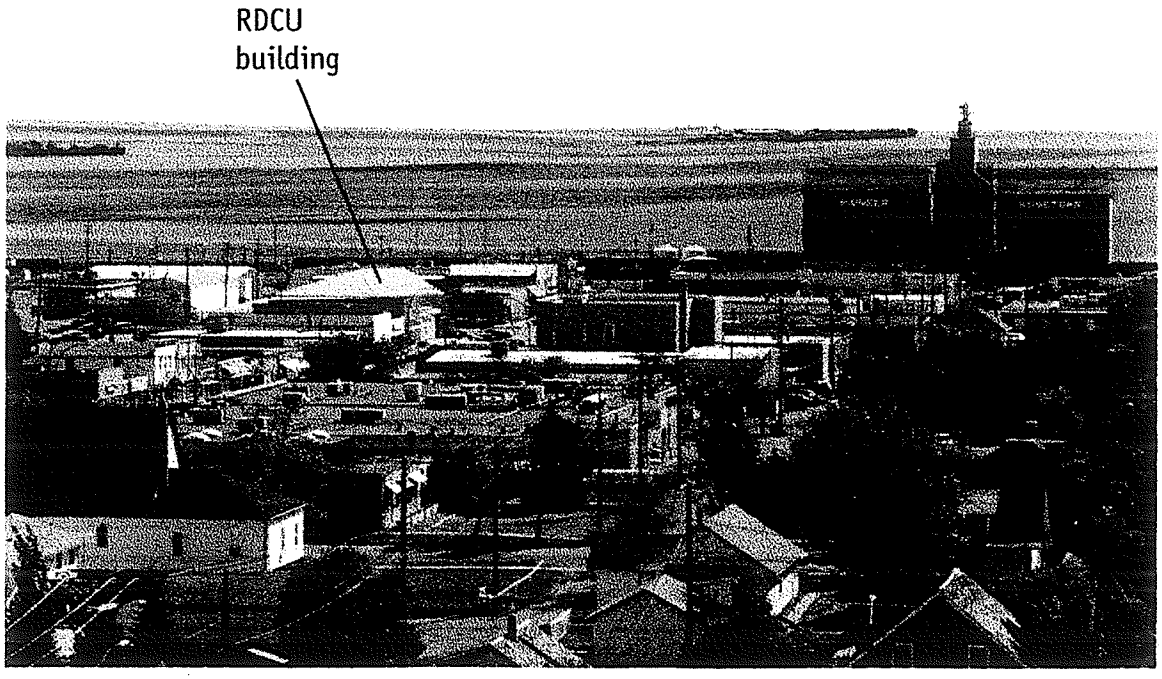



Figure 91. Exterior photograph 1, view from water tower to Main Street

Figure 92. Exterior photograph 2, Main Street, southward


Figure 93. Exterior photograph 3, Main Street from RDCU building, southward

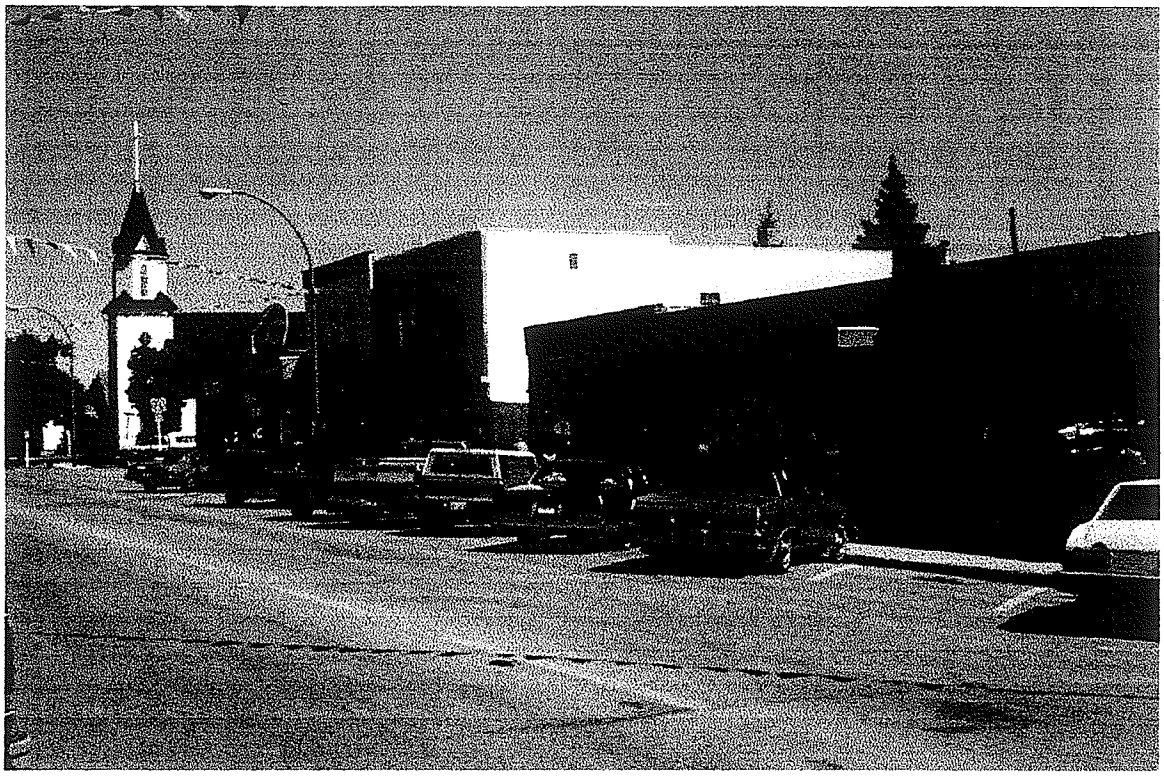


Figure 94. Exterior photograph 4, Main Street, northward

Figure 95. Exterior photograph 5, Main Street, northward

Figure 96. Exterior photograph 6, Main Street, southward

Figure 97. Exterior photograph 7, Main Street, northward

Figure 98. Exterior photograph 8, Main Street, northward, featuring RDCU building

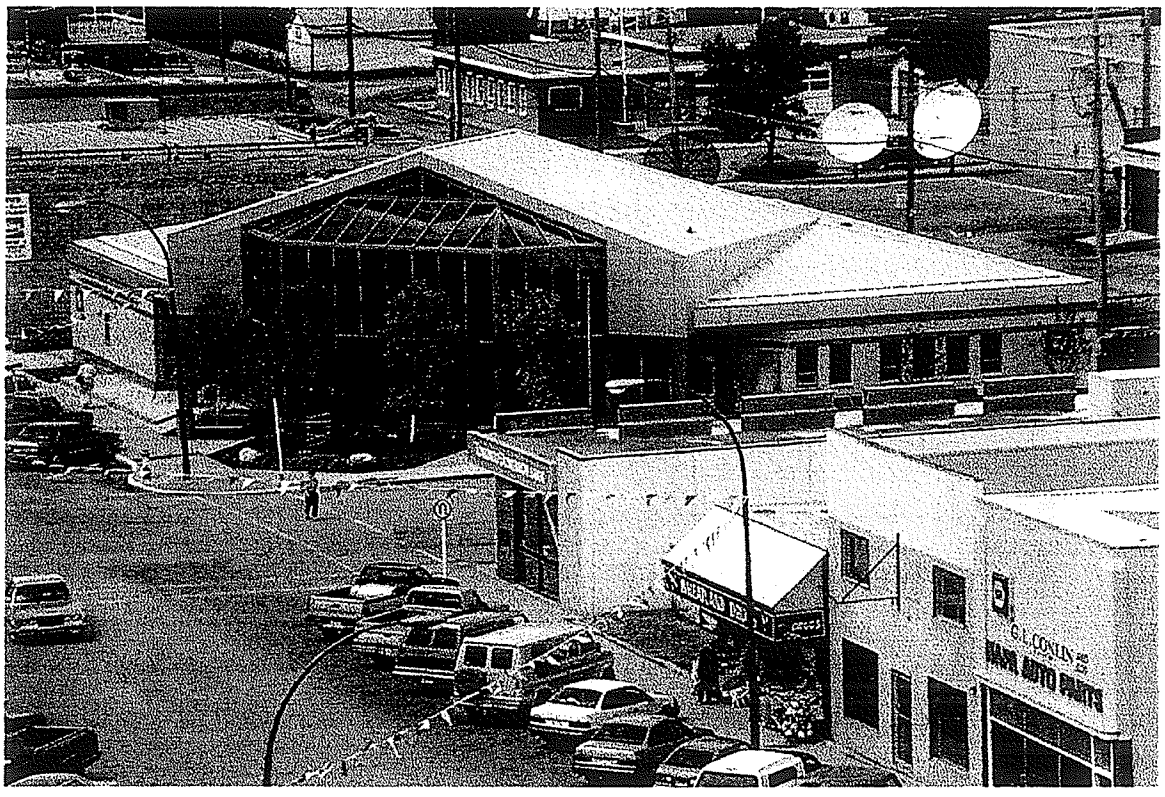


Figure 99. Exterior photograph 9, RDCU building from Pioneer elevator, by Philip M. Brown. Courtesy of Philip M. Brown.

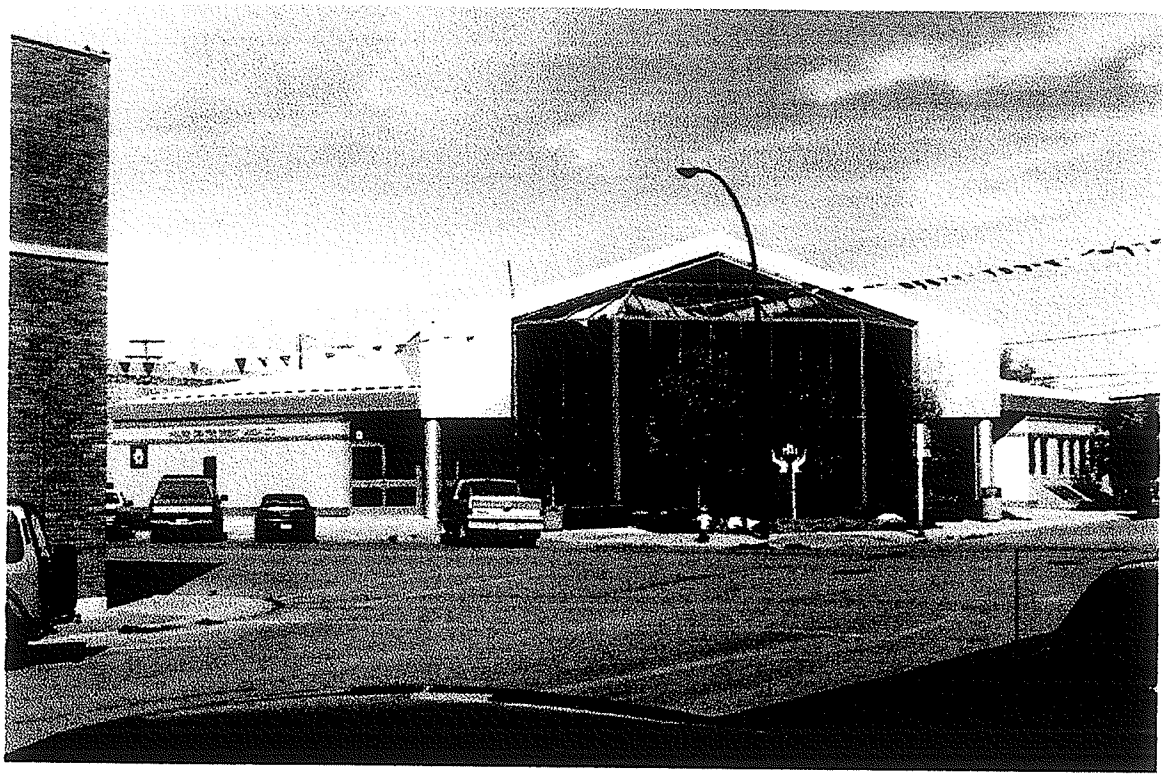


Figure 100. Exterior photograph 10, RDCU building


Figure 101. Exterior photograph 11, panorama featuring RDCU building


Figure 102. Exterior photograph 12, pocket park and mechanical area

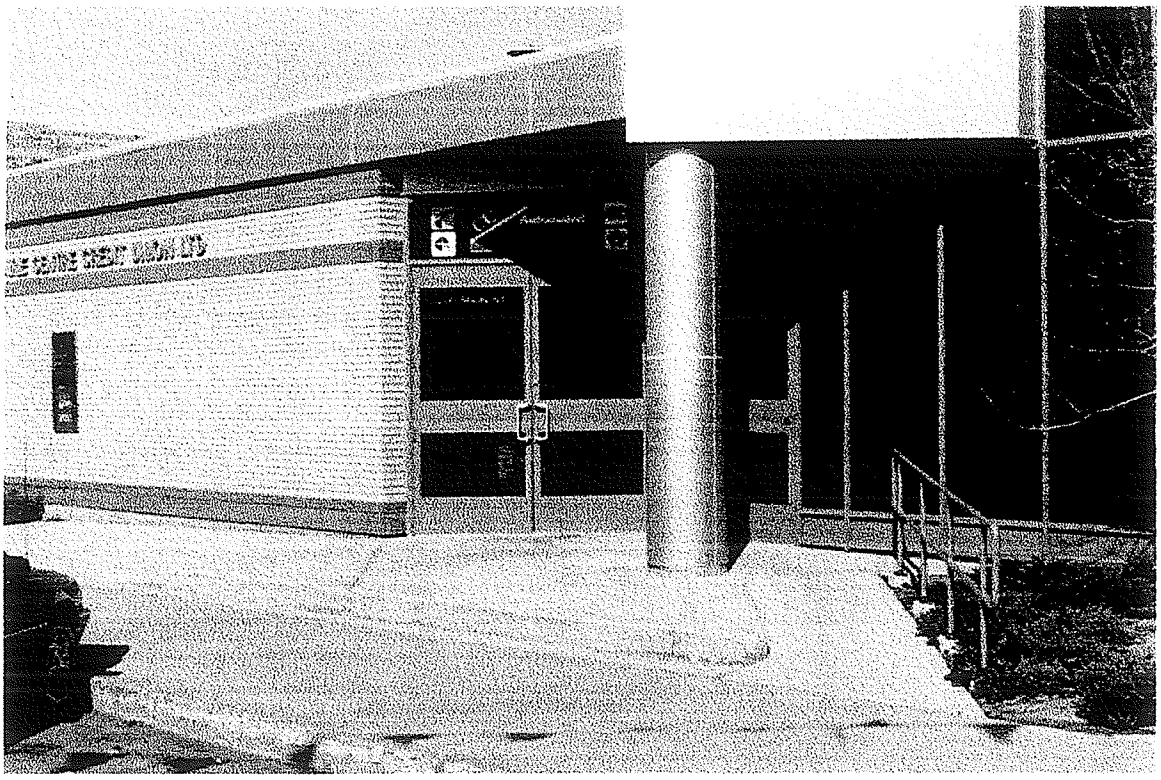


Figure 103. Exterior photograph 13, RDCU building, main entrance

Figure 104. Exterior photograph 14, RDCU building, landscaped area at corner

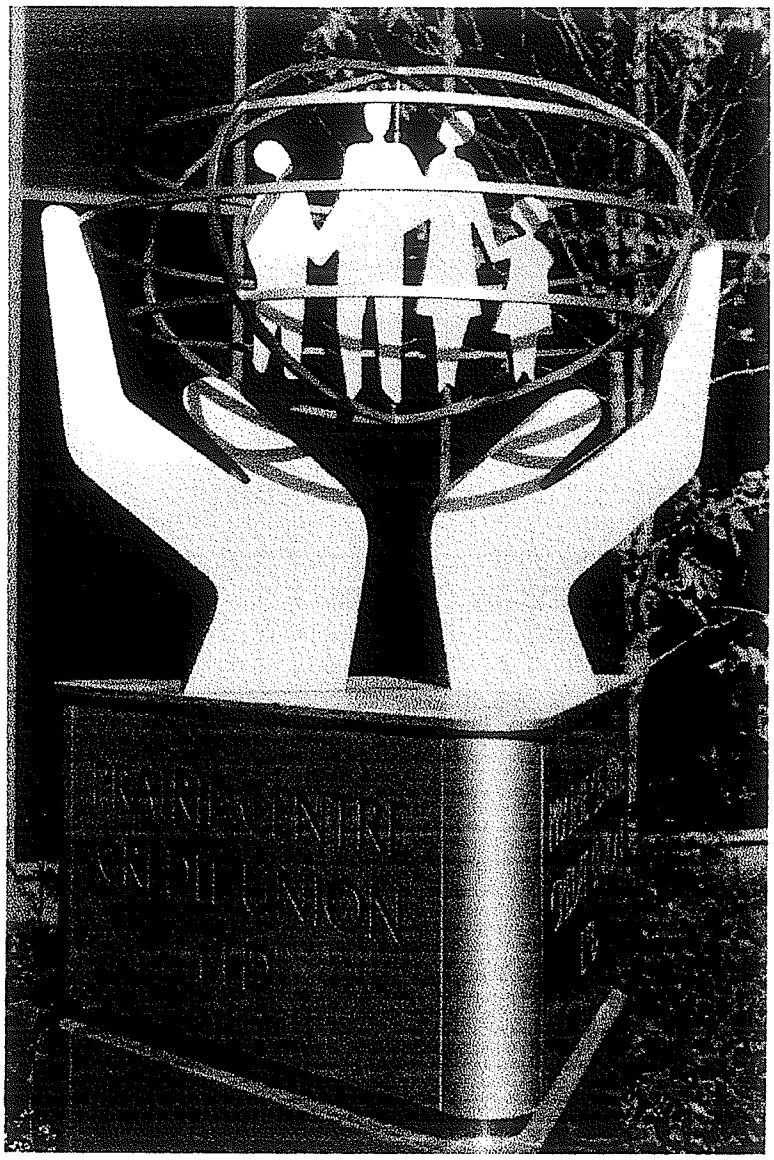


Figure 105. Exterior photograph 15, close up of credit union sign

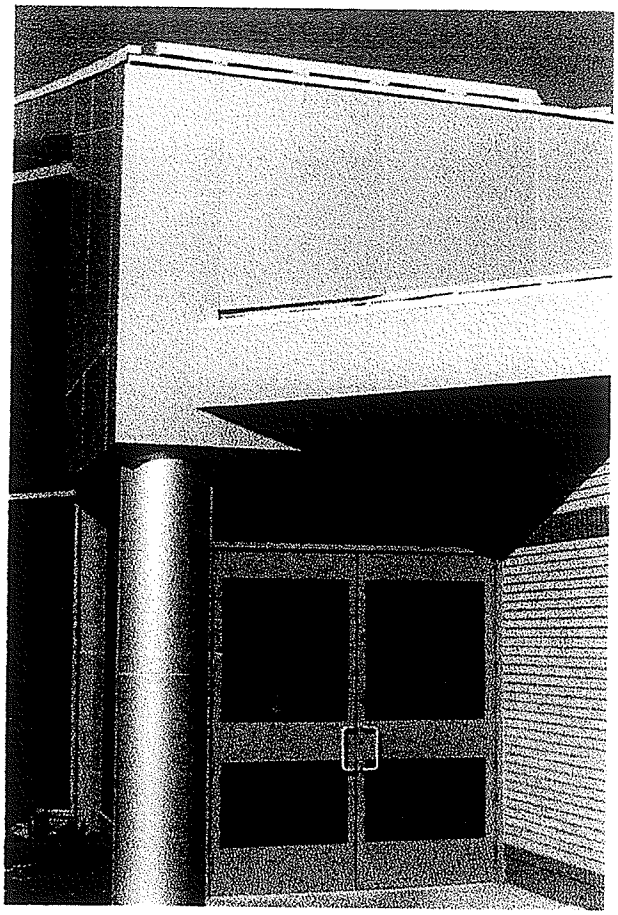


Figure 106. Exterior photograph 16, RDCU building, First Avenue entrance

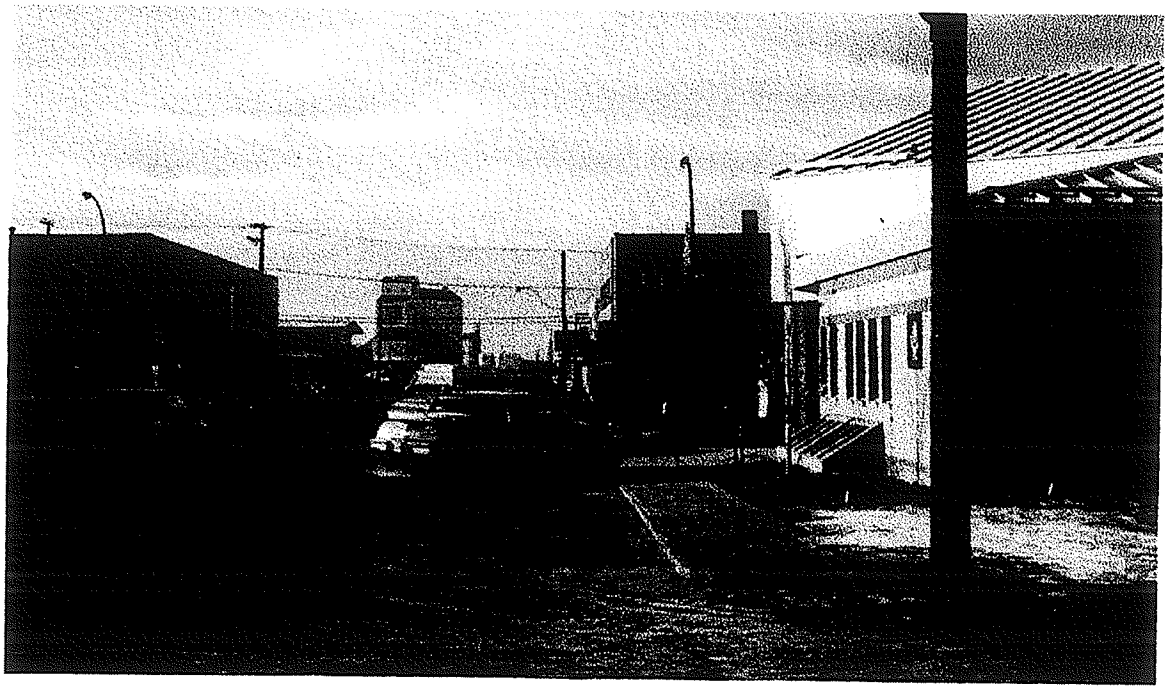


Figure 107. Exterior photograph 17, First Avenue, westward

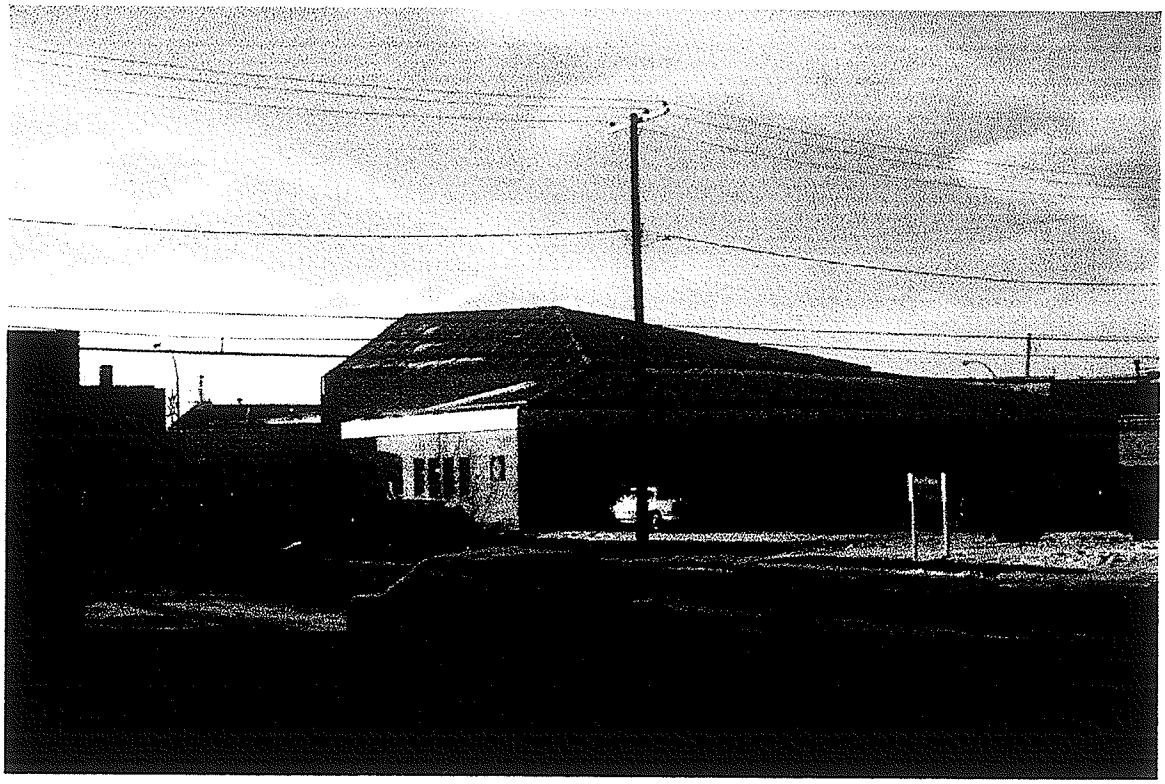
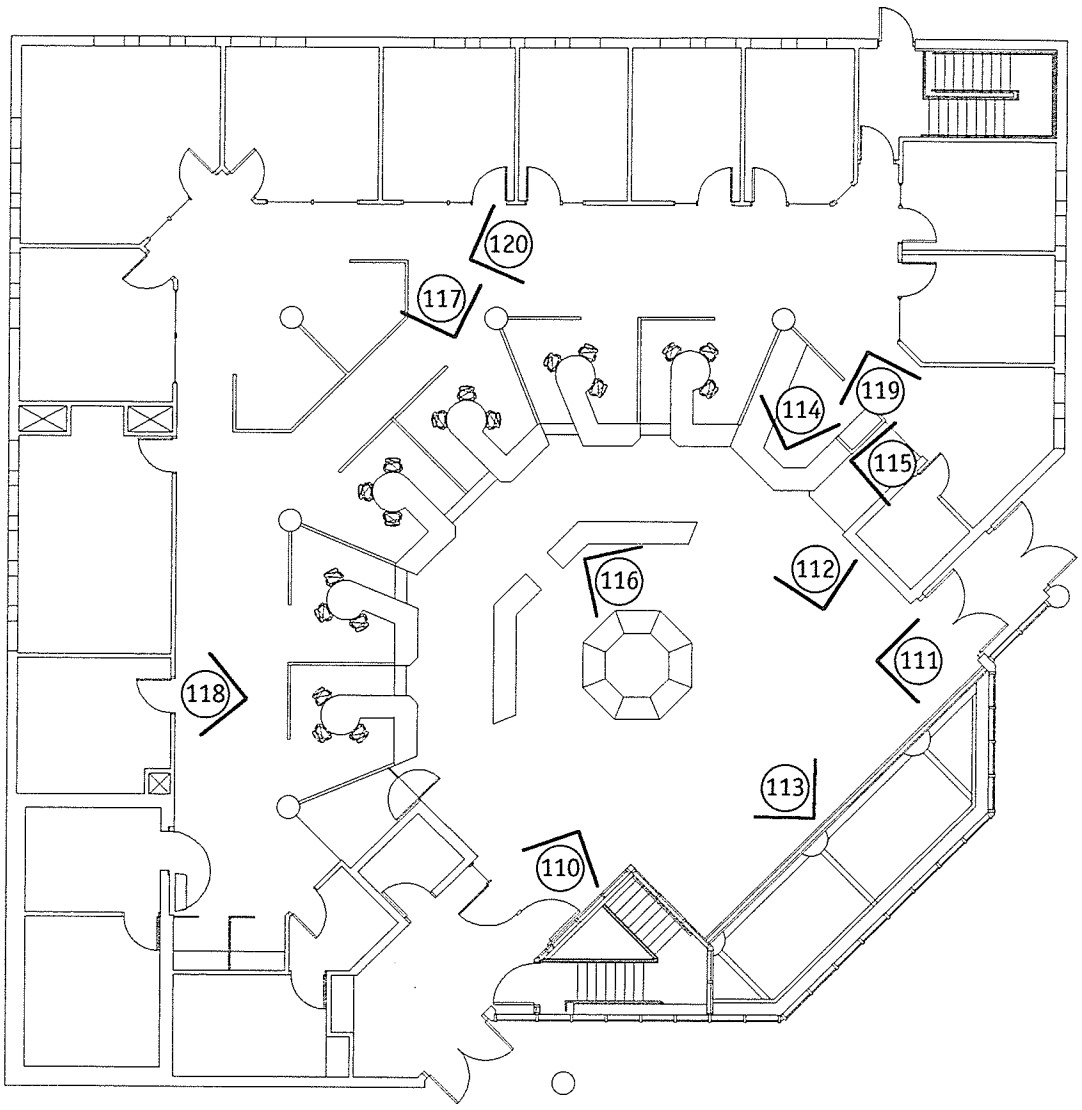


Figure 108. Exterior photograph 18, RDCU building, alley side

# APPENDIX B

## INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS




Sample key: 100

Direction of photograph:

Location of photographer:

Figure number: 100

Note: All interior photographs were taken with a 28MM wide angle lens. This type of lens has a broader field of vision than the human eye, with the effect that some spaces may appear to be larger than they actually are.

