

Citizen participation in the planning process:  
As applied to downtown revitalization

by

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## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to research and analyze citizen participation in the planning process, as applied to downtown revitalization. Downtown is, or was, the center of activity in most communities. Some downtowns have been preserved, or restored, and still serve as the central business district and hub of economic and social exchange. Other downtowns have decayed, decentralized or disappeared. Citizen awareness, citizen concern, and more importantly citizen participation have often been the difference in whether or not a downtown continues to serve as the central location for business services and presents an image of community success and pride.

Understanding the problems and objectives of downtown revitalization is a challenge. Henry Churchill, architect and city planner, said:

There is endless talk of "urban redevelopment," and "Master planning," and "stopping the spread of blight," and "the process of decentralization." There is little understanding of the processes at work, of the historical continuity of our urbanism....The forces for change are relentless, the human aspirations remain the same. New forces are at work, which are incomprehensible except in terms of the past, if only for contrast, and are perhaps unpredictable on any score. The inability to predict should not make us fear understanding, rather it should make us seek it, for if we are to replan our cities we must know what it is that changes and why.<sup>1</sup>

Citizen participation is not new. It has been said that: "The involvement of citizens in the governing of society is the subject of history itself."<sup>2</sup>

### The Problems and the Objectives

The problems and the objectives of citizen participation in the planning process as applied to downtown revitalization are varied and complex. They vary in type, size, detail, origin and solution. And they vary from one downtown to another.

However, there is one common denominator--citizens, the people involved.

Citizens should give direction to the plan since [it is] their city,...and, therefore, the quality of their lives that are affected. Thus, citizens should be the major decision makers in the delineation of values, goals and objectives.<sup>3</sup>

It is logical that the problems and the objectives of downtown revitalization are best identified by the users, the citizens of downtown. In the many examples of downtown revitalization, those with active citizen participation appear to be the most successful.

In the most successful examples, the public has been involved from the very outset of the process - during its inception, throughout planning the implementation, and on into the operational phase.<sup>4</sup>

The problems and objectives examined in this thesis have been selected, analyzed and summarized in order to provide a better understanding of citizen participation in the planning process, as applied to downtown revitalization.

### The Hypothesis

The following hypothesis has been selected as the premise to be addressed in this thesis:

Active citizen participation in a downtown revitalization program improves the chance of success of that program.

This hypothesis has been analyzed and tested in accordance with a selected research method.

### Research Methods

There are many research methods to test a hypothesis, just as there are many approaches to citizen participation. Van Dalen and Meyer provide a thorough guide to research methods in their book, Understanding Educational Research.<sup>5</sup> They present nine basic methods. These have been reviewed and analyzed as to their appropriateness and adaptability to the topic of citizen participation in the planning process, as applied to downtown revitalization. Methods they referred to as historical, descriptive, developmental, case and field, correlational, true experimental, quasi-experimental and action were carefully considered and rejected as not as appropriate and adaptable to the hypothesis as the selected method.

The causal-comparative method was the method selected to test the hypothesis. The purpose of causal-comparative research is to investigate possible cause-and-effect relationships by observing some existing consequence and searching back through the data for plausible causal factors.

Causal-comparative research is "ex post facto" in nature, which means the data are collected after all the events of interest have occurred. The investigator then takes one or more effects (dependent variables) and examines the data by going back through time, seeking

out causes, relationships, and their meanings. The dependent variables in the topic of downtown revitalization will be the response variables, the citizen participation actions to improve the chance of success of a downtown revitalization program.

The causal-comparative method is applicable to the selected hypothesis since in the subject of downtown revitalization it is not always possible to select, control, and manipulate the variables necessary to study cause-and-effect relations directly as in the experimental method. Also, the causal-comparative method is applicable when the control of all variations except a single independent variable may be highly unrealistic and artificial, preventing the normal interaction with other influential variables.

It is recognized that there are weaknesses and shortcomings involved in utilizing the causal-comparative method. The major weaknesses are lack of control over independent variables; difficulty in being certain that the relevant causative factor is actually included among the many factors under study; the complication that no single factor is the cause of an outcome but some combination and interaction of factors go together under certain conditions to yield a given outcome; a phenomenon may result not only from multiple causes but also from one cause in one instance and from another cause in another instance; when a relationship between two variables is discovered, determining which is the cause and which the effect may be difficult; the fact that two, or more, factors are related does not

necessarily imply a cause-and-effect relationship; classifying subjects into dichotomous groups for the purpose of comparison is difficult; and locating existing groups of subjects who are similar in all respects except for their exposure to one or more variables is extremely difficult.<sup>6</sup>

All of the research methods have weaknesses and shortcomings. The causal-comparative method was selected because it is most applicable to the selected hypothesis and to the problems, objectives, and variables of citizen participation in the planning process, as applied to downtown revitalization.

#### Selected method and technique

The causal-comparative method was used to investigate possible cause-and-effect relationships by observing some existing consequence and searching back through the data for plausible causal factors. This method was combined with a citizen participation procedural technique created from the review of several procedural techniques. The procedural steps applied, using the causal-comparative method were:

1. problem identification
2. goals and objectives
3. alternatives
4. decision/commitment
5. implementation
6. monitoring.



These steps were selected as the basic procedure represented in several of the techniques reviewed. They provide a systematic measure of the problems, objectives and variables to be analyzed in order to determine whether or not active citizen participation in a downtown revitalization program improves the chance of success of that program.

#### Selected case studies

Downtown revitalization has occurred in many cities in the United States and in other countries. Revitalization has occurred in large metropolitan cities and in small rural towns. Case studies were selected from Iowa in order to more easily collect the available data and to be more familiar with the political, social and economic influences so that a more accurate analysis could be made.

A number of downtown revitalization projects have been undertaken in Iowa. Two of these projects, Iowa City and Mason City, were selected for application and analysis of the research method and approach technique. These projects were selected based upon similarities in the size and age of their downtown areas, the size of the citizen population, and the past fifteen year period in which their downtown revitalization has been considered.

Iowa City is the county seat of Johnson County in southeast Iowa. Current population is estimated to be 50,508 according to the 1980 census. Census population in 1970 was 46,850 and in 1960 it was 33,443.<sup>7</sup> The University of Iowa, located north and west of

downtown Iowa City, has a current enrollment of approximately 25,000 students who are included in the 1980 population census number. Therefore, the Iowa City citizen population is approximately 25,500, not counting the student population.

The downtown area consists of approximately sixteen square blocks of public and private commercial and service related uses. Iowa City was founded in 1839. Downtown revitalization activities began in the early 1960s.<sup>8</sup>

Iowa City's downtown revitalization is recognized as successful based upon citizens' and city officials' satisfaction with the revitalization results to-date.

Downtown Iowa City these days offers living evidence that patience can pay off or perhaps that perserverance can have its rewards...most people would agree that the work to-date provides its own rewards. They talk about it, they enjoy it, and hence they use it...people indeed have taken over the central business district again...a downtown given over to people, not entirely to concrete, cars and commercial buildings...the success of what has been done-to-date forecasts further success.<sup>9</sup>

Mason City is the county seat of Cerro Gordo County in north central Iowa. Current population is estimated to be 30,144 according to the 1980 census. Census population in 1970 was 30,379 and in 1960 it was 30,642.<sup>10</sup> The North Iowa Area Community College, located at the east edge of the city approximately 3½ miles from the downtown area, has a current enrollment of approximately 2,000 students who are included in the 1980 population census numbers. Therefore, the Mason City citizen population is approximately 28,100, not counting the student population.

The downtown area consists of approximately sixteen square blocks of public and private commercial and service related uses. Mason City was chartered as an incorporated town in 1870. Downtown revitalization activities began in the early 1960s.<sup>11</sup>

Mason City's downtown revitalization is recognized as unsuccessful based upon citizens' and city officials' dissatisfaction with the revitalization results to-date.

...these same individuals (city officials) have created and allowed to perpetuate one of the largest eyesores in the state of Iowa, namely the doomed Southbridge demolition area. (Southbridge is a proposed downtown shopping mall and is the key feature in the city's downtown redevelopment.)<sup>12</sup>

#### Procedure

The problems and objectives of citizen participation in the planning process, as applied to downtown revitalization, have been identified. A hypothesis has been stated and a research method and a procedural technique has been selected to test the hypothesis.

Chapter II provides a review of existing literature on citizen participation in general, citizen participation in downtown revitalization and citizen participation techniques.

Chapter III presents the application and analysis of the selected research method and procedural technique to the selected case study cities.

Chapter IV provides conclusions that are meaningful and usable for others who wish to study--or better yet be involved--in citizen participation in the planning process as applied to downtown revitalization.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Henry S. Churchill, The City is the People (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Efraim Gil and Enil Lucchesi, "Citizen Participation in Planning" in The Practice of Local Government, eds. Frank S. So, Israel Stollman, Frank Beal, and David S. Arnold (Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association, 1979), p. 552.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 566.

<sup>4</sup>Roberto Brambilla and Gianni Longo, For Pedestrians Only (New York: Watson-Guptill Publications, 1977), p. 30.

<sup>5</sup>D. B. Van Dalen and W. J. Meyer, Understanding Educational Research (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966), Chapter 7.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Population: Iowa.

<sup>8</sup>Paul R. Glaves (Downtown Development Coordinator, City of Iowa City, Iowa, 1976-1979), interview, December 1981.

<sup>9</sup>Iowa City Press-Citizen, August 8, 1979.

<sup>10</sup>U.S. Department of Commerce, *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>Jon S. Ewing, Community Development Director, City of Mason City, Iowa, interview, December 1981.

<sup>12</sup>Mason City Globe Gazette, August 10, 1981.

## CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews existing literature related to the subject of citizen participation in the planning process in general, and citizen participation in downtown revitalization in particular. Also, some of the citizen participation methods developed have been reviewed.

### Citizen Participation in General

To understand citizen participation in the planning process requires that "participation" be defined. Michael Fagance observes: "One of the most distressing elements in the debate, particularly from the viewpoint of the participants, and the students of the subject, is the lack of consensus on the definition of 'participation.'"<sup>1</sup> Michael P. Brooks states: "the term 'citizen participation' will refer to processes whereby citizens are involved in the making of those public policy decisions which affect their own welfare."<sup>2</sup> And William F. Swegle defined citizen participation as: "acts by those not formally empowered to make decisions - the acts being intended to influence the behavior of those who have such decisional power."<sup>3</sup> Sewell and Coppock point out an important distinction between "participation" and "influence": "Participation refers to the direct involvement of the public in decision-making through a series of formal and informal mechanisms. Public participation in decision-making does not necessarily mean that

public influence is exerted; public views and opinions may be ignored by decision-makers."<sup>4</sup> Based on this review of the various definitions applied to "participation" the word "active" has been selected to clarify the definition of participation as used in the hypothesis in the preceding chapter.

Also, important to the understanding of citizen participation in the planning process is a brief review of the forms, roles, styles and values of participation possible. Brooks states: "Unfortunately, there are almost as many schemes for categorizing modes of citizen participation as there are writers on the subject."<sup>5</sup> He presents a thorough discussion on the forms, pros and cons, and future prospects for citizen participation. His basic concern is the conflict between technocracy and participation. He states: "these two forces--the growth of technocracy and the quest for a truly participatory democracy--interact in such a manner as to produce considerable social tension....Citizens want to participate, but find the technologically-based decision-making process of the 'expert' to be quite incomprehensible."<sup>6</sup> Brooks refers to Leonard Cottrell who notes: "the best and most complete services imaginable can rob us of our human dignity, when we are not allowed a reasonable measure of self-direction and participation in shaping our destiny."<sup>7</sup>

Charles L. Mulford and Gerald E. Klomglan state that: "Americans generally believe that problems should be solved at the local level. So frequently when people face problems, they turn to their local community - and usually local organizations."<sup>8</sup> Levine and White state

that "The coordination of activities of a number of individuals toward some objective or goal has been designated as a distinguishing feature of organizations..."<sup>9</sup> Organizations, both formal and informal, play an important role in our society and in our personal needs.

Hampton, Summer and Webber state that what the "group" offers the individual is "(1) the satisfaction of complex social needs, (2) emotional support in identifying oneself and dealing with the world, and (3) assistance in meeting goals."<sup>10</sup>

Historically, citizen participation has resulted in an expansion of the role of the people, especially the poor, in decision-making; resulted in the redefinition of the role of the planner in both the planning and implementation process; and provided an analysis of the appropriateness of highly centralized and professional governmental structures. The first of these concerns is best represented by Sherry Arnstein's well-known typology of participation and the strong demand for citizen control and power it presented.<sup>11</sup> As an outgrowth of these concerns, organizing strategies became a concern of planners, and the appropriateness of the traditional planner-as-technician role came into question.<sup>12</sup> From the interface between a desire to change the outcome of the decision process and the questioning of the traditional role of the planner, the then "revolutionary" concept of advocacy planning became popular.<sup>13</sup> Brooks adds: "It is important to remember that the politicization of citizen participation in the community action programs was greatly stimulated and abetted by another potent force already at work in our society, namely, the civil rights

movement. 'Maximum feasible participation' flourished...because it enabled the civil rights movement and the black revolution to find new forms for growth."<sup>14</sup>

An interesting presentation on "Participation: Old Style" is offered by Sima R. Osdoby: "Traditionally, the planning process has been participatory in the sense that non-planners or representatives of the 'public good' have often set the goals, determined what was to be changed, and made the decisions on which plan to implement. Those traditional participants have been members of the established order-- the planning board, the mayor, city manager, the conservation commission, the housing authority, the chamber of commerce, the university president, the hospital director, school board, the county commissioners, etc."<sup>15</sup>

Another related article by Herbert H. Hyman relates two "styles" of planning with citizens. One style was more traditional and less successful due to a lack of active citizen participation, while the other style was to work more closely with the participants and to be more sensitive to their specific needs and desires.<sup>16</sup> Richard S. Bolan writes about the "emerging views of planning," the "variations in planning strategy," and the research directions suggested by analysis. He summarizes, "No matter how we improve our substantive knowledge of how cities function, and no matter how we improve our capabilities in information handling, operations research, and prediction, if there is not a corollary development of the community's capacity for improved decision-making within the framework of



democratic processes, there is the real possibility that heavy investment in the current form of city planning technique will have been in vain."<sup>17</sup> Bolan's comments suggest a concern for values of participation in the planning process.

