

Safeguarding Sense of Place: An Alternative
Approach to Downtown Revitalization

By

JOHN RODERICK SHAW

A THESIS

Submitted to the
University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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SAFEGUARDING SENSE OF PLACE:
AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

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JOHN RODERICK SHAW

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to expand downtown revitalization planning from its original emphasis on beautification to include a sense of place planning approach. Attention is shifted from the improvement of the physical environment to include building on community identity. The approach stresses interaction between person and place, complementing the traditional visual/artistic planning approach.

The study centres on how the individual conceives of and experiences his environment. Emphasis is placed on searching out universalities in the forms of experience contained in environmental interaction.

Sources of knowledge which contribute to and influence the user's image, form the basis on which the study of a particular place can be carried out. Sources of popular culture identifies various forms of environmental experience associated with various landscape "stereotypes". Small towns are represented in popular culture as a particular stereotype or series of regional stereotypes.

The case study documents a small town revitalization project which uses both the beautification and place-making approach in its revitalization program.

The thesis recommends the development of an Action Plan which ensures optimum community input into the place-making component of the revitalization program. The use of a project manager, to facilitate and manage continuous change as part of the ongoing revitalization project, is proposed. Finally the expanded role of the provincial government is investigated to identify a support role.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Statement of Problem

The past few decades have seen the physical decline of central business areas of many North American towns. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Small Town. This decline is due to many significant issues which include the depletion of natural resources, changes in transportation technology, and greater affluence and mobility. Together they have permanently altered social and kinship ties.

Downtown revitalization programs were introduced into many Canadian provinces as a response to core area decline. These programs emphasize the appearance of downtowns, the objective being to make them more pleasant places to be in. These improvements take various forms including: widening of sidewalks, installing plants, trees and benches and other amenities, renovating building facades, improving traffic circulation and parking, and the creation of mini-parks and downtown malls. In many cases, the implicit goal has been to emulate the comfort and convenience of the shopping centre (Rotoff 1981). This environment is perceived as being commercially successful.

The physical decline of Main Street, however, is the product of decades of change in the small town. Small towns

are no longer localized, structured and self-contained (Webber 1964). Gone is the symbolic world of confinement. In the world gained, small town society is increasingly characterized by its mobility - social, spatial and mental. Essentially, the small town has lost its ability to function as a trade and social centre as consumer loyalty, social interaction, and employment opportunities appear increasingly regional rather than local. Seen in this respect, the physical decline of downtown becomes a symbol of community frustration and uncertainty, and not merely changing shopping habits.

Still a strong sense of community exists, strangled and dormant, in the depression of decline. But, while revitalization programs make reference to the changing role of the community, their policies are nevertheless directed towards enhancing the small town's commercial position. Little consideration is given to the changing role of place or meaning of place in revitalization planning.

It can only be concluded that the commercial dominance, once enjoyed by the small town economy, will never again achieve its former role. Methods for redefining the role of small towns in both a physical and social context is necessary. This entails, above all else, restating community attitudes and values, and redefining community purpose.

1.2 Statement of Purpose

A reconsideration of attitudes towards the planning for revitalization of our small towns is necessary. Our current approach to revitalization planning is, in effect, dominated by the visual/artistic approach which has deep roots in traditional planning ideology. Here design is seen as a visual matter. Appearance and layout are emphasized. As a consequence planners have generally seen, as their main target, the "improvement" of the existing physical environment (Foley 1960). Little consideration, however, has been given to the meaning in which that environment may come to have, or has had, for those who inhabit and use that place. As pointed out, the resultant image can be seen as an attempt to model the downtown as an efficient shopping centre environment. Steele summarizes the effect of this approach:

In many instances, modern society is tending to destroy the rich variety of places, replacing them with homogenized "efficient" settings that have no variety, surprise, or traces of their own history and development. They may indeed be efficient for certain tasks, ...but they offer minimal returns compared with the traditional impact of places as providers of many levels of meaning and experience (Steele 1981).

Thus, the costs of revitalization, both in an economic and social context, may be greater than the anticipated returns for the community.

The current emphasis in planning, which centres on enhancement and improvement programs of the physical

environment, must therefore be expanded to include building on community identity or those aspects that give community meaning to the users of the environment. Along with this present emphasis on visible form, there must also be concern with the public use and experience of urban environments. As such, a method for planning for sense of place or community and incorporating the product into a revitalization program becomes necessary. It is important in our approach to planning for revitalization to identify those aspects that make particular environments unique settings for individuals and groups. We must therefore go from the identification of place to an identification with place.

It is important to establish a procedure that can be used for the interpretation and understanding of individual attitudes and values associated with place. Literature concerned with environment and behavior can either be seen in a social science context where social-spatial constraints are seen to shape behavior or work in planning design where the physical environment, if not determines, certainly directs and influences behavior. In much of this work, only assumptions about the individual's efforts and purposes, based on his attitudes and values, are made. Little effort is thus made to directly study how the individual comes to make decisions affecting his environment.

Rather than pursue both the traditional planning and behaviorist models this thesis instead recognizes the humanist

approach to understanding individual actions. Essentially, different people see the same situation in different ways. How the individual perceives his environment is as much a response to attitudes and values he brings to a place as it is to a particular physical setting itself. In other words, the concept of place is just as much psychological or interactional as it is physical.

The environment is made up of a combination of physical and social features; the sense of place is an experience created by the setting combined with what a person brings to it. In other words, to some degree we create our own places, they do not exist independent of us (Steele 1981).

The study concentrates on the individual's decision-making process, the mediating link between environment and behavior. It is on the basis of the individual's attitude, values and preferences that decisions affecting his behavior are made. This proves to be a study of the image one has of his environment.

Environmental images are organized structures of recognition and relationship. They are also suffused with meaning, feeling and value, and these meanings are more complex and subtle than the dry bones of structure (Lynch 1976).

Attention is thus directed towards the individual's environmental knowledge, attitudes and preferences in a belief that these underpin behavior. Emphasis on planning for revitalization thus shifts from space to place and from the impact of the physical environment on man to interaction between person and place - in short, a study of sense of place.

To make the concept of sense of place applicable to revitalization planning, certain assumptions and clarification about the concept are needed. First, it is necessary to study the individual directly, to explore his psychological characteristics for a better understanding of his image formation process. Second, how the individual learns, or comes to make sense of his environment, is a necessary prerequisite in understanding the development of his environmental image. This includes the identification of those components of the derived mental model or image from which the individual gains meaning about place. In this respect, learning is seen to be an interactional process between person and place. The nature of the individual's particular interaction with place will constitute the particular meaning place has for him.

Third, consideration must also be given to sources of knowledge that contribute to the development of the environmental image. Two main sources of knowledge can be identified: primary sources of knowledge, derived from first-hand experience in the environment; and, secondary sources, derived from sources of popular culture such as literature, film and television. Secondary sources of knowledge about place, even places known first hand through direct experience, to a very significant degree influence how we come to know and understand a place. So strong can the acquired image of place be that, in many respects, "when we come to that place, we are prepared to see only what we want to see" (Pocock and Hudson

1981), thus strongly affecting the way we perceive environments experienced first hand.

Gaining an understanding of the individual's image formation process, how he learns or gives meaning to his environment and sources of knowledge which contribute to and influence his image, form the basis on which an analysis of a particular place can be carried out. Based on these assumptions, through a general study of small town as a distinctive place type and specifically a case study of a small Vancouver Island town, a method for assessing small town sense of place is established.

Small towns are seen or represented in popular culture as a stereotype or generalized model. Through this stereotype, various landscape elements which appear consistently in popular culture and our memories, are seen as being representative of specific beliefs and attitudes about place. These beliefs and attitudes are thus conceived as representing sense of place. Further, regional variation in the small town image can also be defined using this procedure.

Through the case study, this thesis examines how sense of place planning can contribute to the downtown revitalization program. What is just as important is how a small community with limited physical and financial resources has managed to convey a strong message of sense of community. It can be stated that planning for sense of place or community can form the basis on which revitalization can be carried out.

This thesis focuses on small towns. While it is recognized that each community owes its present form to different circumstances, small towns generally share similar physical and social characteristics. As such, they form a particular form of community arrangement which warrants special study. But while analysis may be confined to small towns, many of the principles examined apply to all communities regardless of town or city size.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this thesis are:

1. To present a brief overview of the decline of small towns and examination of goals of downtown revitalization programs which have evolved to counter historic trends. It is shown that these programs do little to contribute to community pride or sense of community.

2. To examine the prevailing ideology on which planning for revitalization is based. Traditional planning based on visual/artistic principles of the planner/designer has by and large failed to fully recognize user values and preferences in planned environments. This has done little to encourage sense of community and encourage participation in revitalization programs.

3. To study the individual's personal environment. The individual's personal environment is comprised of perceptions,

attitudes, and values as well as preferences and satisfactions. These in turn form the basis of his environmental image.

4. To investigate the nature of the interaction between the individual and his environment. It is on the basis of the individual's environmental image, that is the form or structure of the physical environment as well as the experiences the individual brings to a place, which forms the basis by which meaning is given to the surroundings.

5. To look at sources of knowledge which contribute to the individual's image of his environment and which have direct consequences for sense of place. Both first hand knowledge as well as secondary sources of information differently affect the way the individual perceives and makes sense of his environment. From this, sense of small town place is described.

6. To focus on one small town to determine what constitutes sense of community for a specific community. The town which incorporates sense of place into its revitalization program is examined to determine the effectiveness of this approach.

7. To make recommendations for incorporating sense of place planning into future revitalization programs and projects.

1.4 Methodology

Work on this study included:

1. A literature review covering the history of physical planning and environmental imagery including an evaluation of methods and problems of each approach.
2. A review of literature which focuses on small towns as a distinctive place type.
3. Review of documents and newspaper clipping files relating to the history of Chemainus.
4. Discussions with the manager of the British Columbia Downtown Revitalization program.
5. Interviews with the project manager in Chemainus as well as key persons involved in the Revitalization program.

1.5 Orientation of Thesis

This thesis recognizes that a new urban policy is needed for the design of our communities. Revitalization projects have identified a more complex form of the interaction in environmental affairs. As a consequence, revitalization has contributed to an awakening of public and political interest in the physical structure of our cities.

In this context, urban design is seen as one of the key instruments being wielded as the planning system maneuvers to cope with familiar public and private responsibilities that are appearing. Urban design is no longer merely seen as sharing a concern for physical relationships, the baggage of traditional architecture and planning controls; an approach commonly conceived of as "civic design" accompanying a narrower process of improving public property. The definition of urban design here is extended beyond this limited view of architecture and planning by virtue of its public responsibility and thus, almost by default, has brought together the fields of planning and architecture (Waterhouse 1983).

In recent history, urban development has taken place on vacant land or in non-existent neighborhoods (politically malleable central areas). Development, however, now takes place in an entirely different milieu. It is now necessary to deal with property interests that have become entrenched

within highly specialized territories (specialized in that they have evolved into uniquely structured areas of artifacts and activities) for both the non-resident and those who inhabit that environment.

The fundamental purpose of urban design in this new political context is to mediate externalities, therefore putting it in the mainstream of public policy planning. Thus it is necessary to go from the city-as-object, to design which captures the complex mediation of interests, alliances and conflicts that determine the shape of the urban environment.

Planners must abandon their traditional but spurious neutrality. They must adopt a meaningful form of political analysis to underpin and render coherent their approach to a multiplicity of individual and seemingly unconnected planning problems.

Planning, to a large degree, still remains void of political interest. The term political, however, must be seen in a broader sense than merely involving politicians. Political activity in planning is based on the recognition that there are very few right or wrong answers. Instead, the answers are entirely contingent on one's underlying political and philosophical values.

The myth that planning is primarily technical, professional and apolitical continues to be largely perpetuated throughout the profession. Although they are

trained to formulate social issues for decision-making, the planners training suggests that issues can be and should be formulated primarily in technical terms. Further, there is still a tendency to recommend procedures with minimum participation of the public. Planning must develop a program that is able to understand the genuine concerns of people and respond to these concerns. They must be able to involve large sectors of affected public groups in planning decisions and be able to organize effective political support. This is necessary for the meaningful understanding of planning as a political activity. To dismiss this apolitical facade is the only way planning can become a humane, self-conscious and relevant activity, responding to real community needs.

2 Downtown Revitalizations

2.1 Background

To understand the prevailing philosophy on which our current process of downtown revitalization is based, it is necessary to begin with an examination of a small town itself: how it came to be, its functions, and the changes which have occurred in the past few decades which have created a perception of a need for revitalizaion. As this thesis emphasizes revitalization in small towns, discussion, as much as possible, will be confined to small communities rather than large urban centres.

For the most part, the North American small town was a business concern. Towns were business propositions (Jackle 1982). They were founded on business values which provided the stimulus for continued growth. Towns that survived the initial spree of speculation and boosterism based their continued success on functional ties with the hinterland, connecting them into a system of regional and economic organization. Towns served as stations through which the products of farms and mines moved to market. These same towns served as distribution points through which local areas were supplied with goods and services which originated elsewhere.

The small town's Main Street symbolized these basic commercial impulses.

But with changes in regional and national fortunes, the decline of local natural resources, greater personal affluence and mobility, and the lure of urban life-styles found in larger centres, many small towns were soon confronted with stagnation and even decline. Small towns have had a typical history. Pierce Lewis sees three distinct stages in the evolution of the small town: the establishment of economic supremacy over the local region, the enjoyment of a brief and glittering moment of glory, and then, incapable of coping with exigencies of the twentieth century, the beginning of its long and catastrophic descent into economic and social depression where it remains until this day (Pierce Lewis 1972).

Major historic changes which effected the economic vitality of the small town are interlocked with major geographical change. Changes in transportation policies affecting the relocation of a major highway, location of bridges, closure of railroad lines, or changes in consumer demand affecting the value of local renewable and non-renewable resources had direct consequences on its vitality. Each crisis to confront the small town was shocking and disruptive, representing a shattering departure from previous conditions. Events that directly affected the small town were initiated far away and largely beyond the control and even comprehension of the local people. Yet the North American

small town, despite changing economic circumstances, continued to survive into the twentieth century making it the basic form of social organization experienced by many North Americans.

Even with a loss of economic vitality the small town managed a metamorphosis of sorts. It was, however, unable to deal with the changes brought about by advances in technology. The automobile, more than any other modern technology, had a devastating effect on small towns. Radically altering both the social and physical aspects of small town life, the small town lost its self-sufficiency and symbolic world of confinement. Greater mobility reinforced large city lifestyles at the expense of smaller community traditions.

2.2 The Physical Decline of the Small Town

These small town pathologies of disintegrating social fabric and loss of reliance on place are recorded in the physical decline of the small town as a distinct place type. The post war years saw a dramatic rise in the use of the automobile. The old streets of the small town, which had so nicely accommodated pedestrian and the horse and buggy traffic, now imposed traffic problems such as congestion and inadequate parking. Small town ambience was lost as a result of the proliferation of the automobile. Reducing traffic through bypass construction, coupled with new highway links were viewed by small town politicians as a savior to the small town's physical setting.

The new transportation routes had a direct effect on business. Auto-related businesses such as gas stations and automobile and farm machinery lots were the first to relocate to these new highway locations because of increased room and low priced land. Gradually retailers, in search of a "modern" image, followed. The result of this shift inevitably led to the establishment of shopping centres as a new retailing centre for the community (Craycroft 1981).

No small town could logically support two centres. Main Street merchants who did not want competition selected the shopping centre as their second retail location. As business grew on the periphery, the stores on Main Street declined to the point where it was no longer profitable to keep some of them open. Civic leaders, however, perceived growth and progress, and shoppers were glad to have an expanded selection of goods from which to choose. The rise of the Shopping Centre and the decline of Main Street occurred simultaneously without anyone noticing it.

Merchants who stayed on Main Street realised they were faced with new decisions and responded by redecorating their storefronts to call maximum attention to their modernity, often with garish results. Aluminum fronts were installed over brick shopfronts. The use of large, ostentatious advertising signs became common practice. Other stores simply remained empty. Civic buildings fell into disrepair as new "technocratic" symbols were constructed elsewhere. Old,

diseased trees were brought down, not to be replaced because of the perceived need for more parking.

Thus, through a series of well-meaning decisions by local politicians, the essence of what constituted a particular kind of place, which small towns represented, had been seriously eroded.

In time, not only was the economic and social importance of the town lost, so also was its character. Main Street took on the appearance of a comb with broken teeth, its uniqueness hidden behind an array of false fronts. It became indistinguishable from every other small town suffering the same plight (Craycroft 1981).

Those who stayed behind tried to improve conditions by improving the physical character. Well-meaning citizens attempted to create an image of prosperity: that of a big city or Shopping Centre environment. But in the absence of any clear idea of what the town might become, these physical improvements often damaged the small town physical environment, one of its few remaining assets.

To conclude this summary, should this trend continue, small towns will lose their ability to reestablish themselves as distinct environments, or place types in their own right and use those distinctions to their own advantage. It is now appropriate to turn to an examination of downtown revitalization programs and demonstrate how these programs continue to support the current trend rather than planning for distinctive place types.

2.3 Renewed Interest in Downtown

A political awareness of Main Street problems, demonstrated through revitalization programs has grown in the past decade as a concern about the physical erosion of downtown increases. The government programs have seen the need to again make Main Street the focus of the community. The programs, however, are based on the assumption that revitalization, with its concern for physical improvements to existing buildings and streetscapes, creating a modern and efficient image, will cause an economic revival downtown.

Many dramatic examples of physical revitalization have been documented: San Francisco's Famous Chocolate Factory and Cannery have been transformed into a vibrant tourist attraction; Boston's Faneuil Hall, consisting of dockside warehouses has been converted into a thriving market; The Gastown District in Vancouver, B.C., once a collection of derelict stores and warehouses is now a popular specialty retail and entertainment area; Victoria B.C.'s Market Square, a collection of decaying central area structures, has been transformed into a downtown Shopping Centre and office complex. While downtown redevelopment has become popular, only in large urban centres are there the resources to succeed. Heavy pedestrian traffic, a rich textured environment, considerable financial commitment and political support are all necessary for projects of this nature. Many or all of these criteria may not exist in smaller centres.

Likewise projects of this nature may not suit the pragmatic and individualistic nature of the small town business person.

Downtown Revitalization programs, which have been introduced in many Canadian provinces, are principally geared to assisting the local business community in injecting new economic life into tired business concerns. The programs offer a variety of loans and grants for streetscape work, infrastructure and building improvements. The economic objectives of the programs are clearly defined. The Ontario program lists as their program's objectives:

...the stabilizing and improvement of property values; stabilizing the tax base; use of infrastructure more effectively; and, the creation of a viable role downtown...(Ontario Guide 1977).

Likewise, the Nova Scotia Program objectives are listed as:

...refurbish, revitalize and redevelop commercial areas...which would have the effect of providing meaningful employment and leading to a more physically and economically attractive community (Nova Scotia Guide 1980).

The British Columbia program objective is to:

...provide an opportunity for local business, communities and organizations to cooperate with municipalities in organizing and planning revitalization of Down Town core areas (British Columbia Program 1980).

Lastly, the Saskatchewan Guide makes no reference to goals and objectives of any sort. Instead, it alludes to missed opportunities by the Downtown Business Community and offers a number of pictorial representations on aesthetic improvements

(Saskatchewan Guide 1981). All of the programs stress economic revitalization, particularly retail revitalization.

2.3.1 The British Columbia Revitalization Program

The British Columbia program can be viewed as politically expedient in nature. As evidence in downtown decline mounted, increasing concern over economic conditions became apparent. Loans and grants to small businesses for the repair of building facades and improvement of public areas (streetscape) were seen as highly visible and popular ways to demonstrate concern for downtown. As outlined in the program document: "...the need for revitalization downtown is obvious to those who are responsible for or have a business interest downtown" (British Columbia Guide). The guide informs local groups that they should determine their own revitalization objectives. The Ministry's sole responsibility would be administering the program.

Conflicts appear between what the program sees as the future of downtown and what is in fact proposed in specific projects. The program document states that downtowns may have to evolve to non-retail and specialty retail functions to survive. The basic principles section advocates this approach.

Shopping Centres may have taken over the job of supplying food, clothing and other daily requirements and although downtowns are unlikely to regain these functions they may do other things. Downtowns may recover their use as a social, entertainment, recreation and cultural centres. They may assist in revitalization and rejuvenation of adjacent residential neighborhoods. Downtowns can provide specialty personal and business services and goods that the homogenous character of Shopping Centre can't provide (British Columbia Program Guide, 1980).

In effect, the guide infers that small retailers already down cannot and should not try to compete with the Shopping Centre. A change in the composition of business and services in the downtown is necessary, rather than a continued struggle in its existing form.

But in practice, according to the manager of the British Columbia Downtown Revitalization Program, revitalization has been directed toward the existing small business community to maintain a viable retail environment downtown. Streets and sidewalks have been resurfaced, and plants and trees, along with other street furniture, have been installed. Existing store fronts have been renovated. The physical layout of the town is often improved with more parking added or identified. Traffic is rerouted if necessary, and more signs and crosswalks added. The downtown will, as a result, be seen as both more efficient and comfortable for the pedestrians to carry out their shopping activities. The pattern, however, bears close resemblance to initiatives historically undertaken by individual towns.

While the guide discusses moving away from primary retail functions and encouraging other uses not in direct competition with the Shopping Centre, no funds or professional assistance is actually given for planning for this purpose. No alternatives are mentioned and no suggestions offered. There is little evidence that this message is being translated into action. Revitalization plans appear to begin at the design stage of revitalization rather than beginning with careful analysis of requirements for individual communities. The towns simply use program funds to fix the existing stores and streets and promote the resultant image.

2.4 Small Town Revitalization

The principles the program proposes have relatively little meaning to small towns. As pointed out, the very existence of small towns are based on their ability to act as commercial centres. Retailing is the principal function. Large urban centres can rely on a variety of major uses to maintain its vitality. These may include office, business, government, and personal services among others. No such diversity exists for a small town. While some non-retail functions may be found in small towns, there is a strong interdependence between these and the retail sector; one cannot exist without the other. Other problems commonly cited, such as traffic and parking, may pose difficulties in larger centres, but usually are of little concern in the small town. In short, many of the solutions undertaken as a result

of program funding may have little impact on the small town. It can also be stated that implementing such proposals may, as outlined by Jackle (1982), result in a negative impact with respect to maintaining a distinctive place type.

