

PEDESTRIAN MALLS: THEIR ROLES IN THE
REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN

by

HIN-FONG YIP

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School of Community and Regional Planning

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date:

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ABSTRACT

During the past two decades the Pedestrian Mall has emerged as a new development concept in the downtowns of many cities of the world. This paper attempts to study the role of the pedestrian mall in the revitalization of downtown.

As a background to this study, the author researched the various functions of the street from historical time to the present day, the type of pedestrian malls that have been built, and the elements that are basic to the pedestrian mall.

Many malls have been built in Europe, England, the United States and Canada; some have succeeded but some failed. The experiences of eleven pedestrian malls were reviewed and the criticism by various writers were recorded, and sometimes analysed. Out of this review, the author has also identified the different stages generally taken during the planning process of pedestrian malls. These planning stages may be useful as guidelines for future mall developments.

The author finds that the revitalization of downtown is a very confused issue. This study concludes that the role of the pedestrian mall in the revialization must be looked at from two different points of view. Philosophically, the pedestrian mall represents the return of the street as a social space where

people congregate and carry on with a variety of activities. In this respect the human scale of the space must be emphasized and the images of the city must be preserved and enhanced. Pragmatically, the pedestrian mall is a tool to generate a higher degree of economic activities, to resolve the pedestrian-vehicular conflict, and to create a better environment for human beings. It follows whether a mall succeeds or not depends on what it sets out to achieve.

In order that the pedestrian mall can fulfil its function many requirements must be met. These requirements include the close cooperation between the merchants and the civic government; the establishment of a Mall Authority; the provision of accessibility and transportation to and from the mall; and the addition of amenities and good urban design.

The Granville Mall in Vancouver is chosen as a case study. This mall is considered as a political action and was completed in a very short time. It has avoided in the planning process any experimentation, and the feasibility study and design phase were kept to the minimum. The recent evaluation surveys have reported that the sales volume has increased, but a city-wide opinion survey conducted by the author has indicated that 48% of the sample either disliked the mall for various reasons or were indifferent. It may be concluded that the Granville Mall is successful in revitalizing the economic activity of downtown but

falls short of becoming a social space for people. The author has suggested some ideas in making the Granville Mall into a downtown centre for people if the transit is removed from the Mall.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE "MALL MOVEMENT"

In recent years many shopping streets in the downtown area of our cities have been converted into pedestrian malls. In North America, the pedestrian mall "experiment" started in 1957 in Springfield, Oregon, as a 10 day trial, and it immediately gained national prominence through its novelty, featured attractions and boldness in banishing the auto and freeing the pedestrian (Weiss 1964). The "mall movement" soon spread across the United States and into Canada, picking up momentum as time went on, resulting in practically all major cities possessing some form of pedestrian malls. It was estimated that there are over 50 malls in existence or being planned in cities of the United States of various sizes which include Kalamazoo (1958), Toledo (1960), Fresno (1964), Minneapolis (1968), Tacoma, New York and many others. In Canada, the most publicized malls can be found in Ottawa (1964), Toronto (1971), Calgary (1971) and recently in Vancouver (1974).

In Europe, where the cities have a different historic background, this movement did not flourish until about 1966 when Essen, Germany, converted its major shopping street, Limbeckerstrasse into a pedestrian mall, which was believed to be the first modern one in Europe (Cottle 1972). Since then we have witnessed some pedestrian mall development in Cologne (1966),

Copenhagen (1966), Munich (1967) and Vienna (1972). Cities in the United Kingdom have also considerable experience in the building of pedestrian malls, particularly in the city of London (1972). Other British cities which have pedestrian malls include Leeds (1970), Liverpool (1970), Norwich and Newcastle (1971). The approximate time of conversion is shown in parenthesis.

B. THE DECAY OF THE DOWNTOWN CORE

The main argument behind the "mall movement" is that the pedestrian mall can be a useful tool to revitalize our downtown cores which are in a state of decay, although the politicians, the planners and the business public realize that the pedestrian mall is not necessarily the panacea to all the problems in our downtown today. The decay of downtown has prompted many cities to undertake large urban renewal projects in the 50's and 60's. Nearly all of these projects involved extensive demolition and re-building which were very costly. Some cities chose the pedestrian mall as a small scale urban renewal project which could be done at a relatively small cost. The degree of decay of our downtown cores varies from one city to another, and the nature of the decay could be either economical, physical, social or environmental. In some cities their downtowns have never matured enough to be in a state of decay. They are in fact suffering from the "growing pains" rather than decay. The downtown is considered to be the heart

of our cities which must be kept healthy at all times if the cities are to survive (Gruen 1964). According to Charles Abrams:

"A city's life depends upon whether its heart continues functioning. The heart of a city is its downtown. Downtown is the business centre, the place of work, the museum of style, the change of scene, the confluence of diversities, the escape to anonymity It is the place that draws the masses and that the masses have made." (Abrams 1961).

He further emphasized that the cities with pulsating downtowns are the cities which thrive. Those without them are doomed to slow oblivion.

The decay of the downtown core may be attributed to many causes. But the major cause is the flight to the suburbs during the 50's made possible by the automobiles and the free-ways. The suburban shopping centres soon became very popular because of easy accessibility, ample parking space and a pedestrian mall concept which offered a safe and enjoyable environment for shoppers. The competition from these suburban shopping centres has led to the decline of the retail trades in downtown.

Another major reason for the decay of the downtown core is the vehicular-pedestrian conflict. The rapidly rising population in our cities and the increasing volume of cars and trucks have created chaos in our street system.

The pedestrians are restricted to the narrow strip of sidewalk while the cars which are capable of travelling at high speeds are virtually crawling at 5 m.p.h.. The result is quite obvious: a very high accident rate, a deteriorating environment due to air and noise pollution, increasing mental stress and frustration to the pedestrians and the drivers, and a very depressing view of our city streetscape.

C. REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN & THE PEDESTRIAN MALL

The pedestrian mall was introduced with the purpose of preventing further decay of the downtown core, and in so doing restoring its vitality as a central place. This is particularly true of the North American cities. Economically, revitalization means the anticipated increase in retail sales and property values. Since the tax base of most of our cities is on assessment the increase of property values will therefore bring about an increase in tax revenues. The improvement of the street coupled with the increase of sales will lead to the physical improvement of the buildings fronting on the pedestrian mall and also encourage new construction developments. It was believed that a better physical environment will reduce the crime rate of our streets. Rudofsky (1964) pointed out "that the ugliness of cities begets boredom and violence in children and adults alike."

Socially, revitalization implies an anticipation of an increase of pedestrian traffic in the mall area. This increase of pedestrian volume is important not only to the businesses but also to the idea of restoring the street as a social space. Social activities and "happenings" will attract people of all ages to visit the mall, to enjoy or to participate in the activities.

Revitalization of the downtown also implies the improvement of the environment. As a result of the vehicles being totally or partially banned from the streets where these malls are planned there will be a reduction of air and noise pollution. The vehicle-free and pleasurable environment is most conducive to walking and shopping as proven by the success of the suburban shopping centres. Although the pedestrian mall is employed as a tool to revitalize downtown it has met with failure in some cities. Nevertheless the majority of the pedestrian malls created during the past 15 years have proven successful.

D. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The hypothesis of this thesis is that the pedestrian mall plays a very important role in the revitalization of downtown. This paper begins with a research into the various functions of the street, a study of the various types of

pedestrian malls and their basic elements. Based on published material available the experience of some of the cities of the world in building pedestrian malls are reviewed. From the planning process of these experiences the generally adopted procedure and problems involved can be identified. These may be useful as guidelines for future mall developments. The recently completed Granville Street Mall in Vancouver is discussed as a case study. In this case study some comparisons are drawn from similar malls in other cities and some recommendations are made to ensure continuing success of the Granville Mall.

II. PEDESTRIAN MALLS

A. DEFINITION OF THE STREET

Since the pedestrian mall involves the banning of vehicular traffic on the street and returning it to the full use of the pedestrians, it is essential to understand the function of the street from historical time to the present day.

The generally accepted definition of today's streets is that it is an urban form of layout consisting of a carriageway for vehicles, flanking pavements for pedestrians, and with frontage development with direct access to premises for pedestrians and occasionally for vehicles (Allen 1967).

Charles Abrams considered the streets as a set of arteries vital to the health of the heart which is the downtown.

Louis Kahn in his address to the design seminar, "Man is the Measure", several years ago referred to the street as a community room where people live, learn, shop and work and that a long street is a succession of rooms given their distinction, room for room, by their meeting of crossing streets. He further emphasized:

"A city is measured by the character of its institutions. The street is one of its first institutions. Today these institutions are on trial. I believe it is so because

they have lost the inspirations of their beginning." (Seminar sponsored by American Iron and Steel Institute, N.Y.)

B. FUNCTION OF THE STREET

From the earliest periods of town building the street has had, to varying degrees, three main functions, to some extent deliberate and to some extent fortuitous. These are: (1) a means of direct access to buildings which face on to it or lie just behind it; (2) a means of physical communication between one part of a town and another for people, vehicles and animals; and (3) a means of affording contact between people living along the street (Allen 1967). The first two functions of access and communication are rather clear but the third function assumes the means whereby chance and planned contacts could take place on the street and not necessarily to be in a formal gathering place such as the public square or civic building.

There are also other functions which changed the forms of the street depending on the dynamics of society and political and city administration. The Romans, for instance, with their political genius for large scale physical organizations, needing to express the concept of Empire, introduced the formally conceived street for civic spectacle. The mediaeval streets, on the other hand, were very tightly

spaced and seemingly random in their layout because they were confined within enclosing defensive walls. Lawrence Halprin described the mediaeval street as having intriguing characteristics for modern people in that it tends to be narrow and winding with an air of mystery and adventure. One does not see very far ahead, and the promise of fulfilment is always one step beyond (Halprin 1972). The Renaissance street was treated as grand urban space with both sides lined with architecturally designed facades as well as orderly arranged trees and plants. These streets were also interconnected with piazzas which were the perfect space for social display.

The building of Renaissance streets extended well into the 19th century. With industrialization and the demand for rapid housing, the grid-iron layout became the vogue in industrial Europe and America because of its simplicity and expediency. The streets then were restricted to the one function of serving the indifferent buildings which lined them. Today the motor vehicle penetrates every street and lane of our cities, villages and towns. As the population and the volume of vehicles increase a conflict in our streets is inevitable. This situation is particularly critical in the shopping streets. Many attempts have been made in segregating the pedestrian traffic from the cars either horizontally or vertically, resulting in the design and

construction of pedestrian malls at various levels. Sometimes a compromise is made, resulting in segregation by time zones and transit malls.

C. TYPE OF PEDESTRIAN MALLS

There are several types of pedestrian malls depending on the physical layout of the streets and buildings, the volume of traffic they have to handle, the building funds available and the kind of environment the city wishes to achieve. The pedestrian is simply a person travelling on foot and a mall can be defined as a pedestrian street from which, in its pure form, all but emergency vehicles are excluded and which extends the full length of the defined area without interruption.

(1) TEMPORARY MALLS

These may be market streets closed to vehicles on market days or busy shopping streets closed on certain days of the week or time of the year, e.g. weekends or Christmas or when the pedestrian flows are the heaviest. In Vancouver, Robson Street has been temporarily closed on several weekends as a temporary mall.

Many cities have introduced the temporary mall as an experiment in order to discover the public's and the merchants' reactions, to check sales volume, to record problems

that may need attention and to observe the traffic flow if a permanent mall is considered.

The temporary malls are created by closing a street, often the city's main shopping street, to vehicles for a specified trial period. Some street furnitures, planter boxes, kiosks and other movable decorations are placed in the right of way in order to create a mall atmosphere. After the test, the right of way again becomes the conventional sidewalk and road way. Such temporary malls are generally financed by the city and some private merchants. The Yonge Street Mall in Toronto and the Madison Avenue Mall in New York are examples of temporary malls which did not materialize into a permanent mall.

Many professional planners do not consider experimental malls a serious attempt to solve downtown's problems and caution against using them. Victor Gruen has pointed out:

"The improvement of the appearance of our cities cannot be accomplished merely by subtraction, but rather by addition. By subtracting automobile traffic from one street without adding anything to its environmental qualities, a deadly atmosphere is created ... Traffic eliminated from one street is, perforce, transferred to neighbouring streets, and unbearable conditions of congestion are thereby created." (Gruen 1964)

(2) TRANSIT MALLS

These are streets dedicated to pedestrians and public transport and from which all private vehicles are excluded, with transit lanes divided from the pedestrian areas. In most cases only buses, emergency vehicles and taxis are allowed in the mall area. Delivery trucks may be permitted in the mall area only in certain specified times of the day.

In transit malls, the sidewalks are widened, leaving a carriage way in the middle for public transport. This carriage way may take on a serpentine form in order to reduce the monotony of a straight roadway. Extensive planting of trees is generally employed to provide shade and to emphasize the human scale of the mall.

Transit malls are not full pedestrian malls but they are built on a permanent basis. A transit mall is ideal when there is no alternate form of transportation to service the area or when the cost for a full mall is prohibitive. The most publicized transit mall is the Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis. Other recent transit malls include the Newcastle Mall in the U.K., the Zurich Mall in Switzerland and the Granville Mall in Vancouver.

(3) PERMANENT MALLS

These streets are totally repaved and all traffic is

banned from entering the streets at all times. This type of mall allows complete freedom of movement for pedestrians who would otherwise be psychologically inhibited by the presence of cars. All mall furniture is relatively immobile and landscaping is on a permanent basis. The services are placed underground and the facades of the structures facing the mall are given some form of unified architectural treatment. Since no traffic is allowed on these full malls, sculptures, fountains, etc. can be permanently placed. In addition, there are generally spaces available for the establishment of sidewalk cafes, playgrounds and holding of flower shows and concerts, etc..

Most of the pedestrian malls in Europe are of this type where the design blends in very well with the scale and character of the streets. The best known examples are the Strøget in Copenhagen and the mall in the Old Town of Munich. In the U.S., full malls can be found in Kalamazoo, Michigan and Fresno of California. In Canada, the most successful one is the Sparks Street Mall of Ottawa.

Of the three types of pedestrian street malls mentioned so far, the most expensive will be the permanent malls, because they require very extensive work on the roadway and on relocating all the underground services. The existing traffic on these streets also has to be re-routed.

(4) COVERED MALLS

This is another type of permanent mall devoted to pedestrians only except it is roofed over. Since the people are protected from the weather the covered mall does convey the feeling of being in a room.

Milan's Galleria is an excellent example of this type. This mall has a dominantly vertical proportion of space with a glass roof over it. The facade treatment and the floor design are well integrated. The space is used very extensively for art shows and exhibits (Figure 1).

This concept of a covered mall is widely used in the shopping centres, where the entire mall is closed in and air-conditioned. It allows complete freedom of movement within the mall space and is ideal for indoor art shows and other activities.

(5) ELEVATED MALLS

This type of mall is used to segregate the pedestrians from the vehicular traffic by connecting the second floors of the buildings with bridges across the streets. Thus, the second floor levels of the buildings become shopping arcades. This type of mall has the advantage of being able to be built quickly without having to conflict with underground utilities

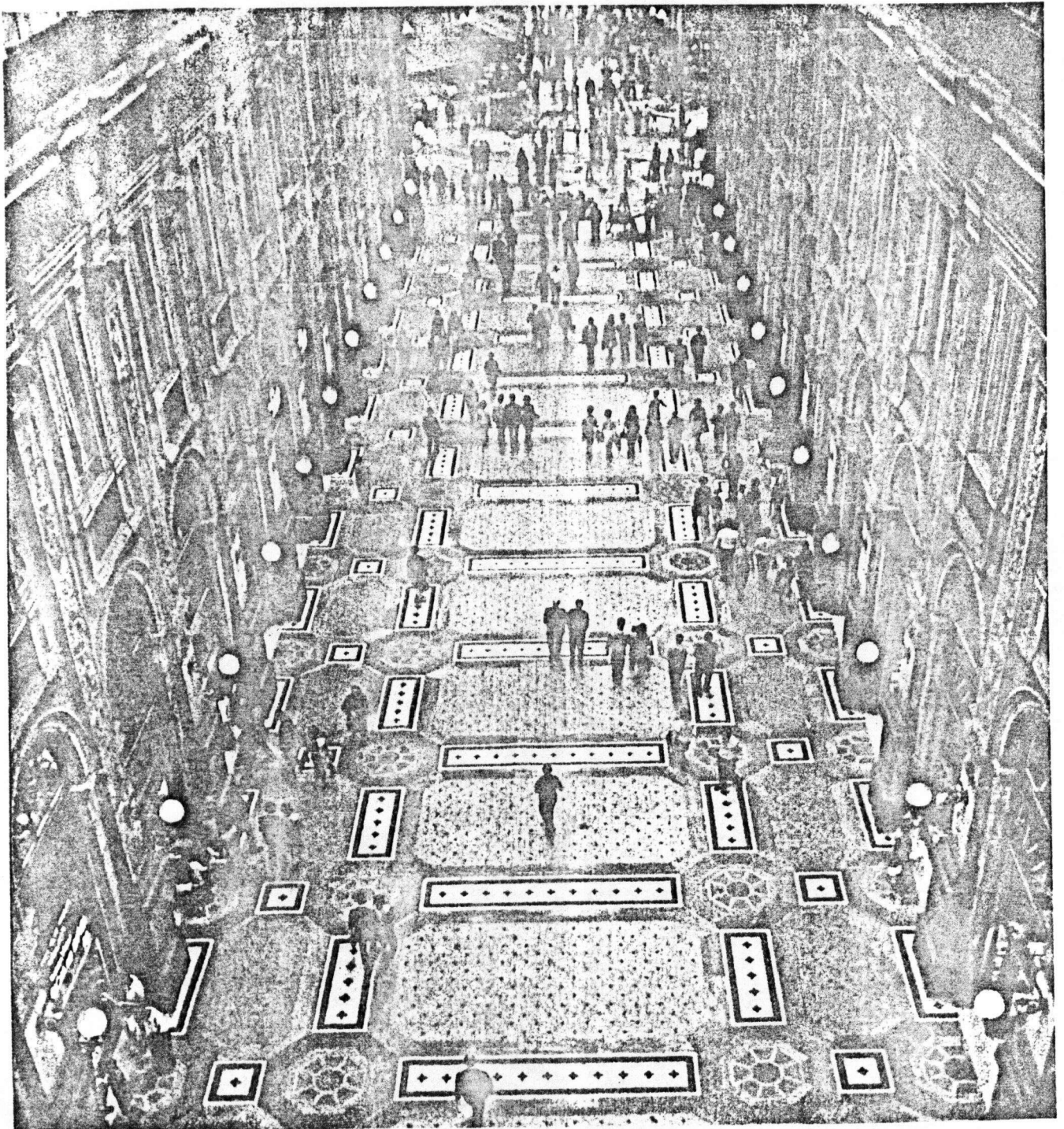


FIGURE 1 MILAN'S GALLERIA

(Source: B. Rudofsky---Streets for People)

or surface traffic. However, the design of aesthetically attractive bridge connections between buildings is a challenge to the architect and the structural engineer.

The City of Cincinnati, Ohio has a planned pedestrian skyway system which interconnects 10 square blocks in the heart of the downtown district. This system is being developed with a combination of private, municipal and federal financing (Fruin 1971). Minneapolis in Minnesota also has an elevated walkway system to complement the Nicollet Street Mall. So far 16 downtown buildings have been linked by 6 elevated walkways which were financed mostly by private developers. The Minneapolis Planning and Development Department has set guidelines for this type of mall to insure adequate walkway dimensions for pedestrian's comfort and safety, to provide security, and to set design standards. (Figures 2 and 3)

(6) UNDERGROUND MALLS

The underground malls are completely enclosed and climate-controlled in both summer and winter. This is most appreciated during the rigorous winters by allowing the pedestrian to avoid the cold and slush above. Shops, theatres and restaurants may line the mall and the traffic and noise of the street above are completely eliminated. It is important that this type of development should have a visual

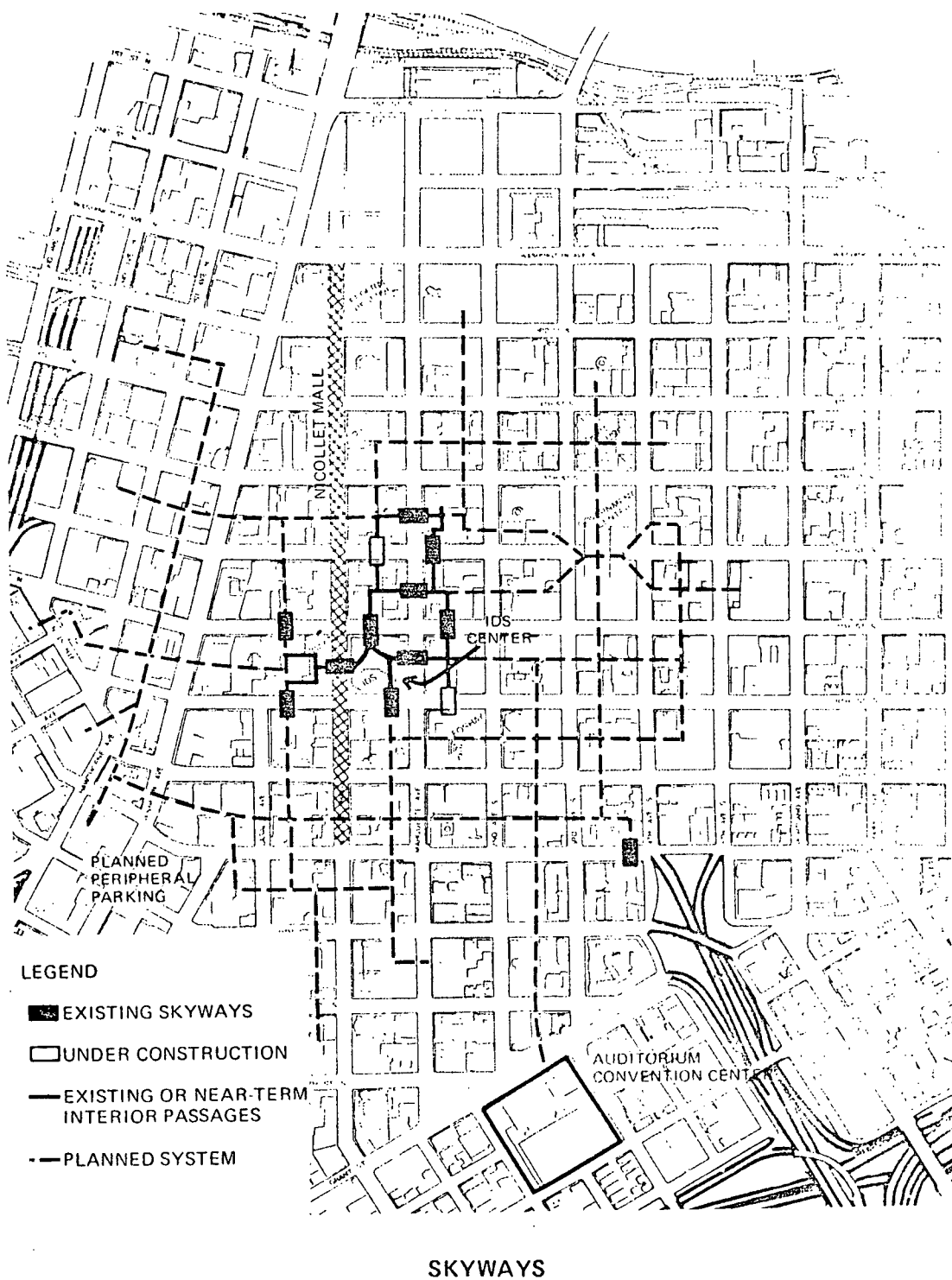


FIGURE 2 MINNEAPOLIS' ELEVATED MALLS SYSTEM

(SOURCE: DOWNTOWN COUNCIL, MINNEAPOLIS)



FIGURE 3 MINNEAPOLIS' SKYWAY

(ARCH. FORUM NOV. 1973)

relationship with the buildings and activities of the streets above. This can be achieved by incorporating some open plazas and skylights, etc..

