

ENTERTAINMENT FOR SALE: URBAN ENTERTAINMENT CENTRES AND THEIR  
IMPACTS ON THE HOST COMMUNITIES

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## **ABSTRACT**

Urban entertainment centres are perhaps the largest and latest kind of commercial development to combine the retail and entertainment industries in one location. These centres often combine new entertainment, dining, and retail activities to provide a pleasurable experience to their visitors.

These centres have been rapidly spreading across the US and Canada, bringing economic, social, environmental, and political and planning changes to the communities. This thesis examines the local impacts of entertainment centres on the host community so that planners can recommend planning policies to mitigate some of the negative impacts.

To contextualize urban entertainment centres, the definition, the history, and the characteristics of entertainment centres are examined. The definition of entertainment centres describes their general forms and functions. The history examines the recent growth of entertainment centres by analyzing the changing supply and demand of public entertainment from the 1870s to 1990s. The physical and experiential characteristics create and influence many of their community impacts.

The impacts are analyzed within a template based on the community objectives to characterize how entertainment centres affect the communities. The analysis adopts the perspective of the host community, producing a comprehensive list of local community impacts on the host community.

To exemplify the impacts, the template is applied to two case studies, International Village Shopping Centre in Downtown Vancouver and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex in Richmond. The selection of the case studies is based on the location difference: International Village Centre is the urban example and Riverport Complex is the suburban example. The location difference helps to explore a broad range of potential community impacts.

The negative impacts of entertainment centres are examined. Possible planning recommendations to mitigate the negative impacts are developed by examining the negative impacts, while referring to the community objectives. The thesis concludes by discussing the potentials and limitations of the template and speculating on the future of entertainment centres.



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# **Chapter One: Introduction**

## **1.1 Personal Context and Purpose**

As I look out onto East 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue from my window at this moment, there is a stream of cars heading towards Metrotown, the largest shopping centre in British Columbia (BC). What makes this scene remarkable is that it is not rush hour traffic; it is 7:00 p.m., already past the evening rush hours. Many of these cars are going to Metrotown for shopping and entertainment. I also often visit the complex, making me a frequent contributor to this vehicle traffic. While I enjoy visiting the complex, the congestion it causes on roads is a concern for me as a nearby resident. My ambivalent relationship with the complex is somewhat typical. My neighbours have similar praises and concerns.

Are these reactions common for residents living near large centres? What are the impacts that these centres have on the host communities? Answers to these questions are important not only to residents, but also for planners, who conduct planning activities that control land uses and for decision makers. By analyzing the relationships among these centres and their communities, planners could learn more about the impacts of such developments. Planners could then propose policies that help to minimize the negative impacts. For example, if a planning study shows that a proposed entertainment centre would increase vehicular traffic to the host community, then a planner could recommend policies to reduce some of the traffic impact by improving the attractiveness of other modes of transportation such as

walking, biking, and taking public transit. Some of the policies may include improving streetscapes near the centre, offering secure bicycle storage at the centre, and providing convenient access to bus stops from the centre. If proposed and developed under such policies, the centres would better integrate into their communities, and provide greater overall benefits to residents.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Many previous studies have already examined megastores (e.g., Wal-Mart) and their impacts on communities (Beaumont 1997, 54-56). Yet, comparatively little research has been conducted on urban entertainment centres and their impacts. At first glance, megastores and entertainment centres are similar, both being large-scale commercial centres. On closer inspection, megastores are single-purpose enterprises focused on selling goods efficiently (Baker 1997, 19). Entertainment centres (e.g., Famous Players SilverCity Theatres) are "post-modern" places, focussing on delivering experiences as a means to selling a wider range of goods and services (Beyard et al. 1998, 23). For entertainment centres, selling stimulating experiences is the business model, rather than selling low-cost goods and services. This difference in the strategy produces different characteristics and impacts. Such differences prevent planners from directly transferring the findings of megastore studies to the analysis of entertainment centres.

Studying entertainment centres is important for planners. These centres have spread rapidly in Canada and the United States (US) for the past several years.

As they enter a new community, they bring changes. These changes will be significant and lasting because entertainment centres are large venues that attract many visitors and generate intensive activities. Yet, whether and in what ways the centres are beneficial or harmful to their host communities have not been critically examined. Much of the available literature praises entertainment centres as saviours of communities, but it fails to discuss their economic, social, environmental, and political costs (Beyard et al. 1998, 20-21; Brunet 1998, 26; and Hammonds 1998, 40). A critical and comprehensive understanding of their benefits and costs is crucial for planners in evaluating entertainment centres.

This thesis analyzes the community impacts of urban entertainment centres so that planners can better understand their adverse impacts to the host community, and where possible, recommend some planning policies to mitigate the negative impacts.

### **1.3 Overview and Methodology**

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter introduces urban entertainment centres and argues the importance of examining them. Chapters 2 to 4 contextualize entertainment centres, providing a general understanding of their forms and functions. Chapter 2 defines entertainment centres, Chapter 3 explores their history, and Chapter 4 discusses their characteristics. These characteristics are responsible for generating many of the community impacts examined in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 begins by developing a list of fundamental objectives that a community has when encountering or hosting an urban entertainment centre. The list of fundamental objectives becomes a basis of a template for assessing the impacts of entertainment centres. The template is then applied and tested by assessing the impacts of two local entertainment centres as case studies in Chapter 6. The two case studies are International Village Shopping Centre (International Village Centre) in Downtown Vancouver and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex in Richmond (Riverport Complex). The two case studies are chosen primarily for their location difference: International Village Centre is the urban example and Riverport Complex is the suburban example. The location difference allows for an exploration of the potential impacts of entertainment centres.

Chapter 7 discusses possible planning policies to mitigate some of the negative impacts of entertainment centres, examines the potentials and limitations of the template, and speculates on the future of entertainment centres.

The focus of this thesis is to produce a template for characterizing the local impacts of entertainment centres for their host communities. It applies and refines this template through the two case studies. Then, it evaluates the potentials and limitations of the template as an impact assessment tool. The aggregate economic benefits, from the municipal, provincial, or national perspectives, are not addressed in this thesis.

Information sources for this thesis are from published literature, 1996 census data, and interviews. Literature information is primarily used in Chapters 2 to 5,

including the definitions, the history, the characteristics, and the template development. The sources used consist largely of newspaper and magazine articles due to the limited availability of journal articles and books on this new retail format.

The case study chapter, Chapter 6, integrates information from the 1996 census data, interviews, and literature. The census data provides background information of the two host communities, which is helpful to determine how well the communities can accommodate the impacts.<sup>1</sup> Interviews with planners and developers offer rich accounts of the community impacts specific to each case study. For the case study of International Village Centre, a planner from City of Vancouver and a representative from Henderson Development Ltd. were interviewed.<sup>2</sup> For the case study of Riverport Complex, a planner from City of Richmond and an administrator from Riverport Complex were interviewed. Literature from municipal council meetings and newspaper articles document perspectives of some local residents.<sup>3</sup> This source is a proxy for the community reactions of the case studies, given the reluctance or the absence of community groups to participate in interviews. In the last chapter, the conjecture about the future of entertainment centres uses information from the literature and an interview with Ian Thomas, a professional retail consultant.

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<sup>1</sup> The analysis of the census data is in Appendix B: Community Backgrounds of International Village Shopping Centre and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex.

<sup>2</sup> All interview respondents, except for Ian Thomas, requested anonymity.

<sup>3</sup> For the International Village Centre case study, I contacted the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association and Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association by telephone to request interviews. Both associations declined my interview requests. For the Riverport Complex case study, I consulted a Richmond planner, one of my interview respondents, to identify local



## **1.4 Scope of the Thesis**

Urban entertainment centres embody elements from both entertainment and retail industries. Therefore, the analysis in this thesis draws on sources, tools, and arguments from both industries. Geographically, the analysis primarily employs Canadian examples of entertainment centres. American examples are sometimes also used because the entertainment centre industry in the US is more mature than in Canada, resulting in more examples in the US. The Canadian industry is about five years behind its American counterpart (Shaw 1999).

This thesis is limited to two case studies of International Village Centre and Riverport Complex. They comprise an urban and a suburban location to explore a range of potential impacts. While the impacts of the two case studies may be applicable to other entertainment centres, the impacts are limited and applicable only to the two case studies. The limitations of the thesis do not allow for choosing additional case studies to explore more potential impacts.

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community groups for interviews. The planner replied that formal community groups were non-existent for this rural area.

## **Chapter Two: Definitions of Urban Entertainment Centres**

As large commercial venues combining both entertainment and retail spaces, urban entertainment centres are challenging to define. Retail professionals would consider them as the newest retail format, while entertainment professionals would consider them as the latest theme parks. Their different perspectives could lead to dissimilar approaches in developing and operating an entertainment centre. Retail developers would emphasize merchandising, whereas entertainment developers would focus on physical designs. Developers from different backgrounds would develop a mosaic of entertainment centres.

Even for a single developer, who may already have developed several entertainment centres, it is reasonable to believe they would deliberately vary the design of each centre because the uniqueness of the centre attracts initial visits and drives repeat visits (Beyard et al. 1998, 113). Visitors would be less likely to visit a centre if it offers similar experiences as other centres. They would be even less likely to return if they get increasingly bored in subsequent visits. The public demand for novel experiences drives developers to differentiate each centre so that it offers something unique.

In literature sources pertaining to urban entertainment centres, different authors define the centres differently, reflecting their perspectives and needs. For example, the Urban Land Institute, a non-profit group representing developers, defines an urban entertainment centre as "a new form of shopping [centre] that

must contain three basic components: [entertainment, dining, and retail]<sup>4</sup>, in a coordinated, intensely sociable environment that draws large and diverse audiences throughout the day" (Beyard et al. 1998, 5). This prescriptive definition is useful for developers, who need to know the components of an entertainment centre. However, it fails to answer the basic question of why this new format is called "urban entertainment centre." An approach to answer it is to examine each word in the term, as each word contributes to the meaning.

## **2.1 Definitions of Urban**

The "urban" term suggests that an entertainment centre is located in an urban area. This suggestion is only partially correct because a centre can locate in an urban or in a suburban area. The second case study in this thesis is at a suburban location. Entertainment centres are selling experiences, an intangible and mobile product (Rose 1998). Therefore, the centre can locate anywhere, as long as it is accessible. Prime accessible locations include transit stations and highways.

Instead of referring to the locations of entertainment centres, the urban term refers to the urban qualities created by the centres. To create urban qualities, entertainment centres often adapt urban street elements such as traditional storefronts and pedestrian pathways (Figures 1.1 and 1.2) (McCloud 1999a). These elements encourage visitors to explore, to linger, and to form crowds. Crowds have

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<sup>4</sup> These three components are essential for the experiential characteristics of entertainment

an inherent ability to attract more crowds; they are a powerful generator for the urban experience.

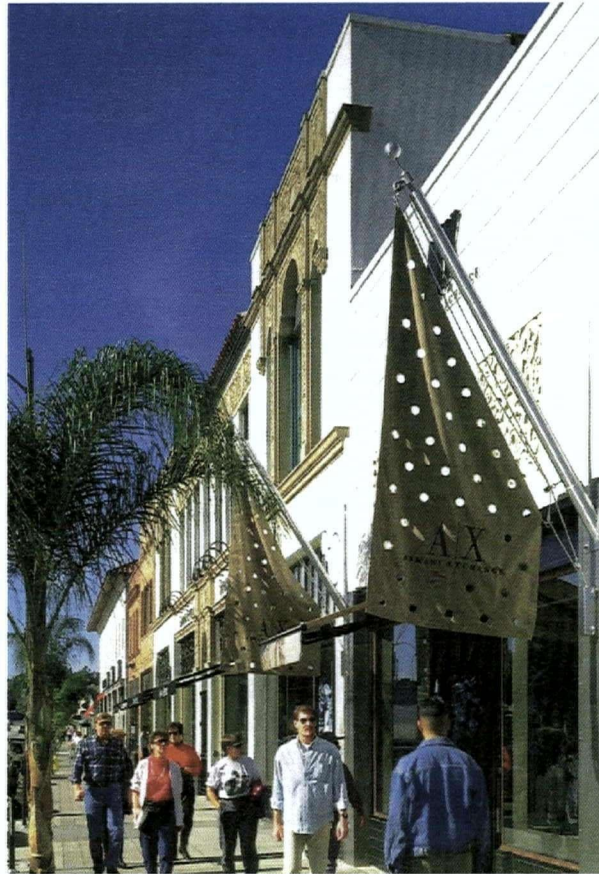


Figure 1.1: Storefronts as an Urban Street Element in One Colorado in Old Town Pasadena, California  
(Source: Beyard et al. 1998, 100)



Figure 1.2: Meandering Pedestrian Pathway as an Urban Street Element 8  
in Las Rozas Entertainment Centre in Madrid, Spain  
(Source: Beyard et al. 1998, 106)

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centres, which will be discussed in 4.2: Experiential Characteristics.

## **2.2 Definitions of Entertainment**

"Entertainment" is a subjective concept; people have different criteria for defining entertainment. Someone's idea of entertainment could be drudgery for another person. Therefore, defining entertainment with examples is impractical. It is easier to characterize entertainment as a pleasurable experience that people are willing to pay for (McCloud 1999a). While some entertainment is free, it still costs people's time. If a certain experience were a waste of time for some people, then such experience would not be entertaining to them. Entertainment, in this context, is an experience for which people would pay with money or time.

## **2.3 Definitions of Centre**

The term "centre" comprises more than simply the buildings that house the three basic components of entertainment centres: entertainment, dining, and retail (Beyard et al. 1998, 31). Some entertainment centres do not include all three of these components, especially when their surrounding sites already have some of the components. For example, a centre may not have a dining component if it is next to many restaurants. To meet the criterion of having all three components, the boundary of this entertainment centre can be extended to include the nearby restaurants. This centre then encompasses the new development and the existing venues. However, this boundary concept should not be overextended, or any development could become an entertainment centre. To constrict the boundary,

walking distance is a practical and useful parameter. The lengths of the walking distances depend on the interactions between visitors and their surroundings: visitors often walk farther in an enclosed centre than they would in an outdoor centre. As long as many visitors could access the three components within reasonable walking distances, the location would be considered as an entertainment centre.

## **2.4 Combined Definitions of Urban Entertainment Centres**

By combining the three terms, urban entertainment centres offer pleasurable urban experience that visitors are willing to pay for with money or time. They are places that have entertainment, dining, and retail experiences within reasonable walking distances. This definition modifies the one provided by the Urban Land Institute to suit the needs of this thesis. The modified definition is more descriptive to help with identifying entertainment centres, whereas the original one is more prescriptive to help with developing the centres.

In addition to the different uses of the two definitions, the definitions contradict each other on another aspect. The original definition casts entertainment centres as the newest retail and entertainment format; the modified definition omits this claim. The omission suggests that entertainment centres are not necessarily the latest retail and entertainment format. In fact, one could argue that entertainment centres have existed for at least a century. Introduced in the mid-

1800s, urban department stores were a form of entertainment centres (Baker 1997, 10). Department stores had urban qualities because they were in downtowns. They had the three components of entertainment, retail, and dining in the forms of spectacles, merchandises, and restaurants respectively. Their boundaries could be extended to include nearby theatres, nightclubs, and restaurants. For the purpose of this thesis, only entertainment centres that were developed in recent decades are considered and analyzed.

Urban entertainment centres are difficult to define because they are constantly reinventing themselves to outperform each other. The modified definition provided in this thesis is based on the definition from Urban Land Institute and the examinations of each term. The modified definition is applicable for this thesis: it helps to describe entertainment centres and analyze their community impacts.

## Chapter Three: History and Supply of Entertainment Centres

One of the first indicators that entertainment centres were gathering momentum in the US was in 1994, when *Business Week* ran a cover story noting that more than USD \$13 billion worth of entertainment projects were in development (Hannigan 1998a, 60). The growth of entertainment centres in the 1990s originated mostly from the history of urban public entertainment.<sup>5</sup>

Entertainment as a commodity first appeared in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the demand for it has grown ever since. Its growth, however, has not been constant.

The demand for urban public entertainment has been influenced by changes in three factors: socio-economic conditions, technological advances, and urban attitudes. These factors are some of the defining features that affect the demand for urban public entertainment, which relates to the demand for urban entertainment centres in recent decades. The three factors are derived from a literature review of Nasaw's *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* (1993), Meller's *Leisure and the Changing City: 1870 – 1914* (1976), Adams' *The American Park Industry: A History of Technology and Thrills* (1991), Schwartz's *The Retailing Revolution: The Impact of Nonstore Retailing on Shopping Centers* (1998),

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<sup>5</sup> This chapter emphasizes the history of the entertainment industry rather than the retail industry because people's demand for entertainment drives the need for entertainment venues. The entertainment industry responds to the demand by offering new and different venues. The retail industry has less connection with the demand for entertainment.



and other relevant articles. These three factors are the conceptual framework for analyzing the changes in demand for urban public entertainment.

The changes in the three factors are divided into three periods: 1870s to 1920s, 1930s to 1970s, and 1980s to 1990s. The periods are separated according to the major shifts in one or more of the three factors, which greatly influenced the demand for urban public entertainment.

The first part of this chapter discusses changes of the three factors in each period and their effects on the demand for urban public entertainment. These discussions are summarized in Table 3.1. The second part of this chapter discusses how the entertainment and the retail industries responded to the growing demand for public entertainment from the 1980s to 1990s by developing urban entertainment centres.

### **3.1 History of Entertainment Centres**

#### **3.1.1 1870s to 1920s**

In the 1870s and 1880s, "nightlife" was accessible to only the wealthy few who patronized playhouses and saloons (Nasaw 1993, 5). Many playhouses were velvet-draped, richly carpeted, and gilt-trimmed to attract their clientele (Eberts 1999a). From the 1900s to 1910s, movie theatres flourished. In San Francisco, the number of theatres surged from three in 1870 to 85 in 1912 (Nasaw 1993, 5).

### **3.1.1.1      *Socio-Economic Conditions***

The proliferation of the entertainment venues was an urban phenomenon. During this period, free time and real income increased while costs of living decreased for urbanites (Adams 1991, 60). In the US, "Saturday half-days" and the "holiday Sundays" became the standard, leading to an average decline in working hours of 3.5 hours per week from 1890 to 1910 (Adams 1991, 60). The shorter work hours not only created the supply of free time, but also created the demand for entertainment because work hours were shortened by squeezing out periods of relaxation during work. When work became more continuous, workers needed to divert more of their leisure time and money on entertainment. They no longer viewed entertainment as a luxury; instead, "they [saw] it as a necessity, and [were] willing to pay accordingly" (Goldberg 2000).

To meet this growing demand for entertainment, entrepreneurs built venues for this new class of customers while still trying to appeal to their original wealthy customers. One approach for them was to reduce class barriers by offering venues that were "exciting enough to the millions, [but] respectable enough to offend no one" (Nasaw 1993, 5). The entrepreneurs convinced the working classes that their venues would transport patrons to a magical and aristocratic environment, so their patrons should behave orderly like the upper classes (Hannigan 1998a, 18). At the same time, entrepreneurs reassured the upper classes that their venues were physically and morally clean. This shrewd strategy was successful in bringing two classes into the same venues (Hannigan 1998a, 18).

The public sector was also involved in providing entertainment venues. Attitudes in municipal councils changed during this period, providing more amenities to promote "municipal pride" (Meller 1976, 97-98). The councils began to maintain civic parks, public libraries, and sports venues. To plan for these amenities, they consulted planning ideologies such as Canon Barnett's "The Ideal City," and Patrick Geddes' "urban renewal surgery" (Meller 1976, 118). The role of municipal council in providing public amenities continues today.

### **3.1.1.2      *Technological Advances***

With the technological innovation of electricity, entertainment became accessible to the masses. Electricity fuelled the mass-production of books, musical instruments, and projection machines, increasing their quantities and lowering their prices (Meller 1976, 17). Besides mass-produced leisure products, electricity expanded evening entertainment activities. With electricity, streets at night were no longer dangerous. Instead, it turned them into a glittering multi-coloured wonderland, a place of promise and future (Nasaw 1993, 7). The electrified streets became a modernized stage, and the pedestrians became performers. Unlike theatrical performances, the electrified stage was free and accessible to anyone. Electricity opened and liberated evening public spaces to anyone seeking entertainment at night.

### **3.1.1.3      *Urban Attitudes***

The scale of public entertainment reached its peak in the 1920s, the "Golden Age of the Metropolis" (Hume 1997b). People prized urbanity during this decade, regarding the city as the place for work and play. They could choose from a wide selection of entertainment venues: live theatres, moving picture theatres, carnivals, penny arcades, restaurants, and world's fair midways (Nasaw 1993, 6). By the end of this decade, attendance at moving picture theatres continued to soar despite the introduction of private entertainment products, including the radio and the phonograph (Nasaw 1993, 241). In the next few decades, however, these and newer private entertainment products would dominate people's consumption patterns of entertainment and eventually lower the attendance levels at public venues.

These three factors contributed to an increase of demand for public entertainment from the 1870s to 1920s.

### **3.1.2          1930s to 1970s**

Many memorable socio-economic conditions, technological advances, and urban attitudes, occurred in Canada and the US from the 1930s to 1970s. People witnessed the Great Depression in the 1930s; World War II in the 1940s; and the postwar boom, recession, and stability after the 1950s. They also embraced new

private entertainment products introduced in these decades. In general, the population that could afford to move seemed to prefer suburban living to urban living. The same three factors affected the demand for public entertainment during this period.

### **3.1.2.1      *Socio-economic Conditions***

The Depression and the World War II did not greatly affect the entertainment industry. These events only disrupted the industry by replacing unprofitable venues (e.g., live theatres) with newer formats (e.g., moving picture theatres). In 1935, the US moving pictures industry was only second in size behind the food industry (Nasaw 1993, 241). Other venues, such as dancehalls, amusement parks, and baseball stadiums, survived by keeping their admission rates low. People depended on public entertainment for temporary escape from the bleak reality.

With the end of the War and the return of the veterans, the entertainment industry recaptured some of its lustre of the 1920s. Many people, who had saved their disposable money and reduced their leisure time during the war, unleashed their pent-up demand for entertainment. Some amusement parks and baseball fields had some of their highest attendance levels during this period (Figure 3.1) (Nasaw 1993, 243). However, after this short period of prosperity, the decline of public entertainment venues began.



Figure 3.1: An Archival Photograph of Crowds in BlackPool Fair, England  
(Source: Hulton Archive 2003)

### **3.1.2.2      *Technological Advances***

Technology, which nourished the public entertainment industry before the Second World War, changed and effectively impoverished it in the postwar period. The arrival of the newer private entertainment products competed with public entertainment venues. The mass production of radios, phonographs, and televisions made these products affordable enough for people to enjoy free entertainment in the comforts of their homes. Radios and televisions transformed the living room into the preferred entertainment centre for many people. Movie theatre attendance rates began to decline in the late 1940s. Between 1948 and 1967, annual admissions to moving picture theatres fell by 600% in the US (Nasaw 1993, 248).

Mass productions of private entertainment products could not explain the decline of theatre attendances alone. Potential movie patrons were still living near theatres, representing a customer base. Private mobility, the second technological advance, accelerated the decline of this industry. Cars, along with government

mortgage incentives and national highway programs, created the modern suburbia (Hume 1997b). Previous generations of suburbia were accessible by the rich who could afford the commute. Cars made suburban living accessible and affordable. People who could afford cars migrated to the suburbs, "a safe haven from the city" (Hume 1997b). Their cars allowed them to segregate themselves from the poor. As they migrated, they took their spending power with them and left a social and economic "donut" in the city.

### **3.1.2.3      *Urban Attitudes***

By the 1960s, urban expatriates no longer wished to visit downtown entertainment venues because they did not want to be exposed to "the dangers of the city" (Nasaw 1993, 249). Even if the dangers were perceived, the fear in people's minds was significant enough to be real. The poor living in the city also shared the fear and remained indoors at night. When people were afraid of visiting the city, crowds disappeared, the protective cover of the crowds vanished, and the fear escalated, forming a self-reinforcing cycle (Jacobs 1961, 35). This cycle tainted cities as cesspools of dangers (Nasaw 1993, 249).

Many downtown entertainment venues were closed as attendance fell. The entertainment industry followed the spending power and demographic trends, and brought public entertainment venues to suburbia. The industry developed drive-in theatres, mall theatres, and suburban amusement parks (Nasaw 1993, 249). These venues appealed to the suburbanites by offering expansive parking, catering to

families, and safeguarding their facilities. The expansive parking accommodated cars and further encouraged driving. The venues catered to families by offering weather-protected facilities, childcare services, and stroller rentals. These venues employed security patrols and claimed their facilities were safer than the urban ones. These suburban venues lacked the class diversity of the downtown venues by targeting mainly to middle-class families (Adams 1991, 110).

The glory of urban entertainment venues disappeared by the 1970s in Canada and the US. Entertainment, which had been a public experience, was privatized into people's homes and relocated to suburban locations. From the 1950s to 1970s, many cities had not only lost urban entertainment facilities, but also the urban values of vibrancy and diversity (Nasaw 1993, 215). Figure 3.2 is an example of the demise of many urban entertainment facilities. Gloria Swanson, the model posed in the photograph, used to perform in the theatre in the 1930s (Nasaw 1993, 251).



Figure 3.2: Gloria Swanson Posed amid the Detritus of New York's Roxy Theatre (1960)  
(Source: Nasaw 1993, 251)



These three factors contributed to an overall decline of demand for urban public entertainment from the 1930s to 1970s.

### **3.1.3        1980s to 1990s**

Changes in the three factors continued to influence the entertainment industry. Demographic changes became the most important factor. Newer private entertainment products continued to arrive in the forms of home video games and the Internet. By the 1990s, attitudes towards suburban and urban environment had reversed, favouring the urban environment once again (Beyard et al. 1998, 5).

#### **3.1.3.1        *Socio-economic Conditions***

Changes in socio-economic conditions during this period reduced the amount of leisure time. The increasing number of single-parent families meant that single parents had to assume both parenting roles and had to work longer to supplement income (McGregor 2000, 1). Even for families with both parents, many of them were dual-income, in which both parents worked outside the home for pay. Single-parent families and dual-income families had less leisure time than "traditional" families. In addition to the changes in family compositions, changes in the employment market reduced the amount of leisure time. The growing number of temporary, contract, and part-time jobs reduced income and job security. To compensate for these negative effects, workers in these arrangements would work

long hours or have more than one job (McGregor 2000, 1). The reductions in leisure time encouraged people to get the most out of their remaining leisure time. They could not afford the time or money on elaborate vacations; instead, they needed flexible and economical entertainment options (Grow 1998). They looked for entertainment options that offered "short, but more intense experiences" (Goldberg 2000).

### **3.1.3.2      *Technological Advances***

Technological advances continued to privatize entertainment. New technology allowed people to enjoy a variety of entertainment at home. Television, with the help from VCRs, game consoles, and DVD players, continued to be the primary source for home entertainment. Computers and the Internet added even more home entertainment choices. In the 1980s and early 1990s, these innovations kept people indoors. However, none of these innovations could fulfil people's inherent desire for social interactions (Beyard et al. 1998, 12). People simply got bored of enjoying entertainment alone. They needed venues that allowed them to enjoy entertainment with others. A Canadian study found that, from 1995 to 1997, CDs sales and video rentals rates fell, while attendance at performing arts and museums rose (Hume 1997b).

### **3.1.3.3      *Urban Attitudes***

By the late 1980s, many people's attitudes towards suburbia became unfavourable. An entire generation of suburbanites had grown up in homogeneous suburban environments. People were tired of the standardized suburban entertainment (Adams 1991, 4). Besides being bored with suburban venues, many suburbanites began to notice that urban problems of traffic congestion and crime had also migrated to suburbia. In 1992, *Fortune Magazine* ran an article stating that American suburbs were "under siege," victimized by waves of carjackings and muggings (Hannigan 1998a, 62).

In the same period, attitudes towards urban locations became more favourable. The suburbanites deemed the city as nearby getaways, a fleeting escape from the uniform suburbs (Adams 1991, 21). The suburbanites rejected the sprawling suburbs and craved the conveniences of the cities. They returned to the city "to embrace the very messiness of diversity and variety that suburbs sought to banish" (Hume 1997b). They believed that the city was an exciting place to shop, work, and live (Hannigan 1998a, 56). When they returned to the city, they demanded for urban entertainment venues that were more exciting than the suburban ones. These demands drove the need for new forms of urban entertainment centres (Beyard et al. 1998, 20).

The favourable attitude towards urbanity also spread to the political climates of many Canadian and American cities. Planners and local governments in these

cities were trying to rescue their downtowns from further deterioration. Their rescue strategies included building on the appeal of the culture and entertainment assets of the downtowns. They established arts, cultural, and entertainment districts in order to regenerate urban activities, employment, and housing (Hannigan 1998a, 56). The creations of these districts often required private investment to develop new shopping and entertainment venues.

These three factors contributed to an increase of demand for urban public entertainment from the 1980s to 1990s.

Throughout the three periods, changes in the three factors, socio-economic conditions, technological advances, and urban attitudes, influenced the demands for urban public entertainment. Table 3.1 summarizes these changes and demands. The next part of this chapter examines how the entertainment and the retail industries responded to the increasing demands from the 1980s to 1990s by developing urban entertainment centres.

**Table 3.1: Changes of Demand for Urban Public Entertainment from 1920s to 1990s**

**Source:** Sources Used in This Section.

	<b>Socio-Economic Conditions</b>	<b>Technological Advances</b>	<b>Urban Attitudes</b>	<b>Demand for Urban Public Entertainment</b>
<b>1870s – 1920s</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many workers had more free time and real income to spend on entertainment</li> <li>- Many municipalities supplied public amenities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Electricity allowed for safer and more exciting nightlife</li> <li>- Mass production of entertainment goods improved the affordability of entertainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many people prized urbanity, calling the 1920s as "Golden Age of Metropolis"</li> </ul>	Increased demand for urban public entertainment
<b>1930s – 1970s</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many people needed an escape from the reality during the Depression and WWII</li> <li>- After the war, people had disposable money and pent-up demand for entertainment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Newer private entertainment products allowed people to consume entertainment at home</li> <li>- Modern automobiles and government programs encouraged many urban residents to migrate to the suburbs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many people perceived downtowns as dangerous</li> <li>- The introduction of suburban entertainment venues allowed suburbanites to consume entertainment in the suburbs</li> </ul>	Reduced demand for urban public entertainment
<b>1980s – 1990s</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many single-parent households and dual-income households had less leisure time, requiring more flexible entertainment options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Newer technology continued to increase the consumption of entertainment at home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many suburbanites were tired of the homogeneity of the suburbs and began to favour urban living</li> <li>- Some municipalities had downtown revitalization programs to improve their urban assets</li> </ul>	Increased demand for urban public entertainment

## **3.2 Supply of Entertainment Centres**

### **3.2.1 Reactions from the Entertainment Industry**

The entertainment industry responded to the changes in socio-economic conditions, technology, and urban attitudes of the 1980s by developing family entertainment centres (e.g., Chuck E. Cheese), miniaturized versions of theme parks. These centres often included arcades, miniature golf, and go-kart tracks. Figure 3.3 shows an example of a family entertainment centre. Palais Crystal in Dieppe, New Brunswick, has an indoor roller coaster, miniature golf, and 12 other carnival rides. However, the boom of family centres in the 1980s became a bust in the 1990s due to their limited appeal, inadequate capitalization, and market over-saturation (Minton 1998).



Figure 3.3: Palais Crystal as a Family Entertainment Centre in Dieppe, New Brunswick  
(Source: Attractions 2003)

Learning from the lessons of family entertainment centres, the entertainment industry modified the “family centres” model and introduced urban entertainment centres in the 1990s. Identifying the first modern entertainment centre is debatable



because there are different ways to classify the centres. Some retail professionals argued that the Country Club Plaza (Figure 3.4) in Kansas City, Missouri, dating from the 1920s, was the first, while others suggested that CocoWalk (Figure 3.5), in Coconut Grove, Florida, opened in 1990 was the first (Mander, no date). Elsewhere, Poag & McEwen, a developer, claimed that its “The Shops of Saddle Creek” project in Memphis, Tennessee, opened in 1987, was the first purpose-built lifestyle centre, a type of urban entertainment centre (Mander, no date).



Figure 3.4: Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri  
(Source: Welcome to Country Club 2003)



Figure 3.5: CocoWalk in Coconut Grove, Florida  
(Source: Beyard 1998, 141)

Many urban entertainment centres tried to improve on family centres by broadening their appeal and offering more simulated attractions (Minton 1998). To improve their competitiveness, some centres increased their sizes to ward off competitors and sought funding from large corporations to secure sufficient capital (Minton 1998). These centres tried to immerse their visitors with sensory thrills that could not be replicated by home entertainment (Silcoff 1998). Urban entertainment centres became a popular place for visitors to spend their limited leisure time (Ebenkamp 1998).