2.5 Main Street: Community Focal Point

Main Street is commonly referred to as the focal point of community life. Phrases such as "centre of community life", "community identity" or "heart of the town" describe an important popular concept with strong emotional appeal.

The downtown is the focus of energy and activity of the small town. It is where people go to buy the things they need, to renew acquaintances, to conduct important transactions, to seek diversions and to come together as a community. The downtown carries with it a true "sense of place", born of the town's history. It is the oldest portion of town, the intersection of mainstreets, and the site of important events (Craycroft 1981).

Main Street is, in short, what the community thinks of itself. Revitalization is therefore seen as an issue of public pride. If the downtown is a poor expression of community, resources should be used to strengthen it.

The response to the decline of Main Street, not only as a commercial, but a social focus of the community, needs greater recognition. The revitalization program makes vague references to the changing role of the community, but fails to take into consideration the need for a strong symbolic statement or community expression. Policies instead are

directed towards enhancing the commercial position through physical improvements.

While a program of physical enhancement may have some merit, it essentially lacks from the perspective of viewing the community as a distinct entity and fails in its approach to address this issue. As Pierce Lewis states:

Cities and towns are more than economic machines...they are creatures of very particular cultures and particular histories (both history and culture subsume economics of course), and the judgement of their values must be made in a social - not merely financial terms (Pierce Lewis 1972).

The traditional approach to planning for revitalization is thus seen as deterministic in nature, subscribing to the belief that rebuilding the physical environment, specifically the commercial core, will correct the problems of Main Street. An approach that builds on traditional values and beliefs and which captures that element of community pride, one that continues to elude the planner/designer, is necessary.

3. Physical Planning : The Aesthetic

3.1 Background

This chapter will consist of a brief historical overview of contemporary approaches to planning physical environments. From this, an alternative methodology will be proposed where human interaction in the environment is conceived to be the important consideration in the planning and design of the environment. This concept receives detailed attention in Chapter Four.

A large concentration of people use Main Street for a diversity of reasons. The primary objective of the planner/designer should be to relate their presence and responses to their physical surroundings. This investigation is thus based on the belief that planning for environmental improvement ought not take the needs, attitudes and values of the users of that environment for granted.

Until very recently, however, there appeared to be little interest in the planning literature in comprehending the urban environment in this fashion. Instead, the beliefs and attitudes of the planner/designer formed the basis of a planning philosophy. No one can propose major alterations to the existing urban fabric based on what appears little more than intuition. Revitalization need not be, nor should not be, reduced to an intuitive process of the reordering of the

urban scene. What is needed then is a renewal of thought about the urban landscape.

Chapter Two concluded with the theme of Main Street as the focal point in the resident's conception of his urban environment. Historically, the concept of urban centres revolves around the notion of Main Street as both the commercial and social focus of place. But many recent changes to Main Street have not been carried out with the user in mind. As a result, the concept of town and the associations of people with their environment, appear to have suffered (Steele 1981). Missing from current programs and plans is a clear understanding of what constitutes Main Street, or "sense of place", for those who inhabit or use that place. Different physical settings, for example, have their own pattern of use suggesting a reciprocal relationship between place and person. Changes to the physical environment, however, are made in isolation of this relationship. The belief is that what is proposed will best suit the community. It will come to appreciate it. Change, simply for the sake of change, may impinge on existing behavior (or on the established pattern of doing things) thus having a negative impact rather than positive consequences on the community. It could be said that current revitalization planning, with its emphasis on "beautification," has had little more than a neutral impact on communities.

3.2 History of the Aesthetic in Planning

Downtown areas have been analyzed for the purpose of physical change in many ways. These enquiries can best be summarized as economic or descriptive in nature (Grey 1970). Little work on Main Street activities which relate land and use of space, user patterns and user attitudes, has been put forward.

The British Columbia Revitalization Program and concept plans, which grow out of the program principles for individual communities involved, emphasize this traditional approach to planning. This approach suggests that the aesthetic or visual form strongly influences behavior patterns and that specifically, architectural "blandishments" can influence uses of space and place in such a way that the individual will change the way he sees and uses Main Street. This approach evolves from a planning ideology which has, for the main part, concerned itself with the physical environment at the macro-scale.

Planning for revitalization is dominated by the visual/artistic approach which gained popularity in England following World War II through the British Town Planning Acts (Jarvis 1980). It was during this period that planning came to be seen as a major government responsibility, where major capital improvements, traditionally provided by the private

sector, would henceforth be publicly provided. The relationship between town planning and the provision of housing in Britain after the War is a case in point. Town Planning's central function came to be seen as providing a good physical environment. A physical environment of good quality was deemed essential for the promotion of a healthy and civilized life (Foley 1960).

The focus on the physical environment gave planning more than a simple allocating function. The approach was built on the premise of designated space standards. The provision of space was in keeping with British values and provided a strong movement to attack "physical blight" in the landscape.

Ideologically, the idea of focusing on the physical environment was reasonably sound, the common assumption being that any improvement to the environment would be followed by fairly direct common sense benefits. "Physical environment determinism...always had a fascinating attractiveness. Its products or intermediate ends are readily graspable" (Foley 1960). Thus, reconstruction of decrepit structures, or the construction of housing estates, could be offered as symbolic proof that something tangible was being done.

There was also a distinct symbolism in seeking to control and modify the physical environment. It provided wide scope for the notion that individualism had gone too far. What was needed was a civic architecture that would truly represent a public sense of community arrangement, a kind of architectural

harmony providing certain kinds of satisfactions for certain kinds of users. (This contrasts with North America where individualism remains at the centre of our planning philosophy. Individualism becomes subservient to the community good only when individual interests are served. Thus, the maintenance of property values becomes a primary criteria for zoning. Property values become the prime motivating force in revitalization planning. Community arrangement is achieved by comparing the economic advantages of the Shopping Centre to the antiquated infrastructure of Main Street. The process becomes one of convincing the individual that acting in a community minded manner, benefits of the Shopping Centre could be achieved downtown. The individual will respond in kind, comprehending the bold logic in the concept. He is thus convinced that in this situation the interest of the community is of primary concern...).

Planning came to represent a clear reliance on amenity with the quality of pleasantness in the physical environment, as a widely accepted goal. This ranged from an essentially negative reaction against what was perceived as a nuisance to a distinctly positive notion of visual delight. Further, an emphasis on space standards, the articulation of space, and the allocation of each kind of use to a purposefully designed space, all became inherent in the planning/design process.

This emphasis on the aesthetic dominated official planning documents. The contributions to Design in Town and

Village (1953), the first post-war official statement on planning/design, emphasized appearance and layout. Little consideration was given to user needs. Thomas Sharpe, one of the contributors, discusses the visually enclosed shapes of village streets and greens of which he describes as picturesque, a quality derived from its "...ground plan, which the buildings and natural elements make" (Sharpe 1953). For Sharpe, the two outstanding social characteristics of the village could best be described by its simplicity and smallness. Descriptions of road systems, building styles and materials, and proper placement of vegetation is summarized. Any change to this simplicity was thought to detract from its plainness of appearance. Sharpe criticizes the placement of trees and flowering shrubs on the basis "...not merely that they offend one's sense of what is appropriate, but because they represent a confusion, an over-elaboration of shapes...(which is) bound to produce a sense of restlessness" (Sharpe 1953). No consideration is given to the meaning that place comes to have for its inhabitants.

Likewise, Gibberd, another contributor to the document, emphasized the street picture in his essay on residential design. Various compositional devices such as the relationship of house to paving, form or character of facade patterns and building lines, are emphasized. The result of this approach was exemplified by the treatment of front gardens. Instead of any consideration in the use of space, pictorial composition predominates:

...if all the front walls and fences are swept away and the space between pavement and the house is designed as a communal front lawn, the composition will be even more complete (Gibberd 1953).

Again, only the briefest and most general references are made to social structures in this article.

It is possible, from this one document, to identify the evolution of many of the concepts employed in physical revitalization. Road systems, building styles, facade material and lines, relationship of structure to street and use of vegetation for revitalization are seen to have their origins at this time. The values held by the planner are seen as the prime determinant of form.

Gordon Cullen's Townscape (1961), although it may contrast in its approach with the methods in Design in Town and Village, is still concerned with aesthetic articulation. The written aesthetic offered previously is now replaced with a glossary of images evoked through a series of photographs of both exotic and familiar places. Emphasis is still placed on the aesthetic as a means of environmental cognition. Cullen's method of categorizing landscapes in order to bring clarity to visible pattern again demonstrates a token regard for function. As Maxwell points out, it is "...premised on the assumption that the 'disembodied' eye emerges, freed from the cultural baggage of associations which attends one view of the world" (Maxwell 1976).

Cullen's approach, as a consequence, loses validity when he does not consider other people's reactions to the same environment. His approach places the observer at the perceptual heart of the townscape, but his interpretation of that place is used to stand for the values of the rest of society.

Cullen's role is that of an interpreter, going about places with the intention of seeking his own meaning and expressing his own personal values; but other people, with other social roles, without the interests or values which derive from an artistic training, may not share them, or if they do, may not give them the same importance (Jarvis 1980).

Over the years, this approach has appealed to designers and planners, and has influenced planning policy: an art ensemble which exploits variety and picturesque (Maxwell 1976). The elimination of incompatible elements and variety, however, has come to be the norm as townscapes have been reduced to simple aesthetic statements, far removed even from Cullen's personal vision of lively and varied townscape.

The emergence of a planning philosophy which can be related to sense of place can be seen as part of the official advice offered in the Action Area Plans (1970). Besides the traditional concern for matters such as maintaining the scale of street, historical preservation and conservation of buildings of outstanding character received official status. This monitoring or stock-taking of the past in a place or "preserving a sense of occasion" (Goody 1974), however, parallels Foley's ideological perspective where the symbolism

of controlling the physical environment came to involve an interest in maintaining some semblance of control over things we have become attached to. In a world with so much change, things appear quite out of control. As Foley states, the official declaration of saving the past, if anything, was:

...imposed by a combination of forces with which we felt ill equipped to deal. Therefore, as if employing some sympathetic magic, we may hold onto what we can (Foley 1960).

Preserving a sense of occasion often meant maintaining traditional values - and features - in the face of pressures from more modern economic and acceptable methods.

Again, however, the identification of physical settings of distinct character relied to a great extent on what Goody calls, "the best professional opinion approach" (Goody 1974). While the issues of preservation and conservation may be open to public debate, a reliance was once again on the professional opinion of the planner when it came to designating environments where sense of past place was to be preserved.

Obviously some criteria are employed - typicality of a feature, special design or structural considerations, associations with literary, political or military figures, all are used as justification for maintaining a sense of past place, but few if any of the criteria used seem to reflect the opinions, attitudes and even needs of the wider, non-professional public (Goody 1974).

Even in the creation of new environments, or in areas deemed to be lacking in physical quality, methods firmly established in the mind of the planner, combined with market

research, has become the popular way of establishing criteria for the successful development of a "saleable" place image. Little criteria, if any, exist in the vocabulary of the planner for defining social-spatial patterns.

Downtown revitalization seems to be infected with the sale of a suitable place image. Shopping Centre attractions emphasizing efficiency and convenience, sufficient access and parking appears as the planning norm. Physical criteria for social environments has led the mind of the planner/designer to a deterministic viewpoint where built form is seen as limiting or channeling behavior. No consideration to how people effect place is given.

This approach to planning the physical environment has created a dilemma which as Foley explains:

...essentially conceives the physical environment as an end in itself, as a quality to be strived for. Social-spatial patterns are to be left to work themselves out through other mechanisms other than town planning (Foley 1960).

To conclude, if planning openly accepts a better physical environment as an intermediary goal, the critical question is posed: intermediate to what future social goals. As soon as this question is seriously asked, the search for a more complete rationale pushes us beyond that of traditional physical planning.

3.3 The Social Environment

Town planning has lacked a full and sophisticated understanding of the social implications of improving the physical environment. The complexity of the problem is discussed in the simplistic reasoning that has become part of planning's ideology. A sub-ideology premised on improvements to the physical environment is needed. As Carr states:

To be sure, we lack much relevant knowledge, but worse than that we lack a way of getting beyond our current conceptualizations of city form and its functions. Indeed the most perplexing problem we face in attempting to improve the relationship of people with their urban environment is the persistence of conventional images and models of conceiving the city in the face of changing urban realities and human purposes (Carr 1967).

The form in which people interact with their environment needs to receive more attention than it traditionally has. This should be of utmost concern to planners. Interaction between people and their environments must be conceived of as a two way process: shaped by the environment and the psychological/cultural characteristics of the individual. Planners have studied form, but have given little consideration to the human half of the equation.

A planning ideology based on human interaction with the physical environment must come to understand the attitudes and beliefs of the users of that environment. Rarely, however, does the planner become aware of the social aspects of the man-made environment. He will see especially those parts of

the environment that are: amenable to his manipulation (over which he has architectural control); related to his training (an analysis of the technical aspects of the environment); or, visible to his perception in view of his position (as surveyor or spectator) (Gans 1972).

It follows that the planner is enamored with his own set of distinct cultural values.

Insofar as he manipulates material objects, his planning is physical, but the forms and the contents that go into the physical environment are as much the product of cultural values and social decisions as they are material objects (Gans 1972).

It then becomes as important to decide whose culture will be reflected in the planners scheme as the kinds of material objects to be incorporated into the scheme. The planner makes decisions that reflect his own personal or professional preferences. These can be seen as being based on his own culture, not on those planned for. In this respect, Gans visualizes two environments: that which the planner sees is known as the potential environment, and the social system and culture of the people who use it is known as the effective environment.

...a man-made artifact is a potential environment, and the conception of that man-made artifact in the culture is the effective environment. The effective environment must thus be defined as that version of the potential environment that is manifestly or latently adopted by its users (Gans 1972).

The physical environment may exert some influence on the individual. There is no denying that a casual relationship

does exist. Gans' argument makes this clear. Of importance, however, is that the individual's determination or perception of his environment hinges primarily on his predisposition to respond. These predispositions composed of past experiences as well as personal and cultural values, motivate the individual to select the content of his environment. Through this selective process the individual reinforces his personal beliefs and behavior. Physical or visual form is then given meaning primarily through experience.

Wide differences in environmental images of the physical environment are thus shown to exist between planners and user groups. Yet little work in planning has gone into identifying the nature and extent of this discrepancy. The context on which the attitudes of the individual decision-maker are based have been investigated outside of planning, particularly by the social sciences. These groups assert, and perhaps rightly so, that the outcomes of architecture and site-planning, and most policies which seek to change the physical environment, have had little positive impact on the behavior patterns and values of the user group. Planning which aims at imposing urban conditions must address itself to this proposition. A reassessment of traditional planning values, in light of these findings is necessary.

If we are concerned with the satisfactions of users as a goal of planning, not just efficient, visually pleasing environments, ...it would seem logical that the needs and values of the public should be more closely considered in the process of urban planning (Porteous 1977).

The current emphasis on planning which centres on enhancement and improvement programs, must be expanded to include management of "place", that is to make the physical environment compatible with every day uses normally associated with that place. The fundamental concept of this approach:

...lies in the attitude that regards the users of the land not in some disembodied way, but as a motivated, perceiving, and responsive persons for whom successful interaction with their environment is an essential prerequisite of land use (Jarvis 1981).

Along with the present emphasis on visible form, there must also be a concern for public use and experience. Essentially, we must establish a procedure for the planning for "sense of place" or place meaning. It is important to define or to identify those aspects that make particular environments unique settings for individuals or groups. We must go from identification of place to identification with place.

Before an analysis of sense of place can be carried out, however, the process by which we in fact give meaning to our environment must first be examined: that is, the study of the personal decision-making environment of the individual, his perception of and attitude towards his material world.

4. The Environmental Image

4.1 Background

The purpose of this chapter is to establish how the individual organizes his beliefs and attitudes, and in turn develops certain preferences and satisfactions towards his environment. Important to this approach is being able to establish a procedure that can be used for the interpretation and understanding of individual attitudes and values associated with place.

To achieve this, the concept of environmental imagery is proposed. The image, or the conception one has of place, is a product of a combination of personal or psychological and socio-cultural variables which form the basis of an individual's value system. It is on this basis, that "place" takes on a particular meaning to the individual. Generally, individual perceptions will converge among individuals so that a "world view", reflecting a commonly held view of place, produces a consensus between those who inhabit a particular place. This, loosely put, can be seen as forming the basis of sense of community or place.

Before developing the concept of sense of place or place meaning, a method of enquiry is needed for the purpose of comprehending the individual's cognitive or image-making

process. First, it is important to develop some theoretical foundations on which to base this line of enquiry. Second, the chapter briefly explores a number of psychological characteristics of the individual for an understanding of his image-formation process. This section is meant to be mainly definitional in character, but is a necessary first step in the process of understanding sense of place. The following chapter investigates how the individual experiences and comes to know his environment. His real world experiences are a product of socio-cultural characteristics by which he gives meaning to his environment or, develops a sense of place.

Of importance is that by understanding the image that the individual has of his environment, assumptions can be made regarding his behavior in that environment.

The study of environmental imagery can be seen as both an alternative to the traditional aesthetic theory in planning and design, and perhaps just as important as a reaction to the mechanistic views of behavior research which were gaining popularity in the social sciences and related fields of planning and design. This line of inquiry is seen as a rejection of physical science philosophies and methods which accompanied the rise of the quantitative revolution and all that it entailed (Tuan 1971). Quantitative research, based on a methodology developed in the context of the physical sciences, brought with it, perhaps unwittingly, the associated

philosophical position of positivism (Pocock and Hudson 1978). Positivism can be characterized by an adherence to empirical truth and logical consistency (Walmsley 1974).

Topic areas common to both the social sciences (particularly geography and sociology) and planning and design, where the positivist approach gained a certain influence, included industrial relocation, retail modeling, neighborhood, regional and national planning and economic modeling. While all of these studies demonstrated a common concern with human behavior, only assumptions about the individual's aims were made, rather than a direct investigation of them (Pocock and Hudson 1981). No recognition of the individual's decision-making process itself, or how the individual comes to make decisions about his environment, was generally attempted.

The main purpose of these studies was an interest in socio-spatial constraints that shaped behavior. In this respect, a link to the aesthetic planning/design model could be made; it saw the physical environment, if not determining, certainly influencing behavior.

Limitations in applying methods developed in the physical sciences to human problems have been identified. Humanists called for the rejection of positivist methods and philosophy on the grounds that they were totally inappropriate for human problems. The rejection of positivism reflects the growth of

image studies and the explicit recognition that different people see the "same" situation in different ways.

The alternative then, has been to study the individual decision-making process directly.

...this usually proves to be the study of environmental images, these being taken as a surrogate for the decision making process. Thus attention is directed towards the individual's environmental knowledge, preferences, and evaluations, in the belief that these underpin behavior (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

The study of the individual's environmental image has led to a refocusing of the man-environment relationship. It has led to the study of the individual who is now treated as a "white box" rather than the traditional "black box".

A rejection of positivist viewpoints and a movement towards a concern for people's personality and subjective models of their environment, as a key to understanding behavior, are found in the early geographical and planning viewpoints of Lowenthal (1961) and Lynch (1960). Lowenthal states that each individual has his own distinct impression of the world. Each individual's appraisal of an identical situation is peculiarly his own.

Each private world view is...unique because everyone chooses from and reacts to the milieu in a different way. We elect to see certain aspects of the world and avoid others. Moreover, because everything that we know about an object effects the way in which it appears to the eye, no object is apt to seem quite the same to any two percipients (Lowenthal 1961).

Everyone has his own geography of the world, his own perception of the environment. There may be agreement between people on the essential character of the world, a "universal knowledge" of the way it is ordered, but knowledge belongs to one person; it is uniquely individual.

Kevin Lynch, in Image of the City (1961), set his sights directly at the rejection of the purely aesthetic. What is of importance to Lynch is how people organize and store information about their environment and how they interpret and make sense of it. While the city may give pleasure and thus relate to artistic creation, it is not cultivated, but a common place experience shared by different people. Lynch saw the city as experienced in the context of everyday events and associations, past and present and extending beyond the immediate perception of the present. "Nothing is experienced by itself, but always in relation to its surroundings. the sequence of events leading up to it, the meaning of past experience" (Lynch 1960). Thus, the emphasis here is not the city as an entity in itself which is important, but how the individual perceives and reacts to his environment. In short, his image of that environment.

4.2 Environmental Perception : The Phenomological Approach

The need for an accurate approach for assessing individual and group preferences in the landscape has been recognized; that is to see the world from the respondents

rather than the researcher's point of view. What the planner/designer lacks at present is the ability to associate the users of environments in planning and design tasks. The techniques used by Lynch and others address this by mapping the individual's knowledge of the physical environment. The approach, however, fails to respond to the social implications of place (Appleyard 1976) and has even been considered by some as neo-positivist in approach (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

The phenomenological posture is seen as a vehicle suitable for understanding and explaining place experience (Kreiger 1974, Tuan 1971, Walmsley 1974, Relph 1970). In this respect, Kreiger states that the phenomenological posture:

...tries to explain how the world comes to make sense to us in terms of how it is organized and structured, and how we organize and structure it, where the world studied is our ordinary everyday one (Kreiger 1974).

The key to this approach is concentrating on man's experience in his lived world.

It is therefore based on insight and description rather than analysis, although it should be noted that description is not undertaken in a simple sense of observation but rather as reflective description of essential structure and connection of experience (Walmsley 1974).

The "humanist" tradition supports the view that unlike physical features, elements of the human landscape cannot be explained by a product of a simple set of forces. This approach therefore, is understandably subjective with its

explicit rejection of empirical analysis. It thus offers a procedure for describing the individual's immediate experience including his actions, memories, fantasies and perception (Relph 1970).