Figure 109. Main Level interior photograph keys

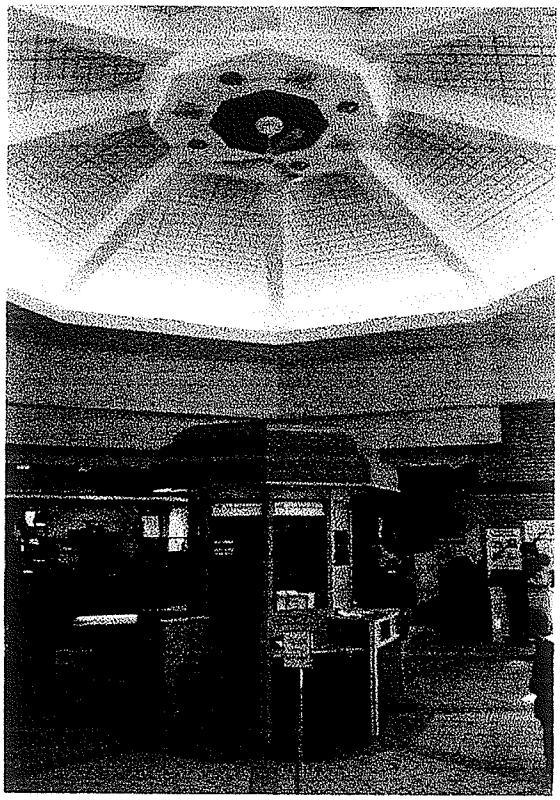


Figure 110. Interior photograph 1, lobby

Figure 111. Interior photograph 2, lobby

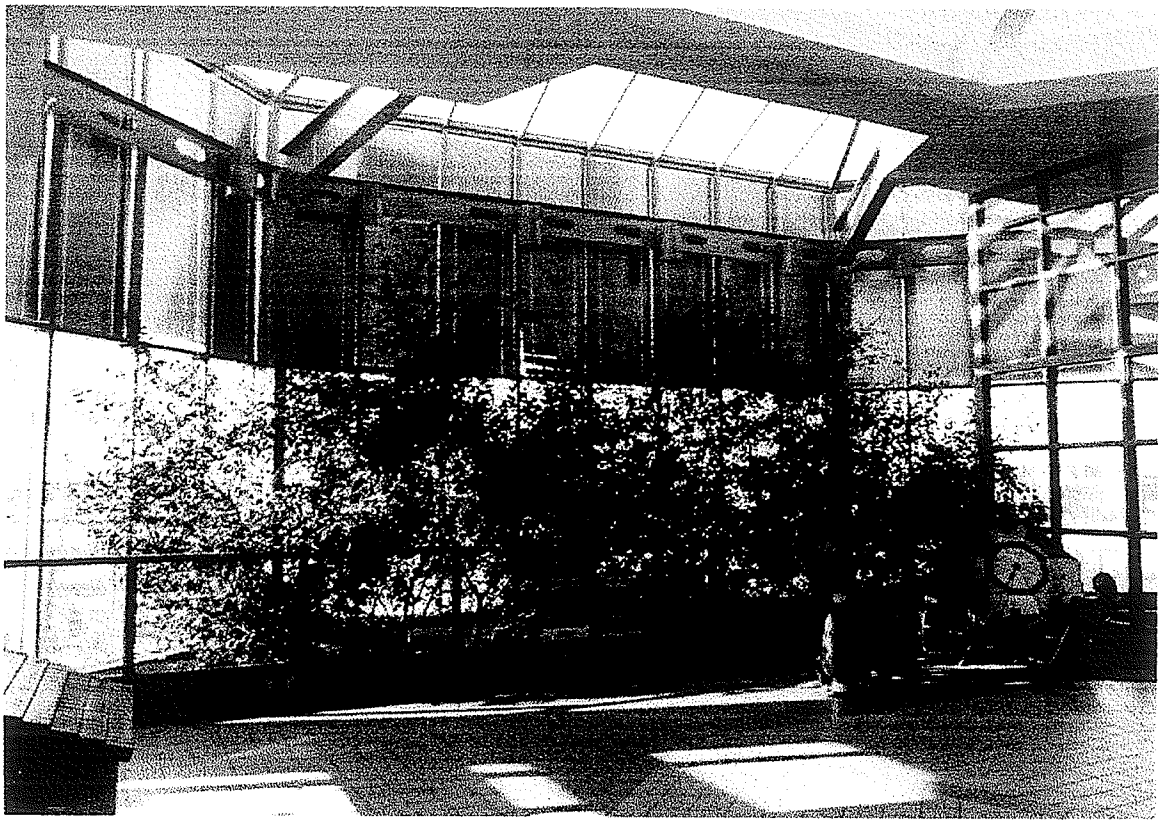


Figure 112. Interior photograph 3, atrium trees and glass curtain wall

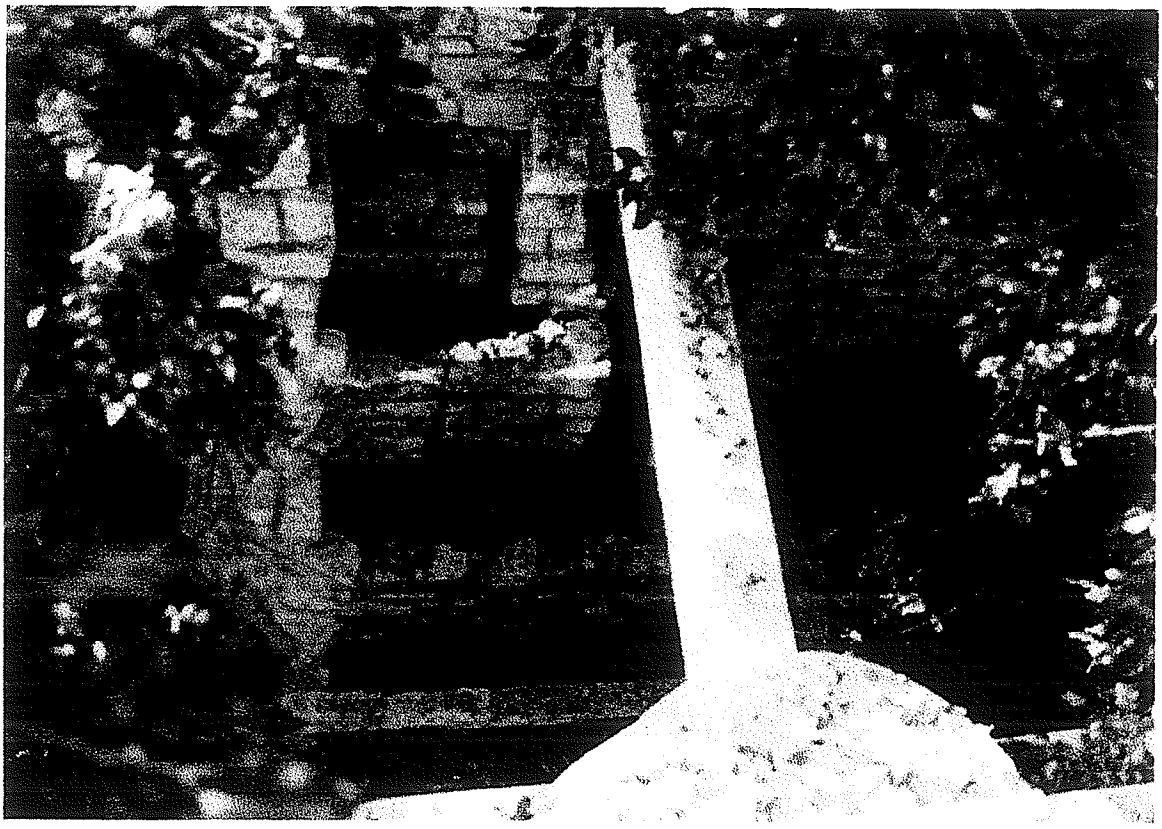


Figure 113. Interior photograph 4, view from lobby down to waterfall

Figure 114. Interior photograph 5, lobby from reception desk

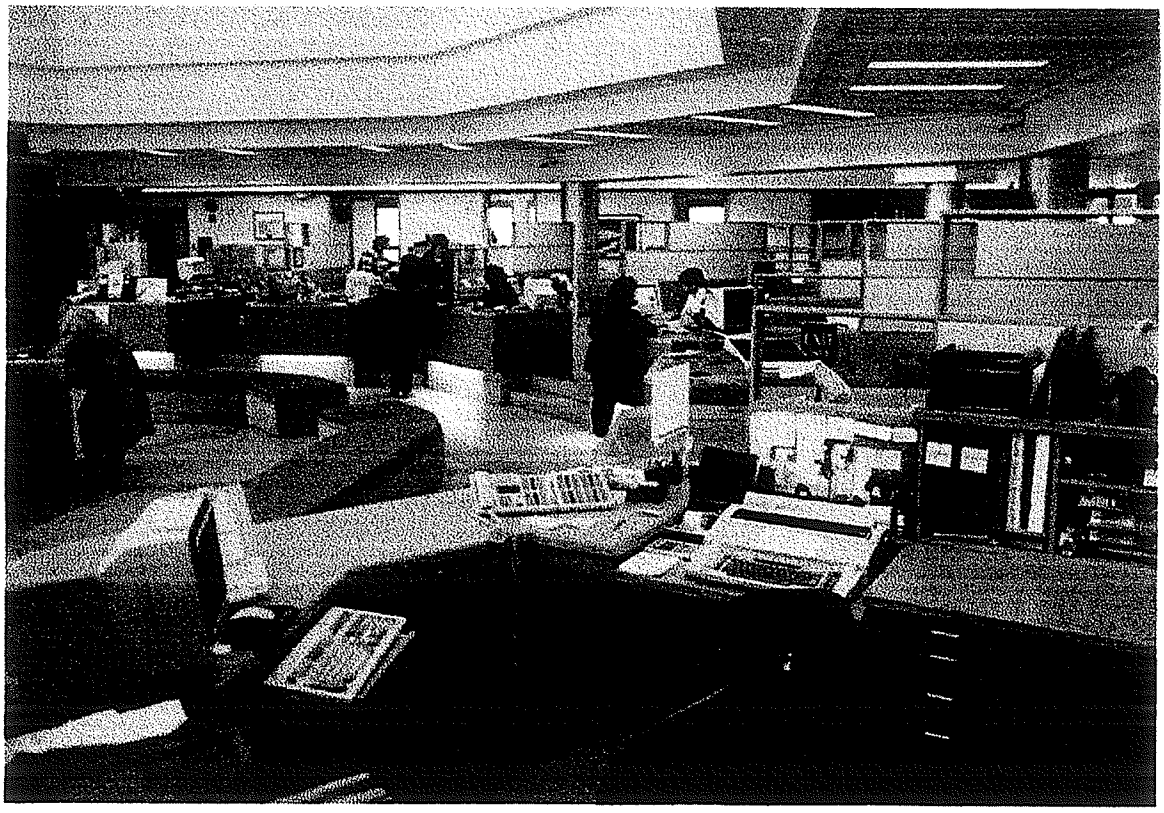


Figure 115. Interior photograph 6, MSO stations from reception area

Figure 116. Interior photograph 7, members standing at MSO stations

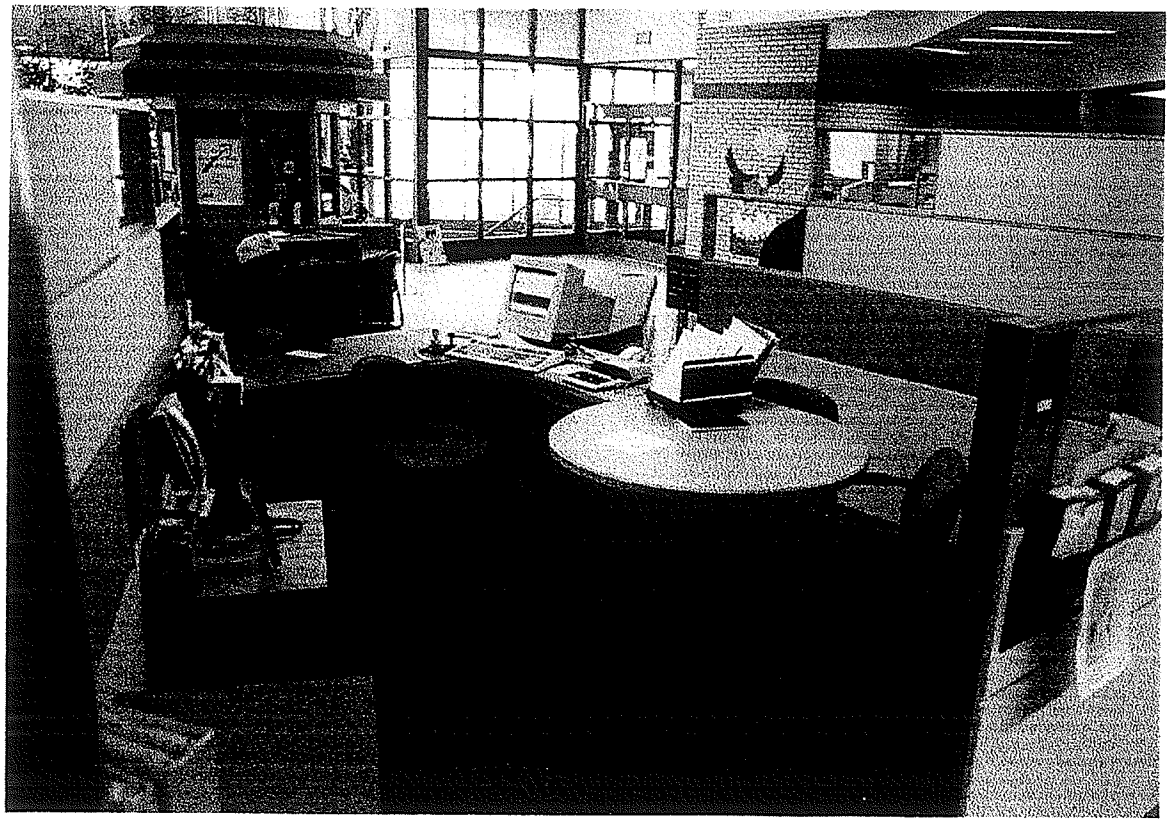


Figure 117. Interior photograph 8, MSO station

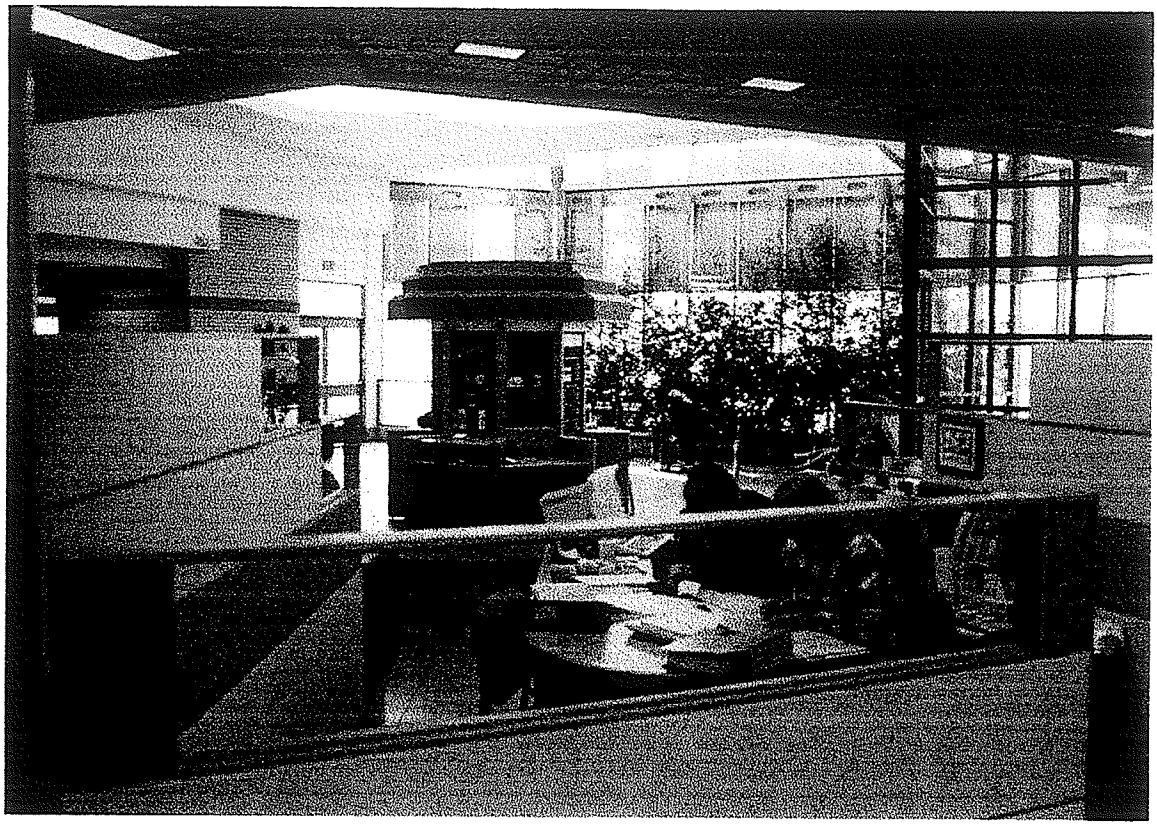


Figure 118. Interior photograph 9, view across MSO station through to atrium

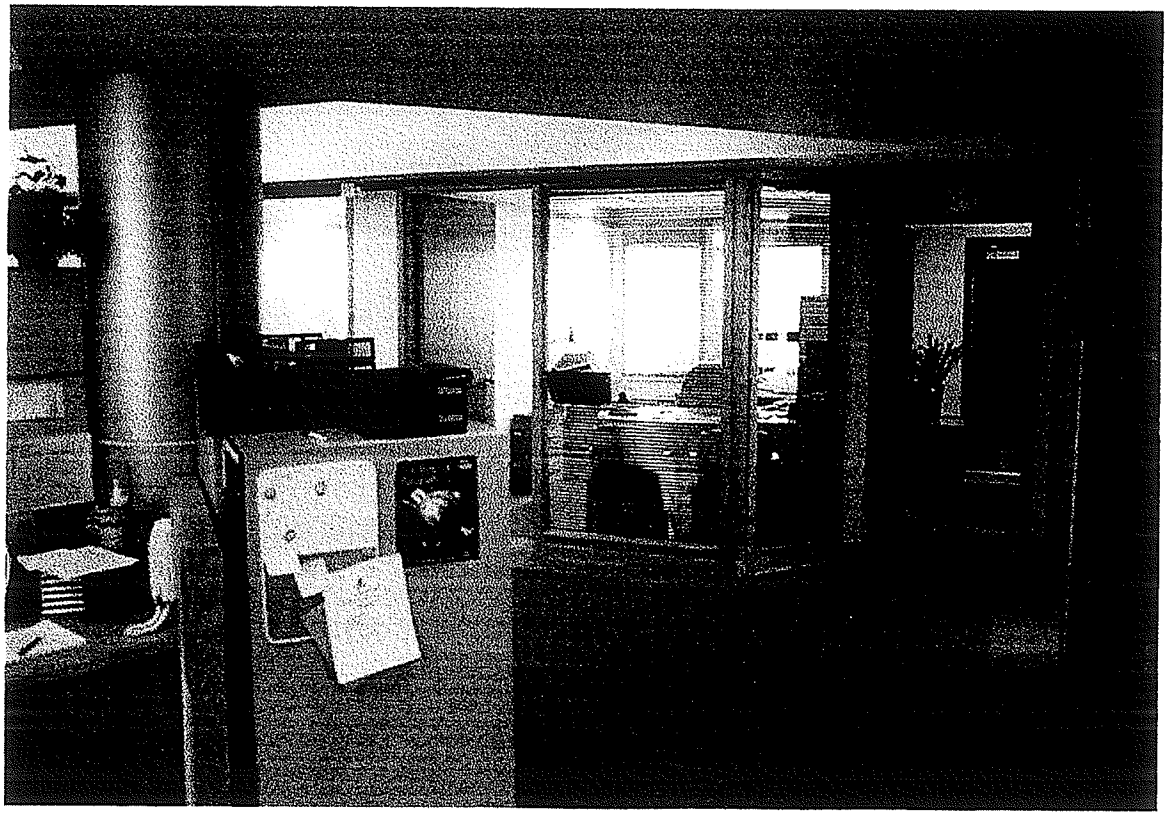


Figure 119. Interior photograph 10, loans officer office from hallway

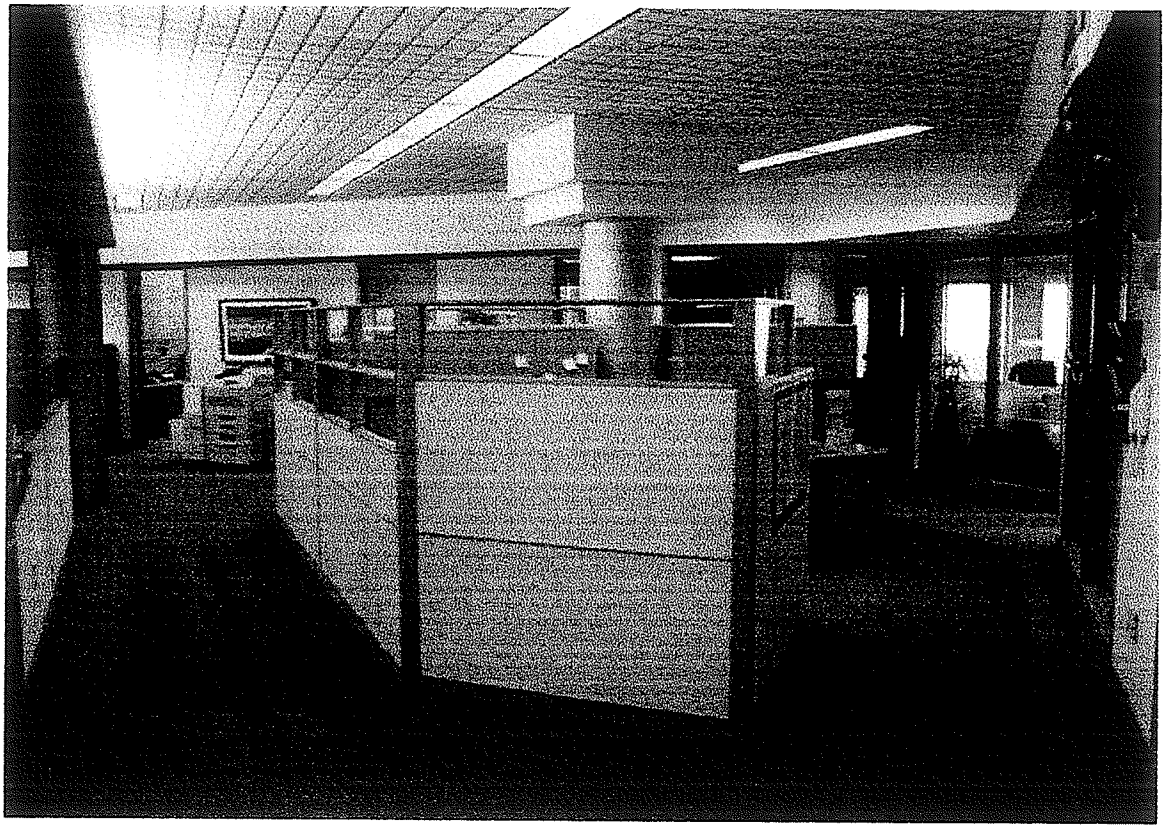
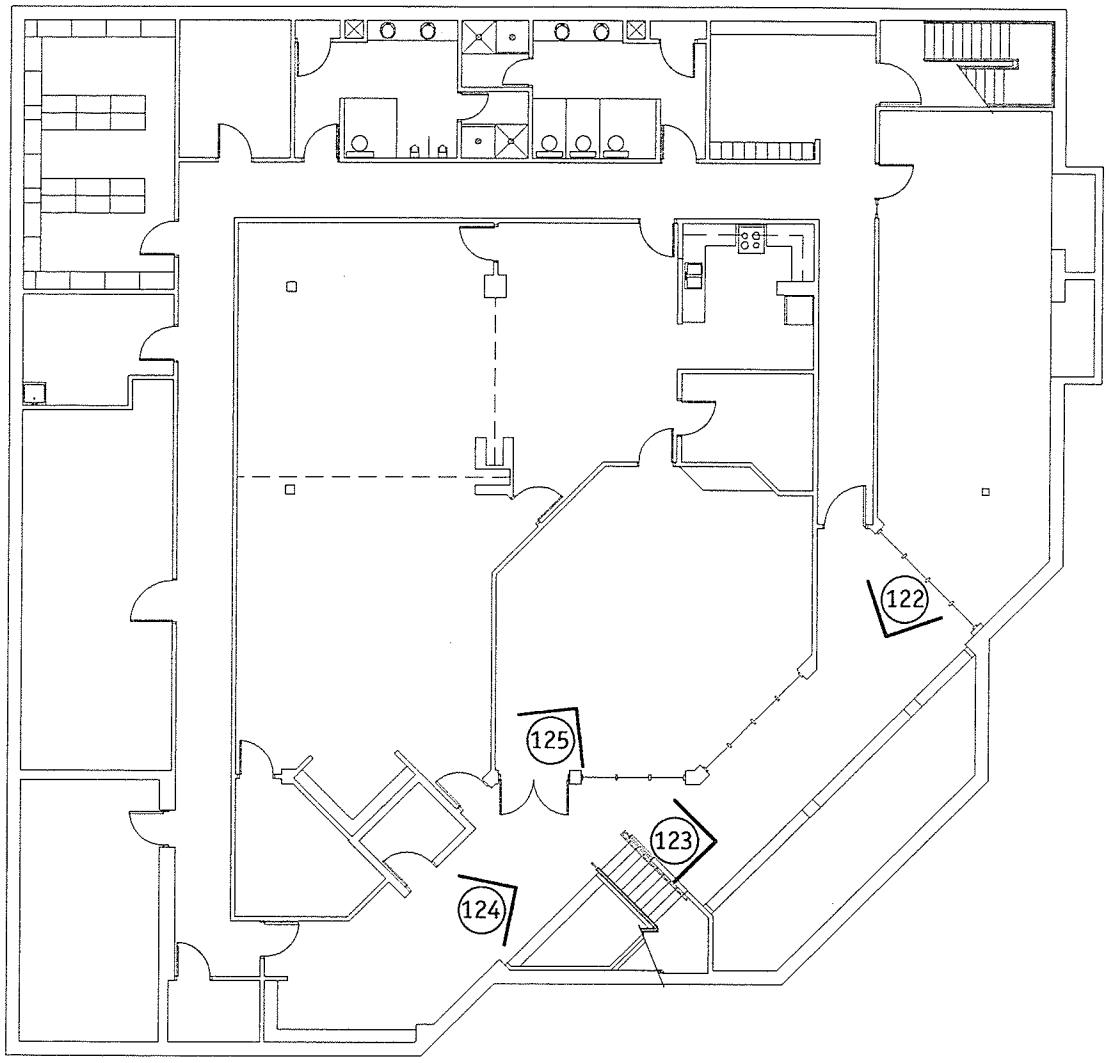


Figure 120. Interior photograph 11, accounting and administrative secretary area




Sample key: (100)

Direction of photograph:

Location of photographer:

Figure number: 100

Note: All interior photographs were taken with a 28MM wide angle lens. This type of lens has a broader field of vision than the human eye, with the effect that some spaces may appear to be larger than they actually are.

Figure 121. Basement interior photograph keys

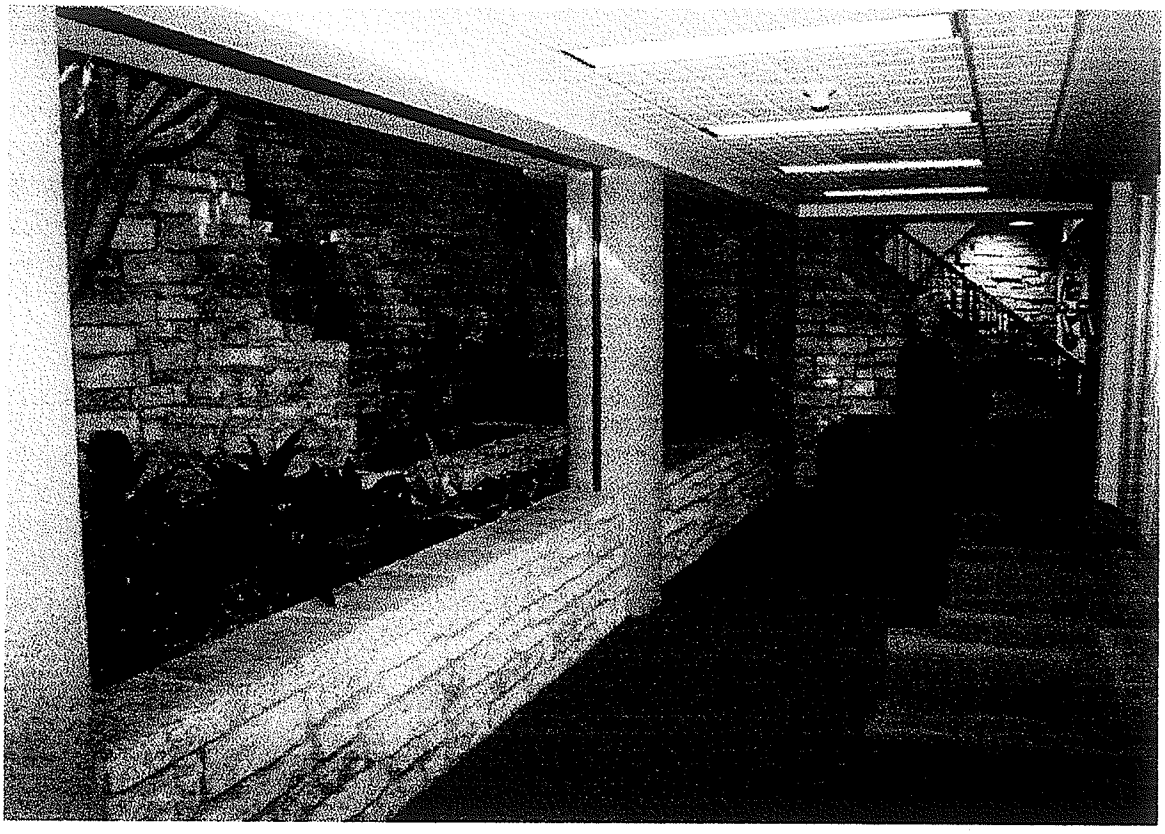


Figure 122. Interior photograph 12, atrium and waterfall

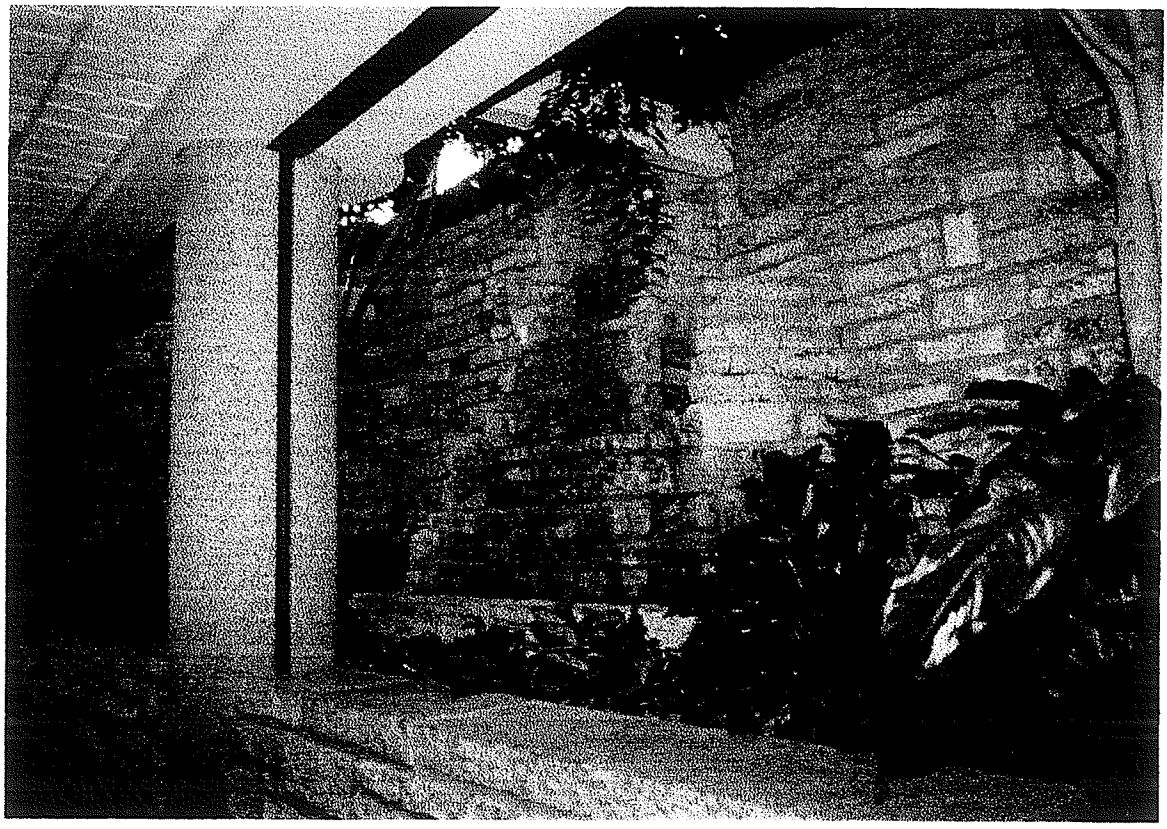


Figure 123. Interior photograph 13, atrium and waterfall

Figure 124. Interior photograph 14, from boardroom lobby toward atrium

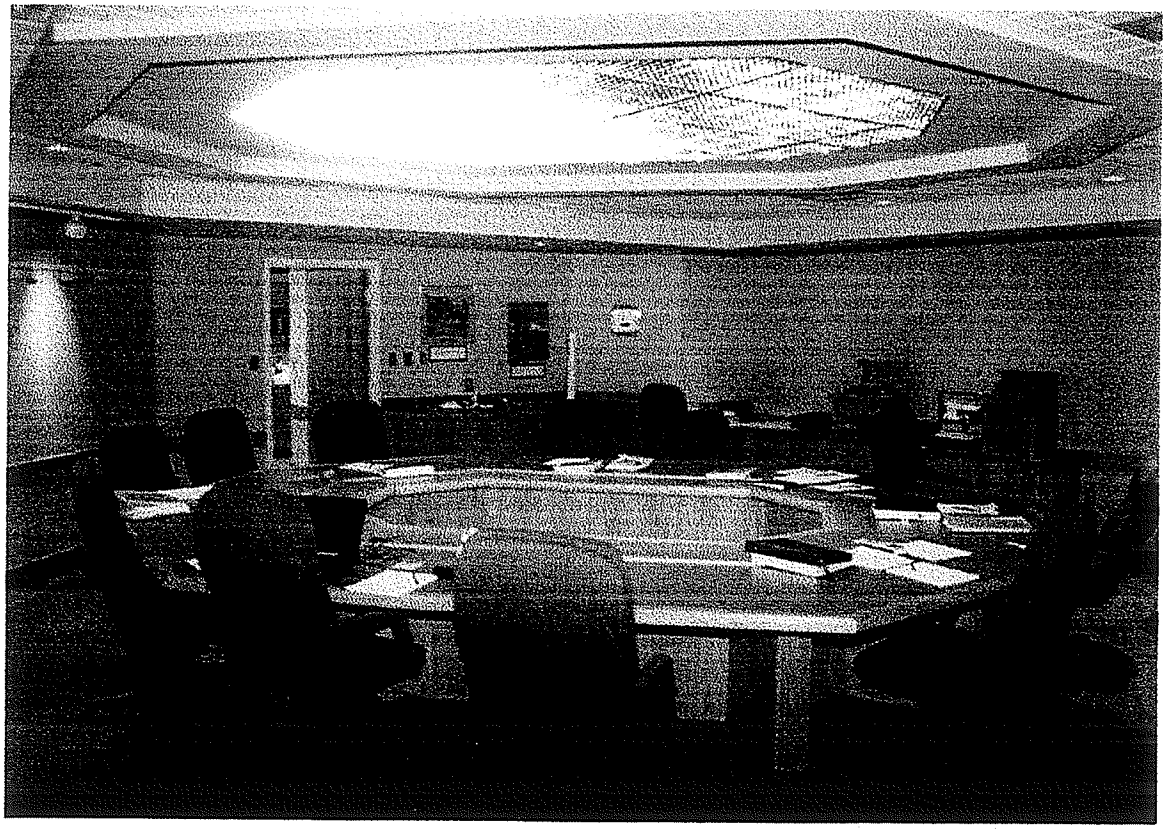


Figure 125. Interior photograph 15, boardroom

# APPENDIX C

## NEWSPAPER ARTICLE REGARDING CHARTERED BANKS

# *Prairie bank-bashing given new impetus*

Here & There

Fred McGuinness

Bankers Are Just Like Anybody Else, Only Richer. Sixty years have passed since Ogden Nash wrote a verse by that name, and you don't need a single stanza to get the message; it's all in that title.

On the Prairies, in what you might call "Credit Union Country," banker-bashing has always been a favorite indoor sport. In recent months, however, there has been a special impetus. While the shareholders no doubt loved those reports of towering profits, the rest of us were appalled.

Community editors took note of the public distress. Before long, their columns were filled with questions about soaring bank charges, and rude comments about loan practices.

At the head of the parade was one of the most doughty battlers on the Great Plains. Gladys Taylor, publisher emeritus of the Five-Village Weekly, of Irricana, has more than a theoretical interest in banks. While many females have been overwhelmed by banker resistance when they launched an enterprise, this was not the case with our Gladys. Because she wouldn't take no for an answer, she founded a tidy publishing empire.

The Taylor motivation for talking about banks is found in the report of the UN Conference on Women. One of its recommendations is for lending programs for women in business.

If you have your wallets and handbags handy, Gladys Taylor will make you a wager. "I'll wager that if you, the average woman, walked in to your bank tomorrow and asked for a loan to start a business, you'd be greeted the same way I was." She says you will face horror laced with skepticism.

At Melfort, the editor asks you to "think of all the good things chartered banks have done for you lately . . . it doesn't take long and it's a short list." Then comes that sorry recital: low interest on your savings, and high interest on your loans; reductions in personal service and increases in service charges. This comment is just one of many to fasten onto that descriptive adjective obscene.

The Boissevain Recorder challenges the service the chartered banks give to the small communities. It cites the case of surrounding communities in which the banks closed their branches and the credit unions took over. In Boissevain today, it is reported that the local branch of the credit union is bigger than the local branch of the Royal.

If this subject interests you, then ask your librarian to get you a copy of "Small Business and the Big Banks," published by Lorimer. Author Susan Bellan, also an entrepreneur, examines current bank practices by citing case histories of companies of promise that were abandoned by their banks when expansion put them into cash-flow crunches.

I wish I could tell you the story of a small manufacturing plant that is about to leave a prairie town and move to a big city. The bank won't lend it expansion money as long as it stays in the town. Alas, the proprietor won't let me identify him. What this tells me is that, in banking circles, town is bad, city is good.

Thinking about banks reminds me of some doggerel I learned as a lad.

"That money talks,/ I'll not deny,/ I heard it speak,/ It said goodbye."

(McGuiness 1996)

# APPENDIX D

## CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING THE PROGRESS OF ROSETOWN (F.E. Hopkins)

D. O. WHEELOCK, Pres. and Gen. Mgr.
H. B. LEWIS, Vice-Pres.

F. E. HOPKINS, Sec.-Treasurer
C. M. HOPKINS, Director

INCORPORATED. $200,000 CAPITAL

Leader M'f'g Co. LTD.

ROSETOWN, SASK.

Sept. 12, 12.

Messrs McPherson and McCurdy Ltd.
Bell Block,
Winnipeg, Man.

Gentlemen:

Our Mr. H. B. Lewis has requested me to give you some data on the progress of Rosetown, Sask. I therefore take pleasing in submiting to you the following facts and figures.

Rosetown will be three years old next November and now has a population of 1200 people. Property assessment in 1912 is $1.000,000.

There are three banks in Rosetown, two of which have recently erected large brick buildings. Rosetown is a distributing point for a large area of the richest farming country in the province and the crops in this section are excellent. Last year yields of 29 bushels of flax per acre, 45 bushels of wheat and 120 bushels of oats per acre were raised. The merchants of Rosetown all carry large stocks of all kinds of merchandise to supply the demand of this rapidly growing town and country.

