A STUDY OF IMAGE: MAILLARDVILLE BRITISH COLUMBIA

By

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ABSTRACT

This study is the result of my curiosity about what makes urban places special and memorable. I believe that if the various physical components distinguishing urban places are identified and analyzed, we can develop principles and policies to preserve and enhance them. I chose Maillardville as the study area because of my familiarity with area, its historical and cultural significance, and because Maillardville is currently undergoing a physical transformation.

Although place images may be an intangible urban quality, they are not difficult to study. Careful observation and resident interviews are efficient and economical tools to discover the various components of the urban image. From there it is possible to develop a visual plan for the preservation and enhancement of a particular place's image.

In the course of this investigation I discovered that a direct relationship exists between Maillardville's physical components and the public image and that this public image focuses almost exclusively on the early settlement located in the Laval Square area. Recent changes outside this area are not significant to the residents' perception of the public image. Yet changes, such as the new commercial and multi-family redevelopments, when undertaken
in a fashion which reflects Maillardville's cultural and historical context, are recognized by residents as supportive elements and with time will likely become significant to the public image. From this it appears that residents prefer to live in a unique environment that reflects a sense of continuity with the past. It is my hope that this study will contribute to the continuation of Maillardville as a unique place by identifying the image elements and illustrating their importance to the existing place image.
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The Brehaut House was built in 1898.


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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Hidden away in the south-western corner of the District of Coquitlam, is the village of Maillardville founded by early French Canadian settlers. In early days it was a place where the French Canadian lifestyle flourished. Figuring prominently in this lifestyle were four basic elements: the Roman Catholic Church, the French language and culture, large families with strong kinship ties and a steady source of employment at the local sawmill. The early settlers reflected their lifestyle in the physical environment created. Laval Square, with its cathedral, Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, dominates the centre of the community. Large, traditional style homes utilized common designs, construction techniques and materials to create a unique residential environment in and around Laval Square. Each home differentiated itself from its neighbour by its use of wood detailing. Maillardville may also be somewhat of an anomaly because it remained somewhat distinct from its surroundings.

Unlike the surrounding areas, Maillardville managed to escape the trends of wholesale redevelopment, suburban expansion and...
maintenance of the community's special image.

While Maillardville today is by no means solely a French Canadian community and the social, cultural and religious ties that once bound the community together may be far less obvious, the surviving physical environment still represents in many ways British Columbia's most significant French Canadian community.

1.1 Problem Statement

The main objective of this case study is to examine the unique image of Maillardville. I will offer evidence regarding major physical elements which help to compose this unique image. It is my intent to point out the usefulness of observation of the environment and study of an area's history to identify a community's unique environmental image (Rapoport 1991, 7).

1.2 Purpose

My hypothesis is that Maillardville possesses a French Canadian image which is visible in the cityscape and which sets it apart from other surrounding communities. What I emphasize is the need for planning based on an awareness of this unique image and history.

The evolution of Maillardville's image should be guided by a "visual plan". This plan would take into account the information derived from an analysis of Maillardville's image. This visual
plan could be used by municipal politicians, planners and local residents, in preventing undesirable change while promoting compatible new development. The assumption of course is that the goal of preserving Maillardville's unique image must include planning for compatible growth and change.

1.3 Scope

Determining what actually comprises a "place" is complex because places reflect both tangible and intangible qualities. While places are first recognized by their appearance, they are also recognized by their culture, social, economic, historical and political context (Jakle 1987, 10). The scope of this study is limited to discovering the significant physical components of Maillardville's image.

1.4 Research Assumptions

This study is based on the assumption that there is a direct relationship between physical form and image and that the visual perception of a place establishes its image or character. Jakle states it this way: "Places and objects are retained in memory in proportion to their vividness and importance to the image, and the degree to which they satisfy a need" (Jakle 1987,12). Another assumption made is that Maillardville's special character can be understood through careful study and observation and that growth
can be managed to enhance Maillardville's special character.

This conceptualization of Maillardville's character is not just a matter for planners and developers. It is reasonable to assert that those who know Maillardville's image best are those who live there. Individuals experience a place with their own mix of personality, memories, emotions and intentions which colour their image of that place and give it a distinctive individual identity (Relph 1976,57). However, individual images can be amalgamated into a common social image of a place. This process is achieved by the constant socialization of individual images through the use of common language, symbols and experience (Relph 1976,57).

According to Kevin Lynch, by interviewing a relatively small number of people, it is possible to identify the universal elements common to each person's image of a city. Lynch considers the most important elements to image identification to be: paths, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks.

It is my opinion that the surviving physical environment of Maillardville contributes to a uniquely French Canadian image not found in other parts of British Columbia. This study recognizes those responsible for planning in Maillardville are becoming increasingly aware of elements in the community's historical, cultural and physical significance and they are striving to incorporating some elements of the traditional French Canadian image into contemporary plans.
1.5 **Research Methodology**

A workable image requires: the recognition of an object distinct from its surroundings; the spatial or pattern relation of the object to the observer and to other objects and, some meaning for the observer, whether practical or emotional (Lynch 1960, 8). Linking all of these aspects together for a specific neighbourhood is a highly complex undertaking. Both Lynch and Relph agree that the meaning of an environment is far more difficult to study and understand than its physical clarity and legibility. Consequently the scope of this work is limited to the task of discovering the identity and structure of Maillardville's image.

Relph suggests that planners have only a superficial sense of place, since they tend to focus primarily on the two-dimensional cognitive space of maps and plans (Relph 1976, 80). Sensitive to this argument and to negate it to the extent possible, I have included a chapter on Maillardville's past in order to immerse the reader into the history, culture, and social life of the community. The assumption here is that the more one learns about a place, the better equipped one is in making informed planning decisions. However, no amount of study of a place can replace actually living there, experiencing it directly. Following Allan Jacobs' reconnaissance methods, I spent many weeks in Maillardville, photographing the streets, homes and churches, collecting historical and photographic information.
The analysis divides Maillardville's physical image into five elements: pathways, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks. The resident interviews included requests for descriptions, locations and personal sketches of the community. I hope my field analysis will predict rather accurately the group image derived from the interviews. This would confirm the role of visible physical forms themselves as providing evidence of community image or place (Lynch 1960, 60). This would mean that at least the physical image of Maillardville is perceivable by both insiders and outsiders, making it a valuable tool for community planning. The resulting group image will involve a basic consensus of important image elements which are used to create the "visual plan".

Following Lynch's methods and questionnaire, I restricted the number of interviews to ten (10). Each interview was lengthy, often lasting two hours, and each generated a large volume of information in the form of sketches, image maps and written notes.

With the assistance of Suzanne Tkach from "La Société Maillardville Uni", a group of residents was selected for the study. Each resident worked or resided within the study area for many years, was very familiar with Maillardville, or was active in the French Canadian community.

In the end I have combined the information from the literature review, observations and interviews to compile a set of images and a "visual plan" to show how they fit together and to assess their importance as tools for community identification.
1.6 Organization

I have organized this study into eight chapters followed by an appendix. Chapter One is the introduction. Chapter Two is a review of literature pertaining to environmental imagery. Chapter Three deals with Maillardville's image, establishing the geographical and historical context of the study area.

Chapter Four examines Maillardville from the vantage point of an outside observer, me. I used my observations to create the preliminary image maps of the area in Chapter Five. Chapter Six includes similar maps based on information from residents as well as an overall "visual plan" of Maillardville. Chapter Seven compares my observations to those of the residents. Chapter Eight discusses the effectiveness of the methodology, useful suggestions on how to preserve and enhance place images and practical applications of Maillardville's "Uniqueness Preservation and Enhancement Plan".
A common theme in the literature is that in this century urban development has been characterized by a lack of concern for place experience. Those responsible for the form of our urban places seem to consider image an urban quality insignificant or too difficult and intangible to consider in the design process.

Recent research regarding the role of image points toward a different approach to urban development. More concern must be shown in preserving and enhancing existing places which possess a strong image or sense of place. My interest lies in safeguarding, repairing and enriching the sense of place of Maillardville.

2.1 The Forgotten Urban Quality

The fields of planning and architecture prior to the twentieth century were concerned primarily with the total composition and organization of the city. Medieval and Renaissance cities were low
and horizontal in form and exhibited a close connection between life inside the buildings and activity on the streets (Tranick 1986, 9). Rich in detail and activity, as well as being physically connected, these historic cities and old vernacular landscapes continue to attract people today. North Americans are especially drawn to the European urban centres full of meaningful places. Michael Hough noted this phenomenon in the following passage:

Too much of our modern cities look alike. The modern era of city building focused solely on functionalism and efficiency and has laid the groundwork for the destruction of our highly imageable environments (Hough 1990, 19).

Edward Relph coined the phrase "placelessness" to describe the process of weakening distinct identities and diverse experiences in the urban sphere (Relph 1976, 79). Separate from their context, buildings themselves, utilitarian in form, lacking style and detail become the object of concentration. Streets become merely functional objects, designed to meet the needs of the automobile, not the pedestrian. The role of the street as a social gathering place, and to some degree a commercial centre, is gone. Our physical heritage is all but ignored as progress becomes equated with modernity (Holdsworth 1985, 46). It is not surprising that the role of many architects and planners is as Norberg-Schultz states:

...to develop a system of meaningful places that give form and structure to our experiences of the world, [architects and planners] have displayed a distinct lack of interest to place experience and disregard of existential qualities such as imageability, memorability and inhabitability (Relph 1976 1).

The problem of environmental imageability is a modern one.
Economics, rather than context, seems to be the primary source of inspiration for urban form. Throughout the world, homogeneous fashion and design results in places that are singular in purpose, functionally efficient, often existing in a style independent of physical setting and reflecting mass values (Relph 1976, 76). In the past there were limits to what one was able to do and the extent to which one could modify the natural environment. The constraints of environment and society created an undisputable sense of being rooted to a place, but these were, nonetheless, constraints that were overcome (Hough 1990, 2). Armed with a new outlook, city builders accepted the position that design was a value free process which could be practised routinely, mechanically and without regard to individual experience in the environment (Bognar 1989, 185). As physical environments become increasingly similar, people are deprived of their creative use and may ultimately become passive onlookers in places where they have no sense of belonging (Bognar 1989, 188).

2.2 What is Environmental Imagery?

Relph states that images are mental pictures that are the product of experiences, attitudes, memories and the environment (Relph 1976, 56). Images are used to interpret information and to guide behaviour. Lynch describes image as a persistent sameness and unity which allows one thing to be differentiated from another (Relph 1976, 45). Images are not just selective abstractions of
an objective reality but are intentional interpretations of what is, or what is believed to be (Relph 1976, 56).

For an image of a place to be acquired, two things are necessary: First, people must experience a place in order to gain knowledge about the place. Images are to a large extent a function of direct experience – they are the result of a two-way process between human beings and their world. In order for people to understand an image they must actively seek it out in the world around them. They achieve it through studying and observing a place and through discussions with residents. Second, images must be communicable to others. The easiest and most effective way to convey an image is through physical form. All places have a physical, visual form which lies at the heart of their imageability. As Relph explains: "a place is defined by the importance of particular associations of physical features, both natural and man-made" (Relph 1976, 76).

Since the intention of this thesis is to concentrate on physical identity and structure as the independent variable creating the environmental image of Maillardville, I will use the concept of image in much the same physical sense as quoted above. For my purposes, image is defined as a mental picture of a visible object or place, and imageability is the quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong mental picture for the observer. This quality has also been referred to as "legibility". Places that are legible are characterized by an environment that is easy to make sense of and to explore without
getting lost (Hiss 1990, 41). For an image to have value, it must contain enough distinct physical components to make it recognizable through observation. The distinctiveness of places and their images present a diverse world. Although the components of an image are closely bound together, they can be identified. The various identifying components of a place are often referred to as thematic units.

Places are public, created and utilized through common experience and common involvement in symbols and meaning (Relph 1976, 34). Although everyone creates their own images of a place, the individual images are linked together through common physical attributes to form a public image of a place. This occurs because people perceive the same objects and activities and because they have been taught to look for certain qualities of place by their cultural group (Relph 1976, 45). The common thread between these diverse images are the physical forms of: paths, nodes, districts, edges, and landmarks.

Images, however, are not fixed or absolute features; they are constantly being created and reworked by human activity; they can be easily overwhelmed by new forms or simply lose their significance as those which created the place, change or disappear. Changes are not necessarily detrimental to a sense of place, in fact they may enhance it.
2.3 Why are Images Important?

Imageability helps us orient and find our way around, understand where a community came from and what lies ahead. (Naser p.42) In turn, an effective image enhances our understanding and enjoyment of places. Thus, designing our environment to preserve and enhance valuable images should be regarded as an essential element rather than simply a frill. Places should have a certain permanent quality about them, however, a permanence with allowance for change (Bognar 1989, 191). The best way of achieving this permanence is through image preservation. The basic purpose of maintaining the old parts of a town is to link us with the past-to enhance one's knowledge of a place's cultural roots (Hough 1990, 187). For the most part new development should occur within the confines of the existing image. Herman Goldstone in his article, "Aesthetics in Historic Districts", correctly points out:

More people than anyone had ever imagined really enjoy living and working in neighbourhoods that are characterized by the harmonious qualities of good urban design and by a sense of continuity with the past. The effort to preserve such qualities has raised community morale and increased social stability (Thomson 1985, 12).

People wish to belong to an environment, to know it, to make it a part of their everyday lives and to feel comfortable inside a place (Relph, 1976, 41). In such a place, a person can find identity and a sense of being at home. People also seek a sense of rightness or correctness in the visual environment based on their past experience and knowledge of a place. Indeed, a visual
image may be constructed as strongly on what an individual thinks he is going to see as on what is actually there to be seen (Jakle 1987, 18).

Another part of people's overall need is an identifiable spatial unit to belong to. Without this, they are unable to identify their part of the city as distinct from others (Alexander 1977, 81). The distinctiveness of each neighbourhood provides a sense of belonging, a positive sense of security and an identity for individuals and groups of people. The length of time residents live in a neighbourhood also affects their image and attachment to the place. A place changes character for people the longer they stay. Relph states: "this is because of their improved geographical and social knowledge and especially because of a growing intensity of involvement and commitment". The result of this attachment is the feeling that the place has endured and persists as a distinctive entity even though the world around it may change (Relph 1976, 31). Thus, it is not surprising to discover that people have deep psychological links with their places. In fact, many never fully recover from the loss of a valued place due to urban growth or renewal (Relph 1976, 65).

The benefits of a strong image are both tangible and direct. Residents benefit from a strong positive image because it reflects a good quality of life, more diversity and choice in the environment and in the activities it offers. Community pride and involvement is also enhanced by a strong image (Garnham 1985, 4). A neighbourhood with a positive sense of place will attract new
residents to a community. A strong image will quickly put them at ease and make them feel at home in their new surroundings. Businesses also benefit from a strong image. Preservation, enhancement and revitalization make good business sense if they impact positively on the collective image of residents and visitors alike (Garnham 1985, 5). Finally, local government also benefits from a positive image; the long-term tax base of the community is strengthened with increased commercial activity (Garnham 1985, 6).

Garnham refers to a strong positive urban image as "a competitive resource to be managed by communities for their own social, community, physical, psychological and economic well being" (Garnham 1985, 6). A sense of place and the resulting image is something we cannot do without. It must be recognized that ordinary surroundings, built or natural alike, have an immediate and continuing affect on the way we feel and act, on our health and intelligence (Hiss 1990, 11). Considering the importance of environmental imagery, it is easy to recognize why we should study and discover the distinctive and essential features of place. Without such knowledge, we cannot hope to create, or preserve, the places which are significant.

2.4 How Place Images are Strengthened

Places and people are inseparable. Places exist only in reference to people; the meaning of place can only be revealed in terms of human response to a particular environment (Violich 1989,
With this in mind, we should avoid classifying most of the modern world as comprising of unauthentic places. Place making is a continuous process and the very fact that a place is lived in, used and experienced by people lends many places a degree of authenticity (Relph 1976, 71). This, however, is not to say that things can't be improved. It would be advantageous to develop a design philosophy recognizing the diversity of different places (Hough 1990, 3). In the past, the diversity of places was assured through working with site and climate, a respect for others and their buildings and the limitations of materials. Contextual design emphasizing imageability could help restore this diversity. Contextual design is defined as a method of design which takes into consideration a place's social, historical and physical context.

How then is a contextual approach to design developed? The first step is to experience the place and this requires personal involvement. Discovery and understanding of a place is not instantaneous nor a one-time event. Places must be inhabited and cared for, taken into possession through time and learning - a process requiring considerable effort and involvement (Bognar 1989, 190). As places are directly experienced, it is possible for an observer to develop an understanding about the image being projected. This understanding is essential to ensure that changes to a place agree with and enhance the image. By paying careful attention to place experiences, we can use our responses, thoughts and feelings to guide us in replenishing the places we have come to love (Hiss 1990, xii).
Second, close attention should be paid to those qualities which give a place its originality, character and charm. People thrive on surroundings which are rich in detail. Details are the key to a thriving sense of place. However, people often miss the detail in the environment because they move too quickly. It follows then, that detail is revealed only by stopping and observing a place and its many facets (Jakle 1987, 75).

Third, those elements that give a place its originality, whether it be a history, a particular character or image should be retained and enhanced. In this way, our urban places will take on a quality of permanence, or what Bognar calls, "permanence with change". The worthiness of preserving and reusing old buildings and designs does not necessarily require that they be fine examples of architecture. More often than not, their strength comes from their collective effect on the viewer. When old buildings stand alone as solitary examples of their genre in new and unrelated surroundings, they often become lost, awkward and out of place. The secret of authentic and unselfconscious vernacular places are harmony and humanness (Relph 1976, 67). These older qualities can become a part of consciously planned environment if we consider and emphasize context and image. Michael Hough states this as follows:

The reuse and integration of the old into the new without fanfare while avoiding the temptation to turn everything into a museum because it is old - lies at the heart of maintaining a continual link with the past and with a place's identity or image (Hough 1990, 186).