Both Montreal and Toronto have embarked on programmes to establish pedestrian networks beneath their central business districts. The Montreal system began in 1962 with the development of Place Ville-Marie shopping malls. This mall became so popular that by 1971 there were approximately 2 miles of connecting pedestrian passageways serving 40 acres of prime office, hotel and retail stores, including 300 underground shops, 50 restaurants and 2500 hotel rooms (Fruin 1971). The uniqueness of the Montreal underground system was that it was first developed on an ad hoc basis by individual developers and all the underground malls were later linked together.

The Toronto underground pedestrian circulation system has adopted the principle of an "open" system, which means it is open to the street level downtown environment. Design guidelines indicate the concern for variety of experiences, open space, quality of service, street furniture, etc.. (Pandakur 1971)

Toyko also has a very successful underground shopping mall leading from the Central Business District to Tokyo's Central Railway Station.

D. ELEMENTS OF PEDESTRIAN MALLS

With the exception of a temporary closure of a street there are several basic elements that are essential to a pedestrian mall in order to assure its success whether it is a permanent mall or a transit mall. These basic elements, either existing or newly added are: (1) The physical elements; (2) Amenities; (3) Activities; (4) Services and accessibility; and (5) Mall Management.

(1) THE PHYSICAL ELEMENTS

The more successful pedestrian malls are major shopping streets comprising a variety of shops, restaurants, theatres, department stores and offices. Shopping is a social ritual. In a shopping street people enjoy looking at, pricing or buying merchandise displayed for sale (Bennett 1971). Department stores are essential in drawing large crowds of shoppers because they offer a greater selection of merchandise at a wider range of prices. Restaurants, theatres and other entertainment centres are also contributing to the success of a pedestrian mall. The offices located on or near the mall will house the daytime population who will patronize the mall.

The buildings enclosing the mall should be upgraded if they are dilapidated in order to create a better visual

environment. Buildings of special character, particularly those of historical values should be preserved in order to maintain the identity of the street.

Another important physical element is the floor of the mall. After the asphalt roadway has been removed, there is an opportunity to treat the floor with different materials and patterns and to apply various designs to complement the buildings and other amenities.

(2) AMENITIES

The term amenities in this section implies the added features to the mall which tend to make it more attractive and pleasant for the pedestrians. These will include planting of trees of suitable sizes, landscaping, removable planter boxes, etc.. Lighting standards and design are very important in creating a special effect or an atmosphere for strolling and walking, especially at night time. Lamp poles design, lighting levels, size and location of signs, etc. must be taken into consideration. Many malls have included fountains and sculptures as focal points whenever the space permits with the purpose of enriching visual diversity along the path network. Other amenities include kiosks, benches and canopies for the convenience of the pedestrians.

(3) ACTIVITIES

The success of a pedestrian mall depends largely on the volume of people utilizing the space. Apart from the shops and entertainment establishments which tend to attract the crowd, other activities are also introduced to make a mall area a social space. Activities that are generally found taking place in the pedestrian malls are arts and crafts shows, outdoor concerts, flower and food markets, ethnic festivities, children's days, etc. Sales promotions include boat shows, antique car shows, sidewalk cafes, special mall sales days and many others. All the above activities if well planned and publicized will bring people to the downtown core again.

(4) SERVICES AND ACCESSIBILITY

When streets are converted into pedestrian malls most of the utilities such as telephone and power lines have to be relocated or placed underground. The relocation of services and utilities comprises a large proportion of the total cost of the mall conversion although these cannot be seen. Loading services are confined to the back of the building if there is a lane, otherwise they can be carried out only during certain hours of the day.

Accessibility must be taken into consideration in the planning stage of the mall. People arrive at the malls either

on foot, by private car or various forms of public transportation. Those who come on foot are mainly from the housing in and around the downtown core or from the offices. But the major pedestrian traffic generators are the car parks, bus stops, underground or railway stations. It is desirable to keep walking distance from these traffic generators as small as possible. The internationally accepted criterion for pedestrian access to the malls is approximately a 5 minute maximum walking distance. This is about 400-500 metres, except for older people and young children which is about 300 metres maximum (Cottle 1972). It is therefore essential that car parks, bus stops, etc. are strategically located in order to provide maximum convenience for the pedestrians.

(5) MALL MANAGEMENT

Although there is considerable literature written about pedestrian malls, the various aspects of mall management have not been dealt with in depth. After the pedestrian mall has been completed, it requires much greater attention on the continuing financing, policing, operation and maintenance to insure the continuing success. Without proper management all the noble goals and objectives may be defeated. The mall will decline and eventually return to its old form of a traffic-clogged and congested street with

an unsafe and unhealthy atmosphere as demonstrated in the mall failure in Vienna. The authority of continuing management may be in the hands of the city or a mall merchant association in co-operation with the city. It may be mentioned here that survey of opinions of the pedestrians should be carried out and evaluated. New ideas may be introduced by the mall management authority to make the mall a dynamic space.

III. REVIEW OF PEDESTRIAN MALL EXPERIENCE

For the past 18 years many pedestrian malls have been experimented with and built all over the world. Some failed but most succeeded. A review of some experiences with malls provides an insight into the reasons why some malls are more successful than the others and why some never got off the ground at all. The criticism on the malls in this section of the paper are mostly taken from available published material. Occasional comments are provided by the author where applicable.

A. EUROPEAN AND U.K. EXPERIENCE

There are important differences between the malls of the European cities and the U.S./Canadian cities. European cities have natural architectural and historical attractions, plus streets often designed for pedestrian use; only the insatiable desire of the automobile for space had threatened their viability. Venice, for example, has always been a pedestrian city, and all the other forms of traffic have been permanently segregated from the pedestrians. European cities also took advantage of the reconstruction programme after the war destruction to create more streets and precincts for pedestrian use. The new towns that have sprung up in England after the Second World War are mostly pedestrian oriented. Four malls are discussed in the following pages.

(1) COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

The Strøget in Copenhagen is one of the most famous and interesting pedestrian malls in Europe. It is approximately 1,200 metres long and it varies in width from 9 metres for most of the mall to 31 metres at certain points. The Strøget is a nickname for five ancient streets linking two main squares where the Town Hall and the Opera House are located in the mediaeval part of the city. The Strøget (Figures 4 & 5) is bisected by three main traffic-bearing streets each controlled by traffic lights, and by three minor crossings where pedestrians have the right of way. The advent of motor transportation threatened to turn the core area into a pedestrian zone about 20 years ago. But business opposition delayed action until 1962, when the town council secretary suddenly banned traffic from most of Strøget, with the purpose of improving the environment. At first, reaction was hostile but after 4 months of experience and a considerable increase in profit, the business community changed its attitude completely and was strongly in favour of the mall idea. A further experimental period of 12 months was carried out before a decision was reached in converting the Strøget into a permanent mall. By 1967 the street was completely repaved as a permanent mall and street furniture was added.

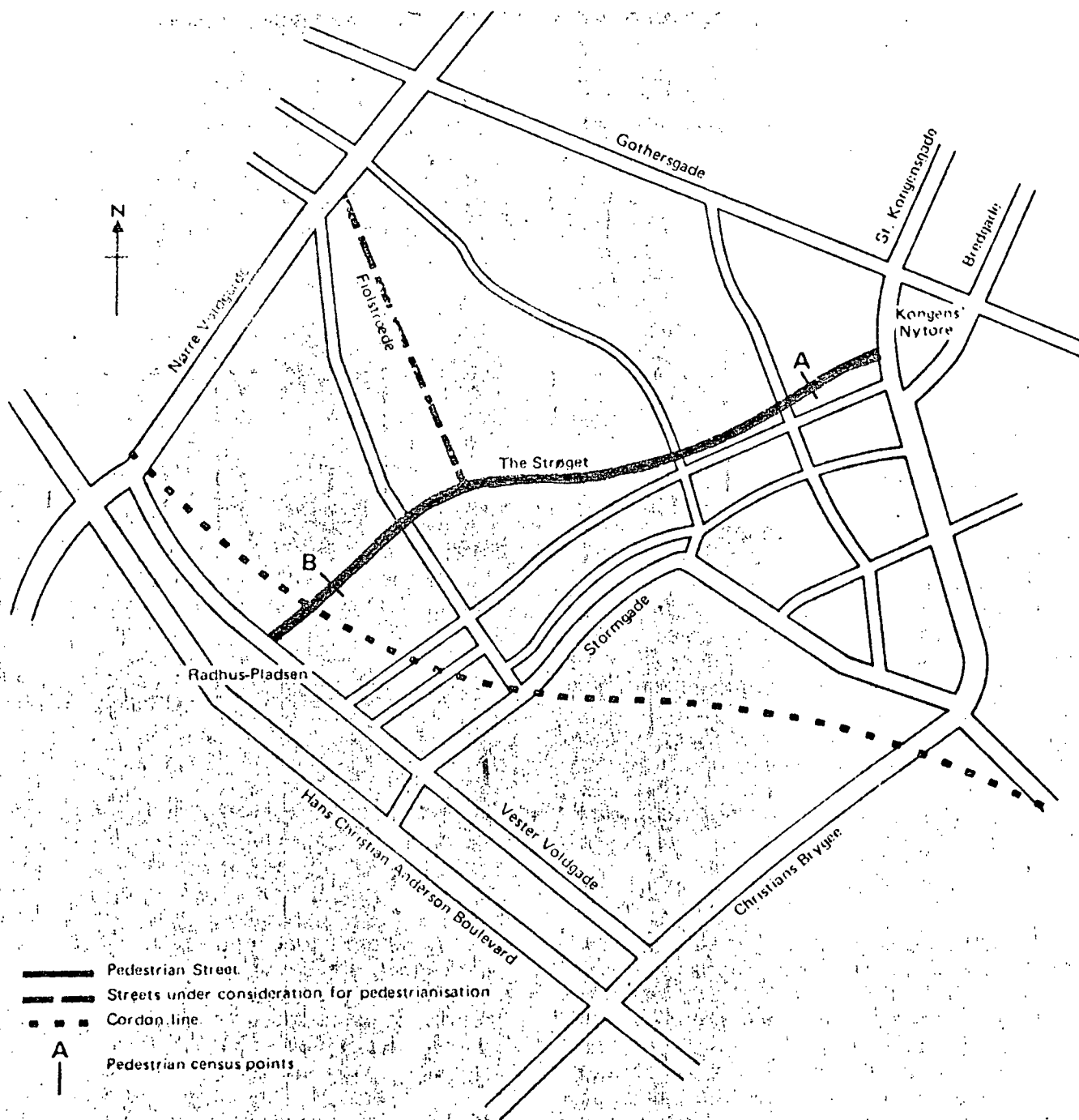


FIGURE 4 THE STRØGET, COPENHAGEN

(Source: GLC Intelligence Unit Quarterly Bulletin, No. 21, December 1972.)



FIGURE 5 VIEW OF THE STRØGET

(Source: GLC Study Tour, 1971)

The significant point of the Strøget was that the pedestrianization scheme was sponsored and implemented by the City Council without previous consultation with the businesses. Nevertheless, despite their initial misgivings, it seems to have operated smoothly and successfully. This mall has attracted large numbers of strollers, tourists and shoppers. It has replaced the squares function as the town's meeting and gathering place.

The Strøget is criticized for being too shop-oriented, which has forced many monolithic, block-sized department stores to close. Some critics also feel that if the area is to survive, there is a need for more diverse activities, such as workshops, theatres, restaurants and libraries for children and adults (Villecco 1973).

(2) MUNICH, GERMANY

The pedestrian mall in the Old Town of Munich is probably the most successful one in Europe. This mall is approximately 900 metres long and 22 metres wide comprising two main shopping streets, Neuhauserstrasse and Kaufingerstrasse. This mall starts and ends with historic landmarks which are located at Karlsplatz at one end and Marienplatz at the other. (Figures 6 & 7)

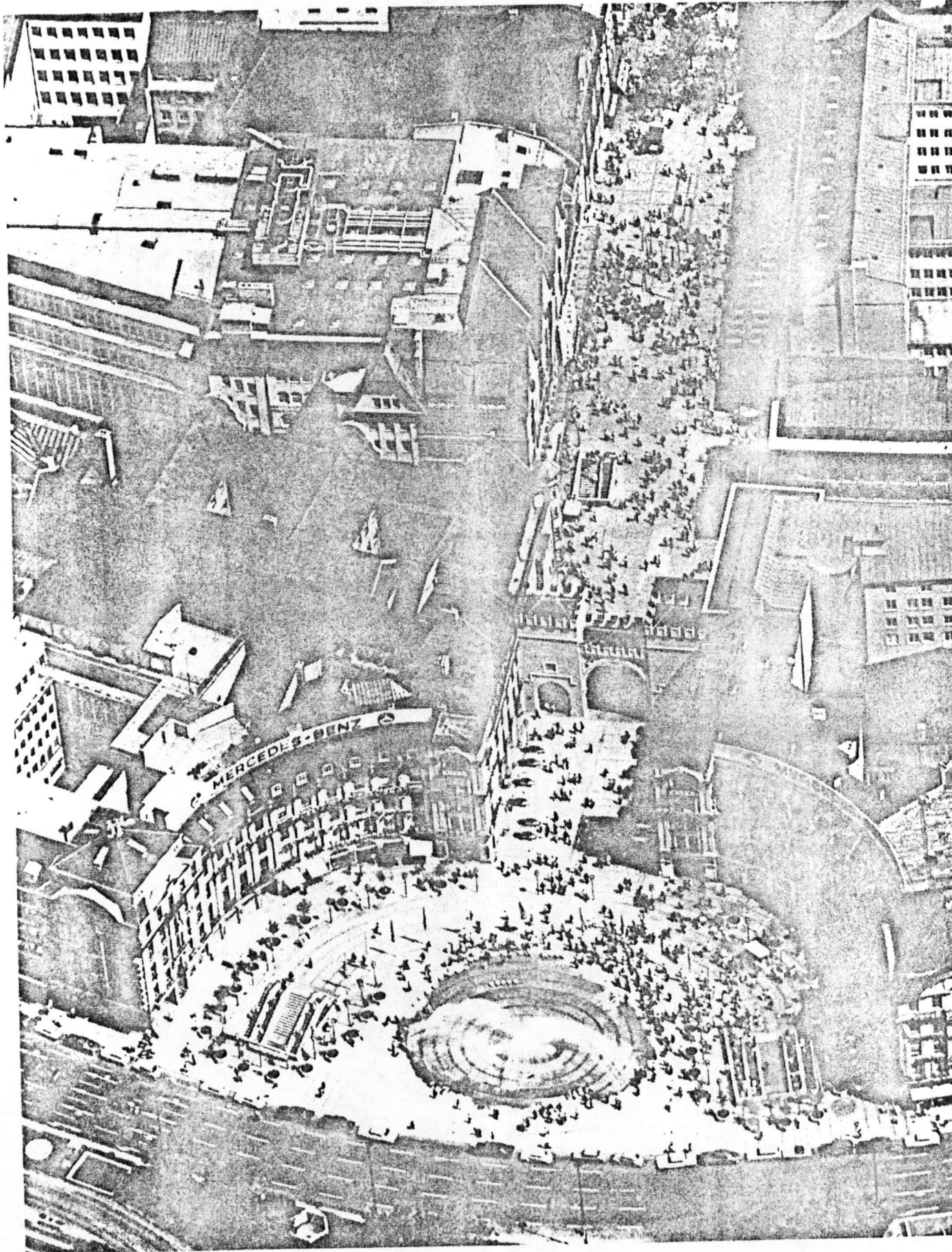


FIGURE 6 **MUNICH'S PEDESTRIAN MALL**

(Source: GLC Study Tour, 1971)

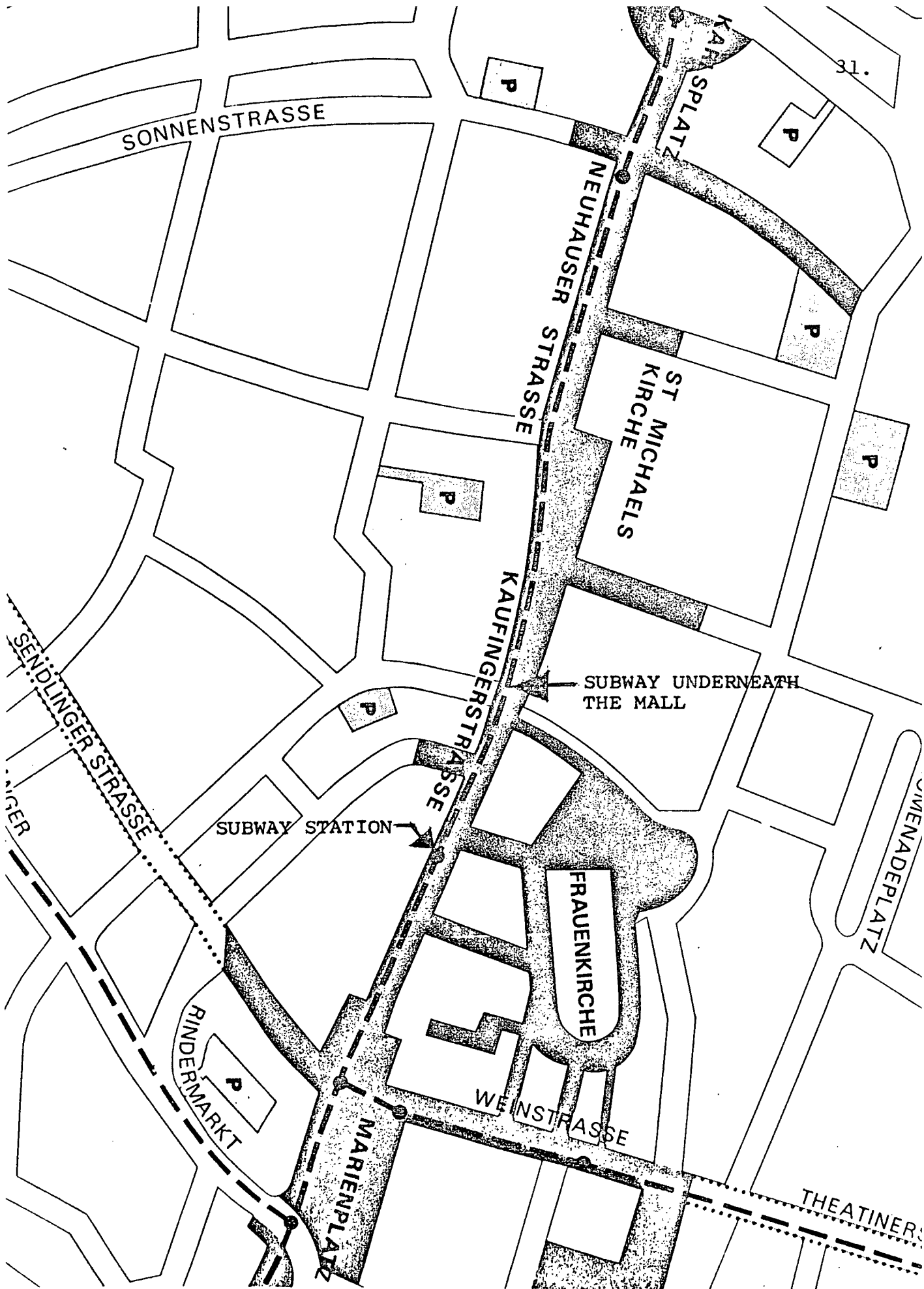


FIGURE 7 MAP OF MUNICH'S PEDESTRIAN MALL

(Source: GLC Study Tour. 1971)

The entire project has been meticulously planned, starting with an analysis of the city in its entirety and its transportation systems in particular. After World War II, the heavily damaged city was rebuilt around the original mediaeval town and its structures. Some of the streets have been widened so that the mall space can be used more than for shopping. This arrangement clearly shows that the malls are intended as a social space. In 1965, a local planner analyzed the core area and showed that its vitality depended largely on pedestrians and that motor traffic only detracted from the area. A pedestrian mall was proposed to strengthen the inner city against decline.

