EVALUATION PLANNING FOR
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROJECTS

by

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ABSTRACT

Downtown areas across Canada have been deteriorating physically and economically due to a number of factors such as age, suburban growth, and shopping centre development. Downtown revitalization programs were created in response to this deterioration. In the last decade millions of dollars have been spent by all levels of government and the private sector in an attempt to achieve revitalization. More than five hundred revitalization projects have been undertaken. However, few project evaluations have been completed. Project evaluation is necessary to determine which program components are effective, to clarify goals and to provide accountability. The purpose of this thesis is to develop improvements in downtown revitalization project evaluation concepts and tools.

Interviews with administrators from five downtown revitalization programs revealed that most projects cannot be evaluated at present because the majority of administrators have yet to identify performance measures. The few evaluations that do exist were not adequately controlled and do not provide compelling evidence that any economic changes that occurred can be attributed to the revitalization project.

This thesis focuses on two research objectives. The first is to identify performance measures and methods of data collection. This in turn, requires an examination of program goals and components. The methods employed to collect this information included: a review of academic literature on downtown revitalization and evaluation methodology; a review of agency literature and current evaluations for five Canadian revitalization programs; interviews with program administrators; and a
survey of program clients and administrators.

The second objective of this thesis responds to the need for assessing the effectiveness of program components. Municipal officials and business representatives in one hundred and eleven Canadian communities which undertook revitalization projects were surveyed in order to determine current revitalization practices and client perspectives on which program components are effective. Their opinions and recommendations provide an interim answer, to be revised as more evaluations are undertaken.

The survey findings indicate that the typical approach to downtown revitalization has broadened beyond physical improvements to include promotional activities and organizational development. However, respondents identified the need for further assistance in the initial planning process and the development of marketing plans. Recommendations for improvements to the revitalization programs in this study are proposed in order to address these needs. In addition, the survey results reveal how program administrators and clients prioritize goals and which performance measures they prefer.

Finally, the input from the surveys, the literature review, the interviews and the author's experience in the field are used to determine a descriptive framework for downtown revitalization project evaluation. Performance measures, data sources, and collection methods are specified. The importance of using a systematic approach to evaluation, as well as collecting data for control groups is stressed. This evaluation framework is intended to assist program administrators and community groups interested in evaluating downtown revitalization projects.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Focus

The intent of this thesis is to assist those involved in downtown revitalization program planning prepare for evaluation. Five Canadian downtown revitalization programs are examined. These include: the MainStreet Canada Program sponsored by Heritage Canada Foundation and the provincial revitalization programs in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The original research involved interviewing program administrators and surveying program clients, in order to collect data on program goals, components and performance measures. The results of the research provide a framework for project evaluation, a description of current downtown revitalization practices and programs, as well as recommendations for improvements to revitalization programs.

1.2 Research Problem

Downtown revitalization programs were created in response to the fact that many downtown areas across Canada have been experiencing economic, physical and social decline. Millions of dollars have been spent by the provincial and municipal governments across Canada in their attempt to achieve revitalization. Similarly, millions of dollars have been invested by the private sector. The nature of these revitalization programs has been changing rapidly since 1978. Initially the programs focused on physical streetscape and facade improvements. Now the approach is more comprehensive and advocates a four-pronged strategy that focuses on organizational development, promotion, design and economic development.
Program evaluation is necessary to assess the effectiveness of the programs and to justify those funds. Program evaluation is also necessary to assess the success of different program components and to provide direction for program planning. By examining what should evaluated and how it should be done, decision-makers can be assisted in clarifying program objectives.

Unfortunately, few evaluations have been completed. At the beginning of this study, only one of the five revitalization programs examined had completed any community evaluations. A second program was in the process of evaluating six community projects.

There are a number of problems with the evaluations that have been completed. Since data bases to measure ensuing changes were not established at the beginning of the revitalization projects, the evaluators had to rely on the perceptions and memories of the merchants and municipal officials. The type of data collected for the different projects was not consistent and was, for the most part, described in qualitative terms. In addition, no data was collected for control communities, making it difficult to separate the impact of the revitalization projects from broader economic factors. Therefore, the opportunity to compare different program inputs and impacts has been eliminated. Although there is evidence that program staff and clients perceive the program to be successful there is little quantitative data to prove that communities experienced economic revitalization as a result of the programs.

Discussion with program administrators and senior staff for
the five programs revealed that their approaches to evaluation varied. One administrator emphasized the need to collect hard data in a systematic fashion. A senior staff member in another program suggested that evaluation was unnecessary because the success was obvious. Another administrator suggested that increased merchant confidence could be considered sufficient evidence of program success. However, all of the administrators expressed interest in sharing information on evaluation and discussing performance measures, particularly measures of economic revitalization.

Given the shortcomings of the few evaluations that exist, and the fact that the majority of program administrators had not formally identified measures to assess the accomplishment of their program goals, I concluded that the programs were in need of evaluation planning.

1.3 Identifying the Initial Research Question

An explanation of how the research problem was initially identified is provided for background information.

The motivation for this study sprang from my involvement with a Vancouver inner city commercial area called Mount Pleasant. The area was in need of revitalization. Business was marginal. Vacant shops stood like missing teeth along the pedestrian walk. Businesses appeared and disappeared routinely. Signs in the shops' windows warned, "Don't ask for change". A survey of the residents indicated that they found the shopping area depressing and the goods lacking in variety and quality. When the prostitutes moved in, bringing with them the highest crime rate in the city, the community was traumatized into action.
My assignment from the local area planning office was to organize a business association in order to provide a vehicle to coordinate revitalization. I began by reviewing the literature on downtown revitalization. I then investigated the benefits of participating in the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Program. Although the Mount Pleasant commercial area was not a downtown area, the downtown revitalization approach could be applied. The research questions that I wanted to answer were, "Which revitalization activities were the most beneficial?" and "What evidence existed that revitalization programs were improving the business climate?" Data such as increased sales volumes and decreased vacancy rates from past projects would have been helpful in my discussions with the merchants and property owners in Mount Pleasant.

After discovering that the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Program could not provide such data, I informally interviewed business association representatives in five areas within Vancouver that had engaged in revitalization projects. All five had undertaken physical improvements but promotional activity was either minimal or non-existent. None of the merchants interviewed reported that the revitalization projects had improved commercial vitality in their area, although they did report that shoppers made positive comments about the physical improvements. These findings confirmed statements in the literature review that warned communities not to expect revitalization to occur through physical improvements alone. It also heightened my curiosity about the differences between revitalization theory and practice in Canada.

In an effort to collect evidence that revitalization programs did improve business climate, I contacted administrators in seven...
programs. Two of the programs on the prairies had just been terminated. Only one of the five programs in this study had undertaken community evaluations. As the need for program evaluation was confirmed, the primary research question became, "How would one measure performance in downtown revitalization projects?"

Because sufficient evaluations had not been completed, the effectiveness of different strategies or activities could not be determined. An interim solution was sought by examining which performance measures were preferred by program clients and administrators. Additional insight would be gained by examining current revitalization practices in Canada, and soliciting recommendations for program improvements for program clients.

1.4 Research Objectives

The primary research objectives of this thesis, therefore, became:
- to determine common program components,
- to determine how stakeholders described and prioritized goals,
- to determine stakeholder preferences for performance measures,
- to identify appropriate data sources for the measures, and
- to assess previous evaluations.

The secondary research objectives of this thesis became:
- to determine common revitalization practices in Canada,
- to determine clients' opinions on which revitalization activities were effective, and
- to gather stakeholders' recommendations for program improvements.
1.5 Research Methodology

The methods used to collect this information included: a review of academic literature on downtown revitalization and evaluation methodology, a review of agency literature on program components and previous evaluations, interviews with program administrators and staff by telephone and in person, and a survey of program clients and administrators.

After the need for evaluation planning was identified, the flow of research activities was as follows:

1. The program administrators were telephoned and familiarized with the intent of this study. All of the administrators expressed interest in sharing ideas on evaluation and participating in the study.

2. The administrators were asked to send program information as well as any evaluation material that existed. Program descriptions are summarized in chapter three.

3. Academic literature on evaluation methodology was reviewed (chapter five). An examination of agency evaluation revealed the need for evaluation readiness (Chapter six).

4. After examining the program material and evaluations program administrators were interviewed by telephone and in person to discuss their opinions and experiences with performance measures, as well as to clarify information regarding program components and goals.

5. Various other stakeholders were interviewed to collect a broader view on program goals and performance measures.
6. The information from the literature reviews and the inter­views were synthesized to structure a questionnaire. The questionnaire design is described in chapter seven.

7. The program administrators and a sample of their clients were surveyed concerning their program goals, components, and preferences for performance measures. The survey findings are described in chapter eight.

8. The combined information from the literature reviews and the survey were used to propose: recommendations for an evaluation model which is described in chapter nine, and recommendations for improvements to the current programs which are described in chapter four.

1.6 Organization

The thesis is organized into two parts. Part one, chapters one to four, provides the reader with an understanding of the state of the art in downtown revitalization. Chapter one introduces the research problem. Chapter two describes the development of downtown revitalization programs and current revitalization practices in 68 Canadian communities. Chapter three describes the program components of the five revitalization programs under study. Chapter four concludes with recommendations for improvements to the programs, based on an analysis of the program material and the survey findings. These recommendations provide direction for program administrators until comprehensive and systematic evaluations can be completed.

Part two of the thesis, chapters five to nine, establishes the framework for project evaluation. Chapter five explains the rationale behind evaluation planning and more specifically recom-
mends an evaluation readiness approach. Chapter six assesses the existing evaluations. Chapter seven describes the methods of data collection for this study and the structure of the questionnaire. Chapter eight describes the questionnaire findings relating to goals and performance measures. Chapter nine concludes by identifying appropriate performance measures and makes recommendations for project evaluation planning.
CHAPTER TWO

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION - THE STATE OF THE ART

To gain some perspective on the development of downtown revitalization programs it is necessary to briefly identify: what the concept of "downtown" means for the community, what factors have caused downtowns to deteriorate, and what attempts have been made to combat that deterioration.

2.1 Downtown — The Heart of the Community

Downtown is the historical, social, physical and business centre of the community. It serves a multitude of purposes, having major components in services, banking and finance, general and specialized office uses, government activities, entertainment, cultural events, and retailing. (Alexander 1986) Referring to over one third of the Canadian population who live in communities of less than 50,000, Harold Kalman (1985) wrote:

"For most of these people Main Street is the physical, commercial, and social heart of their town. Even with the advent of television, mass tourism, and greater daily mobility, Main Street still functions as the heart of their world. Here are the stores, the services, the restaurants, and the social clubs, as well as the important public buildings such as the post office and the town hall. Here too are the shopkeepers, bankers, lawyers, and insurance agents with their generation or two of familiarity with the town and their clients. Over some stores are residences; over others, meetings-halls where the Oddfellows or exercise classes or film societies meet. The traditional use of the street as a social space, a meeting ground, has defined the importance of Main Street. (p. 3) Main Street has always been the social heart of Canada, the place where people meet, greet and celebrate." (p. 5)

Because of differing development patterns, economic bases, cultural identities, and variations in buildings materials, towns across Canada possess distinct individual characters. The arch-
architecture, the town’s layout, the street names, the shops signs with family names, all contribute to the local character and sense of place. (Kalman 1985) Besides providing symbols of community pride and quality of life, a healthy, vital downtown can serve a number of other functions in a community such as: strengthening the tax base, retaining and creating jobs, providing a variety of goods and services, and attracting tourists and investors.

2.2 The Decline of Downtown

Signs of downtown deterioration became evident following World War II. Many downtown buildings were in need of repair. Businesses and shoppers were drawn away from the downtown. The number of bankruptcies and vacancies increased, leaving dead spaces along the once-bustling streets.

The factors that contributed to this deterioration and the question of whether or not revitalization programs in general address the causes of deterioration is not the focus of this thesis. However, a summary of some of the causes applicable to the Canadian experience is discussed in order to provide context.

A review of literature indicated that in short, the changes in the economy, the age of the building stock, suburban development, external competition from shopping centres, and passive management techniques, influenced market forces and caused a major shift in uses downtown. (Bourne 1978; Holdsworth 1985; Bramblett 1975; Hall and Wyndam 1985; Murphy 1972; Ircha 1983; McKenna 1986)

Post war economic expansion created employment growth and increased the demand for office space. This increased demand caused land values to rise, pushing out many of the residential and industrial uses. The loss of downtown residents deprived
shopkeepers of their captive market.

As the automobile became the popular mode of transportation, it brought noise, pollution and congestion. Downtown became a less pleasant location to live. New highways provided easy accessibility for those who wished to leave the ills of the inner city and locate in the newly developed suburbs.

This out-migration was soon followed, and in many cases preceded by, the development of suburban shopping centres. Three obvious advantages for the developers were the resident market, the abundance of land and its inexpensiveness as compared to downtown property. Promotional strategies for these centres were unified, cost effective and sophisticated. For the suburban residents, the centres provided the convenience of a protected environment, ample parking, a wide selection of merchandise, and the ability to do comparative shopping.

Competition from suburban malls significantly reduced downtown's retail marketshare and in so doing, drained the core areas of much of its vitality. In the "Canadian Building" magazine, Barrie McKenna (1986) claimed:

"For years Main Streets, be they in Brandon Manitoba, or Toronto - have been losing ground to shopping centres, which have captured more than 40% of our retail dollars and a corresponding share of commercial development." (p. 29)

In a major review of the impact of regional shopping centers on downtown areas in selected small cities in U.S., Tom Muller (1978) pointed out that regional malls are explicitly designed to be substitutes for central business districts. Muller demonstrated that within the trade areas of smaller cities a new mall causes losses in older retail areas. Muller's study also showed that
Rents in downtown retail facilities are directly related to the level of sales. This drop in downtown sales usually implies a future reduction in rental rates. This in turn, results in decreased property values and a subsequent reduction in municipal assessment and taxes. (p.4-8)

Michael Ircha (1984) quoted that:

"By allowing a shopping center to be constructed in smaller communities, municipalities in effect, give a territorial franchise to a developer to operate a private market place. The monopolistic nature of shopping centers, particularly in smaller centers arises from their size as compared to the existing retailing system within the trade area. In many areas, their magnitude effectively anticipates and serves the community's retailing needs well into the future, thereby eliminating the viability of alternative forms of retailing." (p. 40)

While shopping centers began to promote themselves under a single management, many downtown merchants continued to operate as if they still had a captive market, with little advertising, minimal attention given to window displays, and inconsistent shopping hours. In the Alberta Municipal Councillor, Alderman Wayne Buss from Medicine Hat was quoted as saying, "Part of the problem was our attitude. We were complacent." (Stout 1985, p.9)

Another advantage that the shopping center holds over the downtown area is the opportunity that single management has to intervene and adjust the retail mix. No one owns downtown. No one can control the retail mix. Furthermore, the independent nature of individual proprietors does not lend itself easily to thinking and acting collectively.

The drawing power of the suburban shopping centers has led to a loss of confidence in the future role of retail business downtown. Municipalities attempting to revitalize their downtowns have experienced difficulty attracting major retail devel-
opment. High land costs, problems associated with land assembly, difficult site access, relatively higher taxes, the absence of an indigenous resident market, and parking problems added further to the developers' reluctance to build downtown. (Ircha 1983, p.36)

In order to compete with the parking convenience of the shopping centres, downtown businesses began to provide additional customer parking. Buildings were demolished to make way for the parking lots and more shops, some with second floor residences, were eliminated. Retail continuity was gradually eroded by the gaps along the street.

Insensitive architectural design was cited as another reason for downtown deterioration by Harold Kalman (1985):

"If historically the bank was one eye-catching presence on Main Street, another was certainly the post office. The initial eagerness to provide symbols for a maturing society has given way to concerns for efficiency, and little effort to merge the two. The international style of architecture was quickly adopted by public works. Hard rectilinear structures with brick walls, flat roofs, and large expanses of windows arose everywhere. Their modern lines often proved incompatible with the traditional architecture of the smaller communities. Few respected local materials or building sizes and shapes, and thus they failed to fit comfortably into their environments." (p. 49)

In addition, public buildings have been relocated outside the downtown core area. The basis of the decisions to move have been economic, ignoring concern for a traditional sense of community. (Kalman 1985)

The domination of retail trade by chain stores has further affected both the physical and economic climate of downtown business districts. The immense buying power of chain stores enables them to continually undersell the independents. As a result, local businesses suffer and fail. Chain stores also
employ standardized signage that is often insensitive to their local setting. In *Reviving Mainstreet*, Kalman (1985) complained that:

"The chains' conspicuous signs - which we are forced to notice long before we look at the buildings - have also hurt Main Street. They carry names, logos, and colours, that are dictated by head office. Many corporate signs bear no relationship to the buildings from which they hang; indeed they often do their best to obscure them. Some chains go so far as to hide the upper facade of their buildings behind metal siding that serves as the background for giant billboards. Any sense of harmony once found on Main Street is shattered by this competition to be conspicuous. A further result is a depressing sameness towns from one end of the country to another." (p.44)

Finally, the economic recession of the 1980's increased unemployment and reduced the spending power in many communities. As sales figures continued to drop, layoffs and business closures resulted, contributing further to downtown deterioration.

The above mentioned forces have slowly and collectively changed the face of downtown, physically, socially and economically. For many communities, downtown no longer acts as the primary retail centre, nor it is the focus for social events. There are fewer and fewer reasons for people to meet and greet and celebrate on Main Street.

2.3 Early Attempts at Downtown Revitalization

One of the first attempts at downtown revitalization was undertaken on Magdelen Street in Norwich, England in 1955. The buildings on Magdelen Street were delapidated and the business climate was lethargic. Concern for streets like Magdalen motivated the British Civic Trust, a national preservation charity, to broaden its mandate to include the preservation of streetscapes. In a description of the project, Jacques Dalibard (1985) wrote:
"Within a year of the project's launch, sixty-six properties were repainted in co-ordinated colours; twenty-two unsightly billboards were removed; seventeen signboards were redesigned; six lamp standards were replaced; a church was floodlit; overhead wiring was buried; bus shelters were made more attractive; and an empty parking lot was turned into a little city park. When the face-lifting was complete, most observers agreed that the Trust's first, tentative attempt to prettify a Main Street was a success. This initial success encouraged imitation." (p. 58)

In the following years more than four hundred similar projects were undertaken throughout Britain. During the fifties and sixties the approach to revitalization in Canada and the United States was urban renewal. This method was abandoned as the effects that large scale land clearance and rebuildings had upon residents became evident. By the mid 1960's schemes like the ones in Britain had been adopted in North America. In the United States it became known as beautification. In Canada it became known as the Norwich Plan.

More than two hundred towns and cities, mostly in Ontario, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, completed similar plans. Another Norwich-like plan, undertaken in Alberta, was called Main Street Alberta. The fifteen million dollar project, sponsored by the Calgary-based Devonian Group, provided landscaping, street furniture, pocket parks, and the face-lifting of some buildings. (Dalibard 1985)

Between 1978 and 1980 provincial revitalization programs were established in almost all the provinces. Initially, the programs focused on supporting physical improvements. Unfortunately, the approach was too simplistic to repair the complex problems in many downtowns. In the words of Dalibard (1985):

"...beautification projects ... were destined to be disappointing. With the advantage of hindsight it is easy
to point out that in a fundamental way the beautification experiment simply did not work. From the beginning, prettification was based on the premise that all that was necessary to resucitate a central shopping core was a cosmetic fix-up. Because it underestimated the complexity of a community, the scheme was doomed to failure. The underlying problems facing many downtown districts had not been addressed." (p. 59)

2.4 Current Revitalization Theory - A More Comprehensive Approach

In order to respond to the complexities of downtown deterioration, revitalization approaches became more comprehensive and sophisticated. In addition to improving the physical environment, the programs acknowledged the importance of a broad range of activities including: improving the organizational development of the business community, completing a marketing analysis, developing promotional schemes, recruiting complementary businesses, upgrading business skills, improving public relations, developing non-retail activity generators, establishing policies to control peripheral shopping centre development, and fund raising.

The current approach to downtown revitalization focuses on four elements: organization, promotion, economic development and physical improvement. A more detailed examination of this comprehensive approach is described below. The following description is based on the writer's experience in downtown revitalization and consensus of those working in the field.

2.4.1 Planning and Organizational Development

Ideally, the planning process should involve the participation of interested community groups, business representatives, property owners, developers, municipal officials, provincial staff from the revitalization programs, and economic development officers. In most cases, the planning is initiated by either a few interested
merchants or by the municipality. Consultants are commonly hired to draw up a plan for approval by the property owners and the municipality.

Before a proposal can be developed, the participants have number of planning tasks to complete. These include: assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the downtown, identifying the existing and potential consumer base and the competition, and establishing clear and specific objectives.

The plan should propose actions that will satisfy short and long term objectives, and should provide detailed implementation strategies. The cost of the plan should be within the financial means of the community. Performance measures should be identified in advance so that progress can be monitored and corrective action taken where necessary as the plan is implemented.

To implement the plan, the revitalization committee requires a stable financial base, capable leadership, and broad-based commitment.

In order to facilitate stable funding, eight provinces have passed legislation that enables municipalities to grant monies to business organizations for the purpose of downtown revitalization. Municipalities recover the funds through either the business or property tax system. All of the property owners or business owners within the designated area pay a share of the cost of the revitalization scheme. The designated areas are called either business improvements area (BIAs), business improvement zones (BRIs), or business improvement districts (BIDs). Each organization has an elected or appointed Board of Management. The funds can be used for promotion schemes, beautification projects, management,
research, advertising, property acquisition and development. The legislative powers vary in the different provinces. (See chapter three) Nevertheless, this funding mechanism can provide some stability for financial planning and the opportunity of mounting significant programs.

To expedite the implementation of a revitalization strategy Barnard and Associates recommend a number of management techniques intended to improve organizational strength. The improvements concern: the selection of board members, the use of committee processes, the importance of internal communication, the establishment of well defined financial systems, the utilization of various community resources, the value of full time management, and the benefits of business improvement area legislation. (Barnard 1983, 1985) Barnard’s suggestions are summarized in appendix A.

2.4.2 Promotion

A key component of downtown revitalization is innovative promotion. The town’s interest groups should work together in order to promote a positive image to local residents and the surrounding region.

In order to effectively target promotional campaigns, the business community has to define and analyze its market. Initially the community’s business composition should be identified. Then a profile of their consumers and an assessment of the competition should be described by collecting information such as: age, sex, income range, shopping patterns, work place, and residential neighbourhood. A consumer survey could provide further information regarding consumer demand. An understanding of the existing and potential consumer base provides the basis for targeting promo-
promotions. Because of the strength of fringe shopping centres, some communities have adopted a niche marketing approach, promoting their downtown as a centre for culture, entertainment, tourism, or specialty shopping.

2.4.3 Economic Development

The third element discussed in downtown revitalization literature relates to economic development. Economic development activities are intended to build up the resources downtown and subsequently, draw more people to the project area.

The methods suggested for building the resources include: business recruitment programs, the introduction of public amenities and facilities, and tourism activities.

Economic development, as it relates to downtown revitalization, was described in *Economic Development on Main Street* (1988) as:

"the broadening and diversification of the retail and services mix in the downtown through physical land development or by attracting or encouraging new ventures to the downtown. (p.3)"

Commercial areas that are in need of revitalization often have numerous vacancies. These vacancies destroy retail continuity along the street. By filling those vacancies, the stock of goods and services is expanded. Once the business organization has determined which goods and services are in demand, effort is put into recruiting appropriate businesses. Brochures and tenant search committees can be used to attract businesses.

A brochure can outline the benefits of the business area and describe the available spaces, amenities, rental rates, traffic volumes, taxes, leasing conditions, and contact persons for
the project area. This information can be supplemented with a description of the population base and the promotional strategies of the business organization. In addition, tenant search committees can be established to actively recruit businesses. The committee could include municipal representatives, business people, and real estate agents. The best source of potential new retailers is the pool of existing retailers, who may wish to expand or diversify. Other sources are trade magazines or simply the yellow pages. (Holdsworth 1985, p.216)

A few cities such as Winnipeg, Edmonton, and St. John's, have undertaken major development projects as part of their revitalization scheme. However, the inclusion of these types of initiatives in revitalization projects is rare. One of the assumptions of such projects is that public amenities such as a park, or facilities, such as a library or shops, will act as an anchor for the downtown area. The program guide material reviewed provided little direction for clients regarding anchor developments.