### **3.2.2 Reactions from the Retail Industry**

Some previous studies have indicated that a new retail format emerges about once every 15 years (Baker 1997, 10). The growth of home shopping in the 1990s signalled to store retailers that nonstore retailers, such as mail order and online stores, might be the new retail format replacing them (Schwartz 1998, 23). To compete with nonstore retailers, some store retailers improved their physical spaces, which nonstore retailers lacked. The hope was that the improved environment would provide better social interactions and extraordinary experiences to visitors.

The competition with nonstore retailers shifted store retailers' attitude from product-centred to experience-centred. In the past, store retailers focused on selling products efficiently (Beyard et al. 1998, 12). For them, providing entertainment (through fashion shows, window displays, and parades) was just a marketing strategy to boost product sales. When store retailers became more



experience-centred, they applied the principle that "customers spend their money where they spend their time" (Hume 1997b). Therefore, the retailers focussed on capturing the visitor's time first before capturing the contents of the visitors' wallets. The retailers wanted visitors to have fun while spending money.

To become more experience-centred, some store retailers reinvented themselves as lifestyle retailers, selling leisure-oriented products (Beyard et al. 1998, 11). Retailers such as Chapters Bookstore, Mountain Equipment Co-op, and Starbucks Coffee encouraged customers to pursue certain passions and share them with others (Grow 1998). These retailers portrayed their customers as "avid readers," "outdoor thrill-seekers," and "coffee connoisseurs" respectively. When visiting these stores, customers socialized with other like-minded customers, lingered, and spent money (Grow 1998). For example, Chapters Bookstore motivated their customers to visit regularly by offering classes, author readings, and book clubs (Figure 3.6). Visiting Chapters was more than just a shopping trip; it was an entertaining event.

# November/December Events

What's happening at Chapters Broadway


<p><b>Great Store Events</b></p> <p><b>Friday November 3rd 8:00 pm</b> <b>HEAR MUSIC LIVE!</b> At just 15 years of age, Richard Brown and his classmates already have a wide-ranging repertoire from Jazz to Pop to Classical.</p> <p><b>Saturday November 4th 2:00 pm</b> <b>PERSONAL PILGRIMAGE IN ONE DAY!</b> Meet Viki Hara, the author of <i>Personal Pilgrimage: One Day Soul Journeys for Busy People</i>. Learn how short, local pilgrimages renew your spirit and fit into a dynamic, hectic schedule! Viki Hara is a talented educator, businesswoman, and experienced public speaker living the nine-month day familiar to many of us.</p> <p><b>Sunday November 5th 5:30 pm</b> <b>CELEBRATE DYLAN THOMAS</b> Russell Roberts and Garath Hylle dramatize extracts from Dylan Thomas's short stories. Three characters emerge to "talk back" to Thomas and engage us with what became of them. Bring your favourite Dylan piece to read aloud at the open-air session to close. A pilgrimage to a local pub will round off the readings.</p>	 <p><b>Saturday, November 11th 3:00 pm</b> <b>MY BOOKS REMINDS REMEMBRANCE DAY</b> Join us story and craft is focus of Remembrance Day.</p> <p><b>Wednesday, November 15th 7:30 pm</b> <b>SMALL BUSINESS FINANCING SEMINAR</b> Discover the key to loan acceptance direct from a team of bankers from the Toronto-Dominion Bank. Discover what a banker needs to evaluate your loan request, and how a loan application is reviewed. With this knowledge increase your chances of getting the money you need to grow your business. Bring your questions to an interactive event.</p> <p><b>Friday November 17th 8:00 pm</b> <b>HEAR MUSIC LIVE!</b> Join us this evening for a four-stringing performance of Kitaro, talk with Patti LaBelle.</p>	<p><b>Sunday November 26th 3:00 pm</b> <b>CELEBRATE KLEIN DAY!</b> You'll find lots of fun things to do in My Books, when we hold Kleitz Day featuring games, crafts, and everything using educational Kleitz kits.</p> <p><b>Tuesday, November 28th 7:30 pm</b> <b>INTO THE GARDEN TALKS</b> This evening's garden talk discusses Lady's Mantle the fall and winter with Sherry Lawrence from Ten Kings Urban Gardens. Learn about growing, shrubby and taller tree types suitable for the urban gardeners. Sherry will also demonstrate reporting techniques. Into the Garden Talks are accompanied by from the Garden Magazine.</p> <p><b>ONGOING EVENTS</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, November 14th and Tuesday, November 28th</b> <b>CHAPTERS WRITING GROUP</b> Join a group of friends and get ready for an evening of intense creativity. Bring a sample of your work and read it aloud to this supportive group. Everyone is welcome! For more information call Dave at 854-6185 or Alice at 737-2842.</p>
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Figure 3.6: A Pamphlet listing Upcoming Events of a Chapters Bookstore (Source: Chapters Bookstore 2002)

Existing shopping malls also joined the "retailvolution" to compete with lifestyle retailers (Marotte 1997). Many of them added an entertainment anchor, often theatres and restaurants, to their centres (McCloud 1999b). Other types of entertainment anchors included ice rinks, water parks, bowling alleys, basketball centres, swimming pools, rock-climbing centres, golf courses, and tennis courts (Silcoff 1998). Having an entertainment anchor in a mall became so important that many retail tenants and department stores refused to open their stores in a mall unless it had an entertainment anchor (Marotte 1997).

Restaurants and other companies also became more experience-centred. Restaurants such as The Rainforest Cafe (Figure 3.7) immersed diners in a tropical environment with talking trees and dancing gorillas (Minton 1998). Pure entertainment companies such as The Discovery Channel operated stores to cross-promote their television shows (Hunter 1996). The Discovery Store featured an expeditionary environment where visitors could experience the "Discovery Lifestyle" (Ebenkamp 1998).



Figure 3.7: Rainforest Café in Toronto, ON  
(Source: Rainforest Café 2004)

### **3.2.3 Results of the Reactions from the Entertainment and the Retail Industries**

The growing emphasis on entertainment had positive financial benefits for entertainment centres and some shopping malls. For Metropolis, BC's largest shopping centre, the addition of an entertainment extension in 1998 brought in a

20% increase of number of visits and a 20% increase of annual sales (McCloud 1999b). Other shopping malls experienced 15% to 20% increases of gross retail sales with the addition of an entertainment anchor (Fickes 1999).

Changes in socio-economic conditions, technological advances, and urban attitudes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century affected people's demand for entertainment. The changes in the 1980s and the 1990s were the most influential in demanding venues that offered exceptional entertainment in urban locations. To meet this demand, entertainment and retail industries became progressively more experience-centred, leading to the introduction of urban entertainment centres in the late 1990s.

## **Chapter Four: Characteristics of Urban Entertainment Centres**

The discussion of the history and the supply of entertainment centres established that the growth of modern urban entertainment centres effectively began in the 1990s. Given the assumption that a new retail format persists in dominance for 15 years, this growth might be expected to continue in the 2000s (Baker 1997, 10). As entertainment centres spread across communities in North America and around the world, the centres will generate impacts on their host communities. In order to understand the impacts, knowing the characteristics of entertainment centres is necessary. Their characteristics create and shape the community impacts.

Entertainment centres share many characteristics even though earlier discussions have suggested that each centre is deliberately different. The difference is the specific details of the centres; the broad characteristics of these centres are relatively similar. Specific details are the physical expressions of the broad characteristics. For example, entertainment centres share the common characteristic of using outlandish architecture to attract visitors, but each centre executes the architecture differently with their details.

Entertainment centres have two general types of characteristics: physical and experiential. The two types of characteristics synergize to make entertainment centres a pleasurable place to visit.

## **4.1 Physical Characteristics**

Entertainment centres share the physical characteristics of locations, local contexts, parking, and architecture. These characteristics give the entertainment centres their distinctive appearances.

### **4.1.1 Locations**

The discussions in Chapter 2 have shown that entertainment centres do not have to locate in downtowns because the "urban" term refers to the urban qualities of the centres. However, many centres prefer to locate downtown because these areas offer "a significant entertainment orientation" (McCloud 1999b). Downtown areas already have live theatres and shopping districts. Those facilities generate spillover traffic that entertainment centres can capture, but this traffic comes with the cost of high rents for the prime real estate. Entertainment centres often try to afford these high rents by using space-saving technologies (Phillips 1995). Park Millennium at Lincoln Square in Downtown New York is an example of a downtown entertainment centre (Figure 4.1).



Figure 4.1: Park Millennium at Lincoln Square in Downtown New York  
(Source Beyard et al. 1998, 198)

Within the downtowns, developers of entertainment centres often choose locations in abandoned industrial sites (Beyard et al. 1998, 20). These locations are usually along the waterfront, in old warehouse districts, and in old buildings. Abandoned industrial sites allow the developers to save on rents, to receive government incentives, and to have design flexibilities. The rents of abandoned industrial sites are often lower than the rents of comparable commercial sites. The lower rents reflect the dilapidated and sometimes contaminated conditions of the sites. To revitalize these sites, local governments may offer incentives and impose fewer design restrictions on the developers (Hannigan 1998a, 2). With fewer restrictions, developers have more design flexibilities.

#### **4.1.2 Local Contexts**

Once the developers confirm the site locations, they try to incorporate local contexts in the designs of their centres. The local contexts provide design cues for developers to use in differentiating their centres (Beyard et al. 1998, 78). This differentiation creates centres that provide unique experiences, turning them into tourist attractions. As tourist attractions, they earn revenues from both residents and tourists (Beyard et al. 1998, 85).

Another advantage in integrating local contexts is saving developers' money by sharing resources. For example, developers can design an entertainment centre to share existing parking facilities, allowing the centre to reduce its parking and free up space for other uses. The Metreon Centre in San Francisco depends on surrounding parking facilities so much that it does not have its own parking (Kahn 1999). When sharing resources, entertainment centres do not just siphon off community resources. Some centres allocate the freed-up space for non-existent resources that could benefit the communities. The Price Center at the University of California in San Diego has theatres that serve as lecture halls during the day (Figure 4.2) (Beyard et al. 1998, 99).





Figure 4.2: Sharing of Theatres as Lecture Halls at Price Center at the University of San Diego  
(Source: Ambühler 2003)

To connect with their communities, entertainment centres have two strategies. The first one is for the centres to have a history or “back story.” This strategy integrates local history, culture, or a fictional concept into the centres (Beyard et al. 1998, 79). For example, Navy Pier in Chicago in IL adapts the waterfront industrial heritage in its design (Figure 4.3).



Figure 4.3: Navy Pier in Chicago in IL  
(Source Beyard et al. 1998, 177)

The second strategy is to introduce streets and public spaces, which are urban elements that have existed for thousands of years (Figures 1.1 and 1.2) (Beyard et al. 1998, 79). These timeless elements not only bring urban qualities to the centers, but also encourage socializations among visitors. These elements are

often recreated in the centres by "grouping tenants into easily identifiable neighbourhood" and "using awnings and full-height façades" along the storefronts (Figure 1.1) (Silcoff 1998).

#### **4.1.3          Parking**

Almost all entertainment centres provide parking to allow for convenient access. Even for the ones that rely on surrounding parking facilities or public transit, they may still need to provide some parking due to its large drawing power (MacFarlane 1997). Centres with large drawing power can overwhelm surrounding parking facilities and transit services.

In addition to drawing power, the demand periods of entertainment centres make parking a necessity. Visitors often travel to entertainment centres during evenings and weekends, when public transit operates less frequently than daytime weekdays (Beyard et al. 1998, 110). For many visitors, taking transit during the peak periods of the centres is far less convenient than driving.

Entertainment centre developers have different attitudes towards parking facilities than do mall developers. Mall developers consider parking facilities as an obligatory service that takes up retail space. Since parking areas are often the largest and most visible part of a mall, mall developers minimize its bulk with minimalist, utilitarian designs (Baker 1997, 49). In contrast, entertainment centre developers consider parking facilities as a stage for pre-shows and post-shows of the entertainment sold inside the centres (Beyard et al. 1998, 111). Well-designed

parking facilities can excite visitors when they arrive and impart lasting impressions when they leave.

#### **4.1.4      Architecture**

The architecture of an entertainment centre is its most significant and critical physical characteristic. As the most identifiable physical element, the architecture creates a fantasy world for visitors to experience. It effectively serves as the background, the props, and the special effects of a theatrical production.

To ensure that the architecture excites visitors, many developers incorporate what are called the "3 Ds – drama, diversity, and detail" in its architectural guidelines (Beyard et al. 1998, 112). Drama is the selling point that draws visitors to the centres. It is achieved with distinctive themes, creative back stories, or extraordinary landmarks. SilverCity Colossus in Langley uses the spaceship theme for its drama (Figure 4.4). The interior of the spaceship has a futuristic alien ambience and the exterior has moving searchlights beaming light into the night sky. These details give visitors a "feeling of being somewhere very special" (Eberts 1999b).



Figure 4.4: Spaceship Exterior of Colossus Langley  
(Source: Holiday Inn Express 2003)

Diversity can be achieved by varying the architecture, signage, and shop windows to imitate the classic shopping streets that have evolved over time (Beyard et al. 1998, 112). Designing centres with a tapestry of elements, while retaining coherent themes, stimulates the visitors' senses and encourages them to explore. A local centre that promotes this physical diversity is The Entertainment Zone in Metropolis. Each tenant in The Entertainment Zone has different façades. Glow!, a retailer that sells "glow-in-the-dark" merchandises, has a big exclamation mark for its storefront.<sup>6</sup> Just a few doors next to it, Millennium, a store selling science fiction and fantasy products, has a ferocious dragon breaking out of a cage for its storefront. Across from them is Playdium, a virtual arcade centre, which has monitors showing psychedelic images for its storefront. These storefronts may be different, but they have the common fantasy theme. The diversity of these façades is more distinguishable than the façades of stores in other sections of Metropolis.

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<sup>6</sup> The observations of Entertainment Zone in Metropolis at Metrotown are based on a site visit by the author in June 2003.

Design detail is important in every entertainment centre. It is the means for entertainment centres to achieve drama and diversity. Developers of entertainment centres can apply distinctive details to create drama. The developer of SilverCity Colossus Theatres dresses up ATM machines as aliens (Eberts 1999b). Developers can also vary the details to create diversity. The developer of Entertainment Zone lets the tenants vary their storefronts to express their identities.

The physical characteristics of entertainment centres are always "richer in nuance than the usual planned retail environment, which often suppresses [their physical elements] in the interests of economy and uniformity" (Beyard et al. 1998, 112). For entertainment centres, their thorough attention to physical designs costs more money to construct than malls. The maintenance costs are also higher for entertainment centres because the centres need to look good from every angle, but malls only have to look good inside (Mander, no date). The higher costs are justified because the physical elements package and enhances the entertainment for sale.

Attractive physical features alone do not guarantee profitability for entertainment centres (Minton 1998). While a creative back story may initially attract visitors, it is less appealing for each subsequent visit. Visitors can get increasingly tired of the back story, making fewer repeat visits. Yet, repeat visits are important for entertainment centres; without repeat visits, the supply of visitors will eventually decline. Repeat visits bring continual flows of traffic and revenue to the centres. To encourage repeat visits, entertainment centres can expand their sizes,

change their physical features, or refresh their entertainment (Beyard et al. 1998, 27). The first two strategies are more difficult to execute than the last one because of physical and financial constraints. Therefore, many entertainment centres choose to focus on improving their experiential characteristics for ongoing profitability (Beyard et al. 1998 31).

## **4.2 Experiential Characteristics**

The physical characteristics package the experiences sold by entertainment centres. Attractive packaging may attract visitors to the centres in the first place, but the quality of the experiences gets visitors to return. For entertainment centres to provide quality experiences, they need to know the visitors' tastes for experiences. However, visitors have diverse tastes. To cater to the different tastes, the centres can carefully select a mix of tenants that offers a range of products and services to attract different types of visitors. A centre with shops and theatres can attract shoppers during the day and moviegoers at night. A good tenant mix should have the three basic components mentioned in the definitions of entertainment centres: entertainment, dining, and retail (Beyard et al. 1998, 68). These components fulfil the basic entertainment needs of having fun, eating, and shopping.

#### **4.2.1 Entertainment Venues**

Entertainment venues are typically movie theatres, virtual arcades, and sports centres. Their role is to provide activities for visitors (Beyard et al. 1998, 68). The most common entertainment venue is the multiplex theatre. Theatres have been used as the dominant entertainment venue in malls since the 1940s, but malls have generally devoted far more space to department stores. The average "super-regional" mall allocates about 5% of its area for theatres and other entertainment uses (Beyard et al. 1998, 68). In contrast, an average entertainment centre devotes 30% to 50% of its area for entertainment. The higher percentages indicate the growing dominance and size of the entertainment venues. For example, new theatres may have 20 to 30 screens that occupy up to 80,000 ft<sup>2</sup> (Jeffrey 1996). The numerous screens accommodate many different tastes and allow for frequent changing of experiences. These characteristics make theatres the best entertainment anchor in generating frequent visits. Popular theatres can attract 1.5 to 2.5 million visitors per year (McCloud 1999a).

Another popular entertainment venue is the high-tech arcade. The new arcades can be classified as sports-oriented such as The Score! at the Plaza of Nations in Vancouver, as games-based such as Playdium in Metropolis, or as combinations of both. These arcades use the latest technology to offer highly interactive games (Patton 1994). Because sports games largely appeal to able-bodied youth, the arcades have limited appeal (Jensen 1996). To increase their appeal, some arcades expand their range of games. For example, Playdium in

Metropolis offers over 200 games to attract different preferences (Nutt 1997). It also adjusts lighting and sound throughout the day to serve different visitors: the ambience is family-friendly during the day and youth-oriented at night (Nutt 1997).

#### **4.2.2 Restaurants**

Restaurants extend the staying time of the visitors (Beyard et al. 1998, 69). They refuel visitors so that visitors have enough energy to continue their visits. By enabling the visitors to extend their stays, the restaurants not only generate direct revenues for the centres, but also indirectly increase the revenues of the other two components.

Most restaurants in entertainment centres use themes and back stories to immerse their visitors into a dining adventure (Beyard et al. 1998, 31). These restaurants allow visitors to combine fun and dining. For example, visitors of The Rain Forest Cafe can interact with a simulated rainforest while dining (Figure 3.7). The restaurant packages the experience of dining with the rainforest theme. The distinctive meal presentation and food quality help to drive repeat visits (Jeffrey 1996).

#### **4.2.3 Retailers**

The role of retailers is to attract visitors who need to buy products (Beyard et al. 1998, 70). Visitors who go to the centres for entertainment or dining can linger



at the retailers while waiting for shows or mealtimes (Beyard et al. 1998, 70). The retailers not only disperse traffic of the centres around these periods, but they also fill the slow daytime periods with traffic. Retailers generate traffic throughout the day and night, whereas the entertainment and dining components generate mostly night traffic (Beyard et al. 1998, 70).

Many retailers in the entertainment centres are lifestyle retailers, as mentioned in Chapter 2 (Roche 1998). Similar to restaurants, the retailers combine shopping and entertainment. The NikeTown Store in New York, for example, sells sports apparel in an interactive museum setting (Figure 4.5). Visitors can have fun exploring the “museum” while shopping for Nike products (Phillips 1995).



Figure 4.5: Niketown in New York  
(Source: NikeTown: New York 2004)

The entertainment, restaurant, and retail components work together to create a fun place for visitors. The entertainment component generates activities

for visitors to participate, the restaurant component extends the duration of these activities, and the retail component attracts visitors to come (Beyard et al. 1998, 70). Collectively, they "create a combined pull on the market that extends the centres' geographic reach and penetration" (Beyard et al. 1998, 68).

### **4.3 Effects of These Characteristics**

The discussion in this chapter has shown that the physical and experiential characteristics of entertainment centres are more carefully planned than the characteristics of many malls. How do these considerations affect the performances entertainment centres? Such considerations can affect the drawing power, visit duration, and sales performances of entertainment centres.

#### **4.3.1 Drawing Power**

The physical and experiential characteristics of entertainment centres create an experience distinctive enough to exert a drawing power over an extensive trade area. The trade area of an entertainment centre can be up to a 45-minute radius of driving time, three times larger than the one of many shopping malls ("Disney" 1996). Successful centres can have trade areas so large that the centres become tourist attractions (Beyard et al. 1998, 65). Some centres even have their own tourist departments to organize trips with tourist operators (Silcoff 1998).

#### **4.3.2 Visit Duration**

Most visitors stay longer at entertainment centres than at shopping malls. They need more time to explore the physical elements and to consume the experiential elements. On average, visitors stay three to five hours in an entertainment centre, versus only one hour in a mall (Hunter 1996). The hours are spent differently depending on the time of the day. Daytime visitors often spend most of their time shopping, and then the rest on enjoying activities, watching short films, and dining. Nighttime visitors often spend most of their time watching movies, and then the rest in pre-show shopping and post-show dining (Beyard et al. 1998, 67).

#### **4.3.3 Sales Performances**

Visit duration correlates with sales performances: the longer visitors stay, the more money they would spend (Fickes 1999). Because entertainment centre visitors stay at least three times longer than mall visitors do, their spending is correspondingly higher per visit (Silcoff 1998). Visitors to Grapevine Mills Mall, an entertainment centre in Dallas, spend an average of USD \$167 per three-hour stay, which is higher per visit than the retail industry average of USD \$64 per one-hour stay (Silcoff 1998).

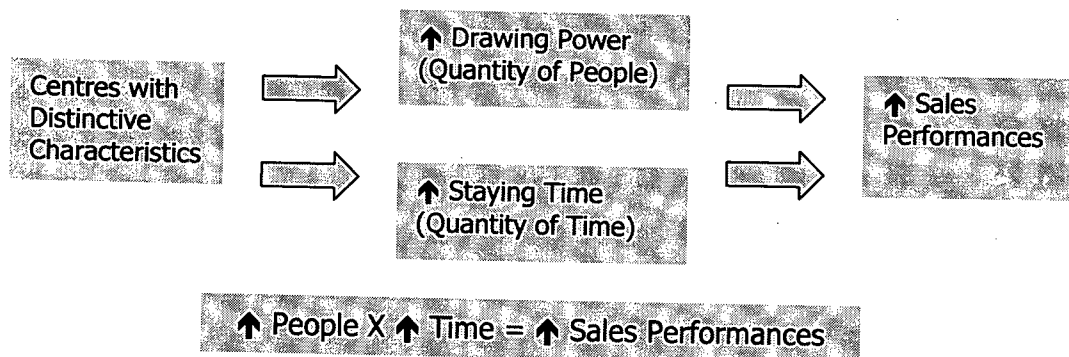
Besides average spending per trip, another measure of sales performances is annual sales per area. In the US, annual sales per square foot for an entertainment

centre range from USD \$700 to USD \$1200, while annual sales per square foot for a super regional mall range from USD \$300 to USD \$330 (Beyard et al. 1998, 90). The highest annual sales per square foot for malls are still lower than the lowest sales per square foot for entertainment centres: USD \$330 vs. USD \$700. These figures clearly show the economic rationale for developing entertainment centres.

Entertainment centres with high sales performances are ones with the most distinctive characteristics. Figure 4.6 suggests the relationships among distinctive characteristics, drawing power, visit duration, and sales performances. Centres with most distinctive characteristics can exert large drawing power and encourage long staying time. The combination of large drawing power and long visit duration leads to high sales performances. The best performer in the US is The Forum Shops in Las Vegas, which has an annual sales of about USD \$1,200/ ft<sup>2</sup> in 1996 (Figure 4.7) (Beyard et al. 1998, 165). The high sales performances are due to its unique identity as a Roman city, tightly integrated with its casino and hotel (Beyard et al. 1998, 165). It has become an important destination in a city known for extravagant attractions.

**Figure 4.6: Relationships among Characteristics, Drawing Power, Staying Time, and Sales Performances**

Source: Figure developed by author.



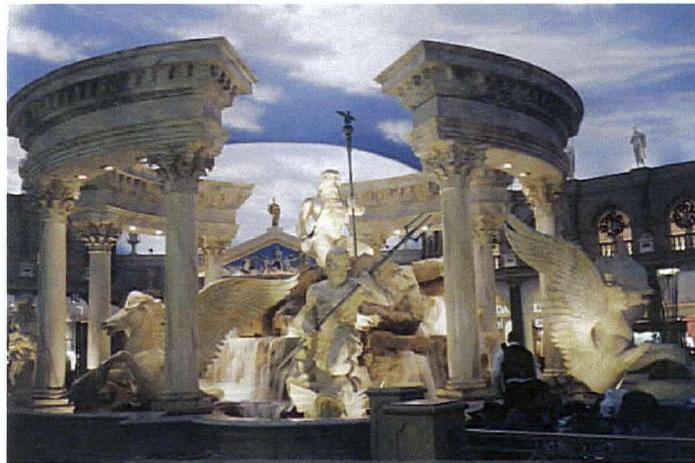


Figure 4.7: The Forum Shops at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas  
(Source: Forum Shops 2004)

The high sales performance of entertainment centres will not continue; the sales performance will inevitably be eroded by competition from new centres and from future retail formats. New entertainment centres will compete with the existing ones, diverting some revenues away from the existing centres. Future centres will also saturate the market of entertainment centres. Market saturation will then force some unprofitable centres to close. In addition to the new centres, future retail formats will intensify competition. Using the assumed 15-year cycle of new retail format (Baker 1997, 10), a new format could be expected to appear in five to seven years for the US and in 10 to 12 years for Canada, as of 2003. These predictions are based on the cycles of retail competition mentioned in previous sections.

Table 4.1 summarizes the analyses of the drawing power, visit duration, and sales performances between shopping malls and entertainment centres. The higher numbers in all three indicators suggest that careful planning of the physical and

experiential characteristics for entertainment centres pays off in attracting more visitors and receiving higher sales performance.

**Table 4.1: Comparisons of Drawing Power, Visit Duration, and Sales Performances between Shopping Malls and Entertainment Centres**

**Source:** (Beyard et al. 1998, 90) and Sources Used in This Section.

	Shopping Mall	Urban Entertainment Centre
<b>Drawing Power</b>		
- Distance	~ 32 km (20 miles)	~ 56 – 64 km (35 – 40 miles)
- Driving Time	Up to a 15-minute radius	Up to a 45-minute radius
<b>Visit Duration</b>	Approx. 1.24 hours	Approx. 3.5 hours
<b>Sales Performance</b>		
- Per Stay	\$64 for a 1-hour stay (average)	\$167 for a 3-hour stay (Mills Mall)
- Annual Sales/ft <sup>2</sup>	\$300 – \$330/ square foot	\$700 – \$1,200/ square foot
<b>Other Characteristics</b>		
- Size	800,000 - 1.7 million square feet	250,000 – 600,000 square feet
- Repeat Visits	Average of 3x per month	Average of 2 – 4x per month
- Tourist Draw	Limited	Potentially 20% – 40%

*All dollar amounts are in USD.*

## **Chapter Five: Impacts of Entertainment Centres on Communities**

The characteristics of entertainment centres generate impacts that can significantly affect their host communities. These impacts can be positive, negative, or both depending on one's perspectives. Developers may consider certain impacts positive, but residents may consider the same ones negative. Since the intent of this thesis is to analyze the community impacts of entertainment centres, this chapter uses the perspectives of the host community as its evaluative framework. Specifically, this chapter adopts the values and the perspective of residents living near entertainment centres to highlight impacts that matter to the residents, and thus to planners and local decision makers.

The first part of this chapter discusses community perspectives and highlights community objectives, or the factors that matter to the community in evaluating the impacts. The objectives of a community encountering or hosting an urban entertainment centre are summarized in Table 5.1. This table becomes a basis of a template for assessing the impacts of entertainment centres. In the second part of this chapter, this template is applied to assess the impacts of entertainment centres on the host community. The assessments are summarized in Table 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres. The purpose in this chapter is to develop a template that indicates the kinds of impacts that should be considered in evaluating entertainment centres from the perspective of a host community.



## **5.1 Community Perspectives and Objectives**

This chapter uses the community perspectives as a basis for addressing the goal of the thesis: helping planners to improve the liveability of the communities by understanding and where possible, mitigating the adverse impacts of entertainment centres. Improving the liveability of communities is important for planners because liveable communities give residents a sense of home. In liveable communities, residents have a strong community spirit, and feel comfortable staying there. Liveability reflects the residents' values, which in turn, represent the residents' attitudes and socio-economic conditions. As the attitudes and socio-economic conditions change over time, the values also evolve. For example, unemployed residents may consider a booming job market as their primary objective for liveability. When these residents have jobs, their values evolve and may consider a park program as their new primary objective.

A thriving job market and a park program are two of the many objectives for a liveable community. To develop a list of community objectives for this thesis, I followed the suggestions outlined in Chapter 3: Identifying and Structuring Objectives of Keeney's *Value-Focused Thinking* (1992, 55-56). Specifically, I reviewed literature on megastores, urban entertainment centers, retail developments, and public entertainment venues (e.g., Baker 1997, Beaumont 1997, Beyard et al. 1998, and Nasaw 1993). During the literature review, I noted community objectives that often appear in the discussions of large-scale commercial developments. Many of these objectives would be applicable to the objectives for



addressing urban entertainment centres because entertainment centres are an example of large-scale commercial developments. The objectives are refined and distilled into a list of fundamental objectives, grouped into four general categories: economic, social, environmental, and political and planning (Table 5.1). I discussed the fundamental objectives in interviews with Ian Thomas, a professional retail consultant (Thomas, Personal Interview, 2002), and with the respondents identified for the two case studies (Please refer to 1.3: Overview and Methodology for the specific respondents).

The fundamental objectives in Table 5.1 become the basis for a template to analyze the impacts of entertainment centres on the host communities. This template will be used in the second part of this chapter to analyze the impacts of entertainment centres. The template will then be applied again in assessing the impacts of the two case studies in Chapter 6.

### **Table 5.1: Fundamental Objectives of a Community Encountering an Urban Entertainment Centre**

**Sources:** Literature used in this chapter. (Table developed by author.)

#### **Economic:**

- Revitalize communities
- Strengthen tourism
- Create jobs and improve human capitals
- Attract additional investments
- Enlarge tax bases
- Reduce economic risks and failures

#### **Social:**

- Protect and enhance community heritage and character
- Reduce displacement of existing residents
- Diminish demographic segregations
- Lower crime
- Improve public spaces and institutions (e.g., public squares and museums)

#### **Environmental:**

- Reduce traffic and parking volumes
- Minimize air and noise pollution

#### **Political and Planning:**

- Support innovative planning policies and approaches (e.g., mixed-use zoning and public-private partnerships)

## **5.2 Economic, Social, Environmental, and Political Impacts**

### **5.2.1 Economic Impacts**

As large commercial centres, entertainment centres affect downtown revitalization, tourism, employment, money movement, taxation, and economic risks in their host communities.

#### **5.2.1.1 Downtown Revitalization**

Entertainment centres often prefer downtown locations for their accessibility and visibility. This preference makes them a great catalyst in downtown

revitalizations (Hunter 1996). Downtown revitalizations are important for improving the economic health of the city because a successful renewal project can raise property values, stem crime, create jobs, improve civic image, and attract tourists (Beyard et al. 1998, 20). By creating excitement in the heart of the city, entertainment centres can often awaken the densely inhabited area that "has lain sleepy, quiet, and undeveloped" for decades (Hume 1997a).

In addition to their ability to revitalize downtowns, entertainment centres can generate additional revitalization projects. Successful centres can prove to other developments that reinvesting in downtowns is lucrative, drawing other developers and investors to downtowns (Tsui 1996). Successive waves of additional developments can spread beyond the downtown cores, revitalizing surrounding parts of the city (Hunter 1996).

In the US and Canada, examples of urban revitalizations include New York City's 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and Vancouver's Robson Central (formerly known as Robsonstrasse). New York City's 42<sup>nd</sup> Street was "imagineered" by Disney. Disney restored the Amsterdam Theatre to showcase its live productions (Figure 5.1), and added an ESPN Zone sports complex that offers sports-themed dining and shopping (Phillips 1995). The 42<sup>nd</sup> Street became a primary anchor for accelerating surrounding revitalization projects in the 1990s (Hannigan 1998a, 63). On the other hand, Vancouver's Robson Central was not revitalized by a single entity (Figure 5.2). Different businesses contributed to its gradual transformations ("Robson" 1996).

Upscale retailers and restaurants had been arriving to the area, drawing visitors and helping to attract additional developments to the area.