A final way of strengthening a place and its image is to strengthen its boundaries by making it more prominent and distinct
from its neighbours. Places with strong images, or sense of place, display strong capacities to provide us with the feeling of being a part of them. Places can only be perceived and understood in relation to their larger surroundings, which are always the outside (Bognar 1989, 191).
CHAPTER THREE

CONTEXT OF STUDY

In a larger regional context Maillardville is, and has always been, small, separate and distinct from its surrounding neighbours. Maillardville is located in the south-western portion of the District of Coquitlam (Map 3.1). An early plan of Coquitlam, dating from 1920 (Map 3.2), shows Maillardville as one of the few areas of significant development in the District. Even until the 1940's Coquitlam consisted essentially of Maillardville and its immediate surroundings. The rest of Coquitlam was actually dense forest dotted by the occasional logging road or homestead (Vinders 1986, 11).

Before the suburban boom of the last forty years, it was possible to clearly identify small, separate communities in the Lower Mainland. By visiting a number of these areas, I discovered that most of these original communities such as Milltown or Fraser Mill are gone, while others, such as Sapperton have become almost indistinguishable from the surrounding suburban sprawl which engulfs them. Yet Maillardville, with its distinct form, history, French Canadian culture and heritage, postponed its assimilation
Map 3.1 The Lower Fraser Valley in relationship to Maillardville.

Map 3.2 The Plan of Coquitlam in 1920.
into this suburban landscape. Development detrimental to Maillardville's established pattern bypassed it for the nearby forested slopes.

Maillardville's location was not chosen by accident. Situated at the base of the hill and extending northward, there seemed to be plenty of room for expansion. The hillside offered this French community freedom from the seasonal flooding of the Fraser River as well as panoramic views of the river, Mt. Baker, the forested hills of North Delta and Surrey. The residents of Maillardville worked at the lumber mill below the townsite. Another significant advantage was the fact that the site was completely separate from the Company town of Fraser Mill where the English and the Asians lived. This removal reinforced the community, its culture and strengthened it to face the many trials which followed.

3.1 The Study Area

At first glance Maillardville does not appear to have precise boundaries. It has never been a separate political entity and never been defined as geographically distinct nor recognized as distinct by any authoritative group or institution. However, the boundaries of the study area were not chosen in an arbitrary manner. To the trained observer there does exist a distinct built form which can be used to define the historical and cultural boundary of Maillardville. It is within this boundary that the image is the strongest.
Maillardville, named after the first parish priest Father Maillard (Fig. 3.1), was at first little more than what we would today call a subdivision. The term "ville" was the French word used to denote a small settlement, distinct from the milltown to the south. Although never incorporated, the name Maillardville triumphed over the derogatory name, "Frenchtown" used by English residents to describe this early settlement.

Map 3.3 represents the extent of the study area which the writer feels is significant from an image standpoint. The study area includes the historic area of Laval Square, the commercial strip along western Brunette Avenue and the new multi-family residential area to the east along Brunette Avenue. The boundaries of the study area are defined along existing roadways except for the areas immediately south of Brunette Avenue. The study area is generally defined by: Schoolhouse Street to the east; Cartier, Rochester and Alderson Avenues to the north; Marmont and Blue Mountain Streets to the west and Brunette Avenue to the south.

The buildings of Maillardville were not meant for the powerful elites of the time. Instead, they were largely the homes of mill workers and a few small businessmen. Such structures often fall between the cracks of preservation planning. Individually they are not important enough to be designated as historic buildings, and not so concentrated to fit the concept of an historic district (Spragge 1987, 59). However, these buildings are the remnants of a working class neighbourhood which is an identifiable and important reminder of the social fabric and environment of the
Fig. 3.1 Father Maillard 1910.

Map 3.3 The Maillardville study area and its surrounding area.
Lower Mainland of almost one hundred years ago. The existing structures provide a basis for taking pride in Maillardville and their continued existence remind us that our communities are connected to the past and do not begin and end with our lifetimes.

Census data for Maillardville, covering an area somewhat larger than the study area reveals a population of approximately 4,000 people. In 1986, about 70% of the residents claim English as their mother tongue, compared to only 13% French (District of Coquitlam, Community Plan 1990, 3). The highest concentration of French speaking residents are still located in the area south of Rochester Avenue, in and around Laval Square and North of Brunette Avenue. One important conclusion we can draw from these statistics is that there has been a drastic decline in the number of French Canadians living in Maillardville since the 1950's. This may be due to continuous assimilation and mobility aspirations (Plan Maillardville 1974, 6).

Although most residents in the area recognize the specific French Canadian character of Maillardville, they do not have a clear perception of the precise limits of the French Canadian district. Socially and culturally, they are still closely linked with the old settlement and have actively encouraged the District's steps towards strengthening the identity and image of Maillardville as a French Canadian community.
3.2 The Historical development of Maillardville

Understanding the history and social structure of a place is a necessary prerequisite to understanding the image or identity of a place. This combination of social history with physical evidence creates a stronger case for preserving what remains. Spragge argues that without such understanding (appreciation) of an area, older buildings are more likely to be targets of the wrecker's ball rather than the object of a consensus to preserve and upgrade them (Spragge 1987, 49). There is no doubt that Maillardville has a social life which endowed it with a unique physical heritage.

Historians do not typically focus on groups such as those who build Maillardville. It was a working class village; few of its buildings are architecturally significant. However, taken as a whole these buildings have a distinct flavour and image which express the French Canadian way of life on the West Coast.

It is often forgotten that French Canadians played an important role in the exploration and development of British Columbia. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, French Canadians provided much of the skilled labour force needed to exploit British Columbia's fur, mining and timber trades. Yet, with the exception of Maillardville, their settlement in this province has been rather meagre. The phenomenal growth of the B.C. lumber industry in the early twentieth century was accompanied by a growing demand for both skilled and semi-skilled workers. A shortage of manpower lead mill owners to employ large numbers of
Asiatics in their mills. However, anti-asiatic demonstrations among caucasians soon forced a curtailment of this practice. Furthermore, according to Stewart, the caucasian employees were prone to tardiness and absenteeism.

Such difficulties prompted the management of the Fraser River Sawmill to recruit skilled French Canadian lumbermen from Québec. Québec was rich in skilled woodsmen and this offered the largest lumber mill in the Pacific Northwest the stable and efficient workforce it needed (Williams 1982, 11).

Mill management realized that in order to lure French Canadian lumbermen away from Quebec would require more than British Columbia's promise of economic prosperity. Also required was a promise of security for the French language, culture and religion. The Canadian Western Lumber Company Limited campaigned convincingly on all accounts. The Company realized that for a community to be attractive to French Canadians, a place would have to be prepared for them. This place would have to be distinguishable and separate from other cultural groups so that a new way of life could develop (Stewart 1956, 45). The result was that on September 11, 1909, the District of Coquitlam gave the Company permission to subdivide District Lot 46 into 190 quarter acre lots (Map 3.4). The Company essentially guaranteed language and religious rights for its new employees by promising a church and school.

The Company provided French Canadian workers and their families with transportation to the West Coast as well as living accommodation in company houses and inns. Most settlers, however,
bought a quarter acre lot for $150.00 and began building their homes. They could pay for the lots through a long-term payment plan of $5.00 a month. The hourly wage of 25 cents an hour was considerably higher than in Québec. The mill provided lumber for the construction of homes as well as the church, a rectory and school.

The first contingent of forty families (about 170 people) arrived at Fraser Mill on September 27, 1909. These recruited families served the Company in two ways: not only were family men more likely to remain on the Company payroll, but their families held the promise of a second generation of mill workers (Williams 1982, 13). Men began work almost immediately upon their arrival.

However, Fraser Mill had little to offer the families of these men. The town consisted of the sawmill, the lumber yard, a few houses and a boarding house. Rather than remain in the baggage cars of the train, many settlers chose to begin building their houses on the densely wooded town site north of the mill. The settlers' concern for a separate, identifiable community outweighed the convenience of living close to the mill.

In the typical Québec style, they placed a square in the centre of the settlement for a Catholic Church. Streets emanated outward from the square in a cross-axis arrangement. The precision of this layout was limited by the diagonal course of the much older Pitt River Road (now Brunette Avenue) which was built in the 1860's by the Royal Engineers (Porges 1991, 23).

As well as working 10 hours a day, six days a week, the men also
had to clear land to build their own homes, the church and the school (Vinders 1986, 9). Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes was finished in December 1910 and became the centre of the new French settlement; lots closest to the church were built on first. They built houses large enough to accommodate large families and used the available materials as well architectural styles and detailing from the period.

For the next few years many new families arrived, attracted by the fledgling French community and the prospects of work at the mill. Father Maillard, the hamlet's first cure, became a popular and well-respected leader. As a result, the new community quickly became known as "Maillard-ville" to the inhabitants. The religious and cultural traditions of the French Canadians remained intact under the Church's watchful eye (Figure 3.2). Social activities sponsored by the Church as well as card parties and community dances occupied the leisure time of the French Canadians. Regarding this social activity, one resident recalls, "That's what kept us together" (Williams 1982, 16). The cohesiveness of the French community was marked by a strong network of kinship. The families intermarried extensively and such bonds reinforced the cohesiveness of their common language and religion.

The name Maillardville was given some form of legitimacy when in 1913 a post office was opened in the community. However, all attempts by the new community to have the name recognized by the Provincial Government and efforts to become officially incorporated as a village failed. In spite of this setback, Maillardville
Map 3.4 1909 Subdivision Plan for Maillardville. Note that the subdivision was superimposed over the existing Pitt River Road, later known as Brunette Avenue.

Figure 3.2 The Corpus Christi Procession down Laval Street in 1919. Note the homes in the background, around Laval Square, which exist to this day.
prospered; a large number of single-family dwellings appeared (Figure 3.3) and the ensuing First World War kept the mill in full production.

By 1918 two separate and distinct communities were tied directly to the economic fortunes of the mill. The first was the mill town of Fraser Mill which ran north along King Edward Avenue to join with the French settlement. Its most notorious characteristic was to house its Asian and white employees in separate quarters (Figure 3.4). The second, and larger community, was Maillardville. The original concept of importing French Canadian workers had now created a thriving settlement centred on spiritual and cultural values and a stable and cohesive home life (Vinders 1986, 14).

Problems were slowly emerging in the young community. Mill employment was attracting growing numbers of non-French immigrants who settled within, or near, Maillardville. In 1908, Millside Public School was built on the eastern fringe of Maillardville. For many, the school's existence was seen as a threat to the perpetuity of the French community (Stewart 1956, 66). Despite the disapproval of the Church, some parishioners sent their children to the public school. Some residents felt this tactic was the only way to get the benefits of taxes they paid the municipal government since the taxes didn't go towards supporting the community's Catholic school (Stewart 1956, 66). Others were not sure that they wanted their children isolated as French in a province dominated by English.

A more immediate threat was the worsening economic situation
Figure 3.3 The Boileau home (circa 1915) was typical of houses found in the area of the 1909 subdivision.

Figure 3.4 King Edward Avenue looking south into the milltown of Fraser Mills (1912). The single family rowhouse was typical of the housing provided by the Lumber Company for their employees.
after the Great War. Peace ushered in a slump in the demand for lumber and growing competition among suppliers. As timber markets contracted, there was an accompanying deterioration of relations between management and labour. The 1920's were more troublesome as working conditions declined and confrontations and dismissals increased. French Canadian workers secretly recruited workers for the Lumber Workers Industrial Union (later to become the I.W.A.) to avoid upsetting the Church. The Company, by March 1927, did not have a single order to fill. The result was a series of wage reductions which that only worsened with the Great Depression (Vidners 1986, 17). When the workers demanded a ten percent wage increase and immediate recognition of the union, management reacted by dismissing them. The strike which followed became a milestone of labour history in British Columbia.

Although the French Canadians constituted only 18% of the total work force in the mill, they were instrumental in initiating and sustaining the strike (Vidners 1986, 24). Under the skilful leadership of Harold Pritchet, who later became the first president of the International Woodworkers Union of America, a strike committee was formed (Vidners 1986, 25). While the entire work force, regardless of racial background, rallied around the strikers, it was the geographically concentrated residents of Maillardville which provided the key social and cultural cohesiveness which ensured the ultimate success of the strike. This cultural cohesiveness was reinforced by a strong kinship network. This cohesiveness facilitated organization prior to the
strike and proved capable of creating and sustaining an impressive solidarity which carried the men and their families through turbulent times (Williams 1982, 36).

After two and a half months, the Company agreed to the strikers' demand for a wage increase but refused to recognize the union. In the context of the Great Depression and the failure of all other strikes during that period, the concession won by the Fraser Mill strikers was substantial. The success of the strike gave impetus to the unionization of the entire industry and set an example of how collectivization could help workers achieve their goals (Vidners 1986, 18). Success would not have been possible if all workers had not been united against their employer. The strike leaders proved to be both effective administrators and able politicians. The tightly knit community of Maillardville possessed characteristics which made it conducive to labour organization and labour protest (Williams 1982, 95).

The strike served to highlight a major social transition slowly taking place in the French Canadian community: the process of Maillardville's assimilation into the wider environment was becoming evident. Although the French Canadians retained the semblance of the cultural structures of Quebec, such as language, religion and societal institutions, the pervasive cultural substance of their lives began to change (Williams 1982, 106). The remainder of the 1930's saw a gradual return of prosperity to the lumber industry in British Columbia. The commencement of hostilities in Europe in 1939 meant unlimited demand for the mill's
lumber. This resurgence of activity provided Maillardville with renewed financial stability. British Columbia then experienced a massive influx of people who were attracted by employment opportunities. Much of the new population settled in the rural municipalities surrounding Vancouver and New Westminster. However, the French Canadian immigrant, often from the prairies, settled in Maillardville.

Their arrival in large numbers provided a new stimulus to the community and a new parish, Notre-Dame-de-Fatima, west of Lebleu Street. The newcomers' lots and homes were considerably smaller than those of the earlier settlers and were far less architecturally distinctive and stylish. As development began to emerge in other parts of Coquitlam in the late 1940's and early 1950's, Maillardville was still Coquitlam's centre and still the prime French Canadian centre in the province. Yet, prosperity brought inevitable changes to the French community. During the 1950's Maillardville became increasingly surrounded by new development which was mainly English speaking Protestants. This surrounding residential growth and the eventual infiltration of English culture drastically altered the nature and physical form of the original community. Many of the older traditional homes were demolished to make way for new bungalows or three storey apartments. The need for newer and wider roads had a serious impact on the early communities of Maillardville and Fraser Mill. The Lougheed Highway was built through the middle of Fraser Mill; its steady stream of traffic soon drove the town to extinction.
The new highway also forced Maillardville to face new realities. Steady streams of commuter traffic passed through Maillardville looking for convenient routes to other parts of Coquitlam. The addition of the Port Mann Bridge and the Trans-Canada Highway only compounded this problem. By the 1960's and 1970's Maillardville become an increasingly less desirable place to live. Residents began abandoning their community. Many of the traditional homes changed hands repeatedly and were significantly altered or allowed to deteriorate. Those who remain in Maillardville are most often senior citizens. The young, no longer bound to the mill for employment, have moved into the surrounding communities. Although descendants of the early settlers still participate in the community's social gatherings and traditional celebrations the effect of assimilation has been significant.

It was not until the mid 1980's that prosperity began to return to Maillardville. The declining quality of the housing stock, the comparatively low land values and the strategic location of Maillardville gradually made it an ideal area for redevelopment. When redevelopment began in the early 1980's, there was no clear vision of the communities future (Dejong 1991). The District's Planning staff did not have a community plan or design guidelines and had to rely upon their own limited knowledge and understanding of the community's image while negotiating with developers. After seventy-five years of existence Maillardville received its first Official Community Plan in 1985.
CHAPTER FOUR

LOOKING FOR AN UNDERSTANDING

We can gain considerable insight into the nature of a place and its image by examining and considering its main components. Structured observation is a research method well suited to examining the physical world. In this chapter I will describe Maillardville and use a collection of photographs to form an image of the existing environment.

Our experiences of place are visually dominated.

While maps are useful in orienting ourselves to the basic spatial systems of a place they cannot replace the deeper sense of relationship that comes from discovering the spatial structure through the actual experience of finding and mentally recording one's way (Violich 1989, 133).

Despite this, Jacobs points out that observation as a primary method of inquiry and analysis has lost favour with the planning profession in recent years. Many believe this method to be too subjective as a basis for serious action. Perhaps it should not be the sole method employed, but I do not contend that observation should supplant more quantifiable, statistically oriented methods. Observation complements other methods. It is a method to be remembered and recognized again as Jacobs points out:
Observation is a cheap and efficient way of research. Looking opens up a myriad of creative possibilities inherent in an urban environment. It helps us recall other places that trigger ideas about the possible ways to bring about desirable change and it allows us an opportunity to observe change in our environment and result of our actions (Jacobs 1985, 8).

Impressions of the landscape vary with the mode of travel (Hough 1990, 171). Walking is the best way to look at a place. It allows one to observe and control the pace while looking at any particular scene. The walking observer is part of the environment with no barriers between his or her eyes and the scene (Jacobs 1985, 13). While walking, one notices subtle details of the surroundings and has opportunities to notice changes and evaluate their appropriateness (Jakle 1987, 85). Although all clues cannot be read easily, observing in a conscious, careful, and purposeful way can reveal a lot about a city or neighbourhood. Jacobs states:

Visual clues can tell something about the history, present dynamics of an area, when and for whom it was built, what physical, social, and economic changes have taken place; who lives there now, what major issues and problems exist and whether the area is vulnerable to the rapid change and if so what kind (Jacobs 1985, 5).