In 1966, the City Council announced a competition and the winning architectural firm started preparing plans for the core area. During the planning stage, the local property owners were consulted at all times and the designs were reviewed in the newspapers, so that by 1969 the project was officially approved with all controversies already settled.

The most important part of the mall's planning was the City's insistence on several pre-conditions for the project. One of these pre-conditions was that the mall must be supported by an improved public transportation system and that the mall must be integrated with the two subways under construction for the 1972 summer Olympics. The City also

decided to ban all but emergency, maintenance and service vehicles from the mall itself and decided to regulate their schedule. The mall was completed on schedule just before the Olympic Games in June 1972 (Villecco 1973).

After the mall was completed, an evaluation showed that the trade had increased by 40% and the pedestrian volume had increased by 60% (G.L.C. 1971). The mall has also led to extensive work on restoration and redevelopment of the pedestrian area (Cottle 1972). The success of the mall may be attributed to the easy access provided by the subway which runs beneath the entire mall (Figure 7).

(3) NORWICH, ENGLAND

Norwich is one of the historic cities located near the east coast of England. Since the street pattern was established in the 11th century, the automobile had posed a real threat to the city's environment and development.

In 1967, the city council created an urban strategy for Norwich to the year 2000. This urban strategy is more than a traffic plan because it sets the goal of limiting traffic in the core and eventually turning the historic area over to the pedestrians.

As far as the planning process is concerned Norwich

started with a 6 month experimental closing of London Street which is a narrow, winding road that joins the market and cathedral areas of the city (Figure 8). During the experimental period the city worked closely with local businesses. Newspaper and Television were used to generate public attention. Since the experiment was successful, London Street was made into a permanent mall in May 1968. In 1969 it was completely repaved and trees, planters, seats, showcases, litter bins and new lighting were installed.

The significance of this mall is that it was not just an isolated phenomenon; it was well integrated into a total development and transportation outlook (Villecco 1973). The narrowness of the meandering streets provides an intimate atmosphere for the mall.

(4) NEWCASTLE, ENGLAND

Newcastle is the most important shopping centre as well as the social, cultural and commercial focus of the north-east region of England.

As part of the total process of sustaining the vitality of the central core area, the city decided to convert Northumberland Street into a transit mall (Figure 9). This mall, completed in 1971, is approximately 265 metres long and 21 metres wide and it contains many of the largest stores



FIGURE 8 A PEDESTRIAN MALL IN NORWICH

(Source: V. Gruen---Centres for the Urban Enviroment)

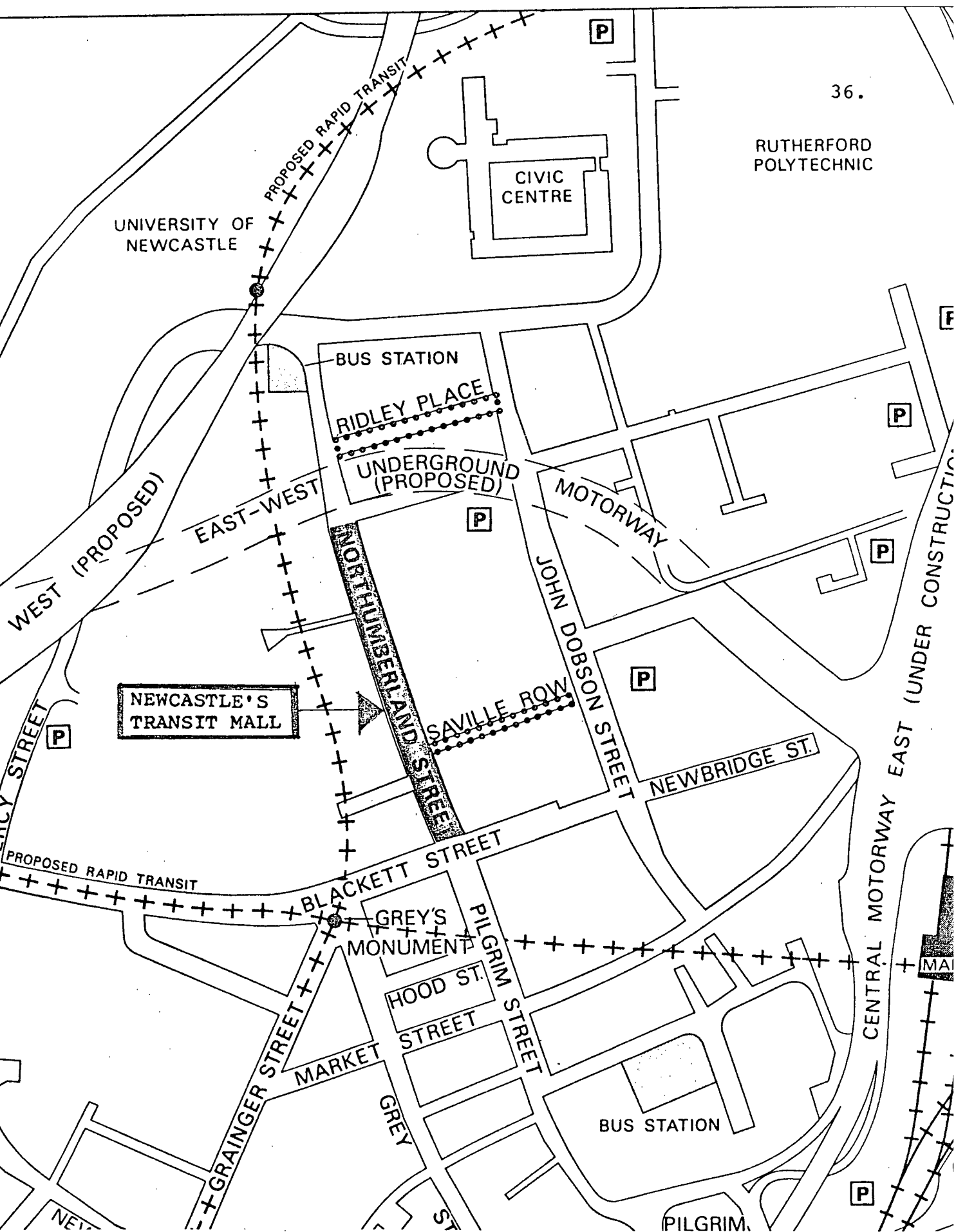


FIGURE 9 NEWCASTLE'S PEDESTRIAN MALL

(Source: GLC Study Tour, 1971)

in the city. There are also some very successful smaller specialty shops and theatres. The transit way was reduced to 5.3 m and the pavements were increased in width from 3.5 m to 7.0 m. Bays 2.5 m wide are provided for servicing vehicles and buses. Substantial planting boxes and seatings have been installed. This project was 100% financed by the City and the success of this mall cannot truly be evaluated until the proposed rapid transit system has become a reality (G.L.C. 1971).

(5) OTHER MALLS

Many other malls have been established throughout Europe and the U.K. in cities such as Vienna, Essen, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Leeds, Glasgow and London. It might be of interest to note that Vienna's pedestrian mall, which centres around the cathedral area, is considered a failure. The scheme has deteriorated since its inception in 1971 because of its lack of environmental improvements such as repaving in the wide streets and the lack of enforcement regulations by police. All kinds of vehicles are entering the mall area despite the prohibitive signs. Loading and unloading are carried out at all hours and the mall is full of parked cars. At the same time the businesses were also against any demonstrations and youth activities in the mall (Cottle 1972; Villecco 1973; G.L.C. 1971).

It was reported only recently that Moscow has planned to turn one of its oldest streets, October 25 Street, into a pedestrian mall and build a tunnel under it to carry vehicle traffic. (Vancouver Sun, January 15, 1975) The October 25 Street, which honours the Russian revolution, is lined with historic buildings and shops. It also links Red Square with Dzerzhinski Square.

B. U.S. EXPERIENCE

In the United States, where the car has long dominated city planning, the streets are more often straight and the architecture mostly "barren" or uninspiring as compared to cities rich in heritage from the middle ages or before. In the U.S. one has to rely on more than natural charm to plan a successful mall (Villecco 1973). Consequently, the street that has been chosen to be converted into a mall must have a high potential for recreation and it must be one which is presently experiencing a pedestrian-vehicle conflict.

(1) KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

The Kalamazoo Mall is probably one of the earliest permanent pedestrian malls that were ever built in the U.S.. This mall, which was completed in August 1959, is only two blocks long. The street in the two block area was ripped up and the sidewalks were widened. Pavement was laid in coloured

squares and new lighting installed. The total cost of the construction was derived from general city taxes, special property tax assessment and rentals of a stage to city businessmen (Aspo Newsletter, December 1959).

In order to control and regulate all activities on the mall and to maintain its aesthetic appeal and pleasantness, the City of Kalamazoo has established a Pedestrian Mall Advisory Board, which is made up of 7 members: six to be appointed by City Council together with the Director of the Park Board. In addition, there is a city ordinance to encourage well-designed signs, decoration and storefronts in the downtown area (See Granville Mall Resource Material #I).

(2) FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

In 1958 the firm of Victor Gruen Associates was commissioned by the City of Fresno and a downtown merchant organization to conduct a study in order to establish goals and criteria for the redevelopment of downtown Fresno. Gruen's proposal submitted to the City included two new freeways that would be joined with an existing freeway so as to create a triangular core area of 2500 acres. Within this area a pedestrian-only core super-block of 36 acres (three by six blocks, enclosed by a loop road) was proposed

(Figures 10 & 11). This proposal of the super-block was approved and implemented by the City Council. By September 1964 a network of pedestrian malls centering on Fulton Street were created (Arch. Record. June 1965).

Gruen used water as the central aesthetic theme in response to the warm climate. He has included in the mall many fountains, ponds and rivulets. Trellises and shade trees are used to shelter the sitting and play areas. Since the Fulton Street Mall is 6 blocks long, a slow speed electric tramway which will run the entire length of the mall was installed. There are also two large playgrounds to attract children (Villecco 1973). The success of the mall is due to the combined effort of the city administration, local businessmen and the renewal agency during the planning stage. Gruen's firm felt that there is room for improvement, especially in the areas of architectural design.

Judging from the plans and photographs, Fulton Street Mall is much more than a shopping street free from cars but also an urban park. The size of the scheme is also bigger than most other schemes in North America.

(3) MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

The Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis is considered one of the most successful transit malls in North America. It

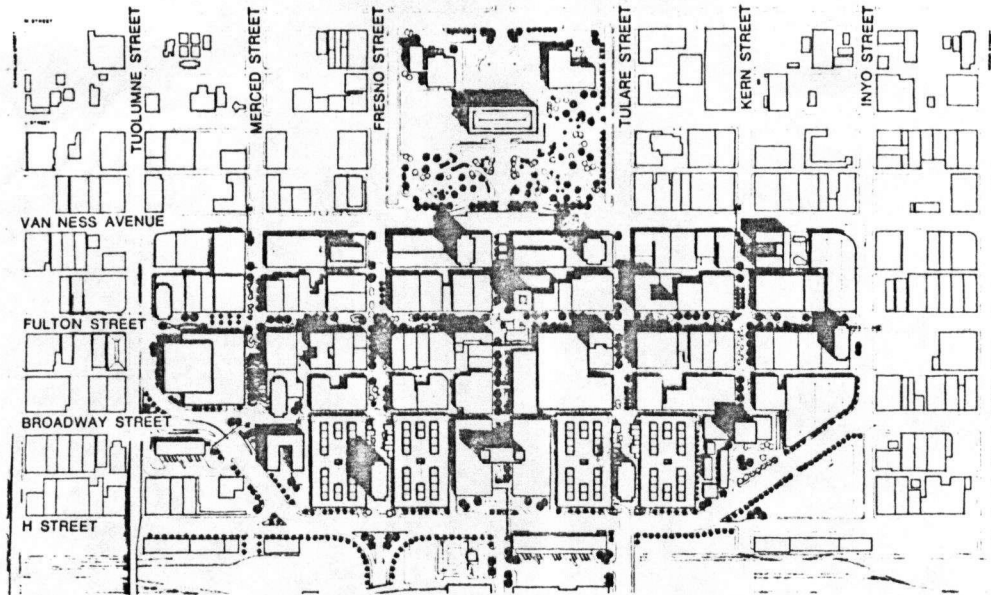


FIGURE 10 PLAN OF FRESNO'S PEDESTRIAN MALL

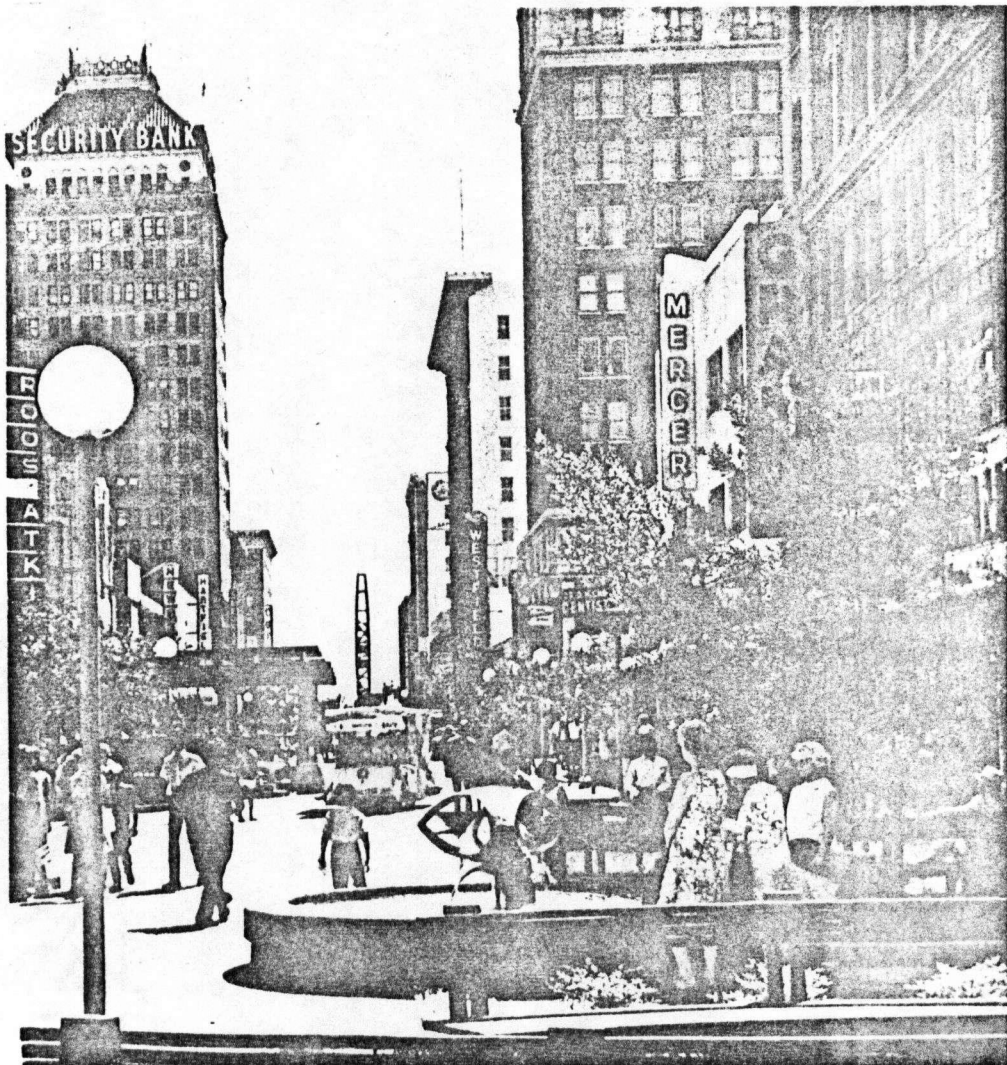


FIGURE 11 VIEW OF FRESNO'S PEDESTRIAN MALL

(Source: Architecture Plus, April 1973)

started in 1957 when the City Council was pressured by the central area business interests to stop further decline in the retail trades due to competition from the suburban centres. A consulting firm was engaged to assess the strength and weakness of Nicollet Avenue which was the major shopping street in Minneapolis (Figures 12 & 13).

The consultant's study showed five alternatives but the transit mall scheme was favoured by the majority. Construction began in 1966 and the Mall, as well as the transit way, were completed in 1968. The concept of the transit mall was to preserve the basic characteristics of the street, while allowing it to be dominated by the pedestrian rather than the motor vehicle. The transit way was reduced to 7.3 m wide from 18 m with a serpentine alignment which allowed the convenient placing of landscape features such as bus shelters, seats and directories. The specific planning objectives that were set forth can be capitulated as follows:

- (1) To improve pedestrian circulation in terms of efficiency and comfort;
- (2) To improve access and encourage mass transportation usage.
- (3) To create new opportunities for promotion of the retail area and the Central Business District.
- (4) To encourage private investment.

It was assessed that all the main objectives have been

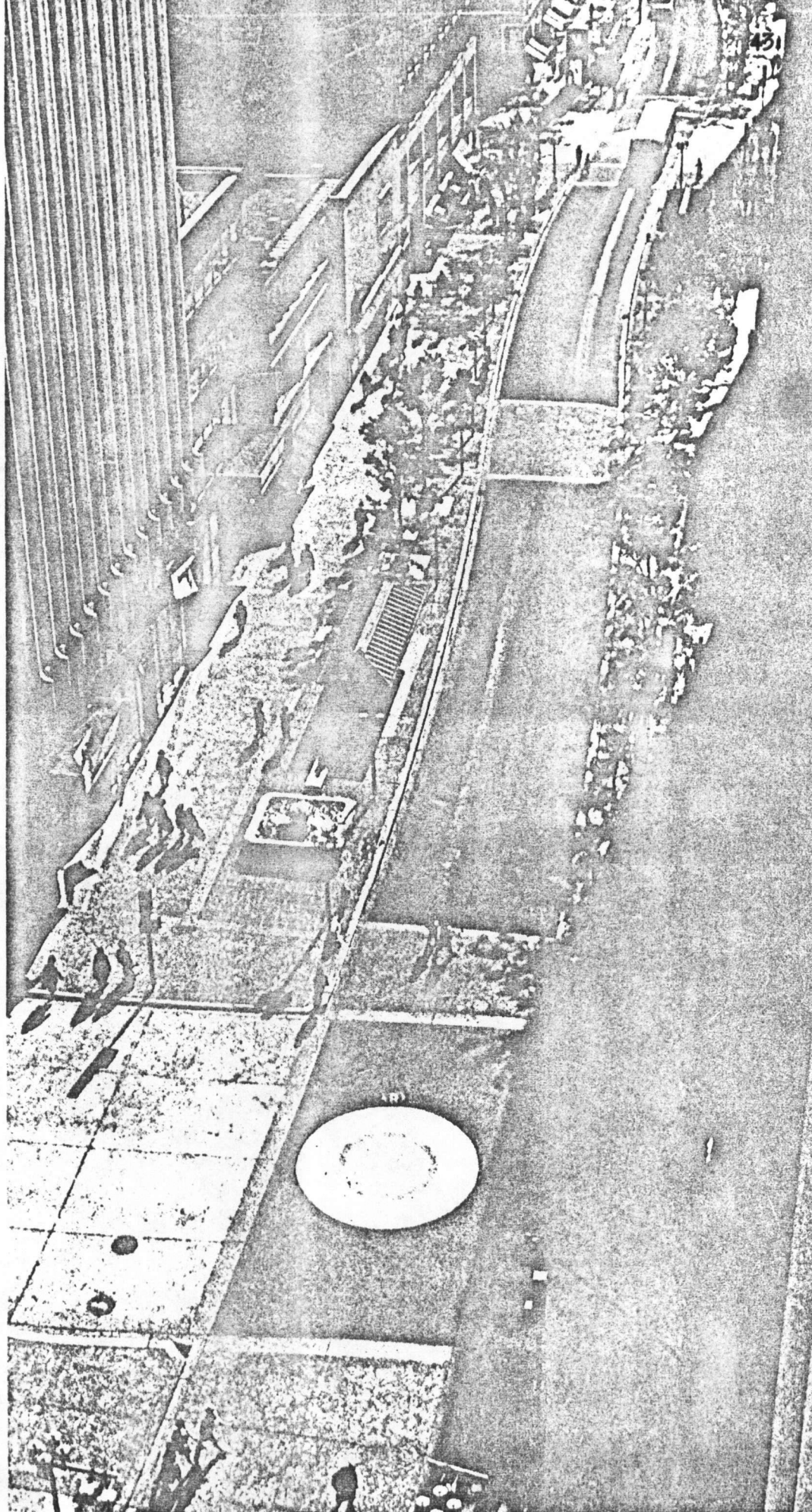
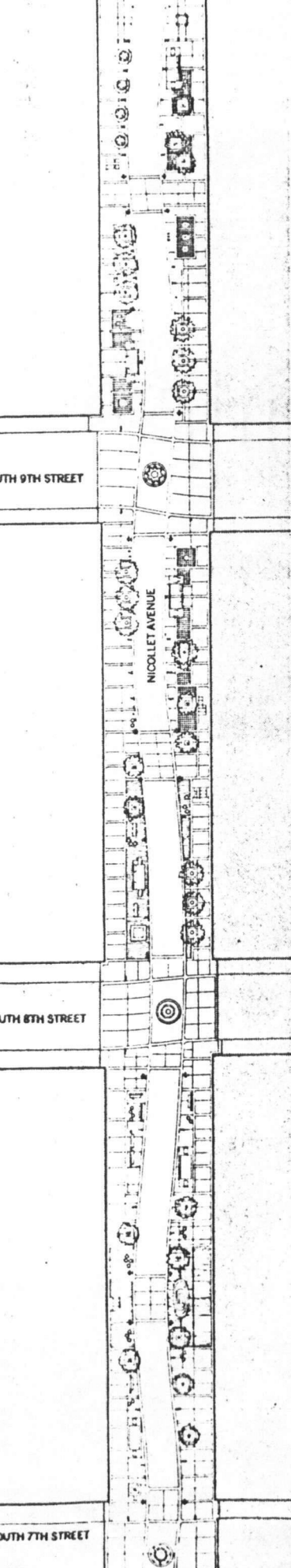