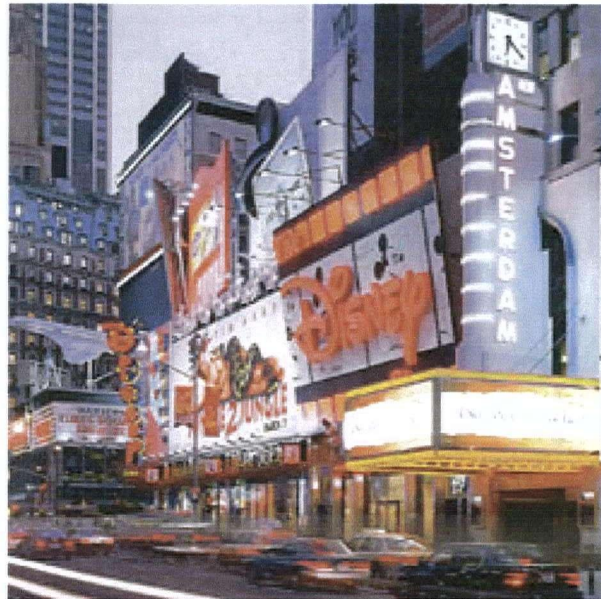


Figure 5.1: 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in New York Revitalized by Disney  
(Source: Beyard et al. 1998, 5)



Figure 5.2: Robson Central in Vancouver Revitalized by Different Developers  
(Source: Kam 2003)

Critics have questioned the ability for entertainment centres to revitalize downtowns. They argue that entertainment centres are just a successor to the failed revitalization projects of the past: abandoned pedestrian malls and under-performed market places (Hannigan 1998a, 142). These projects have failed to revive downtowns and attract additional developments. Entertainment centres may be able to avoid the poor revitalization performances with better planning and execution of their physical and experiential characteristics.

#### **5.2.1.2      *Tourism***

The emphasis on unique physical and experiential characteristics transforms many entertainment centres into tourist destinations. With strong identities, the centres can attract visitors from great distances (Minton 1998).

When entertainment centres strengthen the tourism industry, they benefit the communities with foreign capital, job creation, and improved local image (Minton 1998). In some cities, the growth in the tourism industry offsets the decline in traditional industrial and commercial activities. For the past few decades, many industrial and commercial activities have migrated to suburban sites for the low rent, highway access, and suburban labour pool (Hume 1997b). The suburbanization of many industries and some businesses forced the cities to find other industries such as the tourism industry to fill the economic void.

### **5.2.1.3      *Employment***

Planning, constructing, and operating an entertainment centre create employment in various industries. Its planning often requires developers, planners, architects, and consultants. Its construction often requires construction workers. Its operation often requires administrators, maintenance workers, and service clerks. These jobs also create the demands for supporting jobs.

While it appears that the jobs created by entertainment centres and shopping malls are similar, entertainment centres require more skilled workers than malls do because of their focus on uniqueness, technology, and entertainment (Greg 1999). Their emphasis for uniqueness requires creative designers, architects, and planners to design distinctive centres. Their reliance on technology to deliver fantasy environments requires skilled engineers. Their focus on delivering exceptional experiences requires workers with excellent service skills (Greg 1999).

The types of jobs created by entertainment centres have two possible interpretations. A positive interpretation suggests that many entertainment centres are creating job opportunities for professional workers such as architects and programmers. Many of these workers would receive relatively high wages for their technical skills. Entertainment centres are also creating many entry-level service jobs for inexperienced workers to develop their human capital.

A negative interpretation suggests that many entertainment centres create few professional job opportunities in the local host communities. The developers of entertainment centres usually hire in-house professionals, who work on a variety of

projects for the developers. Even if the developers are using local talent for professional positions, these jobs are mostly in the planning and design phases, which are temporary. Many of the long-term jobs at the centres are service jobs with few advancement opportunities within the centres (Hannigan 1998a, 54).

#### **5.2.1.4      *Investment and Money Movement***

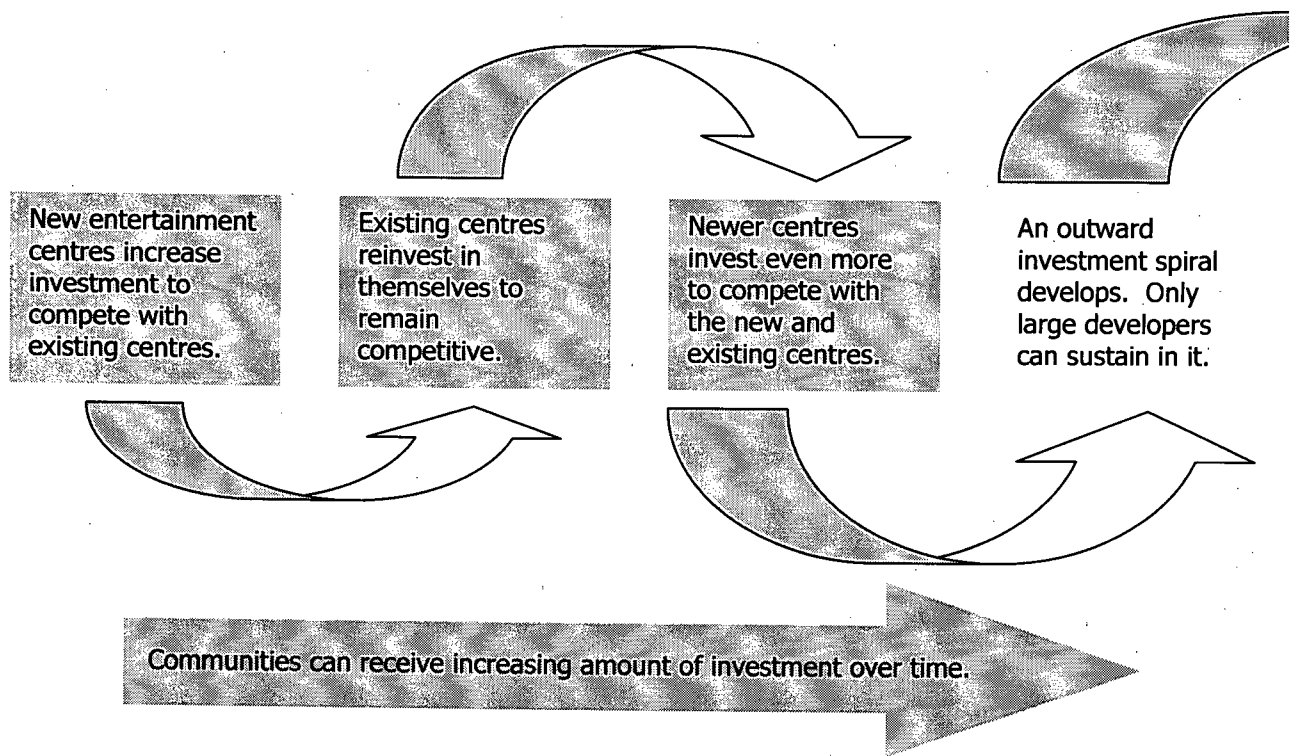
Developing an entertainment centre requires a large investment to create the unique physical and experiential characteristics. The influx of money into a community can stimulate its economic growth. Some of the money spent by the developers goes towards business services such as maintenance and security, creating local business opportunities. If the initial investment is profitable, it would attract additional investment from other developers, helping to generate more investment opportunities.

There is a trend for many developers to increase their investment for every new centre (Marotte 1997). The newer centres need to outperform existing ones to attract visitors. At the same time, existing entertainment centres react to the competition by reinvesting in themselves (Marotte 1997). As competition intensifies, the amount of investment required to develop an attractive centre increases, creating an outward spiral of investment (Figure 5.3). The growing amount of investment can generate more economic opportunities in the communities. However, this investment spiral can only be sustained by large developers with deep pockets of money (Hunter 1996). Smaller developers may under-fund their centres

and develop mediocre centres that do not excite visitors (Phillips 1995). These centres may have to close when they can no longer compete with the better-financed centres. These closures will inevitably hurt the economies of the host communities.

**Figure 5.3: Outward Spiral of Investment Flowing into Communities**

Source: Figure developed by author.



While the developers are increasing their investment over time, critics have questioned whether the spillover benefits of the investment are significant for the communities (Kahn 1999). The critics feel that almost all of the investment is spent on delivering the physical and experiential characteristics of the centres, leaving little



for the communities. An example for this argument is the revitalized economic district in Cleveland, Ohio (Hannigan 1998b). Hannigan uses socio-economic statistics to show that the district makes little economic difference to the surrounding inner cities, where 40% of Clevelanders remain below the poverty line. The immediate district is the only place that is benefiting from the revitalization. Surrounding businesses are actually worse off because the district draws visitors away from them (Hannigan 1998a, 53). Many visitors to the district are reluctant to venture beyond the district to patronize the local businesses.

#### **5.2.1.5      *Taxation***

Entertainment centres improve the tax base for the local municipal governments. Municipal governments collect property taxes from the owners of the entertainment centres. Since the municipal governments have the closest relationships with the communities, the property tax contributions to the municipal coffers are important for the communities. Municipal governments can allocate some of the contributions to serve the communities (Turner 1998). Such contributions can be significant for the communities. When the Metreon Centre in San Francisco was planned, it was estimated to generate USD \$10 million of tax revenue for all levels of government in its first year of operation (Kahn 1999). Some of the revenue would go towards the municipal coffers as property taxes.

### **5.2.1.6      *Competition and Closure***

The profitability of many entertainment centres persuades other developers to develop projects of their own, hoping to achieve similar levels of success. These entries increase competition and lead to market saturation. Stanley Eichelbaum, president of a consulting firm, has voiced concerns over the proliferation of these centres, charging that many entertainment centres are entering markets that are already well served (Mander, no date). An over-saturated market of entertainment centres can be catastrophic for communities. In the interview with Ian Thomas, he stated that the retail pie of a region is only so big, adding the maxim that "new retail space does not create new retail demand, it merely redistributes it" (Thomas, Personal Interview, 2002). The entries of new centres reduce the market of existing centres, eventually forcing some of the less-competitive centres to close.

In addition to competition, entertainment centres are susceptible to economic downturns and cyclical spending patterns. During economic prosperity, consumers are willing to spend some of their disposable incomes on entertainment, but during economic downturns, they usually cut their entertainment spending first (Minton 1998). Consumers also vary their entertainment spending throughout the year. They spend more on entertainment during summers and winter holidays, periods when they have more leisure time (Minton 1998). Unfavourable economic conditions, unpredictable spending patterns, and intense competition can cause vulnerable centres to close (Mander, no date).

The closures of entertainment centres can have several negative community impacts. Some of these impacts may include halting urban revitalization, hurting tourism, reducing jobs, worsening tax bases, and increasing outward money movement. In addition to these negative economic impacts, the communities sometimes have to deal with depreciated resources and abandoned structures. Communities often contribute some of their resources (e.g., road improvements) to the development of the centres (Hannigan 1998b). When an entertainment centre closes, the value of the community-contributed resources usually depreciates. The closed centres also leave abandoned structures that are often difficult to fill. The unique physical characteristics of the previous tenants make the structures unsuitable for other businesses. These structures would be even more difficult to fill if the closed stores have oversaturated their markets and already crowded out their competitors, leaving few players left in the region. Therefore, some of these structures can be left abandoned for a long time, becoming eyesores in the communities (Fulmer 1998).

### **5.2.2 Social Impacts**

Entertainment centres can affect the community's heritage, character, demographic, safety, public spaces, and public institutions.

### **5.2.2.1      *Heritage and Character***

As mentioned in 4.1.2: Local Contexts, developers often incorporate local contexts as the physical characteristics of their entertainment centres. The incorporation of the local contexts affects the social impacts of heritage and character. Entertainment centres sometimes incorporate heritage and character to make the centres appear to be part of the communities for decades (Mander, no date). This pattern of local incorporation can make the residents proud to have centres that respect their qualities.

One way for developers to incorporate heritage and local character in their centres is reusing existing buildings, especially ones with heritage destinations (Beyard et al. 1998, 6). Some developers seek buildings with heritage designations for their ease of incorporating local elements and for their possible heritage bonuses. Many heritage buildings embody some aspects of the local history, so reusing heritage buildings can save developers' efforts in incorporating local contexts. Heritage bonuses are often offered by local governments to entice developers to occupy and refurbish heritage buildings. In Vancouver, the developer who refurbished the former Vancouver Public Library Central Branch received density bonuses valued at \$6 million from the City of Vancouver (Figure 5.2) (Schaap 1997). In return, the developer upgraded the environmental, seismic, and structural elements of the building. This arrangement was a win-win-win situation for the developer, the City, and the local community. The developer received the

bonuses for the building upgrade, the City received more taxes from the increased property value, and the community preserved a heritage building.

Retrofitting heritage buildings is applicable to urban centres. Suburban centres often do not have heritage buildings to retrofit. Suburban centres can still incorporate heritage and character by integrating local uses, a strategy which can be used by both urban and suburban centres. In the US, developers have integrated libraries, university branches, museums, performing arts venues, and civic offices with their centres (Beyard et al. 1998, 93). These centres become quasi-community centres. They get additional visits from residents using the public services and gain sales generated by the spillover traffic.

Critics have argued that retrofitting buildings and integrating local uses do not fully protect the heritage or the character; these actions protect only the physical aspects of the heritage and character, but not the cultural aspect. Specifically, they argue that the experiences inside the centres are usually unrelated to the heritage and character of the communities (Hannigan 1998a, 3). The integration is limited to the physical characteristics only.

While entertainment centres do not protect the cultural aspects as well as the physical aspects, the centres are usually the only developments that have the flexibilities and the incentives to retrofit buildings and integrate local uses. The experiences sold by the centres are usually flexible enough to accommodate to the legacy floor plates found in heritage structures (Beyard et al. 1998, 93). The

incentives to integrate local uses are part of the drive for entertainment centres to be distinctive.

The critics have also argued that the incorporations of heritage and character do not benefit the communities. The incorporations can actually harm the communities by romanticizing their culture. In the interpretation of the community culture, the centres often omit the "harsh truths" of the reality, and selectively use positive cultural elements (Hannigan 1998a, 6). The centres "idealize the surrogate version of the reality, celebrating the fake over the real" (Hannigan 1998a, 5-6).

Proponents of entertainment centres feel this argument is unjustified. Romanticizing the culture has always occurred since the 1920s in movie palaces and department stores. Yet, people now consider these venues, often imitating Greek and Roman architecture, as an important heritage (Nasaw 1993, 6). Heritage evolves over time; the heritage of tomorrow consists of current uses. Entertainment centres are contributing to the heritage of the future.

#### **5.2.2.2      *Gentrification and Displacement***

Entertainment centres have the ability to attract attention to areas that were once neglected. Many American cities have used them to help raise property values, curtail crime, create jobs, improve images, and attract tourists. However, these benefits come with the impacts of gentrifying communities and displacing existing residents (Hammonds 1998). Gentrification occurs when these benefits entice people to move into the communities, driving up property values. When property

values increase, some existing residents, who can only afford the lower pre-gentrified rates, would have to leave their communities and seek housing elsewhere. The displacements of these residents disrupt neighbourhood relationships and can destabilize the communities.

Gentrifications and displacements are more applicable for urban centres than suburban centres (Eberts 1999b). Suburban areas have less concentration of residents than urban areas have, so there are fewer residents to experience the impacts. With fewer residents to be affected by the impacts, the size of the gentrification and displacement impacts is lower. Rather than displacing residents, the suburban centres usually displace land uses. Some of these centres take up industrial or agricultural lands, land uses that may be considered important for the suburban residents.

#### **5.2.2.3      *Demographic Segregation***

Entertainment centres do not appeal to everybody. They attract people with certain demographic and segregate the rest. Entertainment centres can segregate visitors based on their ages, genders, incomes, and physical abilities. For the age and gender segregations, the tenants in the centres target specific groups. For example, Playdium has a target market of 18 to 35 year olds (Greg 1999). As a virtual arcade, it has a male gender bias due to the glorification of fighting and battles in the arcade games (Hannigan 1998a, 66-67). On the other hand, sports-oriented entertainment centres such as The Score! in Vancouver are more gender-

neutral, appealing to both males and females. Other tenants segregate ages and genders by the products and experiences they sell. A diverse tenant mix in an entertainment centre can appeal to different age groups and genders.

For income segregation, some entertainment centres charge admission rates that are too costly for some visitors ("Readers" 1998). For example, a household of two adults and two children has to spend over CAN \$40 for an evening screening in a Famous Players SilverCity Theatre (myTELUS Movies 2003).<sup>7</sup> The admission rates also keep out youth, the target age group of many entertainment tenants, because some youth may need to borrow money from their parents for the theatre admission (Minton 1998). The income segregation partially offsets the age appeal of some entertainment tenants.

Entertainment centres can also segregate visitors with limited abilities such as seniors and people with disabilities. Although the centres usually meet the current accessibility codes, some of their physical and experiential characteristics can interfere with the movements and comfort of these groups. For instance, new theatres have inclined seats that offer unobstructed views of the screens, but these seats require steep stairs that are challenging for people with limited mobility ("Readers" 1998). The stairs are also hazardous to people with limited visions because of the low auditorium lighting. The large screens and loud sounds in the auditoriums can overwhelm some sensitive people (Marotte 1997). These

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<sup>7</sup> Rate as of December 14, 2003.



segregated groups have the similar, negative reactions to other types of tenants that have lavish physical and experiential characteristics.

Not everyone in the target demographic of entertainment centres is attracted to the centres. Some people consciously do not visit entertainment centres because they believe such version of entertainment is "mindless" (Blank 1998). They feel that the centres put them out of touch with reality and human contacts. Their personal preferences differ from the values celebrated by entertainment centres.

As with all developments, entertainment centres do not appeal to every resident in the communities. The communities need a diversity of entertainment options for the different demographics. Some entertainment centres have incorporated other entertainment options such as community centres and parks to broaden their appeals and reduce their segregation impacts (Beyard et al. 1998, 93).

#### **5.2.2.4      *Crime***

A common concern that residents have with entertainment centres is crime. The residents deem the centres as breeding grounds for crime because of their appeal to youth and their long operating hours (Jeffrey 1996). Some people believe youth commit a lot of crime. Whether this belief is accurate or not, it becomes a reality in their minds. Therefore, they equate a congregation of youth as a gathering of delinquents. When there was a proposal to develop an entertainment centre in Downtown Costa Mesa in California in 1993, the zoning commission

required the owners of the centre to assure that the youth "would not get out of hand" (Minton 1998).

The long operating hours aggravate the fear of crime. Entertainment centres operate late into the night for evening shopping, dinner, and movies. Some entertainment tenants in the Entertainment Zone in Metropolis close at 10:00 p.m. or 11:00 p.m. on weekdays while the retail sections close at 9:00 p.m. (Metropolis at Metrotown 2003). For the people who fear youth for their propensity to commit crime, the long operating hours mean that the youth would have more time and opportunities to "get out of hand."

Proponents of entertainment centres argue that entertainment centres do not increase crime. Rather, they help to reduce crime by revitalizing communities and attracting crowds. Revitalizing communities not only improves the liveability of the communities, but also fosters community pride. Residents with strong community pride are active in caring about the safety of their communities. Attracting crowds to the communities provides subconscious surveillance and mutual policing by the visitors (Jacobs 1961, 35).

Regardless of whether entertainment centres increase or decrease crime rates, the centres still need to employ patrols to monitor onsite activities. The Metrotown Complex, which includes Station Square, Metropolis, and Metrotown Centre, employs brightly dressed bike patrollers to make their presences known, to respond to incidents quickly, and to increase the comfort level of the visitors (Jaeger 1998). The complex has also formed a committee with community members, the

RCMP, and the SkyTrain Police to coordinate security services and to ensure that crimes do not happen (Rose 1998).

#### **5.2.2.5      *Public and Private Spaces***

Some entertainment centres distort the relationships between public and private spaces. Such distortions originate from the imitations of public spaces by entertainment centres (Hannigan 1998b). Entertainment centres often imitate qualities of public spaces such as streets and storefronts, as discussed in 2.1: Definitions of Urban and 4.1.2: Local Contexts. Imitating these street elements can create a vibrant environment in the entertainment centres, but it can also confuse some visitors in identifying public and private spaces. Public spaces usually provide certain rights and freedoms to the visitors that some private spaces do not provide (Hannigan 1998b). These quasi-public spaces in the entertainment centres appear to be genuine, but they lack the diversity and humanity of traditional street life (Hannigan 1998b). Downtown Disney in Florida exemplifies such distortion by transposing the diversity of urban public space without its negative baggage such as crime and poverty (Figure 5.4) (Margolin 1998). By minimizing any upsetting elements for their visitors, the sanitized complex erases all of the spontaneity of urban living.



Figure 5.4 Adaptation of Urban Street Elements in Downtown Disney  
(Source: McSparran 2003)

Many entertainment centres have adopted the Downtown Disney's blueprint of theme-park urban life. Developers, architects, and planners have embraced its architectural style, which creates an aura of fantasy, delight, and well-being among crowds (Hannigan 1998b). They have also used the Disney's model of "large-scale urban control zones" in their centres. The developers of Boston's Faneuil Hall sent their staff to Disney World to learn its vigilant security methods (Hannigan 1998b).

#### **5.2.2.6      *Competition with Public Institutions***

Entertainment centres compete with public institutions such as museums for visitors' limited leisure time and money. Both types of centres entertain visitors, but they use different approaches. Many public institutions focus on educating the visitors first and then add entertainment to make education fun. On the other hand, entertainment centres focus on entertainment first and then add education, if it enhances the entertainment (Hannigan 1998a, 99).

Some people prefer public institutions for their educational roles in the communities. Museums and art galleries take the educational roles seriously, ensuring the quality of the education (Hannigan 1998a, 99). Conversely, entertainment centres that incorporate some education may skew the educational content to please their visitors or to advertise. For example, a sports museum operated by a shoe company would likely emphasize sports that the company makes shoes for. The emphasis on entertainment is obviously warranted for entertainment centres. After all, their primary role is to entertain their visitors. If visitors want substantive education, they can always visit the public institutions.

However, the competition between entertainment centres and public institutions can force some public institutions to compromise their educational mandates. Under intense competition, some public institutions shift their emphasis on entertainment more than education to attract visitors. In 1991, I attended the "Star Trek Federation Science" Exhibit at Science World, Vancouver. In the exhibit, I learned about space travel through Star Trek props, music, and characters, a presentation style that I felt has eclipsed the educational content. When a public institution actively and consistently takes this route to emphasize entertainment, it becomes more like entertainment centres (Hannigan 1998a, 99).

### **5.2.3 Environmental Impacts**

Entertainment centres affect the environment by increasing traffic and parking volumes, and generating air and noise pollution.

#### **5.2.3.1 Traffic and Parking**

Entertainment centres can add substantial amounts of traffic and parking volumes to communities. A successful centre generates more visits per year than a convention or sports facility in a major city (Beyard et al. 1998, 93). The magnitude of the traffic and parking volumes depends on the drawing power and the location of the centre. Table 4.1 shows that an entertainment centre has a large drawing power, up to twice the amount of a shopping mall. When this large drawing power is compounded with up to four repeat visits per month, the centre can bring in high volumes of traffic and parking to the host communities (Table 4.1).

A centre in an urban location generates relatively less traffic and parking volumes than a centre in a suburban location. An urban centre is more accessible by walking and by public transportation than a suburban centre. Walking and public transportation are attractive for visitors because of the types of goods and services sold at entertainment centres. Entertainment centres sell experiences and entertainment products such as CDs, which are either intangible or portable enough for visitors to take home with them by walking or on public transit. The Metreon Centre in San Francisco does not have any parking because the developer

forecasted that most of their five million annual visitors rely on walking and public transportation to get there (Goldberg 2000). For visitors who drive to an urban centre, they do not greatly increase the traffic and parking volumes in the urban communities. Since visitors usually visit the centres during evenings and weekends, they do not encounter traffic and parking congestions of business rush hours. Many visitors are travelling against the rush hour traffic flow and occupying vacant parking spaces left by downtown workers. While such traffic and parking volumes do not aggravate the ones in the rush hours, the volumes extend into evenings and weekends. The extensions bring congestions and noises when many urban residents are usually relaxing at home.

A suburban centre has relatively more traffic and parking impacts than an urban centre because it often lacks adequate public transit systems and nearby parking facilities. The public transportation system is sometimes inadequate in serving suburban entertainment centres. In Greater Vancouver, only one bus, #403, stops at Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex (Riverport Complex), a large suburban entertainment centre in the region (TransLink Schedule Lookup 2003). In addition, the bus only runs every 30 minutes during evenings and weekends. The limited, infrequent service is inconvenient for visitors, so many of them drive to Riverport Complex. The number of vehicles driven by the visitors going to a suburban entertainment centre is estimated to be one vehicle for every two visitors (Jeffrey 1996). When the visitors arrive to the centre, they need spaces to park their vehicles. To meet these parking volumes, the suburban centre often

has a sea of parking. The isolated suburban location of the centre forces the centre to provide sufficient spaces on its own, as there is no nearby parking facility for sharing.

Even though a suburban centre generates greater traffic and parking impacts than an urban centre does, the size of the impacts experienced by the residents may be different. The magnitude of the traffic and parking impacts declines over distance. In suburban settings, where spaces are abundant and residential areas are generally away from the suburban centres, increases in the traffic and parking volumes are likely to be distant and unobtrusive. In urban communities, where spaces are tight and residential areas may be adjacent to the centres, any increases in the impacts are close and noticeable.

The large traffic and parking volumes are one of the common concerns for both urban and suburban residents in the literature review. Residents in East Rutherford, New Jersey expressed such concerns when a sports complex was planned for an expansion in 1994 ("In the Works" 1994). They demanded a rail line station by the complex to alleviate some of the traffic and parking impacts. Many suburban residents are inherently more concerned with urban developments than urban residents are. Their decisions to live in a suburban setting partially reflect their preferences for serene, rustic environments, but these preferences contradict the urban qualities of entertainment centres.



### **5.2.3.2      *Air and Noise Pollution***

Entertainment centres do not directly produce air and noise pollution. Rather, their drawing power generates automobile trips, and cars are the main polluting agents of air and noise. The exhausts from the cars emit dusts and greenhouse gases into the air, and the noises from the cars amplify noises along the thoroughfares (MacFarlane 2000). Both forms of pollution harm the residents' health and degrade the environment.

The previous section has indicated that suburban centres generate greater traffic volumes than urban centres. Consequently, suburban centres indirectly generate greater air and noise pollution than urban centres. Similar to the traffic and parking impacts, the pollution impacts often affect the residents during evenings and weekends, periods when the residents are resting. The residents may hear noises as late as 1:00 a.m., when movie patrons leave after the late-night screenings (myTELUS Movies 2003). The magnitude of the air and noise pollution declines over distance. The farther the residents are away from the centres, the less pollution they are likely to experience from the centres.

### **5.2.4      *Political and Planning Impacts***

The unique characteristics of entertainment centres challenge conventional planning policies and procedures, but offer opportunities for new planning ideas. Entertainment centres are large developments that often have mixed uses:

restaurants, retail, entertainment, and sometimes housing and public institutions (Hunter 1996). This characteristic is different from the conventional planning principle of zoning, which separates uses into different areas. The difference prompts planners to introduce new planning policies such as zoning changes to accommodate the different, mixed uses.

The scale of the centres means that the centres have extensive and enduring effects on communities. This characteristic encourages planners to suggest new planning approaches such as public-private partnerships to manage the size and to combine expertises from the different partners. While public-private partnerships are only one of the many innovative planning approaches, several of the available literatures focus on this approach (Beyard et al. 1998, 100-102, Mandel 1999, Hunter 1996, and related articles in Works Cited section). Therefore, this section examines public-private partnerships as an innovative planning approach. The analyses of public-private partnerships yield specific impacts, which do not allow for comparisons with the impacts from the two case studies if the case studies do not involve public-private partnerships. If the case studies use other planning approaches, then these approaches exemplify that entertainment centres encourage planners to recommend innovative planning approaches.

#### **5.2.4.1      *Planning Policies***

Entertainment centres often have diverse tenant mixes to differentiate themselves and to increase their appeal. The Riverport Sports and Entertainment

Complex in Richmond has a bowling alley, an aquatic centre, ice-rinks, theatres, and restaurants (Riverport Sports 2001). The mixed-uses contradict the compartmentalized principle of zoning. The contradictions often require developers to negotiate with planners and residents to define new zoning or seek zoning variances (Baker 1997, 67). The negotiations become more complex when entertainment centres occupy abandoned sites or heritage buildings (Phillips 1995). These locations often have antiquated zoning and building codes that do not accommodate the physical characteristics of entertainment centres; therefore, these locations usually require extensive negotiations.

Rezoning occurs regardless of the locations of the centres ("Famous Players" 1998). For urban centres, they need to rezone for their mixed-use commercial activities. The Playdium Complex in Downtown Toronto needed to downgrade its zoning from "prestigious, high-density offices" to a lower-density one (Marotte 1997). For centres in suburban locations, they often need to rezone from industrial, agricultural, or natural uses to commercial uses. The SilverCity Theatre in Langley rezoned from natural land uses for its commercial activities (Eberts 1999b).

Redefining zoning is often beneficial for communities. Zoning changes require public meetings, and in these meetings, planners can interact with the residents to understand their concerns (Baker 1997, 75). Then, the planners can negotiate for the residents to ensure that the new zoning will address some of the community concerns. The public meetings provide opportunities for the communities to voice their concerns.

Redefining zoning provides planners opportunities to adjust existing zoning policies to accommodate not only entertainment centres, but also future uses (Beyard et al. 1998, 101). New retail and entertainment developments will likely evolve from existing centres, and they will need similar types of zoning. The redefining process also offers opportunities for planners to integrate innovative planning ideas such as sustainable development into the modified zoning (Baker 1997, 75). If the centres are successful, the redefined zoning can become a model for other types of developments.

#### **5.2.4.2      *Planning Approaches***

As large developments, entertainment centres are complex to manage and the impacts are extensive on the communities. The challenges to develop such large centres present opportunities for innovative planning approaches to improve the chances of success. One of the approaches is for developers and local governments to form public-private partnerships (Beyard et al. 1998, 100). In public-private partnerships, the developers and the governments assume roles reflecting their responsibilities (Mandel 1999). The developers are responsible for providing development expertises, while the governments are responsible for working with the communities. The partnerships combine the resources of the two parties to handle the scale and the impacts of the developments (Mandel 1999). Developers can depend on the local governments to provide public infrastructures. Local governments can depend on the developers to use their capitals and

expertises to develop successful centres. These types of dependencies are different from the ones in previous decades. In the 1970s and the 1980s, the partnerships were between developers and federal agencies (Beyard et al. 1998, 91). In the 1990s, many of the federal agencies were replaced by local governments. The descent from the federal to the local level has given local governments more power, but also more responsibilities.

The partnerships, however, do not exist for every development of entertainment centres. Geographically, public-private partnerships are more prevalent in the developments of American entertainment centres than Canadian entertainment centres (Thomas, Personal Interview, 2002).

#### *5.2.4.2.1 Impacts of Public-Private Partnerships for Local Governments*

Many local governments prefer to cooperate with private partners in revitalizing communities to reduce risks and costs. Developers can provide technical and financial help to alleviate the burdens on the governments (Hunter 1996). Large developers such as Disney have plentiful experiences and intellectual capitals to develop successful centres (Hunter 1996). They also have abundant amounts of capital to fund their centres to their full potentials. Moreover, depending on the arrangements, some governments can collect economic dividends from their shares of the developments (Hunter 1996). These benefits are so attractive for many governments that many governments offer incentives to attract private partners. Some of the incentives include tax abatements, low-interest loans, cash

contributions, access improvements, site enhancements, reliable utilities, and zoning variances (Gose 1999, Beyard et al. 1998, 20 & 90). While some of these incentives can expose the governments to financial risks, they encourage the governments to be more diligent and proactive in the partnerships (Hannigan 1998a, 51).

If the centres become notable beyond the local communities, the governments can use them as tourist attractions (Beyard et al. 1998, 91). For governments that have already invested in convention centres, live theatres, museums, sports facilities, and waterfronts, they can use the centres to complement and even invigorate these facilities (Beyard et al. 1998, 91-92). The centres become a strategic investment that can raise the profiles of the host communities.