During my numerous walks through Maillardville over the last year I saw more than I can describe in this study. Map 4.1 is an example of one of my typical walking journeys to discover Maillardville. Since our perceptions about an environment are largely formed by the routes we take from place to place (Hough 1990, 108), I kept to those areas commonly travelled by residents. To effectively convey the environment observed the following description is divided into four manageable parts (Map 4.2):
- The Brunette Commercial Strip (West of the Marmont/King Edward Intersection)
- New Maillardville (East of King Edward to Schoolhouse)
- Old Maillardville (North of Brunette Avenue between Marmont and Schoolhouse Streets)
- Western Maillardville (North of Brunette Avenue between Blue Mountain and Marmont Streets)

4.1 The Brunette Commercial Strip

Two separate development patterns are visible along the Brunette commercial strip. Allard Street is the rough separation line. The area west of Allard Street shows a significant effort to revitalize the commercial strip. East of Allard Street the Brunette strip consists of a mixture of unrelated land uses and structures.

West of Allard Street revitalization efforts have concentrated on introducing a distinctive urban character reminiscent of a European village. This is being achieved by concentrating retail activity within a tightly defined commercial core, a street beautification program aimed at making Brunette Avenue more humane and appealing to pedestrians and the creation of continuous store frontages characterized by common scale, massing and location within property lines, as well as a unifying architectural style.

Notable features are the Gateway Tower (Figure 4.1), and pedestrian walkway characterized by benches, trees, planters, paving stones, historic lighting (Figure 4.2), and a collection of new, two-storey retail buildings which create a street wall along Brunette Avenue (Figure 4.3). A residential component utilizing a design similar to the retail centre completes the revitalization effort (Figure 4.4). In spite of these attractive changes
Map 4.1 The Maillardville Study area. The dotted line shows a typical path taken by the writer to explore the area.

Map 4.2 Four Observation Areas: 1) The Brunette Strip 2) New Maillardville 3) Old Maillardville 4) Western Maillardville
Figure 4.1 Gateway tower at the western entrance to Maillardville.

Figure 4.2 The street improvements found along the commercial portion of Brunette Avenue has created an attractive pedestrian environment.

Figure 4.3 "The Village Square"
New retail-office structures designed with a French Canadian theme.

Figure 4.4 The retail-residential component of the revitalization effort along western Brunette Avenue.
troubling signs are visible. The high number of vacant offices and retail space suggests that few new tenants or customers are being attracted to Village Square. Many of the condominiums are unsold, forcing the vendor to rent them. Although there is an attractive pedestrian walkway at street level, there was little foot traffic. Automobiles, often travelling at high speed, seem to be the overriding influence along Brunette Avenue. The structures which compose the southern edge of Brunette Avenue are simple in form, poorly maintained and contain marginal retailers (Figure 4.5). This is made obvious by the limited store hours, second hand goods for sale and hand painted signs. Yet, despite the southern edge, the overall physical changes which have taken place are positive and should contribute toward a strengthening of Maillardville's image.

East of Allard Street, Brunette Avenue is characterized by a mixture of commercial and residential development. It is clear that development here originally took place in a piecemeal fashion with no clear overall plan. Small, poorly maintained homes (Figure 4.6) and large rental apartments (Figure 4.7) dot the street. None of the street improvements mentioned earlier were carried into this area. Businesses such as the Credit Union, an auto repair shop, the Park Cafe and a gas station are mixed indiscriminately with residential uses. The only new or refurbished building in the area is the Village Credit Union (Figure 4.8). The most recent residential structures are apartments built in the 1970's. While the transformation of this portion of Brunette Avenue is long
Figure 4.5 The south side of Brunette Avenue has not undergone redevelopment.

Figure 4.6 This home is typical of the type and condition of many homes that line Brunette Avenue.

Figure 4.7 This apartment block is typical of the development that occurred in Maillardville in the 1970's. Similar apartments now dot Brunette Avenue.

Figure 4.8 The Village Credit Union.
overdue, the direction this transformation will take is unclear from the environment. Vacant land and numerous older homes are available for redevelopment, but there is no outward sign that this may occur. Based on these observations, it is unlikely anything described along this portion of Brunette Avenue will contribute significantly to Maillardville's image.

4.2 New Maillardville

East of King Edward Street the character of Maillardville changes again. The 1100 block of Brunette Avenue contains structures characteristic of the original settlement and two of them in particular may have been built for people who enjoyed some status in the community. In terms of size, design and prominent location, Mackin House (Figure 4.9) and Place Des Arts (Figure 4.10) are the most significant features of the area. Mackin House was built in the Craftsman style by the manager of the sawmill in 1913. This home has now been vacant for over a year. The second home, now used as an art studio called "Place des Arts", is capped with a unique cross-gambrel roof. The look of this building is derived from the Shingle Style of the Eastern United States, a style rare in this province (Vidners 1986, 23). To the north of these two homes is Municipal Hall.

East of Begin Street, Brunette Avenue once characterized by traditional styled homes (Figure 4.11), has undergone a dramatic transformation. The street is now characterized by townhouses and
Figure 4.9 Mackin House was built in 1913 and is the finest example of the Craftsmen style found in Maillardville.

Figure 4.10 This cross-gambrel home that was built in the Shingle style of the eastern United States and in Maillardville it is unique.

Figure 4.11 Pitt River Road circa 1920. (Brunette Avenue)
vacant land awaiting redevelopment (Figure 4.12). Only a few traditional homes remain (Figure 4.13) and most of them are in very poor condition (Figure 4.14). The bulk of the surviving original homes are now found north of Brunette Avenue.

Eight separate multi-family developments now dominate the area, possibly containing as many as 400 dwelling units. Each development uses a number of means to distinguish itself from the other and to link itself with Maillardville. French Canadian names such as, Fountainbleau, Place Laval and Des Amis are used. Developers have also used various elements of the traditional thematic units displayed by the traditional homes to link their developments to the original character of Maillardville. In the early 1980's the earliest developments lacked strong linkages and applied elements inappropriately (Figure 4.15), developments that followed present an observable improvement in contextual design (Figures 4.16 and 4.17). This suggests the possibility that developers are becoming more sensitive to the area they are developing or that increased awareness of Maillardville's uniqueness has changed the municipal development approach. However, it remains to be seen whether the redeveloped areas contribute significantly to the image of Maillardville.

This redevelopment has an observable directional quality to it. Originally moving from east to west, the growing scarcity of development sites, coupled with the strong demand for townhomes, is resulting in an increased pressure to redevelop the single family residential properties to the north of Brunette Avenue.
Figure 4.12 Brunette Avenue is now characterized by townhomes and vacant land.

Figure 4.13 The last surviving heritage home on Brunette Avenue west of Begin Street.

Figure 4.14 This poorly maintained home is typical of the homes that once characterized Brunette Avenue prior to redevelopment beginning in the early 1980's.
Figure 4.15 "Place d'heritage"
A lack of understanding about the traditional environment of Maillardville is evident in the early townhome designs.

Figure 4.16 "The Brunette Villas"
Later townhome designs are harmonious, utilizing many of the elements of the traditional thematic unit.

Figure 4.17 "Des Amis"
The redevelopment of historic districts should take into consideration the past form of a place. Des Amis is a good example of contextual design that can strengthen images.
4.3 Old Maillardville

The streets and structures of the original settlement offer the viewer an interesting array of sights. In stark contrast to burly Brunette Avenue, the streets in the early settlement area are narrow, poorly maintained and carry minimal traffic. Numerous short streets and alleyways create a development pattern of irregular short blocks which give these streets an intimate feeling. At the centre of this street system in Laval Square and the parish church Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes (Figure 4.18). This cross-axis building has wide lapped siding and triple assembled windows which are inlaid with leaded glass. There is a fan light above the door with a circular window above and the tower is ornamented with a statue niche and a triple arched louvre (Coquitlam Heritage Society 1989, 12). The rectory (Figures 4.19 and 4.20) and the neighbouring Knights of Columbus Hall remain true to their 1910 origins. The remainder of Laval Square is devoted to a parking lot for parishioners.

The homes which comprise the edges of Laval Square, Cartier Avenue and Begin Street are extremely interesting. Surprisingly, some of the homes have undergone little change during the past eighty years (Figures 4.21 and 4.22). The traditional streetscape of large family homes on quarter acre lots is still visible along Cartier Avenue (Figure 4.23). Characteristically, each home sits boldly at the front of the lot and presents a detailed facade to
Figure 4.18 Notre Dame de Lourdes is situated in the middle of Laval Square.

Figure 4.19 The Rectory built in 1910 is one of the oldest structures in Maillardville. Built by the first settlers its design is similar to many of the early homes.

Figure 4.20 The Rectory, located in Laval Square, has changed very little in almost eighty years.
Figure 4.21 The Brehaut House built in 1898.

Figure 4.22 The Brehaut House today.

Figure 4.23 The streetscape of Cartier Avenue.
the street. On corner lots, homes are designed to address the flanking street with a detailed facade (Figure 4.24).

Two construction designs dominate the homes of Maillardville, the first being the square Craftsman style (Figure 4.22) and the other being the rectangular two-storey gable design (Figure 4.25). With only two styles of construction available, the homes of the early settlement displays a unity of form even today. Many of these homes are as old as the church buildings and share some common structural and design features such as: high gabled roofs; the symmetrical placement of windows and doors; the summer kitchens at the rear of the homes; the wrap-around and elevated single, or even double, verandas; decorative vergeboards; porch details and minimal landscaping. Often a home is distinguished through the use of wood detailing and millwork (Figure 4.26). Sometimes the peaks of the building facades and dormers are decorated with cut cedar shingles arranged in a pattern with decorative verge boards framing the peak (Figure 4.27).

Verandas were a very common feature of the early homes. People spent a considerable amount of time on them as they served as a social gathering point between neighbours. These verandas come in many forms: double (Figure 4.28) and single heights and two and three sided. Each of these veranda styles can still be seen along Cartier or Begin. Accompanying the veranda as a social gathering point were the typical French Canadian summer kitchens located at the back of each home (Figure 4.29). Each home was connected to its neighbour through the street and verandas in front and the
Figure 4.24 301 Laval Avenue
This corner home presents a formal facade to each of its flanking streets.

Figure 4.25 This home on Cartier Avenue is typical of the early settlers' homes. Much of this home's original detail has been removed and covered over by stucco.

Figure 4.26 The Bouhot House in 1917. Note the millwork and decorative details that characterized the early homes.
Figure 4.27 Typically the face of the roof gables were decorated with cut shingles and scrolled vergeboards.

Figure 4.28 Early four-plex
Note the double-height veranda which was a common feature of many traditional homes.

Figure 4.29 This Begin Street home has the typical front veranda and summer kitchen at the back of the home.
summer kitchens and alleyways in back. It is these elements discussed above that constitute the French Canadian style of Maillardville.

Although many of the homes have been inappropriately altered, poorly maintained, and have lost some of their fine detail, each is still unique and historically significant especially since they are the last of their kind in the area. They still give a hint of the values of those who built and occupied them and the times in which they lived. Each house was a show piece and became an intricate part of the street complimenting the other homes. Out of respect for neighbours, a homeowner constructed his home in a style similar to those surrounding using compatible materials and details.

North of Laval Square and Cartier Avenue the character of the early settlement changes. The homes here are small and simple and have none of the charm of the older homes to the south (Figure 4.30). The boundaries of Maillardville begin to blur toward Rochester Avenue. It is doubtful the early settlement extended this far north. No large lots are visible and homes only 20 years old characterize the street. The area has a sense of middle class prosperity and stability about it. The homes and yards are well maintained, the automobiles are new, and the furnishings inside most of the homes appear new.

The true image of Maillardville is found within the boundaries of the early settlement. Although the area is run down to some extent, it still retains the components of a strong, definable
image. Within this area the image is somewhat nostalgic as the homes and streets draw us back to a slower-paced time. In sharp contrast to the Brunette Avenue corridor, the centre of historic Maillardville has proven surprisingly stable. There is no visible indication of a growing pressure to redevelop the single family homes. A street and home maintenance program is needed; the deterioration of many of the early homes is approaching the point of no return. Their loss would change the face and image of Maillardville forever.

4.4 Western Maillardville

Western Maillardville shares some similarities with the areas previously described. As in old Maillardville, the street pattern in western Maillardville is characterized by small blocks and numerous streets and alleys bearing French names. Few traditional styled homes are visible. In fact, the only structure that could be construed as a landmark would be the senior citizens' complex called the Foyer Maillard (Figure 4.31). The housing forms of western Maillardville share striking similarities to those found north of Laval Square and along the western portion of Brunette Avenue. Built during the 1930's and 1940's, these plain and utilitarian structures provided shelter at a time when economic conditions were beginning to improve after the Great Depression (Vinders 1986, 26). Most are small, built on small lots and repetitive in design. As a reflection of the times, they are
Figure 4.30 West of Marmont Street the homes become smaller and more utilitarian in form and detail.

Figure 4.31 The Foyer Maillard
This senior citizens home is the largest and most imposing structure found in Maillardville.
austere and lack any decorative detailing, however, they are functional and well-built. True to the community's traditions these homes are characterized by a one-storey and basement construction and have a gabled roof. Most homes also have a small front veranda covered by a hipped roof and small summer kitchen at the back. The upkeep of these homes is generally better than those found elsewhere in the study area and some have been recently renovated by first time buyers. This suggests the area is relatively stable with some gentrification occurring.

From an image perspective, the physical environment of western Maillardville is very different from old Maillardville. The image comes from the "utilitarian" design of most structures. The most significant change taking place in this area is the renovation of some of the small homes by young home buyers. In spite of this, it is unlikely that western Maillardville contributes significantly to the overall public image of Maillardville.
CHAPTER FIVE

ASSESSING THE ENVIRONMENT

The visual form of the environment plays an important role in the shaping of an image. Place is the sum of concrete things which have material substance, shape, texture and colour (Jakle 1987, 7). Most places have a wide range of objects which contribute to their significance and identity. The difficulty lies in determining which elements are major components that form the public image of a place.

For an image to be effective, it must be legible not only to those familiar with the area, but also to strangers. An outsider's observations are useful to compare and contrast with those of the inhabitants, as well as to help identify key elements of an image. I played the outsider's role in identifying the sense of place and public image of Maillardville. I drew mainly from Kevin Lynch and Yi-Fu Tuan who support this approach. They stress the tendency among outsiders to organize an unfamiliar landscape aesthetically. Outsiders tend to focus on objects which combine in stimulating and memorable ways:

In our mobile society the fleeting impressions of people passing through cannot be neglected. Generally speaking, we may say that
only the visitor or tourist has a viewpoint; his perception is often a matter of using his eyes to compose pictures. The native in contrast has a complex attitude derived from his immersion in the totality of his environment (Jakle 1987, 9).

Tourists are examples of outsiders who need to orient themselves to unfamiliar surroundings. They see the novelty in their environment and are sensitive to places which hold interest and pleasure (Jakle 1987, 12).

Lynch classified the urban environment into five (5) physical elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. These elements rarely exist in isolation. However, when they do, the image is usually weak. The image of a place is enhanced when its districts are structured with nodes, defined by edges, penetrated by paths and sprinkled with landmarks (Lynch 1960, 48).

I will use these five elements to categorize the perceived image of Maillardville. If the image is strong enough, the field observations should reflect the image derived from resident interviews. My observations are found in Table 5.1.

5.1 Pathways

The single most important element in the image formulation process is often the pathway. A path is a channel along which observers move; it may be a sidewalk or a street. Street patterns define most North American cities and neighbourhoods. The travel corridor dominates our experience of the environment and it has profound physical and social impacts on the places where we live. Most importantly, the travel corridor affects our sense of identity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image Element</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pathways</strong></td>
<td>Laval Square</td>
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<td>Brunette Avenue</td>
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<td>King Edward Intersection Area</td>
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<td>SECONDARY</td>
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<td>Heritage Homes</td>
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and connection to places (Hough 1990, 101). The automobile allows us to experience the environment indirectly as we move through it. We stop only occasionally at a few select destinations or intersections. Michael Hough correctly states the trend behind this: "...as new human needs and technologies exert themselves on the landscape, new landscapes emerge in response to the imperatives of changing conditions..." (Hough 1990, 58). The short streets and blocks of Maillardville were clearly not designed with the automobile in mind. However, the streets and automobiles dominate this community and figure significantly into its overall image. Not surprising, the streets lack activity beyond that of the automobile. Pedestrians are a rare sight on any of the streets in the study area.

The study area is bounded by pathways which are classified as arterials. However, the contribution of the Brunette, Alderson, Rochester, Blue Mountain and Schoolhouse paths to the image vary according to the number of support elements found along each path's length. With the noted exception of Brunette Avenue and Blue Mountain, these paths are in poor condition. The streets are little more than a patchwork of asphalt, lacking curbs and sidewalks and only very recently have the open ditches been covered. Streets within the study area are enclosed by a web of overhead power, telephone and cable lines supported by wooden telephone poles. A general conclusion about the streetscapes of Maillardville is that they probably do not contribute much to the image of the place. In fact, their influence may be negative.
Turning now to a more specific discussion of the community's paths, a distinctive hierarchy of paths has always characterized Maillardville. The early 1909 subdivision plan made Laval and Cartier the major north-south and east-west arteries of the community. Laval Square and Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes are at the intersection of these two streets. This carefully prepared subdivision was superimposed over the much older Pitt River Road (known as Brunette Avenue today). Brunette Avenue eclipsed Laval and Cartier as the most significant path in the community, orienting activity in a east-west direction toward New Westminster. As a result, the Laval and Cartier streets became the residential and religious heart of Maillardville while Brunette Avenue grouped a hodge podge of commercial, retail, residential, and public institutions.