Two good hotels are in operation here with a combined capacity of 170 rooms, four restaurants and two rooming houses with 140 rooms. All these rooms are filled each night and often times people are compelled to seek rooms in private homes.

Rosetown has a good school costing $14000. and three churches. Four lumber yards are as busy here as the proverbial bees furnishing lumber for the many buildings under construction.

The business men of Rosetown subscribed in two hours $40,000. for the Flax Decorticating Co. Ltd. and this company has built its plans and is now installing 12 of these machines, which are built in Paris, to extract the fibre from the flax straw. This, the only flax fibre mill of its kind in the country, will employ forty men on the present unit of 12 machines and double this number if the second unit of machines is put in as contemplated. This company has a good flowing well of soft water.

The Rosetown Machine and Automobile Co. has a well equipped machine shop and automobile garage which holds 50 cars. An opera house and moving picture theatre has bought its site and is putting up a building to cost $10,000. The town is putting in an electric lighting and power plant.

The following are some of the industries that are figuring with the board of trade for sites in Rosetown, sash and door factory, flour mill, brewery, etc. Funds have been raised for a 30 bed hospital to cost $35,000. and a site has a site has been offered for same.

A large skating rink and a good hockey and curling rink furnish amusement and recreationi in the winter months. The Rosetown Base-ball club won the championship of the province for two years. At the last election Rosetown elected a

member to Parliament from this district. The Canadian Northern receipts show over $500,000.

Four hundred traction engines have been shippped into Rosetown and two million bushels of grain shipped out last year. The C. N. R. is now building freight sheds, more side tracks spurs and sidings.

The C.P.R. will give Rosetown a direct line to Moose-Jaw and the Twin cities in six weeks with the comletion of the bridge at Outlook. The receipts at the C.P.R. station show over $100,000. cash business in ten months and the collect business shows as high as $80,000. per month.

Hoping this information will be of some service to you,
I beg to remain,
Yours very truly,

F.E. Hopkins

P.S. the C.N.R. have a proposed branch from Regina to Rosetown and the Grand Trunk a proposed line from Biggar to Swift Current to touch Rosetown.

# APPENDIX E

## CLIENT'S CRITICAL DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

Critical Design Requirements Required

PARKING LOT

- ample staff parking and plug-ins
- ample member parking

ENTRY

- easy access

ATM

- ATM lobby
- balancing room
- street visible

MAIN LOBBY

- public washrooms?
- spacious and attractive
- natural and managed traffic flow
- all services visible (you know where to go)
- communication (information centre, rate board) strategically located

RECEPTIONIST DESK

- currently - 1 steno/receptionist/loan
  - 1 admin secretary
- prominent
- well-signed
- well-lit

MEMBER SERVICE OFFICER STATION

- currently 4 stations
- sit down and stand up
- confidential
- all visible to member
- comfortable
- ergonomically designed

OFFICES

- present - 4 management, 1 admin sec, 3 loan officers, + room for expansion
- spacious, private, sound proof
- outside wall offices
- good lighting
- wired for automation and moveability

MACHINE ROOM

- central location
- ample in size
- LAN wiring

**VAULT**

- split vault
- inside escape mechanism
- inside light switch and telephone
- location

**STORAGE**

- centralized for day-to-day supplies
- basement for historic
- ample in size
- some fireproof

**BOARD ROOM**

- separate room from staff room, office and training room - total 9 directors
- spacious
- well done but not extravagant
- optional board lounge
- attendance at meetings - 9 directors, 4 management, 1 secretary + room for more

**MEETING/TRAINING ROOMS**

- room for seating/training (50 people)
- tied in with staff room kitchen

**STAFF ROOM**

- 20 staff
- kitchen/dining/lounge
- relaxed atmosphere
- optional - showers,lockers, games room

**SECURITY**

- buttons at all stations and wall offices
- reliable all night back-up

**ACCTG/EDP/MSO WORK AREA**

- out of sight
- **brainstorm**

**COAT ROOM**

- coat room/lockers

General CDR

- all mechanical in basement (not on roof)
- executive meeting room (optional)
- full basement
- lighting, ample and energy efficient, natural, non-intrusive to computer usage
- signage - visible, tasteful, consistent
- air quality, fresh, moist, draft free, temperature control, dust and contaminant free
- healthy, no one backing against a PC, no one sitting on a rad
- ATM room, include space for night deposit, ATM, courier
- building environmental friendly, aesthetically pleasing with a presence (unique features or showcase without exotic marble from Transylvania)
- clear, free span (100 PSI roof)
- elevator, space for elevator (design it in)
- ability to add second floor
- cost control
- concern about flat roof

Other CDR

**General Statements**

1. All areas accessible to the handicapped
2. Provision for expansion
3. Provision for data processing wiring in all levels for present and future
4. Should we have a small storage for Janitor supplies on each floor.

**Basement Level**

1. Contain sick room
2. Janitor room and maintenance equipment room (sink low to floor)
3. Built in commercial vacuum??

**Interior-General**

1. Low maintenance interior, eg. brick, glass, glazed ceramic tile, etc.

**Exterior**

1. To create an image, but not too flamboyant

Courtesy of Prairie Centre Credit Union.

# APPENDIX F

## DESIGN PROCESS SKETCHES AND DRAWINGS

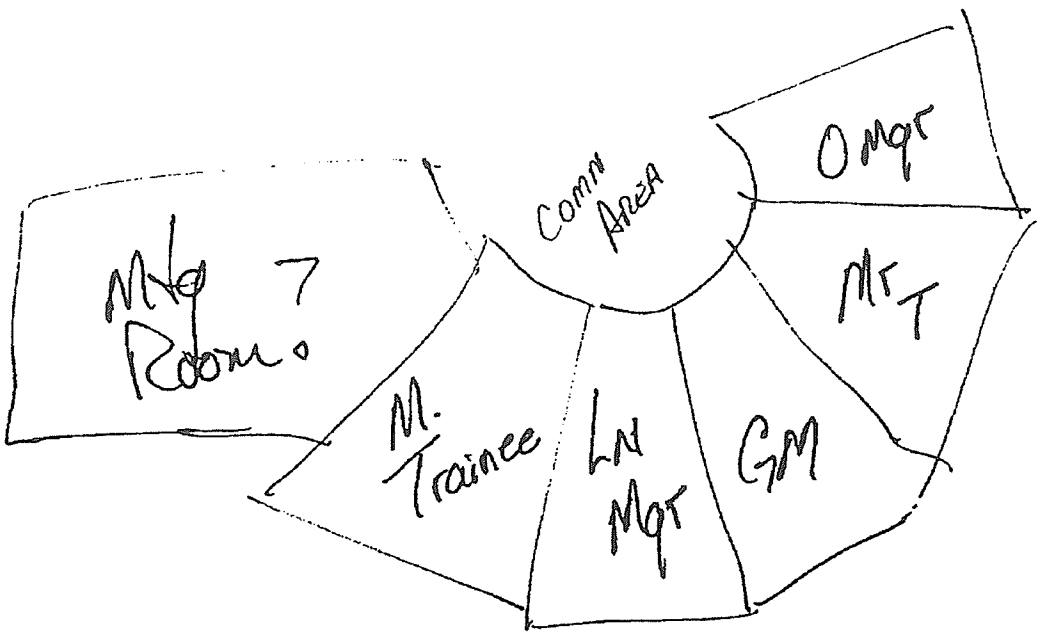



Figure 126. Client sketch 1. Courtesy of the architect.