The chief lesson of phenomenology is that the world can only be understood in terms of man's intentions and attitude toward it. Intentionality, as used here means:

...both the fact that man is understood as the source of acts of intention and the fact that it is only through the study of man's intentions that we can comprehend the world for it is these that give meaning to man's behavior (Walmsley 1974).

To put this concept into perspective, the human landscape, as Tuan (1971) points out, is somewhat analogous to the interior of an individual's house in that it totally reveals purposes and ends that have directed human energy. The house is built to obey physical laws and economic constraints. It is about these principles that empirical statements of the individual's behavior can be derived. Within the house, however, the man establishes his scale of values and meaning. Color of paint, garden and furniture arrangement can tell us much about the individual beyond his biological needs and economic constraints. It can reveal the intentions and aspirations of the individual. Thus it is the realm of will and search for meaning that is of interest.

In the aesthetic or positivist movement, we have come to understand meaning in the landscape by distinguishing order in a chaotic world. "We find meaning when we discern harmony in

the chaotic world of facts and remove the irritation and insecurity chaos generates" (Tuan 1971). In the humanist approach, however, meaning implies significance:

...a phenomenon has meaning because it is a sign to something beyond itself, to its own past and future, and to other objects. The significant objects or event has the seeming capacity to condense the diverse strains of the universe into a thing within human reach. It is this attribute which enables anyone who beholds, or participates in, a thing as an event to respond to it personally and meaningfully (Tuan 1971).

The basis of the approach then is that when we seek meaning in the landscape, we are not simply seeking order, but landscape as a repository of human experience.

The phenomenistic approach, or what can be termed the humanist approach, has its origins both as a reaction to the aesthetic movement and the quantitative revolution that pervaded the social sciences in the last two decades. Interest in the approach can be attached to the fact that many of the concepts in planning - neighborhood, territoriality, and quality of life in the urban context - may well have their basis in experience.

No explicit specifications are given in the literature in applying this concept. Indeed, given the very subjective nature of the proposal, there may be no one set or group of ways of accomplishing this. Further, no attempt is made to link environmental images through learning and sources of knowledge to behavior. The remainder of the chapter will concern itself with image formation; how the individual

perceives and thus forms an image of his world on which his behavior is based. In other words, this will be a description of criteria that forms the individual's decision-making process. The process of learning, or the nature of interaction between the individual and his environment and sources of knowledge which contribute his image of his environment are examined in subsequent chapters.

4.3 Personal Environments

Research in the area of personal decision-making environments has tended to emphasize three areas: perception, attitudes, and preferences and satisfaction.

As used by geographers, the actual process of perceiving refers to:

The impression one has of stimuli - that impression being modified by the perceiver's past experience in general, his previous experience with that or similar stimuli and the individual's state at the moment he is viewing the stimuli of interest (Porteous 1977).

Further, perception can be seen as one step in a process:

...of sensing awareness between sensation which is the initial unorganized response to a stimulus, and cognition, which represents a general awareness, a summary of all previous stimuli, none of which need actually be present (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

It can be seen as the end product itself, if used in a context where it can be referred to as awareness of, or understanding of, a stimulus object. In this regard, Tuan regards perception as both a response of the senses to external

stimuli and purposeful activity in which certain phenomena are clearly registered while others recede or are blocked out (Tuan 1974). For our purpose, perception will refer to "...the product of sensory encoding of information to learned and relatively stable mental conceptions of the environment" (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

Perception will depend primarily on our physiological abilities: sight, taste, smell, hearing and touch. By definition, however, learning and culture will also effect the perceptual process.

If perception can be seen as the filter between man and environment, the image can be referred to as the sum of direct sensory interaction as interpreted through the observer's value system.

Learned and stable mental conceptions of the environment are referred to as environmental images, mental models of the environment, which can be thought of as summarizing the individual's environmental knowledge, evaluations and preferences and as having implications for their behavior (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

Action in the real world takes place on the basis of the cognitive image of the world held by the individual. The construction of this image is necessary before purposeful behavior can occur. For the individual, the environment exists only as experienced or reconstructed in his brain. External action can thus be modified and given meaning on the basis of the individual's learning, experience and habitation. It can relate to the individual's environment more extensively

than can be apprehended in a narrow, perceptual sense. This can be referred to as the individual's personal environment.

It is on the basis of the individual's personal environment that decisions are made that translate into actions. The individual's personal environment consists of behavioral and experiential components. The behavioral component consists of the image of the phenomenal (world of objects) environment. It is defined as being:

...informational in nature, concerned with description and classification - the basic whatness and whereness of the image. It is here that the mental map, concerned with basic properties such as distance, orientation, location or spatial variations, is best seen as the purveyor of the image (Pocock and Hudson).

It can thus be seen as involving a variety of objectively measurable properties capable of stimulating the individual.

The experiential environment, on the other hand, consists of the mental storehouse containing the sum of the individual's experiences, including the behavioral components of the past, and thus roughly coinciding with his personality (Porteous 1977). It:

...incorporates both evaluations and preferences, the former including some general or external standards, the latter reflecting a personal type of appraisal, and affection which is the emotional response concerned with feeling, value and meaning attached to the perceived. Degree of acquaintance and involvement in an environment will determine whether the engagement is at a perceptual or conceptual level (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

Thus, the stimulus perceived may or may not have its origins in the environment. The geographic environment provides stimuli only in the sense that it provides landscape images on which to focus. These images constitute reminders rather than sources of meaning. Thus, the basic difference between the behavioral (sensory) environment and the experiential (symbolic) environment is that elements in the behavioral environment have meaning derived from the nature of their composition, while elements of the experiential environment require a culture or personality transformation before they achieve meaning. The special meaning or value attributed to objects in the experiential environment subsequently determines the sensitivity of individual or groups to their existence (Sonnenfeld 1972).

Where perception requires actual external stimulus, attitudes exist in the experiential environment of the self. Attitudes can be conceived of as a long series of perceptions. But where perception is a response to a specific stimulus, attitudes involve the organization of a set of feelings and beliefs.

Attitudes in general parlance, usually refers to the individuals feeling toward an attitude object, or, more generally, a view of the world. Attitudes imply considerable experience and a degree of firmness of opinion; they involve expectation of further experience and provide for a response to that experience object when perceived (Porteous 1977).

Of special importance is the composition of the attitude in image formation. Attitude contains: a cognitive

component, beliefs about the attitude object - there are better shopping opportunities at the Shopping Centre; affective component, individual feeling about the attitude object - it is more pleasant at the Shopping Centre; and, the behavioral component, the predisposition to respond to the object - shopping at the Shopping Centre (Porteous 1977). The individual will attempt, under normal circumstances, to keep the affective and cognitive components internally consistent. When they are not consistent, the individual is said to be in a state of "cognitive dissonance" (Porteous 1977).

Such a situation of flux may be followed by an attitude change. The organization of consistent feelings and beliefs into a system predisposes the individual to act in a particular way toward the object. On this basis, if we can discover the individual's attitude toward an object, there may be some basis for predicting his behavior.

While attitudes consist of a response or an opinion toward a specific object or situation, a value can refer to a desirable end state or mode of behavior. Values are seen as general standards which transcend attitudes toward individual objects.

Lastly, it can be said that there exists an intimate link between attitude, preference and satisfaction.

Attitudes always involve a preference which is the attitudes affective component. Preference is related to satisfaction, which results from the evolution of repeated perceptions and the achievements of goals and which in turn becomes and attitude formation (Porteous 1977).

If a high level of satisfaction is achieved from performing in a certain manner toward a stimulus object, it is likely that the stimulus will be preferred over others.

Preferences will vary with the individual and his experiences. Sonnenfeld (1969) points out inherent problems of using culture and society as major determinants of landscape preference. Cultures may have a built in bias. This is reflected in the particular society. Instead, Sonnenfeld finds environmental experience and personality the chief determinants of environmental preference. Using Sonnenfeld's native/non-native typology, preferences, based on experience and personality can be defined. The native will have a complex attitude formation toward his environment arrived at by his immersion into that environment. It may happen that he is dissatisfied with his environment, and as a consequence less sensitive to it. He has nevertheless adapted to it by extended residence. The non-native comes to a place with adaptation levels at least partially determined by prior occupations of space and landscape. These, it can be inferred, have conditioned his environmental attitudes and preferences. As a result, he may be less satisfied with what he considers an inadequate landscape. Further, the non-native

is set apart by virtue of having less interaction with the environment than the native.

It can be seen from the native/non-native typology that space and landscape preferences cannot be universally specified. Each individual's image of the environment is idiosyncratic, invoking or triggering a different response in each individual. Preferences differ with adaptation levels which condition the nature of landscape perceptions. This is essentially so because of different values ascribed to the perceived space. Thus, the chief basis for assessing environmental preferences and satisfactions should not be based on society and culture, but experience and personality.

This chapter has endeavored to demonstrate that the image has utility as a potentially crucial intervening variable when attempting to understand behavior. This approach could well close the gap between the professional planner, policy maker and the user if more is known about human preferences and satisfactions. The image may also be considered an integral part of understanding and predicting behavior. Decisions made by the individual are made on the basis of what they believe the best alternative from alternatives known. The image they have of their environment, based on attitudes, values and preferences, will affect behavior whether it concerns work, shopping or place of residence.

5. Sense of Place

5.1 Background

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate how the individual experiences and comes to know his environment. This is accomplished by identifying those elements that constitute sense of place.

Sense of place, broadly defined, is how one conceives aspects of his surroundings through his personal environment and how they come to have meaning for the individual. Learning thus necessitates consideration in the development of environmental images; that is, the build-up of knowledge and meaning of place and space.

A variety of theories of learning have been developed in psychology. Learning in this context, however, is primarily defined as a change in behavior rather than a change in one's environmental image (Pocock and Hudson 1978). As such, these theories cannot be considered as appropriate frameworks for the study of the environmental image.

Learning, or the act of gaining meaning can be considered through the study of sense of place; the relations between place and person, an awareness of the distinctive character of specific localities. Environmental learning is seen to

incorporate aspects of imageability, topophilia, attachment and the symbolic meaning of place. Two dimensions are recognizable: the physical and the social-psychological. These two dimensions closely relate to the two dimensions of the individual's personal environment: the behavioral (designative), which is primarily concerned with form and structure of space and the appraisive (symbolic) which is concerned with the meaning of space.

5.2 Elements of Sense of Place

5.2.1 Imageability

The most obvious component of the individual's mental model or image that the individual has of his environment is its physical form, and the meaning attached to it. The strength of the physical component of the image is primarily derived from the distinctive combination of topographical features and built form (Lynch 1960). Ease of recognition or knowing a place is a measure of such distinctiveness.

Choosing to concentrate on the role of form, Lynch developed a hypothesis that the individual's knowledge of the city is a function of its imageability:

...that quality in the physical object that gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in a given observer. It is the shape, color, or arrangement which facilitates the making of vividly identified, powerfully structured highly useful mental images of the environment (Lynch 1960).

Conversely it can be stated that the environment contains more information than any individual has the capacity to deal with at any given time. Because of this limitation, the individual will become selective of what he sees and consequently what he comprehends (Pocock and Husdon 1978). Each person will decide which environmental messages concerns him, and ignore the rest.

We have a number of more or less automatic mechanisms which sort out and discard much information in accordance with an apparently fundamental human plan to seek and to find simple features and objects whenever possible. And what is simple in our experience is a question of both form and familiarity (Carr 1967).

Anxiety results from the inability to perceptually filter out those aspects of the image which are of no concern. This feeling is common to anyone entering new or intimidating urban environments where environmental information is sought to plan necessary activities.

Legibility is therefore an important component of imageability, and plays an important role in the simplification and organization of the physical form. Lynch demonstrated this concept of how the individual simplified physical form by organizing it in terms of five elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks (Lynch 1960). Paths are channels along which the individual moves; edges are non-path linear elements providing barriers to vision and an outline of areas; districts are distinctive areas of the city; nodes are strategic foci; and, landmarks are single prominent

elements. The result of Lynch's study showed resident's images of Boston, New Jersey and Los Angeles to have particular and unique structures.

Clarity alone, however, denotes the simple and obvious, and as a result may prove monotonous and boring. The individual is also receptive to perceiving sources of novelty and complexity in the environment. Rapoport and Kantor, in their attack against contemporary approaches to planning and design, suggest that the planner/designer:

...has simplified and cleaned up (the built environment) to such an extent, that all it has to say is revealed in a glance. A range of meanings and possibilities has been eliminated. This loss leads to a loss of interest. There is nothing to direct or to hold one as a result of lowered rates of perceptual interest (Rapoport and Kantor 1967).

A range of perceptual input can be visualized: from sensory deprivation where there is not enough to observe or select and order, which may result in monotony, to sensory satiation where there is no relation between elements resulting in perceptual chaos (Rapoport and Kantor 1967). The individual's preference is generally related to intermediate amounts of stimuli and can be referred to as an "optimal perceptual rate".

The concept, however, is difficult to make operational. Whatever we seek, for instance, will not only be affected by the form of the environment itself, but by individuals with different levels of familiarity with the same environment. Attending to specific functions will also lead the individual

to observe different features of that environment. Each specific physical environment, however, may only have a few predominant image creation elements. Thus, it may be possible to determine the physical aspect of the mental model and direct design features to relevant features (Rapoport and Kantor 1967).

Memory of a place may be a method for identification of these features. We organize our expressions of environment in memory. Remembering continues the process of simplification.

The task of memory is to represent an experience in a form which can be retained in the brain unused for an indefinite period than located at the appropriate latter date (Carr 1967).

Literal images may be retained of some event or place, but normally only a few key perceptual features are used to classify each unique experience. These simplified and condensed experiences are then related to common past experiences. For example, a shopping environment may be represented in memory as a type of shopping area: antique, high class and so on. Few particular stores, however, are remembered. Through this method we are able to relate this information to the rest of our knowledge about an urban environment.

While the physical attributes may be an obvious reason why the form of the urban environment is known, physical qualities such as clarity, simplicity and dominance alone will

not guarantee imageability and a place in the individual's mental model.

Physical features of the environment achieve a significance or imageability through association with a particular activity or function, or more generally, and in a more subtle manner, through the adherence of particular sentiments, memories, attitudes and beliefs (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

Physical form then can be given meaning through some combination of emotive (associative), usage (attachment) and symbolic (sentiment) significance.

5.2.2 Topophilia

There is an interaction with, rather than a response to place; in effect a sense of relatedness. This spirit or personality of place is not revealed in a brief acquaintance with a place, but is acquired through affiliation with a place. The individual becomes no more different than or becomes identified with place where he develops affective ties with the material environment.

Tuan identifies this affiliation by the use of the term "topophilia": human love of place, or fields of care.

Topophilia can be expressed in a variety of ways:

The response to environment may be primarily aesthetic: it may vary from the fleeting pleasure one gets from a view to the equally fleeting but for more intense sense of beauty that is suddenly revealed. The response may be tactile, a delight in the feel of the air, water, earth. ...less easy to express are feelings that one has towards a place because it is home, the locus of memories, and the means of gaining a livelihood (Tuan 1974).

Topophilia is thus described or appreciated in two contexts: visual/aesthetic experience and physical contact. Our visual or aesthetic appreciation of the environment varies in kind and intensity and is thus dependent on our knowledge or interaction with place. Appreciation of the aesthetic can be little more than a social convention, as with a typical sightseer; it can be aesthetic combined with some other intent as when we become curious about events that unfold in a place; or, it can be personal and longer lasting when mixed with memory of human interaction. (Tuan 1974)

It is not possible, however, to appreciate or enjoy a purely aesthetic appreciation for long. For example, in observing a painting the visual impact alone may be fleeting. But when a painting is given meaning, either in a personal context or through knowledge of its creator, it is possible to maintain the sensation of appreciation for a longer interval.

Similarly, surprise may be an alternative method for explaining this concept. The most intensive experience in nature is that which may capture the individual unaware. "Beauty is felt as a sudden contact with an aspect of reality that one has not known before" (Tuan 1974). This new sense of understanding awareness may be understood as the antithesis of the acquired taste for landscape or received opinion.

The visual appreciation of landscape or environment implies a certain non-related distance with the landscape. Physical involvement tends to be more direct. For a true love

of place then, direct contact is a necessary prerequisite. Attachment to the land, however, is varied. It can be a round of golf or a conquest such as in the sport of mountain climbing. Or it can be a logger's or farmer's attachment to the land where nature is known through one's need to gain a living. The working farmer, for instance, does not see the land as pretty pictures, but is still profoundly aware of its beauty. It can be his enemy or friend, depending on the crop. Attachment to place in this context can be summed up by the Great Plain's farmer.

In America, on the marginal farms of the Great Plains, farmers must constantly struggle against the threat of drought and dust storm. Those who cannot bear the hardship leave; those who hang on seem to develop a curious pride in their ability to endure (Tuan 1974).

Thus, the farmer's topophilia is a compound of material dependence and the land as a repository of meaning which sustains hope.

Everyone has his own topophilia. It will range from the city dweller's aesthetic experience which may be characterized as a romantic appreciation of nature or his urban environment. It may be represented by weekends in the country or activity in historic preservation movements. For the individual with direct experience in the land, his topophilia will reflect a much greater intimacy, a different kind of awareness and meaning which is much more direct and special.

Understanding an individual's affective ties with place, or topophilia, is another component of the individual's mental model or image. These associative ties with place can also assist in understanding how the individual or group uses the environment. In other words, their attachment to place.

5.2.3 Attachment

Just as place affects the people who inhabit it, so to do people affect the place or the use of space. Activities become associated with certain types of place. For example, it is easy to observe the contrast in attitudes adopted in different public places. Observe, for instance, the difference in behavior in a sports stadium as opposed to in a church or someone's home.

It is when we carry out our plans in real environmental situations that the consequences of form are most directly experienced. The form the environment provides support for certain actions and constrains others. The significance for environmental form for human actions, however, is as much a function of how people perceive supports and constraints as it is of the physical form itself (Carr 1967).

Attributes of form are more meaningful when they reinforce usage or activity patterns. In short, a church should look like a church. When form does not visually express an activity, the pattern of an activity will tend to dominate the individual's meaningful knowledge (Pocock and Husdon 1978). Or as Gans puts it, the environment is a potential field for human action but it does not become effective until we

perceive what actions are possible to carry them out (Gans 1972). In this context, a new playground in a slum area may not become an effective environment for the inhabitants. It may be perceived as not needed or an unsafe place. In such a case, the playground might evolve different unplanned uses such as a battleground for street gangs (Jacobs 1961).

In this respect, the whole environment may be thought of as being divided into regions or settings for action, each of which will determine to varying degrees the behavior which occurs in it (Barker 1968). A behavior setting can be defined as a stable combination of behavior and phenomenal (world of real objects) environment possessing the following properties: a recurrent behavior pattern; a particular phenomenal environment; a specific time-period; and, strong congruence between behavior and the phenomenal environment (Porteous 1977). And, although time may pass and the identities of participants may change, characteristic behavior patterns associated with that setting will persist.

...a basic characteristic of such settings is that they have a form - an ordered internal arrangement in time and space tending to determine human actions within them - which persists independently of particular actors (Carr 1967).

Activity in these settings will persist either passively (shared recognition) or through overt behavior in which an individual or group lay claim to those parts of the environment that support activity.

Signs signal different types of attachment to place. They communicate to others the extent of their claim and inform of special conditions that have been placed on the use of a particular place. They may be conscious signs announcing a setting through visible means such as physical barriers or graphically through billboards or more informal graffiti. Signs that mark settings can be of an implicit or unconscious nature as well. Spaces can be defined by spatial reaction and orientation. The relative locations of residences may identify class structure in the community just as the location of churches, schools or parks will also identify settings. Care and attention of spaces, from front yards to Main Street, are also signals for appropriate behavior in a setting (Schroeder 1981). Signs of territoriality thus become important characteristics of any environment and constitute an important element in the visual or perceived environment. They represent attitudes towards forms of behavior within a setting by clarifying communication for both the occupant and receiver.

It enables the occupant to develop a "place" in the environment with which he can identify himself and which can serve him as a base for sending messages, relating to status, class, prestige, taste and affiliations; and it thus acts as an extension of his personality (Brower 1965).

Clarity of communication is advantageous for the receiver as well. He is informed of behavior expected of him and can thus decide on an appropriate course of action.

An individual's behavior is then regulated in accordance to the standards and restrictions associated with each place. The extent to which the individual's behavior is limited depends on the amount of social cohesion a space represents. For instance this can range from maximum control in one's home, tightly knit behavior in a church, to less restricted behavior in a street.

In studies of behavior settings, Barker (1968) presents classifications based on stable combination of behavior and phenomenal environment where specific activities are carried out by individuals. Brower (1965), however, identifies four basic types of territorial occupancy. Unlike Barker's classification, where a unique combination of behavior and environment is observed, each type of occupancy in Brower's hierarchy can be represented by a range of behavior. Brower's first occupancy type is represented by "personal occupancy". This type of occupancy is generally representative of someone's home. Most forms of behavior are restricted. In most cases an outsider will abide by the rules imposed. Personal occupancy will reflect the identity of the owner, with signs reflecting his tastes, standards and values. "Community occupancy" can be characterized by behavioral restrictions that fall within a community purpose. Settings such as churches, private clubs and shopping centres are examples of this setting. "Occupation by society" restrict and control behavior for the good of the general public. Signs tend to be clear and standardized. The space expresses

a public function and access is open to anyone. A street is an example of occupancy by society. Lastly, with "free occupancy", the character of restrictions which are placed upon freedom of action generally reflects accepted social behavior. Signs are tolerated as long as they do not have a general power to control. Examples of free occupancy could be a wilderness park or nude beach.

Specific places or functions may represent more than one occupancy type as well. Eating establishments may be represented by: a hot dog stand in the park - occupancy by society; a cafeteria - community occupancy; or, a vegetarian cafe - personal occupancy. Type of occupancy can also be seen in the distinction (both visually and structurally) between the typical shopping street, characterized by occupancy by society, and the shopping centre, which is seen as community occupancy. Everyone feels they have input into the development and control of the street. In the Shopping Centre, however, no matter how many public amenities are added, this space will always reflect the best interests of the shopkeepers and not the community. Even other types of community occupancy will seem inappropriate in the Shopping Centre environment. Thus, placing a church in a Shopping Centre for instance, may be inappropriate given the certain aspects that define community occupancy of a Shopping Centre.