2.4.4 Physical Improvements

Most of the revitalization projects in Canada have focused on physical improvements as the first activity in the revitalization process. In the report prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Barnard (1985) offered the following advice:

"In our view, a downtown organization striving for excellence will maximize its returns by an early focus on physical improvements. The important object is to communicate to the public and the organizations' members that "something" is different." (p. 1.15)

Only the Albertan program literature cautioned against assuming physical improvements should be undertaken, and advised communities
to consider promotion and marketing initially. (Alberta Municipal Affairs - Technical Resource 1, 1986)

Numerous examples of downtown physical revitalization approaches are evident across Canada. The majority are street beautification projects in which improvements have been made to the sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping. Some projects have provided seating, mini-parks or some form of public space, or special features such as entrance gates, town signs, clocks, community bulletin boards or bandstands. Other design elements such as banners, unique street signage, flags, or a repetition of a color have been used to unify and define the boundaries of the downtown core. In some cases, improvements have been made to the availability of parking and vehicular and pedestrian accessibility.

One approach to street beautification, in which a street theme is artificially imposed upon the streetscape was criticized in Technical Resource 1 (Alberta Municipal Affairs 1986).

"One approach which has proven popular but has met with limited success, is the development of a "theme" village. Such development, however, must be approached with caution and must be appropriate to the region and local history of the area. Otherwise, downtown may suffer a loss of its sense of community and tradition." (p. 187)

Many communities have undertaken facade improvements. The nature of this upgrading has ranged from simple paint and awning schemes to heritage restoration projects. Literature on the subject suggests that successful examples of facade improvements are those that build upon and respect existing architectural resources. (Holdsworth 1985, Mintz 1977) In Heritage Canada's book, Reviving MainStreet, (1985) John Stewart stated that:

"Facade designs should restore the integral features of the buildings, not simply make the store-front look quaint or cute by adding period motifs or other gimmicks. (p.187)
When rehabilitating a storefront, new materials may be introduced but the manner in which they are used should respect the composition and lines of the original buildings. To restore harmony in the streetscape, renovations and new development should be designed in a manner sensitive to the dominant architectural features on the street. In order to ensure this sensitivity, the official community plan should be amended to include design guidelines regulating architectural elements.

This concludes the description of current downtown revitalization theory. This comprehensive approach to downtown revitalization can be applied in small towns as well as in commercial areas within larger urban centers.
2.5 Current Practices in Downtown Revitalization

The approaches to downtown revitalization described in the preceding section were those advocated in program guides and revitalization literature. In order to gain some understanding of current revitalization practices in Canadian communities the writer surveyed one hundred and eleven communities that had participated in revitalization programs between 1980 and 1985.

In the writer's 1987 survey, the business and municipal respondents were asked to select from a list of activities and improvements; first those actions that did occur in their community part of the revitalization program, and then those activities and improvements that they felt should have occurred, or should have been emphasized more. The results of two other surveys completed by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs are discussed to provide further insight into current revitalization practices.

The description of these revitalization practices will be again presented under the headings of: organization, promotion, economic development, and physical improvements. Chapter two concludes with a summary of these practices and a description of key components for successful revitalization.

2.5.1 Organizational Activities that Occurred

Table one illustrates the results of the writer's 1987 survey. The majority of respondents claimed that they had established committees, had experienced increased municipal support and had hired a coordinator. Just over one half claimed to have experienced a more supportive attitude from other groups.
Table 1

Organizational Activities that Occurred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Activity</th>
<th>% of Respds with a Co-ord</th>
<th>% of Respds with No Co-ord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- creation of committees for design, promotion</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- experienced increased attendance at meetings</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- experienced increased municipal support</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- experienced increased association membership</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- experienced improved supportive attitude from other community groups</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- hired a co-ordinator</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: "%" = Percentage  
"Respds" = Respondents  
"Co-ord" = Co-ordinator

Table 1 also illustrates the different responses concerning organizational activities between those communities who had hired a coordinator and those who had not. The advantage of retaining a coordinator appears to be best reflected in increasing attendance at organizational meetings, establishing committees, and improving the supportive attitude of other community groups. Implicit in this is the hope that these three factors will lead to greater participation and ultimately long term commitment on the part of the whole community.

Approximately sixty-five percent of the communities that responded had hired a co-ordinator. This percentage is biased somewhat because the acquisition of a coordinator is a requirement for communities involved in the Main Street Programme. As well, communities with a co-ordinator would be more liable to respond.
because they have paid staff to respond to correspondence. There were fifty-one respondents in the "with co-ordinator" category and thirty in the "without co-ordinator" category.

Table 2 illustrates the percentage of respondent in the different programs that hired co-ordinator for their revitalization project. It would appear that the provision of funds for a co-ordinator does not increase communities' propensity for hiring management staff.

Table 2

Communities With Coordinators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province or Program</th>
<th>% of respondents that hired co-ordinator</th>
<th>*funding for co-ordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>no (1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>no funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>no funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street Program</td>
<td>100% (program requirement)</td>
<td>no funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* details provided in chapter three

A survey completed by the Community Renewal Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, provides further information regarding coordination and organizational development. The Ministry's 1986 survey revealed that the larger the BIA was, the more likely it was to hire a co-ordinator. The majority of BIAs with over two hundred members hired coordinators. BIAs usually began hiring part time staff when their budgets ranged between eight and ten thousand dollars. The figures in Table Three illustrate the relationship between size of BIA and likelihood of hiring a co-ordinator. (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs 1986)
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-ordinator/Size of BIA</th>
<th>% that hired a coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-99</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-199</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-399</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400+</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the findings related to coordinators the survey reported that sixty-nine percent of the BIAs surveyed used at least one medium of internal communication monthly such as meetings, newsletters, or informal contact. Only twenty-six percent used all three. Twenty-four percent had established a block captain system. A block captain system is a system in which each block designated one business person as a representative.

A second report written for the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs (Barnard 1985) identified a number of weaknesses in business improvement area (BIA) organizational development. The report stated that:

"While most of the BIAs examined do not have formal planning processes, we found that all do have basic goals or a philosophy on what the BIA wants to achieve. The problem appears to be in articulating this philosophy and in linking it to specific objectives to guide the BIA over the longer term." (p.1.12)

"A number of the BIAs examined have had problems with maintaining management continuity because of attrition on the board. However, only a few have established mechanisms to deal with this problem." (p.2.6)

"Of the ten case study BIAs, only two have developed formal constitutions." (p.2.8)

"The major weakness we identified in the budgeting practices of our case study is the lack of project evaluation and planning before budgets are prepared. Many BIAs appear to be weak in their ability to assess accurately the real benefits derived from their projects and activities. They also
do not establish a budget for the coming year on long term objectives....BIAs suffer from a lack of accurate market information to determine whether their projects are having any impact." (p. 2.15)

"None have systems in place to accurately monitor the effectiveness of promotional programs." (p. 1.12)

### 2.5.2 Promotional Activities That Occurred

Table four describes the responses to the writer's 1987 survey concerning promotional activities. The further breakdown of this information into responses from communities with and without coordinators reveals the significant impact of a coordinator upon promotional activities and merchant participation.

#### Table 4

**Promotional Activities That Occurred**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotional Activity</th>
<th>% with co-ordinator</th>
<th>% without</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>creation of promotional events</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creation of promotional material</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased merchant participation</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>joint advertising</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation in marketing courses</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The collection of more detailed information concerning the number, type, and cost of promotional activities was beyond the scope of this study.

Barnard's survey (1985) indicated that having a co-ordinator increased the number of promotions possible, but sales statistics were not collected to quantify the impact of the promotions:

"In Oshawa, the number of projects the BIA was able to undertake doubled once a full time manager was hired, while the BIA's budget only increased by 20 percent. While sales statistics were not collected by the BIA,
merchants interviewed claim that sales levels increased as a direct results of the efforts of the manager." (p. 1.5)

2.5.3 Economic Development Activities That Occurred

A well targeted promotional scheme is based on an analysis of the trade area's consumer base, competition and market opportunities. The respondents to the writer's 1987 survey indicated that only forty-two percent had undertaken market determination studies. The percentage of the respondents that claimed that their community undertook these studies varied between programs. The percentages were: Main Street Program 53%, Ontario and Nova Scotia programs 40%, British Columbian and Albertan programs 33%.

Only thirty-seven percent of the total respondents claimed to have engaged in business recruitment activities. Again the highest percentage, 53% was found among the Main Street Program communities. Forty percent of the Ontario and Nova Scotia respondents reported engaging in business recruitment activities. Only thirty-eight percent of the British Columbian respondents and eleven percent of the Albertan respondents claimed to have engaged in business recruitment activities.

Respondents from Western Canada volunteered the following comments regarding business recruitment:

"Recruiting businesses, that's the job of the City and the Chambre of Commerce."

"Regarding the recruitment of businesses and developers.... who plays God in the BRZ ?"

The identity of the respondents is not revealed in order to maintain confidentiality. The first statement reflects an unwillingness to assume responsibility for business recruitment, possibly due to a lack of awareness of the benefits of attracting small businesses.
The respondent may have only been familiar with large scale municipal efforts to recruit head offices or industries to the community.

The second statement suggests the belief that recruitment is a form of unnatural and unethical intervention in the market place.

Very few communities, only twenty-five percent, built anchor developments as part of their revitalization strategy. Ontario and Nova Scotia had the highest percentage of respondents who claimed to have incorporated anchor development in their project. (Ontario 33%, Nova Scotia 37%) Both these programs provide funding for property acquisition and development. (Refer to chapter three for details.)

Table five illustrates the impact of a coordinator upon the economic development activities of the communities surveyed.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Development Activities that Occurred</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-market determination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-business recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-anchor development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It would appear that communities with co-ordinators were more able or more motivated to undertake market determination studies and business recruitment activities than communities without co-ordinators.

Barnard's report (1985) provides further information concerning the practice of undertaking a market analysis. The survey results revealed that only sixteen percent of the BIAs had developed a marketing plan. Twenty-three percent claimed to have hired a
marketing consultant. The report stated that:

"Few BIAs developed strategies based on solid marketing research. In some of the cases examined, BIA managers have been able to conduct small-scale market research projects but most do not have the resources to complete professional market surveys. Many BIAs examined have developed an intuitive understanding of the market environment but could benefit from having better market information on market shares and consumer shopping behavior."

2.5.4 Physical Improvements That Occurred

Table six illustrates the percentage of respondents that claimed to have undertaken the physical improvements listed in the survey. The responses are presented in a manner that reveals the impact of a co-ordinator upon physical improvements.

Table 6
Physical Improvements That Occurred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement or Activity</th>
<th>combined</th>
<th>with coordinator/without</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-infrastructure upgrading</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>84% / 83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-street beautification</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>89% / 97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-improved traffic circulation or access</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39% / 34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-increase in parking spaces</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>28% / 55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-provision of a downtown public space</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>67% / 62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-shopfront upgrading</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>80% / 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-heritage restoration or renovation</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>52% / 31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the writer’s 1987 survey, the revitalization activity that was completed by the greatest percentage of the respondents was street beautification. Ninety-two percent had undertaken street beautification projects. Eighty-two percent of the respondents claimed that they had completed municipal infrastructure upgrading. Sixty-one percent of the respondents reported that they included
some form of public space or mini-park in their revitalization project.

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents claimed that facade improvements were completed as part of their project. Although Nova Scotia and British Columbia provide facade rebates, the percentage of communities undertaking facade improvements was not higher than other provinces. Data regarding the number, quality, cost, of the storefront upgrading was not requested. It is reasonable to propose that those programs providing either design assistance, or funding, would precipitate more improvements, and better design.

The provinces in which the highest percentage of respondents reported including mini parks or creating public spaces downtown were Ontario and Nova Scotia. (Ontario 60%, Nova Scotia 94%). These were the only provinces that provided funding for the acquisition and development of property. The details of each program’s funding components are presented in chapter three.

Improvements to traffic circulation and increases in the number of parking spaces were completed by less than 40% of the respondents. The need for these types of improvements would depend on each community’s specific requirements and resources.

Almost half of the respondents claimed that their community had undertaken some heritage restoration work. However, these results are skewed because of the selection criteria for the Main Street Programme. To be eligible to participate in the programme, a community has to possess some heritage resources and express interest in preserving it. Seventy-three percent of the respondents in the Main Street Programme reported completing heritage
restoration. Whereas, in the remaining provincial programs, the range was between 33% - 47%.

A comparison of the percentage of respondents who completed physical improvements in communities with co-ordinators as opposed to those without co-ordinators reveals little difference. The percentages vary less than ten percent, except regarding heritage restoration and parking. A greater percentage of communities without co-ordinators increased parking than those with co-ordinators. Communities with co-ordinators did more restoration work than those without co-ordinators. The results were probably skewed because of the inclusion of Main Street Program communities, which are only eligible if they have buildings of architectural merit and express interest in restoring them. The other factor is that the decisions regarding physical improvements are often made before the hiring of a co-ordinator or manager.

2.5.5 Revitalization Activities That Should Have Occurred

In contrast to the responses in the previous sections of the survey fewer respondents selected items as activities or improvements that should have occurred or should have been emphasized more. Two possible reasons for this lesser response are that either most people were satisfied with the actions and improvements that were undertaken or that they were uncertain of the value of those activities they omitted. The business representatives selected twice as many activities and improvements in the should occur category as municipal officials. Table seven illustrates the combined responses of the program clients, in the order of frequency selected.
Table 7
Activities or Improvements That Should Have Occurred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity or Improvement</th>
<th>combined response / Bus/ Municipal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-participation in marketing courses</td>
<td>43%  37%  35%  34%  33%  31%  28%  27%  25%  23%  22%  21%  19%  18%  17%  15%  13%  12%  11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-business recruitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-market determination studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-build an anchor development downtown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-increase the availability of parking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-hire a co-ordinator *</td>
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<tr>
<td>-develop promotional material</td>
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<tr>
<td>-increase merchant participation in events</td>
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<tr>
<td>-increase attendance at organizational mtgs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-improve traffic circulation or access</td>
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<tr>
<td>-increase membership of association</td>
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<tr>
<td>-undertake joint advertising</td>
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<tr>
<td>-shopfront upgrading</td>
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<tr>
<td>-heritage restoration or renovation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-downtown public space or mini park</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-supportive attitude of community groups</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-creation of committees (design &amp; promotion)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-infrastructure upgrading</td>
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<tr>
<td>-increased municipal support</td>
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</table>

NOTE: * = responses of those who had not hired a co-ordinator

The business representatives and the municipal officials were generally in agreement. However, there were significant differences concerning eight of the activities or improvements. The differences are noted by a dash in table six.

Graph A on page 35 summarizes the responses from the program clients regarding which revitalization activities and improvements did occur and which they felt should have occurred and should have been emphasized more.

2.6 Summary and Conclusions

The typical approach to downtown revitalization in the communities surveyed is not as comprehensive as the approach described in literature. However, the approach has broadened beyond physical improvements to include promotion activities and
has improved its organizational development.

Street beautification and infrastructure upgrading continue to be a major component of revitalization programs. With the exception of Main Street Program communities, heritage restoration was undertaken by only a minority of the respondents. Initiatives to increase parking were undertaken by a minority of respondents.

Although eighty-six percent of the respondents claimed to have organized promotional events as part of their revitalization strategy, only forty-two percent had undertaken marketing studies. Although participation in marketing and merchandising courses was the second least frequent activity that did occur, it was the top priority in the "should occur" category. This attitude was confirmed by the findings of the 1986 Ontario BIA survey which identified information on promotion as the assistance most frequently requested. (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs 1986, p.13)

It is evident that communities involved in downtown revitalization are now eager to be more informed and skilled in collective marketing and analysis.

The majority of organizational activities identified by the respondents as ones that should have occurred or should have been emphasized more relate to increasing merchant participation and getting the entire community to work together. Cognizant of the time and skill required to muster such collective support, and to organize promotional activities, the majority of communities have hired co-ordinators or managers. The responses to the writer's survey provide evidence of the significant impact that co-ordinators had upon a community's organizational, promotional, and economic development activities.
GRAPH A

ACTIVITIES THAT DID OCCUR - SHOULD HAVE OCCURRED

100% 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 -10 20 30 40 50 60%

created committees

attendance at organizational meetings

municipal support

increased association membership

supportive attitude of community groups

hired a co-ordinator

- infrastructure upgrading

- street beautification

improved traffic circulation and access

increased parking

provided public space or mini-park

built anchor development

shopfront upgrading

heritage restoration

- promotional events

- developed promotional material

increased merchant participation

joint advertising

marketing courses

- market determination

- business recruitment

ORGANIZATION

PHYSICAL

PROMOTION

ECONOMIC DEVEL.'T
Legislation enabling business organizations to form BIAs, BRZs, or BIDs, is now available in eight provinces. This funding mechanism provides communities with the opportunity to mount significant promotional programs, and prepare multi-year budgets.

A number of weaknesses have been identified in the areas of planning and organizational development. Communities participating in a revitalization programs lack skills in assessing the real benefits of their projects. As a result, they do not link their budgets to project evaluations. Few have developed long range plans. Management continuity and internal communication systems need to be improved.

The economic development component is by far the weakest component in most revitalization projects. A minority of respondents indicated that their community engaged in business recruitment activities or undertook market determination studies. The Main Street Program communities were the most active in this sector. As would be expected, communities with co-ordinators were more likely to be involved in economic development activities than communities without.

The construction of an anchor development was selected by the greatest number of business respondents as a revitalization activity that should have occurred, although it was the least common revitalization activity undertaken by the respondents. Such developments require: substantial planning and financial resources and pose varying degrees of risk. The creation of downtown development corporations, between property owners or via public-private ventures, remains a relatively uncommon practice in downtown revitalization projects.
The survey results and the literature review emphasized the value of hiring a co-ordinator and the importance of having the whole community work together. The survey responses identified the need for assistance in following areas:

1. long range planning;
2. the development of marketing plans;
3. assessing program impacts, in particular the evaluation of promotional strategies, and linking the evaluations with budget planning; and
4. organizational development, specifically internal communication and management continuity.

The literature reviews and the survey findings identify the following elements as the key ingredients for successful downtown revitalization:

1. Clearly articulate the revitalization goals and objectives.
2. Budgets should be linked to the expressed goals and objectives.
3. Assess the impact of the program components and modify the components accordingly.
4. Prepare long and short range plans.
5. Establish a marketing plan based on sound understanding of the market forces, economic realities and community conditions.
6. Assess the effects of each promotional strategy and allocate funding in accordance with the impact of each strategy.
7. Identify economic development opportunities for the business community and develop a detailed implementation plan.
8. Obtain professional assistance for land use planning and design issues. Designs should be sensitive to the indigenous character of the town. Include an analysis of parking needs in the plan.
9. The business organization should adopt a business-like approach in their operations.
10. Effective internal communications systems must be established and maintained for the organization.

11. Full time management will significantly increase the amount of area promotion and business recruitment activity that can be undertaken.

12. The funding mechanism made possible through provincial legislation, can provide a stable financial base and consequently permit long range financial planning.

13. Co-operation and co-ordination among the merchants, municipal government, community groups, developers, media, realtors and provincial departments is essential.

14. Financial commitment and capable leadership are crucial.
CHAPTER THREE

A REVIEW OF FIVE REVITALIZATION PROGRAMS

3.1 Introduction

The five downtown revitalization programs reviewed in this thesis are: "The Ontario Program for Renewal, Improvement, Development, and Economic Revitalization", "The Nova Scotia Main Street Program", "The British Columbia Downtown Revitalization Programme", "The Alberta Downtown Revitalization Program", and the "Main Street Canada Programme". These programs provide varying levels of assistance to municipalities and business groups. This assistance is educational, financial, and organizational in nature.

Program components include the following: provision of staff to guide and facilitate decision-making, creation and distribution of resource material on topics related to the process of planning and implementing revitalization strategies, provision of staff or funding to hire consultants to present workshops and seminars for participants, organization of educational conferences and training programs for co-ordinators, publication of newsletters to facilitate information exchange and networking, provision of funds in the form of loans and grants, and the provision of enabling legislation.

This chapter provides: background information for each program, and a description of current program components, recommendations for improvements from program clients, a summary of program components, and conclusions. The information was gathered initially, by reviewing academic and agency literature, secondly, by interviewing program directors, and finally, by surveying program clients.
ONTARIO'S REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

3.2 Background Information

The Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has developed a number of programs since 1970 in order to encourage revitalization. In 1976 the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program (ODRP) was introduced to encourage downtown renewal and revitalization in municipalities with maximum populations of 125,000. In "A National Overview of Commercial Improvement Initiatives", published for the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Fletcher (1984) reported that:

"The objective was to finance specific catalytic development proposals in core areas to stimulate revitalization through municipal and private initiatives. " (p. 43)

Thirty programs were funded, amounting to $53,027,308. Municipal funding totalled $26,537,394, while private investment was $92,600,000. (Fletcher 1984)

In order to support downtown improvements in communities of less than 35,000, the Ontario Main Street Revitalization Program (MSRP) was established in 1976. Low interest loans were provided to help beautify municipally owned lands and buildings. The program encouraged coordination and joint planning between the municipality and the BIA. A total of $7,641,279 provincial funds and $8,131,004 municipal and BIA funds were devoted to 56 communities. (Fletcher 1984)

In 1983, both the ODRP and the MSRP were terminated and replaced by the Commercial Area Improvement Program (CAIP). CAIP assisted municipalities in upgrading older commercial districts by providing grants and loans for municipal services, parking, aesthetic and economic improvements, consultant studies, facade improve-
merits, administration, and small anchor redevelopment projects. Fifty percent of the cost of improvements were provided in the form of one third grant and two thirds loan. Between 1983-84, forty-three municipalities participated in CAIP, receiving a total of 9.7 million dollars. (Shelley 1984)

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing complemented the financial support with educational and organizational support. The Ministry provided technical information, developed resource materials, published newsletters, prepared community improvement policies, sponsored seminars, and facilitated the establishment of BIA’s. In 1986, CAIP was replaced by a program called PRIDE, Program for Renewal, Improvement, Development and Economic Revitalization.

3.2.1 Program for Renewal, Improvement, Development and Economic Revitalization (PRIDE)

The aim of PRIDE as stated in response to the writer’s survey is, "to promote comprehensive revitalization, renewal and redevelopment of older existing commercial areas by providing financial assistance and advisory educational services". The benefits of the program outlined in the provincial PRIDE brochure include: enhancing the quality of life, maintaining and increasing employment, attracting new investment, broadening the tax base, and laying the foundation for continuing improvement across the communities. All sections of a municipality, industrial, residential, mixed-use, and commercial are eligible for financial assistance. (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1986)

Municipalities are responsible for initiating and implementing the improvements. PRIDE encourages municipalities to involve
the public and the business community in the planning process. This helps to ensure that overall objectives and specific projects not only meet the community’s needs but are implemented so as to encourage private investment and ongoing renewal. A comprehensive approach assists municipalities in setting priorities and allocating funds in the most efficient manner.

3.2.2 Eligibility

Financial assistance under PRIDE is in the form of a grant covering 50% of improvements and land acquisition costs for a comprehensive community improvement project. In order to be eligible for assistance municipalities must have an approved official plan containing community improvement policies, have a property maintenance and occupancy standards by-law, and possess the financial and administrative capabilities to implement the project. For an area to be eligible, it should: be identified as needing improvement in the official community plan; be deficient in municipal services and community facilities; exhibit symptoms of physical, functional or economic decline; and possess the consensus and endorsement of the people who live and do business there.

Project components eligible for assistance include: administration costs; capital costs of building, improving or replacing services and utilities; capital costs of building, improving, or replacing social and recreational facilities such as parks, community centres, libraries, and day care centres; aesthetic improvements such as streetscape upgrading, landscaping, and buffer to reduce land use conflicts; land and building acquisition; clearance and demolition for eligible project components; and relocation costs. Anchor developments such as community facilities: com-
mercial, residential or industrial buildings, can be eligible if they are identified as an essential component of the revitalization scheme. However, staff from Ontario’s Community Renewal Branch indicated that no anchor developments have been funded under PRIDE because the funding limit for each community is currently $400,000. (telephone interview 1988) After a community has undertaken infrastructure upgrading and street beautification, there have been no funds remaining to purchase or improve property. In addition, program staff stated that municipal infrastructure and street beautification projects took priority over anchor developments.

3.2.3 Ontario Legislation

Under Section 217 of the Municipal Act, legislation was enacted in 1970 to enable the establishment of a Business Improvement Area (BIA). BIA legislation provides a self-help mechanism designed to assist local business communities to upgrade and maintain public property in their downtown or commercial area and, at the same time, to promote their areas as a business or as a shopping district. (Fletcher 1984)

Currently 220 BIA’s have been established in Ontario. Each BIA is run by a Board of Management appointed by the municipal council with at least one municipal councillor as a member. In Fletcher’s (1984) national overview Ontario’s legislation entrusted the Board with the ability to provide:

"The improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally owned lands, buildings and structures,... and the promotion of the areas a business area." (appendix C)
In addition, section 108 of the Municipal Act enables the BIAs to acquire, establish, lay out, and improve land, buildings, and structures for the purpose of vehicular parking.