Robin M. William, Jr. states: "Values are important causal components in individual conduct and in the functioning of social systems."<sup>18</sup> He defines values as: "those conceptions of desirable states of affairs that are utilized in selective conduct as criteria for preference or choice or as justifications for proposed or actual behavior."<sup>19</sup> Williams writes in detail on the sources and consequences of different values, and of measures and indicators of values, and he concludes: "The most important evidence on values comes from records of actual behavior in all areas of American life."<sup>20</sup> Gil and Lucchesi appear to agree with Williams on the importance of "values," and they conclude:

The societal values underlying citizen participation are many. Among the most significant are: protecting citizens' rights; guarding the public interest; maintaining the stability of society; and reducing the alienation of individuals within a large technical society. There is a definite demand for citizen participation, and when its benefits to the society are considered, it seems apparent that all efforts must be made to include citizen participation in the local planning process.<sup>21</sup>

Some of the forms, roles, styles and values of citizen participation have been reviewed. There is yet another factor, an ingredient which is essential to the meaningful participation of people. This ingredient is "attitude."

Paul and Percival Goodman discuss the "need for philosophy."

They say:

Mostly, however, the thousand places that one plans for have mixed conditions and mixed values. The site and history of a place are always particular, and these make the beauty of a plan. Different people in a place want different things. Some of these conditions and aims are compatible and some are incompatible....People are rightly suspicious of planning, and they end up with everything being overplanned, no freedom from the plan, and the purpose lost. This is because nobody has dared to be philosophical, to raise the question of the end in view....<sup>22</sup>

"Daniel Burnham," says Zane L. Miller, "superintended the development of the Plan for Chicago between 1906 and 1909. The plan was bold, practical, flexible, and comprehensive. Its objectives were to assure the city's economic efficiency; to make it a comfortable, convenient, and esthetically pleasing place in which to live; and, above all, to encourage unity. Its method was, on the one hand, to establish a broad physical framework within which future improvements could be fit and, on the other, to propose specific projects for immediate implementation."<sup>23</sup>

"Make no little plans," wrote Daniel H. Burnham in 1912, "they have no magic to stir men's blood. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work....Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty."<sup>24</sup>

Jane Jacobs, on the subject of "attitude," says:

In short, will the city be any fun? The citizen can be the ultimate expert on this; what is needed is an observant eye, curiosity about people....Let the citizens decide what end results they want....What a wonderful challenge there is! Rarely before has the citizen had such a chance to reshape the city, and to make it the kind of city he likes and that others will too. If this means leaving room for the incongruous, or the vulgar or the strange, that is part

of the challenge, not the problem. Designing a dream city is easy; rebuilding a living one takes imagination.<sup>25</sup>

#### Citizen Participation in Downtown Revitalization

The application of citizen participation specifically to downtown revitalization has been going on for many years. Cities in the United States are "young" in comparison with European cities and cities in other parts of the world. And yet, "revitalization" of our downtowns has been a part of the planning challenge almost from the beginning of our cities. Kenneth Halpern says:

...few American downtowns possess the sense of order, beauty interest, and vitality of European centers. This is true, in part, because of the way most American cities developed.<sup>26</sup>

The development of most American cities coincided with the industrial revolution. Industrial and commercial trading sites were selected primarily in terms of transportation access and cities grew up and around them. The "downtown" simply happened wherever it seemed convenient for people to congregate or wherever shrewd businessmen were first to provide necessary services. Halpern continues:

The chaos of early American cities was overwhelming. If a city had no plan of its own, it often adopted the U.S. government's organizing framework - the rectangular survey - a grid. The rest was up to individuals, and although in small parts of some cities there were restrictive covenants tied to land ownership, it was not until 1916 that the first zoning resolution sought to place minimal restraints upon what an individual could build between that gridiron network of streets.<sup>27</sup>

Streets provided the circulation network for the automobile and service vehicles. Much has been written about their influence and impact on the city and the downtown specifically. John J. Fruin says:

Transportation, whether by walking or other means, has always been a significant determinant of the structure of the city. Because the internal transportation of the cities of the past was based on the convenience of walking, these cities were characterized by more attention to the human qualities of design. The advent of machine transportation has changed this perspective, forcing man into an unbalanced competition for urban space....Despite its advantages of personal mobility, the auto is responsible for a great many negative changes in our society.<sup>28</sup>

The "personal mobility" of the automobile directly and indirectly influenced many changes and attitudes regarding the downtown areas.

Arthur B. Gallion and Simon Eisner state:

The forces gnawing at downtown are manifold and the lag in positive response to the competition is hurting. Decentralization of retail shopping centers has been a natural evolution of urban expansion, and the relative position of the central business district is headed for modification....Dispersion of the residential population from the environs of the central business district has altered the economic base. Those who could afford it have espaced to the outskirts....The flight to the suburbs has drawn with it a decentralization of consumer retail business.<sup>29</sup>

These reviews represent some of the physical reasons why downtowns have changed and why "revitalization" is necessary. Another important reason is economics. The Iowa Office for Planning and Programming quotes from one community's comprehensive plan that answers the question this way:

For the community as a whole, it is essential that the strength and vitality of the downtown be maintained and improved, because the downtown represents a substantial

portion of the tax base in comparison with the area it occupies and because the community has a considerable investment in streets, utilities and other services in the area. Further, the transition and reuse of the downtown or any part of it for other purposes would be very difficult and costly. Consequently, the planned upgrading and expansion of the downtown is a matter of major concern.<sup>30</sup>

Gallion and Eisner state:

The central problem of urban rebuilding is the cost of the land....If we are to restore decency to the urban scene, the excess cost of land must be liquidated - written off the books as a loss....The cost of rebuilding our cities is the price that must be paid to restore a decent standard of city building. It is the penalty for permitting such congestion that rebuilding is not an economic possibility. Responsibility for this error rests with every community in which it has occurred.<sup>31</sup>

Planning and participation literature on the subject of urban renewal is extensive. Beginning with The Housing Act of 1949, there are a multitude of good and bad experiences and documents attempting to deal with citizen participation in downtown revitalization. For example, the Workable Program of the 1954 Housing Act states:

A basic approach to building the kind of citizen participation a program needs is three-pronged. It must be planned to inform and involve the following:

- (a) The community as a whole.
- (b) Special interest groups, enlisting their assistance in solving particular problems.
- (c) Residents of areas to be directly affected by various program activities.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to the historical, the physical and the economic concerns related to downtown revitalization, there is also the basic social concern for the common denominator, "citizens," and the essential ingredient, "attitude." Gallion and Eisner say:

Not the least element in the program for a revitalized downtown is the spirit in which the property owners and tenants participate. Full cooperation may produce a metamorphosis in downtown and restore it as the heart of the city.<sup>33</sup>

Henry S. Churchill writes on social concern and attitude:

We can if we wish bring into being any city plan that stirs us enough....None of the things that are desirable in a city are impossible of achievement. The techniques of planning are adequate enough; economic lag, legal obscurantism, and public indifference are the real stumbling blocks. They can only be overcome by something that will seriously disturb public indifference.<sup>34</sup>

Once again turning to Jane Jacobs for her remarks on the subject of "people" and "attitude," she says:

The remarkable intricacy and liveliness of downtown can never be created by the abstract logic of a few men. Downtown has had the capability of providing something for everybody only because it has been created by everybody. So it should be with the future; planners and architects have a vital contribution to make, but the citizen has a more vital one. It is his city, after all; his job is not merely to sell plans made by others, it is to get into the thick of the planning job himself.<sup>35</sup>

#### Citizen Participation Techniques

Thirteen approaches to citizen participation have been selected for review from the many approaches developed by others. They were selected on the basis of their potential appropriateness and adaptability to the topics of citizen participation in the planning process, as applied to downtown revitalization. There are similarities and differences in the techniques, and some have unique features.

### Group techniques

Three of the participation approaches reviewed are primarily group-oriented techniques. For discussion convenience, they are referred to as techniques a, b, and c.

a) Creating coordination among organizations. This is an orientation and planning technique for organizational coordination. It presents an applied model that practitioners can use. Emphasis is placed upon the many options that are available for coordination. Barriers to coordination that are frequently encountered are discussed and factors that can facilitate coordination are presented. The proposed approach states that at least four kinds of elements can be coordinated: resources, programs, clients and information. However, coordination of all elements may not be possible or even desirable. Several worksheets are provided to assist the user to analyze the present situation, outline organizational decisions to be considered, list joint organization decisions to be developed and summarize the joint action and impact objectives of the coordination process.<sup>36</sup>

b) Group behavior and decision-making. New groups develop expectations about proper attitudes and behavior which members generally respect and to which they will conform. Work groups tend to fall into limited behavioral categories: apathetic, erratic, strategic, and conservative. There are important differences in decision-making by individuals and by groups. Groups offer advantages on certain kinds of problems when conditions are favorable and tend to make fewer errors, to be willing to take higher risks, and to improve on the

performance of average individuals--but not always on that of the best group members. Whether the advantages of group decision-making justify the additional time required depends on three critical factors:

(1) whether speed is essential; (2) whether an incorrect decision can be tolerated; and (3) whether the organization has an exceptional individual who would be hindered by a group. In general, both the effectiveness of the group and the satisfaction of its members are increased when the members see their personal goals as being advanced by the group's success.<sup>37</sup>

c) Decision-making technique - the nominal method. The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is a small group problem-solving method structured in a particular way to generate a wealth of information concerning a given topic or problem. The process is based upon social psychological research which indicates that the NGT is superior to conventional discussion groups in generating higher quality, quantity, and variety of information in fact-finding tasks. Basically, it encourages individual thought and contribution. Research has shown that in groups in which there is unrestricted discussion, fewer problem dimensions and solution types are produced compared to sessions in which the participants do not talk during the problem or solution generation stages. Despite attempts at freeing individuals to speak, people are easily inhibited and reluctant to share undeveloped ideas within a group. Also, there is a tendency for groups with unrestricted discussion to focus on a particular train of thought early in the discussion. A final aspect of the group process important to creativity



and characteristic of the NGT is heightened tension. An optimum level of heightened tension appears to aid the involvement and productivity of group members.<sup>38</sup>

Technique "a" is best suited to groups of varying interests seeking to find common denominators for cooperation and coordination. It is not particularly applicable to citizen participation in downtown revitalization except perhaps in a large metropolitan city where organizations of varying interests were seeking activities or projects of mutual benefit.

Technique "b" suggests that there are important differences in decision-making by individuals and by groups. Citizen group participation in downtown revitalization is good for the group as a whole but may not necessarily be desirable for an individual who has strong personal motivations and skills.

Technique "c" is a group procedure designed to bring out the best in each individual. This method is most effective in small groups of seven to ten members. Citizens interested in a specific topic or area of downtown revitalization could make good use of this method.

#### Descriptive techniques

The following five participation approaches describe elements, styles, and techniques for citizen involvement. (Techniques d through h.)

d) Defining development objectives. This technique emphasizes the normative elements of planning--the elements that describe "where we are going" and "how we will get there." Normative planning is the

activity of establishing rational or reasonable ends. It involves determinations concerning the objectives or ends which will guide subsequent actions. Most of the normative work of planning agencies is being carried out under the label of "policies planning," the preparation of a set of general statements that define the direction and character of future development and set forth the actions necessary to attain the desired development. In comparison with end-product plans, the policy statements are relatively permanent. Whereas the end-product plans set forth proposals and designate sites, the policies would only set forth the principles or precepts that would guide those who are responsible for making proposals. Policies planning is a response to the public demand to be involved in planning and enables the public to see the relationship between the general and the specific.<sup>39</sup>

e) Planning with citizens - two styles. The two styles or techniques compared here are a "power elite model" and a "pluralistic model" of citizen participation. The power elite technique focuses its attention on the community-wide groups, particularly their executive committees. It assumes that representatives in community-wide groups routinely communicate with their neighborhood groups and that the two levels of citizen activity hold similar attitudes. These assumptions are not necessarily valid. The pluralistic technique focuses its attention at the neighborhood levels, providing a grassroots approach. Detailed neighborhood planning is placed within a conceptual framework for the whole community. Planning moves "from the specific to the

general" whereas the policy planning of the power elite technique moves "from the general to the specific." Each approach has six resources available: knowledge, money and credit, political status, social status, expenditure of energy, and conferring legitimation to plan. However, each approach utilizes these resources differently depending upon the style of the leadership. The trend appears to be toward a more pluralistic technique of planning and represents democracy at work in the community and in neighborhoods where residents have not previously had an opportunity to become involved in making decisions regarding their own interests. More important, plans that are worked out in the neighborhood build up a committed constituency to support and bring pressure on public and private officials to ensure that the plan is implemented essentially as approved by them.<sup>40</sup>

f) Citizen participation in local decision-making. This technique describes the contextual factors which determine the situation within which a given decision is made, reviews the types of participatory strategies and acts available to the citizens of a community and then explains how all of these factors may be put together to define a specific local decision-making situation and the strategies and acts that might be appropriate to it. Several matrices can be developed to relate types and characteristics of decisions, participants, decision-makers and political environment. Analysis of the specific situation and objectives lead to determination

of implications for strategy and participatory acts to accomplish the objectives.<sup>41</sup>

g) Pedestrian planning and design. The pedestrian planning technique follows the classical sequence of problem definition, identification of restraints, determination of program objectives, establishment of study scope and procedures, collection and analysis of data, development of alternative solutions, final design, and program implementation. Project scope may range from a basic low-budget improvement program, gradually funded over a long time period, to a large capital project with accelerated priorities. The total program represents a substantial commitment by the community and local planning and development agencies to promote a comprehensive pedestrian improvement [downtown revitalization] system involving substantial capital investment. The important aspects of the program are: (1) recognition of the importance of pedestrian circulation and amenities; (2) alertness to every possible form of development opportunity; (3) concentration on all the planning improvement objectives and goals; and (4) commitment to implement a substantial and continuing program.<sup>42</sup>

h) Downtown participation workshops. The participation technique developed for the Brookfield, Mo. workshop is a case study in which the writer participated. A planning workshop was held on April 25, 1980, in downtown Brookfield. Participants included property owners, merchants, consumers, public officials, the consultants, media representatives and other interested persons. The purpose of the

workshop was presented as: (1) to provide the opportunity to participate in the preparation of a design strategy and plan for the redevelopment of downtown Brookfield, and (2) to help determine a priority for public projects which were to be undertaken first, second, third, fourth, etc. and to discuss how the city should use any monies that may be granted to the city for use in the downtown. The stated goal was to prepare a grant request to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for an Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) which would make certain private developments possible and support the continued revitalization of the central business district (CBD). The benefits of citizen participation were thoroughly presented and discussed. Planning issues, both public and private, were listed in a workbook and participants were asked to review them and to make additions and suggestions. Extensive group discussion followed on each item and the results were recorded. Another feature of the workshop was an awareness walk. Participants were scheduled to follow a designated route and individually record their reactions at eleven stops along the route. Questions and comments related to each stop along the walk were provided in the workbook to stimulate awareness and reactions from the participants. These reactions were also recorded and collated for further group discussion at a future meeting.<sup>43</sup> The awareness walk was based on a "take part" participation concept developed by Lawrence Halprin and Associates,<sup>44</sup> and has proven to be a very effective method to stimulate citizen participation and involvement and have fun while doing it!