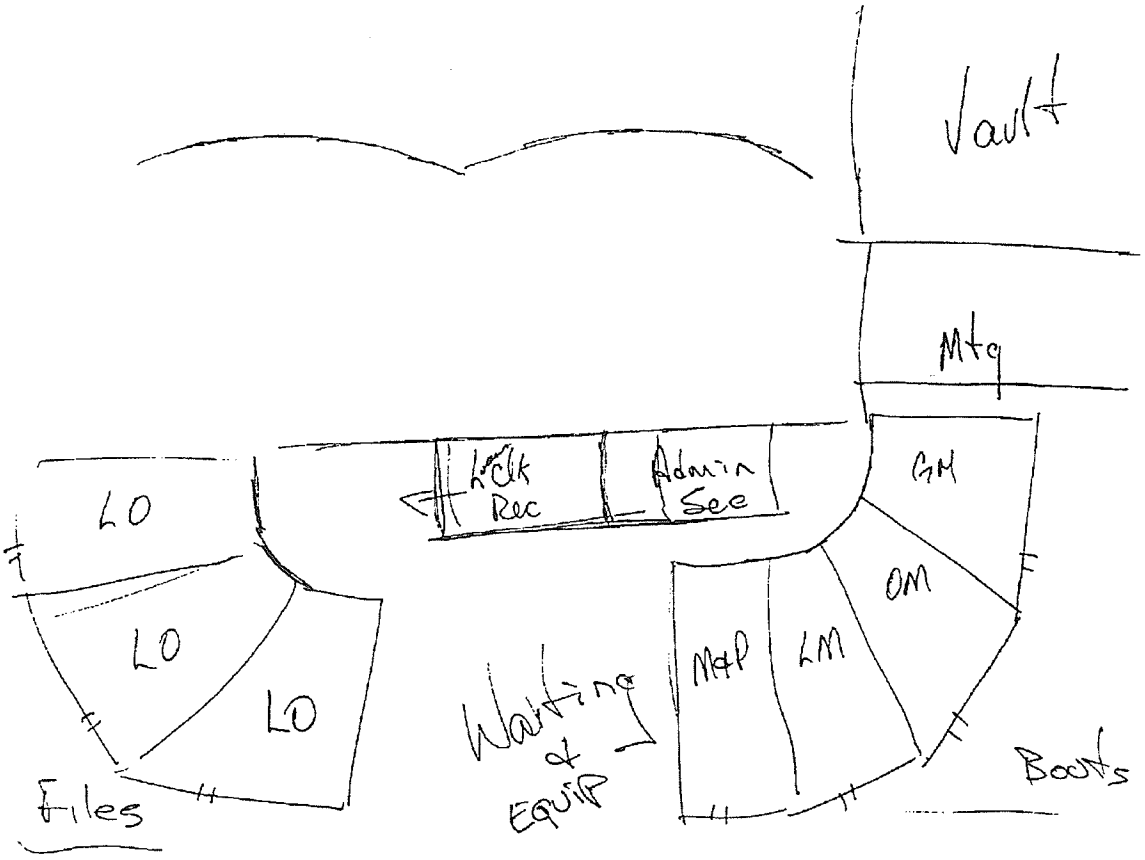



Figure 127. Client sketch 2. Courtesy of the architect.

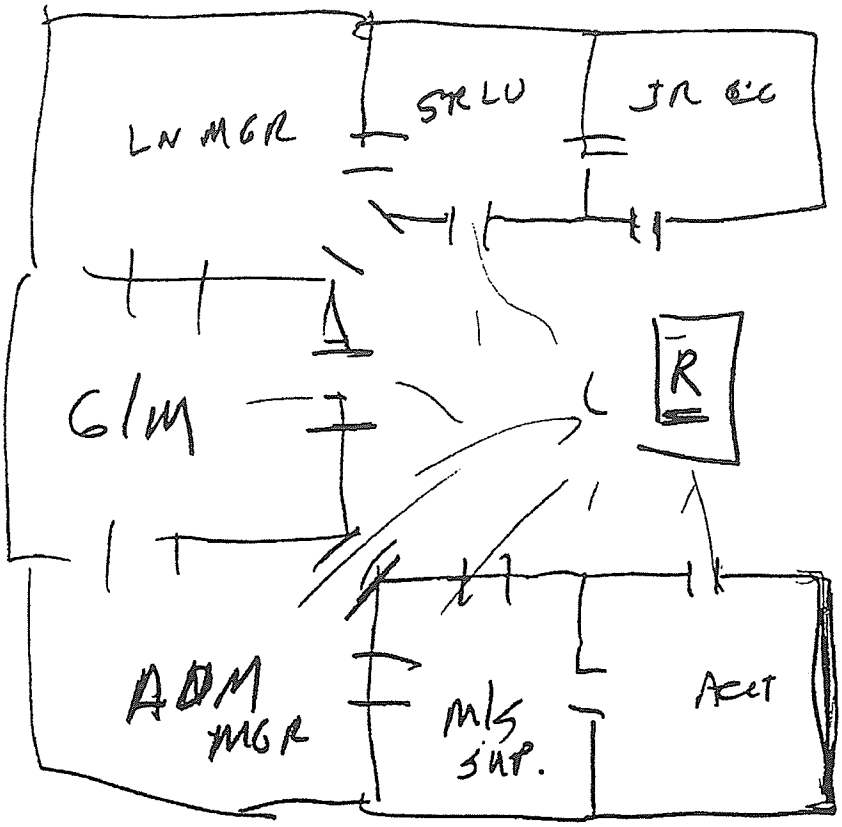



Figure 128. Client sketch 3. Courtesy of the architect.

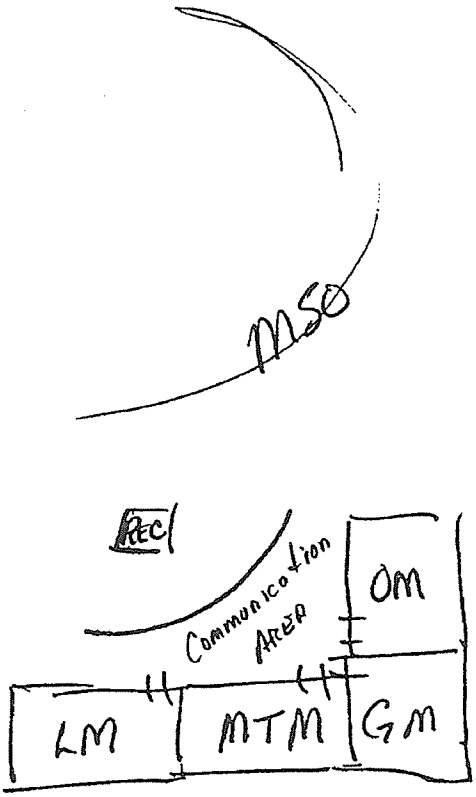



Figure 129. Client sketch 4. Courtesy of the architect.

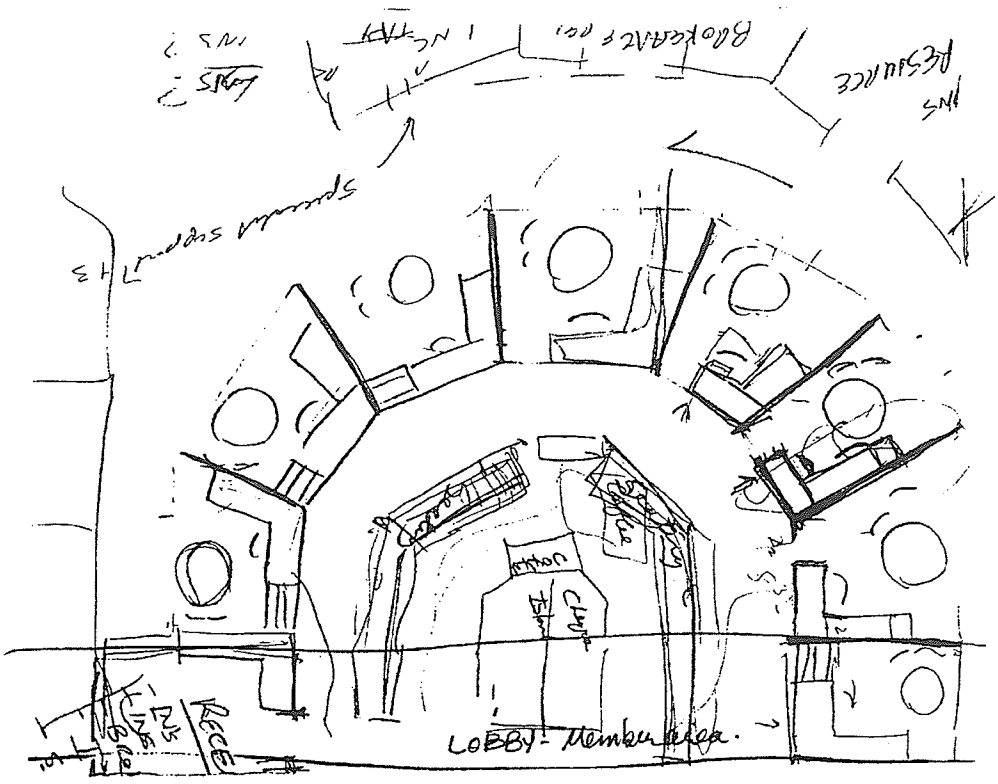



Figure 130. Client sketch 4 (based on architect's concepts). Courtesy of the architect.

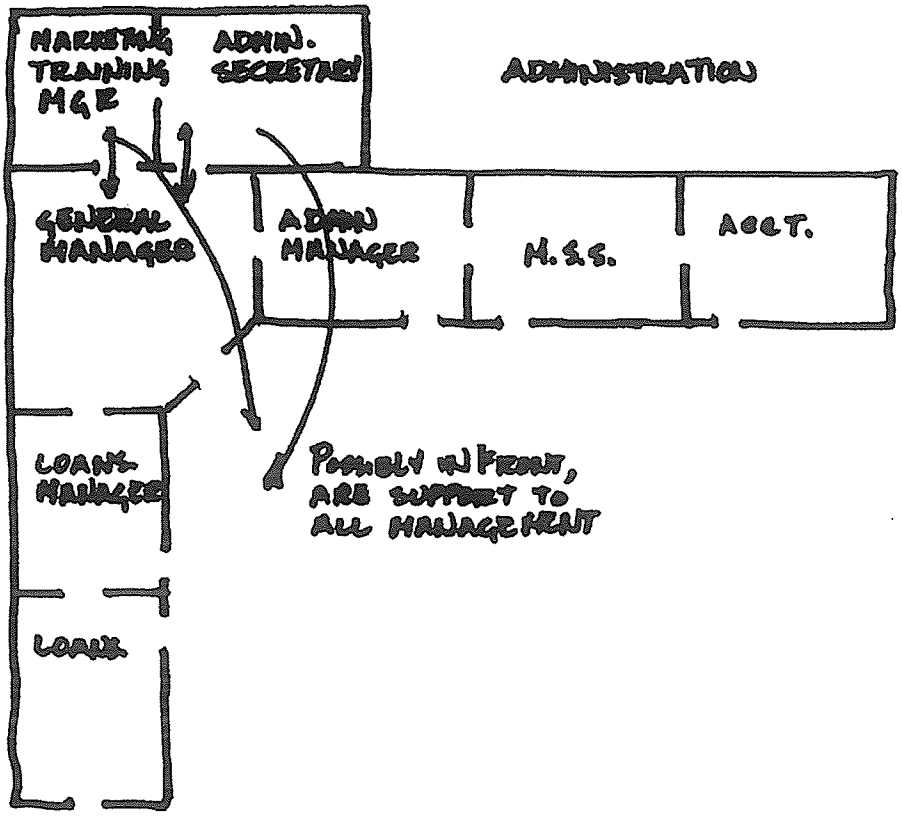



Figure 131. Architect sketch 1. Courtesy of the architect.

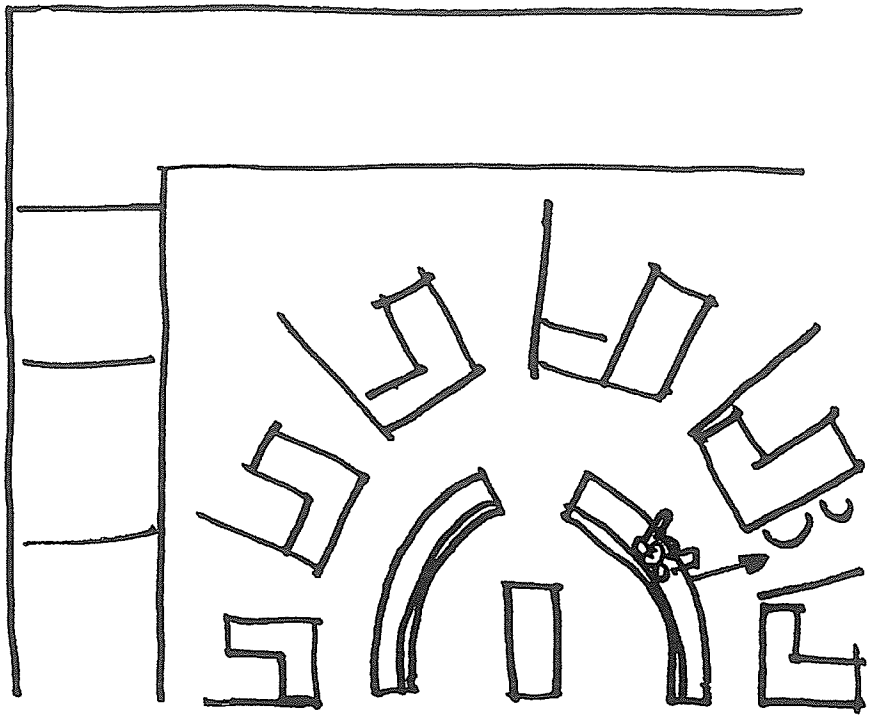


Figure 132. Architect sketch 2. Courtesy of the architect.

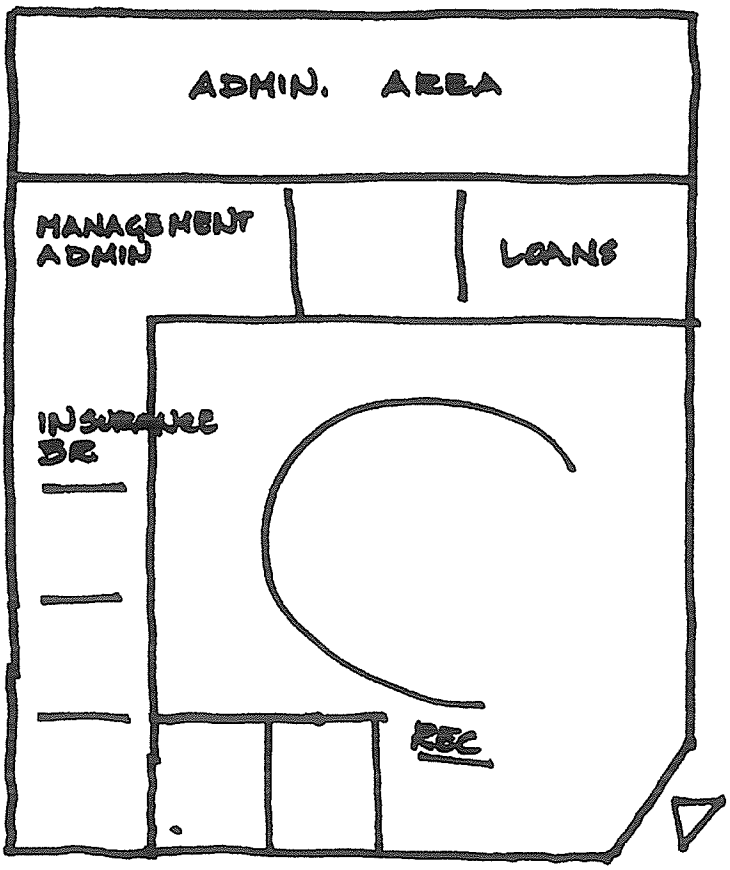



Figure 133. Architect sketch 3. Courtesy of the architect.

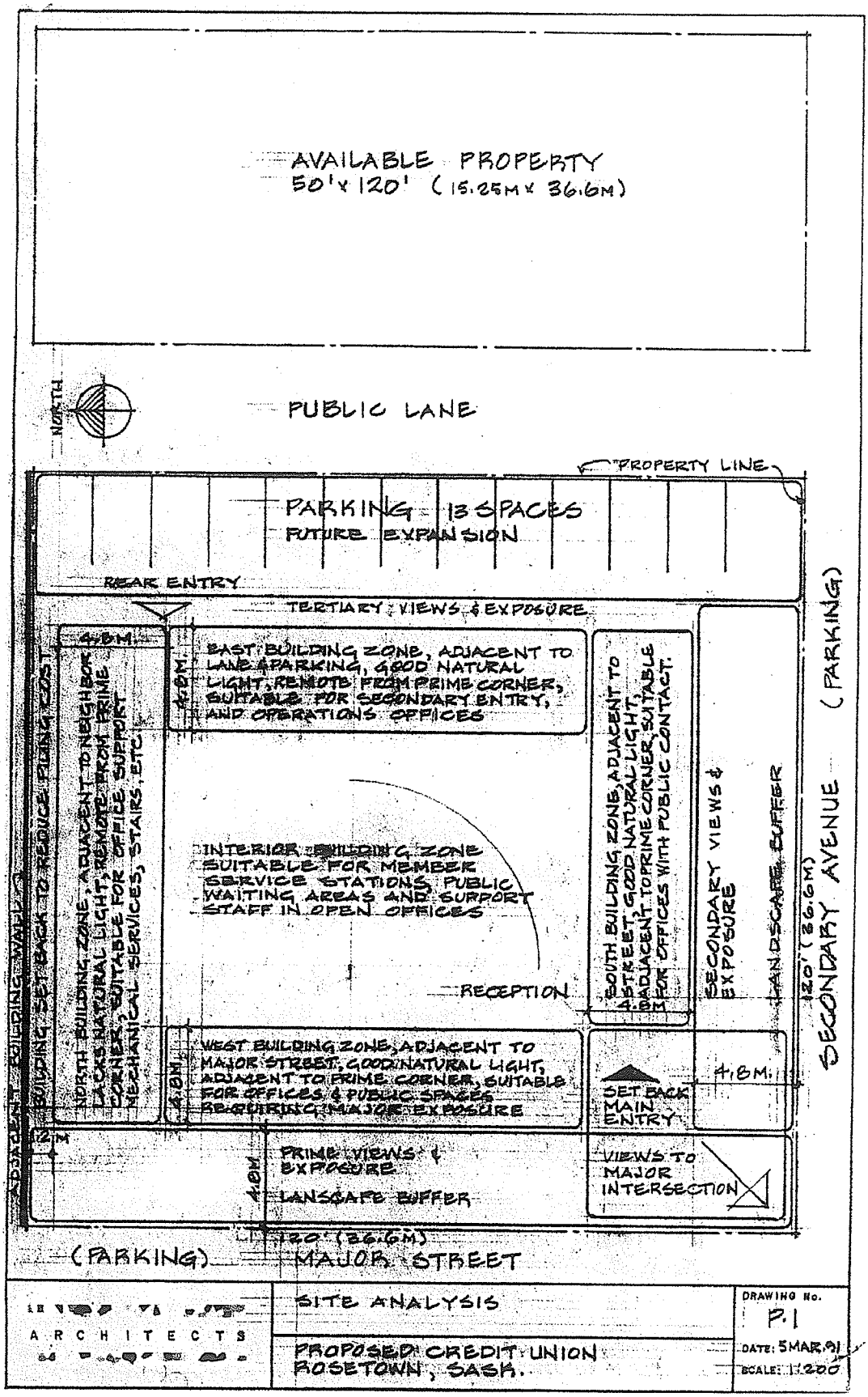



Figure 134. Architect design sketch 1, Site Analysis. Courtesy of the architect.

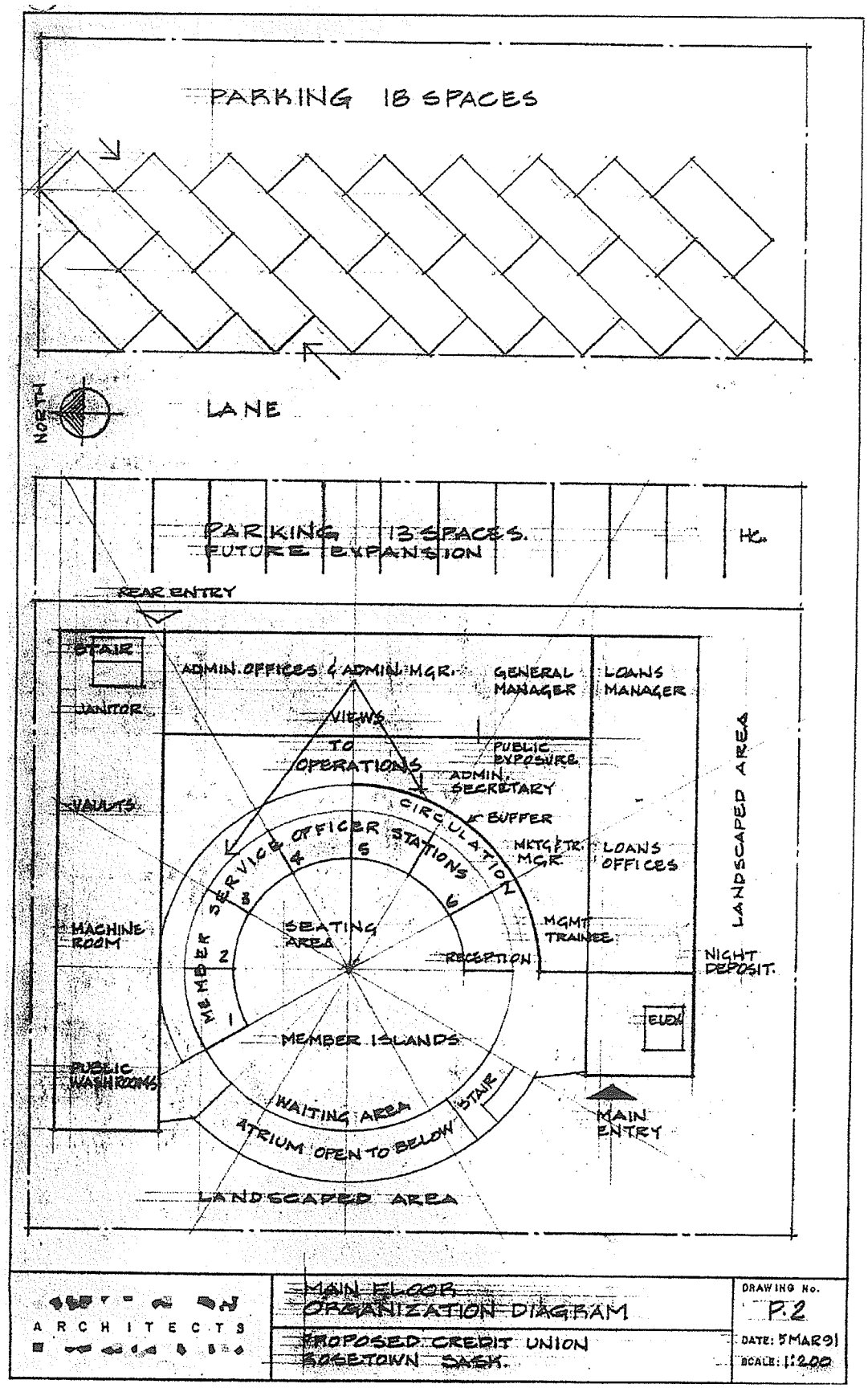



Figure 135. Architect design sketch 2, Main Floor Organization Diagram. Courtesy of the architect.