Collaborating with developers is not always favourable for governments. The partnerships may predispose governments to revitalization projects that may not be the best uses of their resources (Hannigan 1998a, 193). The allure of the entertainment centres can distract the focus of the governments away from meeting the priorities of the communities. A government may better service the needs of a community with a social program rather than with an entertainment centre (Hannigan 1998a, 193). In addition, the partnerships may not give the local governments a fair share of negotiating power. Decades of subsidy cutbacks from higher levels of governments have forced local governments to seek private partners in revitalization projects (Hannigan 1998a, 193). The competitive demands for private partners allow developers to dominate in many public-private partnerships

(Hannigan 1998a, 8). The private partners have greater negotiating power to serve their interests.

#### *5.2.4.2.2 Impacts of Public-Private Partnerships for Developers*

For developers, collaborating with governments is often a favourable arrangement. Developers need the support of the local governments to improve infrastructures. The local governments have the expertises to improve access and public spaces that complement the designs of the centres. These improvements can improve the visitors' experiences of the centres. In addition, when local governments contribute any forms of financial assistance, they imply their faith in the centres, helping the developers in selling or leasing the units in the centres (Gose 1999).

While public-private partnerships can be beneficial for developers, they impose some political responsibilities on the developers. Partnering with local governments exposes the projects to public scrutiny; the projects usually have to meet the public standards of accountability (Beyard et al. 1998, 93). They also often need to achieve community support by interacting with the communities to identify community concerns, assess means of addressing concerns, and provide credible analyses and alternatives (Beyard et al. 1998, 93).

#### 5.2.4.2.3 *Impacts of Public-Private Partnerships for Communities*

Public-private partnerships are often beneficial to the communities. After all, the primary purpose of the partnerships is to improve the communities by pooling expertises and commitments from the two parties. The commitments are as important as the investment in helping communities. The formations of the partnerships demonstrate to the residents that the developers and the governments are committed in improving their communities. In Penn's Landing Project in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the representatives from the developer, government, and community participated in an extensive series of meetings to identify potential community enhancements (Mandel 1999). The results of these meetings led to doubling the scale of public amenities over existing waterfront amenities.

The partnerships may encounter problems that can affect communities. Since the partnerships are composed of two participants with different values, disagreements sometimes occur. While both parties in a partnership may share a growth-oriented goal for the communities, they may have different approaches for it. Developers tend to focus on maximizing the profitability of the centres first, and then use the success of the centres to attract investment to the communities (Hannigan 1998a, 129). On the other hand, local governments tend to focus on using the centres directly to create jobs, to attract tourists, and to improve the community profiles. The disagreements can sometimes hinder and even halt the progress of the projects. Disruptions are costly for the two participants as well as for the communities. In Montgomery County in Maryland, the county officials pulled



the plug on the proposed American Dream Mall after a considerable amount of resources has been spent on planning it, mostly due to conflicting expectations (Hannigan 1998a, 130).

#### *5.2.4.2.4 Impacts of Public-Private Partnerships for Planners*

Public-private partnerships provide planners the rare opportunities to have governments and developers collaborate on large developments. The complexities of having partnerships working on large developments encourage planners to form committees within the partnerships. After the developments are completed, some of the committees become business improvement associations to manage operations and to plan for future directions (Beyard et al. 1998, 20). Some of these associations have the right to tax the merchants in order to provide expanded services such as street cleaning and security patrols (Hannigan 1998a, 139). They help build the community by empowering the merchants to work together towards a healthy retail environment. The business improvement association in New York's Time Square closed the majority of the sex-related businesses, used its powers of condemnation to assemble properties, improved infrastructures, and provided public subsidies for major projects (Beyard et al. 1998, 162).

### **5.3 Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres**

Entertainment centres have a mix of positive and negative community impacts. To rate the impacts as positive or negative, I adopted the general perspective of a host community. The adoption of the general community perspective helps me to better achieve part of the goal of this thesis: to evaluate the impacts of entertainment centres on the host community. I did not use the perspectives of specific residents or groups within the community because each resident or group has different perspectives in evaluating the impacts. Their perspectives would be influenced by different factors such as their demographics and their relative locations to the centre. For example, residents living next to a centre may rate certain impacts differently than residents living several kilometres away from the centre.

Table 5.2 summarizes the impacts discussed within the four categories of impacts: economic, social, environmental, and political and planning. Positive impacts are denoted by a ✓, negative impacts are identified by an ✖, and impacts that can either be positive or negative are indicated by a ✓/✖. The rating system is simply a method to further organize the impacts for interpretation and summary. The impacts related to public-private partnerships are italicized to indicate that these impacts are specific for this planning approach. These impacts are not applicable for entertainment centres that do not have public-private partnerships.

The processes of developing this table and its structure serve as a model for the following chapter. The template of potential impacts will be applied to the two case studies to analyze their impacts on their host communities.

### **Table 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres**

**Source:** Sources Used in this Chapter.

#### **Legend**

✓ Positive Impacts | ✗ Negative Impacts | ✓/✗ Positive or Negative Impacts

#### **Economic Impacts:**

##### **Downtown Revitalization**

- ✓ Become a catalyst in downtown revitalizations
- ✓ Generate additional revitalization projects

##### **Tourism**

- ✓ Attract visitors from great distances
- ✓ Strengthen the tourism industry

##### **Employment**

- ✓ Create jobs during their planning, constructions, and operations
- ✓ Create jobs in supporting services
- ✓ Create entry-level jobs for workers new to the labour market and train them to improve the workers' human capital
- ✗ Create mostly entry-level jobs with low wages and few advancement opportunities

##### **Investment and Money Movement**

- ✓ Bring money to the communities in their developments and operations
- ✓ Increase the amount of self-reinvestment to compete with others, bringing more money to the communities
- ✗ Invest mostly in themselves, leaving little benefit to the communities

##### **Taxation**

- ✓ Improve the tax bases for the local municipal governments

### **Competition and Closure**

- \* Induce other developers to develop entertainment centres, increasing competition and potentially over-saturating the markets
- \* Are susceptible to economic downturns and cyclical spending patterns
- \* Stop and reverse some of their positive impacts when they close
- \* Abandon physical structures that are difficult to convert to other uses

### **Social Impacts:**

#### **Heritage and Character**

- ✓ Have incentives to incorporate elements of local heritage and character
- ✓ Often reuse heritage buildings and integrate local uses
- \* Protect only the physical component of heritage and character
- \* Romanticize local culture, celebrating an idealized version of the communities

#### **Gentrification and Displacement**

- ✓ Improve the urban image and urban living environment
- \* Displace existing residents in urban communities
- ✓/\* Gentrify communities
- ✓/\* Displace existing land uses in suburban and rural communities

#### **Demographic Segregation**

- ✓ Incorporate other local uses such as public institutions to diversify their appeal
- \* Inconvenience seniors, people with disabilities, and people sensitive to sensory stimulations
- ✓/\* Appeal to specific demographic: middle- and higher-class families

#### **Crime**

- ✓ Reduce crime by attracting crowds and revitalizing communities
- ✓ Employ patrols to monitor onsite activities
- \* Make people believe that they worsen crime due to their appeal to youth and long operating hours

#### **Public and Private Spaces**

- \* Distort the relationships between public and private spaces when public and private spaces imitate each other

#### **Competition with Public Institutions**

- \* Compete with public institutions for people's leisure time
- \* Compel some public institutions to compromise their educational role

## **Environmental Impacts:**

### **Traffic and Parking**

- ✓ Generate demands for public transportation in urban communities
- \* Increase traffic and parking volumes for both urban and suburban communities
- \* Extend traffic and parking volumes into evenings and weekends for urban and suburban communities

### **Air and Noise Pollution**

- \* Indirectly produce air and noise pollution by increasing automobile uses

## **Political and Planning Impacts:**

### **Planning Policies**

- ✓ Challenge existing zoning and require new zoning or zoning variances
- ✓ Provide opportunities for planners and residents to interact
- ✓ Provide opportunities for planners to plan for future uses and to integrate innovative planning ideas

### **Planning Approaches**

- ✓ Encourage new planning approaches such as public-private partnerships

#### ***(For Public-Private Partnerships)***

- ✓ *Allow the two parties to combine resources and expertises*
- ✓ *Impose public standards of accountability on the developers*
- ✓ *Formalize investment and commitments of the two parties*
- ✓ *Encourage the creations and uses of innovative planning approaches such as business improvement associations*
- \* *Distract the governments from other programs that may be more beneficial for the communities*
- \* *Potentially weaken the negotiating power of the governments in the partnerships*
- \* *Lead to costly project delays or terminations when disagreements occur*

## **Chapter Six: Case Studies: Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex and International Village Shopping Centre**

The entertainment centre industry in Greater Vancouver is not as mature as in the US and Eastern Canada. Entertainment centres first appeared in the US, and then spread to Canada, usually to Eastern Canadian cities before migrating to Western Canadian cities. The first examples of entertainment centres appeared in the US in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Mander, no date). Then, the spread of entertainment centres migrated to Eastern Canada in the mid-1990s, and eventually reached Greater Vancouver in December 1997 with the opening of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex (Edwards 1998). This migration pattern allows retail professionals, planners, and decision makers in Greater Vancouver to learn from the experiences of the developed entertainment centres in the US and Eastern Canada.

After the opening of the first entertainment centre in Greater Vancouver, more entertainment centres continued to arrive in the region, including SilverCity Theatres in Coquitlam and Langley, and International Village Shopping Centre in Downtown Vancouver. Eaton Centre Metrotown in Burnaby added an entertainment component to its shopping centre in November 1998 (Nutt 1997).

Two entertainment centres in Greater Vancouver were selected as case studies for the thesis: International Village Shopping Centre (International Village

Centre)<sup>8</sup> and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex (Riverport Complex). They were chosen primarily for their location difference to explore the range of potential impacts on their host communities. International Village Centre is the urban example. It is surrounded by several urban communities: Gastown, Downtown Eastside, Strathcona, Chinatown, and Downtown South (Figure 6.1). Riverport Complex is the suburban example. It is surrounded by mostly Agricultural Land Reserves and some industrial sites (Figure 6.2). The northwest corner of the Riverport Complex faces a residential area.

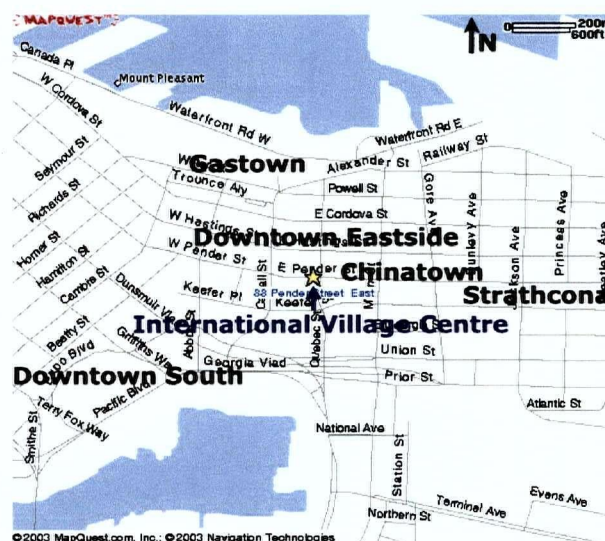


Figure 6.1: Community Map of International Village Centre  
(Source: myTELUS MapQuest 2003)

<sup>8</sup> Because the name of the centre and the name of the development are the same, International Village Centre refers to International Village Shopping Centre and International Village development refers to the overall development of International Village.

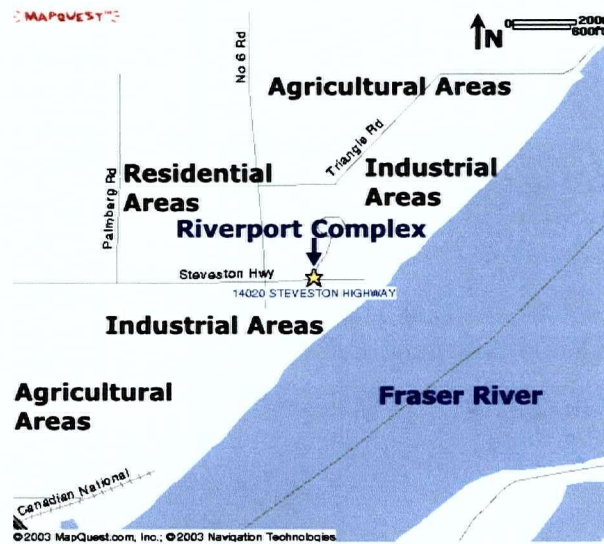


Figure 6.2: Community Map of Riverport Complex  
(Source: myTELUS MapQuest 2003)

The impacts of each case study on its host community will be analyzed by using the template of potential impacts, developed in the previous chapter. The analysis of each case study will be compared with the impacts listed in Table 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres to flesh out the impacts identified from the literature. The impacts of each case study will also be compared with each other to explore how the location difference affects some of the community impacts of entertainment centres.

Other entertainment centres in Greater Vancouver were not chosen because of their history or their undefined boundaries. Metropolis at Metrotown was not selected because of the addition of "Entertainment Zone" to its shopping centre in November 1998 (Nutt 1997). The expansion of this entertainment component can add the impacts of the new entertainment component to the impacts of the existing retail component. Entertainment districts such as Robson Street and Granville Mall have undefined boundaries, which complicate the identifications of the extent of the



impacts. The trade-off for not using a case study with undefined boundaries is losing the analysis of the "public and private spaces." Therefore, the analysis of "public and private spaces" will be omitted for the two case studies.

## **6.1 International Village Shopping Centre**

### **6.1.1 Introduction**

Opened in late 1999, International Village Shopping Centre is the second phase of a six-phase International Village development by Henderson Development (Canada) Ltd., ("Here Comes" 1994). The overall development is a four-block area of mixed-uses at the east end of False Creek, and the entertainment and shopping centre is bound by Abbott Street in the west, East Pender Street in the north, Taylor Street in the east, and Keefer Street in the south (Figure 6.1) (Lai 1997, D1).

International Village Centre consists of two stories of underground parking, three stories of commercial uses, two-story townhouses, and a 23-story residential tower (Figure 6.3) (City of Vancouver 1999c). For the commercial uses, a marketing brochure of the centre envisions a food market on the first floor, an international fashion boulevard on the second floor, and a theatre on the third floor (O'Connor 2001, 1) (Appendix A lists the tenants in International Village Shopping Centre). The brochure bills the food market as a combination of the excitement of San Francisco, Paris, Hong Kong, and Florence, and the fashion boulevard as a "stunning collage of international styles and designs" (O'Connor 2001, 1). The theatre is the primary entertainment anchor in the centre, while an entertainment centre on the

second floor and a small entertainment area inside the theatre lobby are the secondary anchors (Figure 6.4) (City of Vancouver 1999a). The 12-screen Cinemark Tinseltown Theatre has 2,200 stadium-style seats, promising unobstructed views for every seat (Lai 1997, D1). The entertainment centre on the second floor, Xtreme Sports Systems, offers interactive games, providing the participants “extreme experiences” in sports and other activities (City of Vancouver 1999a). The dominance of the entertainment anchors and the inclusion of the other two anchors, retail and dining, categorize International Village Centre as an entertainment centre.



Figure 6.3: Components of International Village Centre with Commercial Uses in the Centre and a Residential Tower and Townhouses on the Right  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)



Figure 6.4: Exterior of the Tinseltown Cinema, the Primary Entertainment Anchor in International Village Centre  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

### **6.1.2 Impacts of International Village Shopping Centre**

The impacts of International Village Centre on the surrounding communities are analyzed using information from interviews, literature, council reports, and census data. An interview with a staff from City of Vancouver and an interview with a staff from Henderson Development were conducted to reveal their perspectives of the impacts.<sup>9</sup> The planner from the City (Vancouver Planner) represents the perspectives of the communities and the planners, and the staff from the developer (Developer) represents the perspectives of the developer. Downtown Eastside Residents' Association and Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association

were contacted by telephone for interviews. Both associations declined my interview requests. Therefore, the community perspectives would have to be derived from the interview of the planner, literature, and council reports. An additional source of information is the 1996 census data. The census data provide useful background information on the host community. The analysis of the census data for International Village Centre is in Appendix B.1: Community Background of International Village Centre.

The impact analysis in this section follows the structure in Chapter 5. The template is applied to evaluate its effectiveness for this first case study. Accordingly, the analysis focuses on the economic, social, environmental, and political and planning impacts of International Village Centre. These impacts are summarized into an impact summary table, Table 6.5. Then, this table is compared with Table 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres.

#### **6.1.2.1      *Economic Impacts***

When asked to list the economic impacts of International Village Centre on the host community, the interviewees offered the following lists (Table 6.1). The italicized text in brackets labels the impacts into different categories of impacts. The labels are helpful in categorizing and generalizing their responses. Some of the

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<sup>9</sup> The respondents requested for anonymity.

impacts have more than one label and some do not have any because of their different viewpoints.

The planner focused on how International Village Centre relates to Chinatown and how it can entice new businesses to move into the area (Vancouver Planner). The developer offered four different economic benefits: employment, downtown revitalization, taxation, and tourism (Developer). Both interviewees agreed that International Village Centre is too sparsely occupied to generate impacts to their potentials (Vancouver Planner and Developer).

**Table 6.1: Viewpoints of Economic Impacts of International Village Shopping Centre**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the developer.

**Planner:**

- International Village Centre does not have a great impact on Old Chinatown yet.
- It increases the comfort levels of investors (e.g., new businesses have established near there: Lotus Hotel and Wild Rice Restaurant). (*Investment and Money Movement*)
- It can be a destination to serve tourists visiting Chinatown and Gastown. (*Tourism*)
- It offers new commercial spaces; therefore, it encourages new businesses to move into the area. (*Investment and Money Movement*)

**Developer:**

- It generates local retail and service jobs, but the centre has not been filled up yet, so the impact is diminished. (*Employment*)
- It potentially brings a lot more people into the area. (*Downtown Revitalization*)
- It increases land values, and therefore, the tax bases. (*Taxation*)
- It has an impact on tourism. (*Tourism*)

**6.1.2.1.1 Downtown Revitalization**

Bringing 300,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of commercial and 160,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of residential spaces to the region, International Village Centre has the potential to "revitalize the

neighbourhood and provide a commercial anchor for Chinatown" (Lai 1997, D1). As a large investment, the centre represents the developer's belief of the positive economic future in the region; such belief would attract other investments such as additional residential and commercial developments (City of Vancouver 1990).

The planner, the developer, and a local business association shared the expectation that International Village Centre can revitalize the area. The planner based her expectation on the capability of deep-pocketed developers such as Henderson Development to take greater risks in developing in decaying areas (Vancouver Planner). She stated that this expectation was an important basis for the Vancouver City Council to support the development (Vancouver Planner). The planner cautioned that the scale of the development imposes a large expectation on the centre to revitalize the region (Vancouver Planner). The planner advised that in order for the development to meet this expectation, the developer could need to ensure that the expectation remains realistic (Vancouver Planner).

The developer believed the centre is an economic catalyst, which attracts activities to the region, especially to areas west of Carrall and Cordova (Developer). Nevertheless, he stressed that the current level of activities in the centre was not at its maximum because the overall International Village development was not completed yet (Developer). Without witnessing the activities to achieve their potentials, the developer could not determine the size of the potential impacts (Developer). He compared the current state of the development to the early stages of Yaletown renewal programs (Developer).

From the literature review, the Vice President of the Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association, Derek Cheng, regarded International Village Centre as "a saviour" to Chinatown merchants ("Here Comes" 1994). The merchants, many of whom were affected by competition from suburban Asian malls, believed that the centre would attract shoppers back to the region. Cheng was not concerned about the competition coming from the centre because he believed "business begets business" ("Here Comes" 1994).

The interviewees and the business association shared the sentiment that the current conditions of the centre have been attracting few people and little activities to the region; thus, the centre is not very effective in helping to revitalize the region. For the centre to begin generating significant revitalization impacts, it needs to wait for the economic and social conditions of the region to improve. The question is "not so much if International Village Centre will revitalize the region, but how soon" ("Here Comes" 1994).

#### *6.1.2.1.2 Tourism*

Due to the numerous vacancies in the centre, International Village Centre currently has a negligible impact on tourism. Nevertheless, the planner believed that the centre has the potential to generate a notable impact; the centre can become a destination for tourists visiting Chinatown and Gastown (Vancouver Planner). She added that the developer had been trying to make the centre a tourist destination by collaborating with local communities to promote the region

(Vancouver Planner). However, the centre cannot depend on tourism alone because the tourist season for Vancouver is generally limited to three or four summer months of the year (Vancouver Planner). The centre needs traffic from both tourists and residents.

The developer echoed the opinion that the centre currently has a small tourism impact, but it has the potential to generate a more notable impact. He observed that visitors just recently realized that there is a theatre in the centre and that the theatre is one of the best in downtown (Developer). Even fewer people are aware that the centre is great for those who do not want to drive around to have a leisurely meal, to see a good movie, and to shop (Developer). As the awareness increases, more people, including tourists, will visit the centre (Developer).

#### *6.1.2.1.3 Employment*

Both planners and developers stated that the centre has a small employment impact because of the numerous vacancies in the centre. The developer added that when the centre is filled up, it will "generate local retail and service jobs" (Developer). By then, the 150+ tenants will create enough jobs to generate a large employment impact (O'Connor 2001, 1).



#### 6.1.2.1.4 *Investment and Money Movement*

International Village Centre helps to attract investment to the region in two ways. First, it represents an investment to the area, providing new commercial spaces for businesses (Vancouver Planner and Developer). Second, it acts as a lead investment in the region, encouraging new businesses to move to the area and existing businesses to self-reinvest (Vancouver Planner). Across from the centre, Wild Rice Restaurant has recently opened and the Lotus Hotel has recently renovated its pub (Vancouver Planner) (Figure 6.5). These businesses are hoping the centre would draw visitors to the region, providing spillover traffic to them.



Figure 6.5: Recently Renovated Lotus Hotel across from International Village Centre  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

Due to the lack of impact studies on International Village Centre, the planner was uncertain about the impact of money flow (Vancouver Planner). She speculated that the centre generates money inflows (Vancouver Planner). The developer was also uncertain, reiterating that the vacancies in the centre were generating imperceptible impacts (Developer). He believed that when the centre becomes full, it would work together with BC Place and GM Place to generate money inflows (Developer).

#### *6.1.2.1.5 Taxation*

International Village Centre sits on an abandoned industrial land. By turning unused land into a commercial and residential property, the centre increases the land values and the tax bases of its own and surrounding properties (Developer). The centre "is bringing hundreds of times more tax revenues to the City than the amount the City would get from the abandoned industrial land" (Developer).

#### *6.1.2.1.6 Competition and Closure*

International Village Centre is competing with other entertainment districts and shopping malls in Downtown Vancouver. Some of its competitors include Granville Mall and Pacific Centre (City of Vancouver 1999a). The competition will likely intensify with the expected opening of Paramount Place, an entertainment centre at 900 Burrard Street, in 2004 (Griffin 2003, D5).

The planner assessed the retail component of International Village Centre is not currently competitive, and recommended this component find a niche to improve its competitiveness (Vancouver Planner). The developer offered a similar assessment, stating that "the mall is not competitive right now" (Developer). Both respondents agreed that the only competitive component in the centre is the theatre. Its better competitive position is due to its cheaper admission, stadium seating, and free parking (Vancouver Planner and Developer). Terrell Falk, a representative of the theatre, boasted that the theatre has outgrown others in the area (O'Connor 2001, 4).

Reasons to explain the poor retail performances can fall into one of the three factors: the location, the timing, and the demographic targeting of the centre. The location of International Village Centre discourages people from visiting the centre, especially at night. It is "located in an area where people are more likely to go to buy heroin than haute couture" (O'Connor 2001, 5). The developer thought that the main deterrent for visiting the centre is people's perception of, rather than the reality, of the location (Developer). He questioned how real the perception is to the actual crime rate (Developer). To dispel the perception, his company is collaborating with Chinatown and the City on programs to improve the image and safety of the region (Developer).

The timing of the centre makes the centre a pioneer development in the region. As a pioneer development, the centre has to depend on itself to draw visitors. However, the current number of opened stores is too low to draw enough

traffic on their own (Vancouver Planner). The centre needs to wait for more stores to open and surrounding revitalization projects to proceed in order to generate enough drawing power (O'Connor 2001, 4). The waiting is too long for some of the stores, and they had to close (Figure 6.6).



Figure 6.6: Empty and Abandoned Stores inside International Village Centre  
(Source: Author, Taken February 2002)

The demographic targeting of the centre differs from the dominant demographic of the region. From the 1996 census data, 57% of households in the region have less than \$20,000 annual household income, an income range lower than the income targets of many upscale stores in the centre (Appendix B.1.1). These upscale stores are ignoring the captive market of many nearby residents; instead, they are pursuing wealthier customers, many of whom live beyond the stores' immediate trade areas (O'Connor 2001, 4). So far, many of these pursuits were unsuccessful.

Only the theatre has been successful in pursuing movie viewers, but the traffic from movie viewers has little spillover benefits for many upscale stores. When movie viewers visit the centre to watch movies, not many of them would shop

for upscale merchandises, even if some of the viewers were within the target demographic of the stores (O'Connor 2001, 4).

The present poor performances of many stores in the centre weaken the competitiveness of the centre. Ever since its opening, the centre has a history of hardships. Many of the promised anchor tenants, a microbrewery and brand-name boutiques, never appeared (O'Connor 2001, 1). Only 34 tenants have ever occupied the centre (O'Connor 2001, 5). 11 tenants have left the centre in late 2001, and some of them have sued Henderson Development (O'Connor 2001, 5).

When asked to speculate on the impacts of a hypothetical closure of the centre, the planner replied that the impacts would be "bad" (Vancouver Planner). She added that the City is constantly working with Henderson Development to ensure that the centre is viable (Vancouver Planner). The City is also running programs to make Chinatown more appealing to residents, tourists, and youth in order to attract them to the area (Vancouver Planner). One of the programs was hosting visioning workshops in the late 2001 and early 2002 with residents to understand their concerns and needs (Vancouver Planner).

The developer declined to speculate on the impacts of the closure, saying that the impacts would be "hard to tell" (Developer). He assured that his company is trying many strategies to improve the viability of the centre (Developer). Strategies to attract visitors include offering free parking validation, extended hours of operation, 24-hour security, co-operative advertising, and community event planning (O'Connor 2001, 5).

#### 6.1.2.2 Social Impacts

Table 6.2 lists the social impacts offered by the planner and the developer. From the table, both interviewees mentioned the social impacts of gentrification, heritage, and character (Vancouver Planner and Developer). Only the developer mentioned crime (Developer).

#### **Table 6.2: Viewpoints of Social Impacts of International Village Shopping Centre**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the developer.

##### **Planner:**

- International Village Centre creates a fear of the potential gentrification in the area. (*Gentrification and Displacement*)
- It can form partnerships with Chinatown, becoming part of the new visions for Chinatown. (*Heritage and Character*)

##### **Developer:**

- It "cleans up" the area because the site was an abandoned land and a grey zone. (*Heritage and Character*)
- It is a secured place for visitors because of its tight security. (*Crime*)
- The residential component of the centre attracts residents with demographics different from the ones of the current residents. (*Gentrification and Displacement*)

#### 6.1.2.2.1 Heritage and Character

The interviews, the literature, and the census data provide reasons to indicate that International Village Centre has positive impacts on the heritage and the character of the region. First, the development sits on a "no man's land," so it does not displace anything with heritage value (Developer). Instead, it creates a heritage for the future (Developer). Second, the development received approval from Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee in 1995; the approval shows that



the centre meets the committee's objectives to preserve and enhance the heritage of Chinatown (City of Vancouver 1995b). In addition, the development had to follow the *International Village By-Law* drafted by the City to ensure that the centre "achieve[s] a built-form that is complementary to the form of adjacent areas" (City of Vancouver 2003b). To abide by this by-law, the developer designed a centre that reflects the heritage and character of Chinatown (Developer). Lastly, the analysis of 1996 census data suggests that the residential component of the centre complements the apartment style of many nearby residential developments constructed between 1981 and 1996 (Appendix B.1.4).

The centre also contributes to the character of community by hosting cultural events such as the Chinese New Year Festival and Chinese Film Festival (Figure 6.7) (Vancouver Planner and O'Connor 2001, 4). These events not only celebrate the Chinese culture, but also connect the centre to Chinatown, energizing both places with visitors and activities (Vancouver Planner).



Figure 6.7: 2002 Chinese New Year Festival in International Village Centre  
(Source: Author, Taken February 2003)

#### 6.1.2.2.2 *Gentrification and Displacement*

Some residents fear the gentrification impacts generated by the centre (Vancouver Planner). According to a related report by city planners, gentrification will bring additional residential and commercial developments to the surrounding sites of the centre (Lai 1997, D1). Currently, some of the sites have hotels and apartments that provide affordable housing. If some of the affordable housing was replaced due to gentrification, some of the existing residents would have to relocate. How many of them would be displaced, and where could they go?

The answer to the first question can be determined by the size of the displacement impacts generated by the centre. In the interview, the planner suggested that the impacts would be small because the centre sits on an abandoned land, so there is no resident living on the site for displacement (Vancouver Planner). Instead, the centre is adding more residents to the community (Vancouver Planner). The arrival of new residents provides the region "a good balance of existing and new residents" (Developer).

The answer to the second question can be determined by the size of the displacement impacts experienced by the residents. If the displaced residents have access to alternative affordable housing in the community, then the magnitude of the impacts experienced by the resident would be reduced by the availability of alternative affordable housing. Alternative housing sources include the International Village development, which provides a minimum of 140 units of "non-market housing," as required by the City in the *International Village By-Law* (City of



Vancouver 2003b). Additional sources, recently constructed by community groups and the provincial government, are available near the centre (O'Connor 2001, 1).

The availability of affordable housing alternatives would allow some of the displaced residents to stay within the community.

#### *6.1.2.2.3 Demographic Segregation*

As mentioned earlier in 6.1.2.1.6: Competition and Closure Impacts, many upscale stores in International Village Centre target customers with incomes higher than the incomes of many existing residents. The upscale stores are selling products that are too expensive for the majority of residents. Because upscale stores dominate the centre, the centre has a notable segregation impact on many residents.

The planner noted that the segregation impact is diminishing due to demographic changes in the surrounding communities (Vancouver Planner). Communities, such as Strathcona, are gentrifying as young, wealthy people find "funkiness" living there (Vancouver Planner). Having household incomes that better match the target incomes of the stores, many of these new residents would feel the upscale stores, and the centre as a whole, welcoming to them. Gentrification of the surrounding communities helps to reduce the segregation impact of the centre.

#### 6.1.2.2.4 *Crime*

Currently, International Village Centre has little impact on crime. After the opening of the centre in 1999, crime and drug problems in the area declined for a while, but later returned (Vancouver Planner). Their initial decline was due to the expectation that the centre would bring visitors to the area, offering subconscious surveillance from the crowds (Vancouver Planner). Their return was due to the failure of the expectation to become a reality. For example, when the centre opened, many residents expected the storefronts along West Pender and Abbott Streets would draw crowds to these streets, and the crowds would indirectly patrol the area. This expectation was temporarily met as the opening of the centre attracted some visitors, deterring some criminal activities. However, the expectation never became a reality as many storefronts stayed empty, failing to draw crowds and their surveillance protection (Figure 6.8). The lack of the protection allowed some criminal activities to return and discouraged pedestrians from using these streets (Vancouver Planner).



Figure 6.8: Empty Storefronts along West Pender of International Village Centre  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

For crime inside the centre, the developer mentioned that there had been incidents of drug consumption in the washrooms and car break-ins in the parkade (Developer). To ensure incidents like these do not happen again, Henderson Development employs security officers to patrol the centre (Developer). The security service was criticized by some residents for being too vigilant (O'Connor 2001, 5). In late 2001, demonstrators picketed the centre, accusing the security for harassing street people. Henderson Development responded to the picketing with a press release stating that "anyone exhibiting objectionable behaviour will be asked to leave, as in any mall" (O'Connor 2001, 5).

In the long run, both interviewees commented that the Centre needs to work with the communities and the City to make the region a safer place (Developer and Vancouver Planner). The developer believed that governmental programs, along with the future revitalization impacts from the centre, would reduce crime (Developer).

#### 6.1.2.2.5 *Competition with Public Institutions*

The planner and the developer responded that the centre does not compete with public institutions (Vancouver Planner and Developer). If there were any impacts, then most of them would be from the theatre, which competes for the visitors' time and money (Vancouver Planner). The interviewees suggested that the centre actually collaborates, rather than competes, with institutions by hosting community festivals, concerts, and cultural events (Vancouver Planner and Developer).

#### 6.1.2.3 *Environmental Impacts*

Table 6.3 lists the environmental impacts provided by the planner and the developer. Both interviewees believed that the centre does not have any environmental impacts because of the emptiness in the centre, the urban setting of the site, and the positive results of the environmental analysis (Vancouver Planner and Developer).