Technique "d" describes how an overview or general understanding of the goals and objectives of downtown revitalization would be desirable in order to make citizen participation on specific items more meaningful and effective. Individuals have a tendency to see only their own personal problems or opportunities without recognizing or understanding the overall challenges or benefits of the larger group or area involved.

Technique "e" compares community-wide group influence and participation at the neighborhood "grassroots" level. The downtown revitalization neighborhood provides an opportunity for citizens that share common goals and objectives to participate and cooperate to accomplish their agreed upon objectives.

Technique "f" describes the individual prerequisites and characteristics of participation in local decision-making. Personal interests, resources, motivation, knowledge and other factors influence the degree of individual participation in downtown revitalization.

Technique "g" represents a familiar order of problem-solving and participation-oriented definitions. This method requires strong leadership skills to apply the process to a specific goal such as downtown revitalization.

Technique "h" is a participation and sensitivity process to expose the participants to both the general and the specific challenges and opportunities of downtown revitalization. Properly organized and presented, this method can be very effective to provide an awareness of problems and potentials that are otherwise unknown or unseen.

### Procedural techniques

The remaining five participation approaches selected for review are procedural in nature, or provide step-by-step suggestions to encourage citizen participation. (Techniques i through m).

i. A procedure for citizen participation. Use of any of the techniques depends on the issues involved, the resources available, the nature of the immediate neighborhood or other area and other local factors. Techniques that may be appropriate for one community or situation are not necessarily appropriate for all or other situations. Also, citizens, planners and public officials each play a role in the participation process. Following is one suggested procedure and involvement.<sup>45</sup>

Planning process steps	Participants		
	Citizens	Planners	Public officials
1. Assessing community values	X	0	
2. Determining goals and objectives	X	0	X
3. Data collection		X	
4. Design of criteria and standards		X	
5. Developing alternative plans		X	
6. Choosing an alternative	X	0	X
7. Detailed design of operational plan		X	
8. Modification/approval of operational plan	X	0	X
9. Implementation		X	X
10. Feedback	X	X	X

X = Major role

0 = Facilitating or supporting role

j. Downtown improvement procedure. The following step-by-step process for downtown revitalization has been synthesized from the input of many public and private sources.

1. recognition of the problem by public and private sectors  
of the community

Citizens are encouraged to assess the problems of the business district, utilizing a checklist, to document the problems thoroughly and convince a small group of people of the extent of the problems.

2. approach a key group or organization that can provide  
the basis of support needed to initiate an improvement  
program

The purpose of this step is to establish a downtown improvement committee and a commitment to solve the problem by recognizing the potential and establishing certain goals and objectives.

3. preparation of a plan

Decisions to be made include how the plan is to be financed and what type and extent of professional assistance is needed.

4. officially adopt the plan either by the business district  
development corporation and/or by the city council and city  
planning commission

Then, develop an action-oriented program and seek the necessary financial commitment to authorize implementation of the plan. As each stage in the planning process is completed, participation, publicity and feedback should be encouraged to generate support for the plan.



The key to the successful organization of a downtown improvement project is the committee. Its members, in addition to being broadly representative of the community, should (a) be vitally concerned with the future of downtown; (b) be willing to expend considerable time and energy for "the cause;" (c) have among its membership representatives of the leading institutions of the city; (d) have among its membership persons capable of making clear, crisp public presentations; and (e) be committed to leadership in an endeavor which probably will result in some criticism of its leaders. It must be recognized that change causes uncertainty, and uncertainty breeds fear. Such fear must be countered with positive, truthful information to avoid rumor and misunderstanding.<sup>46</sup>

k. How to involve the public in citizen participation. These brief, but applicable guidelines reinforce the belief that good participation techniques can be utilized for almost any type of citizen involvement. The ten guidelines offered are:

1. clearly specify the objectives of citizen involvement;
2. define the public;
3. involve the full range of relevant interests;
4. ensure that adequate public awareness and understanding exist prior to involvement;
5. seek citizen input before a decision has been reached;
6. allow sufficient time for citizen involvement;
7. direct citizen involvement toward specific issues;

8. provide sufficient support resources;
9. provide feedback to the public; and
10. maintain the proper perspective.

The emphasis appears to be clearly tied to the professional's ability to structure the involvement process, and then apply the input received to plans for action. Other points appropriately made are that the "user" is an expert on how well (or poorly) his needs are met, and the active and sincere involvement of the public can contribute to realizing the ultimate goal of public service - the satisfaction of human needs.<sup>47</sup>

1. Organizing a downtown improvement program. This technique is offered as a rational step-by-step process in which problems are realistically assessed, achievable solutions are proposed, and extensive community participation is obtained. Perhaps this latter characteristic--broad community involvement--will, more than any other factor, determine whether long-term community goals for a downtown area can be realized. Although the concept of public participation is not new, the methods and techniques for achieving participation are not clearly defined, nor is there any formula to guarantee that citizen participation will make a program successful. A community undertaking a major downtown improvement program must struggle with the questions of when to involve citizens; how to channel their input; and how to structure a process which provides for open discussions, free exchanges, effective decision-making, and a support system for the development and implementation of a successful program. The following is one process (many

variations are possible) for developing a downtown improvement program. Some steps will seem natural and obvious, others more formal or structured. Each, however, has its place, its own timing, its demands.

Stage one:	Initiating discussion
Stage two:	Expanding community involvement
Stage three:	Exploratory meetings
Stage four:	Developing an organization
Stage five:	Setting downtown goals
Stage six:	Studies and surveys
Stage seven:	Setting downtown objectives
Stage eight:	Establishing concepts, plans and implementation procedures
Stage nine:	Program continuation 48

Note the similarities between this technique and the one immediately following.

m. Involving the community. Following is a citizen participation outline based on results from a number of positive experiences.... It serves as a reference for involving the public and delegating responsibilities:

1. identifying key participants;
2. expanding community involvement;
3. organizing meetings;
4. developing an organization;
5. setting goals;
6. preparing surveys and special studies;
7. setting objectives;
8. establishing concepts, plans and implementation procedures; and
9. monitoring operation.

A feasibility study is actually the first step in a chain reaction which leads to sound planning policies and a viable design scheme. It provides a means of identifying social, economic, legal and physical problems, while indicating potential responses, resources and solutions. Advocacy efforts should always be designed keeping in mind the need to gain the support of the community and its leaders. Facilities can be minimal, but they must be reliable and effective. The formalization of a leadership or steering committee helps to focus problems which may develop and prevent cross-purpose decision-making.<sup>49</sup>

Procedural techniques "i" through "l" obviously contain many similar steps arranged in slightly varying order or choice of wording. They all start with a procedure to identify the problem and to involve the participants in establishing goals and objectives. Then, alternatives are considered, decisions made and implementation procedures initiated. A feedback or monitoring process is recommended. Throughout these several procedures and techniques the emphasis is placed upon the downtown committee, the users, the participants...the citizens directly involved in and affected by the proposed downtown revitalization action.

A procedural technique consisting of the several steps summarized above has been applied to selected case studies and is presented in Chapter III.

### Summary

The literature review provided support and guidelines for the importance of citizen participation in the planning process. The literature also supports the hypothesis that active citizen participation in a downtown revitalization program improves the chance of success of that program.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Ann DeWitt Watts and Alan W. Steiss, Review of Citizen Participation in Planning, by Michael Fagence, Journal of the American Institute of Planners 44 (October 1978): 494-495.

<sup>2</sup>Michael P. Brooks, "Social Policy in the Cities: Toward a Theory of Urban Social Planning" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1970), p. 283.

<sup>3</sup>William F. Swegle, "A Manual on Citizen Participation in Local Development Decision-Making" (Master's dissertation, Kansas State University, 1971), p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>Ann DeWitt Watts and Alan W. Steiss, Review of Public Participation in Planning, by W. R. Derrick Sewell and J. T. Coppock, Journal of the American Institute of Planners 44 (October 1978): 494-495.

<sup>5</sup>Brooks, *ibid.*, p. 292.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 274.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 323.

<sup>8</sup>Charles L. Mulford and Gerald E. Klonglan, Creating Coordination Among Organizations: An Orientation and Planning Guide. Ames, Iowa: North Central Regional Extension Publication 80 (August 1979), p. 3.

<sup>9</sup>Sol Levine and Paul E. White, "Exchange as a Conceptual Framework for the Study of Interorganizational Relationships," Administrative Science Quarterly 5, No. 4, (1961): 583-601.

<sup>10</sup>David R. Hampton, Charles E. Summer and Ross A. Webber, Organizational Behavior and the Practice of Management (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1973), p. 215.

<sup>11</sup>Sherry R. Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," Journal of the American Institute of Planners 35 (July 1969): 216-224.

<sup>12</sup>Efraim Gil and Enid Lucchesi, "Citizen Participation in Planning" in The Practice of Local Government, eds. Frank S. So, Israel Stollman, Frank Beal and David S. Arnold (Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association, 1979), pp. 557-558.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 558-559.

<sup>14</sup>Brooks, *ibid.*, p. 229.

<sup>15</sup>Sima R. Osdoby, "An Examination of the Planner's Role in the Participation Process," Paper submitted for presentation at Confer-In 72, Boston, Mass., 1972 (Boston, Mass.: Boston Transportation Planning Review, 1972), p. 3.

<sup>16</sup>Herbert H. Hyman, "Planning with Citizens: Two Styles," Journal of the American Institute of Planners 35 (March 1969): 105-112.

<sup>17</sup>Richard S. Bolan, "Emerging Views of Planning," Journal of the American Institute of Planners 33 (July 1967): 244.

<sup>18</sup>Robin M. Williams, Jr., "Individual and Group Values," The Annals of the American Academy 1 (May 1967): 20.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 23.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>21</sup>Gil and Lucchesi, *ibid.*, p. 574.

<sup>22</sup>Paul and Percival Goodman, Communitas (New York: Random House, Inc., 1960), pp. 221-222.

<sup>23</sup>Zane L. Miller, The Urbanism of Modern America (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovitch, Inc., 1973), p. 141.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>25</sup>Jane Jacobs, "Downtown is for People" in The Exploding Metropolis, eds. Eleanor Johnson, Eleanor Carruth, Patricia Hough, and Eleanor Nadler (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1958), p. 168.

<sup>26</sup>Kenneth Halpern, Downtown USA (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1978), p. 13.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>28</sup>John J. Fruin, Pedestrian Planning and Design (New York: Metropolitan Association of Urban Designers and Environmental Planners, Inc., 1971), pp. 7-8.

<sup>29</sup>Arthur B. Gallion and Simon Eisner, The Urban Pattern (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1963), p. 274.

<sup>30</sup>Iowa Office for Planning and Programming, Downtown Improvement Manual for Iowa Communities (Des Moines, Iowa: Office for Planning and Programming, 1978), p. 5.

- <sup>31</sup>Gallion and Eisner, *ibid.*, p. 314.
- <sup>32</sup>U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, Workable Program for Community Improvement (Washington, D.C.: Housing and Home Finance Agency, Revised February 1962).
- <sup>33</sup>Gallion and Eisner, *ibid.*, p. 283.
- <sup>34</sup>Churchill, *ibid.*, p. 184.
- <sup>35</sup>Jacobs, *ibid.*, p. 167.
- <sup>36</sup>Mulford and Klonglan, *ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup>Hampton, Summer and Webber, *ibid.*, pp. 213-270.
- <sup>38</sup>A. Delbec and A. Van de Ven, "A Group Process Model for Problem Identification and Program Planning," Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 7 (September, 1971): 7-9.
- <sup>39</sup>Franklyn H. Beal, "Defining Development Objectives" in Principles and Practice of Urban Planning, eds. William I. Goodman and Eric C. Freund (Washington, D.C.: International City Manager's Association, 1968), pp. 327-348.
- <sup>40</sup>Hyman, *ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup>Swegle, *ibid.*
- <sup>42</sup>Fruin, *ibid.*
- <sup>43</sup>Peter Dahm and Jack Leaman, "Downtown Brookfield Planning Workshop," Report and guide prepared for workshop presented in Brookfield, Mo., April 25, 1980 (Mankato, Minnesota: Rieke/Carroll/Muller Associates, Inc., April 1980).
- <sup>44</sup>Lawrence Halprin & Associates, Take Part (Portland, Oregon: Portland Press, 1972).
- <sup>45</sup>Gil and Lucchesi, *ibid.*, pp. 552-575.
- <sup>46</sup>Iowa Office for Planning and Programming, *ibid.*
- <sup>47</sup>James F. Orr, "How to Involve the Public in Parks and Recreation," Parks and Recreation, (January 1969), pp. 46-47.



<sup>48</sup>Emanuel Berk, "Organizing a Downtown Improvement Program," Downtown Improvement Manual (Chicago: American Society of Planning Officials, 1976), Chapter 2.

<sup>49</sup>Roberto Brambilla and Gianni Longo, For Pedestrians Only (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1977), pp. 30-36.

### CHAPTER III. APPLICATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the application and analysis of the causal comparative method and the procedural technique, discussed in Chapter I, as applied to the selected case studies to test the hypothesis.

#### Selected Application

In order to apply the causal-comparative method to each of the selected case study cities, the following procedural steps were investigated in each selected case study city to provide data and information which could be compared and analyzed:

1. problem identification
2. goals and objectives
3. alternatives
4. decision/commitment
5. implementation
6. monitoring.

The data and information provided by applying the procedural steps to each city helped to identify the dependent variables or response variables. These variables are the citizen participation actions taken to improve the chance of success of a downtown revitalization program. Past events or actions have been examined by going back through time and records to seek and analyze causes, relationships and their meanings.

Following is a step-by-step analysis of the application of the procedural technique to each of the selected cities using the causal-comparative method.