The dominance of Brunette Avenue was not challenged until the 1950's when Coquitlam began to experience a suburban explosion north of Maillardville. North-south oriented streets such as; Blue Mountain, Nelson, Marmont and Schoolhouse became significant traffic corridors. In stark contrast to the quiet residential streets, these north-south oriented streets carry heavy volumes of commuter traffic leaving the Lougheed and Trans-Canada Highways and passing through Maillardville en route to their more northern destinations. However, because of their recent influence, their short length within the study area and the absence of traditional architecture these north-south oriented streets contribute little to Maillardville's image, other than defining its boundaries.
The street pattern of Maillardville has a number of traffic obstacles which enhance the image. Obstacles such as squares, irregular intersections and dead-end streets force traffic to stop and pause. One expects that at these points, the observer will have a good recollection of the environment. The most noteworthy obstacle is Laval Square. Laval Square was clearly designed to play a leading role in the community. While English communities tended to place a city hall or park at the centre of their communities, French Canadians preferred a parish church. The 1909 subdivision recognized the importance of the Roman Catholic Church to the early settlers and as well as the close social ties and interdependence of the settlers. The design of Laval Square with Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes at the centre is unique in Western Canada. Laval and Cartier streets leave the Square in the configuration of a cross. The large church dominates the square and street approaches. Elevated on the hill, the church is visible from Brunette Avenue and the Lougheed Highway.

The most noteworthy intersection is that of Brunette, Marmont and King Edward. Its simple four-way form is reinforced by both edges and landmarks such as Mackin Park, City Hall, and Mackin House. The other significant intersection is found at the western entrance of Maillardville. This intersection is, however, difficult to envision because of its "X" shape and oddly shaped blocks. Recent street improvements to this are designed to draw the attention of traveller to the unique and memorable qualities of the place. This, therefore, is the only clearly defined
entrance to Maillardville and should be well recognized by all.

Another type of path obstacle is the result of the development pattern of Maillardville. The road system in Maillardville is also characterized by numerous dead-end streets and "T" intersections. Every lot in the early subdivision backs onto a rear lane. The configuration of streets and lanes created a street pattern of short blocks. The tradition of short blocks and "T" intersections was continued in the area west of Marmont Street and south of Alderson Avenue.

The development of land around the original 1909 subdivision further reduced Maillardville's chances of becoming the hub of Coquitlam. Subsequent development tended to isolate Maillardville. Streets that lead north, such as Begin and Laval became cul-de-sacs. Along the northern perimeter of the community, Rochester Avenue cut Maillardville off from northern expansion. Likewise, the geographical features of the original settlement site limited the potential growth of the community in an eastern or southern direction. To the north-east the steep hillside made development difficult while the land to the south was prone to yearly flooding making extensive development too risky. As expected, the early community expanded in the only possible direction: west. However, subsequent development west of Marmont Street broke the development pattern. Streets, such as Laval and Cartier, leading out of the early settlement were not directly linked to new roadways.

Three important developments can be observed in Maillardville's environment due to these expansion restrictions. First, the
termination of streets leading out of the community creates abrupt directional shifts in the pattern of movement. This isolated the original settlement and preserved its unique characteristics while the areas around it changed dramatically. Second, numerous "T" junctions led to the unique street vistas which focusing on the houses at the end (Figure 5.1). Third, although it is not clear if District officials had a policy to isolate the community, the road system which resulted has internalized the community. This restrictive road pattern challenges today's visitor to enter and explore. It is clear from the low traffic volumes observed in the early settlement area that most people travel around the area on arterial roads and rarely travel those paths which provide the richest image elements.

The concentration of special uses along a path can also give it prominence in the minds of observers (Lynch 1960, 50). Brunette Avenue again is the most significant path in this regard. However, special uses are not dispersed along its entire length and it is prone to commuter traffic. On busy streets a person's attention becomes increasingly focused on the street as the only distinctive form (Jakle 1987, 47). There are only a few points along Brunette Avenue where images are identifiable. These include the revitalized commercial centre, the King Edward intersection and the eastern multi-family developments.

The street vistas in Maillardville, which are in part a function of building heights and street widths, are limited by either topography or the irregular street pattern. The best potential
street vistas are to the south along streets like Marmont, Laval and Nelson which take advantage of the sloping topography. There are, however, a number of important short street vistas which focus on special features such as Lourdes Church (Figure 5.2). Lourdes Church serves as an obvious focal point which entices the observer forward. The houses lining the street reinforce the view. Street improvements in the commercial centre along Brunette Avenue are also noteworthy (Figure 5.3).

The streets west of Marmont Street contribute far less to the overall image of Maillardville than those found in the old settlement. This is partly due to a lack of strong image-making elements. These residential streets are narrow and arranged in a confusing pattern. There is little to distinguish them from each other except for their unique French Canadian names.

The writer's observations about Maillardville's paths and how they contribute to the overall environmental image are illustrated by Map 5.1. The location and thickness of the line roughly indicate the path's value as an image element. A number of conclusions can be drawn from this map. First, those streets which carry high volumes of traffic tend to have little or no image value and that those streets which contain the most significant images have much less traffic. The bulk of those who travel through Maillardville, probably do so without realizing the uniqueness of the place. Second, although pathways are a significant element in Maillardville's image, they are not the prime image element. Finally, paths which display a multitude of elements are the most
Figure 5.1 The numerous "T" intersections found in the Laval Square area contribute to unique street vistas that terminate with homes.

Figure 5.2 The finest examples of short street vistas are found along Cartier and Laval Street.

Figure 5.3 Street improvements have made new short range vistas where none existed before. The pedestrian environment has been significantly enhanced along the western portion of Brunette Avenue as a result of these improvements.
memorable.

5.2 Edges

Edges are best described as linear elements that establish the boundaries of a place. Generally, edges are not as dominant an image element as paths but they do play an important part in how people organize their environment. They tend to reinforce pathways and separate various districts of a city. Strong edges are those which are visually prominent, continuous in form, impenetrable or difficult to cross (Lynch 1960, 63).

Maillardville's residential character, small geographic size and sporadic redevelopment, does not lend itself well to strong, definable edges. Except for a few noted exceptions, Maillardville's edges are weak. Strong edges and boundaries enhance a neighbourhood's identity. It is difficult for a neighbourhood with weak boundaries to maintain its identifiable character or image overtime (Alexander 1977, 88). For an edge to have a strong identity it should display a number of similar characteristics along its length.

Existing edges can be enhanced efficiently and economically by utilizing common structural facade styles; special street lighting; common landscaping, structural detailing and the use of unifying building materials. However, edges should appear natural. They should take upon themselves elements that are a part of the community, its people, its history and its region. In doing so,
they appear to belong and avoid standing out as unrealistic or alien to the locale. It is the responsibility of urban designers, planners, and developers to know and understand the area enough to ensure that development strengthens rather than weakens the existing urban edges.

Streets such as Alderson, Marmont, Rochester, and parts of Brunette Avenue lack positive edge features. Gaps caused by the removal, deterioration or inappropriate renovations of structures, have developed along such traditionally strong streets as Cartier, Begin and Laval Square. Edges at various points along Brunette Avenue are also particularly weak. These edges are dotted with buildings lost in a landscape of fragmented land which is too small to develop and visually derelict (Jakle 1987, 99).

Small positive edges do exist in Maillardville. These do not act as barriers, but rather, as unifying seams (Lynch 1960, 65). They enrich the environments with their detail and variety, and they are visually prominent, continuous in form and historically significant. Map 5.2 summarizes those edges which are most significant.

The differences in structures identify edges and paths most often. The edges along two particular streets, Cartier and Begin, consist of early homes which still demonstrate the qualities of a positive edge. Lewis Mumford taught that buildings could be read as a record of a community's life and spirit (Miller 1990, 26). Examining an edge reveals when development took place, the pace of development, who it was intended for, who uses it now and how
Map 5.1 Significant pathways. The thickness of the line indicates the importance of the path as a possible image element.

Map 5.2 Significant edges. They are; (1) The Brunette Commercial Strip (2) The King Edward Intersection, (3) The Cartier-Begin-Laval edges, and (4) The Brunette Multi-family edge.
vulnerable it is to change (Jacobs 19885, 31).

The edges of Begin and Cartier illustrate a continuity of siting and character elements with a diversity of built form. The homes display architectural qualities and methods of building which are no longer in practice. They are large houses, not because they are showplaces of the wealthy, but because of cultural taste and the ability to accommodate large families. These homes utilize simple hand-built framing techniques and have either a hip or gable roof structure. The homes which make up the edges display common features such as: window size, shape and arrangement; roof lines; silhouettes; street setbacks; details and materials. Each home is different from the other and this is probably because family and friends assisted in the construction of the home and altered the basic designs to suit their particular needs or taste. Nonetheless, each home is tied to neighbours, through echoed similarities (Jakle 1987, 43).

A very important edge feature along these two streets is the way in which the earlier homes address the street. All the homes, regardless of lot size, sit at the front of the lot and face the street. Special effort is put into the design and detailing of the front facade of each home. Although a small picket fence usually separates the street from private property, barriers between neighbours are rare. Jacobs believes:

The farther removed from the street a building is either by distance or other barrier, the less likely that the residents or businesses are closely associated with the street and with day-to-day public life (Jacobs 1985, 41).

Therefore, lack of barriers, shared common setbacks and facades
rich in detail are all indicators of the cohesiveness a community enjoys along these edges.

With few exceptions, the edges of Brunette Avenue are weak. Development along weak edges should strive to improve the edge, while developments along strong edges should tastefully incorporate itself into the edge. The District of Coquitlam has adopted this philosophy and has begun to improve the image of Maillardville by strengthening the Brunette edges at two strategic points: the commercial area in the west and the multi-family residential area in the east. Since the overall appearance of both areas has improved significantly as a result of this development and its continued emphasis on French Canadian design traditions, the new edges should figure strongly in the public image of this place.

5.3 Nodes

All urban environments possess, areas or nodes, which are considered by residents to be significant and memorable. Nodes are the strategic points in a city into which an observer can enter. They may be junctions in paths or concentrations of some use or physical character. There are three small nodes in Maillardville which are especially memorable, they are: Laval Square, the King Edward intersection, and; the "Village Square" commercial redevelopment area. Map 5.3 shows that these nodes are evenly distributed throughout the study area. Nodes are most effective as image elements when they are:

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Well defined in shape; have a strong foci; have significant form; possess uses that are intense and reinforcing to strengthen identity; and are located at strategic spots in a city such as intersections or prominent sites (Lynch 1960, 102).

Although none of the three nodes identified above display all of these qualities, each one possesses enough of them to be memorable to residents and visitors.

Of the three nodes identified, Laval Square is the most defined in shape. Laval Street surrounds various church buildings located in the centre of the Square, of which, Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes is the most significant. The homes which comprise the edges of the node act as boundaries which contain the view and space of the Square. The addition of homes to the Square in the 1960's and 1970's adds to the sense of enclosure found in this node. Unfortunately, the design of these homes add nothing to the character of the place (Figure 5.4). Entering the Square from any direction forces the traveller to pause at a "T" intersection. A conscious decision must be made to turn either left or right in order to traverse the Church and Square. Due to the size of the church buildings in the Square, rapid exploration takes more than a brief glance as the traveller passes through. The viewer must explore the Square to determine its full extent (Jakle 1987, 55).

This node is also noteworthy for the uses present within it. Reinforcing Laval Square's traditional social, cultural and spiritual role, is a large new community centre called "Place Maillardville". Unfortunately, for its image standpoint, the Community Centre's design does not reflect the shapes and designs
Map 5.3 Three distinct nodes. (1) The Brunette Commercial Node, (2) The King Edward Node, and (3) The Laval Square Node. Each node is characterized by a distinct physical form, multiple uses and activities.

Figure 5.4 Located in Laval Square, the home on the left effectively illustrates how inappropriate redevelopment can detract from unique places.
of historical Maillardville or the community it serves.

The Village Square commercial development is the second identifiable node. Located on the north side of Brunette Avenue, between the corner of Lougheed Highway and Allard Street, the node is strategically placed at the entrance to Maillardville and is highly visible to motorists. The structures of this node define and enclose the various streets and spaces around them. Much of this definition is a result of the redevelopment of the Brunette shopping corridor using a French Canadian design theme. Development has created a new two-storey street wall on the northern side of Brunette Avenue by enclosing the Avenue with small scale retail business, which display a continuity of windows at or near the property line, and by upgrading the existing southern street wall. The "Village Square" has an internal plaza bounded by buildings with retail, commercial and residential uses. However, lacking strong retail use, it is doubtful that this plaza will become the focal point of the node.

The actual focal point of this node is not the Village Square but rather the south-western corner of Brunette Avenue and Lougheed Highway. A gateway concept is in place utilizing extensive landscaping, a granite masonry tower and a small public square with a parking area. The tower, bearing the community's name, stands out clearly at the intersection. However, it is doubtful that this will ever become a highly valued landmark in the community. Many factors work against this focal point including the constant traffic nearby, the rather exposed corner and the lack of
interesting pedestrian destinations nearby. The gateway's greatest impact on the public image will probably come from its visual impact on motorists, who over the past few years, have seen the corner transform from a derelict site to a positive space which enhances the appearance and image of Maillardville.

While the northern and southern boundaries of this node are well defined, the eastern and western edges lack clear definition and diminish the effectiveness of the redevelopment efforts undertaken along Brunette Avenue. Semi-vacant buildings and parking lots characterize the edges of Blue Mountain Street. The eastern edge of the node, located at Allard and Woolridge Streets, displays a mixture of conflicting land uses which are transitory in nature. These conflicting uses, coupled with a variety of building scales and large expanses for parking, make it difficult to clearly define the spaces along these edges. This node's contribution to the community's image will probably rest upon the street improvements and the Village Square's urban character.

The final node observed comprises the corners of the King Edward intersection. Because of its structure, this node lacks the definition of space found in other nodes. This node derives its influence from its function as a major intersection and its prominent display of a number of significant landmarks. Fortunately, development over the years in this node has consisted of a variety of compatible and mutually supportive uses which has furthered this node's influence.

The south-west corner of the node contains Mackin Park (Figure
5.5) which is the only park within the study area. Despite this large park's tree lined borders, it is not the focal point of the node. This distinction rests with the south east corner of the node where the heritage structures of Mackin House and Place des Arts are located. These homes dominate the intersection and are the most significant structures remaining along Brunette Avenue. The intense use of Place des Arts by Coquitlam's art community reinforces the significant role of this corner to the community image.

However, these focal points are situated on prominent sites and when coupled with increasing maintenance costs, these homes will be facing increased pressure to redevelop. Currently, Makin House has no tenants and the activities associated with Place des Arts could in the future desire more modern accommodations in the new town centre. The loss of these buildings would seriously weaken this node.

The District's Municipal Hall is located on the northeastern corner of the node. It is a rather non-descript building which offers few hints of its official function (Figure 5.6). Its most notable features are the mature trees which compliment those on the other corners. This leafy feature combines to create the common link in this node. Lacking a strong physical presence, Municipal Hall's contribution to the node will probably result from its governmental activities only. The northwestern corner of this node contains a new six unit townhouse complex (Figure 5.7). The development has taken into consideration its context. Rather than
Figure 5.5 Mackin Park is the only park in the community.

Figure 5.6 Municipal Hall

Figure 5.7 Small scale redevelopment like this is in keeping with the scale and design of traditional structures in the area.
plain, functional boxes, the development reflects the appearance, scale, massing and details of Maillardville's traditional homes. More elements of Maillardville's traditional thematic unit should have been incorporated into the design. For example, the placement of windows should be in sets of twos and threes. The facade projections should be wider and bay windows dropped altogether from the design. The existing roof is too complicated and varied for the context of Maillardville. Rather, the roof pitch should be steeper and emphasize a gabled design. The mid-storey roof apron also seems out of place and further reduces the effect of the facade projections. Although this apron is intended to break up the facade of the structure, the blank sections and side walls it breaks up are characteristic of many of the early homes. An additional roof dormer and side yard projection capped with an open-faced gable roof would have strengthened the contextual nature of the development more.

5.4 Districts

A district is defined as a large area of a city which contains a homogeneous character. It is recognized by clues which are continuous throughout the district and absent in adjacent areas (Lynch 1960, 103). Districts are the basic elements of a city's image (Lynch 1960, 67). People seem to need an identifiable spatial unit to belong to and they derive immense pleasure from the ability to distinguish their part of a city from others.
(Alexander 1977, 81). In this regard, Maillardville is no longer as homogeneous as it once was. Smaller districts continue to emerge within the study area. Although the edges of these districts are often blurred, four separate districts have emerged (Map 5.4). These districts are: Alderson, Laval Square, the Brunette Commercial Strip, and the Brunette Multi-family area. Each district displays a homogeneous physical character. This homogeneity may be a result of a continuity of colour, texture, material, detail, building type, scale of facade and landscaping. The more these characteristics overlap, the stronger the impression of a unified region becomes (Lynch 1960, 104).

The most distinctive districts display a strong physical form usually visible in a central core location. This core is surrounded by what Lynch calls "a thematic gradient" which gradually dwindles (Lynch 1960, 70). These district characteristics contribute to what is called "the inside-outside relationship of a place" and it is a district's boundaries which determine how strongly this relationship is perceived by observers. In districts where characteristic forms end abruptly, the inside-outside relationship is the strongest since a place is experienced from the inside (Relph 1976, 49). Where there is no clear demarcation of elements, or where they overlap or are few, the delineation of a district and its characteristics are more difficult to determine. However, it is important to remember that a place can be perceived and understood only in relation to its larger surroundings, which are always the "outside" (Bognar 1989, 80).
Repetition of a physical form enhances visual images of a place. Images result when several forms reinforce one another (Jakle 1987, 54).