#### **Table 6.3: Viewpoints of Environmental Impacts of International Village Shopping Centre**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the developer.

##### **Planner:**

- International Village Centre does not have any impact because it has not reached full capacity yet.

##### **Developer:**

- It does not have any impact because the site is hardly nature and the development has passed the environmental analysis.

#### 6.1.2.3.1 *Traffic and Parking*

In planning for the development of International Village Centre, city planners predicted that the commercial component of the centre would impose "traffic and parking on surrounding neighbourhoods" (City of Vancouver 1999b). On the other hand, they predicted that the residential component of the centre would impose little traffic and parking because it would provide "opportunities for high-density living close to transit, recreation, and work places in downtown" (City of Vancouver 1995b). The contrasting impacts from the two components lead to planning policies with dual principles. To manage the impacts from the commercial component, the *International Village By-Law* requires the development to "provide adequate on-site parking and loading spaces for all developments within International Village [Centre]" (City of Vancouver 2003b). To constrain the impacts from the residential component, the *By-Law* requires the development to follow a deliberate tough parking standard to "promote an affordable community that would not be car-oriented" (City of Vancouver 1995a). Bounded by these different requirements, the development has to balance the number of parking spaces. If there were not enough parking, visitors would have to park on streets, subjecting "to risks of personal and vehicular safety" (City of Vancouver 1995a). However, if there were too much parking, the extra spaces would become a source of parking for residents and commuters, contradicting the principle of promoting alternative transportation.

When the centre opened, the prediction of the impacts was partially correct. The weaker commercial component and the stronger residential component

generated impacts that were smaller than expected. According to the developer, the impacts were low because the centre "was still pretty empty" and had "more than enough underground parking" (Developer). The planner offered similar explanations, and then added that most of the current traffic impacts were from traffic entering and leaving the parking rather than traffic around the centre (Vancouver Planner).

#### **6.1.2.3.2     *Air and Noise Pollution***

Both interviewees believed that the centre does not generate any air or noise pollution (Vancouver Planner and Developer). The planner explained that the lack of industrial activities in the area means that most of the air and noise pollution in the area, if any, would come from the automobile traffic (Vancouver Planner). Because the traffic generated by the centre is usually low, the amount of vehicular pollutants and noises emitted would also be low. The developer added that noises from the visitors are also small because of the relatively few visitors, the security enforcing noise limits, and the physical separation between commercial and residential components (Developer).

#### **6.1.2.4     *Political and Planning Impacts***

Table 6.4 outlines the planner's and the developer's perspectives on the political and planning impacts of International Village Centre. Both began their responses by referring to zoning changes and public consultations (Vancouver

Planner and Developer). Then, they discussed community changes from their perspectives. The planner focused on the changes in planning practices to recognize the residents in the International Village development as a new community group (Vancouver Planner). The developer focused on the potential changes the centre can bring to the community (Developer).

**Table 6.4: Viewpoints of Political and Planning Impacts of International Village Shopping Centre**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the developer.

**Planner:**

- International Village Centre required zoning change to Comprehensive Development 1 Zoning (CD-1), permitting debates during the rezoning processes. (*Planning Policies*)
- Residents living in the development represent a new community group, and planners need to acknowledge its presence in their policies and procedures.

**Developer:**

- The overall development is rezoned through public participation and public hearings; it obtained support from different levels of participants and stakeholders. (*Planning Policies*)
- The centre is a pioneer in the community: its concept is very bold. However, nothing much has happened yet.

**6.1.2.4.1 Planning Policies**

The International Village development required rezoning from BCPED and DD to CD-1 (265) (Vancouver Planner).<sup>10</sup> The difference between the former and the new zonings is that CD-1 is "tailor-made to the intended form of development" (City of Vancouver 2003b). The development had to comply with the by-laws outlined in the *International Village CD-1 (265) By-Law (No. 6747)* (City of Vancouver 2003b). According to Larry Beasley, a Senior Planner of Vancouver, the objective of the CD-1

Zoning is to develop "a mixed, diverse neighbourhood where people live near one another" ("Here Comes" 1994).

Rezoning to CD-1 had occurred in other mixed-use projects such as Concord Pacific (Developer). Similar to these projects, the International Village development received higher residential and commercial densities than the permissible densities in other downtown zonings (Developer). The International Village development deviated from other projects with its inclusion of "entertainment centre" as one of the permissible uses (City of Vancouver 2003b). This zoning accommodates and regulates a proposed interactive retail on the second story (564 m<sup>2</sup>) and an entertainment area (88 m<sup>2</sup>) inside the theatre lobby (City of Vancouver 1999a). These entertainment uses are governed by the "Entertainment Centre" license by-laws, rather than the existing "Arcade" guidelines, because they emphasize "extreme experiences" in simulated games (City of Vancouver 1999a). (Appendix C contains the "Arcade" guidelines, "Family Sports and Entertainment Centre" definitions and by-laws, and "Entertainment Centre" definitions and by-laws.)

The "Entertainment Centre" license by-laws were modelled after the "Family Sports and Entertainment Centre" license by-laws (Appendix C.2). The "Family Sports and Entertainment Centre" license by-laws were introduced in June 1996, when the city council approved The Score! Sports Centre at Plaza of Nations on a trial basis (City of Vancouver 1999a). At the end of its trial, planners evaluated its impacts and found that "there [were] no identifiable negative impacts" (City of

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<sup>10</sup> BCPED is Comprehensive Development District (False Creek – North Side), DD is



Vancouver 1999a). In addition, they recommended that future proposals of family sports and entertainment centres "should be considered through privately-submitted applications to rezone CD-1 or amend existing CD-1s, rather than be permitted in standard zoning districts" (City of Vancouver 1999a).

The positive evaluation of The Score! Sports Centre convinced the planners to believe that entertainment centres "could successfully occur on a limited basis elsewhere in the city" (City of Vancouver 1999b). When the planners evaluated the proposed entertainment uses in International Village Centre, they supported these uses because they would "enhance the success of [the] shopping complex and thus assist the revitalization" of surrounding areas (City of Vancouver 1999a). They recommended the council approve the proposal to add "entertainment centre" into the CD-1 Zoning (City of Vancouver 2003b). The council followed the recommendation and approved the proposal on December 16, 1999. The approval also enacted "Entertainment Centre" license by-laws, which were similar to "Family Sports and Entertainment Centre" license by-laws (Appendices C.2 and C.3). International Village Centre became the first development in Vancouver to have the "Entertainment Centre" license by-laws in its zoning.

#### **6.1.2.4.2     *Planning Approaches***

The planning approach of International Village Centre was similar to the planning approaches of other comprehensive mixed-use developments in Vancouver (Vancouver Planner and Developer). The main difference was the use of CD-1 amendment to evaluate the proposed entertainment uses. This approach complied with the recommendations that entertainment centres should be evaluated through CD-1 rezoning or CD-1 amendments (City of Vancouver 1999a). CD-1 rezoning and CD-1 amendments appear to be preferable planning approaches for planners and the host community because these approaches require the developers "to provide traffic, parking, and social impact assessments and to liaise with residents" (City of Vancouver 1999b). These approaches provide opportunities for discretionary evaluations and public meetings.

#### **6.1.3            Conclusion**

International Village Shopping Centre has the potential to become an exciting shopping and entertainment complex in Downtown Vancouver. However, various factors, such as poor economic environment and the public's perceptions of danger, reduce the competitiveness of the centre. Boname, a retail consultant, speculated a less expensive centre could work in the future (O'Connor 2001, 5). He suggested that Henderson Development should abandon the idea of high-end retail and get on with its residential developments to create a "quasi-captured market." He also

recommended a stronger connection between the centre and Chinatown, a comment shared by the planner and the developer (Vancouver Planner, Developer, and O'Connor 2001, 5). The planner and the developer believed that a stronger connection permits the pooling of revitalization resources to maximize improvements in both places (Vancouver Planner and Developer). The collaborative improvements would draw more visitors to the area.

#### 6.1.4 Centre **Impact Summary Table of International Village Shopping**

Table 6.5 summarizes the impacts of International Village Shopping Centre.

#### **Table 6.5: Impact Summary Table of International Village Shopping Centre**

**Source:** Sources Used in this Chapter.

##### **Legend**

✓ Positive Impacts | ✗ Negative Impacts | ✓/✗ Positive or Negative Impacts

##### **Economic Impacts:**

##### **Downtown Revitalization**

- ✓ Has a negligible impact on revitalization
- ✗ Fails to meet the expectation of helping to revitalization the region

##### **Tourism**

- ✓ Attracts few visitors

##### **Employment**

- ✓ Creates few jobs

##### **Investment and Money Movement**

- ✓ Represents an investment in the region and an attraction for additional investments
- ✓ Generates small inflows of money

**Taxation**

- ✓ Improves the tax bases for the City

**Competition and Closure**

- \* Competes poorly with other entertainment centres, entertainment districts, and shopping malls
- \* Is susceptible to closure

**Social Impacts:****Heritage and Character**

- ✓ Creates a heritage for the future
- ✓ Reflects the heritage and character of Chinatown with its architecture
- ✓ Contributes to the character of Chinatown by hosting cultural events

**Gentrification and Displacement**

- \* Displaces few residents
- ✓/\* Gentrifies surrounding communities

**Demographic Segregation**

- \* Segregates the majority of existing residents, who have low incomes

**Crime**

- ✓ Employs security patrols to prevent crime in the centre
- \* Initially reduces crime, but its vacancies allow crime to return

**Public and Private Spaces**

N/A because International Village Centre is an enclosed centre that has a clearly-defined boundary separating public and private spaces

**Competition with Public Institutions**

- ✓ Collaborates with public institutions in hosting cultural events
- \* Competes little with public institutions for people's leisure time

**Environmental Impacts:****Traffic and Parking**

- \* Has small impacts on traffic and parking; most of the impacts are at its parking entrance and exit

**Air and Noise Pollution**

- \* Generates little air and noise pollution

## **Political and Planning Impacts:**

### **Planning Policies**

- ✓ Requires rezoning from BCPED and DD to CD-1 (265)
- ✓ Requires an amendment of its CD-1 Zoning to include the new "entertainment centre" license by-laws
- ✓ Provides opportunities to evaluate the proposed entertainment uses and to liaise with the public

### **Planning Approaches**

- ✓ Becomes the first development to use CD-1 amendment to evaluate, and later accommodate, the proposed entertainment uses

## **6.1.5 Comparisons of Impacts between International Village Centre and Urban Entertainment Centres**

Table 6.6 combines Tables 6.5: Impact Summary Table of International Village Shopping Centre and 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres to compare the impacts between International Village Centre and urban entertainment centres. In this combined table, there are fewer impacts listed for International Village Centre than for urban entertainment centres because the first set of impacts represents only one centre while the second set represents numerous entertainment centres discussed in the literature. Therefore, the impacts of entertainment centres are often more comprehensive than the impacts of International Village Centre.

**Table 6.6: Combined Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres and International Village Shopping Centre**

**Source:** Sources Used in Chapters 5 and 6.

**Legend**

✓ Positive Impacts | ✗ Negative Impacts | ✓/✗ Positive or Negative Impacts

**Economic Impacts:**

	<b>Urban Entertainment Centres</b>	<b>International Village Shopping Centre</b>
<b>Downtown Revitalization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Become a catalyst in downtown revitalizations</li> <li>✓ Generate additional revitalization projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Has a negligible impact on revitalization</li> <li>✗ Fails to meet the expectation of helping to revitalization the region</li> </ul>
<b>Tourism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Attract visitors from great distances</li> <li>✓ Strengthen the tourism industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Attracts few visitors</li> </ul>
<b>Employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Create jobs during their planning, constructions, and operations</li> <li>✓ Create jobs in supporting services</li> <li>✓ Create entry-level jobs for workers new to the labour market and train them to improve the workers' human capital</li> <li>✗ Create mostly entry-level jobs with low wages and few advancement opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Creates few jobs</li> </ul>
<b>Investment and Money Movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bring money to the communities in their developments and operations</li> <li>✓ Increase the amount of self-reinvestment to compete with others, bringing more money to the communities</li> <li>✗ Invest mostly in themselves, leaving little benefit to the communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Represents an investment in the region and an attraction for additional investments</li> <li>✓ Generates small inflows of money</li> </ul>

**Taxation**

✓ Improve the tax bases for the local municipal governments

✓ Improves the tax bases for the City

**Competition and Closure**

\* Induce other developers to develop entertainment centres, increasing competition and potentially over-saturating the markets

\* Competes poorly with other entertainment centres, entertainment districts, and shopping malls

\* Is susceptible to closure

\* Are susceptible to economic downturns and cyclical spending patterns

\* Stop and reverse some of their positive impacts when they close

\* Abandon physical structures that are difficult to convert to other uses

**Social Impacts:****Urban Entertainment Centres****International Village Shopping Centre****Heritage and Character**

✓ Have incentives to incorporate elements of local heritage and character

✓ Creates a heritage for the future

✓ Often reuse heritage buildings and integrate local uses

✓ Reflects the heritage and character of Chinatown with its architecture

✓ Contributes to the character of Chinatown by hosting cultural events

\* Protect only the physical component of heritage and character

\* Romanticize local culture, celebrating an idealized version of the communities

**Gentrification and Displacement**

✓ Improve the urban image and urban living environment

\* Displaces few residents

\* Displace existing residents in urban communities

✓/\* Gentrify communities

✓/\* Gentrifies surrounding communities

✓/\* Displace existing land uses in suburban and rural communities

**Demographic Segregation**

✓ Incorporate other local uses such as public institutions to diversify their appeal

\* Inconvenience seniors, people with disabilities, and people sensitive to sensory stimulations

✓/\* Appeal to specific demographic: middle- and higher-class families

\* Segregates the majority of existing residents, who have low incomes

**Crime**

✓ Reduce crime by attracting crowds and revitalizing communities

✓ Employ patrols to monitor onsite activities

\* Make people believe that they worsen crime due to their appeal to youth and long operating hours

✓ Employs security patrols to prevent crime in the centre

\* Initially reduces crime, but its vacancies allow crime to return

**Public and Private Spaces**

\* Distort the relationships between public and private spaces when public and private spaces imitate each other

N/A because International Village Centre is an enclosed centre that has a clearly-defined boundary separating public and private spaces

**Competition with Public Institutions**

\* Compete with public institutions for people's leisure time

\* Compel some public institutions to compromise their educational role

✓ Collaborates with public institutions in hosting cultural events

\* Competes little with public institutions for people's leisure time



## **Environmental Impacts:**

	<b>Urban Entertainment Centres</b>	<b>International Village Shopping Centre</b>
<b>Traffic and Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Generate demands for public transportation in urban communities</li><li>* Increase traffic and parking volumes for both urban and suburban communities</li><li>* Extend traffic and parking volumes into evenings and weekends for urban and suburban communities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Has small impacts on traffic and parking; most of the impacts are at its parking entrance and exit</li></ul>
<b>Air and Noise Pollution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Indirectly produce air and noise pollution by increasing automobile uses</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Generates little air and noise pollution</li></ul>

## **Political and Planning Impacts:**

	<b>Urban Entertainment Centres</b>	<b>International Village Shopping Centre</b>
<b>Planning Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Challenge existing zoning and require new zoning or zoning variances</li><li>✓ Provide opportunities for planners and residents to interact</li><li>✓ Provide opportunities for planners to plan for future uses and to integrate innovative planning ideas</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Requires rezoning from BCPED and DD to CD-1 (265)</li><li>✓ Requires an amendment of its CD-1 Zoning to include the new "entertainment centre" license by-laws</li><li>✓ Provides opportunities to evaluate the proposed entertainment uses and to liaise with the public</li></ul>

## **Planning Approaches**

✓ Encourage new planning approaches such as public-private partnerships

✓ Becomes the first development to use CD-1 amendment to evaluate, and later accommodate, the proposed entertainment uses

### ***(For Public-Private Partnerships)***

✓ *Encourage new planning approaches such as public-private partnerships, allowing the two parties to combine resources and expertises*

✓ *Impose public standards of accountability on the developers*

✓ *Formalize investment and commitments of the two parties*

✓ *Encourage the creations and uses of innovative planning approaches such as business improvement associations*

\* *Distract the governments from other programs that may be more beneficial for the communities*

\* *Potentially weaken the negotiating power of the governments in the partnerships*

\* *Lead to costly project delays or terminations when disagreements occur*

International Village Centre shares several positive economic impacts with entertainment centres, but some of its positive impacts are smaller. The centre creates few jobs, attracts few visitors, and generates small inflow of money. These small economic impacts are mostly due to the weak economic performance of the centre. International Village Centre is currently not very competitive, making it susceptible to closure.

Many social impacts of International Village Centre are similar to the ones of entertainment centres. Specifically, both centres reflect the heritage and characters

of their host communities, gentrify their communities, and employ security patrols to minimize crime. The table also shows that International Village Centre displaces comparatively fewer residents, segregates more residents, and competes less with public institutions than most of entertainment centres discussed in the literature. International Village Centre appears to have two distinctive social impacts: the eventual return of crime and the collaborations with public institutions. These differences are mostly due to the distinctive characteristics of the centre, as discussed in the preceding section.

Overall, International Village Centre has relatively small negative environmental impacts of traffic and parking, and air and noise pollution. These smaller environmental impacts are mostly related to the low drawing power of the centre.

For political and planning impacts, the developments of International Village Centre and entertainment centres both challenge their existing zoning and requiring a rezoning. The impacts of planning approaches for International Village Centre are different from the ones for entertainment centres because International Village Centre uses zoning amendment as its main approach.

## **6.2 Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

### **6.2.1 Introduction**

Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex (Riverport Complex) is the first dedicated entertainment centre to open in Greater Vancouver. Completed in 1997,

the complex is anchored by Famous Players SilverCity Theatre, WaterMania Aquatic Centre, The Zone Bowling Centre, Richmond Ice Centre, and The Basketball Centre (Riverport Sports 2001) (Appendix A lists the tenants in Riverport Complex). The rest of the complex is comprised of a brewery and restaurants (Riverport Sports 2001). Many of the anchors, except for the theatre, are a type of participatory sports. This roster illustrates a deviation of Riverport Complex from other entertainment centres. None of the major anchors is a retailer, an essential component of many entertainment centres. Despite the lack of the retail component, Riverport Complex qualifies as an entertainment centre because it offers a variety of entertainment and dining experiences for visitors to consume. The missing retail component reinforces the argument that entertainment centres strive to be different from others.

Riverport Complex is isolated from other major commercial areas in the City of Richmond. Its isolated location is necessary because of the size of its buildings require the complex to locate on a large tract of land (Barker 1998). It is located on the south-eastern part of Richmond, surrounded by Agricultural Land Reserves (ALRs), industrial zones, residential zones, and Fraser River (Figure 6.2).

Although the focus of this case study is on Riverport Complex, the focus of the literature and interview responses is on SilverCity Theatre. Therefore, many sources used for this case study refer to the theatre rather than the complex. Many people believe that the 5,800 square metre (63,870 square foot) theatre is the dominant anchor of the complex (van den Hemel 1998b). This perception is

dominant anchor of the complex (van den Hemel 1998b). This perception is probably due to the theatre's popularity (Edwards 1998).

The success of the theatre can be attributed to its goal of becoming a movie palace of the future, determined to restore the glamour, excitement, and glory of the past (Barker 1998). Visitors can enjoy "a total cinematic experience with oversized screens, leading-edge projection, and digital sound" (Barker 1998). Before the visitors enter the theatre, the exterior of the building already excites them. The exterior is a dramatic movie set (Figure 6.9) (Dyck 1998). When the visitors are in the lobby, they can spend some time in Tech Town, an arcade that offers many interactive games for visitors to play before and after the movies (Eberts 1999a). With these auxiliary attractions and the movies, many visitors spend their entire evenings there.



Figure 6.9: Dramatic Exterior of SilverCity Riverport Theatre  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

### **6.2.2 Impacts of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

Similar to the impacts of International Village Centre, the community impacts of Riverport Complex are determined from interviews, literature, and census data.

An interview with a planner from City of Richmond and an interview with an administrator from Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex were conducted to determine their perspectives of the impacts.<sup>11</sup> The planner from the City (Richmond Planner) represents the perspectives of the communities and the planners, and the administrator from the complex (Administrator) represents the perspectives of the administrator and the developer. According to the Richmond planner, formal community groups are non-existent for this rural area. Therefore, community perspectives are derived from the interview of the planner and literature. Similar to the analysis of the first case study, 1996 census data were used to provide background information on the host community of Riverport Complex. The analysis of the census data for this case study is in Appendix B.2: Community Background of Riverport Complex.

The analysis of the impacts follows the structure in Chapter 5. The template is applied again to evaluate its effectiveness for this second case study. The results of the analysis are summarized into an impact summary table (Table 6.11) and then compared with Table 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres.

#### **6.2.2.1      *Economic Impacts***

The interviewees offered a list of economic impacts of Riverport Complex on communities (Table 6.7). The table shows that the planner and the administrator

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<sup>11</sup> The respondents requested anonymity.

listed employment first (Richmond Planner and Administrator). Then, the planner provided few more economic impacts, mentioning money movement and regional draw of the complex (Richmond Planner).

**Table 6.7: Viewpoints of Economic Impacts of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the administrator.

**Planner:**

- Riverport Complex creates shift, after-school, and evening jobs, types that are attractive to youth. (*Employment*)
- It generates spin-offs, supporting the other uses in the complex such as WaterMania Aquatic Centre. (*Investment and Money Movement*)
- It does not benefit agricultural or industrial communities.
- It has a regional draw: it represents a destination for Delta residents. (*Tourism*)

**Administrator:**

- It creates jobs. (*Employment*)
- It does not have any negative economic impacts.

**6.2.2.1.1 Downtown Revitalization**

Both interviewees explained that Riverport Complex does not have any impact on downtown revitalization because of its suburban location. The planner replied that the location of the complex was unused so there was "no social problem to clean up" (Richmond Planner). The administrator stated that the complex is not close to Downtown Richmond, so downtown revitalization programs are inapplicable (Administrator).

While the interviewees replied that the complex does not have any impact on downtown revitalization, the literature counters that it has an impact. The development of Riverport Complex contradicted the fundamental goal of downtown

revitalization programs: to avoid urban sprawl by concentrating growth in Downtown Richmond (DaSilva 1996b). This goal is one of the growth management strategies of the 1998 Official Community Plan of Richmond (City of Richmond 1998). The development of Riverport Complex deviated from this vision; the complex created an isolated node of growth, drawing activities away from Downtown Richmond. The diversion can weaken the impacts of downtown revitalization programs.

Riverport Complex revitalizes its surrounding area, attracting some residential and commercial developments. Numerous new houses now line on both sides of No. 6 Road, one of the two arterial roads to the complex (Dyck 1998). For commercial developments, there have been proposals to add a marina, an amphitheatre, sports fields, restaurants, offices, and hotels to the site (DaSilva 1996b). However, proposals for sports fields and amphitheatre, submitted in 1999 and again in May 2001, did not progress beyond the negotiation stage.

#### *6.2.2.1.2 Tourism*

Riverport Complex is a popular entertainment destination for the region. The complex attracts residents from Vancouver, Burnaby, Delta, Surrey, and White Rock (Richmond Planner). It also attracts American visitors from Point Roberts and Blaine because of its accessible highway location, its ample free parking spaces, and the favourable currency exchange rates (Richmond Planner and Administrator). In its first year of operation, 1998, the complex had more than 3.3 million visits, more visits than what Whistler had in the same year (DaSilva 1999a).



#### 6.2.2.1.3 *Employment*

As a large commercial development in the southeastern corner of Richmond, Riverport Complex is the largest employer in its region. In 1996, the developer estimated that the complex would create over 450 jobs when the complex opened in 1997 (DaSilva 1996a). By December 2001, the complex created 750 to 900 jobs (Administrator). The majority of these jobs are shift, after-school, and evening positions, which are attractive to youth (Richmond Planner). Youth can earn an income and gain work experience (Richmond Planner). While the majority of jobs are part-time, entry-level positions, some of the jobs are full-time positions that require advanced education and skills (e.g., security officers, film projectionists, and lifeguards) (Administrator).

Does the supply of jobs from the complex meet the demand for jobs by the residents? The analysis in Appendix B.2.2: Employment Rates shows that the region has a relatively low unemployment rate. Therefore, the complex appears to create an oversupply of jobs for the host community. Some of the oversupply may be reduced by population growth in the area, by some residents returning to the labour force, by some residents switching jobs to the ones in the complex, and by residents coming from other regions (van den Hemel 1998a).

#### *6.2.2.1.4 Investment and Money Movement*

Riverport Complex has reinvested in itself and attracted additional investments (Richmond Planner). When the complex was opened in 1997, the construction of SilverCity Theatre already cost \$12 million, a significant investment to the region ("Riverport's" 1998). A year after its opening, the theatre added six screens ("Riverport's" 1998), bringing in another round of investment. While most of the investment went to the theatre, some of it benefited the community by improving road access and supporting the public institutions in the complex (e.g., WaterMania Aquatic Centre) (Richmond Planner). Future reinvestment by the theatre would be unlikely due to increased competition from other large theatres.

The complex has also attracted additional investment to the community. There have been two proposals, in 1999 and 2001, for an amphitheatre and sports fields (Richmond Planner). However, these proposals collapsed in the early negotiation stages. Although the two proposals fell through, their appearance indicates that other developers are interested in investing in the community, potentially bringing more money to the community.

Riverport Complex generates a net money inflow for the region. The construction of the complex brought money inflows to the region, and part of these inflows became money outflows, in construction costs and wages (Administrator). When the complex is operating, it draws in people and their spending from Delta, South Vancouver, and other parts of Richmond (Richmond Planner). Some of these

inflows become outflows of wages, maintenance costs, and marketing (Administrator).

#### *6.2.2.1.5 Taxation*

The planner and the administrator responded that the complex increases the tax base for the City (Richmond Planner and Administrator). The increase is due to the transformation of the site from an automobile storage yard to an intensive commercial development (Administrator). The transformation raises the value of the site and the tax rates, increasing the amounts of taxes remit to the municipal coffers (Richmond Planner).

#### *6.2.2.1.6 Competition and Closure*

When Riverport Complex opened in 1997, it was the only entertainment centre in Greater Vancouver. The complex enjoyed a brief period of a monopolistic market until the arrival of other entertainment centres in the region. Even though other centres have reduced the competitiveness of the complex, the complex remains highly competitive by focusing on sports (Richmond Planner and Administrator). It is the only operating centre in Greater Vancouver delivering entertainment through physical activities (Administrator).<sup>12</sup> The focus on sports is very appealing to families who like to exercise and play together (Administrator).

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<sup>12</sup> The Score! Sports Centre in Vancouver is closed.

There have been two proposals to develop more entertainment centres in Downtown Richmond. When these centres are developed, they will compete with Riverport Complex (Jones 1998). As of December 2003, none of the two proposed centres was developed.

According to the planner, a hypothetical closure of the Complex would leave the community with increased unemployment and abandoned buildings (Richmond Planner). Unemployment would be easier to handle by the community than abandoned buildings because the unemployed could find jobs elsewhere, but the abandoned buildings would have difficulty in finding new tenants (Richmond Planner). Some new tenants would be reluctant to occupy the abandoned buildings because of the belief that there might be underlying economic problems that closed the complex (Richmond Planner).

The administrator believed that centre would not close; it will only get better (Administrator). For instance, The Zone Bowling Centre added a rock-climbing wall in late 2001, illustrating that further expansions in the complex are economically feasible (Administrator).

#### **6.2.2.2      *Social Impacts***

Table 6.8 lists the social impacts of Riverport Complex stated by the respondents. The planner mentioned crime, but was uncertain how the complex affects crime (Richmond Planner). The planner also indicated that the complex is a major recreation resource in the region, which benefits not just residents of

Richmond, but also nearby municipalities (Richmond Planner). The administrator emphasized the family-friendliness of the complex (Administrator).

**Table 6.8: Viewpoints of Social Impacts of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the administrator.

**Planner:**

- As a hangout for youth, Riverport Complex appears to have a crime problem, but a hangout for youth does not necessarily mean the complex is a high crime area. (*Crime*)
- The complex is a major resource of parks and sports. (*Competition with Public Institutions*)

**Administrator:**

- It is a good place to come with the family. (*Demographic Segregation*)

*6.2.2.2.1 Heritage and Character*

The complex appears to have a positive impact on the cultural heritage but a negative impact on the agricultural character of the region. Because the site is undeveloped, there is no cultural heritage for the complex to affect (Richmond Planner and Administrator). Instead, the complex is creating a new cultural heritage in the region (Richmond Planner and Administrator). The complex reflects the extravagant qualities of the entertainment industry with its "post-modern" architecture of a movie set on top of the theatre in Figure 6.9 and cars on the walls in Figure 6.10 (Richmond Planner). These visual cues help to signify the complex as a new landmark in the region (Barker 1998 and Richmond Planner).



Figure 6.10: Full Size Cars on a Building Façade as an Example of Post-Modern Architecture in Riverport Complex  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

The analysis of the “Dwelling Construction Periods” census data suggests that the physical characteristics of the complex complement the suburban character of the host community (Appendix B.2.4). The boxy structures and extensive parking lots make the complex look like a suburban shopping mall.

Many residents in the host community value farmlands as part of the community’s heritage. The agricultural landscape has attracted many of the residents to move there (Hansen 2001). For some of them, the traffic and noises generated by the complex degrade the agricultural qualities. The increased traffic has been a frequent, common complaint of the residents (Brunet 1998).

Much of the agricultural heritage will remain in the community because the farmlands in the region are in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). As part of the ALR, the farmlands are preserved to encourage farming activities and to regulate non-agricultural uses (City of Richmond 1998). This protection is likely to stay, given that 90% of Richmond residents supported the protection of ALR in a 1997 Official Community Plan (OCP) survey (City of Richmond 1998). The ALR helps to protect the agricultural heritage of the community.

#### 6.2.2.2.2 *Gentrification and Displacement*

The literature suggests that the complex gentrifies the region. One source mentions the growing number of newer, more expensive "monster houses" on either side of No. 6 Road (Dykk 1998). Another source quotes a statement from an employee of the complex, "Any sort of commercial development will change the neighbourhood. How many housing developments, for example, sprang up out of nowhere because shopping malls were built?" (Brunet 1998). These sources use the increases of new houses to imply gentrification.

The gentrification and displacement impacts affect relatively few households in the host community. The community has a small percentage of households with low annual household income (Appendix B.2.1). Because gentrification affects this group of households the most, its impact is limited in the community. The limited gentrification impact suggests that the displacement impact is also likely to be low. The displacement impact is also minimized by two suburban characteristics of the host community: low population density and abundant undeveloped land (Richmond Planner and Administrator). The low population density means that there are few residents available to be affected by the displacement impact (Administrator). If some residents were displaced, there would be room in the region for the residents to relocate (Richmond Planner).

Although the complex does not displace residents, it displaces industrial uses (Figure 6.11) (Richmond Planner). The complex converts the industrial site into a commercial site. This conversion is unfavourable for some residents because of

their preference to preserve the “waterfront industrial lands” (Bryan 2002). For other residents, the conversion may be desirable because of the reduction in industrial activities.



Figure 6.11: An Industrial Site Northeast of Riverport Complex  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

#### *6.2.2.2.3 Demographic Segregation*

Riverport Complex is a popular family centre, which allows families to “swim in the morning, go bowling in the afternoon, have dinner, and see a movie” (DaSilva 1996a). In addition to providing family-friendly activities, many of the physical amenities are designed for families with children. For example, Go Bananas! is an indoor play centre for children and WaterMania Aquatic Centre has dedicated children facilities (Figures 6.12 and 6.13). The family focus of the complex caters to many households in the community. The analysis of age groups demographic indicates that there are many families with children in the host community (Appendix B.2.1).



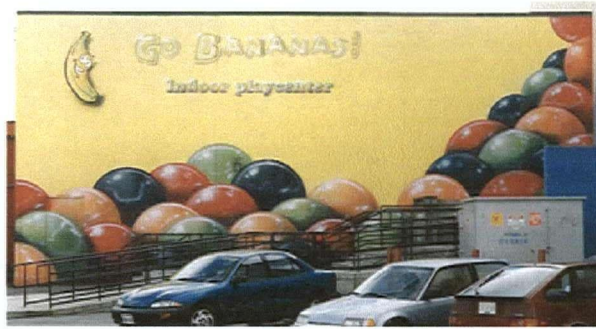


Figure 6.12: Go Bananas! Indoor Playcenter for Children  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)



Figure 6.13: WaterMania Aquatic Centre and its Children Appealing Logo  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

The secondary target markets for the complex are school groups and sports teams. The complex becomes a popular field trip destination for many school groups, who often visit the complex for movies, swimming, bowling, skating, and basketball (Administrator). The sports venues in the complex are training facilities for many sports teams. For instance, WaterMania Aquatic Centre is home to the 400+ members of the local winter swim clubs (Fennell 1996a).