## 1. Problem identification

Iowa City. In the early 1960s, business and civic leaders expressed concern and provided impetus for the city to pursue a program of comprehensive redevelopment for the downtown business and professional area.

In the planning for such a program, the downtown was studied in depth. These studies confirmed many of the problems previously cited by citizen groups of business and civic leaders.<sup>1</sup>

In 1964, the Citizens Advisory Committee, consisting of over one hundred citizens concerned about the future of downtown Iowa City, submitted a report and their recommendations for revitalization to the city officials.

Like most cities our downtown suffers from problems of traffic congestion, conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, insufficient parking, obsolete structures and shabby appearance. The Central Business District lacks an appropriate character to distinguish it as an outstanding educational and retail center.<sup>2</sup>

The recommendations were based on the studies by five subcommittees: 1) the CBD today, 2) the CBD in comparison, 3) the role for (urban renewal) CBD improvement, 4) the Iowa City CBD tomorrow, and 5) informing the public (public relations). These were all voluntary citizens who worked "hundreds of hours...throughout many months"<sup>3</sup> to prepare their report.

Mason City. On November 29, 1962, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended to the City Council that a consultant be hired to update the 1940 Comprehensive City Plan using the Federal Urban 701

Planning Program.<sup>4</sup> On April 20, 1964, the City Council entered into a contract with Barton-Aschman Associates to update the city's comprehensive plan.<sup>5</sup>

Problem identification for the downtown area was studied as part of the overall community comprehensive plan.

The downtown plan will point out problems with the downtown area, but will not deal with specific ways of implementing solutions.<sup>6</sup>

The news media reported both good and bad opinions regarding downtown problems.

Mason City merchants say business is looking good...the only problem is a lack of adequate parking.<sup>7</sup>

There is little time to waste, (Barton-Aschman Planner) warns of business loss in deterioration of downtown.<sup>8</sup>

The Planning and Zoning Commission did appoint a Downtown Advisory Committee at the request of the consultant. This committee consisted of a few downtown property owners, merchants and members from the Chamber of Commerce. However, participation was less than adequate to demonstrate support.

Of the dozens of store owners who should be vitally interested in this project to retain the downtown's hold on the local economy and to further tap the potential, only seven were represented. Conspicuous by their absence were representatives of several of the largest retail establishments. The meeting, obviously, failed to meet its objectives. It could not produce a unified front because there was no real outward sign of interest at a time when the very future of these businesses is being decided.<sup>9</sup>

Analysis. Iowa City's problems were identified by a large number of active volunteer citizens who spent many hours and many months

studying and preparing a list of recommendations to city officials. They encouraged the city to hire consultants to prepare specific detailed plans for downtown revitalization based on their recommendations for the problems they had identified.

Mason City's downtown problems were identified by a few appointed citizens. Problems were not agreed upon by a significant number of people and there was a recognized lack of interest among downtown property owners and merchants. Also, the consultant indicated they would not provide specific implementation plans for the downtown area since the downtown was only one portion of their overall comprehensive city plan study. There was a general difference of opinion on what and where the downtown problems were.

## 2. Goals and objectives

Iowa City. The Citizens Advisory Committee provided twenty-three recommendations which referred to code improvements, utilities, traffic and parking, land uses, design criteria, maintenance, priorities, financing and public relations.<sup>10</sup> These recommendations formed the base for a statement of general goals and objectives which were agreed upon by the citizens and by the city officials.

1. To improve the central business district so that it may better serve the people of Iowa City as a modern, convenient place to shop and work.
2. To create an environment for private enterprise and investment by making vital public improvements...by helping to provide sites for new development...by eliminating blight and congestion.

3. To aid the University of Iowa to expand in an orderly way, so the University and the business district can each perform its own function with minimum conflict and maximum benefit.<sup>11</sup>

"Many citizen participation meetings and public hearings were held by the consultants, city staff and city officials. Citizen attendance was good, participation was active and city officials responded with actions to establish the goals and objectives desired by the citizens."<sup>12</sup>

Mason City. The Comprehensive Planning Studies, which were prepared by the consultant during the planning process, contains a section on "Goals, Objectives and Principles." Under specific objectives for Mason City it states:

The city should assist in the renovation and revitalization of one of its greatest economic assets, the central business district, to assure that the city maintains its position as a center for trade and services.<sup>13</sup>

The consultant and the Planning and Zoning Commission scheduled meetings and public hearings to encourage citizen participation. However, citizen participation continued to be lacking in interest.

Planning and Zoning officials are concerned over apparent lack of interest among downtown property owners and citizens in discussions about the proposed downtown improvements.<sup>14</sup>

Analysis. Iowa City's downtown citizens were active in the participation for establishing goals and objectives for downtown revitalization. The goals were general but provided agreed upon guidelines for design and implementation to follow.

Mason City's downtown citizens were less active in the participation for formulation of goals and objectives. The statement of goals was

prepared by the consultant and did not have strong input and support from the citizens of downtown or city officials.

### 3. Alternatives

Iowa City. Several specific design studies and plans were prepared by several consultants: Barton-Aschman Associates in 1965, Sasaki, Dawson, DeMay Associates in 1966, Peters and Martinson in 1970 and Welton Beckett Associates in 1974.<sup>15</sup> These plans provided alternatives for the citizen advisory committee, city staff and city officials to compare and determine which alternative best fit the agreed upon goals and objectives.

Real opportunities were brought to light. One of the greatest opportunities to be captured through a sound redevelopment program was the continuance of downtown Iowa City as the dominant business center for the years to come. The alternative to this is to allow things to go their own way with outlying shopping areas playing an ever increasing role as the commercial centers.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the downtown citizens' participation in consideration of revitalization alternatives, Iowa City also has a Design Review Committee. The nine members of this committee are appointed by the City Council and are selected for their personal and professional skills specifically related to design; such as art, architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning and construction. Downtown revitalization plans, both public and private plans for large projects and for individual buildings, are reviewed by this committee and a recommendation is made to the City Council for design adjustments or for approval.<sup>17</sup>

Mason City. Only one general design concept was presented by the consultant, Barton-Aschman Associates, for downtown revitalization. As previously stated, the downtown plan was part of an overall city comprehensive plan and the consultant stated that the downtown plan will not deal with specific ways of implementation.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, no alternatives were readily available for comparison and discussion.

Downtown traffic circulation alternatives and parking alternatives were the topics most often discussed by citizens, downtown merchants and city officials. A review of newspaper clippings in City Hall scrapbooks for 1964, 1965 and 1966 indicates a continuing discussion and disagreement among downtown citizens and city officials regarding a system of one-way downtown streets.<sup>19</sup> Several street system alternatives were prepared by city officials who could not agree among themselves and often made decisions without any citizen participation.

...regarding the City Council feuds...it all comes about because the people in Mason City - the rank and file - have never had much part in saying what happens in Mason City.<sup>20</sup>

Analysis. Iowa City citizens and officials had several specific downtown revitalization alternatives to review and consider. In addition to active citizen participation, a special committee skilled in design considerations made recommendations to the City Council. Selected alternatives had the strong support of the citizens and city officials.

Mason city citizens and officials had only one downtown revitalization alternative to review and consider. The proposed plan was mostly



the opinion of the consultant due to the limited time spent on the downtown plan and limited participation by downtown citizens and city officials. Meanwhile, the city officials were preoccupied with their own alternatives for a one-way downtown street system.

#### 4. Decision/commitment

Iowa City. City Manager/Council form of government has existed in Iowa City since 1951. In 1976 the City Manager said, "Whatever course the Council sets for downtown redevelopment it will fail unless there is a strong, sustained, not temporary, political commitment from the City Council....Urban renewal will succeed only when the Council reaches a strong political commitment to completion....Any business or industry seeking a location is looking for a community in which the political leadership can provide strength for reaching success and for a community in which citizens have confidence in their elected officials to succeed in endeavors which are important to the community."<sup>21</sup>

Also, there has been city planning staff since 1963. In 1970, an urban renewal director was appointed. In 1976, this position became the city development coordinator.

An organized decision-making process was used by city staff and city officials which encouraged citizen participation in the planning process. When decisions were made, there was a recognized commitment by city officials and staff to carry out the objectives of the downtown revitalization plan.<sup>22</sup>

Mason City. Mayor/Council form of government has existed in Mason City since 1945. There was a City Manager/Council government in Mason City from 1927 to 1945 and a vote to return to a City Manager failed in 1965 by 287 votes, with less than half of the eligible voters voting.<sup>23</sup>

For many years, Mason City has had a local two-party political system which often resulted in stalemate, disagreement or indecision and lack of commitment.

The United Community Party and the Associated Citizens Party once again presented their individual views for the future of Mason City.<sup>24</sup>

The news media continued to support and present the importance of the new city plan, especially the downtown revitalization plan.

It has been acknowledged that something must be done to change the face and pace of downtown Mason City. Much of the leadership must come from the Mayor and City Council...to translate the plan into acceptable action for the good of the total community.<sup>25</sup>

The first planning staff for Mason City was hired in June 1966, six months after the new city comprehensive plan was completed and adopted. The need for a city planner had been discussed since early 1964<sup>26</sup> and was emphasized by the consultants in 1964.

The single most important factor of the failure of the 1940 Comprehensive City Plan was the lack of a qualified city planning staff to bring to bear planning experience and principles on the day-to-day deliberations of the Planning Commission and City Council. This has fostered a decision-by-decision reaction to specific proposals rather than consistent policy-based recommendations directed at achieving goals. The City Planner would be the link between the Citizen Advisory Committees of the Planning Commission, the City Administration and private development agencies.<sup>27</sup>

During the 1964-65 time period, while the new city comprehensive plan was being prepared, city officials granted several zoning changes for shopping center type commercial development near the edges of the community.<sup>28</sup> Also, during this same time period, the location of Interstate Highway 35 was being discussed for approximately eight miles west of Mason City. The city's consultants warned of the potential impact the interstate could have on downtown revitalization.

The City and County should take steps to discourage strip development along Highway 18 west of Mason City.<sup>29</sup>

Analysis. Iowa City had a strong City Manager/Council form of government, city planning staff with people assigned to downtown renewal and development, a participation-oriented decision-making procedure and a political commitment to proceed with an organized and consistent downtown revitalization program.

Mason City had a weak Mayor/Council form of government, no city planning staff until after the downtown plan was completed by consultants and a lack of a participation-oriented decision-making procedure with no apparent political commitment to an organized and consistent planning process.

## 5. Implementation

Iowa City. Since 1965, the city has spent approximately \$15 million for public improvements in the downtown revitalization area. These improvements include utility replacements and extensions, new street and sidewalk surfacing, a four block pedestrian plaza, a new public library, two public parking ramps and streetscape amenities such

as landscaping and pedestrian facilities. Also, approximately \$26 million in private development has been spent for a new downtown shopping center, new commercial and office buildings and rehabilitation and remodeling of existing buildings.<sup>30</sup>

Several lawsuits were filed against the city between 1967 and 1979 regarding legal procedures. Each time, the matter was resolved and the City proceeded with the downtown revitalization plan. Referendums to use General Obligation Bonds for the downtown parking ramps were defeated in 1972 and 1974. The city proceeded with the ramps using Revenue Bonds.<sup>31</sup>

All of the implementation work has been in accordance with the agreed upon goals and objectives, the selected alternatives, and the decisions and commitments made by both the public and private representatives. Citizen participation has remained active during design considerations in both public and private improvements.<sup>32</sup>

Mason City. Since 1965, the city has spent approximately \$4 million for public improvements in the downtown revitalization area. These improvements include a one-way traffic loop system to remove highway traffic from the main shopping street, public parking lots adjacent to the traffic loop, and expenses to provide a redevelopment area for the proposed downtown shopping center. Approximately \$8 million in private development has been spent for new commercial and office buildings and some rehabilitation and remodeling of existing buildings.<sup>33</sup>

In August 1967, a referendum to use Urban Renewal General Obligation Bonds to provide land for private development of a downtown shopping center was defeated. The vote was 50 percent favorable but required a

60 percent favorable vote to be successful.<sup>34</sup> Approximately one-half of the proposed shopping center area has now been acquired and cleared by the City but there is still inadequate public or private commitment to implement the redevelopment project. In fact, recent City Council discussions to reopen access to Federal Avenue, the main shopping street proposed to be developed for pedestrian shopping, indicates the continuing inconsistency and lack of commitment to implement the adopted downtown revitalization plan.<sup>35</sup>

The city has been involved in a lawsuit to prevent the development of a major shopping center on the west edge of the community which is part of an area where commercial zoning was extended by the City Council in 1964 while the new comprehensive city plan was being prepared. Also, the developers of the westside shopping center have threatened to build the center approximately three miles west of the city on Highway 18 which connects to Interstate Highway 35 if they are unable to construct the center at the west edge of the city.<sup>36</sup>

Analysis. Iowa City has proceeded with implementation of the downtown revitalization plan in accordance with public and private decisions and commitments resulting from active citizen participation. The public dollars spent for downtown improvements have already generated nearly double their amount in private improvements. The public and private commitment to implementation of the downtown plan has been persistent in spite of legal problems, delays and changes in the people directly involved.

Mason City has implemented only a small part of the downtown revitalization plan. The public dollars spent for downtown improvements have generated double their amount in private improvements but the amounts are small in comparison to the anticipated potential of the downtown revitalization plan. Legal problems and lack of public and private commitment have delayed progress and encouraged inconsistency in decisions and conflicting development plans.

Retail sales comparison. Retail sales statistics for Iowa City and Mason City show an increase of 241 percent in sales and an increase of 288 commercial businesses reporting in Iowa City between 1960 and 1970, and an increase in sales of 201 percent and an increase of 199 businesses between 1970 and 1980. For Mason City, the statistics show an increase of 171 percent in sales and an increase of 67 commercial businesses reporting between 1960 and 1970, and an increase in sales of 176 percent and an increase of 122 businesses between 1970 and 1980.<sup>37</sup>

Year	Iowa City		Mason City	
	Retail Sales Reported	No. of Businesses Reporting	Retail Sales Reported	No. of Businesses Reporting
1960	\$ 48,805,250	517	\$ 62,647,200	730
1970	\$117,722,323	805	\$107,363,646	797
1980	\$236,516,264	1,004	\$188,841,254	919

Source: Iowa State Department of Revenue, Sales Tax Division

These figures indicate that Iowa City has had an increase of 485 percent in sales and an increase of 487 businesses between 1960 and 1980, while Mason City has had an increase of 301 percent in sales and an increase of 189 businesses during the same period of time.