FIGURE 12 PLAN AND AERIAL VIEW OF NICOLLET MALL

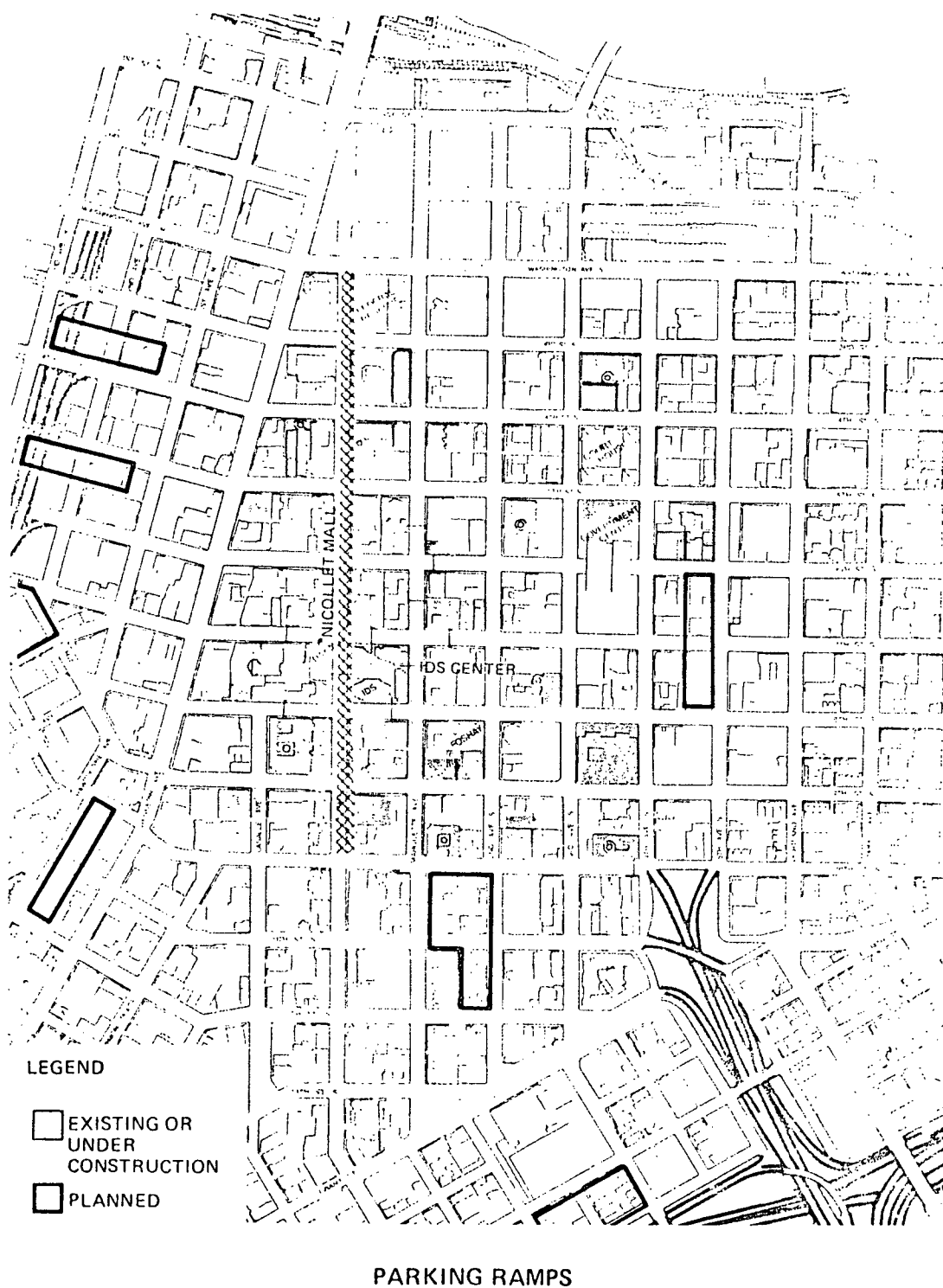


FIGURE 13 PARKING AREAS AROUND NICOLLET MALL

(Source: Nicollet Mall, City of Minneapolis)

reached after the mall has been in operation for several years (Aschman 1971).

Throughout the planning and construction stage which together took over 10 years, there was close co-operation between the City Council, the Planning Department, the businessmen and the consultant. It also had strong leadership and persistence by the people concerned to bring such a project to fruition.

It is important to note that the mall today does not just exist; it is maintained and enhanced through continuing effort and this is paid for through annual special assessments on the affected property (Aschman 1971; Robertson 1973; G.L.C. 1971; Villecco 1973).

(4) NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Madison Avenue in New York City was closed during the summer of 1972 as an experimental mall. The idea was to create a transit mall along Madison Avenue if the experiment proved favourable in order to attract more pedestrians to the Midtown shopping area (Figure 14). Unfortunately this experimental mall did not receive any support from the businesses. Like many experimental malls the lack of amenities conveyed an unfavourable image to the

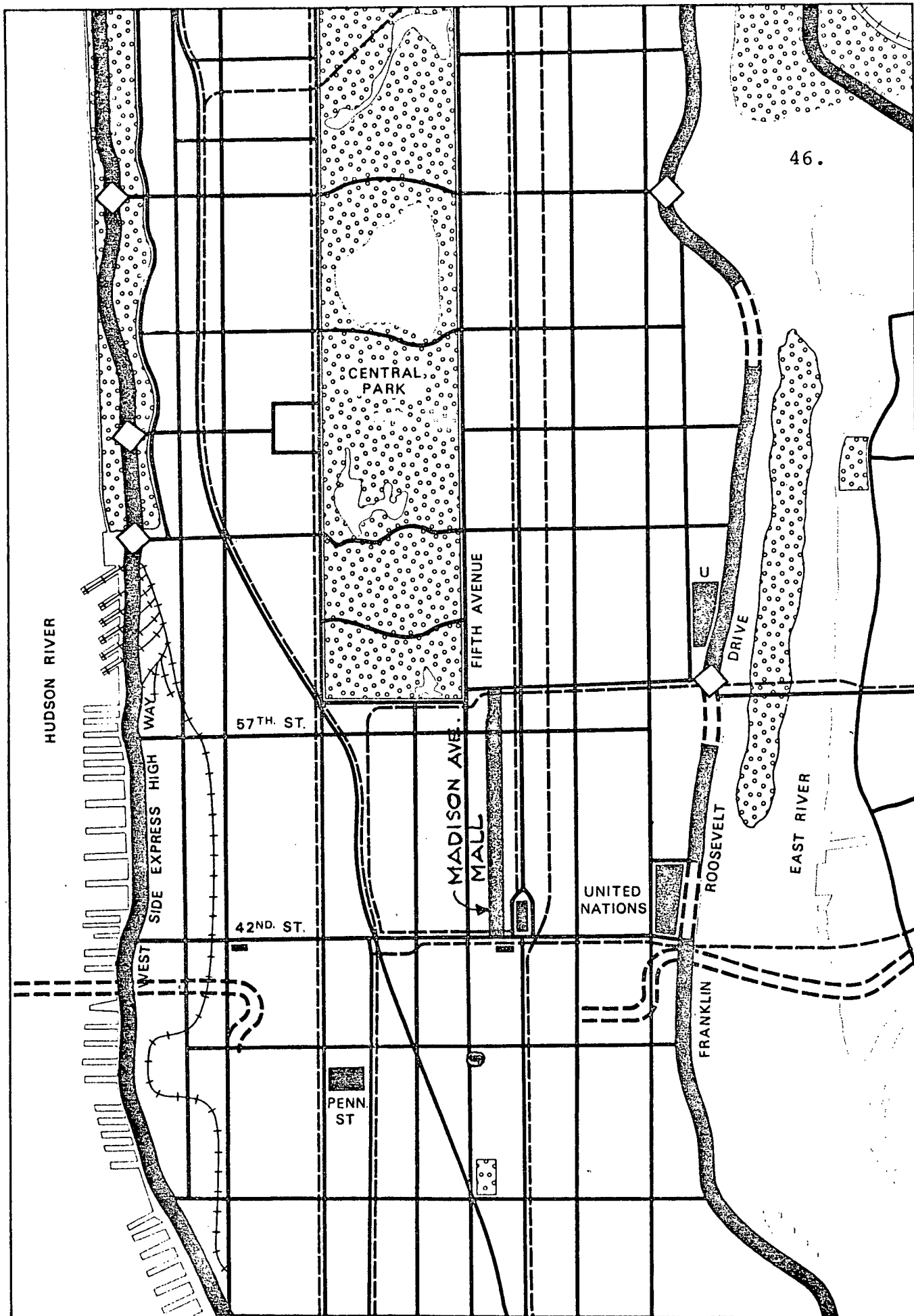


FIGURE 14 PLAN OF MADISON AVENUE MALL, N.Y.

businesses and the pedestrians. Madison Avenue is a major uptown route for cars and as a result of the temporary closure, it created tremendous traffic problems for the other streets. Today this idea of converting Madison Avenue into a pedestrian mall has been temporarily discarded.

One criticism of this mall is that the streets were closed by the City without consultation with the merchants. There was also a lack of communication during the experimental period.

C. CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

In Canada the experiences with pedestrian malls are very similar to that of the United States because our street systems are basically the same and our malls are modelled after those built in the U.S.. The only difference is that pedestrian mall projects in Canada do not receive any Federal grant, whereas in the U.S. most malls received Federal assistance if they were approved by an urban renewal agency.

Pedestrian malls have been constructed or tried out only in major urban centres such as Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver, but this idea of pedestrianizing our main

streets has already spread to the small centres such as Quebec City, Victoria, Vernon and many others.

(1) OTTAWA, ONTARIO

The most celebrated mall in Canada is the Sparks Street Mall in Ottawa (Figures 15 & 16). It was initiated by a group of businessmen, who in 1959 formed the Sparks Street Development Association (SSDA) to promote the idea of a pedestrian mall. At that time the business on Sparks Street was declining due mainly to the increasing competition from spreading suburban shopping centres coupled with the increasing traffic congestion and parking problem in downtown. This idea of pedestrianizing Sparks Street received the support from the City of Ottawa and the National Capital Commission.

The planning process began with a field trip to Toledo, which at that time was experimenting a temporary mall. As soon as the SSDA was formed, Sparks Street was closed to vehicular traffic by city by-law for six consecutive summers. The street surface was painted and other features added to convert it into a temporary mall. The aim was to create an urban environment in which trees, flowers, grass, water, outdoor cafes, sculptures and other features will create a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere conducive to resting,

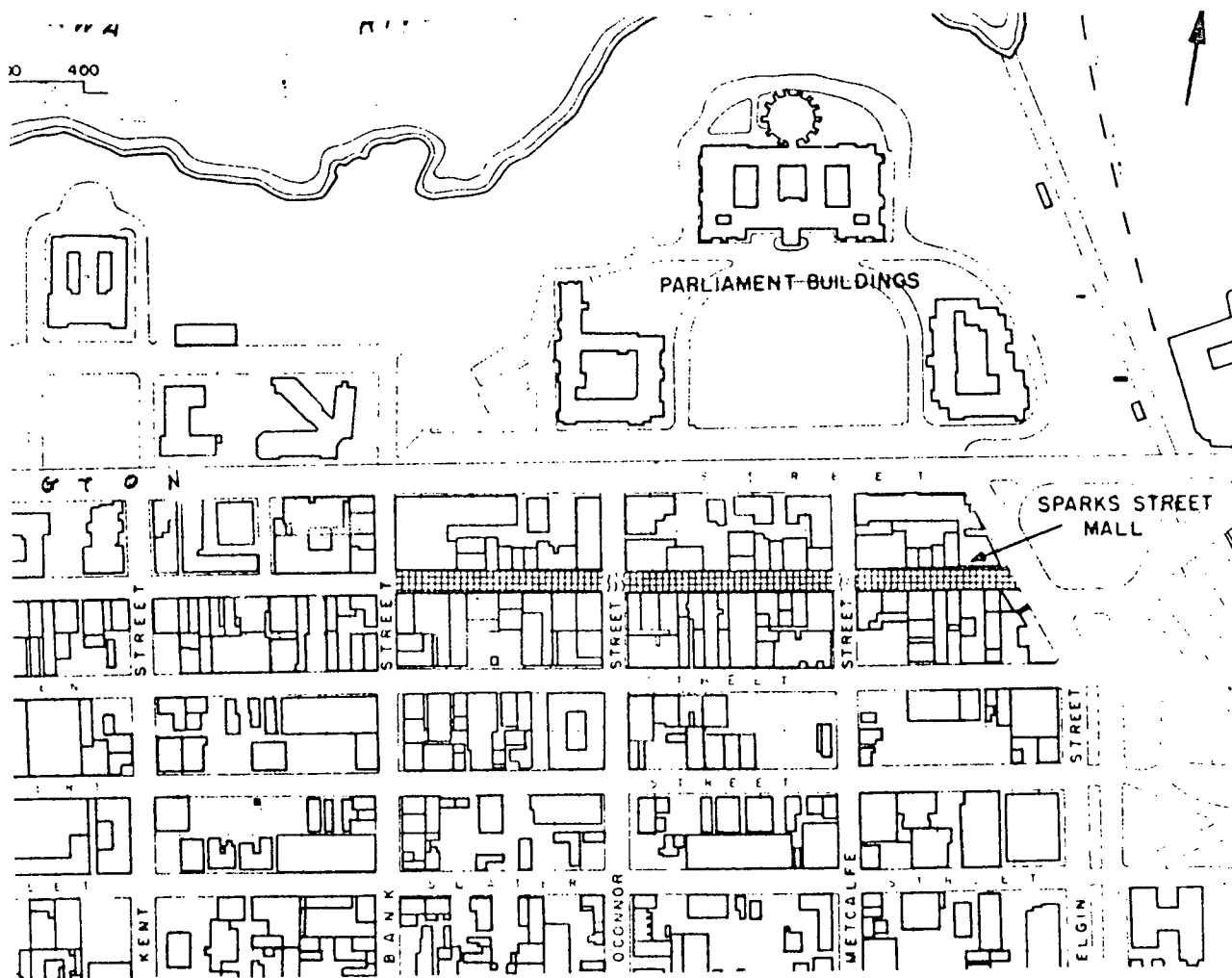


FIGURE 15 PLAN OF SPARKS STREET MALL, OTTAWA.

(Source: A. Tate --- The Sparks Street Experiment 1960)

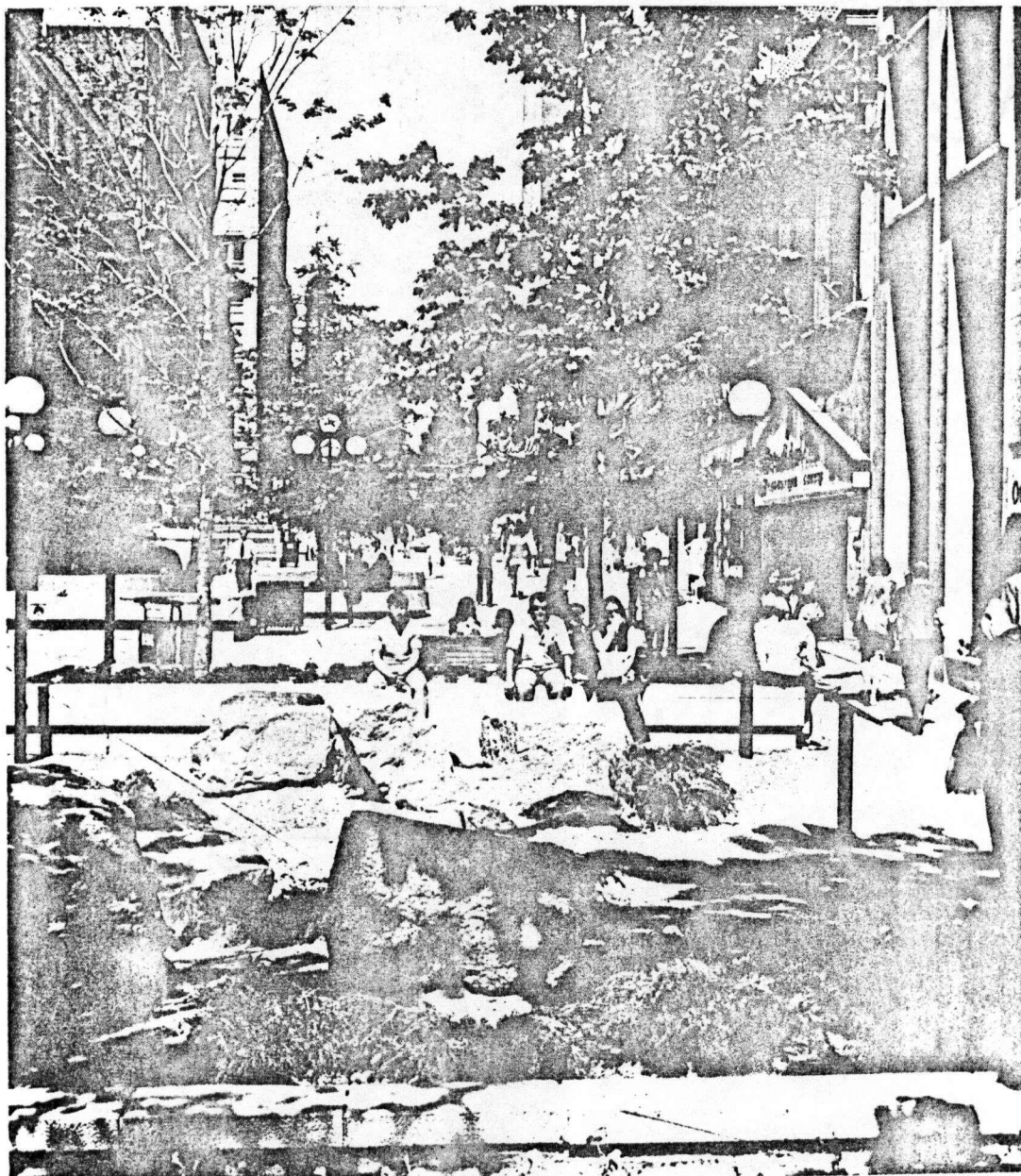


FIGURE 16 VIEW OF SPARKS STREET MALL, OTTAWA.

(Source: Architecture Plus, April 1973)

strolling, shopping, seeing or being seen. During this experimental period, opinion surveys of the public and of the businesses were conducted and the results were mostly in favour of a permanent pedestrian mall. The SSDA later organized a Citizens Committee to oversee and control the cost-estimating, evaluating and the planning of the permanent mall.

In 1964 the mall was finally completed with the total cost shared equally between the City and the property owners. The mall has a rock court as a central feature. Other amenities include a steel and stained-cedar clock tower; a speaker's platform; open-air restaurants, temporary and permanent sculptures and art exhibits; an exhibition kiosk and an information booth.

Unlike many other schemes the Sparks Street Mall was not planned as part of an urban development scheme nor was it integrated into a city-wide transportation plan. Yet, it stands up as one of the most popular places in Ottawa. Another important point is that there are six Mall Commissioners appointed to maintain the mall and control changes to buildings and sign in order to safeguard the mall in the future (Tate 1960, Villecco 1973, Harvor 1964, Flanders 1969).

(2) CALGARY, ALBERTA

The 8th Avenue Mall in Calgary was built as part of an overall movement policy known as the +15 elevated walkway system. The pedestrian mall is 2 blocks long and 66 feet wide with shops on both sides (Figures 17 & 18). It was designed as an "urban park" and yet a transit way was left in the middle of the street. Recently a Vancouver consultant visited the 8th Avenue Mall and reported that although this mall was very popular during the daytime, it was not considered a success either by the businessmen or by the planners. The general complaint of the merchants was that there were too many strollers and by-standers and not enough shoppers. The merchants were also imjappy about the scheme because there was no communication during the planning process between the merchants and the City. As a result there is the lack of a strong merchant group which is so essential in making the mall a continuing success. Another comment was that the transit-way that was left on the mall has prevented the addition of any design features or amenities to improve the physical environment (Bain 1973, Pendakur 1971, B.B.H. 1973).