While behavior settings may be characterized, each is unique. Each have their own peculiar set of variables by

which we identify them. Factors which determine behavior settings may depend on homogeneity or the diversity of the community, as well as the particular structure of relationships that may exist. Only by identifying and dealing with these settings on an individual basis can a clear relationship between the setting and its behavioral realities contained be identified. They therefore can be seen as the real units to which individuals must adapt.

5.2.4 Symbols

Symbols play an important part in making the landscape comprehensible. By reducing the city to symbolic form, the complexity of sensory information is reduced accordingly (Rapoport and Kantor 1967). By increasing meaning between bits of information received, redundancy of stimulus input and predictability are achieved. Symbols are thus seen as having a direct connection with optimal perception rate. Whole cities may be captured by a summary of particular attributes, analogies and personification.

...from the point of view of image formation if...man symbolizes the environment which he engages, it is logical to assume given acquaintance or involvement, that those symbols themselves may become stimuli to which he then responds (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

The individual's knowledge of his urban environment occurs most predominantly at two distinct levels: the total urban environment and his own local situation. Intermediate divisions remain vague. "These two ends of the scale appear

to express a common human desire to dwell on two widely disparate levels of thought: high abstraction and specific response" (Tuan 1974). The city in all its complexity can be identified by a name, for example Rome, or a monument such as the Eiffel Tower, or a scene such as New York's skyline. At the local level, although its constituent parts are not built as symbols, all acquire meaning to those who inhabit the place. Place thus becomes a reflection of the individual's collective values, thus becoming a symbol.

A symbol is a part that has the power to suggest a whole: for instance the cross of Christianity, the crown of kingship and the circle of harmony and perfection. An object is also taken for a symbol when it calls for a penumbra of meanings, when it calls together a succession of phenomena that are related analogically and metaphorically to each other (Tuan 1974).

The city itself can be a monument. Certain places have gained this distinction. Washington D.C., for example, was conceived to symbolize the new republic. It was born from a plan that sought to create a city of beauty and magnificence. Examples of this type in North America are rare. Most towns and cities owe their creation and layout to the convenience of a survey grid and growth along transportation routes. Thus the North American urban symbol may be a functional symbol like a bridge or railroad depot or more recently the group of tallest buildings located in areas representing peak land values in the urban region. Religious and civic aspirations take shape as individual symbolic elements in the urban scene but rarely come to be a symbol of community.

Non-utilitarian structures like the St. Louis gateway arch acquire certain symbolic qualities. The arch was specifically designed to capture widely held historical sentiments. The success of non-utilitarian imagery, however, depends not only on the aptness of the symbol, but also to a large degree on its ability to capture the public's imagination.

Boosterism is a popular non-utilitarian symbol creating device which aims at creating a favorable community image. Booster images, or the capsule image (Porteous 1977) usually represents a strong trait that stands for the entire community (Kane and Alexander 1965).

Boosterism as an image creating device finds its most popular usage through nicknames or the stereotyped image of a postcard. Nicknames gained popularity in use by fledgling commercial centres that sprang up across the North American continent. Nicknames were used to advertise their individuality and unique virtues against the rivalries of others. Nicknames usually refer to what the city is supposed to represent: this is derived from their social or economic achievements or geographical advantage.

Tuan suggests that the necessity of creating the illusion of self-sufficiency is based on man's ethnocentric beliefs. Even though these symbols in the literal sense may not represent reality, they are necessary to maintain the vitality of community.

The illusion of superiority and centrality is probably necessary for the sustenance of culture. When rude encounters with reality shatter the illusion the culture itself is liable to decline. In the modern world of rapid communications, it is difficult for small communities to believe that they are in any literal sense at the centre of things, and yet such faith is necessary if they are to prosper. City fathers and town councilors appear to recognize this fact, and valiantly try to maintain a sense of centrality by proclaiming their town to be, for example, the "Bratwurst Capital of the World" (Sheyboygon, Wisconsin), or even better apparently, the "largest city for its size" (Taunton, Mass.). (Tuan, 1974)

Hence, terms such as "centre of", "capital of", "hub centre", or "heart of" are used, always playing on the positive aspects of image.

Booster imagery is also achieved by attempting, through the use of postcards, to capture a specific scene or commodity that is representative of the community. Prominent buildings or shopping districts represent the desired image. On the other hand, frequent, and often exaggerated artistic rendering of products of local economy representing the commercial achievements as sources of prosperity are also common. Even small towns sell postcards that reveal a faith in the worthiness of their Main Street or economic achievements. A giant apple mounted on a flat-deck truck (Vernon, British Columbia), or a salmon, greatly exaggerated in size, strapped to the top of a station wagon (Campbell River, British Columbia) represent booster imagery.

In contrast to these pretentious symbols, the associative power of place also occurs on a localized level. Even though

a place may not be created as a symbol as such, over time buildings and streets achieve a symbolic character of their own. Beacon Hill, for example, represents a persistence of an urban pattern which long ago may have ceased as a functional unit. Its enduring character can only be understood in terms of the group values it has come to symbolize.

Beacon Hill is a famous upper-class neighborhood in central Boston. For a long period of time it has been a world to itself; marked off from other areas by tradition, culture, social standing and economic power. Beacon Hill, for the most part, owes its status in articulating and symbolizing these genuine historical sentiments. It is keenly aware of its distinctions.

In the course of time, Beacon Hill has become far more than a piece of real estate; it is a symbol for a mellow world that whispers rather forbiddingly of old family lineages, distinguished residents, old family houses, local antiquities and venerable neighborhood traditions. It is an effective symbol that Beacon Hill in the twentieth century, can continue to attract and retain certain upper-class families that would not otherwise live there (Tuan 1974).

Heightened awareness, by both resident and outsider of the essential character of Beacon Hill, adds credibility and strengthens the Hill as a distinctive place type. Walter Firey (1945) has shown how the spatial symbolism of Beacon Hill has exerted a marked influence on the ecological organization of the rest of the city of Boston. The "Hill" is located adjacent to the city's downtown business core. Because of its narrow, winding streets, it has been criticized

as being functionally inefficient for today's modern needs. Economic rationale, however, cannot contend with the sentimental values of influential Bostonians and people throughout the state of Massachusetts. Through community sentiment the Hill has maintained its individuality.

Internal and external images of neighborhoods and communities rarely coincide as they do in Beacon Hill. In this case, the synchronization of images has grown from the residents themselves, being keenly aware of their own identity. Signals are thus broadcast to the wider community informing them of this distinction. In the case of Beacon Hill, great effort has gone into the profuse creation of pamphlets and articles extolling the neighborhood's charm and sacredness. Annual festivities such as the Christmas Eve candle lighting event, a time-honored tradition on Beacon Hill for both resident and outsider, has contributed to local self-awareness and enriched the public image of the neighborhood.

This chapter has identified those elements that constitute sense of place. It represents a method for understanding how an individual reads and consequently comes to know his environment. It recognizes the role of form as the primary component of sense of place. It also recognizes the emotive ties of people who come to inhabit place. Conversely, it demonstrates that there is a reciprocal arrangement where people affect place; that a place contains a

hierarchy of life's social spaces which form the basis of attachment to place. Finally, it has been shown how place comes to symbolize the values held by those who inhabit it.

Man's institutions, his self-image, his associational activities and his artifacts large and small, are intertwined and interactive. Acknowledgement of these diverse but related elements as constituting sense of place has direct planning and policy implications. To what extent are we creating or reinforcing sense of place by modifications to the physical environment through our current emphasis on the visual/aesthetic? The obvious omission to our current approach is the lack of social-psychological input of the user of place.

6. Small Town Place Type

6.1 Background

The previous chapter was concerned with environmental cognition: that is, how the individual learns and gives meaning to his environment. Four major elements which illustrate the relationship between place and person were considered. These elements are seen as having close correlations with the two dimensions of the individual's personal environment. It is proposed that through a study of place in this fashion, it is possible to understand the attitudes, preferences and satisfactions of the users of that environment.

The purpose of this chapter is to use these criteria as the basis for the development of the small town as a distinctive place type. To do this, images derived from popular culture are utilized to assist in determining and interpreting these elements as they apply to the image of the small town. Information about the environment, acquired second hand through popular culture, is shown to influence the observer's knowledge of what constitutes place. The study of popular culture, however, is not used to articulate the human situation, but rather serves to illuminate underlying dimensions of the person's dialogue with his environment. In

this respect, elements of imageability, association, attachment and symbolism are seen as forming building blocks in the way we conceive of and experience place, providing a categorization of intertwined layers of environmental knowledge.

The chapter is divided into two sections. Popular Culture as an information source is first examined to understand its credibility and contribution in understanding place imagery. Second, the small town, known from the image received from popular culture is then considered. This chapter will set the tone for a case study involving a small town which has undergone revitalization, using both the traditional visual/artistic and place making approaches.

6.2 Environmental Learning

The purpose here is to examine the role of popular culture in the image formation process. While place images are partially rooted in direct experience, we also act on indirect knowledge - on understandings communicated and shared as part of popular culture. Or as Lowenthal (1975) states, only through our memories and that of others do we truly understand any scene. Information thus acquired second-hand through various sources relating to places visited and not visited assist in the build-up of knowledge of place. The main source of secondary information that contributes to the development of environmental imagery is derived through

various sources of popular culture: newspapers, journals, books, radio, television and film.

An examination of popular culture can contain what can be described as predominant landscape attitudes, namely, points of view which are expressed over and over again in literature, film and other sources of mass media. If these attitudes are not necessarily the attitudes of the common man, they can be or should be seen as representative of that minority which is so active in creating peculiar landscape tastes and moulding landscape itself (Lowenthal and Prince 1965).

The image produced through popular culture will have a marked impression on the receiver. The novel or film, for instance, conjures up a vivid place image or creates a particular consciousness about the place. As a consequence, attitudes and preferences may be no less strong whether that place is known first hand or not. Coming into an area known only through familiar literature and film may well confirm the individual's feelings about the place. The newcomer, however, is prepared to "see what he knows" (Pocock and Hudson).

Therefore, while place images may be conveyed through first hand experiences, it is mainly secondary sources of information that contribute to the development of environmental images. As Pocock and Hudson point out:

The cumulative influence of schooling and vicarious experiences through arts and popular mass media enable him to know, and to hold opinions about, many places never actually visited (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

To be sure, inherent weaknesses in accuracy may accompany this approach. The general type of mental model or representation formed by the observer, which can be referred to as the imagination-image, will be simpler, less-rounded and contain a higher degree of distortion than would be found in a memory-image (Tuan 1975). The image derived from this source can represent:

...a stereotype, an oversimplification; myth, an ill-founded over-simplification; prejudice, an oversimplification unresponsive to corrective, first-hand evidence (Pocock and Hudson 1978).

Thus, while secondary sources of information may complement or enable a filling in of images of place acquired first-hand, they can also influence, by implanted expectations, or conditioning, image formation of those areas known first-hand. Take, for instance, the obvious contrast which exists between the image of a place held by Sonnenfelds's native or resident and that of the outsider or non-native (Sonnenfeld 1966) examined in the previous chapter.

Nevertheless, the use of secondary information in the development of environmental images can play a major role in the planning for revitalization because it offers an interesting perspective in the individual's dialogue with his environment. As Marx indicates:

Because imaginative literature remains one of our most delicate and accurate means of joining ideas with emotions, public with private experience, I believe that it can provide insights into the relations between mind and the environment which are unavailable elsewhere (Marx 1968).

The landscape revealed by popular culture interpreted directly, can give a good indication of the meaning the real world landscape has for people. Analysis of the environment in this respect reveals patterns of experience, perhaps not in keeping with the values of the planner/designer, but nevertheless those he must learn to respond to.

The literature concerned with understanding small town place settings is divided over the application of secondary sources of information, as opposed to first hand knowledge, in the analysis of small town place types. Schroeder, for example, argues that to know a town one must know it first hand (Schroeder 1981). It is difficult to image a small town, though most of us have an idea of what a small town should be like. It is suggested that there are simply too many small towns to be recognized as unique entities. For example, in 1980 more than one-fifth of the United States lived in 5500 towns with population between 2,500 and 25,000 inhabitants, while another five percent of the population inhabited 13,000 places with populations less than 2,500 inhabitants (Schroeder, 1981). Sheer numbers of small towns may be ample justification for generalization. But to make generalizations about small towns runs the risk of blurring the individual's ability of conceptualizing the small town as a unique place setting. As Schroeder states:

...studious generalizations, no matter how rational, and popular stereotype no matter how verifiable, erase individual differences, and such erasure confounds the individual's ability to judge small towns as places to live and work (Schroeder 1981).

But as pointed out, through education and experience we are endowed with a preconceived image of what small towns are. Any confrontation between reality and what is believed, the latter will surely prevail. The method proposed here is that it is precisely the popular stereotype that presents promise for more fully understanding the small town as a distinctive place type. Further, by becoming more familiar with the constituent parts of the stereotype, variations of the stereotype, which apply to local situations become apparent.

Thus, the justification for concentrating on secondary sources for this theme is that they represent the articulated and accepted system of values of the society studied. Novelists, for example, are able to create small-town landscapes in their books because they essentially agree with the sentiments of the reading public. That is, to be plausible they have to match what the individual thinks of them.

The truthfulness of such communication lies in the reader's acceptance of the author's image as plausible. To be plausible, the fictional town must agree with the readers' general picture of small towns and small town life. This sharing of stereotypes makes the novel an extraordinary source for understanding place images (Jackle 1982).

Photography can be seen as another important source of image creation. Commercial photographers are strongly susceptible to stereotyping. Jackle quotes Theodore Dreiser:

I like the spirit of small towns...which seek out...the charms of local life and embody...them in colored prints. Walk into any drug or book store of any up-to-date small town, and you will find in a trice nearly every scene of importance and really learn the character and charms of the vicinity (Dreiser 1966).

Purveyors of Popular Culture are therefore seen as an important source in the study of small town place settings. The stereotype they portray identifies the prevailing image, which is used to picture the small town as a distinctive kind of place, by describing elements which traditionally served to symbolize that place type. These symbols may be seen differently (each person justifying their own beliefs and attitudes in their own terms), but have consistent meaning for everyone who sees them. As Jackle states:

Beliefs and attitudes about small towns were associated with landscape features, so townscapes, or features in townscapes, served as icons to stereotype thoughts about towns. Place images were not only imitations or representations of landscape in the mind's eye, but, more fully they symbolized place as beliefs and attitudes extrapolated from suggested icons in the landscape (Jackle 1982).

Small town images can be seen as being built around clusters of belief, attitude and icon. The most important of these clusters consists of small town economics and small town society. By focusing on these clusters, it can be shown how these beliefs and attitudes were symbolized in the physical structure of the small town landscape. Thus to establish

place meaning, objects, as icons, are seen to direct and influence the image. This distilling of place image is an attempt to sort out these various aspects of place meaning as they applied to the North American Small Town.

6.3 The Mythicized Small Town

An examination of townscape features actually reveals two generalizations or stereotypes which have evolved portraying small towns as distinctive place types. The first is the one of the mythicized small town of the pre-automobile era. This stereotype portrayed small town as a virtuous place set against the backdrop of the metropolis where impersonal self-interest was seen as the social dominant. Literature portraying this period, read by those exposed to the cold impersonal life of the city, tended to show the small town as a place of welcomed memories, of simpler times and places. The small town was seen as a place where one grew up in the safe environment of kinship and social ties and capable of coping with small town society. "Authors like Zona Gale, Sarah Orne Jewett, Meredith Nicholson and Booth Tarkington painted almost a bucolic picture of small town life (Jackle 1982)". Such novels emphasized that sense of community especially evident in pioneer towns. Warmth of fellowship, which close neighboring brought to towns, was emphasized.

Francaviglia puts the power of the mythicized small town image into perspective:

The small town is a repository of American longings. When translated into the realm of popular culture it becomes one of the most poignant symbols of American ethos. It is tied to sacred icons which simplify and symbolize behavior (Francaviglia, 1980).

Disneyland, a dream park which serves as a cultural preserve for the most powerful and nostalgic images and dreams of American society, exemplifies the power of the small town image. Thus, it is simply not the scene that says its a certain type of place, a location in our individual geographies, but what the scene says to us through various landscape symbols.

An appropriate beginning in the discussion of the small town image would be Main Street itself. The physical appearance of Main Street, including its size, number and quality of buildings was more than an example of economic success, it was what the town thought of itself. Towns were born as a place for fresh starts; a place for new economic opportunities. Small town architecture expressed the profit-seeking motive of towns early years through utilitarian rather than social or aesthetic values.

Its quest, on the traditional scale of values...were thrift, industry, pragmatism and sobriety. To these, aesthetic values and considerations of leisure and comfort were subordinated (Rees 1969).

Expediency was the order of the day. Because there were no existing traditions to respect, the form of the town, apart

from the grid pattern laid down, followed the mood of the settlers. Financial gain was seen as the motive for settlement. The economy was exploitative in nature.

For those towns whose economic plateau years lay ahead, a more permanent business community asserted leadership, with less exaggerated claims of growth as the age of boosterism came to an end. More permanent structures with greater architectural detail would follow. The utilitarian architecture would remain for towns who enjoyed their zenith during this booster period.

Main Street formed an enclosed setting with building facades forming two distinct edges emphasizing the linearity of the street. Where geography permitted, Main Street stretched uninterrupted to the horizon.

Building materials and details of architectural decoration varied between buildings and towns, usually as a function of the period of town development, size and affluence of the town. New towns tended to be build of wood while older, more established centres saw the increased use of brick and iron. Building material was also contingent upon the region.

Little effort was made to fit the architecture of one building with another, although most Main Streets at the turn of the century fit together as attractive, if not distinctive, settings. This diverse, if not eclectic, combination offered

the street somewhat more in terms of visual complexity, than the simpleness of design of each building.

Main Street was essentially a pedestrian street. Wooden planks were quickly replaced with concrete when available. Large awnings covered sidewalks and served a dual purpose of sheltering merchandise on display as well as protecting shoppers from the elements. Many towns maintained rows of large shade trees along business streets for both protection and appearance.

People affected the use of Main Street. Certain types of activity occurred displaying specific types of place behavior. Main Street was divided into settings, each setting determining, to varying degrees, the behavior which occurred there. Business dominated Main Street. Retail stores were the most dominant. Professionals and shopkeepers tended to occupy offices and living quarters in apartments above the stores. Goods and services offered on Main Street were a function of town size which in turn was related to trade area size. Small town merchants displayed ingenuity in their merchandise selection. Stores stressed convenience goods and, depending on the economics of the hinterland, arranged specific lines of specialty items. Such clustering of goods and services were necessary in smaller towns where the market for any one item was limited.

Except for the "high rent" intersection, where banks and department stores located, businesses were usually located in

a random order offering the shopper an ever changing diversity of sights, smells and social interaction.

Although Main Street was a creation of, and principally owned by, businessmen, it was a place that belonged to everyone.

Locals took pride in "downtown" as the ceremonial heart of the community. Although Main Street was owned by businessmen, it seemed to belong to everyone. Although the values of business ruled Main Street's creation, a larger sense of community aspiration prevailed. Small towners easily thought of Main Street in comparing their towns with other places. Visitors were shown the street with pride (Jackle 1982).

Different memories and meanings were attached to Main Street by all the towns inhabitants through a life time of associations. Examples abound. Barbershops, located in hotels and poolhalls, were thought of as nothing less by the barber than the town forum. Every topic of importance originated here and if not, the notions were certainly refined in such places.

Barbershops were a man's world, and ladies hurried by to escape the ogling and raucous laughter evident through the flimsy facade. Cigar smoke, sweet tart scent of bay rum, and the stench of lavishly applied tonic greeted visitors as they opened the door and prepared to match wits and stories with their cronies (Antherton, 1954).

The pool hall also played a distinctive role as a loafing place for older men and adventurous boys. The clink of balls, the spittoons and calendars with pictures of scantily clad women gave the place an aura of mystery and reverence.

Banks, however, epitomized the respectable end of Main Street. They were instruments by which the town could be controlled.

A new and acquisitive society emphasized basic aims, (money) meant so many hogs or cattle or acres of land to the farmer; it measured store goods and business buildings for the merchant. In handling it, the banker manipulated the symbols which identified the successful man (Antherton, 1954).

Bank buildings were built to symbolize wealth and success. Banks were built to look strong. Banks drew strength from appearing strong.

Public buildings not only symbolized vital community functions, but the community itself. Public buildings were often the most elaborate landmarks, symbolizing towns importance. The courthouse symbolized regional government, extending the towns influence throughout the region. Similarly, the post office symbolized the involvement of the federal government in small town affairs. Other federal offices would be housed in the basement or upper floors. This structure would be dubbed the federal building in most places.

Town halls, on the other hand, were usually located on a side street just off Main Street. Real estate capable of generating tax money was thus reserved for business. The Courthouse, however, was good for business and was given an honored place, usually a square in the middle of Main Street. The town hall was a fixture of no significance to trade and could be shunted aside.

Traditional small town society involved small, inwardly focused populations occupying limited spaces. Consequently, neighboring was intensive and highly personalized. As such, small town society was easily stereotyped, and those stereotypes were easily symbolized in landscape. The street grid itself, symbolized small town society.

.....the grid symbolized simplicity and efficiency in town building. It also symbolized an ordered environment. It was a classic American form much taken for granted in its wide spread replication (Jackle 1982).

This orderly layout of streets meant an orderly transition of uses from the commercial heart to residential uses. The grid pattern of streets came to reflect the grid of social strata; it represented a well ordered social system.

Consequently, neighboring became an intensive pastime in small towns. Porches, town squares with benches, stores with areas for meeting all reflected this reality. Neighboring followed prescribed rules.