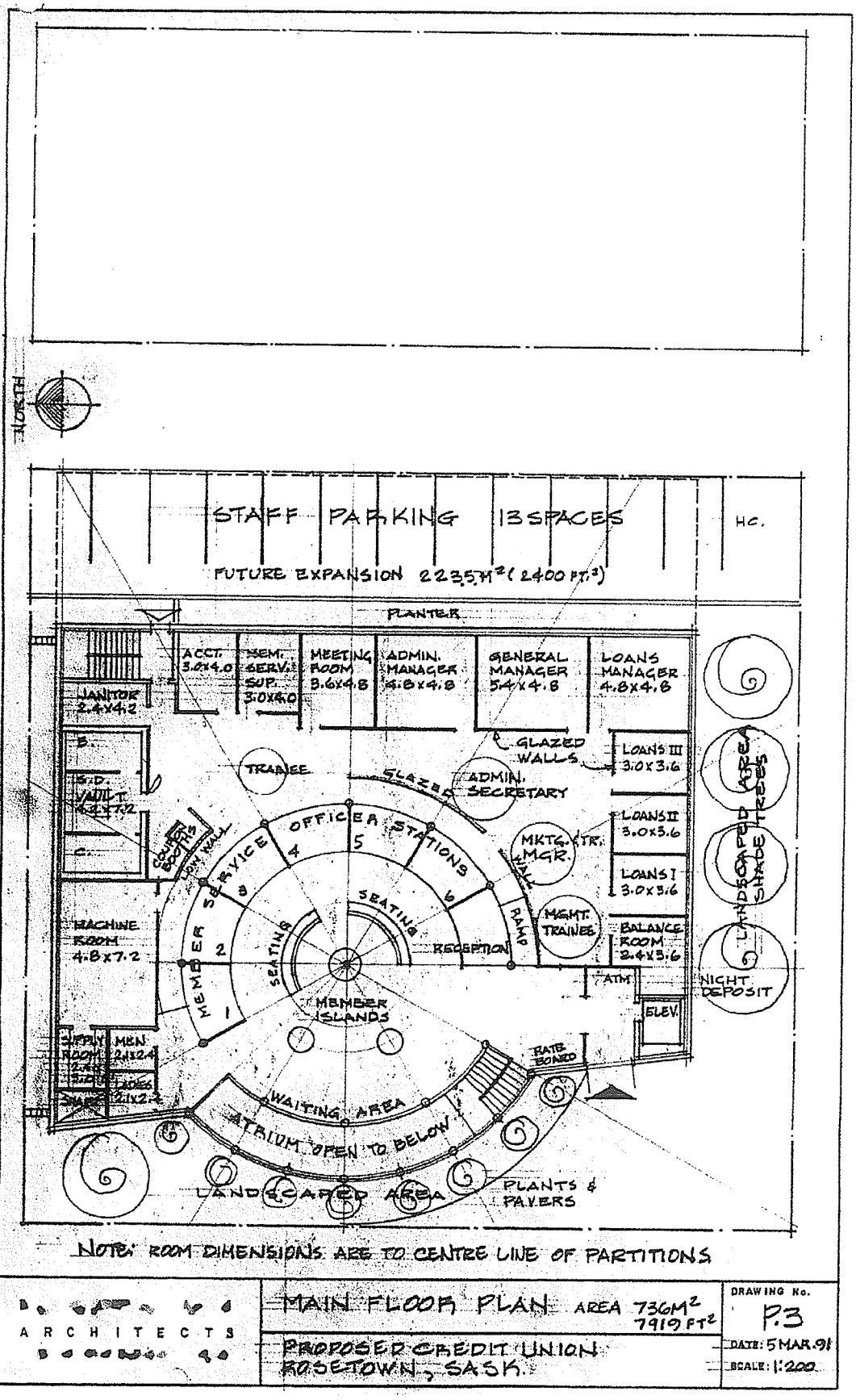



Figure 136. Architect design sketch 3, Main Floor Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

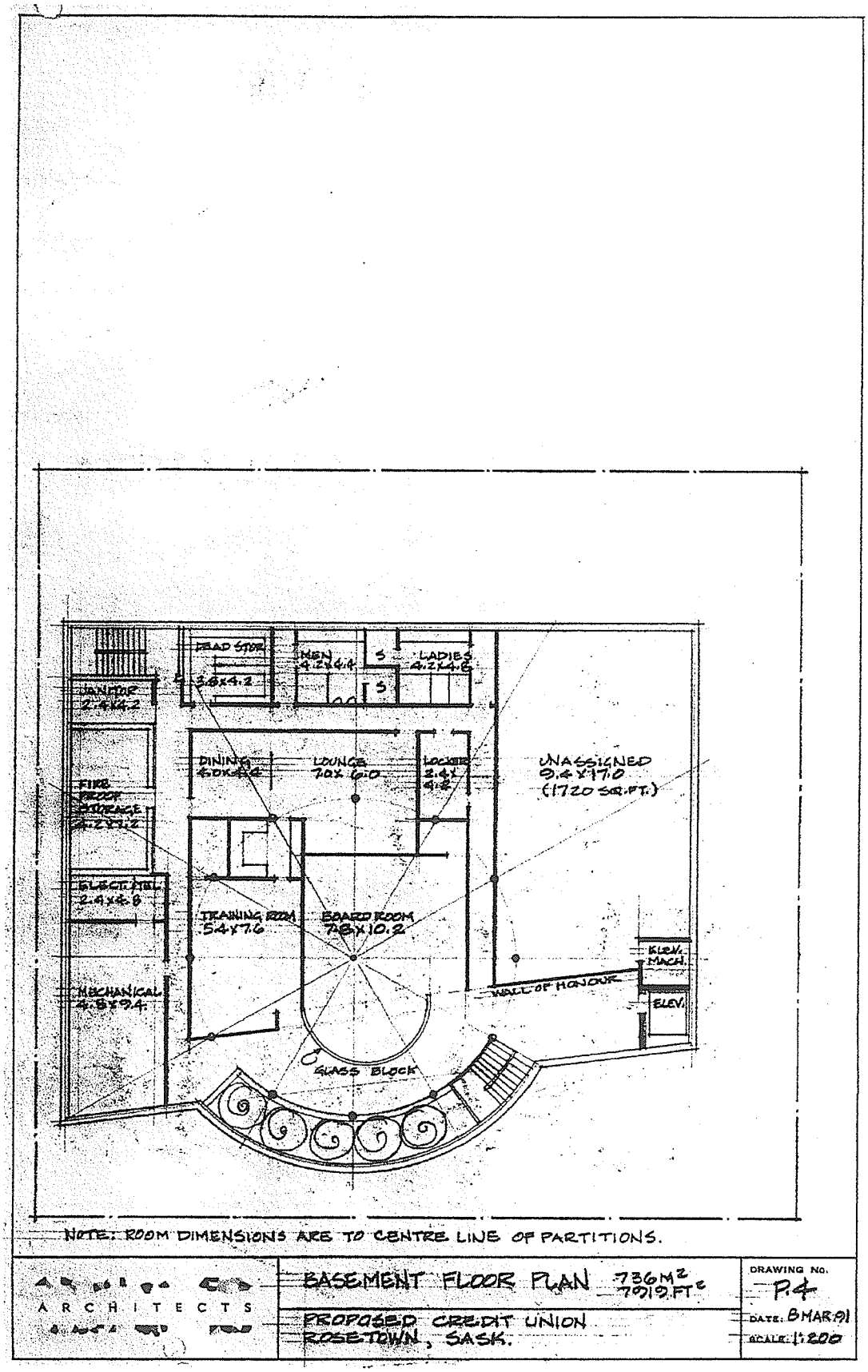



Figure 137. Architect design sketch 4, Basement Floor Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

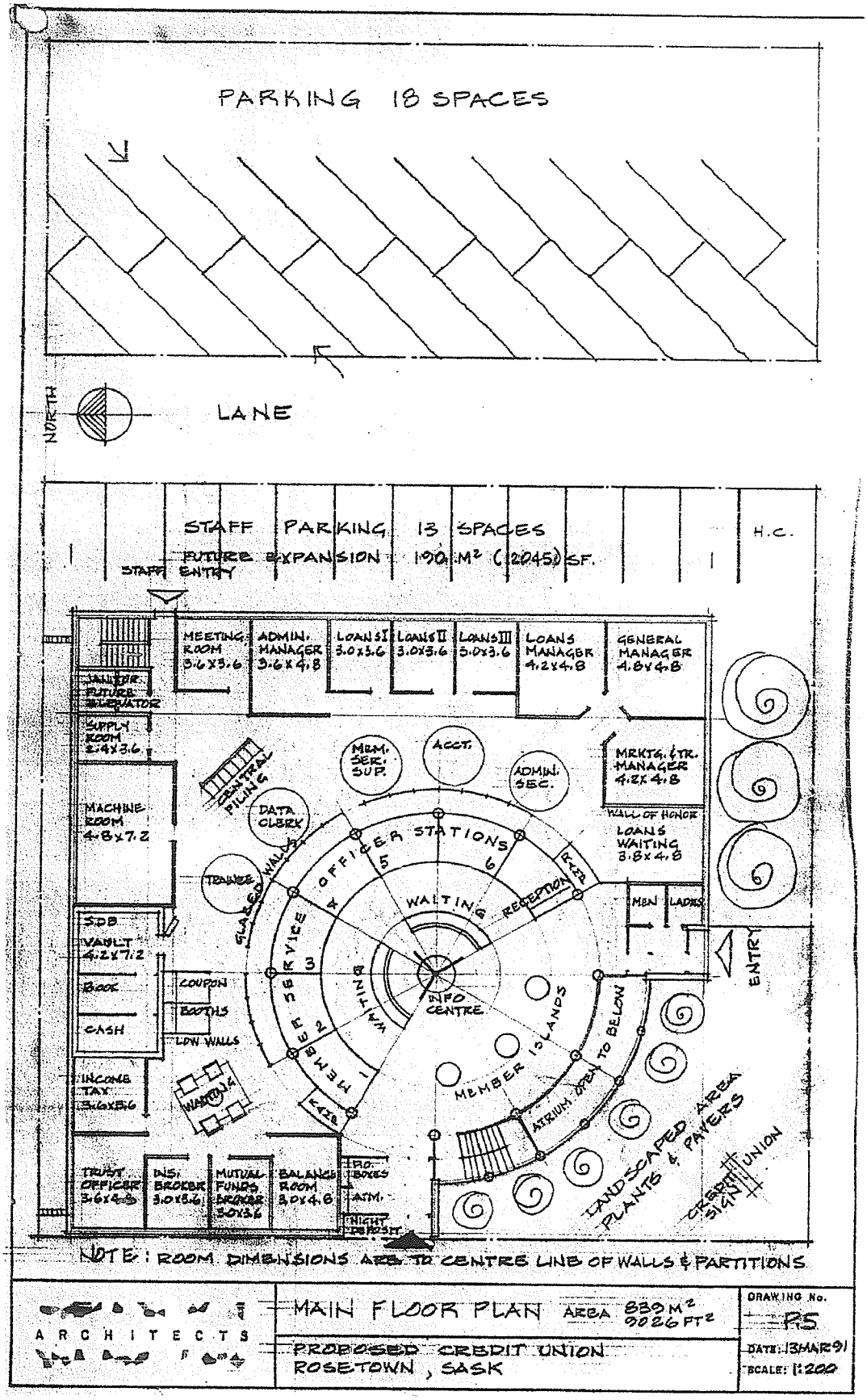



Figure 138. Architect design sketch 5, Main Floor Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

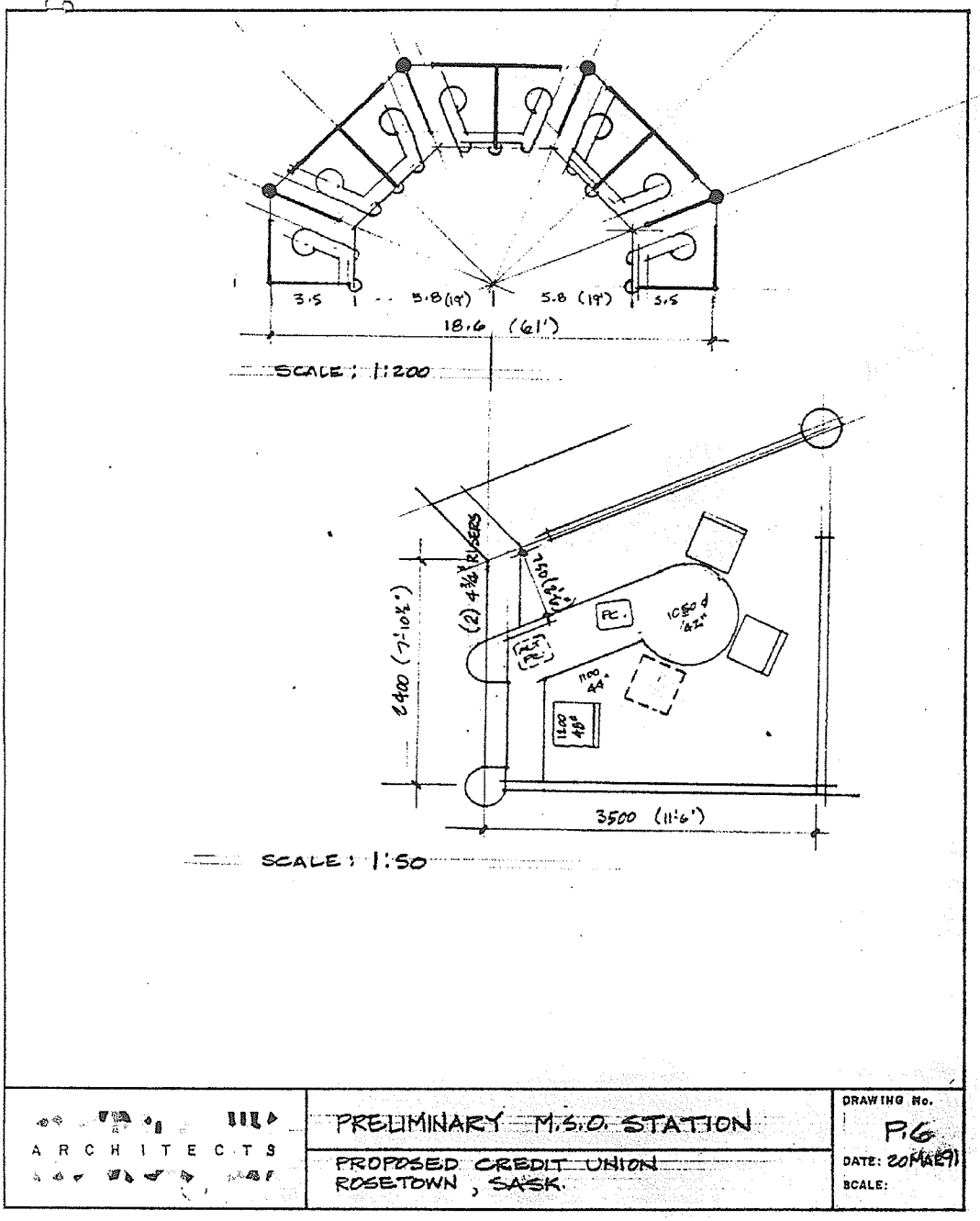



Figure 139. Architect design sketch 6, Preliminary MSO station. Courtesy of the architect.

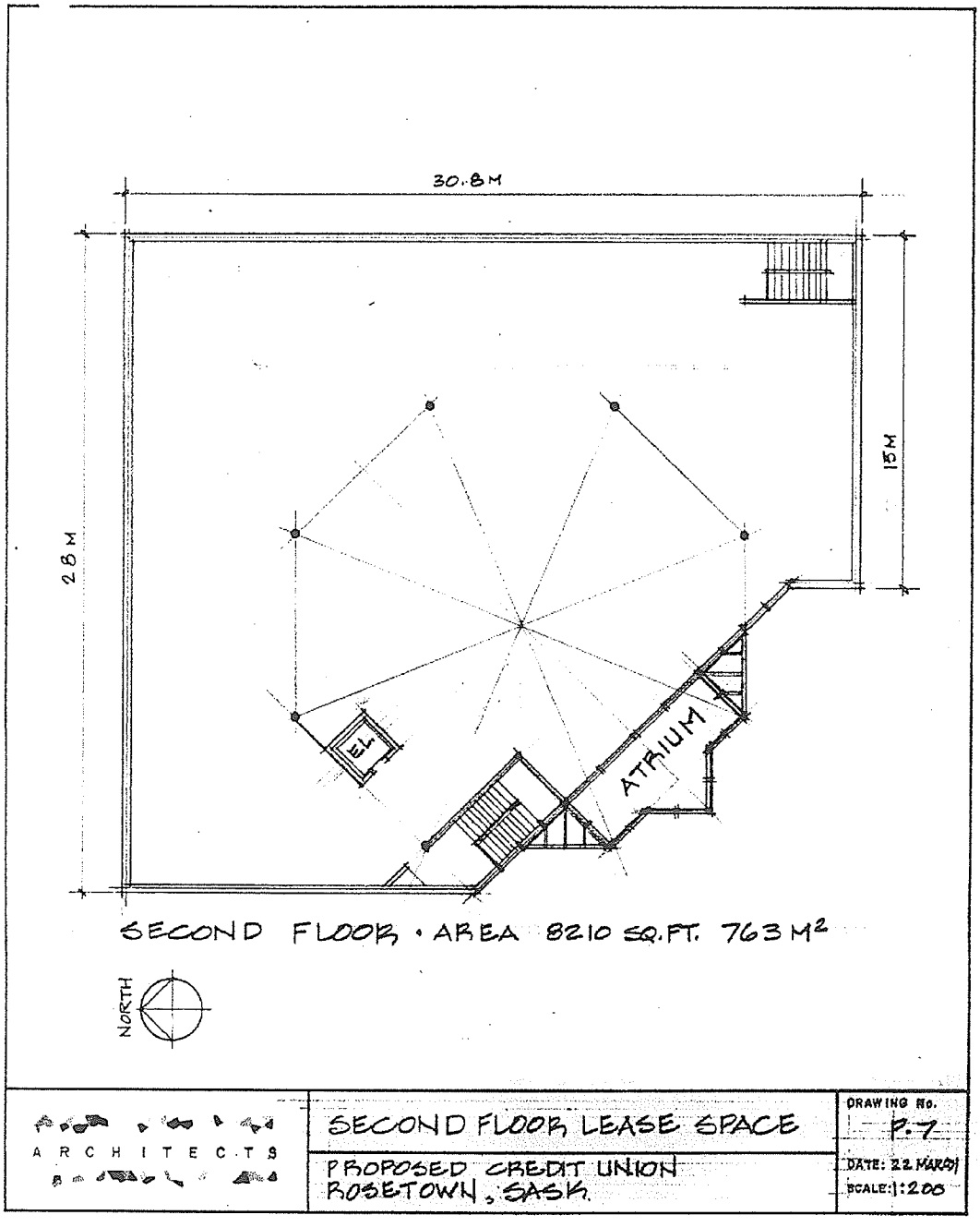



Figure 140. Architect design sketch 7, Second Floor Lease Space. Courtesy of the architect.

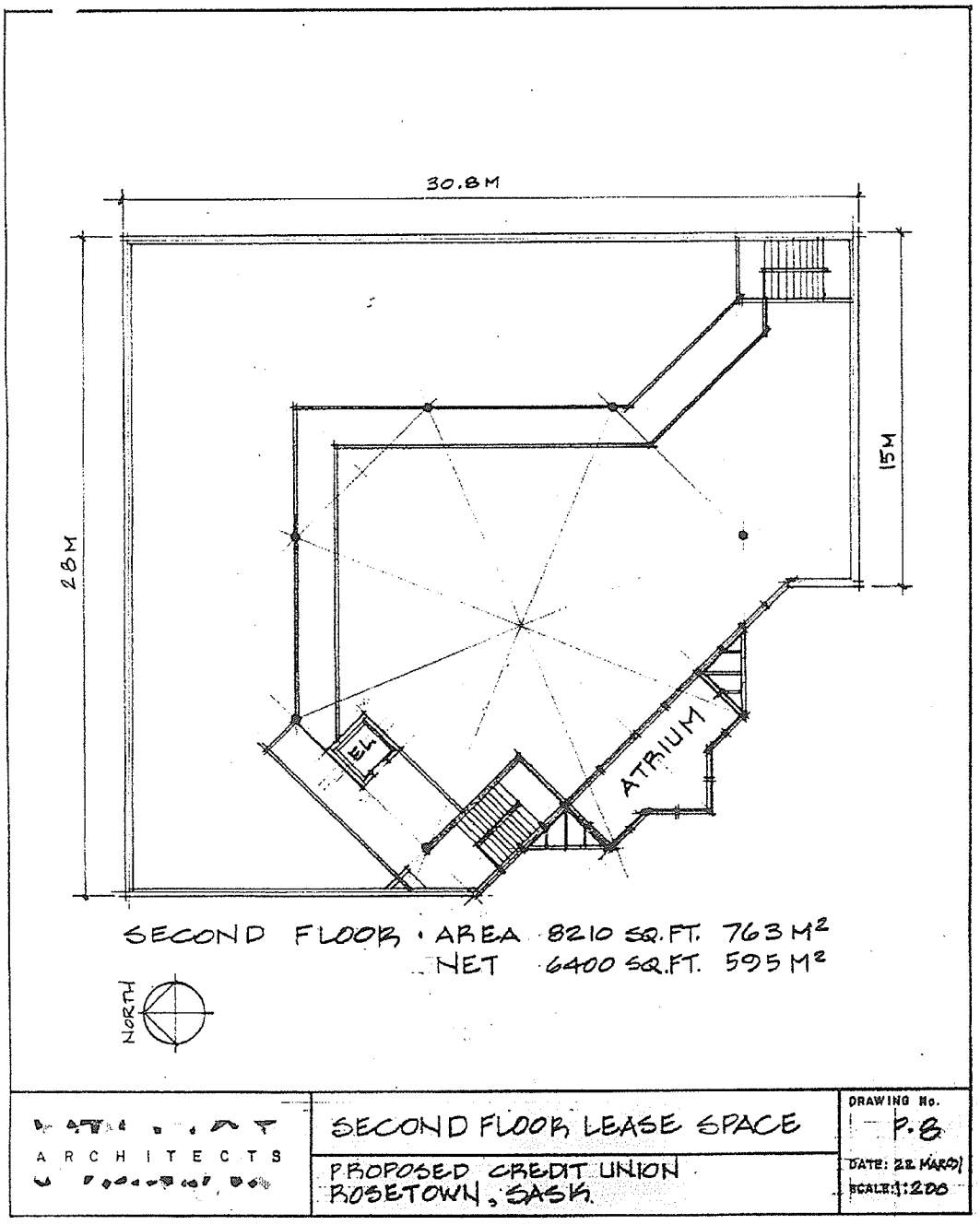



Figure 141. Architect design sketch 8, Second Floor Lease Space. Courtesy of the architect.

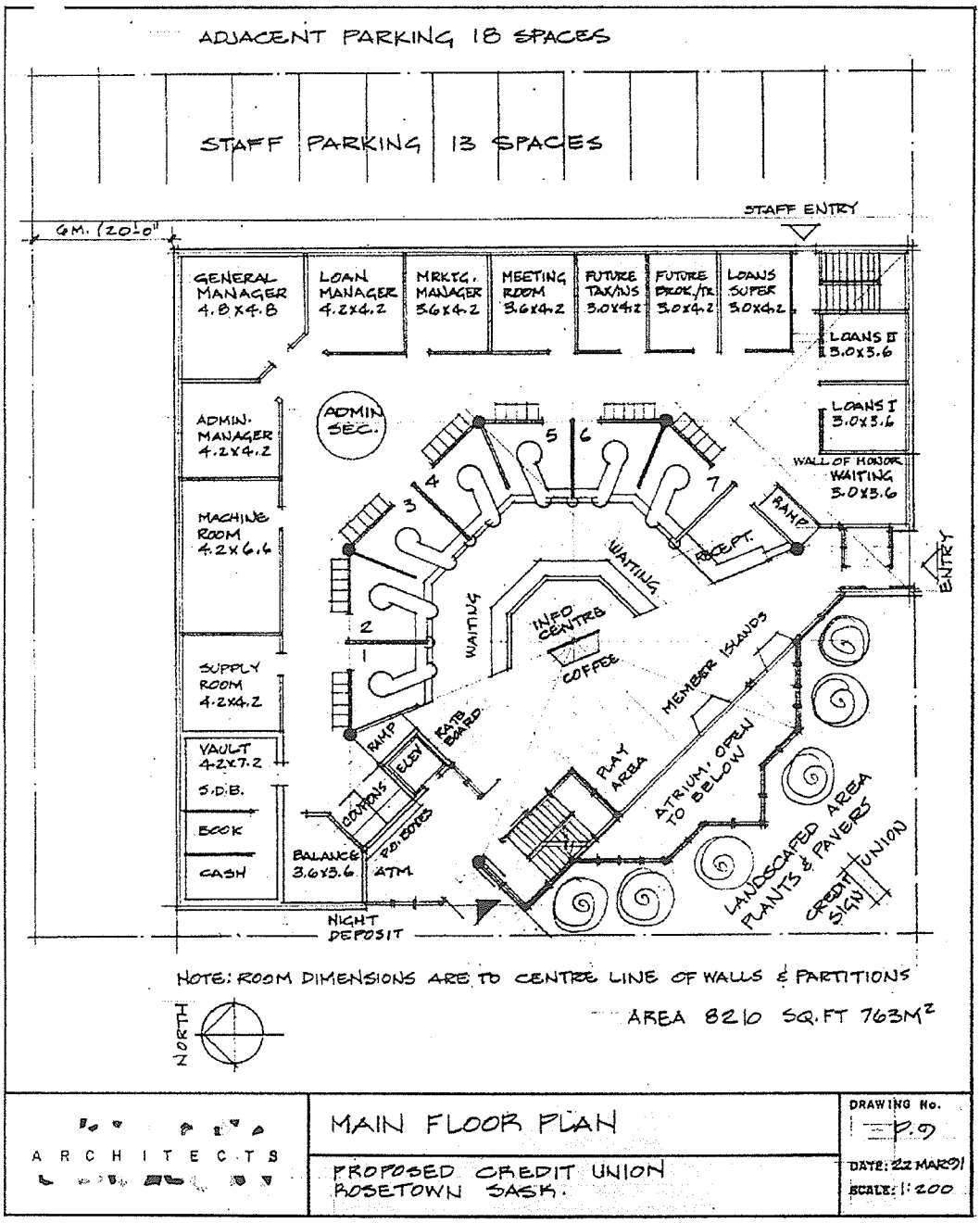



Figure 142. Architect design sketch 9, Main Floor Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

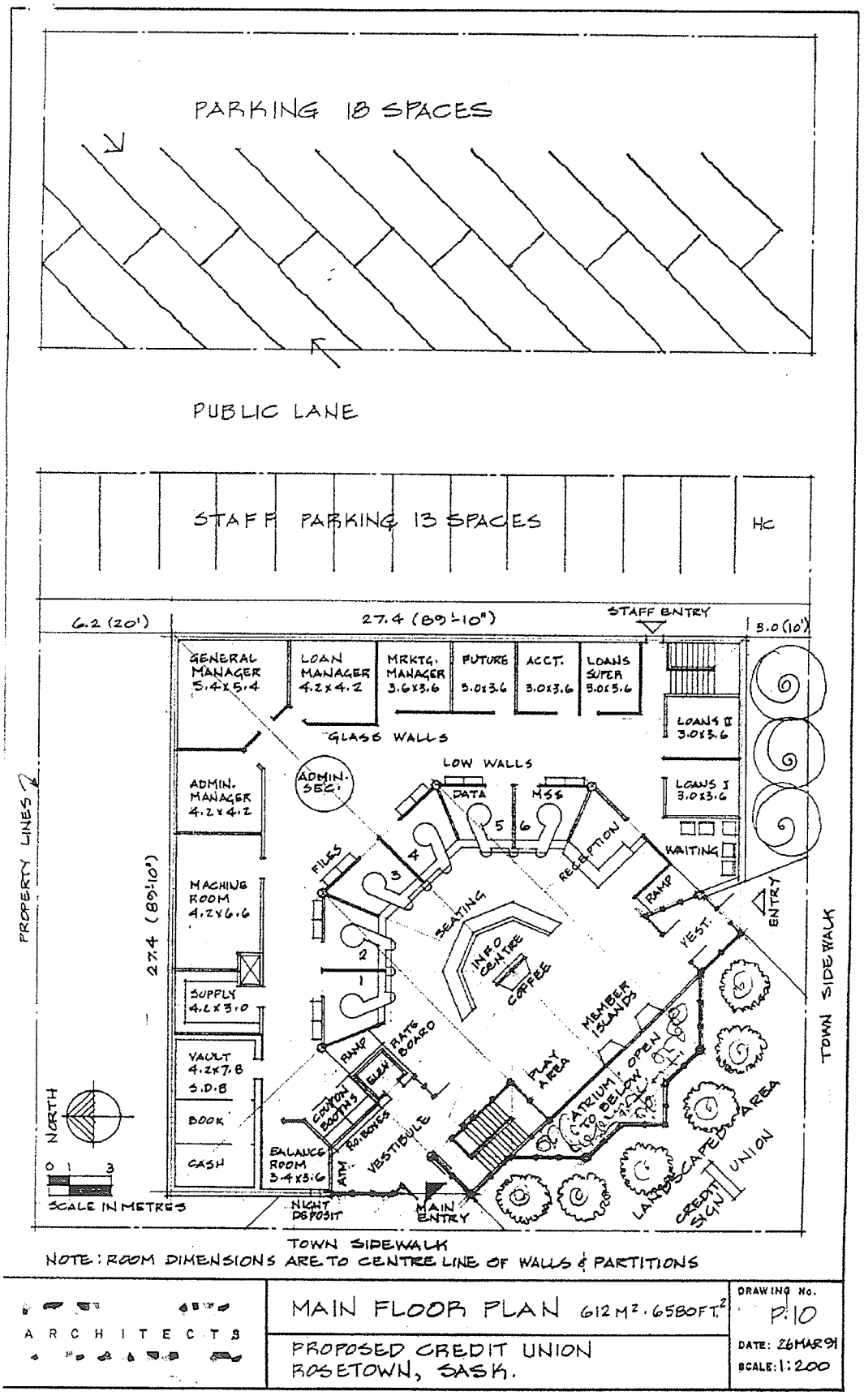



Figure 143. Architect design sketch, Main Floor Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