The BIA Board is responsible for preparing an annual plan and budget. When the budget has received approval by the membership, the municipality disburses funds to the Board to implement the plan. The municipal government recovers the funds by way of a special levy attached to the business tax for properties within the BIA boundary.

3.2.4 AREAS OF PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

ASSISTANCE IN THE INITIAL PLANNING PROCESS

The program administrator stated in a telephone interview (1988) that there are thirteen provincial staff members available to facilitate the process of developing a downtown revitalization strategy, and to provide technical advice. There are two senior planners working in program development, eight field officers available to work with the community and municipal representatives, and three staff members to develop information regarding BIA management and procedures.

Branch personnel provide professional advice in the:
preparation of community improvement policies as part of the official community plan; interpretation, application, and administration of the community improvement legislation in the Planning Act; development and administration of property maintenance and occupancy standards by-laws; and assistance with the establishment and ongoing operation of Business Improvement Areas across Ontario. (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing 1986)
Municipalities are responsible for initiating and implementing a comprehensive community improvement process. They are to set policies, manage the process, approve and commit necessary funding. The public is encouraged to take an active role in developing the policy and plan. BIA members will often contribute to the cost of improvements and take responsibility for the area's long term promotion and management.

ONGOING SUPPORT AND INFORMATION SERVICES

a. Educational Material

The Community Renewal Branch has published resource materials dealing with BIA legislation, downtown management, and physical improvements. Three reports, "Downtown Management", "Towards Excellence in Downtown Management", and "Keys to Profit" provide information on effective management techniques and organizational development principles. Two excellent publications entitled, "The Community Improvement Series," deal with planning and designing commercial area improvements and facade improvements. The Branch also maintains a resource centre which receives contributions from individual BIA's. Excerpts from BIA annual reports have been included in "Towards Excellence in Downtown Management". (Barnard 1983) These excerpts discuss parking studies, promotions, constitutions, marketing studies and business recruitment techniques.

b. Conferences and Training for Managers

The Department sponsors and participates in conferences and seminars on community improvement activities and the ongoing operations and responsibilities of BIA'S and their staff. A two-day workshop is provided annually for BIA managers. In 1988, the
Ministry of Municipal Affairs together with the Heritage Canada Foundation and the Ontario Association of BIA’s, co-sponsored a national conference on downtown revitalization.

c. Newsletter

A newsletter entitled, "Street Beat", is produced quarterly to communicate the activities of the different BIA’S and to convey any administrative information.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Under PRIDE, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, provides 50% of revitalization project costs. The municipality contributes the remaining 50%. BIA members contribute to the cost of the streetscape upgrading through their business tax. The share of the cost born by the BIA members varies in different municipalities. A description of the type of projects eligible for funding was provided on page 42.
3.3.1 Introduction

The Main Street Program in Nova Scotia has been in place since 1978 and is operated under the Provincial Department of Development. The information in this section relies heavily on the Main Street Program Guide 1987/88. The program's goal is to improve the physical, economic and social environment in downtown areas while at the same time creating jobs. Physical improvements are coupled with promotional efforts, staff development and upgrading of business, marketing and operating techniques.

3.3.2 Eligibility

Eligibility for assistance under the program relies on two main prerequisites. The first relates to the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) Committee. The BID Committee is comprised of representatives from council, municipal staff, the business community and special interest groups where appropriate. The BID Committee is charged with a number of responsibilities including: defining the BID boundaries; developing a multi-year plan for revitalization; administering funding; monitoring the improvements projects; providing the Department of Development with Committee minutes; preparing application for improvements; and providing advice and a liaison between members within the BID and provincial and municipal staff.

The second prerequisite for eligibility is the collection of the Downtown Data Base. This data includes information such as the BID boundaries, the total commercial assessment, and responses to a survey concerning business practices and customer profiles. A computerized file of downtown information is kept on all
participating communities. The Department of Development uses the data to produce graphs that illustrate the BID’S overall business characteristics and consumer profile.

3.3.3 Legislation

In 1981 Section 202 of Towns and Municipal Act was amended to enable business communities interested in acquiring land for development, implementing improvements on publicly owned land or leased property, and collectively promoting their area, to collect a special commercial tax for those purposes. In order to take advantage of this legislation a BID Commission must be established. The BID Commission may replace the BID Committee. If it does it must fulfill the obligations of the Committee as well as satisfying all the requirements of informing all those assessed within the BID. The Commission may also initiate marketing and merchandising plans for the BID. (Fletcher 1984)

The objects of the Business Improvement District Commission are to:  " beautify, improve, enlarge, repair, alter, equip, service insure and maintain property owned or leased by it;

beautify, improve and maintain property of the municipality as authorized by council; promote the business improvement district as a place for retail and commercial activity;
establish or maintain parking facilities within the district." (Fletcher 1984, Appendix H)

As revitalization progresses other organizations may evolve such as a Downtown Development Corporation (DDC), composed of and financially supported by the private sector. Projects undertaken by the DDC should benefit the BID as a whole. The DDC Board should work closely with the BID Committee or Commission, Council and the
Province.

A conversation with the program administrator (1988) revealed that there are currently seventeen BID Commissions. Ten of these BID Commissions had collectively purchased and improved public property. (Provincial Department of Development, September 1988)

3.3.4 AREAS OF PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Assistance in the Initial Planning Process

a. Staff

The Department of Development provides one director for program planning, and three field officers to assist the communities in developing and implementing their revitalization strategies. The Department of Municipal Affairs manages the legal work involved in establishing Business Improvement District Commissions.

b. Funding

Through the Anchor Program a 50% grant is provided in order to retain consultants to complete conceptual plans for revitalization.

ONGOING SUPPORT AND INFORMATION SERVICES

a. Educational Materials

The administrator of the Nova Scotia program stated that the Department of Development has produced written and audio visual material on topics which include: merchandising, promotion, retail mix studies, business recruitment, and design guidelines. However, none of this material was forwarded, so an assessment of this material was not possible.

b. Funding for Workshops For Participants

The Anchor Program provides a 50% grant to retain consultants
to complete studies and conduct seminars on subjects such as: marketing, retail mix, customer relations, window displays, or any or any other area of business practice.

c. Conferences and Training For Managers or Co-ordinators

The Department has developed a curriculum for downtown coordinators and is in the process of establishing a training program that will provide seminars over a three year period.

Department staff is also available for consultation at regional coordination meetings. Participants are reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses associated with preparation for the meetings.

d. Funding For Co-ordinators

There are currently twenty-seven project coordinators in the 65 communities that are in the Main Street Program. The Department of Development funds 50% of the salaries of the coordinators who implement the revitalization plans. Some smaller communities share a co-ordinator.

e. Funding for Promotional Activities

Promotional Activities that are directed at the BID in general and are part of a comprehensive annual promotion plan may be eligible for 50% funding under the Anchor program. Where required funding may be provided for a promotions assistant to assist the existing coordinator.

f. Downtown Data Base: An Analytical Tool

The Downtown Data Base is an information system designed to monitor changes in downtown commerce and land-use. All communities
requesting funding under the Mainstreet Program must complete the surveys used to collect the data base information area. The information relating to commercial assessment provides a measure of investment level in standing stock in the downtown core. Information collected relating to business characteristics and practices can be useful to direct marketing and promotional ventures.

g. Business Development Program

The Main Street Program offers assistance to businesses participating in the Main Street Program to improve business and merchandising techniques. Activities eligible for cost sharing include the following: management and staff training sessions, market research, assessment or development of appropriate advertising and promotional plans, assessment or development of appropriate visual merchandising techniques such as store layout and window displays. Participants are reimbursed for 65% of the cost of the business development program up to a maximum of $2000. Special rebates of 75% are available for groups of businesses who wish to participate in the same activity, utilizing the same consultant.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Projects for use as a public facility on land owned or leased to the town are eligible for cost sharing. Included in this would be: street and sidewalk improvements beyond normal municipal and provincial standards; the provision of pedestrian amenities such as walkways, park areas, street furniture, beautification and landscaping; exterior building improvements for the public facility; and signage.
The cost of acquiring property and developing a public building is subsidized if it is demonstrated that such action is essential to the success of the proposed revitalization project. Parking developments must be supported with a recommendation from a downtown plan or municipal planning strategy. These types of projects are eligible for fifty percent funding under the Anchor Program.

Funding is provided to owners and tenants who upgrade their buildings beyond normal maintenance work. Initially $300 is provided for those wishing to retain professional design services. Rebates of up to 30% of the total cost of drawings, construction, and supervision are available for approved completed projects. Rebates of up to 40% are available for groups of commercial buildings that follow a complementary improvement scheme.

Up to 40% of the cost of improvements to signage are available. A sum of $150 is available for design services for signage as well. (Nova Scotia Main Street Program Guide 1987/88)
The British Columbia Downtown Revitalization Programme

3.4.1 Background Information

The B.C. Downtown Revitalization Programme (DRP) came into existence through the Special Funds Act in 1980. A sum of twenty five million dollars was allocated from the Provincial General Fund to establish the Downtown Revitalization Fund. The goal of the DRP is to increase economic strength and viability, as well as improve the physical infrastructure, of downtown areas by supplying municipalities and private business owners with financial incentives. The area must be a pedestrian-oriented retail, service, entertainment, social or cultural central place within the municipality. Promotion, facade improvements and municipal improvements are the tools for core rejuvenation. The primary aims of the program as described in "The Evaluation of the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Programme" (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs 1987), are:

"to improve the municipal physical infrastructure;
to stimulate private property improvements;
to increase the economic viability of downtown; and
to aid merchants in marketing and promotions." (p. 8)

3.4.2 Eligibility

According to "The Evaluation of the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Programme", in order to be eligible for financial assistance a municipality must demonstrate:

"That the assistance will be effectively utilized, that there is a long-term commitment to policies and attitudes that support downtown, that they are willing to commit their resources to the revitalization, and that they will commit themselves to undertaking compatible promotion, marketing and management of the downtown to complement the physical/aesthetic improvements."(p. 13)
In its application for designation by the Minister of Municipal Affairs a municipality is required to outline why designation is requested, to indicate community support for the project; and to provide a summary of estimated project costs. Since 1980, one hundred and twenty municipalities have been designated for assistance and a total of 65 loans for municipal capital works, totalling $20 million, have been approved or completed. (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation, and Culture 1988)

3.4.3 British Columbia Legislation

In December of 1987, BIA legislation was enacted in the province of British Columbia. The legislation provides a funding mechanism for communities interested in implementing a business promotion scheme. The business promotion scheme can include: "the carrying out of studies; the improvement, beautification, or maintenance of streets, sidewalks or municipally owned land, buildings or structures, and the encouragement of businesses." (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture 1988, Appendix 1)

Once a BIA is established, a Board of Management is created to provide direction. The Board of Management is responsible for establishing a budget and implementing the business promotion scheme. The promotion plan and budget must be approved by the majority of merchants and owners present at an annual general meeting. Finally, money to implement the plan is collected through a special tax added to the property tax within the designated improvement area.
3.4.4 AREAS OF PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

ASSISTANCE IN THE INITIAL PLANNING PROCESS

a. Staff

The B.C. Downtown Revitalization Program has one program director who administers the program funds and assists communities interested in revitalization. When a community indicates interest the administrator will attend a meeting to present a slideshow on revitalization and describe the process that has to be undertaken to apply for funding. Each year approximately ten projects commence.

b. Funding

The B.C. Program provides a 50% grant (up to maximum of $2500) to communities to hire consultants to develop a downtown strategy for revitalization. A second grant of $5000 is made available to hire a consultant to design a concept plan that meets the goals established in the strategy plan developed. The source of funding information is the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Programme Brochure printed in 1988.

ONGOING SUPPORT AND INFORMATION SERVICES

a. Educational Materials

The program administrator has developed a BIA manual that describes the benefits of the BIA mechanism, the procedures for establishment, the role of Board members, and provides a list of possible activities such as promotion and physical improvements.

b. Funding For Marketing Studies

A 50% grant, up to a maximum of $2500, is available to business communities participating in the revitalization program for
the purpose of undertaking a marketing study and developing a promotional strategy.

c. Workshops, Training, Conferences

No conferences or training programs are organized for representatives from communities undergoing revitalization. However, if a business community wants to hire a consultant to provide information on a relevant topic, such as window displays, or promotion, the Administrator will facilitate the process by suggesting speakers and organizing the seminar. The cost of the consultant, however, is born by the business community.

d. Funding for Co-ordinators

The program also provides two grants to newly formed BIA's for their first year only. The first is a $1000 management grant to help pay for the coordinator's salary for the first year.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

A capital works loan, of up to 75% of the total cost of the improvements, is made available to eligible communities. A facade rebate of 20% up to a maximum of $200 a meter is available to individual tenants and owners in designated revitalization areas. Finally, a 75% grant up to $5000 is provided to cover the costs of ammending the official community plan to include design guidelines for storefronts in the downtown.
ALBERTA DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

3.5.1 Background

Main Street Alberta was one of the first Canadian programs developed to help communities beautify their downtowns. Between 1973 and 1978, approximately $15 million was spent in 172 communities. Typical improvements included: street furniture, hanging flowers baskets, kiosks, landscaping and the creation of pedestrian malls. The program, sponsored by the Devonian Group of Charitable Foundations, provided a grant for two thirds of the project costs. The community was responsible for the remaining one third (Dalibard 1985, p.59).

In 1986 two provincial departments began providing support for downtown revitalization initiatives in Alberta. The Department of Municipal Affairs provides technical and organizational support in the form of land-use planning assistance, local facilitation and the development of continuing capabilities locally. The Department of Economic Development and Trade provide field staff to assist communities examine economic development opportunities as part of their revitalization strategy (Alberta Municipal Affairs 1986).

It is expected that Regional Planning Commissions provide support and advice to communities that request assistance in developing general plans and completing studies on their downtown. Some Commissions also conduct workshops on topics of interest to the community.

3.5.2 Alberta Legislation

In 1983, Section 171 of the Municipal Government Act was amended to include a provision for the establishment of Business
Improvement Zones (BRZ). Under this legislation, a BRZ Board of Directors can be formed, through nomination by property owners within the BRZ boundaries, and with the approval of the municipal council. The Board is a corporation and consists of one of more members of council, and not more than ten individuals. The Council may by resolution, remove any person appointed and appoint another person (Fletcher 1984, p.9).

The purpose of the BRZ Association may include any of the following (Fletcher 1984, appendix D):

(a) "to improve, beautify and maintain municipally owned lands, buildings, structures in the area, in addition to any improvement, beautification or maintenance that is provided at the expense of the municipality at large;

(b) to acquire, by purchase, lease or otherwise, any real property necessary for its purpose and improve, beautify and maintain that property;

(c) to promote the area as business or shopping area;

(d) to undertake interim improvement and maintenance of any property mentioned in clause (b) for use as parking and subsequently to dispose of that property, by sale, lease exchange or otherwise, for public or private redevelopment for commercial purposes at a price not less than its fair market value;

(e) to conduct any studies or prepare any designs that may be necessary for the purposes of this section."

A telephone conversation with program staff revealed that none of the BRZ organizations have acquired or developed property as yet. (Sept. 1988)

3.5.3 AREAS OF PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Assistance in the Program Planning Stage

a. Staff

An interview (1988) with program staff revealed that the Research and Development Branch of Municipal Affairs provides one
full time planner and one half-time planner to administer the Alberta program. The typical time required for a community to develop an action plan ranges between six and eight months. During that time, a staff member will attend between seven and ten meetings to guide the process of goals clarification and strategy development. The Department of Economic Development and Trade have eight to ten field staff that will assist the community groups at these meetings in economic development matters. It is also expected that a planner from the Regional District Commission will contribute to the planning process at organizational meetings.

ON GOING SUPPORT AND INFORMATION SERVICES

a. EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

The Research and Development Branch has published a package of information entitled the, "Self-Help Kit". One component of the "Kit" is a 95 page workbook intended to guide the process of goal clarification, consumer analysis, examination of economic development strategies, promotional strategies and strategies for business recruitment. A second component of the "Kit" called, "Technical Resource 1", provides technical information on organizational development, survey procedures, promotions, business recruitment, and physical improvements. A third technical resource offers advice on the hiring of consultants. A fourth component listed the various resources and government programs available to communities.

C. Newsletter

One section of the newsletter "Municipal Councillor" produced by Municipal Affairs is dedicated to downtown revitalization, in order to keep municipal officials aware of program initiatives.
FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

The Alberta program does not provide financial assistance to communities for revitalization projects. However, "the Self Help Kit" includes a booklet which outlines other provincial and federal grants and programs that may provide assistance.
3.6.1 Background Information

The main information source used for the Main Street Canada Programme is a 1986 Heritage Canada Foundation publication entitled, *Main Street Canada Grassroots Downtown Revitalization*.

The Heritage Canada Foundation is a national non-profit organization, working to promote the preservation of Canada's heritage resources. The Foundation initiated the Main Street Canada Programme in 1980. The goal of the program, "is to help Canadian communities revitalize the physical, cultural, and business aspects of their downtowns through appropriate, incremental, long-lasting change" (Heritage Canada Foundation 1986, p.4).

The Main Street Canada (M.S.C.) Programme was implemented in two phases. Phase one established ten demonstration projects between 1980 and 1985. The second phase, with a budget of five million dollars, intends to establish an additional seventy projects by 1991. Funding for the program is provided through the federal Department of Tourism and Regional Industrial Expansion. Program efforts are geographically balanced across Canada.

The key to the M.S.C. approach is community involvement and self-help. The program advocates a four-pronged approach within each community: organization; marketing; design; and commercial restructuring and economic development. A project co-ordinator, hired by the community, works as a catalyst in bringing together downtown businesses, municipal and provincial governments, building owners, service clubs, local organizations and the media to form an action plan for downtown.
The M.S.C. Programme provides a team of experts to help the community set its priorities for revitalization. Drawing upon the strengths and traditions of the community, strategies are developed to promote the downtown as a desirable place to go for shopping, business and recreation. These strategies include image decision, retail mix, special sales, events and promotions. The co-ordinator acts as a facilitator in the revitalization process by offering free assistance on design, marketing, and merchandising matters. Where particular problems arise the services of a marketing specialist are provided.

The M.S.C. Programme provides the services of a specialist to assist the coordinator in storefront design, general repair and maintenance problems. Economic revitalization is fostered through techniques in competitive management, business recruitment, real estate principles, tourism development, and in the appropriate use of planning, legislation and funding services. The Main Street Program assists the co-ordinator in understanding the mechanisms which affect economic forces.

3.6.2 Eligibility

Six major considerations are used in the selection process. These include (Heritage Canada Foundation 1986):

1. "The community should have a population of between 5,000 and 50,000. Main Street Canada will accept a number of smaller communities for which financial support can be secured, also a few larger communities where the Main Street concept can be applied to a particular district of the city.

2. The central business district should have architectural heritage resources and be economically viable: the town’s retail market should not be totally dominated by other shopping centres. The central business district must not have overly severe traffic problems and not be totally isolated from surrounding areas by parks or cleared areas.
3. The community should be located for potential "spin-off" effect on other municipalities within the district or region.

4. There must be strong support from at least one local business association which must be capable of generating strong governmental support, good relations, and media coverage, and of fund raising.

5. The town council and administration must demonstrate strong support for the programme, and should be willing and able to provide support services.

6. There should be a geographical balance across Canada."

3.6.3 AREAS OF PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

ASSISTANCE IN THE INITIAL PLANNING PROCESS

a. Staff

The M.S.C. Programme provides a board of Directors in Ottawa and four regional co-ordinators to serve the participating communities across Canada.

b. Resource Team

Main Street Canada provides a resource team of experts in design and economic development in the early stages of the project to help the community develop a strategy and set its priorities. Over a three day period, the resource team visits the community, interviewing key informants, assessing the strengths and weaknesses and makes recommendations for a revitalization strategy.

c. Community Consensus and Evaluation

In the second year, the co-ordinator for each region meets with the community to assess the progress, re-assess the strategy, and assist in addressing any new issues. At the end of the project an evaluation is completed and again the assessment, re-assessment
process occurs in order to provide continuing direction for the
community.

**ON GOING SUPPORT AND INFORMATION SERVICES**

a. Co-ordinators

The acquisition of a full time co-ordinator is a prerequisite
for participating in the M.S.C. Programme. Together the community
and municipality are responsible for the costs relating to main­
taining a Main Street office and for retaining the services of a
co-ordinator. In return the Heritage Canada Foundation trains the
selected co-ordinator. Two two-week sessions are provided which
describe the Main Street approach to downtown revitalization. The
regional co-ordinator is available for consultation. The head
office provides technical information that assists the coordinator
in keeping abreast of recent literature and trends in the field.

b. Educational Material

Staff from the Main Street Programme, prepare publish and
distribute a wealth of information on all facets of the Main Street
approach. One excellent resource is a book entitled, *Reviving
Main Street*. Individual chapters are devoted to describing the
history of downtown revitalization, the process of getting organiz­
ed, promotion, marketing, business recruitment, and design.

A film entitled, "Heart and Soul: Rediscovering Main Street
Canada" has also been produced by Heritage Canada. The object of
the film is to demonstrate why preservation makes better sense for
older commercial centres that other approaches to urban revitaliza­
tion.

In addition, a series of brief technical booklets called,
"Technotes", is available on a broad range of topics including: Joint Christmas Promotions, Putting on a Parade, Recording Streetscapes, Creating a File, Producing a Newsletter, Advertising with Flyers, Structural Glass - Repair and Replacement, New Life for Old Theatres, Organizing Tours in Your Community, Working with Municipal Heritage Advisory Committees, Maintenance Treatments for Street Furniture, and Introduction to Financial Statements.

c. Workshops

The M.S.C. Programme may also design custom-tailored workshops and provide the services of a special consultant where particular problems arise.

d. Conferences

The Heritage Canada Foundation holds regional conferences for their coordinators annually. In 1988, along with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and the Ontario Association of BIA's the Foundation sponsored the first national conference on downtown revitalization.

e. Newsletters

The head office and the regional co-ordinator are in contact with the project co-ordinator on a regular basis. Co-ordinators are required to complete monthly reports and annual reports. However, there are no newsletters that exchange information between participating communities.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

The M.S.C. Programme does not provide financial assistance for physical improvements or promotions. The nature of the programme's
assistance is educational and technical.

A typical annual budget for a M.S.C. project ranges between $75,000 and $100,000. Approximately one third of this cost is covered by Heritage Canada’s Main Street services, such as consultant services, co-ordinator’s training, suppliers’ fees, and headquarters’ expense. The community is expected to provide the remaining two-thirds and sustain the project for a three year period. The community’s share should cover the cost of the co-ordinator’s salary, the office expense and operating costs. Promotional costs are not included in these figures. The use of services-in-kind and donated office space can reduce these costs. Frequently financial support is received from municipal and provincial governments as well as corporate and private donations. After three years, it is anticipated that community members will have developed sufficient skill and experience to continue the revitalization process without the guidance of the Main Street Canada Programme (Heritage Canada Foundation 1986).
### TABLE 8
SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

#### 8.a PLANNING AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>program staff</th>
<th>field officers</th>
<th>regional coord’r</th>
<th>funding for consults</th>
<th>provides consults</th>
<th>literature on plan’g process</th>
<th>literature on organ’l develop’</th>
<th>enabling legislation</th>
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#### 8.b PROMOTION

<table>
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<th>educat’ material</th>
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<th>de vel’t bus</th>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.C.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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</tbody>
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**Note:** ( * ) for first year only

#### 8.c ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>economic develop’t staff resources</th>
<th>legislation permits property acquisition</th>
<th>funding for develop’t of community facilities</th>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.C.</td>
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#### 8.d PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

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<th>educat’ material for capital works</th>
<th>design funds for capital works</th>
<th>funds for facade design grants</th>
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<th>signage design funding</th>
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</table>
3.7 SUMMARY OF REVITALIZATION PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

This section of chapter three summarizes the types of assistance provided by the five downtown revitalization programs examined in this thesis. Table 8 illustrates this summary.

3.7.1 Assistance in the Planning Process and Organizational Development

All the programs in this study provide some form of guidance in the initial planning process: either by direct assistance, by the provision of funds to hire consultants, or by educational material on downtown revitalization.

In addition to providing each community with a team of experts to facilitate goal-setting and prioritizing, the Main Street Canada Programme completes two further assessments during the three year period. These assessments provide the opportunity to modify or refocus the revitalization strategy as the project evolves. This three-assessment structure responds to both the dynamic and incremental nature of the revitalization process.