Although the complex is accessible to families, school groups, and sports teams, it is less accessible to certain groups. One group is people who cannot afford the admission charged by some of the private venues. Watching a movie at SilverCity Theatre could be expensive for some visitors (Richmond Planner). The visitors can lower their spending by visiting during discount periods (Administrator).

Other venues that charge less may have lower segregation impacts (Richmond Planner). As public venues, WaterMania Aquatic Centre and The Richmond Ice Centre charge lower admission than private venues (Administrator). These facilities sometimes offer discounts to make them even more affordable (Administrator).

Affordability is generally not a critical concern for many households in the community (Richmond Planner). The analysis of annual household income of the host community suggests that many households would be able to afford admission of different venues (Appendix B.2.1). Households with low income could still enjoy the complex by visiting the public facilities or taking advantage of the occasional discounts (Administrator).

Other notable groups segregated by the complex are residents who use public transit or who cannot drive. These groups have to rely on others to drive or rely on a single bus line to get to the complex ("Candidates" 1999). The #403 bus operates every 20 to 30 minutes during weeknights, daytime Saturdays, and daytime Sundays, the peak periods for entertainment centres (TransLink Schedule Lookup 2003). The infrequent service makes taking transit far less convenient than driving.

#### *6.2.2.2.4 Crime*

Riverport Complex appears to have a crime problem because it is a popular hangout for youth (Richmond Planner). However, a hangout for youth does not necessarily mean that it is a high crime location (Richmond Planner). According to

the planner, the only type of crime conceivable at the complex is auto theft because the cars left on the parking lots are usually there for couple of hours (Richmond Planner). However, opportunities for stealing cars are counteracted by the surveillance of moviegoers arriving and leaving at staggered screening times (Richmond Planner). The casual surveillance of the moviegoers is supplemented by the 24-hour security patrol, reducing such crime to "almost nil" (Administrator). Overall, the complex is "not a launching ground for crime," and it does not affect residential crime (Richmond Planner).

#### *6.2.2.2.5 Competition with Public Institutions*

The interviewees and the literature suggest that Riverport Complex has minimal competitive impacts on public institutions. Both types of facilities are in different markets, competing for different types of visitors (Richmond Planner). The complex appeals to people preferring mass entertainment or physical experiences, while public institutions appeal to people preferring cultural experiences (Richmond Planner and Administrator).

Rather than competing with public institutions, the complex is perceived as helping public institutions. The complex incorporates two public institutions: WaterMania Aquatic Centre and Richmond Ice Centre (Riverport Sports 2001). Both private and public facilities in the complex help each other by generating spillover traffic for each other (Richmond Planner).

### **6.2.2.3      *Environmental Impacts***

The planner and the administrator listed environmental impacts of the complex in Table 6.9. The planner mentioned the noise and traffic impacts, and then compared them with the impacts of other urban developments. Next, the planner explained that the complex has no runoffs because it discharges waste through the municipal sanitary system (Richmond Planner). The administrator focused on how as an urban development, the complex removes the natural habitat of the site (Administrator).

**Table 6.9: Viewpoints of Environmental Impacts of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the administrator.

**Planner:**

- Riverport Complex has noise impact. (*Air and Noise Pollution*)
- It has traffic impact. (*Traffic and Parking*)
- It changes the physical environment, but it is no different from any other types of urban developments.
- It does not produce runoffs or discharges; it is serviced by the municipal sanitary system. (*Air and Noise Pollution*)

**Administrator:**

- The complex eliminates the natural habitat on the site.

#### **6.2.2.3.1      *Traffic and Parking***

The administrator and the planner stated that the complex increases traffic in the region (Richmond Planner and Administrator). The administrator mentioned that the traffic bothers some residents, and the planner discussed that some residents have complained to the city council about the traffic problem (Richmond

Planner and Administrator). The traffic problem has been a significant concern for many residents (Richmond Planner).

The significance of the traffic problem is contributed by the limited road choice and inadequate road capacity. When visitors drive to the complex, visitors can only choose either Steveston Highway or No. 6 Road (Figure 6.2). The limited choice concentrates traffic into these arterial roads, congesting them.

When the complex opened, the two arterial roads were incapable to handle the heavy traffic (Figure 6.2) ("Traffic Problems" 1998). They were not in good shape, the lighting was poor, and there were no sidewalks or bike paths (DaSilva 1999a). Individually, Steveston Highway was already congested from the traffic of Highway 99 and George Massey Tunnel (Figure 6.2). The combined traffic of Highway 99, George Massey Tunnel, and the complex caused traffic jams (Richmond Planner). No. 6 Road, the other arterial, was a two-lane road with numerous ditches ("Traffic Problems" 1998). The ditches on No. 6 Road had been eroded by heavy traffic, prompting city staff to improve the road shoulders and ditch banks ("Road" 2000). Additional improvements such as road widening would be unlikely due to the intention of the City to keep No. 6 Road as a local road (Richmond Planner). This road would retain its two lanes to deter additional traffic (Richmond Planner).

To mitigate the heavy traffic impact, the City improved the road conditions of Steveston Highway and increased bus services (Richmond Planner and DaSilva 1999a). In 1999, the City upgraded Steveston Highway to four lanes, added bike paths, and installed a tree-lined median from No. 6 Road to about halfway to

Highway 99 (DaSilva 1999a). In addition, the City installed traffic lights and added left-turn lanes at the intersection of Steveston Highway and No. 6 Road, where much of the congestion occurred (Figure 6.2) (Richmond Planner and DaSilva 1998).

Before the complex was proposed, the bus system did not serve the area ("BC Transit" 1998). When the complex was proposed, BC Transit (now TransLink) was noncommittal about dispatching buses to serve the complex ("BC Transit" 1998). When the complex opened, traffic congestion became chaotic, forcing BC Transit to extend and increase its bus service to the area (DaSilva 1999a). The area is now served by one bus line, connecting the complex and Richmond Centre. This bus runs until midnight every day so that visitors and workers can safely return home (DaSilva 1999a). The improved bus service, however, is still less convenient than driving, as discussed in 6.2.2.2.2: Gentrification and Displacement.

The complex has over 900 free parking spaces, encouraging many local and out-of-town visitors to drive to the complex (Figure 6.14) (Administrator and Richmond Planner). Even with the ample supply of parking, it was full for weeks after the theatre opened (DaSilva 1998). Periods before and after movie screenings were the busiest in the parking lots (DaSilva 1998). Ample parking was the main reason many moviegoers drove to the complex ("Widening Roads" 1999 and Administrator).



Figure 6.14: Ample Parking Spaces at Riverport Complex  
(Source: Author, Taken September 2002)

#### 6.2.2.3.2 *Air, Noise, and Water Pollution*

The complex affects the air, noise, and water qualities in the community. The impact of water qualities is unique to Riverport Complex because it discharges treated effluents to its nearby river, Fraser River (Figure 6.2).

The air quality is worsened with the increases in automobile traffic generated by the complex (Richmond Planner). The traffic adds car exhaust to the air, and the exhaust fumes are a health concern for many residents living along the two arterial roads (van den Hemel 2001a).

The traffic to and the activities in the complex increase the noise levels around the complex (Richmond Planner). The planner mentioned that some residents had complained about noises from the pubs during summer nights (Richmond Planner).

The planner stated that the complex does not produce runoffs or discharges because it is serviced by the municipal sanitary system (Richmond Planner). Her comments differ from the findings of the *Environmental Protection Noncompliance Reports* published by the BC's Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Parks and the

newer Ministry of Water, Land, and Air Protection. The 1997, 1999, 2000, and 2001 editions of the report indicate that the wastewater is processed by the treatment plant at the complex, and the treated effluent flows into the Fraser River (Environmental Protection Noncompliance Report 1997, 1999, 2000, and 2001). Aside from the first report, which cites an administration infraction, the other three reports indicate that the complex has exceeded the discharge limit or failed to meet the toxicity requirement of its treated effluents (Environmental Protection Noncompliance Report 1997, 1999, 2000, and 2001).

#### **6.2.2.4      *Political and Planning Impacts***

When asked to list the political and the planning impacts of the complex, both respondents mentioned rezoning (Table 6.10). The planner added that the complex required more than just rezoning; it needed a new zoning: Athletics and Entertainment District (238) (AE) (Richmond Planner). The new AE zoning required changes in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and converted some of the industrial and Agricultural Land Reserves (ALRs) to commercial uses (Richmond Planner). The conversion of the ALRs was a concern for the planner, who worried that the conversion would set a precedent for rezoning the surrounding ALRs (Richmond Planner). The planner then commented that the rezoning would require public meetings, allowing some opportunities for public input (Richmond Planner).



### **Table 6.10: Viewpoints of Political and Planning Impacts of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

**Sources:** Interviews with the planner and the administrator.

#### **Planner:**

- The development of Riverport Complex requires the creation of Athletics and Entertainment District (238) (AE). The creation changes the zoning designation from Agricultural District (AG1) and Light Industrial District (I2) to AE in the Official Community Plan (OCP). (*Planning Policies*)
- Its development also requires conversion of some industrial land and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) to commercial uses. The removal of the ALR indicates to others that they can also take land out of the ALR, indirectly putting pressure on the ALR. (*Planning Policies*)
- Its rezoning involves public meetings, allowing for some public input. (*Planning Policies*)

#### **Administrator:**

- It requires rezoning. (*Planning Policies*)

#### **6.2.2.4.1 Planning Policies**

The development of the complex affected the planning policies in two ways: it required rezoning, and it contradicted the guidelines of the OCP. In 1997, Riverport Complex was rezoned to 238: Athletics and Entertainment District (AE) (Appendix C.4 contains information on the AE Zoning) (DaSilva 1999b). The AE District was created to accommodate Riverport Complex (Richmond Planner). This zoning accounts for anything that is entertainment related, such as commercial entertainment, but prohibits casinos and permanent residences (Appendix C.4) (Richmond Planner).

Before rezoning, parts of the site were zoned Light Industrial District (I2) and parts were zoned Agricultural District (AG1) (Richmond Planner). Land in the AG1 Zoning was in the ALR. When land in the AG1 Zoning was rezoned to the AE Zoning, it lost its ALR status and the associated agricultural protection. This

rezoning sets a precedent for rezoning nearby agricultural sites out of the ALR (Richmond Planner).

The rezoning process required public participation. In June 1997, the city council held public meetings ("Candidates" 1999). In the meeting, many residents, who were concerned with the additional traffic generated by the complex, opposed to the rezoning (Richmond Planner). Nevertheless, the rezoning was approved by the council, believing that the approval would be the best interest for the community and the City (Richmond Planner). The approval allowed the development of Riverport Complex to proceed (DaSilva 1997b).

The rezoning not only changed the land use, but also the planning of the area. The new commercial zoning contradicted the OCP of the area. The location of the Riverport Complex challenged the principles outlined in the OCP. The OCP states that Richmond residents "endorse the concentration of growth to create a strong city centre," and they want "a true downtown with a business core, urban neighbourhoods, and arts and culture" (City of Richmond 1998). The downtown was pegged as the premier location for arts and entertainment (DaSilva 1996a). The complex became a competing node for entertainment, taking away some of the entertainment activities away from the downtown (DaSilva 1996a).

When the complex was proposed, city planners did not recommend or endorse the development (DaSilva 1996a). They wanted to shape most of the growth in the downtown (van den Hemel 1998a). By concentrating development in the same area, the planners hoped to encourage more walking, biking, and taking

transit instead of driving in the city centre (van den Hemel 1998a). The council's approval for the project contradicted the planners' recommendations.

The council acknowledged the complex would be in an outlying area, but it approved the development anyway because there was not enough room in the city centre for the complex. In addition to land scarcity, downtown land was expensive for future expansion (Edwards 1998). The council saw the location "as an area which might develop its own character with an athletics or entertainment focus" (DaSilva 1997a).

#### *6.2.2.4.2 Planning Approaches*

The planner believed that the development of the Riverport Complex did not involve public-private partnership; she was uncertain whether the City directly contributed to the development of the complex (Richmond Planner). The literature mentions that part of the development, Richmond Ice Centre and WaterMania Aquatic Centre, involved public-private partnerships (Fennell 1996a). The City rents these facilities from the developer for ten years. Under terms of the lease, the City pays the developer CAD \$1.4 million per year for the use of the pool (Fennell 1996b).

The lease arrangement appears to be successful enough for the city council to pursue a similar arrangement when it called for bids to develop sports fields and an amphitheatre next to the complex (van den Hemel 2001c). As mentioned earlier, these projects fell through in the negotiating stages.

### **6.2.3 Conclusion**

Riverport Complex is the first entertainment centre to open in Greater Vancouver. Being the first centre, it has attracted a lot of attention and visitors throughout the years. Although the popularity of the complex has levelled off due to competition from other centres, it is still a popular destination for entertainment and sports.

The success of the complex has spawned proposals for additional developments. In addition to the failed proposals of adding sports fields and an amphitheatre to the complex, there was a 2002 proposal by Hotson-Bakker Architects to add residential units to the complex (DaSilva 1996b). If this proposal were successful, the complex would have permanent residents, which would significantly change the characteristics of the complex and could greatly affect the host community.

### **6.2.4 Impact Summary Table of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

Table 6.11 summarizes the impacts of Riverport Complex.

## **Table 6.11: Impact Summary Table of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

Source: Sources Used in this Chapter.

### **Legend**

✓ Positive Impacts | ✗ Negative Impacts | ✓/✗ Positive or Negative Impacts

### **Economic Impacts:**

#### **Downtown Revitalization**

- ✓ Brings residential and commercial developments to the region
- ✗ Weakens downtown revitalization programs

#### **Tourism**

- ✓ Attracts visitors from GVRD and beyond

#### **Employment**

- ✓ Employs the most workers in the region
- ✓ Creates an oversupply of jobs in the region
- ✓ Creates many shift, after-school, and evening positions and some full-time positions

#### **Investment and Money Movement**

- ✓ Generates money inflows
- ✓ Represents an investment in the region
- ✓ Reinvests in itself by expanding the theatre, improving road access, and supporting public institutions
- ✓ Attracts several opportunities for commercial and residential investments

#### **Taxation**

- ✓ Improves the tax bases for the City

#### **Competition and Closure**

- ✓ Possesses a competitive advantage by focusing on sports
- ✗ Is expected to face many competitors in the city centre

### **Social Impacts:**

#### **Heritage and Character**

- ✓ Creates a new cultural heritage and complements existing suburban characteristics
- ✗ Degrades the agricultural heritage and character

**Gentrification and Displacement**

- ✓ Does not displace residents
- ✓/\* Gentrifies the area
- ✓/\* Displaces industrial uses

**Demographic Segregation**

- ✓ Caters to families with children, school groups, and sports teams
- ✓ Offers affordable admission at public venues or during discount periods
- \* Segregates people who cannot afford high admission charged by private venues
- \* Segregates people who use public transit, who cannot drive, or who cannot afford cars

**Crime**

- ✓ Does not affect residential crime
- \* Is attractive for auto thefts, but is discouraged by formal and informal surveillances

**Public and Private Spaces**

N/A because Riverport Complex has a clearly-defined boundary separating public and private spaces

**Competition with Public Institutions**

- ✓ Competes for different types of visitors than what public institutions compete for
- ✓ Helps and collaborates with public institutions

**Environmental Impacts:****Traffic and Parking**

- ✓ Prompts for upgrading road infrastructures and offering a bus service
- \* Worsens local traffic problems and adds traffic to the two arterial roads
- \* Increases automobile uses and reliance
- ✓/\* Has ample free parking, but discourages transit uses

**Air, Noise, and Water Pollution**

- \* Worsens air quality and extends the period of air pollution
- \* Increases noise levels and their durations
- \* Has exceeded the discharge limit or failed to meet the toxicity requirement of its treated effluents

## Political and Planning Impacts:

### Planning Policies

- ✓ Requires rezoning from Light Industrial (I2) and Agricultural District (AG1) to Athletics and Entertainment District (AE)
- ✓ Offers public participation opportunities
- ✗ Sets a precedent for nearby agricultural land to be taken out of the ALR
- ✗ Contradicts OCP Guidelines for the area

### Planning Approaches

- ✓ Forms a public-private partnership with the City in leasing two of the facilities

## 6.2.5 Comparisons of Impacts between Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex and Urban Entertainment Centres

Table 6.12 combines Table 6.11 and Table 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres to compare the impacts of Riverport Complex and urban entertainment centres.

### Table 6.12: Combined Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex

Source: Sources Used in Chapters 5 and 6.

#### Legend

✓ Positive Impacts | ✗ Negative Impacts | ✓/✗ Positive or Negative Impacts

## Economic Impacts:

	Urban Entertainment Centres	Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex
<b>Downtown Revitalization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Become a catalyst in downtown revitalizations</li><li>✓ Generate additional revitalization projects</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Brings residential and commercial developments to the region</li><li>✗ Weakens downtown revitalization programs</li></ul>

**Tourism**

- ✓ Attract visitors from great distances
- ✓ Strengthen the tourism industry

- ✓ Attracts visitors from GVRD and beyond

**Employment**

- ✓ Create jobs during their planning, constructions, and operations
- ✓ Create jobs in supporting services
- ✓ Create entry-level jobs for workers new to the labour market and train them to improve the workers' human capital
- \* Create mostly entry-level jobs with low wages and few advancement opportunities

- ✓ Employs the most workers in the region
- ✓ Creates an oversupply of jobs in the region
- ✓ Creates many shift, after-school, and evening positions and some full-time positions

**Investment and Money Movement**

- ✓ Bring money to the communities in their developments and operations
- ✓ Increase the amount of self-reinvestment to compete with others, bringing more money to the communities
- \* Invest mostly in themselves, leaving little benefit to the communities

- ✓ Generates money inflows
- ✓ Represents an investment in the region
- ✓ Reinvests in itself by expanding the theatre, improving road access, and supporting public institutions
- ✓ Attracts several opportunities for commercial and residential investments

**Taxation**

- ✓ Improve the tax bases for the local municipal governments

- ✓ Improves the tax bases for the City



**Competition and Closure**

- \* Induce other developers to develop entertainment centres, increasing competition and potentially over-saturating the markets

- \* Are susceptible to economic downturns and cyclical spending patterns

- \* Stop and reverse some of their positive impacts when they close

- \* Abandon physical structures that are difficult to convert to other uses

- ✓ Has a competitive advantage by focusing on sports

- \* Is expected to face many competitors in the city centre

**Social Impacts:****Urban Entertainment Centres****Heritage and Character**

- ✓ Have incentives to incorporate elements of local heritage and character

- ✓ Often reuse heritage buildings and integrate local uses

- \* Protect only the physical component of heritage and character

- \* Romanticize local culture, celebrating an idealized version of the communities

**Gentrification and Displacement**

- ✓ Improve the urban image and urban living environment

- \* Displace existing residents in urban communities

- ✓/\* Gentrify communities

- ✓/\* Displace existing land uses in suburban and rural communities

**Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

- ✓ Creates a new cultural heritage and complements existing suburban characteristics

- \* Degrades the agricultural heritage and character

- ✓ Does not displace residents

- ✓/\* Gentrifies the area

- ✓/\* Displaces industrial uses

**Demographic Segregation**

✓ Incorporate other local uses such as public institutions to diversify their appeal

✓ Caters to families with children, school groups, and sports teams

✓ Offers affordable admission at public venues or during discount periods

\* Inconvenience seniors, people with disabilities, and people sensitive to sensory stimulations

\* Segregates people who cannot afford high admission charged by private venues

\* Segregates people who use public transit, who cannot drive, or who cannot afford cars

✓/\* Appeal to specific demographic: middle- and higher-class families

**Crime**

✓ Reduce crime by attracting crowds and revitalizing communities

✓ Does not affect residential crime

✓ Employ patrols to monitor onsite activities

\* Make people believe that they worsen crime due to their appeal to youth and long operating hours

\* Is attractive for auto thefts, but is discouraged by formal and informal surveillances

**Public and Private Spaces**

\* Distort the relationships between public and private spaces when public and private spaces imitate each other

N/A because Riverport Complex has a clearly-defined boundary separating public and private spaces

**Competition with Public Institutions**

✓ Competes for different types of visitors than what public institutions compete for

✓ Helps and collaborates with public institutions

\* Compete with public institutions for people's leisure time

\* Compel some public institutions to compromise their educational role

## Environmental Impacts:

	Urban Entertainment Centres	Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex
<b>Traffic and Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Generate demands for public transportation in urban communities</li><li>* Increase traffic and parking volumes for both urban and suburban communities</li><li>* Extend traffic and parking volumes into evenings and weekends for urban and suburban communities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Prompts for upgrading road infrastructures and offering a bus service</li><li>* Worsens local traffic problems and adds traffic to the two arterial roads</li><li>* Increases automobile uses and reliance</li><li>✓/* Has ample free parking, but discourages transit uses</li></ul>
<b>Air and Noise Pollution (Urban Entertainment Centres)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Indirectly produce air and noise pollution by increasing automobile uses</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Worsens air quality and extends the period of air pollution</li><li>* Increases noise levels and their durations</li></ul>
<b>Air, Noise, and Water Pollution (Riverport Complex)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Has exceeded the discharge limit or failed to meet the toxicity requirement of its treated effluents</li></ul>

## Political and Planning Impacts:

	Urban Entertainment Centres	Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex
<b>Planning Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Challenge existing zoning and require new zoning or zoning variances</li> <li>✓ Provide opportunities for planners and residents to interact</li> <li>✓ Provide opportunities for planners to plan for future uses and to integrate innovative planning ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Requires rezoning from Light Industrial (I2) and Agricultural District (AG1) to Athletics and Entertainment District (AE)</li> <li>✓ Offers public participation opportunities</li> <li>* Sets a precedent for nearby agricultural land to be taken out of the ALR</li> <li>* Contradicts OCP Guidelines for the area</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Approaches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Encourage new planning approaches such as public-private partnerships</li> <li><b><i>(For Public-Private Partnerships)</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Encourage new planning approaches such as public-private partnerships, allowing the two parties to combine resources and expertises</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Impose public standards of accountability on the developers</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Formalize investment and commitments of the two parties</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Encourage the creations and uses of innovative planning approaches such as business improvement associations</i></li> <li>* <i>Distract the governments from other programs that may be more beneficial for the communities</i></li> <li>* <i>Potentially weaken the negotiating power of the governments in the partnerships</i></li> <li>* <i>Lead to costly project delays or terminations when disagreements occur</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Forms a public-private partnership with the City in leasing two of the facilities</li> </ul>

By examining Table 6.12 and drawing discussions from the impact analysis of Riverport Complex, some of the impacts for Riverport Complex appear to be largely influenced by the success of the complex, the suburban location, and the integration with public facilities. These three characteristics create some of the distinctive community impacts in all four categories.

The success of the complex produces many positive economic impacts (e.g., tourism and money inflow), but generates mostly negative environmental impacts (e.g., traffic). These negative environmental impacts are compounded by the suburban location. The suburban location, along with ample parking, encourages driving to the complex, which directly worsens traffic and indirectly degrades air and noise qualities. The suburban location also affects the social impacts of displacing industrial uses, the economic impacts of weakening downtown revitalization programs, and the planning impacts of rezoning industrial lands.

The integration with the two public facilities generates few notable impacts of Riverport Complex: improving its competitiveness, reducing income segregation, and decreasing competition with public institutions. These impacts are generally beneficial to the complex and the host community.

### **6.3            The Location Factor on the Impacts of the Two Case Studies**

The two case studies were deliberately chosen for their different locations. The location difference provides an exploration of the potential impacts of entertainment centres. Table 6.13 combines the impact summary tables of the two

case studies, Tables 6.5 and 6.11. Impacts that are greatly affected by the location difference are shaded.

**Table 6.13: Combined Impact Summary Table of International Village Shopping Centre and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

Source: Sources Used in Chapters 5 and 6.

<b>Legend</b>	✓ Positive Impacts   ✗ Negative Impacts   ✓/✗ Positive or Negative Impacts
	<u>Shaded</u> Impacts Affected by Location Difference

**Economic Impacts:**

	<b>International Village Shopping Centre</b>	<b>Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex</b>
<b>Downtown Revitalization</b>	✓ Has a negligible impact on revitalization  ✗ Fails to meet the expectation of helping to revitalization the region	✓ Brings residential and commercial developments to the region  <u>✗ Weakens downtown revitalization programs</u>
<b>Tourism</b>	✓ Attracts few visitors	✓ Attracts visitors from GVRD and beyond
<b>Employment</b>	✓ Creates few jobs	✓ Employs the most workers in the region  ✓ Creates an oversupply of jobs in the region  ✓ Creates many shift, after-school, and evening positions and some full-time positions

**Investment and Money Movement**

- ✓ Represents an investment in the region and an attraction for additional investments
- ✓ Generates small inflows of money

- ✓ Generates money inflows
- ✓ Represents an investment in the region
- ✓ Reinvests in itself by expanding the theatre, improving road access, and supporting public institutions
- ✓ Attracts several opportunities for commercial and residential investments

**Taxation**

- ✓ Improves the tax bases for the City

- ✓ Improves the tax bases for the City

**Competition and Closure**

- \* Competes poorly with other entertainment centres, entertainment districts, and shopping malls
- \* Is susceptible to closure

- ✓ Has a competitive advantage by focusing on sports
- \* Is expected to face many competitors in the city centre

**Social Impacts:****Urban Entertainment Centres****Heritage and Character**

- ✓ Creates a heritage for the future
- ✓ Reflects the heritage and character of Chinatown with its architecture
- ✓ Contributes to the character of Chinatown by hosting cultural events

**Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

- ✓ Creates a new cultural heritage and complements existing suburban characteristics
- \* Degrades the agricultural heritage and character

**Gentrification and Displacement**

- \* Displaces few residents
- ✓/\* Gentrifies surrounding communities

- ✓ Does not displace residents

- ✓/\* Displaces industrial uses

**Demographic  
Segregation**

\* Segregates the majority of existing residents, who have low incomes

✓ Caters to families with children, school groups, and sports teams

✓ Offers affordable admission at public venues or during discount periods

\* Segregates people who cannot afford high admission charged by private venues

\* Segregates people who use public transit, who cannot drive, or who cannot afford cars

**Crime**

✓ Employs security patrols to prevent crime in the centre

✓ Does not affect residential crime

\* Initially reduces crime, but its vacancies allow crime to return

\* Is attractive for auto thefts, but is discouraged by formal and informal surveillances

**Public and  
Private Spaces**

N/A because International Village Centre is an enclosed centre that has a clearly-defined boundary separating public and private spaces

N/A because Riverport Complex has a clearly-defined boundary separating public and private spaces

**Competition  
with Public  
Institutions**

✓ Collaborates with public institutions in hosting cultural events

✓ Competes for different types of visitors than what public institutions compete for

✓ Helps and collaborates with public institutions

\* Competes little with public institutions for people's leisure time



## Environmental Impacts:

### Urban Entertainment Centres

#### Traffic and Parking

- \* Has small impacts on traffic and parking; most of the impacts are at its parking entrance and exit

#### Air, Noise, and Water Pollution

- \* Generates little air and noise pollution

### Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex

- ✓ Prompts for upgrading road infrastructures and offering a bus service

- \* Worsens local traffic problems and adds traffic to the two arterial roads

- \* Increases automobile uses and reliance

- ✓/\* Has ample free parking, but discourages transit uses

- \* Worsens air quality and extends the period of air pollution

- \* Increases noise levels and their durations

- \* Has exceeded the discharge limit or failed to meet the toxicity requirement of its treated effluents

## Political and Planning Impacts:

	Urban Entertainment Centres	Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex
<b>Planning Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Requires rezoning from BCPED and DD to CD-1 (265)</li> <li>✓ Requires an amendment of its CD-1 Zoning to include the new "entertainment centre" license by-laws</li> <li>✓ Provides opportunities to evaluate the proposed entertainment uses and to liaise with the public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Requires rezoning from Light Industrial (I2) and Agricultural District (AG1) to Athletics and Entertainment District (AE)</li> <li>✓ Offers public participation opportunities</li> <li>✗ Sets a precedent for nearby agricultural land to be taken out of the ALR</li> <li>✗ Contradicts OCP Guidelines for the area</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Approaches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Becomes the first development to use CD-1 amendment to evaluate, and later accommodate, the proposed entertainment uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Forms a public-private partnership with the City in leasing two of the facilities</li> </ul>

Table 6.13 shows that the location factor has little influence on many of the economic impacts. The most notable impact is the weakening of downtown revitalization programs by Riverport Complex. Other economic impacts are less affected by the location factor because economic matters such as investment and employment are mostly intangible and mobile.

For the social impacts, impacts that have geographic references in them are more likely to be influenced by the location factor. Specifically, the impacts of heritage and character, segregation, and residential crime are affected by location.

The large cluster of shading in the table reveals that the location factor has the most influence on the environmental impacts. The impacts of traffic and parking; and air, noise, and water pollution are closely linked to the geography of the centres.

The location factor has little influence on the political and planning impacts. It affects mostly on the rezoning in the development of the centres. The development of the Riverport Complex had a new zoning; whereas, the development of the International Village Centre had a zoning variance.

## **Chapter Seven: Planning Recommendations and Future of Urban Entertainment Centres**

The goal of the thesis is to help planners to improve the liveability of the communities by understanding and, where possible, mitigating the adverse impacts of entertainment centres. To achieve this goal, the first part of this chapter highlights the negative impacts of entertainment centres, which were examined in previous chapters. Then, it proposes planning recommendations for mitigating some of the adverse impacts. The second part of this chapter examines the potentials and the limitations of the template as an impact assessment tool. Then, the chapter concludes with a conjecture about the future of entertainment centres.

### **7.1 Planning Recommendations**

To understand the adverse impacts of entertainment centres, a list of negative impacts is compiled. As mentioned in 5.3: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres, the rating of the impacts is based on the perspective of the host community. The adoption of the community perspective achieves the goal of examining the impacts on the host community better than the adoption of other perspectives.

Table 7.1 combines the negative impacts in Table 5.2: Impact Summary Table of Urban Entertainment Centres, Table 6.5: Impact Summary Table of International Village Shopping Centre, and Table 6.11: Impact Summary Table of Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex. Not all of the adverse impacts in the

two case studies are listed in Table 7.1 because some of them are highly specific to their respective case studies.

### **Table 7.1: Negative Impacts of Urban Entertainment Centres**

**Source:** Information from Tables 5.2, 6.5, and 6.11

#### **Negative Economic Impacts:**

##### **Downtown Revitalization**

- \* Fail to meet the expectation of revitalization if the centres are performing poorly
- \* Draw revitalization resources away from the downtown for suburban centres

##### **Employment**

- \* Create mostly entry-level jobs with low wages and few advancement opportunities

##### **Investment and Money Movement**

- \* Invest mostly in themselves, leaving little benefit to the communities

##### **Competition and Closure**

- \* Induce other developers to develop entertainment centres, potentially over-saturating the markets
- \* Are susceptible to economic downturns and cyclical spending patterns
- \* Stop and reverse some of their positive impacts when they close
- \* Abandon physical structures that can be difficult to convert to other uses

#### **Negative Social Impacts:**

##### **Heritage and Character**

- \* Protect only the physical component of heritage and character
- \* Romanticize local culture, celebrating an idealized version of the communities
- \* Degrade the agricultural heritage and character for suburban centres

##### **Gentrification and Displacement**

- \* Displace existing residents in urban communities

##### **Demographic Segregation**

- \* Inconvenience seniors, people with disabilities, sensitive people, and people who do not drive
- \* Segregate people who cannot afford high admission charged by some private venues

##### **Crime**

- \* Make people believe that they worsen crime due to their appeal to youth and long operating hours
- \* Are attractive for auto thefts, but are discouraged by formal and informal surveillances
- \* Initially reduce crime, but poor performance of some centres may allow crime to return

##### **Public and Private Spaces**

- \* Distort the relationships between public and private spaces when public and private spaces imitate each other

### **Competition with Public Institutions**

- \* Compete with public institutions for people's leisure time
- \* Compel some public institutions to compromise their educational role

### **Negative Environmental Impacts:**

#### **Traffic and Parking**

- \* Increase automobile uses and reliance
- \* Increase traffic and parking volumes
- \* Extend traffic and parking volumes into evenings and weekends

#### **Air, Noise, and Water Pollution**

- \* Indirectly produce air and noise pollution by increasing automobile uses
- \* Can generate other forms of pollution such as water pollution

### **Political and Planning Impacts:**

#### **Planning Policies**

- \* Can set a precedent for rezoning nearby protected sites
- \* Can contradict the OCP Guidelines for the area

#### **Planning Approaches**

##### ***(For Public-Private Partnerships)***

- \* *Distract the governments from other programs that may be more beneficial for the communities*
- \* *Potentially weaken the negotiating power of the governments in partnerships*
- \* *Lead to costly project delays or terminations when disagreements occur*

By analyzing this table of negative impacts, I developed a list of **possible** planning recommendations that may mitigate some of the impacts (Table 7.2). The recommendations were developed by using the fundamental objectives in Table 5.1 as the framework and by consulting the suggestions presented in Keeney's *Value-Focused Thinking* (1992, 201-203). Each recommendation was developed by focussing on each of the negative impacts, while keeping the community objectives in mind (Keeney 1992, 202). Then, I refined the recommendations to its final form in Table 7.2. The planning recommendations in Table 7.2 aim to improve the

liveability of the host community by mitigating some of the negative impacts of entertainment centres.