An urban park is primarily a social space for people and not necessarily for business gains. In this regard, the 8th Avenue Mall is successful because it has fulfilled the planning objective. Unfortunately, the mall has not lived up

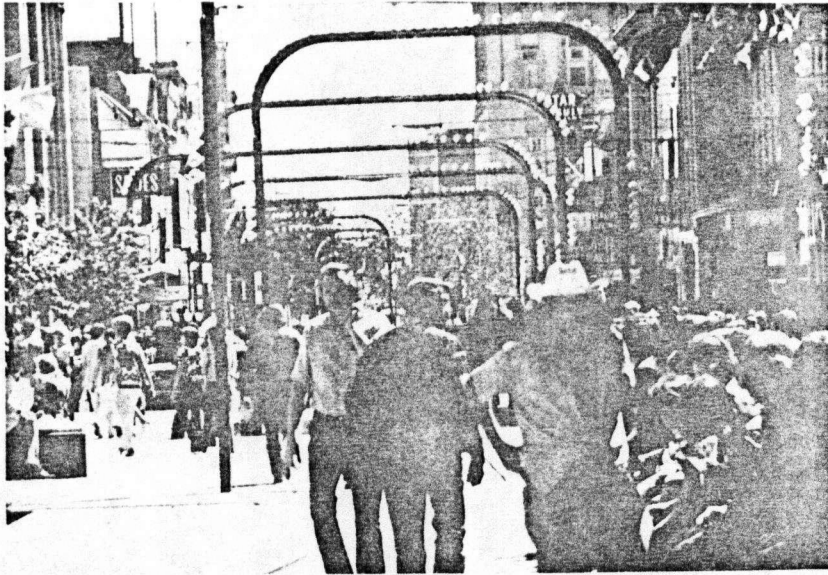


FIGURE 17a PEOPLE ON 8TH AVENUE MALL, CALGARY

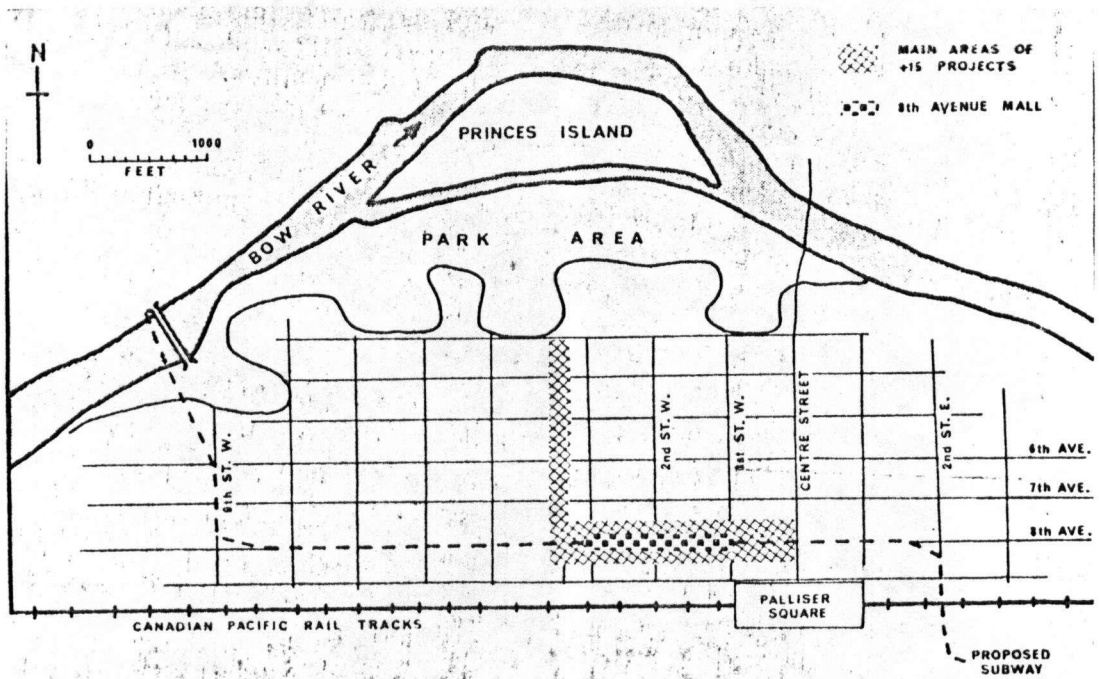


FIGURE 17 PLAN OF 8th AVENUE MALL, CALGARY.

(Source: Highway Research Record #355, 1971)

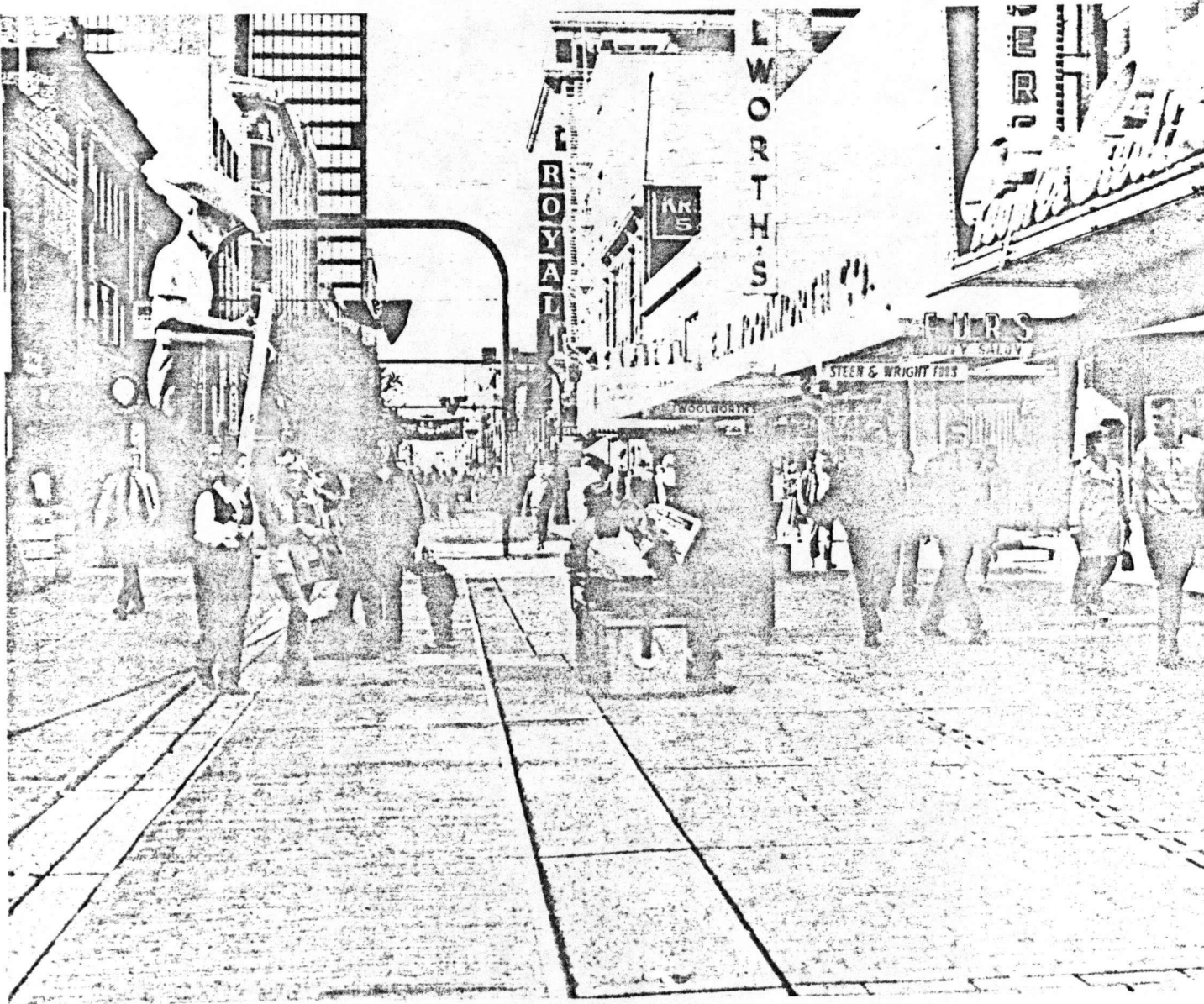


FIGURE 18 VIEW OF 8th AVENUE MALL, CALGARY.

(Source: R.B. Baine---Calgary, An Urban Study.)

to the expectations of the merchants for an increase in their business sales.

(3) TORONTO, ONTARIO

The Yonge Street in Toronto was established as an experimental pedestrian mall for the past few summers since 1971. The duration of the converting the street into a mall varied from 4 weeks to 3 months. The primary purpose was to separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic in an attempt to improve pedestrian movement. At the same time the City Council expected to obtain reaction of what would happen to Yonge Street if it were set up as a permanent mall (Figures 19a & 19b).

During the experimental period of the summer of 1971 which lasted for only one month, the business sales had neither increased nor decreased, although the public transit bureau reported an increase of 3% in passengers travelling downtown. On this point the pedestrian mall was not considered as a success. Also because of its initial attraction, there were so many people crowded into the mall during the week that it did not in fact function as a viable pedestrian walkway. (Metropolitan Toronto Traffic Conference, January 13, 1972).

During the summer of 1973, the Yonge Street Mall was increased to eight blocks long. The theme of that year was

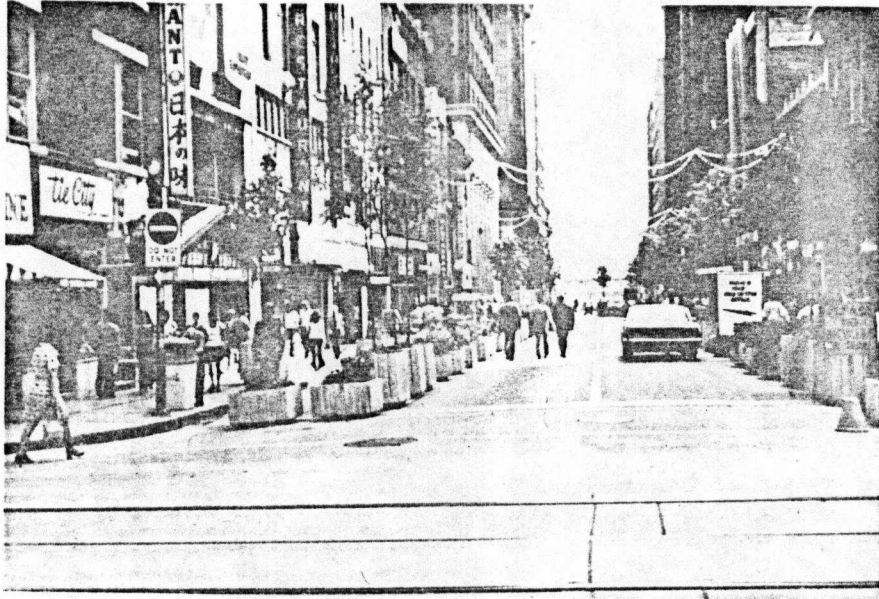


FIGURE 19a VIEW OF YONGE STREET MALL, TORONTO

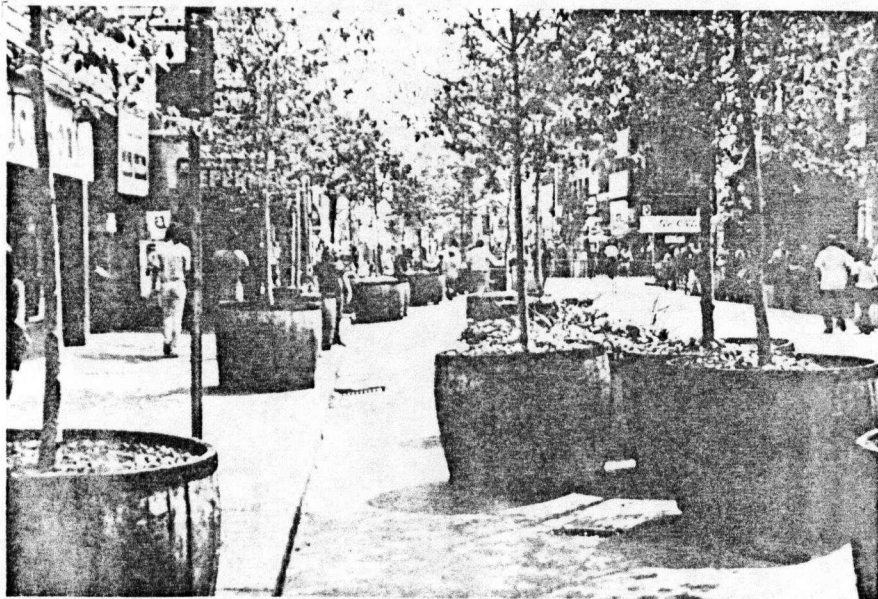


FIGURE 19b TEMPORARY PLANTERS ON YONGE ST. MALL

"Main Street Canada". As can be seen from the traffic diagram, the people using the mall were totally confused because certain blocks along the mall permitted cars and certain blocks did not. The traffic regulations also changed for different days of the week (Figure 19).

The mall experiment was again carried out in the summer of 1974. The major problem in the mall seemed to be the control of the large number of peddlars, panhandlers and literers. Police officials reported at a Metropolitan Toronto Police Commission meeting on April 3rd, 1975 that more than 1,200 persons were arrested in the downtown Yonge Street Mall during the summer of 1974 and charged with offences ranging from liquor-law infractions to attempted murder (Vancouver Sun April 4, 1975). The City Council felt that with a stricter police control the crime element would disappear from the Mall area. There was also suggestions that the City should restrict the issuance of licenses to certain types of businesses which would downgrade the area.

The author feels that the social problems encountered on Yonge Street Mall is one common to all large urban centres in North America and not necessarily attributed to the Mall itself. Like the 8th Avenue Mall in Calgary, the Yonge Street Mall succeeded as a social space because it has attracted large crowds of people, but it failed in creating substantial increases in sales for the merchants.

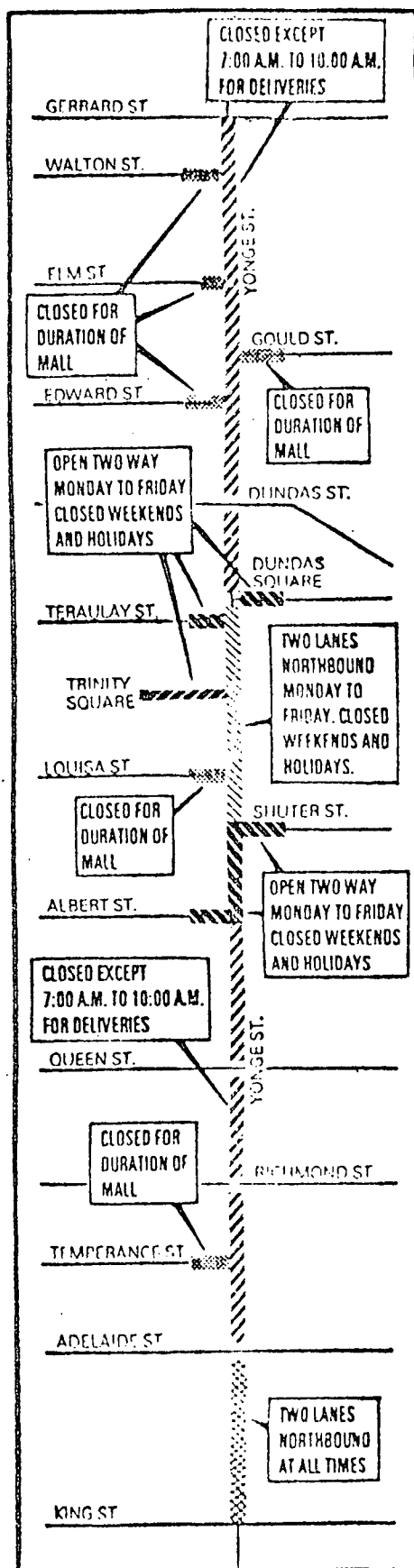


FIGURE 19 YONGE STREET MALL TRAFFIC REGULATIONS, SUMMER, 1973.

(Source: Toronto City Council Report June 15, 1973)

D. ASIAN EXPERIENCE

Very little is written about the pedestrian mall movement in Asia and the Far East although many malls have existed for centuries as part of their indigenous street system.

In Tokyo, however, the main shopping and entertainment street in Ginza district was closed on several Sundays as an experimental mall to combat the air pollution problem. It was a completely different sight to find the street suddenly flooded with thousands of people after the cars had been banned (Figures 20 & 21). The interesting point in this experiment was that people were not afraid of crowded places.

Another example of an Asian pedestrian mall is the side street of Hong Kong. These side streets have been closed to all vehicles since the end of the Second World War, primarily because they are too narrow for vehicular traffic. Also the Government would like to maintain the bazaar atmosphere of these small shopping streets for the enjoyment of the local people as well as the tourists. However, cars are permitted on these side streets only at night for loading and unloading for cleaning purposes (Figure 22).

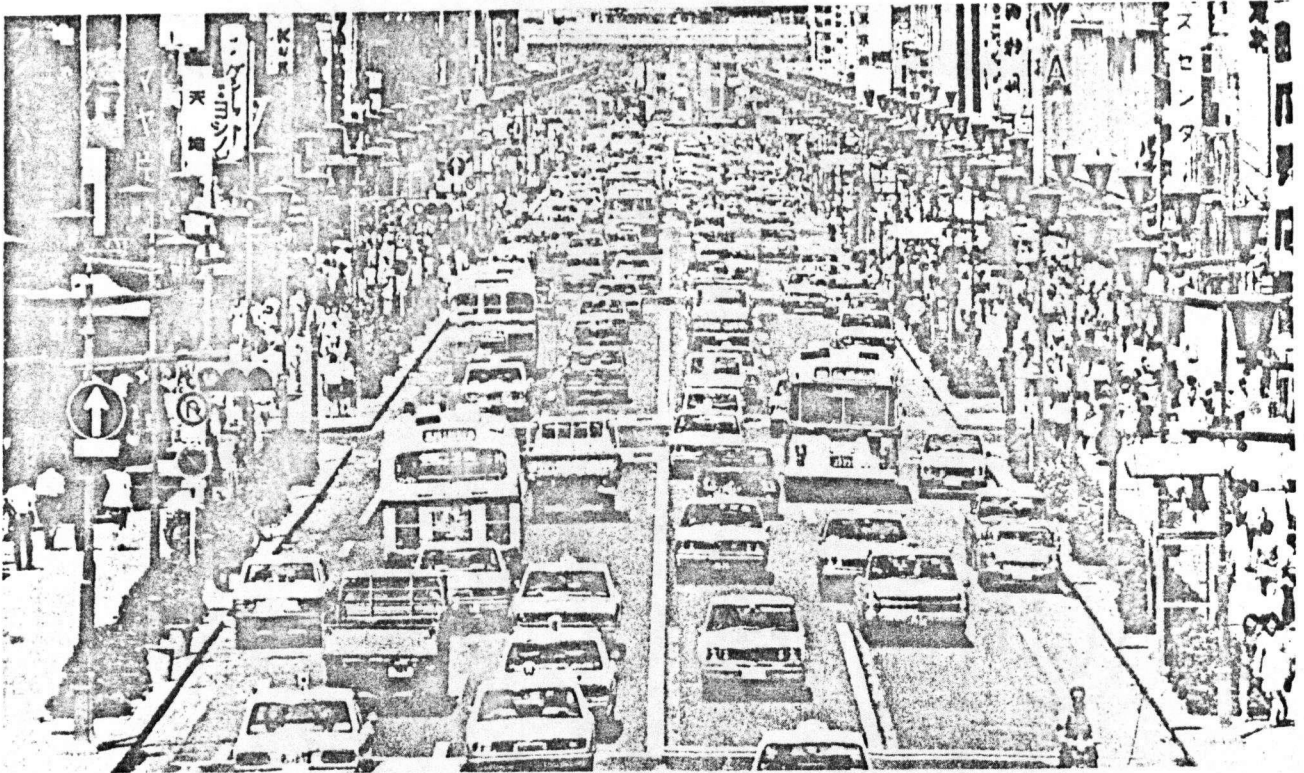


FIGURE 20 NORMAL CONDITIONS OF THE GINZA, TOKYO
 (Source: V. Gruen---Centre for the Urban Enviroment)



FIGURE 21 TEMPORARY MALL IN THE GINZA, TOKYO
 (Source: V. Gruen---Centre for the Urban Enviroment)

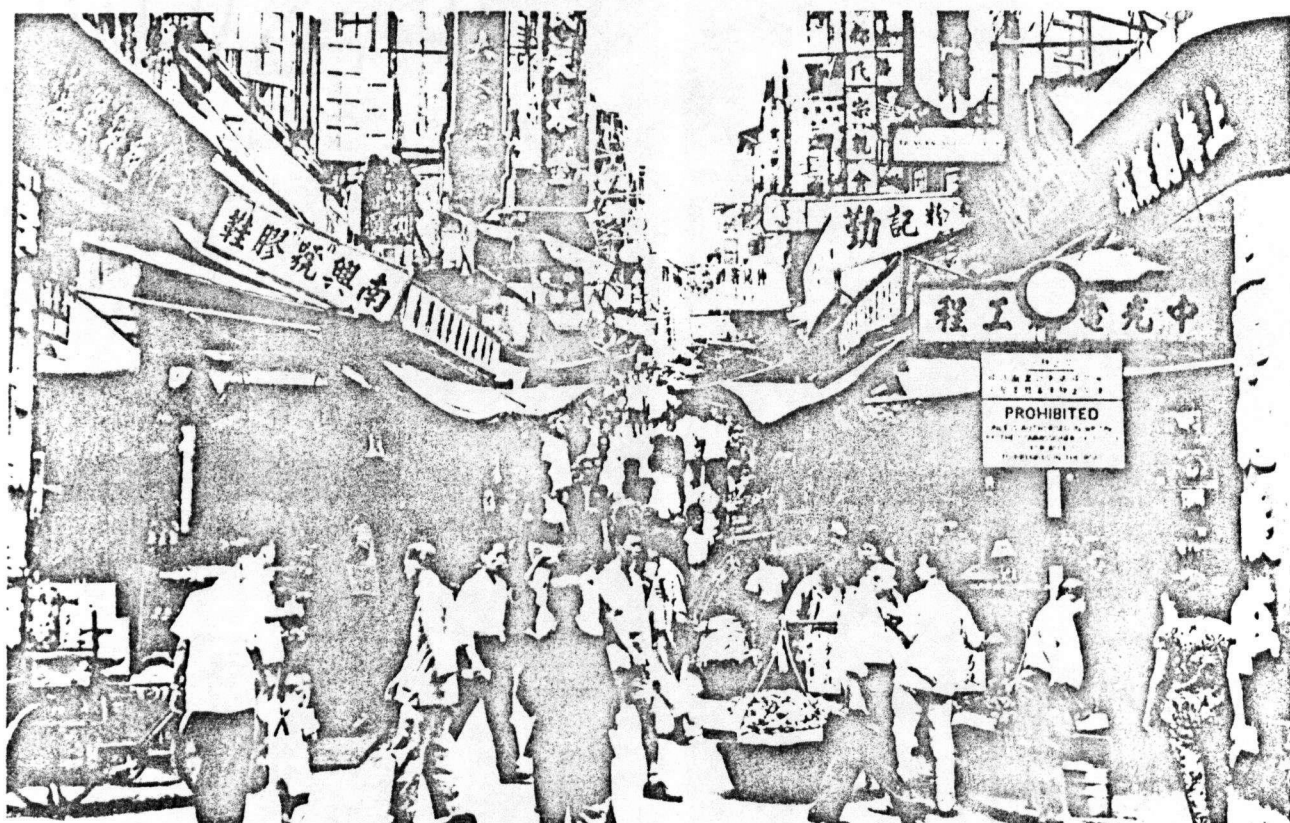


FIGURE 22 PEDESTRIAN STREET IN HONG KONG

(Source: V. Gruen---Centre for the Urban Enviroment)

IV. PLANNING PROCESS OF PEDESTRIAN MALLS

There are no hard and fast rules for the planning of pedestrian malls. However, after reviewing a number of pedestrian malls experiences, it appears that there are several identifiable stages in the planning process. Some malls were implemented without going through the stages of feasibility study and experimentation. On the other hand, some malls took great pains to go through several evaluation periods before they were built. The various stages of the planning process are as follows:

- A. Definition of Goals and Objectives;
- B. Feasibility Study;
- C. Experiment;
- D. Design Phase;
- E. Implementation;
- F. Evaluation.