The Ontario program looks to the municipal government to initiate and develop a plan for improvements. Eight provincial field officers are made available to municipal and community representatives to provide advice in the preparation of community improvement policies across the province.

The Nova Scotian program provides three field officers to assist communities in developing and implementing their revitalization strategies as well as providing 50% of the cost of hiring a consultant to develop a plan.

The Albertan program provides approximately nine field officers to assist community groups. Because program staff are
committed to a community for a period of six to eight months, this provides the necessary time for community members to become skilled enough to participate in designing the action plan. The presumed benefit of this process is that greater public involvement should translate into greater commitment to implementation.

Having only one staff member, the British Columbia program appears to be understaffed. This factor imposes constraints upon the administrator's involvement in each community's planning process. Consequently, in order to assist a community with the development of a revitalization plan, funding to share the cost of hiring consultants is provided.

Two of the programs provide assistance in organizational development: the Ontario program through its literature and seminars for BIA managers, and the Main Street Canada Programme through its trained co-ordinators.

Alberta's Self-Help Kit addresses clients' need for assistance in the initial planning process. The workbook guides community and municipal participants in the process of goal clarification and analysis of the downtown physical and economic environment. A chapter in Heritage Canada's book, Reviving Mainstreet is devoted to describing the process of getting organized.

All the provincial programs in this study now provide enabling legislation for municipalities to create business improvement areas, zones, or districts. The legislation in Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Ontario permits the acquisition and development of property.
3.7.2 ASSISTANCE IN THE AREAS OF PROMOTION AND MARKETING

The type of assistance offered by the different programs include: either providing or subsidizing the cost of marketing consultants, subsidizing the cost of project coordinators, training co-ordinators, publishing educational material, and organizing seminars.

In addition to the assistance described above, the Nova Scotia program provides three additional components. It is the only program that provides funds for promotional events. Information collected for the Downtown Data Base is analyzed and presented to the community for use in designing their promotional strategies. The program also provides funding for upgrading skills in marketing and merchandising.

Communities participating in the Main Street Programme are provided with specialists to design custom made workshops if the coordinator is unable to provide the service. Nova Scotia and now British Columbia, provide 50% funding to hire consultants to undertake marketing studies and to develop promotional plans.

In the program guide material each program recognized the value of hiring a coordinator to implement the project and manage the promotional activities. Two provinces, British Columbia and Nova Scotia, provide funding to subsidize the cost of coordinators.

Heritage Canada has been conducting training programs for coordinators since 1980. Nova Scotia is currently in the process of developing a training program.

Two of the programs have developed educational material that discuss area promotion and marketing. The textbook and technical notes published by the Heritage Canada Foundation and the
collection of BIA annual reports in Ontario provide helpful examples of activities and studies.

The same two programs have been providing educational workshops and seminars. The Ontario program annually provides a two-day workshop for BIA managers annually. The Heritage Canada Foundation, together with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, appear to be taking the lead in facilitating information-sharing on a national scale by sponsoring the 1988 national conference on downtown revitalization.

3.7.3 ASSISTANCE WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The need for commercial restructuring and economic development in the downtown revitalization process was identified first in the literature produced by Heritage Canada and then acknowledged in the Alberta program literature. However, the discussions provide only a sketchy outline of how to identify a preferred retail mix based on what the market can support and methods of recruiting business.

Nova Scotia and Alberta, were the only provinces that routinely provided communities with field officers skilled in identifying economic development opportunities.

The legislation in Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Ontario does permit the acquisition of property for public use. Although, this power provides communities with the opportunity of undertaking projects that would draw more customers to the area, only the Nova Scotia BIDs have utilized this power.

In theory, Ontario's PRIDE program provides 50% funding to purchase and improve public property, however, no communities have been able to take advantage of this component because of funding
limits and program priorities.

The Nova Scotia program also provides 50% funding for the acquisition of land for development, if it is identified in the municipal planning strategy, as a necessary component of the revitalization.

3.7.4 ASSISTANCE WITH PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Financial Assistance for Public Improvements

Only the Ontario and Nova Scotia programs provide 50% of the funding for capital works and property acquisition while the British Columbian program provides a loan to municipalities to cover 75% of the cost of physical improvements.

The design costs of the physical plan can be included as part of the project costs in Ontario. In British Columbia, a grant of $5000 is available to assist the community with the cost of designing a concept plan.

Financial Assistance for Facade Improvements

The Nova Scotian and British Columbian programs provide facade rebates to tenants or owners who upgrade their building facades. In addition to facade rebates, the Nova Scotian program provides a grant for individual facade design costs and also a rebate for signage improvements.

Design Information and Advice

Main Street Canada provides the services of a specialist to assist the coordinator in storefront design, building renovation and preservation, and public improvements. Heritage Canada's book, *Reviving Mainstreet*, and Ontario’s, "Community Improvement
Series" are two excellent resources for facade upgrading and public improvements.

Only the Nova Scotia program provides 50% grants for parking facilities. The Ontario program is currently considering the inclusion of funding for parking. (Source)

3.8 Survey Results

The writer's survey, sent to municipal and business representatives across Canada, asked for recommendations for improvement to the revitalization programs. The majority of the program clients indicated satisfaction with the programs. In particular, the approach of Heritage Canada was praised. However, a number of recommendations were raised which demonstrate the need for more assistance: in the initial planning process, in developing a marketing plan, and with organizational development. In addition a number of respondents suggested that anchor developments would significantly benefit revitalization efforts.

Some of the program clients' statements are presented here as evidence. However, the sources are not identified in order to maintain confidentiality.

"Before implementation, one full year of strategy development towards education of the public and private sector should be done."

"More money should be put into preliminary planning and thought for the future, beyond five to ten years."

"The program is organizationally starved. There is no marketing, planning, or administrative support."

"The program is quite well-developed but it does not address the issues of ongoing maintenance, retailer education, and basic management skills."

"A single, large, downtown project would benefit all merchants in the city by drawing more shoppers from the trading area."
At the Main Street Programme conference, co-ordinators complained of the repetetiveness of design, reporting that pavers and lamps were found in projects from Victoria to Halifax.

3.9 Conclusions

Although revitalization programs are increasing their assistance in the areas of planning and organizational development, the recommendations made by the program clients suggest that some communities still feel the need for greater assistance with the process of developing a revitalization plan and detailing implementation strategies. Their comments indicate uncertainty regarding how to continue the revitalization process. The approach whereby an 'expert' analyzes the situation and then submits a plan and leaves is not conducive to gaining community ownership and commitment to the plan.

Revitalization programs that fund or provide initial planning assistance without teaching the community how to continue in the process are not recognizing revitalization as a long term endeavour. Sufficient time and professional guidance are needed to assist community members in acquiring skills in identifying goals and objectives and determining methods of implementation and evaluation. Without this educational component program continuity is threatened.

The review of the types of assistance provided by the different programs reveals that, generally, communities receive little direction from economic development staff on how to complete market studies or how to commence business recruitment activities.

Many of the program clients believe that an anchor develop-
ment would significantly enhance their revitalization project. However, only one program actively funds anchor developments. It would appear that most programs hope that the physical improvements and promotional schemes will motivate private investment.
CHAPTER FOUR

4.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

Based on the results of the writer's survey and the findings of the two BIA surveys (Barnard 1985, Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs 1986) the following improvements to downtown revitalization programs are recommended:

1. The survey results demonstrated the need for more assistance in the initial planning process. Therefore, downtown revitalization program staff should devote more time assisting community members develop skills in: identifying goals and objectives; determining methods of implementation; and assessing the effectiveness of different strategies. I estimate that a six month period will be necessary to develop a plan, if the community is to be involved in its design, committed to its implementation, and capable of planning inevitable modifications and reprioritizations. However, this time will vary according to individual skills and the complexities of each community's circumstances.

Programs that do not have sufficient staff to guide the community in the planning process, should either oversee the comprehensiveness of the community's scheme or communicate to clients, in a more detailed manner, the essential components of a plan. This second option is less desirable because it does not train community members to carry on the planning process.

2. Because market determination and the identification of economic development opportunities are important for downtown revitalization, staff assisting community groups in the initial planning process should possess skills in this area. In many
provinces this will mean co-ordination of services from the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Department of Economic Development.

3. The actors involved in downtown revitalization project could include: provincial staff from Municipal Affairs, Economic Development, and Tourism; municipal officials; business association members; revitalization co-ordinators; developers; property owners; realtors; and members of service clubs and local societies. The agency literature clearly indicated the importance of having the entire community work together in revitalization. In order to facilitate involvement and cooperation among all the potential actors program staff should publish a brochure that clearly articulates the role that each actor could assume. For example, a description of possible municipal actions could include: the collection and presentation of demographic data and commercial properties data for use by the business recruitment committee; incentives to developers to locate downtown such as deferral or forgiveness of taxes; joint public-private venture for development or parking provisions; expropriation of land for public use; staff to facilitate the establishment of BIA type organization; amendments to zoning regulations to prohibit peripheral shopping centres; and subsidizing the costs of public improvements. In addition, information on relevant government support programs should be included. Describing the potential contributions of all those involved would increase the awareness of the possibilities for action.

4. A number of educational tools should be developed in order
to expand the resource base of expertise in the field of downtown revitalization and to address the weak areas identified by the three surveys in chapter two, namely, marketing, business recruitment techniques, measuring effects of promotions, management skills, and assessing parking needs.

These educational tools should include the following:

a. A film series which describes a component of a comprehensive approach. A film would reduce program costs by eliminating some of the travelling costs. A film is a good medium for community meetings because not all of the participants will take the time to read written material. As well, a visual presentation is the best medium for illustrating the principles of sensitive design.

b. Brief technical papers should accompany the film, describing each of the component of a comprehensive approach. In this way, community members can review the crucial points after the film has been returned.

c. Detailed manuals should be written for use by the co-ordinators and specific revitalization committees.

d. Training workshops should be organized for co-ordinators, interested business people, and municipal officials. The existing expertise possessed by Main Street Programme staff could be utilized. These workshops should be co-ordinated provincially and be presented at locations through each province.

e. Provincial conferences should be organized in order to provide the opportunity for municipal officials, professionals, and community representatives to share their experiences and expertise.

f. Provincial program administrators should encourage the related university departments to examine the subject of downtown revitalization in their course of study.

g. Provincial newsletters, should be written and distributed to participating communities and municipalities, relaying information on workshops, conferences, related studies.

5. Finally, evaluations of community projects need to be undertaken in a systematic manner so that comparisons can be made to advance understanding in the field. For example, the impact of different anchor developments,
types of promotions, parking initiatives, and other inputs should be documented and assessed. By determining which program inputs are most effective, these evaluations will provide direction for future downtown revitalization program planning.
CHAPTER FIVE

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

The last recommendation in chapter four asserted that program evaluation is important in that it provides direction for program planning. This chapter discusses the rationale behind program evaluation and more specifically, identifies the importance of evaluation planning. The remainder of the chapter addresses five related evaluation planning issues: the evaluability assessment approach, the evaluation readiness approach, the value of a stakeholder survey, the importance of program monitoring, and the role of the evaluator.

5.2 The Need for Program Evaluation

In the broadest sense, evaluation involves "the marshalling of information to support decision making" (Thompson 1975, p. 26). Program evaluation is concerned primarily with determining the influence of a program upon its clientele. Its main purposes are: to establish realistic expectations about the effectiveness and efficiency of the program, to assess the plausibility of explanations given for the success or failure of a program, to provide information that will improve the program over the short term and assist in long range planning, and to provide policy makers with evidence needed to gain political support for successful programs.

Programs come into being because of a belief that establishing them will benefit program society. The government has a continuing obligation to examine and evaluate the ways the taxpayers' money is being spent. They must question: "Are the problems that were targetted being solved? Are there alternative ways of meeting the
same needs which would be preferable? Is the level of funding appropriate?" By examining what should be evaluated and how it can be done, decision makers can be assisted in clarifying program objectives.

 Millions of dollars have been spent by provincial and municipal governments across Canada in their attempt to achieve downtown revitalization. Similarly, millions of dollars have been invested by the private sector. Program evaluation can assess the success of this intervention and can justify continuance, modification, or termination of the program.

 Program planning and program evaluation have traditionally been viewed as two discrete, yet interrelated activities. They are bound together by a common purpose, that is to produce well-defined and well-managed programs capable of meeting their intended objectives. Ideally the two disciplines should work hand in hand throughout the entire sequence of program activities. In practice however, program planners tend to concentrate their attention on program design, development and implementation issues, whereas evaluators occupy themselves most with questions of assessing program impact and performance. Some have argued that a clear separation of evaluation from program planning should be maintained (Caro 1979) in order to preserve the credibility and objectivity of evaluators. However, on the individual program level, a lack of interaction between program administration and the evaluator could lead to structural deficiencies in program design and to weakness in evaluation conduct. Both planning and evaluation provide information by which management steers the course of program operation. Their fruitful interaction should be encouraged so as to
assure the success of each group's objectives.

5.3 The Need for Evaluation Planning

Although program evaluation is a valuable aid to program planning, factors intrinsic to many programs such as ambiguously stated objectives, inadequately defined performance measures, and incomplete or unreliable data bases, often conspire to limit the evaluable of these programs. This lack of preparedness for timely and responsive evaluation not only compromises the opportunity to conduct a summative assessment of program performance, but it also negates potential formative contributions to the program planning and development process (Cohen, Hall, Cohodes 1985). Evaluation planning is intended to prepare the program for evaluation.

5.4 Evaluability Assessment Approach

Over the past decade numerous approaches to improving evaluation have been proposed in literature, including several that explicitly address the need for evaluation planning (Rutman, 1980; Wholey, 1979; Wholey, Scanlon, Duffy, Fukumoto, and Vogt, 1970).

The most prominent approach to evaluation planning, that of evaluability assessment, was initially developed by Wholey and his Urban Institute colleagues (Wholey et al., 1970, Wholey, Nay, Scanlon, and Schmidt, 1975) to assist federal government decision makers regarding the evaluation of publicly funded programs. According to Wholey (1979), evaluability assessment aims to determine "whether program performance is likely to be adequate and whether program evaluation is likely to be useful in improving program performance". (p.18). Wholey (1979) describes the basic
approach as:

"a process that tests the extent to which managers and policy makers have defined measurable program objectives and defined specific use for information on program performance; documents ongoing program activities, including resources and information flows; assesses the plausibility of program objectives, and the feasibility of measuring progress toward program objectives, and identifies opportunities to change program activities, objectives, and uses of information in ways likely to improve program performance." (p. 13)

In anticipating that the evaluability of any program is likely to be less than optimal, Wholey chooses to rely on the evaluator's judgment to suggest performance measures or changes in program activities that could lead to improved program performance.

5.5 The Evaluation Readiness Approach

Evaluation readiness, an approach advocated by Cohen et al (1985), is intended to improve upon the evaluability assessment approach by adopting a distinctly proactive, management-oriented focus. The structural components of evaluation readiness, the formal program definition and the data inventory framework assemble the basic information necessary for useful program evaluation. The program definition seeks to organize program objectives into process, input and outcome categories. This process is useful for highlighting conflicts or incongruities in organizational objectives, thereby signalling to planners that clarification and resolution may be needed. The assembly of the data inventory framework at an early stage of program planning can be used to guide information system design. Once the operations get underway, the specification of program performance measures should also provide guidance to program managers when considering subsequent activities.
To prepare for evaluation readiness (Cohen et al. 1985) recommends the following strategy: (a) specification of major program goals, objectives and plans; (b) development of suitable measures that assess the extent to which these are fulfilled; and (c) identification and creation of appropriate data sources. (p. 316) According to Cohen et al. (1985), evaluability assessment recognizes the importance of these essential ingredients, but places relatively greater emphasis on documenting their absence than on assuring their presence. Evaluation readiness on the other hand, by working with management, assures adequate preparation for evaluation and timely response when the need for specific evaluative information arises.

5.6 Increasing Evaluation Utilization

A marked change in evaluation has been the shift away from an exclusive emphasis on the methodological rigor of evaluation to a co-equal concern for the use or non-use of evaluation findings by decision makers and program administrators (Davis and Salasin, 1979; Ianni and Orr, 1979; Rossi, 1979). Those promoting the change have stressed the need for more work at the front end of an evaluation, aimed at obtaining information to guide the selection and refinement of the evaluation issues or questions and the methodological approaches eventually included in the evaluation (Freeman and Solomon, 1981; Rutman, 1977). Also, the general literature on evaluation suggests that instances in which evaluations are explicitly used for decision making are rare. O.M. Patton (1978) claims that a utilization crisis exists because of the time and money wasted on non-utilized evaluations. Patton's research (1978) suggested that evaluations are most useful when "the guy who was
5.7 The Importance of a Stakeholder Survey

Although evaluators should work together with the program decision makers, there is equal value in surveying the opinions of a broad range of stakeholders. Decision makers form only one group of stakeholders. The stakeholders for a program could include those who directly or indirectly participate in the program, such as legislative committees, program administrators, program staff, as well as program clients. Surveying a broad range of stakeholders permits tapping multiple perspectives and data sources, thus capturing the most comprehensive view of the intervention being studied (Denzin, 1970; Reichardt and Cook, 1979). Hollister, Kemper, and Wooldridge (1979) noted that:

"Program staff are almost always convinced of the effectiveness of the program they are running. Pre-evaluation discussions between evaluators and program administrators or advocates (or opponents) can assist in surfacing these opinions, thereby reducing the naivety of the researchers, and alleviating the danger of the ivory tower posture towards program evaluation." (p. 328)

Administrators and clients could raise additional hypotheses and research questions, and comment on the feasibility of specific data collection approaches. Stakeholders may also display biases or concerns that reflect directly on choice of study design such as dissatisfaction with previously used design, sensitivity of particular measurement approaches, or the length of time between initial and follow up data collection points (Lawrence and Cook 1982). In short, communication between evaluators and a broad range of stakeholders can improve the evaluation planning process.
5.8 The Importance of Program Monitoring or Process Evaluation

Another significant component of evaluation planning is program monitoring. Granting agencies routinely require that evaluation research be built into demonstration projects so that the relative success of new kinds of treatment may be assessed. One of the standard designs for such research takes its rationale from the classical experimental model. Despite the practical and ethical shortcomings, standardized tests are administered before, during, and after treatment. The same tests are given at specified intervals to a matched group of controls. The underlying assumption of the strategy is that the only important difference is the treatment. Even if one grants, for the sake of argument, that the tests indeed measure what one wants to measure, that controls really control all the necessary variables, and that the comparison of scores reliably indicate the effects of treatment, this sort of research can only tell what happened, it cannot tell anything about how it happened. This type of research can test one's hypothesis about probable outcome of treatment but it cannot describe or generate hypotheses about the process of treatment in the way that program monitoring can.

A monitoring system should be established which employs a set of varied and well defined strategies to describe the process of the intervention. These strategies may include the use of documents, interviews with informants, and photographic records. Whereas impact assessments are useful to policy makers who need to justify dollars spent. Program monitoring is of great importance to administrators and staff as they strive to ensure the improve the program components.
5.9 The Role of the Evaluator

As was suggested earlier, the people who design and administer the programs are likely to be the programs' most ardent supporters. They may assume that the program merits are obvious and that an evaluation would add nothing useful, or they may believe that the main values of the program, pride for example, cannot even be objectively measured. For reasons such as these, evaluations may sometimes be neglected. The following statements made by two interviewees revealed exactly this type of attitude towards program evaluation: "The success is obvious. If you have to evaluate there must be something wrong with the program.", "Evaluation is a low priority. The communities are clammering for the program.", and "It's hard to measure a moving target."

It is possible that program staff would select performance measures that are less than comprehensive. One administrator interviewed suggested that one indicator, increased merchant confidence, would be sufficient evidence of program success. In order to ensure greater objectivity, program evaluations should not be designed solely by in-house evaluators. A balance should be struck, utilizing the administration's intimate knowledge of the program and the objectivity of an external evaluator. The external evaluator and the administrator should work together to determine the performance measures and the collection methods for both the impact assessment and the program monitoring system (Bocialetti and Kaplan 1986).
5.10 Summary

The main points of chapter five can be summarized as follows:

(i) Program evaluation is important because of its formative contribution to the planning process and for its provision for accountability.

(ii) Evaluation planning should be addressed in the initial program planning process. The components of evaluation readiness approach, namely the formal program definition and the data inventory framework, helps to prepare a program for evaluation.

(iii) Surveying a broad range of stakeholders permits tapping multiple perspectives and data sources, thus capturing the most comprehensive view of the intervention under study.

(iv) Program monitoring or an evaluation of the ongoing process is essential for assessing the effectiveness of different program components and consequently providing direction for program development.

(v) Program administrators and an external evaluator should work co-operatively to determine the program performance measures and the collection methods for both impact assessments and program monitoring systems.
CHAPTER SIX
RECENT DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROJECT EVALUATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Chapter five identified the value of program evaluation and the need to provide for evaluation in the initial planning process. This chapter examines recent evaluations of the current programs in this study and comments on their state of evaluation readiness. As was initially stated, this thesis focuses on measuring the economic impacts of downtown revitalization projects.

Very few evaluations have been undertaken although approximately 400 revitalization projects have been completed under the five programs identified in this thesis. To be more specific, evaluation studies have been undertaken by administrators in only two of the five programs: the Main Street Programme of the Heritage Canada Foundation, and the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Programme. A total of twelve communities were used as case studies for these evaluations. These two programs should be commended for the groundwork they have laid for others involved in measuring program effectiveness and for the leadership they have demonstrated in this research field.

In addition to the examination of current program evaluations, two student evaluation initiatives, undertaken by university students, are reviewed.

Finally, the opinions and experiences of administrators in the remaining three programs, and concerning performance measures, are discussed.
6.2 'MAIN STREET' PROGRAMME EVALUATIONS

6.2.1 Introduction

As was described in chapter three, the Main Street Programme was implemented by the Heritage Canada Foundation in two phases. Phase one established seven demonstration projects between 1980 and 1985. Five of these pilot projects have been evaluated. In response to the writer's request for existing evaluations, Heritage Canada forwarded two of their best evaluations which were for the programs in Perth, Ontario (Hinton 1985), and in Fort MacLeod, Alberta (Lasear 1986).

Both evaluations discussed the impact of the projects upon the community in regard to: economic improvements, organizational activities, attitudinal changes, promotional activities, and what was described by Heritage Canada as 'quality of life' factors. A review of these evaluations follows, accompanied by discussion on the comprehensiveness of the data collection and the sensitivity of the indicators used. Again, this review focuses on the economic impacts and simply lists the other impacts discussed by the evaluators.

6.2.2 Description and Analysis of the Economic Indicators Used

The following indicators were used to measure economic impacts of the revitalization programs in the communities studied:

1. Business Openings and Closures:

During the course of the program, Perth gained twenty-six new businesses and lost thirteen. The closures were categorized according to causes: bankruptcy 4, retirement 6, and relocation 6 (Hinton 1985, p. 36) Fort MacLeod gained five new businesses but closures were not recorded (Lazear 1986, p. 25)
The data provided is not complete enough to assess the impact of the programs on the communities because of the following unanswered questions: What was the net gain in businesses in Fort MacLeod? What was a typical net gain prior to the project? What were the net gains in new businesses in neighbouring towns during that period?

2. **Bankruptcy Rates:**

The Perth bankruptcy rate was compared with the national bankruptcy rate for the years 1980, 1981, and 1982. The Perth evaluator noted that the Perth rate remained lower than the national average. While the national level remained constant at .25%, the Perth rates were recorded at .25% for 1980, .48% in 1981, and .24% in 1983. Although the Perth remained below the national average, we are unable to determine if the lower rate of bankruptcy can be attributed to the revitalization project, because we are not provided with the bankruptcy rate prior to the project’s commencement (Hinton 1985, p. 37).

Criticism of the use of bankruptcy rates as an indicator for judging commercial or economic vitality was received from economic development officers in Vancouver and Edmonton. Lack of business acumen was cited as a more common cause for bankruptcy than decreased commercial vitality for an entire area. Another reason that the bankruptcy rate was dismissed as insensitive by the economic development officers was that business operators who experience difficulty in a particular location are more likely to relocate or close down the business, than to proceed to the point of bankruptcy.
3. **Job Creation:**

It was fortunate for the Perth evaluator that the town of Perth undertook a survey on job creation in 1982. The net gain in jobs for the entire town between 1980 and 1982 was 347. A description of the changes in the industrial sector reveals that three major industries: Westinghouse, 3M, and G & B Batteries opened new plants in Perth and created 300 of the jobs. The introduction of these industries adds a significant variable and affects the interpretation of the substantial net gain in jobs (Hinton 1985, p.38-39).