The Alderson Avenue District is the least physically striking or attractive of the four districts identified. Built during the difficult years of the Great Depression and the Second World War, the homes are simple, small and repetitive in design (Figure 5.8). The street pattern of this district is quite varied and has short streets and small blocks. It is a confusing pattern which is difficult for visitors to comprehend.

However, this district displays a number of characteristics which may contribute in a minor way to Maillardville's image. The streets are named after early French Canadian settlers such as Allard, Boileau, and Lebleu. The names of districts and streets are capable of giving identity to a place, especially if physical forms exist which reinforce the names hinted at. The physical forms in this district are weak. The small homes display none of the charm or character of the homes found in the early settlement. Built as cheap and efficient housing, there is little to distinguish one from another. This factor blurs the image of the district (Lynch 1960, 68). Overall, this district lacks a recognizable thematic unit, strong boundaries or a focal point. While the district may be recognizable to those who know it well, to the stranger, it lacks any visual strength or impact.

The Brunette commercial strip comprises a district which stretches from Blue Mountain to Marmont Street. The district's
Map 5.4 Four distinct Districts observed in the study area. They are; (1) The Alderson District, (2) The Brunette Commercial District, (3) The Laval Square District, and (4) The Brunette Multi-family District.

Figure 5.8 The Alderson district is characterized by narrow streets and small homes which are simple and repetitive in design.
core is the commercial centre along western Brunette Avenue. This district's contribution to the public image is positive, but this is largely a result of the recent physical transformation. The revitalization efforts have created an urban character where none existed before. Modeled in a French Canadian style, a distinctive thematic unit fosters a unique sense of place (Figure 5.9). The visual and architectural continuity of the building forms are due to design guidelines which ensure new development is compatible in building form, roof line and cornice height, window size and pattern, materials, texture, and colours (District of Coquitlam Dec. 1987, 3).

The core of Brunette Avenue has been transformed into a integrated street of small stores which are distinctively urban and pedestrian-oriented. This transformation has been accomplished by the implementation of a street beautification program including wider sidewalks of decorative brick, street trees, character lighting, additional on-street parking, benches, and bicycle racks (Ducate 1987, 6). Facade improvement of existing buildings focuses on coordinating awnings for pedestrian protection, recessed doorways, improved display windows and lighting, compatible architectural character, materials, colour and an infill programme of vacant lots to improve retail continuity (Ducate 1987, 6). The creation of a continuous street wall two-storey in height, the placement of parking at the rear of the lot and the placement of buildings without setbacks, are working to define the street space along Brunette Avenue.
Despite these improvements, this district suffers from a flaw which may significantly affect its ability to contribute to the overall image. In order to achieve and maintain a village atmosphere there is a vital need to attract and nurture a cluster of activities. A lack of significant uses in this area cannot be overlooked since the most memorable urban environments are those which present not only interesting forms but also significant public uses. In short, the size of buildings and unoccupied units in the Brunette commercial core reflect a marginal economy. These businesses appear to be less than prosperous, and are comprised of small entrepreneurs which serve a largely local market.

Other problems hamper this district as well; its boundaries are ill-defined and the streetscape and structural design end abruptly where the redevelopment effort has stopped. This leaves the commercial areas beyond the core rudderless and disconnected. The overall impression is that of a district in difficulty.

The third district corresponds to the original settlement surrounding Laval Square. This district contains the strongest visual elements found in Maillardville. Hence, it plays a leading role in defining the community's image. The concentration of early settlement homes along Begin and Cartier Streets provide a unique streetscape and are a basis for a lasting impression and image (Violich 1989, 128). Although somewhat reduced by neglect and careless renovation over the years, many of these homes still reveal unusual details which are a credit to the craftsmanship of early builders. It is not uncommon to find solid balustrades,
scroll-cut vergeboards, wood trimmed doors and windows, oversize dentil courses, and patterned shingles as a surface treatment on them (Vinders 1989, 22) (Figure 5.10).

The building tradition and character of the 1909 subdivision are related to the pedestrian rather than the automobile. The walking environment is enhanced by a street pattern of short blocks, a street-lane-street development and buildings placed at the head of streets to function as a focal point for the street vista. The street-lane-street pattern suited the settlers' social and cultural habits well. Backyards, summer kitchens and lanes were private gathering places for neighbours. The rear was understood to be a private and quiet place, while the front was more noisy and public (District of Coquitlam Dec. 1987, 4).

Utilizing simple hand-built framing techniques and one of two types of roof forms (hip or gable), a continuity of siting and character emerged. Without exception, the older homes orient toward the street, situating important elements such as the front door, gables, large windows, porches and verandas to the street (District of Coquitlam Dec. 1987, 7). They often form a street wall along a common setback line with projections of porches and steps lending interest, diversity and a sense of human scale to the basic house forms. While the basic building forms of the thematic unit were constant throughout the 1909 subdivision, diversity and character were achieved by individual home owners. Through addressing special urban design considerations, such as views, corner sites, terminating street vistas and decorative
detailing the individual customized and diversified his home from others (District of Coquitlam Dec. 1987, 7). Therefore, this district has the strongest focal point of any district identified. Most of the streets within the early subdivision lead to Laval Square and the thematic unit which characterizes the homes in this area dwindles away as one moves further away from Laval Square. The Square, with its accompanying church and community centre, has functioned for many years at the heart of the community and is still regarded as central to the public image by residents of Maillardville.

The various elements of this district combine to portray an insular image of the community. This is not surprising considering the community's history. Factors such as the street pattern, the Square, the large family homes, the huge church and the dense surrounding forest were all elements which created a sense of familiarity and belonging for residents. At the same time, these factors created a sense of awkwardness or even alienation for outsiders. Often, environments created by other cultures can cause visitors to feel this way. This sense of belonging, or not belonging, to a place is a direct result of uses, physical forms and circulation patterns. These elements can be manipulated to either attract or repel people from a place. They were originally designed to maintain and defend the French community and as a result, have acted as barriers against outsiders. When faced with such barriers, outside observers tend to experience a place superficially and quickly, even if the place experienced is highly
memorable. Residents of the district have developed a great connection with and affection for their place, but outsiders feel out of place and thus remain ignorant of the most significant place experiences in Maillardville.

The final district identified is the Brunette Multi-family District located in the south-eastern corner of the study area along Brunette Avenue. Eight separate developments, each different in design, size, and density make up the area. This district's impact on the public image of Maillardville is difficult to predict since it marks a dramatic change in Maillardville's development pattern. However, for this reason alone, one would expect it to significantly affect residents' perception of their community. Whether or not this change will be seen to be a positive development remains to be seen. Certainly the boundaries of this district are the most defined since large-scale development along the southern side of Brunette Avenue has created a street wall effect.

This district does, however, suffer from a number of weaknesses which may limit its contribution to the public image. Each development is independent of the other and this does not contribute to the creation of a community focal point. The ambience of the district is also limited by the mixture of contextual and non-contextual design. When redevelopment began in the early 1980's the risk to developers was extremely high. The economy at the time was in recession and Maillardville was still considered a rather odd and depressed area with no proven track
record for redevelopment success. Not surprisingly then, early redevelopment was characterized by simple, functional structures built by small scale developers who were eager to sell as quickly as possible (Figure 5.11). The Municipality was caught off guard by these early developments. Therefore, the resulting developments reflected a lack of municipal design control and the desire of small scale developers to cut corners in order to save money (Dejong 1991).

Financial success soon attracted larger and better financed developers to Maillardville. These developments have higher densities and attempts to develop thematic units which distinguish developments from rivals are awkward. This came at the expense of sacrificing designs which fit harmoniously into the established image. It also suggests that developers and the Municipality lacked a complete understanding of what constitutes the traditional thematic unit and image of Maillardville. Most of the new developments relate poorly to each other and to the community. Preferring to focus inward, most developments have missed the opportunity to help define the Brunette Avenue streetscape.

Access into this district is limited to three cul-de-sacs, Begin, Laval and Casey. Only those who live here would have any reason to enter. Most of the developments on Brunette Avenue actually turn their back on it and barricade themselves behind high fences or slightly smaller waist-height fences (Figure 5.12). Only the "Brunette Villas" treat the street in the traditional fashion by orienting front yards and entrances to Brunette Avenue. With no
Figure 5.9 A distinctive image has been created in the commercial node by utilizing an architectural form and style reminiscent of Montreal.

Figure 5.10 The style and thematic unit displayed on this home is typical of many of the early homes of the Laval Square area. It is not uncommon to find wood trimmed doors and windows symmetrically placed; front facades decorated with patterned shingles and elevated porches and verandas.

Figure 5.11 An early example of multi-family development which lacks any contextual design elements.
fences or berms acting as barriers between the street and the homes, the resulting affect is a streetscape which is inviting and in harmony with the traditional thematic unit of Maillardville. The introduction of design guidelines in November 1987 has improved the look of new developments in this district. A thematic unit inspired by the designs and details of the original homes has ensured development which fits the needs of today while still recognizing the vitality of the past (Figure 5.13). Despite these encouraging developments, the image of Maillardville may be hampered more by the presence of developments which portray a weak physical presence and tend to dominate the prime sites along Brunette Avenue.

5.5 Landmarks

The final element identified as necessary for a significant image is local landmarks. Since Maillardville is, and has always been, primarily a residential community, the majority of landmarks are residential structures. The identification of landmarks involves the singling out of a group of key physical characteristics or elements from a host of possibilities. The distinctive architectural expressions found among the structures of the early settlement represent the largest numbers of local landmarks. As a result, the most significant landmarks are found in the Laval Square area and some incidental structures beyond its boundaries which also display traditional themes. Structures which display
few of these characteristics are likely to be overlooked as landmarks. The casual observer in an unfamiliar environment often lacks the knowledge or skill necessary to identify such a structure as significant. However, if, as Lynch asserts, there is a tendency in those familiar with a place to rely on systems of landmarks for guides, then Maillardville's landmarks cannot be exclusively located within the Laval Square district (Lynch 1960, 78).

For convenience, I have classified Maillardville's landmarks into primary and secondary landmarks. Primary landmarks are those which possess high imageability due to their size, age, scale, exceptional architecture, historical significance, and present use (Jakle 1987, 35). It is more difficult to identify secondary landmarks because they have either been altered significantly or have been isolated by new development. They are also difficult to identify because they come in any form.

The bond between people and places is a personal one. An object may have a significant meaning to one observer and a totally different one, or no meaning at all, to another person. Although not necessarily unique by themselves, the presence and human scale of supportive landmarks in Maillardville aids in holding the streetscape and image together.

Map 5.5 shows the primary and secondary landmarks. Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes is the premier landmark in Maillardville (Figure 5.2). Located on a prominent hillside, the church serves both as a local and distant landmark. The sheer scale and size of Lourdes church and its dominance of Laval Square leave a considerable impression.
Figure 5.12 Streetscapes are enhanced when developments face the street and reduce the number and types of visual barriers.

Figure 5.13 The design of Des Amis is inspired by the designs and details of the original homes of Maillardville. Contextual design allows for positive change and growth while still recognizing the significance of the past.

Map 5. 5
Significant landmarks as perceived by the writer.
The Church's impressive physical form, coupled with the social and religious roles it plays, reinforce its role as a landmark.

Many other old homes in the Laval Square District are regarded as landmarks. Most noticeable are those which display the traditional thematic unit, those which are situated on prominent sites, are not obscured by recent redevelopment and are reinforced by neighbouring homes which display less perfectly the original look of the area. To what degree residents are able to pick out specific homes as separate and distinct landmarks is unclear.

The few remaining early homes found along the north side of Brunette Avenue east of Begin Street are also likely to be considered landmarks, not because they are the best surviving examples of heritage homes, but because they are the only remaining homes linking the street to an earlier past (Figures 4.13 and 4.14). Both Makin House (Fig 4.10) and Place des Arts (Fig. 4.11) are likely to be considered major landmarks in Maillardville. Each building is prominently sited, unique in design and rich in history. Of the two Makin House is the home most visible. However, because it lacks a significant public use its value as a landmark will likely trail behind that of Place des Arts. Municipal Hall is also likely to be a significant landmark, not as a result of its built form but because of its role as seat of the local government. The "Foyer Maillard" located on Alderson Avenue is also likely to be a major landmark in Maillardville (Figure 4.34). Although simple and unimaginative in form, the size and scale of "Le Foyer" contrast dramatically with surrounding
buildings. Its prominent hillside site reinforces this contrast and its use as a retirement home for many of Maillardville's surviving pioneers make it an important social and cultural landmark to the community. The small homes which characterize the Alderson district are not likely to be seen as major landmarks, but taken together they do represent a cluster of secondary landmarks which help define the image of Maillardville.

The revitalized Brunette commercial strip is an example of a new landmark. The improved pedestrian environment and the unified redevelopment theme has turned a declining commercial strip into a positive place which hints at the community's French roots. Situated at the junction of the Lougheed Highway and Brunette Avenue, the gateway tower is the most prominent feature of this streetscape. As for the Brunette Multi-family residential area, no landmark stands out from its surroundings. These developments which occupy prominent sites fail to make a distinctive impression. This is unfortunate considering that developments which correspond more to the area's theme find themselves on obscure sites and contribute little to the community's image and landmarks.
CHAPTER SIX

MAILLARDVILLE'S IMAGE AS PERCEIVED BY ITS RESIDENTS

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the public image of Maillardville held by a group of residents. One would expect that the residents would confirm the image of Maillardville derived from the preceding analysis. Confirmation will reinforce the argument for using observation as a tool. The public image maps which result will accurately depict the significant visual aspects of Maillardville. These maps will then be used to create a "visual plan" of Maillardville to show which areas are critical in preserving the community's unique character and which areas deserve enhancement.

I interviewed a total of ten residents. Appendix 1 is a copy of the questionnaire. Each interview began with some general tone-setting questions in which the purpose of the interview was laid out. Photographs, map sketching and supplementary questions were used to probe and draw out as much information about the residents' perception of Maillardville as possible. I taped and transcribed each interview. The interviews lasted an average of two hours each. Table 6.1 is a summary of the results of these interviews.
TABLE 6.1

IMAGE ELEMENTS AS PERCEIVED BY RESIDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image Element</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pathways      | Laval Square  
                Brunette Avenue  
                Cartier Avenue  
                Begin Street  
                Lebleu Street  
                Schoolhouse Street |
| Edges         | Cartier/Begin/Laval Square  
                Brunette Commercial Strip (North Side)  
                Central Brunette Strip (North Side)  
                King Edward Intersection Area |
| Nodes         | Laval Square  
                King Edward Intersection  
                Central Brunette Edge  
                Brunette Commercial Strip |
| Districts     | Laval Square  
                Alderson |
| Landmarks     | PRIMARY  
                Notre-Dame-De-Lourdes  
                Millside School  
                Place des Arts  
                Municipal Hall  
                Gateway Tower  
                Village Credit Union  
                Foyer Maillard |
|               | SECONDARY  
                Heritage Homes  
                Church Rectory & Hall  
                Plac Maillardville  
                Makin House  
                Village Square  
                Chez Nous  
                The Park & Trevs Cafes |
6.1 **Paths**

In responding to a request to sketch a map of Maillardville which included its important features, all residents began drawing the street pattern. The prominence of streets in most sketch maps, such as Map 6.1 illustrate the fact that pathways take on a significant role in defining the image of a place. There is a hierarchy of streets visible on each sketch map and the major streets correspond to community boundaries. Residents recognized that certain paths in Maillardville, such as Laval Square and Brunette Avenue, have always been important features. However, of the two paths, Laval Square is the most significant image element. Its significance to the community is revealed by residents who symbolize it by its central location and exaggerated size on all sketch maps.

Brunette Avenue was the second major path which appeared central to Maillardville's image. Historically significant, physically imposing and heavily used, it exerts a strong influence on the community. A number of secondary streets also proved important in defining the boundaries of Maillardville. As the writer expected, streets such as: Schoolhouse, Brunette, Alderson, Blue Mountain and Rochester are acknowledged by most residents as the boundaries of Maillardville. Smaller streets also contribute positively to the image. Residents identified Begin Street and Cartier Avenue as being highly memorable due to the location of important structures along their length, at their origin or at their destination.
Residents also noted that Lebleu Street is the most important internal boundary of the community. Residents were quick to recall it as the dividing line between the two parishes. This barrier does, to some degree hinder regular contact and communication across it. With the exception of the revitalized streetscape of western Brunette Avenue, the conditions of the community's streetscapes do not figure prominently in the public image. Residents prefer instead to focus on the maintenance of structures which line the paths.

Overall, Maillardville's image does not hinge fundamentally on the element of paths. As the image map below indicates (with a few exceptions along Brunette Avenue), the paths in and around Laval Square are the most significant from an image standpoint (Map 6.2). One could argue that their importance is not a result of their inherent characteristics, but rather results from the interaction between paths, landmarks and edges which line them. Perhaps if the study area were larger and the community had fewer reference points, paths might have emerged as the dominant image element. However, it seems that overall, paths play a secondary role in defining the public image of Maillardville as defined. Their role is to form a basic organizing network which all other image elements built upon. It is the other elements which hold the key to Maillardville's image.
Map 6.1 The size of particular landmarks when drawn by residents indicates its importance in helping to define Maillardville's image. Laval Square was consistently placed at the centre of all sketch maps and remaining image elements were linked to it.

Map 6.2 Significant pathways as perceived by residents. The thickness of the lines indicates the importance of the path as an image element.
6.2 Edges

Residents identified three edges which were significant in helping them to define the public image of Maillardville. In order of importance they are: the Begin-Cartier-Laval Square edge; the central Brunette edge, and the commercial redevelopment edge along western Brunette Avenue (Map 6.3).