Thus, while the grid served the needs of land development, its popularity can be seen as being rooted in a broader ethic. The grid imposed a sense of clan equality - lots of equal size in a system of equal streets. For the majority, social identity was derived less from residential location and more from intensive and highly personalized ties of neighboring and friendship. Residential segregation was

not necessary for defining social relationships where the small town found itself in a restricted area. Behavior was highly personalized and people were relatively well known to each other.

A Small Town's social fabric was held together by formal social organizations focused on specific activities, and often operated from specific points of view. Local government, schools, churches and various special events provided a social framework for neighboring, friendship and kinship. Together these organizations upheld the public welfare. Through them conflict was resolved and consensus sometimes turned to action. As these organizations had physical identity in the landscape, they did much to symbolize a sense of community for small town people.

Local government could best be described by small town conservatism rooted in the ethic of good neighboring.

One must eschew opinions, or information, which are not acceptable to the common run...the country town system of knowledge and belief can admit nothing that would annoy the prejudices of any appreciable number of respectful townfolk. So it becomes a system of intellectual institutional, and religious holdovers. The country town is conservative, aggressively and truculently so. (Thorstein Veblen 1923)

Town improvements were seen in terms of enhanced business environment. In paving the streets, civic government acted to enhance the value of business property; increasing fire and police protection lowered insurance rates which made businesses more profitable. Municipal affairs, civic pride

and community interest converged upon its real estate values. Once these improvements were initiated, citizens became involved in seeking to extend utilities and other services throughout the community.

Schools not only served the school children, but played important social and economic roles as well. Schools had significant economic impact, especially in smaller places. The school would employ a substantial number of teachers, and, in many instances, control the biggest payroll in town. Schools also represented perhaps the town's largest capital investment. For towns with no courthouse, the school would represent the largest most prominent public structure in town.

The school contributed much to the town's identity. Organized sports pitted small towns against each other in an exercise in pride.

Churches not only served the town's spiritual needs, but were also important places for socializing. Churches extended a community wide influence.

The church was easily the most dominant force...leading reforms, promoting improvements, and directing pleasure...church influence was directed through its members as they moulded opinion and made decisions in other settings.
(Jackle 1982)

Congregations competed with each other for members, and thus for influence in the community. Small town churches were quite status conscious with pecking orders of denominations developing. Status was measured in size of church. The

church thus became an important icon in understanding community beliefs and aspirations.

Perhaps the most serious and significant expressions of small town communities was its festival.

...they are like family reunions in which it is a best foot forward celebration of the ideal of the community, of what it wants to be; it is a celebration of a sense of place, of uniqueness, or worth (Schroeder 1981).

Much can be learned from the community's manipulation of historical "realities" to support, sanction and justify the lifestyles and social structure of today's town. Historical periods may be expanded with reference to specific people or compressed to suite the purposes of the day. Historical citizens are reduced to type. Thus, symbols of local festival or pageant should not be idly dismissed as contrived publicity or simply the naive antics of locals looking for an excuse for a celebration. Instead they must be viewed as vivid statements of the community's beliefs, attitudes and values.

6.4 Revolt From the Small Town

Jackle's second small town stereotype can be seen as a revolt from the small town. Here popular culture portrayed everything unglamorous about small towns. With the popular use of the automobile, the nostalgic myth of the small self-contained pre-automobile town became replaced by a stereotype that emphasized all that the myth had ignored. With the changing role of society small towns, once a mythicized

symbolic environment, became lost to changing ideas. Small towns became a symbol of provincialism.

With the growth in the use of the automobile, small towns came to be valued less for their traditional qualities and more for their communalities with regional centres and larger cities. The revolt emphasized the conformity, complacency, self-righteousness and ugly materialism of small towns. They came to be seen as parochial places isolated from the big city.

Changes in geographic and social mobility (as new opportunities became available for small-town inhabitants) stand as important facets in twentieth century small town life. Small town society became increasingly characterized by its mobility, both spatial and mental. The automobile and the highway loosened the bonds of self-confinement and more substantially pointed small town inhabitants in an outward direction of the big city. The outward flight was one of individuals seeking opportunities elsewhere.

Main Street gave way to the automobile. New priorities consisting of widened and paved streets replaced the orientation to sidewalks and awnings.

(The)...automobile's appetite for road space, parking space and service space was insatiable. The auto monopolized the curb, encroached on the site of the demolished town hall....and usurped the central square. Parking lot and service station bit into the town fabric, digesting corners, gouging holes in street fronts and devouring those intricate relationships that hold city together (Rifkind 1971).

The street was gradually converted from a place for pedestrian to that of machine.

Merchants sought to modernize Main street. Trees in the way of street widening came down in the name of progress. New architecture became increasingly nondescript, looking more and more like everywhere else. Utility increasingly squeezed aesthetics aside in an attempt by merchants to look up-to-date. Form followed function. Less was more. Old building facades were remodeled to conform with the times. Size became standardized. Signs received more attention. Merchants devoted more and more of their storefronts to signs. Each sought to make loud and distinctive pitches to customers. Signs suspended over the sidewalks sought to attract the passing motorist, now a more important customer than the pedestrian. Fewer and fewer reminders of the old Main street, both physically and mentally were left. That which did remain came to be seen with greater sentimentality and affection, even though what it offered architecturally and emotionally may have been less.

Few towns were prepared to cope with this disruption to traditional landscape. Except for the time of their founding, when town developers exerted controlling influence over its spatial organization, few small towns deliberately planned for change. Change in the landscape was simply allowed to run its course. Land use controls ran counter to the small town's deep regard for the sanctity of private property, a value held highly in smaller towns where, in contrast to the city, a larger proportion of the population owned land (Jackle 1982).

In small towns, common sense was a highly valued prize.

Zoning and other decisions often directly affected officials and their families through an intricate web of small town interactions. Officials might avoid decision-making, or persistently uphold private interests over the more abstract community benefit (Jackle 1982).

By the 1960s the auto had imposed a new order, equally as simplistic as the grid pattern of the pre-auto town, and even more predictable. Lack of planning produced a new venacular in arrangement. New icons of the highway culture began to prevail.

Small town societies came to be seen as no longer being localized, structured and self-contained. Where life in small towns had been traditionally based on domestic display, inviting conformity to middle class social norms, increased mobility, both socially and physically, heightened the individual's opportunity outside the town (Jackle 1982).

Employment opportunities, social interaction and consumer loyalty were increasingly formed outside the town. Nearby employment meant a flow of residents, especially the young, to positions which for the most part were lower-skilled or menial occupations. For the small town resident, with little training outside of traditional resource based employment, the new technology in the outside world presented a feeling of resignation which dampened his optimism. The small town then came to be seen with a certain amount of disdain, even by its former residents.

As a result of decades of instability, a feeling of pessimistic conservatism settled over the small town. As Pierce Lewis writes of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania:

Three generations of economic trouble, three generations of watching Bellefonte children leave town upon reaching adulthood, three generations of being told incessantly that Bellefonte was a tired worthless place - all these have carried the town beyond the threshold of pain to a state of pessimism and resignation which often approaches despair. Out of pessimism has come a grim conservatism that has little necessarily to do with political attitudes. It reflects the fear shared by passengers in a sinking lifeboat that at any moment, any change threatens survival itself. (Lewis 1972)

There has been little in the North American way of thinking that prepared a town to accept a condition of slow growth or no growth at all. Nothing, in short, to prepare it to grow old gracefully. With the desire to grow, but unable to do so, the small town grew increasingly frustrated and bitter.

The automobile disrupted traditional town-country ties in an economic sense. Merchants survived or failed in their ability to adapt to new circumstances.

Less frequently did the call for community cooperation go out, and less faithfully were those calls heeded; the sense of community had been diluted, its boundaries uncertain and its core less evident (Jackle 1982).

Main Street no longer came to be seen as a symbol of community, so much as a frustrated individualism struggling for survival in the automobile age.

Business strung along the highway epitomized the quest for individual fulfillment under terms more flattering to the new ethic of self-assertion. Centralization was replaced by decentralization. Symbols of concentration and mutual reinforcement were replaced by symbols of separation and alienation. The new icons of place reflected a fragmented sense of purpose, and the associated beliefs and attitudes were equally as diffused. The messages transmitted by the new reality were ambiguous so far as community of interest was concerned (Jackle 1982).

The automobile brought a new orientation to the landscape. The automobile symbolized change; change coming to be seen as the new "metropolitan universal" order. With the emphasis on individualism, there was little the community could do, or perceived it should do to direct change. But bearing few symbols of this new order, the small town borrowed place-making symbols reflecting this metropolitan order.

6.5 Regional Variation in Small Town Imagery

Thus far, interest has been focused on the small town as place stereotype. Of special importance has been those icons of small town landscape which have become powerful symbols in popular culture. Meinig (1979), on the other hand, explores the idea of regional variation in predominant small town images. Meinig identifies those images that relate to different kinds of small town places, geographically and temporally, rather than precise buildings and localities. For Meinig, there is not one, but a series of symbolic small town landscapes:

Every mature nation has its symbolic landscapes. They are part of the iconography of nationhood, part of the shared set of ideas and memories and feelings which bind a people together (Meinig 1979).

Of importance is not what the scene might say to the observer, that it is a certain type of place, but what the scene says to us through certain kinds of landscape mediums; not that this is a small town for instance, but what attitudes and beliefs are associated with the small town.

Meinig sees three distinct small town place types that perhaps best typify the small town symbolic landscape: The New England village, the Mid-west town and the California suburb.

The New England village is a specific image. Its white church steeple, village green or common and streets lined with

elms conjures up feelings of continuity (present with past), stability, and quiet prosperity.

Taken as a whole, the image of the New England village is widely assumed to symbolize for many people the best we have known of an intimate, family-centered, God-fearing morally conscious, industrious, thrifty democratic community (Meinig 1979).

It was from such towns that the heroes of the nations emerged. Virtues thought to be rooted in small towns were seen to nurture men and women to greatness. The pastoral pursuits of small town life contributed to virtue, the good life and happiness.

Main Street middle America is seen as the next dominant small town place type held by many North Americans. It is no accident that the symbols of middle-America, the Court House and Railroad depot, which enclose Main Street, are so amply captured in theme parks such as Disneyland.

Perhaps the most essential element of the Mid-west town was the town bank. With its great classical columns fronting the stone "temple of business", the bank was proclaimed the real set of power and authority. There is no more "church" in the Mid-west town, but churches of all denominations.

(The)...image of Main Street is the seat of business culture of property minded, law abiding citizens devoted to "free enterprise" and social morality, a community of sensible, practical people. The Chamber of Commerce and Protestant churches are actually linked in support of progress and improvement (Meinig 1979).

It was in the productive lands of the Mid-West, coupled with the New England values of religion, education and morality, that many found real substance to the American dream.

The third landscape found in popular culture is a product of technological advance: the automobile. The auto created its own kind of landscape affecting both the physical and social form of the community. New elements evolved. The resultant image consists of houses built in broad lots, two car garages connecting to broad streets with no sidewalks. New kinds of auto-oriented services emerged to serve the motorist. The auto offered the individual freedom from place. It connected the individual with far flung employment, shopping and social opportunities.

Southern California is given credit as the major cultural hearth of this development. It can be seen as a unique environment not just adaptations of all landscapes.

Southern California was also giving birth to a new kind of society. It might be characterized as a leisure society, not because so many people were so rich they need not work, but because it was based upon a very different attitude toward work which made leisure a positive good, a definite break with older puritan and middle-class American mores....The automobile was an integral and essential part of this new individualistic, informal, immediate life-style (Meinig 1979).

Hollywood, perhaps unconsciously, put before the eyes of America and the world this selective idealized California suburb as the best American landscape, a standard to strive for; a model of the future. The nation came to be remade in

the California image. Suburbia became "...the equivalent of small town America as a symbol to the country's grass roots and the fountainhead of the American way of life." (Meinig 1979)

This chapter has explored sources of knowledge which contributes to the formation of the image of the small town as a distinctive place type. Secondary sources of information, derived from sources of popular culture, are seen as directing and influencing our image of the small town. What is important is that these sources create, as well as reinforce, images held of small town place.

Two generalizations or stereotypes are presented: the mythicized small town and revolt from small town. They are portrayed as the predominant images of popular culture. Last, regional variation in the small town image, as a result of local belief and attitude, is outlined.

From this approach the small town image, in all its complexity and variation, is summarized and generalizations are put forward about small town sense of place. The approach thus presents a procedure of enquiry by presenting, in a capsule form, what constitutes the small town and what small town inhabitants think of themselves.

The following chapter forms a case study which builds upon this approach by outlining those elements that contribute

to sense of place for a particular small town. The small town revitalization program studied outlines how incorporating elements that contribute to a stronger awareness of sense of place contributes to stronger community identity and purpose, not just for the inhabitants of place, but serves to synchronize community identity with non-residents as well.

7. Case Study

7.1 Background

The purpose of this chapter is to examine a small town revitalization project which has relied both on the principles of the traditional or beautification approach and sense of place or place-making approach, to achieve its goal of a revitalized downtown. The project demonstrates how both approaches can be used, in a complementary manner, to satisfy revitalization objectives.

The town of Chemainus, B.C. is selected for the study because it appears to have successfully incorporated both approaches into its revitalization project. It is thus possible to compare the contributions of the two concepts in one community project; how they were conceived, carried out and, the overall contribution to the community.

Thus far, this thesis has attempted to demonstrate the underlying principles of the two approaches. The traditional approach to planning for revitalization is dominated by the planner's conception of what the environment ought to be. The composition of the planned environment will tend to be related to his training and visible to his perception in view of his

position. In short, form will come to be a reflection of the values of the planner.

On the other hand, sense of place is seen as the particular relationship that exists between the individual and his environment. It views the user's of place as motivated, perceiving and responsive individuals with whom successful interaction with the environment is an essential prerequisite of land use.

Herbert Gans points out that as a consequence, two environments are seen to exist: the potential or man-made environment; and, the effective environment, the conception that the user has of this man-made artifact or potential environment. As a result, attitudes and activity in that environment may be far removed from its intended or planned use.

The planner/designer is faced with the task of becoming more responsive to the perceptions that the user has of his environment. As such, how the individual conceives of his environment, and how it comes to have meaning for him becomes a prime consideration.

It is on the basis of the individual's personal environment, that his perceptions of his surroundings are formed. From this, decisions translate into actions. The personal environment is said to consist of two components: the behavioral, consisting of real world objects; and,

experiential, the mental storehouse containing the sum of the individual's experiences including the behavioral components of the past. The focus is thus on the build-up of knowledge about environment and the meaning place comes to have for the individual.

Through sources of popular culture, it is possible to derive an awareness of the distinctive character of specific localities, that is the specific relations between person and that place. It is this relationship which forms a sense of place. Place-making, or sense of place, incorporates the elements of: imageability, or the concern with the real physical world of objects; topophilia or love of place, attachment to, and symbolic meaning of place. Two dimensions are thus recognizable: the physical and the social/psychological, relating to the two dimensions of the individual's personal environment.

It is these two dimensions which form the two realities of revitalization planning: beautification and place-making. The success of the project is dependent on its ability to satisfy both dimensions. The project must create a legible, visually coordinated and aesthetically pleasing surroundings as well as satisfy place-making criteria by capturing the essence of the relationship between person and place.

The Chemainus project differs from most other projects in the B.C. revitalization program experience in that it not only satisfies the beautification component, but equally attempts a

significant place-making program as well. To do this, Chemainus builds on a geographical stereotype associated the North West timber culture in an attempt to portray the community's lumber heritage and reestablish a sense of history.

Place-making has been attempted in other revitalization programs in British Columbia. Kimberly, B.C., a small mining centre located at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, has attempted to incorporate both dimensions into its revitalization project. In conjunction with the beautification project, Kimberly has created a Bavarian Platzel-like atmosphere in an attempt to evoke certain symbolic qualities. Kimberly however, owes its existence to a mineral resource background centred around the Sullivan mines. This mine dates back to the 19th century. A unique relationship thus exists between person and place, one where the community owes its existence to a mining culture.

In 1978, with an anticipated expansion of the local economy through a large alpine ski development, the decision was made to revitalize a stagnating downtown to compliment this recreation development. The Platzel theme was initiated to capture widely held popular sentiments associated with the Bavarian alpine village.

Success of an image-creating or place-making symbol, however, depends not only on the aptness of the symbol, but also to a large degree on its ability to capture the public's imagination. The "Disneyfication" of Kimberly, a collection of free associations of a popular stereotype which comprises the Bavarian village landscape, may not be appropriate for the established community of Kimberly with its own patterns of use and relationships. If the elements of the place-making scheme fail to relate to what the individual believes the environment represents, that is if it fails to recognize the essence of what the relationship between person and place should be, the project is less likely to succeed.

From these lessons, Chemainus, B.C. has developed a place-making theme that displays the historical roots of the community. It builds on local sentiments to create a unique place-making concept that captures widely held beliefs and attitudes about the community. Essentially the place-making project consists of a series of large murals which cover the walls of downtown buildings. These depict scenes of the community's forest culture. The procedure used attempts to link past time to present time, emphasizing community purpose. The project makes reference to events and achievements which have occurred throughout the history of the town. This portion of the project complements the streetscape and facade improvements which form the basis of the beautification scheme. The approach has served to inject pride into the residents, and praise and respect from visitors. It has

served to synchronize perceptions about place between resident and non-resident alike. In turn, the project forms the basis of a tourist industry for the community.

The objectives of the case study are as follows. A brief overview of the community is outlined. This is not meant to outline a history of the community but rather to establish community character; a profile which establishes a sense of community and adds perspective to the revitalization project. Second, a brief history of the revitalization project is documented. The two components of the project, beautification and place-making, are then examined in detail. The concluding section reviews what has been achieved by examining the project in terms of the place-making criteria developed in this thesis.

Background research on the development of place meaning and the revitalization project includes the review of historical documents and a newspaper clipping files, which were prepared by the downtown revitalization committee. The project, and its effects on the community were experienced directly on several occasions in autumn 1983 and spring 1984. Contact with participants in the project included interviews with the British Columbia Downtown Revitalization coordinator, the project manager for the town of Chemainus, a contributing mural artist and recorded conversations with storeowners and townspeople.

7.2 History: Creating a Sense of Community

Chemainus, a small coastal community of about 3500 residents, is located on the east coast of southern Vancouver Island. It is situated approximately 40 miles north of Victoria, B.C. in the Rural Municipality of North Cowichan. The urban municipalities of Duncan and Ladysmith mark the southern and northern extent of the Cowichan Valley, which roughly coincide with the boundaries of the rural municipality (see Figure 1).

The immediate environs of Chemainus received its first white settlement in 1859. From its beginning, the settlement relied on a small but ever expanding regional timber industry as the basis of its economy. Except for infrequent intervals where instant towns appeared briefly around nearby mining claims, timber continued to be the ever expanding mainstay of the region.

Milltown

Chemainus has always been a mill town. From its founding in 1862 until its closure in 1982, life in Chemainus revolved around its lumbermill. No part of community life remained unaffected by the mill. For generations it provided a distinct way of life for the people of Chemainus, helping to create in its residents their own peculiar set of beliefs,

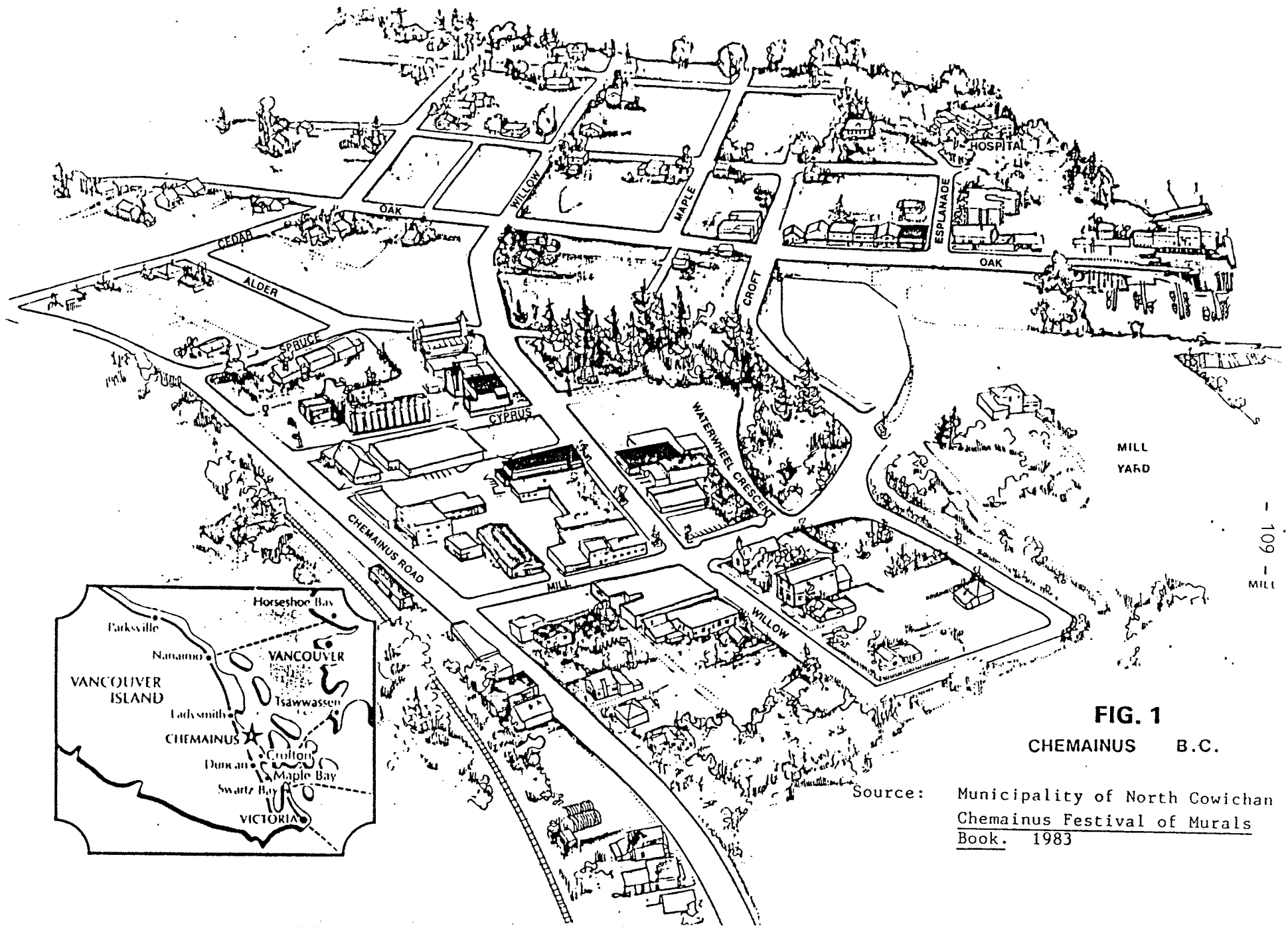


FIG. 1
CHEMAINUS B.C.