## 6. Monitoring

Iowa City. A planning staff has existed in Iowa City since the beginning of downtown revitalization planning in 1963. The recommendations of the Citizens Advisory Committee submitted in 1964 suggested a monitoring process.

A person or place to which any citizen could go ask a question or present a personal problem in connection with any CBD Improvement Plan should be available at all times.<sup>38</sup>

In 1970, the City established the position of Urban Renewal Director and in 1976 a full-time downtown Development Coordinator was appointed to monitor all public and private projects in the downtown revitalization area.

The voluntary Citizens Advisory Committee has continued to function and has influenced many important decisions made by the City Council. Also, monitoring of specific design plans for both public and private improvements in the downtown revitalization area has been provided by the Design Review Committee, a group of conscientious, skilled citizens who review proposed design plans and make recommendations to City Council.<sup>39</sup>

Mason City. Monitoring efforts in Mason City prior to 1966 were provided primarily by the Planning and Zoning Commission. At the consultant's request they established a downtown citizens advisory committee which was somewhat ineffective due to size and lack of interest. A city planner was hired in 1966, after the new comprehensive city plan was adopted, and had the responsibility of interpreting, guiding and monitoring the plan for the entire community, not just the downtown area. Additional consulting services have been utilized to plan and coordinate the implementation of downtown improvements.<sup>40</sup>

A downtown citizens' advisory committee, appointed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, has continued to meet from time-to-time when there were plans or projects to discuss and review.<sup>41</sup>

Analysis. Iowa City provided monitoring of downtown planning activities from their beginning in the early 1960s with a large voluntary citizens advisory committee and city planning staff to coordinate downtown activities with other community planning. Citizen concerns and participation has continued throughout the early planning and later implementation stages for downtown revitalization. Also, a special citizens design review committee provides monitoring of all downtown implementation plans.

Mason City did not have organized monitoring of downtown planning activities until planning staff was established in 1966. The size of staff did not permit full-time monitoring of downtown revitalization activities and additional consulting services were hired by the city. Although the capability of city staff and the consultant may be adequate,



the availability of time and budget did not permit the type of day-to-day monitoring and effort desirable for a downtown revitalization program. Citizen participation was not voluntary, continuous and dedicated.

#### Summary

The following summary, Table 1, presents the event and effect relationship for the procedural steps applied to each of the selected cities using the causal-comparative method.

Table 1. Summary of the event and effect relationships for the procedural steps applied to Iowa City and Mason City using the causal-comparative method.

Procedural Steps	Iowa City		Mason City	
	Event	Effect	Event	Effect
1. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION	Citizen and civic leaders awareness of downtown problems	Large and active citizens advisory committee	Planning commission recommendation to update comprehensive city plan	Consultant activity with little citizen interest or agreement
2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	Citizen advisory committee provided list of recommendations	Statement of goals and objectives agreed upon by citizens and city officials	Consultant prepared list of downtown goals and objectives	Continued citizen and downtown owner/merchant interest
3. ALTERNATIVES	City officials authorized several specific downtown design studies to be made	Several alternative plans were available for comparison and selection	Consultant prepared one nonspecific downtown plan	Lack of participation and discussions of alternatives by citizens and city officials
4. DECISION/ COMMITMENT	Strong city manager/council form of government plus city staff assigned to downtown redevelopment	Discussion, decision and commitment by citizens, city officials and staff to downtown redevelopment	Weak mayor/council form of government; lack of planning staff until after the plan was adopted	Lack of a participation-oriented decision-making procedure and political commitment
5. IMPLEMENTATION	Public and private commitment to step-by-step accomplishment of the agreed upon goals and objectives	\$15 million in public improvements; \$26 million in private improvements; accomplishment of goals and objectives	Lack of public and private commitment to organized improvements and lack of agreement on goals and objectives	\$4 million in public improvements; \$8 million in private improvement; incomplete and inconsistent goals and objectives
6. MONITORING	City staff assigned to coordinate and assist in downtown development; continuing citizen participation in implementation	Continuing active citizen participation in downtown revitalization programs to improve the chance of success of the programs	Limited city staff time and budget to assist in downtown redevelopment; continuing lack of citizen and city official participation	Lack of active citizen participation in downtown revitalization programs to improve the chance of success of the programs

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Iowa City: City-University Center Redevelopment (Iowa City, Iowa: City of Iowa City, 1966), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Citizens Advisory Committee Reports on the Central Business District (Iowa City, Iowa: City of Iowa City, 1964), Introduction.

<sup>3</sup>J. Bradley Rust, Chairman, Central Business Today sub-committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee (Iowa City, Iowa: City of Iowa City, August, 1964), letter to City Council.

<sup>4</sup>Planning and Zoning Commission (Mason City, Iowa: December 3, 1962), letter to City Council.

<sup>5</sup>City Council (Mason City, Iowa: April 20, 1964), Resolution 5055.

<sup>6</sup>Mason City Globe Gazette, 23 November 1964.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 26 June 1965.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 18 June 1965.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 13 August 1964.

<sup>10</sup>Citizens Advisory Committee Reports of the Central Business District (Iowa City, Iowa: City of Iowa City, 1964).

<sup>11</sup>Iowa City: City-University Center Redevelopment, *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup>Paul R. Glaves (Downtown Development Coordinator, City of Iowa City, Iowa, 1976-1979), interview, December 1981.

<sup>13</sup>Barton-Aschman Associates, "Goals, Objectives and Principles," Comprehensive Planning Studies (Mason City, Iowa: September 1964), p. 5.

<sup>14</sup>Mason City Globe Gazette, 18 May 1965.

<sup>15</sup>Glaves, *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup>Iowa City: City-University Center Redevelopment, *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>Glaves, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>Mason City Globe Gazette, 23 November 1964.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 1 January; 4 June; 23 October 1964; 2 February; 27 February; 4 May; 18 May; 27 May; 8 June; 20 July; 17 August; 8 September 1965.

- <sup>20</sup>Des Moines Register, 3 January 1965.
- <sup>21</sup>Neal Berlin, City Manager, City of Iowa City, Iowa, Iowa City Press-Citizen, 12 June 1976.
- <sup>22</sup>Glaves, *ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup>Mason City Globe Gazette, 29 May 1965.
- <sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 24 August 1964.
- <sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 29 May 1965.
- <sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 2 March 1964.
- <sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 2 September 1965.
- <sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 16 March; 16 October 1964; 15 April 1965.
- <sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 11 March 1965.
- <sup>30</sup>Glaves, *ibid.*
- <sup>31</sup>Glaves, *ibid.*
- <sup>32</sup>Glaves, *ibid.*
- <sup>33</sup>Ron Fiscus, Assistant Community Development Director, City of Mason City, Iowa, interview, December 1981.
- <sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>37</sup>Iowa State Department of Revenue, Sales Tax Division, interview, December 1981.
- <sup>38</sup>Citizens Advisory Committee Reports on the Central Business District, *ibid.*, p. 8.
- <sup>39</sup>Glaves, *ibid.*
- <sup>40</sup>Fiscus, *ibid.*
- <sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

#### CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter summarizes the cause and effect relationships applied and analyzed for the selected case studies in the preceding chapter. Conclusions and implications have been made regarding the method, the technique and the hypothesis.

##### The Method

The causal-comparative method was appropriate and adaptable to test the hypothesis. Since this method is "ex post facto" in nature, it was particularly adaptable to examine citizen participation actions, or lack of actions, over a similar period of time in the selected comparable case study cities. The method should be equally adaptable to any two selected cities that have a reasonable degree of similarity in population, size of the downtown area, geographic and physical influences, opportunity for political form of government, and intent to provide for a downtown revitalization program. The more comparable these independent variables are, or can be, the better the opportunity to compare the dependent variables discovered by research and analysis.

Iowa City and Mason City have a reasonable degree of similarity in their independent variables. Information and data were available regarding the dependent variables, the citizen participation actions. Therefore, the selected case study cities provided opportunity for application of the causal-comparative method.

Data were collected for the events of interest that have occurred in the downtown revitalization projects in each of the selected case study cities. The citizen participation actions to improve the chance of success of the downtown revitalization were examined and analyzed to seek out causes, relationships and their meanings. Other dependent variables such as civic and political leadership, creative design solutions and public relations are recognized as important factors. However, it appears that active citizen participation is the key factor which motivates other variables to be positive influences.

The results of the application and analysis, utilizing the causal-comparative method for each of the selected case study cities, strongly indicates the importance and the influence of active citizen participation in the planning process as applied to downtown revitalization.

### The Technique

The citizen participation procedural technique, created from the review of several procedural techniques, was appropriate and adaptable to test the hypothesis.

The six procedural steps applied to each of the selected case study cities provided the cause and effect relationships, data and consequences for comparison and analysis. The following conclusions were made:

#### 1. Problem identification

Problem identification should be made by the users of downtown. Active citizen participation, preferably voluntary, should use their

awareness and concern to initiate recommendations to city officials for public and private improvements to the downtown area.

## 2. Goals and objectives

Goals and objectives for downtown revitalization are best established by active citizen participation working closely with city staff and officials in order to reach an agreement on procedures and policies to achieve the goals and objectives desired.

## 3. Alternatives

Alternatives should provide specific details and information so that citizens and city officials can discuss and compare more than one plan to achieve the goals and objectives agreed upon.

## 4. Decision and commitment

Decision and commitment for downtown revitalization should be shared by active citizen participation and city officials. Capable, responsive city officials are also a result of active citizen participation.

## 5. Implementation

Implementation is the result and the reward of active citizen participation and responsive decision-making by city officials. It is the success of working together to achieve the goals and objectives agreed upon.

## 6. Monitoring

Monitoring should be on-going and consistent by both active citizen participation and by responsible city officials to see that changes and challenges are made and met within the goals and objectives established.

The results of the procedural technique steps applied to each of the case study cities strongly indicate one important ingredient, a common denominator, found in the successful Iowa City downtown revitalization program...active citizen participation. This ingredient was found to be weak or missing in applying the procedural steps to the Mason City downtown revitalization project, which is recognized to be unsuccessful to-date.

### Implications

Active citizen participation is the key; activity that preferably begins with a growing number of concerned citizens and participation that involves both the private property citizens of downtown and the public representatives of the citizens of the community. The active and cooperative involvement of all of these citizens in the suggested procedural steps should greatly improve the chance of success of a downtown revitalization program.

The suggested citizen participation procedural technique is applicable to all downtowns, large and small, old and new. Planners, whether in private practice or in public service, should encourage active citizen participation.



### The Hypothesis

The research and the analysis of the selected method and technique applied to each of the case study cities supports the hypothesis.

Active citizen participation in a downtown revitalization program improves the chance of success of that program.

### The Beginning!

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I also owe a debt of thanks to a group of peers and colleagues who provided critique, interest and encouragement for my topic: Paul Glaves, Paul Popelka, George Brophy, Peter Dahm, Jon Ewing, Ron Fiscus, Ben Isaacson and Bruce Morgan.

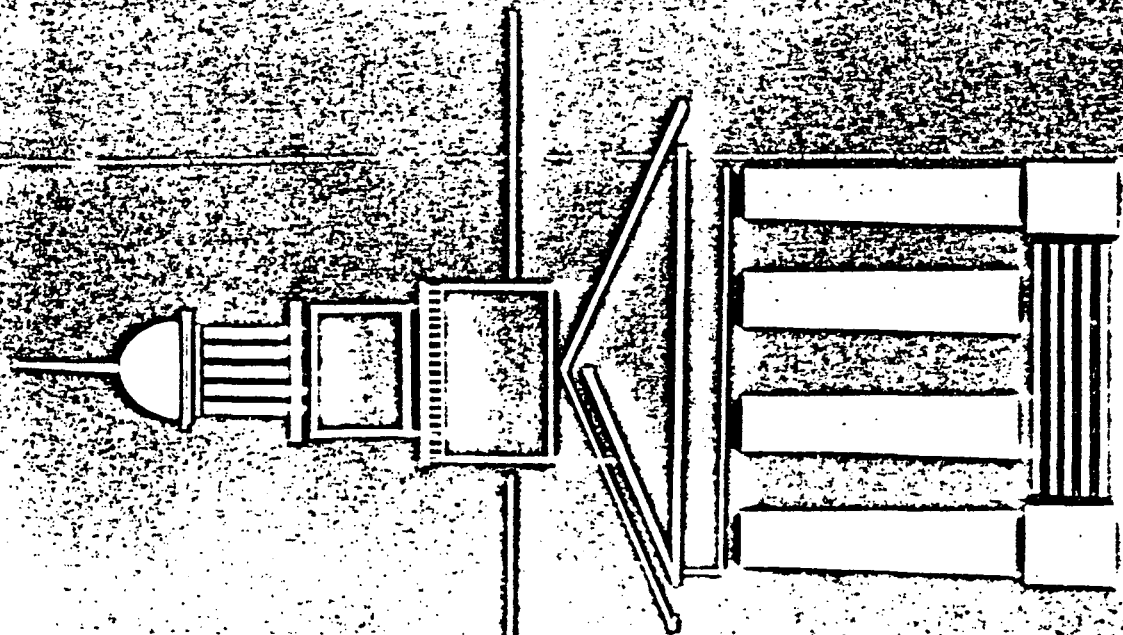
And last, but certainly not least, my wife Darlene and my family who also provided encouragement, understanding and participation over the years leading to this undertaking.

APPENDIX A

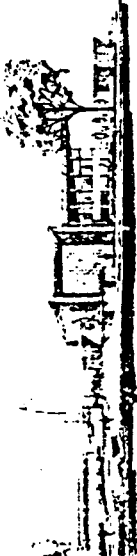
Iowa City, Iowa Downtown Revitalization

# Iowa City

CITY-UNIVERSITY CENTER REDEVELOPMENT







# CITY OF IOWA CITY

office of the mayor  
WILLIAM C. HUBBARD

Dear Iowa Citian:

Several years ago, business and civic leaders indicated their concern to the City Council about the future of our downtown. This provided the impetus necessary for your Council to pursue a program of comprehensive redevelopment for your downtown business and professional area.

The attractiveness of your downtown area is important to you and your friends. Redevelopment would provide an inviting environment for you to shop and do business. New interest in downtown can only mean new vitality for the enterprises in the city. An appropriate environment is most desirable for the future development of the University of Iowa--our most important asset. Strengthening the economic structure of our city would be a contribution to the welfare of every citizen of Iowa City.

A public hearing on this program is anticipated sometime during the summer of 1967. I urge you to consider this information carefully. This redevelopment program is a community project, and it is the wish of the entire City Council to decide this important public issue in the best interest of the community.