Because the list of recommendations was developed with little consideration for financial, technical, and political constraints, many of the proposed policies may be difficult or impossible to achieve. In addition, some of the recommendations are not directly applicable to the development of the centres (e.g., examines ways to reduce traffic on local streets); instead, they are more applicable to the overall planning of the community. These recommendations are still important for the mitigation of the negative impacts because entertainment centres are part of the community, and planning for entertainment centres often require the planning of the host community in tandem.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> An example of requiring community planning is Richmond's response to the traffic impact of Riverport Complex. The City had to improve road conditions and add road infrastructures to relieve some of the traffic generated by the complex.

## **Table 7.2: Possible Policies to Mitigate Some Negative Impacts of Urban Entertainment Centres**

**Source:** Developed by author using *Value-Focused Thinking* (1992, 201-203).

### **Mitigating Some Negative Economic Impacts:**

- Encourages the centres to provide a diversity of employment
- Provides incentives for the centres to include community improvement projects
- Evaluates the competitiveness of the centres
- Encourages the centres to incorporate uses that are less susceptible to economic downturns
- Provides guidelines to include some flexibility for reusing structures

### **Mitigating Some Negative Social Impacts:**

- Encourages the centres to incorporate cultural heritage and character
- Ensures that the centres minimizes the displacement of residents and preferred land uses
- Encourages the centres to offer a diversity of facilities that accommodates the different demographics
- Interacts with local residents to discuss the impacts of the centres on crime
- Provides guidelines for the centres to identify the separation between public and private spaces
- Encourages the centres to collaborate with public institutions

### **Mitigating Some Negative Environmental Impacts:**

- Encourages the centres to accommodate visitors who walk, bike, or take transit
- Examines ways to reduce traffic on local streets
- Examines ways to buffer air and noise pollution from the residents

### **Mitigating Negative Political and Planning Impacts:**

- If the local government participates in a public-private partnership with the developers:
  - Evaluates the partnership approach and compares it with other planning approaches
  - Ensures that the negotiating power of the local government is not compromised
  - Outlines the responsibilities and goals of the two partners to minimize disagreements

## **7.2 Potentials and Limitations of the Impact Assessment Template**

The impact analysis of the two case studies in Chapter 6 shows that the template is an effective tool for assessing the impacts of entertainment centres on the host community. As with any other evaluation tools, this template has potentials and limitations.

An obvious benefit of the template is the listing of the community impacts, which provides the basis for planners to recommend possible planning policies to



mitigate the negative impacts. Another benefit is its systematic method of evaluating the impacts. If the template is consistently applied to different entertainment centres, it produces results that are comparable to each other, as shown in the analysis of the two case studies. The analysis of the two case studies also shows the ability for the template to evaluate entertainment centres at either urban or suburban locations. Lastly, the template is modular, which allows for additions and omissions of the different potential impacts. For example, the evaluations of the two case studies omitted the analysis of public and private spaces because both centres have well-defined boundaries.

One of the limitations of the template is its qualitative measurement of the impacts. The qualitative measurement is difficult to convert into a quantitative measurement, but the need for quantifying the impacts is seldom required because many impacts are difficult to quantify. For example, it would be challenging to provide a quantitative score for how well an entertainment centre incorporates the local heritage. In addition, attempting to quantify the impacts would strip out the details characterizing the impacts. A qualitative measurement of the impacts would be better in examining the negative impacts and then recommending policies to mitigate them.

Another limitation of the template is its inability to account for the experience of each resident. Residents living in the host community of an entertainment centre are affected differently by the centres depending on the location and the demographic of the residents. To partially overcome this limitation, the template

can be applied repeatedly using the perspectives of different residents. However, this process would produce many different sets of impacts.

Another limitation of the template is the exclusion of the different weights of each impact. Different impacts may have different weights, depending on the specific characteristics of the centres and the host community. For example, if a community has a high unemployment rate, then the employment impact is more significant than the other economic impacts. This limitation can be addressed by arranging the order of the impacts in the template. Impacts can be arranged from the most significant to the least significant.

Another limitation of the template is its focus on the community and not on the other uses in the community (e.g., shopping mall). Many of these uses are part of the community, affecting the lives of many residents. For instance, the introduction of an entertainment centre may force a nearby shopping mall to close in the host community. The closure would affect the socio-economic conditions of the workers in the mall, some of which are residents of the host community. Such indirect links of impacts are not represented in the template. This limitation can be partially overcome by adding measures that analyze these indirect links. However, deciding which indirect links to include in the template is challenging as there can be numerous indirect links.

### **7.3 Future of Urban Entertainment Centres**

Besides Canada and the US, other countries are experiencing the spread of entertainment centres. Asian-Pacific countries are experiencing rapid growth of entertainment centres (Beyard et al. 1998, 235). On the other hand, European countries, where there are strict planning laws, active city centres, and less competitive retail markets, are seeing a slower spread (Hannigan 1998a, 2).

Will the spread continue or is the market for entertainment centres already saturated? In my interview with Ian Thomas, he commented that a retail format has a shelf life of every seven to ten years, and a no-change scenario for entertainment centres can be catastrophic (Thomas, Personal Interview, 2002). Market shakeouts of entertainment centres are inevitable when the entertainment centre markets are saturated and when consumers' taste for entertainment centres change (Fulmer 1998). Some consumers are already weary of entertainment centres, and some centres have difficulty in keeping the public interest in order to maintain the initial levels of performance (Minton 1998). It would be difficult to know whether entertainment centres can sustain their performance over the long run (Gose 1999).

For planners, anticipating the next generation of entertainment centres is difficult. There are many scenarios for entertainment centres to evolve, including the continuation for more, bigger entertainment centres and the development of an entertainment town. Living in an entertainment town allows the residents to consume entertainment where they live.

A prototype of the entertainment town already exists: Celebration in Florida, USA (Figures 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3). Developed by Disney, Celebration is an entertainment centre with permanent residents (Hannigan 1998b). While the town does not continuously bombard the residents with entertainment, it makes entertainment readily available for the residents to consume. Many aspects of community living such as special events and social clubs are "imagineered" by Disney. In winter, the town's managers blow fake snow on the streets, and in autumn, they drop fake leaves on the streets (Living with Walt 2003). In addition, Disney "entertains" by promoting the values of wholesomeness, safety, and family. These values are entertainment because they are pleasurable experiences that residents are willing to pay a premium to live there.



Figure 7.1: Traditional Architecture of a House in Celebration, Florida  
(Source: Absolutely Florida 2004)



Figure 7.2: Business District in Celebration, Florida  
(Source: Absolutely Florida 2004)

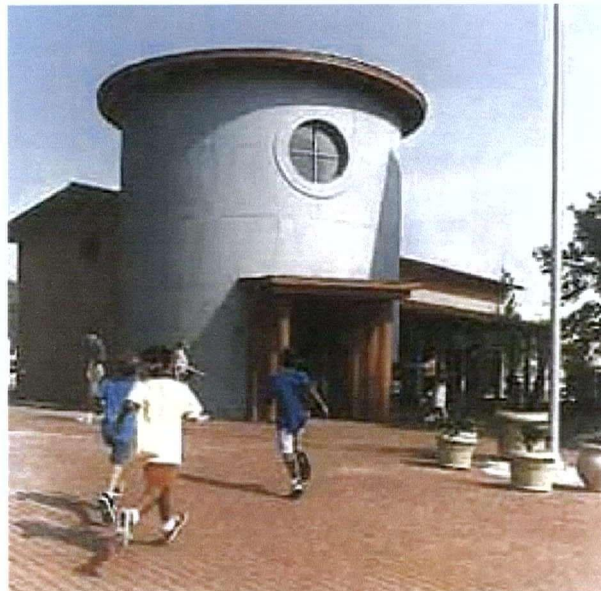


Figure 7.3: Exterior of a Post Office in Celebration, Florida  
(Source: Absolutely Florida 2004)

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A Tenants in International Village Shopping Centre and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex

### International Village Shopping Centre

(Source: Author, Collected December 17, 2003)

#### Entertainment Component:

- Cinemark Tinseltown Theatre (12-screen theatre)
- Xtreme Sports System (interactive sports arcade) CLOSED

#### Dining Component:

- Starbucks Coffee (café)
- McDonald's Restaurant (fast food restaurant)
- Quizno's Restaurant (fast food restaurant)

#### Second Floor Food Court:

- Death by Chocolate
- Giant Panda Szechuan Cuisine
- India's Flavor
- Koya Japanese
- Sammi's
- TacoTime
- Thai Village
- Vana Vietnamese

#### Retail Component:

- 7-11 (convenience store)
- Bod & Christensen Clothing (clothing store)
- CLIO Professional (hair and beauty supply store)
- Fido Unipage (mobile phone retailer)
- Galaxy Eyewear (eyewear optical store)
- Home Quarters Furniture (furniture store)
- House of Italy (clothing store)
- LG Cashmere (clothing store)
- Modern Carpets (carpet store)
- Silversilk (clothing store)

### Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex

(Source: Author, Collected September 2002)

#### Entertainment Component:

- Famous Players Riverport Theatre (18-screen theatre)
- WaterMania Aquatic Centre (swimming pool and exercise centre; public facility)
- The Zone Bowling Centre (bowling centre)
- Richmond Ice Centre (ice rinks and hockey rinks; public facility)
- The Basketball Centre (basketball courts)

**Dining Component:**

- Stanley's Sports Bar and Grill (bar and restaurant)
- White Spot Restaurant (restaurant)
- Big River Brewing Company (brewery and pub)
- Lulu Sweets House of Coffee (café)
- Subway (fast food restaurant)
- Fast food counters inside SilverCity Theatre

**Retail Component:**

- None (except for small shops in some sports centres, selling athletic apparels and accessories)

## **Appendix B      Community Backgrounds of International Village Shopping Centre and Riverport Sports and Entertainment Complex**

### **B.1              Community Background of International Village Centre**

International Village development is surrounded by several established communities: Gastown, Downtown Eastside, Strathcona, Chinatown, and Downtown South (Figure 6.1) (City of Vancouver 1999c). The 1996 census data of these communities were compiled and analyzed to obtain their background information (Figure B.1). The shaded areas in Figure B.1 indicate the census tracts selected for the analysis. The selection of the census tracts is based largely on the proximity of the census tracts to the centre. Census tracts that are next to or close to the centre were selected because the impacts of entertainment centres can be extensive, as mentioned in 4.3.1: Drawing Power. For International Village Centre, the selected census tracts had 32,289 residents in 1996 (Statistics Canada 1999).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> All statistical data in Appendix B are from Statistics Canada 1999.



Figure B.1: Selected Census Tracts Surrounding International Village Centre  
(Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada)

Census data are used because they measure the socio-economic demographics of the residents. Understanding the residents' demographics living close to International Village Centre helps to determine the relevance of the impacts generated by the centre. For example, if International Village Centre generates a positive impact on a particular matter, the socio-economic conditions of the residents may reduce the ability for the residents to benefit from it.

The following sections discuss certain measures of census data, based on their potential influences on the impacts analyzed by the template in Chapter 5. Age groups, household sizes, and annual household income could affect the social impacts of demographic segregation, gentrification, and displacement. Employment rates could affect the economic impacts of employment. Modes of transportation to work could affect the environmental impacts of traffic and parking. Finally, dwelling construction periods could affect the social impacts of heritage and character.

### ***B.1.1 Age Groups, Household Sizes, and Annual Household Income***

Of the residents in the selected census tracts, 71%<sup>15</sup> are between the ages of 20 – 59 and 20% are over 59 years old (Figure B.2). Adults and seniors are the dominant age groups in the region. Only 9% of the residents are 19 years and younger (Figure B.2). A possible explanation for the low percentage of children and youth is the high percentage of single-person households in the region (66%) (Figure B.3). Single-person households usually consist of adults and seniors. Because there are only 11% of households with three or more persons in the region, there would be relatively few households with children (Figure B.3). The age and household size demographics do not yield to the family-oriented strategy used by some entertainment centres. If International Village Centre wants to attract most of the local residents, it should appeal to adults and seniors living alone.

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<sup>15</sup> Numbers and percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

### Int'l Village Community: Population by Age Groups

Data from 100% Sample  
Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada

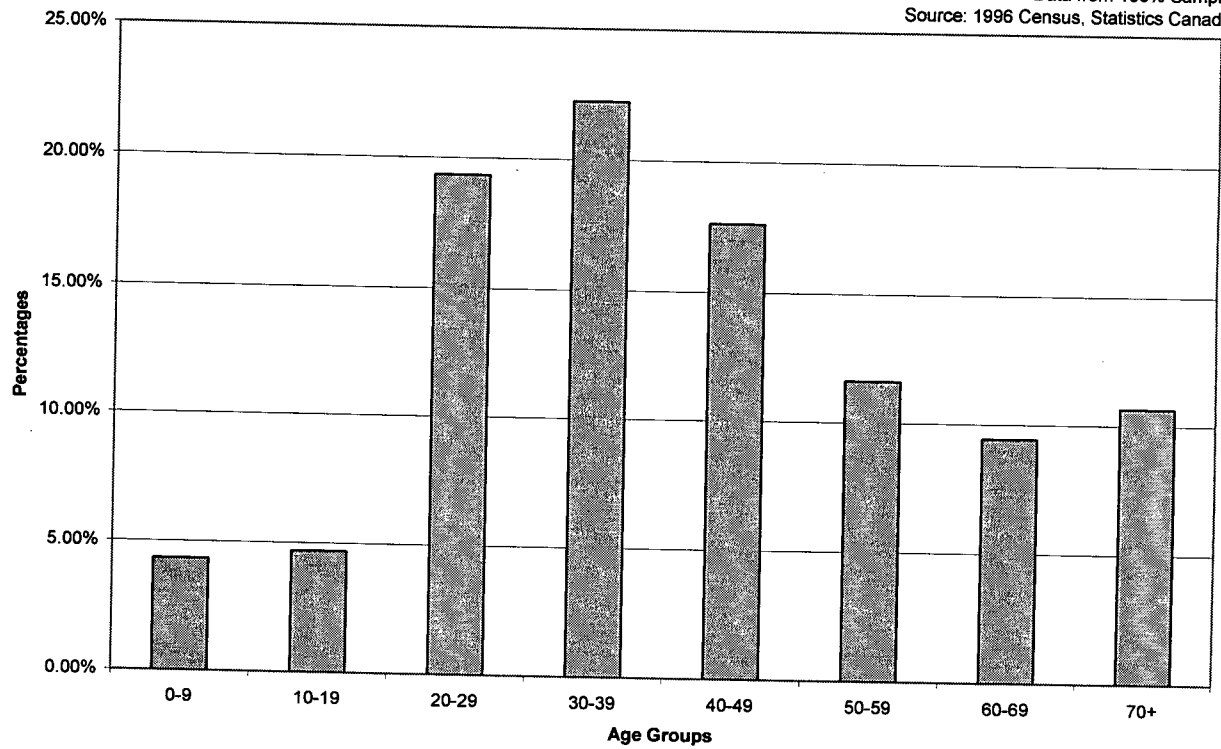


Figure B.2: Population by Age Groups of the Community Surrounding International Village Centre

### Int'l Village Community: Household Sizes

Data from 20% Sample  
Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada

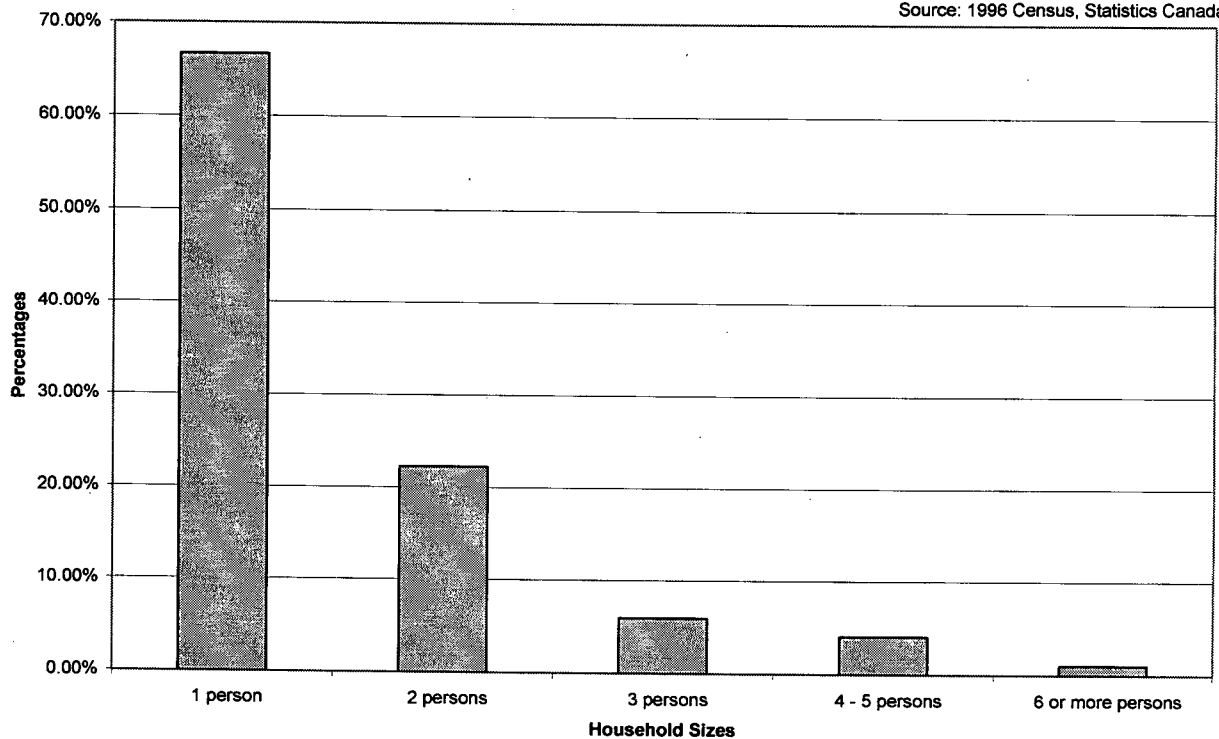


Figure B.3: Household Sizes of the Community Surrounding International Village Centre

In this region, 33% of households have annual household income less than \$10,000<sup>16</sup> and 24% of households have income between \$10,000 - \$19,999 (Figure B.4). Together, 57% of households have income less than \$20,000. The relatively large proportion of low-income households can be attributed to household sizes. Household sizes are correlated with household income because single-person households have, at most, one income earner, while multiple-person households have more incidences of multiple income earners. Therefore, the high percentage of single-person households in the region indicates a considerable number of households with less than \$20,000 annual household income. If International

Village Centre targets only households with \$20,000 or more household income, it could segregate many local households.

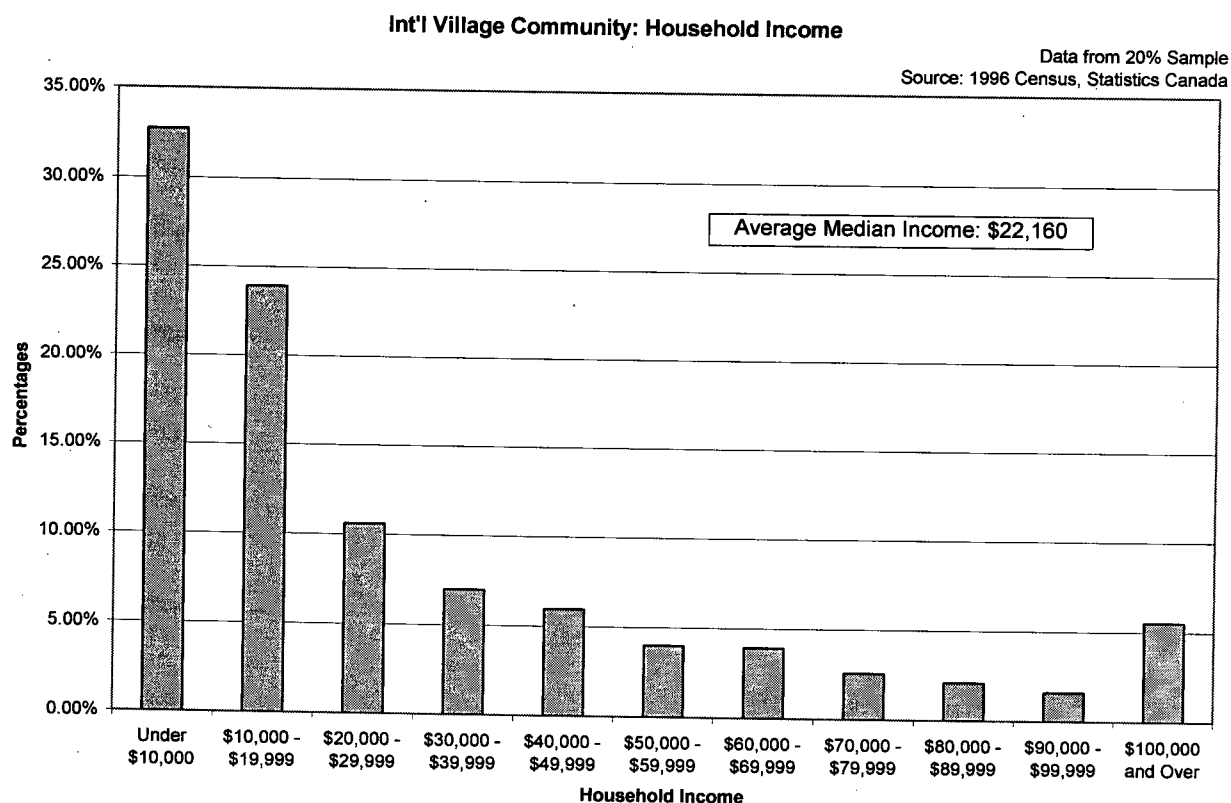


Figure B.4: Household Income of the Community Surrounding International Village Centre

### **B.1.2 Employment Rates**

In this region, 10% of the residents age 15 years and older are unemployed,<sup>17</sup> and the average unemployment rate is 19% (Figure B.5). This employment environment suggests that there is a significant group of residents looking for

<sup>16</sup> All dollar figures in this chapter are in Canadian Dollars.

<sup>17</sup> As defined by Statistics Canada, people who are unemployed and are actively looking for employment are classified as "unemployed." People who are unemployed, but are **not** actively looking for employment are classified as "not in the labour force."



employment. Some of these residents may be able to find employment in International Village Centre.

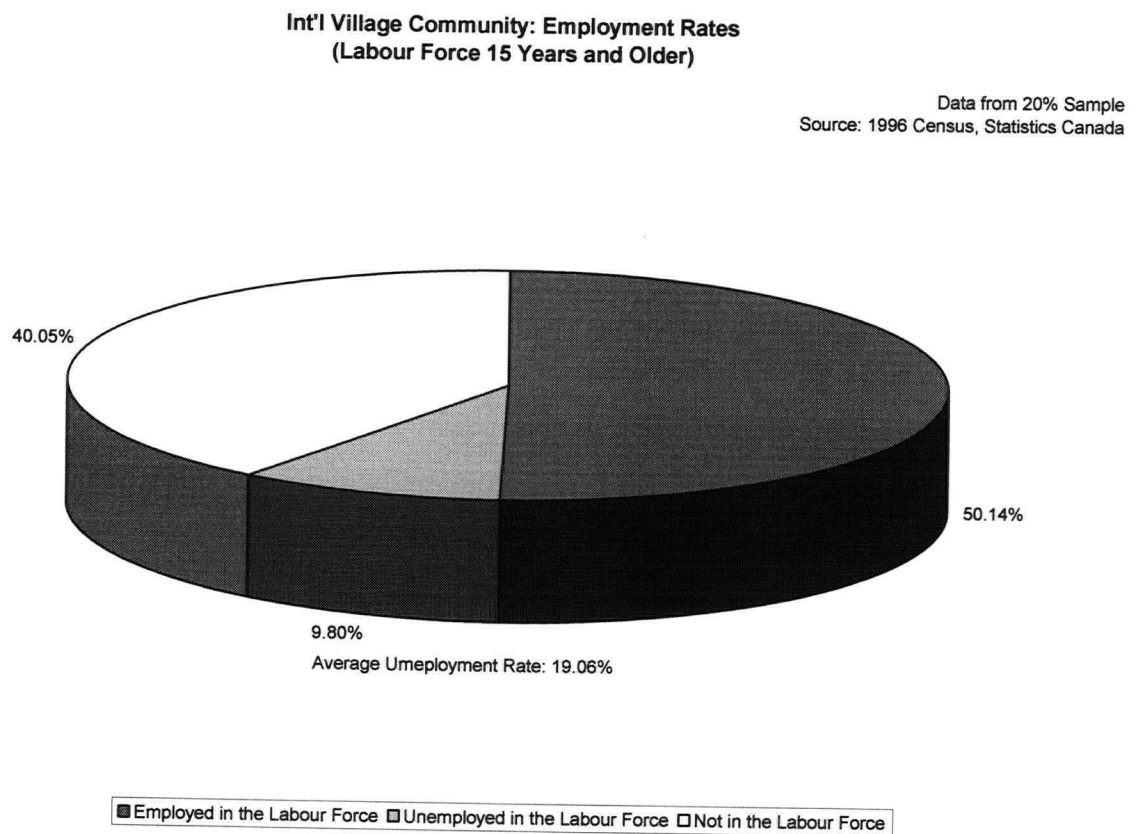


Figure B.5: Employment Rates of the Community Surrounding International Village Centre

### ***B.1.3 Modes of Transportation to Work***

The measure of "modes of transportation to work" in the census is useful as an approximate proxy to determine how the residents would travel to International Village Centre. This proxy is based on the assumption that residents who use one mode of transportation to work will likely use the same mode when they visit International Village Centre. For example, residents who drive to work are used to the convenience of driving, and they are unlikely switch to other modes of

transportation when they travel to other places. This assumption does not apply to residents living right next to the centre, as many of them would walk to the centre anyway. In this region, 42% of residents age 15 years and older use their cars, as drivers or passengers (Figure B.6). The rest use other modes to work: 31% walk, 22% take public transit, and 3% bike (Figure B.6). Non-automobile users represent 56% of the residents in the region. This comparatively higher percentage is probably due to the compact, mixed-use characteristic of downtown living. Based on this proxy measure, a significant number of the residents would walk, take public transit, or bike to International Village Centre. If the centre wants to accommodate these visitors, it could offer attractive streetscapes, convenient access from bus stops, and secure bicycle storage.

**Int'l Village Community: Modes of Transportation to Work  
(Labour Force 15 Years and Older)**

Data from 20% Sample  
Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada

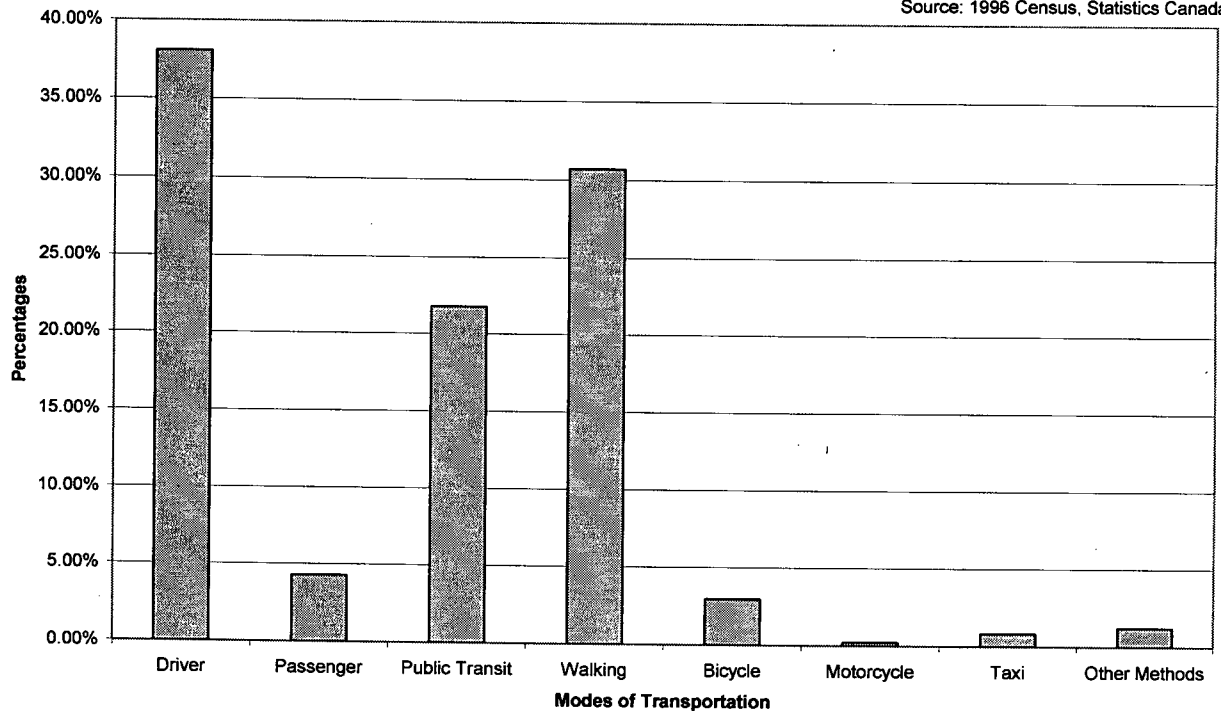


Figure B.6: Modes of Transportation to Work for the Community Surrounding International Village Centre

### ***B.1.4 Dwelling Construction Periods***

The dwelling construction periods are useful to describe part of the heritage and character of a region. Part of the community's character and heritage is from the architectural styles of the dwellings, which reflect the periods when the dwellings were constructed. The periods when the majority of dwellings were constructed allow certain architectural styles to dominate the residential landscape. For example, in the 1930s, many dwellings constructed in Greater Vancouver reflected the Art Deco style (Heritage 1981, 119). If the majority of dwellings in a Vancouver community were constructed in the 1930s, then its residential landscape

would be dominated by dwellings in Art Deco style and other popular styles of the period. These dominant architectural styles would become part of the heritage and character of the community.

For the region surrounding International Village Centre, the largest proportion of dwellings was constructed before 1946 (42%) (Figure B.7). These dwellings, built before the end of Second World War, remained in the region for more than 50 years. Some of these dwellings had one of the popular residential architecture of the period: Georgian Revival, Classical Revival, Chalet, Gothic Revival, Tudor Revival, Art Deco, Bungalow, and Italianate styles (Heritage 1981, 117 – 120).

The second largest proportion of dwellings was constructed from 1991 to 1996 (22%) (Figure B.7). The residential development in this six-year period produced as many dwellings as the development did in the previous ten-year period (22% from 1981 – 1990). This large increase can be attributed to the developments along the eastern and western shores of False Creek (CityGate and Concord Pacific), Yaletown, and Gastown. These developments were mostly apartments, a style that was different from the smaller, single-detached style of dwellings built before 1946.

The residential component of the International Village Centre is similar to the architectural style of many apartment dwellings constructed from 1991 to 1996 (Figure 6.3). The residential component of the centre complements many of the apartments constructed from 1991 to 1996 in the region.