Source: Municipality of North Cowichan
Chemainus Festival of Murals
Book. 1983

attitudes and values. Love of place is seen through the association of the people of Chemainus with their mill. This peculiar pride or attachment is best summarized by Schroeder who, in making general comments on milltowns, states:

These towns are born in profit seeking benevolence and energetic optimism, but the full realization of dependence, whether it comes from hard times in production, from union strife, or from environmental conflicts, gives a peculiar psychological character to such communities. Paranoia is the best label for those company towns that have gone through a crucible of layoffs, bitter strikes, or the abandonment of mines, forests or industrial plants. But in the upswing there is a good life: richly endowed public schools, recreation programs, libraries, neat cottages, fresh natural environment and unity of purpose (Schroeder 1981).

This utter dependency upon a single economic resource haunts many towns.

Although it did not begin as one Chemainus, for all intents and purposes was a company town. All aspects of life were in some way dependent on the mill. The full extent of this dependency was realized in 1892 when in a deepening recession the mill experienced its first long-term closure. This situation would last three years. This closure resulted in the loss of most of the white population from the community (Olsen 1963). This period also marked the beginning of a long cyclical history of the community dependent on its mill.

During the community's history, the provision of land, and its development for urban uses was carried out by the company. Dwelling units were supplied to the company workforce on a rental basis to secure a more stable labour force. It was the company's horse-drawn plows that kept the streets cleared of snow in the winter, as well as supplying the community with electricity generated at the mill.

In 1899 a typhoid epidemic in the community pointed to the need for an improved community water system. The mill provided the system as well as land and lumber for a community hospital, the first in the Cowichan valley. Financial solvency of this institution continued to be maintained by the company. This was mainly due to a plan, initiated by the company, giving hospital benefits to its employees for a monthly subscription rate. This was the first such scheme in British Columbia (Olsen 1963).

Life in Chemainus was male-dominated in its entirety. Activity was organized around the mill and its work. Physical strength and technical know-how were admired in men who wrenched the trees from the forests. Utilitarian values predominated. Many local innovations in logging techniques, which would eventually become standard practice throughout the industry, as well as in the production of finished goods originated in Chemainus. The symbol of the Victoria Manufacturing and Lumber Co., (which owned the mill from 1889 to 1939 and which turned Chemainus into a major lumber centre)

consisting of a "V" in a diamond, would become known throughout the world, and became a symbol of status and success for Chemainus.

The company was also responsible for much of the towns' major social functions. Special occasions in the owner's family or a milestone for the mill resulted in a local holiday and was celebrated by the entire community. On such occasions the manager's residence was the centre of activity.

The company provided the nearest thing to a community newsletter with its production of the Christmas Annual, a publication which became a cherished repository of memories of social activities and events in the community. During the war years, the company produced the Chemainus Contract, a bulletin providing news to servicemen from Chemainus about the home front during these years.

Perhaps the full impact and meaning of the mill can be summed up by the impact of the fire that destroyed the operation in 1923.

Clustered on the edge of the bank, wives and children stared down, appalled by the sight of the towns livelihood going up in flames. Below them, every able-bodied man, whether employed by the company or not, strove to prevent the fire from spreading to adjacent buildings, to piles of lumber and to the town....The whistle had been tied down, so that the voice of the dying mill could be heard above the roar of the flames....The people of Chemainus looked at one another, their faces all strangely ruddy from the light of the fire, and asked "What now?". The mill had died, and it seemed likely the town too, would die (Olsen 1963).

The mill was more than a source of livelihood for the people of Chemainus. It represented instead a distinct community feeling. It was almost an overbearing pride that the people of Chemainus had, the mill being the focus of this pride. To residents of neighboring communities, this pride became somewhat irksome. A popular song in Chemainus, a parody to "What's the matter with Father", became a popular theme song:

What's wrong with Chemainus?

Its all right!

The Woolworth Building may be tall,

But our chimney stack beats them all!

What's wrong with Chemainus?

Its all right! (Olsen 1963)

Chemainus was the Mill.

The Hospital

The hospital represented a significant achievement for the community and is a lasting legacy of the determination of the residents to create a better life. The typhoid scare of 1899 had demonstrated the need for better community care facilities for Chemainus. There can be no doubt in the role of the hospital in solidifying community resolve and unity of purpose. It also became a strong symbol of community pride as evidenced by popular community support.

Hospital authorities thought that they could always depend on the unstinting support of the community in any crises. In 1909 they came to the realization that the hospital faced insolvency. The collapse of the mining boom resulted in the closure of both smelters (at nearby Crofton and Mt. Sticker), so that many hospital subscribers found themselves unemployed. A closure of the logging camps in the same year resulted in the hospital being dependent on the monthly subscriptions of the sawmill employees and stevedores. When it became known that this amounted to half the expenses, the remaining subscribers voluntarily doubled their subscriptions to keep the hospital in operation and available to all those who could no longer pay for it (Olsen 1963).

The annual hospital ball, a fund-raising event, became the gala event of the year in Chemainus. But the event was more than a community celebration. Outsiders as well enjoyed in, compliments of the railroad who provided a special train to transport people from as far away as Victoria to join in the festivities.

It is therefore not surprising that the first civic beautification project in Chemainus in 1920, consisted of the beautification of the grounds and adjoining streets around the hospital. The funds for this project were provided by proceeds from the annual garden show sponsored by the Chemainus Garden Club.

Main Street

Following World War II a new feeling of community began to evolve. Prosperity, as a result of continued growth in the forest industry, ushered in a new era of permanency. By the end of the war, ninety percent of all homes were privately owned, either through purchase from the company or constructed through private financing. This state of permanency offset the cyclical effects of the forest industry by providing the town with a stable population.

This period also marked the closing of the company store. Since 1884 there had been no greater symbol of the company's dominance in local affairs than the company store. The store provided all of the necessities of life. In 1949 the company closed the store at its Willow Street location. Continuing with tradition however, the Willow Street subdivision, developed by the company, was completed and the area continued on as the commercial hub of the community. New business enterprises established themselves to fill the gap left by the company store, as well as meet the rising expectations of the community.

Previous to the Willow Street subdivision, businesses had located sporadically at the foot of Oak Street and on the Chemainus Road. Willow Street provided for a new concentration of facilities. This expansion of facilities included a movie theatre which was built mainly through local

subscription. The opening of Willow Street provided, for the first time, facilities that the residents sought out of town. The prospect of gaining a stay at home population was encouraging and newer businesses soon opened. Community pride continued to grow at the site of such progress; a self-assertive pride manifested itself throughout the community.

The Political Environment.

Chemainus had been the first white settlement in the Cowichan Valley. The construction of the railroad in the 1890's saw the beginnings of the nearby urban centres of Duncan and Ladysmith along its route. The economies of these two communities, not dependent on a single industry, meant rapid and sustained growth which soon overtook Chemainus both in size and importance. The incorporation of the Rural Municipality of North Cowichan was followed by the incorporation of the two municipalities. Only Chemainus remained unincorporated.

Chemainus had all but lost its separate identity by the beginning of the century. The Rural Municipality made this inevitable. A bitter rivalry began to grow between much of the Cowichan Valley, centred in Duncan, and Chemainus. Distinctions in the images of the two places soon appeared. The Cowichan Valley had begun to acquire an image of refinement as a diversified economy of farming, mining and

forestry grew as opposed to the community of Chemainus, a place known to be populated mainly by millhands (Olsen, 1963).

The incorporation of the new municipality of Duncan brought this rivalry to a head. A deep schism had been created between the rural municipality, to which Chemainus belonged, and the new urban municipality of Duncan over the location of municipal halls. The decision to construct a new building in Duncan to house both municipal halls in one building was a visible loss of political power for Chemainus and a bitter pill to swallow for the people of the milltown.

The municipal issue helped mould the resolve of the residents to fight another issue which would affect their town. The creation of the North Cowichan School District called for the centralization of the school population in nearby Ladysmith. As with the municipal debate, the school debate became an explosive issue, typical of Chemainus public affairs, and of which so startled neighboring communities.

Again Chemainus had been left out of North Cowichan affairs. Nothing had been given back to it, even though the mill was the largest source of tax revenue in the rural municipality. Talk of seceding from the rural municipality proved productive. An alternative plan was put forward where a small high school was constructed in Chemainus. For Chemainus this meant more than having its children stay at home, it meant the construction of the first public building

in the community, and the diversification in the local economy.

In short, the municipal and school issues can be seen as a solidification of local sentiments about the town. These debates served to solidify political resolve within the community and can be interpreted as being a catalyst for the consensual form of politics which has come to typify Chemainus.

7.3 Chemainus Revitalization Program.

Chemainus had enjoyed continued uninterrupted growth following World War II. This growth was geared to the continued expansion of the lumber industry. Business on Willow and Oak Streets, the two major shopping districts, symbolized this progress. But the commercial districts also symbolized other concerns as well. Lack of new investment, as witnessed through the continued deterioration of the physical environment, began to spell uncertainty about the future.

The town essentially was beginning to feel the effects of major changes occurring in society. Changing economic patterns and greater individual mobility were beginning to have a negative effect on this traditionally self-contained community. By 1980, only thirty-three percent of the mill's work force originated in the Chemainus (Chemainus-Ladysmith Chronicle, December 16, 1981). Of greatest concern, however, were the rumors of an impending closure of the mill.

Seen in this respect, the physical decline of the downtown came to be understood in terms of frustration and uncertainty, not merely changing shopping habits.

In September, 1980, the Chemainus-Crofton Chamber of Commerce organized the Chemainus Development Committee to formulate a plan of action. Physical deterioration of the downtown was cited as the principal reason for this action. The committee, consisting of members of the downtown business community, as well as elected officials of the Rural Municipality of North Cowichan, formulated a plan that would include beautification and parking, as well as murals on some of the area's unsightly buildings (The Cowichan News September 24, 1980). A theme, depicting the history of forestry was suggested. The British Columbia Revitalization program was seen as a possible source of funding for the project. (For a review of the history of the project see APPENDIX I. Chemainus Revitalization Project).

The appointment of a downtown revitalization project manager to coordinate the project was a major development in the evolution of the project. Karl Schutz, a long-time resident and businessman, was selected for the position. Mr. Schutz had a proven record in community promotion and development as a member of the executive of the Chamber of Commerce. His most significant contribution was the development of Waterwheel Park, for which he had received a Centennial Award in 1967 from the Government of Canada.

It was through the project manager that an overall development plan began to emerge. It was decided that the physical revitalization of the Willow and Oak Street commercial areas was necessary to maintain a healthy community environment. The aesthetic approach of structurally unifying Main Street became a priority. Giving downtown the appearance of an efficient Shopping Centre environment, however, was not seen as a panacea for success.

...Schutz made it clear that neither he nor the downtown business people plan to turn the downtown business area of Chemainus into a large shopping centre. "The cozy and homey atmosphere will remain as it is" he said, "but we need new ideas and new paint to freshen things up a little" (Chemainus-Ladysmith Chronicle, February 25, 1981).

A method for re-defining its role as a community, in both a physical and social context, was seen as necessary for revitalization to be a success.

While it was understood that physical revitalization could aid the community, the creation of an efficient, modern setting was only part of the desired image. Not only had there been a commercial decline, but so had there been a decline in the social focus of the community as well. The need was seen to make a strong symbolic statement through these physical improvements. In other words, it was important to build on those elements that gave the community meaning in the first place; to reaffirm local beliefs and attitudes. Developing a strong sense of community was important both in the way the residents continued to see themselves as much as

the way others saw them. An approach conceived as building on traditional beliefs, which recaptured elements of community pride, was advocated.

The objectives of the project, as outlined by the committee included: capital improvements, change to the storefronts and the promotion of the town (Chemainus-Ladysmith Chronicle, February 25, 1981). Accomplishing all three objectives was necessary for a successful project. Through these objectives, the realization began to emerge that it was an overall plan, not just beautification that was needed.

But an overall plan is what is really lacking. The town needs to be different, because it cannot compete in terms of the number of stores - the variety thing again. So make the setting different, make people want to stop here because they enjoy it...Chemainus has a rich history, steeped in wood...(Editorial, Chemainus-Ladysmith Chronicle, March 4, 1981).

From these beginnings a place-making theme, which would complement the beautification project, began to evolve.

Although the community originally rejected the idea of a theme for the development, such as was done with Kimberly's Swiss Alps motif, the incorporation of logging scenes on buildings may strengthen Chemainus forestry orientation (The Cowichan Leader, January 28, 1982).

Place-making art, consisting of giant murals, depicting events from it's history, were seen as a financially practical and a socially expected method for linking Chemainus to it's proud past. "...we are establishing the history, and giving ourselves an identity. We can see where we came from..." (Chemainus-Ladysmith Chronicle, October 3, 1982). It became

the belief that the town's heritage, if exposed, could motivate citizens of Chemainus to improve the quality of life there.

The project thus evolved to incorporate both dimensions of planning for revitalization: the visual/aesthetic represented by the beautification of downtown and place-making, capitalizing on the community's heritage to create a stronger sense of place.

7.3.1 Beautification

The beautification component of the project called for the modernization of the Oak and Willow Street shopping districts (Maps 1 and 2). The overall appearance of these two districts was one of rundown physical storefronts and physical infrastructure. This condition, a reflection of the attitude of the community, left an indifferent impression with both resident and visitor alike.

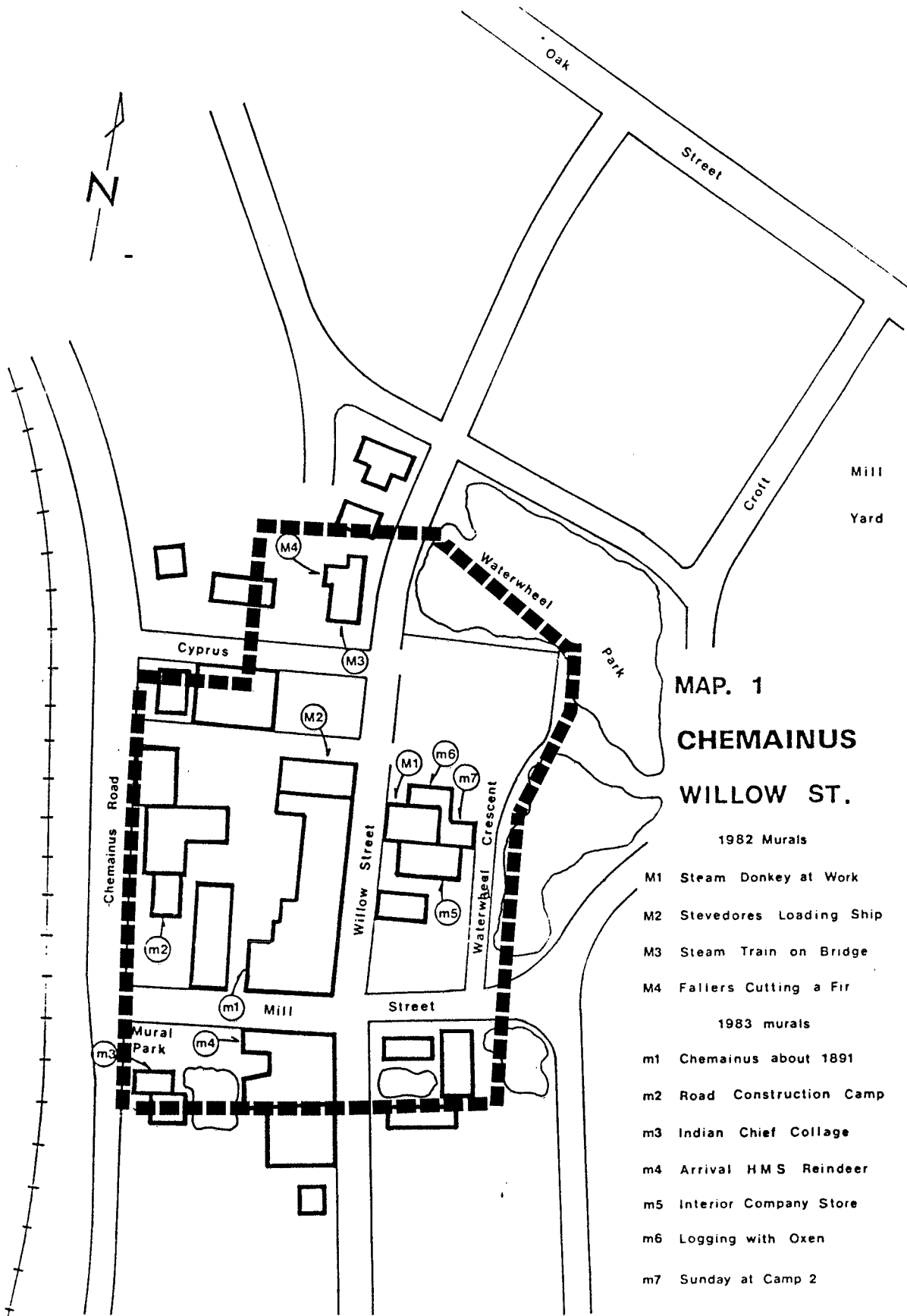
Downtown Chemainus had few predominant image creation elements. Structures displayed a utilitarian form of architecture common in most small resource-based towns. As such, streetscape and facade work aided in structurally unifying the downtown, creating a strong physical setting and more prominent shopping area.

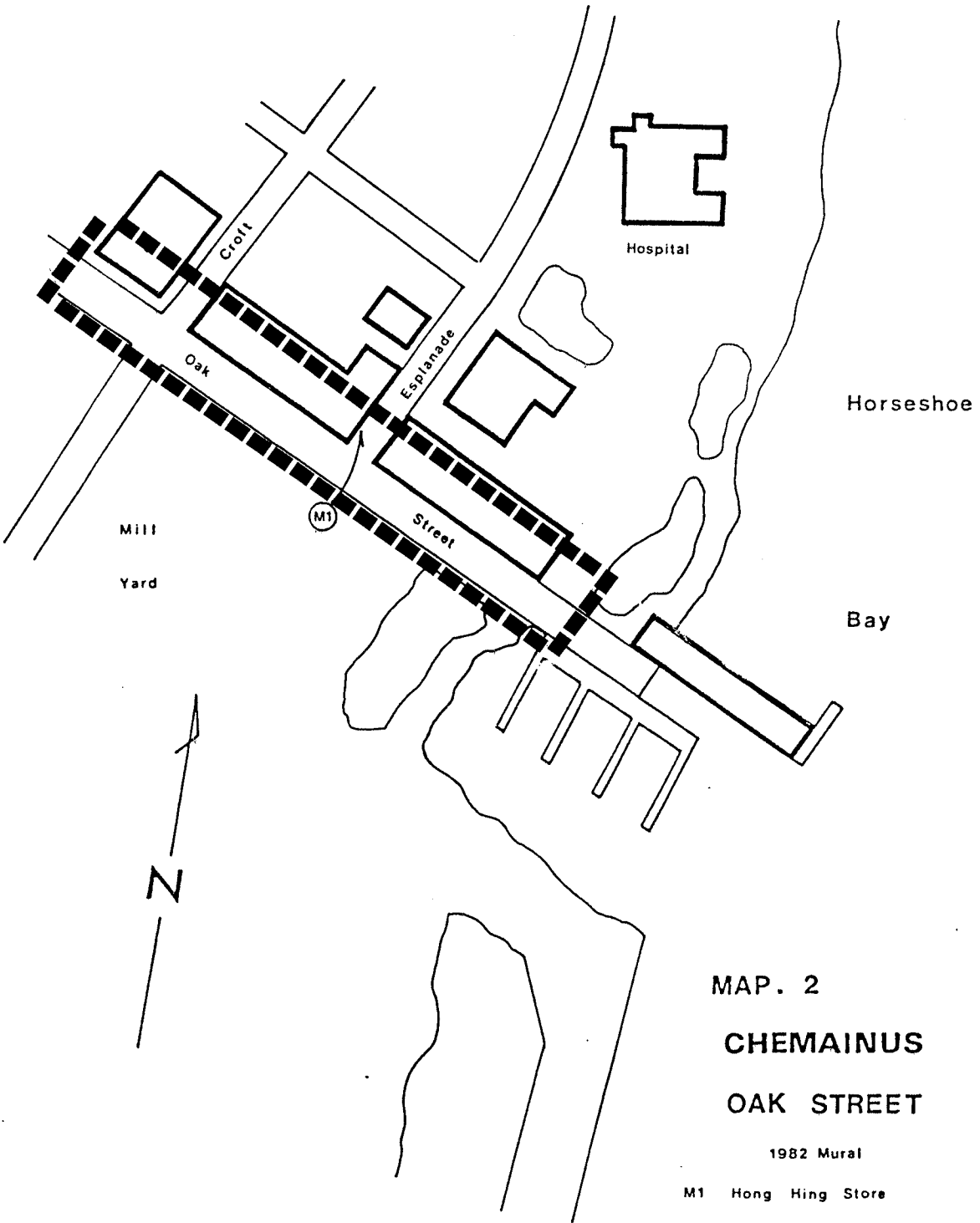
Various compositional devices such as the relationship of building and pavement, form or character of facade patterns,

and building lines were emphasized in the streetscape work (Figures 2 and 3). The work undertaken to improve appearance and layout consisted of new pavement with new widened concrete sidewalks creating strong paths for pedestrian improvement. Protective cedar canopies, constructed along storefronts on Oak and Willow Streets, serve to further strengthen the image of a compact shopping district. The final aesthetic considerations include new street lighting, planters, trees and benches along Willow Street.