It would be unfair to attribute the job gain as a spinoff of the revitalization project unless the decision to locate in Perth was strongly influenced by the project. Statements made by Hinton (1985) negate the likelihood of such conclusion: "The selection of Perth as the site for 3M was negotiated well before the project began. ...Perth may have been experiencing a mini-boom before the MainStreet Project was in place." (p. 41)

It is also difficult to determine how many of the remaining jobs were created in the project area because of an improved business climate. These new job opportunities could have resulted in spin-off effects such as increasing the disposable income of the previously unemployed persons or increasing the resident population base (or the flow of consumers) from neighboring towns. For a more comprehensive assessment, population and unemployment data should accompany the job creation analysis.

In the Fort MacLeod evaluation, job creation data was provided by the Alberta Bureau of Statistics. During the period between 1982 and 1984, forty-three full time positions and seventy-four part time positions were created (Lazear 1986, p.21). However,
no data on job increases in neighbouring or comparable towns was provided for the sake of comparison.

4. **Vacancy Rates and Rental Rates:**

The Fort MacLeod evaluator reported a 71% reduction in storefront vacancies. The actual number of vacancies was reduced from seven to two (Lazear 1986, p.21). Because the vacancy data is not presented in relation to the total storefronts, it is difficult to determine the significance of the reduction of the total by five.

Rental rates in Fort Macleod remained unchanged. Data on the vacancy and rental rates for Perth were not provided in the evaluation. This data inconsistency negates the opportunity of comparing project impacts. As well, there is no context within which to assess the impact of the programs, because vacancy or rental data for control towns was not collected.

5. **Property Values:**

The Fort MacLeod evaluator claimed that the market value of property in the downtown area increased by approximately 35% between 1976 and 1984 (Lazear 1986, p.21). This information was based on a selective sample of market transactions provided by a Fort MacLeod realty company. In an aggregate form the increase appears significant. However, when one considers the time period and recalls the housing boom that occurred in the early 1980's, the percentage appears less significant. Again, without comparing this increase with increases in other towns it is difficult to determine the impact of the revitalization project on property values. No data was provided for changes in property values in Perth.
6. Property Tax Assessments:

The evaluator in Perth reported that tax assessments rose by 9.28% from 1981 to 1982. The average annual increase for the previous ten years had been 3.3%. The evaluator concluded that the revitalization project had had a positive impact on downtown property values (Hinton 1985, p.39). Physical improvements to the buildings would also have increased the tax assessments. In fact, the evaluator disclosed that the town of Perth forgave a portion of taxes levied against property owners who made improvements. Two unanswered questions are: What portion of the increase is due to a perceived locational advantage for a business to be inside the project area? and How much did the tax assessments of the unimproved properties increase in comparison with other commercial areas in the town or in neighbouring towns?

Again, a common data base and common evaluation criteria are lacking, as the Fort MacLeod evaluation did not provide data on tax assessments.

7. Value of Building Permits and Private Investment:

In Fort MacLeod the value of building permits at the close of the program was 137% higher than at the beginning (Lazear 1986, p.22). This information suggests substantial project spinoff in the way of individual building upgrading. It is not clear whether or not the building permit figures include the construction of a new development or numerous facade improvements. The introduction of a major development would certainly suggest investor confidence in the business area. However, in order to attribute the increased investment to the revitalization project, it would be necessary to know if the developer’s decision to locate there can be attributed
to the success of the revitalization project. As well, an examination of building permit values in other commercial sections of Fort MacLeod and in control towns would provide the necessary contextual information to assess program impacts.

The Perth evaluation did not provide data on changes in the value of building permits. However, it did report that 86% of the building improvements were privately financed (Hinton 1985, p.33). Although grants for heritage restoration were made available, a number of owners did not accept them because of terms which would limit their rights to future alterations. Such a record of public investment data provides valuable information for process evaluation.

8. Land Use Changes:

The Fort MacLeod evaluation reported that seven retail spaces were created through the redevelopment of existing buildings (Lazear 1986, p. 25). The evaluation stated that the project co-ordinator attempted to increase commercial use of the upper floors. Although the uses remained either residential or storage, the description of the co-ordinators' actions, again provides details of the program's inputs. The Perth evaluation did not discuss changes in land use.

9. Sales Information:

The evaluator in Fort MacLeod was fortunate to have available Alberta retail and service trade statistics. A telephone conversation (1988) with staff from the Alberta Bureau of Statistics revealed the information was collected between 1969 and 1985 by way of surveys mailed to merchants in each Albertan town. The response
rate was sixty percent. The respondents' information was kept confidential and presented in aggregate form.

Using the Bureau's statistics the evaluator reported that during the 1982-85 period total trade receipts for the retail and service sectors within the entire town increased by 30% (Lazear 1986, p. 19).

Because the data was presented in an aggregate form, it is not clear what percentage of the businesses fell within the project area. A better assessment of the project's impact would have been gained by comparing the trade receipts for the project area with receipts in other commercial areas in town or with comparable towns, before the project began and at the three year interval.

The Alberta Bureau of Statistics also provided trade receipt per capita data for all Albertan towns. The evaluator reported that the receipts per capita in Fort MacLeod were 22% higher than the provincial average in 1984 (Lazear 1986, p. 19). We are left questioning why the data for 1984 was presented instead of pre and post project data.

In addition to the data from the Alberta Bureau of Statistics, the testimonials of two business people are provided. One owner reported an increase in retail sales of 20% during the period of the project. The second merchant reported an increase of 34% in the first year and 60% over two years (Lazear 1986, p. 19). While these testimonials are encouraging, such a small number can hardly be assumed sufficient to represent increases within the general business community.

No sales information was provided in the Perth evaluation.
6.2.3 Summary of the Heritage Canada’s Economic Evaluation

The major criticism of the Heritage Canada evaluation on economic impacts is that the assessments exist in a vacuum, without context, because the lack of data from control towns negates the possibility of making comparisons. Indeed, the Assistant Director acknowledged the evaluations’ shortcoming and wrote, "The Fort MacLeod evaluation is closer to what I am looking for but it is too incomplete as it does not note differences between itself and neighbouring towns" (personal communication 1988).

Comparisons between the two projects are not possible because the data bases are inconsistent. In addition, because a data inventory had not been established from the outset of the projects data collection was not systematic. Without pre-project data the impact of the intervention cannot be determined.

The Main Street Canada Programme has recently established a data base procedure. Beginning in 1985, participating communities were required to provide baseline data in order to assess changes within the communities. The project co-ordinators now complete monthly progress reports which include data such as: the number of organizational meetings; the value of building permits inside the project area and in town; the number of business openings, closures and reasons for closures; job gains and losses; a list of businesses contacted for recruitment purposes and the results; a list of promotions and the percentage of merchant participation; a list of other festivals and exhibits held in the area; estimates of attendance at these events; a list of design and planning work underway and completion dates; a list of buildings that are either in the process of design or restoration work; and
finally a list of grants received through the efforts of the project co-ordinator.

6.2.4 Description of Other Impacts Evaluated

In addition to the economic impacts discussed, the evaluators described a number of program components in a qualitative manner. These included: organizational development; marketing activities; design work undertaken business recruitment activities; tourism development; and heritage preservation and cultural development.

Some quantitative data was collected for the following program components and effects: the number of promotions; estimates of people in attendance at promotional events; attendance at workshops; survey data conveying merchants' attitudes towards the promotional events; and relationships with the media and the municipality.

The program monitoring system collects a combination of information valuable for a process evaluation.

6.3 EVALUATION OF THE B.C. DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAMME

6.3.1 Introduction

In the spring of 1987, four months after this thesis work began an evaluation of the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Programme (DRP) was completed and made available to the public. The evaluation was undertaken by staff in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs under the direction of the program administrator.

Six communities were chosen as case studies. These selected communities had small populations ranging from 3500 to 16000. The project completion dates and the scale of the capital work projects
in each community studied varied. Ease of access and the uniqueness of the project were cited as additional selection criteria. The communities were: Chemainus; Courtenay; Campbell River; Grand Forks; Rossland and Trail.

The evaluation identified economic, physical and attitudinal impacts. The majority of the evaluation's economic data was based on the findings of a merchants' questionnaire. An average of 26% of the merchants (n=13) in each community responded to the survey. As with the evaluation of the Main Street Programme, the description that follows focusses on the economic impacts.

6.3.2 Economic Impacts

The source of the following information is *An Evaluation of British Columbia's Downtown Revitalization Programme* (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs 1987).

1. Increase in Jobs

In Chemainus 13 out of 20 merchants polled in the DRP evaluation claimed that they had to hire additional staff as a result of the revitalization project. Most of the jobs were seasonal (p.34). The fact that the majority of jobs were seasonal suggests that the tourist component of the project was drawing customers. Information relating to staff increases in comparable towns would have provided a context for these results.

The evaluator also reported that MacMillan Bloedel had opened a new sawmill and created 130 new jobs (p. 34). Because of this major increase in employment it is difficult to separate the revitalization's impact on job creation from that of MacMillan Bloedel's. One hundred and thirty new jobs could certainly increase the disposable income in town, the residential population and the
number of people drawn to the town daily as employees. The evaluator added that the general perception in Chemainus was that the revitalization project was a contributing factor in MacMillan Bloedel’s decision to locate a new sawmill there. Details of the changes in consumer profile would have possibly clarified which factor had caused the increased demand for staff in the project area.

In each of the remaining five towns, only one or two of the merchants interviewed claimed to have hired additional staff.

2. Increase in Business Property Tax Assessments

Information concerning property assessments for the six communities was collected with the assistance of municipal contact in each community.

The communities of Chemainus and Courtenay were reported to have experienced increases in business property assessments as a result of the revitalization projects. Phase one of the Chemainus capital works project was completed in 1982. The evaluator calculated the average total assessed business property values for two periods, 1979-1981 and 1982-1985, for two projects in Chemainus. In the Willow Street area the average value between 1982 and 1985 was 46% higher than for the earlier period. In the Oak Street area the average value between 1982 and 1985 was 718.46% higher than for the earlier period (p. 35)

I would speculate that the dramatic increase in tax assessments in the Oak Street area is due to a major development, which could have been motivated by the revitalization activities, by MacMillan Bloedel’s actions; or by other factors. If new construction did occur within the area, the figures for its assessment
should be separated from the remaining assessed property values. In this way, the increase in value for the existing land and improvements could be determined.

For the sake of comparison, the B.C. evaluator reported that the average assessed value in the district of North Cowichan for the period 1983-1985 was 32.5% higher than for the period 1979-1981. The evaluator stated that the values for 1982 were discarded because of the extraordinary short-term increases in value they reflected because of the property boom of 1981 (p. 35).

The method used to compare changes in property assessments for Courtenay was different than that used for Chemainus. The total assessed value of business properties in the designated revitalization area increased 3.15% from 1979 to 1981 in Courtenay, whereas the total assessed value for the entire town increased by 21.8%. From 1983 to 1985 the total assessed value in the designated area rose by 21.01% as opposed to an increase of 8.22% for the entire Courtenay area. The evaluator concluded that property in the designated area had appreciated considerably since the revitalization project. The capital works projects was completed in 1981. When the periods are separated it appears that the revitalization project was the turning point for the depressed commercial core. However, when the increases for the two period are combined, it is evident that property values in the Courtenay area increased by 30.09% whereas the values in the revitalization area within Courtenay increased by only 24.17% (p. 60).

The answers to the following questions would throw additional light on this examination of assessed property values: Was the increase in the Courtenay area’s assessed value in the 1979 to 1981 period
due to major redevelopment? How much of the increase in assessed value in the designated area between 1983 and 1985 was due to facade and public improvements?

The evaluation reported that in the other four communities property assessments either decreased or remained unchanged.

Finally, although one question on the merchants' survey asked if they attributed any increases in property taxes to the revitalization project, the responses were not recorded.

3. Vacancy Rates and Rental Rates

In order to collect information on vacancy and rental rates the evaluator solicited the opinions of real estate agents in each community. Agents in Courtenay and Grand Forks reported that vacancy rates had been reduced and rental rates had increased but no quantitative data was provided. The evaluator relied on the memories of the agents. The revitalization project had no effect on vacancy or rental rates in Rossland and Campbell River. It was reported that no vacancies existed in Chemainus, however since no pre-project data was available we are unable to quantify the change in rates. There was no discussion of vacancy or rental rates for the town of Trail.

4. Business Openings

In Chemainus thirty new businesses had opened. In Grand Forks five business openings were recorded. Closures were not recorded, consequently net gain calculations could not be made. No data was provided for the remaining four towns or for control towns.
5. Increases in Sales

The questionnaire asked merchants if they had experienced an increase in sales since the revitalization project. In Chemainus and Trail more than fifty percent of the merchants surveyed reported that their sales had increased. However, there were increases in the industrial sector of both towns during the project periods. As was stated earlier, MacMillan Bloedel located a new sawmill in Chemainus. A telephone conversation with a representative from Cominco Mines in Trail confirmed that rehiring had commenced prior to the evaluation. These variables confound the findings.

In each of the remaining four towns an average of 39% of the interviewees or an average number of five merchants, claimed to have experienced increases in their sales.

The questionnaire also asked the merchants to what extent they felt sales increases could be attributed to the revitalization project. However, the responses to this question were not cited in the evaluation. No data was collected for comparable towns in order to provide a context in which to assess the impacts of the projects.

6. Spin Off Investment

The survey asked merchants if they were prompted by the DRP to make independently funded improvements to their premises. Responses varied dramatically. In one town only 11% of the respondents claimed to have been motivated by the DRP to undertake improvements while in another town 67% choose to privately invest in improvements. However, in all cases, the number of merchants in each town who claimed to have been prompted by the DRP to make
improvements did not exceed eight. Such a varied range of responses and such a small number of respondents, does not provide conclusive evidence for spin-off investment.

7. Merchants' Perception of Changes in Market Share

Changes in the market share was examined in a qualitative and indirect fashion. In the survey the merchants were asked if they felt that more people were shopping downtown now than before the DRP was implemented. Seventeen of the nineteen Chemainus respondents and six of the twelve Courtenay respondents felt that there were more people shopping downtown now than there were before the project. In the remaining four towns, from 18% to 47% of the respondents believed that the number of people shopping downtown had increased.

A more detailed approach to determine changes in the market share would have been to examine changes in the consumer profile and sales volumes. Individual merchants could record data such as consumer age, sex, residence, and estimated occupation at the beginning of the project and at different intervals throughout.
6.3.3 Summary of the B.C. Evaluation of Economic Impacts

One may speculate that budgetary constraints influenced the decision to study only six communities. Whatever the reason the fact remains that six is a remarkably small sample to be representative of B.C.'s smaller communities.

Only two of the six communities chosen had completed their capital works three years prior to the evaluation. The decision to include 'younger' projects effectively reduced the sample size to two. The problem generated by this decision was noted by the evaluator in a section of the evaluation entitled Problems With Data Collection. The evaluator complained that in some communities information was not available because: "insufficient time had elapsed to allow for in-depth and accurate evaluation of impacts such as sales, property values and employment." (p28) The evaluator recommended that a two or three year time lapse would be more desirable. Because of the small sample size the research can not be regarded as a comprehensive evaluation.

Some of the data collection was incomplete and inconsistent. For example, an assessment of net increases in the number of businesses and jobs was not possible because data on business closures and job losses was not collected. As well, no pre-project data for these measures was collected.

Further there was no context in which to compare the changes or impacts of the program. Data from locations outside the project area was collected for only one indicator, the property tax assessments.

The evaluation did not provide figures on: how many jobs were created in the project area; how much the vacancy rates were
reduced; how much the sales increased; or how much was invested privately. Without figures attached to these indicators, comparisons between projects cannot be completed. Quantitative records of program effects and the inputs that contributed to those effects are necessary to provide direction to program administrators and clients.

The evaluator was limited to qualitative data because she had to rely on the memory of the merchants and municipal officials, and their willingness to participate. If a data base had been established and maintained for these communities and some control communities, the evaluator would have had the tools to prepare an evaluation which would serve both summative and formative purposes.

6.3.4 Description of Other Impacts

The remainder of the evaluation assessed aesthetic impacts, attitudinal impacts and program delivery.

The evaluator provided descriptions and subjective evaluations of: the street beautification projects; improvements to the municipal services and utilities; changes in parking and traffic circulation; improvements in pedestrian access; improvements in safety and convenience; and land use changes. Photographs accompanied the descriptions.

In the survey the merchants were asked if they were pleased with the physical improvements. An overwhelming majority (75% - 93%) of the respondents stated that they were pleased.

Three measures were used to assess merchant attitudinal changes: association membership; improvements in the members relationships; and confidence in the future. Unfortunately the
information collected pertaining to business association membership could not determine increases in the association's membership. The data only reviewed what percentage of the respondents were members. The percentage of the town's total merchants who were members before the project and at intervals following, would have been more valuable. The association's Board of Directors should be able to provide this information.

The respondents who were members were asked if the relationship between the members had improved since the project began. The majority of respondents in Chemainus and Campbell River reported improvements in the association's relationship. In two communities a minority claimed there was improvement and in the remaining two, respondents claimed there was no improvement.

The merchants were asked if they felt confident about the downtown's future. In five out of six communities 73% or more of the respondents answered positively. This confidence factor could have provided important evidence of the impact of the project upon the merchants' attitude, if pre-project data on confidence had been established. As well, it is difficult to isolate the impact of the project from the impact of the economic conditions in the province. What percentage of the merchants in other towns felt confident about the future in 1986?

This concludes the discussion of the evaluations completed for the Main Street Programme and the B.C. Downtown Revitalization Programme. The remainder of the chapter reviews two evaluations completed by students and the results of interviews with program administrators regarding performance measures and evaluation.
6.4. **Student Evaluations**

6.4.1 **Introduction**

Two other attempts to evaluate revitalization projects have been undertaken by university students. A planning thesis by Nowlan entitled, 'Downtown Revitalization: A General Investigation and Evaluation of B.C.'s Downtown Revitalization Program', was completed in 1983. In 1986, seven students from Ryerson's School of Urban and Regional Planning (Fieder, Foster, Greer, Jack-Mallik, Munn, Pushchak and White), elected to devise a method of evaluation for business improvement areas. A brief discussion of both initiatives is provided.

6.4.2 **Nowlan's Study**

Nowlan studied six communities in British Columbia with a broad brush approach. These communities were: Duncan, Nanaimo, Chemainus, Port Alberni, Campbell River, and Courtenay. Nowlan's stakeholder survey was limited to two or three people in each community: a member of the downtown business association; a member of the downtown revitalization committee, if one existed; and a municipal contact.

These key informants were asked their opinions concerning: the success of their revitalization project; the project's effect on retail sales and vacancies; the relationship within the business association; relationships between the business community and the municipality; and lastly suggestions for improvements to the program.

Nowlan's findings were that the program helped small businesses undertake physical improvements but that there was little evidence of economic revitalization. However, she did acknowledge other
program accomplishments such as: improving relationships between the future; as well as initiating the idea of marketing and promoting downtown.

I would have to agree with Nowlan, that on the basis of the information that she collected, there is little evidence that economic revitalization occurred. However, I would add that the program should not be faulted until comprehensive data has been collected and examined. A broader stakeholder survey, with pre and post project data is required.

6.4.3 The Ryerson Study

The Ryerson study team developed a model intended to evaluate business improvement area (BIA) performance. The evaluation model was composed of three interrelated components: BIA inputs; BIA efforts; and BIA effects. The inputs category was composed of various forms of assistance available to the BIA such as self-taxation, grants, loans, support programs and services. The efforts category was composed of management effort measured in man hours devoted to the BIA operation, physical improvements and promotions measured in dollars. The BIA effects category was composed of: improvements in the business composition measured by a scale developed by the students; an increase in the number of years a business had been in operation in the area; increases in commercial floor space; increases in the number of businesses; and reductions in the rate of vacancies and bankruptcies. Sales figures and employment figures were not utilized because the data was not readily available. The study team examined data for one BIA.
Initially, all three components were to be compared to each other. However, due to problems associated with the collection and interpretation of data, the inputs were not measured against the BIA effects. Instead, the BIA efforts were compared to the BIA effects. Data for a ten year period was collected and then standardized using multivariate statistics and plotted on graphs for interpretation.

The study concluded the following observations: little change in the hierarchy of businesses; insignificant growth in the number of businesses and commercial floor space; some degree of management effort by a limited number of BIA members; and finally a decrease in the vacancy rate from 10% to 0% during the ten year period. The study claimed, "The indices as applied to the Bloordale BIA indicated that there has been very little growth, stimulation or economic revitalization within the BIA" (Fieder et al 1986, p.38).

Staff from the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs prepared a critique of the Ryerson model, which cited a number of limitations and problems with the model’s three components (personal communication 1987). A review of the criticisms for one component relevant to this thesis, the BIA effects, follows.

The Ryerson study team assumed that if a commercial area was successfully revitalized there would be evidence of a shift in the types of businesses. They created a business hierarchy, with four levels, and listed examples of the types of business in each level. The highest scores were awarded to stores such as franchise anchor stores. The lowest scores were awarded to stores such as local beauty salons and repair shops. This hierarchy of businesses was criticized on the grounds that it was subjective and difficult to
use in the future. No criteria were provided to support or explain why businesses were placed in each level of the hierarchy. In addition to those criticisms made by the Ontario staff, it may be noted that business composition is tied to the demographics of the trade area. If a BIA in a working class neighbourhood had a large percentage of lower order stores would that mean the BIA was performing less successfully than a BIA in the downtown with numerous speciality boutiques?

Another effect anticipated by the Ryerson team was an increase in commercial floor space. The Ontario critique recognised that as a BIA improves, store owners may make use of basements and second floors, but outlined a number of constraining factors. These were:

"The current trend in retail is to downsize and put all stock on the floor rather than storing; what if the zoning by-laws and Official Plans of various cities discourage this second floor or basement expansion either at present or in the future" (personal communication 1987).

In my experience with Vancouver commercial areas that are in need of revitalization, most businesses could absorb significant increases in staff and sales before requiring additional floor space. Because of reasons justed outlined increases in commercial floor space should not be considered a reliable indicator of economic revitalization.

Another BIA effect anticipated by the Ryerson study team was turnover in businesses. They created a scoring system that responded to the number of years a business was in operation in the area. A higher score was awarded businesses that recently located in the BIA because the study team assumed that turnover in stores was a key indicator of a positive change in economic activity. It could also be argued that in some communities, a high turn over
rate signifies a poor business environment rather than improvement.

Despite the criticisms regarding the indices, the study team should be commended on the manner in which they structured their model. Unfortunately, neither of the student evaluations were comprehensive enough to provide evidence of economic revitalization in the communities.

6.5. Other Evaluation Initiatives

No evaluations have been completed for the current provincial programs in Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Alberta. Telephone interviews were conducted with program administrators to discuss their attitudes towards different performance measures. This section of the chapter summarized their responses.

6.5.1 Ontario's Experience

When asked for evaluation material, a senior staff member of Ontario's PRIDE program replied that an evaluation study had not been commenced because of budgetary constraints. However, the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs did complete an evaluation of the Main Street Ontario Program, which operated from 1976 to 1983. The evaluation was completed as part of a cabinet submission to obtain approval for the Commercial Area Improvement Program that operated from 1983 to 1986. Because the evaluation was part of a cabinet submission the Ministry of Municipal Affairs was unable to make the evaluation available to the public (personal communication 1988). One would suspect that the results would be made public if they provided positive evidence.
A publication entitled, *Towards Excellence in Downtown Management* (Barnard 1983), prepared for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, did suggest a number of possible performance measures for downtown organizations. These suggested measures included:

- increased business revenue or maintenance of past levels in the face of new competition, measured by increased market share or more customer for non-retail businesses;
- decreased vacancy levels;
- quicker occupation of vacated space;
- new development;
- new businesses coming in;
- sales of existing businesses to newcomers;
- increases in rent levels, realty and business assessments;
- greater private renovation;
- more people downtown;
- improved community attitude downtown measured by political support, media coverage and attitude surveys; and
- better support for downtown organizations measured by attendance of meetings and the attitude of other community groups.

In a telephone interview, the program administrator expressed his interest in obtaining sales tax information as an economic indicator. Unfortunately the administrator had been unsuccessful in obtaining release of this information from government sources.