*William C. Hubbard*

Mayor

## CITY COUNCIL

William C. Hubbard, Mayor  
Richard W. Burger  
Loren L. Hickerson  
Robert H. Lind, Sr.  
James H. Nesmith

## CITY MANAGER

Frank R. Smiley

## DIRECTOR OF PLANNING URBAN RENEVAL

Barry D. Lundberg

## PROBLEMS TO BE FACED . . .

The downtown "area" is the most important land in Iowa City in terms of the future. It is today the heart of the city's business life. It includes a critical area of expansion for the University. However, there are growing problems in this area; problems not uncommon to most cities on the move.

### CONGESTION

The original street system no longer suits modern shopping and business needs. There are also inadequate parking facilities.

### OBSOLESCENCE

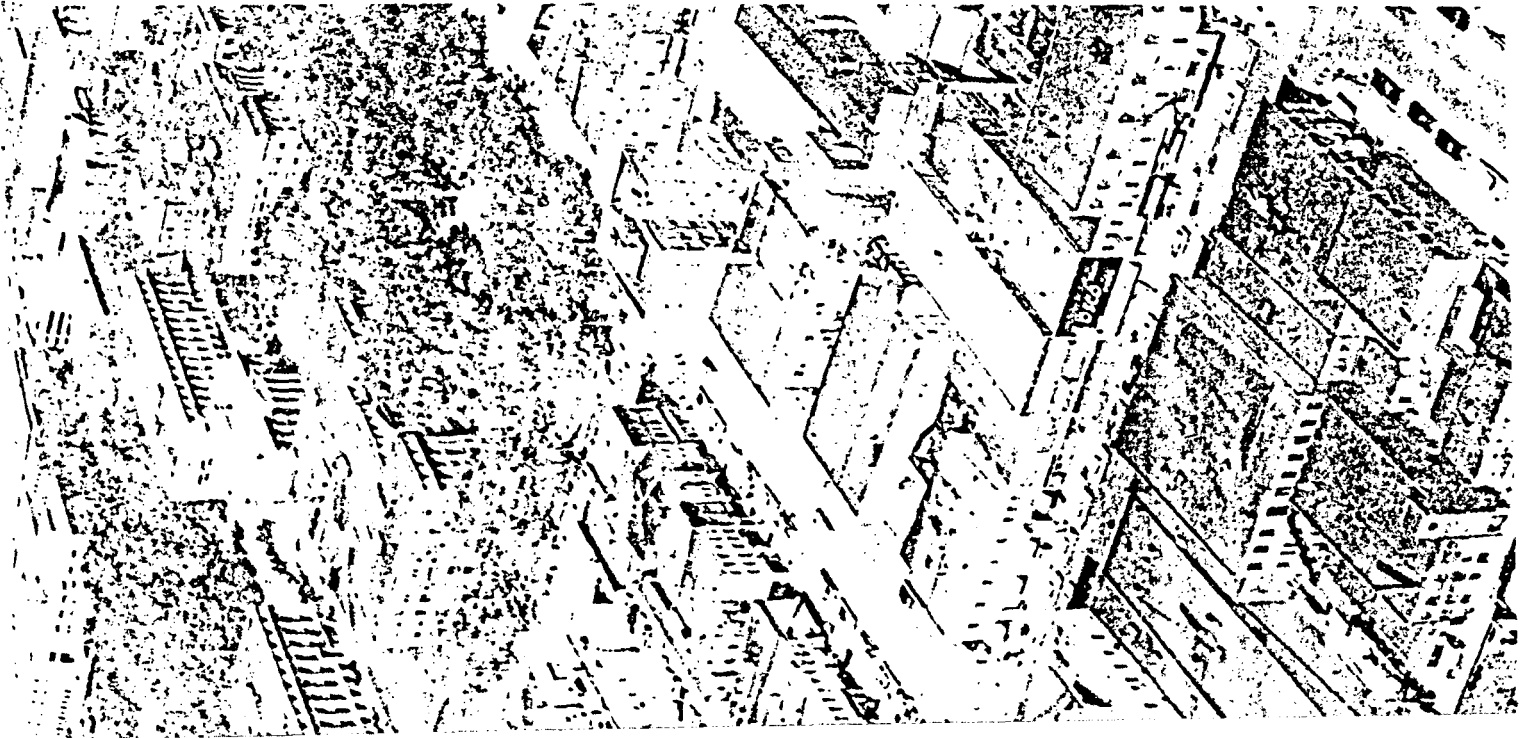
A major percentage of the buildings are old and plainly obsolete.

### HAZARDS

In some instances the buildings can be considered dangerous under modern standards of safety and fire prevention.

### UNATTRACTIVENESS

This condition is common to many American cities.



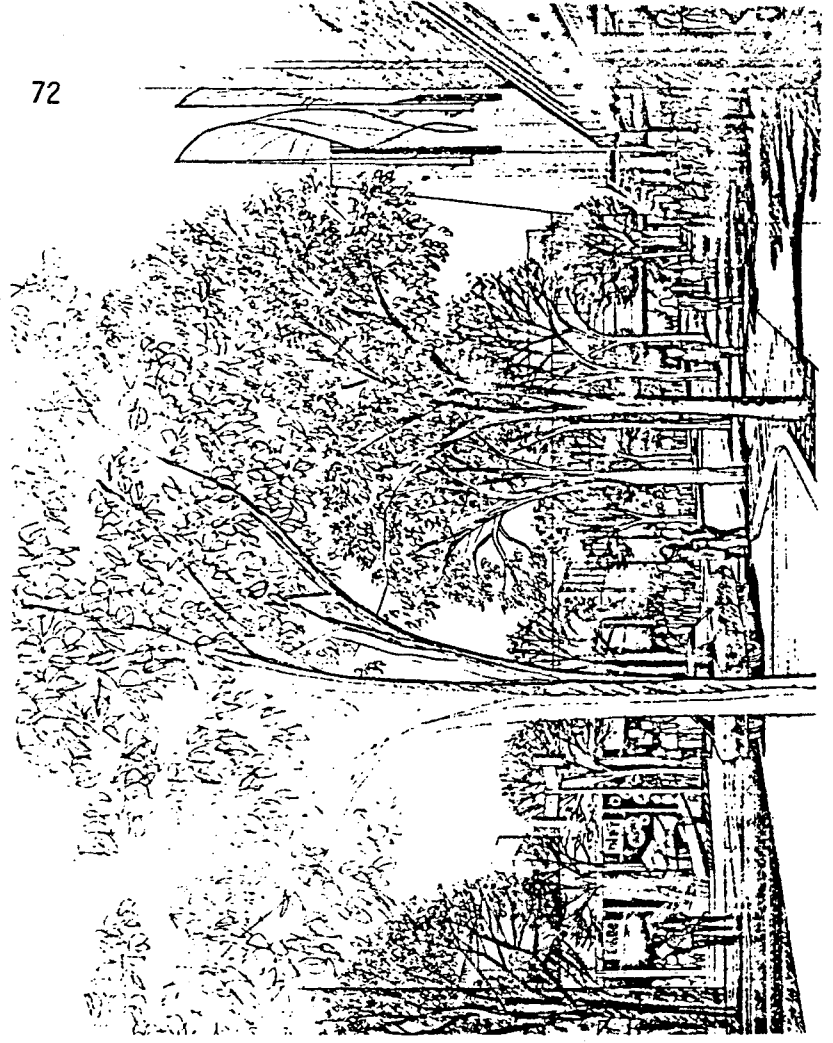
# DOWNTOWN TOMORROW

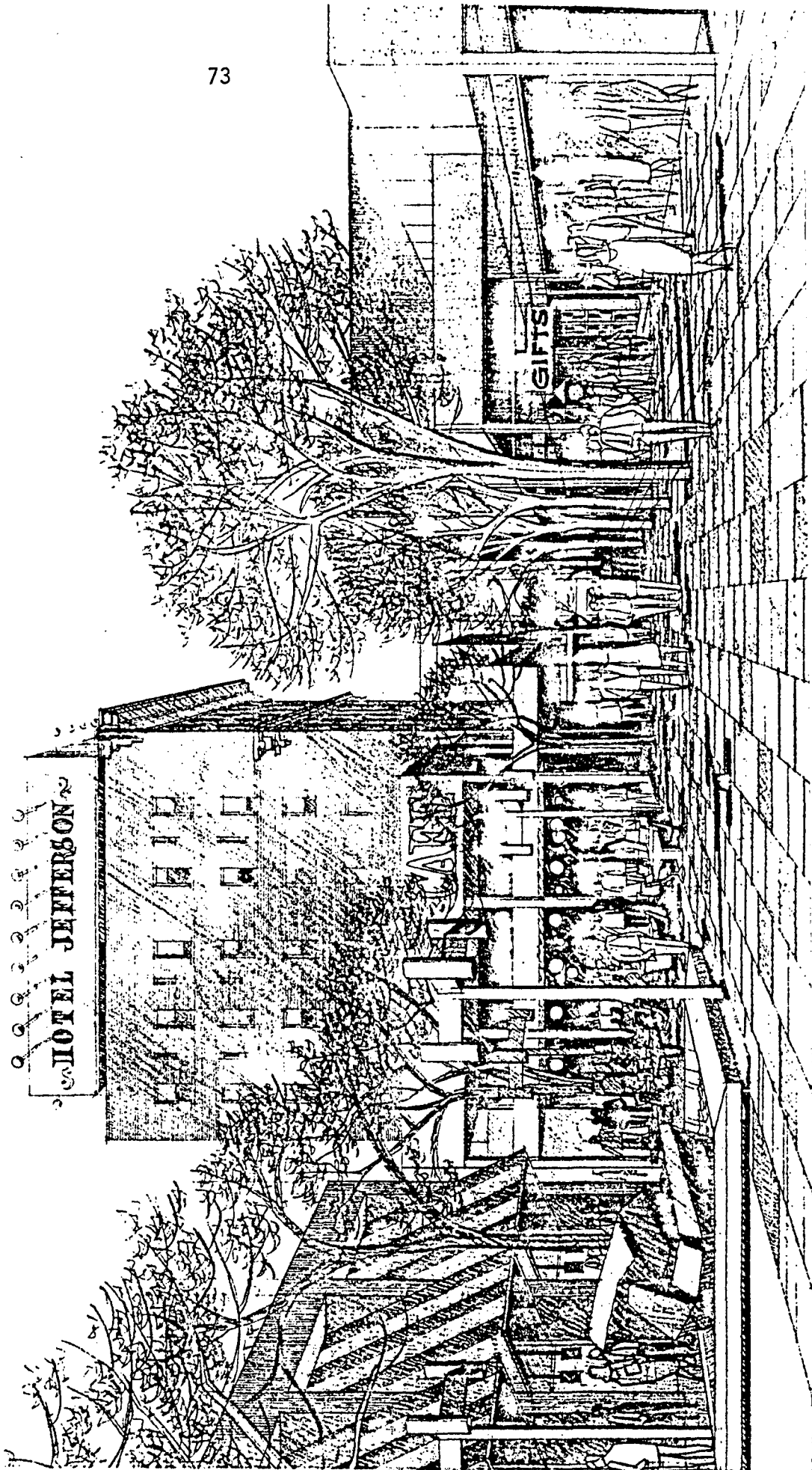
## OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH REDEVELOPMENT

- a revitalized center
- new commercial facilities
- attractive landscaping and architectural design
- orderly university expansion
- convenient traffic flow
- convenient parking
- improved utilities systems
- removal of hazardous building conditions
- removal of blighting conditions
- safety of investment in modernization

### THE ALTERNATIVE

In the planning for such a program, the downtown was studied in depth. These studies confirmed many of the problems previously cited by citizen groups of business and civic leaders. In addition, however, real opportunities were brought to light. One of the greatest opportunities to be captured through a sound redevelopment program was the continuance of downtown Iowa City as the dominant business center for years to come. The alternative to this is to allow things to go their own way with outlying shopping areas playing an ever increasing role as the commercial centers.





## THE BASIC OBJECTIVES..

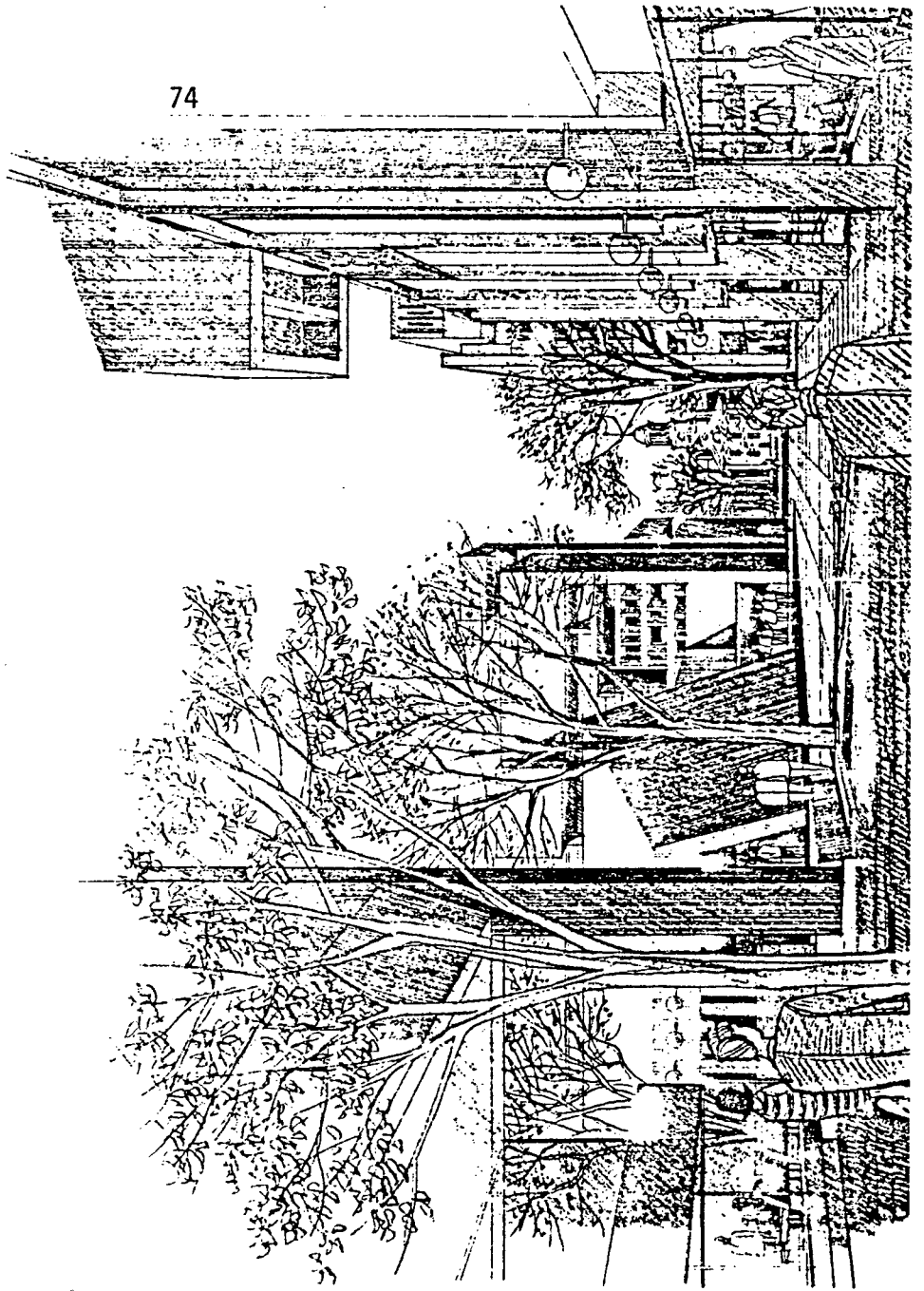
TO IMPROVE THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT SO THAT IT MAY BETTER SERVE THE PEOPLE OF IOWA CITY AS A MODERN, CONVENIENT PLACE TO SHOP AND WORK.

TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT FOR PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND INVESTMENT BY MAKING VITAL PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT, . . . BY HELPING TO PROVIDE SITES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT, . . . BY ELIMINATING BLIGHT AND CONGESTION.

TO AID THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA TO EXPAND IN AN ORDERLY WAY, SO THE UNIVERSITY AND THE BUSINESS DISTRICT CAN EACH PERFORM ITS OWN FUNCTION WITH MINIMUM CONFLICT AND MAXIMUM BENEFIT.

# THE PLAN FOR REDEVELO

SOUTH APPROACH TO OLD CAPITOL



### UNIVERSITY AREA

The University of Iowa has grown dramatically during the past several years. To help meet the increasing need for developed land, and in order that they might achieve optimum campus development, property in this area not now owned by the University will be acquired. This land, in turn will be sold to the University and developed by them in accordance with their comprehensive campus development plans.

### TRANSITION AREA

This area is intended to function as an appropriate transition between the academic core of the University and the Central Business District; activities in this area would be those which would strengthen or support mutual needs, yet be functionally set apart.

Property in these two blocks will be acquired and prepared for redevelopment. Large scale developments in the spirit of the transition concept will be encouraged. A total of approximately 200,000 sq. ft. of redevelopment land would be available in this area.

### CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AREA

In addition to the transition zone, a total of approximately 250,000 sq. ft. of land will be available for private redevelopment in the core area and the area immediately south of the core. The area south of Burlington Street would be particularly appropriate for automobile oriented uses. A large development site will be assembled between College Street and Burlington Street, making use of a portion of the Dubuque Street right-of-way, in anticipation of attracting a major department store downtown.

### AUTOMOBILE CIRCULATION

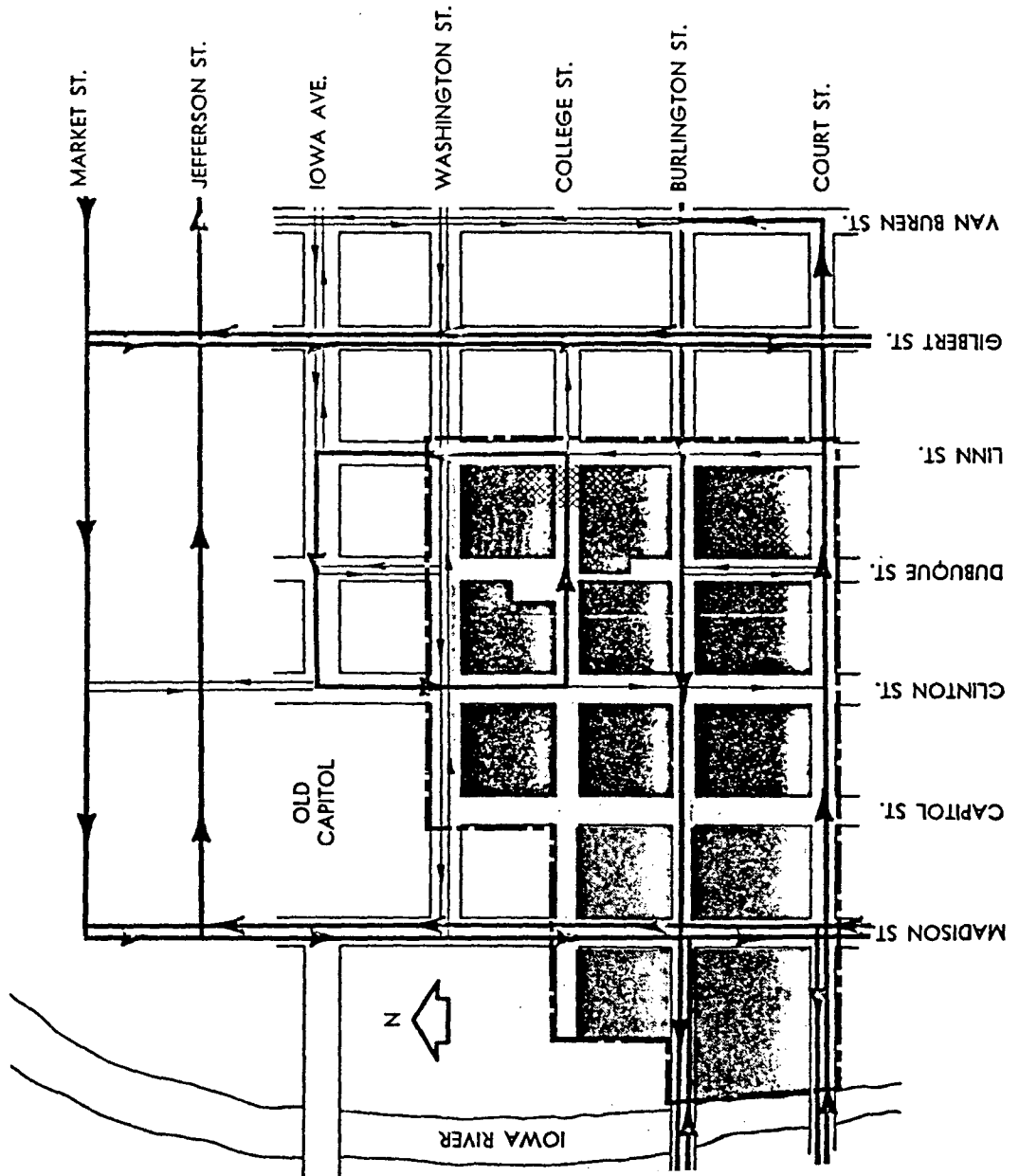
A system of "circulation rings" with an external "by-pass" ring and an internal "shopping core" ring will be developed. Access points to the internal ring will be developed. Access points to the internal ring will be provided at its corners. Several one-way streets will be established and portions of other streets will be removed from the traffic circulation pattern.

### PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Pedestrian and vehicular conflicts will be minimized through the closing of several streets and the one way operation of others. In addition to this, sidewalks will be widened within the shopping area and a pedestrian mall constructed; this mall will be largely on the Dubuque Street right-of-way. The heart of the central business district will be focused on the civic plaza. Other pedestrian amenities will enhance the attractiveness of the total shopping environment.

### PARKING FACILITIES

Several new parking lots are planned for the southern portion of the area. A multi-story parking ramp is planned to penetrate the shopping core as an added convenience for shoppers.



## REHABILITATION

Preservation and strengthening of the economic well-being of the central business district depends upon a program of rehabilitation as much as redevelopment. An important goal in the total program is the restoration of salvable buildings to a long-term sound condition. The level of improvement these properties will be expected to meet is comparable to standards for new construction. The objectives of the rehabilitation program are as follows:

- Renewal of the area to a long-term sound condition
- Substantial improvement of the quality of properties.
- Substantial improvement in the living conditions.
- Maximum retention of the original character of the area.
- Prevention of the spread or reoccurrence of blight.

## RELOCATION . .

The plan for redevelopment involves the relocation of a number of individuals, families, and businesses. This relocation will be necessary because of the clearance of property and perhaps the rehabilitation of other properties.

The City will have a relocation staff to assist families and individuals in the relocation process. This assistance will be in the form of actively seeking suitable dwellings for these people to move to. In addition to this assistance, actual moving expenses of up to \$200 will be paid to all families and individuals.

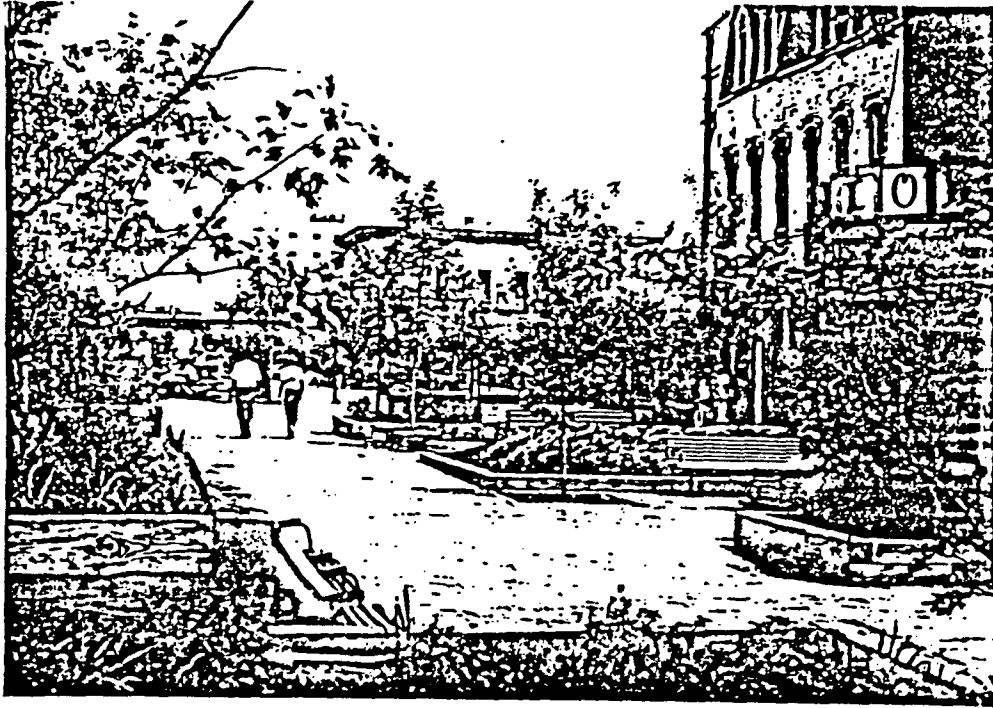
The successful relocation of the business affected must be carried on within the basic concept of free enterprise meeting a market demand in a spirit of cooperation between those being relocated, those meeting this demand, and the City. There are now commercial development sites available and additional sites will be made available through the proposed program. Actual moving expenses of up to \$25,000 will be paid to all businesses.

Relocation of families, individuals, and businesses will be staged over a period of at least six years.

## FINANCING . . .

If the redevelopment project is carried out, it would be carefully staged and would take place over a period of some six years. It would involve purchasing of real estate, rehabilitation of buildings, relocating families and individuals and businesses, preparing land for re-development and providing many public improvements.

The Federal Government will provide approximately eight million dollars for capital project costs; as well as the full amount necessary to cover relocation expenses. The City will meet its share in the costs of the project through a combination of City expenditures for parking facilities and eligible expenditures made by the University of Iowa in acquiring property necessary for their expansion program.



Iowa City, Iowa Downtown Revitalization

Photograph taken in July, 1981



APPENDIX B

Mason City, Iowa Downtown Revitalization

**A**  
**General Downtown Plan**  
**for Mason City**

**Prepared for the Planning and Zoning Commission  
and the City Council, Mason City, Iowa**

**September, 1965**

**Consultant: Barton-Aschman Associates, Chicago, Illinois**

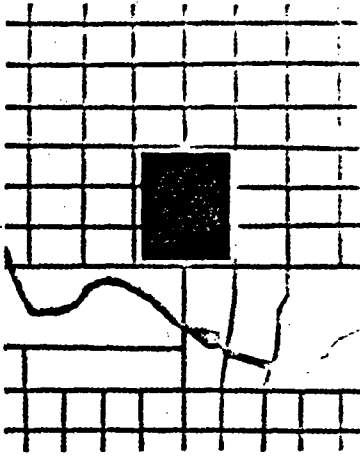
The recommended General Downtown Plan was developed according to basic land-use principles in a series of steps beginning with the "retail core." These principles are described below and illustrated in Figure 2.

A "retail core" must be defined which is compact and scaled to reasonable estimates of future land requirements. This district, like a shopping center, should be designed for the convenience of the pedestrian, reducing his conflict with vehicles and eliminating "dead spots" to facilitate comparison shopping. An objective should be to secure major department store "anchors" at each end of the core and a "row" of specialty shops between them to stimulate trade among all merchants.

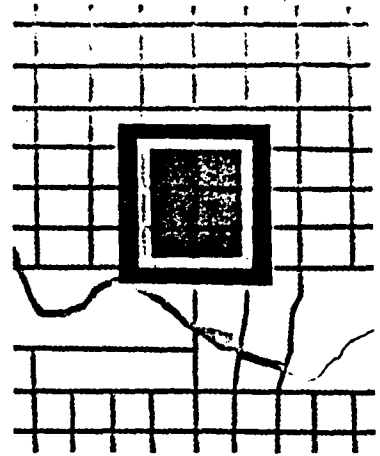
Around this core, a band of short-term parking is needed so that patrons can be as near to their destinations as possible without making the parking function interfere with the "core" itself. It is important that all-day parkers be discouraged from using these spaces. A band of short-term parking is suggested since undue concentration at any one point could limit the feasibility of the best distribution of parking spaces.