After reviewing the residents' sketch maps, it became apparent they had a comprehensive view of the Laval Square District only. It is here, where the early homes are still visually prominent and continuous in form and design, that they reinforce the paths to create an effective impact on observers. One resident described the Begin-Cartier-Laval edge as: "the most important surviving edge in the community, the real power house in the area" (Roy 1991).

The central Brunette edge consisting of the Village Credit Union, the Hell's Angels Club House, the Park Cafe and the Mr. Tremble's Shell Gas Station have strong links to the community. It is the social and historical links of these buildings and their uses, not their physical appearance, which makes this edge important to the public image. The opposite of this is true for the Brunette Commercial Strip which is the final edge. Residents recall this edge for its unified and visual pleasing design even if it might lack any significant use as a feature. As one resident states: "This commercial area never had a French Canadian feel to it until now" (Lambert 1991).
6.3 Nodes

The residents identified four nodes as the most critical to the image of Maillardville. They are: Laval Square; the King Edward intersection; the central Brunette node, and; the Village Square redevelopment (Map 6.4). The interplay between paths, edges, and landmarks makes Laval Square the premier node of the community. Every resident included Laval Square on his or her sketch maps, usually drawing it as the first or second identifiable element in Maillardville and relating all other elements to it. In this sense, Laval Square creates a well defined space. For all residents the focal point of the node is clearly Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes. Most residents can identify many of the homes which compose the edges of the Square. This is especially true if the particular home has a unique design, a prominent history and is well maintained. Uses relating to the Church and community are also important in determining the extent of the node. For example "Place Maillardville", the new community centre on the southwestern corner of Laval Square is also identified.

The second node vital to the image of Maillardville is the King Edward intersection. As in Laval Square, this node is reinforced by the presence of other image elements and significant uses. The King Edward node is defined by the intersection and landmarks which constitute its edges. Unlike Laval Square, which is relatively remote and private, the King Edward node is situated prominently along two major traffic routes. The focal point of the node is the
Map 6.3 Significant edges as perceived by residents were the Brunette Commercial Strip (1), the Central Brunette Social or Activity node (2), the King Edward Intersection (3), and the Cartier-Begin-Laval edges (4).

Map 6.4 The significant nodes as identified by residents were similar to those identified by the writer with one exception. Residents identified the Central Brunette Node as important because of its various uses and ties to the community. Its physical appearance, however, was not significant enough to be considered by the writer as an image node.
southeast corner which contains Makin House and Place Des Arts.

One half of the residents interviewed identified the Village Square commercial redevelopment as a node. From a physical form point of view, the residents appeared extremely happy with the recent transformation of the area. However, despite these changes, most residents did not frequent the area. As one resident stated: "I really enjoy the new french theme of the area but I don't know what's really there because the uses are not very significant" (Sevigny 1991). Despite of all the redevelopment on the northern side of the node, for most residents, the focal point of the node remains the gateway tower on the southern side of Brunette Avenue. The boundaries of this node were defined enough for residents to clearly identify them.

Residents identified the Central Brunette Node located along Mall Street as the final node. They alerted me to the existence of a previously unnoticed community or social node. Lacking any clear physical linkages, the importance of this node rests with its connection to the community. The Village Credit Union, the Foyer Maillard and Chez Nous are all significant social and economic centres of the community.

6.4 Districts

Residents tend to see only two areas which are large in area and continuous in character: the Laval Square and Alderson Districts. Two other districts residents identified, they view as either
extensions of the older parent districts (the Brunette Commercial strip), or as completely foreign communities (the Brunette Multi-family District) (Map 6.5). The Laval Square district corresponds to the original settlement. Residents see it as the major district contributing to Maillardville's image. Heavily travelled streets surround the district and large traditionally styled homes characterize the edges. Laval Square, with Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes at its centre, is the focus of the district.

The residents' singular concentration on Laval Square as the premier image producing area in their community was matched only by their lack of knowledge or interest in what existed south of Brunette Avenue. Only one out of the ten residents interviewed located the new townhome developments on his or her sketch map. This comes despite of the fact that redevelopment has been taking place in this area for almost ten years and this development now stretches from Schoolhouse Street to King Edward Street. Residents are unable to distinguish one development from another. No focus or centre exists in the development which will facilitate the creation of a landmark.

The Alderson District is the second major identifiable district in Maillardville and as one resident explains: "What is significant about this part of Maillardville is the number of very small homes and lots built during the Depression" (R.Garneau 1991). The Alderson area is still considered by many residents as the new part of Maillardville which is distinct from the early settlement of the Laval Square district. One resident recalls: "While we
Map 6.5 Significant districts as perceived by residents. Three independent districts have developed. They are; Alderson (1), Laval Square (2), and the Brunette Multi-family area (3). The writer's assumption that the Brunette Commercial Strip is now a separate district seems premature at this time. Residents still regard it as a continuation of the Alderson district.
lived in this area [Alderson District], the hub of the community was really to the east in the original settlement" (Racine 1991). With few exceptions, the sketch maps of the Alderson district were blank. Although the Alderson District contributes little to Maillardville's overall image, it does enjoy two special features which all residents recognize. The first is the Central Brunette edge consisting of The Village Credit Union, the Foyer Maillard and Chez Nous. The second major focal point or node is the Brunette Commercial Strip.

6.5 Landmarks

Landmarks proved to be a major element in comprising the residents' sense of place and image. This is not surprising considering the small size of the study area and the familiarity of the residents with the neighbourhood. There was, however, a distinct hierarchy surrounding the landmarks identified by residents (Map 6.6). Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes was the most important landmark identified in Maillardville. Lourdes Church provides the context and focus for the traditional homes that line the edges of Laval Square, Cartier and Begin Street. Few of the traditional homes actually stood out in the memory of residents. Millside Public School is regarded as a secondary landmark, although it has been regarded as somewhat foreign element in the community. As well the structure has been altered significantly by additions which diminish its original form. This classification is largely
Map 6.6 Final Landmark map as determined by residents.

Primary Landmarks (Numbers)

1. Notre Dame de Lourdes
2. Millside School
3. Place des Arts
4. Municipal Hall
5. Gateway Tower
6. Village Credit Union
7. Foyer Maillard.

Secondary Landmarks (Letters)

A. Heritage Styled Homes
B. Church Rectory & Hall
C. Place Maillardville
D. Makin House
E. Makin Park
F. Park Cafe /Gas station
G. Chez Nous
H. The Village Square
the result of the school's long association with the community, its
continued use, and its location at the increasingly important
Schoolhouse-Brunette intersection. It is significant to note that
neither the residents nor myself identified landmarks within the
townhouse district.

The second primary landmark residents identified was Place des
Arts, located in the King Edward node. The importance of this
structure to the image of Maillardville is further enhanced by its
community uses. Makin House sits on a more prominent site and is
equally as visually impressive, however, it stands vacant and lacks
the association of uses which would classify it as a primary
landmark. Municipal Hall to the north possesses none of the beauty
or charm of these two homes. Nonetheless, the residents viewed it
as a primary landmark because of its government role. It is
interesting to note that while Makin Park was regarded by most
residents as a secondary landmark, at no time did the residents
identify any natural feature or trees as landmarks.

While the landmarks east of Marmont Avenue generally displaying
unique physical characteristics, those to the west are noted more
for their use. Residents recall social gathering points such as
Trev's Cafe and the Park Cafe as secondary landmarks. They also
regard the Village Credit Union as a primary landmark and
institution of the community. This is largely a result of the fact
that the community itself gave life to the Credit Union and it
remains today an important financial institution of the French
residents throughout Coquitlam. Foyer Maillard is another primary
landmark which towers over Maillardville and is recognized from miles away. Tucked between these two landmarks is Chez Nous. It is acknowledged as a secondary landmark due to its incorporation of various features of a variety of traditional Maillardville home designs into its form.

The final landmark identified by residents is located within the commercial node and is the newest landmark. While none of the new buildings in the node stand out individually as landmarks, the Gateway Tower does. The Tower has transformed a corner which was an eyesore into the primary entrance of the community. It is important to note that residents were unable to identify any type of landmark in the residential area of the Alderson District.

6.6 The Uniqueness Preservation and Enhancement Plan

Using an overlay technique the five preceding image element maps were superimposed over a base map of the study area in order to create a sixth map called "The Maillardville Preservation and Enhancement Plan" (the "Plan") (Map 6.7). The Plan indicates those areas in the community which play a major role in the community's unique character and should therefore be preserved and enhanced (Garnham 1985, 105). The Plan is divided into two broad categories: areas which currently contribute to the community's image and those which do not.

The overlay system made it possible to assign a relative value to those areas identified as contributing to the public image.
Areas of significant imageability:

A. Very Strong Image  
B. Strong Image  
C. Moderate Image  
D. weak Image

Areas completely lacking in imageability.

Map 6.7 Maillardville's Image Preservation and Enhancement Map.  
A basis for future image preservation and enhancement decision making.
Each area was assigned a value based loosely on the concentration of image elements found within it as determined by the residents. Four values were used to rate each area's imageability. An area was given a "very strong" rating if it contained all five image elements. If four elements were present the area was considered to have a "strong" image. In areas where only two or three elements were present the rating was "moderate". If an area contained only one element, it was considered "weak".

The District of Coquitlam could use this image rating in assessing their current policies for Maillardville and to pinpoint those areas which are in need of additional image preservation or enhancement.
CHAPTER SEVEN

AN ANALYSIS OF MAILLARDVILLE'S PUBLIC IMAGE

The purpose of this chapter is to compare, contrast and comment on my observations with those of the residents. I will determine how useful field observations are in determining a place image in comparison to the more empirical approach of resident interviews.

7.1 General Observations and Findings

Each resident interviewed believes that the physical environment of Maillardville contributes to a significant public image. When asked what Maillardville means to you? The typical response was: "home", or "a small and old French Canadian community". When asked if they could describe Maillardville's image in a physical sense, most responded with this type of answer:

Maillardville is a French Canadian settlement characterized by the Church, the Credit Union, large older residential homes on quiet backwater streets, isolated and in decline (Sevigny 1991).

This sense of decline or impending doom for Maillardville's traditional environment is a constant theme throughout most of the interviews. Daniel Roy describes the changes taking place in
is rapidly changing and one that is struggling to survive" (Roy 1991).

Residents are generally pessimistic about the possibility of the traditional public image surviving much longer. This pessimism is the by-product of redevelopment, the elimination of traditional homes and the steady decline of the French Canadian population within the study area. Residents are fearful that neglect and redevelopment will continue to degrade the community's image. Yet, when the principles of good contextual design are applied to new projects residents responded. For example, residents have widely applauded the revitalization effort of the Brunette commercial strip and it has become a component of most personal images.

On the other hand, when contextual design is not utilized, or is poorly applied, as is the case for some developments in the Brunette multi-family district, the impact on the public image is negative. The majority of the townhomes are accepted as positive changes only in that they eliminate the worst examples of residential decay in the community. Most referred to this area prior to redevelopment as a "slum" and were somewhat embarrassed that it had been a public eyesore for so long. The townhomes have been accepted more for what they replaced than for their own merits. Overall, however, the memory and impressions of the new residential developments upon residents is poor.

For many residents it is extremely difficult to describe their community in a strictly physical sense. Their description of the images of Maillardville consist not only of the physical
environment but also of their social, cultural and historical experience in the community. A fine example of this is the image map drawn by Mrs. Racine (Map 7.1) which outlines in great detail Maillardville in the 1940's, including the names of the various families who built the homes.

Clearly, images and the components of an image can vary significantly between residents. This image, once established in the mind of a resident, lingers for years despite the fact that the environment has long since disappeared. A number of subjects felt that apart from a number of major landmarks, the most significant component of Maillardville's image today is found with the French Canadian residents themselves. Their numerous associations and institutions still bind the scattered community to Maillardville. I overlooked significant social landmarks in the community because they lacked a strong physical form or strategic location.

A prominent image of any urban area is its map shape (Relph 1976, 40). The majority of subjects perceive Maillardville as being very limited in size and as having its boundaries defined by major streets. In most instances, the boundaries of their sketch maps correspond closely to those I identified through observation. The interviews confirm the fact that Schoolhouse Street was, and still remains, the eastern extent of Maillardville. The questionnaire responses support the observation that Maillardville's northern boundaries are Alderson and Rochester Avenue, but with two qualifications. Although residents recognized
Rochester as the northern boundary, few recalled any strong image elements along it. Rather, they remember Cartier Avenue, one block to the south, as the street with the best overall image. Residents are reluctant to limit the northern boundary of Maillardville to Cartier, because this divides in two what they perceive to be the original settlement. Second, there is a tendency on the part of a few residents who live just outside the study area to enlarge the boundaries of Maillardville to encompass their homes and social centres. Thus, there may be a tendency or desire among some people to associate themselves with unique places despite not actually living in such a place.

The western boundary of Blue Mountain Street is the least defined of the four boundaries. It is a significant four lane street with very heavy traffic volume and is in close proximity to the new commercial redevelopment along Brunette. Just as residents chose Rochester Avenue as the northern boundary, they placed Blue Mountain on most sketch maps without identifying any accompanying character elements. A number of residents have suggested the most significant western boundary of Maillardville is Lebleu Street. Their rationale is that Lebleu is the dividing line between the two Catholic parishes. For some residents, the area west of this street is clearly a separate community. This type of social boundary is not necessarily visible in the physical environment.

When subjects define Maillardville in social terms, such as where they spend most of their time, the boundaries become smaller (Map 7.2). As one resident states:
Map 7.1 This sketch map illustrates how images can persist in the minds of residents even long after the objects that created this image are gone. Elderly residents were able to recall in great detail the environment of Maillardville in the 1940's and 1950's, but often failed to recall recent developments and changes in their community.

Map 7.2 For some residents Maillardville was defined geographically quite small, consisting of only those areas and structures used by the resident. In such cases the resulting sketch maps were characterized by nodes and landmarks rather than pathways and districts.
For me Maillardville is from Lourdes Church down to Foyer Maillard on Alderson, down Lebleu to The Village Credit Union, and along Brunette to Casey Street. I feel that life really rotates around there (Tkach 1991).

Clearly for some people, social factors such as gathering points and activity centres are major image elements regardless of whether they are physically vivid or not.

The easiest boundary to identify is Brunette Avenue. However, the residents did not confirm all of my observations. I believe that the north and south side of Brunette Avenue are within the boundaries of Maillardville. Historically this may have been the case, yet at only one particular point, the King Edward node, did the resident images protrude south of Brunette Avenue itself. Forgotten or ignored by the residents were the older commercial enterprises, the apartment blocks and the new townhouse developments which compose the southern edge. There is a distinct possibility that these elements do not fit into the traditional image held by residents and so they ignore them rather than modify their perceptions of the environment.

Apart from the interviews, the sketch maps prove to be an invaluable source of information in assessing Maillardville's environment and image. The basic assumption used in analyzing them is that people tend to relate only those elements which they see as contributing significantly to a place and ignore all others. Nasar states that: "People will recall places about which they have strong feelings and they will more likely have feelings about the imageable parts of a city" (Naser 1990, 42). Three factors seem important in affecting the imageability of Lynch's elements,
namely: distinctiveness of form, visibility, and use or symbolic significance (Naser 1990, 7). Images are condensed and abstracted in memory as a store of visual experience (Jakle 1987, 18). If an element contains one or more of these features it is far more likely to be remembered by residents and contribute significantly to the overall public image.

While size and scale of an object are important, distinctive form and vividness are what truly make images memorable (Jakle 1987, 181). Many of the subjects failed to include the large apartments and townhome complexes because they were not vivid enough to stand apart from their context and contribute separately to the image. Elements which were easily visible along pathways and visibly striking were frequently recalled in the sketches. However, important landmarks such as the Brehaut House, which is now obscured by apartments, contributed nothing to the overall image. Intersections are where the recollection of the environment was strongest. It is there that pedestrians or motorists remains stationary for a few moments, giving them the opportunity to survey and evaluate the immediate surroundings. While the physical appearance of a building is important in determining whether or not it is considered an image element, a building's present and past use were equally important to residents. Not surprisingly, some of the new commercial buildings suffer from a lack of recognition because their distinctive forms do not match an equally significant use.
7.2 Paths

The vast majority of residents experience Maillardville from the street; more precisely, from their automobiles. The pedestrian environment of well-defined streetscapes and minute details was missing in all the interviews. In the area of path identification, I had the advantage of observing Maillardville on foot rather than by automobile. Because of this, it is not surprising that my observations appear more detailed than those of the residents.

Those interviewed experienced Maillardville's environment largely through automobile, proceeding to and from various destinations. While their destinations were often recalled in great detail, the elements which line the paths are often spoken of in mere generalities, for example: "many old homes" or "the redeveloped area".

Paths seem to be the organizing element that all the other image elements relate to. They are also the most effective element in defining a boundary. There is a hierarchy of streets visible on each sketch map. The residents simplified a complex pattern of pathways into a few which, for one reason or another were memorable.

While Kevin Lynch believes: "Paths are the predominant image element", my findings do not unequivocally confirm this. In fact, the interviews and sketch maps revealed that long-term residents tended to rely heavily on elements such as landmarks and nodes to define the image of Maillardville. The importance of paths in
defining an image declined as a person became more familiar with a place. As well, residents shifted their focus from generalized characteristics to the details of the environment.

Despite the tendency to rely more heavily on elements other than paths, certain paths in Maillardville have, in fact, always been important features. Both my observations and those of the residents recognized the importance of Laval Square and Brunette Avenue to Maillardville's image. Both of these paths are historically significant, physically imposing, and at times heavily used. For long term residents, it appears that these two paths have actually broken a barrier to become more than streets. They have, in fact, become landmarks themselves due to the interaction between the various image elements they contain.