The elements of the various planning stages will be discussed in the following pages.

A. DEFINITION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

It is common practice that the goals and objectives must be clearly defined in a planning process. Cut, in the

planning of pedestrian malls, this cannot be easily done because there are too many uncertainties. This accounts for the fact that so many malls have to go through the experimental stage.

In general, the goals and objectives of a pedestrian mall are: (a) to provide an improved environment for the pedestrians; (b) to reduce the pedestrian-vehicle conflict by space separation, either horizontally or vertically or by time separation; (c) to re-arrange the traffic system in and around the core of the city; (d) to stop the decline of businesses in the downtown core and the decline of property values which is vital for the city's tax base; (e) to preserve the characters of historic areas; and (f) to create more public space or an urban park. Some cities may place more emphasis on certain objectives than others.

Pedestrian malls are generally being initiated either by city councils, private citizens, downtown business groups, senior governments responsible for urban renewal schemes or a combination of any of the parties mentioned.

It is important to make clear to the people concerned in defining the goals and objectives whether the mall is an isolated incidence or part of an integrated scheme of

pedestrian malls because in the latter case, a comprehensive plan and a great deal of studies would be required in the decision-making process.

B. FEASIBILITY STUDY

The feasibility study is a very important stage in the planning process of a pedestrian mall because this study is intended to help decide whether a mall should be built or not. However, the feasibility study could also turn out to be a waste of time if the city council persisted to build a pedestrian mall regardless of the outcome of the study.

The general procedure is that a professional or a consulting firm would be hired to conduct the study. The study will begin by taking inventory of the existing land use, the type and number of stores, the pedestrian movements, the physical feature of the existing buildings, etc.. The study should also include the collection of relevant data such as sales records, rental rates, property values and assessment rates, taxes, vacancy rates, accidents and crime rates, etc.. Another important aspect of the feasibility study is the identification of residents, traffic patterns, access roads, public transportation, parking facilities, the legality of converting a street into a mall, the by-law changes necessary and many others.

In order to see a pedestrian mall in action a field trip is generally arranged for the politicians, civic officials, professional consultants and representatives of the merchant group to visit other malls of cities which are of similar size to the one being studied.

A public opinion poll may be taken at this time to determine the general attitude towards a pedestrian mall. The more important step would be to get the reaction from the merchants who will be directly affected by the mall. Constant communication between the city and the merchant group at this time would have most of the difficulties resolved.

The consultant would be expected to present his findings of the study, whether favourable or otherwise. He may also be required to present alternatives and some preliminary designs. The findings would be scrutinized by all parties concerned; it may even be publicized in newspapers and on radio and television in order to stimulate greater involvement. Some cities hold public meetings for everybody to air the issue, but some are against the idea because they feel that public meetings will only bring out the opposition with a negative attitude.

The total cost of the project and the financing formula should also be approved before the mall can proceed. In Europe and the U.K. the initial cost of the mall project was forced to be borne entirely by the city although the subsequent assessment to the property owners was not known.

C. EXPERIMENT

After the feasibility study obtains a favourable support, a temporary mall may be constructed for a specified experimental period. One may consider that the temporary mall is part of the feasibility study.

The expenditure on a temporary mall is usually kept to the minimum. As such it is often criticized for the lack of amenities. The existing roadway will remain unchanged except perhaps getting a new coat of paint in some interesting patterns. The landscaping and fountains, etc. will be of the portable type which can be removed as soon as the experiment is over. If the experiment takes place in the summer months when the weather is ideal, more pedestrians can be expected. Promotion by the merchants is also important in order to attract more people to the mall.

An evaluation survey would be taken during this period. Further inventory and data collected would be required. The results of the evaluation survey will most likely help decide whether a permanent mall is feasible or not. In fact, several major urban centres have voted against the construction of a permanent mall after unfavourable results were produced by the experimental mall.

D. DESIGN PHASE

This stage of the planning process will be carried out by professionals such as architects, planners, engineers, social planners and landscape architects if the city council decides to proceed with the design and construction of the permanent mall, which may be a full mall or a transit mall.

The design phase will be concerned with the relocation of utilities underground such as hydro, gas, sewer, water and telephone. The old ones will be replaced at this time since the roadway will be made permanent. Existing traffic on the streets will have to be re-routed to other streets in the case of a full mall or improved in the case of a transit mall. Delivery vehicles, taxis and garbage trucks may be allowed in the mall at certain times of the day and emergency vehicles such as ambulance and fire engines should have access to the mall if needed.

Urban design plays an important role in the success of the mall. The added features must be such as not to overcrowd the area and should convey a relaxing and pleasant atmosphere. The lamp standards, tree-planting and canopies, etc. must relate to the human scale. Victor Gruen (1973) maintained that all urban planning which ignores the human scale and human values will inevitably erode "the urbanity" of our cities.

Other major problems to be considered during the design phase are public transportation, parking spaces, policing, snow-removal and general maintenance, etc. An attempt should be made to preserve some of the existing features that are identifiable with the street such as some statutes, clock towers, gates, etc.

E. IMPLEMENTATION

During the construction stage, it is essential that least inconvenience be caused to the local merchants in conducting their business. A schedule of work should be worked out and adhered to so that there is a target date for completion.

The businesses should be rearranged at this time to carry out any alteration or renovation work to their premises.

They should also work closely with the planning officials and consultants to establish design and control standards for any future construction on the mall. Some of these standards would be incorporated into the by-laws and regulations applicable to the pedestrian mall only. The cost of future maintenance and operation should also be decided at this stage.

F. EVALUATION

After the mall has been completed and has been in operation for a period of time, an evaluation survey should be carried out. The main purpose of this stage is to find out whether the original goals and objectives have been met. The evaluation study is generally conducted by interviews and by distributing questionnaires to merchants for information and comments. The results are tabulated and analyzed and normally available for release to the public.

The following indicators are useful in evaluating a mall's success or failure.

- (a) Pedestrian count
- (b) Sales volume
- (c) New construction
- (d) Renovations and improvements

- (e) Property values and assessment
- (f) Crime rates
- (g) Traffic accidents
- (h) Vacancy rate and relocation
- (i) Pollution standards

An increase in pedestrian count and sales volume indicate that more people are using the mall and the business has improved. More new construction and renovation work to the buildings along the mall not only provide more work and employment, but also show the confidence of the merchants and property owners in the mall. Otherwise there will be no need for capital investment. As the popularity of the mall increases the demand of space will most likely increase. Consequently property value will rise and the tax dollars for the city's coffer will also increase.

With the elimination of most cars and trucks on the street the traffic accident rate is expected to drop drastically. As far as the crime rate is concerned a great deal depends on the law enforcement. The mall is an ideal place where the policeman mingles with the crowd. It is also believed that a better environment is the best cure for vandalism.

It is expected that some types of business will be forced to move out of the mall area because they depend heavily on door to door delivery such as stores selling heavy appliances, repair shops and other drive-in businesses. But as long as the vacancy rate is kept relatively low there is no cause for alarm.

Lastly, the overall environment should be greatly improved with the low level of air and noise pollution after the cars have been removed from the mall.

V. GRANVILLE STREET MALL, VANCOUVER - A CASE STUDY

A. BACKGROUND

(1) DOWNTOWN STUDIES (1968 - 1974)

Granville Street is the major thoroughfare of downtown Vancouver. Along its length Granville Street offers a variety of people-oriented activities which include theatres, restaurants and retail shopping, as well as offices and financial institutions. Because of these activities it is quite natural that Granville Street has the heaviest pedestrian traffic.

The City of Vancouver has carried out many downtown studies over the years, particularly since 1968. In almost all the studies planning for pedestrians in downtown has been the major topic. Consequently, many recommendations have been made to provide safety, comfort and convenience for the pedestrians.

In the study entitled "Downtown Vancouver Plan, Part I - The Issues" of August 1968, it was shown that pedestrian traffic was the heaviest on Granville Street in the 400, 500 and 600 block area. This study recognized that the conflict existing between the pedestrians and vehicles on Granville Street was very severe and commented that the

one-way street system and mid-block pedestrian crossings on Theatre Row of Granville Street may not be the solution. However, this study did suggest that more continuous, permanent canopies and bus shelters should be provided for weather protection of the pedestrians (p. 47).

In June 1970, a very comprehensive report entitled "Downtown Vancouver, Development Concepts" was published. In this report, five alternative development concepts were proposed for the comments and suggestions from interested citizens or groups of citizens. The theme of the report was to make Downtown Vancouver into the executive and cultural centre of the Canadian West. It emphasized that the special needs of pedestrians for safety from vehicles, ample room to walk, places to rest, shelters from rain and interesting, pleasant or exciting environments to experience should be provided in both private and public developments (p. 22).

Specifically, in Concept 5 of the Report, a pedestrian mall was proposed for Granville Street;

Granville Street would be developed as a pedestrian mall. The new character of the street would have a decidedly urbane quality with sidewalk cafes, small sidewalk shops, kiosks, semi-permanent buildings to be used for boutiques, magazine stores, tourist and gift shops, planted areas and trees, sidewalk art displays and permanently placed

sculptures donated by private individuals or groups ... (p. 54)

The concept also suggested a network of pedestrian walkways:

A system of pleasant and interesting walkways would link the downtown parks, squares and malls ... (p. 54)

Of the five alternative concepts, Number 5 received the most favourable comments. It is quite clear then that the mall idea for Granville Street was accepted in principle.

Another study came out in April 1973 entitled: "Downtown Vancouver, Part I, Proposed Goals" aiming to encourage more citizens' participation in the planning process of our downtown. This report proposed nine goals which were considered to be fundamental to the future of downtown Vancouver, one of which is to "Make Downtown a Place for Pedestrians."

Although there was no mention about pedestrian malls, this report singled out a few important pedestrian streets:

All Pedestrian Streets should be made more attractive for pedestrians, with priority given to the people activity corridors such as Hastings, Granville and Robson Streets. Programs to carry out this policy would include design and zoning controls, and beautification programs such as the one on Granville Street . . . (p. 14)

It went on to suggest linkages to adjacent buildings and streets by either over-street or underground connections, and the importance of preserving older buildings (p. 15).

While the Granville Street Mall was nearing completion, a study report was released by the City called "Downtown Vancouver, Report for Discussion" dated September 1974. Again, planning for pedestrians was one of the main themes in this report. In discussing the downtown core, the report states:

Within the boundaries of the core outlined by the inner ring road, a new network of transit malls is set out which forms the focus for an ultimate new pedestrian system. Extension of certain of these malls beyond the core, Hastings Street to the east, Robson Street to the west and Granville Street to the south, provides for the pedestrian linkage of the core to other areas ... (p. 46)

At that time, Granville Street Mall was already a reality. This report was to suggest development of further transit malls and more importantly, an inner ring road for vehicular traffic only. In this way, the vehicle-pedestrian conflict would hopefully be eliminated.

(2) THEATRE ROW - A BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

The above four downtown studies clearly show that Granville Street has always been favoured as a pedestrian mall.

It might be mentioned here that around 1967 a beautification project was actually completed for the "Theatre Row" on Granville Street. In this project, the sidewalks in the several blocks were repaved with coloured concrete; some benches and concrete planters were placed near the mid-block pedestrian crossings and on-street parking was banned. This project received very good comments except for the complaints from the merchants about the location of the benches which attracted many "undesirable" people.

(3) MERCHANTS' REQUEST

Between 1971 and 1973 the business on Granville Street had been on a steady decline. Many businesses had closed or relocated in the suburban shopping centres. As a result there was a high vacancy rate. It was the Council's concern to strengthen the position of Granville Street as the major shopping street in the downtown area. In that period construction and demolition work was taking place on the west side of the 600 and 700 blocks which contributed to a very confused traffic condition. In order to facilitate construction, the sidewalks on these two blocks were closed for a long period of time. This was another reason for the decline of retail business.

As the environment deteriorated, the crime problems

began to emerge. Early in 1973 the merchants on Granville Street between Robson and Nelson made a formal petition to City Council to solve the problems along Granville Street such as prostitution, drug-peddling, vandalism, loitering and general disturbance to the store-keepers and the pedestrians alike. As a result of these petitions and complaints, representatives of the City's Social Planning Department and Police Department met to try to solve the problems which were causing concern. Both short and longer-term solutions were discussed and reported to Council.

It was proposed that Granville Street, if converted into a pedestrian mall, will provide a lasting solution. The idea was that by improving the environment and by providing better policing and control, Granville Street will become a much safer and enjoyable place for people to shop, to do business, to stroll or to attend other events (Granville Mall Committee Report, March 1974).

(4) COUNCIL'S ACTION

Following this report the City Council took immediate action to investigate the possibility of building a Granville Street Mall.

On June 26, 1973 City Council approved the establishment of an Alderman as liaison with the staff Committee of Planning, Social Planning and Engineering on the Granville Street Mall and other mall developments in the downtown area.

On June 28, 1973 the Alderman's report to City Council recommended the following actions:

- (a) That a Granville Street Planning Committee be established, the members to include the Director of Social Planning, City Engineer, Deputy Director of Planning and Civic Development, and a member of the Police Force. Alderman Massey would serve as chairman of the Committee and the Mayor's representative would serve as liaison with the Mayor's office.
- (b) The Director of Social Planning would co-ordinate all aspects of the project including the liaison with merchants and property owners, information and design.
- (c) An amount not to exceed \$10,000 for a preliminary design report to be prepared by a private consultant.
- (d) That the City Council request the Police Department to increase the number of patrol constables in the transit mall area.

(Granville Street Planning Committee,
September 24, 1973)

The above recommendations were adopted by Council on July 3, 1973 with the exception of clause (c). However, after

further meetings and the preparation of terms of reference, the consultants Bain, Burrough & Hanson, Architects, were approved on July 17, 1973.

The consultants' report, "Granville as a Pedestrian Transitway" was submitted to Council on September 14, 1973 and was immediately distributed to Social Planning, Engineering, Police, Planning and Civic Development, and Finance Departments for comments. Further copies were also sent to merchants and Downtown Business Association.

All the comments from the committee members as well as the merchants were in favour of the Granville Transit Mall as proposed by the consultants. The Social Planning Department contributed the most comprehensive analysis of the report. It endorsed the consultants' concept of making downtown a place of exchange for cultural, commercial and recreational activities. It went on to suggest many mall activities that can take place and improvement to the lighting and signs, etc.. The Engineering Department presented a budget of \$3,250,000 for Phase I of the construction. The Police Department was opposed to seating south of Robson Street and recommended maximum lighting in the entire mall area. The Director of Planning merely endorsed the concept of a pedestrian mall for Granville Street and suggested that design work must begin immediately if the

deadline for completion of the mall on July 1974 was to be met. The Director of Finance reported that the project be financed from 1973/74 Supplementary Capital Funds available which is estimated at 2 to 2.5 million dollars.

The City Council finally approved the recommendations of the Committee and authorized the work of converting Granville Street into a transit mall to proceed immediately with a target date for completion set at July 1974.

B. PLANNING PROCESS

(1) GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The proposed goals for downtown Vancouver (April 1973) are the basis for city initiatives for creating a transit mall along Granville Street. These goals for the downtown area are:

1. Encourage downtown to become the executive, cultural and tourist centre of Western Canada.
2. Promote high standards of environment.
3. Make downtown a place for pedestrians.
4. Expand the housing opportunity.
5. Improve the mobility of people to and within downtown.
6. Require development proposals to meet overall community goals.

7. Increase public presence and spending.
8. Reinforce the character of special areas.
9. Establish a program for downtown development.

(Bain, Burroughs and Hanson Report)

According to the consultants' report, Granville Street was chosen as the first city-initiated project to provide a place for people because it has a historical sense of being a special street in downtown and it offers more opportunities for the pedestrians and a variety of people-oriented activities along its length than any other north-south street in downtown. Also the automobile can be removed from Granville Street with less disruption of vehicular flow than on other streets.

The long-term objective, according to the Social Planning Report, was that Granville Street Mall, in addition to facilitating pedestrian use, would also act as a framework for redevelopment and to stimulate revitalization.

Despite all the long term goals, the immediate objective for the Mall construction was to combat the crime problems. The Social Planning Report stated:

Although there have been exceptions, the conversion of a street to a pedestrian mall has generally reduced social problems. Great increases in pedestrian traffic -- shoppers, strollers and theatre-goers --

create a safer, self-policing environment.

(Questions and Answers about
Granville Mall, March 1974)

The Director of Social Planning was later appointed by the City Council to coordinate the entire project with the various departments, the merchant groups and the citizens.

(2) FEASIBILITY STUDY

Unlike Sparks Street Mall or Nicollet Mall, the time spent on feasibility study was very brief prior to City Council's approval to construct the Granville Street Mall. It seems that the Planning Committee had the idea of a transit mall modelled after the Nicollet Mall at the outset.

After setting the terms of reference and the appointment of the consultant, the members of the Granville Street Planning Committee flew to Minneapolis to meet with officials and study the Nicollet Mall. Apparently, the reason for visiting the Nicollet Mall was that there are striking parallels between it and Granville Street in width, length and the relationship to other streets in downtown.

The consultant's report may be considered a more formal feasibility study although the terms of reference and

the design were determined by the Planning Committee. The only decision left was to decide on the length of the mall and the width of the transit way.

The Social Planning Department, however, did conduct an opinion survey in August of 1973. The survey showed that of the 2500 interviews, 86% were in favour of making Granville Street a pedestrian transit mall with buses, but no cars. A portion of the 14% opposed to a transit mall wanted no bus at all.

A letter from the Downtown Business Association (September 20, 1973) seemed to indicate that their association and many other retail members were not consulted in the decision-making process. However, they did endorse the proposal of a transit mall in principle.

(3) EXPERIMENT

As noted in Chapter III, the Spark Street Mall in Ottawa went through an experimental period of six years before the permanent mall was finally constructed. The Granville Street Mall, however, did not go through any experimental period because it was banking on the experience of Nicollet Mall, which took ten years to plan and had been in operation since 1968.

The only other experience the City had in an experimental mall were the temporary closure of Robson Street and Pender Street for one or two days at a time. The Robson Street experience showed that the costs of promotion and cleaning afterwards were very high.

(4) DESIGN PHASE

The Granville Street Mall was designed as a transit mall. (Figure 23) This mall in this stage is six blocks long, extending from Hastings Street to Nelson Street. The transit way is 24 feet wide in order to accommodate two lanes of bus traffic only. Part of this transit way is widened to facilitate the turning of buses, especially at intersections. The sidewalks have been widened and new curbs were installed. The design of Theatre Row has been incorporated in the overall floor treatment (Figure 24).