Imageability was enhanced through the shape, color and arrangement of physical elements facilitating easily identifiable commercial districts with distinct edges. The effect unifies the districts giving them a strong sense of actness and enclosure.

The overall effect has been the creation of a strong saleable place image. Simplification and organization of the built environment has been achieved. The elimination of incompatible elements (signs, projecting facades) has reduced the townscape to a simplified and unified aesthetic statement. The work does create an overall positive effect for the downtown and is a significant improvement from the deteriorating conditions that existed previous to the start-up of the project.





MAP. 2

CHEMAINUS

OAK STREET

1982 Mural

M1 Hong Hing Store



Figure 2. Willow Street Beautification



Figure 3. Oak Street Beautification



Figure 4. Beautification and Place-Making, Willow Street

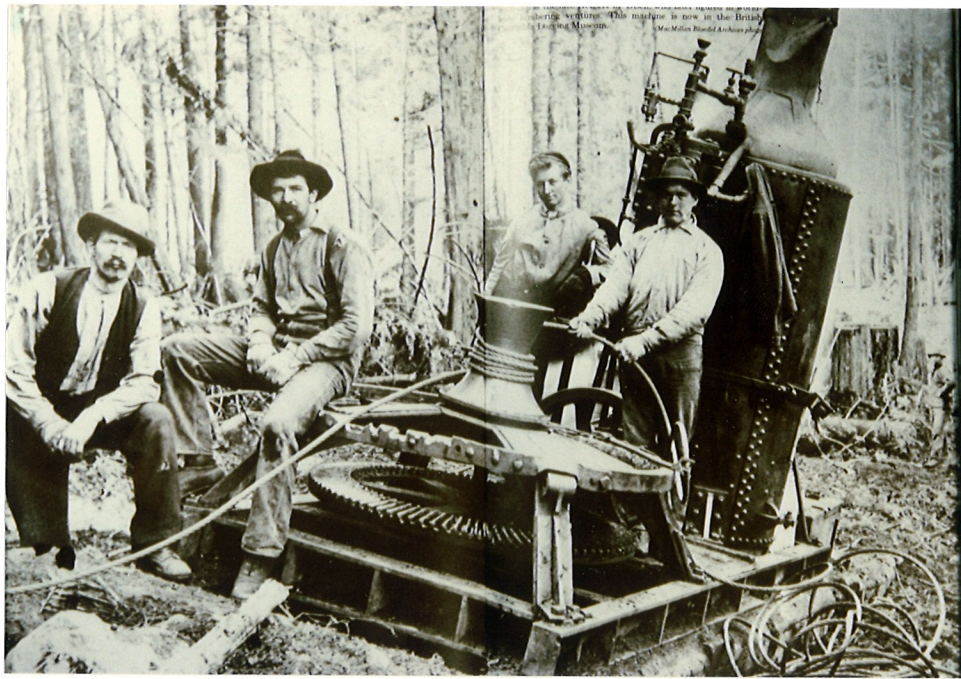


Figure 5. Steam Donkey at Work (Photograph)



Figure 6. Steam Donkey at Work (Mural)



Figure 7. Steam Train Crossing the Bridge (Photograph)



Figure 8. Steam Train Crossing the Bridge (Mural)

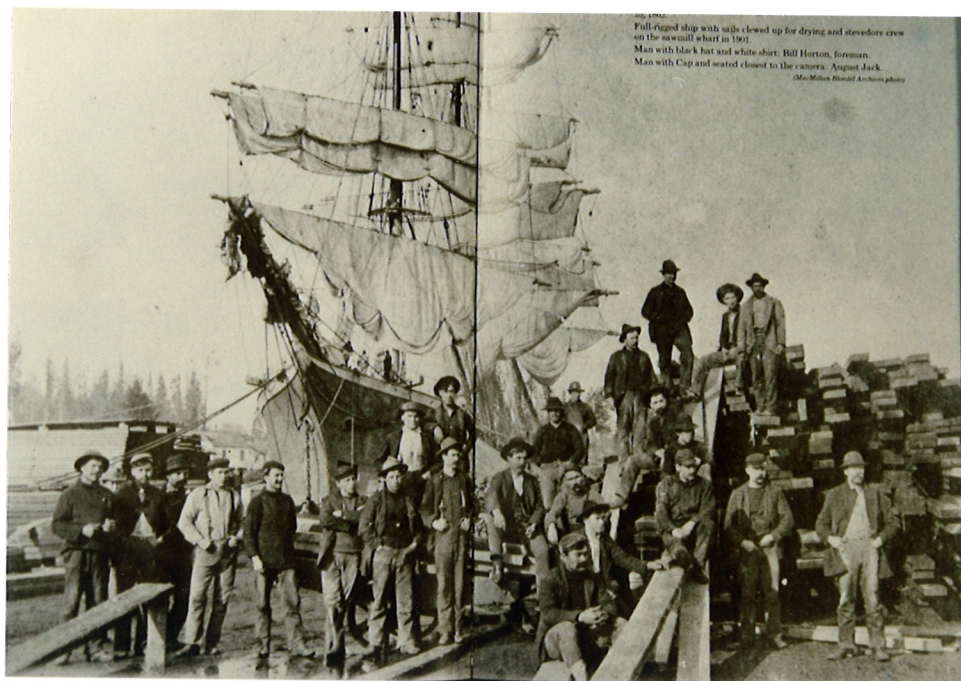


Figure 9. Stevedores Loading a Tall Ship (Photograph)



Figure 10. Stevedores Loading a Tall Ship (Mural)

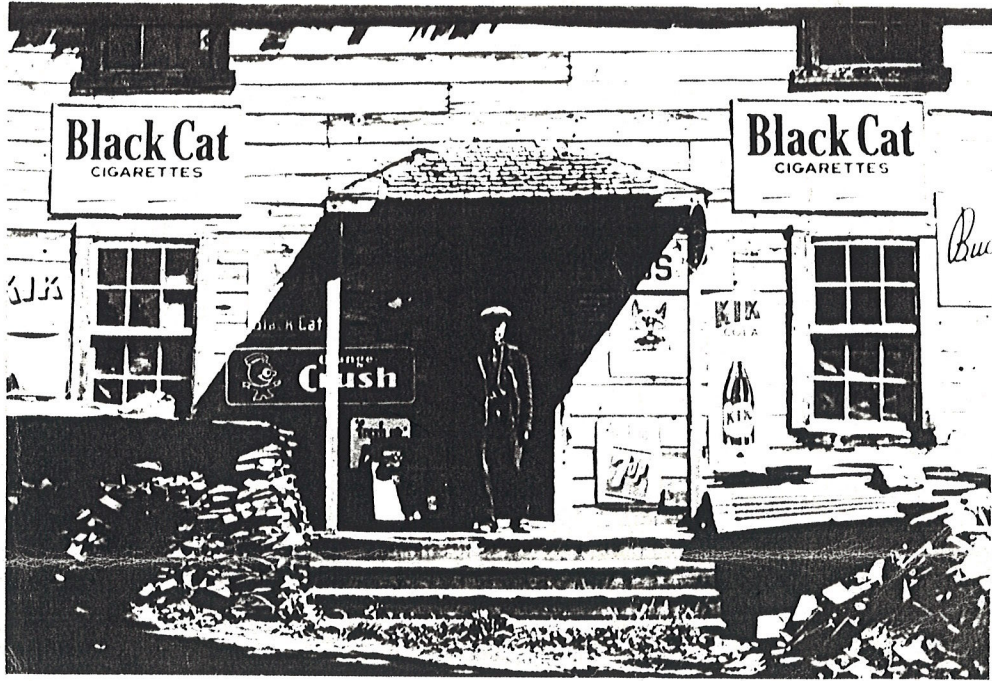


Figure 11. Hong Hing Store (Photograph)



Figure 12. Hong Hing Store (Mural)



Figure 13. Fallers Cutting a Fir



Figure 14. Fallers Cutting a Fir
(Close-up)

7.3.2 Place Making

The place-making theme, which has become the centrepiece of the project, evolved through the determination and work of the project manager. From the beginning, Schutz saw the revitalization plan consisting of more than beautification. Promotion of the town and what it stood for became the catalyst of the project. The theme of the place-making component would be giant life-like murals covering the walls of the buildings in the Oak and Willow Street improvement areas. The murals would depict the history of the community.

The purpose of the murals would be to bring to life the community's own particular history. This was represented by a community tradition steeped in logging and sawmilling; a rich and romantic history filled with fading images of 'steam donkeys' hauling giant cedars out of primeval forests. Chemainus was a culture of cork-booted men who shaped the land with their axes. It took the decline of the big trees and the steam-powered donkey before the community realized the heritage that had slipped from their midst.

Chemainus had existed for 120 years as a world unto itself, marked off with its forestry background as an area of distinct tradition and culture. Chemainus had survived because it was aware of its status. Over time, it had become more than an established mill town. It had become a symbol of

a world dominated by the ring of the axe, and the company whistle, which regulated the eating and sleeping habits of the entire town. Chemainus had developed a curious pride, the pride of being able to stand the cyclic fluctuations of the forest industry, to become the best at producing lumber. Through generations, families had seen their fortunes rise and fall with the industry, a factor which ironically had aided the people of Chemainus in gaining a certain independence. This independence is made visible in the murals.

Wall art, with a social message, is a recent phenomenon. The United States National Federal Art Project of the 1930's used unemployed professional artists who, fired by the enthusiasm of the Mexican muralists, made their own statements about the American consciousness during the depression.

As a rule, murals dealt...with the history, endeavors and community life of a local area. The American scene was encouraged as subject matter, with the goal of teaching citizens about their own area, instilling pride and appreciation for local history (Arts Magazine, October 1977).

The resurgence of the murals movement in the United States in the 1960's, on the other hand, received its support from the local level. The new mural movement came out of minority depressed Black and Chicano communities. Their primary goal was to instill respect, dignity and pride within their community (American Institute of Architecture Journal, October, 1975). Black street art, for example, is intended to

instill ethnic consciousness and pride by portraying historical events and famous black people. Chicano art consists of stylized icons of Spanish, Mexican and Indian origins. This kind of identity building and connection with history serves an important purpose for people oppressed for centuries. Similarly with Chemainus, identity building became a much sought-after aspect. The icons of west coast timber life would be used as a source to instill community pride.

The origins of this unusual project for a small sawmill town are derived through a personal experience of the project manager. While on a holiday in his native Romania, Schutz became impressed with the fresco murals on the outer walls of monasteries in the towns in which he visited. The pictures were stories of the history and hopes of the adjoining community. For Schutz, the murals represented a method for motivating the people of Chemainus to improve the own community identity.

Later, as project manager, Schutz assumed the task of the publishing of the book Water Over The Wheel (Olsen, 1963), a written history of Chemainus by the late H.W. Olsen. For Schutz, the historical photos included in the book contained the imagery of powerful wall murals for Chemainus. The message was clearly stated for creating a stronger sense of community. "...that the town's heritage, if exposed, could motivate citizens to improve the quality of life there" (Seattle Times, June 21, 1983).

The mural concept was first presented to the revitalization committee as part of the overall plan for Chemainus.

We had our own history and culture in Chemainus with the Indians, forest industry and huge trees. I wanted that heritage to stand out for all who visit (Chemainus-Ladysmith Chronicle June 23, 1983).

They were seen as the central theme or "super attraction" on which the revitalization project would be built around. Further an annual July Festival of Murals was planned around the murals. The creation of the murals themselves, as well as the history they represented, would thus become the focus of an annual community celebration. Not only would the history of the community be celebrated but so would the mural creation event itself become part of the memories associated with Chemainus.

The completed murals represent historical scenes of the community's past. Daily events in the early years of the community are portrayed. The most prevalent theme has been directed at the building of a forest culture identity, the economic reason for the existence of the community.

None of the murals deal with the negative aspects of pioneer life or social problems which confronted the community. Further there are no political statements to be found in the paintings. Rather, the style remains neutral,

filling in past events about the community; dealing with the day to day reality of the new settlement. All the scenes portray the positive mood of the community, with individuals and groups actively involved in the daily pursuit of the new timber culture.

Certain value orientations are present in the selection of the first murals. Logging and the production of lumber dominate. Men are depicted more frequently than women, participating in a significantly greater variety of actions. Women play a neutral role and are depicted as passive and participating in a very limited range of activities. Criticism of building an identity solely around men and timber, according to Schutz, caused a change in the direction in the composition of future murals. In addition to forestry scenes, greater emphasis was subsequently given to the settlement of the community as well as the contribution of minority groups.

The placement of the murals is meant to compliment the beautification project as well as create maximum visual impact. To achieve a heightened effect, murals are strategically located in the two revitalized commercial districts to complement the streetscape work completed in the beautification phase (Figure 4). This combined effect of "Stevedore Loading A Tall Ship" set against Willow Street beautification adds a sense of historical depth to the

facelift as the observer is reminded of past people and events which have shaped the community.

The murals themselves are arranged around open spaces so that maximum effect can be achieved by observing several of the compositions at any one time. Two "visual" nodes have been created in the Willow Street district for this purpose. The first node is located at the intersection of Cyprus and Willow Streets. The walls of buildings facing this intersection were the first to be decorated with murals. "Steam Donkey at Work" (Figures 5 and 6) on the wall of Monco's Cafe, "Steam Train Crossing the Bridge" (Figure 7 and 8) covering the public safety building and, "Stevedores Loading a Tall Ship" (Figures 9 and 10), part of the forty foot collage on the Fireside Theatre, are examples of work completed in 1982 at that location during the first year of the mural painting program. Waterwheel Park, the community's Centennial project, is located on the North and East sides of the square. The focus of the park consists of a large waterwheel similar to the one that powered the first sawmill in Chemainus. Two other murals were completed adjacent to this square the following year. The subject matter in these murals are also related to the mural theme. Together, the murals and park create a sense of enclosure around this space. The wall size murals, which portray the forestry theme symbolically carry the forestry scenes into the natural environment of this setting, reinforcing the community's forestry roots.

From the corner of Cyprus and Willow Street, it is possible to comprehend all of the elements of the revitalization project: the beautification on Willow Street, murals and Waterwheel Park (which predates the project but still must be considered as an important element in the overall effect).

A second strong node was created the following year during the July Festival of Murals. This node is located at the intersection of Mill Street and Chemainus Road at the south end of the Willow Street project. Four murals were completed at that time on adjacent buildings. The theme of the murals here differ from those adjacent to Waterwheel Square. Here the subject matter has been expanded to include a range of activities occurring during early settlement. A train arriving in early Chemainus, a pioneer family in a covered wagon and workmen in a road building camp are depicted. A tribute to the native Indian culture is also represented in two murals. One mural consists of a series of portraits of local Indian Chiefs from the Cowichan Valley. The other is an Indian Princess meeting an early tall ship (one of the few murals based on legend versus actual photographs). Further, the Indian Chief mural is carried out on a wall constructed specifically for the project. This is because no suitable wall existed at this corner. A mural here, however, was necessary to again achieve an overall effect of a sense of enclosure.

The last major element created in this space is a small mini-park located at the foot of the Indian portrait mural. It consists of fountain, stream and green area to compliment the mural and setting and act as a catalyst or gateway from Chemainus Road onto Willow Street.

As a result, two distinct place-making nodes have been created at opposite ends of the Willow Street improvement area. The murals add historical depth to the newly redeveloped streetscape. The pedestrian is reminded of the past and confronted with an aesthetically pleasing and convenient shopping area from the Indian Chief mural to Waterwheel Park. Circulation throughout the area is thus enhanced by the elimination of "dead" spaces along pedestrian routes. While four other murals have since been created, in other sections of the Willow Street scheme, these two nodes continue as the focus for the aesthetic appreciation of the project and community.

The smaller Oak Street improvement area has received considerably less attention, both in terms of physical improvements and mural creation. Only one mural is located in this area, at the corner of Explanade and Oak Streets. The mural, which has become a favorite for both resident and visitor alike, is a reproduction of the colorful Chinese entrepreneur Hong Hing (Figures 11 and 12). Hing was a former

grocer, bootlegger and gambling house operator whose business activities spanned five decades of community life.

The style of the mural compositions are carefully controlled. A poster art approach is employed adding to the impact of the murals. Extra tension is created by setting the compositions in motion. Take, for example the difference between the photograph and in the finished work of "Steam Donkey". Realism in the re-creation of early residents, as well as events, add to the effect. As a result, alert long-time residents can easily find old friends and relatives in the murals staring down at them, completing the effect of a living link with the past. As Frank Lewis, creator of "Steam Donkey" states:

...(I) wanted to portray that day to day life. I'm not looking for idealism, no Marlborough man. We are establishing the history, giving ourselves an identity. We can see where we came from "
(Chemainus-Ladysmith Chronicle, March 10, 1982).

A sense of reality and dramatic effect is further heightened by adapting the murals to wall spaces. "Fallers Cutting a Fir" (Figures 13 and 14) re-created on the hometower of the public safety building, creates the symbolic effect of carrying the imagery of the forest into the natural landscape. This compositional device also assists in symbolically establishing the roots of the town in the physical landscape.

The urban design concept outlined here was again a product of the resourceful Karl Schutz. Working mainly from intuition he has been able to create strong visually enclosed settings which complement both the streetscape improvements and natural setting in which Chemainus is located.

Securing wall space for the murals was again the responsibility of the project manager. The completion and early success of "Steam Donkey" and "Stevedores" lead to an "open door" policy from landowners who volunteered wall space to expand the project. The question of ownership of these artworks, which have been completed by well known mural artists, has yet to be decided. It is also difficult to say whether the placement of the murals will discourage infilling by new buildings that may locate in the area or become responsible for the evolution of new and imaginative urban forms.

7.4 Conclusion

The case study demonstrates that given proper determination and judicious interpretation of the meaning of a place, revitalization of a community can be undertaken without altering or destroying its social or physical integrity. The following chapter will show how this approach to revitalization relates to the theoretical concepts presented in this thesis, and how this knowledge can be applied towards a successful implementation of projects of this nature.

8. Creating a Sense of Place

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the theoretical concepts prescribed in this thesis are examined as they relate to the case study of Chemainus, B.C. It is believed that lessons learned from this project have a great potential in application to other communities attempting to achieve community renewal while maintaining and safeguarding its identity.

8.2 Discussion of Case Study

8.2.1 Aesthetics

In Chapter Three of this thesis, it was shown that the beautification approach may not fulfill the objectives of community renewal. Further, renewal based solely on this approach runs the risk of obscuring, even obliterating community identity.

In the case of Chemainus the visual/artistic approach was not neglected. A decision from the outset, however, was made to integrate the approach into an overall revitalization program emphasizing place-making; building on the generally accepted image of what the community was seen to represent.

The physical structure of Chemainus, in its aging condition, has little intrinsic value. Modernized, it would

have less. By using building facades to represent a pictorial history of the community, the physical structure is given greater meaning to both resident and visitor alike.

As pointed out, the individual may retain an exact mental model of some event or place. Usually, however, only a few perceptual features of a place are used to classify a unique place experience. These simplified and condensed experiences are then related to common past experiences. Thus, simply presenting a beautified downtown Chemainus may remind the user of a shopping centre environment. Place comes to have little of its original meaning, memories of past place being covered up in the process of modernization.

It was not the goal of the Chemainus Revitalization Committee, however, to transform downtown Chemainus into an efficient and convenient shopping centre environment. Creating a unique environment was seen as being necessary for the success of the project. In creating a sense of place, it was recognized that the nature of the individual's interaction with his environment is a product of past experience with that setting. It is thus on the basis of memory of place, that place-making is carried out.

The creation of the murals can thus be seen as an articulation of this memory of place. As such, building on a regional stereotype of a west coast timber culture is justified on the basis that it represents an accepted system of values of the community as well as sentiments of a wider

public. Each composition in effect, represents a key perceptual feature, each classifying a unique environmental experience. Loggers falling trees, life in the camp, early settlement or the company store, all represent memories associated with this stereotype. Each scene has a common meaning for the general population. We relate to Chemainus through these elements.

Aesthetically, the buildings can be seen as costumes. The facades are now used to conceal structure, to disguise function, to palliate the unpleasant, to camouflage the crude. Through the murals, the conventional utilitarian architecture of this small town gains symbolic importance. The facades, in effect, come to stress propriety, respectability and the aspirations of the community.

8.2.2 Sense of Achievement

Assessment of the Chemainus project indicates that sense of place has been achieved in a sensitive manner through the use of appropriate and well balanced symbolism. Success can be measured by the acceptance of this symbolism by both resident and visitor alike (see Chapter Five).

A sense of relatedness or, interaction with place is necessary for successful revitalization to take place. Two primary forms of interaction involving both the visitor as well as the resident successfully occur in Chemainus.

The murals, if useful in no other sense, take on a didactic value. The visitor learns by being a visible witness of history. Appreciation of past ways of life for a place, enlarges ones range of experience. History made visible through the murals, endows the present with substance and durability. The murals offer visible reminders of the pioneer spirit of Chemainus. The creation of a forest culture is brought home pictorially.

To the non-resident the murals reveal a sudden and new meaning of what constitutes community. For the visitor, who responds primarily to aesthetic stimuli, the environment is given deeper and more personal meaning. Each scene depicted has deep associations with the inhabitants of place. The visitor's appreciation of place is heightened by expanding his range of knowledge of place in this manner. The murals tempt him to know more about Chemainus, to become more curious and hence appreciative of the town's heritage.

Pride of past events and achievements are remembered by the residents as well. For the resident, with direct experience in the forests, his topophilia represents a much greater intimacy; a more intense awareness and meaning. As Bob Waters, long-time resident and mill-worker put it: The people of Chemainus are woodcutters or loggers. They always have been, and they always will be. This is Chemainus. We are a logging community and we will never run out of logs here. It has provided us with jobs, homes, and a way of life.