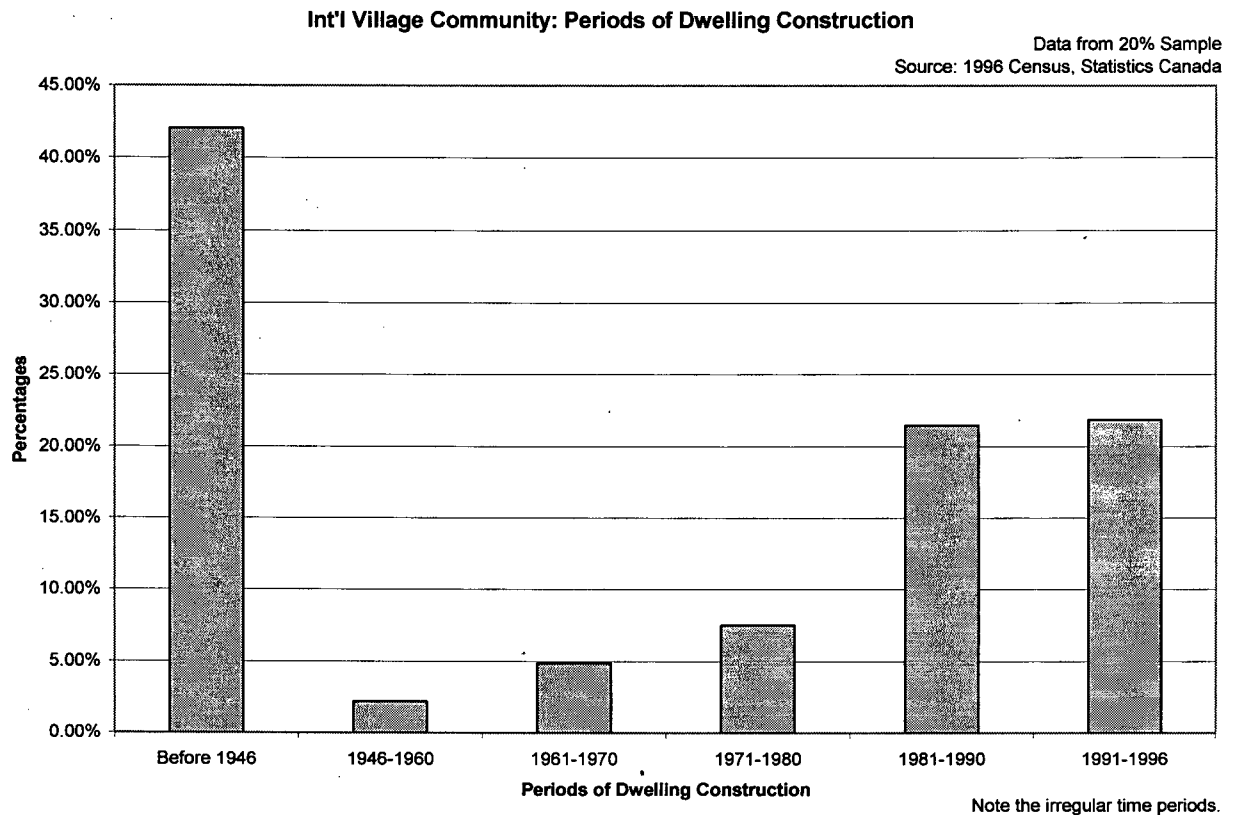


Figure B.7: Periods of Dwelling Construction in the Community Surrounding International Village Centre

## B.2 Community Background of Riverport Complex

Following the similar processes of analyzing the background of International Village Centre host community, the 1996 census data of selected tracts were used to analyze the background of the Riverport Complex host community (Figure B.8). The shaded areas in Figure B.8 indicate the census tracts selected for the analysis. The selection was also based on the proximity of the census tracts to the complex. The selected census tracts had 33,467 residents in 1996. The analysis of the Riverport Complex community uses the same census measures as the ones from the analysis of the International Village Centre community.

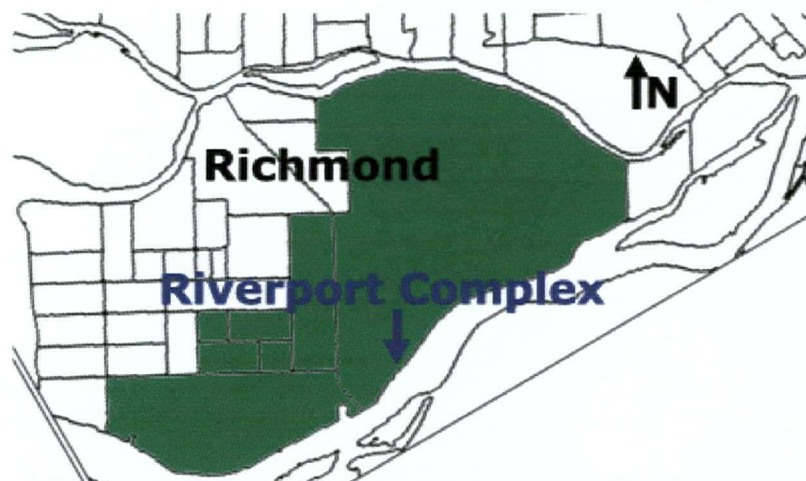


Figure B.8: Selected Census Tracts Surrounding Riverport Complex  
(Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada)

### ***B.2.1 Age Groups, Household Sizes, and Annual Household Income***

In this region, the largest two clusters of the age groups are 30 – 49 years old (34%)<sup>18</sup> and 0 – 19 years old (28%)<sup>19</sup> (Figure B.9). These clusters suggest a large presence of families with children in the region: couples between the ages of 30 – 49 with children between the ages of 0 – 19. This suggestion is based on the assumption that children and youth (0 – 19 years old) usually live with their parents or guardians (mostly 30 – 49 years old) in the same households. The validity of this assumption is partially supported by an analysis of household sizes. “Four- to five”-people households are the largest group in the region (33%) (Figure B.10). Many of these households are likely to be couples with two or three children.

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<sup>18</sup> 18% (40 – 49 years old) + 17% (30 – 39%) = 34% (34% is accurate; 35% is calculated from rounded numbers.)

<sup>19</sup> 15% (10 – 19 years old) + 13% (0 – 9 years old) = 28%

Based on this analysis, there is a significant presence of families with children in the region. This demographic coincides with the family-orientation of many entertainment centres. If Riverport Complex targets families with children, it would appeal to many households in the region.

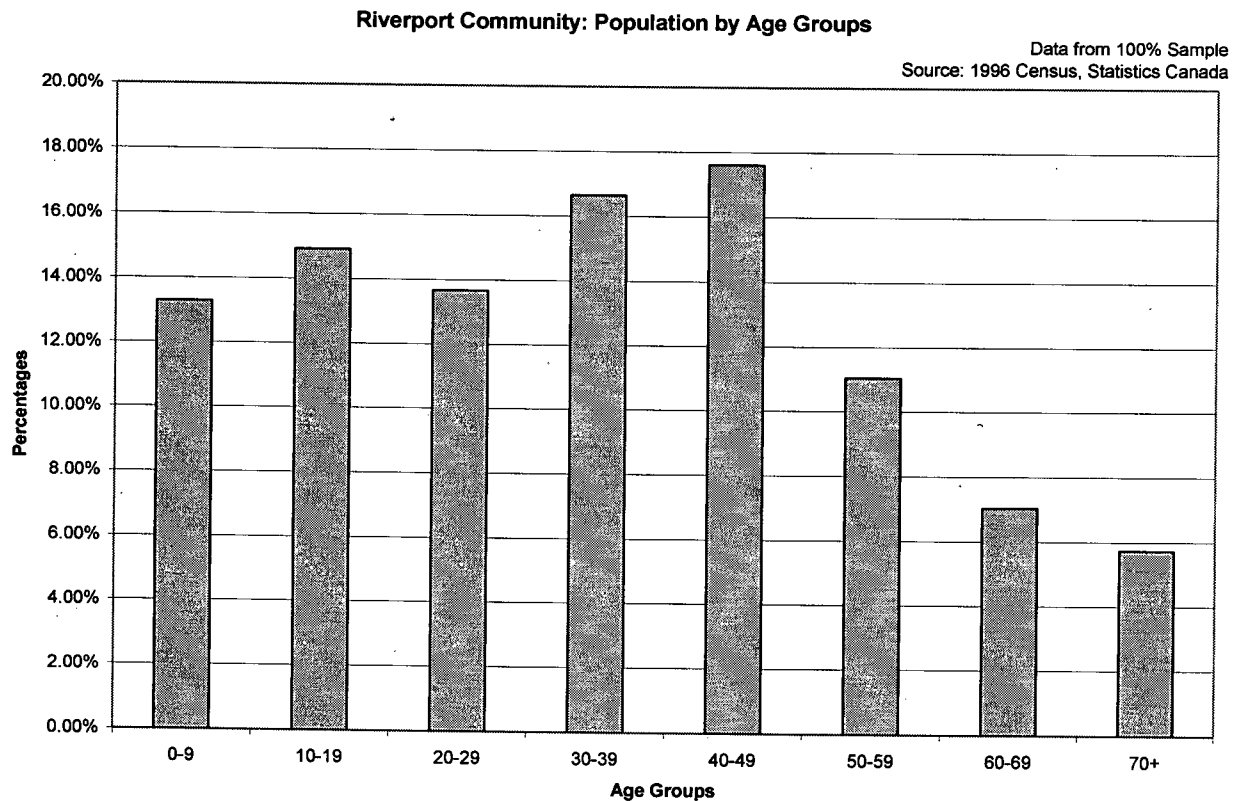


Figure B.9: Population by Age Groups of the Community Surrounding Riverport Complex

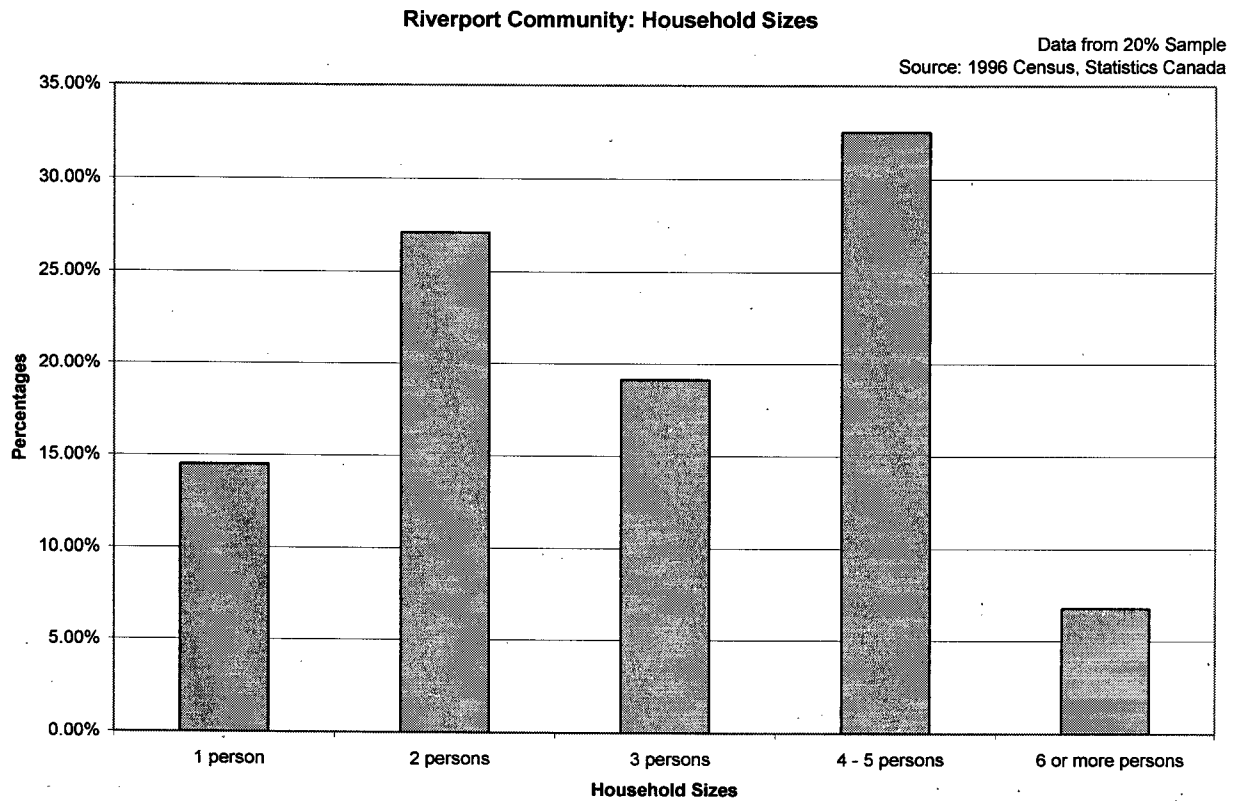


Figure B.10: Household Sizes of the Community Surrounding Riverport Complex

The household income data show that 86% of households have \$20,000 or more annual household income (Figure B.11). If Riverport Complex targets households with income \$20,000 or greater, then it would still serve many households in the host region.



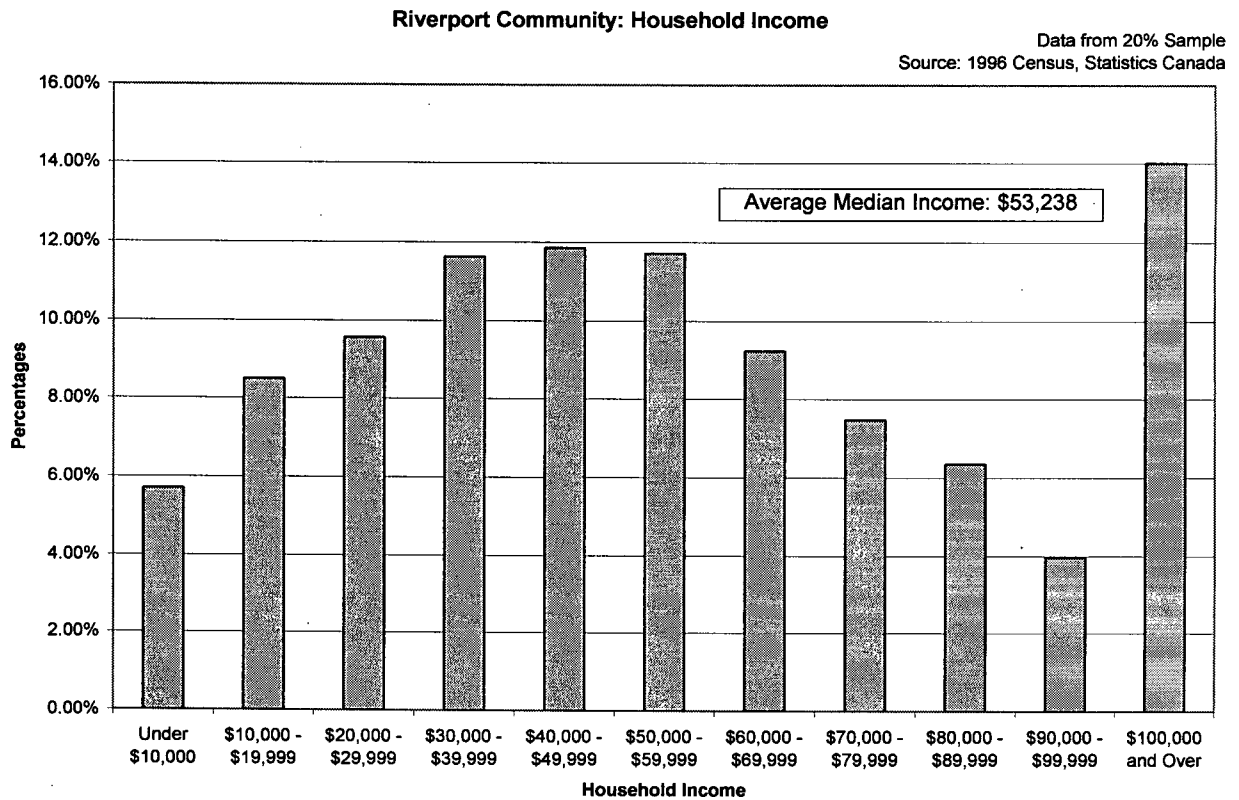


Figure B.11: Household Income of the Community Surrounding Riverport Complex

### **B.2.2      *Employment Rates***

In this region, 5% of the residents age 15 years and older are unemployed and the unemployment rate is 8% (Figure B.12). With a relatively low unemployment environment, the region has a low supply of active jobseekers available to work at Riverport Complex.

**Riverport Community: Employment Rates  
(Labour Force 15 Years and Older)**

Data from 20% Sample  
Source: 1996 Census, Statistics Canada

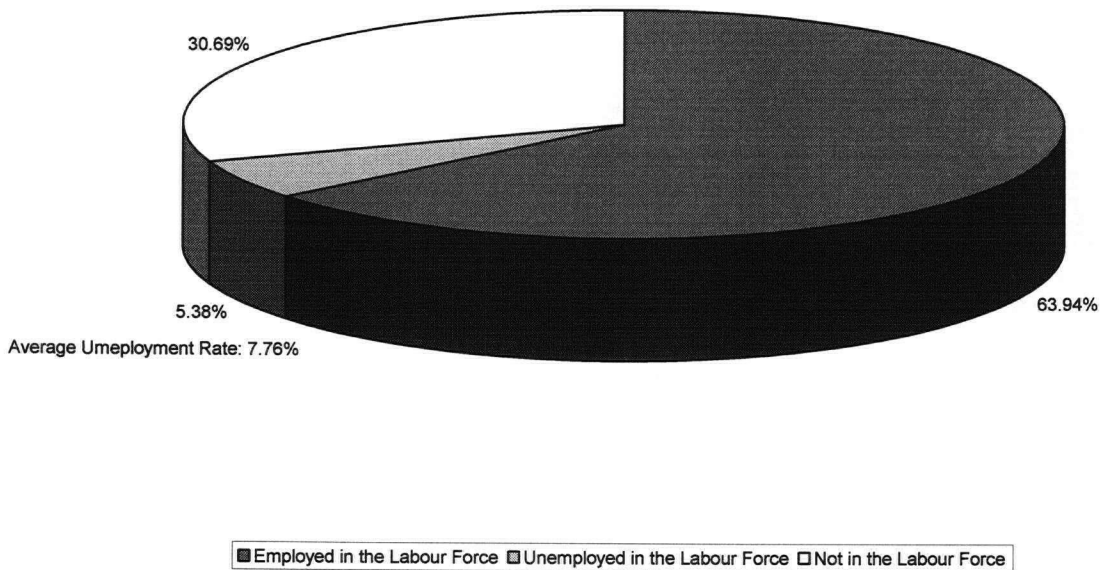


Figure B.12: Employment Rates of the Community Surrounding Riverport Complex

### **B.2.3 Modes of Transportation to Work**

88%<sup>20</sup> of the residents age 15 years and older use their automobiles to get to work (Figure B.13). This high percentage partly reflects the sprawling suburban character of the region. Many residents depend on their automobiles for their daily routines. Based on the high percentage of this proxy measure, many residents would likely use their automobiles to visit Riverport Complex. If the complex wants to accommodate these local residents, it could provide convenient road access and adequate parking.

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<sup>20</sup> 80% (drivers) + 8% (passengers) = 88%

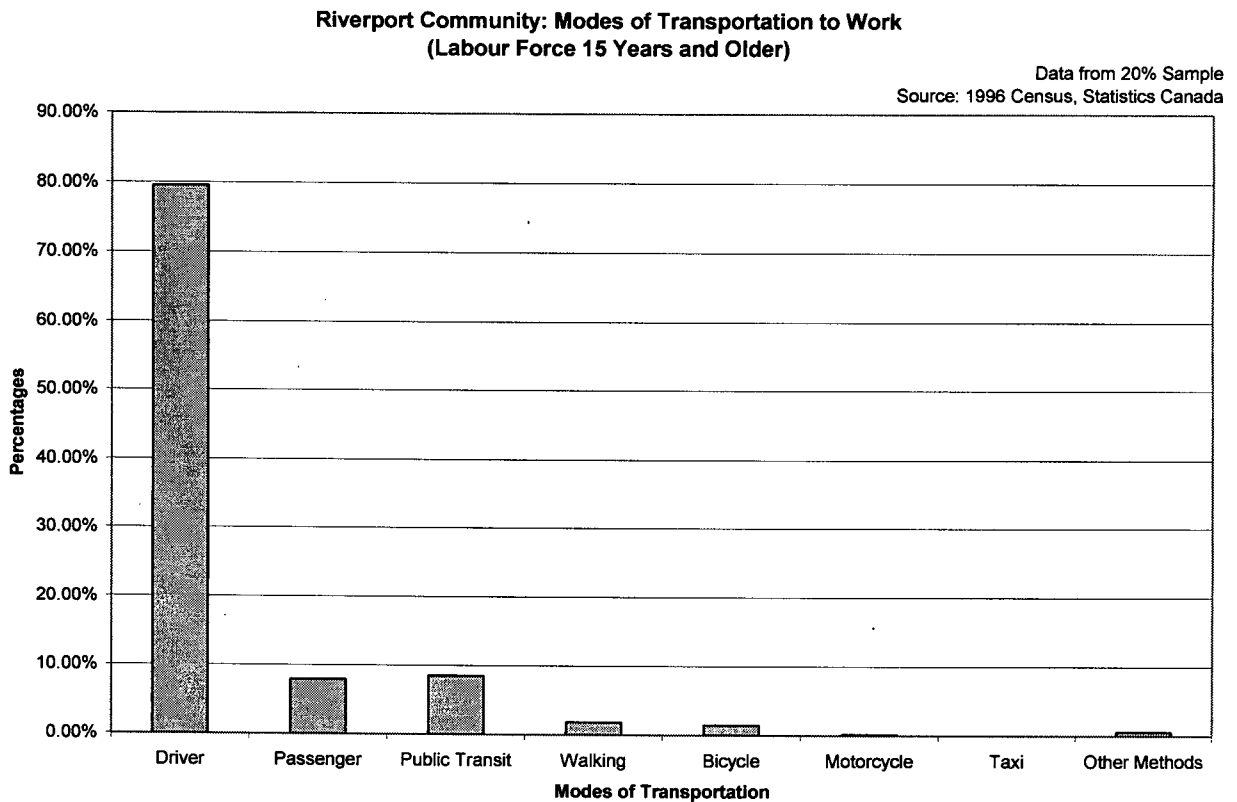


Figure B.13: Modes of Transportation to Work for the Community Surrounding Riverport Complex

#### ***B.2.4 Dwelling Construction Periods***

From the measure of "dwelling construction periods," the largest proportion of dwellings was constructed in the 1970s (38%) (Figure B.14). The large increase of percentage from the periods before 1970s indicates that the region experienced rapid residential development in the 1970s. In this period, the common dwelling type was single-detached houses, and the popular architectural style was "Vancouver Specials," characterized by boxy forms and hip roofs (Carrigg 2003). The dominance of the 1970s dwelling style contributes to the modern suburban character of the region. This character appears to be complemented by the boxy, sprawling style of Riverport Complex (Figures 6.12, 6.13, and 6.14).

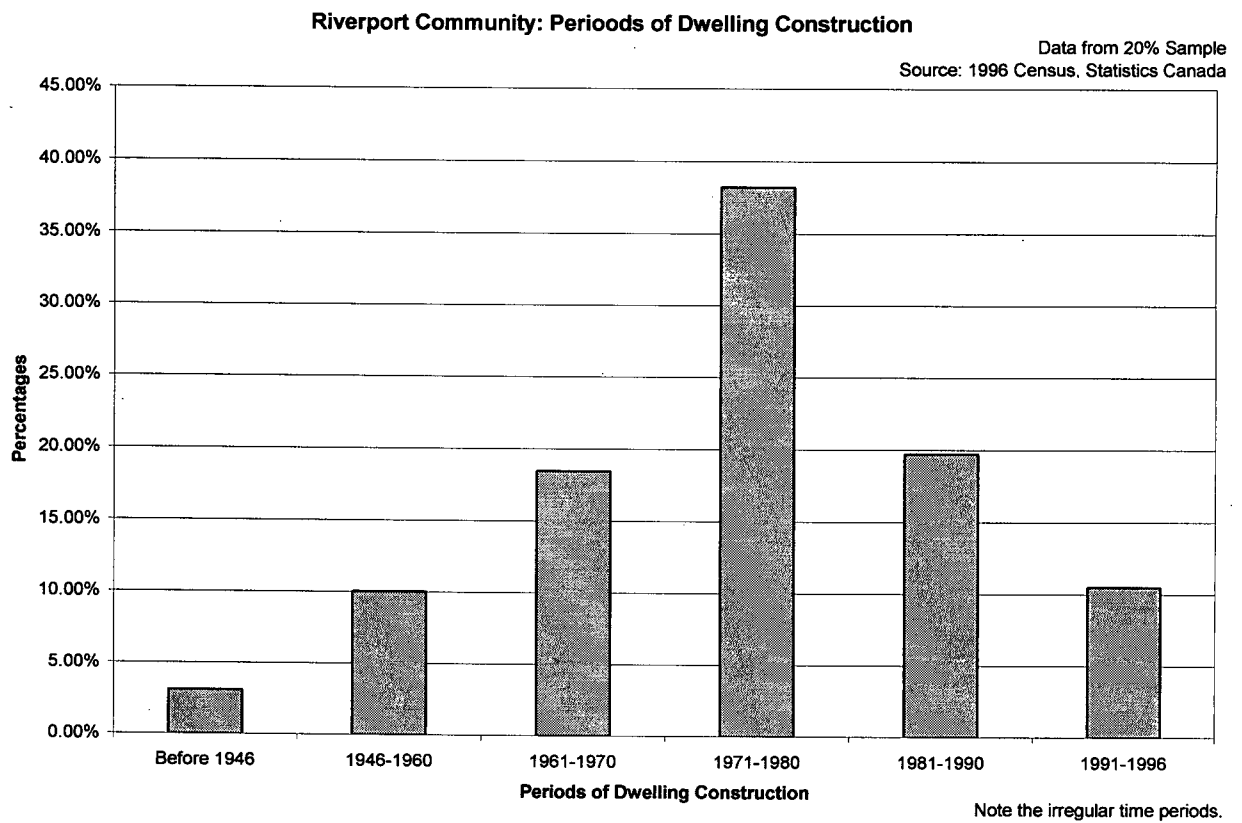


Figure B.14: Periods of Dwelling Construction in the Community Surrounding Riverport Complex

## **Appendix C      Municipal Guidelines, Definitions, and Zoning**

### **C.1              City of Vancouver's "Arcade" Guidelines**

(Source: City of Vancouver 1996)

#### **Arcade Guidelines:**

##### **1. Application and Intent**

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with a district schedule of the Zoning and Development By-Law or with an official development plan by-law for development permit applications for an arcade, including any redevelopment of the premises. Arcade is defined in Section 2 of the Zoning and Development By-Law.

##### **2. General Design Considerations**

(a) Large windows increase pedestrian interest by permitting easy viewing into the arcade. Windows should be transparent and not tinted, as natural light increases the comfort of seating areas within the arcade. Machines or other equipment should not be placed in front of the windows. Posters and signs in the windows should be kept to a minimum.

(b) Dark lighting within arcades results in a poor public image, reduces the perception of safety, and hinders the ability of police to monitor the premises. Lighting levels should be sufficient to permit easy surveillance from the street, while recognizing the need to prevent glare on video screens and other video equipment.

(c) A seating area should be provided for patrons. This area should be located towards the front of the arcade to allow two-way interaction between arcade users and passersby.

**C.2 City of Vancouver "Family Sports and Entertainment Centre" Definition and License By-Law**

(Source: City of Vancouver 2003a)

**Family Sports and Entertainment Centre Definition:**

Family Sports and Entertainment Centre means premises where a minimum of 55 percent of the total floor area is used for simulated sports and associated circulation space; and the balance is used for the administration of the centre, the sale of food and retail products, and the provision of games and automatic machines offering games for amusement or entertainment.

**Family Sports and Entertainment Centre By-Laws:**

**15.3**

[1] The provisions of this section apply to all persons carrying on the business of operating a family sports and entertainment centre.

[2] No operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall install, allow to be installed or otherwise provide for use on the premises less than 4 or more than 150 vending machines offering games for amusement or entertainment

[3] (a) No operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall install, allow to be installed or otherwise provide for use on the premises any machine if it, or the

operator, redeems successful play with money or with prizes that can be redeemed for money on the premises.

(ii) No operator or a family sports and entertainment centre shall install, provide or conduct prize games if the outcome of such game is determined by chance or mixed chance and skill.

[4] No operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall permit any customer, person or onlooker to enter or remain on the premises between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. except that in the case of a person under the age of fifteen years no operator shall permit that person to enter or remain on the premises between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. An operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall be deemed to permit such play, operation or use if it occurs while the operator or an employee of the operator is present on the premises.

[5] No operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall permit any person apparently or actually under the age of fifteen years to enter or remain on the premises between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays inclusive, unless the day is a school holiday or unless the underage person is accompanied at all times by the person's parent, legal guardian or school teacher.

[6] Where reasonable doubt exists as to the age of a person desiring to enter or remain in a family sports and entertainment centre the operator shall not permit the person to enter or remain on the premises if the person is unable to provide documented proof of age.

[7] No operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall allow any intoxicated person on the premises or allow any person on the premises to drink alcohol beverages or take drugs or take part in any gambling.

[8] Every operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall keep the premises clean, shall not cover up any windows in a manner so as to prevent a clear view of the interior of the premises, and shall not enclose individual activity areas in a manner, which prevents views into the activity area.

[9] Every operator of a family sports and entertainment centre shall post in a conspicuous place a summary of the rules of conduct for customers, including the rules contained in this section 15.3.

### **C.3 City of Vancouver "Entertainment Centre" Definitions and By-Laws**

(Source: City of Vancouver 2003a)

#### **Entertainment Centre Definitions:**

Entertainment Centre means the use of premises where a minimum of 55 percent of the total floor area is used for simulated sports, simulated games and similar activities and associated circulation space, and the balance is used for the administration of the space, the sale of food and retail products, and to provide vending machines offering games for amusement or entertainment.



## **Entertainment Centre By-Laws:**

14.1 (1) The provisions of this section apply to all persons carrying on the business of operating an entertainment centre.

(2) No operator of an entertainment centre shall install, allow to be installed or otherwise provide for use on the premises less than 4 or more than 150 vending machines offering games for amusement or entertainment.

(3) (a) No operator of an entertainment centre shall install, allow to be installed or otherwise provide for use on the premises any machine if it, or the operator, redeems successful play with money or with prizes that can be redeemed for money on the premises.

(b) No operator of an entertainment centre shall install, provide or conduct prize games if the outcome of such game is determined by chance or mixed chance and skill.

(4) No operator of an entertainment centre shall permit any customer, person or onlooker to enter or remain on the premises between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. except that in the case of a person under the age of fifteen years no operator shall permit that person to enter or remain on the premises between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. An operator of an entertainment centre shall be deemed to permit such play, operation or use if it occurs while the operator or an employee of the operator is present on the premises.

(5) No operator of an entertainment centre shall permit any person apparently or actually under the age of fifteen years to enter or remain on the premises between

the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays inclusive, unless the day is a school holiday or unless the underage person is accompanied at all times by the person's parent, legal guardian or school teacher.

(6) Where reasonable doubt exists as to the age of a person desiring to enter or remain in an entertainment centre the operator shall not permit the person to enter or remain on the premises if the person is unable to provide documented proof of age.

(7) No operator of an entertainment centre shall allow any intoxicated person on the premises or allow any person on the premises to drink alcoholic beverages or take drugs or take part in any gambling.

(8) Every operator of an entertainment centre shall keep the premises clean, shall not cover up any windows in a manner so as to prevent a clear view of the interior of the premises, and shall not enclose individual activity areas in a manner, which prevents views into the activity area.

(9) Every operator of an entertainment centre shall post in a conspicuous place a summary of the rules of conduct for customers, including the rules contained in this section 14.1.

## **C.4 City of Richmond 238 "Athletics and Entertainment District" (AE) Zoning**

(Source: City of Richmond 2000)

### **Athletics and Entertainment District Zoning:**

#### **238 ATHLETICS AND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT (AE)**

The intent of this zoning district is to provide for athletic and entertainment facilities and uses.

##### **238.1 PERMITTED USES**

- ASSEMBLY;
- COMMERCIAL ENTERTAINMENT;
- RECREATION FACILITY;
- FOOD CATERING ESTABLISHMENT;
- DORMITORY BUILDING;
- EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION;
- HOTEL;
- OFFICE;
- COMMUNITY USE;
- CARETAKER RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION, limited to one such unit per lot;
- ACCESSORY USES, BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES
- AUTOMOBILE PARKING.

##### **238.2 PERMITTED DENSITY**

- .01 Maximum Floor Area Ratio: 1.0 (exclusive of parts of the building, which are used for off-street parking purposes).

##### **238.3 MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE: 60%**

##### **238.4 MINIMUM SETBACKS FROM PROPERTY LINES**

- .01 Road Setbacks: 6 m (19.685 ft.).