New lamp standards have been installed and the lighting level has been reduced to create an intimate atmosphere for strolling at night although the police department had recommended maximum lighting level (Figures 25 & 26)

There are over 200 trees planted on this mall of approximately 15 to 20 feet high in order to emphasize the human scale of the space. There are also landscaped

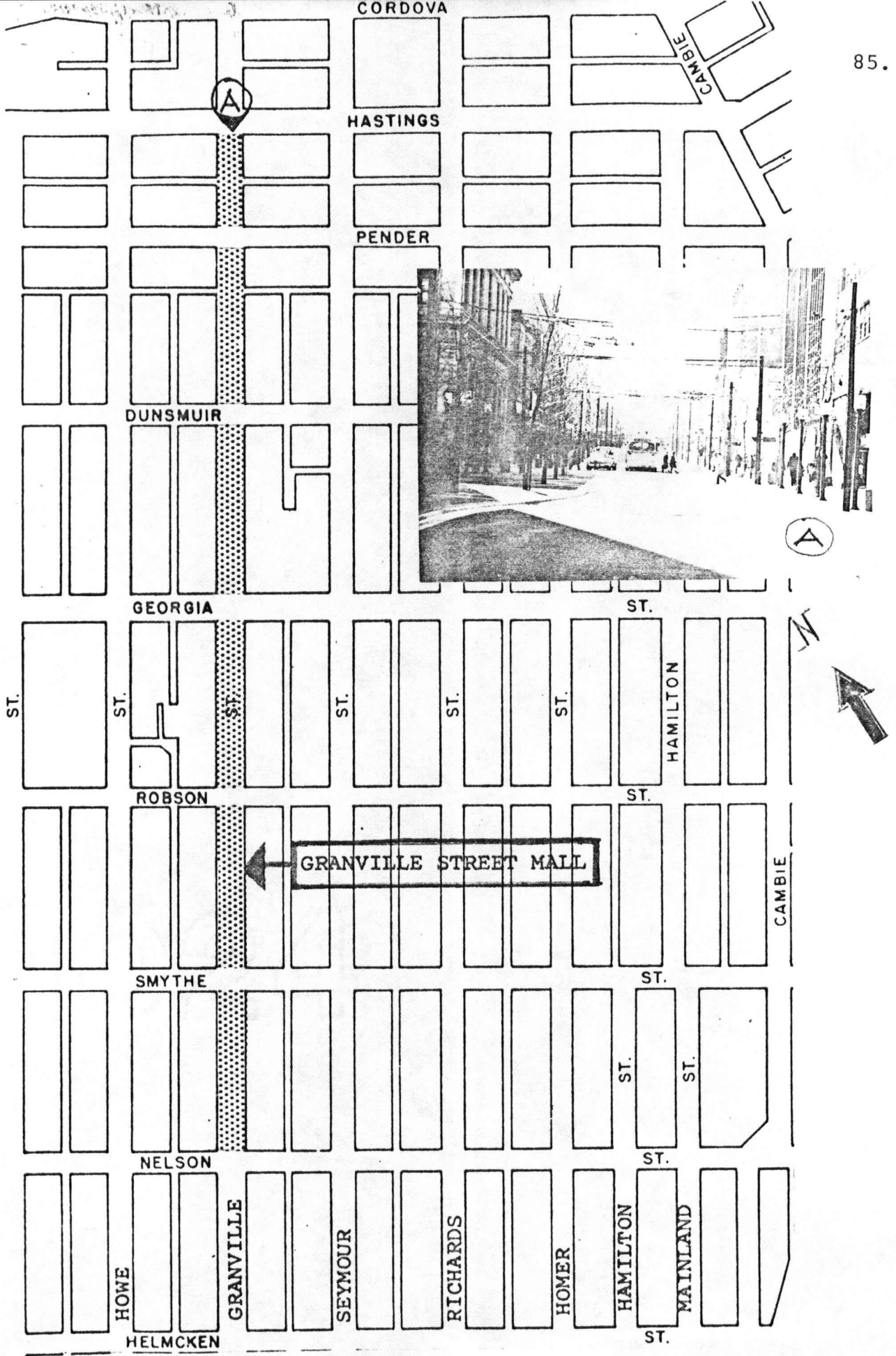


FIGURE 23

GRANVILLE STREET MALL, VANCOUVER



FIGURE 24 THEATRE ROW

FIGURE 25
THEATRE ROW AT NIGHT

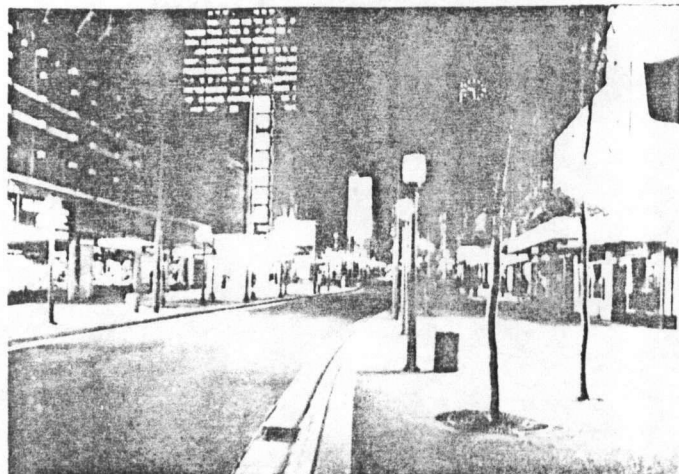
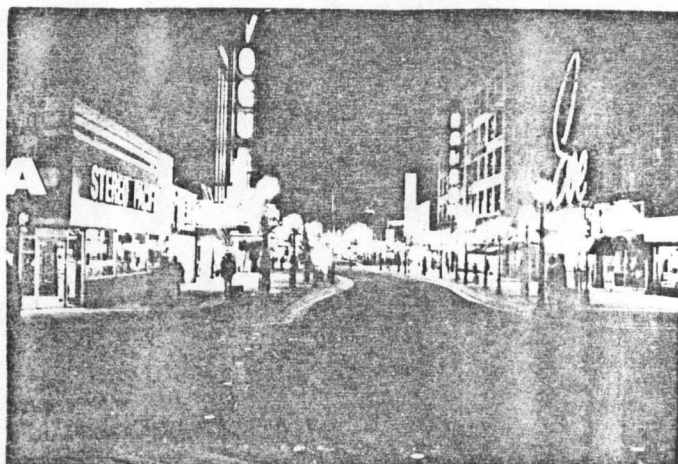


FIGURE 26
GRANVILLE MALL AT NIGHT

areas on the 900 block to define the southern entrance to the mall. Other street furniture includes litter containers and public telephone booths, etc. (see Appendices).

It was suggested in the report that consideration should be given to provide seating, bus stop shelters, kiosks and art works, etc.. Vendors would be permitted if they met the standards and regulations as set down by the City Council.

In general, the consultant was instructed to provide the minimum at this time in order to meet the budget. Further refinements may be added after the mall has been in operation for a period of time or when more funds are available.

C. IMPLEMENTATION

(1) CONSTRUCTION

Implementation of the plan was almost immediate after the consultant's final drawings were completed and approved on October 16, 1973. A deadline for completion of the mall was originally set for July, 1974.

In order to meet the target date, the Council waived

normal tendering procedures and instructed the Engineering Department to negotiate directly with contractors and suppliers. Some of the sewer work had begun during the Christmas period with no traffic disruption. Despite the electrician strike during the summer, the mall was officially opened on August 22, 1974 with three days of special activities.

(2) BUDGET

The total cost of the project was estimated at \$3,250,000.00 by the Engineering Department. The formula for cost-sharing was such that the property owners' share would be one-third, and this would be recovered through local improvement charges included in property taxes. The City's share would be two-thirds of the total cost, which would be derived from profits of property sales in 1972 and funds that were available in 1973 supplementary Capital Budget. However, the City's share was further reduced by the Federal Winter Works Programme which has contributed about \$700,000.00 of the cost. The final cost of the project was 3.9 million.

(3) TRANSIT

Early in August 1973, two meetings had been held between the Planning Committee and the Bureau of Transit Services

presided by the Mayor. According to the Bureau's forecast, there will be a 5% - 10% annual growth in transit patronage until 1980. It was suggested that the 2-lane transit would handle the traffic until 1976, and after that 4 lanes would be required. However, the Planning Committee decided that a 5% annual growth rate until 1980 would be more realistic. It was the Council's hope that some form of Light Rapid Transit would be in operation in downtown Vancouver after 1980.

During the course of construction, B.C. Hydro moved transit to adjacent streets by the end of January 1974. The bus service was resumed in September 15, 1974 after the mall had been completed.

(4) GRANVILLE MALL INTERIM AUTHORITY

During the course of construction, a Granville Mall Interim Authority was established. This Authority was made up of elected and appointed officials, as well as 12 Granville Street businessmen and property owners appointed by City Council. The final goal was to have a Mall Authority which will organize activities to create interest during the construction period of the mall and afterwards. It would also recommend measures to encourage mall improvement. Other responsibilities included advertising of activities to

be permitted on the mall, such as sales, festivals, exhibits, and recommending on signage and street furniture, including fountains, sculptures, planters, etc.. (Questions and Answers about Granville Mall, March 1974).

(5) GRANVILLE MALL MERCHANT ASSOCIATION

On September 1, 1974 the Granville Mall Merchant Association was formed. The elected representatives serve in the Granville Mall Authority. The membership is on a voluntary basis, and according to the Mall Manager, only 50% of the merchants and property owners have joined the Association to date. However, this figure is expected to rise as time goes on. The purpose of this Association is to promote business sales and social events, and to act as an advisory body to Council on matters relating to the mall.

(6) BY-LAWS

In order to control and regulate the land use, traffic and business activities of the Granville Street Mall, many new by-laws have been introduced.

There is an interim zoning by-law which legislates the type of business that would be allowed in the Mall area

(CM-1A and CM-2A). For example, massage parlours and arcades will not be permitted on the mall, and the frontage for new banks and offices facing the mall shall be limited to 25 feet frontage.

By-law No. 4792 was passed on August 13, 1974 to prohibit any vehicles, except buses and emergency vehicles to enter the mall. Taxis are allowed on the mall only when they have been called. Any other vehicles using the mall must have received a permit issued by the City Engineer.

On June 11, 1974 a by-law was passed to regulate street vending in downtown Vancouver (By-Law No. 4781). Recently in one of the Council meetings, it was passed that only 30 vendors will be allowed on Granville Street Mall. Also the size and design of these kiosks, the location and the type of merchandise of the vendors must be approved by the City Engineer before a license will be issued.

D. EVALUATION

(1) METHODS OF EVALUATION

Although the mall was officially opened on August 22, 1974 the business condition did not resume to normal until the bus was in operation again on September 15, 1974.

Under the direction of the Social Planning Department, consultants were employed to conduct an impact study during the construction period and a retail sales survey after the mall was opened in order to evaluate the success of the mall.

The methods of survey adopted by the consultants included personal interview, distribution of questionnaires, the counting of pedestrian flows and research of relevant data such as land assessments and downtown employment statistics.

It is understandable that all these studies and surveys can only be considered as preliminary since the mall has been completed only for 7 months. Other surveys will be needed during the summer months ahead in order to have a more complete evaluation of the impact on the businesses. Besides, the current construction of an office-hotel complex on the west side of the 600 block and an office-bank project on the east side of the 700 block will have substantial impact on the mall because of their day-time population and the tourists in the hotel.

(2) GRANVILLE MALL PRELIMINARY IMPACT STUDY

This study was carried out by AVG Management Sciences

Ltd. in various stages. The initial surveys were done in June 1974 during the construction period and follow-up surveys on commencement of bus service in October 1974. A further business survey was performed at the end of January 1975.

The objectives of the impact study were to: develop standard formats and methods for assessing the impacts of mall development; assess the impact of the construction period of development and to assess the immediate benefits of a mall development.

The type of impacts considered in this study were property and rental values, ownership patterns, major developments, transit and parking, employment, retail trades, pedestrian surveys and attitudes towards Granville Street Mall. For the purpose of this thesis only the highlights of the impact study are discussed.

Assessed Property and Rental Values

There are 144 properties on the Mall which are presently owned by 70 persons or business firms. Their total 1974 value is \$107 million. The total property tax amounts to \$2.9 million and the assessed rental value is

\$7.8 million. It was reported in the impact study that the rental rates seemed to have lagged behind the land values for commercial property downtown in the past few years.

Ownership Patterns

It was reported that over 25% of the properties in Block 800 changed hands. This was the same block in which renters had the highest level of dissatisfaction over the rental increases that followed in 1974. Many stores in this block had either moved out of this area or to the 900 block where the rent was cheaper.

Major Developments

The major developments that are taking place on or in the vicinity of the Mall will have significant impact on the pedestrian movements and business volume. These developments are the Simpson Sears development on Hastings Street, the Pacific Centre development on Block 42, the Vancouver Centre complex on the site of the old Birks Building and the new Provincial Courthouse project between Howe and Hornby Streets.

Transit and Parking

As far as the transit is concerned, the peak hour volume is estimated at 110 buses per hour. However, this volume may decrease when construction work is completed on Seymour Street and Howe Street.

Owing to the construction work on Howe and Seymour Streets, about 792 parking spaces have been removed. The present parking facilities within 2 blocks of the Mall stand at just over 5,000 available spaces. This reduction of parking spaces coupled with the increase of parking fees may discourage a large proportion of potential Mall customers. However, the City's contention is that the difficult parking situation so imposed will encourage more people to patronize public transit instead.

Employment

The total employment figure is very difficult to obtain because of each firm's confidentiality. It was estimated the present total employment in the Mall area is about 15,000. With the new developments completed this figure may rise to 18,000.

Retail Trades

According to the D.B.S. Census Data reproduced in the impact study, there was a decline in the number of retail stores from 1961 to 1966.

In the City of Vancouver, the decline was 8%; but in the Central Business District (C.B.D.) the decline was 14%. This could indicate a trend towards larger stores or a shift towards larger shopping centres. This study also estimated that the annual volume of retail trade along the Mall for 1974 would be \$127 million by 117 stores employing about 3,900 staff.

Pedestrian Survey

This survey was performed in five sections:

- (a) Pedestrian Traffic
- (b) Transportation
- (c) Purpose of Visit to Mall
- (d) Opinions on the Mall
- (e) Pedestrian characteristics

In pedestrian traffic: this survey shows that there were approximately 1,000 people on the Mall at any one time during

the day. In pedestrian origin, between 60-70% are from Vancouver and the rest from the neighbouring municipalities.

In transportation, the survey shows that 48% of the people came by bus and 46% came by car during the October survey. Their purpose for visiting the Mall ranged from shopping and browsing (45%), passing through (15%), business (15%) to eating and drinking (7%).

The general opinion on the Mall was that people did not like the buses because they limit their freedom in walking. However, the pedestrians felt that other amenities such as benches, toilets and more trees could be added.

One very significant statistic shows up in the survey of pedestrian characteristics. It shows that 17% of the people on the Mall were under the age of 20, 78% between the age of 20 to 64 and only 5% were over the age of 65. In order to make the Mall a people's place it is important that it has something to offer for people of all ages. It is hoped that an improved parking situation and an efficient transit system will make it easier for the elderly to visit the Mall.

Attitudes Towards the Mall

In general, the businessmen liked the Mall because it would be good for their business. A small percentage interviewed (16%) said they liked nothing about it. The main concerns seemed to centre on the control of "undesirables", drug addicts, panhandlers, etc. and adequate parking facilities for their customers.

In summary, this study shows that the Mall has accomplished a number of its goals and objectives; increased numbers of people are strolling and shopping in the Mall area and property owners and tenants are making improvements to their premises thus reversing the decay that had been a matter of concern in recent years. Despite the adverse economic conditions more than half of the Granville Mall businesses had realized significant increases in sales volumes since the opening of the Mall as compared to the same period the previous year.

(3) A SURVEY OF THE GRANVILLE MALL, RETAIL SALES, PHASE II

This survey was conducted in January 1975 by a private consultant for the Social Planning Department. The study, unlike the previous one, has the benefit of a significant period of operation from which to gauge the

effect of the Granville Mall upon the retail community.

A sample of 41 retail businesses and restaurants on Granville Mall were chosen for this survey of which 23 were chain stores.

The survey shows that more businesses had reported a sales increase: 32% in October 1974; 47% in December 1974 and 58% in January 1975. Of the 58% recorded sales increase, 73% credited the Mall as a direct influence. The percentages in this section refer to the businesses and not the increase of sales.

The businesses were also asked to compare the Christmas sales volume in 1974 and 1973. 47% had reported an increase while 32% reported unchanged. Of the 47% reported an increase, 72% attributed their success directly to the influence of the Mall.

The major objection relating to the business aspect of the Mall was the lack of parking facilities within a two block distance. As far as improvements are concerned, the retailers and restaurateurs placed great emphasis on:

(1) Greater police patrol; (2) Establishing a police sub-station near the Mall; (3) Provision of special lighting for holiday seasons.

Nearly all merchants interviewed were against the installation of benches on the Mall. They felt that the benches and public seating would attract the "undesirable". However, they did not object to having chairs and tables outside the restaurants in the form of a sidewalk cafe.

Other suggestions from the retailers included better designed kiosks, more coverings or canopies for the entire Mall sidewalk area and the installation of an information booth.

In summary, this is also a most encouraging report as far as the retailers and restaurateurs are concerned. Both the Impact Study and this Retail Survey have demonstrated that pedestrian volume has increased and business sales volume has also substantially increased over the five month period since the Mall was opened.

(4) COMPARISON OF GROSS SALES VOLUMES -
GRANVILLE MALL AND ROBSON STREET

This survey was carried out in February 1975 by the same consultant who made the Retail Survey. Although 58% of the Granville Mall merchants have reported increase in gross sales volumes, only 14% from the 1000 block Robson had reported an increase over the past 5 months. However, the Christmas sales volumes for the two areas were about the same.

It is interesting to note that 50% of the Robson merchants considered the Granville Mall as a disappointment while 30% thought it was a success. According to the Attitude Survey by AVG Management only 15% of the Granville Mall merchants disliked the Mall. The Robson merchants' opinion may indicate that they were not in favour of converting Robson Street into a transit mall.

(5) POLICE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

During the monthly meeting of the Granville Mall Merchant Association on February 19, 1975 the representatives from the Police Department reported a substantial decrease in the crime rate on Granville Mall. Although there still is some begging and panhandling on the Mall most of the drug peddlers have disappeared.

Currently the Police Department is working in conjunction with the Citizens Youth Resource Centre to patrol the Mall in order to prevent any vandalism or problems caused by some young people. This idea of combining the effort of police and social services seems to work out very well on the Mall.

At the meeting, the suggestion of establishing a store-front police station was brought up for discussion. The idea, of course, was a follow-up of the Retail Survey, in which a

police sub-station was favoured near the Mall. The police department was investigating the possibility of renting a vacant store in the 800 and 900 block area. However, the biggest stumbling block would be the financing and maintenance cost.

(6) TELEPHONE SURVEY OF OPINIONS ON GRANVILLE MALL

Both the Impact Study and the Survey of Retail Sales discussed in the previous sections were carried out on the Mall. In order to obtain a city-wide opinion on the Mall the author of this paper has conducted a telephone survey during the first week of April 1975.

A random sample of approximately 100 Vancouver residents were contacted by telephone. These telephone numbers were the second or third numbers on the third column of every eighth page of the telephone directory. Six persons made the phone calls (3 men and 3 women), and half of the calls were made in the daytime and the other half at night-time. The four questions and their answers are presented as follows:

- (a) Are you aware that Granville Street has been changed into a pedestrian mall?

Yes	105	---95%	(W - 58%; E - 37%)
No	<u>6</u>	--- <u>5%</u>	(W - 1%; E - 4%)
Total	111	100%	

(b) Have you visited the Granville Mall?

Yes	88	---	80%	(W - 50%; E - 30%)
No	<u>22</u>	---	<u>20%</u>	(W - 9%; E - 11%)

Total	110		100%	
-------	-----	--	------	--

(c) If so, do you like the Mall?

Yes	46	---	52%	(W - 36%; E - 16%)
No	28	---	32%	(W - 16%; E - 16%)
Indifferent	<u>14</u>	---	<u>16%</u>	(W - 9%; E - 7%)

Total	88		100%	
-------	----	--	------	--

(d) Do you think it is a good idea to have a pedestrian mall?

Yes	71	---	67%	(W - 41%; E - 26%)
No	<u>35</u>	---	<u>33%</u>	(W - 20%; E - 13%)

Total	106	---	100%	
-------	-----	-----	------	--

Although a telephone survey does not give very accurate results it is nevertheless quite sufficient for getting an opinion poll. The answers to question (a) have revealed that Granville Mall was widely publicized. The fact that Granville Mall is a very important street in Vancouver has been indicated in the answers to question (b). More than half of the people called were in favour of the Mall, but about one-third have expressed that they disliked the Mall for various reasons. In general, two-thirds of the people thought that it was a good idea to have a pedestrian mall.

Of the total samples of residences, 47 were located east of Main Street (E) and the remainder were located west of Main Street including downtown and the West End (W). It may be

of interest to note that only 30% of those who liked the Mall live in the area east of Main Street. This low percentage may be interpreted as a general disinterest of the Granville Mall by the people in the eastern part of Vancouver.

E. PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

(1) ACCESSIBILITY AND PARKING

The success of a pedestrian mall depends largely on accessibility. In the case of the Granville Mall, the only means of public transit is the bus system. A large proportion of the people on the Mall still arrive by cars. There has been a great deal of talk about a rapid transit system for the City of Vancouver between the City Council and the two senior governments. So far no concrete decision has been made. In the meantime, more parking facilities should be provided within the 2 block area of the Mall until such time when a better transit system is established.

(2) MALL AUTHORITY

As suggested in the consultant's report, a permanent Mall Authority should be established to control and regulate the activities as well as to oversee the continuing operation and maintenance of the Mall. It is also advisable that a Mall Manager should be employed on a full time basis to

co-operate and co-ordinate all matters concerning the Mall between the businesses and the City Council.