For the residents the beauty of place is thus known through their need to make a living. The murals reinforce that strong and curious pride which has developed as a result, a pride which permeates the history of the community itself. It can even be said that it is this pride and this pride alone which has saved, and continues to sustain the community.

The murals thus become a living legacy of what the residents think of themselves. They take pride in the murals because they reaffirm their own personal beliefs about place, beliefs that were dealt a serious blow with the closure of the lumbermill.

8.2.3 Increased Pride and Respect

A very successful aspect of the project was the ability to draw on those features of Chemainus' past which were capable of evoking the qualities most cherished in small communities (see Chapter Six). This was accomplished both with respect to the local inhabitants and visitor alike.

Attributes of form are more meaningful when they reinforce usage and activity. The Chemainus murals serve the purpose of supporting existing activity patterns and community values.

Activities become associated with a certain type of place. Through beautification, the planner/designer has created a potential environment, a man-made artifact. It is

from this environment that the individual will select the content that is meaningful to them in their normal range of activities. The range of possibilities to be found in this modern and efficient layout presents few possibilities to the users, especially visitors.

The Chemainus project, however, realizes that the environment consists of more than material objects, that the downtown is a product of cultural values and social dimension. To make the environment effective, it must come to represent the values and aspirations of the users of that environment. The murals thus serve as a communicative device matching the man-made artifact in the beautification process with the conception of that artifact in the culture. Through this selective process the individual reinforces his own personal beliefs about the meaning of that place.

The murals thus serve to communicate a certain type of attachment to place, an extension of the community's personality. The special relationship, which exists between the residents and their environment, is depicted. As such, they allow the residents to identify and reaffirm their own beliefs and attitudes and serve as a base for sending messages to visitors informing them of these special conditions attached to place.

The murals provide a vehicle for greater social interaction between residents and visitors as well as residents themselves. Chemainus has attired herself to prompt

a particular response or type of behavior from resident and visitor alike. As such, Chemainus can be enjoyed more as a recreation pursuit opposed to the primarily utilitarian motives of the past. This is seen as a major departure from the tradition of the small town where the range and type of social interaction was limited and highly structured. It is this shared view of place that forms the constituency necessary to support a tourist industry for the community.

8.2.4 Reinforce Community Identity

Finally, the Chemainus revitalization project has achieved a balance between the mythical image of a small community and a certain concrete reality which has weathered the disruptive tendencies described in the "Revolt From Small Town" described in Chapter Six.

Chemainus was not created as a symbol, but over time it has taken on a symbolic character of its own. Chemainus has functioned as a world to itself. It has grown and survived on the fortunes of the forest industry.

But with the closure of the mill, the town has since ceased to exist as a functional unit. Its enduring character can only be understood by its group values - the stoic pride portrayed in the murals - that the community has come to symbolize.

The mural project represents how the associative power of place can occur at the local level. The downtown area of Chemainus was not created as a symbol. Over time, however, many of the buildings and structures, even those effected by modernization, came to take on a symbolic character. Because there now remains very few visible reminders of the past the murals serve to bring back memories for the residents.

The murals capture a particular worth about the community. They reveal an attitude of wanting to survive. The murals have given a renewed sense of importance to the community. They represent a desire to sustain community.

A symbolic continuity with the past has thus been achieved through the use of the murals. They serve to link the past with the present, forming a strong community image.

The approach has facilitated a synchronization of images because the residents have collectively aware of their own identity. Signals, which are broadcast to the wider community inform them of this distinction contributing to local self-awareness and an enriched public image of the community.

This heightened awareness adds credibility to Chemainus as a distinctive place type. While the murals serve to symbolize the environment for the resident, they in turn become stimuli to which the visitor responds. Community identity, both from within and without the town, has grown from this movement.

8.3 Learning From Chemainus

When comparing Chemainus' approach to other similar endeavors such as Kimberly, it is apparent that a number of actions or strategies have been adopted which were instrumental in its success. The purpose of this section is to recommend a set of precepts for the benefit of communities wishing to undertake similar revitalization programs.

The recommendations reflect the need for greater public participation in the design of our communities. In effect, they represent practical methods on how urban design can truly become an instrument of public policy for creating and facilitating change in our small towns.

8.3.1 Action Plan

The Action Plan is a checklist whose purpose is to ensure that the physical, social and cultural content of the community has been thoroughly examined. A multi-disciplinary team, representing diverse community interests, would be invited to coordinate public and private input into the plan. Among the tasks of this team, in completing the Action Plan, would be the production of a statement of goals. A statement of goals would include: what constitutes a sense of place or community and why the community wants to preserve and manage sense of place, what public purpose is involved and identifying the benefits that would flow from the project.

This approach would be in contrast to methods of problem identification and their elimination, a procedure which is now commonly used. The objectives of the Plan would include completing an environmental brief, the development of themes and project constraints as well as an inventory of community resources.

The environmental brief would involve assembling information on a diverse set of community topics grouped into a physical and social inventory of the community. Included would be the history, legends and events of the local as well as its attitudes and values of the community. Essentially the objective is the development of what constitutes a sense of place.

From the material collected, the nature of place experience could be identified and place-making themes developed. Choosing a theme or set of themes and how to portray them becomes a major consideration. In Chemainus, for example, the history of forestry was originally conceived as the major place-making theme. As the project progressed, however, settlement also came to be seen as an important theme that received consideration.

At this point design guidelines should begin to emerge. By listing topographical man-made and social constraints, options in theme development are identified. Proposals to modify the existing physical and social environments are considered.

Preparing an inventory of unique community resources differs from the environment brief in that here the concern is identifying human resources, cooperating organizations, institutions and various levels of government that could be of assistance in the actual project development. As well, this implies locating unique skills within the community which could be made available, sources funding and technical resources from senior levels of government.

These four elements would then be brought together to form an Action Plan, a blueprint for community re-development.

Continued community participation is necessary to capture the enthusiasm of the community. This would be accomplished by the Revitalization Team producing a short publication of the Action Plan or Action Plan alternatives. A formal process of public input and a fixed period for the public to respond should be developed.

The plan is thus seen as a way of encouraging interaction from all parts of the community and becomes a challenge to the creativity of the community to develop their environment. The modest expense incurred to this point would in all likelihood not result in exorbitant costs should a stalemate or outright failure occur resulting in lingering community resentment which characterizes so many projects of this nature.

8.3.2 Project Manager

A full time project manager is necessary for the project to be carried out successfully. The role of the project manager can be seen in the development and implementation of the Action Plan. The case study, however, identified the most important function of this individual, that is dealing with the process of change within the community.

Managing Change

The process of change is more acceptable if a proper forum is developed in the community to deal with differences of opinion. Everyone must feel that they have gained from the experience. The manager must have skills in determining optimal community input.

How change occurs is important. Long drawn out change is welcome if it comes in quick modest increments. Chemainus for example demonstrates the success of the incremental approach to revitalization through its handling of the beautification program and its annual festival of murals celebration.

Changes are difficult to bear if they are imposed without choice or participation, or if they have neither pattern nor meaning. Change that is long announced and short in coming, where results do not match expectations, are also pitfalls of project management.

Revitalization is thus seen in an evolutionary process where community input, timing and impact are essential for a successful project. Managing change in these contexts is of utmost importance to the project manager.

Implementing Change

Change must be perceptible, fairly rapid and be made noticeable both in a physical context and in the minds of the residents. Yet it must be made without disrupting the entire day-to-day process of the community. For example should the entire downtown be disrupted at once by re-development or should it take place on a block by block basis? The program should build in intensity with time; the familiar "band wagon" techniques must be used. Small incremental improvements must be followed by large noticeable improvements for increased effect.

Active groups must derive clear benefits from changes made. Benefits, therefore should be widely diffused. As such, change must increase environmental information about the present and the future. It must raise realizable expectations and educate the community to new needs. The user's perception of change must be monitored: is he aware of shifts in his environment, what meanings does he ascribe to these changes and does he value them and, finally, does he try to control them. All these considerations should be part of a feedback mechanism designed to monitor the project's progress.

Education

The project manager must come to understand the value of the environment as a learning device. An environment cannot be allowed to stagnate, but must constantly produce an ever changing flow of new information. An environment can be thought of as an instrument of human change especially if it is open and comprehensible to its users.

An important factor in transmitting environmental change is a knowledge of how inhabitants image the present, past and future of an area. Change must learn to reflect these evolving perceptions of place. Environmental alterations cannot be planned without understanding those changing images of the user of a place and without considering how alterations will support and enrich this image.

In short, a project manager must be able to manage the art of change and to take account of the cumulative effect of the transition process. He must be able to understand the role of timing and strategy in a project, as well as the link between physical and social environments and the way in which they interact. Finally, the ability to measure and represent change, to evaluate its cumulative costs and benefits are criteria that must be taken into account over the life of the project.

8.3.3 Government Programs

The responsibilities of the provincial government in downtown revitalization must be expanded from its present role of program funding. The program must be developed to offer more guidance to towns, especially during the initial stages of a revitalization project, primarily through the Action Plan as well as developing criteria for levels of funding to communities.

At present, the British Columbia program offers a grant to the community to prepare a concept plan for a revitalization project. The purpose of the plan is to demonstrate a potential environment through revitalization. Once the concept plan has been completed, the town can apply for a combination of a low-interest loan and per capita grants for special facade and promotional work.

A major weakness in this approach has been the concept plan. The plan, commonly consists of architectural rendering of a revitalized downtown. Usually there is little community input into its development. As such, the concept neither matches the image conceived nor the financial resources of the community. As of 1983, the B.C. Revitalization Program records identify eighty-four B.C. communities who had become involved in the program by initiating a concept plan. Of these, only thirty-nine have initiated any type of work that

would require any funding (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Province of British Columbia).

The Province should instead make this grant available for the development of an Action Plan. The terms of reference for the development of the plan could be outlined by the Province. Furthermore, the size of the grant for such a plan should be based on the community's willingness to undertake and complete such a study. Preparing a brief, developing themes, identifying constraints and resources would all receive additional funding considerations.

The provincial program must also demonstrate the need for a project manager. The project manager is necessary to adapt this assistance to local needs. As well as serving as coordinator of the project on an ongoing basis in the community, the project manager would continue to acquire assistance and fulfill provincial requirements on an ongoing basis.

The project manager position should be jointly funded by the province and the community (with the manager being responsible to the community). This would ensure that all towns, no matter what size, would have a manager to coordinate the project.

The province must also develop a set of criteria for funding a revitalization project. As indicated, the initial grant would be conditional upon initiating the Action Plan and

acquisition of a project manager. The actual amount of funding would be conditional on the project that is developed. Those towns that demonstrate initiative, efficient use of funds, or a good possibility for fulfilling their revitalization objectives should be further encouraged. For example, extra funding should be made available for place-making projects.

The provincial role outlined here would further guarantee that sufficient interest and support has been generated by the community to warrant the project. Second, it would be more likely that the work carried out would meet the expectations of the community. Third, planning for revitalization in this fashion would allow for a greater diversity of interests. Last, planning could be more open-ended with the project becoming an ongoing activity of community change.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how both beautification and place-making, as defined and described in this thesis, have contributed to a successful downtown revitalization project for Chemainus, B.C. It is believed that this criteria has potential for other communities attempting revitalization of their own community.

Last, it is recommended that for revitalization to be successful the community must adopt guidelines for re-development through an Action Plan, as well as make use of a project manager to coordinate and promote change within the community. Last, the Province must expand its role to ensure that sufficient interest and funding is available at the right time to ensure project success.

9. CONCLUSION

This study has grown from a belief that a new approach to planning for downtown revitalization is necessary. The current approach to revitalization planning finds its roots in a traditional planning philosophy where the physical environment is seen as strongly influencing behavior. Planning methods, which have evolved from this approach, are essentially concerned with the principles of aesthetics and the manipulation of the physical environment to satisfy planning objectives. Modern physical environments, emphasizing economy and efficiency, commonly associated with Shopping Centre environments, have thus become a standard planning objective.

Revitalization programs across Canada and the methods developed to implement the program objectives have grown out of this traditional approach to planning. The programs are premised on the assumption that revitalization based on physical improvements to existing buildings and streetscapes, creating a modern and efficient image, will cause an economic revival downtown.

This thesis recognizes the value of this approach to revitalization planning. Human interaction in the environment, however, must also receive important consideration in the planning and design of the environment.

Different environments have their own patterns of use and are providers of many levels of meaning and experience. The physical environment cannot be conceived as an end in itself, but must involve the user of place; plans must encourage the successful interaction of users and place as an essential prerequisite of land use. Along with emphasis on visible form then, there must be a concern for public use and experience of the place. We must develop a technique that identifies and builds on those elements that make particular environments unique settings for individuals and groups.

What is lacking is an appreciation of the social implications for improving our environment. As a profession, planners largely fail to perceive the city in a politically humane manner. Decisions affecting the form of the environment are seen as being based on the values and culture of the planner, and rarely of those planned for. To what extent then does the planner/designer really become aware of the social aspects of the man-made environment? In this respect, improving the relationship between people and their environment must be considered a major problem facing planning.

A methodology which seeks to understand how the individual organizes his beliefs and attitudes toward the environment was thus proposed. Enquiry of this nature, however, inevitably leads to a discussion of the man-land relationship where the environment is explained in terms of

man as "planner" of his own environment or the ecological approach where the environment itself is seen in determining the actions of the individual.

Rather than taking this dialectic approach, this thesis instead concentrates on the individual's decision-making process as the mediating link between the environment and behavior. Study of the decision-making process, however, proves to be a study of the image, the mental representation of the real world on which the individual bases his actions. The individual's environmental image is composed of beliefs, attitudes and preferences, in short, the knowledge he has of his environment.

Thus we move away from the cognitive process of the individual and evaluation of the physical environment to a study of how the individual conceives of and experiences his environment. It is this articulation of experience that is of importance. No attempt was made to reduce human experience to simpler, more manipulative units. Rather, an approach which searches out universalities in the forms of experience contained in the environment was proposed. The method shows promise for closing that gap between the planner and user by coming to know more about the individual's environmental preferences and satisfactions.

The principal task for the planner comes in developing a method of understanding how an individual experiences his environment. Information about the environment, acquired

second hand through popular culture, was shown to influence our knowledge of what constitutes place. Elements of imageability, association, attachment and symbolism form building blocks in the way we conceive of and experience place.

Through sources of popular culture it was also possible to isolate and categorize various forms of environmental experience associated with specific landscapes. These experienced patterns can be termed environmental stereotypes. Planners as such should consider the symbolic significance that our society attaches to images of external landscapes.

The case study documented a small town revitalization project where both the beautification and place-making approaches were used to accomplish revitalization goals. The beautification component incorporated elements of the traditional/aesthetic approach. Streetscape and facade improvements were emphasized. Place-making or creating a sense of place, on the other hand, was accomplished by establishing a visible history of the community's proud past, an articulation of place experience.

Because of few visible traces of history and experience in the physical environment, place making art has been the approach taken toward revitalization. Giant wall murals, depicting scenes of the community's history, form the basis of the project. The approach recognized the community's human resources as the true strength of the community. The

historical scenes depicted are of local significance, but as a stereotype comes to have meaning for all who see them. It is only by making these meanings more accessible that we can restore a vision of place as a declaration of public value. It is this mental linkage to a sense of value, to a connection of what represents community, that is the basis of an ethic.

Place-making has been achieved by not only contributing to the community aesthetically, but creating a sense of achievement and respect for residents and non-residents alike. The murals reflect the personality of the community. They have synchronized feelings among residents thus becoming a strong symbol of community.

No proven methodology for assessing the impact of downtown revitalization programs has yet been undertaken. For the most part, analysis has centered around the effects on the physical environment. An assessment of the performance of the program, based on its ability to create or reinforce a sense of community should be undertaken.

The approach was not intended to detract from present tools available to planners for assisting in maintaining a strong downtown but rather to complement them. Different incentives which may include offers to developers to locate downtown, by-laws restricting peripheral development, for example, are still important. Physical improvements in the Central Business District alone, however, cannot in themselves regenerate a decaying downtown. Programs aimed at reinforcing

sense of community are necessary and must be considered in the revitalization process. Unfortunately, revitalization may have gained a poor reputation in many areas because a planner or architect has recommended plans that may be far beyond the financial capability of small towns, and more significantly, out of character for the town. Being unable to implement these programs or seeing no visible signs of economic success, the town becomes discouraged and takes no further action.

In their haste to maintain a sense of progress, many towns attempt to create modern and efficient environments. As a result, many small towns have lost sight of their identity, that aspect of the town which makes it unique. In losing its identity, the town loses that quality that constitutes place.

While the sense of place planning approach has wide application for small towns, specific sets of policies must grow from the conditions, resources and aspirations of the particular community. Clearly public policy should have a greater part in the downtown revitalization process. The small town does have the capability to guide its own future. Resignation to decay or reliance on provincial revitalization programs should not be considered the only alternative available.

APPENDIX I : CHEMAINUS REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Sept. /80 -The Chemainus Development Committee is formed to study the possibility of a downtown revitalization project for Chemainus. The group, a sub-committee of the Chemainus-Crofton Chamber of Commerce, consists of members of the North Cowichan Council and the Chemainus downtown business community.

-A mural project is also proposed at this time. Its purpose would be to cover some of the downtown's unsightly buildings. A theme depicting the history of forestry in Chemainus is suggested.

-The British Columbia Downtown Revitalization program is seen as a possible source of funding.

Jan. /80 -The Rural Municipality of North Cowichan hires Karl Schutz as project manager. Schutz received position based on his long record of community promotion through the Chamber of Commerce.

Feb. /81 -The revitalization program goals are outlined for the first time. Goals include: promotion of the community; change in the condition of the store fronts; and, capital improvements. Beautification is emphasized.

March /81 -A one time event called "Pioneer Days" is planned for April, 1982 to officially mark the beginning of the revitalization program. The event is meant to pay tribute to the "...community's contribution to the development of the island and the timber industry".

-W.H. Olsen's book Water Over the Wheel, a written history of Chemainus is unveiled. The book is published by Karl Schutz. The historical photographs contained in it will latter become the subject matter of many of the project's murals.

March /81 -Initial funding for the project, provided by the B.C. Revitalization Program, is announced. Included is a: \$5,000.00 startup grant for a concept plan; and, a \$4,000.00 promotion grant (the B.C. program provides a grant of 25% of funds expended on promotion with a maximum of \$1.00 per capita).

July /81 -The B.C. Revitalization program approves, in principal, a loan to the Municipality of North Cowichan for the revitalization project. A total of \$225,000.00, to fund up to 75% of project costs, through a low interest loan, is approved. The municipality provides \$75,000.00 from general revenue for the project. In addition, a loan of \$100,000.00 to upgrade store fronts is set (the B.C. Program provides a grant of 20% of funds expended on facade work with a maximum of \$2,000.00 per metre frontage).

-A cost-sharing breakdown of 58% - 42% between merchants and the North Cowichan council is set.

-Loans and grants require an affirmative vote from community merchants.

Aug. /81 -An affirmative vote is given by merchants to proceed with the specified area tax (as set out in the B.C. Municipal Act). Capital expenditures for the revitalization project can now begin.

Sept. /81 -The mural concept is officially proposed as part of the revitalization plan.

-The plan includes arranging murals in sequential order; the various components forming a complete pictorial history of the community.

-A search for qualified artists begins.

Nov /81 -The physical improvements to complete the beautification component of the project begins. Work is to be completed for April 1982 "Pioneer Days" celebration. Work includes new pavement, sidewalk and sidewalk awnings, streets, trees and benches (as well as all underground physical services).

Jan. /82 -Phase II - Long Term Revitalization objectives are outlined. Tentative objectives include: promotion of cottage industries; production of a film depicting the remake of the downtown; new highway signs; and, an annual July Festival of Murals (beginning in 1983).

-Tentative Phase II budget of \$186,000.00 is proposed with \$120,000.00 going towards securing artists and related expenses.

Feb. /82 -Frank Lewis is hired to paint the first four murals.

-The completion date for mural production is set for April, 1982 "Pioneer Days".

-The first murals to be painted in revitalized core will front on Paddlewheel Park (the community's Centennial project).

Feb /82 -Macmillan Bloedel Forest Products announces the permanent closure of its sawmill operations in Chemainus. The closure will result in the loss of 540 full-time jobs and will bring to an end 120 years of forestry history in Chemainus. Closure date set for June, 1982.

April /82 -The revitalization project is commemorated during the "Pioneer Days" celebration.

-The beautification component, as well as one mural, are completed.

Dec. /82 -Chemainus receives its official revitalization slogan "The Little Town That Did". Focus of the project becomes the July Festival of Murals.

Jan. /83 -Phase II - Long Term Revitalization is announced. Objectives are set in place.

March /83 -The Festival of Murals Committee is organized. Objectives include: the promotion of spinoff industry; promotion of the community; and, promotion of the beautification and mural project.

- March /83 -The Festival of Murals Office is opened. The objective is to promote the annual event.
- March /83 -The Chemainus entry into the New York International Downtown Revitalization Program Competition wins first prize out of 54 international entries.
- March /83 -The forestry theme for murals is expanded to include scenes of community development. This is partially due to private funding (doctors who use the Chemainus hospital, and the Chemainus historical society). Local donations total \$8,000.00.
- April /83 -Grants totaling \$89,000.00 are received from provincial and federal governments allowing Phase II to proceed: provincial - B.C. Lotteries Fund \$63,000.00; federal - Department of Multi-Culturalism \$26,000.00.
- June /83 -July Festival of Murals schedule is outlined. Six artists and one sculptor are scheduled to participate.
- June /83 -The National Film Board project is announced. The film will revolve around the revitalization program. Chemainus is seen as being typical of west coast sawmilling towns. The economic blow (the closure of the mill), and the Chemainus project is seen as appealing to wider audiences. NFB contribution: \$38,000.00. Chemainus: \$54,000.00.
- July /83 -The July Festival of Murals gets underway. The festival marks the beginning of an annual tradition. Its purpose is a celebration of a town which believes in itself.
- The objective of the festival is to create the largest outdoor gallery in the Northwest.
- Summer /84 -MacMillan Bloedel announces the construction of a new sawmill in Chemainus which will employ 260 workers.

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