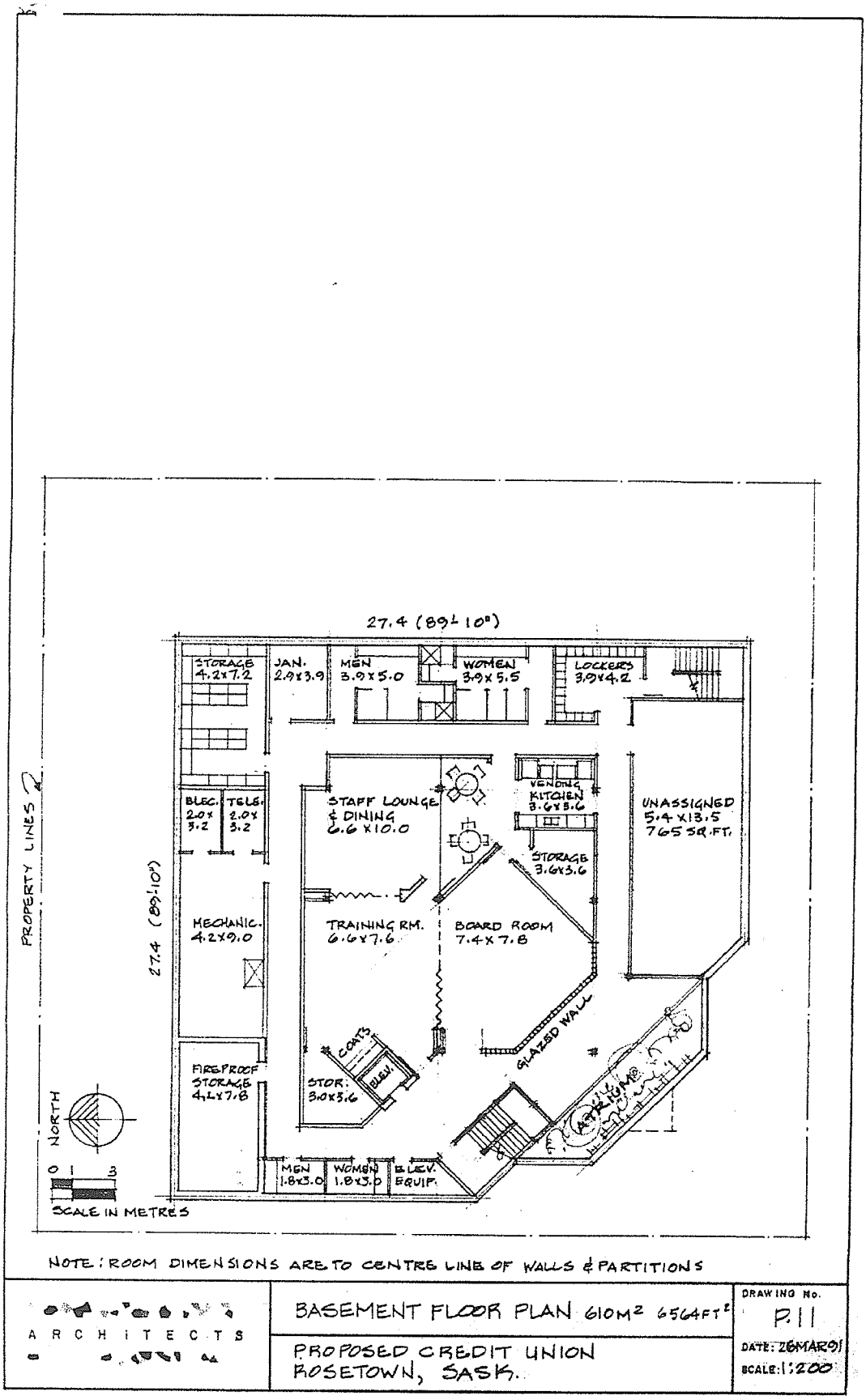



Figure 144. Architect design sketch 11, Basement Floor Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

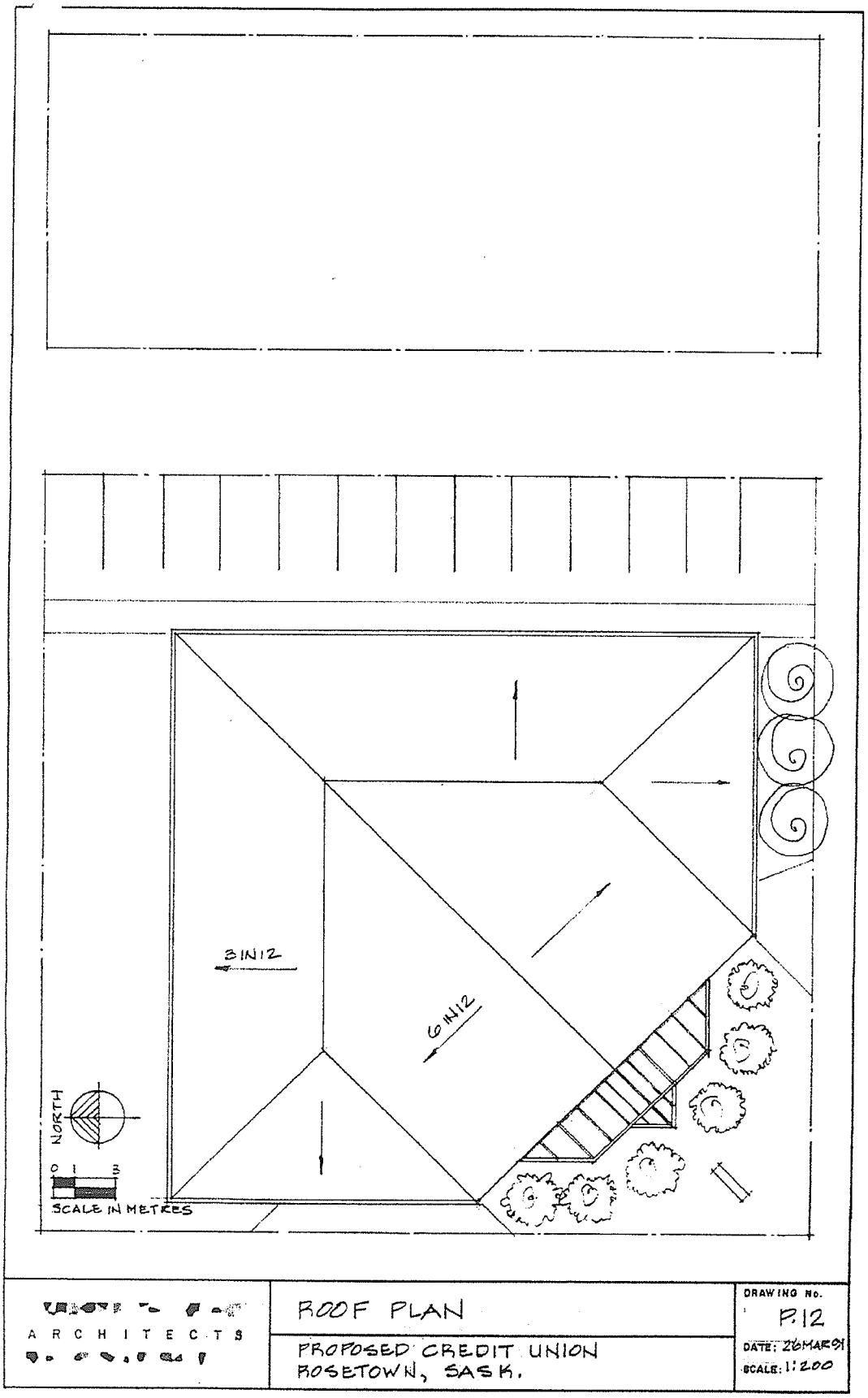



Figure 145. Architect design sketch 12, Roof Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

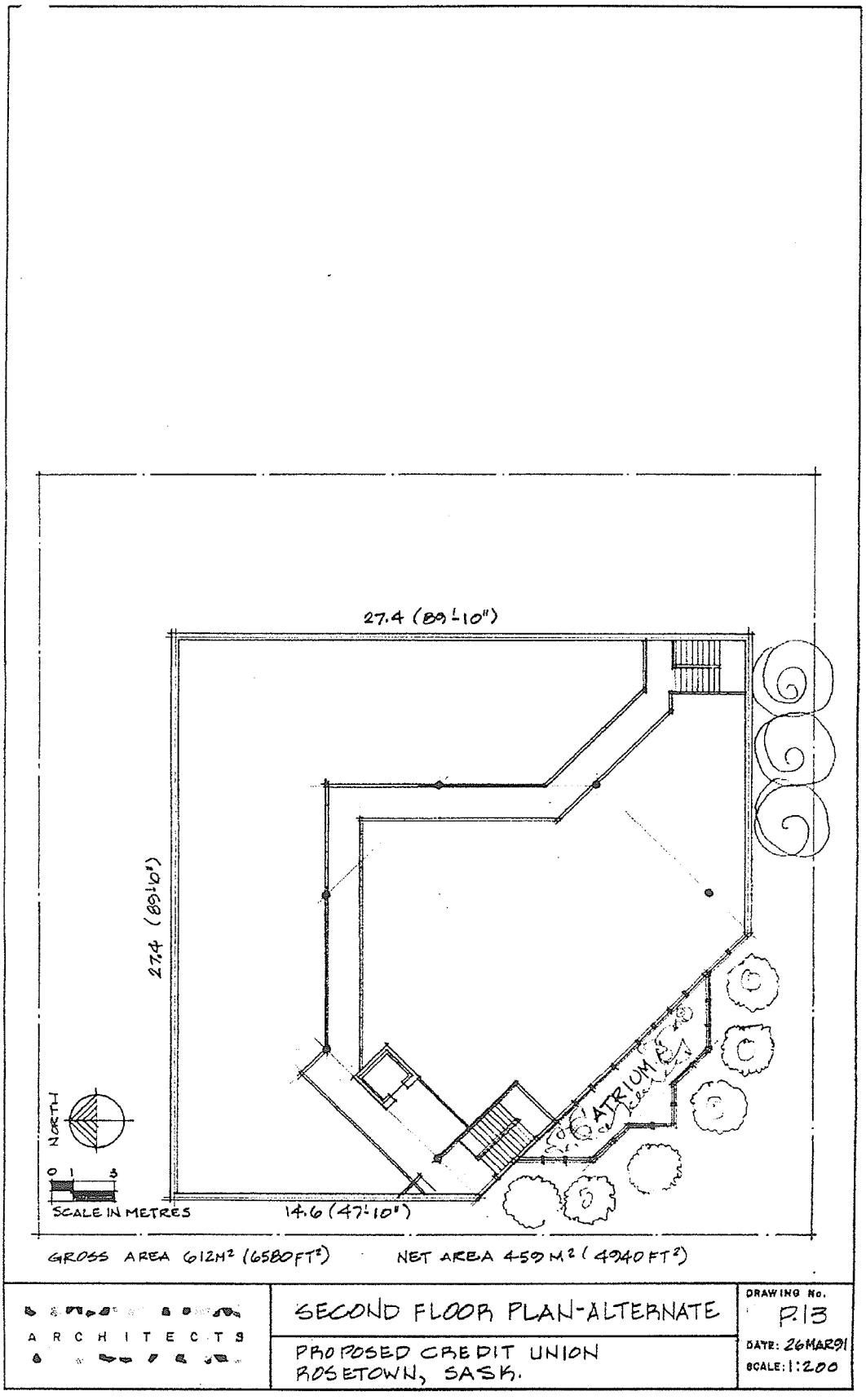



Figure 146. Architect design sketch 13, Second Floor Plan Alternate. Courtesy of the architect.

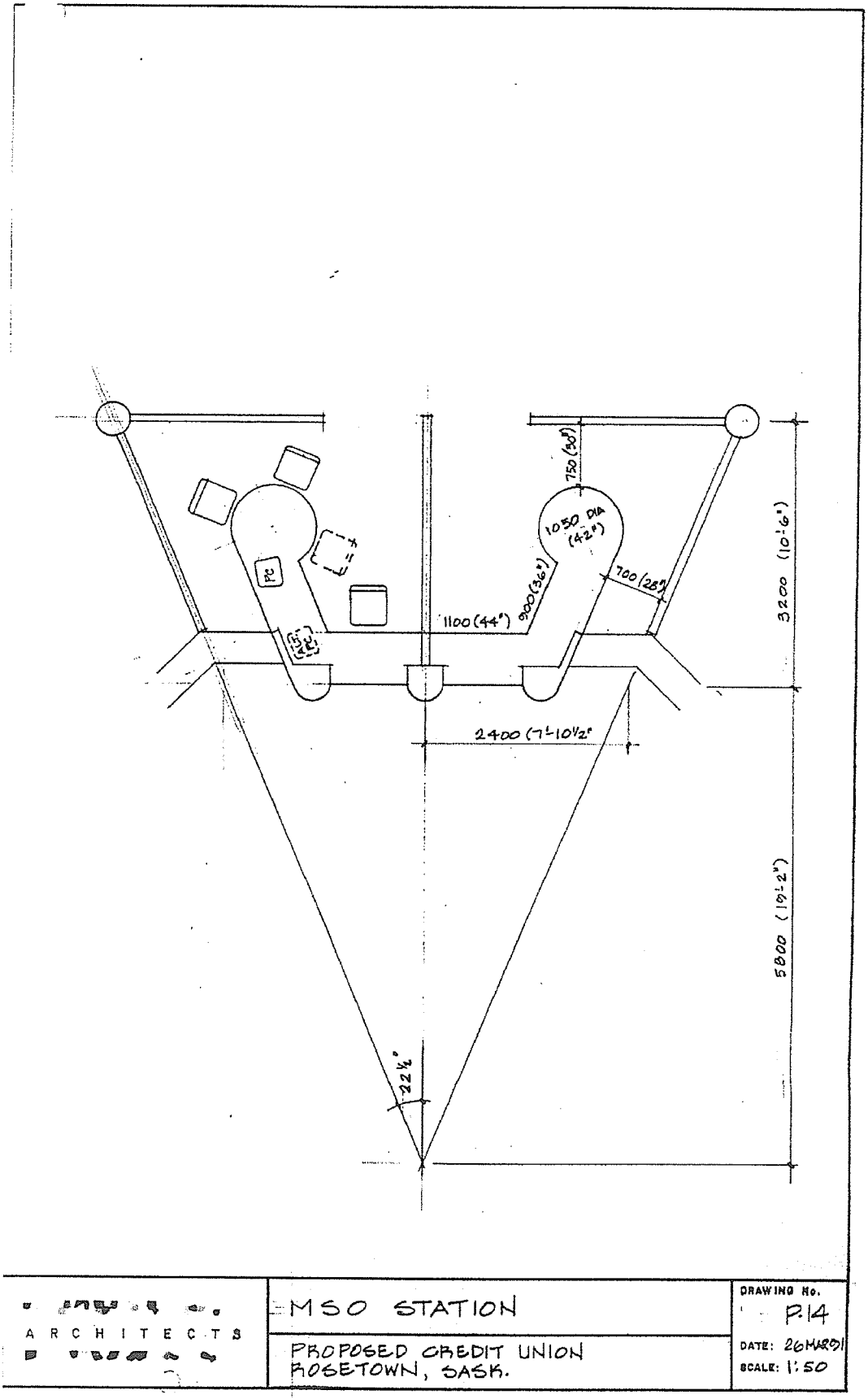



Figure 147. Architect design sketch 14, MSO Station. Courtesy of the architect.

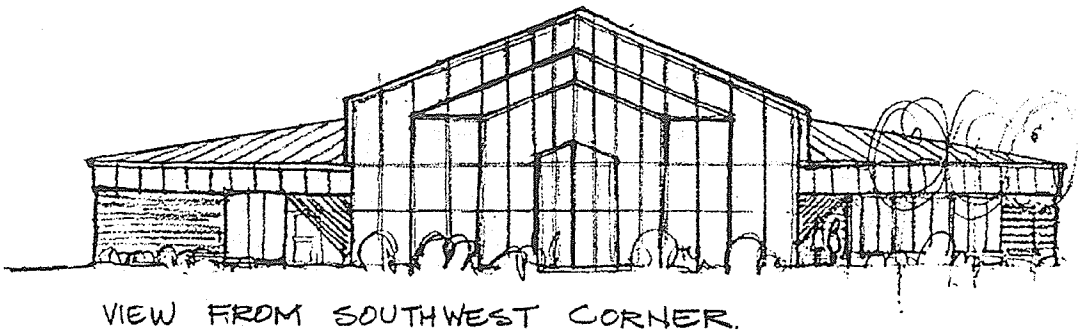



Figure 148. Architect design sketch, elevation study. Courtesy of the architect.

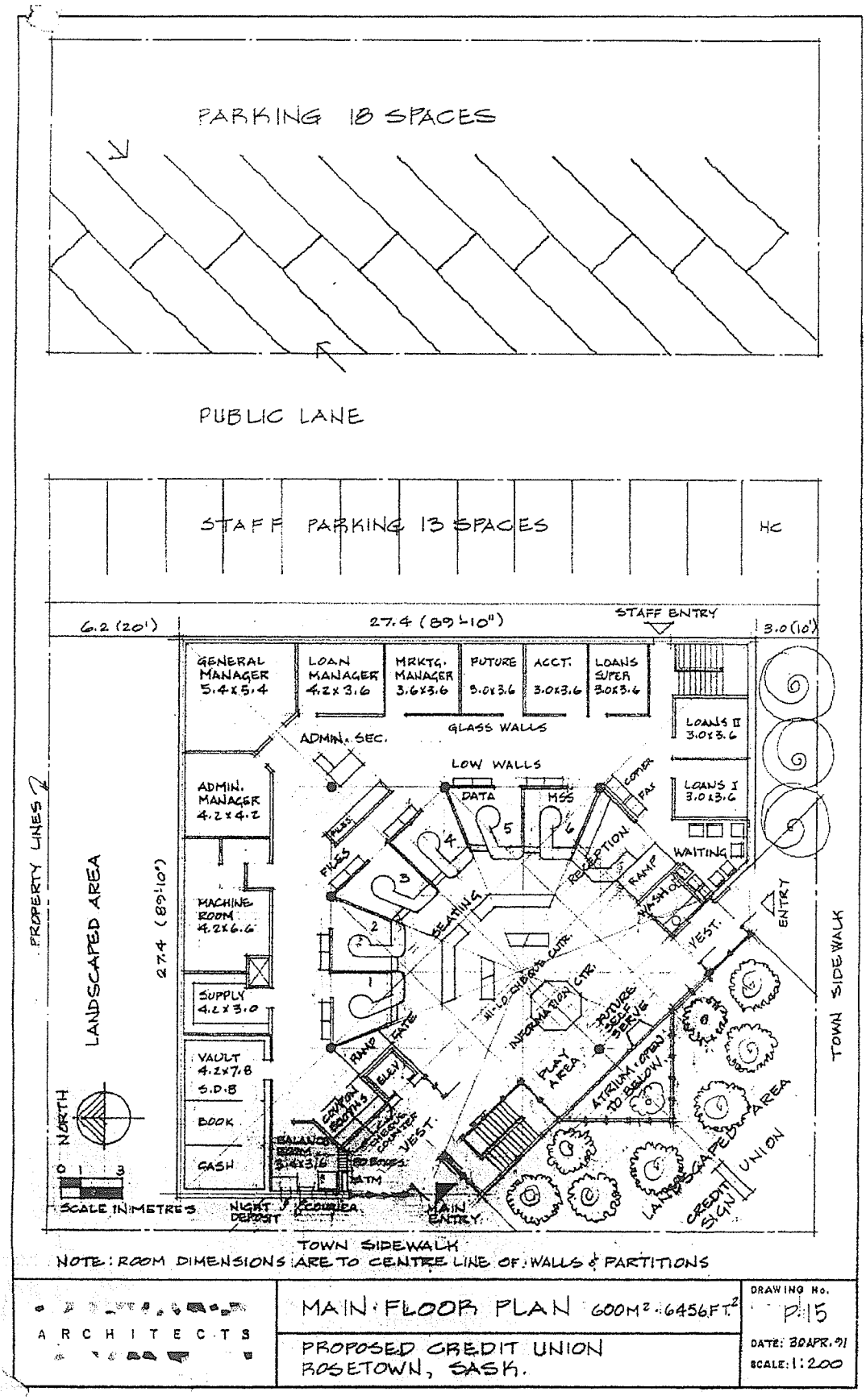



Figure 149. Architect design sketch 15, Main Floor Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

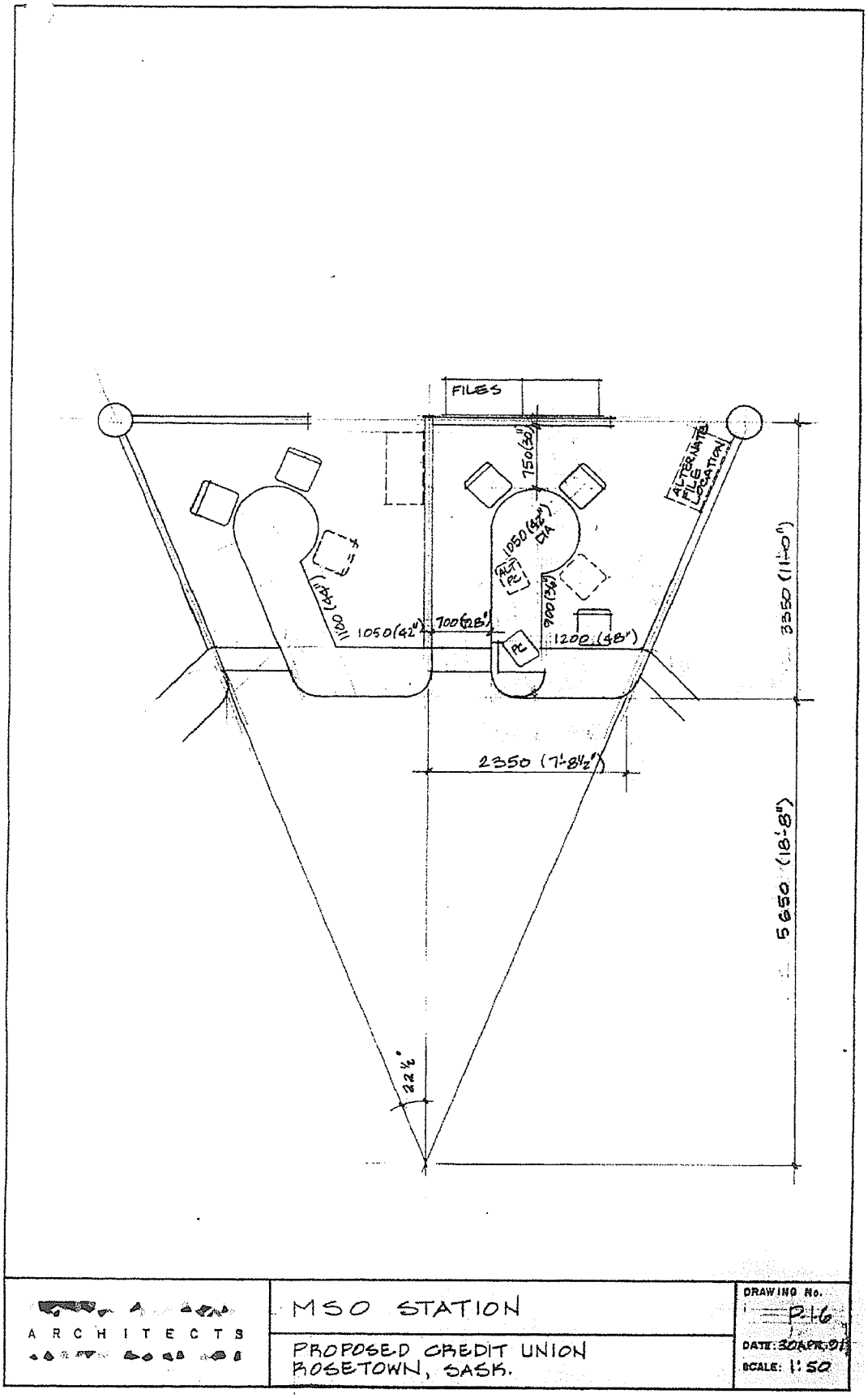



Figure 150. Architect design sketch 16, MSO Station. Courtesy of the architect.

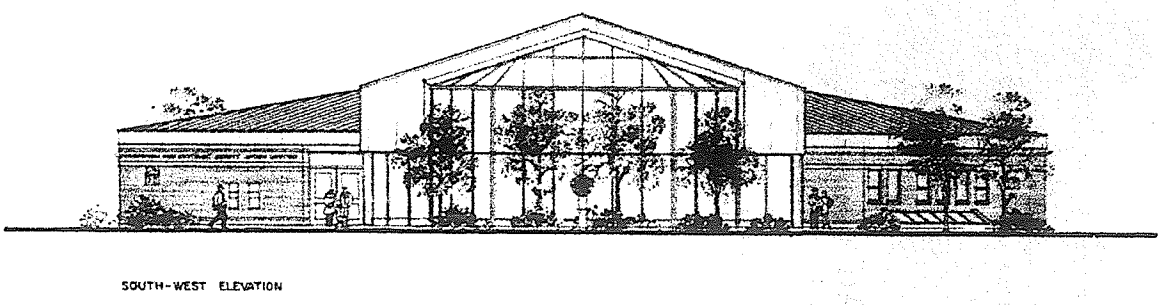



Figure 151. Architect design drawing, Southwest Elevation. Courtesy of the architect.