Other streets are capable of contributing to the image if they function as area boundaries, if they have important buildings placed at their terminus or are reinforced by strong edges. Schoolhouse Street, Cartier Avenue and Begin Street are prime examples of these secondary pathways since each contains one or more of the above qualities. Memorable streets are also those with clear and well-known origins and destinations. Laval Avenue, for example, is fairly insignificant by itself but was always included on the sketch maps since it serves as the north-south axis between Brunette Avenue and Laval Square.

Minor streets which display none of these distinguishing characteristics are often forgotten even by long-term residents. The numerous dead-ends, short streets and alleys are difficult and
confusing for even the longest standing residents to recall. Yet, when asked specifically about them, most residents claim they do contribute to the comfortable, human scale of the area. The residents take a great deal of pride in the fact that the streets were named after early settlers. In fact, the use of French Canadian street names was used by some residents to determine if the street was part of Maillardville or not.

Another type of street feature which contributes to Maillardville's image is found in the Laval Square District. The restricted access into this District is a result of the numerous "T" intersections. These are noted by many subjects who believe that they contribute to the unique feeling and thereby help define the neighbourhood. This protected feeling seems to result from the minimal number paths leading into the area. As well, the obstacle Laval Square presents to through traffic and the fact that most of the major heavy volume paths like Brunette, Blue Mountain and Rochester traverse the study area aid in keeping the Laval Square District restricted. The residents of Maillardville often perceive these major through streets as barriers. The heavier the traffic the less likelihood there is to have pedestrian activity. Heavier traffic also means the visual image became sketchy. It is significant that none of the subjects spend any time walking along the busy streets.

There is a tendency among the residents to impose regularity on their surroundings; they organize paths into geometrical networks, disregarding curves and non-perpendicular intersections (Lynch
Residents noted abrupt directional shifts in paths enhance the visual clarity of an image, as is the case of Laval Square, but often failed to convey gradual shifts in paths. For example, Brunette Avenue is always sketched as a straight east-west corridor. In fact, Brunette Avenue begins in a north-eastern direction and then curves west. Generally speaking, streetscapes were not a major issue in residents' images of Maillardville. From readings and observation, I assumed that the generally poor condition of most paths and streetscapes would have a negative impact on the image. However, most residents failed to identify streetscapes as a major problem, preferring to focus more upon the upkeep of structures. This may be a result from residents becoming desensitized to the poor conditions which have existed over long periods of time. The residents may have some satisfaction now that the District has recently eliminated the most blatant negative feature of Maillardville's traditional streetscapes - the open ditch.

The widespread use of automobiles by residents contributes to the acceptance of numerous street lights and poorly maintained sidewalks. While subjects seem to accept or ignore the poor quality of streetscapes which characterize much of Maillardville, when improvements are made they don't go unnoticed. As expected, the residents applauded the improved streetscape of the revitalized commercial strip. Most often they recalled what they could see from cars, such as the decorative street lights, boulevard trees, planters, and the Gateway Tower. Few residents mentioned the new
brick paving; this confirms my suspicion that few residents walk along Brunette Avenue.

There were no significant differences between my observations and the comments and sketches regarding pathways. The paths in and around Laval Square are the most significant paths from an image standpoint. Their importance is not so much a result of their inherent characteristics, but the result of the interaction between paths and the landmarks and edges which line them. It is possible that paths might have emerged as the dominant image element if the study area were larger and the community had fewer reference points. However, it seems that paths, outside of Laval Square, play a secondary role in defining the image of Maillardville. Their role is to form the basic organizing network on which to hang all other image elements. It is these other elements that best identify Maillardville's image.

7.3 Edges

With a few noteworthy exceptions, the linear edges in the study area are weak and in need of strengthening. The resident sketch maps like the one below confirm this observation (Map 7.3). The image map is rather bare except for a few points along streets where single buildings, or groups of buildings stand out. Residents have identified three edges as the largest contributors to the image of Maillardville. In order of importance they are: the Begin-Cartier-Laval Square edge, the central Brunette
Map 7.3 Some sketch maps like this one above tended to concentrate more on activity and social centres rather than physical forms. Maillardville has been divided into two simple parts; Laval Square on the right and the Central Brunette Node on the left.
edge, and the commercial redevelopment edge along western Brunette Avenue.

In reviewing the sketch maps it became apparent that the residents have a comprehensive view of only the Laval Square District. It was here, where the early homes are still visually prominent and continuous in form and design, that they effectively reinforce the paths to create an effective impact on observers. My observations predicted this by identifying this edge as the most significant in the study area. One resident describes the Begin-Cartier-Laval edge as: "the most important surviving edge in the community, the real power house in the area" (Roy 1991). The sketch maps reinforce my observations that no strong image exists north of Cartier Avenue nor the north side of Brunette Avenue in the 1100, 1200, 1300 and 1400 blocks. The residents left these areas of their maps completely blank.

The residents of Maillardville were quite knowledgeable about general characteristics which compose the edges of the Laval District. One described the homes in the following way: "The old homes along Cartier and Begin are traditional Maillardville homes with big verandas which were sometimes double, decorated facades and gabled roofs" (N. Garneau 1991). It appears that people can acquire a sense for the general characteristics of a homogeneous edge yet not focus on any one particular object within it. This suggests that there may be some room for change in an established edge if those changes are not dramatic enough to alter the general character of the edge. Even long term residents have trouble
describing individual buildings that are not located on prominent sites nor outstanding in design or upkeep. However, residents are quick to point out two relatively new homes along Laval Square which, as one resident states: "did not fit in" (Roy 1991).

As predicted, residents perceived the redeveloped Brunette commercial strip as a new and positive edge in the community. There is little doubt that the District's efforts created a visually pleasing shopping area. As one resident states: "This commercial area never had a French Canadian feel to it until now" (Lambert 1991). The image of this edge focuses almost entirely on the redeveloped northern side of Brunette Avenue. Except for the gateway tower, residents largely ignore the older south side of the street. When I drew their attention to it, their feeling was that it needs to be redeveloped to complement the northern edge. A number of residents are so pleased with the new environment that they want to see it expanded as far east as King Edward Street.

The residents confirm the prediction that the edges along Brunette Avenue between Woolridge Street and King Edward are also largely ignored. This edge has a serious image problem because of the vacant lots, dilapidated homes, an old trailer park and run-down apartment blocks. One resident summed it up as follows:

I am certainly not going to walk in an area where it is very slummy, or be expected to spend much time there. To be made appealing to people it needs to be redeveloped (Tkach 1991).

Despite these sentiments, the interviews and maps reveal that this edge has a redeeming quality which my observations did not reveal. The Village Credit Union, the Hell's Angels Club House, the Park
Cafe and Mr. Tremble's Shell Gas Station are all important social and community resources with long historical links to the community. These buildings comprise what could be termed the central Brunette social edge. While observations proved effective in identifying edges that were visually prominent and continuous in form, the addition of the central Brunette social edge illustrates that drawing conclusions about a place by observation only can leave important gaps in a place's image.

Observations can underestimate the value of some image elements as well as overestimate the importance of a particular element. I believed the Brunette Multi-family District composes a major positive edge along Brunette Avenue. The townhouses are certainly prominent visually, they are continuous in form and impenetrable to crossing. However, the interviews or sketch maps did not reinforce this belief. Only two of ten residents labelled the townhouses on their maps. It may be that structures which compose the edge are not significant enough to draw attention to themselves. When shown photographs of the various townhomes, few of the residents could identify where the townhouses are located or which group of townhouses were built first. The older dilapidated homes which once characterized the street still appear to dominate the residents' images of this edge.

Residents regard the area south of Brunette Avenue as a separate district from Maillardville. Most of the residents interviewed admit they have not even entered this area, but have experienced it only through driving by. Their acceptance of what is taking
place in this area is more a result of the area's poor condition prior to redevelopment. This observation is a result of numerous comments, such as: "The townhouses are great in comparison to what was there" (Roy 1991).

7.4 Nodes

Nodes contribute strongly to Maillardville's public image. They seem to be the major building block from which residents are able to construct their image. Other elements such as paths, edges and districts seem more useful in describing large cities and regions rather than smaller communities like Maillardville. This, of course, may be a natural result of studying a small area which is well known by its residents. Nodes and landmarks seem to be more site-specific elements which residents come into direct contact with, helping them to comprehend their extent and to form a relationship with them. The sketch map below is typical of the maps drawn by other residents when asked to describe Maillardville in a physical sense (Map 7.4). Typically, they show clusters of buildings or activity nodes.

Residents are able to identify four nodes which are critical to the public image. The writer identifies only the following three in his observations: Laval Square, the King Edward intersection and, the Brunette Commercial strip. The node overlooked by observation is the central Brunette node consisting of the Village Credit Union, Chez Nous and the Foyer Maillard. The residents
Map 7.4 This sketch map indicates that the edges of Maillardville are weak and not easily recalled by residents. Nodes and various landmarks seem to be the most significant image elements.
identified the node based largely on social, non-physical aspects.

The most significant nodes are Laval Square and the King Edward intersection, which contain important uses and vivid physical forms. These nodes, for example, are twice as likely to be recalled by residents than the Brunette Commercial node which is physically impressive but lacks important uses. The more public a use associated with a node, or particular building, the more likely the node will figure prominently into the public image. For example, Makin House, with its prominent location, large size and significant design should be the most significant landmark in the node. However, it is vacant and the residents consider Place des Arts as the most significant image element of the node. This suggests that although the physical form of a structure may be an important contribution to the overall image of a place, if a significant use, preferably a public one, is associated with a structure, that use further enhances the image element.

A recurring theme throughout the analysis of nodes of Maillardville is the tendency among residents to recall particular homes or buildings by associating them with the particular personalities which once lived there. Many residents, for example, recall who built each of the traditional homes. Residents frequently commented on the historical uses associated with homes and buildings. Place des Arts was once the home of the local R.C.M.P. detachment and in its present parking lot, the original Caisse Populaire Credit Union once stood. The use of property or buildings can linger in the collective consciousness of a group of
residents long after the particular structure is removed.

None of Maillardville's natural elements figured prominently into the public image. This was a surprise considering the mature landscaping of Makin Park and the tree lined boulevards of the King Edward node.

Residents identified Municipal Hall for its function. It has no specific visual impact on them. One resident states:

Municipal Hall fits into the node because of its community service aspect only. People have grown accustomed to it being there and feel it belongs. Its future removal from Maillardville will be seen by many people as abandonment of the community (Sevigny 1991).

Much like Municipal Hall, Makin Park is identified as a component of this node but residents are slow to recall its significance. Most simply recall it as the only park in the study area and the area where residents of Maillardville traditionally assemble and play.

The new townhouse development on the north-western corner of this node is forgotten by all but one of the residents interviewed. However, when shown a photograph of a small 6 unit development most residents were in favour of its size since they feel it blends in better with Maillardville's single-family character than the wholesale high density developments found further east along Brunette (Figure 5.10).

Each of the identified nodes has in recent years undergone changes which, to some degree, enhance the node in the public image. The addition of the community centre, "Place Maillardville" in Laval Square and the "Gateway Tower" in the Brunette Commercial
node are two prime examples of positive change. This change is most effective when it strives to work with the established thematic unit of the node rather than competing with or altering it. However, it appears that when a significant form and an important use are combined and placed into an established node, the public image is doubly enhanced.

This is what has occurred in the small multi-family development of Chez Nous in the Central Brunette node. Chez Nous was the only multi-family development in the entire study area which was recalled with any consistency by residents. This development was financed through community funds from the Village Credit Union and was designed and built in cooperation with the District, the developer and long term residents. Chez Nous has since become a valued community asset. The writer spoke to a number of residents who feel Chez Nous suits their needs and fits in well with the traditional style and scale of Maillardville. This development is an excellent example of how community input, if sought early in the development process, can result in a development which residents take pride in and which fits well into the social, historical and physical context of the community. Reinforcing this conclusion is the fact that residents clearly had a better recollection of these types of developments than those located inside the much larger Brunette Multi-family District.
7.5 District

Residents appear not to be accustomed to looking at their community in terms of internal boundaries and divisions. They tend to perceive Maillardville as a unified district, distinct from the rest of Coquitlam. It is only after much discussion and sketching that various parts began to emerge which are distinct from others. Ultimately, the distinction between various parts of the community rests upon the physical make-up of the districts. This physical character, or thematic unit, was generally perceived as continuous throughout the district and discontinuous elsewhere. Those districts which were well defined at the borders, introverted in nature and unique in form proved to be the most distinct to residents. With the exception of the Brunette Multi-family District, all districts contain at least one node or focal point and are sprinkled with landmarks. While residents appear to have a subconscious perception of various districts within the community, they often have only a general perception of them in their immediate memory. Each district seems to have areas within it which have few memorable elements. This accounts for the fragmentation of most sketch maps and the large blank areas left in the descriptions of the urban fabric of Maillardville.

By observation, I identified four districts in Maillardville: Laval Square, Alderson, the Brunette Multi-family district and the Brunette Commercial Strip. Residents agree with classifying the Laval Square area and the Alderson area as separate districts, but
are less affirmative about the other two areas. Perhaps it is premature to suggest that the Brunette Commercial strip has developed into a separate district. Residents tend to perceive it as an integral part, or node, of the Alderson District. This may result from the close historical relationship between the two areas, the lack of clearly defined boundaries between them and the relatively small size of Brunette commercial area.

It is important to point out that the District's efforts to rejuvenate the commercial strip have captured the imagination of residents. While their knowledge of the environment is not as precise as it is in Laval Square District, they nonetheless perceive these changes as having a significant impact on the image of the community. The pessimism which often accompanied the discussions about the future of Maillardville dissipates when residents discuss the revitalized commercial strip. Residents acknowledge problems with the area, such as the lack of significant uses, but they are very positive about the physical changes taking place and hope to see them continue. While the residents realize the new look of the area is imported, they are happy to see the buildings incorporate a French style on such a prominent intersection.

The observation that the Brunette Multi-family area could be a district of Maillardville has not been confirmed. Residents tend to perceive this area as a new and separate community rather than a district of Maillardville. Most residents believe that it contributes little to the overall image of Maillardville as a
French Canadian community and few have any interest or knowledge of what actually exists in the area. As one resident put it: "it was a slum area that is being transformed into something better, but which may threaten the social side of our community" (Tkach 1991). Generally speaking, the excessive densities and lack of contextual design are major criticisms.

Residents' rejection of this district is so complete that only one out of ten residents interviewed even labelled the townhomes on their sketch maps. In fact, residents are unable to distinguish one development from another. No focus or centre exists in the development to act as a landmark. Instead, each development is very different in form and often are in conflict with neighbouring developments. Siting problems also limit the visual impact. Built at the bottom of the slope, these developments are actually twelve feet below Brunette Avenue. Their visibility is further reduced by the height of the fences along the street. The inward orientation of most buildings, gives the impression of a dense, internalized district.

From an image standpoint these developments appear to contribute nothing to the public image of Maillardville according to the residents interviewed. One would have expected the contrast between the old and the new, the vast size and visibility of these developments with the rest of Maillardville would make them important image making elements. However, the opposite seems to be true. Residents are grateful for the redevelopment in areas that have deteriorated, but what is being built is not, in their
opinion, successfully reflecting or strengthening the collective image of Maillardville.

The result is a collective concentration by residents on the few remaining areas of the Laval Square District which still display the traditional image. In contrast, there is a notable disregard for those areas which they perceived as foreign or different. A resident clarifies this sentiment in the following quote:

I have not spent a whole lot of time down there, but it seems to me that the place is meeting a need and the need is to put people up. Yet, I don't see the developments as integrating themselves into the community. Although I suppose the designers have tried to throw in a token French name and a few motifs (Roy 1991).

However, it would be a mistake to conclude from the above discussion that the residents of Maillardville are against all multi-family development in their community. It is clear that after reviewing the photographs of the new developments with residents, that they are willing to accommodate change if it promises to improve those areas of the community which have suffered from neglect. They are also accommodating to development which tries to strengthen the French image of the area by using the traditional designs, materials and siting considerations.

As proof of this, residents consistently choose "Des Amis" (Figures 7.1 and 7.2) and the "Brunette Villas" (Figures 7.3 and 7.4) as developments having a positive impact on the public image. Both of the developments use elements such as: the traditional silhouettes; scale, gabled roofs; placement of doors, windows porches and stairs; building style and material; and the inclusion of important details such as shingled facades, wooden railings and
Figure 7.1  Des Amis is a fine example of contextual design. Elevated porches, symmetrical window placement, gable roofs and wood trim link this development to Maillardville’s French past.

Figure 7.2  Attention to details is critical in linking new development with a place and its established image. The designers of Des Amis paid equal attention to the front and sides of their development.

Figure 7.3  The Brunette Villas is not as detailed as Des Amis, but its strategic location and traditional relationship to the streets makes up for this.

Figure 7.4  The Brunette Avenue streetscape in front of the Brunette Villas is comfortable and inviting to pedestrians. Most other developments retreat from the street and hide behind barriers.
window sashes. All of these elements combine for a total effect which reflects Maillardville's past while providing for the needs of the future (Figures 7.5 and 7.6).

Residents generally regard those developments which fail to display enough of these traditional design elements (Figure 7.7), or apply them incorrectly or awkwardly (Figure 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10), as contributing little, or not at all, to the public image. Developments such as Chez Nous (Figure 7.11) and Des Amis prove that new elements can be introduced successfully. For example, the multi-family development can fit into single-family areas as long as strong design linkages and appropriate scales accompany them. Development is not necessarily harmful to unique places. What is harmful is development which insensitively imposes a foreign character on an existing place without recognizing the place's special character or what type of image the residents want (Garnham 1985, 31).