6.5.2 Nova Scotia’s Experience

Although no formal evaluation of the Nova Scotia Main Street Program has been conducted, the Department of Development established a downtown data base in 1982 and currently collects data concerning business and consumer profiles. A questionnaire is used to gather information such as: type of business, store hours, number of years of operation, advertising practices, customer profiles, and attitudes towards the physical improvements. This information is valuable to the business associations in that it can provide direction for promotional strategies.
Survey findings for Lunenberg were forwarded to the writer in April 1988. One of the questions on the survey could be used to assess changes in the merchants confidence in the business climate. Question twenty-seven asked the merchants what they thought the trend for business would be in the next four years. In 1983, 30% of the Lunenberg respondents and 42% of the provincial respondents felt business would improve (Nova Scotia Department of Development 1987). In 1987 47% of the Lunenberg respondents felt business would improve. No provincial data was provided for 1987. It is clear that after four years, 17% more of the respondents felt confident about the future. What is not clear is whether or not the increased confidence can be attributed to the revitalization project or to broader regional factors. A comparison of attitudes with comparable communities would be necessary to make this distinction.

One encouraging element is the increasing response rates to the downtown data base surveys. Thirty-two percent of the Lunenberg merchants responded to the 1983 survey, while sixty percent responded in 1987. Communities are now required to complete the surveys in order to be eligible for assistance under the Anchor Program.

Discussions with the current and past program administrators provided additional perspective on performance measures for revitalization programs. The current program administrator described program evaluation as a low priority compared to the need to amend the legislation and to develop a training program. Until an evaluation is completed, the administrator felt satisfied that demand for the program and increased merchant confidence provided suffic-
ient evidence of program success.

Background information on other evaluation initiatives was collected through a telephone interview with the former administrator. In 1980 a comparison was made between changes in property assessment values and changes in merchant confidence in the future. The administrator expressed disappointment with the results because the property assessments decreased in the two communities with the highest level of merchant confidence. The reliability of merchant confidence as either a single or major indicator of program effectiveness is therefore questionable.

A number of other unsuccessful attempts to collect evaluation data were undertaken. One initiative came from a co-ordinator in Yarmouth who looked for a reduction in the number of tax assessment appeals on the grounds of hardship. In another community, gross sales figures were collected. However, because the returns were anonymous, comparisons could not be made the following year. As well, the number of returns were not sufficient to be considered representative of the business community. The administrator recommended, as an alternative collection method, that the community's co-ordinator should establish a trusting and confidential relationship with a number of key business people, and solicit gross sales figures from them, as representative of the community's changing business climate.

In contrast to the interests of the Ontario program administrator, the past administrator of the Nova Scotia program did not consider sales tax to be a sensitive indicator. Two limitations reduce the utility of using sales data as an indicator of sales increases. The most obvious is that it does not include
non-taxable items such as children's clothing and food; the second concern is that the mailing address to the Department of Revenue is not always the same as the street address of the store. This is often true of large chain stores.

In addition, he suggested that an increase in the number of businesses that owned their property should be measured. In his estimation, if a business was still renting its premises after a period of three years, it signifies a lack of confidence in the area's business climate.

6.5.3 Alberta's Experience

The Alberta Downtown Revitalization Programme had not completed an evaluation because their program was only one year old at the time. However, program staff had not formally identified performance measures or established a data base. In a personal interview with senior staff from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Department of Economic Development, these staff suggested that they would anticipate that different objectives would be met within different time frames. As an example, they suggested that general clean up activities (exterior painting, trash removal) should be accomplished in six months; sales increases should be evident in three to five years; and the downtown should be a community focus in fifteen to twenty years.

Information collected in a telephone interview with the program administrator of the Washington State Mainstreet Project was in agreement with the Albertan viewpoint. The administrator claimed that while factors such as employment rates, private investment and the number of business starts were important indicators of a community's economic performance, qualitative measures such as: establishing a merchant association, organizing promotions, gaining one new business, were reasonable measures of success for a new project. As the business association matures more quantitative measures would be appropriate. The administrator felt that a revitalization project required a twenty year commitment.
6.6 Summary of Current Project Evaluations

The following statements summarize this chapter's review of recent project evaluations, related evaluation initiatives, and the experiences of program staff concerning performance measures.

None of the provincial revitalization programs in this study routinely monitor each community's inputs or assess the impacts. Very few revitalization projects (n=13) have been evaluated. Only nine of these projects had been in operation long enough expect measurable changes. These evaluations contain very little hard data that could be used as evidence of economic revitalization.

Data collection was not systematic, that is to say, data was not collected at the beginning of the project and measured against changes that occurred at different intervals.

None of the programs collect data for control communities making it difficult to separate the impacts of the program from the impacts of broader economic factors. In addition, incomplete data and the lack of a common data base made comparisons between project difficult.

The majority of indicators used in the recent evaluations were measured in qualitative terms, making comparisons with other projects difficult and negating the formative contributions of an evaluation.

Some of the program administrators have identified performance measures but there are varying opinions on which measures are appropriate. There is no consensus on what constitutes appropriate performance measure. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of downtown revitalization programs are not in a state of evaluation readiness.
evaluation readiness. The intent of this thesis is to assist program staff prepare for evaluation, by determining stakeholder preferences for performance measures and suggesting appropriate data sources. The method chosen to determine stakeholder preferences is a stakeholder survey. The details of the survey are provided in chapter seven.
CHAPTER SEVEN

STUDY METHODOLOGY - THE STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

7.1 Introduction

The importance of evaluation readiness as a major component of program evaluation was established in chapter five. A review of the current revitalization project evaluations in chapter six revealed that the majority of the programs in this study are not in a state of evaluation readiness. As was stated initially the primary intent of this thesis is to assist revitalization program staff and program clients prepare for evaluation.

Adopting the evaluation readiness approach advocated by Cohen et al (1985), the following information was sought: how stakeholders described and prioritized their goals; what the common program components were; whether or not there was consensus on appropriate performance measures; the identification of appropriate data sources; and what, if any, dissatisfaction existed with recent evaluations.

7.2 Overview

A review of academic and agency literature provided the descriptions of program goals, components, and attempts at evaluation, discussed in chapters three and six.

A stakeholder survey was used to collect information concerning the common revitalization components and practices and recommendations for improvements to the programs. The findings have been discussed in chapters two and three. This information was presented in Part One of this thesis to support the descriptive material on current revitalization programs.
The stakeholder survey was also used to collect information pertaining to goals prioritization and stakeholder preferences for performance measures. The findings presented in chapter eight provide the basis for this thesis’ recommendations for evaluation planning.

7.3 Audience Identification and Client Access

As was mentioned in chapter one contact was made by telephone with program administrators for the provincial programs in British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Nova Scotia, the national Mainstreet Canada Programme, and the Washington State Main Street Project. Three of these programs are not examined in this study. The programs in Saskatchewan and Manitoba had been recently terminated. The Washington State program administrator demonstrated interest during the telephone interviews but was dismissed from the study because of failure to return the questionnaire.

The remaining five programs provided a reasonable sample of Canadian revitalization programs. The Ontario and Nova Scotian programs are the most developed and longest established. The Albertan program has adopted an approach that is different than the other provincial programs in that it does not provide financial assistance and de-emphasizes physical improvements. The Main Street Programme of Heritage Canada Foundation is the only program that operates nationally. The British Columbian program provided a well developed model for Western Canada. As well, the author’s experience working with revitalization projects was in British Columbia.

Telephone interviews with the administrators of these
programs provided information on their program goals and components as well as their experience with performance measures. This information was combined with information from the literature review to structure the stakeholder survey.

The program administrators were also asked to identify any other potential stakeholders interested in downtown revitalization. In response to these other stakeholder identified contact was made with the following representatives: the Urban Program Director of the National Main Street Centre in the United States; the Director of Governmental Research for Central Michigan University; the Senior Development Officer of the Alberta Northern Development Branch; the Supervisor of Community Improvements for the City of Toronto; provincial economic development officers located in Edmonton and Vancouver; downtown revitalization consultants in Edmonton and Vancouver; and fifteen Mainstreet Canada co-ordinators who were planning a conference in Edmonton.

These individuals were contacted by telephone or interviewed in person to discuss potential performance measures and experiences with program evaluation. The writer was invited to attend the Mainstreet Canada conference and was consequently able to interview the coordinators and the administrators personally. The agenda was restructured to permit a discussion on the portion of the writer's questionnaire dealing with performance measures. Each of these stakeholders provided further perspectives on evaluation planning and current revitalization practices.

The administrators of the five revitalization programs in this study facilitated access to program clients by providing lists of participating communities. In most cases, the list
included contact names and addresses. Ontario, Nova Scotia and Heritage Canada maintained and published current lists. In Alberta and British Columbia, it was necessary to phone municipalities and business associations to obtain current and complete contact information.

Twenty-five communities were surveyed in each province, except in Alberta which only had eleven projects. In Ontario and Nova Scotia, where the number exceeded twenty-five, the communities were selected at random from the lists provided by the program administrators.

7.4 Survey Design

As was stated earlier, the combined input from the literature review and the interviews was used to structure the questionnaire. In order to increase the utilization of results and to capture a comprehensive view of downtown revitalization the questionnaire was directed towards two groups, the program administrators and the clients. A list of survey respondents is found in Appendix B.

Each questionnaire was composed of four sections: goals, program components, performance measures, and open-ended questions. This structure responds to the evaluation readiness approach recommended by Hall, Cohen and Cohodes. The elements within each section reflect the opinions of current decision makers for revitalization programs as well as the views described in recent literature. A copy of each type of questionnaire is provided in Appendix C. A description of each section of the questionnaire follows.
Goals

All the respondents were asked to indicate how they would prioritize or categorize a list of goals. The list which was generated for the most part from the literature reviews included the following:

- to provide additional jobs;
- to maintain buildings and streets;
- to encourage new investment downtown;
- to provide a full range of goods and services downtown;
- to change the business community's attitude to one of confidence in its own ability to revitalize downtown;
- to strengthen the municipal tax base;
- to generate or maintain a positive public image and civic pride;
- to restore the economic vitality in the downtown core;
- to maximize the use of the downtown infrastructure;
- to maintain the character of the downtown;
- to prevent deterioration from spreading to surrounding commercial areas;
- to maintain or retrieve a central focus for the town;
- to maintain accessibility to services in the downtown for disadvantaged groups; and
- to stabilize or improve property values.

These possible goals were presented in random order on the questionnaires so as to avoid order bias from selections on long lists.

The program administrators were asked to classify each of the goals using the following categories: a primary goal; a secondary goal; an objective or means of achieving a goal; not a goal but a desirable spin-off; or not applicable. The reason for providing the numerous classifications was to isolate the primary goals from lower level goals and objectives. It was thought that if respondents felt an expectation to select a goal, but actually placed little value on it, they had the opportunity of selecting it as a secondary goal.

The business representatives and municipal officials were asked to select goals relevant to their community's revitalization
project and classify them as either primary or secondary. Pre-test experiences with merchants revealed that they were unfamiliar with differentiating between objectives and goals.

From an evaluation planning perspective, it was necessary to determine which revitalization goals were important to the stakeholders in order to know what program pacts would constitute program success.

7.4.2 Program Components

The Program Administrators were asked to describe what methods, incentives or assistance their program offered in the areas of: organization; design, promotion and marketing; and commercial restructuring and economic development. The structure reflects the comprehensive approach to downtown revitalization described in Chapter Two. The information from this section was combined with agency literature to describe each program’s components in chapter three.

The business representatives and municipal officials, on the other hand, were provided with a list of possible revitalization activities or components. Information collected in telephone interviews and the literature reviews determined the contents of the list. The program clients were asked to indicate which of the activities had occurred in their community’s project and which activities or improvements did they think should have occurred or wished had been emphasized more. The activities and improvements listed were organized under the headings of: organizational activities; physical improvements; promotional activities; and commercial and economic restructuring. The list contained the following options:
ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

a. creation of committees for design, marketing strategies and special events
b. increased attendance at organizational meetings
c. increased municipal support e.g. financial, by-law enforcement zoning changes
d. increased membership in business organization
e. supportive attitude of other community organizations
f. hired a downtown coordinator or manager

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

a. infrastructure upgrading e.g. new sidewalks, road improvements, street lighting, sewers
b. street beautification e.g. decorative sidewalks, ornamental lighting, street trees, landscaping, seating, banners
c. improved traffic circulation and access
d. increase in the number of available parking spaces
e. provision of the downtown public space e.g. mini park, town square
f. built anchor development downtown
g. shopfront upgrading e.g. awnings, painting, signage
h. heritage restoration

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

a. creation of downtown promotional events e.g. festivals, contests, fairs,
b. creation of promotional materials e.g. brochures, shopping bags, logos, business directories
c. increased merchant participation in promotional activities
d. joint advertising for special sales events e.g. newspaper, radio
e. participation in marketing and merchandising courses

COMMERCIAL RESTRUCTURING and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

a. analysis of economic development potential, determining which goods and services are in demand
b. recruitment of new businesses, investors, or developers.

When an evaluator conducts a process evaluation a detailed and measurable description of program components is necessary. In this way comparisons can be made between projects and judgements made regarding the most effective program components. It was beyond the scope of this thesis to quantify each of the activities and improvements listed by the respondents. However, the objective of this section of the questionnaire was to determine the common revitalization practices in revitalization and the common
attitudes about which activities were valuable.

7.4.3 Evaluation

In order to determine if there was stakeholder consensus on appropriate performance measures, the respondents were asked to indicate which measurements they would select as indicators of successful downtown revitalization. A list of possible measures was provided for all respondents. The composition of the list was determined by information collected through the telephone interviews and the review of existing evaluations.

The business representatives and municipal officials were asked how they would measure success if they wanted to evaluate their revitalization program. They were instructed to place an 'X' beside the measurements that they would select as indicators that their downtown was revitalized.

The program administrators were asked to indicate which of the measures they would select as indicators of successful revitalization when completing an impact assessment, and which data they would select for the purpose of monitoring program progress. The impact assessment would provide a summative evaluation and the program monitoring would be used as a process evaluation.

The list of possible performance measures included:

a. Increased business revenue, or maintenance of past levels in the face of new competition, measured by: an increase in sales volumes; an increase in market share; more customers for non-retail businesses.

b. Greater demand for business space measured by: decreased vacancy levels; quicker occupation of vacated space; new development.

c. Increased returns from downtown property measured by: rent levels; real estate values; property tax assessments.
d. More people downtown measured by: increased traffic and pedestrian counts; a shopper's survey on the number of shopping trips.

e. Physical Improvements measured by: the amount of private investment in facade upgrading; completion of a street beautification project; improved window displays.

f. Business growth measured by: new businesses coming in, decreases in closures and bankruptcies; an improved retail mix and wider range of goods and services.

g. Improved community attitudes measured by: type of media coverage; community attitude surveys.

h. Job creation measured by an increase in full and part time jobs.

i. Promotional activities measured by: increases in the number of downtown events and promotions; an increase in attendance at these events or participation in contests.

j. Better support for the downtown organization measured by: financial or zoning support from the municipal government; supportive attitude of other community organization; increased attendance at organizational meetings; increased merchant participation in promotional activities; increased membership in business association; creation of committees for special events and promotions; acquisition of a downtown coordinator; participation in marketing and merchandising courses.

Finally, a space was left for respondents to indicate other measures not listed. Because sales volumes were considered to be sensitive measures, respondents were asked if they believed the business community would reveal sales volumes figures for project evaluation purposes.

7.4.4 Open-ended Questions

The stakeholder survey concluded with a number of open-ended questions about evaluation initiatives and recommendations for program improvements. The program administrators were asked: whether they had completed an impact assessment; when they thought an impact assessment should be completed; and whether or not they had established a data base on participating communities for the
purpose of program monitoring.

The municipal officials and business representatives were asked open-ended questions concerning their own assessment of the community’s revitalization project, whether the project was municipally or community-driven, and recommendations for improving the revitalization programs that were available to them. The recommendations for improvements were incorporated into Chapter Three’s discussion on program components. Finally, the findings for the remaining open-ended questions, along with the sections on goal prioritizations and stakeholder preferences for performance measures are presented in the following chapter.
8.1 Introduction and Organization of Findings

As described in the previous chapter the questionnaire was organized in four sections: goals; program components; performance measures; and open ended questions concerning evaluation and recommendations for program improvements. The findings for the sections dealing with program components and program improvements have been discussed in chapters two and three. This chapter presents the survey findings concerning goal prioritizations, stakeholder preferences for performance measures, and the open-ended questions on evaluation. The findings are organized under the following major headings: survey response rate; stakeholder prioritization of goals; and stakeholder preferences for performance measures.

8.2 Survey Response Rate

Questionnaires were sent to the program administrators responsible for the: Main Street Programme of the Heritage Canada Foundation; the Washington Mainstreet Programme; and the provincial programs in Ontario, Nova Scotia, British Columbia and Alberta. Responses were received from 100% of the Canadian programs.

Questionnaires were also sent to either business or municipal representatives in one hundred and eleven communities across Canada. Where the contact person was a municipal representative, he or she was asked to forward a second copy of the survey to the appropriate business representative, and vice versa. A total of eighty-one questionnaires were returned, representing sixty-eight of the communities. The response rate is therefore calculated to be 68/111 or 61.3%. A list of the respondents is provided in
Appendix B. Table 9 illustrates the distribution of the surveys and the number of responses.

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>B.C.</th>
<th>Ont.</th>
<th>N.S.</th>
<th>H.C.</th>
<th>Alta.</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. sent</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. returned</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(municipal vs. business)</td>
<td>17/8</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of communities represented</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This high response rate suggests a strong interest in the survey topic. In fact, numerous respondents attached letters expressing support for the study and requesting copies of the findings.

It is notable that the response rates in Alberta and British Columbia are significantly higher than for the other programs. The reason for the difference is due to the fact that telephone contact was made to community members in these provinces in order to obtain current names and mailing addresses. This personal contact appears to have increased the rate of questionnaire return.

8.3 Stakeholder Prioritization of Goals

A description of the goals selected by the program clients precedes a description of those selected by program administrators.

8.3.1 Goal Prioritization by Program Clients

The objective of this section of the questionnaire was to identify the primary goals common to program clients. The program clients identified eight of the fourteen goals listed as primary.
Table 10 lists that goals that were selected as primary by more than 50% of the municipal and business respondents.

Table 10

PROGRAM CLIENTS’ PRIMARY GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Goal Description</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>To maintain a positive public image and civic pride</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>To restore economic vitality in the downtown core</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>To change the attitude of the business community to</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>one of confidence in their own ability to revitalize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>To encourage new development and investment downtown</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>To maintain the character of downtown</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>To maintain or retrieve a central focus for the town</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>To provide a full range of goods and services downtown</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>To maintain buildings and streets</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining six goals were selected as primary less than one third of the time. In addition these six goals were identified as secondary by approximately half of the program clients who responded. The reason of providing a secondary category was to account for the halo effect, and to provide a category into which respondents could place those goals that perhaps they felt would be noble gestures, but were not of prime importance.

Table 11

SECONDARY GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Description</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To strengthen the municipal tax base</td>
<td>58% / 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide additional jobs</td>
<td>53% / 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide accessibility to downtown services for disadvantaged groups</td>
<td>51% / 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To prevent deterioration from spreading</td>
<td>50% / 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve or stabilize property values</td>
<td>46% / 28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To maximize the use of existing downtown infrastructure</td>
<td>45% / 31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The selections for goals appear to fall into three distinct ranges: the top three goals fall in the seventy percent range; the middle five goals fall in the fifty percent range; and the bottom
six goals fall into range from eleven to thirty-one percent. These percentage groupings suggest that: the top three goals represent the most important goals in the eyes of the program clients; the middle five goals are less important; finally that the bottom six selections should not be considered a common primary goals.

The program clients response data was separated by respondent type in order to examine differences between municipal officials and business representatives. Graph B illustrates the different emphasis placed on goals by the two groups. The goals identified as primary are also organized under the headings of: economic goals; social goals; and physical goals. although they are interrelated as illustrated. A description of the goal prioritizations is provided, along with possible reasons for the selections and their implications.
GRAPH B

PRIMARY GOALS OF BUSINESS AND MUNICIPAL RESPONDENTS

SOCIAL...................... ECONOMIC....... PHYSICAL

100%

90%

80%

70%  0  69  0

60%  0  0  64  63  58  58  0  55  0  55  0  58

50%  0  0  49  0  0  0  53  0  0  47

40%  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0

30%  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0

20%  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0

10%  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0

0%  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0  0

GOAL  #1  #3  #6  #5  #7  #2  #4  #8

NOTE: 'O' - Municipal Response  '*/' - Business Response

PROGRAM GOALS

1. to maintain a positive public image and civic pride

2. to restore economic vitality in the downtown core

3. to change the attitude of the business community to one of confidence in their own ability to revitalize downtown

4. to encourage new development and investment downtown

5. to maintain the character of downtown

6. to maintain or retrieve a central focus for the town

7. to provide a full range of goods and services downtown

8. to maintain buildings and streets
As illustrated in Table 10 the social goal of maintaining a positive public image and civic pride was selected by a slightly higher (77%) percentage of the program clients that the goal of restoring economic vitality (72%). However, when comparing the responses of the municipal officials and the business representatives, in GRAPH B it is evident that the combined response was swayed by the strong response (87%) of the municipal officials. This same strong desire to maintain civic pride is also reflected in some of the names selected for revitalization initiatives, e.g. Ontario's PRIDE program, Edmonton's PRIDE program.

It was anticipated that the business community would favour the 'economic vitality' goal much more strongly than the social 'pride' goal. Surprisingly, the response revealed that both goals were selected by an equal number of business representatives. (Refer to Graph B) This equal weighting implies that business representatives place equal value on restoring economic vitality and maintaining a positive public image and civic pride.

The goal of changing the business community's attitude to one of confidence in their ability to revitalize the downtown received the second highest response from both municipal officials and business representatives. This response signifies a strong belief that the key agent for change or revitalization is the business community and a key determinant is a confident attitude or belief that change can be effected. As an important component in the revitalization process, changes in the business community's confidence should be monitored.

Implicit in this bestowal of power to effect change is blame. In Chapter Two's review of the decline of downtown, merchant
complacency and passive management techniques were cited as two reasons for downtown deterioration. Program evaluation could play a significant role in effecting a change in attitude by publicizing revitalization project successes thereby building confidence that improvement can occur.

The goals of encouraging development and investment, maintaining character, and providing a full range of goods and services downtown, were selected as primary goals by between 54% and 59% of the program clients. There was strong agreement between the municipal and business respondents regarding these three goals. It is possible that these elements were not selected by more program clients because they could be considered to be revitalization means or objectives. As was explained in chapter seven, program clients were asked to differentiate between goals and objectives because pre-tests with the questionnaires indicated that merchants were unfamiliar with the task.

I had anticipated that a greater percentage of municipal officials would have selected the goal of encouraging new development and investment downtown. This low percentage (55%) reflects a narrow approach to revitalization, one which seeks to bring life back to what currently exists, but devotes little energy to attracting new life through redevelopment and economic development. The findings from the questionnaire relating to current revitalization practices confirm this limited approach. The findings, discussed in chapter two, revealed that only 37% of the respondents recruited businesses or developers, and only 25% of the communities had built anchor developments.

A reason that the goal of providing a broad range of goods and
services was not selected by more program clients, could be that it would not be relevant for all business areas. In towns where large malls outside the core area are successfully providing a broad range of goods, the downtown business composition may shift towards speciality shops or some other marketing niche. In some circumstances a town may not have a sufficient consumer population to support a full range of goods and services.

The goal of maintaining a central focus downtown for the community was selected by a majority of the municipal officials and a minority of business respondents. Merchants must locate their businesses wherever they can capture the most customers. Their first priority, staying in business, must take precedence over any value they place on maintaining a central focus. On the other hand, municipal officials are conscious of the benefits of a functional town centre and the effects of downtown deterioration upon the entire town. If municipal governments truly place value on the downtown as a central focus for the community they should educate the community on the benefits and secure supportive planning mechanisms.

Maintaining buildings and streets in the downtown core benefits both the municipality and the business people, in that it can strengthen the municipal tax base as well as provide a pleasant environment for customers. The goals of maintaining buildings and streets was selected as a primary goal by 47% of the municipal officials and by 58% of the business respondents.

8.3.2 Goal Prioritization By Program Administrators

The program administrators were asked first to describe their program goals. These descriptions were incorporated into the
program reviews in chapter three. Then the administrators were asked to classify a list of fourteen possible goals and objectives as they related to their program. The classifications included: primary goal; secondary goal; objective or means of achieving a goal; not a goal but a desirable spin-off; and, not applicable.

Only five goals were selected by the majority of program administrators as either primary or secondary. These goals are listed in Table 12.