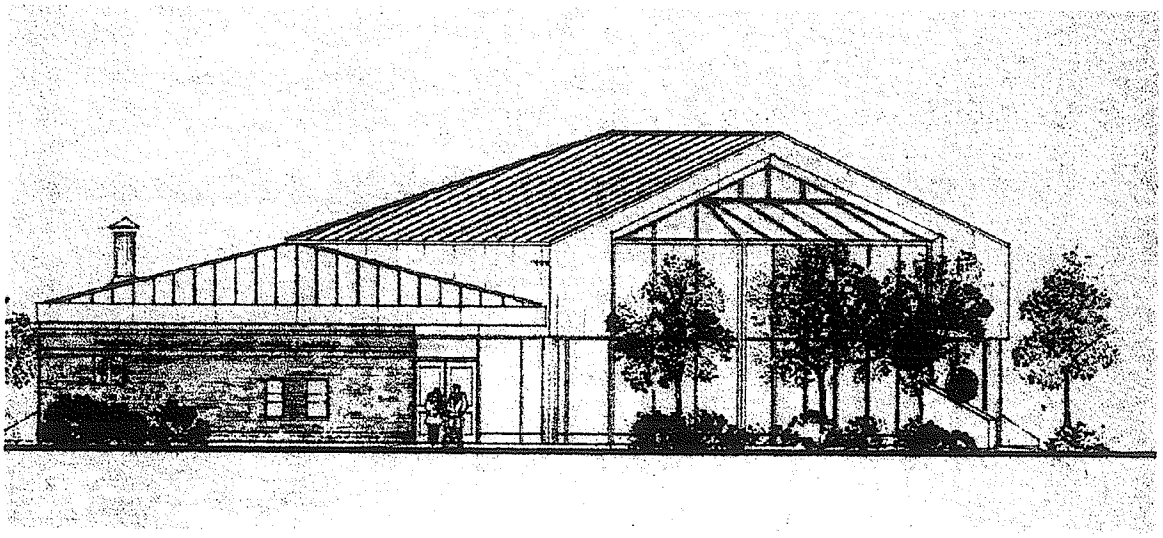


Figure 152. Architect design drawing, West Elevation. Courtesy of the architect.

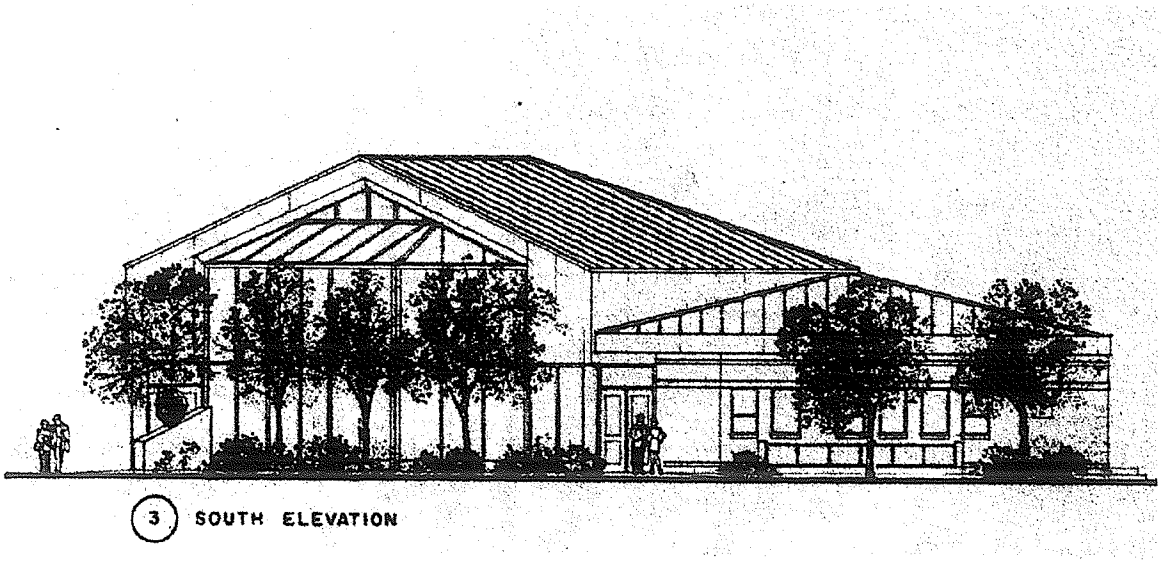



Figure 153. Architect design drawing, South Elevation. Courtesy of the architect.

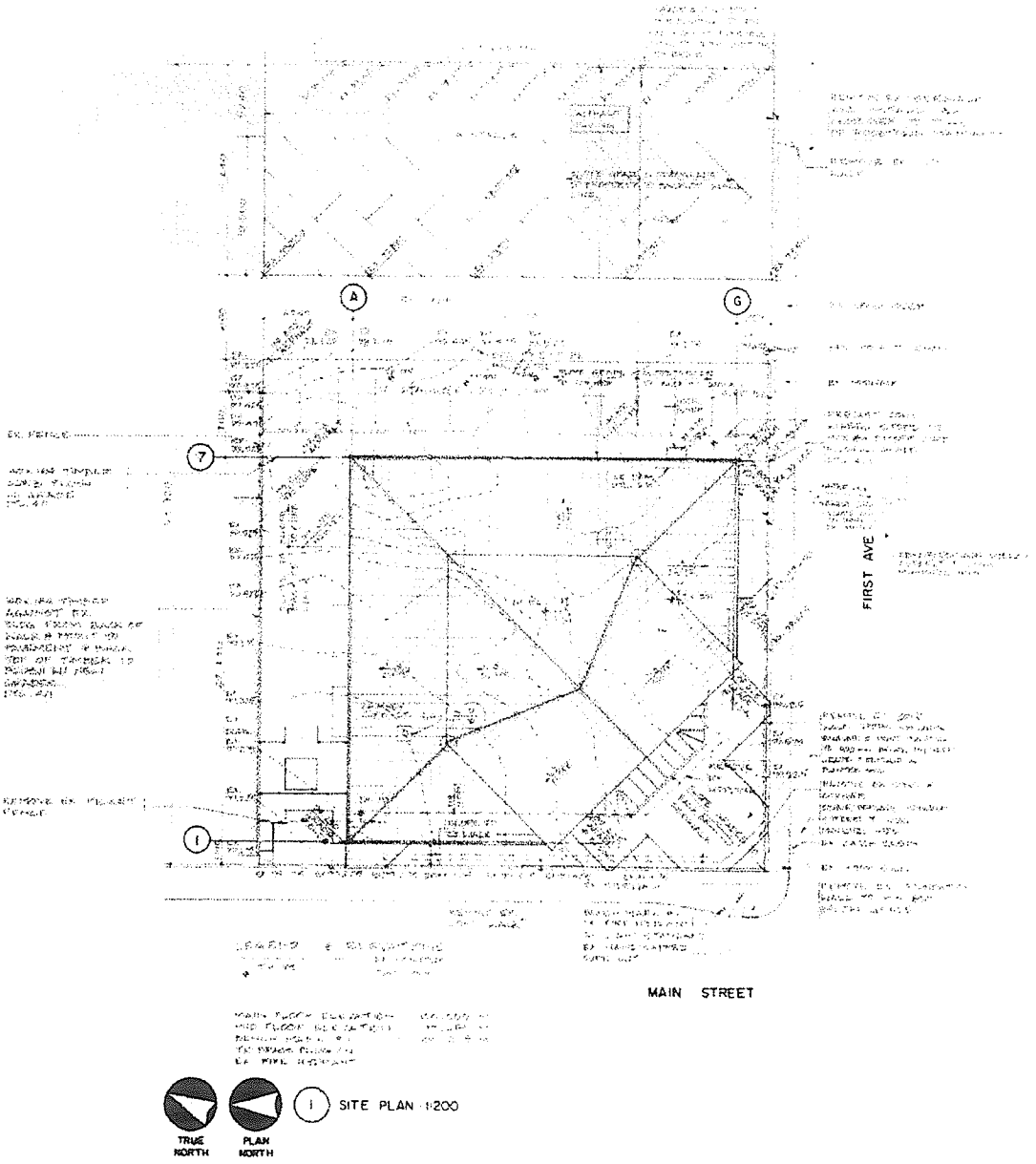



Figure 154. Architect construction document, Site Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

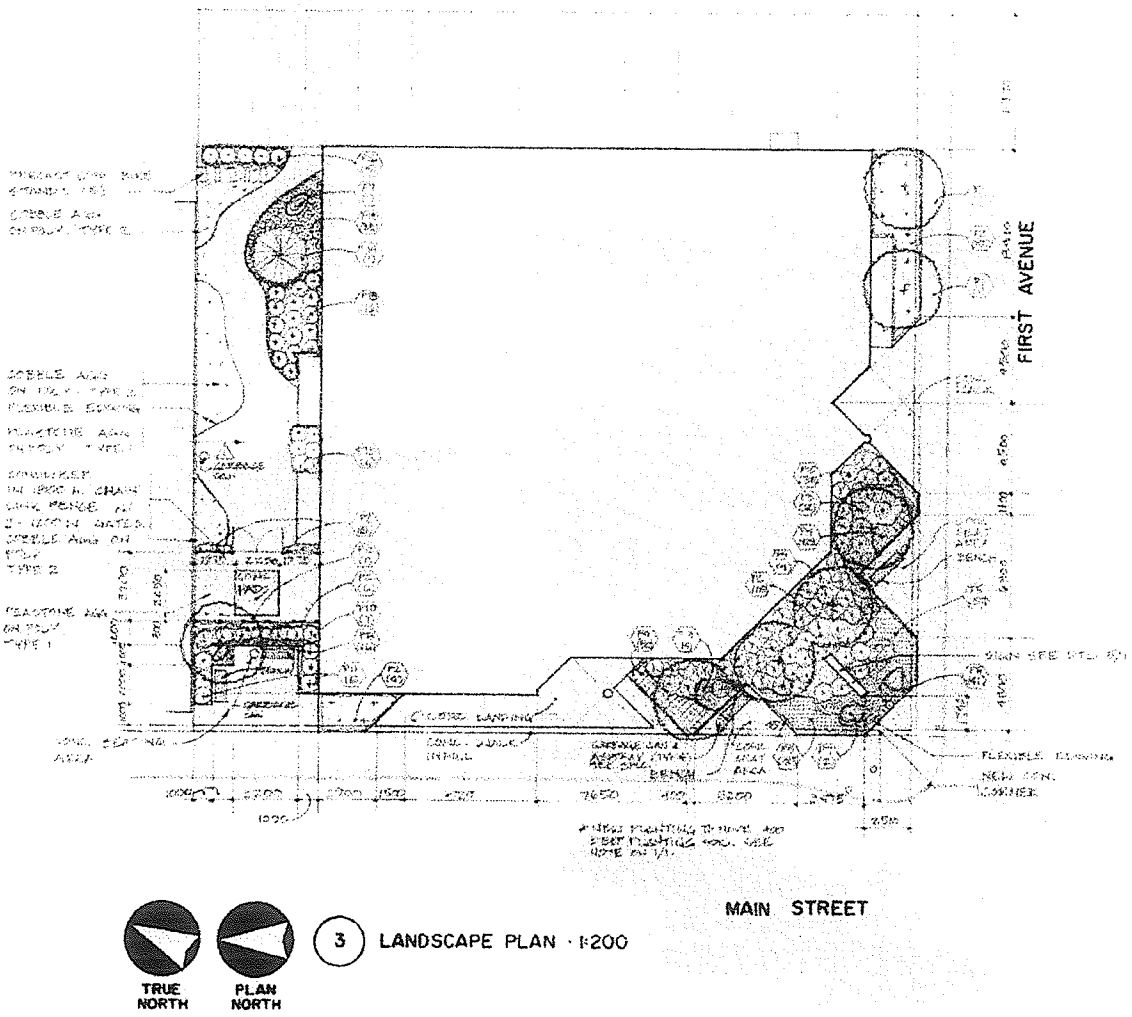
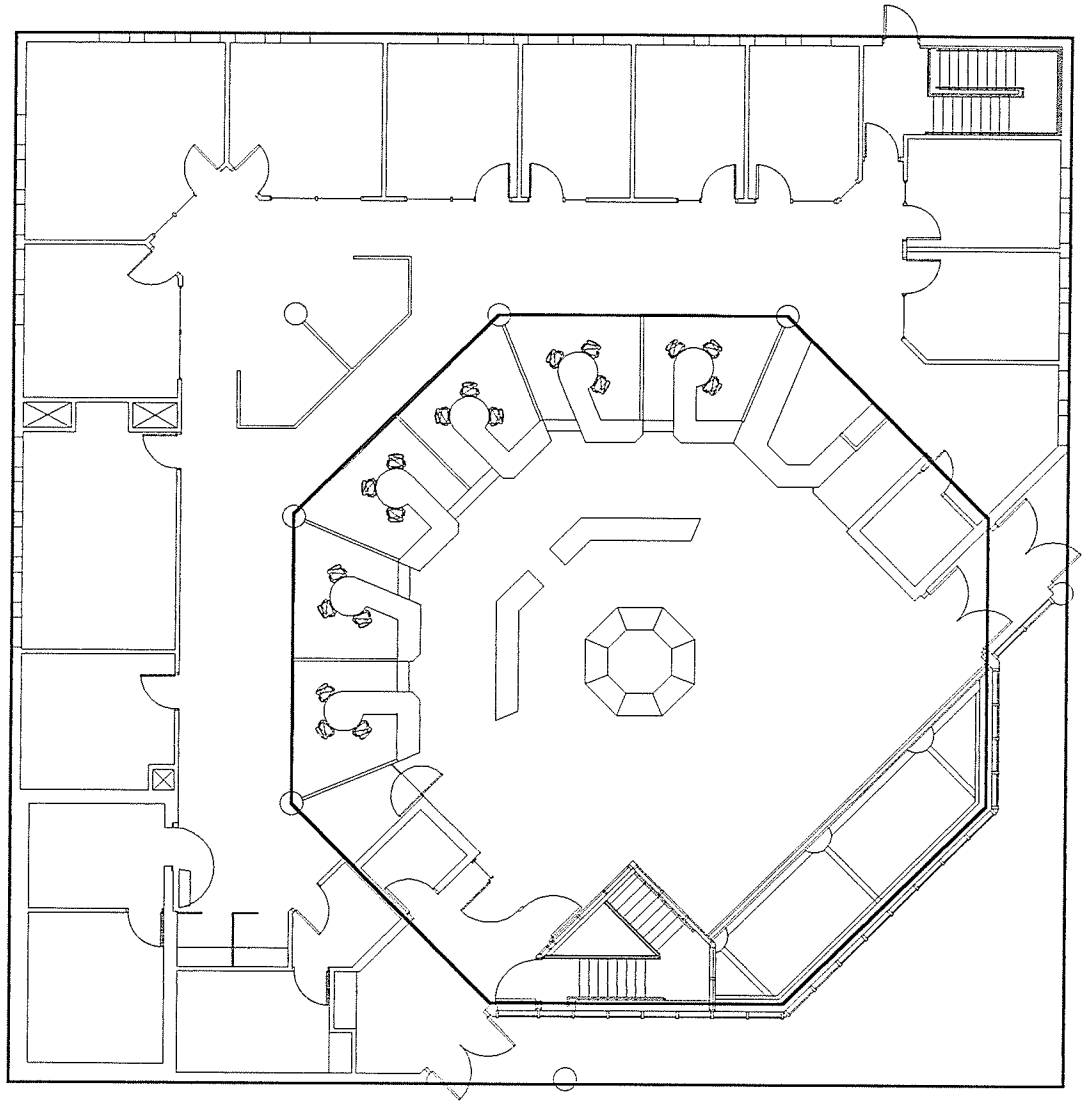
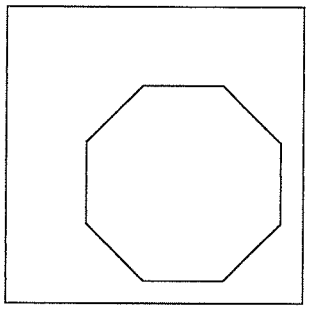



Figure 155. Architect construction document, Landscape Plan. Courtesy of the architect.

# APPENDIX G

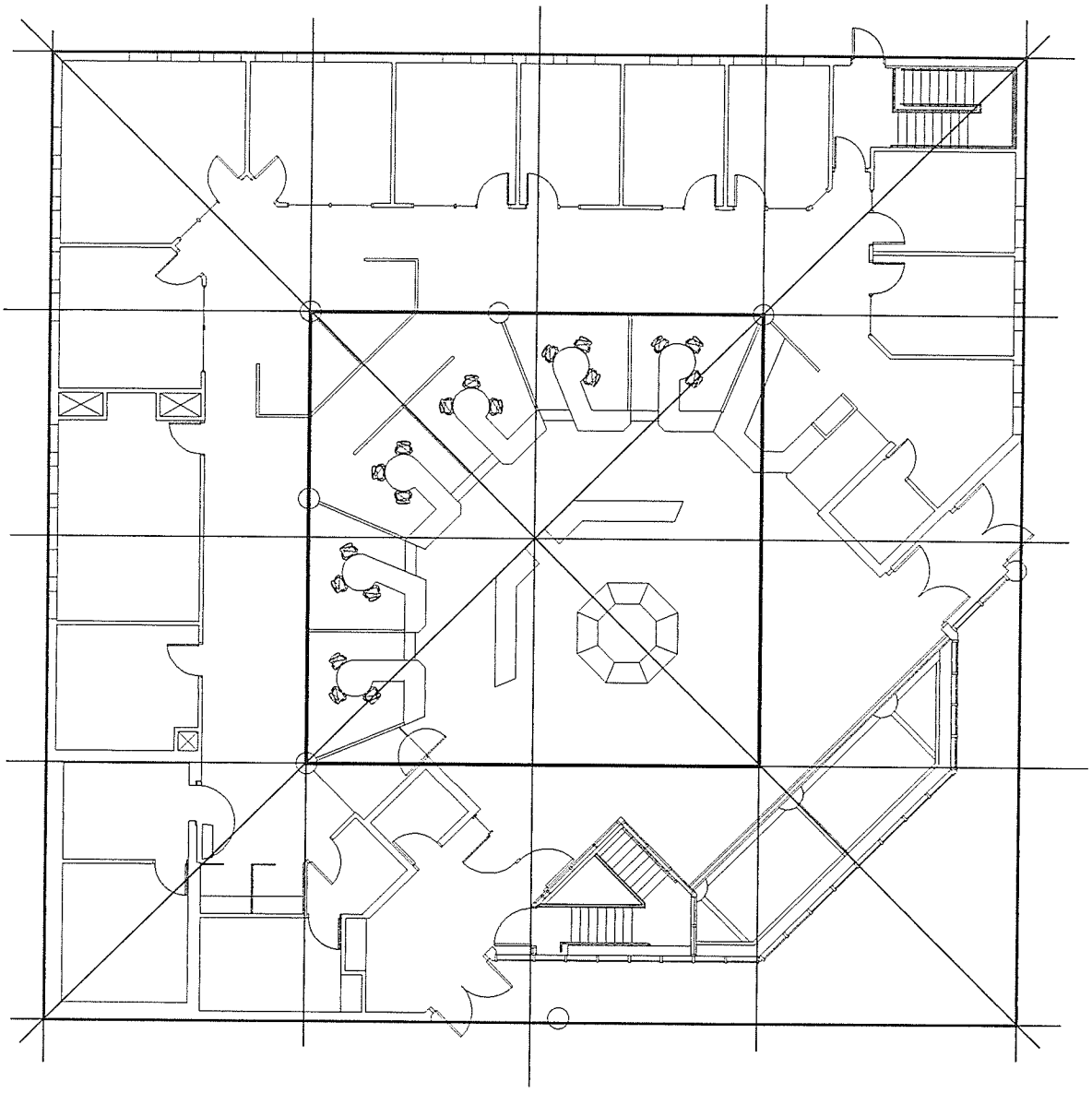
## GEOMETRICAL PROCEDURE DIAGRAMS

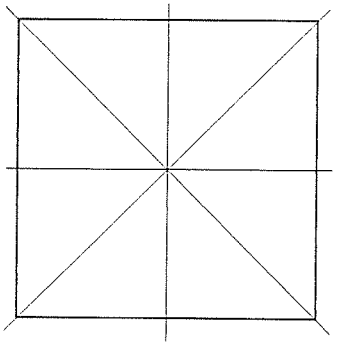




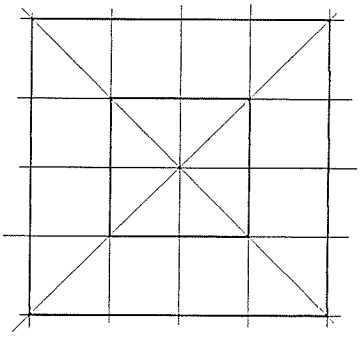
An octagon within a square.

Figure 156. RDCU building, geometrical system, analysis diagram 1



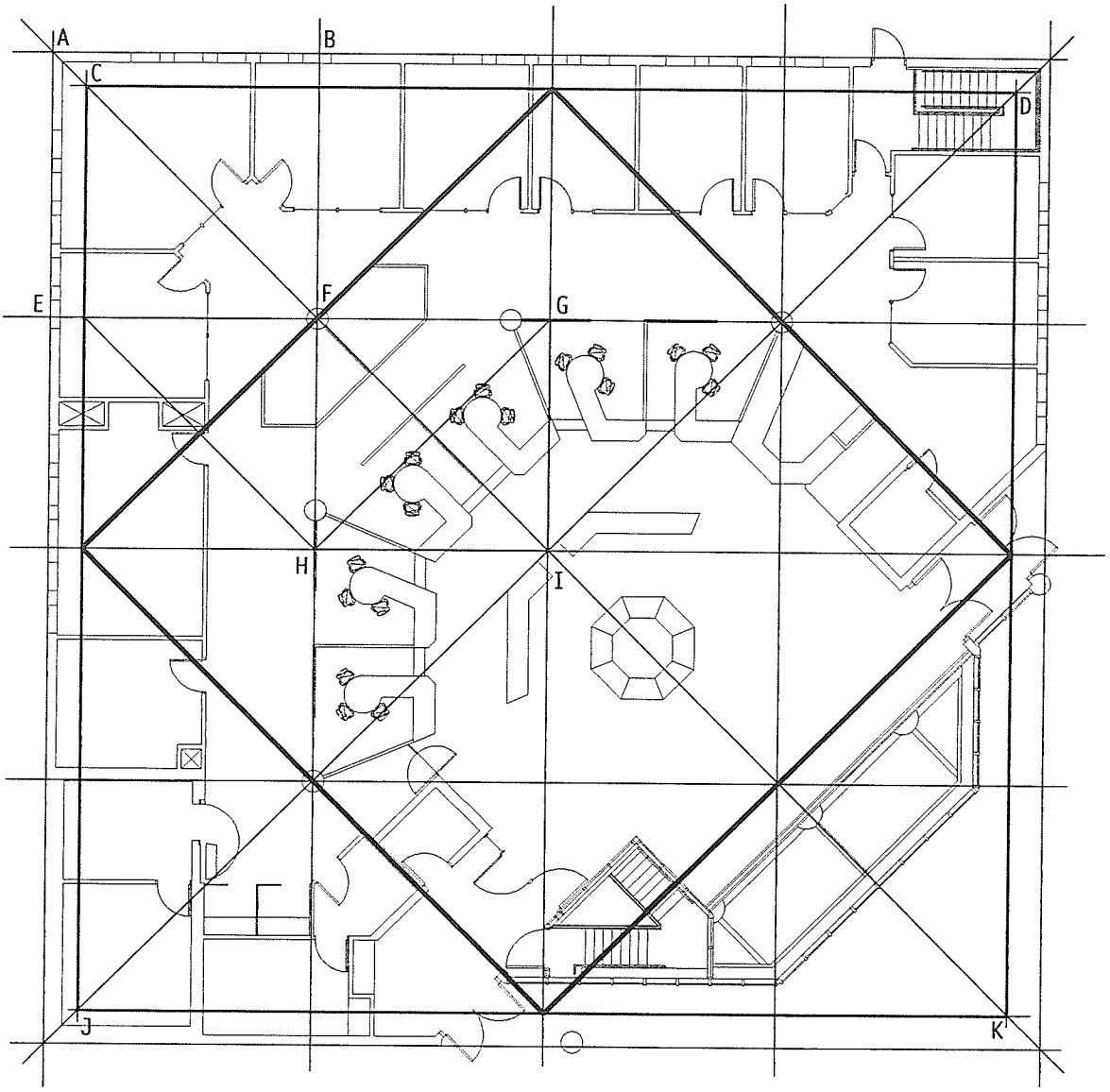


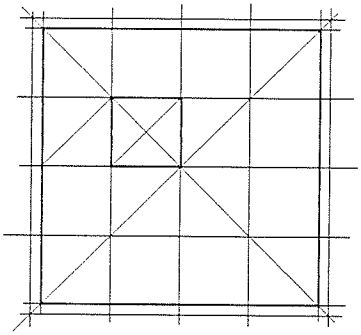
(1) Find that building is square.



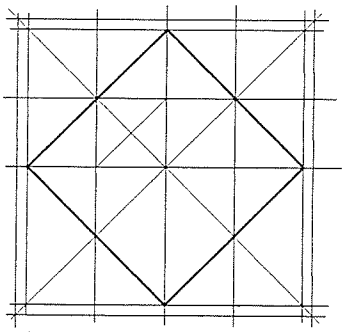
(2) Find square drawn through columns.