This band of short-term parking should also be a multi-purpose facility which serves a supporting ring of personal and business service establishments, i.e., shops, offices, motels, and institutions. For efficiency of operation, similar activities should be grouped in various parts or "sectors" of this ring; for example, a government office center, a medical complex, entertainment area, business-office service area, etc. This ring should also contain institutions or retailers which desire a central location, yet have only weak "links" to the retail core. Examples of the latter are automotive shops and services, some home furnishings and appliance stores, churches, fraternal organizations, and city-wide education and recreation facilities.

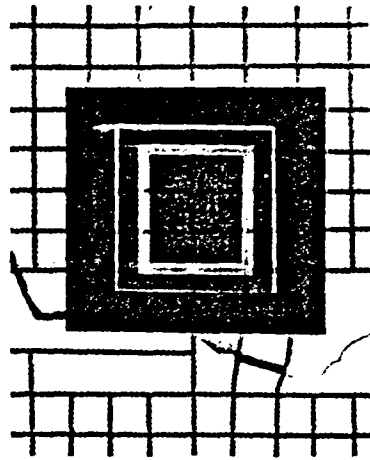
A broad band beyond this "service ring" should be identified within which long-term parking lots should be established to serve employee parking and other long-term parking needs of the core and the ring of supporting services. This area would also help supplement the long-term parking needs of large institutions, such as the junior college, library, and churches, and be available for those multi-family areas which represent the most convenient living areas for young adults and senior citizens.



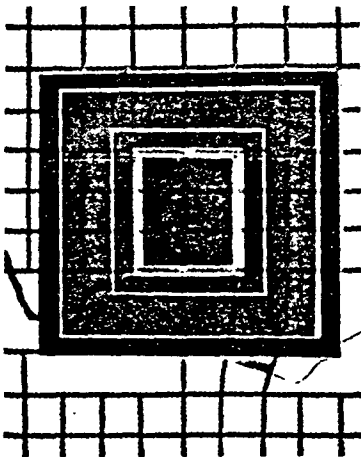
**Retail Core**



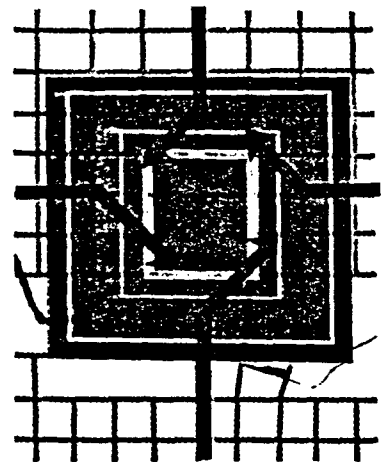
**Short-Term Parking**



**Supporting Services**



**Long-Term Parking**



**Traffic Access**

**DEVELOPMENT OF A DOWNTOWN AREA**

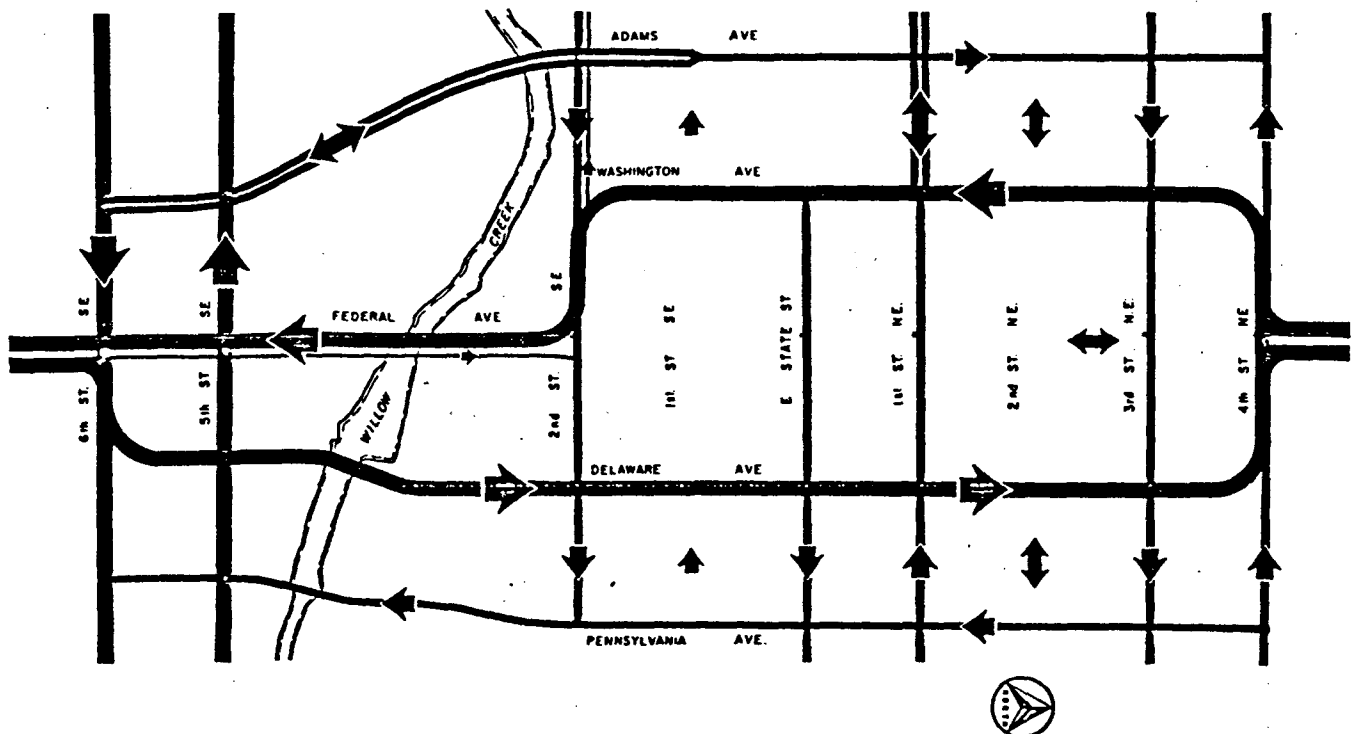
**FIGURE 2**

Knit into this arrangement of land-uses should be a street system which not only channels through traffic around the core but guides downtown-destined traffic past the band of short-term and long-term parking in an easily understood fashion. (See Figure 3.)

The land-use principles described above were adapted to Mason City in the development of the General Downtown Plan as shown in Figure 4. The pattern of proposed uses shown recognizes existing features which differ somewhat from the "ideal" principles as illustrated in Figure 2.

It should be noted particularly that the proposed core is more irregularly shaped than the theoretical core, taking into account the exclusion of Central Park and the addition of the Shopper's Lane complex. It is more compact than the present retail district, however, since the southern part of the district is proposed for future supporting services.

The short-term parking area established between the rear of the Federal Avenue stores and Washington and Delaware Avenues is incomplete as a continuous band both because a



PROPOSED DOWNTOWN CIRCULATION PLAN

FIGURE 3

complete half-block ring of parking would exceed the amount needed and because substantial and desirable existing uses interrupt it. The band of supporting services shown is also somewhat irregular although traceable as a strip one-half block deep on the west and a band two blocks deep on the north, east, and south.

The most likely and/or desirable long-term parking is located, for the most part, beyond the supporting services areas. It is somewhat irregular, again because the area within a complete band would exceed long-term parking needs and because a substantial number of desirable existing uses are present. The concentration of parking suggested for the east side in conjunction with the junior college and the suggested supporting service area across Willow Creek on the south should also be noted.

#### A RECOMMENDED ACTION PROGRAM

The following is a step-by-step guide for concerted public and private efforts to revitalize Downtown Mason City.

1. Secure concurrence on the General Downtown Plan and commitment to its systematic implementation by the City Council and others.
2. Establish a well coordinated downtown improvement organization to prepare detailed development policies, handle fund raising, and conduct a community relations program via news media.
3. Develop and seek approval of a Workable Program for Urban Renewal.
4. Secure City Council commitment to the Capital Improvement Program for the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Plan.
5. Prepare a parking and street improvements assessment mechanism--particularly for the "retail core" area.
6. Prepare, and seek approval of, a Downtown Rehabilitation Project application.
7. Begin development of short-term parking areas. Secure city-county policy agreements with respect to police and court facilities. Relocate police facilities.

8. Secure master development blueprint for such visual design projects as the following and prepare promotional literature.

Store front and rear elevations coordination  
 Pavement design  
 Signs  
 Street furniture  
 Central Park redesign  
 Detailed landscaping  
 Arcades design


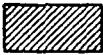














9. Begin building modernization and arcade projects.
10. Begin street modifications to relocate Federal Avenue.  
Relocate Federal Avenue.
11. Develop pedestrian plazas on Federal Avenue, sponsored by the downtown improvement organization.
12. New department store and store expansion projects. Fire station relocation.
13. Acquire and develop new long-term parking areas.
14. Clear and build new office building and medical center facilities.
15. Junior college expansion program. Relocate insurance company offices. Acquire additional lands north of the campus.
16. Build new Municipal Building.
17. Develop the Home Furnishings Center.
18. Develop a site for housing for the aged.
19. Develop the Entertainment and Fine Arts and Crafts Center.
20. Build west side bypass bridge.
21. Develop the Farm Center.
22. Expand hotel convention facilities and parking.

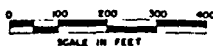
# GENERAL DOWNTOWN PLAN

## Key to Downtown Features

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> New Police and Courts Facilities | <b>9</b> Fine Arts and Crafts Center |
| <b>2</b> Junior College Campus            | <b>10</b> Entertainment Center       |
| <b>3</b> Convention Facilities            | <b>11</b> Housing for the Elderly    |
| <b>4</b> Major Office Building            | <b>12</b> New Bridge                 |
| <b>5</b> New Municipal Building           | <b>13</b> Proposed Department Store  |
| <b>6</b> Pedestrian Plazas                | <b>14</b> Medical Center             |
| <b>7</b> Arcades                          | <b>15</b> Farm Center                |
| <b>8</b> Home Furnishing Center           |                                      |

## Proposed Land-Use

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Primary Retail     |  Manufacturing                |
|  Other Retail       |  Communications and Utilities |
|  Office Services    |  Storage and Warehousing      |
|  Other Services     |  Multi-Family Residential     |
|  Government         |  Short-term Parking           |
|  Education          |  Long-term Parking            |
|  Religious          |  Transportation               |
|  Other Institutions |  Public Open Space            |

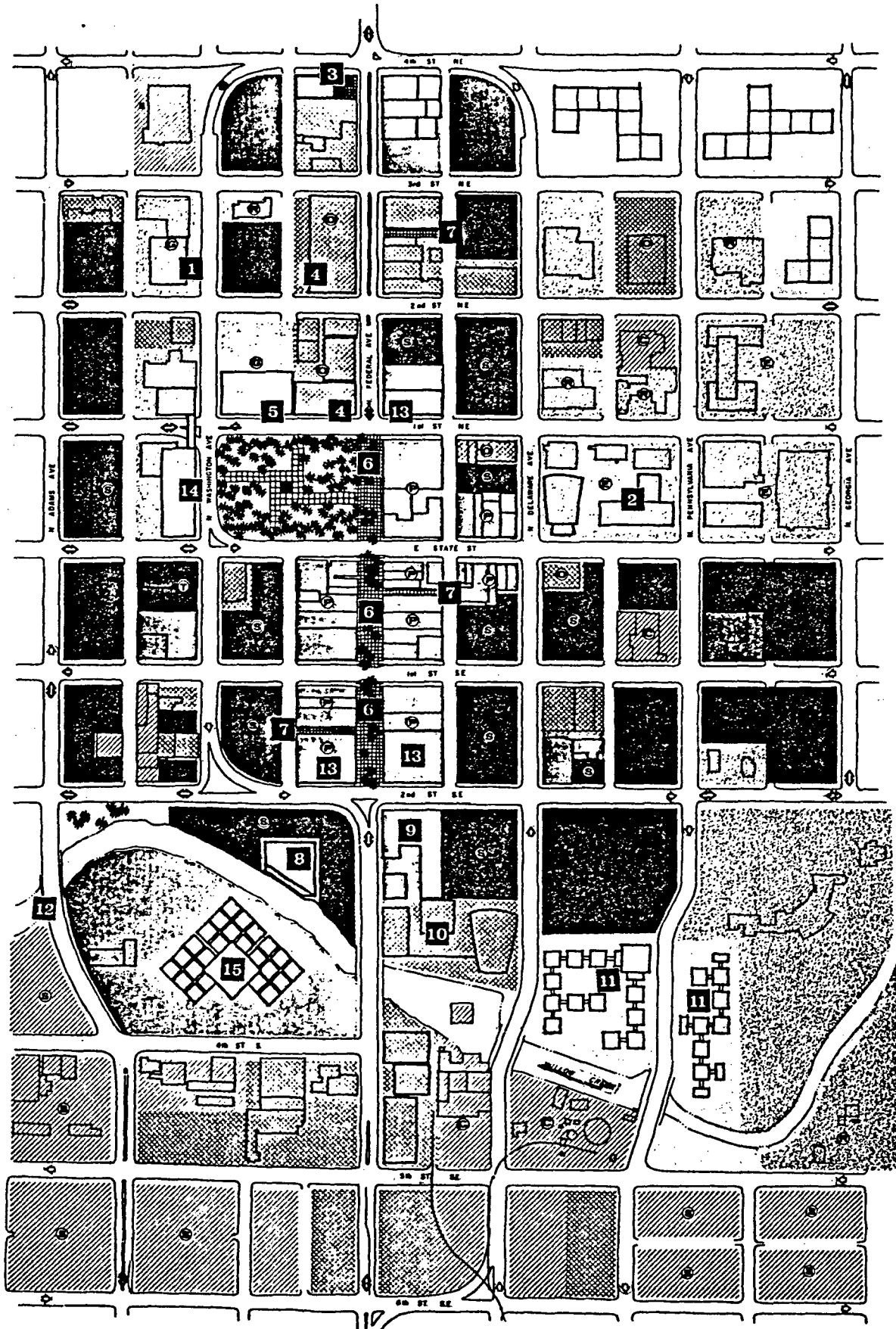


THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCIALLY AIDED THROUGH A FEDERAL GRANT FROM THE URBAN REHEVAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE HOUSING AND HOME FINANCE AGENCY, UNDER THE URBAN PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 70 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED. AUGUST 1964

URBAN PLANNING GRANT PROJECT NO. P-28  
 PREPARED UNDER CONTRACT FOR AND FINANCED IN PART BY THE IOWA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 24 CODE OF IOWA AS AMENDED.

**FIGURE 4**







Mason City, Iowa Downtown Revitalization

Photograph taken in December, 1981