Table 12

GOALS BY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Goal Description</th>
<th>% Selected as primary / secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>to restore economic vitality in the downtown core</td>
<td>100% / 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>to encourage new development and investment downtown</td>
<td>60% / 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>to maintain or retrieve a central focus for downtown</td>
<td>60% / 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>to change the attitude of the business community to</td>
<td>60% / 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>one of confidence in their ability to revitalize</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>to maintain a positive self image and civic pride</td>
<td>40% / 40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The responses of the program administrators demonstrate that restoring economic vitality is the most common primary goal. The five goals selected by program administrators coincide with those selected as primary by the program clients. However, the program clients selections also included: maintaining buildings and streets; providing a full range of goods and services; and maintaining the character of downtown.

In contrast to the program clients' selections the majority of program administrators considered maintaining buildings and streets and providing a full range of goods and services as a means to bring about revitalization. Only the Main Street Canada administrator chose maintaining character as a primary goal.
The items most commonly selected as spin-offs were:
providing additional jobs; effectively utilizing existing downtown infrastructure; strengthening the municipal tax base; improving or stabilizing property values; and providing accessibility for disadvantaged groups. These items coincided with the goals selected as secondary by the majority of program clients.

8.4 Stakeholder Preferences for Performance Measures

8.4.1 Introduction

This section of the chapter describes stakeholder preferences for performance measures. The program administrators were provided with a list of indicators used in previous evaluations or suggested in the telephone interviews. The administrators were asked to identify which of them they would use as indicators of successful revitalization when completing an impact assessment, and which of them they would use as data for the purpose of program monitoring.

The program clients were asked to select the indicators that they would use to measure success for their community project.

The results of the stakeholder survey are summarized in Table 13 under the headings of economic, social and physical indicators and then discussed. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings to the open-ended questions on evaluation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAKEHOLDER PREFERENCES FOR PERFORMANCE MEASURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I.A./P.M.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ECONOMIC INDICATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amt. of private investment in facade upgrading</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>71%/84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased no. of new businesses opening</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>76%/68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decrease in vacancy rate</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>76%/66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase in sales volumes</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>60%/63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase in staff needed by businesses</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>64%/58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new development</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>60%/53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increase in market share</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>58%/34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decrease in business closures</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>51%/42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>quicker occupation of vacated space</td>
<td>/ 80%</td>
<td>53%/53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased property value</td>
<td>/ 80%</td>
<td>58%/26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased rental rates</td>
<td>/ 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased property tax assessments</td>
<td>/ 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SOCIAL INDICATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>more people downtown - traffic/pedestrian counts</td>
<td>/ 60%</td>
<td>73%/61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased attendance at promotional events</td>
<td>/ 60%</td>
<td>62%/71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved community attitude measured by media</td>
<td>/ 80%</td>
<td>53%/47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved community attitude measured by survey</td>
<td>/ 60%</td>
<td>58%/58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased number of promotions</td>
<td>/ 60%</td>
<td>60%/58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquisition of a coordinator</td>
<td>/ 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creation of committees</td>
<td>/ 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased merchant participation in events</td>
<td>58%/58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased membership in business association</td>
<td>51%/58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wider range of goods and services downtown</td>
<td>64%/53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased municipal support</td>
<td>58%/39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PHYSICAL INDICATORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>completion of street beautification project</td>
<td>64%/58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved window displays</td>
<td>/ 60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** (*) I.A. denotes Impact Assessment  
P.M. denotes Program Monitoring

The eight indicators typed in bold print were selected by the majority of program administrators for use in an impact assessment. This emphasis on the economic measures combined with the fact that restoring economic vitality was the only goal selected as primary...
by 100% of the administrators confirms the economic thrust of the downtown revitalization programs in this study. A discussion on all the economic indicators selected follows.

8.4.2 Economic Indicators

The amount of the private investment in facade upgrading was selected by a consistently high percentage of each type of respondent. It was selected by: 84% of the municipal respondents; 71% of the business representatives; and 80% of the program administrators. This type of investment is generally reflects owner and tenant confidence in the downtown as a business area.

Decreased Vacancies and new businesses opening in the area were the two indicators selected by the greatest percentage (76% of business respondents). An increase in the number of new businesses opening in the commercial area was also selected by 100% of the program administrators as measure to be used in an impact assessment. Eighty percent of the administrators selected decreased vacancies as a measure to be used in an impact assessment. When businesses choose to locate or remain downtown as opposed to other areas, it signifies confidence in the business area.

An increase in sales volumes was selected by 60% of the business respondents and 63% of the municipal officials. In addition, 80% of the program administrators selected sales volumes as an indicator for use in an impact assessment. The telephone interviews with program administrators revealed that sales volume data was considered the most sensitive indicator of economic vitality. It was considered sensitive in two ways, sensitive meaning that it is a good measure, and sensitive in that most business people are reluctant to release such information. The stakeholder survey
asked respondents if they believed the business community would reveal sales volumes figures. Unfortunately, only 9% of the respondents replied that the business community would reveal sales figures. Consequently, surrogate measures should be identified and used. Some of the respondents suggested percentage increases in sales and merchant testimonials.

**Increases in staff** were selected by 64% of the business respondents and 58% of the municipal officials as an indicator of revitalization. One hundred percent of the program administrators selected increased demand for staff as a measure suitable for an impact assessment.

Sixty percent of the business respondents and 53% of the municipal officials selected the occurrence of **new development** as an indicator of downtown revitalization. Eighty percent of the program administrators selected new development as a measure to be used in an impact assessment. Property owners would not invest in new developments unless they felt confident about the return on their investment.

Closely related to increases in sales volumes are **increases in the marketshare**. Fifty-eight percent of the business respondents chose this indicator compared to thirty-four percent of the municipal officials. Business owners are more interested than municipal officials in knowing if more customers from the local areas are being drawn to their store, and if their trade area is expanding to other towns. Being conscious of which products or services are drawing customers to their stores or competitors' stores is crucial.
A decrease in business closures was selected by 51% of the business respondents and 42% of the municipal respondents. Eighty percent of the program administrators selected it for use in an impact assessment. This information is also useful in calculation of the net gain in businesses in the community.

The following performance measures were selected by the majority of program clients as indicators of revitalization and by the majority of program administrators as indicators that they would employ for program monitoring purposes. The indicators selected are economic, social and physical in nature.

All three indicators relating to revenue generated from property: real estate value, rental rates, and property tax assessments, were selected by eighty percent of the program administrators for program monitoring purposes.

However, program clients did not express as much interest in these indicators. Fifty-eight of the business representatives and only 26% of the municipal officials selected an increase in property values as an indicator. Further, increases in rental rates and property tax assessments were not selected a majority of the program clients.

It is possible that the majority of municipal officials believe that property values, rental rates, and tax assessments are more influenced by larger economic factors than by revitalization initiatives. However, if the average increases in these indicators were compared to average increases in other towns, the impact of the revitalization initiatives could be determined.

The business representatives may have avoided selecting these three indicators because they view them as additional burdens on
their business. When they envision a revitalized downtown they do not want to think of increased rents and taxes. However, because all three indicators will increase if demand for a downtown location increases they are appropriate performance measures.

**Quicker occupation of vacated space** was selected by 53% of the program clients that responded to the questionnaire. This figure is substantially lower than the percentage of respondents that selected decreases in the vacancy rate. Eighty percent of the program administrators selected quicker occupation as a program monitoring measure.

### 8.4.3 Social Indicators

An increase in the number of people downtown measured by **traffic and pedestrian counts** was selected as an indicator of revitalization by 73% of the business respondents and 61% of the municipal officials. Sixty percent of the program administrators selected this indicator for program monitoring purposes. In order to attribute an increase in traffic to the revitalization project, an evaluator would have to examine other variables such as: changes in circulation patterns; the introduction of a community facility; population increases; or newly created employment opportunities.

More specific measures such as: increases in the number of tour buses that stop downtown for reasonable shopping and eating periods; or increases in the number of parking spaces used; or increased revenue from parking meters, where applicable, would more directly reflect positive changes in resident and visitor behavior.

Although an increase in the number of people downtown does not automatically translate into increased sales, if may indicate a change in the community's attitude toward downtown as a focal point.
A community attitude survey could provide a further understanding of changes in this factor.

Seventy-one percent of the municipal respondents and 62% of the business respondents felt that an increase in attendance at promotional events was an indicator of revitalization. Sixty percent of the program administrators selected this measure for program monitoring purposes. Increased attendance could be due to: the creation of more stimulating events, signifying increased merchant confidence; or an increase in community interest or identification with the downtown as a central focal point.

Fifty-eight percent of the municipal officials and sixty percent of the business representatives selected an increase in the number of promotions as an indicator of revitalization. Sixty percent of the program administrators selected this measure for program monitoring purposes.

Municipal respondents may value an increase in attendance at promotional events and an increase in the number of promotions because these behaviors suggest the realization of three of their social goals: maintaining a positive self image and civic pride; changing merchant attitude; and retrieving a central focus for the town.

The merchants, on the other hand, recognize that the realization of these three social goals does not necessarily guarantee the realization of the goal of restoring economic vitality. It is quite possible that people attend community celebrations without changing their consumer behavior. The merchants sponsor these celebrations with the hope that some attendees will return downtown to shop because that had a pleasurable experience there.
Some of the business respondents added comments to the questionnaire regarding their interest in determining whether providing larger discounts or risking a broader merchandise line, would create a greater increase in sales than sponsoring promotional events. No data was provided in the current evaluations to compare the impacts of different types and frequencies of promotional efforts upon sales volumes in revitalization projects. Perhaps, as more business organizations work together to implement different promotions and evaluate their results, the answer to this question will become available.

Fifty-eight of the program clients selected an improved community attitude towards downtown, measured by a survey, as an indicator of revitalization. Sixty percent of the program administrators selected this measure for program monitoring. A community survey could be used to determine attitudes concerning the image of downtown, the variety of goods and services, and suggestions for improvements.

The program clients expressed little confidence in measuring community attitude through the type of media coverage. However, eighty percent of the program administrators selected it as a measure to be monitored. In the interviews with the Main Street coordinators of Heritage Canada programs, a number of factors were cited which dismiss the reliability of assessing community attitude through media reports. The factors which could influence the type of coverage included: personal relationships between the editorial staff, municipal staff, and the business community; and the amount of advertising purchased by the merchants.

Eighty percent of the program administrators selected the
acquisition of a coordinator and the creation of committees, for design and promotions etc., as indicators that should be monitored. These actions could demonstrate confidence as well as commitment on the part of the business people, and any other participating community members. However, not all communities have the financial resources or government programs to support a coordinator. The majority of program clients did not select these as indicators of revitalization.

Four other indicators were selected by the program clients, but not by the program administrators. These included: increased merchant participation in promotional events; increased municipal support; increased membership in the business association; and a wider range of goods and services. Although these actions would not, in themselves, be evidence of economic revitalization, they would demonstrate commitment and a change of attitude, and as such they should be monitored. The last two may not apply in some communities.

8.4.5 Physical Revitalization Indicators

Sixty-four percent of business respondents and fifty-eight percent of the municipal respondents selected the completion of a street beautification project as an indicator. In the last section of the survey, where respondents were asked if they believed that their town had been or was being successfully revitalized, an overwhelming majority answered positively, and referred to the completion and cost of their physical improvements as evidence. This response suggests that program clients still view the street improvements as an end in themselves.

None of the program administrators selected a street beauti-
fication as an indication of revitalization. In fact, their classification of goals and objectives revealed that they considered maintaining buildings and streets to be a means to revitalization. It could be a means to encourage new development and investment or a means to maintain a positive image and civic pride.

Besides the obvious physical improvements that a street beautification project and facade upgrading do contribute to a revitalization project, these actions are a measure of community commitment towards the revitalization project.

With regard to assessing the success of the physical revitalization, a number of measures could be employed. Some of these would attempt to judge elements such as: the integrity of a design; the harmony of the streetscape; the respect of the dominant architectural features; the efficiency of the circulation patterns; the quality of lighting; the adequacy of the parking and loading zones; and the design's integration into the rest of the community. All these assessments would be subjective and thus subject to change over time and vary by evaluator. Comments offered by the Main Street coordinators indicated that business respondents placed more confidence in a photographic record of the physical improvements than in ratings systems designed by planners or architectural preservationists. Because photographs provide a fixed record, these elements could be assessed by different audiences at different times.

Finally, sixty percent of the program administrators selected improved window displays as an indicator to be monitored. It could be that the administrators would use this measure as an indicator of merchant commitment and confidence. The majority of
program clients did not select this, possibly because the amount of attention given to window display is heavily influenced by the degree to which sales rely upon visual display.

8.4.6 Summary of the Goals and Measures Selected by Stakeholders

Table 14 illustrates the goals and performance measures selected by the stakeholders surveyed in this study. The goals typed in bold print are those selected by the program administrators. Similarly, the indicators typed in bold print are those selected by the administrators for use in an impact assessment. It is evident from the administrators' selection of indicators that they place greatest value on the economic impacts. Armed with a summative evaluation of the program's positive economic effects, policy-makers can justify continued government support. Evaluations that report on changes such as increased merchant confidence or increased civic pride provide a less convincing argument.

These social goals hold more significance at the community level. In order to evaluate the accomplishment of these revitalization goals, the program clients expressed interest in measuring changes in attitude and behavior. The program administrators, on the other hand, are interested in measuring these changes in order to monitor the process and document project inputs. In this way, the administrators can judge the effectiveness of particular inputs and modify their program accordingly. The collection of this data is therefore mutually beneficial and client cooperation is important.

This concludes the discussion of stakeholder preferences for performance measures. The final chapter of this thesis provides recommendations on how the data necessary to evaluate program success
TABLE 14

SUMMARY OF GOALS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES SELECTED BY STAKEHOLDERS

Note: Underlined goals represent selections of program administrators.
Underlined measures were selected by administrators for use in impact assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECONOMIC GOALS</th>
<th>ECONOMIC MEASURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• restore economic vitality</td>
<td>• increased sales, increased no. of new business openings,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• encourage investment downtown</td>
<td>• decrease in business closures, decreased vacancy rate,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• increase in staff needed, increased marketshare, new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• development, private investment in facade upgrading,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• increased property tax, assessments, increased property values, quicker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• occupation of vacated space, increased rental rate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL GOALS</th>
<th>SOCIAL INDICATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• improved business community’s attitude</td>
<td>• increased merchant participation in promotional events,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• maintain positive public image and civic pride</td>
<td>• increased number of promotions, acquisition of a co-ordinator,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• maintain or retrieve central focus downtown</td>
<td>• increased membership in business association, creation of committees for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• design and promotion, facade upgrading,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• improved window displays, completion of a street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• beautification project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL GOALS</th>
<th>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• maintain buildings and streets</td>
<td>• completion of street beautification project, private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• investment in facade upgrading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
can be collected. Recommendations for evaluation planning presented in the chapter nine will rely heavily on the stakeholder preferences that have been identified.

8.5 Discussion on the Survey's Open-ended Questions

After selecting performance measures the program clients were asked open-ended questions such as: their own assessment of the community's revitalization project; whether or not the project was municipally or community-driven; and recommendations for improving the program that was available to them.

Sixty-nine percent of the respondents claimed that their project was successful and that their downtown areas were being revitalized. Most made reference to the cost and completion of their physical improvements as evidence of that success. Only two of the eighty-one respondents made any references to economic factors such as reduced vacancy rates or the belief that sales had increased. Twenty-one percent claimed that progress was either non-existent or very slow. Consistently, the projects that were experiencing little success were the ones that respondent claimed were municipally-driven.

Thirty-eight percent of program clients claimed that both the municipality and the business community supported the project equally. Twenty-one percent claimed that there project was initiated by the business community.

The program administrators were asked whether or not they had completed evaluations or established a data base. Only the Heritage Canada Foundation had established and maintains a comprehensive data base.

The administrators were also asked when they felt an assess-
ment should be completed. The majority believed that three to five years after the completion of physical improvements was an appropriate time to wait for assessing the impacts.
CHAPTER NINE
AN EVALUATION MODEL FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROGRAMS

9.1 Introduction

As was initially stated the intent of this thesis is to assist those involved in downtown revitalization program planning prepare for evaluation. This final chapter makes recommendations for performance measures and suggests data sources. These recommendations are based on: the survey findings; information collected during interviews with various stakeholders; and the author's own experience with downtown revitalization stakeholders.

The recommendations are organized under the headings of: economic performance measures and data sources; and program monitoring. This evaluation framework recommends twenty-two performance measures collected by five different collection mediums. The mediums include: municipal records; a business survey; a business organization survey; a community attitude survey; and field observation photographic records. The performance measures are useful for either assessing program impacts or monitoring program inputs.

Information regarding the type of questions appropriate for each survey and options for methods of conducting the surveys are discussed.

The chapter concludes with comments on the importance of systematic evaluation and the need for control data.

9.2 Economic Performance Measures and Data Sources

Co-operative efforts between the provincial and municipal governments could produce reliable quantitative data to assess economic impacts such as increased number of businesses, investment
in facade upgrading, new development, business openings and closures, reduced vacancy rates, and property tax assessments. Business surveys could be used to measure merchant perception of changes in: market share, sales, staff needs, merchant confidence, and rental rates. Both municipal governments and business people should be motivated to co-operate and assist, because the evaluation results benefit communities that are developing and implementing downtown revitalization strategies.

Municipal officials should provide a local economic context by describing any factors that could influence the trade area such as changes in employment opportunities, population, industrial and tourism activities, traffic routes and business competition. In addition any assistance or support provided by the municipal government for the revitalization program should be described. Data from Statistics Canada could be used to describe the population changes and the number of unemployment claimants in each area.

The recommended performance measures and the data sources are as follows:

1. Municipal building permit records provide accurate and some of the most complete information available concerning the amount of investment in facade upgrading and new development, in the project area and in control areas. The total amount of construction recorded on the building permits for each area is not sufficient. New developments should be recorded separately from the total amount of the building permit records. As well the number of properties that applied for a building permit should be recorded. Provincial records on facade grants may reveal the total cost of
upgrading for those owners who utilized the facade grants. Private and public investment calculations could be made but they would not be as comprehensive as the building permit records. The total amount of grants provided should be recorded as a program input.

2. **Municipal business licence records** could determine the **number of new businesses opening in the area** and the number who did not renew applications, because they have **closed or relocated** outside of the project area.

3. **Provincial or municipal records** should be used to compare changes in the **property tax assessments**. The tax assessments are based on the amount of revenue a property can generate through sale or lease. Assessors judge the value of the land and improvements in relation to similar properties, and take into consideration locational advantages. If revitalization initiatives attract customers and encourage businesses to upgrade their buildings, then owners will be able to demand more for their property. Consequently, the property tax assessments will increase. Because of the method of assessment described, property tax assessments provide a reliable economic indicator of revitalization.

The increase in assessments should be compared to increases in other areas so as to separate the impact of the project from broader economic forces. An examination of increases in individual property assessments would be more valuable than simply a total of the assessed values for the area, because new developments would exaggerate the increases. Some assessments may increase because of extensive upgrading rather than an increase in the demand to locate the area. The percentage increase of an unimproved property
within the project area should be compared to the percentage increase for unimproved properties in other 'control' commercial areas.

4. **Photographic records**, or simply **records of the storefronts completed by field observation** at the beginning of the project and three years later would reveal the **number of shops that made improvements** and would also capture minor improvements, such as painting, which would not have been recorded in the building permit information. These photographs or records would also indicate the **number of vacancies** for the different years, as well as the **number of new businesses, business closures, and new developments**.

5. A **survey of the business community** should be used to determine changes in the **marketshare, rental rates, sales volumes; and need for staff**. The responses would be subjective and there would be no way of establishing the accuracy of some of their responses. However, it is valuable because it records merchant perception of these factors.

A description of the type of questions that should be asked on a business survey and how the survey options were conducting the survey are described on page 163.

9.3 **Program Monitoring**

The performance measures described in the preceding section would be sufficient for an impact assessment according to the selections of the program administrators. (Refer to Chapter 8, page 139). However, this information would only provide a summative evaluation of the economic impacts; it would not document
the revitalization process or describe program inputs. As was
'described' in chapter five, a description of the process and
inputs enables program planners to determine which activities are
most effective. In addition, monitoring the projects’ progress
provides the opportunity to modify some of the components or
revitalization strategies during the process.

A description of four vehicles useful for program monitoring
follows:

1. A vehicle for documenting the process and monitoring progress
would be to survey the local business organizations. The survey
should collect information about the effort and money put into
items such as: promotion; management; maintenance; parking;
research; organizational development; property investment; and
business recruitment. This information, monitoring changes in the
business community’s behavior, correlates with five of the perform­
ance measures selected by the stakeholders. These measures include
an increased number of promotional events; increased merchant
participation in the events; increased membership in the business
association; acquisition of a coordinator; and improved window
displays.

A description of the type of questions that should be asked is
provided on page 165. Conducting the survey annually should
prevent data problems caused by respondents’ faulty memories or
record keeping. The organizations should be advised of the nature
of the questions so they can structure their data collection to
satisfy the requirements. The information regarding expenditures
should be available from each organization’s annual financial
statements. The Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs has been
successful in collecting information relating to BIA expenditures since 1982.

At the same time that the business community survey and the annual business organization survey measure some of the economic impacts and monitor the revitalization process, they also reflect merchant attitude. As such they serve to measure the accomplishment of the goal of changing the attitude of the business community to one of confidence in their ability to revitalize downtown.

In addition, the surveys would provide administrators with the opportunity for feedback from program clients regarding program assistance and delivery.

2. A second method of monitoring progress would be to conduct a community attitude survey. The survey should measure: changes in the community’s attitude towards downtown; attendance at promotional events; the community’s perception of the range of goods and services provided downtown; and their assessment of window displays downtown.

The survey would also provide the opportunity for feedback from community members concerning their perception of downtown’s assets and how they use them. Information that identified: consumer characteristics, consumer responses to the promotional activities, and consumer demand for goods and services would be valuable in providing direction for future promotional campaigns and business recruitment activities.

A more detailed description of the type of information that should be collected and options for collection methods is provided on page 162.
Besides monitoring the change in the community’s attitude towards downtown, the survey could serve to measure the accomplishment of four primary goals identified by program clients. These goals included: maintaining a positive image and civic pride; maintaining or retrieving a central focus for the town; providing a full range of goods and services; and maintaining the character of downtown. As such the community survey acts as an impact assessment for the social goals.

3. Program inputs for the physical improvements should be documented by using either provincial revitalization program data or municipal local improvement data to record the cost of the street improvements. To facilitate the comparison of physical inputs in different community projects, the costs should be described in dollars spent per frontage foot.

4. Finally, in order to measure increases in the number of people stopping downtown, program staff could record the number of used parking spaces, or examine the revenue generated from parking meters, in the commercial area. Care would have to be taken to avoid unusual business days such as: pay-days, welfare days, celebrations in the towns or in nearby towns, and days when some businesses in nearby towns are closed.

Graph C, on the following page, summarizes the recommended performance measures and data sources.
## PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND DATA SOURCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</th>
<th>DATA SOURCES</th>
<th>USES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. facade upgrading</td>
<td>bldg permits</td>
<td>MUNICIPAL RECORDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. new development</td>
<td>bldg permits</td>
<td>field observ. photo records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. business openings</td>
<td>business licences</td>
<td>field observ. photo records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. business closures</td>
<td>business licences</td>
<td>field observ. photo records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. property tax assessment</td>
<td>tax records</td>
<td>field observ. photo records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. vacancy rates</td>
<td></td>
<td>MUNICIPAL RECORDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. more people stopping downtown (parking)</td>
<td>municipal meter revenue</td>
<td>recording of parking used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. rental rates</td>
<td></td>
<td>MERCHANT DATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. sales volumes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. market share</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. staff needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. merchant particip. in events</td>
<td>annual business organiz. survey</td>
<td>BUSINESS ORGANIZATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. number of promotions</td>
<td>annual business organiz. survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. association membership</td>
<td>annual business organiz. survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. acquisition of coordinator</td>
<td>annual business organiz. survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. creation of committees</td>
<td>annual business organiz. survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. window displays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. community attitude to downtown</td>
<td>community survey</td>
<td>DATA FROM COMMUNITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. attendance at promotional events</td>
<td>community survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. street beautification</td>
<td>municipal program staff records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. municipal support</td>
<td>municipal records</td>
<td>annual business organiz. survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Some of the performance measures identified by the stakeholders are not included in this model. The reasons for their exclusion are described on the following page.
9.4 Performance Measures Dismissed from the Evaluation Model

Four performance measures that were selected by the majority of stakeholders but are not included in the evaluation model because either other measures are sufficient, or the collection of the data was considered too time consuming or unreliable. These measures were: quicker occupation of vacated space; increased property values; more people downtown measured by traffic or pedestrian counts; and an improved community attitude measured by media coverage.

