EXAMINING CIVIC PRESENCE:
A CITY HALL
IN SURREY

by

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...architecture has been defined as environmental communication, a network of interaction: (a) between designers and the users, through the designer's "intended messages", (b) between [human] and the material world through the observation of messages read in similarities and differences structured in matter either in the form of "object systems of "behaviour patterns", and finally (c) between [humans] and [their] past and future through [their] association with all of the above forms and functions in immediate and distant space and time, and memories and their compilation in culture.\textsuperscript{1}

Asghar Talaye Minai 1984

Culture plays an integral part in the expression of human abstract meaning. With architecture as the experiential expression of these meanings, human cultures have recorded hopes, desires, aspirations, and political and cultural ideologies in their built structures. Thus city and town halls have always promoted community image through the structure of the hall. The purpose of the city hall has remained relatively unchanged, however, form has evolved with changing behaviour patterns relating to culture and architectural 'styles'.

A new city hall for Surrey is necessary to symbolize their new status as a city and the importance they place on their future plans and aspirations. With this in mind a look at North American Postmodern culture and values is used to evaluate the history and symbolism of past town halls. Research uncovered an office concept design used in Europe and Japan that is both democratic and humane. Using this as a base for the administrative legacy of Surrey municipality and the planning concepts targeting the area surrounding the chosen site the design incorporates public accessibility to create presence. The location depicts a suburban legacy progressing towards an urban future connected by a pedestrian oriented plaza with the building split into public and administrative functions flanking the plaza.

\textsuperscript{1} Asghar T. Minai, \textit{Architecture as Environmental Communication} (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1984), p335.
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CONCEPTS

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