Figure 157. RDCU building, geometrical system, analysis diagram 2



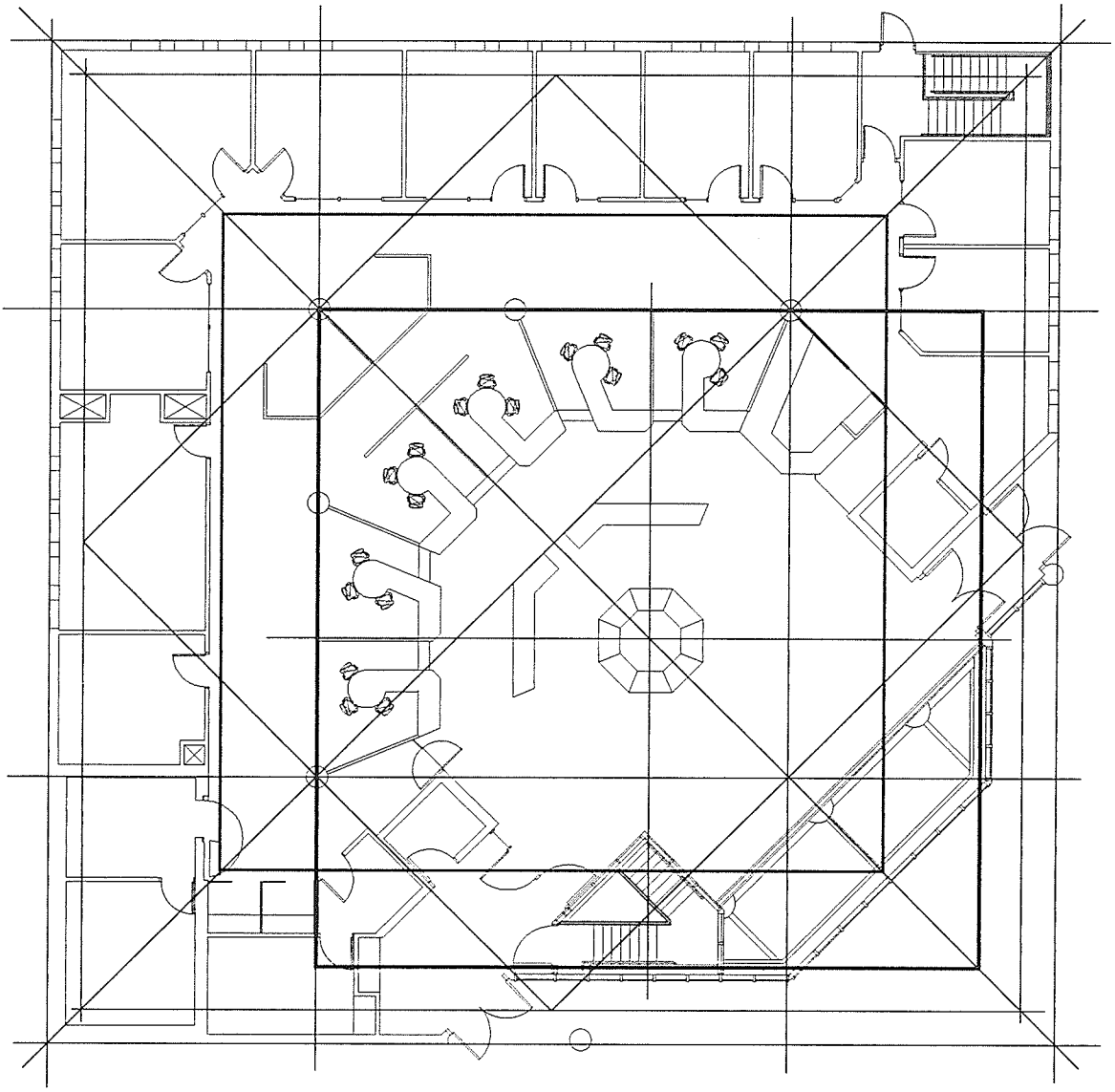



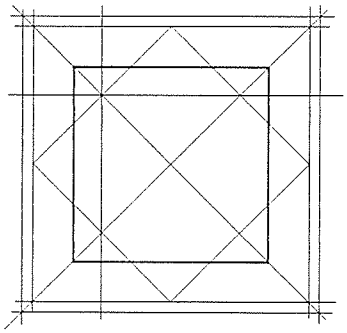
(3) Since square ABEF is not congruent with FGHI, neither is the square found in step 1. Find square CDJK, which is congruent with FGHI.



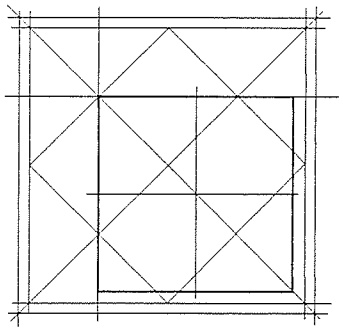
(4) Find rotated square which runs through the centre points of each side of CDJK.

Figure 158. RDCU building, geometrical system, analysis diagram 3



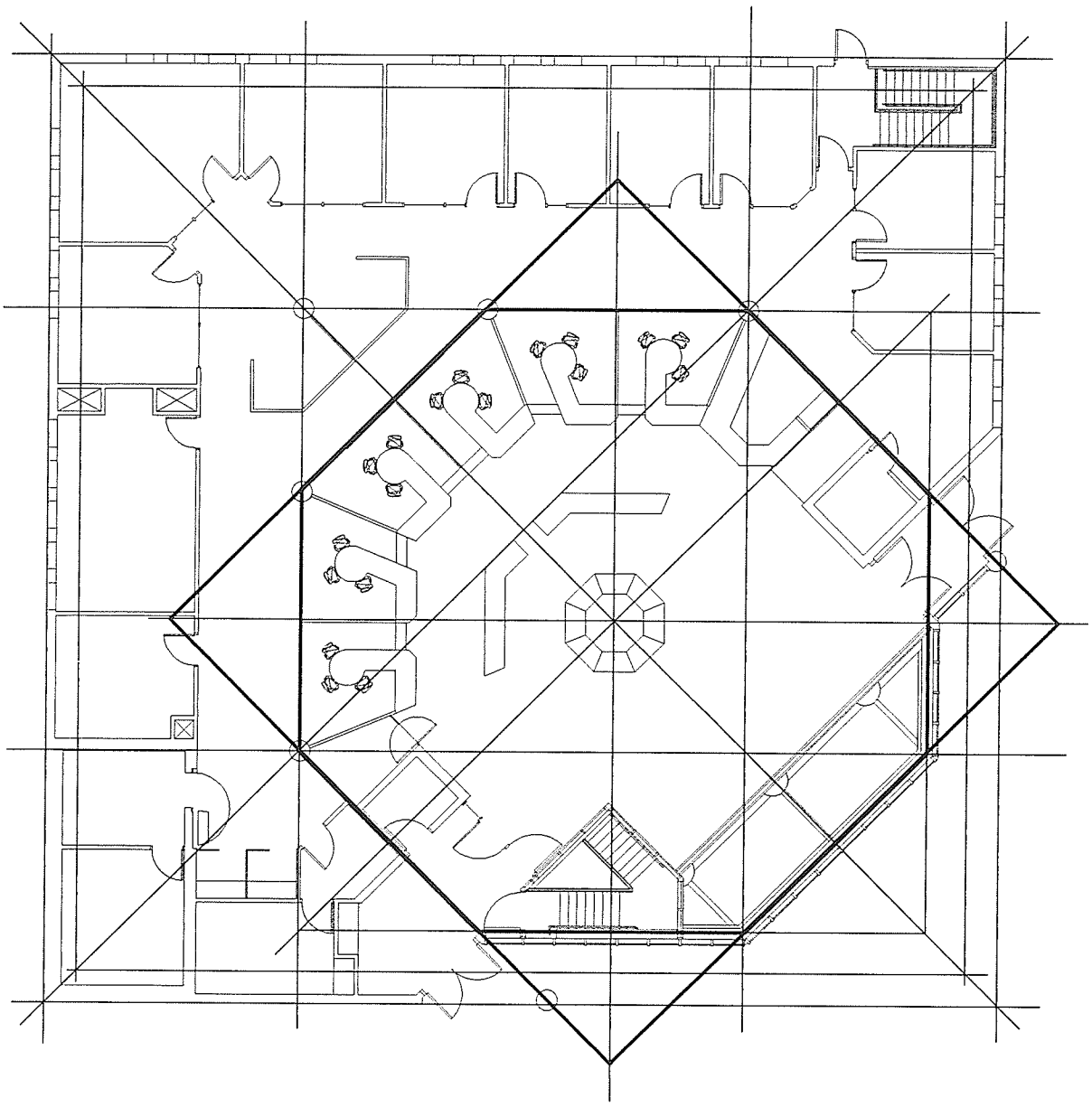


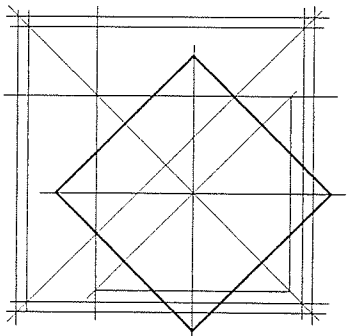
(5) Rotate the rotated square 45°.



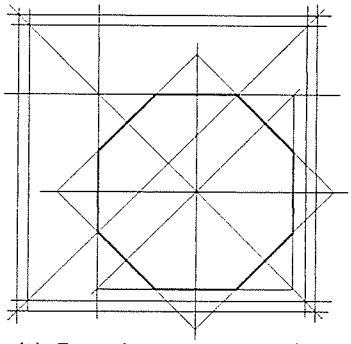
(6) Shift the square along its diagonal axis to where two of its sides correspond with two sides of the square drawn through the columns.

Figure 159. RDCU building, geometrical system, analysis diagram 4



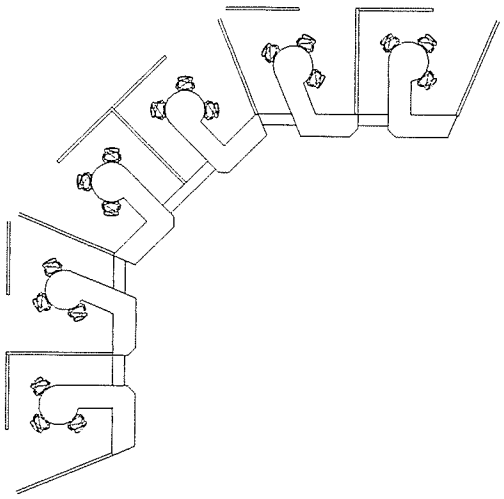


(7) Rotate the square.



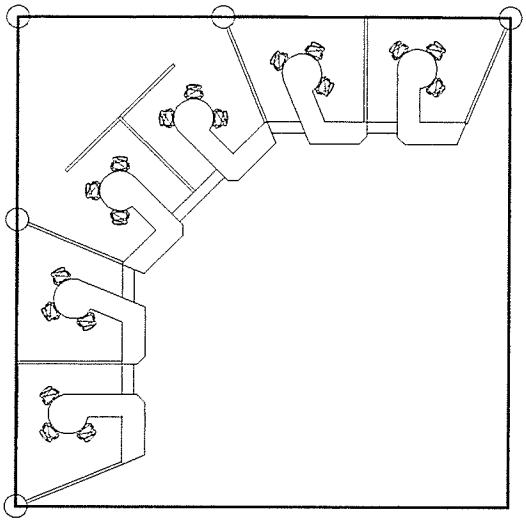
(8) Trace the octagon created by the two squares.

Figure 160. RDCU building, geometrical system, analysis diagram 5



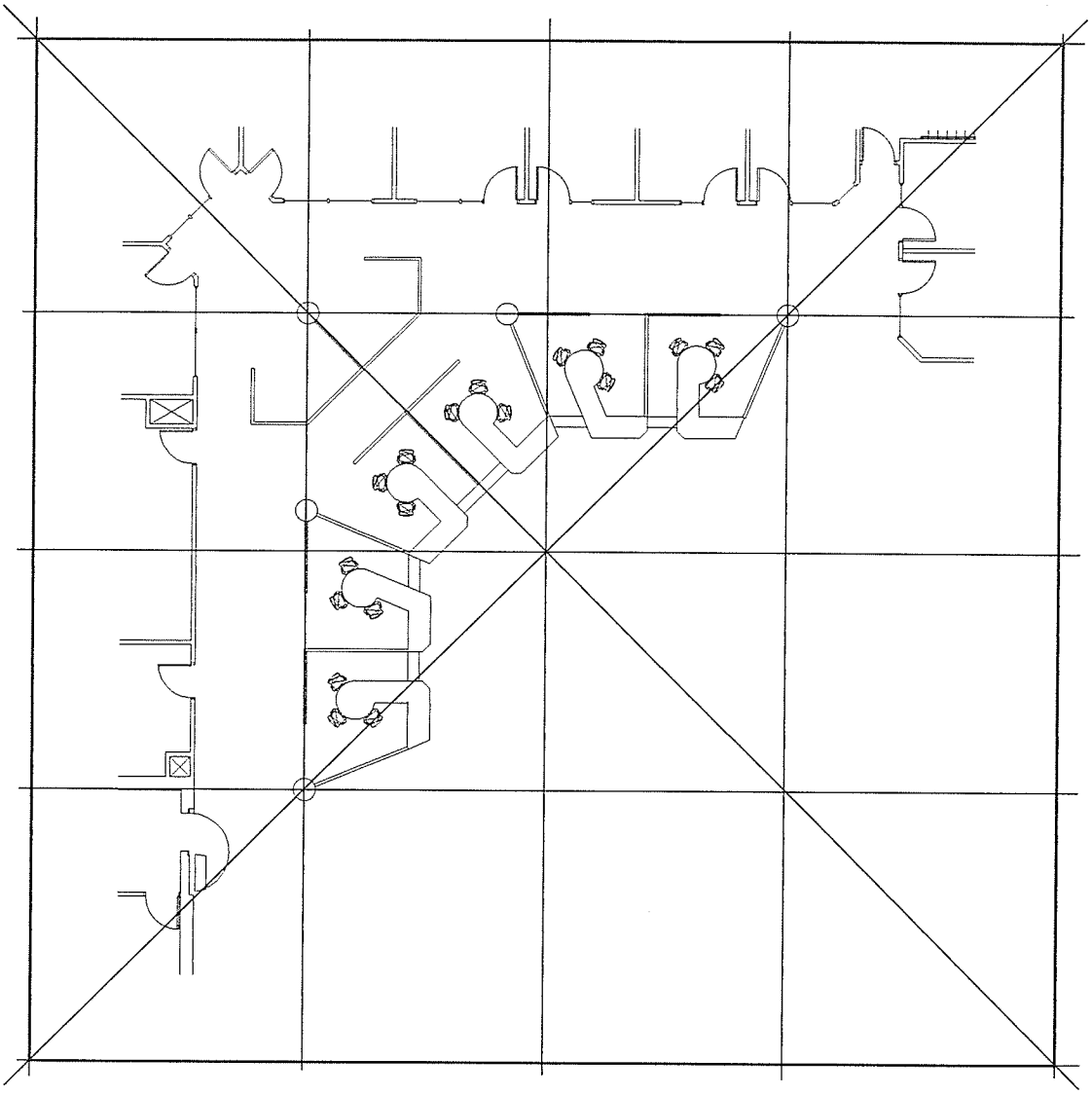
(1) Determine configuration of MSO stations.

Figure 161. RDCU building, architect's geometric procedure, diagram 1



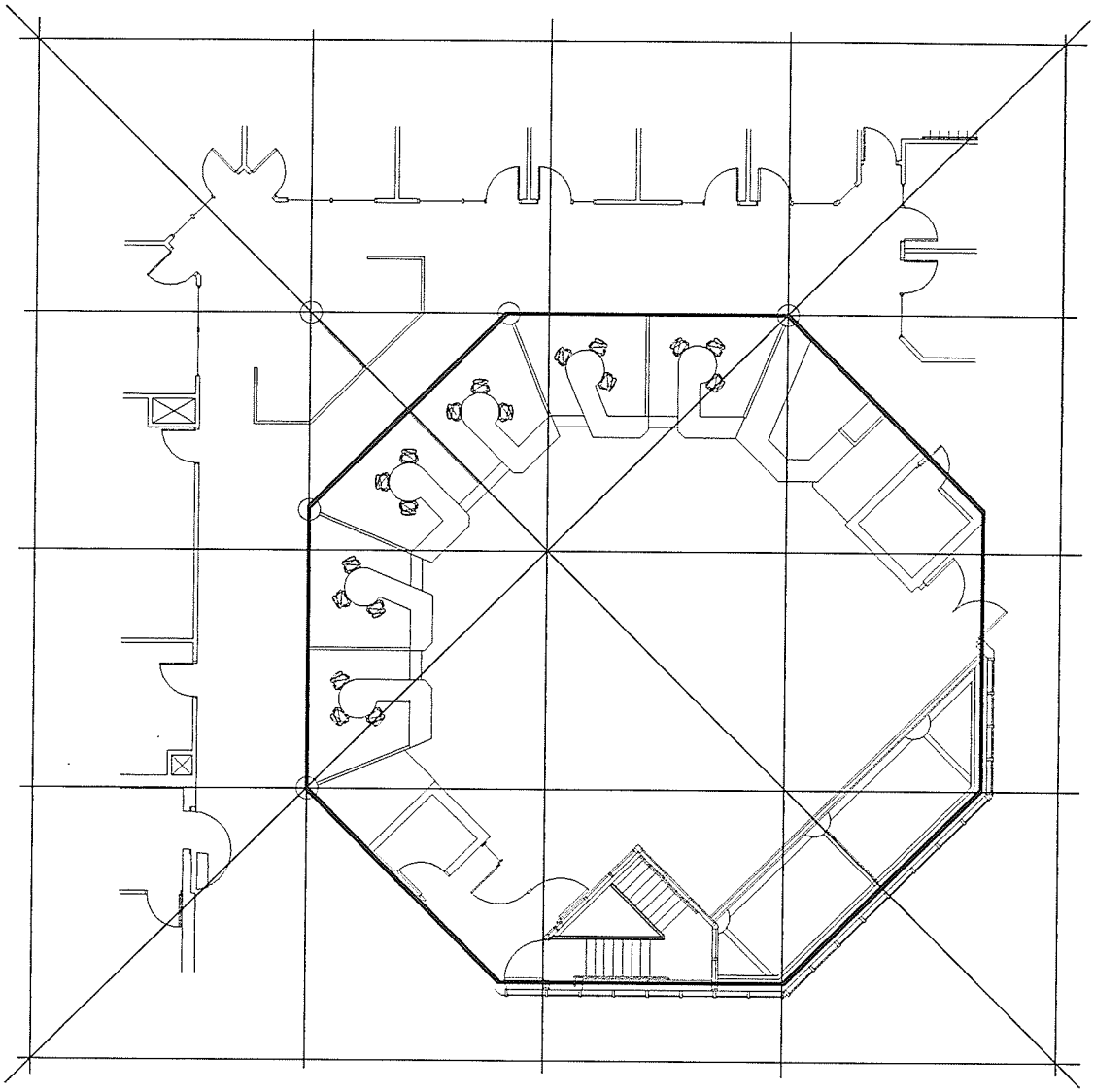
(2) Find square surrounding MSO stations.

Figure 162. RDCU building, architect's geometric procedure, diagram 2



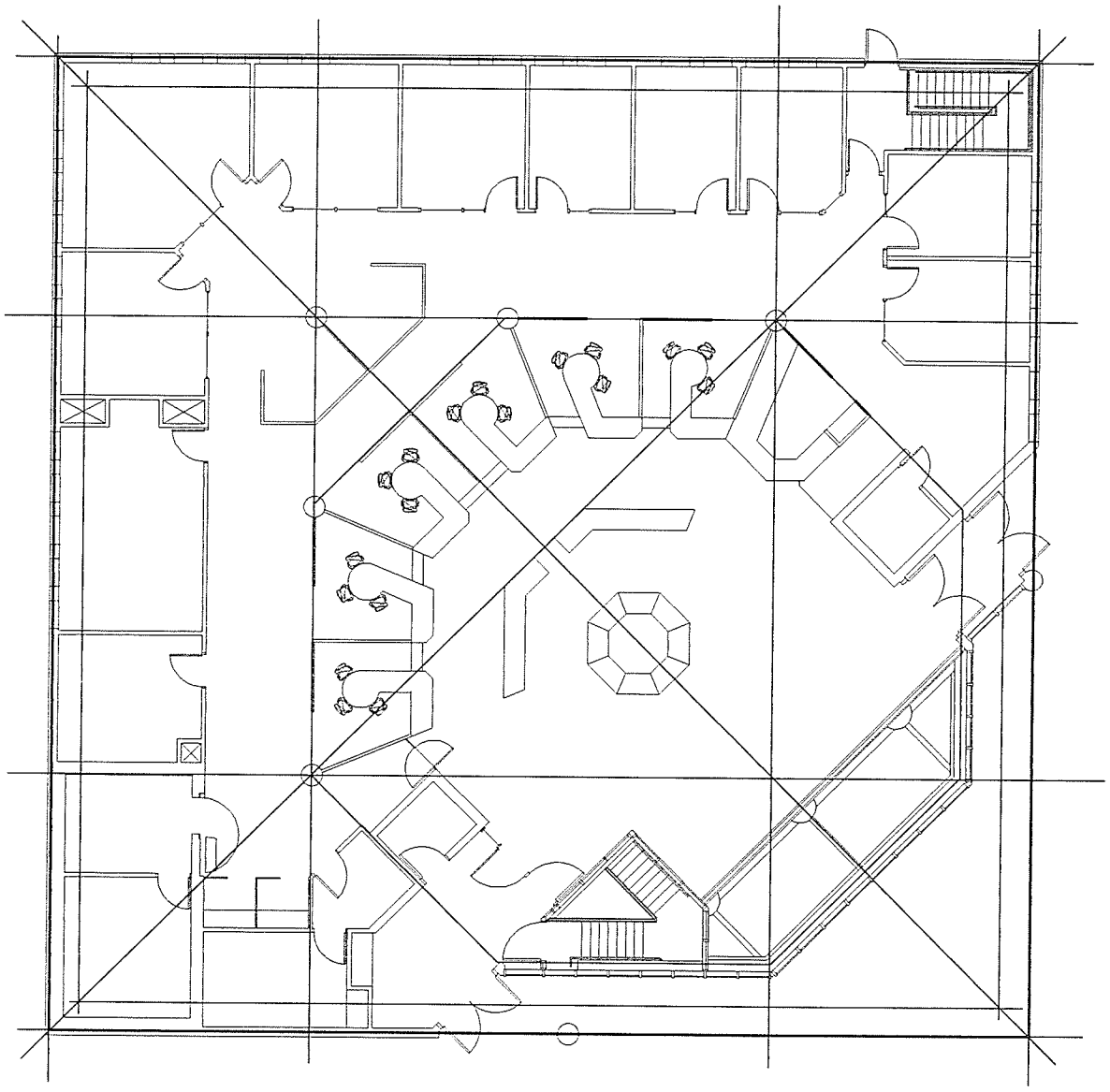
(3) Develop square grid based on MSO stations.

Figure 163. RDCU building, architect's geometric procedure, diagram 3



(4) Draw octagon based on MSO stations.

Figure 164. RDCU building, architect's geometric procedure, diagram 4



(5) Increase size of perimeter square due to client's wish for larger offices.

Figure 165. RDCU building, architect's geometric procedure, diagram 5

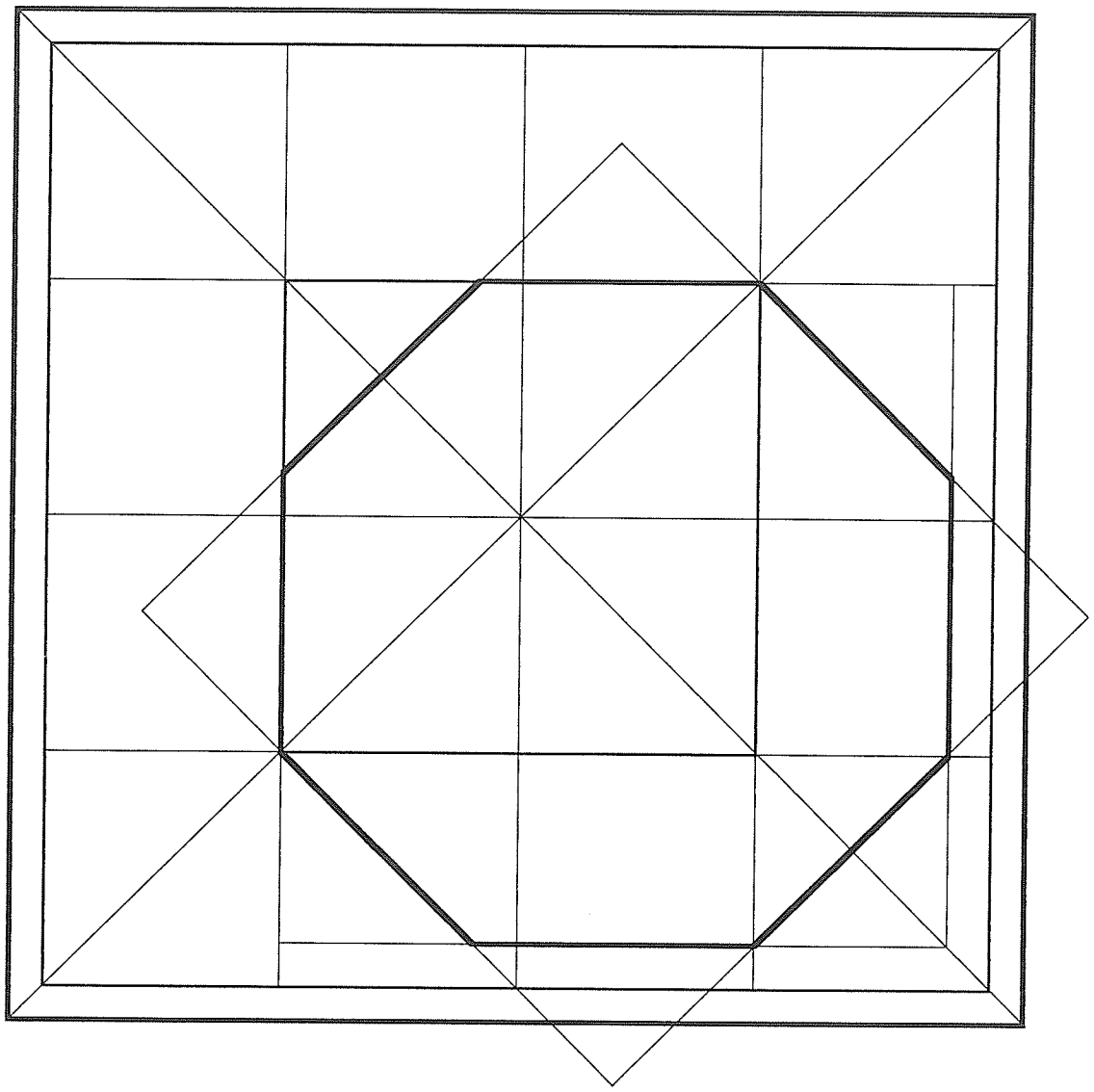


Figure 166. RDCU building, geometrical system diagram

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