Measuring changes in the time commercial space is left vacant would require more work than the measure merits, given that vacancy rates will be recorded. Some program administrators may contact business representatives to informally monitor progress. Should a representative comment that commercial space is being more quickly occupied, it would indicate positive change. However, quicker occupation of vacated space does not warrant measurement.

Increases in property values can be a good measures for assessing the economic impacts of a revitalization project. However, the collection of accurate data presents some problems. Two sources are available for this data, private real estate brokers and a public assessment authorities. Using the real estate source the evaluator would have to rely on the agent’s opinions about increases. In some small towns, very few property sales occur each year, so it is difficult to determine if property values have increased generally. There is no way of ensuring that when the evaluator returns to the community in three years, the same agent or another agent with a long term perspective on property values in the area will be available. Such changes can affect the consist-
ency of the data and therefore its validity. On the other hand, property tax assessments are completed every two years by provincial authorities. Although more conservative in nature due to the two-year time frame between assessments, the sometimes lower values may provide a steadier base to view change. The property assessments generally 'smooth-out' the more immediate peaks and valleys of marketplace fluctuations. The provincial data permits comparisons between towns.

As was discussed in chapter eight, it is difficult to determine whether traffic increases can be attributed to revitalization initiatives or other variables such as: changes in circulation patterns; the introduction of a community facility; or newly created employment opportunities. A more direct method of determining if more people are actually stopping downtown would be to measure the number of parking spaces being used or the amount of revenue generated from parking meters.

Finally, measuring changes in community attitude by media coverage is not recommended because of factors which could influence the nature and extent of the coverage in local papers. These factors include: the relationship between the editorial staff, the municipal staff, and the business community, and the amount of advertising purchased by the merchants.
9.5 **Community Attitude Survey**

Community attitude surveys should be conducted at the beginning of the revitalization project and then three years later. The survey could be either mailed to individual homes, distributed over business counters or in shopping bags, or completed by telephone. A telephone survey completed by random digit dialing in different quadrants of the town would provide the least expensive method of surveying a representative sample of the community members. After identifying the respondents or interviewees' age bracket, sex, residential neighbourhood, workplace, and the number of years as a resident, the following type of information should be collected:

1. Whether or not the respondents feel the changes that have occurred downtown as part of the revitalization project have maintained the original character of the area.

2. Whether or not the respondents attended specific promotional events sponsored by the business association.

3. How often the respondents are drawn downtown for activities such as lessons, clubs, theatre, fitness classes, or dining. The list would have to be specific to each town's amenities.

4. Whether respondents shop for particular types of merchandise or services: downtown; in another town; or in a suburban mall.

5. What goods and services they would like to see provided downtown, that are not currently provided.

6. How the respondents rate the downtown concerning items such as: cleanliness of streets; attractiveness of downtown; parking convenience; safety; quality, variety, and cost of goods and services available; friendliness of sales staff; convenience of shopping hours; quality of the window displays; quality of
event, festivals and promotions.

7. Whether or not the respondents identify with downtown as a central focus for the town.

The community attitude survey should be designed in consultation with a representative from the business organization so that the questions pertaining to the amenities and promotional activities are specific to each town.

9.6 Business Survey

A business survey should be conducted at the beginning of the revitalization project and then 3 years following. In order to provide some context, a survey of businesses in other towns and commercial areas should be completed. With this control data judgements can be made about whether any increases in sales, jobs, investment or business confidence can be attributed to the revitalization project.

After establishing basic data such as: whether the respondents own or rent their premises; the store address; how long the respondent has operated their business at that location; what type of business it is; and the commercial square footage; the following information should be sought:

1. If each respondent is currently a member of the business association.

2. After listing the town's promotional events each respondent should be asked about their participation in each event. How they participated should also be determined. e.g. financial support, advertised individually or collectively for the event, created a sales promotion during the event, provided
staff as volunteers, or no participation.

3. How each of the promotional events affected the respondent’s sales.

4. Whether or not the respondent upgraded his storefront in the last three years, as well as into what cost range the improvements fell.

5. How many respondents received facade grants.

6. How often the respondent changes the window displays.

7. To what degree respondents judge window displays are responsible for attracting customers to their store.

8. How each respondent would assess the overall trend in business in the last three years.

9. What each respondent thinks will be the overall trend in business in the next three years.

10. How each respondent would assess changes in his marketshare during the last three years.

11. How many full time, part time and seasonal staff work in each shop.

12. How many staff members have had to be hired in the last three years as a result of the revitalization project.

13. Respondents’ comments on changes that have occurred in the trade area that they believe affected their business. These changes could include factors such as: population, employment opportunities, competition, industrial or tourism sector development, traffic routes.
1. How much the current rental rate is, calculated per per square foot without taxes or utilities.
2. How much each respondent's sales volumes have changed in the last three years. e.g. increased or decreased by 5%, 10%, 15%, 20% etc.
3. How many respondents believe that their sales increases can be attributed to the revitalization project, and to what degrees.

Measures should be taken to ensure the confidentiality of the responses concerning sales increases and rental rates. The questions relating to these more sensitive measures should be put on a separate page, which could be submitted anonymously. Assurance should be given that individual submissions will be destroyed and only average increases would be used. The responses could be returned in several ways. They could be mailed directly to the program evaluator. They could be mailed to a third party such as the business association for calculation and averaging and then mailed to the evaluator. If the business survey is conducted in person, then the responses could be deposited in a ballot box.

9.7 Annual Business Organization Survey

A survey of each community's business organization would provide information on revitalization initiatives and their costs, as well as the association's confidence in the business area. The survey should ask for the following information:

1. A statement of expenditures for the following:
   (a) administration - coordinator salaries
   - secretaries salaries
- summer help salaries
- office expenses
(b) internal communication - newsletters, meetings
(c) public improvements
(d) maintenance of public improvements
(e) promotional events, materials - balloons, logos
(f) advertising costs - television, paper, radio, flyers
(g) business recruitment activities - brochures, postage
(h) research - marketing, design, parking studies
(i) property investment
(j) parking costs - structure or subsidies
(k) other
(l) total budget

Because non-profit societies are required to complete yearly financial statements, and BIA Boards are required to submit audited financial statements annually to the BIA members and to the municipal officials involved in levying taxes for the BIA, requesting financial information should not impose a burden. However, the organization would have to be notified of the specifics of the data request at the beginning of the year.

2. A description of the promotional activities and their perception of the impacts should be requested. If enough data was collected on the different types of promotions and their effects, eventually comparisons could be made between different promotional strategies. To this end, the organizations should be asked to: describe each promotional activity, identify the target audience, and specify the operational costs and the advertising costs; to describe the duration of the promotion; to estimate the attendance; and to summarize the merchants' evaluation of each promotion. Again, the nature of this request should be made clear at the beginning of each year.

3. A description of the business recruitment activities and the results should be requested.

4. How many members are there in the business organization?
5. List the names of any active committees that your organization has established.

6. How many businesses in the area are eligible to be members?

7. How many businesses completed facade improvements this year?

8. How many businesses have opened in the area this year?

9. How many businesses have closed or moved from the area this year?

10. How many vacancies are there currently?

11. Describe any new developments that have been constructed in the business area this year.

12. Has business in the area declined, stayed the same, or improved this last year?

13. Do you believe that business in the area will decline, stay the same, or improve this coming year?

14. Comment on any changes that have occurred in your trade area that you believe have influenced sales: e.g. competition from suburban malls or other towns, tourism activities, industrial development, population, employment.

15. In what way does the municipal government or provincial government assist or support your revitalization project? e.g. grants, planning, zoning, etc.

9.8 **Increasing the Survey Response Rate**

Motivating program clients to complete the survey information should increase the response rate which will in turn facilitate a more comprehensive analysis. Four methods of motivating program clients to respond are discussed.

The Nova Scotia Main Street Program currently uses two methods of increasing survey response for their Downtown Data Base.
The completion of the survey information has been made a prerequisite for obtaining funding under the Anchor Program. The second motivation is created by an additional service that program staff offer to the community. Staff add a number of questions to the downtown database that request information such as: the types of businesses; store hours; advertising practices; and consumer characteristics. Program staff tabulate the responses and present the results to the community. The results provide a composite of the business community and their consumer base. An analysis of this information is important in the development of promotional strategies. The Main Street Canada Programme has recently published a similar survey. A copy is provided in appendix D.

Some of the business representatives expressed keen interest in understanding which promotional strategies are the most effective by writing questions relating to this topic on the survey.

A third way of motivating respondents is to structure the survey so that answers to sensitive questions can be made anonymously.

A final method of increasing merchant response would be to conduct the survey by telephone or in person. The response rate of this thesis was significantly higher in the two provinces where respondents were contacted by telephone.
9.9 Closing Comments

This chapter has recommended a number of performance measures and data sources for use in an evaluation of downtown revitalization programs. The importance of collecting similar data for other towns or commercial areas should be emphasized. Without such data comparisons, the specific impact of the revitalization program cannot be verified.

In 1987 an evaluation of the impacts of the Texas Main Street Project on economic revitalization and historic preservation in central business districts was conducted by Dr. Riposa and Dr. Slack from the Centre for Public Service, Texas Tech University. In this evaluation a number of economic factors in twenty-six Main Street Project cities were compared with those in twenty-seven control group cities. The results indicated that the Main Street cities experienced more bankruptcies and had more businesses leave the central business district than the control group cities experienced. Further, over a period of five years, the control group cities experienced a much larger rate of growth in gross sales and a lower rate of unemployment than the Main Street cities. These results once again emphasize the need for project evaluation and accountability in Canada. Where is the evidence that the existing downtown revitalization programs accomplish economic revitalization?

In order to answer that question evaluations must be conducted and in order to conduct an evaluation, programs must be prepared for evaluation. This thesis has recommended performance measures and data sources to assist project evaluation planning. By using a common data base and sharing evaluation results, program administrators can increase the body of findings and subsequently conduct
more comprehensive analyses of projects inputs and impacts.

The data should be collected before each project commences and again three years later. Because program clients claimed that progress was slow, and some administrators stated that revitalization required long term commitment, it would seem reasonable that data collections should also be undertaken in the sixth year.

Finally, conducting program evaluations based on the measures and data sources identified in this thesis will require cooperation between various government departments, municipal governments, and the public. It is responsibility of program administrators to encourage co-operation by making stakeholders aware of the value of project evaluation.
economic development officer: "How much did the beautification cost?"

planner: "Half a million."

economic development officer: "It would have been better spent subsidizing the lease of an anchor, but we both know that wouldn't be politically palatable."
9.10 Further Study

The following issues are identified for further study:

1. Both the Ontario and the Nova Scotian program administrators expressed interest in examining the enabling legislation. How effective has this program component been? Are modifications necessary?

2. The measures and data sources recommended in this thesis are based on the stakeholders’ and the author’s perceptions of what would be appropriate. After a number of evaluations have been conducted the appropriateness of these measures and the reliability of the sources should be tested.

3. At present there is no definition of what constitutes success in downtown revitalization. How much of an increase in sales or decrease in vacancies need occur before the claim of economic revitalization can be made?

4. Criteria for selecting appropriate control towns or commercial areas should be identified.

5. Recent changes to the federal sales tax system should be examined to determine whether or not they would provide reliable and accessible data for assessing economic impacts.
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35. Lazear, S., Fort MacLeod Main Street Project, Phase 1, Project Summary, Heritage Canada Foundation, 1986.

36. McKenna, B., "Main Street Reborn as a City Living Room", Canadian Building, September, 1986.


44. Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Keys to Profits, 1985


SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES RECOMMENDED IN BARNARD REPORT

1. Select Board Members carefully, according to their management skills and the necessary resources. Encourage board rotation and continuity.

2. Emphasize the committee process so as to reduce the time and workload.

3. Regard communication as the prime internat'l function. Use newletters, general letters, annual reports, and the block captain system to relay information to the members.

4. Ensure that individual businesses and owners are informed of the strategy behind every marketing effort.

5. Establish a well-defined process for striking a budget. Establish a clear financial system which controls and monitors expenditure. Tailor the budget to both needs and resources.

6. Capitalize on existing community events, available volunteers, and inexpensive summer help.

7. Hire a full time manager or co-ordinator, with strong interpersonal skills, and expertise in marketing and design. When an organization relies solely on volunteers, it is difficult to maintain a standard of input. Different volunteers have differing levels of ability. As well as the amount of time that they are able to commit to the project will vary. Consistency and quality often suffers. It is difficult to muster and maintain the respect and support of the merchants if the organization is haphazard in its management style.

8. Take advantage of provincial legislation that provides a funding mechanism, so as to provide a stable base for future financial planning. Organizations that do not take advantage of the funding often spend excessive amounts of time raising funds, and trying to gain the support of the businesses. They have no means of future planning because of funding uncertainty. They typically have little stature in the community because they have insufficient funds to mount a program of impact and significance.
Appendix C -

Client Questionnaire

RESPONDENT'S NAME

--------------------------------------------------------------------

ORGANIZATION


--------------------------------------------------------------------

ADDRESS / TELEPHONE

--------------------------------------------------------------------
A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. How would you describe your program goals?

2. When did you begin your revitalization efforts?

3. Which of the following would you select as your PRIMARY GOALS and SECONDARY GOALS? Indicate by using the letters P.G. or S.G. on the lines provided.

...... to maintain buildings and streets
...... to encourage new investment downtown
...... to continue to provide a full range of goods and services downtown
...... to provide additional jobs
...... to change the business community's attitude to one of confidence in its own ability to revitalize downtown
...... to generate or maintain a positive public image and civic pride
...... to strengthen the municipal tax base
...... to restore the economic vitality in the downtown core
...... to maximize the use of downtown infrastructure
...... to maintain the character of the downtown
...... to maintain or retrieve a central focus for the town
...... to prevent deterioration from spreading to surrounding commercial areas
...... to maintain accessibility to services for disadvantaged groups
...... to stabilize or improve property values and business tax base
j. Better Support for downtown organizations

- Municipal support - financial & zoning
- Increased attendance at organizational meetings
- Supportive attitude of other community organizations
- Increased percentages of merchants participating in promotional activities
- Increased membership of merchants in business association
- Creation of committees, eg. special events, promotions
- Acquisition of a downtown coordinator/manager
- Participation in marketing and merchandising courses

k. Other (please specify)

.............................................
.............................................

2. Would you say that your downtown has been or is being successfully revitalized?

3. Would you say that revitalization in your downtown is community-driven, municipally-driven, or supported equally by both groups?

4. Have you any recommendations for improvements to the downtown revitalization program made available to you?
B. MEASURING SUCCESS

1. If, after 5 years, you wanted to evaluate your revitalization program, how would you measure success? Place an X beside those measurements you would select as indicators that your downtown was revitalized.

   a. Increased business revenue, or profitability or maintenance of past levels in face of new competition
       Increase in sales volumes
       Increase in share of market
       More customers for non-retail business
       (Would members of the business community reveal any form of reliable figures to measure sales volumes)

   b. Greater demand for business space
       Decreased vacancy levels
       Quicker occupation of vacated space
       New development

   c. Increased returns from downtown property
       Rent levels
       Property values
       Property tax assessments

   d. More people downtown measured by
       Increased traffic and pedestrian counts
       Shoppers' survey on no. of shopping trips

   e. Physical Improvements
       Amount of private investment in facade upgrading
       Improved window displays
       Completion of a street beautification plan

   f. Business Growth
       New businesses coming in
       Decrease in business closures & bankruptcies
       Improved retail mix, wider range or goods & services

   g. Improved Community Attitudes to downtown measured by
       Media coverage
       Community attitude surveys

   h. Job Creation
       Increase in part time and full time staff

   i. Promotional Activities
       Increase in no. of downtown events & promotions
       Increase in attendance at these events, participation in contests
C. ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

1. Which of the following activities or improvements HAVE OCCURRED in your downtown? Place a check mark beside these activities under the first column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAVE OCCURED</th>
<th>SHOULD HAVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. creation of committees for design, marketing strategies, special events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. increased attendance at organizational meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. increased municipal support - financial, by-law enforcement, zoning changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. increased membership in organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. supportive attitude of other community organizations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>f. hiring a downtown manager/coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. infrastructure upgrading - new sidewalks, road improvements, street lighting, sewers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. street beautification - decorative sidewalks, ornamental lighting, street trees, landscaping seating, trash containers, banners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. improved traffic circulation/access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. increase in parking spaces</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e. provision of an downtown public space</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>f. build anchor development downtown</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. shopfront upgrading- awnings, painting, signage, heritage restoration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. creation of downtown promotional events - festivals, contests, fairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. creation of promotional materials - brochures, shopping bags, logos, business directories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. increased percentage of merchants participating in promotional activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. joint advertising for special sales events - newspaper, radio, flyers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. participation in marketing and merchandising courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. analysis of economic development potential - determining which goods and services are in demand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. recruitment of new businesses, investors or developers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Are there any of the above activities or improvements that you feel you SHOULD HAVE included or emphasized more than you have? Please indicate by marking an X in the second column.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. How would you describe your program goals?

2. How would you classify the following in relation to your program?

P - primary goal    M - means of achieving goal
S - secondary goal  I - not a goal but a desirable
N - not applicable    impact or spin-off

...... to maintain buildings and streets
...... to encourage new investment downtown
...... to continue to provide a full range of goods and
       services downtown
...... to provide additional jobs
...... to change the business community's attitude to one of
       confidence in its own ability to revitalize downtown
...... to generate or maintain a positive public image
       and civic pride
...... to strengthen the municipal tax base
...... to restore the economic vitality in the downtown core
...... to maximize the use of downtown infrastructure
...... to maintain the character of the downtown
...... to maintain or retrieve a central focus for the town
...... to prevent deterioration from spreading to
       surrounding commercial areas
...... to maintain accessibility to services for
       disadvantaged groups
...... to stabilize or improve property values and business
       tax base
B. METHODS OR PROGRAM INPUTS

1. Please indicate what methods, incentives, or assistance, in the following four areas, are offered as a means to accomplishing your goals.

a. ORGANIZATION FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION:
   (eg.- establishing an organizational framework, in which the varied interests of the community are represented, or offering assistance or direction in the formulation of revitalization goals and objectives)

b. DESIGN:

c. PROMOTION / MARKETING:

d. ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING:
   (eg. diversifying the economic base downtown, or recruitment of new businesses, investors and developers.)
C. EVALUATION

1. Have you completed an assessment of the impacts your program has upon communities?

2. If you have not completed an impact assessment, have you scheduled one?

3. When should an impact assessment be completed? (e.g., 3 years? 5 years? after program initiation)

4. Have you established a data base on participating communities for the purpose of program monitoring?

5. Following is a list of indicators used in previous evaluations or suggested in literature. Please indicate which of these you would select as:

(i) indicators of successful revitalization when completing an impact assessment (I.A.)
(ii) data for the purpose of monitoring the program’s progress (P.M.)

Write the letters I.A. and/or P.M. on the lines provided.

a. Increased business revenue, or profitability or maintenance of past levels in face of new competition

acci  Increase in sales volumes
Increase in share of market
More customers for non-retail business
(Would members of the business community reveal any form of reliable figures to measure sales volumes?)

b. Greater demand for business space

Decreased vacancy levels
Quicker occupation of vacated space
New Development

c. Increased returns from downtown property

Rent levels
Property values
Property tax assessments
d. More people downtown measured by
   .......................... Increased traffic and pedestrian counts
   .......................... Shoppers' survey on no. of shopping trips

e. Physical Improvements
   .......................... Increase in private investment in facade upgrading
   .......................... Improved window displays
   .......................... Completion of a street beautification plan

f. Business Growth
   .......................... New businesses coming in
   .......................... Decrease in business closures & bankruptcies
   .......................... Improved retail mix, wider range of goods & services

g. Improved Community Attitudes to downtown measured by
   .......................... Media coverage
   .......................... Community attitude surveys

h. Job Creation
   .......................... Increase in part time and full time staff

i. Promotional Activities
   .......................... Increase in no. of downtown events & promotions
   .......................... Increase in attendance at these events, participation
   .......................... in contests

j. Better Support for downtown organizations
   .......................... Municipal support - financial & zoning
   .......................... Increased attendance at organizational meetings
   .......................... Supportive attitude of other community organizations
   .......................... Increased percentages of merchants participating in
   .......................... in promotional activities
   .......................... Increased membership of merchants in business association
   .......................... Creation of committees, eg. special events, promotions
   .......................... Acquisition of a downtown coordinator/manager
   .......................... Participation in marketing and merchandising courses

k. Other (please specify)

 ........................................
 ........................................
### Appendix III: Merchants’ Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q-1** Name of Business  
Address  
Telephone Number  
Your title  
Type of business

**Q-2** Do you own or rent this location? (circle number)  
1. Rent  
2. Own

**Q-3** How long have you been in business at this or a previous location? (circle number)  
1. Under One Year  
2. One To Four Years  
3. Five To Nine Years  
4. Ten To Fifteen Years  
5. Over Fifteen Years

**Q-4** What is your busiest day of the week? (circle only one number)  
1. Monday  
2. Tuesday  
3. Wednesday  
4. Thursday  
5. Friday  
6. Saturday  
7. Sunday

**Q-5** What is your busiest time that day? (circle only one number)  
1. Early Morning  
2. Late Morning  
3. Lunch Time  
4. Early Afternoon  
5. Late Afternoon  
6. Evening  
7. Other (specify) ________________
Q-6 Which best describes how frequently the majority of your clientele uses your business? (circle number)

1. Daily
2. At Least Three Or Four Times A Week
3. One Or Two Times A Week
4. Two Or Three Times A Month
5. Once A Month
6. Less Than Once A Month

Q-7 About how long does the majority of your clientele stay while doing business with you? (circle number)

1. Less Than Five Minutes
2. Five To Fifteen Minutes
3. Sixteen To Thirty Minutes
4. Thirty-One To Sixty Minutes
5. One To Two Hours
6. More Than Two Hours

Q-8 Is your clientele different now than it was five years ago?

1. Yes
2. No

Q-8a How?

Q-9 Over the last five years, has your business ... (circle number)

1. Improved
2. Declined
3. Stayed About The Same

Why?

Q-9a If you had the opportunity to move out of downtown, would you?

1. Yes
2. No

Why?
Q-10 How would you rate the downtown area for the following? (circle your answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Attractiveness</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Quality of eating places</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Cleanliness of streets and sidewalks</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Comfortable places to sit (outside)</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Number of convenient parking spaces</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Convenience of shopping hours</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Friendliness of sales people</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Safety during the evening</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Number of events, festivals and special downtown promotions</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Variety of goods sold</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Cost of goods sold</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Quality of goods sold</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q-11 What is the most important way that you promote your store and attract customers? (circle number)

1. Newspaper Advertisements  
2. Radio Advertisements  
3. Group Promotions  
4. Window Displays  
5. Word-Of-Mouth  
6. Other (specify) ________________________________

Q-12 How frequently do you change your window displays? (circle number)

1. More Than Once A Month  
2. About Once A Month  
3. About Every Two Months  
4. About Every Two To Five Months  
5. About Every Six Months  
6. About Every Seven Months To Once A Year  
7. Never  
8. Other (specify)  

Q-18 How do you think any new malls or shopping centres would affect your business? (circle number)

1. Very Negatively  
2. Somewhat Negatively
3. Not At All
4. Somewhat Positively
5. Very Positively

Q-19 How many people work at your business (including yourself)?
(Give exact number) ____________

Q-20 Where do you and your employees park? Give exact number of employees who park:
1. On The Street ____________
2. In A Private Lot (space you own or rent but which is not used for customers) ____________
3. In A Customer Lot ____________
4. Other (specify) ____________

Q-21 Do you own or rent property to provide customer parking?
1. Yes
2. No
If yes, how many spaces do you provide? ____________ (Give number)

Q-22 A recent parking study of downtown indicates that many spaces that could be used for customers are now being used by downtown employees. Would you be in favour of making changes to employee parking in order to provide more spaces for customers?
1. Yes
2. No
If yes, what changes would you favour? (circle all applicable)
1. Enforcing a 2-hour limit to on-street parking
2. Enforcing a 1-hour limit to on-street parking
3. Using existing under used lots that may be four or five blocks away for Downtown Employees
4. Convert existing private spaces behind stores for use by customers
5. Construct new parking lots which would be financed by merchants

Q-23 What do you think has been the overall trend for downtown businesses in the past five years? Business has . . . (circle number)
1. Declined
2. Stayed About The Same
3. Improved

Q-24 What do you think will be the overall trend for downtown business in the next five years? Business will . . . (circle number)
1. Decline
2. Stay About The Same
3. Improve
4. Don't Know
Q-25 What kinds of improvements would you like to see in the downtown?

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Kinds of new businesses you would like to see:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Kinds of improvements you would like to see to sidewalks, parks and streets:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Other kinds of improvements you would like to see:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________