Residents of Maillardville perceive their community as consisting of essentially two districts which correspond more or less to the area settled by the first settlers (Laval Square District) and the area settled by the second major wave of newcomers in the 1930's (Alderson District). However, residents are also aware of two new emerging entities: the Brunette Multi-family District is in fact being perceived as separate and distinct from the Laval Square District; the Brunette Commercial strip, although recognized, is not yet at this point. Each of these new entities, however, has the potential to supplant their original
Figure 7.5 Traditional elements of the heritage homes in Laval Square applied to new development link them with the established image.

Figure 7.6 These traditional elements can be applied in a variety of ways to distinguish one development from another.
Figure 7.7 Place Maillard was built with little care for the image of Maillardville.

Figure 7.8 Place d'heritage has tried to incorporate some elements of the traditional thematic unit into the design but the elements are poorly applied.

Figure 7.9 Inappropriately applied details can damage an image as much as a lack of them.

Figure 7.10 Residents found this development confusing in spite of the fact that it does display many of the traditional elements of the thematic unit.
Figure 7.11 Chez Nous is an example of contextual design in which residents had some input into the design. The scale, design and detailing is inkeeping with the traditional form of Maillardville.
parent district as the cornerstone of the community's image.

Residents have welcomed and encouraged the growth of the commercial strip because it promises to contribute positively to the French character and traditions of the community. Despite this, community support for the further expansion of the Brunette Multi-family District will be difficult to attain because it can only be accomplished at the expense of the Laval Square District. Most residents now regard the Brunette Multi-family District as a separate community. Residents are uneasy about possible redevelopment on streets such as Begin, Cartier and Laval. These are the streets, edges and landmarks which constitute the public image of Maillardville for the majority of residents. Residents have a strong perception of what styles and designs fit with their images. Although they are not against change, only change which is sympathetic to the traditional environment and image of their community is strongly supported. As the experience of garnering public input for Chez Nous proves, when public input is sought early enough it can be extremely helpful in directing change in a unique environment.

7.6 Landmarks

Landmarks prove to be a major element in the sense of place and image for Maillardville. Some residents, for example, perceive Maillardville simply as a collection of various landmarks (Map 7.5). This is not surprising considering the small size of the
Map 7.5 This sketch map illustrates that some residents have an intricate knowledge about the environment of Maillardville. For these residents their image of the community was simply a collection of various landmarks all relating to each other.
study area and the familiarity of the residents with their neighbourhood. There is, however, a distinct hierarchy surrounding the landmarks identified by residents. A landmark's present use, physical form, scale, visibility, location and historical significance all affect whether or not a particular building or feature is considered a primary or secondary landmark. The more of these qualities that are associated with a landmark, the more likely it is to be a major landmark.

Residents consider the upkeep of a building to be important. Poorly maintained buildings are often blocked out of the public image; the residents mentioned none of them in their replies. While landmarks can be highly personal, in that they can consist of almost any recognizable feature, there is a level of consistency in recognizing some. Observations were successful in identifying community landmarks which are physically significant. However, a landmark's importance may rest upon less visible qualities such as use, cultural and historical connection which observation might fail to identify. Resident interviews complement observation by adding these multi-dimensional landmarks. This confirms the value of personal interviews with residents.

Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes is the most important landmark in Maillardville. In reply to the question: "What first comes to mind when I say Maillardville?", residents inevitably turn to the Laval Square area. A combination of physical, cultural and social features continue to keep Lourdes Church at the centre of Maillardville's image. The chimes of the church bells calling the
parish to mass is an added dimension to this landmark which is cherished by old and new residents alike.

The Church provides the context and focus for the traditional homes which line the edges of Laval Square, Cartier and Begin Street. Residents were able to pinpoint the location on the street of each home after being shown photographs of the homes. This is especially true for homes around Laval Square. However, the residents could often not provide detailed descriptions of individual homes, only general characteristics of all the homes in the area. Thus, these homes form a significant edge, but do not display enough landmark features to stand out on their own from their surroundings. While residents classified them individually as secondary elements, their combined influence on the image is quite significant.

Although observation identified many secondary landmarks, residents were obviously more adept at ranking these landmarks in significance. It's not surprising that the last remaining traditional home on Brunette Street has attained landmark status (Figure 4.14). The same is true for Millside Public School. Residents regard the School as a secondary landmark even though it has always been regarded as somewhat of a foreign element in the community and has been altered significantly by additions which diminished the structure's original form. This classification is largely the result of its long association with the community, its continued use as a school and its location at the increasingly important Schoolhouse-Brunette Avenue intersection.
The second primary landmark identified by residents is Place des Arts located in the King Edward node (Figure 4.11). The importance of this structure to the image of Maillardville is doubly enhanced by the community activities which occur there. Makin House on the contrary, sits on a more prominent site and is equally as impressive visually, but, since it stands empty, it lacks an association of uses which would make it a primary landmark. Although Municipal Hall possesses none of the physical beauty nor charm of either of the above two homes, residents regard it as a primary landmark due to its government role. Generally, for a structure to be classified as a primary landmark, it must be physically unique and have a significant public use.

While the landmarks east of Marmont Avenue are generally characterized with unique physical characteristics, those to the west are noted more for their uses. Secondary landmarks such as Trev's Cafe, the Park Cafe and the Hells Angel's Club House are remembered by residents as social gathering points. These social landmarks were not observed. It appears that if a use is significant enough, it can elevate a seemingly mediocre structure to a landmark.

This is what has occurred with the Village Credit Union. Many residents regard it as a primary landmark. This is largely the result of the fact that the community itself gave life to the Credit Union. It remains today an important financial institution of French residents throughout Coquitlam. The Foyer Maillard is another primary landmark which towers over Maillardville. Tucked
between these two landmarks, is the secondary landmark Chez Nous. It is seen by residents as a landmark largely due to its incorporation of various features of traditional Maillardville home design into its form. Residents identified one new landmark located within the commercial node. While none of the new buildings in the node stand out individually, the Gateway Tower does. The Tower has transformed a corner which was traditionally regarded an eyesore into the primary entrance of the community.

Residents considered landmarks to be an important element to use in understanding and describing their community. The landmarks described here are key to Maillardville's public image. While the majority of the landmarks have had a long history in the community and display a form characteristic of the early community, new landmarks have emerged. The most successful of these landmarks are those which have borrowed from the community's past. Chez Nous' contextual design and the commercial redevelopment along French lines proves that new structures can become significant landmarks if they serve a community need or fit in physically with the established context.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion to this study consists of three parts: First, comments need to be made about the utilization of structured observation and resident interviews as complementary methods of investigation to determine a place image. Secondly, a by-product of this study worth relating is a list of helpful observations and possible strategies for image preservation and enhancement. Thirdly, possible applications of this work to help preserve and enhance Maillardville's image.

Structured observation proved to be an efficient and accurate tool in assessing Maillardville. Observation proved most effective when image elements displayed a vivid physical form. This vividness was critical to the development of an image, it is what set an object apart from its surroundings. Structured observation, however, is not without its weaknesses. Relying uniquely on observation, one could pass over simple structures and small objects. In contrast to this, the resident interviews proved that such elements, for example Trev's Cafe and the Village Credit
Union, are critical to the community image. Thus, observation may fall short in revealing social, cultural or historical components which may also contribute to the image.

The second weakness found in a strictly observational approach was its emphasis on the physical or visible world. The most noteworthy example of this was anticipating that the townhomes which line Brunette Avenue would constitute a significant edge. The verbal interview material and the sketch maps indicated that this was not the case. Residents ignored this edge in the interviews and the entire Brunette Multi-family area is now considered a separate and foreign element.

Resident interviews and sketch mapping were critical to this study and largely validated the results of observations. The interview process played a critical role in confirming the observations and findings. Resident interviews were extremely helpful in gleaning information about the environment which otherwise may not be visible. The interviews also proved the usefulness of Lynch's image categories in adequately describing a physical environment, but they did have difficulties structuring intangible components of an image. For example, visible uses and social or cultural history often combined with a consistent architectural style to create a unique identity. To aid in understanding how important non-visible elements were to a place image one resident noted:

Maillardville is not just the place or its old buildings, it's the people, the community, the life and the activities that revolve around those old buildings. All of this together is what created the sense of community and a sense of belonging.
which is so very important (Tkach 1991).

The function of a building, its history and its meaning to residents is not always visible or comprehensible to the outside observer. Resident descriptions of Maillardville as their "home" or "community" are social qualities which are difficult to perceive in a physical environment. Yet, such statements are an integral part of a person's image of a place. They reflect a person's commitment to a place and are a reflection of the inter-relationship between a person's mind, their activities and the place.

Residents' image maps were similar to those created through observation, thus confirming the usefulness of observation. However, there were noticeable differences in the two sets of image maps. Resident interviews were also useful in evaluating and commenting on the effectiveness of public programs and policies as well as private development. Observation can only speculate on the impact of these elements. The success of new elements such as the Village Square and Chez Nous illustrated how public input and contextual design can work together and be extremely helpful in preserving and directing change in unique places.

Just as observations were not completely reliable in assessing a place image, the interviews were not without their weaknesses. It appears that images of a place can become obsolete if they are not confirmed from time to time for us (Hiss 1990, 81). This was evidenced by the two residents, who were more descriptive of what existed in Maillardville of the 1940's than today. This resulted
in a reticence on the part of some residents to recognize either a deteriorating environment or one that is undergoing a process of renewal (Hiss 1090, 81). Interviewing other residents and personal observation proved effective in countering this weakness.

The sample of residents interviewed was also small and this affected the methodology. Some may argue that it is impossible to generalize from this sample that a "true" public image had been uncovered. However, the sample was not meant to provide a statistically significant response to a definite question but rather, to identify impressions in a larger sense. As well, the residents' comments largely confirmed what observation discovered. The complementary methods do give a fairly accurate insight into the composite city image of Maillardville and that visual form does play a significant role in environmental images. While observations were successful in identifying the majority of the visible, physical image elements, the true public image was identified only through an amalgam of observation and resident interviews. The mutually supportive findings of these methods suggest that the discovered image of Maillardville was accurate.

In the course of determining an image of Maillardville the following information was discovered about the general topic of imagery. Although not organized in any particular order, this information could be a helpful starting point for others interested in studying and preserving unique urban places.

1. Images can vary significantly between individuals, yet overlapping elements do occur, these images can be effectively identified and form the key building blocks of a public image.
2. These overlapping images can be conveniently grouped into five categories: pathways, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks.

3. Images are not as intangible or difficult an urban quality to study as some believe. Careful observation of a place is economical and highly effective in determining the physical, visible components of a place image. Resident interviews effectively double-check observations and fine tune the image related to the social, cultural and historical components of place images.

4. Whether positive or negative, images can linger in the collective consciousness of a community long after the elements that sparked these images are gone.

5. Elements in the environment which have a vivid or unique physical form, scale or use, are most likely to be major image making elements.

6. People who inhabit a place are able to simplify a complex environment into a few elements. These elements form the basis of their "place image".

7. People are far more likely to recall elements which contribute positively to a valued place image than negative ones.

8. Elements which do not fit comfortably into the traditional image of a place may be ignored by residents.

9. A structure's present or historic use affects its imageability.

10. Nodes and landmarks tend to dominate the public image of small places. This is especially true if those interviewed are extremely familiar with a place.

11. Unsympathetic changes to unique places can lead to a sense of loss or alienation on the part of residents.

12. Residents are far more likely to respond favourably when principles of contextual design (ie. consideration of a place's social, historical and physical context) are applied to changes in unique environments.

13. Positive change in unique environments consists of working with the established image elements.

14. Although residents may not fully understand the complexities of their place images, they do have a strong perception of
what will and will not fit into this image.

15. If public input is sought early enough in the development process, it can result in changes residents will take pride in since it will fit well into the social, historical and physical context of the community.

16. Residents living within a unique environment are not necessarily against all change. They are against change when it is unsympathetic to the traditional environment and image.

17. When given a choice between existing blight and non-contextual redevelopment, most residents choose the latter even if it means the area will cease to be perceived as part of the traditional community. Thus, their ambivalence to the decay of unique environments is just as harmful to an established image as inappropriate change.

While the intent of this study was to discover an image of Maillardville using observation and interviews, some consideration must be given to practical applications of the study. The District of Coquitlam has already taken considerable steps in trying to preserve Maillardville's character through the adoption of an Official Community Plan, design guidelines for multi-family and commercial development and the designation of significant buildings, such as Makin House and Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, as heritage structures. Yet, as the Image Preservation and Enhancement Map showed, some areas of Maillardville continue to contribute significantly to the image while others do not. The application of district policies has not always resulted in the anticipated enhancement of the image. The general failure of the multi-family developments to contribute significantly to the public image is a good case in point. Alternatively, the single-family homes of old Maillardville are not protected by any policies, but continue to contribute significantly to Maillardville's image.
The following suggestions could be helpful in maintaining and enhancing Maillardville's special character. Maillardville's image hinges critically upon the homes of the early settlement and yet provincial legislation prohibits design controls for single-family structures. If Maillardville's image is to be preserved and enhanced this dilemma must be solved. Two suggestions related to educating the public, municipal staff and councillors about Maillardville's image could ease this dilemma. First, the Image Preservation and Enhancement Map could be adopted by Council as part of the Official Community Plan. All changes within the study area would then have to be evaluated on the basis of whether it supports and enhances the established community image or not. Streets characterized by single-family development would now have some claim to special status. Secondly, with this plan officially recognized, staff responsible for examining new homes plans or renovations could determine if the subject property falls within an area considered significant to the public image. If it does, staff could suggest non-binding changes to the house design or refer the plans for quick comment by the District's urban design specialist. The Coquitlam Heritage Society, in conjunction with the Planning Department, could prepare a Heritage Design Brochure for single-family dwellings within old Maillardville. This brochure would form the basis of the design review. It must be remembered that this design review would not be binding on the public and could not be used to withhold a building permit. Council support and staff commitment to preserving and enhancing
Maillardville's unique image and power of persuasion is what is necessary for this suggestion to succeed.

In an attempt to improve the imageability of multi-family developments in Maillardville, the study points in two directions. First, public recognition of a development was always strongest when the public had a significant and early part to play in the development process. Secondly, developments such as Des Amis which display a strong contextual design contribute to the established image. With these points in mind it is suggested the public be brought into the development process for multi-family development much earlier than is the case now. Traditionally the public does not get to see a development until public hearing. At this point the design is generally set and the plans have been approved in principle by the Planning Department and Council. Council could require all developers to display large proposals publicly at Makin House while the project is being considered by planning staff. This would provide the public ample time to review the project and make comments. These comments could then be reviewed by staff prior to submitting the final report to Council. To ensure the public is kept abreast of each development proposal, public notification letters could be sent to all adjacent property owners surrounding the proposal site.

In an effort to improve contextual design a Citizen Advisory Design Committee could be set up to review all proposed growth and change proposals within the area covered by the Image Preservation and Enhancement Map. This committee could make non-binding
recommendations to Council as to the suitability of the proposal. This evaluation will identify any conflicts between the development and the Map, provide suggested revisions to the proposal, and become a component in final implementation decisions (Garnham 1985. 54).


Racine, Mr. Resident, Maillardville, British Columbia. Interview, 4 December 1991.
Racine, Mrs. Resident, Maillardville, British Columbia. Interview, 4 December 1991.


APPENDIX ONE

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What first comes to mind when I say the word Maillardville?
   What symbolizes the word "Maillardville" for you?
   How would you broadly describe Maillardville in a physical sense?

2. I would like you to make a quick map of Maillardville as you see it. Make it just as if you were making a rapid description of the neighbourhood to a stranger, covering all the main features. We don't expect an accurate drawing, just a rough sketch. (Interviewer is to take notes on the sequence in which the map is drawn).

3. Please give me complete and explicit directions for the trip that you would take following the map provided. Picture yourself actually taking the trip, and describe the sequence of things that you actually see, hear and smell along the way, including the path markers that have become important to you, and the clues that a stranger would need to make the same decisions that you have to make. We are interested in the physical pictures of things. It is not important if you can't remember the names of streets and places. (During the recital of the trip, the interviewer is to probe, where needed, for more detailed descriptions.)

4. Do you have any particular emotional feelings about various parts of your trip? How long would it take you? Are there parts of your trip that you feel uncertain for your location?

5. Now I would like to know what elements of Maillardville you think are the most distinctive. They may be large or small, but tell us those that for your are the easiest to identify and remember. (For each of the elements listed in responses to 4, the interviewer goes on to ask question 5).

6. a. Would you describe __________ for me. If you were taken there blindfolded, when the blindfold was taken off what clues would you use to positively identify where you were
   b. Would you show me on your map where __________ is? and if appropriate where the boundaries of it are.

7. Would you show me on your map the direction of north?

8. The interview is over now, but it would help if we could have a few minutes of free discussion.
   a. How important do you feel orientation and the recognition
of city elements are to people?

b. Do you feel any pleasure from knowing where you are or where you are going? Or displeasure in the reverse.

c. Do you find Maillardville an easy neighbourhood to find your way in or to identify its parts?

d. What neighbourhoods of your acquaintance have good orientation? Why?

e. Does Maillardville have a distinct image?

f. How secure do you believe this image is? What sort of things do you see threatening this image?

g. Do you have any suggestions on how best to preserve Maillardville's image?

h. Have there been any recent changes in Maillardville over the last five years that have altered your image of Maillardville for either the better or worse?

PICTURES

- Would you please group the pictures together in groups that seem natural to you. How did you determine the group? Which group most exemplifies the image of Maillardville and least. Why?

- Can you please locate on your map where these photographs are located. Are there any you can't place or are unsure of? Why?

- Please arrange the photos of the recent developments in an order based upon those that fit your image of Maillardville best and those that don't. What physical element makes one development better than another?