At the time of writing, it does not seem that anything further will be done to improve the Mall. In the first place the Mall Merchant Association has received support from only 50% of the property owners and merchants and this will make it very difficult for the Association to promote any activities. In the meantime, the City has already exhausted the funds allotted on the Mall project. Therefore, further improvements such as benches, kiosks, public toilets, etc. will have to be postponed until such time as funds are available.

As far as the City Planning Department is concerned, one gets the impression that they have an indifferent attitude towards the Mall. This is understandable because the Planning Department had very little input into the design and planning of the Mall since the inception. The Granville Mall is now being designated as a "Character Area" of downtown and it will likely remain as such for a long time.

The difficulty with a public project is that if too many departments are involved, the project is likely

delayed or not carried out. Conversely, if one department assumed the full responsibility and succeeded in carrying out the project, the other departments will sooner or later be involved with it. The Social Planning Department and the Engineering Department have been carrying the full load since the beginning and it is high time that a coordinate body such as a Mall Authority should be formed to take on future responsibilities.

This Mall Authority as suggested will be different from the Mall Merchant Association in that its members will include some senior civic officials, representatives from the Merchant Association and one or two knowledgeable citizens. It will be an advisory body which shall have the powers to regulate and control all activities on the pedestrian mall in order to maintain the aesthetic appeal and a pleasant atmosphere of the mall.

Most U.S. cities have established Mall Authorities for their pedestrian malls. In Michigan City, Indiana, the Mall Authority is made up of 9 members: 3 property owners, 2 civic officials, 3 mall merchants and 1 citizen at large. In Kalamazoo, Michigan, the Mall Authority is made up of 7 members: 1 civic official and 6 citizen members appointed by the City Commission. In the first case, it is

too much like a merchant association while the second is a pure advisory body. A compromise of the two would be ideal for the Granville Street Mall.

(3) SOCIAL SPACE

One of the goals in building the Granville Mall is to make it into a social space for people. To date we have evidence that the business sales volume has increased but we have seen very little social activities. To promote social activities requires funds, which has to come either from the merchants on an equitable sharing basis, or from the City. The Merchant Association is planning on assessing \$10.00 per each front foot of the property facing the Mall, so that there will be extra funds to promote social activities. The kind of activities that the Association plans for the summer include concerts, children's bands, puppet shows, etc..

Another problem that the merchants have to face is that there is a lack of space for any social activities. The widened sidewalk is meant for easy pedestrian movements. Any activities taking place on the sidewalk will no doubt create a crowding situation. The planners should look very hard at providing some open space or plazas on the Mall if social activities are to be encouraged.

It is the opinion of the architect involved in the design phase of this project that without the fund and facilities for social activities and without a strong organization for management the Granville Mall is nothing but a beautification project.

(4) FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

In view of the fact that no other form of public transit is available in the next few years, the transit mall seems to be the only logical solution. And since the Granville Mall has been successful at least in the economic sense, it is quite conceivable that this transit mall can be extended to other streets such as Hastings and Robson, so that a network of transit malls can be accomplished to maintain the economic viability of the downtown core. This network would also incorporate with the underground shopping malls at the intersections of Georgia and Granville Streets and Burrard and Georgia Streets. To achieve this goal the Planning Department must take the initiative in incorporating this pedestrian-transit network in the downtown plan for the City of Vancouver.

F. SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS

Despite all the downtown studies the construction of

the Granville Mall is considered as a political action to fulfil the election promise of 1972 to make downtown into a "peoples' place" by the TEAM-member dominated council. The term TEAM is the abbreviated form for a civic political organization of Vancouver known as The Electors Action Movement.

In the planning process of the Mall, the Council has avoided any experimentation and kept the feasibility study and the design phase to the minimum. The recent evaluation surveys have reported that the sales volume has increased; but a city-wide opinion survey conducted by the author has indicated that 48% of the sample either disliked the Mall for various reasons or were indifferent. Those who expressed dislike of the Mall were against the transit being left in the street and the general lack of amenities such as benches, bus shelters, canopies, public washrooms, etc. The problem with a transit mall is that the street gives the impression of a landing strip when there is no traffic on the mall (Figure 27). Much of this space can be put to better use for the pedestrians had Granville Street been converted into a full mall instead. It may be concluded that Granville Mall is successful in revitalizing the economic activity of downtown but falls short of becoming a "peoples' place" as advocated by the politicians.

On the positive side, the Granville Mall offers the unique opportunity of becoming a successful social space for

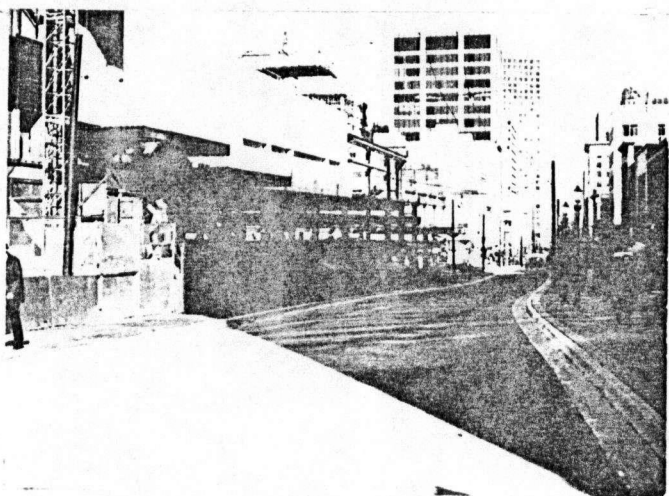
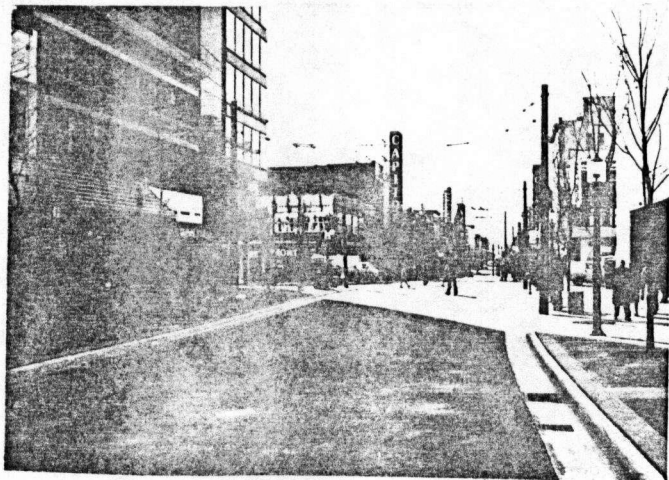
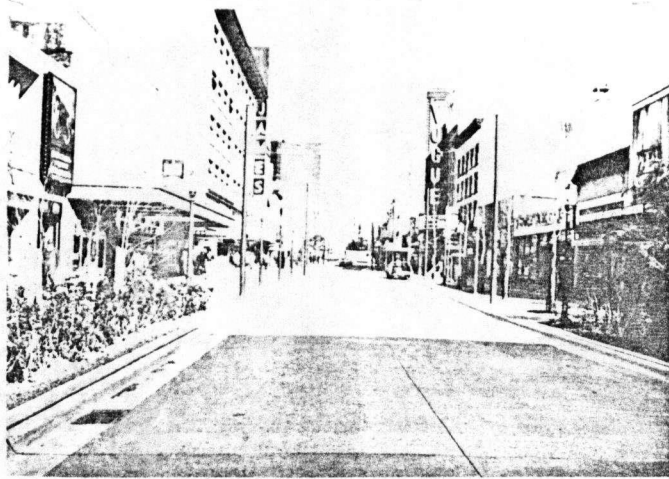


FIGURE 27 PHOTOGRAPHS SHOWING THE BLEAKNESS
OF A TRANSIT MALL ROADWAY

people if the transit can be removed from the Mall area. Since most of the buildings at the south end of the street are rather low, part of the Mall can be roofed over to provide a year-round weather protection. This covered space is ideal for many social activities such as concerts, art displays, flower and fashion shows, etc. Some of the second floors which have been vacant for a long time may be connected by a bridge or platform across the Mall. The inside spaces would be used as shopping arcades, arts and crafts workshops, libraries, etc., while the outside space can be used as outdoor restaurants and display areas. The upper floors of many older buildings may be converted into housing for single people and the elderly, who undoubtedly will participate in the night-time activities on the Mall. These are just some of the suggestions that the author has towards making the Granville Mall a genuine social space and a unique downtown centre for people.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The pedestrian mall concept is nothing new, because throughout the ages the streets have always been designed for pedestrian use. It is only in the age of the automobile that our streets have been lost for the pedestrians. The pedestrian mall is introduced as a device to bring about a separation of the pedestrian and vehicular traffics. In this way, the pedestrians can enjoy the safety and comfort in an urban public space and at the same time the vehicles can operate to their full efficiency on a designated roadway. Therefore, a pedestrian mall cannot be planned as an isolated incidence, but rather must be planned in conjunction with a transportation system.

The Pedestrian malls play an important role in the revitalization of downtown, because in the process of separating the vehicular traffic, they contribute to the improvement of the environment conducive to shopping, recreation and other social activities. Most successful pedestrian malls possess high level of amenities and urban design, resulting in a better social environment. The concentration of people in a pedestrian mall will bring about economic viability and thus strengthening the retail function of the downtown core. This argument can be substantiated in the review of pedestrian malls.

The author has learned from the review of mall experiences that most of the pedestrian malls in Europe are natural social spaces because of the richness in culture and the existence of historic buildings, statues and fountains surrounding the mall. Their success is also due to a well-planned transportation system such as the one in Munich, which permits easy access to the mall area whether by automobile or public transit. Somehow the pedestrian malls in the U.S. and Canada appear contrived because of a different background in the development of our cities. Consequently, a much greater effort must be exerted in the U.S./Canadian cities in order to achieve the goal of converting our pedestrian malls into social spaces. It also seems that most U.S./Canadian pedestrian malls are evaluated on the basis of economic benefits only.

The pedestrian mall is urban in appearance but rural in concept because the most successful malls today as we view them are those that have the marketplace and bazaar atmosphere of a village. This is the similar idea as advocated by Jane Jacobs that we must bring back the trust of the people to the streets if our cities are to survive. There is the general trend that people want the streets back for pedestrian use. The pedestrian mall may be just a beginning towards a new urban pattern for our downtowns. Louis Kahn considered the street as the living room of our city. Arthur Erickson echoed his sentiment by saying:

"The street - the living room of the city - is assenting itself as the most important city space - rather than as it has been in America - the leftover gap between buildings. This growing consciousness of the continuity of the city marks a shift in direction from the trend of the last 500 years. In fact it suggests a slow but persistent return to attitudes which existed long before in Western Culture - as far back as the middle ages." (Erickson 1975)

This study concludes that the role of the pedestrian mall in the revitalization of downtown must be looked at from two different points of view. Philosophically, the pedestrian mall represents the return of the street as a social space where people congregate and carry on with a variety of activities. In addition to shops and eating places, many other activity areas should be introduced such as playgrounds for children (Figure 28); open air stages for concerts and fashion shows; theatre-in-the-round for performances (Figure 29); and seating areas for resting and leisure (Figures 30 & 31). Also, the human scale of the space must be emphasized and the images of the city must be preserved and enhanced. Pragmatically, the pedestrian mall is a useful tool to generate a higher degree of economic activity, to resolve the pedestrian- vehicular conflict, and to create a better environment for human beings. Therefore, the success and failure of a pedestrian mall is a relative thing, depending on what it sets out to achieve.

In order that a pedestrian mall can fulfil its role,



FIGURE 28 PLAYGROUND IN PEDESTRIAN MALL
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY



FIGURE 29 THEATRE-IN-THE-ROUND,
RICHMOND, INDIANA

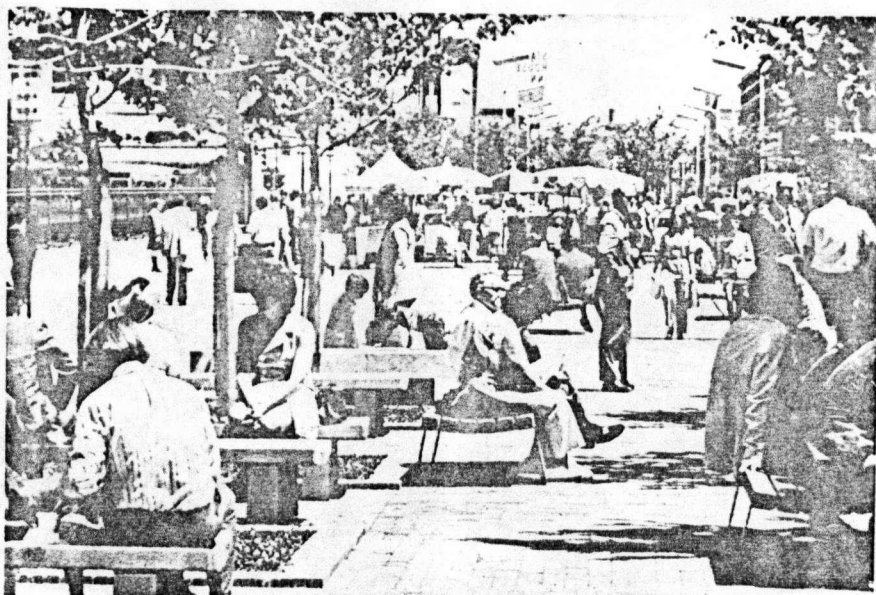


FIGURE 30 SEATING AREA ON MALL
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS



FIGURE 31 PLANTERS FOR SEATING
SPARKS STREET MALL, OTTAWA

a planning process must be carefully worked out. Particular attention must be given to the problems of accessibility, transportation, amenities and urban design, as well as continuing evaluation. At the completion of the project a Mall Authority should be established to ensure proper operation and management of the mall. Throughout the project, close cooperation and coordination between the merchants and the civic government is most essential.

Finally, the pedestrian mall "movement" signals the beginning of a change in urban forms because it involves the revamping and sorting out of our existing street systems. As more and more streets are being converted into pedestrian malls the building blocks can no longer stand in isolation. Architects and planners must take into consideration the intimate spatial relationship between the buildings and streets in their design process. This pedestrian mall concept may even be carried into the residential area. The planners should investigate the redundancy of some of our residential streets which could be converted into social spaces, and where children can play street hockey without having to avoid the cars.

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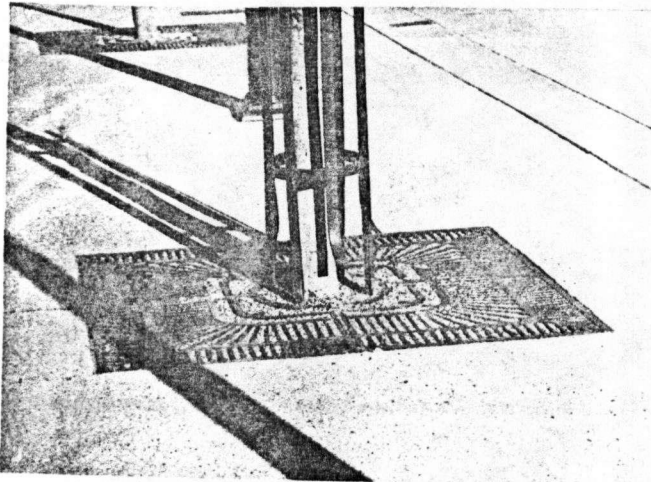
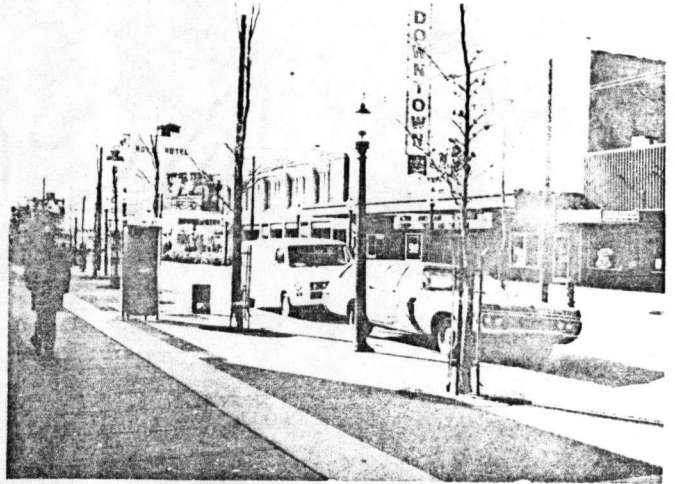
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APPENDICES

PHOTOGRAPHS OF GRANVILLE MALL

1. TELEPHONE BOOTH
& PARKED CARS
(NOTICE CARS HALF
ON SIDEWALK)



2. DETAIL OF A TREE-GUARD
& DRAIN
(A GOOD DESIGN)

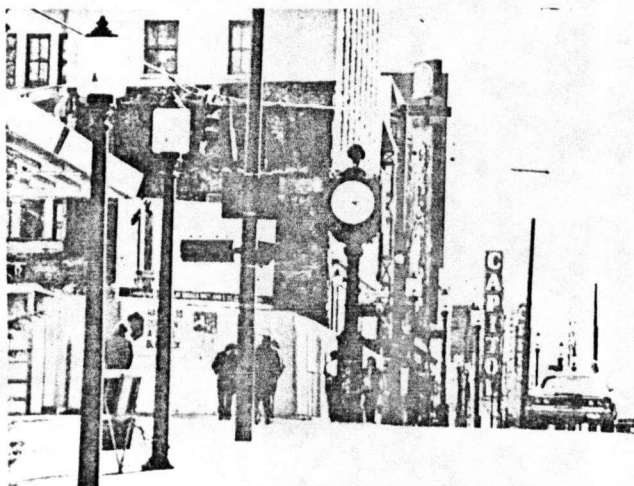
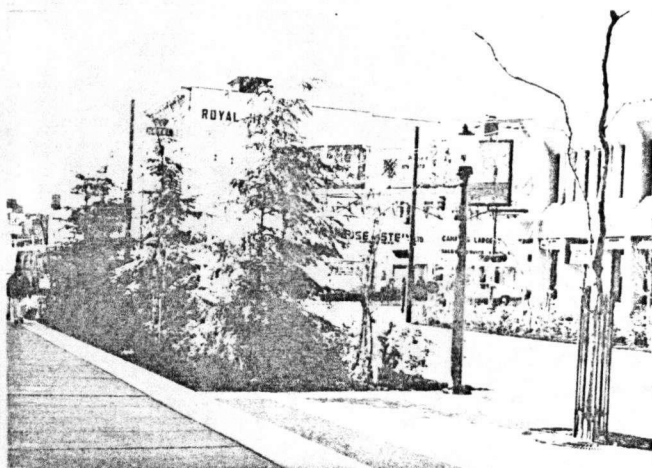
3. LITTER BOX &
TRUCK LOADING
ON MALL
(LOADING & TAXI
BLOCKING THE
TRANSITWAY)





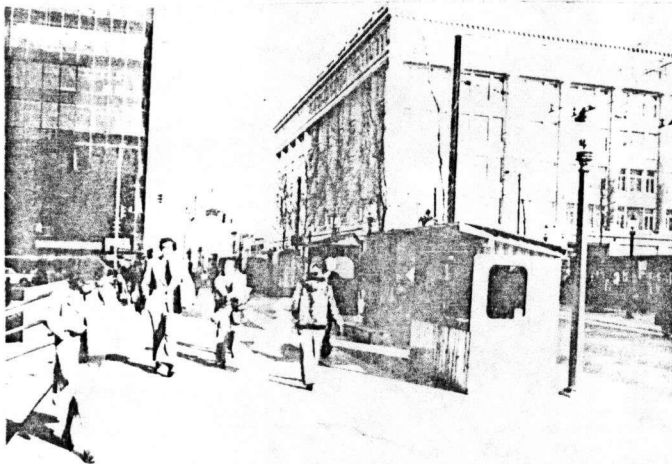
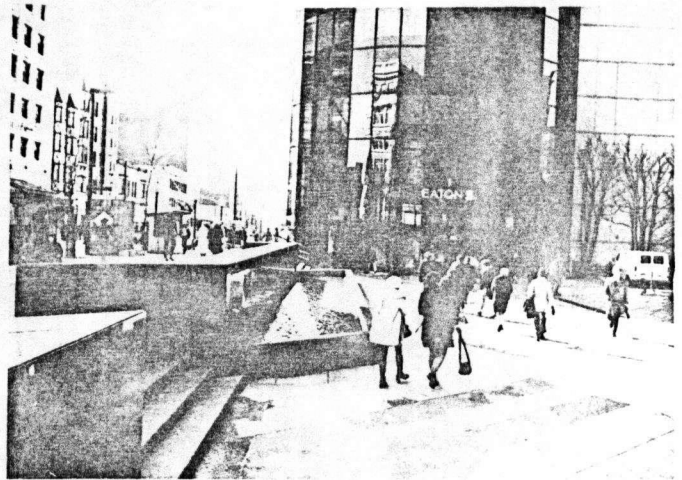
4. AERIAL VIEW OF
GRANVILLE MALL &
GEORGIA STREET
(FUTURE UNDERGROUND
MALL LOCATION)

5. LANDSCAPING AT SOUTH
ENTRANCE TO MALL



6. THE BIRKS CLOCK &
LAMP POSTS
(THE CLOCK IS A
FAMILIAR LANDMARK
TO BE PRESERVED)

7. EATON'S PLAZA &
FOUNTAIN POOL
(THE ONLY LARGE
OPEN SPACE ON MALL)



8. SOME OF THE VENDING
KIOSKS ON MALL
(THEY CAN BE OF
BETTER DESIGN)

9. A DISCARDED KIOSK
& A TILTED LAMP
SHADE
(WHOSE JOB TO
CLEAN UP?)

